Medball Bum



Medieval Football [Soccer] as it Really Was!
(… or how we imagined it might have been)

Medball Bum is a miniatures game designed for fast and fun tournament play or small pick-up games (1-2 Players). The goal here is not to simulate realism, but rather to allow you to play out cinematic sports battles in the Dark Age & Medieval Eras using smart tactics and no small bit of luck.

At the first use of certain words, an alternate word is listed in [ ] as an aid to readers in parts of the world where Football is commonly called Soccer. You know… places like Australia, Bermuda, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Philippines, South Africa (and the Afrikaans translation sokker), U.S.; and sometimes interchangeably, casual, or 50/50 used in Lesotho, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Puerto Rico; (and Soka in) Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

The rules are kept concise and to the point. They build as they go, so some confusing things will be made clear later. If you still have any questions, or to get any of the figures shown, visit us at rrbminis.com.

Based on Chivalrous Bum rules by David Bezio © 2024
Medball Bum rules with permission by Rich Brown © 2026 -- **Draft #1**



Introduction & Background

The Blood on the Grass: An Introduction to Medball

The year is 948 AD. The air is thick with the scent of damp peat, roasting boar, and nervous sweat. On a patch of uneven, muddy earth between two rival encampments, ten men stand stripped to their tunics. There are no cheering crowds in grand stadiums here—only the grim, rhythmic banging of iron swords against wooden shields, and the low growl of chieftains wagering silver arm-rings on the outcome.

Before you sits a ball made of stitched pig bladder, wrapped in coarse bull-hide. It is heavy, unpredictable, and unforgiving.

This is not the gentleperson's sport of the modern era. There are no immaculate white lines, no nylon nets, and no whistle-blowing referees to shield you from a hard shoulder to the ribs. In the Dark Ages, this game is a test of raw shield-wall endurance, speed, and tribal pride. Survival is the strategy. Honor is often the only referee. Now bind your boots, steel your nerves, and prepare for Medball.

Medball - Official Rulebook: This is a summary of the real-life Medball game rules as handed down through the generations. Previously only learned by oral tradition, this written summary is especially helpful for those only familiar with modern football [soccer] rules because of the many differences, or for those who are not familiar with them at all.

1. Match Structure & Timing

- Single-Period Match: A game consists of one continuous block of play.
- Total Play Time: The match lasts for a predetermined duration; typically until sunset (e.g. 2-3 hours), or until one team scores 5 goals, or as agreed upon before kickoff.
- Hard Stop Timing: There is no game clock; time runs continuously. There is no Added Time or Stoppage Time for injuries, lost balls, or arguments. When the time expires, or one team scores 5 goals, the match is over instantly.

2. Teams and Positions

- Flexible Team Sizes: Matches are highly adaptable, though 5 vs 5 is considered the standard format with anywhere from 3 vs 3 to 13 vs 13 being commonly used as well.
- Positionless Play: There are no assigned positions. All Players are allowed to freely roam.
- The Absolute 'No Hands' Rule: Every single Player on the pitch must play under the exact same restrictions. No one is permitted to use their hands or arms to control, redirect, or stop the ball. While a Player can stand in front of the goal, they have no special privileges to use their hands.

3. The Pitch and Markings

- Variable Pitch Sizes: The playing field (Pitch [Field]) varies based on available space and Player count, but it is significantly smaller than a standard modern Pitch to ensure chaotic, close-quarters Action.
- No Ground Markings: The Pitch features boundary lines (or physical barriers) and two goals, but completely lacks internal markings like a center circle, penalty boxes, or goal creases.

4. Start of Play & Kickoffs

- The Initial Coin Flip: A coin flip dictates the start of the match. The winner chooses either the goal they wish to defend/attack, OR elects to take the initial kickoff.
- The Free Goal Kickoff: Because there is no center circle and the pitches are smaller, the kicking-off team starts with the ball directly in front of the goal they are defending. They may kick off freely to any other Player from this position to start the game. The opposing team must stand at least 5 paces away. Although cheating happens, it is considered to be very bad form to crowd the kicker.
- Post-Goal Restarts: After a goal is scored, the team that conceded the goal restarts play with a Free Goal Kickoff from their own end. The opposing team must stand at least 5 paces away.

