



★ THE PREMIER NATIONAL LEAGUE

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SO MUCH FUN, IT'S INHUMAN

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NRL 1220 – 15 LB. TECHNICAL REGULATIONS



1. General

- 1.1. All participants build and operate robots at their own risk. Combat robotics is inherently dangerous. There is no amount of regulation that can encompass all the dangers involved. Please take care to not hurt yourself or others when building, testing and competing. All robots must not have any words, logos or graphics that are offensive in any way. NRL reserves the right to require anything they deem as indecent to be removed or covered up.
- 1.2. If you have a robot or weapon design that does not fit within the categories set forth in these rules or is in some way ambiguous or borderline, please contact NRL. Safe innovation is always encouraged, but surprising the event staff with your brilliant exploitation of a loophole may cause your robot to be disqualified before it ever competes.
- 1.3. Compliance with all event rules is mandatory. It is expected that competitors stay within the rules and procedures of their own accord and do not require constant policing.
- 1.4. Each event has safety inspectors. It is at their sole discretion that your robot is allowed to compete. As a builder you are obligated to disclose all operating principles and potential dangers to the inspection staff.
- 1.5. Cardinal Safety Rules: Failure to comply with any of the following rules could result in expulsion or worse, injury and death.
 - 1.5.1. Radios may not be turned on, at or near events for any purpose without obtaining the appropriate frequency clip or explicit permission from the event personnel.
 - 1.5.2. Proper activation and deactivation of robots is critical. Robots must only be activated in the arena, testing areas, or with expressed consent of the event personnel or its safety officials.
 - 1.5.3. All robots must be able to be FULLY deactivated, which includes power to the drive and the weaponry, **within 60 seconds by a manual disconnect.** (Removable link or Main Power Switch)
 - 1.5.4. All robots must be able to be fully activated within 30 seconds.



- 1.5.5. All robots not in an arena or official testing area must be raised or blocked up in a manner so that their wheels or legs cannot cause movement if the robot were accidentally turned on. Runaway bots are VERY dangerous. (We strongly suggest a custom designed block that ensures the robot will not be inadvertently dislodged from the block)
- 1.5.6. Locking devices: Moving weapons that can cause damage or injury must have a **clearly visible** locking device in place **at all times** when not in the arena. Locking devices must be painted in neon orange or another high-visibility color. Locking devices must be clearly capable of stopping, arresting or otherwise preventing harmful motion of the weapon.
- 1.5.7. Weapon locking pins **must be in place** when weapon switch is turned on during a robot's power-on procedure (the weapon switch will be on, but no power will be applied to the weapon). The locking pin will be pulled out just prior to closing the arena door. This includes **all** powered weapons regardless of the power source or weight class.
- 1.5.8. It is expected that all builders will follow basic safety practices during work on the robot at their pit station. Please be alert and aware of your pit neighbors and people passing by. Continued failure to follow safety directions could result in an individual's or the entire team's disqualification for the event. This includes and is not limited to wearing SAFETY GLASSES at ALL times while in the pit area. Safety offenses will be handled as follows:
- (1) The first safety offense from any member of the team will result in a warning.
 - (2) The second offense from any member of that same team will result in that individual or individuals being removed from the pit area permanently and not allowed to compete with the team.
 - (3) A third offense from the same team will result in the entire team being disqualified for the event.

2. Weight Classes & Size. This event offers 15 pound robots. (There is no weight bonus for shufflers or other forms of locomotion which are predicated on rolling - see 3.1.2 for a definition of a non-wheeled robot.)

2.1. Rolling weight = 15 pounds



- 2.2. Non-wheeled weight = 20 pounds
- 2.3 Your robot must be no wider than 3 feet, and no taller than 4 feet. This is to ensure that your robot fits in the arena door.

