



Standard Practice for Paintball Field Operation¹

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INTRODUCTION

This practice sets forth procedures for operating a paintball playing field. The goal is to assist paintball field operators in running a safe business. Like any other physical activity, paintball presents a potential for injury. No procedural practice can prevent all injuries, especially when paintball players do not follow safety instructions. The ultimate responsibility for preventing injury lies with the paintball player. This practice, however, intends to promote safe paintball field operation through standardization of operating practice.

1. Scope

1.1 This practice establishes minimum safety requirements for the operation of paintball playing fields, and provides for certain materials and procedures required.

2. Terminology

2.1 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

2.1.1 *bulk cylinder, n*—a gas storage vessel used to fill gas propellant vessels on paintball guns.

2.1.2 *ear protection, n*—devices that cover the ear cavities and prevent direct entry of paintballs into the ear canals.

2.1.3 *filling apparatus, n*—equipment used to properly fill gas propellant vessels on paintball guns from bulk cylinders.

2.1.4 *game area, n*—an area in which paintball games are conducted and in which goggles are required to be worn.

2.1.5 *goggles on areas, n*—areas in which all persons are required to wear paintball goggles, including playing fields, game areas, chronograph areas, and target ranges.

2.1.6 *playing field, n*—an area delineated by a boundary marker, in which paintball games are conducted.

2.1.7 *staging area, n*—an area protected against stray entry of paintballs, in which paintball players organize themselves for a game.

3. Operational Procedures

3.1 *Safety Rules Posted*—Player safety rules, printed in 12-point type or larger, shall be posted conspicuously at the registration area. Every player shall be instructed to read the safety rules.

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3.2 *Field Orientation and Safety Briefing*—Prior to their first game of the day, every player shall be given a formal briefing on safety rules, risk of injury, game rules, field orientation, and equipment operation.

3.3 *Barrel Plug Regulation*—All players shall be required to have paintball gun barrels plugged with a device specifically designed for that purpose at all times other than while on the playing field during games, at the chronograph, or at the target range.

3.4 *Eye, Ear, and Face Protection*—All players shall be required to wear ear protection and paintball goggles with full face protection at all times while they are in areas designated as “goggles on areas.” The goggles shall be designed specifically for use in paintball games. Goggle lenses with cracks visible to the naked eye shall not be permitted.

3.5 *Chronographing Procedures*—All paintball guns shall be chronographed. All field rental paintball guns shall be chronographed daily prior to being used at the field. All other paintball guns shall be chronographed at the field prior to being used on the field. Paintball gun velocities shall be adjusted so as to not exceed 300 ft/s.

3.6 Required Signs:

3.6.1 The following signs shall be posted conspicuously:

3.6.1.1 “Goggles On” signs shall be posted at the exits of the staging area along routes to the playing fields, and at the entrances to any other areas that paintball gun discharge might be permitted.

3.6.1.2 “Barrel Plugs” signs shall be posted at the exits from the playing fields, chronograph area, target range, and anywhere else that paintball gun discharge might be permitted.

3.6.1.3 “Paintball Game Area, Eye Protection Required” signs shall be posted at locations where unauthorized direct access to the playing fields is likely by outsiders not familiar with the sport.

3.7 *Emergency Contingency Plan*—Emergency procedures, printed in 12-point or larger type shall be posted and a first-aid kit readily available at the field.

3.8 *Adequate Judges During Games*—At least one referee shall be present on every indoor paintball playing field. At least two referees shall be present on every outdoor paintball playing field. There also shall be a minimum of one referee on every paintball playing field for every 15 players.

3.9 *Fill Station*—Bulk cylinders shall be secured properly to prevent falling over, during storage and during use. A scale shall be used to ensure against CO₂ overfills beyond the Department of Transportation allowed capacity. All gas filling apparatus and procedures shall meet OSHA requirements, as well as Compressed Gas Association requirements for the handling of compressed gasses.

3.10 *Adequate Spectator Provisions and Staging Area*—Areas in which spectators are permitted to observe paintball games without goggles and player staging areas shall be protected against paintball entry. These areas shall be designed in a manner or location such that stray paintballs cannot enter

from other areas, such as playing fields, target areas, or chronograph areas. Staging areas may be protected by a minimum of 300 ft of open space by natural growth which prevents paintball penetration or by a barrier which prevents paintball penetration.

3.11 *Game Area:*

3.11.1 Game areas require the following:

3.11.1.1 Boundaries of all outdoor paintball playing fields shall be marked clearly and continuously with rope, tape, or other highly visible material.

3.11.1.2 Areas with hidden dangers such as water, cliffs, or sharp objects shall be roped off, posted, or plainly identified.

3.11.1.3 Playing fields shall be free of barbed wire, broken glass, and other dangerous litter.

3.11.1.4 Floor surfaces of indoor paintball playing fields shall be maintained in a manner which provides adequate traction.

4. Keywords

4.1 field operation; paintball; safety

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