

# THE DODGEBALL SURVEY 2024

## REPORT



BRITISH  
DODGEBALL





# INTRODUCTION

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The Dodgeball Survey 2024 was open for responses for 4 weeks between April & May 2024. The survey was in two forms: a main survey for members, players, spectators and coaches and a referee-specific survey. The idea behind this was to ensure our referees had a voice regarding possible rules updates, which is important as they need to be confident in their abilities to enforce any changes made as a result of this survey. As there is a high crossover between players and referees, this also gave individuals the ability to answer a question from both the point of view of a player and as a referee.

The main aims of the survey were to:

- Gather feedback on the provision of dodgeball in the UK, including details on competitions, the community's desired development goals and volunteering.
- Gather feedback on current rules in order to gain more insight into player, referee, coach and spectator views

We asked questions which were grouped into 5 categories:

- About You
- Competition Feedback
- Rules Feedback
- Development, Governance & Volunteering
- British Dodgeball Awards 2024

By asking questions relevant to these categories, we welcomed respondents from a wide range of background in order to hear from more people and subsequently learn more about the landscape of the sport in the UK.

We would like to thank everyone that took time to complete the survey and help us learn more about your involvement in dodgeball and your views on the sport; this information will help us to continue to develop the sport to encourage people from all ages and backgrounds to Come Join In. As part of a continued dialogue between British Dodgeball, our members and those involved in the playing, coaching, teaching, administering or spectating of dodgeball in the UK, we have developed a list of actions to be undertaken which should prove effective and are realistically achievable. This will help us to improve the sport we all love in line with both your feedback and our [2022-2025 4-year strategy](#).

You will therefore see the following in this report:

- Survey Findings
- **Next Steps**
- *Quotes*

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- Competition Feedback
  - University Mixed League Feedback
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- Development, Governance & Volunteering
  - NI, Scotland, Wales and England Development Focuses
  - Workforce Recruitment
- British Dodgeball Awards 2024

# ABOUT US

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British Dodgeball is a non-profit organisation that invests all income back into developing the sport of dodgeball in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. We currently have 6 full time and 1 part time member of staff and are confident in our claim to be the leading National Federation for dodgeball in the world with the most comprehensive grass roots development program in the sport.

Our staff members work tirelessly to administer and deliver a wide range of services including the provision of over 200 league events and one-day open events annually for primary schools, high schools, universities, junior community clubs and adult community clubs; young leadership training and coach education provision in both online and face to face formats; club development support by way of bid writing, resource development and working specifically for individual member clubs needs; sales of products such as dodgeballs and lesson plans; and manage teams of volunteers and casual staff members such as technical committees, HEDA's, event coordinators and referees to ensure everyone that engages in the sport finds it to be safe, fun and inclusive. We don't receive any funding from any of the Home Nations sport councils yet, so we need to generate every penny ourselves through the above services & products in order to keep the organisation financially solvent and to re-invest back into dodgeball.

## Our Vision

“Inspire generations and communities to experience the benefits of playing dodgeball”

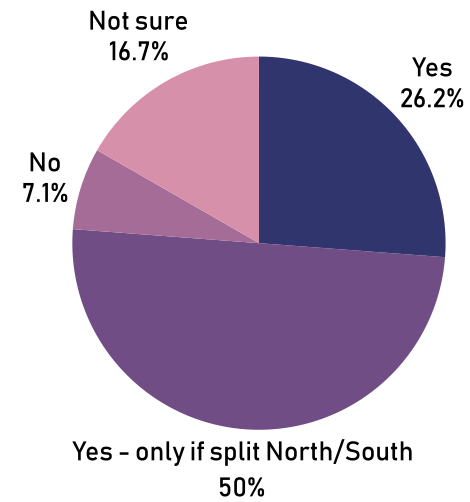


# COMPETITION FEEDBACK

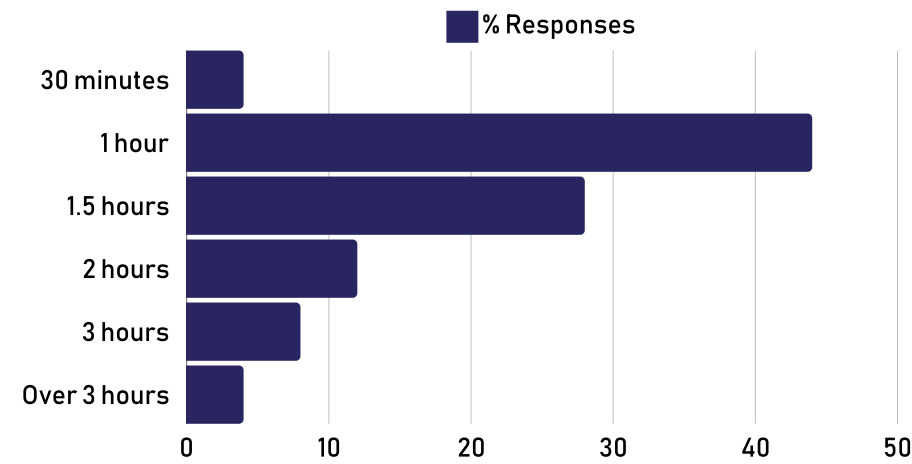




## University Players: Interested in a University Mixed League?



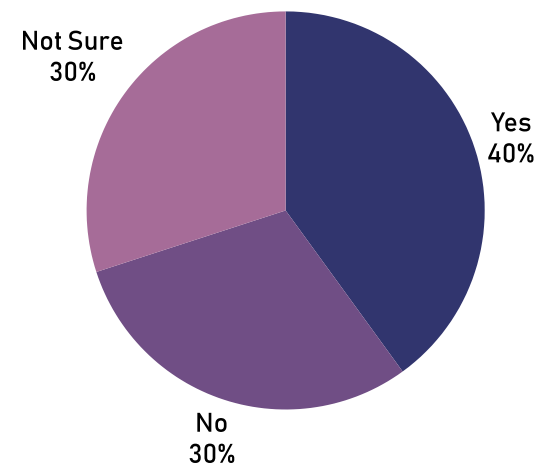
## Juniors: Max time you would travel for a one-day open?



- University mixed events tend to be very popular, which has led us to consider the formation of a university mixed league to mirror the community mixed league.
- As you can see above, this idea is popular if held as 2 divisions: North England and South England.
- We will look to hold a university mixed league North and South next season. This will likely be 4 rounds taking place November-February.
- This will be fully coordinated and run by British Dodgeball as opposed to BUCS at this time.

- 48% of respondents will travel no longer than one hour.
- The mean response for maximum travel time is 91 minutes.
- The range in answers indicates the varying levels of commitment amongst junior players & parents - from those looking for local opportunities only to those willing to travel greater distances for the right level of competition.
- Due to the number & location of clubs, it is unfeasible for us to offer an open within an hour of every junior club.
- We will analyse this data further to try to develop an open offer which works for the majority of clubs.

## Have you ever submitted, or do you plan to submit, feedback regarding recent refereeing performance?



- This season, we have received very little feedback from players regarding referee's performances via the [Referee Feedback Form](#).
- This is our main mechanism for providing further bespoke training and so we need to hear more from players, spectators and coaches if we are to improve individuals and our refereeing team as a whole.
- We will endeavour to make the Referee Feedback form more visible - by adding to our pre-event emails and member update emails.
- Coordinators & referees will encourage the use of the Referee Feedback form.





