

# Yukigassen (Snowball Fight) Rule Book

## Yukigassen Spirit:

The purpose of Yukigassen, is to become one with the snow and develop the body while maintaining good sportsmanship.

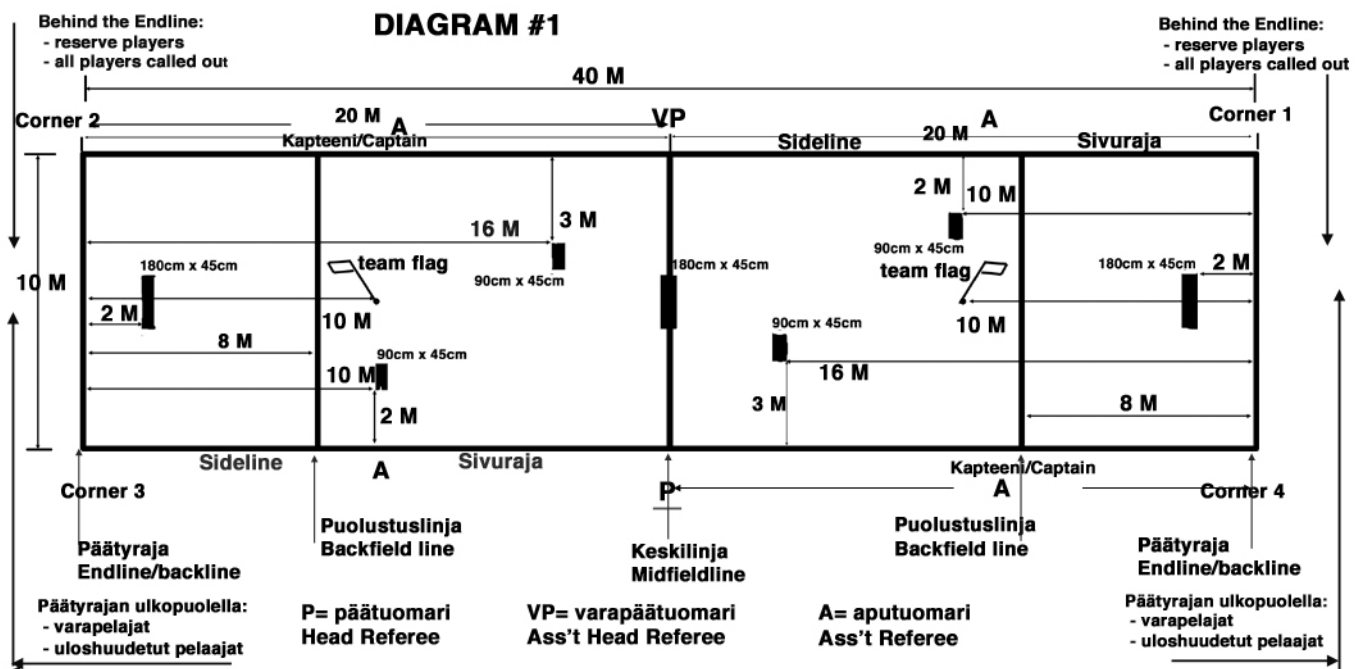
## Match Rules

**Purpose:** These rules were developed with the Japanese Yukigassen League's "*Yukigassen Spirit*" in mind.

### Chapter 1 General Rules

#### Match Court:

**Article 1** The court shall be laid out as follows (see diagram #1)



- 1) The standard court will be a sectioned-off rectangle with the following dimensions:  
Length - 40m (or 36m); Width - 10m.
- 2) Elementary school student courts dimensions are as follows:  
Length - 32m; Width - 8m. (See Diagram #2 below)
- 3) The court will be laid out in the following manner:
  - a) There will be sidelines running along the outer edges of the court's length;
  - b) End lines running along the court's width at each end of the court.
  - c) A centerline dividing the court into two equal halves will be placed equidistant from both end lines. This centerline also divides the center shelter/chateau into two equal halves.
  - d) Each court half will have a backfield line running across the width of the court placed parallel to and 8 meters from the end lines of each half.
- 4) The lines will be laid out in such a manner with colored rope or paint as to be clearly visible, and in the case of snow or melting will be renewed before play.
- 5) There will be a flag stand in each half, placed as marked on the diagram.
- 6) The following "forts" will be placed on the field at the locations marked on Diagram #1:
  - a) 4 "shields/shelters" measuring 90cm in height, 90 cm in width and 45 cm deep

will be placed in the forecourt of both halves.

b) 3 “chateaus/castles” measuring 90cm in height, 180 cm in width and 45 cm deep will be placed on the field. One shelter will be placed straddling the midfield line. The other two shelters will be placed (one each) in the backfield of each half.

