

Q&A

VEX V5 Robotics Competition 2024-2025: High Stakes

Tagged: G1

Welcome to the official VEX V5 Robotics Competition Question & Answer system, where all registered teams have the opportunity to ask for official rules interpretations and clarifications. This Q&A system is the only source for official V5RC High Stakes rules clarifications, and the clarifications made here from the Game Design Committee (GDC) are considered as official and binding as the written [Game Manual](#) itself.

Please review the [Q&A Usage Guidelines](#) before posting. This system is only intended for specific V5RC High Stakes rules questions.

- For event, registration, or other competition support questions, please contact your [REC Foundation Regional Support Manager](#).
 - For VEX technical support, contact support@vex.com or sales@vex.com.
- For game questions, suggestions, or concerns outside of specific and official rules questions, contact GDC@vex.com.

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657: Request for reconsideration - 3D printed part for field

23-Sep-2020

G1

We had submitted a request to use a 3D printed part to secure the side goals to the side of the field. This goal, as originally designed, is failing in use 100% of the time. It is not possible to keep the height of the lower ring within tolerance throughout a match without some additional support. The PVC posts are not rigid enough to hold keep the rings of the goal in place through normal game play.



The 3D printed part we have suggested provides needed support by securing the second ring to the field side. Without support, these goals do not hold up to game play and the opening between the first and second ring cannot be maintained within the required specification.

We are happy to provide the files for the 3D printed part to VEX and to all all event partners. Or we are open to a metal bracket, similar to that used in the field corners.



Answered by committee

As noted in the original question:

In certain circumstances, this modification hinders the intended performance of the goal, and was intentionally not included in the original design of the field. Therefore, this modification will not be legal to use during an official competition.

We would advise any Teams or Event Partners having repeated failures of this nature to take care not to over- or under-tighten the rings onto their PVC pipes. If the ring is overtightened, there may be white discoloration in the plastic around the nut/screw, and it may even crack. If the ring is under-tightened, the PVC pipe will be very easy to slide and cause out-of-tolerance failures like the one shown in your photo.

602: Definition of Owned balls at same height

13-May-2020

G1

The definition of *Owned* states:

Owned - A Goal status. A Goal is considered Owned by an Alliance if its colored Ball is the vertically highest Scored Ball in that Goal.

The definition of Scored states:

Scored - A Ball status. A Ball is considered Scored in a Goal if it is not touching a Robot of the same color as the Ball and meets all of the following criteria.

- The Ball is fully or partially within the outer edge of the Goal.
- The Ball is fully below the upper edge of the Goal.
- The Ball is not contacting the foam tiles outside of the Goal.

What happens if two balls of opposing colors are *scored* in a goal, but neither is higher than the other? For example, see this picture: <https://imgur.com/a/Kz5IOjz>

Answered by committee

What happens if two balls of opposing colors are *scored* in a goal, but neither is higher than the other? For example, see this picture: <https://imgur.com/a/Kz5IOjz>

This Goal would not be Owned by either Alliance.

599: "Locking" Balls in Corner Goals

13-May-2020

G1

As documented in this thread on the forum: <https://www.vexforum.com/t/ball-lockout-critical-flaw-in-game-design/80888>

it is possible to "lock" balls in corner goals by shoving them into the tight space between the poles and the rings. Once "locked" balls are difficult to remove by hand and are extremely difficult for robots to remove. As Change Up is intended to be a back and forth game with copious amounts of descoring, it seems odd that this be possible. Did the GDC intend that this strategy be possible? If not, will the GDC consider making provisions to prevent balls from becoming "locked", such as by modifying the field specifications to include a stand off mounted to the bottom ring?

Here is a direct link to a picture:

<https://www.vexforum.com/uploads/default/original/3X/6/f/6fe513ed40c912dd38536246de508b1a6cbdf6ef.jpeg>

Answered by committee

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. This question will be addressed in the May 25th Game Manual Update.

2595: Follow-on to 2544: SG7 & SC8: Forcing Loss of AWP

2-Mar-2025

G1 G13 G17 SG7

Looking for clarification to answers to 2544: SG7 & SC8: Forcing Loss of AWP.

