Lithuania Ball

When soccer and basketball combine!

Watch the Video Explanation Here!

Overview

- ★ # of Participants: **10-40**
- ★ Where to Play: **Indoors**
- ★ Age of Participants: **Middle / High School**
- ★ Approximate Time to Play: **20-45 minutes**
- ★ Materials: **Dodgeball, Painter's Tape**

Summary

- ★ Split players into teams, and allow them to choose their role (Strikers, Protectors, Goalies)
- ★ Play in Basketball Mode until the ball touches the ground, then switch to Soccer Mode
- ★ The team with the most points wins!

How to Play

On a basketball court, split your group into two teams. There are three roles in this game, and each role has their own region of the gym. You need to define a region in the middle, such as the outside edges of the basketball court, this is where the Strikers will play. There should also be space along the sidelines of the court, this is where the Protectors will play. All that's left is a strip along the back of your team's half, and this is where the Goalies will play. Along each team's back wall, create a 'goal' using painter's tape, it's just a rectangular box, and it should be about 20 feet wide and 6 feet tall. This game is played with a dodgeball, or really any ball that you can both shoot like a basketball and kick like a soccer ball.

The first time you play Lithuania Ball, there's a few rules to learn, so let's break it down by role. Strikers, the people in the middle of the court, will start off in "basketball mode," and score by shooting the ball into the other team's basket. Just like in basketball, you get 2 points for scoring a close basket, or 3 points for scoring a long-range one, but unlike in basketball, you are not allowed to move when you have the ball. It's almost like ultimate frisbee in a sense, you run forward to get open, catch the ball, stop moving and look for a teammate to throw the ball to, who hopefully will shoot and score. As long as the game is in basketball mode, the Protectors and the Goalies aren't doing too much, but they should stay ready for action.

Inevitably, at some point the ball will fall to the ground, whether because of a failed pass or an intentional drop. As soon as the ball touches the ground, everyone switches from "basketball mode" to "soccer mode." Now the way that the strikers score is no longer by scoring a basket, but by kicking the ball into the net you've created on the opposing team's back wall. Just like in soccer, strikers aren't allowed to touch the ball with their hands, and if you manage to score a goal, you earn 1 point for your team. Just to recap, the game starts in basketball mode, where players try to shoot a basket for either 2 or 3 points, but as soon as the ball touches the ground they are instantly in soccer mode, where they try to score by kicking the ball into the goal.

Next let's talk about the players along the sidelines, the Protectors. The only way for players to switch back from soccer mode to basketball mode in the middle of the point is through the Protectors. While the strikers aren't allowed to pick the ball up off of the ground, the Protectors are. Once the Protectors pick the ball up, they are allowed to throw the ball to the strikers on their team, and from there the strikers can continue playing in basketball mode. Hopefully the strikers realize the value of kicking the ball to their teammates on the sidelines, because once the ball gets thrown back in, they have a chance to earn 2 or 3 times as many points as if they had tried to play selfishly.

And that leaves the Goalies. Their job is the most straightforward: don't let the other team kick the ball into your net. The goalies are allowed to use their hands, but are not able to make the game switch back into basketball mode. If they are holding the ball, they can throw or kick it to the strikers, who will still be in soccer mode, or they can throw or kick it to the Protectors, who will throw the ball in to their teammates to continue in basketball mode.

Allow each team to divide themselves into as many of each role as they want to. They can have 8 strikers, 1 protector and 1 goalie, or 4 goalies, 2 strikers and 2 protectors, etc, as long as they have at least one of each role. Take a break every time a point is scored, and give players a chance to redistribute themselves among the roles. Keep track of the score, and whichever team has the most after about 20 or 30 minutes wins!