

Silkball

An introduction to the second-most popular sport at Strixhaven

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Version 1.0

2023

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PART 1
THE GAME

CHAPTER 1: THE RULES

WELCOME TO THE WONDERFUL GAME OF Silkball! Silkball is a popular sport played at Strixhaven, and is commonly chosen by students with limited magical proficiency over Mage Tower. In this game, players rely on their physical skills to win, as use of magic can result in a penalty. This document expands on information first presented in the Strixhaven: Curriculum of Chaos supplement by Wizards of the Coast.

The Tales from Trantor podcast play a game of Silkball in episode 16 of Students of Strixhaven. Consider giving it a listen if you'd like to hear these rules in action!

GAME STRUCTURE

Silkball consists of two teams of five players each who play a game that is designed to feel like a combination of Dodgeball and Lacrosse, where players must hurl balls at their opponents, and try to catch balls being thrown at them. Unlike dodgeball, there are goals at opposing ends that can quickly change the state of the game.

Two teams, consisting of five players each, play on a game field measuring 120 feet in length. Throughout the field are 'zone designations', which are explained in detail further on, and an annotated map is available on the website for reference. Five silkballs are placed into the middle of the field in the No Throw Zone at the start of the game. If for any reason a ball is removed or needs to be thrown back in, it is placed in the No Throw Zone.

To begin the game, all players and NPCs roll for initiative, and take action as if in combat. The highest five in the initiative order are considered to have rushed to the centre of the field and grabbed balls first, so begin their turns with a Silkball. Once all balls have been assigned, all players may choose their starting locations. Following combat initiative, all players take turns using the actions described later in this document. Initiative resets at the start of each combat round to keep things interesting.

OBJECTIVES

There are two objectives in Silkball to win a game round. Achieving either of these objectives permits a win for the team:

- Get the opposing team out; or
- Score three goals.

The game is played to the best of three game rounds, meaning a team needs to win two of three rounds to succeed against their opponent.

GET THE OPPOSING TEAM OUT

Like dodgeball, if a team is able to hit all opposing players currently on the field, they have won the game round.

SCORE THREE GOALS

Using inspiration from Lacrosse, players can hurl the silkball with their sticks and try to land a shot in the opposing team's goal. After three successful goals, that team has won the game round.

RULES

- No flying
- No magic
- No throwing from the No Throw Zone
- Only one player may remain in the "Red Zone" indefinitely
- A player re-entering the game must do so from a corner of the field, starting their turn in the Red Zone

ZONES

The game field is made up of a few different zones, including:

- No Throw Zone
- Green Zone
- Yellow Zone
- Red Zone
- Goalie Zone

New silkballs are placed in the **No Throw Zone** when a team scores a goal. Players may enter the zone to collect a silkball, but will be penalised if they attempt to throw from here.

The **Green Zone** is often the most popular zone, as it provides no positive or negative modifiers.

The **Yellow Zone** can make it harder for a player to be hit, but makes an attack from this distance equally difficult.

The **Red Zone** is typically only for a goalie, or those re-entering the game field from the rear. Only one player may remain in this zone indefinitely, otherwise the team will be penalised.

Lastly, the **Goalie Zone** is a designated area for someone who defends the team goal. A player in this zone can invoke the **Remain Vigilant** action, allowing them to contest an incoming goal with an additional modifier.

PENALTIES

If a player is caught doing something that breaks one of the established rules, they invoke a

penalty. The offending player's team must immediately roll a ball to the opponent's side. If no silkball is available, a team member must be sent off the field and is out.

MAGIC USE

One or more game referees watch the game, and look out for actions invoking penalties, including the use of magic on the field. While not common in small fields or games, in professional or important Silkball games, anti-magic barriers are deployed to prevent interference from the crowd. Where possible, a caster can attempt to cast on the field, but must do so without drawing the attention of a referee. The difficulty of this will vary depending on the type of spell:

- **Verbal Component:** Requires an Opposed Stealth/Sleight of Hand check against a Referee Perception check.
- **Somatic Component:** Requires an Opposed Stealth/Sleight of Hand check against Referee Perception check, with Disadvantage.
- **Material Component:** Due the complexities of holding a Silkball stick and casting a spell, it is very difficult to achieve this. Consider applying the same check as a Somatic component spell, but consider making the DC more difficult, or add complications to the outcome of the spell.

ACTIONS

Similar to combat, each player has a variety of main, movement or bonus actions to perform during their turn.

PASS TO A TEAM MEMBER

Bonus Action

If the player has a silkball, either in your net or at within 5 feet, they can pass the silkball to the team member as a bonus action.