While at a tournament this weekend, prior to start of match R1 appeared to program a new auton to their robot. At the start of auton period, R1 drove in a straight line crossing the auton line and going all the way over to the Blue side while pushing red and blue rings with it and stopping near the field wall disrupting the auton of B1. Referees deliberated for a while and ultimately gave auton bonus to Blue but no win point for Blue and no disqualification for R1. The crossing appeared intentional to deliberately impact B1 from achieving winpoint bonus. Not getting winpoint caused B1 to drop from 1st place to 3rd place in qualifications (this was B1's last quals match) and changed the dynamic of alliance

selection. Questions: If intentional, is there any situation where Referees replay autonomous period? Can referees ask to see autonomous code to make determination if intentional? Seems as if G1, G13c, G17, as well as SG7 would apply. R1 losing auton bonus was consequence of crossing, but B1 was essentially penalized by not having opportunity to finish match auton to try to complete the requirements for winpoint. Believe some additional rule clarification is needed for this type of situation/action or to discourage this.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GW44S5ESwdY&t=22684s> Match 91 at the 6 hr 17 second mark

Answered by committee

If intentional, is there any situation where Referees replay autonomous period?

Match Replays, as described in rule [<T7>](#), are warranted when Matches are negatively affected by field faults or game rule issues. Rule Violations by Teams are not situations that should result in Match Replays, and should instead be handled through Major and/or Minor Violations as appropriate.

Can referees ask to see autonomous code to make determination if intentional?

No. The referee's judgment call must be made based on the context of the Match and the event. Based on your description, the Head Referee could reasonably have considered Robot R1's actions as an intentional, strategic, or egregious Violation and given them a Disqualification for the Match based on the 2nd Violation Note for [<SG7>](#), although that decision can only be made by the Head Referee.

Note: This guidance may be expanded or revised in the April 2, 2025, Game Manual update for the VEX Robotics World Championship.

2514: Clarification on rules

7-Feb-2025

G1 SG4

The latest official ruling in the Q&A have caused some confusion for the kids on our team. Below is how the team have interpreted the game and how they formulated their robot and game strategies.

Referencing the Game Manual Version 3.0

Page 1 — Introduction

The primary objectives of the game are to Pass the Balls between Robots, score Balls through Targets, and Clear Switches. Balls are introduced to the field through the Loading Station or, during the last 15 seconds of a Match, a Rapid Load Zone.

Page 6 — General Definitions

Field – The entire playing Field, being six (6) field tiles wide by eight (8) field tiles long (totaling forty-eight (48) field tiles), including the Field Perimeter.

Page 12 — Game-Specific Definitions

Loading Station – The gray structure, built out of VEX IQ parts, that is attached to the Field Perimeter opposite the Goal Wall. The Loading Station is intended to receive Balls from a human Loader and randomly send them left or right into the Load Zone.

Load Zone – An area of the Field containing the Loading Station, bound by the Field Perimeter and the inside of the second solid black line from the edge of the Field (marked by two yellow VEX IQ beams). The Load Zone is an infinitely tall 3-dimensional volume; “reaching over” the black line without contacting the Floor would still constitute being partially in the Load Zone.

Page 2 — About the Game Manual - A Note from the GDC

Obviously, all Teams must adhere to these rules, and any stated intents of these rules.

In consideration of everything listed above, our team has interpreted the above manual entries as follows:

The team must adhere to all rules and stated intents in the manual, including the intended use of the loading station; it receives balls from a human loader and randomly send them left or right into the 3-dimensional volume of the load zone at which point the robot can pickup the ball.

The team's understanding is any robot action that prevents the completion of the intended use of the Loading Station would be a violation, specifically its ability to randomize.

2052: <SG4d> - Additional Clarification on Robots in Loading Zone

If the human Loader is no longer contacting a Ball that is being (or has been) Loaded, it is legal for a Robot to enter the Load Zone.

In consideration of Q&A 2052, our team's interpretation of the game remained the same.

When a human loader is no longer in contact with a ball that is being loaded, the robot can enter the load zone and its 3-dimensional volume, including contact with the loading station, as long as the robot does not violate the intended use of the loading station to introduce the ball into the field randomly left or right.

2484: Can a robot extend over the front of the Loading Station

There is no rule prohibiting a Robot from making contact with a Ball in the Loading Station before the Ball is "randomized" by falling left or right onto the Floor.

<SG4> clause D simply states, "No Robot(s) may be in the Load Zone at the time the Ball is released by the Loader."

The answer to 2484 counters and negates the intended use of the Loading Station per the definition in the manual as highlighted previously.

The definition of "loading station" applies every time "loading station" is referenced in the manual, therefore, it isn't defined under any Rules, but defined in the "Game-Specific Definitions" section of the manual.

The ruling in Q&A 2484 changes the definition and intention of Loading Station.

In this case, would the committee be able to reevaluate the official ruling in Q&A 2484 to match the definition of Loading station per the game manual?

Else, which takes precedence—the definition of Loading Station in the latest version of the game manual or the definition of Loading Station without the intent of randomizing as described in the official ruling in the

Answered by committee

Per clause D of rule [<SG4>](#), "No Robot(s) may be in the Load Zone at the time the Ball is released by the Loader."

