

INTERNATIONAL TCHOUKBALL FEDERATION

OFFICIAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THE FITB REFEREE'S CODE

FITB Technical Commission

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1 Introduction

The present document presents the official interpretations of the FITB's rules of the game. These interpretations are not included in the FITB rules because :

1. the interpretations are not always « rules », but also explanations of how to understand and to apply any given rule, or descriptions of particular playing situations and how to judge them ;
2. these interpretations may change and evolve faster than that which is reasonable for the FITB rules, for example to react at any new problem or question that arises with the rules.

This document must nevertheless be considered as absolutely official and the interpretations must be applied rigorously, with uniformity, by all National Federations. To make this possible, all referees should know these FITB rules' interpretations as they know the FITB rules.

2 Official interpretations of the FITB referee's code

Rule #	Interpretation
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1.6	Field limits
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If the ball hits an object located 7.0 metres or higher above the court, this counts as a breakdown or a point. If the ball hits an object located lower than 7.0 metres above the court, it should be considered as an "obstruction". As a result, the ball should be given to the team last in control of the ball, before it hit the object. This team is:

- the team that is in possession of the ball if the action was an offensive one (pass),
- the team that is not in possession of the ball if the action was a defensive one (deviation during a defence, before the ball is firmly caught).

(6)	Time out
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The official FITB rules don't say anything about a possible time out during the game. To ensure that the result of a tchoukball match will not depend on a time out that would be asked by a coach to break the game of the opponent ("team" time out), the FITB, according to the spirit of the game, does not accept any time out during a tchoukball match except those called by referees (injuries, disciplinary problems, water or blood on the field,...), known as a "Referee" time out.

7.1.1	Playing with the legs
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The word « leg » should be understood as the lower leg, i.e knee and lower (knee, calf, shin, ankle, foot).

Thus the players are allowed to play with the thigh, no matter if the contact is deliberate or not. Any contact with the knee or any part of the body situated below the knee remains forbidden. A contact with the kneepad is considered as being a contact with the knee.

7.1.2	Travelling
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As long as the player has contacts on the ground with his feet only, there is no need for interpretation. Two problems can however occur:

- A player slides or rolls on the ground after having caught the ball. It is almost impossible

to decide how to count equivalent foot contacts for this kind of movement. The following interpretation should be applied: a slide or a roll on the grounds counts as 1 foot contact, which allows 2 foot contacts for the player to stand up on his both feet. Of course, the referees must be very strict if a player uses this kind of movement in a deliberate way to "travel" on the field with the ball.

- A player touches the ball after a shot (defence), but doesn't catch it. The ball bounces off. The same defender finally catches the ball after a short run. If he makes more than 3 foot contacts (2 paces), between first touching the ball and the moment when he finally releases the ball (pass), it must be called for travelling.

It is important to note that any travelling, made during a defence, does not give a point to the attacking team. It only counts as a fault that gives a breakdown to the opposite team. However, if a defender commits a travelling during a defence but the ball is finally not caught, it should not be called for travelling but for a point for the attacking team, even if the travelling occurs before the ball falls on the ground.

7.1.4 **4 passes**

It is important to remember that four passes can also be understood as five contacts by players in possession of the ball. Consequently, if the ball is caught simultaneously by two defenders, this counts as one pass.

7.1.5 **Player inside/outside the field**

A player is considered as being **inside** the field as long as his steps are inside the field. It should be noted that the lines belong to the part of the field they delimit. Thus, the line of the forbidden zone is part of it (i.e. it is not allowed to step on the line), the base and side lines are part of the field (i.e. it is allowed to step on it).

If a player catches the ball in the air, the referee has to know where the player had his last step before he jumped. If the last step was inside the field, there has been no offense. If this last step is outside the field or in the forbidden zone, the player is considered as being **outside** the field, even if he is in the air above a valid zone of the field. This rule will be applied by analogy for rule #7.1.12. It is of no importance whether the step before the last one was taken inside or outside the field, as long as the player is not in possession of the ball.