THROW AT AN OPPONENT

Main Action

If a player is in possession of a silkball, they can make a strength-based attack roll, adding their proficiency modifier if they have sufficient experience playing the game. The defender makes an opposed check, and has a chance to catch the ball if they don't already have one. The content is resolved according to the following rules:

- The Attacker confirms any **Zone distance modifiers**
- The Attacker makes an attack roll with their Silkball stick, using their Strength modifier and any zone distance modifiers (if applicable).

- The Defender makes a contested Acrobatics check, using their Dexterity and proficiency modifiers (if applicable).
- The Defender wins on ties, otherwise:
 - If the Attacker beats the Defender, the Defender is out, and sent off the field immediately.
 - If the Defender beats the Attacker, they dodge or the Attacker has missed, and the Defender has a chance to catch the ball if they do not already possess a ball in their net.
 - If the Defender has a chance to catch, they roll a 1d10. On 1-8, they do not catch the ball, and it lands in a location somewhere around them (see Figure 1.1). On a 9 or 10, the Defender has caught the ball, and the Attacking player is out, and is sent off the field immediately.

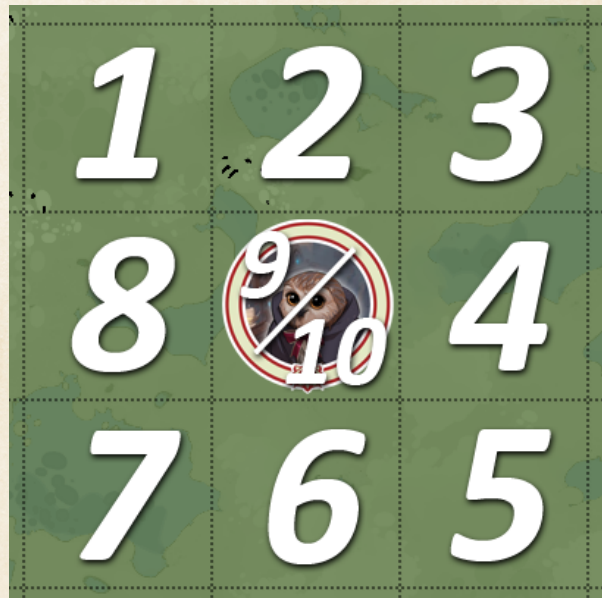


Figure 1.1: Drop location of an incoming silkball

THROW AT THE GOAL

Main Action

If a player is in possession of a Silkball, then on their turn they may make an opposed Attack roll against the goalie to attempt a goal on the silkball net. Depending on the distance to the goal, the Attacker makes their roll with a disadvantage, representing the length of the field to the goal:

- Attacker in Green Zone: No negative modifier
- Attacker in Yellow Zone: -1 modifier
- Attacker in Red Zone: -2 modifier

The difficulty of the check can differ depending on a few factors. Most notably:

- A Defender who is in the Goalie Zone and has chosen to **Remain Vigilant** can add a +2 to their Acrobatics check, if they have not already done this before the start of their next turn.
- If the Attacker's roll meets or beats the Defender, the player has scored a goal. Two of the Attacker's team members may immediately re-enter the field, stepping in from the corner of their team's Red Zone.
- If the Defender, they may make an attempt to catch the Silkball. The defending player rolls a 1d10, getting the Attacker out on a 9 or 10.
- If there is no Defender in the Goalie Zone, replace the contested roll with a pre-determined DC depending on the distance:
 - Shooting from Green Zone: DC 12
 - Shooting from Yellow Zone: DC 15
 - Shooting from Red Zone: DC 17

CALL TO ARMS

Bonus Action

From the rear of the field, the goalie has good eyesight towards the happenings of the game. As a bonus action, a player in the Goalie Zone may take a bonus action to make a suggestion, inspire with a few words, or otherwise direct a teammate to take a directed action.

The goalie chooses one player to receive an "encouragement die" (d4), and if the player chooses to follow the goalie's direction, may attempt the action, rolling the d4 along with their action.

REMAIN VIGILANT

Main Action

A player in the Goalie Zone may choose to not move this turn and remain vigilant, keeping their attention alert for incoming danger. The player receives a bonus (+2) to the next defensive checks against themselves, such as when making an Acrobatics check to dodge. This is only available once, and subsequent contests do not provide this bonus until the action is taken again.

SPRINT

Main Action

A player may double the distance they can normally travel this turn, but cannot perform any other action, including passing, picking up a ball, or becoming vigilant.

MOVE

Move Action

A player may move their regular amount of movement each turn, in combination with any Main Action or Bonus Action that may be taken.

	Defender	Defender	Defender	Defender	Attempt on Goal
Attacker	1	0	-1	-2	0
Attacker	0	-1	-2	-3	-1
Attacker	-1	-2	-3	-4	-2

FIGURE 1.2: ZONE DISTANCE MODIFIERS TABLE