



# U.S. National Kubb Championship<sup>®</sup>

## Rules V4.0

These rules are authorized as official by the U.S. National Kubb Championship (Eau Claire, WI), and have been designed in spirit to promote a fair and enjoyable tournament environment for all kubb players, regardless of age, sex, or ability. For more information on the U.S. National Kubb Championship and to ensure you have the most up-to-date version of these rules please visit [usakubb.org](http://usakubb.org).

These rules are adapted from and are a detailed explanation of the Official World Championship Rules © Rone Gymnastik och Idrottsklubb 2003

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# I. Setup and Overview

## A. Objective

Be the first team to knock over the opposing team's **kubbs** and the **king**, by strategic throwing and placement of **batons** and **kubbs**, within the boundaries of the **kubb pitch** and the rules of the game.

## B. Game Components

	Measurements (Metric) <i>Official U.S. Championship dimensions</i>	Weights (Metric) <sup>1</sup> <i>Recommended Tournament weights</i>
10 Kubbs	7x7x15cm	Each: Min: 0.3kg Max: 0.5kg
6 Batons	30cm x 4.4cm diameter	Each: Min: 0.2kg Max: 0.3kg
1 King	8x8x25cm to 9x9x30cm	Min: 0.8kg Max: 1.3kg
6 Pitch marking stakes		

<sup>1</sup>Recommended weights were derived from measuring the current standard competition sets, calculating the minimum and maximum weights, rounding to the nearest gram (rounding down for minimum, rounding up for maximum).

Two teams are required, with a minimum of three players per team. Teams may substitute players at any time, as long as they were registered with the team. Players can only be registered with one team in a tournament.

## C. Setup

**Pitch marking stakes** are placed so that a rectangle is formed, measuring 5m x 8m, with a **centerline** intersecting the rectangle, and **sidelines** running on the long edges of the rectangle. The king is placed upright in the center of the pitch, and the **kubbs** are placed upright on the **baselines**, five **kubbs** on each side, no closer than a **baton** length to the corner stakes. **Kubbs** starting the game on the baseline are referred to as **baseline kubbs**. The baseline should run through the center of the **kubbs**.

## D. Play Overview

After determining which team throws first and from which side, the game begins with the **attackers** throwing the **batons** from behind their baseline, attempting to **topple** the baseline **kubbs** on the **defender's** baseline.

Once all the **batons** are thrown, the opposing team gathers any toppled baseline **kubbs**, and throws them into the **upfield** (the far half of the pitch). **Kubbs** thrown into the upfield are called **field kubbs**, and they are raised by the first team (now the **defenders**) where they came to rest. The second team (now the **attackers**) throws the **batons**, first attempting to topple any **field kubbs**, then any **baseline kubbs**, then the **king**.

If they are unable to knock down all of the **kubbs**, then the **king**, the first team picks up all toppled **kubbs**, throws them into play as **field kubbs**, and play continues to a second **round**. Rounds are continued until the game ends.

The **game** is won by the team who topples all the **kubbs** in the upfield and on the baseline then topples the **king**. However, if when throwing a **baton** or **kubb**, a team topples the **king** at any time prior to toppling all **field** and **baseline kubbs**, then that team immediately loses the game. A **match** is determined by the winner of best-of-three games.

## E. Phase Breakdown

For the purposes of illustration, the sidelines, centerline, and baselines are marked. Marked lines that do not interfere with play are allowed.