Per [Q&A 2052](#), if the human Loader is no longer contacting a Ball that is being (or has been) Loaded, it is legal for a Robot to enter the Load Zone.

After the Ball is released by the Loader, per [Q&A 2484](#), there is no rule prohibiting a Robot from making contact with a Ball in the Loading Station before the Ball is "randomized" by falling left or right onto the Floor.

Once the Loader has released the Ball into the Loading Station, there aren't any rules that define how and when a Robot can or can't contact the Ball.

2426: Strategic use of R3

10-Jan-2025

G1 G3 R3 T5 T6

[<G1>](#), [<G3>](#), [<R3>](#), [<T5>](#), [<T6>](#), Code of Conduct

If a team notices a problem with another team's robot, which would likely cause that team to fail a 'spot inspection', do they have an obligation to report that information in a timely manner? Or could they wait until it is strategically advantageous to do so?

Example: During qualification matches, Team A noticed that Team B's robot brain placement probably should not have passed inspection. Fixing the problem would have taken considerable time. Rather than approaching Team B and letting them know so they could fix their robot proactively, or informing the Head Referee directly, Team A waited until they were about to face Team B in a semi-final elimination match before pointing out the problem to the Head Referee.

Should Team B be allowed to play their match since they've played through all the qualification matches and it's at the Head Referee's discretion whether to conduct spot inspections? Or should their robot be removed from the field per R3, T5 & T6. Has Team A violated G1, G3, or the Code of Conduct?

Answered by committee

We believe that this scenario falls under rule [<G1>](#), "Treat everyone with respect." If you see anyone breaking a rule at a Match Field, you should immediately bring it to the Head Referee's attention and let them handle it as they deem appropriate. If you see a Violation away from the Field, you should alert the Event Partner. Teams must use extreme caution when handling these situations, and should remember to remain respectful, civil, truthful, and professional. Once the matter has been reported to the Head Referee or the Event Partner, their decisions and ruling will be final as described in rules [<T1>](#) and [<T4>](#).

If a Head Referee believes a Team is reporting potential Robot rule Violations strategically, maliciously, or speculatively, it should be treated as a [<G1>](#) Violation and immediately brought to the attention of the Event Partner who should then consult with the REC Foundation Regional Support Manager as described in the Violation Notes for [<G1>](#).

If a Team's Robot is found to be in Violation of a Robot rule during an event, rule [<R3>](#) (specifically clauses C, D, & E) will apply.

In the specific case you describe, in which a Team believes another Team's Robot Brain is in an unsafe location, Head Referees must apply judgment to determine whether or not the reported Team should be allowed to continue without modifying the Robot.

242: Legality of "coaching" from the stands/audience by team members and adults

13-Feb-2019

G1 G2 G3

I have a question regarding the legality of students or adults calling out from the stands/audience to drivers during a match. By far the two most common examples I have seen of this are:

- Someone periodically calling out the remaining time in the match, particularly if the students on the drive team are unable to see a match timer.
- Someone calling out "Get the yellow hub" or "Go hang" near the end of the match.

I have never seen this done in a disrespectful way so assume for this question that nothing is being said in a derogatory or offensive manner.

I have been told "*All Drive team members are in Drivers stations and are students. There are NO coaches - Thus the coaching from any location is illegal.*" and that teams could be disqualified because of this. The reasoning for this was based on their interpretation of the following from the game manual and Code of Conduct:

G1 In all aspects of the VEX IQ Challenge program, the Students make the decisions and do the work with adult mentorship. Code of Conduct: • Student-centered teams with limited adult assistance.

G3 When reading and applying the various rules in this document, please remember that common sense always applies in the VEX IQ Challenge.

Nothing in the above would apply to students "coaching." Also, "adult mentorship" and "limited adult assistance" could be interpreted to allow adult "coaching" during a match.

So, I have two specific questions.

1. Are students in the stands/audience allowed to call out time or things like "Go hang"?
2. Are adults in the stands/audience allowed to call out time or things like "Go hang"?

For completeness here are rules G1, G2, and G3 in their entirety.

G1 Treat everyone with respect. All Students and adults associated with a Team are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and positive manner while participating in the VEX IQ Challenge. If Team members are disrespectful or uncivil to staff, volunteers, or fellow teams at an event, the team may be Disqualified from their current or upcoming Match. Judges may also consider team conduct and ethics when determining awards.

In all aspects of the VEX IQ Challenge program, the Students make the decisions and do the work with adult mentorship. The VEX community prides itself on being a positive learning environment where no one is bullied, harassed, or berated. Teams avoid placing unnecessary stress upon students and/or event volunteers; instead, challenging situations are viewed as teachable moments to model positive behaviors and good sportsmanship.