7.1.6 **Missed pass or missed shot**

8.2.1

A point can only be called if it was a missed shot (no matters if the ball crosses the bottom line or not). The only exception to this rule is when a missed pass or an attempted defence hits the frame or the net. In that case, it must be considered as a shot attempt. In short:

- missed pass that does not hit the frame : fault, awarding a breakdown (rule #7.1.6)
- missed pass or attempted defence that hits the frame, rebounding outside the forbidden zone and is not caught by the other team : point (rule #8.1.1)
- missed pass or attempted defence that hits the frame that does not rebound outside the forbidden zone : given point (rule #8.2.2)
- missed shot (that does not hit the frame): given point (rule #8.2.1)

The referees have to judge what the player intended to do (shoot or pass).

7.1.7 **Obstruction**

Obstruction can be called for a fault committed by the defence as well as for a fault committed by the attack.

Special attention should be paid to the following situations:

- A player of the attacking team obstructs a defender who is about to catch the ball. The

obstruction can be whistled if the defender moves to catch the ball (obstruction in the movement) as well as if he is static but that the attacker prevents him from receiving the ball (obstruction in the reception of the ball or strongly obstructing the visual appreciation of the trajectory of the ball).

- A defender in first defence line prevents an attacker from passing along the base line to catch a pass from a teammate (switching).

However, it should be noted that a player cannot see what happens behind him. The players of the attacking team should take this into account and use free "trajectories", i.e. there is not an obstruction if the attacker tries to use a trajectory that is known for being used by the defence in modern tchoukball (for example try to run *through* a set first line defence).

The rule speaks about movement obstruction in a phase of reception, shooting, passing or positioning, and not of visual obstruction. Consequently, the referee should not whistle an obstruction if a player could not see the ball coming because of the presence from another player *who was in a normal position of attack*. Of course, if the attacker was intentionally there to prevent the defender seeing the ball, the referee will observe rule #11.2. Moreover, an obstruction may be whistled against an attacker who is not in a normal and logical attacking position, who obstructs the view of the defender.

In addition, an obstruction will be whistled when a player of the team in defence touches, deviates or **involuntarily** blocks a pass between two attackers. If this interception is **deliberate**, rule #11.2 applies against the defender. If the attacker deliberately throws the ball against the defender, rule #11.2 also applies, but against the attacker.

7.1.10 Landing

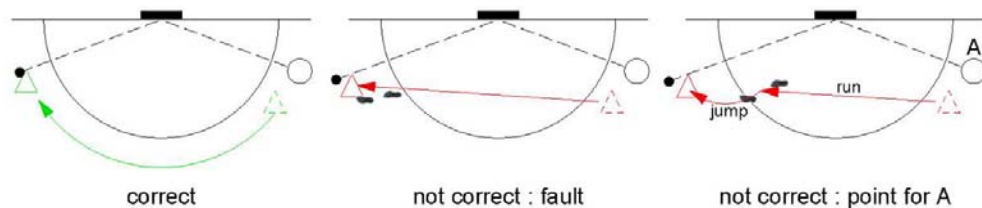
No particular interpretation, but it is important that the rule is strictly applied. In case of doubt, it is recommended not to call for landing. The referee should whistle only if he is sure of his observation.

7.1.11 Going through the forbidden zone to take a defensive position

In order to go to a defensive position located on the other side of the forbidden zone, the player has to move around this zone (fig., left) and should not cross it (fig., middle and right).

If the player goes through the forbidden zone to catch the ball, the referee should give a breakdown (fault) for the attacking team (fig., middle).

Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the defender should have at least one foot contact outside the forbidden zone (inside a valid part of the field) and no more foot in contact with the forbidden zone **before** he catches the ball. If the player does not have at least one foot on the ground outside the forbidden zone, rule #7.1.5 applies, with a point being awarded to the attacking team (fig., right : the player has his last steps inside the forbidden zone before he jumps to catch the ball).



Important note : rule #7.1.11 has to be taken into account only if the player has gained an advantage in crossing the forbidden zone to catch the ball. If, while running around this zone, he just steps on the line of the forbidden zone, it should not be considered as a fault.

