



BLACKTOP STREET HOCKEY

Official Rules and Regulations

(Last updated June 2021)

The BTSH rules are NOT necessarily the USA [BALL] HOCKEY rules, the NHL rules, or any other hockey rules that you may be familiar with, but they are a collection of rules that have been patched together to suit our needs. Read them, know them, live them!

1) DON'T BE A DICK.

- a) Don't be a dick! This rule is the bedrock on which BTSH was founded.

2) STRUCTURE, OT, PLAY-OFFS, WEATHER

2.1 Game Structure

- a) Games will start on time or within 5 minutes of the previous game ending. You should be arriving before your game is slotted to start. If you have trouble doing this buy a new alarm clock.
- b) Teams play with a max of 6 players on, including a goalie each. There must be at least two women on the court at all times.
- c) Games are played in two 25-minute halves with a running clock. At the half the teams switch sides. Teams always switch defending goals after each half but NOT after the second half and before overtime.
- d) The clock is always stopped during water breaks and timeouts. If there is a 1 or 2 goal differential (not tied, however) during the last two minutes of the second half- the clock is stopped. If the game is tied or if there is a differential of 3 goals or more there is no stoppage.
- e) The clock can also be stopped at the ref's discretion (ex. Medical needs).
- f) Each team is permitted to take one thirty-second time out per game.
- g) There is a maximum break of 2 minutes between halves, and between regulation and over-time.
- h) If the gap in the score of the game reaches 10 goals, the game will end and will be declared a victory for the team in the lead. This is called the outdated rule.

2.2 Overtime (OT)

- a) If the game is tied at the end of the 2nd half, a 5 minute sudden-death over-time (running clock) will be played, wherein the first team to score wins and ends the game. The teams do not switch sides for overtime. If a winner is not determined in the OT, a shootout commences.
- b) Shootouts: This shoot out format will be followed for all regulation and playoff games (EXCEPT the semifinals and the final) if no winner is declared in overtime.
- c) Teams will select 3 players to shoot, and at least 1 of these 3 shooters must be female.
- d) If no winner is declared after each team's 3 shooters, teams will shoot back and forth in single rounds of sudden death until a winner is declared.
- e) Shoot-Out Format past first 3 shooters:
 - i) For every 3 shooters after the initial 3, at least 1 must be female.



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- ii) Teams match the roster size and make-up of the smaller team. For example, one team only has 3 women and the other team has 6, the team with 6 only has to have 3 of their women shoot. Regarding your entire roster that day - all of your players have to shoot before you can repeat a player (male or female), however, if one team has 10 people present and the other team has 14, the team with 14 can repeat players after 10 shooters.
- iii) If the shootout starts to repeat shooters, teams will then be forced to ask themselves why they hate winning so badly.

2.3 Play-off Selection/Structure

- a) A player must play 6 regular season games for their team in order to be eligible to play in the playoffs. (Unless this player is given prior approval by a majority of the captains before the start of the playoffs.)
 - i) The number of end of season exemption proposals (for playoff eligibility) per team is limited to at most 2 players and 1 goalie per team.
- b) Teams are ranked 1 - 20 based on Regular Season Schedule, regardless of division or conference.
- c) Playoff Weeks
 - i) Playoffs Week 1 = Bottom 8 teams square off to see which 4 will move onto to join Top 12 in the Round of 16.
 - ii) Playoffs Week 2-Round of 16 = Top 12 plus 4 winners from Playoff Week 1
 - iii) Playoffs Week 3 = Quarterfinals
 - iv) Playoffs Week 4 = Semifinals Typical bracket system
 - v) Playoffs Week 5 = Final Typical bracket system
- d) There are 5 weeks of playoffs; there will be no double headers for any team except if needed due to a prior playoff game being rained out.
- e) Eliminated Teams will have the option to play exhibition games with games geared so that you face teams you missed in regular season, if possible.
- f) Reseed every week.
- g) When selecting and ranking teams for play-off berths, teams will be ranked by points. Teams tied for points will be ranked by the following criteria in the following order:
 - i) head-to-head wins between teams tied for points
 - ii) by total wins in the regular season
 - iii) by greatest goal differential
 - iv) by coin toss, in which case the team that is alphabetically first gets to call which side of the coin is in their favor
 - v) sword fight.
- h) If the game is tied after the regulation 50 minutes, then a ten-minute running-clock sudden-death over-time period will occur (unlike the 5 minute clock for regular season). The first team to score in the OT period wins.
- i) If the game is still tied at the end of the first over-time period, then a shoot-out will ensue, in accordance with rule 2.2.