3. Mobility

- 3.1. All robots must have easily visible and controlled mobility in order to compete. Methods of mobility include:
 - 3.1.1. Rolling (wheels, tracks or the whole robot)
 - 3.1.2. Non-wheeled: non-wheeled robots have no rolling elements in contact with the floor and no continuous rolling or cam operated motion in contact with the floor, either directly or via a linkage. Motion is "continuous" if continuous operation of the drive motor(s) produces continuous motion of the robot. Linear-actuated legs and novel non-wheeled drive systems may qualify for this bonus. [Contact league personnel with questions on weight to see if your robot may qualify.]
 - 3.1.3. Shuffling (rotational cam operated legs)
 - 3.1.4. Ground effect air cushions (hovercrafts)

4. Robot Control Requirements:

- 4.1. Tele-operated robots must be radio controlled. Radio controlled robots must use approved ground frequencies [75 MHz for the 08-09 season only or 2.4GHz Spread Spectrum].
- 4.2. Tethered control is not allowed.
- 4.3. Radio system restrictions for this event with corresponding weight and or weapon restrictions:
 - 4.3.1. Radio systems that stop all motion in the robot (drive and weapons), when the receiver loses power or signal, are required for all robots. This may be inherent in the robots electrical system or be part of programmed fail-safes in the radio.
 - 4.3.2. All robot radio systems must have a way to change frequencies or coded channels to prevent radio conflicts. Having at least two frequencies or coded channels available is required. Lack of extra frequencies may result in a forfeit. (spread spectrum radios already meet this requirement).
 - 4.3.3. No home built control system will be allowed.



5. Autonomous/Semi-Autonomous Robots: Any robot that moves, seeks a target, or activates weapons without human control is considered autonomous. If your robot is autonomous contact league personnel.

5.1. Autonomous robots must have a clearly visible light for each autonomous subsystem that indicates whether or not it is in autonomous mode, e.g. if your robot has two autonomous weapons it should have two "autonomous mode" lights (this is separate from any power or radio indicator lights used).

5.2. The autonomous functionality of a robot must have the capability of being remotely armed and disarmed. (This does not include internal sensors, drive gyros, or closed loop motor controls.)

5.2.1. While disarmed, all autonomous functions must be disabled.

5.2.2. When activated the robot must have no autonomous functions enabled, and all autonomous functions must failsafe to off if there is loss of power or radio signal.

5.2.3. In case of damage to components that remotely disarm the robot, the robots autonomous functions are required to automatically disarm within one minute of the match length time after being armed.

6. Batteries and Power

6.1. The only permitted batteries are ones that cannot spill or spray any of their contents when damaged or inverted. This means that standard automotive and motorcycle wet cell batteries are prohibited. Examples of batteries that are permitted: gel cells, Hawkers, NiCads, NiMh, dry cells, AGM, and LiIon.

6.2. All nominal onboard maximum voltages are limited to: **24 Volts for 15# class robots** for this league. (It is understood that a charged battery's initial voltage state is above their nominal rated value)

6.3. All electrical power to weapons and drive systems (systems that could cause potential human bodily injury) must have a manual disconnect that can be activated within **15 seconds** without endangering the person turning it off. (E.g. No body parts in the way of weapons or pinch points.) Shut down must include a **manually** operated mechanical method of disconnecting the main battery power, such as a switch (Hella, Whyachi, etc) or removable link. Relays may be used to control power, but there must also be a mechanical disconnect. Please note that complete shut down time is specified in section 1.5.