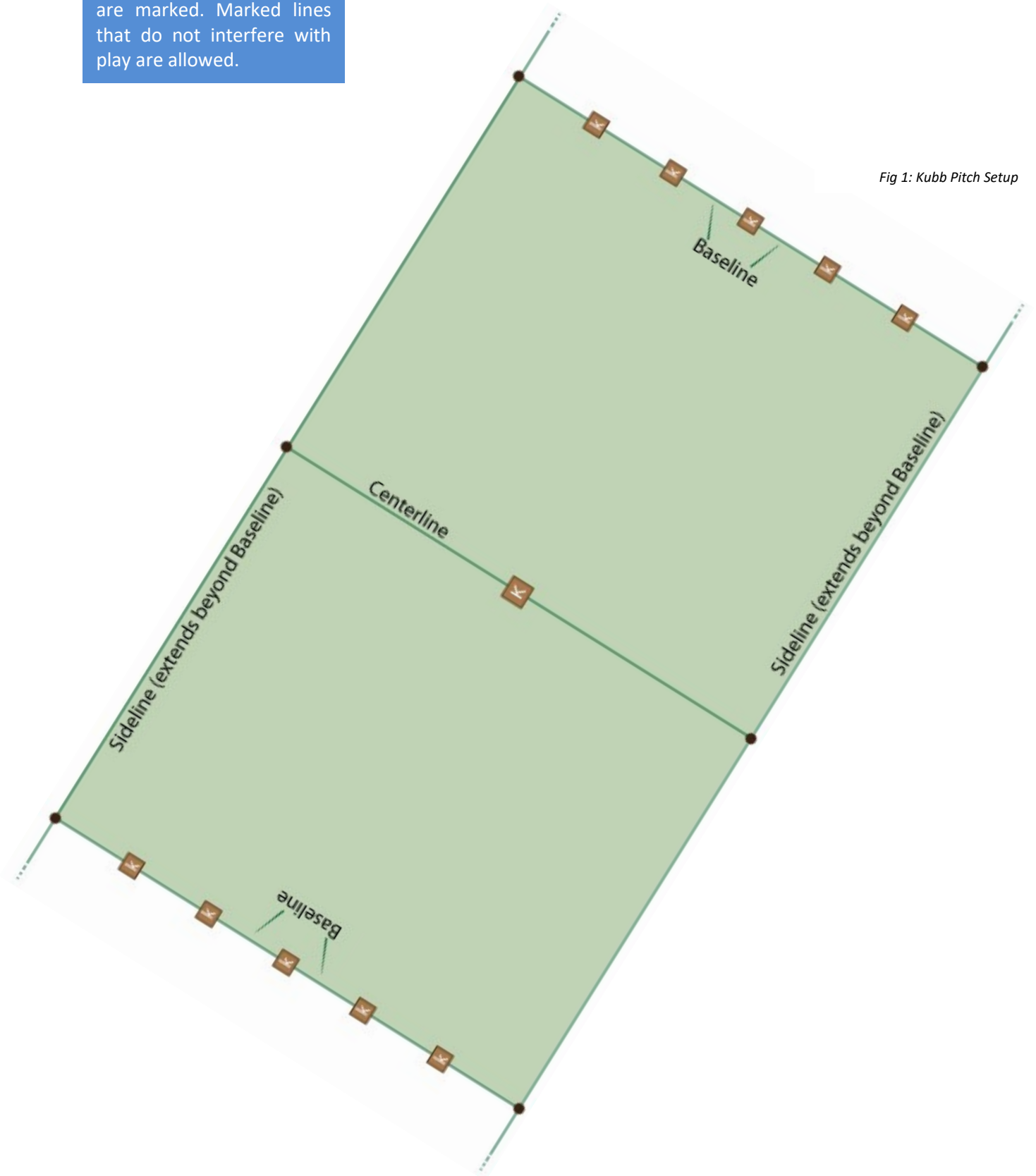


Fig 1: Kubb Pitch Setup



Fig 2: Phase Breakdown

## II. In-Depth Phase Rules

### A. Determine Sides and Order (Beginning Toss Phase)

Once both teams agree on an accurate setup of the pitch, sides and order are determined by the following rules:

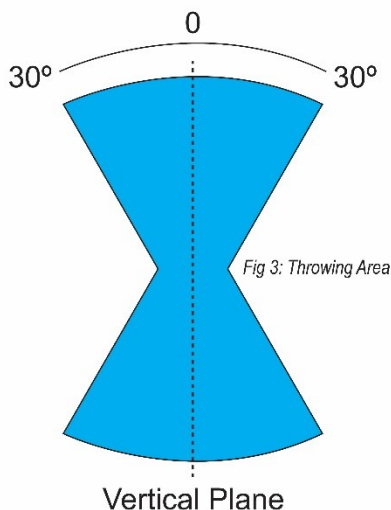
1. Each team chooses one player as a representative and selects a baton.
2. The two representatives stand behind opposing baselines facing each other.
3. One or both count to 3; on 3 they each throw a single baton according to the rules for throwing batons—see Sec II.B below.
4. When the batons come to rest, the team whose baton is judged closest to the king without having knocked it over chooses throwing order or chooses which baseline to defend. If the winner chooses throwing order, the losing team may choose which baseline to defend. If the winner chooses a baseline to defend, the losing team may choose throwing order. (All games start with the 2, 4, 6 open. The opening team throws two

batons, the second team throws four batons, and the opening team then throws six batons. Both teams then always throw six batons. In the first two turns, two different players need to throw the two batons, and at least three different players need to throw the four batons.)