5. Out-of-Bounds Restarts

- The Boundary Kick-In: When the ball goes completely over the side or end boundary lines, play stops. The team that did not last touch the ball restarts play by kicking it back onto the pitch from the exact spot it went out-of-bounds. The opposing team must stand at least 5 paces away.
- No Corner Kicks: Unlike modern soccer, there is no distinction between the ball going out the sides or past the ends. All out-of-bounds balls are restarted with a regular Kick-In.

6. Mechanics of Play

- No Offside Rule: Players can position themselves anywhere on the pitch at any time. "Cherry-picking" or lurking right next to the enemy goal is completely legal. Sometimes sheep are used as goal markers though, and will typically wander away if Players come too close.
- Permissible Physicality: Heavy body-checking and similar aggressive physical battling are an expected reality of the game. Tripping, due to the high risk of serious injury, and shoving/striking/holding due to using of the hands/arms, are not allowed and will draw a penalty if observed.

7. Fouls and Penalties

- Prohibited Acts: While much contact is legal, Players may not strike (punch or elbow a Player directly), trip (sweeping the legs from behind), or hold (grabbing clothing or limbs to restrict movement).
- No Warning System: There are no cautions, warnings, or yellow/red cards. Infractions result in immediate penalties based on the severity of the act.

Level 1: Standard Fouls (Holding / Shoving / Minor Tripping)

- The Uncontested Free Shot: For minor infractions like holding or tripping to disrupt play (items with no resultant injury), the fouled team receives a free kick from the exact spot the foul occurred. The offending team must stand at least 5 paces away.
- The Direct Threat: The Player taking the kick can shoot directly at the goal or pass to a teammate.

Level 2: Severe Fouls (Striking / Malicious Leg Sweeps)

- The Blood Penalty (Temporary Banishment): For acts of deliberate violence like stabbing/striking an opponent or a highly dangerous tackle (items that result in an injury), the offending Player is immediately banished from the pitch (and is not replaced) until the next goal is scored.
- The Penalty Spot-Kick: In addition to the Player banishment, the fouled team is awarded a direct shot at the opponent's goal from a designated distance (e.g., 10 paces out). No defenders may block the path, but one is placed just ahead of the goal line, so it is not a totally open goal shot.



8. Goal Verification and Scoring

- The Goal Post Markers: The target consists solely of two low physical markers (such as heavy stones, wooden stakes driven into the ground, shields, or grazing sheep) to define the width of the goal. There is no net and no crossbar.
- The Scoring Condition: To score a point, the ball must pass entirely between the two goal markers.
- The Height Limit: Because there is no crossbar, the ball must pass through the markers below the head-height of the tallest Player on the pitch. Any ball kicked higher than the head height is ruled "out of bounds" and results in a Kick-In for the defending team.
- Dispute Resolution (The Chieftain's Call): If there is a disagreement over whether a ball went between the markers or was too high, the dispute is settled by an impartial bystander chosen before the match (a "Chieftain" or "Elder"). If no such person is present, the goal only counts if the defending team openly concedes it. If a fierce argument stalls the game, remember that the match clock never stops running.

Items Needed to Play Medball Bum

Now that you know how to play Medball in real-live, here are some things needed to play Medball Bum in miniature:
Some 6-sided dice (d6), a ruler marked in inches or millimeters (1 Pace is equal to 1 inch or 25 mm.), miniature figures to represent the Players, a Pitch to uses as the play area (9"x9" for a 3 vs 3 match, 18"x18" for 5 vs 5, or larger as desired), and 4 goal markers.

Note: Needing to roll one die is indicated as 1d6, two of them 2d6, etc.