This rule exists alongside the REC Foundation Code of Conduct. Violation of the Code of Conduct can be considered a violation of <G1> and can result in Disqualification from a current Match, an upcoming Match, an entire event, or (in extreme cases) an entire competition season. The Code of Conduct can be found at http://link.roboticseducation.org/recf_codeofconduct.

G2 VEX IQ is a student-centered program. Adults may assist Students in urgent situations, but adults should never work on or program a Robot without Students on that Team being present and actively participating.

> Some amount of adult mentorship, teaching, and/or guidance is an expected and encouraged facet of the VEX IQ Challenge. No one is born an expert in robotics! However, obstacles should always be viewed as teaching opportunities, not tasks for an adult to solve without Students present and actively participating. >
> When a mechanism falls off, it is... > ...okay for an adult to help a Student investigate why it failed, so it can be improved. > ...not okay for an adult to put the robot back together. > > When a team encounters a complex programming concept, it is...> > ...okay for an adult to guide a Student through a flowchart to understand its logic. > ...not okay for an adult to write a pre-made command for that Student to reference.

G3 Use common sense. When reading and applying the various rules in this document, please remember that common sense always applies in the VEX IQ Challenge.

Answered by committee

There is no one-size-fits-all blanket answer for this topic. In general, infrequent comments from the stands in the spirit of cheering on the students are aligned with the student-centered policy of the Game Design Committee and the REC Foundation.

Cheering from the stands, especially for a key end-of-match moment, is an exciting part of the VEX IQ Challenge's intensity; there is no positive learning experience to be gained by penalizing Student Drivers for receiving encouragement from their excited fans.

Similarly, calling out the amount of time remaining in a Match is a common practice for many play-by-play announcers, and is even included in the [relevant Referee Training video](#) as a suggestion to help with the 30-second Driver switch.

However - frequent, direct, and specific coaching instructions ("turn left, now pick up the Hub, now turn right, now go score") would not be within the spirit of the various student-centered guidelines in the Game Manual, Code of Conduct, Judges Guide, etc.

2237: Mentor participation!

28-Oct-2024

G1

We want to go to a local tournament for V5. However we are unsure if our mentor can make it. Is it possible for teams to compete without their main mentor present?

Answered by committee

Rule [<S2>](#) requires that Students at an event be supervised by an Adult who is present for the full duration of the event in the case of an emergency. This Adult does not have to be a team coach or mentor.

1803: Regarding G1 and Calling out of Penalties

1-Dec-2023

G1

I am wondering if a team respectfully calling out a penalty that is not being called by the refs is a violation of G1. What is the preferred method of letting a ref know that a team is committing a penalty? [<G1>](#)

Answered by committee

Respectfully advocating for your Team and Alliance is not an inherent Violation of rule [<G1>](#).

Although every head-to-head Match is watched by at least one Head Referee, the number of Robots and the size of the field lead to cases in which a Head Referee is unaware of an ongoing Violation or Holding interaction. As described in rule [<T1>](#), a Head Referee will make their calls based solely on what they (and their Scorekeeper Referees) observed during the Match.

Per rule [<T3>](#), "Communication and conflict resolution skills are an important life skill for Students to practice and learn." In a case where a Drive Team Member feels the need to call the Head Referee's attention to specific actions on the field, they should ensure that all communications remain professional and respectful in accordance with the REC Foundation Code of Conduct and rule [<G1>](#).

1696: Spanish Game Manual

13-Oct-2023

G1

Hello

Will the game manual be published in a Spanish edition like in Change Up?