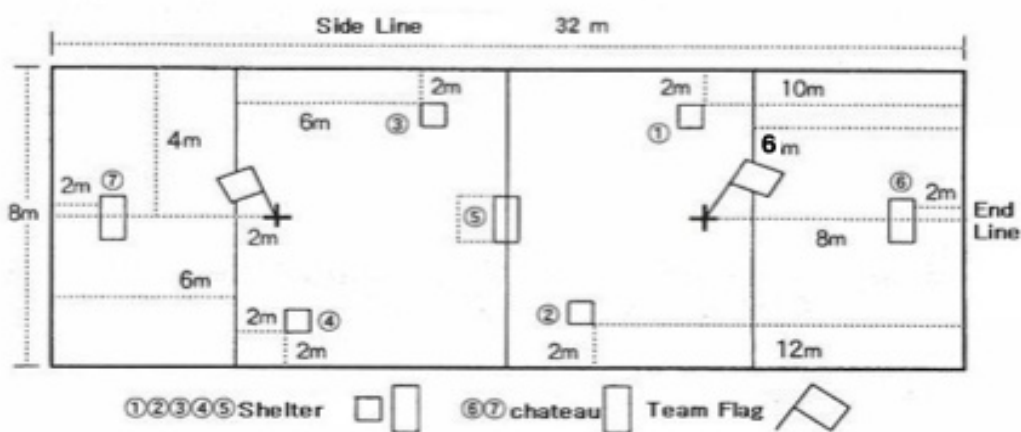
c) No additional “forts” are allowed!

7) The “shields/shelters” and “chateaus” will usually be made with snow. Similarly dimensioned products that can be fixed to the surface and share the same purpose and are safe may be used instead of snow.

8) To prevent injuries from stray snowballs a fence or safety net may be placed around the entire court 3 meters from the end lines and sidelines. If several courts are located side by side on the same field then the fence or net need only run along the outer most end and sidelines.

### The Elementary school court:

[DIAGRAM 2]



### Equipment

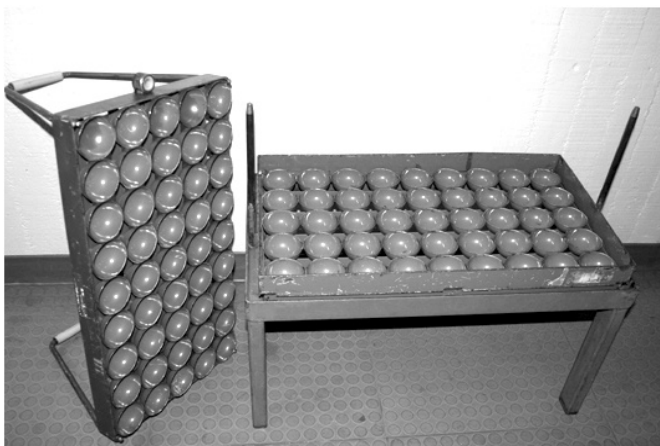
**Article 2** The equipment used in the matches are as follows:

1) Snowballs:

a) The diameter of each snowball is to be 6.5 to 7cm in diameter.

b) The snowballs should be made with a snowball making machine so that they are uniformly the same.

**A snowball making machine:**



2) Each team shall have 90 snowballs for use during each 3 minute set (period).

