

= Netball =

Netball is a ball sport played by two teams of seven players . Its development , derived from early versions of basketball , began in England in the 1890s . By 1960 , international playing rules had been standardised for the game , and the International Federation of Netball and Women 's Basketball (later renamed the International Netball Federation (INF)) was formed . As of 2011 , the INF comprises more than 60 national teams organized into five global regions .

Games are played on a rectangular court with raised goal rings at each end . Each team attempts to score goals by passing a ball down the court and shooting it through its goal ring . Players are assigned specific positions , which define their roles within the team and restrict their movement to certain areas of the court . During general play , a player with the ball can hold on to it for only three seconds before shooting for a goal or passing to another player . The winning team is the one that scores the most goals . Netball games are 60 minutes long . Variations have been developed to increase the game 's pace and appeal to a wider audience .

Netball is most popular in Commonwealth nations , specifically in schools , and is predominantly played by women . According to the INF , netball is played by more than 20 million people in more than 80 countries . Major transnational competitions take place , including the Netball Superleague in Great Britain and the ANZ Championship in Australia and New Zealand . Three major competitions take place internationally : the quadrennial World Netball Championships , the Commonwealth Games , and the yearly World Netball Series . In 1995 , netball became an International Olympic Committee recognised sport , but it has not been played at the Olympics .

= = History = =

Netball emerged from early versions of basketball and evolved into its own sport as the number of women participating in sports increased . Basketball was invented in 1891 by James Naismith in the United States . The game was initially played indoors between two teams of nine players , using an association football that was thrown into closed @-@ end peach baskets . Naismith 's game spread quickly across the United States and variations of the rules soon emerged . Physical education instructor Senda Berenson developed modified rules for women in 1892 ; these eventually gave rise to women 's basketball . Around this time separate intercollegiate rules were developed for men and women . The various basketball rules converged into a universal set in the United States .

Martina Bergman @-@ Österberg introduced a version of basketball in 1893 to her female students at the Physical Training College in Hampstead , London . The rules of the game were modified at the college over several years : the game moved outdoors and was played on grass ; the baskets were replaced by rings that had nets ; and in 1897 and 1899 , rules from women 's basketball in the United States were incorporated . Madame Österberg 's new sport acquired the name " net ball " . The first codified rules of netball were published in 1901 by the Ling Association , later the Physical Education Association of the United Kingdom . From England , netball spread to other countries in the British Empire . Variations of the rules and even names for the sport arose in different areas : " women 's (outdoor) basketball " arrived in Australia around 1900 and in New Zealand from 1906 , while " netball " was being played in Jamaican schools by 1909 .

From the start , it was considered socially appropriate for women to play netball ; netball 's restricted movement appealed to contemporary notions of women 's participation in sports , and the sport was distinct from potential rival male sports . Netball became a popular women 's sport in countries where it was introduced and spread rapidly through school systems . School leagues and domestic competitions emerged during the first half of the 20th century , and in 1924 the first national governing body was established in New Zealand . International competition was initially hampered by a lack of funds and varying rules in different countries . Australia hosted New Zealand in the first international game of netball in Melbourne on 20 August 1938 ; Australia won 40 ? 11 . Efforts began in 1957 to standardise netball rules globally : by 1960 international playing rules had been standardised , and the International Federation of Netball and Women 's Basketball , later the International Netball Federation (INF) , was formed to administer the sport worldwide .

Representatives from England , Australia , New Zealand , South Africa , and the West Indies were part of a 1960 meeting in Sri Lanka that standardised the rules for the game . The game spread to other African countries in the 1970s . South Africa was prohibited from competing internationally from 1969 to 1994 due to apartheid . In the United States , Netball 's popularity also increased during the 1970s , particularly in the New York area , and the United States of America Netball Association was created in 1992 . The game also became popular in the Pacific Island nations of the Cook Islands , Fiji and Samoa during the 1970s . Netball Singapore was created in 1962 , and the Malaysian Netball Association was created in 1978 .

In Australia , the term women 's basketball was used to refer to both netball and basketball . During the 1950s and 1960s , a movement arose to change the Australian name of the game from women 's basketball to netball in order to avoid confusion between the two sports . The Australian Basketball Union offered to pay the costs involved to alter the name , but the netball organisation rejected the change . In 1970 , the Council of the All Australia Netball Association officially changed the name to " netball " in Australia .

