



2004

Q & A

Stairs

9-15-04

Q: On the stairs mission, do we have to be all the way at the top only, or is okay to still have part of the robot on the lower steps?

A: The steps count as part of the stairs.

CD

9-15-04

Q: Does the CD need to be touching the circle part of the CD case for points?

A: No. You'll get credit as long as the CD is touching anywhere at all on either side of the case.

Chair

9-15-04

Q: Are there free points for the chair that's already on the rug when the match starts?

A: Yes, as long as it still meets the requirements at the END of the match.

Dual Lock

9-15-04 (Revised 9-16-04)

Q: We followed the Field Setup instructions closely on the use of squares, but ended up having no Dual Lock left for the custom pieces mentioned. Did we do something wrong?

A: No, that's our error. To free up some Dual Lock, steal 6 pairs of squares from the stairs (leaving a pair at each corner), steal 2 pairs diagonally from each pet, and steal 4 pairs from the Basket Holder. If you still need more after that, an adequate but less friendly substitute is "2-Sided Foam Tape" available at hardware stores.

Mat Size

9-15-04

NOTICE: The FLL Field Mats are running oversized this year. A corrective notice went out, and it is restaed here:

The bottom border should be 3/8" thick, and the left border should be 1/4" thick. If your borders are thicker than that, trim them. If your borders are thinner than that, move the mat away from the coner as needed so that the white space at the bottom of Base begins 3/8" from the border wall, and the white space at the left of Base begins begin 1/4" from the border wall. After getting these two borders correct, it is okay to trim the opposite edges (the top and right) as needed for the mat to lie flat on your table.

Ball Colors/Placement

9-17-04

Q: I'm confused about the Balls...Will we have both colors at the tournament?

A: No (sorry for missing this). At the tournament, field setup is with 8 red Balls on one team's side and 8 blue Balls on the other.

Gate Direction

9-21-04

Q: Which way is the Gate supposed to face and open? The picture on the web is different than the picture in the building instructions and the way the mat shows the hinge.

A: That picture on the web has misled you because it is of the back side of the gate. Correct setup is with the hinge over its location on the mat, and the Gate will open toward you, away from the Pets and the Stairs.

Robot Definition

9-21-04

Q: What is the robot defined as this year? Is it everything touching the robot? Is it the RCX?

A: Sorry, in effort to simplify the rules, that baby went out with the bath water! The new definition of the robot is "the RCX and anything built onto it, and anything being moved by same".

Pet Food Covered On Top

9-21-04

Q: What does it mean for the pet food to be covered on top?

A: All that means is that as delivered, the food can be seen from directly above. If it started to rain, the food would get wet. A pet could eat it without having to paw at it.

Transporting The Basket

9-21-04

Q: Can we grab the Basket and move it to a better location for our advantage? The model itself would not be damaged, so this seems legal, if not ethical.

A: That idea is pretty slick, given that the model is loose and would not be broken, but we are ruling here that this maneuver would constitute field damage if not model damage, and would not be allowed.

Team-Supplied Balls

9-21-04

Q: There doesn't seem to be anything stopping us from bringing balls from our supply and having the robot bring them out on the field as strategic objects to be worth bonus points. So can we do that?

A: Fantastic question! It took some work to figure out how to rule this illegal, but had to be! The Balls are described in the Missions as being worth points anywhere on the field, so that makes them Deliverables. Even though they fit the description of a Strategic Object in the Rules, the Missions have precedence over the Rules where there is disagreement. Since they are Deliverables, their correct quantity is trait of the field. To introduce extras is to throw off the count, and this (thankfully) is a form of Field Damage, and would not be allowed.

Legal Parts

9-21-04

Q: Hello, are the only legal parts the ones that come in the robot kit, or can we use other stuff that we had, like Star Wars?

A: All parts not restricted under the MATERIALS rule are legal in any quantity, no matter what the source. This even includes pneumatics, and wind-ups.

Basket Blocking

9-23-04

Q: Can we block the other team's basket?

A: It's legal, and reasonable as a part of "Playing Ball", but just know that the other team's referee will consider the blocking item to be a "stray object" on their side and will confiscate it upon request from that team.

Tethers and Penalties

9-23-04

Q: If our RCX and main body go out but leave a tether in Base, can we touch the robot without a penalty?

A: It's legal. And based only on that, if you choose to use this technique to save time, reduce the need for programming, and avoid penalties, I can't blame you in the competitive spirit. But philosophically, this loophole in the Rules is by-product of our desire to allow teams grace while entering/exiting Base. Hopefully we don't see a lot of teams leaving cable tails in Base, because that would defeat the whole concept of an autonomous vehicle, and we'll have to return to including a specific rule against it next year. This would complicate the rules for everyone, as we struggle to re-define what the robot is, and what a tether is, and whether the robot is coming or going, etc. Or I could just rule saying that the robot would need to get COMPLETELY back into Base to avoid a penalty. Another word of caution against this otherwise legal technique is that thought the referees may have to live with it, the various building and programming judges (think awards) will see the technique for the cheap shortcut that it is.

Driving On The Water

9-23-04

Q: Is there a penalty for driving on the water?

A: Don't cha think we would have had to put a value on it somewhere? Or mention the water at all? We didn't. So it's okay. Try not to manufacture restrictions for yourselves. In general, if something's not talked about in the Missions, Rules, Field Setup, or here, it doesn't matter.

Oval Rug Extents

9-23-04

Q: Is the Rug considered the outer ring, or all of them?

A: It must be me. Outer.

Basket Centering

9-24-04

Q: The picture in the instructions shows the 46.5" measurement at the right side of the basket holder, but that doesn't agree with the text. Is this picture wrong?

A: The picture is too small, and it's showing an illusion. The 46.5" measurement's extension line actually goes down to the MIDPOINT of the Basket Holder, putting it's midpoint at the midpoint of the border wall (both are supposed to be centered right around 46.5").