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- j) In the event of overtime, unlike all other BTSH games, the semifinal games and the final will never go to a shootout. Unlimited sudden-death overtime will occur until one team scores. Overtime will occur in 25-minute periods, teams will switch sides after each overtime period.

2.4 Weather

- a) If bad weather threatens to make playing conditions dangerous, then the League Manager and Captains will work together make a decision about calling off games. They will attempt to make the call no later than 2 hours prior to the scheduled start time of the game,
- b) One captain can unilaterally postpone the game on their own without needing the other captain's approval so long as it is at least 2 hours prior to gametime. If they try to cancel less than 2 hours prior to game time and the other captain does not agree, both teams are still required to play. Not showing up would result in a forfeit.
 - i) Note: if the unilateral option becomes the standard and a team abuses this, the team will forfeit the game. There has to actually be a weather concern. Also please note that this is only dealing with postponing games before they start; this does not include the situation where a game begins and then there is inclement weather.

3) FACE-OFFS

- a) Face-offs occur at the center of the court/rink at the beginning of each period and after each goal is scored. Refs have the discretion to call face-offs when play is stopped, and such face-offs should occur near where play had stopped, unless otherwise provided for in these rules. Players line up for face-offs behind the ball on the side of the court closest to their own goal (on-sides). All face-offs shall be knock hockey style in which each player taking the face-off must first hit the ground then each other's stick 3 times before making a play for the ball.

4) BRINGING A BALL INBOUNDS

- a) At any non-rink venue (without "boards" completely containing the playing surface):
 - i) The ball must be on or behind the out of bounds line when being brought in from the sidelines, then you bring it back into bounds. The player in-bounding does not have to be behind the out-of- bounds line, only the ball.
 - ii) The ball must be passed or shot into bounds; it cannot be carried in from out of bounds.
 - iii) A player in-bounding the ball may shoot the ball anywhere within the playing area, INCLUDING ON GOAL, directly or deflected.
 - iv) Opponents of players bringing a ball into bounds/goalies bringing balls into play are to be no closer than 6 feet from the ball while the ball is being in-bounded (that includes the player and his/her stick, of course).



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- v) Players, including goalies, have 5 seconds from the time the ball is set by the referee to bring the ball into bounds or into play; if they do not bring the ball into play within 5 seconds the referee may reverse possession.
 - vi) When the ball comes to rest in an area that is in-bounds but in or near an obstruction which the referee considers problematic or potentially dangerous, then the referee may stop play to conduct a face-off or the referee may give possession over to the first player to contact the ball. When given possession, the ball is to be in- bounded from a spot nearest to where it became unplayable.
 - b) At a rink venue with continuous boards enclosing the playing surface:
 - i) When possession is given to a team, the ball must be introduced into play no closer to the opponent's goal than the blue line nearest the opponent's goal.
 - ii) Opponents must not be closer than 3 feet from the person "in- bounding" the ball.
 - iii) Once the in-bounder touches the ball, it is in play. Thus, shots on goal from in-bounding at a rink venue are allowed.
 - c) Inbounding after ball leaves rink NOT over the sideline:
 - i) The dugouts on the west court are out of bounds. Any time the ball enters one of the 2 dugouts, the ref will blow the whistle **immediately** and possession will change from the team who last touched the ball before it went into the dugout, to the other team. (The same as out of bounds on the sideline) The team awarded the ball will inbound it from the entrance to the dugout which the ball originally entered. The ref will start the countdown from 5, the same as when a ball is inbounded from the sideline.
 - ii) Either door on the west court: if the ball goes out of bounds, the possession will change to the team who did not touch it last. The ball shall be inbounded from an area as close as possible to the point at which the ball went out with the inbounding team receiving six feet from the defending team in order to play the ball back in. The referee will give the standard 5 second count in which the ball must be played before possession is changed.
 - iii) Turned up fences on any court: if the ball goes out of the court and the referee can clearly determine the team the ball went off of, the opposite team shall inbound the ball as close as possible to the location the ball went out and shall be afforded six feet of room to bring the ball in. The referee will give the standard 5 second count in which the ball must be played before possession is changed.
 - iv) Trees: If the ball hits any tree, it is not out of play unless the following scenario occurs: the ball hits the tree above one of the goals, and falls directly into the net without touching another player (other than the goalie -- basically, if it falls off his or her back), that will not be counted as a goal. Otherwise, the game will not be paused.
 - v) If the referee cannot determine possession, then a faceoff shall occur at the closest safe spot; the faceoff must occur between the two goal lines.
- 5) GOALIE SAFETY
- a) If an attacking player initiates any contact with a goalkeeper, incidental or otherwise, while the goalkeeper is in the goal crease, and a goal is scored, the goal will be