- (a) The baton may touch the king, but cannot knock it over.
  - (b) Per Sec II.B, batons are required to at least start rotating vertically.
  - (c) In the event of a tie, or if the king falls after having been impacted by both teams' batons, re-throw until there is a clear winner.
  - (d) On the second and third games of a match teams switch sides and throwing order.
5. For any disagreements on initial baton or side selection, a random method (ex. coin flip) can be used to determine.
  6. Play then continues to the baton throwing phase.

## B. Throwing Batons (Baton Tossing Phase)

1. Batons must be thrown underarm. The baton cannot go more than 30° off the **vertical plane** and must stay within the **throwing area** (see Fig. 3). Batons are required to at least start rotating vertically, unless a player is throwing from an advantage line and the player is throwing at field kubbs. If a player is throwing at field kubbs from an advantage line, and there is no vertical rotation of the baton, the baton needs to travel straight with no horizontal rotation from release to impact (staying inside the throwing area). Any kubbs toppled with an illegal throw are raised and placed back to their original location, and the baton is forfeited.



### Note:

There are two distinct terms used when classifying a legal throw:

#### Throwing Area:

The hourglass shaped area that a baton must stay within during the throw to be considered legal.

#### Vertical Plane:

The line that intersects the horizon that the Throwing Area must travel on during a throw.

2. If the opposing team failed to topple all of their field kubbs on the previous turn then an **advantage line** is created running parallel to the baselines and through the center of the field kubb closest to the center line. While throwing batons, players may advance to and throw from behind an advantage line.
3. Any **supporting areas** must remain behind the **throwing line** and between the sidelines throughout the throwing motion, and without assistance from other players.
4. Multiple kubbs can be toppled from a single baton throw.
  - (a) If a baseline kubb is toppled and there is at least one field kubb still standing then the baseline kubb is immediately raised to the previous location – it remains a baseline kubb.

5. No player may throw more than two batons in a single round.
6. Only one baton may be thrown at a time.
7. If a kubb is struck and, without ever becoming parallel to the ground, is pushed so that it is not legally in-bounds then the kubb is immediately returned to the location it last was legally in-bounds.
8. If a kubb is struck and there is a question as to whether a kubb will topple, a reasonable amount of time shall be provided to determine if the kubb topples. Kubbs that fall that were not struck as a result of the present throw are placed back in their original position prior to the throw.
9. If a kubb is struck and, without ever becoming parallel to the ground, comes to rest leaning on a game component, the attacking team may ask to temporarily halt play. The defending team is to move the supporting piece(s) a minimum amount required to determine if the leaning piece will fall, without touching the kubb in question. Once a determination has been made, pieces are to be set back as close to their original positions as possible. If a piece will fall, it is considered toppled the remainder of the phase.
10. It is possible for a toppled kubb to be knocked over, then through the course of motion, to come to rest standing on one end. In this case, the kubb is still considered toppled.
11. If field kubbs located in the attacking team's half of the pitch are hit by the attacking team's batons, those field kubbs and any toppled kubbs in the opponent's half of the pitch, and king on game-ending king throws, are immediately placed back in their previous location. The baton is forfeited.
12. Once all batons have been thrown:
  - (a) If the king has been toppled, the game is over.
  - (b) If the game is not over, the defender may reset any leaning kubbs to vertical (no moving unless Sec. II.B.7.). The game progresses to the kubb tossing phase.