7.2 Restarting the game after a fault (breakdown)

How to restart ?

After a fault (not after a point), the team (player) who gets the ball must :

- take the ball with **both** hands (if the ball is already on the ground, the player should take it off the ground),
- put the ball on the ground with **both** hands on it where the referee asks to do it,
- the game restarts immediately after the player takes the ball off the ground.

From this time on, he must respect all the rules, and especially the 3-steps rule and the 3-seconds rule.

Where to restart ?

The place to restart the game is indicated by the referee. It is where the fault was committed or the nearest place on the field if the fault was committed outside the field or in the forbidden zone. The referee should judge whether the game is not restarted too far from the place where he indicates to restart. Around the forbidden zone, this distance should be less than about 1 metre. Near the centre of the field, this distance should be less than about 3 to 4 metres.

After the fault described in the rule #9.4.1 (passing beyond the halfway-line after a point), the game should be restarted at the **starting point of the shot**, and **not** in the middle of the field around the middle-line.

What to do if the game is not restarted in that way ?

If the game is not restarted in the way described above, the referee must ask the player to take it again, but should **not** give the ball to the other team. The field referees should move along the base lines to see the player during his action. The main referee may help the field referees to decide whether the restart was done correctly if the player turns his back on the nearest field referee.

9.4.1 **Ball crossing the halfway-line after a point**

9.4.2 After a point, the ball must cross the halfway-line before a team can shoot at the same frame where the last point was scored. The ball has passed the halfway-line if a player has the ball in his hands and is standing in the other half of the court (see also rule interpretation #7.1.5). It means that the player should have one or both feet in the other half of the court: if it is only one foot, the other must not be in contact with the ground in the other half of the court. If a player has one foot in each part of the court,, the ball is not considered to have passed the halfway-line.

The ball does not need to cross the middle-line on the restart (pass #0). It may also cross this line on the pass #1, 2 or even 3.

7.1.2 **Faults that do not give a point**

7.1.4 In general, any fault committed while defending (i.e. before the ball is firmly caught and the defender is in a stable position, see below, "passage from defence to attack") gives a point to the attacking team (for example: step on the line of the forbidden zone, touch the ball with the leg,...). However, there are two faults, described in chapter 7 of the FITB rules, which do not give a point to the attacking team. These are:

- travelling (rule #7.1.2),
- go through the forbidden zone to take a defensive position (rule #7.1.11), provided that the player's last step was not made inside the forbidden zone before he catches the ball, as explained above (rule #7.1.5).

If a player commits one of these faults, there is no point, but a breakdown is given to the other team (i.e. the team that just shot).

Passage from defence to attack

It is important to know at which moment a team switches from defence to attack because that can affect the awarding of points. For example, an uncontrolled ball in an attack counts as a missed pass, whereas an uncontrolled ball in defence counts as a point. In a same manner, a foot on the line of the forbidden zone in possession of the ball counts as a breakdown in an attack, but as a point in defence.

A team has finished defencing, by definition, when the ball is firmly caught (not a deviation) and that the player who blocks the ball is in a stable position (not necessarily stationary, but at least in a position of balance and control).

For example, following situations give a point to the attack (the team in possession of the ball is in defence) :

- The defender blocks the ball but, in his movement, leaves the court or enters the forbidden zone.
- A defender deviates the ball. The ball goes up above the forbidden zone. Another defender jumps to catch the ball but while doing this steps on the line of the forbidden zone.

On the other hand, in following situations a breakdown, and not a point (the team in possession of the ball is in attack, defence is regarded as finished and succeeded) should be awarded:

- The defender catches the ball, stands up, takes a step behind to prepare to pass and while doing this steps on the line of the forbidden zone.
 - The defender catches the ball but in his movement runs towards the side line. He jumps and throws the ball above the caught but no other player can catch it and the ball falls on the ground. In this case, the referee should consider that the ball is defended because the player **caught** and controlled the ball and that, in his movement, managed to jump and make a pass inside the court, which requires a minimum of stability and control. There is a point in the same situation if the ball is not really controlled by the defender or that his "pass" falls outside of the field.
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