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disallowed.

- b) If an attacking player initiates any contact, other than incidental contact, with the goalkeeper, while the goalkeeper is outside of the goal crease, and a goal is scored, the goal will be disallowed.
- c) In all cases in which an attacking player initiates other than incidental contact with a goalkeeper, whether or not the goalkeeper is inside or outside the goal crease, and whether or not a goal is scored, this action will be considered a foul by the attacking player.
- d) If the goalie initiates contact outside of the goal crease and a goal is scored, that goal is allowed.
- e) To sum up: no touchee the goalie.
- f) Only goalies can call water breaks. Goalies can only call for water breaks when their team has possession in their own zone or on a goalie ball (for either team).

6) GROUND PLAY

- a) Players may not lie on the ground to defend the goal and may not intentionally cover the ball to prevent play. It's a chump move that causes more injuries than it's worth and is a punishable offense. Any act which endangers other players, such as sliding, is not permitted. If such chump moves occur, the offending player sits out a shift, and the opposing team gains possession from the sidelines.
- b) A player may drop down to 1 or both knees in order to block a shot or an inbound. However, the player must only drop down in a stationary position - again, NO sliding. Going down to the knees is legal in BTSH and in most countries.

7) GOALIES AND BALLS

- a) Goalie throws are restricted to throws to the side or behind the goal line. Goalies cannot throw the ball forward. Just noting this as they used to be able to. Get with the times, people.
- b) Goalies may not cover, freeze, glove or close their hand on the ball unless they are within their crease (fully or partially). Thus, goalies can't run to mid-court and cover the ball.
- c) Goalies may not play the ball forward with their hand or glove (see above). If a goalie gloves or grabs the ball, he or she has roughly three seconds to either drop it where they grabbed the ball or drop it behind the goal line. If they hold on to the ball, the ball will be frozen and there will be a whistle.
- d) The ball is frozen when the goalie covers the ball with his or her glove or any part of their body and the ref determines that the goalie does not intend to play the ball further. At this point the ref blows the whistle to stop play. After the whistle, the goalie must hand off the ball to their defense behind the goal line. At this point the ref will begin counting down from 5 seconds until the player either passes the ball into play, or stickhandles across the plane of the goal line. When the player does either of these two options, the ball is immediately "live" and in play. The ball will also become "live" once the ref countdown reaches zero and the other team can then cross the goal line