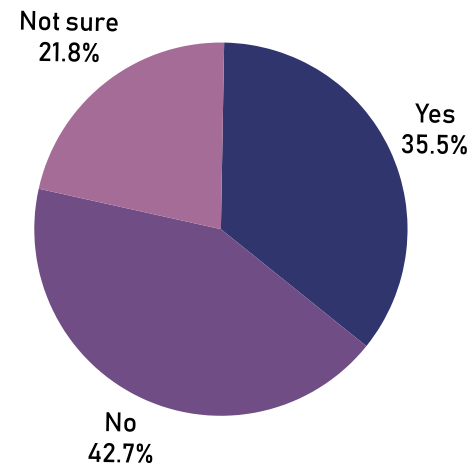
# RULES FEEDBACK



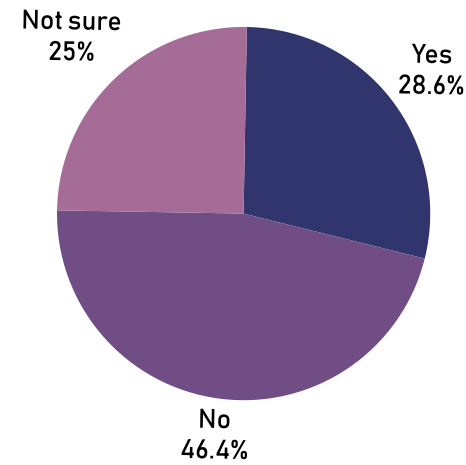


Would you have any concerns with referees' performance if British Dodgeball were to adopt the EDF Play Ball rule?\*

Main Survey

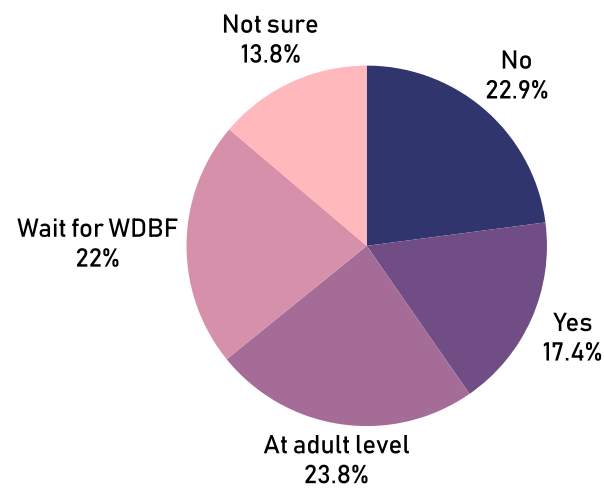


Referees Survey

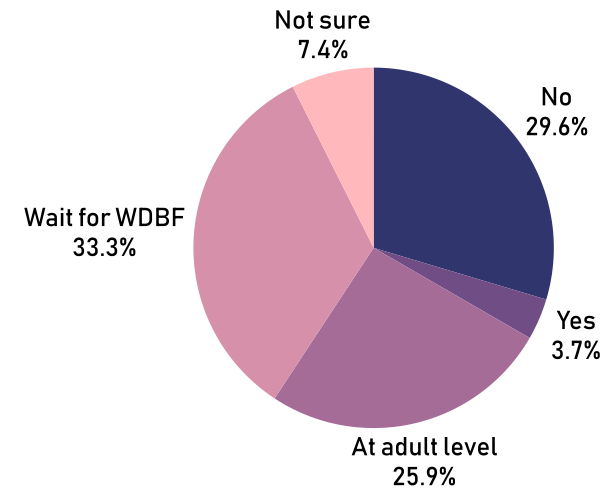


Do you think that British Dodgeball should adopt this new 'play ball' rule?

Main Survey



Referees Survey



\*Explanation: After the initial 5 seconds of possession, the team with possession are now called to 'Play X Balls' unless they have made enough attempts to lose the majority of balls (e.g. only keep 2 remaining in their possession in the 5 ball game) rather than make one attempt. It is unclear at this stage whether the World Dodgeball Federation will adopt this rule. The British Dodgeball technical committee have commented that this change may speed up the game, but will limit tactical options of the team in possession, as they are dictated to in terms of how many they must throw to avoid the 'Play n balls' call. Some members of the technical committee have voiced concerns that this rule is more complicated which can have an impact on newcomers, new referees and new players. This is because referees and players would now need to quickly count how many are needed to be thrown to lose majority (e.g. 3 when a team has 5 balls, 2 when a team has 4 balls and 1 when a team has 3 balls) within 5 seconds, before deciding whether the 'Play n Balls' call needs to be made - with the current rule, they only had to look out for one attempt being made, which is simpler. Although this may be fine amongst those within the community, it is likely to make officiating at school and casual events harder, which may mean that:

1. Less people follow the official ruleset and moves more people away from standardisation, and
2. Less people have a thorough understanding of this rule should they try to follow it, meaning more ambiguity and a less positive experience had by players & leaders resulting in less success at grassroots level.

Further comments:

- It's over complicated and it reduces a tactical element to the game. Unclear on what the intended benefit is. Games are already pretty fast.
- No significant concerns with adopting this rule outside the usual adoption period & good communication of the change.
- Ball possession can be a very tricky thing to keep track of and I would have concerns of refs keeping track of this like stated. I also would like to know how this would affect a play ball call when a player is hit out just before throwing.
- More difficult to referee. As well as limiting tactical options. EDF and WDBF should play to the BD rule set. It is far more developed, easier to referee, and safer.
- I think this makes their job harder, we are struggling with referees volunteering as it is and as a result if they get it wrong they will be criticised more. That said I believe we need as a sport to move towards a singular rule set so it is a difficult one.
- Issue with this being standardised across all refs, especially when this rule is just being introduced. Difficulty picking up this new rule, particularly for newer and younger players. Seems over complicated and massively limits the tactical decisions of a team.
- Too complicated. Simplification needed.
- Not aligning rules is a hurdle for myself when going between coaching and refereeing International and local dodgeball. This needs to be looked as a matter of urgency.
- We already have issues with refs not calling play ball now, I think complicating it more would cause too much confusion.

- Opinions on this rule are split, with no clear consensus reaching over 50% in either survey.
- The technical committee will review through the off-season using the results of this survey to influence decisions.
- We will wait for the next iteration of WDBF Ruleset to be confirmed before deciding on the appropriate course of action.
- We will share the results of this survey with the EDF and WDBF in order to provide additional information for their rules committees.

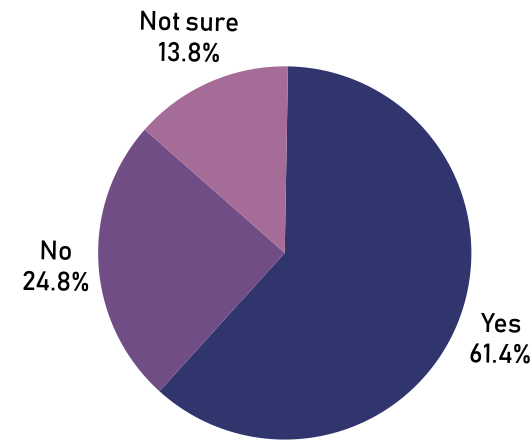




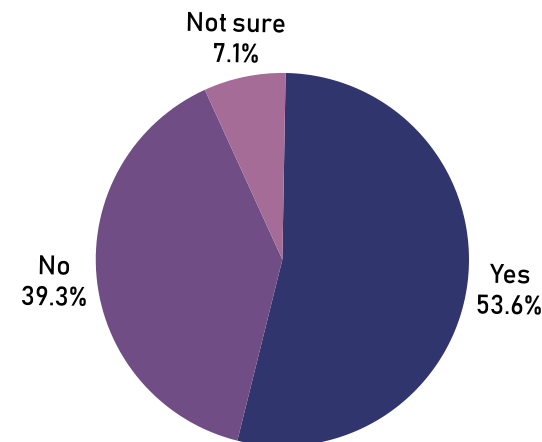
# RULES FEEDBACK: COURT SIZE & SACRIFICE PLAYS