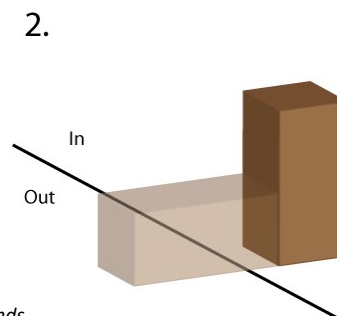
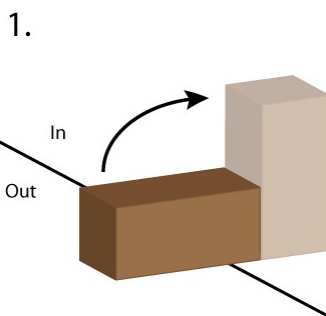
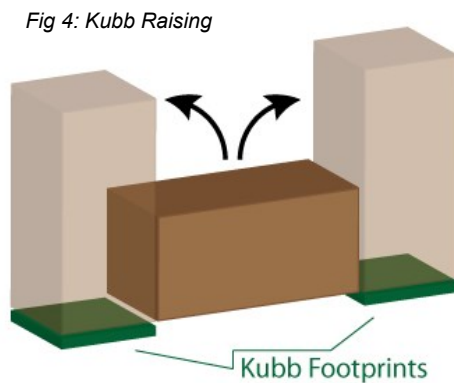
### **C. Throwing Field Kubbs (Kubb Tossing Phase)**

1. After the attacking team has thrown all the batons the defending team becomes the attacking team and gathers any kubbs toppled by their opponent then throws them to the upfield as field kubbs. Teams always throw kubbs from the baseline.
2. Kubbs may be held and thrown in any manner, but must be thrown with an underarm motion (they may rotate in any direction when thrown).
3. Any supporting areas must remain behind the throwing line and between the sidelines throughout the throwing motion, and without assistance from other players.
4. If a thrown field kubb impacts a previously thrown field kubb then they are each to be raised where they finally come to rest. It is therefore possible to knock kubbs into and out of play during the course of throwing field kubbs. It is important that the field kubbs are not touched by any player until all field kubbs have been thrown.
  - (a) This applies to previously established field kubbs from prior rounds as well; if one is impacted by a thrown field kubb then it is to be raised in its new position and remains a field kubb.
  - (b) If the thrown field kubb impacts a field kubb in the thrower's half of the pitch, the previously standing field kubb is placed back to its original location, and the thrown kubb is considered out of bounds.
5. If a thrown field kubb impacts a field kubb in play and the struck field kubb comes to rest after impact in such a way that it cannot be raised in bounds:

- (a) If the impacted field kubb was previously established (having been left standing in a previous round) then it is to be returned to the attacking team to be thrown and is treated as if it had not yet been thrown in this round.
  - (b) If the impacted field kubb was thrown in the current turn and has only been thrown once in the current turn, it is returned to the attacking team to be re-thrown.
  - (c) If the resting field kubb has already been thrown twice in this turn then it is a **punishment kubb** (see rules for punishment kubbs Sec II.D.11).
6. After all field kubbs have been thrown, any that have only been thrown once, that come to rest in such a way that it is impossible to raise them in bounds according to the rules for raising kubbs (see Sec II.D below) are returned to the attacking team to be re-thrown.
- (a) For purposes of determining whether a kubb is in bounds judge where the center of the kubb is relative to the center of the boundary. If 50% of the kubb is in, it is declared in bounds.
  - (b) If it is not immediately apparent whether a kubb can be raised in bounds it should be temporarily raised after all other kubbs have been thrown so a clear determination can be made. If it is determined to be in bounds and there are any kubbs to be re-thrown then it should be laid back down in its original position until all re-throws are completed.

#### D. Standing Field Kubbs (Kubb Raising Phase)

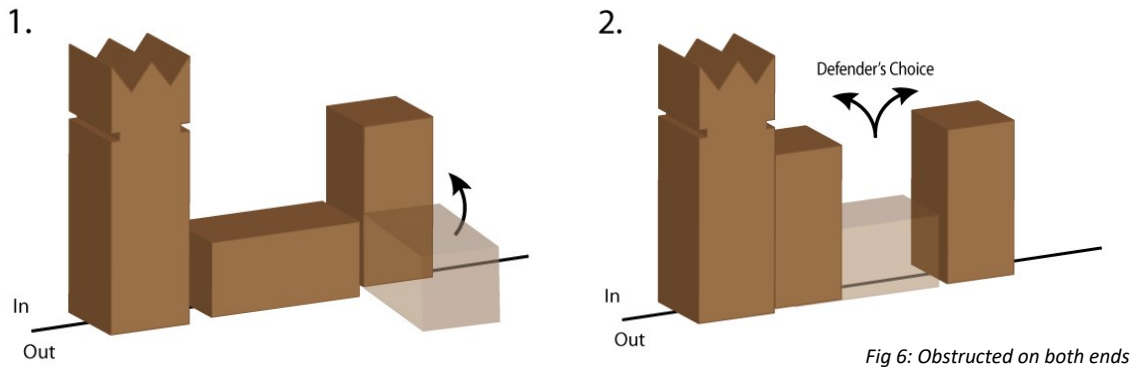
1. After all field kubbs have been thrown - and re-thrown as necessary - kubbs are to be raised upon one end while keeping two corners on the ground. The two areas where a kubb could potentially be raised are called the **footprints**. If both footprints are not **obstructed** and in bounds the defending team may choose on which end to raise the kubb.
2. If a thrown field kubb comes to rest on one end and is at least 50% in bounds, then it is considered "raised" and is not to be moved by the defending team.
3. Any field kubb that can be raised in bounds must be raised in bounds.