Thanks

Answered by committee

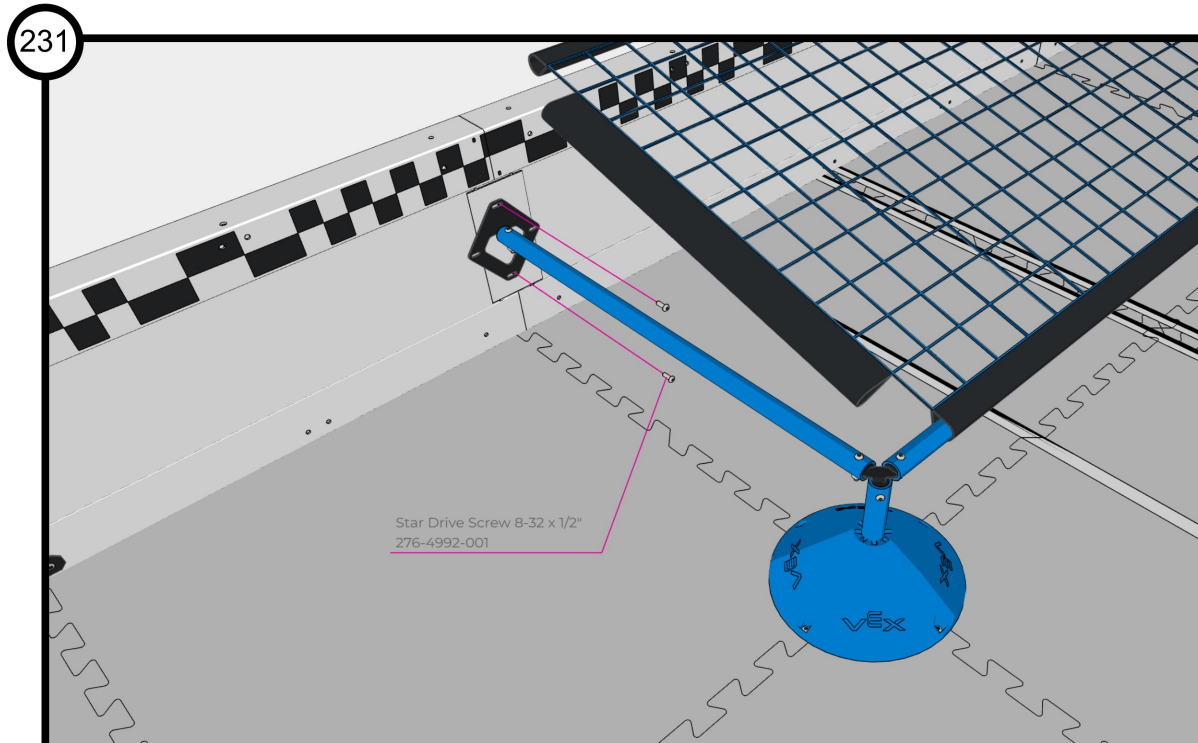
Please review the [Q&A Usage Guidelines](#). This question does not fall under the scope of the Q&A, and would be better suited for an alternative source of discussion such as the VEX Forum or an email to GDC@vex.com.