- 3) Team flags are to be made of cloth; 50cm in height and 70cm in length with ties at one end so that they can be easily attached to a flag pole at the start of a match.
- 4) Flag poles shall be 1.5 to 2 meters long and placed on the court as indicated (Diagram #1)
- 5) Team members are to wear numbered bibs (vests) with the following numbers *clearly* marked:
  - a) The **Captain** wears bib number “0”
  - a) **Forwards** (strikers, shooters) numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 in black;
  - b) **Backs** (backfield players, go-fors or “gophers”) numbers 5, 6, 7 in red.
  - c) It is important that the number series be distinct from each other – **black** numbers or **black** bibs for **Forwards** and **red** numbers or **red** bibs for the **“Backs”**.
- 6) All team members on the field (including the Captain) are required to wear special helmets with face protection for the duration of each 3 minute set (period).
  - a) The helmets are to be two different colors for each team but the same color for each team member. For example: all red helmets for Team A and all blue helmets for Team B, their opponents.
  - b) Under special circumstances, helmets other than the “approved” helmets may be used if they meet the safety standards, and are approved by the Sports Chairperson.
- 7) Green helmets are reserved for the officials and shall not be used by any team.
- 8) Targets for the Victory Throw (VT) shall be ones that will fall when struck by a snowball.

## **Apparel**

### **Article 3**

- 1) Clothing worn by the competitors should be suitable for the sport, and shoes are required.
- 2) Each team should wear a similar article of clothing that identifies them as a team, either identical shirts or pants of the same color or with the same logo, or the same uniform.
- 3) For the safety of other competitors, the following are prohibited:
  - a) Shoes with non-rubber spikes
  - b) Shoes with metal parts
  - c) Safety shoes

## **Team Composition**

### **Article 4**

- 1) A team is composed as follows:
  - a) 1 Captain (coach) and no more than 9 additional members or 10 members in total.
  - b) Of the 9 registered members, 7 are active (on-field) players and two are reserve or “substitute” players
  - c) The 7 active on-field players are divided into 2 groups: 4 **Forwards** and 3 **Backs**

d) **Finnish Yukigassen League (SYL) rules** require that at least 3 of the 7 active on-field players must be of the opposite gender.

2) The Captain's (Coach's) duties:

a) The Captain is accountable for the team, and is required to behave properly as the match progresses.

b) The Captain is required to keep his team under control at all times so that the match progresses smoothly.

c) The Captain is the **only** team member allowed to exhort the team or call instructions to them from the sideline as the match progresses.

d) The Captain is **strictly prohibited** from interfering with or complaining to the referee.

f) The use of megaphones or other means of increasing the volume of their voice by a Captain is strictly prohibited.

g) The Captain is allowed to use a timer or stopwatch to keep track of the time during a match.

h) The Captain may also act as an active on field player, in which case there is no one allowed along the sideline.

i) In the case that a Captain is acting as an active on field player they must wear the player position's bib – that of a **Forward** (1,2,3,4) or **Back** (5,6,7) and obey the on-field rules for that position.

j) Before a Captain may return to the role of Captain **only** they must remove the active player number bib, leave the active field of play and put on the # 0 bib and return to the sideline.

4) Player positions:

a) **Forwards** can play anywhere in front of the BACKLINE. **Forwards may not cross their BACKLINE with any either foot or hand.**

b) **Backs (go-fors/ gophers)** can use the **whole** court. Backs are the **only** players allowed to go for the snowballs and carry/move them forwards by hand from the back chateau.

5) Player liability:

a) All players agree to absolve the SYL of any liability or responsibility for any injuries the player might sustain or commit during a Yukigassen tournament, on or off the field.

## Required Documents

### Article 5 Forms: Team Registration, Match Documentation

1) **Under SYL rules:** a Team Registration form is to be submitted to the tournament office at least 30 minutes before the start of the tournament.

2) At the conclusion of a match the court officials will complete the Match Documentation form for the match which is to be signed by the winning team's captain. The form will be filed with the tournament office and the results of the match posted.

## Manner of Play

### Article 5 Preparations

1) One half hour before the match start time teams will report to the snowball making facility and make the required number of snowballs (90 snowballs per set X 3 sets = 270)

for the match.

- 2) Teams are to report to the field with their snowballs and be ready to start the match on time.
- 3) After entering the court area, teams are to have their snowballs checked by the officials.
- 4) The snowballs for one period (90) are to be placed in their container behind the rear chateau and the container is not to be moved forward from behind the chateau.
- 5) Number bibs and helmets are provided by the tournament and remain on the court.
- 6) The officials will check that the shoes worn by the players are in accord with Article 3, item 3; **and** that the number bibs and helmets are properly worn by all team members.
- 7) Before the start of the match both teams are to line up at the centerline in numbered order and to shake hands with each other.

