THE ROBALL HANDBOOK

VERSION 0.91

The Philosophy

Roball was designed as a fun and intensive team based sport satisfying several requirements, and solving some annoyances present in other popular team sports.

The main points around which Roball was designed will be discussed in the following section. Before doing so, we need to define some terms.

An attacker is, for the sake of this discussion, a person that directly affects the flow of the game, or around which the action is happening. There can be a single attacker, like the person dribbling the ball in Football, Basketball or Handball, or holding the ball like in Rugby. There can also be multiple attackers, like in American Football, where all the players on the attacking team that are in a position to catch the ball from the quarterback are considered attackers. Another way of looking at it is the spectator has to look at more than one player to fully understand what is happening at the moment.

A defender is any player who is not an attacker.

Running Style

The most important aspect of Roball is its running. It has to be a full speed sprint, and be able to move in all directions. It can be a short five meter run with sidesteps, or a long sprint to the finish line. And this has to apply for both attackers and defenders.

It is difficult to find this type of running in other sports. Taking Football and Basketball for example, the attacker is limited by dribbling, and the defender just runs up and down the court for positioning. In rugby, most of the runs are short and the direction is always straight with some sidesteps, which are not really a change in direction.

Natural Rules

There should be a basic set of rules that will enable the game to unfold naturally, without the need to add more "artificial rules" to make the game more strategic or prevent exploitations and unbalances. An example of a game with very natural rules is Football, where the basic rule is put the ball into the enemy goal without using your hands. A game with many artificial rules is Rugby (League or Union) with the forward pass, knock on, tackle count and scrums.

Easy Refereeing

This follows the natural rules point above, and is to say that the rules should be clear with no need of judgment that can transform into disputes. Ultimate Frisbee is an example of a self refereeing game. Rugby is practically impossible to play without a referee.

Strategy

The game should have multiple attackers which will instantly make the strategizing more complex, as we have multiple variables to consider. Also the game should make use of a wide variety of skills adding another layer of complexity to the strategy.

Handicaps

Players from all levels of experience and shape should be able to play together and enjoy the game.

Playing Field

All that is needed to play is an empty open field. It can even be played with obstacles. The only requirement is a soft surface, and the equipment that will be specified in the rules.
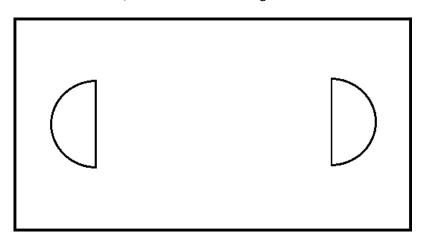
The Rules

Main Objective

Each team has a base. To score a point a player has to plant the ball in the enemy's base while wearing a "kit".

We are using a handball. It is ideal for handling with the hands, and kicking.

The Bases

The bases are drawn at each end of the playing field, and are a semi circle of five meter diameter minimum, with the flat side facing the center.

We are now using a white rope to delimit the base. This also serves to better judge whether the ball was planted inside or outside a

The Kits

Kits are for everyone, they do not belong to specific team. The number of kits on the playing field is the number of players divided by two, rounded up if the number is odd.

Having the kit on a player allows him to do 3 things:

- **Hold the ball.** Meaning that without a kit, a player can only hit the ball (with any part of his body). Imagine that without the kit, the ball is flaming hot and you cannot touch it for more than a fraction of a second.
- **Enter the enemy base.** Without a kit, you cannot enter the enemy base. If for some reason you do enter it without a kit, you have to get out without interfering with other players (as if you are offside in rugby)
- **Plant the ball and score a point.** This rule follows naturally from the first two.

We are now using a long colored strip of tissue with a thick knot at one end. The knot is inserted into the elastic part of your shorts or an elastic rope tied around the chest. The rest of the tissue is dangling behind the player so it is easy to grab

Putting on a kit

The player can put a kit on himself only in his own half. However he is not allowed to remove it (unless he is in his own base), but his teammates can.

Losing a kit

If a player wearing a kit and holding the ball is being chased by an enemy, and that enemy grabs the kit and removes it, the player has to stop holding the ball as soon as possible. His is allowed to throw the ball or drop it to the floor and start dribbling.

Handling kits

When kits are not being worn, they are simple items that can be moved around the field freely. Let's say a player removes the kit from someone, he can give it to someone else, throw it on the floor or base to pick it up later or put it on (if he is in his own half). A player can hold in his hands an unlimited amouts of kits.

Base privileges

When a player is in his own base, he is allowed to hold the ball even without a kit, and throw it outside the base. Like a quarter back in American football.

As was said before, he can remove a kit himself.

Kit handicaps

If players of different levels of skill are playing together, we use kits of different colors and length to denote the skill level. The lower the skill, the shorter the kit. A person of low skill level can use any kit for a higher level than him, but not the other way around.

> Currently, we use red kits for high skills, green for medium, and blue for low.

Game start and stoppage

Essentially, the game is in action when the ball or a kit is outside the bases. When the game is not in action, there is a time limit on how long a ball can stay in a base.

After scoring, the game stops until all players are reset and ready. Since the ball is already in a base after the score, it stays there with the losing team and the game is reset until all the kits are back in their base whether they are being worn or not. After that, the action can start again.

If we find ourselves in a situation where the ball is in one base, and all the kits are in another base, a deal can be made where the ball is exchanged for half the kits.

The game initially starts just like after a score, the only difference is the distribution of kits and the ball. A fair deal would be to have one third of the kits and the ball with one team.

Fouls

In the case where a player removed his kit, or put on his kit in the wrong conditions, he has to stop playing and give his kit to an enemy player.

In the case where a player did not stop holding the ball shortly after losing his kit, the game stops (if the victim team has not capitalized on an advantage). A temporary base holding one player of the victim team is created at the location of the foul. The game restarts once the player in the temporary base moves or throws the ball.

Physicality

The game is supposed to be a non-contact sport. But because players are running around in all directions collisions are bound to happen. The players must actively make sure not to hurt the other players. Players can block other players the same way they do in basketball, which means not using the hands actively to push someone.

There is also no fighting over the kits, the first person that grabs a kit, gets it.

In the case where a player with a kit and the ball is rushing towards the enemy base to score, a defender cannot tackle him as in rugby. Instead he can use one arm around the waist of the attacker to slow him down a little, and use the other arm to remove the kit