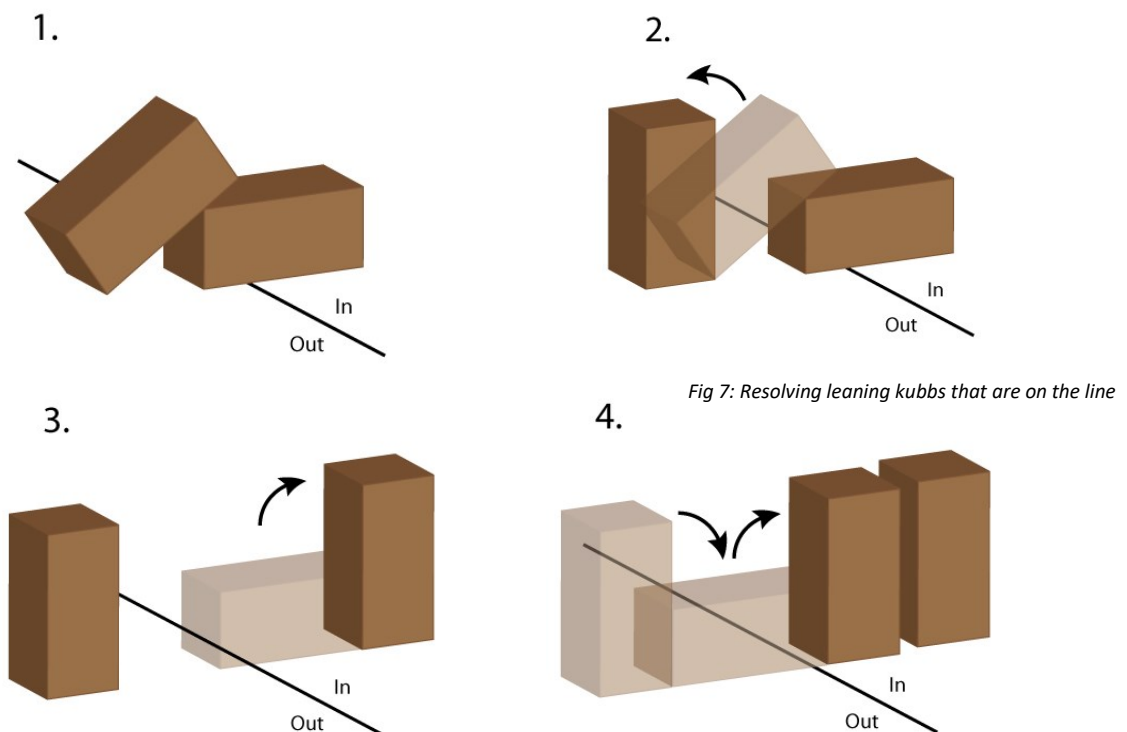
*Fig 5: Kubb forced in-bounds*

4. Defenders cannot raise kubbs in such a manner that forces other kubbs out of bounds when other kubb raising options are available.
5. If a field kubb cannot be raised on one end due to being obstructed by the king, a pitch marking stake, or another kubb, then it must be raised on the unobstructed end.
  - (a) If both ends are obstructed and either end can be unobstructed by raising another kubb first then the defending team must do so.

- (b) If neither end can be unobstructed then the field kubb may be raised on either end, touching the obstruction, and as close as possible to the potential footprint it had if there had been no obstruction. Pitch marking stakes are not allowed to be removed to raise a kubb.