In 1963 , the first international tournament was held in Eastbourne , England . Originally called the World Tournament , it later became known as the World Netball Championships . Following the first tournament , one of the organisers , Miss R. Harris , declared ,

England could learn from the mistakes in the past from the empty stands at Eastbourne . To get the right publicity and the right status desired , the game must emerge from the school playground . Netball should be part of a sports centre where social events could also be held .

The World Netball Championships have been held every four years since , most recently in 2011 . The World Youth Netball Championships started in Canberra in 1988 , and have been held roughly every four years since . In 1995 , the International Olympic Committee designated netball as an Olympic recognised sport . Three years later it debuted at the 1998 Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur . Other international competitions also emerged in the late 20th century , including the Nations Cup and the Asian Netball Championship .

== Gender ==

As of 2006 , the IFNA recognises only women 's netball . Men 's netball teams exist in some areas but attract less attention from sponsors and spectators . Men 's netball started to become popular in Australia during the 1980s , and the first men 's championship was held in 1985 . In 2004 , New Zealand and Fiji sent teams to compete in the Australian Mixed and Men 's National Championships . By 2006 , mixed netball teams in Australia had as many male participants as rugby union . Other countries with men 's national teams include Canada , Fiji , Jamaica , Kenya , Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates . Unlike women 's netball at elite and national levels , men 's and mixed gendered teams are largely self @-@ funded .

An all @-@ transgender netball team from Indonesia competed at the 1994 Gay Games in New York City . The team had been the Indonesian national champions . At the 2000 Gay Games VI in Sydney , netball and volleyball were the two sports with the highest rates of transgender athletes participating . There were eight teams of indigenous players , with seven identifying as transgender . They came from places like Palm Island in northern Queensland , Samoa , Tonga and Papua New Guinea . Teams with transgender players were allowed to participate in several divisions including men 's , mixed and transgender ; they were not allowed to compete against the cisgender women 's teams .

== Description and rules ==

The objective of a game is to score more goals than the opposition . Goals are scored when a team member positioned in the attacking shooting circle shoots the ball through the goal ring . The goal rings are 380 millimetres (15 in) in diameter and sit atop 3 @.@ 05 @-@ metre (10 @.@ 0 ft) -high goal posts that have no backboards . A 4 @.@ 9 @-@ metre (16 ft) -radius semi @-@ circular " shooting circle " is an area at each end of the court . The goal posts are located within the

shooting circle . Each team defends one shooting circle and attacks the other . The netball court is 30 @. @ 5 metres (100 ft) long , 15 @. @ 25 metres (50 @. @ 0 ft) wide , and divided lengthwise into thirds . The ball is usually made of leather or rubber , measures 680 to 710 millimetres (27 to 28 in) in circumference , and weighs 397 to 454 grams (14 @. @ 0 to 16 @. @ 0 oz) . A normal game consists of four 15 @- @ minute quarters and can be played outdoors or in a covered stadium .

Each team is allowed seven players on the court . Each player is assigned a specific position , which limits their movement to a certain area of the court . A " bib " worn by each player contains a two @- @ letter abbreviation indicating this position . Only two positions are permitted in the attacking shooting circle , and can therefore shoot for a goal . Similarly , only two positions are permitted in the defensive shooting circle ; they try to prevent the opposition from shooting goals . Other players are restricted to two thirds of the court , with the exception of the Centre , who may move anywhere on the court except for a shooting circle .

At the beginning of every quarter and after a goal has been scored , play starts with a player in the centre position passing the ball from the centre of the court . These " centre passes " alternate between the teams , regardless of which team scored the last goal . When the umpire blows the whistle to restart play , four players from each team can move into the centre third to receive the pass . The centre pass must be caught or touched in the centre third . The ball is then moved up and down the court through passing and must be touched by a player in each adjacent third of the court . Players can hold the ball for only three seconds at any time . It must be released before the foot they were standing on when they caught it touches the ground again . Contact between players is only permitted if it does not impede an opponent or the general play . When defending a pass or shot players must be at least 90 centimetres (35 in) away from the player with the ball . If illegal contact is made , the player who contacted cannot participate in play until the player taking the penalty has passed or shot the ball . If the ball is held in two hands and either dropped or a shot at goal is missed , the same player cannot be the first to touch it unless it first rebounds off the goal .