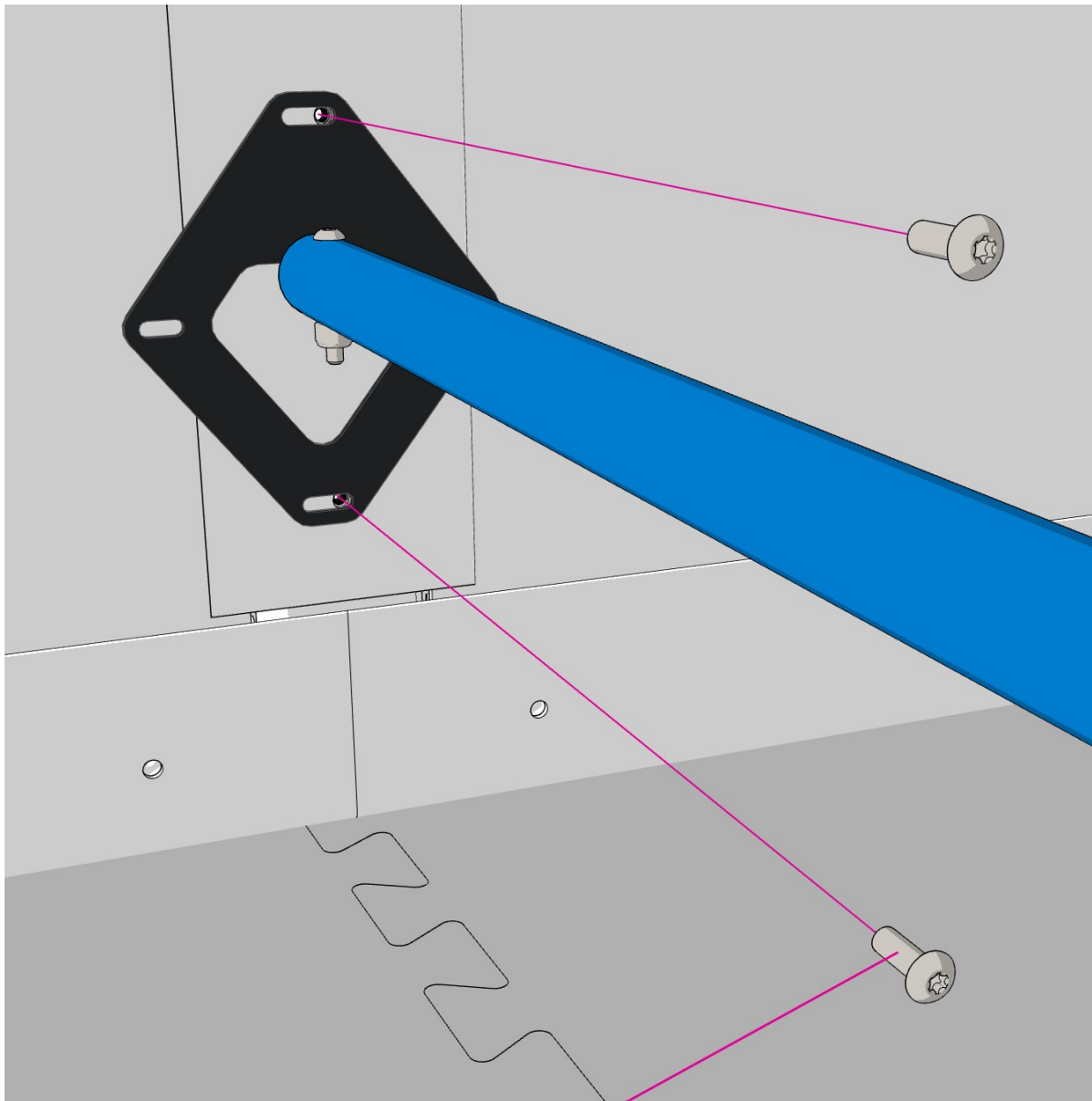
1535: Over Under Field Assembly

7-Jun-2023

<G1>

Step 231 uses 1/2" screws to connect the net to the field perimeter wall. However, there is no way for the screws to stay put. I have looked throughout the assembly manual to make sure I didn't miss anything. I have looked through the holes in the perimeter walls to confirm my thinking that there is nothing inside to attach to. Even poked a screwdriver all the way through. I'm wondering what the fix was? I can't find anything online yet. I want to maintain legality of the field for competition purposes.





Answered by committee

Please review the [Q&A Usage Guidelines](#). This question does not fall under the scope of the Q&A, and would be better suited for an alternative source of discussion such as the [VEX Forum](#) or a call to [VEX Support](#).

1478: <G1> One Team doing Everything at a Teamwork Challenge

25-Feb-2023

G1

<G1> During multiple events, we have witnessed teams capable of doing all dispensers and as such asked their teammate to sit and let them run the whole match. It is even noted in this QA, <https://www.robotevents.com/VIQC/2022-2023/QA/1456> As it is noted that the QA and Game Manual are the only official documentation for rules, the explanation of G1 was sent in an email. In an email from Dan Mantz, that not everyone has received, he stated:

Understanding Rule <G1>

In the [VEX IQ Competition Slapshot](#), the Teamwork Challenge features a two team alliance working together to solve the challenge of the game. The [REC Foundation Code of Conduct](#), and by extension rule <G1> (see [game manual](#) page 16), requires teams to work together with mutual respect and professionalism.

At recent VEX IQ events, REC Foundation staff and Head Referees have witnessed teams telling their Teamwork Challenge partner to “sit in a corner” or “stay out of the way” in a match. When this happens, the Head Referee can rule that this is a Major Violation of <G1> as it does not exhibit good sportsmanship or support of an alliance partner.

A Major Violation of <G1> can result in Disqualification from a current Match, an upcoming Match, an entire event, and/or judged awards.

One of the most important aspects of the VEX IQ Competition’s randomly-paired teamwork matches is teams collaborating on match strategy. The two teams must work together ahead of the match to figure out how to cooperatively solve the game.

Does this mean, if a team does all 5 dispensers and their alliance partner does nothing, they are disqualified? If this is true, then this will lead to several situations:

If a team does all 5 dispensers, and their alliance partner moves, but does no real input, are they also disqualified? If a team does all 5 dispensers, and their alliance partner's only contribution is expansion, is that enough contribution to not be disqualified?

Or is the disqualification the act of attitude, where teams begrudgingly agreed to stay in the corner? If so is it possible that a team agrees that to do nothing, as their robot might be in repair or they feel that they will not be able to properly contribute, so there should be no disqualification? How will the head referee determine which it is, or will it be a case by case basis?

Answered by committee

We cannot provide a blanket answer that would cover all possible interactions between Alliance Partners during a VIQC Teamwork Match. As stated in the blue-boxed note below rule <T1>, “... some rulings will rely on a judgment call from [the] Head Referee. In these cases, Head Referees will make their calls based on what they and the Scorekeeping Referees saw, what guidance is provided by their official support materials (the Game Manual and the Q&A), and most crucially, the context of the Match in question.”