- (c) If one end is obstructed and the other end is out of bounds then it must be raised on the inbounds end touching the obstruction, and as close as possible to the potential footprint it had if there had been no obstruction. *Note: It is entirely possible the kubb will end up being out of bounds.*
- (d) A kubb leaning on another kubb or other obstruction is raised upon the end closest to the field. If that end is out of bounds, raise the supporting kubb, then re-lower the leaning kubb to its previous position, and raise it in bounds.



6. Any field kubb that, after having been thrown, comes to rest horizontally on top of one or more other field kubbs is to be lowered directly to the pitch, touching the lower kubb. **Note:** Defender chooses what side to lower if both ends are unobstructed and in-bounds.



- (a) If this is impossible on one end due to obstruction or the boundary of the pitch then it must be done on the unobstructed and in bounds end. The bottom kubb cannot be moved until the elevated kubb is resolved.
- (b) If this is impossible on either end due to obstructions then un-raised kubbs must be resolved in a legal manner that allows the elevated kubb to be lowered directly to the pitch.

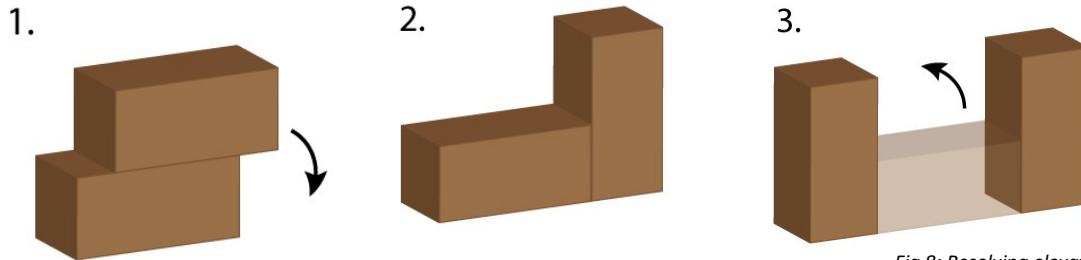


Fig 8: Resolving elevated kubbs

- 7. Once a player begins to raise a kubb on one end it cannot then be laid back down in order to be raised on the other end, barring temporary standing to determine in/out of bounds.
- 8. Kubbs raised by the defending team are to be self-supported. Raised kubbs cannot be supported by another game component.
- 9. Reasonable and essential force is allowed to push down a kubb in order to create self-support.
  - a. Twisting a kubb is never allowed.
  - b. Debris from the pitch may be cleared prior to raising a kubb, but altering the natural state of the pitch is not allowed. (Note: Moving a twig is legal; pulling grass from the pitch is illegal)
  - c. Debris may not be used to create nonessential support to a kubb.
- 10. Kubbs that come to rest on the long edge of the kubb (when four corners of a kubb are not supported by the ground or playing surface) are to be flattened in an unobstructed and in-bounds direction closest to the pitch (with gravity) before being raised. If a long edge of the kubb is completely vertical, it is the choice of the defending team which way to flatten the kubb. Flattening against gravity to make the kubb in-bounds is not allowed. However, if a kubb comes to rest on the long edge so that it is in contact with another game component and due to contact with that game component the unobstructed direction is both with gravity and would create a situation where the kubb is out-of-bounds, after any field kubb(s) that was supporting the kubb on edge is raised, the kubb is allowed to be flattened against gravity to make it in-bounds, if possible.
- 11. If a field kubb that was thrown twice has come to rest in such a way that it cannot be raised in bounds then it becomes a punishment kubb. Punishment kubbs are collected by the defending team and placed anywhere on their half of the pitch provided that they are at least one baton-length (30cm) from the king and at least one baton-length from any pitch marking stakes.

Punishment kubbs can be placed anywhere in the green area. Punishment kubbs must be 1 baton length away (30 cm) from pitch marking stakes and the king.