General Rules

Note: Each real-life game-Player acts as one team's Head Coach. All references in these rules to "Player/Players" pertain to the miniature figures that make up the teams.

Forming up a Team

Matches have 1 Captain per team plus other Players totaling the agreed upon number. All Players are defined by 4 attributes (collectively referred to as their Pitchworth): **Speed, Shoot, Scrap, and Salt**. All Players also start with the number of **Hit Points** (HP) shown on the table and a **Luck** score (discussed later). First pick Players randomly from the table below based on the available miniatures and the agreed upon total. Ex. If it's a 3 vs 3 match, pick 3 Players, limiting the selection to the available poses (the Character Cards ID the poses, and offer a good random picking solution by blindly drawing cards). Some Matches may also allow for extra Bench Players to be picked to allow for substitutions.

Player Character Type	Speed	Shoot	Scrap	Salt	HP
Rock [Brick-Wall]	1d6	1d6	1d6	2d6	2
Chopper [Cheap Shot]	1d6	1d6	2d6	1d6	2
Roadrunner [Burner]	2d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	2
Pinger [Sharpshooter]	1d6	2d6	1d6	1d6	2
Diver [Faker]	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	2
Joe Bloggs [Average Joe]	1d6	1d6	1d6	1d6	3
Ham [Show-Off]	2d6	2d6	1d6	1d6	1

Next, choose any Player except for a Ham to be the Team Captain, then roll for the Captain's Special Trait to be added to the standard character type.

1d6	Captain's Special Trait
1-2	+1d6 Speed
3-4	+1d6 Shoot
5-6	+1d6 Scrap
7-8	+1d6 Salt
9-10	+1 HP
11-12	Ham

Attributes & Pitchworth
Each Player's 4 attributes (Speed, Shoot, Scrap, and Salt) all start as listed on the Player Character Type table, but can be increased up to a maximum of 3d6 with experience. Whenever a Player wants to do something, the Team's Head Coach rolls the applicable attribute's Pitchworth (1d6 to 3d6 dice) and read the result of the highest die rolled only. For example: If you roll 2d6 and get a 3 and 6, the result of the roll is 6. In rare cases, a Player might be listed as having a 0d6, -1d6, etc. Pitchworth. In those cases, roll 2d6, 3d6, etc. respectively, and take the lowest die rolled only.

Testing Luck: Luck tests are different. Most Players begin with a Luck Score of 4. Diver Players start with 3. To succeed, you must roll your current Luck score or better on 1d6. With a failure, the current score is increased by one (3+ to 4+ etc. to a max. of 6). [Optional: Luck tests can be used to resolve Actions or questions not specifically covered in these rules].

Match Dice: Each team starts a match with 3 Match Dice. These can be expended to reroll ANY die rolls until they are gone. You CAN reroll rerolls, but must accept the final result.

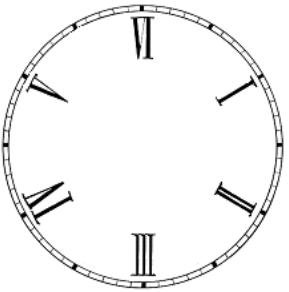
The Match Rounds/Turns
The Match takes place over a series of Rounds. During a Round, each Team member on the pitch gets a Turn. On a Turn, a Player may take **2 of the following Actions** (including the same Action twice): Do Nothing, Move, Aim, Mount/ Dismount, Shoot/Pass (if controlling the ball), Scrap, or take another Action (picking up an item, using a special ability, etc.).

Initiative: At the beginning of each Round, roll off (1d6) to see who (the highest roll) activates a Player first, with sides alternating after that. A Head Coach with more Players activates the extras in succession at the end of the Round.

Speed
Speed is the maximum number of inches (roll your Speed Pitchworth) a Player can move in a Turn. The randomness represents your Player tripping, or getting confused.

Charge: If a Player moves adjacent to an opposing Player, initiating a Scrap, he gains a +1 to the Scrap roll this Round. A Player can move out of a Scrap, but NOT back in, the same Round. Any move not initiating a Scrap (i.e. moving twice) must end >1" from any opposing Player.