= = Variants = =

= = = Indoor netball = = =

Indoor netball is a variation of netball , played exclusively indoors , in which the playing court is surrounded on each side and overhead by a net . The net prevents the ball from leaving the court , permitting faster play by reducing playing stoppages .

Different forms of indoor netball exist . In a seven @- @ per @- @ side version called " action netball " , seven players per team play with rules similar to netball . However , a game is split into 15 @- @ minute halves with a three @- @ minute break in between . This version is played in Australia , New Zealand , South Africa and England .

A six @- @ per @- @ side version of the sport is also played in New Zealand . Two Centres per team can play in the whole court except the shooting circles ; the remaining attacking and defending players are each restricted to one half of the court , including the shooting circles . The attacking and Centre players may shoot from outside the shooting circle for a two @- @ point goal .

A five @- @ per @- @ side game is also common in indoor netball . Players can move throughout the court , with the exception of the shooting circles , which are restricted to certain attacking or defending players .

= = = Fast5 = = =

Fast5 (originally called Fastnet) is a variation on the rules of netball designed to make games faster and more television @- @ friendly . The World Netball Series promotes it to raise the sport 's profile and attract more spectators and greater sponsorship . The game is much shorter , with each quarter lasting only six minutes and only a two @- @ minute break between quarters . The coaches

can give instructions from the sideline during play , and unlimited substitutions are allowed . Like six @-@ per @-@ side indoor netball , attacking players may shoot two @-@ point goals from outside the shooting circle . Each team can separately nominate one " power play " quarter , in which each goal scored by that team is worth double points and the centre pass is taken by the team that conceded the goal .

= = = For children = = =

Netball has been adapted in several ways to meet children 's needs . The rules for children are similar to those for adults , but various aspects of the game (such as the length of each quarter , goal height , and ball size) are modified .

Fun Net is a version of netball developed by Netball Australia for five- to seven @-@ year @-@ olds . It aims to improve basic netball skills using games and activities . The Fun Net program runs for 8 ? 16 weeks . There are no winners or losers . The goal posts are 2 @.@ 4 metres (7 ft 10 in) high , and a smaller ball is used .

Netball Australia also runs a modified game called Netta aimed at 8- to 11 @-@ year @-@ olds . The goal height and ball size are the same as for adults , but players rotate positions during the game , permitting each player to play each position . Netta was created to develop passing and catching skills . Its rules permit six seconds between catching and passing the ball , instead of the three seconds permitted in the adult game . Most players under 11 play this version at netball clubs .

A version called High Five Netball is promoted by the All England Netball Association . It is aimed at 9- to 11 @-@ year @-@ old girls and includes only five positions . The players swap positions during the game . When a player is not on the court , she is expected to help the game in some other way , such as being the timekeeper or scorekeeper . High Five Netball has four six @-@ minute quarters .

= = Governance = =

The recognised international governing body of netball is the International Federation of Netball Associations (IFNA) , based in Manchester , England . Founded in 1960 , the organisation was initially called the International Federation of Netball and Women 's Basketball . The IFNA is responsible for compiling world rankings for national teams , maintaining the rules for netball and organising several major international competitions .

As of July 2012 , the IFNA has 49 full and 24 associate national members in five regions . Each region has an IFNA Regional Federation .

The IFNA is affiliated with the General Association of International Sports Federations , the International World Games Association and the Association of IOC Recognised International Sports Federations . It is also a signatory to the World Anti @-@ Doping Code .

= = International competition = =

Netball is a popular participant sport in countries of the Commonwealth of Nations . Non @-@ Commonwealth entities with full IFNA membership include Switzerland , Taiwan , Thailand , Argentina , Bermuda , the Cayman Islands and the United States , along with former Commonwealth members Zimbabwe , Ireland and Hong Kong . According to the IFNA , over 20 million people play netball in more than 80 countries . International tournaments are held among countries in each of the five IFNA regions , either annually or every four years . School leagues and national club competitions have been organised in England , Australia , New Zealand and Jamaica since the early 20th century . Franchise @-@ based netball leagues did not emerge until the late 1990s . These competitions sought to increase the profile of the sport in their respective countries . Despite widespread local interest , participation was largely amateur .

Netball was one of three new sports included in the 1998 Commonwealth Games and has been a

fixture ever since . Twelve teams competed there in 2010 . Australia and New Zealand have won two golds and two silvers each , while England has three bronzes and Jamaica one bronze .