Teams are advised to include their Alliance Partners in all Teamwork Matches, work collaboratively to play the game, and exhibit good sportsmanship, mutual respect, and professionalism.

1458: Distribution of World Championship places

15-Feb-2023

G1

Our team won the championship of team cooperation in the Asian Championships, but the quota recently issued was not ours. Officially, it was a mistake, but it affected us. How do we think the organizing committee would react to this situation

Answered by committee

The Q&A platform is intended to be a communication channel for questions such as "is this interpretation of a rule legal?" not a discussion forum to post questions such as "I disagree with this rule, can it be changed?"

For questions regarding Team qualifications to championship events, please contact the Team Engagement Manager or Regional Support Manager for your location. You can identify your region's contacts at RobotEvents.com/support.

1456: Game Design and Code of Conduct

14-Feb-2023

G1

<G1>We are seeing an issue with this year's game. There are teams that can clear all the dispensers, shoot them into the zones, and score the bonus all by themselves. They are paired with teams at tournaments that can only do one or two things like empty the yellow dispenser onto the field. The teams are coming up with a "strategy" for the advanced robot to clear the field while the other one stays out of the way and gets any disks that fall out. Event volunteers, parents, and even event partners are filing complaints against these teams for not letting the other team participate. Many times by them "participating" it will significantly lower the score. What can be done about this beside a game design that does not allow one robot to do everything?<G1>

Answered by committee

The Q&A platform is intended to be a communication channel for questions such as "is this interpretation of a rule legal?" not a discussion forum to post questions such as "I disagree with this rule (or game design), can it be changed?"

For game questions, suggestions, or concerns outside of specific and official rules questions, contact GDC@vex.com or your [REC Foundation Team Engagement Manager](#).

1368: In Search of Solution for: Right Side of Controller Not Working

7-Jan-2023

G1

<G3><G1><G1><G1><G2><RSC1>Our ri<T1>ght side of our controller is not working even though we have fixed our programing several times and it works but the second we turn off our robot and turn it back on it stops working.

Answered by committee

Thank you for your question. However, your question has not been approved for public Q&A posting. Please review the Q&A Usage Guidelines before posting, specifically note 1, "The Q&A system is for rules clarifications only".

For official VEX product support, visit support.vex.com.

1349: <G1><SG8><SC6> Intentionally Violating Game Rules

19-Dec-2022

SC6 G1 SG8

I have been hearing about teams attempting to intentionally violate <SG8> in order to guarantee that their disks get scored in the high goal so that they can earn the autonomous win-point from <SC6>. From my perspective as a referee and others that I talked with, this is a blatant disregard for the rules and Code of Conduct and would constitute a <G1> violation if it occurs multiple times at a singular competition. Teams are entitled to a warning for the first offense in this scenario as is the ruling with anything pertaining to <G1>.

For example: In match 1, Team 1234A (Red) scores both rollers on its side to Red in autonomous, then it drives across the lines to line up along the blue barrier to guarantee that it makes its shot of two disks into the high goal. Blue wins autonomous due to Red crossing the line, but Red gets the win-point. The head referee notes this down in the match anomaly log. In match 4, Team 1234A (Blue) does the exact same strategy. This shows that it is intentional because it happened twice, even for different sides of the field. The team is given a "final warning" per <G1> for intentionally violating the rules. In match 8, Team 1234A (Blue) does the exact same strategy again. At the end of the match they receive a DQ per <G1>. In match 15, Team 1234A (Red) does the exact same strategy again. At the end of the match they are DQ'ed from the competition per <G1>.

Is this an appropriate response to seeing this strategy applied or should no action be taken as it also benefits the opposing alliance who would win autonomous each time this occurs? *I am only asking for if it is **the exact same strategy or a very similar one** due to the many different causes that may occur and have a robot cross over the autonomous line unintentionally.*

Is something going to be changed in the rules for <SC6> so that if you cross the autonomous line and violate <SG8> that you cannot earn the autonomous win-point?

Thanks for your time,

"Cowboy" Chris

Answered by committee

Thank you for your question. If a Robot uses the other alliance's Barrier to square up before taking a shot at the High Goal during the Autonomous Period, it is a clearly intentional action and should be ruled as an intentional violation of <SG8>. As described by the 2nd Violation note for <SG8>, all intentional Violations are considered Major Violations and result in Disqualification of the Team. This includes the 1st Violation and all subsequent Violations that rely on this strategy, with no warning or Minor Violation for the first offense.

As described in Q&A 1142, an <SG8> Violation that does *not* result in a DQ has no effect on earned AWP's in that Match.

1026: SG3-B - Questionably Ethical Strategic Decisions?

30-Jan-2022

G1 SG3

Hello,

SG3 - Platforms are "safe" during the endgame.