#### **Article 6 Start of Play**

- 1) Teams are to line up in front of their backfield with their back foot on the backfield line with one snowball in each hand.
- 2) When a team has lined up properly at its backline the assistant referees will raise their flags.
- 3) When the Head Referee has seen that both teams are ready, he will spread his arms wide to each side and then sound his whistle while bringing his hands together to begin the start of play.
- 4) If there is a false start (a play made before the whistle sounds) the set will be whistled dead and stopped. The offending player will be called out and the teams will line up again in front of the backfield line, with any snowballs they have on them. No additional snowballs will be taken and the expired time will be lost. Items 2 and 3 above will be repeated and the match restarted

#### **Article 7 Object of Play**

- 1) Two opposing teams throw snowballs at each other. Players try to hit as many members of the opposing team as possible with snowballs within the allotted time of 3 minutes per set.
- 2) Players may move forward and try to capture (pull out) the opposing team's pennant (flag) within the allotted time, without getting struck by a snowball.
- 3) A player struck with a snowball is declared out and must leave the court *on their own* by the nearest sideline and walk to the rear of the court and quietly stand behind the back line.
- 4) When a player is hit by a snowball and ruled "out" before they capture the flag and that player continues to capture the flag - **the flag capture will not count**. That player will leave the field and their team's remaining members will go back to stand at the starting position with whatever snowballs they have and wait for the set to restart.

#### **Article 8 Ongoing Play**

- 1) The **Forwards (1,2,3,4)** are **not allowed** to enter their own backfield. The **Backs (5,6,7)** or "**Go-Fors**" are allowed to use the backfield and supply the "Forwards" with snowballs.
- 2) Snowballs can be transferred by handing the snowballs to another player, rolling them on the ground to another player, or placing them on top of one of the "forts" to be used by another player.

3) Each set (period) lasts 3 minutes. Each match consists of up to 3 sets (periods).

4) A set (period) begins with the signal (whistle) from the head referee and continues until the head referee signals (by whistle) the end of the set.

5) If the head referee declares an interruption in the set; the time passed until the resumption of play does not count as part of the set's elapsed time.

#### **Article 9 Declaring Players "OUT"**

1) A player struck anywhere on their body, clothes or helmet by a valid thrown snowball that has not made contact with any other surface, or player is "**out**".

2) A player is not allowed to throw a snowball to a team member and if a player accidentally hits their own team member with a snowball; the hit player is "**out**".

3) If a player hits their self with a snowball they are "**out**".

4) A player who makes or uses an invalid snowball is "**out**".

##### **Invalid Snowballs are:**

a) Less than 2/3rds of a snowball

b) Snowballs held by out players.

c) Snowballs taken from outside the court, or come from outside the court

d) Snowballs which have fallen apart and are repaired by adding snow

e) Snowballs made by combining broken snowballs

f) Snowballs made from loose snow

5) A player whose foot crosses an end line or sideline is "**out**".

6) A player whose limb/body part crosses over the end line or sideline or when they touch a snowball that is not on the court is "**out**".

7) A player who is a **Forward** whose foot crosses his own team's **backline** is "**out**".

8) A player who is a **Forward** and comes into contact with a snowball that is behind their own **backline** is "**out**".

9) A player who hides a snowball inside his number tag, clothing, etc. is "**out**".

10) A player who receives snowballs from an "out" player is "**out**".

11) When two players hit each other simultaneously, both athletes are "**out**".

##### **12) NOT "OUT":**

a) **When a player is hit by a snowball thrown by an "out" player they are NOT OUT.**

b) **When a player is hit by a snowball that broke apart in flight they are NOT OUT**

#### **Article 10 Players Declared "OUT"**

1) A player declared "**out**" must put all the snowballs they are holding on the ground at the place where they were hit.

2) A player declared "**out**" must leave the field of play immediately *on their own* by the nearest sideline and walk to the rear of the court and quietly stand at the back of the field and remain there until the end of the set (period).

3) An "**out**" player must not hand the snowballs they are holding to another team member or carry them anywhere. In both cases any players touching those snowballs will be "**out**".

