

Body Ball™ – A Game for All Ages

Body Ball™ is a non-contact, cooperative and highly cardiovascular game that gets all of your students involved in working toward the same goal, literally. The “goal” in this case however is a person from your own team. Often referred to as an alternative to Dodgeball because of its non-aggressive play, Body Ball™ gets all participants involved and does not allow the more athletically inclined to dominate the play.

As with many things, Body Ball™ was developed out of necessity by Gordon King when he was teaching a junior high mixed grade, boys and girls phys. ed. class. He was trying to get all students involved because some of the traditional sports were dominated by a few in the class and as a result, not all of the students were engaged in activity. Body Ball™ gets all students involved by necessitating a teamwork atmosphere in order for the team to succeed. The object of Body Ball™ is for a team to pass the specialized fabric ball with fuzzy Velcro on it to teammates down the court while being guarded by the other team and eventually throwing the ball so that it sticks onto your own teams “catcher” wearing the specialized vest with Velcro hooks on it. The basic parameters of Body Ball™ that allow for all to participate regardless of skill and age include the following:

- Participants must be matched up with a check on the opposite team that is of equal size or ability.
- You can only hold onto the ball for 3 – 5 seconds (as determined by the instructor).
- The ball does not bounce and players are not allowed to run with the ball once they catch it.
- Once the ball is caught, the player with the ball is allowed to pivot in order to make a pass to a teammate.
- If a team drops a pass or a pass is knocked down by the defending team, the defending team is allowed to pick it up and go the other way with it. (this causes a constant transition element, which in turn creates an excellent cardiovascular workout)

Body Ball™ is often referred to as being very versatile in that both the formal game and various uses of the equipment outside of the game create a tremendous variety of activities for a class. For example, one adaptation to the formal game is to add another “catcher” to each team, or add another ball, or as one attendee of a session suggested, different point values could be given to the team depending on which color (blue/red) of the ball attached to the “catcher”.

Beyond the formal game, the Body Ball™ equipment is being used by instructors for variations of tag games, as an assisted catching device, a lead in to basketball and many other team sport units where learning how to utilize open space is as important as throwing and catching skills. Many agree that the only limit to the use of the equipment is ones imagination.

The official rules to Body Ball™ as well as descriptions of two adaptations accompany each game set and there are three different sizes of packages available so that a school or teacher or kids program leader can choose what will work best to serve their needs. To view comments from other teachers about the game, more applications and video clips of the game being played, visit www.bodyballgame.com or www.gteducational.com.