## Should British Dodgeball amend the court sizes to contain three standard sizes instead of a sliding scale?\*

Main Survey



Referees Survey



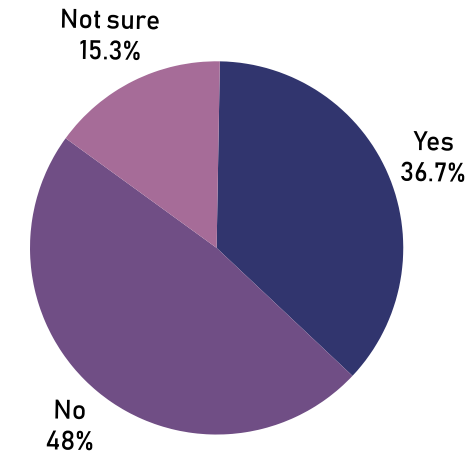
- The majority of both surveys' respondents would prefer to use 3 standard sizes instead of a fully sliding scale.
- The technical committee will review through the off-season using the results of this survey to influence decisions.
- We will share the results of this survey with the EDF and WDBF in order to provide additional information for their rules committees.

\***Explanation:** British Dodgeball now use a sliding scale when determining court size. Using a sliding scale for court size has generally had positive feedback this season, as it has allowed for a consistent throwing distance (the distance between the back line and the nearest neutral zone line) to always be 7.75m. However, there has been feedback that sometimes the sliding scale results in odd court sizes with very small neutral zones (i.e., less than 30cm wide in some cases) - to the point that it might be better to not have the neutral zone at all.

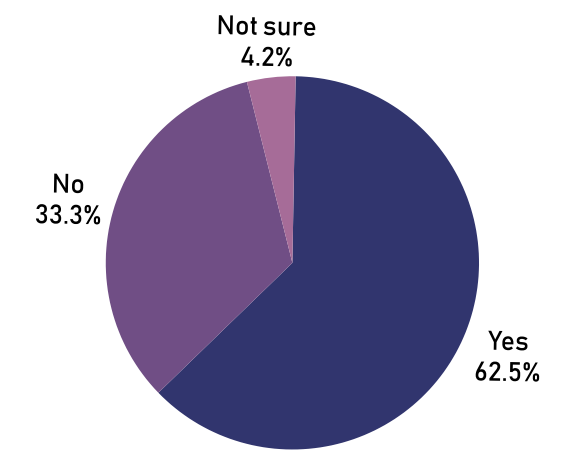
Sizes are tbc but could be 18m (full length), 17m (reduced length) and 15.5m (no neutral zone) as examples - event coordinators would select which to use based on the available space at each venue.

## Do you have any concerns with adopting the EDF/WDBF Sacrifice play rule?

Main Survey

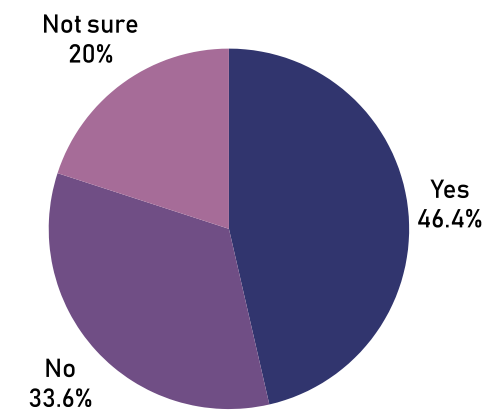


Referees Survey

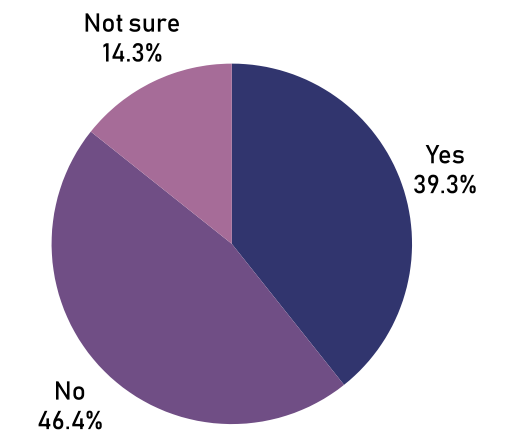


## Do you think that British Dodgeball should adopt the sacrifice play rule at adult level?

Main Survey



Referees Survey



- Opinions on this rule are split, with no clear consensus reaching over 50% in either survey. The only result over 50% is the amount of referees who have concerns with adopting the sacrifice play rule.
- The technical committee will review through the off-season using the results of this survey to influence decisions.
- We will share the results of this survey with the EDF and WDBF in order to provide additional information for their rules committees.

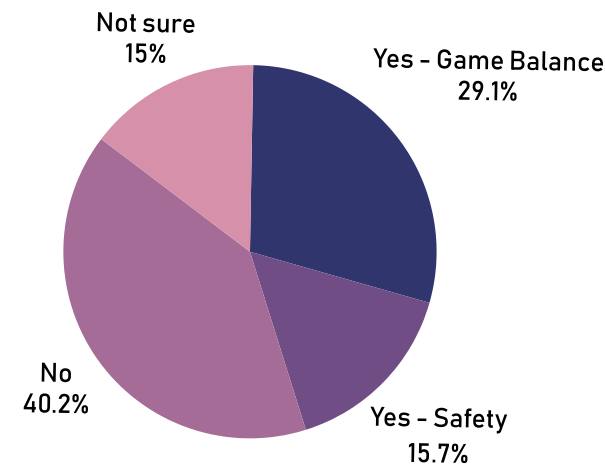
\***Explanation:** The EDF and WDBF rulesets allow for sacrifice plays, where a player may remain in if they hit an opponent where they have released their ball in the air after having jumped past the far neutral zone line and then land in the opposition's half. The British Dodgeball technical committee have never adopted this rule due to concerns with encouraging physical contact between players both during and after the sacrifice play.