#### **Article 11 Substitutions**

1) Substitutions may be made between sets (periods). Only individuals listed on the Team Registration Form are allowed to play.

- 2) Substituted players may return to inactive status only between sets (periods).
- 3) A player who has been replaced by a substitute, may play again in the next set (period).
- 4) Players may also switch their playing positions between sets (periods). They must wear the appropriate number bib for the position they are now playing and obey the rules for that position. If a **Back** switches position to become a **Forward** they are no longer allowed in the backfield.
- 5) The Captain must inform the Head Referee of a substitution made between sets and the Head Referee must witness it.
- 6) In case of injury during play, substitution during the set (period) is not allowed.
- 7) Non-active players will either quietly remain at the back of the field behind the court, or they may join the crowd behind the safety fence and cheer their team as spectators.

### **Determining the Winner**

#### **Article 12 Winner and Loser of a Set (period)**

- 1) When the Head Referee signals the end of the set (period), the remaining on-field players will drop their snowballs and line up at their backfield line to be counted by the Assistant Referees.
- 2) If, within the allotted time, a team captures (pulls out) their opponents' flag they win the set (period) **and the set ends**.
- 3) A team whose flag is captured (pulled out) within the allotted time is the loser of the set.
- 4) If a winner and loser are not determined by rule 2 & 3 above then the team with the most remaining on-field players as counted according to rule 1 above, is the winner.
- 5) If both teams have the same number of players on field the set is ruled a "draw" or tie.
- 6) If the whistle sounds as the flag is being captured (pulled out) it is **not a win**.
- 7) if the whistle sounds as a player is being struck with a snowball the hit does not count and the player is **not out**.
- 8) If **four** members of a team enter the opposing team's half at the same time; the opposing team wins the set (period) **and the set ends**. A foot or hand placed by a player anywhere over the center line on the opposing team's half is regarded as **being in that half of the court**.

#### **Article 13 Point System**

- 1) When a team captures the opposing team's flag they are awarded 10 points **and the set ends**. The opposing team is awarded 0 (Zero) points.
- 2) A team that eliminates all members of the opposing team is awarded 10 points **and the set ends**. The opposing team is awarded 0 (Zero) points.
- 3) When 4 members of a team enter the opposing team's half of the court **at the same time the set ends** and the opposing team wins the set (period) by a score of 10 – 0.
- 4) If at the end of the allotted time, no winner is determined by the above rules then each team is awarded one point for each team member remaining on-field at the end of play.
- 5) If the result of rule 4 above is the same number the set (period) is ruled a draw.
- 6) If a team pulls out their own flag they lose the set 10 – 0 and play ends.

#### **Article 14 Winner and Loser of a Match**

- 1) The first team to win two sets (periods), wins the match, which is scored 2 – 0, and

ends.

2) In the event that two sets (periods) end in a tie, the winner of the third set wins the match, which is scored 1 – 0.

3) Sets (periods) that are drawn are scored as a 0 (zero) for match tally purposes.

4) In the event that the Match results end in a draw: each team won one set and the third set is a draw (1-1-0) then the total points for all three sets are totaled and the team with the most points wins. The team with the most points is awarded a match point and the match is scored 2.-1.

**CLARIFICATION: If team A wins the 1<sup>st</sup> set (10 – 0); team B wins the 2<sup>nd</sup> set (7 – 6); and the 3<sup>rd</sup> set is a draw (5 – 5) the set total is 1 – 1 – 0: and would result in a drawn match. However, the set point total is: team A – 21; team B – 12. Team A receives a match point for the most set points wins the match which is scored 2-1. Set points are important! Protect your flag!**

5) in the event that the total points for all 3 sets is tied (the same number), then the winner of the match will be determined by a Victory Throw (VT).