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- to try and get the ball. To be clear- the goalie can no longer play the ball forward; it must be dropped behind the goal line and restarted by a teammate.
- e) When outside their crease, goalies are subject to all rules governing the play of regular (non-goalie) players and may only play the ball with the stick and feet. This means they cannot slide prone, raise their sticks above their waist, etc. Even while in the crease, the goalie may not shoot/pass the ball above the cross bar or while playing the ball have their stick go above their knee.
- 8) NETS – CREASES
- a) Creases and nets shall be consistent at all playing locations. Goals are regulation 6-feet x 4-feet x 2-feet. Creases have a 4 foot radius from the center of the goal along the goal line.
 - b) A goal shall be disallowed if any body part of a member of the offending team is in or touching the crease when the ball crosses the goal line. If a shoelace is on the tip of the crease the goal will not be allowed. This rule is in effect to protect the goalies. Deal.
 - c) No attacking player can be in or have contact with the goal crease at any time, including their stick, except that a stick is allowed to be inside the crease when the ball enters the crease as long as it is not making contact with the goalie (see rule 5).
- 9) STICK AND BALL PLAY
- a) In the interest of safety (preventing head/face injuries from high balls or sticks being swung at high balls), the ball may not be shot into the air head high. If the ball is shot head high, it is **immediately** whistled a dead ball with possession reversed at the nearest sideline from the spot of the infraction. In other words- high balls are not delayed penalties. Exceptions to the rule include a rising shot that travels head high **beyond the net** and deflected shots. In these exception cases, play continues. In the case of a deflected shot that goes high, the ref should use the deflection signal of one hand swiping over the other hand to indicate play carrying on and yell “deflection” for clarity.
 - b) Slap shots are illegal. A slap shot is loosely defined as winding up or lifting your stick (in preparation for a shot) above knee level. (see rule 1 for further clarification). The follow- through must not go above the waist.
 - c) Players are not allowed to run with their stick or play the ball with their stick above their waist. A goal scored by playing the ball with a stick above the waist shall be disallowed.
 - d) Stick checking is NOT allowed. Any play for the ball must be just that; a play for the ball. You cannot lift the stick, hold the stick down, or come down on the stick. A “sweep” for the ball is allowed.
- 10) HAND-BODY DEFLECTION (SOME STOLEN FROM A LITTLE LEAGUE CALLED THE NHL)
- a) If a ball is traveling off of the ground, a player shall be permitted to catch the ball out of the air but must immediately place it or knock it down to the ground. He/she may not



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catch it and run with it.

- b) A player shall be permitted to stop or “bat” a ball in the air with his/her open hand unless, in the opinion of the ref, he/she has directed the puck to a teammate in any zone other than the defending zone
- c) Play will not be stopped for any hand pass by players in their own defending zone. A hand pass in the defending zone is considered to have occurred when both the player making the pass AND the player receiving the pass have both of their feet inside their defending zone. The defending zone is defined as the area closest to the team’s defending goal up to the mid-court face-off dot.
- d) Any attacking player who gloves the ball towards the goal keeper or the net/crease area will be whistled for a hand pass. This will result in a goalie ball restart for the defending team.
- e) A goal cannot be scored by an attacking player who bats or directs the puck with his hand into the net. A goal cannot be scored by an attacking player who bats or directs the puck and it is deflected into the net off any player, goalkeeper or official [or tree]. When the puck enters the net on a clear unintentional deflection off a glove, the goal shall be allowed.
- f) A goal cannot be scored by an attacking player who uses a distinct kicking motion to propel the puck into the net. A goal cannot be scored by an attacking player who kicks a puck that deflects into the net off any player, goalkeeper or official [or tree].
- g) Any ball that is directly deflected off or knocked in by a ref and goes in to the goal unobstructed shall not be allowed.

11) SUBS

- a) Subs can enter the game at any time, however, no more than 6 players (including the goalie and 2 women) from any team can be playing on the court at any time. Subs may only shift on and off the court when they are on the same half of the court as their team's 'bench'. If a player or team is caught shifting on/off on the other team's half, it is a delayed call for Too Many Players and possession is given to the non-offending team.

12) REF INTERACTION AND REF SCHEDULING

- a) NO player may speak to the referees during the game, unless the referee initiates communication. If you have something you think a referee should know, tell your captain and they will relay the message to the referee at an opportune time. An opportune time includes after whistles or in between halves, not during play.
- b) Keep in mind that the referee’s call stands, so if you have a dispute with a call, suck it up and shut up.
- c) Any attempt to yell, scream, bitch, whine, molest, or otherwise annoy the ref will result in, first a warning to the player and the captain of the players’ team, then ejection from the game and possible DC committee action. (again, rule number 1.)
- d) Ref Schedulers and Ref Managers must not be members of the same team.
- e) If the ref scheduler's team is in the semi-finals or finals they cannot have a role in scheduling refs for those games. If this conflict of interest arises, the ref manager will



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assign refs. If both have a conflict, then the commissioner will take over, followed by a randomly selected board member.