6.4. All efforts must be made to protect battery terminals from a direct short and causing a battery fire.

7. Pneumatics

Pneumatic systems on board the robot must employ non-flammable, nonreactive gases. Only LPA (low pressure air (150 PSI max)) or single use CO2 cartridges are permissible. LPA systems may use refillable tanks; CO2 systems may NOT use refillable tanks. (The terms 'pressure vessel, bottle, and source tank' are used interchangeably)

- 7.1. All components must be used within the specifications provided by the manufacturer or supplier. If the specifications aren't available or reliable, then it will be up to the Safety Official to decide if the component is being used in a sufficiently safe manner.
- 7.2. All pneumatic components on board a robot must be securely mounted. Particular attention must be made to pressure vessel mounting and armor to ensure that if ruptured it will not escape the robot.
- 7.3. All pneumatic components within the robot must be rated or certified for AT LEAST the maximum pressure in that part of the system. You are required to have rating or certification documentation on all components in the pneumatic system. This includes the following:
 - Onboard air compressors
 - Air Tanks/Air Storage Devices
 - All Valves (Solenoid, Purge, Shut-off, Pressure Relief, Check & Shraeder)
 - Pressure Switch
 - Manifolds
 - Tubing/Hose
- 7.4. All pressure vessels must be rated for at least **120%** of the pressure they are used at. (This is to give them a margin of safety if damaged during a fight.)
- 7.5. If regulators are used anywhere in the pneumatic system there must be an (additional) over pressure device downstream of the regulator set for no more than **100%** of the lowest rated component in that part of the pneumatic system and there must be a gauge easily visible from outside the robot not on the bottom.
- 7.6. All pneumatic systems must have a manual main shut off valve to isolate the rest of the system from the source tank. This valve must be easily accessed for robot deactivation and refilling. It must also be out of any danger areas. It must be clearly marked.



7.7. All pneumatic systems must have a manual bleed valve downstream of the main shut off valve to depressurize the system. This bleed valve must be easily accessed for deactivation. This valve must be left OPEN whenever the robot is not in the arena to ensure the system cannot operate accidentally.

7.7.1. It is **required** to be able to easily bleed all pressure in the robot before exiting the arena. (You may be required to bleed the entire system, including the source tank, if it is believed that you have any damaged components.)

7.8. If back check valves are used anywhere in the system you must ensure that any part of the system they isolate can be bled and has an over pressure device.

7.9. All pneumatic systems must have an appropriate gauge on the low side of the regulator to show maximum resolution of the pressure in that part of the system. The gauge should be easily readable from outside the bot, not on the bottom.

7.10. Source Specifications for Pneumatic Systems:

7.10.1. Source Specifications for CO2 Based System

The max pressure that may be stored on board when using CO2 is relative to ambient temperature. The pressure at the liquid to vapor phase of CO2 at 70 degrees F ambient temperature is 853 PSI. No form of tank heater is allowed, including mounting of tanks near components that heat up during use. The max total volume of pressurized gas stored on board is 8 cubic ft at standard temperature (70 degrees).and pressure (14.7 PSI or 1 atmosphere).

7.10.1.1. No refillable tanks may be used for CO2.

7.10.1.2. Source system must be hard plumbed down to 150 PSI (no flexible tubing).

7.10.1.3. Minimum requirement for component stream:

Single use CO2->Puncture Valve->Burst disc->Regulator->Pop-off valve-> Gauge->150 PSI (max)

7.10.1.4. Burst disc must be rated at 1.8k (1800 PSI standard CO2 Safety Burst Disc or less)

7.10.1.5. Pop-off valve must be rated at 175 PSI or less

7.10.1.6. Gauge must show maximum resolution for 150 PSI max and must be readable from outside the robot.



7.10.2. **LPA Based Systems**

The maximum pressure that may be stored on board when using LPA is 150 PSI.

On-Board Compressor LPA System:

- 7.10.2.1. Minimum requirement component stream for On-Board Compressor System:
On Board LPA Compressor->Pressure Switch->Pop-off valve->Gauge->150 PSI (max)
- 7.10.2.2. Pressure Switch must be set at 150 PSI (max)
- 7.10.2.3. Pop-off valve must be rated at 175 PSI or less
- 7.10.2.4. Gauge must show maximum resolution for 150 PSI max and must be readable from outside the robot.