6) A Victory Throw (VT) is done according to the following rules:

a) the seven 7 players participating in the final set from each team take part in a VT.

b) A target is placed on the center line of the center chateau and a throwing line is drawn five meters from it.

c) Each team chooses 5 players of which two must be female to participate in the first round. (SYL rules)

d) Teams take turns having one player stand behind the throw line and throw one snowball at the target. Each team starts with a male player followed by a female.

e) The team with the most “hits” of the target on the chateau at the end of the first round wins.

f) If no team wins in the first round, one of the remaining 2 players from each team takes a turn throwing at the target. If the target is hit by one player and missed by the other player their team wins.

g) If the above rule does not produce a winner, the remaining player from each team takes a turn throwing at the target. If the target is hit by one player and missed by the other player their team wins.

h) If the above rule does not produce a winner then each team chooses one player to compete. The two players will alternate throwing at the target until one of them hits the target and the other player misses.

i) If a player who knocks down the target has crossed the back line the throw is invalid.

k) The winning team of the VT will be awarded one match point, and the match will be scored in the following manner: a 0 – 0 - 0 draw will be scored 1 – 0; a 1 – 0 – 1 draw will be scored 2 – 1.

7) A team that wins the Victory Throw wins the match and a match point. The match is then scored 1 – 0 , or 2 – 1; depending upon the draw score: (0 – 0 – 0 ) or (1 – 0 – 1).

8) When the match is declared ended, the Head Referee will indicate the winning team.

9) After the match has ended both teams are to line up at the centerline and shake hands.

#### **Article 15 Interrupting Play During a Set (Period)**

1) The Head Referee can interrupt a set at any time he feels it necessary.

- 2) The Assistant Referees can signal to the Head Referee or Assistant Head Referee to stop the set by waving their flags rapidly back and forth in front of them.
- 3) When an interruption occurs players are to remain where they are standing and keep the snowballs that they are holding until the Head Referee makes a decision.
- 4) When the cause of the interruption has been determined and resolved, the Head Referee will communicate whatever action is to be taken to the other Referees who will instruct the players what to do, and restart the set (period), and time will be resumed at where it was stopped.
- 5) If there is a false start, the elapsed time will not be replaced. Players will line up at the starting position with only the snowballs they possessed when play was stopped. The Head Referee will restart the set (period).
- 6) Play may be interrupted if there is an accident or injury during the set (period).
- 7) In the case of injury the clock is stopped and once the injured player is removed from the field the clock will restart, play will resume and continue to the end of the set.

### **Article 16 Suspension of a Match**

- 1) A match will be suspended if weather conditions are deemed to be unsafe for play to continue.
- 2) A match will be suspended if it cannot be continued for any reason.
- 3) If the first set has been completed the match is considered official, and the results of that set will determine the winner/loser of the match.

### **Article 17 Fouls**

A foul will be called if a player or Captain does any of the following;

#### **LEVEL I**

- 1) Holds or transports snowballs pressed against their body or in the number bib. Snowballs can **only** be held by hand.
- 2) If a player makes a “false start” – moves forward before the whistle signals match start.

#### **LEVEL II**

- 3) If a player/Captain commits a dangerous act – any act deemed unsafe by a referee.
- 4) If a player/Captain interrupts the match in any way.
- 5) If a player/Captain protests a decision made by the referees. **On-field protests of a referee decision are strictly prohibited.**
- 6) If a player/Captain directs rude behavior or speech toward the opposing team or the referees.

#### **LEVEL III**

- 7) If a team refuses to start a match or delays a match without good reason.
- 8) If a team quits a match without good reason.
- 9) If an illegal player/Captain participates in a match.

### **Article 18 Penalties**

The following penalties apply:

#### **LEVEL I**

- 1) If number 1 or 2 of the fouls listed in Article 17 have been committed the player/Captain committing the foul will be ruled “out”.

#### **LEVEL II**

- 2) If number 3, 4, 5 or 6 of the fouls listed in Article 17 have been committed the player/

Captain will be ejected from the match and the team will be given a warning (yellow card).  
If a team receives two yellow cards in the same match it will lose the match which is scored - set points: (7 - 0), (7 - 0); match points: (2- 0).

**LEVEL III**

3) If number 7, 8 or 9 of the fouls listed in Article 17 is committed the offending team or player/Captain is ejected from the tournament and the match and all subsequent matches will be awarded to their opponents scored - set points: (7 - 0), (7 - 0); match points: (2- 0).

**Article 18 Liability**

1) All players acknowledge that by taking part in the Yukigassen Tournament, they will be personally responsible for any injuries that they may receive during the competition or off the field during the tournament and further agree to absolve the SYL of any liability, financial or other wise.