Easy/Rough Going (for Unusual Pitches): A Player can traverse ladders, cliffs, pigpens, rubble or any other rough ground or obstacle at a cost of double movement (count 2 paces for every 1 pace crossed). They can similarly travel with a heavy load such as a wounded friend or crate/barrel. Easy Going (i.e. road travel) is the reverse; double speed (count 1 pace for every 2 paces traveled).



Scatter Direction/Distance: Sometimes, the ball (or other object) is deflected and goes off randomly. When that happens, orient the dial image with the VI toward the Home Team's goal (or other landmark) and roll 1d6 to determine the direction the ball goes. Then roll 1d6 again to determine the number of Paces it goes. A Player moving to/past the ball's final resting spot may automatically recover it without making any special die roll.

Throwing (Ranges: Short 4+, Long 5+, Extreme 6+)
Throwing is the change of getting any object to a target spot when the Player is using its hands.

Line of Sight (LoS): In order for a Player to Shoot, Pass, or Throw to another (or to the goal), he must be able to see the target. You have LoS if a straight line can be drawn from any part of one Player to any part of the target without touching additional Player or terrain. **8**

Shooting/Passing (Ranges: Short 4+, Long 5+, Extreme 6+)
Shooting/Passing is the chance of getting the ball to a target spot the Player is using their feet.

Range (NO pre-measuring)**:** Declaring a target, then measure the distance from the front of the base to any part of the target. If the target is within range, you can roll to hit. If not it's an automatic miss. Each item has a short, long, and extreme range. You need to roll a 4+ to hit at Short Range, 5+ at Long, and 6+ at Extreme. A target hit with a weapon must pass a Salt roll or suffer 1 wound. One hit with a ball must pass a Salt roll to gain control of the ball, else roll for the ball scatter direction and distance. One hit with a cabbage must pass a Salt roll to remain focused, else loose its next Action.

Shooting/Passing Die Roll Modifiers: Kicker Aimed +1, Target obscured behind Cover -1.

Range Table	Short (4+)	Long (5+)	Extreme (6+)
Knife/Rock/Cabbage	1"	2"	+2" to 4"
Ball	1"	3"	+3" to 10"

Interceptions
Any Player which has not yet activated may attempt to intercept a Shot/Pass that comes within 2 Paces of them. This is **not** a free Action. If the attempt fails, the Player is marked as Activated (i.e. loses the ability to take a Turn this Round). If the attempt succeeds, the shooting/passing Player's Turn is ended, and the intercepting Player Activates with 1 remaining Action to perform. The roll needed to Intercept is based on the distance or **Range the Player is from the Shooter/Passer (Short 6+, Long 5+, Extreme or farther 4+).**

Player Substitutions (if Bench Players are in use)
Substitutions are done on the fly by moving one Player off the pitch (by any side) and then later moving the new Player on. If a Player only takes one Action to exit, the sub can take one Action on the same Turn.

Scrap/Tackle
A Player adjacent to an opponent may enter into a Scrap (scuffle/fight) or attempt to Tackle (get the ball). Both sides make a Scrap Roll. The highest roll wins and if in a Scrap, the loser must make a Salt roll or take a wound, if a Tackle the winner gets/retains the ball. Ties are a stalemate and play continues with no change.
Scrap Die Roll Modifiers: Recklessly Charging Players get +1 on the first Turn only (see Cheating); One or more friendly Players are also engaged with the same opponent, AND your side outnumbers the other +1; Player with illegal weapons +1; Player defending the high ground (not all Medball pitches need be flat), or behind wall +1; Wounded -1/wound.
Leaving a Scrap: Player may attempt to **disengage** from a Scrap during their movement, but must Test their Luck or take 1 wound as they try to escape (Salt rolls apply). Disengaging counts as the 1st Action and moving away as the 2nd.