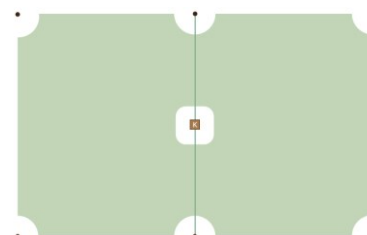


Fig 9: Punishment Kubb Placement

### **III. Rules Enforcement**

#### **A. Etiquette and the Spirit of the Game**

1. Kubb is a game that expects high standards of etiquette and courtesy. Among the basic considerations of etiquette are such things as concern for spectators, other players, and respect to the direction of the tournament coordinator and decisions by all officials of the game.
2. These rules have been designed in spirit to promote a fair and enjoyable tournament environment for all kubb players, regardless of age, sex, or ability. One of the objectives of the U.S. National Kubb Championship is to determine the relative skills of the players, however, the spirit of the game will take precedent. The spirit of the game of kubb demands good sportsmanship, courtesy, and honorable conduct. The spirit should influence both the interpretation and application of the rules of the game and more importantly, the conduct of the participants.

#### **B. General Rules**

1. Some phases and situations in kubb can be complicated and potentially indefinable by any ruleset. If a situation is not covered in these rules, the decision shall be made in accordance with fairness, with decisions being influenced by the spirit of the game. Often a logical extension of the closest existing rule or the principles embodied in the rules will provide guidance for determining the resolution.
2. Unless stated differently, rules will be enforced by the elected referee for the tournament. The referee will enforce all penalties. Penalties include: Warning, Game Penalty, Match Penalty, and Personal Ejection.
  - (a) Warning is a verbal warning to the team. Warnings may be issued more than once for multiple infractions of the same rule at the discretion of the referee.
  - (b) One baton is forfeited for the remainder of the game for each Game Penalty incurred. A Game Penalty cannot be given without first giving a Warning.
  - (c) One baton is forfeited for the remainder of the Match (best-of-three games) for each Match Penalty incurred.
  - (d) A player is not allowed to continue tournament play for a Personal Ejection they are given. If this makes a team illegal (less than three active players), the team will forfeit all remaining games, and be disqualified. The player who received the Personal Ejection may be subject to a future ban.
3. The team captain may call for a referee to provide oversight during a game. When the captain calls for referee oversight, play will be halted until the referee calls for the play to continue.
4. Referees can enforce rules at any time before, during, or after the tournament. Referees do not need to be called upon to assign penalties.
5. Any rules enforced, during any throwing phase, on the non-throwing team will result in a replay of the last thrown game component, if requested by the throwing team. Reset game components to the positions prior to the last throw. The throwing team replays the last throw.
6. Any rules enforced on the throwing team (including warnings) during any throwing phase will result in a forfeiture of the last toss. Reset game components to the positions prior to the last throw. Kubbs thrown on a forfeited toss are to be removed from play and treated as though they were thrown out of bounds.

7. When an illegal action is taken that is not a penalty, and can be reversed with no changes to the state of the game, play will be halted until the illegal action is corrected. Examples include, but are not limited to: Picking up an untoppled kubb to rethrow, unintentionally kicking over a baseline kubb, or only throwing 5 batons after a kubb has been thrown by the opposing team.

### **C. Sportsmanship and Penalties**

1. Distracting your opponent with gestures, sounds and/or comments is not allowed. (Warning → Game Penalty → Match Penalty)
2. Throwing a baton or kubb before the pitch is clear of people, or the opposing team is not one meter away from the pitch. (Warning → Game Penalty → Match Penalty)
3. Throwing a baton or kubb from out-of-bounds. (Warning)
4. Raising a field kubb on both sides for evaluation purposes. (Warning → Game Penalty → Match Penalty)
5. Twisting in any manner, or unnecessary force, used on a kubb during raising. (Warning → Game Penalty → Match Penalty)
6. Altering the pitch or game components, or the use of foreign substances or instruments, such as chalk on game components. (Warning → Game Penalty → Match Penalty)
7. Placing a punishment kubb illegally (Warning). The punishment kubb is placed legally after the penalty is enforced.
8. Not throwing all kubbs before throwing batons. (Warning) The unthrown kubb is then placed by the opposing team, on their baseline, no closer than one baton length from any corner pin. (baseline penalty)
9. Intentionally knocking over game components outside the rules. (Warning → Game Penalty → Match Penalty)
10. During a match, players are only allowed to use game pieces from the pitch they are playing on and are not allowed to practice on another pitch. (For the next turn after the penalty, the team forfeits the maximum number of batons for every person that committed the penalty, and that person is not allowed to throw during the next turn. For example, if one person commits the penalty, the team forfeits two batons for the next turn and that person is not able to throw batons. If a person practices throwing kubbs, the team still loses two batons and that person is not allowed to throw batons and kubbs on the team's next turn.)
11. A player throwing more than two batons. (Warning → Game Penalty → Match Penalty)
12. A player participating with two separate teams during the tournament. (Personal Ejection)
13. A player attempting to compromise tournament rules and/or standards. (Personal Ejection)
14. Directing obscene language or gestures to a player, tournament official, or referee. (Personal Ejection)
15. Intentionally creating an unsafe environment, including the intent to injure any person. (Personal Ejection)