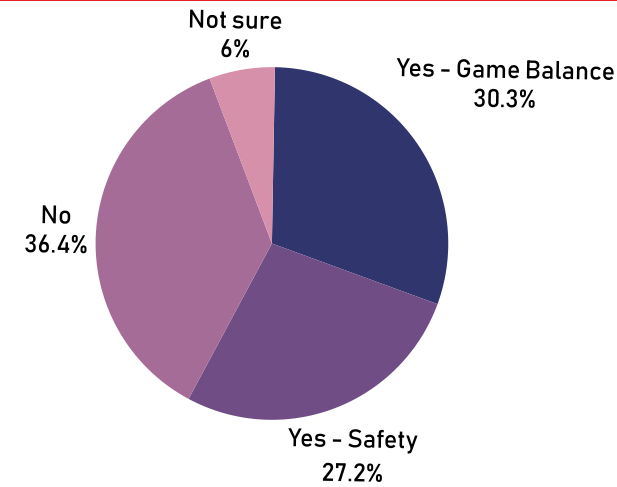
# RULES FEEDBACK: THROWING DISTANCE & RETRIEVERS

## Do you have any concerns with adopting the EDF/WDBF 7m throwing distance and larger neutral zones?\*

Main Survey

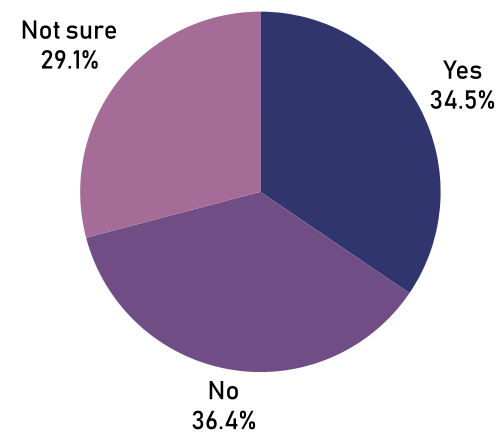


Referees Survey

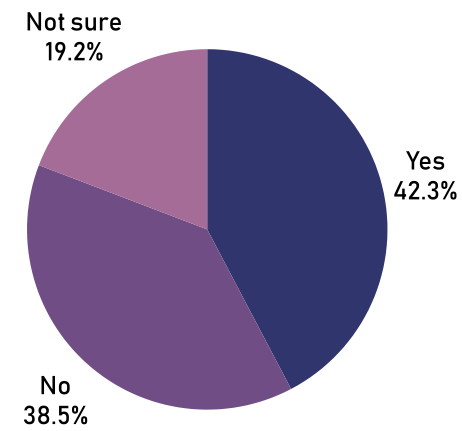


## Do you think that British Dodgeball should adopt the 7m throwing distance?

Main Survey



Referees Survey



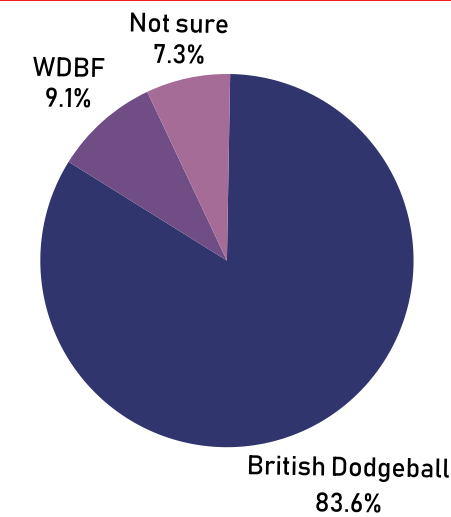
- Opinions on this rule are split, with no clear consensus reaching over 50% in either survey.
- The technical committee will review through the off-season using the results of this survey to influence decisions.
- We will share the results of this survey with the EDF and WDBF in order to provide additional information for their rules committees.

\*Explanation: The EDF and WDBF rulesets call for the throwing distance (the distance between the back line and nearest neutral zone line) to be 7m. This results in a 4m neutral zone if using a full 18m court. The British Dodgeball technical committee have never adopted this rule, and kept the throwing distance to 7.75m (resulting in a 2.5m neutral zone on a 18m court). This is due to:

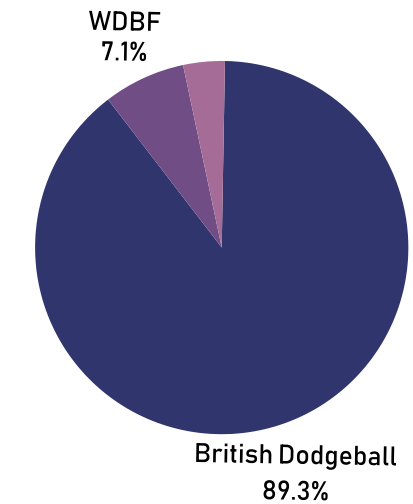
- 1) the amount of wall-to-wall venues in the UK (as opposed to having nets or lots of room behind each side of the court) resulting in the shorter 7m throwing distance giving attacking teams too much of an advantage (they are closer to make hits and have the ball bounce back to them off the wall should they miss),
- 2) safety concerns for players in a larger neutral zone being more likely to initiate contact, and
- 3) safety concerns for players due to the shorter throwing distance between opposing players.

## Which version of the rule regarding what retrievers can do with a ball in their possession do you prefer?\*

Main Survey



Referees Survey



- The majority of both surveys prefer the British Dodgeball rules on what retrievers can do regarding retrievers putting balls back into play.
- We will share the results of this survey with the EDF and WDBF in order to provide additional information for their rules committees.

\*Explanation: The WDBF ruleset demands that retrievers put balls back on court immediately either by placing in the corners or by giving to a player. The British Dodgeball ruleset allows more freedom to retrievers by allowing them to hold on to a ball for their team until they wish to give it to a live player. The rationale for the British Dodgeball version is:

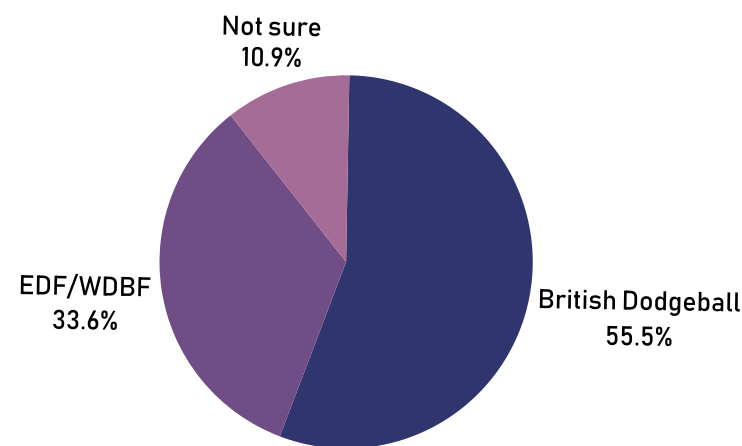
- 1) this aligns to foam dodgeball,
- 2) this version is less strict so less likely to result in a sanction on a new retriever who forgets what to do in the heat of action, and
- 3) it increases the role of the retriever, allowing them to have more tactical input into the game.



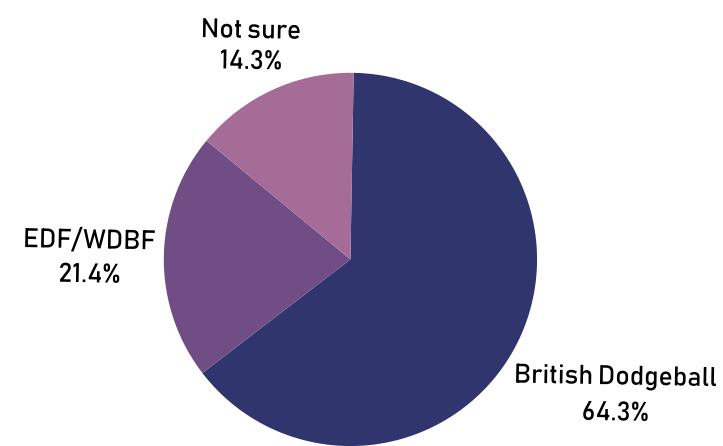
# RULES FEEDBACK: BALL USAGE WHEN HIT

Which version of the rule regarding what players can do with balls in their possession once out do you prefer?\*

Main Survey



Referees Survey



\*Explanation: The EDF rulesets demands that players must drop their ball in place if they are hit or players will receive a blue card. The WDBF ruleset demands that players must drop their balls in place if they are hit inside the neutral zone or players will receive a blue card. The British Dodgeball ruleset allows players to pass any balls in their possession when out to a teammate. The rationale for the EDF/WDBF rule is that the balls dropped high up court creates tense situations to be resolved, whereas the rationale for the British Dodgeball ruleset is:

- 1) that passing a ball to a teammate could reward skill,
- 2) it keeps the game flowing, preventing teams having stalemates up court before retrieving a ball, and
- 3) it prevents players (particularly new players and those at one-off school events) from being punished for a relatively small action taken in the heat of action, which happens at a high frequency.