13) TEAMS

- a) Teams are co-ed and must have at least two female players playing on the court at all times (not including the goalie) or else they will need to play short.
- b) Rosters will be limited to 20 active players plus 1 goalie and will be locked at the end of Week 15. Captains must submit a playoff roster by this time and certify that all players on that roster have played at least 6 regular season games. Captains are held responsible should a team be caught playing someone with less than 6 games experience. Exceptions may be granted by a majority vote of the captains. Beginning in 2019, refs will track attendance each week. Injured players who attend games will receive credit for attendance and do not require an exception for the playoffs (assuming they met the 6 game rule).
 - i) Players (FA or regular) must be a registered member of a team in order to accrue a game played for that team. This means that FAs will no longer receive credit for games played on a team until they formally join that team via their registration. This also means that any player, FA or otherwise, who neglects to register with a team, may require an exemption at the end of the season if they do not register timely and accrue the minimum required games played (6).
 - ii) Games will NOT accrue retroactively if a player plays as a Free Agent and later registers with a team for which they played games.
 - iii) In order for a player to accrue a game played, the player must have been present for at least half of the game. Whether that means they show up for the entire second half, only the first half or half of each half doesn't matter.
- c) If your team elects to use a player from another BTSH team, the captain of the team you are playing that day must agree to this first. If the other team's captain does not agree to this, you will need to either play shorthanded, or forfeit. This goes for both players and goalies from other BTSH teams. Your team may use any player who does not play for any BTSH team (except during playoffs) with no questions asked. However, such players should register on the website as an FA before the game, just for legal/liability reasons. During weeks 1-5 free agents can play as many games as they want, afterwards they can only play 1 game max per week (exceptions are possible in the case of goalie/female free agents).
- d) A game that is forfeited before it begins or because one team refuses to play results in a score of 0 (zero) for the forfeiting team and at 10 (ten) for the non-forfeiting team. If the game was in progress at the time it is declared forfeited, the score shall be recorded as 0 (zero) for the loser and 1 (one), or such greater number of goals that had been scored by it, for the winner.
- e) If a team does not have a goalie, a player on that team may play in place of the goalie. If goalie equipment is not available, the player may not play as a goalie and will be subject to player rules (6 players and no goalie on the court). A team may ask another member of BTSH to play goal if it is first approved by the opposition's captain.



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14) NO STICK THROWING/SMASHING

- a) No one is to ever smash a stick or anything else against the ground with force, and no one is ever to throw a stick, on the court or off, because of the potential for severe injuries. Such infractions may lead to penalties, ejection from the game or both.

15) PENALTIES

- a) GAME RESTARTS AFTER A PENALTY OCCURS
 - i) Should an infraction of the rules be committed by a player of the team in possession and control of the puck, the Referee shall immediately stop play and assess and the ball changes possession and ball is inbounded from sideline across from the point of the foul.
 - ii) Should an infraction of the rules be committed by a player of a team NOT in possession and control of the puck the Referee shall signal a delayed penalty. Play will be stopped immediately when the offending team gains possession and control of the ball. The ball changes possession and placed at the spot of the touchup.
- b) If any infraction of the rules is severe enough, intentional, or repeated, the offending player will be written up by the head ref. A weekly review by the head of officiating/DC director will then, based on the referees' write-ups, determine a penalty that is suitable to the offense. If an offense is severe enough, items marked with a "(DC)" can be brought up to the disciplinary committee (part 16) for further discipline and consequences, including expulsion from the league.
- c) Minor offenses (written warning to 1 game suspension):
 - i) Holding
 - ii) Hooking
 - iii) Lofting
 - iv) stick check
 - v) goalie covering out of crease
 - vi) goalie delay of game
- d) Major offenses (written warning to 3 games suspension):
 - i) high sticking
 - ii) slapshot
 - iii) breaking Rule #1 (DC)
 - iv) sliding (players AND goalies)
- e) Severe offenses (1 game – 5 game suspensions):
 - i) slashing (DC)
 - ii) throwing/smashing stick (DC)
 - iii) tripping (DC)
 - iv) verbal abuse (DC)
- f) Extreme offenses (1 game suspension to season expulsion):
 - i) ref abuse
 - ii) pushing/roughing/fighting