During the last thirty (30) seconds, Robots may not contact the opposing Alliance's Platform. The intent of this rule is to prohibit Robots from directly inhibiting their opponents' ability to utilize the Platform at the end of a Match.

Points "a", "b", and "c" apply to Robot actions during the last thirty (30) seconds of the Match:

...

b) For the purposes of this rule, <G13> supersedes rule <G14>. Any Robot which is contacting its own Platform, provided that no other rules are being violated, will automatically receive the "benefit of the doubt". Therefore, any contact with this Robot will be considered a violation, regardless of intent.

...
Note 2: If points "a", "b", or "c" are being violated at the end of a Match (i.e. when the timer hits 0 and all Robots come to rest), then it will automatically be considered a violation which has interfered with gameplay, i.e. will result in a Disqualification.

[Q&A 968](#)

Q. Additionally, if a robot stopped working mid match, battery died, connector broke, whatever, and gets pushed or dragged into the opposing teams platform in the last 30 seconds, is that a penalty?

A. Under the strictest interpretation of SG3-b, yes, this would be considered a violation. However, we would caution the offensive Team in question to be mindful of other rules such as G12, S1, G1, etc. We would hope that an Alliance in this 2v1 situation would not feel that they must resort to a questionably ethical strategic decision in order to beat a single opponent Robot.

What should Referees look for in a forced SG3-B violation to determine when it becomes a questionably ethical strategic decision and violates G1? The below scenarios assume the forced SG3-B violation doesn't violate G12, S1, or any other rules. Some questions include:

1. Forcing your opponent to contact your platform at the end of the match, causing a DQ.
2. In the Q&A 968 scenario, it's implied that the Alliance with 2 Robots would overpower the Alliance with 1 Robot regardless of forcing an SG3-B violation. Should the skill of each Alliance be taken into account? For example, if the Alliance of 1 Robot was overpowering and forced an SG3-B violation? Does this change if the Alliance of 2 forced an SG3-B violation when they are losing?
3. Does proximity to the platform before the forced movement starts matter? For example, is it okay to force an SG3-B violation if the opponents are x distance away from your platform, but not okay if they're over x distance? For example, entering the opponents home zone automatically makes you a defensive robot?
4. Should the intent of teams be taken into account when deciding if a forced SG3-B violation becomes a questionably ethical strategic decision?
5. Do these interpretations violate the manual, G13 in SG3-B, by giving the defensive robot an edge in the decision?

There are more scenarios that could be stated, but I know a blanket answer cannot be given. At some point, the Head Referee will always have to decide how to interpret what happened. I'd like some pointers on what to look for when this situation inevitably happens.

Top teams walk a narrow road with the rules and will force an SG3-B violation if they are able to argue its legality.

Thank you for your time!

Answered by committee

What should Referees look for in a forced SG3-B violation to determine when it becomes a questionably ethical strategic decision and violates G1?

The inherent nature of G1 makes it impossible to provide a blanket, definitive set of guidelines that outline this gray area. Rules such as G1, S1, G12, etc are intentionally worded to give Head Referees the appropriate leeway for making informed judgment calls given the context of their specific Match. If it were possible to set purely objective "black-and-white" rules to outline every possible interaction, then the judgment of human Head Referees would not be necessary.

The most objective description we can provide for SG3 is found in the first sentence of the rule:

During the last thirty (30) seconds, Robots may not contact the opposing Alliance's Platform.

If a Robot is contacting the opposing Alliance's Platform, regardless of how it got there, then a violation of SG3 has occurred.

All five of your specific questions can be answered by parts "a" and "b" of SG3:

a. For the purposes of this rule, contact is considered "transitive" through other Robots and Scoring Objects.

b. For the purposes of this rule, <G13> supersedes rule <G14>. Any Robot which is contacting its own Platform, provided that no other rules are being violated, will automatically receive the "benefit of the doubt".

The Robot of the same color as the Platform should always receive the "benefit of the doubt".

The scenario described in [Q&A 968](#), i.e. taking advantage of disabled robot to force a violation, is a very specific example of an extreme edge-case scenario that could be interpreted as a G1 warning (at a minimum), and could easily be escalated to a G1 / G12 violation depending on the specifics of the interaction or previous warnings.

Top teams walk a narrow road with the rules and will force an SG3-B violation if they are able to argue its legality.

We would advise these teams to bear in mind the sentiment shared in [Q&A 895](#). Teams who choose to rely on a human judgment call of an edge-case rules interpretation should be cognizant of the risk they are taking in doing so, and be aware that it is well within the Head Referee's discretion to escalate any controversial or uncivil interaction accordingly.