Further comments:

- Difficulty for newer, less experienced players to adopt the EDF/WDBF rules. Needing to place the ball where you were hit would slow down the game and produce more disparity between new and experienced players.
- I dislike the requirement to put the ball down when hit, and results in players being penalised for very honest mistakes.
- WDBF have introduced a slightly different ball-down rule in their latest version where it depends where on court you were hit. This is even worse than the EDF rule. The BD version is just far simpler and better.
- I think EDF rules on leaving the ball reward good play and hits in the neutral zone where teams can gain an advantage not just by hitting a player out but also by retaining or gaining further possession. At present, there is sometimes not enough reward for prethrows or counters as players are able to pass the ball back to their teammates.
- Complicates refereeing. EDF and WDBF should play to the BD rule set. It is far more developed, easier to referee, and safer. The UK has more Dodgeball players than all of Europe combined.
- I have played both versions of these rule. It's very hard when you have adrenaline going and you've just been hit, to remember to actually place the ball on the floor.

- The majority of both surveys' respondents prefer the British Dodgeball rules regarding what players can do with a ball when hit out.
- We will share the results of this survey with the EDF and WDBF in order to provide additional information for their rules committees.



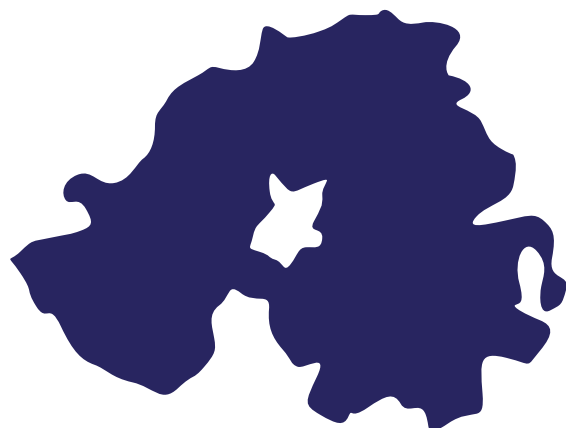




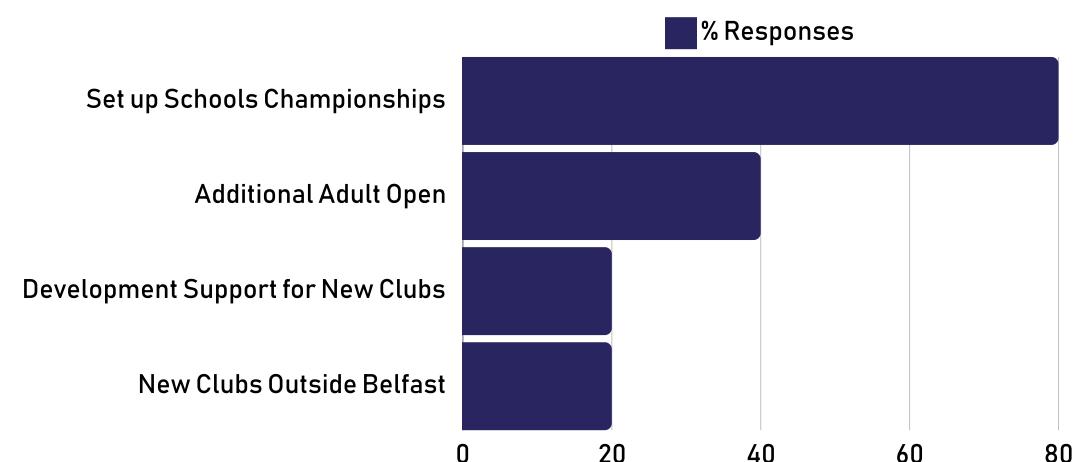
**DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNANCE  
& VOLUNTEERING**



## Northern Ireland



What would you like to see us focus on next in order to grow the sport in your home nation? (Choose 2 max)



### Northern Ireland Current Landscape:

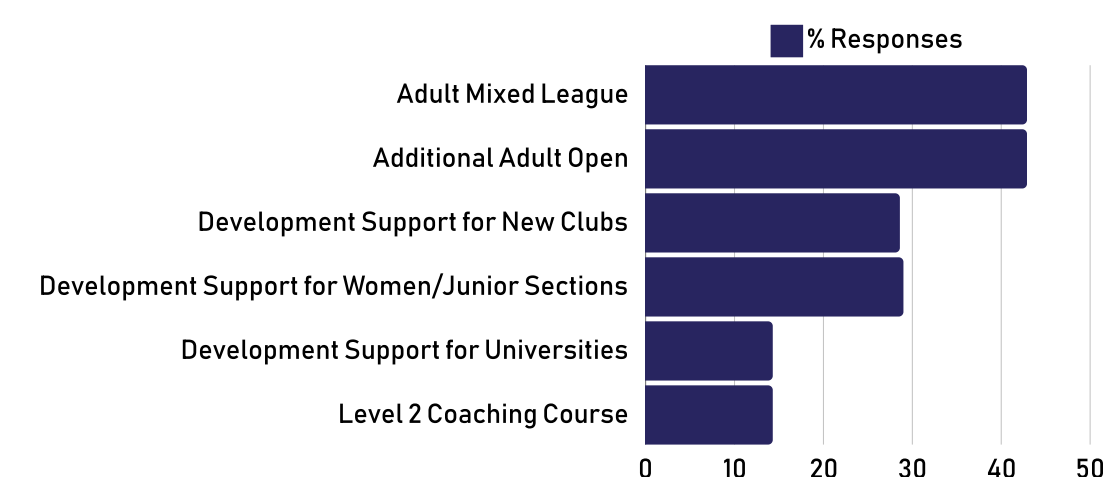
- With open events, a regional league, a mixed league and a national league already in place, the adult community side of the game is at the same point as England in terms of a competition offer.
- With 1 junior section in NI, opportunities for running junior events has been limited.
- Level 2 coaching courses tend to run once every 2 years when we are confident that we can get at least 10 individuals booked on to reach the minimum required number.
- There are currently no school competitions which we run in NI.
- The next step will be to expand each competition pathway as new clubs form.

- We only received 5 responses from NI-based members, so we only have a small sample size of answers to this question.
- The majority of respondents would like to see a Schools Championship pathway start to be set up. This is an objective we wish to meet long-term, but there are barriers: this year, we hoped to run both a Welsh & Scottish school championship, but neither received interest from schools to go ahead. As such, we are changing our strategy to improve interest before attempting to re-organise these competitions. We will look to source a partner who can help us raise the profile of dodgeball & our own organisation in NI. England received this 15 years ago via the Matalan Sporting Promise (run by the Youth Sports Trust) which raised the profile of dodgeball in schools. When we have this set up in a Home Nation & there is more demand from schools, we will look to revisit the delivery of a schools pathway.
- We will look to host an additional adult open.
- We have a new club development strategy which allows club leaders to access direct support from British Dodgeball development staff every 6 months. Now this is in place, the limiting factor to more dodgeball clubs and more sections is the number of people willing to volunteer to set up & lead them. We will trial different ways of finding these potential club leads, but we urge anyone already within the community to consider if they would like to be supported to set up a new club.