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*Kubb unites people and creates peace on Earth.*  
*Kubb förenar människor och skapar fred på jorden.*

## IV. Glossary

**Advantage Line:** A line running parallel to the baselines and through the center of the field kubb closest to the centerline, created when field kubbs are present. Batons may be thrown from an advantage line.

**Attacking Team/Attackers:** The team throwing batons in a given turn.

**Baseline Kubb:** A kubb which is still in its original position on the baseline. During the course of play a field kubb may come to be placed on the baseline, but it remains a field kubb. All baseline kubbs must be toppled before the king can legally be attacked.

**Baseline:** The short sides of the rectangular pitch or field of play. This is the side you are defending, and your opponent's baseline is the side you are attacking. All field kubb throws and attacks at the king must be done from behind the baseline. Regulation size is 5m, and the boundary is measured by the corner stakes.

**Baton:** The throwing pin. A game requires 6.

**Centerline:** A line parallel to the baselines running through the center of the king. This line demarcates the two halves of the pitch, and the boundary is measured by the center stakes.

**Defending Team/Defenders:** The team raising kubbs (not throwing) in a given turn.

**Field Kubb:** A baseline kubb which has been toppled and, having been thrown back onto the field, has "joined the game". All field kubbs must be toppled before baseline kubbs can legally be attacked.

**Footprint:** The potential area that contacts the ground when a field kubb is raised. All kubbs have 2 potential footprints.

**Game:** The play of kubb between the setup and the king being toppled.

**King:** The centerpiece of the game and of the kubb set. Be the first to topple the king and win, but do it out of order and lose.

**Kubb:** The eponymous game piece. A game of kubb requires 10.

**Match:** Best-of-three games.

**Obstructed/Obstruction:** A game component that interferes with raising field kubbs including kubbs, the king, and field marking stakes.

**Punishment Kubb:** Teams are allowed one fault per kubb while throwing field kubbs (the kubb comes to rest in such a manner that it cannot be raised in bounds). If the second throw of the kubb is also judged to be a fault then the kubb is referred to as a punishment kubb and the defending team can place it anywhere in their half of the pitch provided that it is no closer than one baton length to the king or any pitch marking stake.

**Phase:** Common sections of a given turn, there are four phases of a game; the beginning throw phase, the kubb tossing phase, the kubb raising phase, and the baton tossing phase.

**Pitch:** The kubb field of play; a 5m by 8m rectangle including the playing surface.

**Pitch Marking Stakes:** Pins staked into the ground used to mark the pitch boundaries. There are 4 corner stakes denoting the sidelines and baseline, and 2 center stakes marking the centerline.

**Round:** A game round is a set of two turns, each team attacking once and defending once.

**Sideline:** The long sides of the rectangular pitch or field of play. Regulation size is 8m, and the boundary is measured by the corner stakes.

**Supporting Area:** The area that touches the ground that supports a player. This is generally the surface area of your feet, but can include medical devices, such as a cane or a wheelchair.

**Throwing Area:** The hourglass shaped area that a baton must stay within during the throw to be considered legal.

**Throwing Line:** The line behind which a player throws their batons – either the baseline or an advantage line.

**Toppled:** A piece that has been struck by another piece as the result of a throw and becomes parallel to the ground. Pieces that fall over due to wind, uneven ground, or being jostled by a player are not considered "toppled", and should be placed back in their original position prior to the throw.

**Turn:** A game turn is a combination of the kubb tossing phase, kubb raising phase, and the baton tossing phase.

**Upfield:** The far half of the opponent's side of the pitch.

**Vertical Plane:** The line that intersects the horizon that the throwing area must travel on during a throw.