Salt (5+; 6+ if Already Wounded)
Salt is a Player's ability to withstand pain and stay upright when wounded. When a Player is hit with a weapon, it may take damage. Throw a Salt roll. If the roll is 5+ (or 6+ if already wounded), it's only a flesh wound; if less the model suffers a hit point of damage and is considered "wounded".

Hit Points: Once all HP are gone, a further hit point kills or incapacitates the Player. Remove the model from the game.

Cheating & Getting Caught
Players may wish to cheat in order to get an advantage.

- Faking an injury to get a Foul called, use hands to get a +2 on a Interception attempt, or a trip/hold so the opposing Player only gets 1 Action on their next Turn, simply make a Testing Luck roll. Failure draws a Level 1 Foul.
- Those Recklessly Charging, wanting to knock an opposing Player down so they lose their entire next Turn, and take a Wound, initiate a Scrap, then make a Testing Luck roll to see if they got away with it. Failure draws a Level 2 Foul.

Spoils to the Victor!

After a Match is over, the side that won (scored the most goals, or accomplished some other victory condition) gains a boon for the next Match. Roll 1d6.

1D6	Boon
1-2	+1 Match Die or +1 Bench Player*
3-4	+2 Bench Players*
5	+2 Match Dice
6	+1d6 to any attribute (3 max.) of any 1 Player

* Having Bench Players allows a Head Coach to change Players on the Pitch to better meet current situations.

Optional Rules

- A Player that picks 2x Do Nothing Actions, may (if they have the ball) take an opportunity Shoot/Pass Action later the same Round during another Player's Turn, or similarly (if they do not have the ball) may attempt to intercept a shot/pass that comes within 4 Paces of them.
- The Referee's location is marked. Either Head Coach can move the Ref. 1d6 Paces in place of any of their Player's Turn. If the Ref. is within 6 Paces of a cheater, there will be -1 on the Testing Luck roll.
- The Coach's location is marked. Either Head Coach can move the Coach figure 1d6 Paces up or down the sideline in place of any of their Player's Turn. All Players within 6 Paces of their Head Coach will get +1 on all rolls.
- Crowd Interaction Happens. Once per Round max., each Head Coach can rile the crowd up who will then either: 1-2 throw rocks, or 3-6 throw cabbages, at the opposing team. Measure Range from the nearest front edge of the Stands if a model of them is present, or use Extreme Range if not.
- Sheep for Goal Markers… WIP
- Rolling Pigs for Side Bets… WIP

Solo or Cooperative Play Rules

When an opposing Head Coach isn't available to face you across the Pitch, you can always control both teams as neutrally as possible. For a true solitaire challenge, however, this section introduces the OPFOR Protocol (Opposing Force Protocol). This system drives the opposing team using randomized tactical logic. It cannot replicate the long-term scheming of a human mind, but it ensures your solo Matches remain unpredictable, challenging, and tense. Choose a scenario, and recruit teams using common sense. Use the following rules on the opponents Turn:

- Players will always use their special abilities when they have the opportunity.
- Roll 1d6 on the list below. If there is a Player that fits the criteria for that result, Activate it. If not, simply move down the list to the next result until you find a Player to Activate, then use it as indicated.
  Activate a Player that can: 1-2 = Shoot/Pass, 3-4 = Scrap/Tackle, 5 = Move, 6 = Do Nothing.

Shoot:/Pass If a Player with the ball has a LoS to the goal that HONESTLY looks to be in range, then activate the Player to Aim/Shoot, If they can move to a shooting position, the Move/Shoot, or Move/Pass to a Player in a better spot.

Scrap/Tackle: If a Players can charge into Scrap, choose the Player that has the closest enemy and charge with it. Follow-up with a Scrap attack. Or if a Player is already adjacent to an enemy, attack the lout!

Move: Get a move on! If more than one Player fits the criteria, roll randomly to Activate a Player.

Do Nothing: Player will watch to Shoot/Pass later if they have the ball, or will look to Intercept if not.