## Scotland



What would you like to see us focus on next in order to grow the sport in your home nation? (Choose 2 max)



### Scotland Current Landscape:

- With open events, a regional league and a national league already in place, the adult community side of the game only lacks a mixed league (as this did not receive enough entries to run this season) and women's-specific leagues.
- With 1 current member club with a junior section in Scotland, opportunities for running junior events has been limited.
- Level 2 coaching courses tend to run once every 2 years when we are confident that we can get at least 10 individuals booked on to reach the minimum required number.
- The first Scottish School Championship was due to take place this year, but had to be cancelled due to lack of interest.
- The next step will be to expand each competition pathway as new clubs form and put on a mixed league, junior leagues & women's leagues when there is enough interest to make this viable.

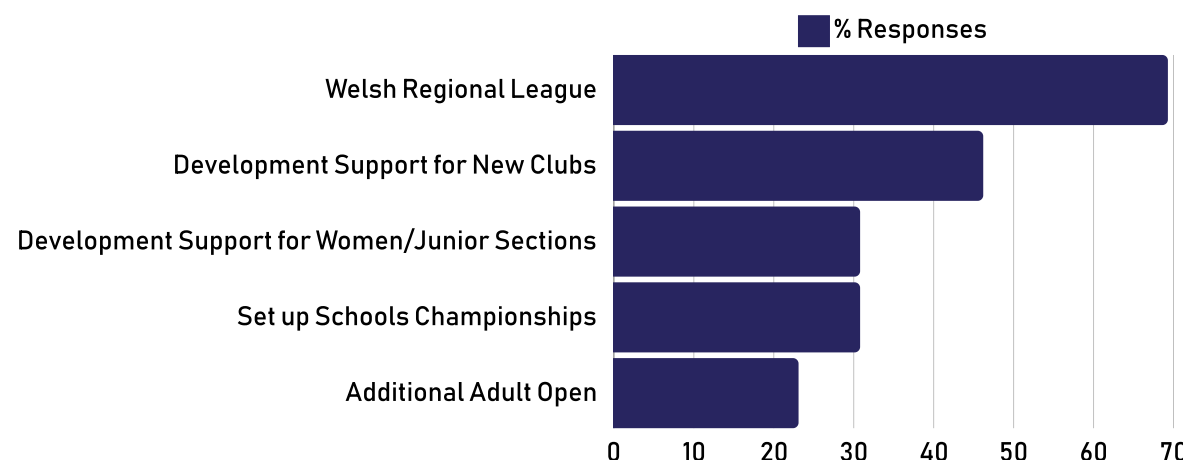
- We only received 7 responses from Scotland-based members, so we only have a small sample size of answers to this question.
- Many respondents would like to see an adult mixed league. This is something we tried to coordinate last season but it did not gain enough interest. We will send out an expression of interest to clubs again for next season.
- We have a new club development strategy which allows club leaders to access direct support from British Dodgeball development staff every 6 months. Now this is in place, the limiting factor to more dodgeball clubs and more sections in Scotland is the number of people willing to volunteer to set up & lead them. We will trial different ways of finding these potential club leads, but we urge anyone already within the community to consider if they would like to be supported to set up a new club.
- We operate the HEDA scheme which provides free training and networking alongside additional support. We have one HEDA in Scotland, based at RGU, who we are supporting to set up a club there. We share information on HEDA scheme through BUCS and hope to grow the number of HEDAs and Scottish universities playing dodgeball each year.
- We have secured funding from Active Renfrewshire to provide 25 schools with Level 1 training, 6 size 1 foam dodgeballs bag We are working with Active Renfrewshire to allocate this and help grow the game in this area.



## Wales



What would you like to see us focus on next in order to grow the sport in your home nation? (Choose 2 max)



### Wales Current Landscape:

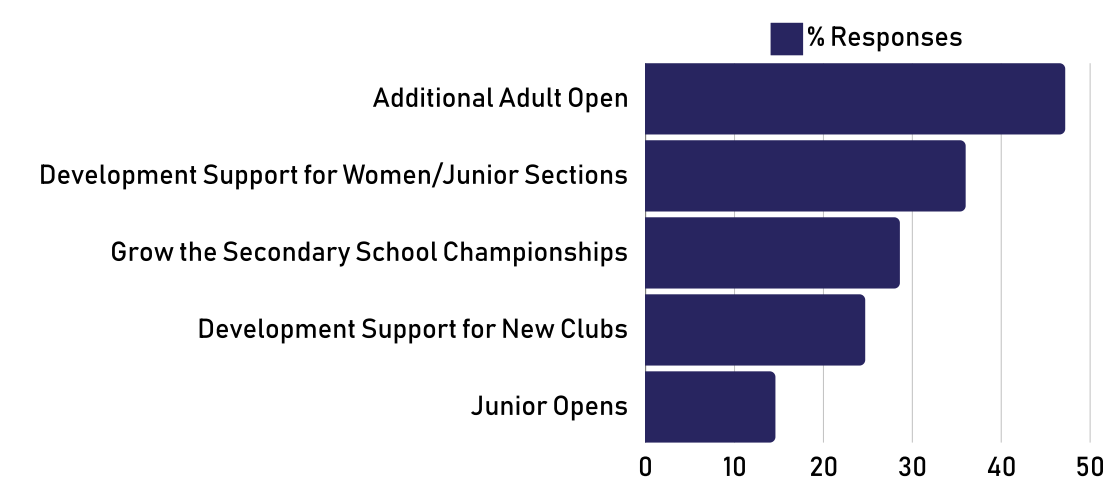
- With 2 community member clubs in Wales, opportunities for running standalone leagues has been limited, with only open events taking place at adult & junior level. The limiting factor is currently volunteers or individuals who have the drive and capacity to set up new clubs in Wales.
- If individuals, whether moving into the area or picking up dodgeball through an existing community club or session contact us, then our priority will be to support them to create a new sustainable club.
- Level 2 coaching courses tend to run once every 2 years when we are confident that we can get at least 10 individuals booked on.
- The first Welsh School Championships was due to take place this year, but was cancelled due to lack of interest.

- We only received 8 responses from Wales-based members, so we only have a small sample size of answers to this question. The vast majority were from one club.
- The majority of respondents would like to see a Welsh regional league. We will send out an expression of interest to clubs for next season.
- We have a new club development strategy which allows club leaders to access direct support from British Dodgeball development staff every 6 months. Now this is in place, the limiting factor to more dodgeball clubs & new sections in Wales is the number of people willing to volunteer to set up & lead them. We will trial different ways of finding these potential club leads, but we urge anyone already within the community to consider if they would like to be supported to set up a new club.
- Some respondents would like to see a Schools Championship pathway in Wales. This is an objective we wish to meet long-term, but there are barriers: this year, we hoped to run both a Welsh & Scottish school championship, but neither received interest from schools to go ahead. As such, we are changing our strategy to improve interest before attempting to re-organise these competitions. We will look to source a partner who can help us raise the profile of dodgeball & our own organisation in Wales. England received this 15 years ago via the Matalan Sporting Promise (run by the Youth Sports Trust) which raised the profile of dodgeball in schools. When we have this set up in a Home Nation & there is more demand from schools, we will look to revisit the delivery of a schools pathway.

