

FALL 2025 FRIDAY NIGHT SERIES CANOE BATTLESHIP RULES

(Updated 7/11/2025)

Recent rule changes will in appear hi-lighted and italicized font.

Rule 1: Facility

1. All heats will occur at the Field House pool in an area approximately four swimming lanes across. In the pool, boundaries are provided by lane lines and the side of the pool.

Rule 2: Player Eligibility

1. All Intramural Sports eligibility rules apply. Please check the [Intramural Sports Rules and Regulations](#) carefully.
2. Prior to participating, all players must check-in with the Sport Programs Supervisor. To check-in, each participant must have a photo available through IMLeagues, or must provide a University of Iowa or government-issued photo ID.

Rule 3: Team Composition and Requirements

1. The heat shall be played between two to six teams of four to five players each. Each team must provide a "boat guide" to be positioned in the water and guide their team's canoe.
 - a. A minimum of four players is required to prevent a forfeit.
2. A team may have an unlimited number of players on its roster. A substitute may only replace an active player between heats.
3. Appropriate swimwear is required to be worn by all players.

Rule 4: Equipment

1. Each team will receive four buckets. Teams can distribute their equipment throughout the boat in any order.
2. Yoga mats are available for use in team canoes. Mats can be used as shields or as padding in the bottom of the canoe; teams aren't required to use mats.

Rule 5: Object of the Game

1. Teams attempt to sink their opponents by throwing water from their buckets into their opponents' boats.
2. During qualifying rounds, a predetermined number of boats afloat (typically the last one, two or three, depending on registration) will advance to the next round.
3. The last boat afloat in the final round will win the tournament.

Rule 6: Game Play

1. Players must be sitting or kneeling in the bottom of the boat to begin.
2. At the start of a round, the boats will be evenly spread along the perimeter of the battle waters. An official will instruct the canoes to push off towards the center of the pool. An official will then blow their whistle to start play.
3. Teams may engage as soon as the starting whistle is blown.
4. Players may throw water with their buckets or hands at their opponents.
5. When play is paused by an official, all play must stop including throwing water and moving the boat within the pool.
6. There will be a 15-minute time limit for each heat. Once the time limit has been reached, play will stop. Each remaining boat will have a bucket of water added to it at the same time. The first boat(s) to sink are eliminated.

Rule 7: Restrictions

1. Players may not take water out of their own canoes.
 - a. Penalty: Replacement of water at official's discretion plus one large penalty bucket.
2. Players may not touch an opponent, opponent's equipment (in the possession of an opponent or in the pool), or an opponent's boat.
 - a. Penalty: One large penalty bucket. Any intentional act of tipping an opponent's canoe may result in team disqualification.
3. Players may not touch the side of the pool or any lane lines within the pool to push off or otherwise direct or propel their boat within the water.
 - a. Penalty: One large penalty bucket.
4. A team may never possess more than four buckets.
 - a. Penalty: One large penalty bucket.
5. Players must immediately freeze when an official's whistle is blown.
 - a. Penalty: One large penalty bucket.
6. During the stoppage of play all players are prohibited from throwing water at opponents or removing water from their canoes.
 - a. Penalty: One large penalty bucket.
7. A player may not fall out of or intentionally leave their team's boat.
 - a. Penalty: One large penalty bucket and that player will not be replaced.
 - i. When a player falls out of the boat, play will stop, the player will get out of the pool, the team will play shorthanded, and play will resume on the official's whistle.
8. A team's "boat guide" may not support their canoe to prevent it from sinking.
 - a. Penalty: One large penalty bucket.
9. A team may not intentionally stall to avoid contact with other boats.
 - a. Penalty: One large penalty bucket.
10. Game officials will blow their whistles to stop play when a penalty bucket is issued. They will announce which boat receives the penalty. The penalized boat will be required to bring the canoe to the side of the pool, where an official will administer the penalty bucket.

Rule 8: Elimination

1. A team is eliminated when:
 - a. Its canoe capsizes or both sidewalls of the canoe are underwater.
 - b. An official rules a team is eliminated due to unsportsmanlike conduct, dangerous play, or rule violation.
 - c. It receives more than three penalty buckets.
2. Once eliminated, the game officials will stop play until the eliminated team and its canoe clear the playing area.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If there is inclement weather and Intramural Sports are scheduled, check the [Intramural Sports website](#) for cancellation information. The Sport Programs Staff will also attempt to notify participants scheduled to play that night. You can also sign-up for Intramural Sports notifications through the [Recreational Services app](#).