The major international tournament in Africa is organised by the Confederation of Southern African Netball Associations , which invites teams from Botswana , Namibia , Zambia , Malawi , South Africa , Lesotho , Swaziland , Zimbabwe and the Seychelles to take part . The tournament is hosted by a country within the region ; senior and under 21 teams compete . The tournament has served as a qualifier for the World Championships . South Africa launched a new domestic competition in 2011 called Netball Grand Series . It features eight regional teams from South Africa and is aimed at increasing the amount of playing time for players . It runs for 17 weeks and replaces the National Netball League , which was played over only two weeks . According to Proteas captain Elsje Jordaan , it was hoped that the competition would create an opportunity for players to become professional .

The American Federation of Netball Associations (AFNA) hosts two tournaments each year : the Caribbean Netball Association (CNA) Under 16 Championship and the AFNA Senior Championship . The CNA championship involves two divisions of teams from the Caribbean islands . In 2010 five teams competed in two rounds of round robin matches in the Championship Division , while four teams competed in the Developmental Division . Jamaica , which has lost only once in the tournament , decided not to play the 2011 tournament . The AFNA Senior Championship includes Canada and the USA along with the Caribbean nations . The tournament serves as a qualifier for the World Championship . Jamaica , with its high ranking , does not have to qualify ; this leaves two spots to the other teams in the tournament .

The Asian Netball Championship is held every four years . The seventh Asian games were held in 2009 and featured Singapore , Thailand , Maldives , Taiwan , Malaysia , Sri Lanka , Hong Kong , India and Pakistan . There is also an Asian Youth Netball Championship for girls under 21 years of age , the seventh of which was held in 2010 .

The major netball competition in Europe is the Netball Superleague , which features nine teams from England , Wales and Scotland . The league was created in 2005 . Matches are broadcast on Sky Sports .

Netball has been featured at the Pacific Games , a multi @-@ sport event with participation from 22 countries from around the South Pacific . The event is held every four years and has 12 required sports ; the host country chooses the other four . Netball is not a required sport and has missed selection , particularly when former French or American territories host the games .

The ANZ Championship is a Trans @-@ Tasman competition that has been broadcast on television in both New Zealand and Australia since 2008 . It is contested among ten teams from Australia and New Zealand . It began in April 2008 , succeeding Australia 's Commonwealth Bank Trophy and New Zealand 's National Bank Cup as the pre @-@ eminent netball league in those countries . The competition is held annually between April and July , consisting of 69 matches played over 17 weeks . The ANZ Championship saw netball become a semi @-@ professional sport in both countries , with increased media coverage and player salaries .

= = Major championships = =

There are three major international netball competitions .

Netball 's important competition is the World Netball Championships , held every four years . It was first held in 1963 at the Chelsea College of Physical Education at Eastbourne , England , with 11 nations competing . Since its inception the competition has been dominated primarily by the Australian and New Zealand teams , which hold ten and four titles , respectively . Trinidad and Tobago is the only other team to win a championship title . That title , won in 1979 , was shared with New Zealand and Australia ; all three teams finished with equal points at the end of the round robin , and there were no finals .

The World Series is a competition among the top six national netball teams , as ranked by the INF World Rankings . It is organised by the INF in conjunction with the national governing bodies of the six competing nations , UK Sport , and the host city 's local council . The All England Netball

Association covers air travel , accommodation , food and local travel expenses for all teams , while the respective netball governing bodies cover player allowances . It is held over three days , with each team playing each other once during the first two days in a round @-@ robin format . The four highest @-@ scoring teams advance to the semi @-@ finals ; the winners face each other in the Grand Final . The competition features modified fastnet rules and has been likened to Twenty20 cricket and rugby sevens . A new format featuring shorter matches with modified rules was designed to make the game more appealing to spectators and television audiences . The World Netball Series was held annually in England from 2009 to 2011 .

Netball gained Olympic recognition in 1995 after 20 years of lobbying . Although it has never been played at the Summer Olympics , politicians and administrators have been campaigning to have it included in the near future . Its absence from the Olympics has been seen by the netball community as a hindrance in the global growth of the game by limiting access to media attention and funding sources . Some funding sources became available with recognition in 1995 , including the International Olympic Committee , national Olympic committees , national sport organisations , and state and federal governments .