Refillable LPA System:

- 7.10.2.5. Minimum requirement component stream for refillable LPA System: Fill valve-> LPA tank-> Pop-off Valve->Gauge
- 7.10.2.6. Fill valve (typically a shraeder valve)
- 7.10.2.7. Pop-off valve must be rated at 175 PSI or less
- 7.10.2.8. Gauge must show maximum resolution for 150 PSI max and must be readable from outside the robot.
- 7.10.2.9. You must have a safe and secure method of refilling your pneumatic system.

8. Hydraulics

8.1. Robots in the 15# class are **NOT** allowed to use hydraulics.]

9. Internal Combustion Engines (ICE) and liquid fuels.

9.1. Robots in the 15# class are **NOT** allowed to use ICE.

10. Rotational weapons or full body spinning robots:

- 10.1. Spinning weapons cannot contact the outer arena walls during normal operation. (Contact with an inner arena curb, or containment wall is allowed).
- 10.2. Spinning weapons must come to a full stop within **30 seconds** of the power being removed.

11. Springs and Flywheels

11.1. Springs used in robots will use the remaining rules in this section. Safe operation, good engineering and best practices must be used in all systems.



11.2. Any large springs used for drive or weapon power must have a way of loading and actuating the spring remotely under the robots power.

11.2.1. Under no circumstances must a large spring be loaded when the robot is out of the arena or testing area.

11.2.2. Small springs like those used within switches or other small internal operations are exempt from this rule.

11.3. Any flywheel or similar kinetic energy storing device must not be spinning or storing energy in any way unless inside the arena or testing area.

11.3.1. There must be a way of generating and dissipating the energy from the device remotely under the robots power.

11.4. All springs, flywheels, and similar kinetic energy storing devices must fail to a safe position on loss of radio contact or power.}

12. **Forbidden Weapons and Materials.** The following weapons and materials are absolutely forbidden from use:

12.1. Weapons designed to cause invisible damage to the other robot. This includes but is not limited to:

12.1.1. Electrical weapons

12.1.2. RF jamming equipment, etc.

12.1.3. RF noise generated by an IC engine. (Please use shielding around sparking components)

12.1.4. EMF fields from permanent or electro-magnets that affect another robot's electronics.

12.1.5. Weapons or defenses that stop combat completely of both (or more) robots. This includes nets, tapes, strings, and other entanglement devices.

12.2. Weapons that require significant cleanup, or in some way damages the arena to require repair for further matches. This includes but is not limited to:

12.2.1. Liquid weapons. Additionally a bot may not have liquid that can spill out when the robot is superficially damaged.

12.2.2. Foams and liquefied gasses

12.2.3. Powders, sand, ball bearings and other dry chaff weapons

12.3. Un-tethered Projectiles (see tethered projectile description in Special Weapons section 13.5)

12.4. Heat and fire are forbidden as weapons. This includes, but is not limited to the following:



- 12.4.1. Heat or fire weapons not specifically allowed in the Special Weapons section (13.1.1)
 - 12.4.2. Flammable liquids or gases
 - 12.4.3. Explosives or flammable solids such as:
 - DOT Class C devices
 - Gunpowder / Cartridge Primers
 - Military Explosives, etc.
 - 12.5. Light and smoke based weapons that impair the viewing of robots by an Entrant, Judge, Official or Viewer. (You are allowed to physically engulf your opponent with your robot however.) This includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - 12.5.1. Smoke weapons not specifically allowed in the Special Weapons section
 - 12.5.2. Lights such as external lasers above 'class I' and bright strobe lights which may blind the opponent.
 - 12.6. Hazardous or dangerous materials are forbidden from use anywhere on a robot where they may contact humans, or by way of the robot being damaged (within reason) contact humans.
13. Special Weapon descriptions allowed:
- 13.1. Tethered Projectiles are allowed, and must be no longer than 3 feet.
 - 13.1.1. Heat, Smoke and Fire are not allowed.