Player Character Types

These rules use archetype Player characters (listed below). Each character has special abilities. Each Player is assigned to a type by their body pose (not their head/face).
Note: "(x2)" means there are 2 poses for this character available in a full team. The cards have all the Player images.



Rock (x2): A passive defensive obstacle focused on spatial denial, they use their strength to shield the ball.
+2 Scrap vs being Tackled.





Chopper (x2): A malicious defender who relies on cynical fouls and rule-breaking rather than athletic ability to stop opponents. They deliberately hurt or frustrate skillful Players to take them out of the game. They specialize in late tackles, and subtle provocations.
+1 if initiating a Scrap.





Roadrunner (x2): A pure speed merchant whose entire game relies on explosive acceleration and straight-line velocity. They exploit open spaces to chase down long balls and leave defenders stranded in their wake.
+1 Speed.





Pinger (x2): A master passer possessing elite technical precision and incredible vision to distribute the ball across long distances. They can accurately drop a cross or a diagonal switch right onto a teammate's foot from anywhere on the Pitch.
+1 Shooting/Passing.



Diver (x2): A theatrical attacker who uses deception and exaggerated falls to trick the referee into awarding fouls. They prioritize drawing penalties and cards over staying on their feet to create genuine goal-scoring chances. They deliberately seek out minor physical contact in the penalty box to collapse realistically and manufacture set-piece advantages.





Diver Players start with a Luck score of 3.



Joe Bloggs (x2): An aggressive, physical enforcer focused on intimidating and disrupting opponents, they specialize in bone-crunching tackles. A functional utility Player who executes basic footballing tasks reliably without any flashy skill or elite athleticism. They offer consistent work rate and tactical discipline to balance out the more eccentric stars on the squad. They stick strictly to short, safe passes and standard duties to avoid making costly mistakes. This is the general basic trait for every Medball Player. As such the core rules and stats for Joe Bloggs are based on this.





Ham: The Ham is a flamboyant entertainer who prioritizes technical flair, trickery, and crowd-pleasing skills over efficient team play. They use step-overs, and unnecessary flips to humiliate defenders and win-over/energize the spectators. They slow down the attack to engage defenders in isolated, one-on-one duels using complex/impressive freestyle moves. If they move less then half their Speed, +3 Scrap vs being Tackled. If using the Optional Rule Crowd Interaction Happens, the crowd will not throw anything at the Ham Player.

Medball Bum

Quick Reference Sheet

The Game Rounds/Turns: On a Turn, a Player may take **2 of the following Actions** (including the same Action twice): Do Nothing, Move, Aim, Mount/ Dismount, Shoot/Pass (if controlling the ball), Scrap, or take another Action (picking up an item, using a special ability, etc.).

Movement: Roll your Speed Pitchworth.
Speed Modifiers: Mounted Players move +6". Crossing Rough Going cost double; Easy Going cost half.

Shooting/Passing (Ranges: Short 4+, Long 5+, Extreme 6+)
Shooting/Passing Die Roll Modifiers: Kicker Aimed +1, Target obscured behind Cover -1.

Range Table	Short (4+)	Long (5+)	Extreme (6+)
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Interceptions: Based on the Range the Player is from the Shooter/Passer (**Short 6+, Long 5+, Extreme or farther 4+**).

Player Character Types:

- **Rock:** +2 Scrap vs being Tackled.
- **Chopper:** +1 if initiating a Scrap.
- **Roadrunner:** +1 Speed.
- **Pinger:** +1 Shooting/Passing.
- **Diver:** Player starts with a Luck score of 3.
- **Joe Bloggs:** Core rules and stats.
- **Ham:** If moves less then half Speed, +3 Scrap vs being Tackled. The crowd will not throw anything at them.

Scrap/Tackle: a scuffle/fight or attempt to Tackle (get the ball). Both sides make a Scrap Roll. The highest roll wins and if in a Scrap, the loser must make a Salt roll or take a wound, if a Tackle the winner gets/retains the ball. Ties are a stalemate and play continues with no change.
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