## England



What would you like to see us focus on next in order to grow the sport in your home nation? (Choose 2 max)



### England Current Landscape:

- With open events, multiple regional leagues, women's-specific regional leagues, mixed leagues and a national league pathway already in place, the adult community side of the game is at capacity for both staff members and clubs (based on event entries, past survey & anecdotal demand).
- The next step will be to continue to expand each competition pathway as new clubs form.
- Level 2 coaching courses tend to run in various areas - approximately 20 take place each year. 1 or 2 Level 3 coaching courses take place each year in line with demand.
- There are approximately 40 British Dodgeball school events taking place this season (35 primary and 5 secondary).
- Many respondents would like to see additional opens. We ran 15 adult opens this season (almost doubling from 8 the previous season based on actions taken after the previous Dodgeball Survey); combined with regional, national & mixed leagues, junior & university events and providing space for international team training, our calendar is at capacity. We therefore encourage clubs to host their own opens at times which suit them. We can help to promote these club-run opens as long as there are no clashes with similar BD events, just get in touch.
- We have a new club development strategy which allows club leaders to access direct support from British Dodgeball development staff every 6 months. Now this is in place, the limiting factor to more dodgeball clubs & new sections in England is the number of people willing to volunteer to set up & lead them. We will trial different ways of finding these potential club leads, but we urge anyone already within the community to consider if they would like to be supported to set up a new club.
- Some respondents would like to see an expanded Secondary Schools Championship pathway in England. This is in its second year, growing from 6 competitions to 10 and we hope to see this continue to expand. We will set up a Year 9/10 age group for the first time to expand our high schools competition offer.
- We will look to run junior opens - see the Competition Feedback section for more information.



Do you know anyone who would make a great Participant Representative for your Home Nation?

21  
Nominees

- Player representatives will be elected by the members at the next AGM, taking place before the end of July. Nominations will be accepted up to a week prior to the agm. Nominations should include a short brief about the nominee.
- We will contact those nominated via email to enquire as to their interest. Anybody may apply via nomination - more information is available [here](#).

#### Player Representative Recruitment:

- British Dodgeball now has a board of directors in place which is full of experienced professionals who are specialists in their relevant areas. British Dodgeball has always recognised that a voice is needed from participants in the running of the sport; our board of directors has had a strong player influence at the heart of the organisation since our inception in 2017, and the makeup of our technical committee (formerly rules and regulations committee) has always involved members from the dodgeball community. We want to be able to continue to have a strong player voice within the board when it comes to decision-making.
- British Dodgeball is seeking enthusiastic and forward thinking individuals to represent the players' voice in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. We are looking for representatives with strong critical thinking skills who are capable of applying independent judgment to work effectively with other directors.
- More information available [here](#).

Interest in joining the voluntary Media team:

10  
Potential Volunteers

- We will contact those who are interested in volunteering. Anybody may apply at any time - more information is available [here](#).

#### Supporting British Dodgeball as a volunteer:

- British Dodgeball currently consists of:
  - 6 members of the board
  - 6 staff members (5 Development staff members and 1 Marketing/Media staff member)
  - 9 technical committee members (including 4 staff members)
  - A team of approximately 45 referees who work on a casual basis
  - A team of approximately 15 tutors who work on a casual basis
- As we only have 1 marketing staff member, gathering footage at events and leagues across the UK can be tricky due to capacity and the cost of travel. We are looking to recruit individuals who are interested in assisting in gathering video and images at events (Media volunteers) and operating/commentating on livestreams (Livestream volunteers). By building resilient teams of volunteers, we will have more ability than ever before to promote dodgeball in all areas of the UK equally, and develop high quality streamed content which can further promote the sport.
- At this point in time, all dodgeball livestreams across the world, including those ran by EDF and WDBF, are operated by volunteers due to the lack of financial return resulting from a small audience, and British Dodgeball's are no exception; although we can allocate some staff time towards administration & management, it must primarily be driven by volunteers as we do not wish to charge clubs more in order to provide a professional service. We currently only have a very small pool of volunteers in England, and no volunteers in Scotland or NI on the livestreaming team.
- You can see more info here: [Work With Us - Media Team](#)

Interest in joining the voluntary Livestream team:

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Potential Volunteers





# FINAL COMMENTS





Thanks to our respondents for their final comments. We noted three particular patterns of feedback regarding what respondents would like to see improved: Referees, Adult Dodgeball Media, English National League Structure. We have listed these below alongside some more general comments:

## REFEREES: COMMENTS & RESPONSES

- The number of paid referees has to increase. Whilst competing in North League this season, we've not always had enough paid centre refs for the matches and have had to ask people playing on the day to centre ref.*
  - The quality of line reffing also leaves something to be desired and has made the difference between a controversial draw and a win for us.*
  - More accountability of referees' actions. Some very dubious reffing has been seen this season and it has marred otherwise incredibly enjoyable events.*
  - More referee training. As a referee, I have had zero training and guidance. I am happy to admit I probably have my flaws as a ref, and we all need some way of feedback/training happening.*
- We've recruited and trained 24 new referees this year, significantly more than any previous year. We will continue to outline our refereeing offer throughout the UK to continue to grow the referee pool. Unfortunately, we have had 41 referees become inactive in the last 2 years; the best way of maintaining and upping the standard of referees, as demonstrated by many sports, is for ex-players to remain in the sport as a referee. We will explore how to encourage & support referees to remain in role.*
  - The primary way of making referees and allocated referees accountable is for players, coaches, spectators and other referees to provide feedback via the [Referee Feedback form](#). As mentioned in the Competitions Feedback section, we will be making efforts to highlight and promote the use of this more more often. We use the information you provide to: Provide specific feedback to referees and to club referee leads in order to help improve the standard of refereeing across the UK; structure referee training to target specific issues; and celebrate referees who are doing a great job at facilitating the sport we all love.*
  - Whilst this is a long-term aspiration, we are not at the stage where we can offer regular 1:1 continuous personal development (CPD) as this would be another staff member to pay, raising entry costs further at a time where almost all venues have significantly increased their hire rates. We also have the issue that many of our more experienced referees are also active players and are not in a position to commit more weekend time to dodgeball in order to fulfil this role. We will look to improve our online training and update offer by including more real life video content examples, in addition to targeted feedback when this is given via the Referee feedback form. We encourage all referees to feedback on each other in order to facilitate this process.*

## ADULT DODGEBALL MEDIA & PROMOTION: COMMENTS & RESPONSES

- Please improve the BD media coverage of adult events, there has been almost zero BD media all year and only junior and uni.*
  - More mention of Scottish events on the Social medias*
  - The livestream at national league needs to be improved... How can the sport grow if something like this cannot be done.*
  - Media coverage of adult events - there's no photos or videos. Media coverage of university events. Promotion of international teams - they currently get no support from British Dodgeball.*
- We have a new staff media & marketing offer in place, Matthew, who will focus on ensuring all areas of our organisation are promoted equally. We will focus on the creation of more promotional films and case studies alongside highlights of the sport to raise engagement.*
  - We would love to share more photos and clips from non-English events - we'd love some people from these areas to join our [media team](#) in order to provide us with more content to work with to promote the sport taking place in these areas.*
  - We will be contacting those willing to volunteer to operate and commentate on the livestream as an outcome of this survey; anyone else interested in contributing to the live stream can see more info [here](#).*
  - We have had issues with international squads not sending us reports and content for us to share. We hope this issue has been rectified and communications both ways will be improved so we can celebrate the brilliant achievements of our international squads.*