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- g) A 5-minute misconduct penalty can be given to any player who breaks Rule #1. This player must leave the game for 5 minutes before they can return to the game, the ref will notify the team when the 5 minutes is up. Infractions warranting a 5-minute misconduct include:
- i) any infraction which takes away a golden scoring chance from the other team (for example, stick-checking someone from behind while they are on a breakaway or stick-checking someone right in front of the net as they are about to shoot)
 - ii) To reiterate- if a player commits a penalty against another player on a breakaway-at least a 5 minute misconduct will be awarded. This call will be made in the interest of safety and rule #1
 - iii) verbal abuse of refs or other players
 - iv) Refs still have the option to say sit a shift, sit the rest of the half, or sit the rest of the game (a game misconduct) for various infractions. However, if a referee feels a player needs to sit longer than 5 minutes, or the whole game, you do not necessarily need to give a 5-minute misconduct first.

16) DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE (DC)

- a) If a severe disciplinary infraction is committed and the head of officiating/DC director deems it necessary, then the disciplinary committee (DC) will meet as soon as possible to deliberate on the matter. The DC may also from time to time evaluate players with documented discipline problems.
- b) The DC is comprised of a DC director who coordinates and initiates the meetings and the representatives of the league teams (generally captains or proxy appointed by the team captain). The DC director only votes to break a tie vote.
- c) The dc will have the authority to sanction players with reprimand, game suspension, probation, or league expulsion. The DC is ultimately responsible for upholding their decisions, and their decisions are final. Expelled players forfeit their fee and must consider their expulsion permanent barring the discovery of new evidence or information involving their expulsion. Only with such information can the player ask the DC to reexamine his/her case and revote on his/her position in the league. Notice there are no jokes in this rule, because we are dead serious.
- d) Best way to avoid the DC? See rule 1.

17) PROHIBITED ACTIONS

- a) This is a non-contact game where we chase an orange ball around the playground. As such, there is no pushing or using physical force against another player. All players are responsible for being in control of their actions at all times on the court and sidelines. Prohibited actions include and are not limited to:
 - i) intentional physical contact with another player with your body or stick
 - ii) checking
 - iii) chopping (bring the stick down on another stick and also holding down a stick)
 - iv) upward stick checking (flipping sticks up from behind and underneath)
 - v) hacking/slashing (shin- slapping)



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- vi) tripping
- vii) hooking
- viii) spearing
- ix) stick end-butting
- x) high sticking (stick above the waist)
- xi) vengeful shots made purely to induce injury
- xii) verbal taunts and abuse
- xiii) fighting
- xiv) any infraction covered by the rules of USA Hockey, not stated above, and at the discretion of the refs
- xv) basically doing anything that would embarrass your loved ones. If you feel your temper getting the best of you, take yourself out of the game before someone else does it for you.

18) WARNINGS

- a) If you are repeatedly seen by or are reported to the referee as doing any of the above violent no-nos, you will be given a warning and possibly sat down for a shift, 5 minutes, half, or ejected from the game
- b) If the behavior continues, you may be suspended; you will have to appear in front of the DC and possibly be ejected from the league.

19) FALLS/INJURIES

- a) If someone falls or trips or there is any safety issue, any player can ask the referee to call an emergency time out until the situation is rectified.

20) CHAIN OF COMMAND

- a) **Officials provide the final say in terms of goals and behavior on the court or rink**, but the players and captains are responsible for regulating themselves and those around them, and are expected to do so in an adult manner. All decisions and behavior should keep player safety and rule #1 in mind!!!!
- b) If a player feels that he or she is being maliciously targeted by another player, that player may bring the matter to the attention of their captain and the referee, but may not retaliate.

21) THE BOTTOM LINE

- a) These rules have been annually updated since the league's founding in 2000, and are tailored for a low-key, fun, friendly, non-aggressive, social hockey league. Every player must know and follow these rules. BTSH strives to be less than a "sports league" and more than a "social club," if that makes any sense. It's not all about the wins, it's not all about the trophy, it IS all about getting together with some friends and having FUN. Abiding by the rules in a strict manner will help you accomplish that goal!