## ENVIRONMENTAL: COMMENTS & RESPONSES

- Get rid of wooden medals. They're rubbish and demean the fantastic effort the teams have made. Environmentally, focus on the miles we drive (to non-central locations) rather than medals.*
- BD needs to make the English national league more accessible. Hosting the national league in St George's park is really inconvenient for many players. Due to the location, most players must drive as there is no suitable public transport links. This must be considered within the context in BD's carbon footprint - being unable to use a form of transport with lower emissions means that BD is responsible for this. BD has mentioned environmental impact before to support the new wooden medals, stated they are better for the environment. These wooden medals could then be seen as an act of green washing, if the issue of excessive driving to an inconvenient location is ignored.*
- Whilst only having a small carbon footprint (we do not mass-manufacture and mass-ship products), and having limitations with what we can realistically do as a small organisation, we are always keen to take steps to help reduce our environmental impact where we can. We will look at increasing accessibility via public transport at venues we book (but please be aware this isn't always possible as limitations such as venue availability and cost do ultimately determine bookings). We will continue to look to support the development of more local competition such as club-run rec leagues, more regional leagues and consulting clubs regarding the English women's national league 1 locations for next season. We will also look to continue to train more local referees so that we can use them and reduce our workforce's travel miles.*



Thanks to our respondents for their final comments. We noted three particular patterns of feedback regarding what respondents would like to see improved: Referees, Adult Dodgeball Media, English National League Structure. We have listed these below alongside some more general comments:

## EVENT VENUES & LEAGUE STRUCTURE: COMMENTS & RESPONSES

- Move out of St Georges Park, it's not worth being so out in the middle of no-where.
- Move the national league venue from St George's Park. This is a huge barrier to getting new ladies into the sport as the travel commitment is unreasonable, the venue needs to be centrally located and within walking distance of a major train station. Having games finish at 8:45 means using the trains to get back to London/the south is not really an option so we have to have enough drivers in the squad or pay for overnight accommodation which can make the weekend too expensive for some team members.
- Look at the location of English national league. It has been frustrating to travel so far when the venue has cancelled & rearranged meets.
- A six team league is too small considering the time commitment to travel to St George's Park. It can work in leagues that aren't national in scope. Likewise, reducing the season to 6 meets has reduced the impact of competition. While a triple game meet is a welcome addition for the season, playing on just six weekends increases chances of leagues being dictated by outside circumstances.
- As a Women's National League 2 player, the travel to and from SGP from Surrey has been incredibly difficult. Especially as a full time uni student, there has been times where I have considered pulling out of a meet due to travel, and other times I have had to say no to a meet because the travel demands are too great.

- Using St George's park has been a key part of our English dodgeball competition provision since British Dodgeball formed in 2017, as it is an extremely accommodating that allows set-up the night before at no extra cost which increases affordability (this is also vital to allow the extended schedule needed for the number of fixtures). That said, we are aware that there are limitations with this venue in terms of accessibility and the number/timing of available weekend hire dates we are offered. We will be exploring other options that allow a longer league season whilst maintaining the 3-match-per-round structure. Clubs will be consulted once further investigation has taken place, well ahead of the 25/26 season which is soonest any changes may be implemented.
- We will consult clubs on desires to set up North/South Women's leagues to provide more local opportunity to play.

## SCOTLAND, WALES & NI: COMMENTS & RESPONSES

- More support for NI. We pay as much as the other nations but seem to have less BD-led infrastructure, etc.
- Players in Scotland often feel like an afterthought. Things like less coverage on social media, schedules for events having clashes, moving English leagues to clash with Scottish open resulting in a drop in attendance.
- Improvement of provision in Wales. There is no representative for Wales. There are 2 competitive community clubs and I believe 2 university clubs to represent the entire of Wales and this is poor. This is really sad and key opportunities are being missed. As a Rhondda Dragon, we are working so hard to grow the sport we love here but I don't see this being matched by BD.
- The lower demand from schools & the low number of clubs means that it isn't yet viable to support development staff members in these areas as extra salary demands may risk our long-term financial sustainability. This remains a long-term aspiration. See responses below however as we do want a participant rep from NI to join our board.
- As seen by the low number of respondents to this survey from these areas, we need players to engage with us more, particularly in specific areas such as becoming referees & joining media teams: join us to help us improve.
- We hope to have a participant representative from each home nation join our board to act as a link & put your views forward. Some clubs (e.g. Kapow, Rhondda) are doing amazing development work in their local area & we are always keen to support this (e.g. we supported Rhondda with their recent Sport Wales funding bid). We are limited by the number of volunteers wishing to set up new clubs as we can not create club leaders out of thin air. We'll explore ways of recruiting, but encourage current or ex-players interested in setting up a new club to get in touch.

## GOVERNANCE & CONDUCT: COMMENTS & RESPONSES

- There is also an attitude problem amongst some community clubs where they are not in the habit of taking their outs. We've also seen some manipulative behaviour from certain coaches where a player has wanted to move club for personal reasons, and the coaches have said that their position on the national team is at stake since they also coach the national team.
- There was no AGM at all last year. Calling a survey once a year listening and acting on feedback is kind of ridiculous given it only allows people to feedback on the questions set out by BD. Having a free text field for comments like this is the only way I can communicate any thoughts to BD.
- Become an official Sport England National Governing Body.
- Our technical committee has been active this season, giving out approx. 20 sanctions & 10 further warnings for various offences. We encourage all individuals to follow our Complaints policy as outlined on our [governance page](#) if they observe any cheating behaviour or breaches of the rules, as these are taken extremely seriously in order to protect the sanctity of our sport. Any complaints from national teams players regarding coaching would again be taken seriously - just follow the same procedure as above.
- No AGM has been missed; this season's AGM is taking place before the end of July. We are more responsive than most other NGB's via email & act on feedback constantly throughout the year - all you need to do is get in touch. Email [us](#) to give feedback at any time as we love to engage with our members - simple!
- We have submitted our pre-application to Sport England & are awaiting feedback on this. We hope to become officially recognised within 12 months if all goes well. It is vital we have player reps on the board for approval.



Thanks to our respondents for their final comments. We noted three particular patterns of feedback regarding what respondents would like to see improved: Referees, Adult Dodgeball Media, English National League Structure. We have listed these below alongside some more general comments:

## WHAT YOU LIKE: COMMENTS & RESPONSES

- *Number of uni events has been good, have seen quality of teams increase over past few years.*
- *The frequency and variety of events in the dodgeball community is incredibly engaging as it provides opportunities for players to improve at all levels. Keep running the regionals and opens as these are just as important for fostering engagement as national leagues.*
- *The amount of opens and opportunities to play, especially as a new player, has been a really really invaluable experience.*
- *The split between south/north for lower leagues to keep dodgeball more reachable*
- *Regional League! Essex Swords players dislike the long travels for national league and regional league allows them the short travel and good competition. Reminders and emails before any league meets. The venue for National League south and Regional league have been great! Dodgeballs for competition have never been old abused balls. Proper punishment for teams not turning up for league meets.*
- *Asking for feedback from the community and seeking to grow the sport.*
- *The consultancy with clubs to progress towards sustainability is really commendable.*
- *I think British dodgeball is run by well intentioned, generous people who love the sport. Keep doing what you're doing.*

- **Whilst there certainly was a hit to university dodgeball post-COVID, we are extremely pleased to see university clubs grow and develop further once again. We hope our focus on the HEDA scheme continues to support university clubs annually.**
- **We are glad you enjoy the range of events we put on.**
- **We hope to continue to provide more local opportunities as our sport grows. The pyramid league system will continue to develop in all areas where it is viable.**
- **We value our community immensely and always want to hear from you. You can always email any feedback further to us via [hello@britishdodgeball.com](mailto:hello@britishdodgeball.com). We love having 6-monthly development meetings with our club leaders as this helps us address an concerns and provide guidance on next development steps for each club individually.**
- **Our entire team is passionate about seeing dodgeball grow and succeed. Receiving feedback such as this is genuinely appreciated and a lovely way to end this year's survey report. Many thanks!**







# BRITISH DODGEBALL

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