Team Handball

History
Team Handball can be referred as Handball, Olympic Handball or European Handball. The modern game actually grew out of 3 sports that were developed, independently, in 3 different European countries. The Czech hazena, the Danish handbold, and the German Torball. All 3 were based on soccer, but essentially replaced the foot with the hand, so that the ball could be advanced by batting or throwing, rather than by kicking. Team Handball originated in Europe in the 1900s and recognizes over 140 countries as members of the International handball Federation (IHF). Handball first appeared in the Olympics in the 1936 Berlin Games as an outdoor sport, with 11 players on a side. It was not played again at the Olympic games until 1972, where it was played indoors with 7 players on each side. Women’s handball was added to the Olympic games in 1976. Team Handball is usually played indoors, but outdoor variants exist in the form of field handball or beach handball.

About USA Team Handball
USA Team Handball is the National Governing Body for the Olympic Sport of Handball in the United States. They are a nonprofit organization designed to develop team handball through schools, recreational leagues and colleges; provide multiple levels of competition for all ages, skill levels, and interests; as well as developing the Men's and Women's teams for the Pan American Games, World Championships, and the Olympic Games. Team handball is 2nd most popular sport in Europe (only behind soccer), but little is known in North America.

Game
A regulation men’s or women’s game is played in 30 minute halves with one team time-out per half. Half-time is 10 minutes in length. A coin toss determines which team starts the game with a throw-off. The clock stops only for team time-outs, injuries, and at the referee’s discretion.

Object of the Game
Handball combines the elements of soccer, hockey, and basketball, as six players move the ball down a floor that is larger than a basketball court and try to score by throwing the ball past a goalkeeper into the net. A player can move the ball by dribbling it, as in basketball; by hitting it with any part of the body above the knee; or by throwing it. A successful scoring attempt results in the award of a single point. Typically, final scores are high and action-packed with at least 20 goals for each team.

Field of Play
The court is slightly larger than a basketball court. Regulation size is 20x40 meters (65’7” x 131’ 3”). All court lines are referred to by their measurement in meters. The most significant line on the court is the 6-meter line or goal area. This area is called the zone or the crease. Only the goalie is allowed inside the crease. Players may jump into the goal area if they release the ball before landing in the area. The 9-meter line, or free throw line, is used for minor penalties, while the 7-meter line, or penalty line, is used for penalty shots, much like penalty kicks in soccer.
The Goal
An official size goal measures 2 meters high (6’7”) and three meters wide (9’10”). The net is one meter deep at the base of the goal.

The Ball
A handball is made of leather and is about the size of a large cantaloupe. It varies in size and weight according to the group playing. The ball for men weighs 15-17 oz. and is 23-24" in circumference. Women and juniors use a smaller ball weighing 12-14 oz. and 21-22" in circumference. Youth use smaller varieties of balls.

Players
A game is played between two teams. Seven players on each team are allowed on the court at the same time (6 outfield players and 1 goalkeeper). The positions of players are designated as goalkeeper, center half, right and left backs, center forward, and right and left wingers. Unlimited substitution is allowed. Substitutes may enter the game at any time through their own substitution area as long as the players they are replacing have left the court.

Playing the ball
Players are allowed to:
* Dribble the ball for an unlimited amount of time.
* Run with the ball for up to 3 steps before and after dribbles.
* Hold the ball without moving for 3 seconds.
* A player owning the ball can hold it for 3 seconds or go for 3 steps, then he/she must tip the ball to the ground, throw the ball to another player or into the goal.

Players are not allowed to:
* Cannot dive for rolling balls that are on the ground.
* Endanger an opponent with the ball.
* Pull, hit, or punch the ball out of the hands of an opponent.
* Block opponent with arms, hands, or legs.
* Contact the ball below the knees.
* Hold the ball more than 3 seconds if the player is not moving.
* Enter into goal area which is called the zone or crease.

Goalies are allowed to:
* To defend the goal in every possible way, including kicking the ball with their feet while the ball is moving toward the goal or is inside of the goal area.
* To leave the goal area without the ball. When he or she does, the same rules apply to the goalie as to the rest of the team.
Penalties

Free-Throw – for a minor foul or violation, a free throw is awarded to the opponents at the exact spot it took place. If the foul occurs between the goal area line and the 9-meter line, the throw is taken from the nearest point outside the 9-meter line. All players on the team taking a free-throw must be outside the 9-meter line. Opponents must be 3 meters away from the ball when the throw is taken.

7-Meter Penalty Shot is awarded when:
* A foul destroys a clear chance to score a goal.
* The goalie carries the ball back into the goalie area.
* A court player intentionally plays the ball to his or her own goalie in the goal area and the goalie touches the ball.

All players must be outside the free-throw line when the throw is taken. The player taking the throw has 3 seconds to shoot after the referee whistles. Any player may take the 7-meter throw. The penalty throw shall be aimed directly at the goal.

Progressive Punishments
These are fouls that require more punishment than just a free-throw. “Actions” directed mainly at the opponent and not the ball; are punished progressively (actions consist of reaching around, holding, pushing, hitting, tripping, or jumping into opponent).
* Warnings (yellow card) – referee gives only one warning to a player for rule violations and a total of 3 to a team. Exceeding limits results in a 2-minute suspension.
* 2-minute suspension – Awarded for serious or repeated rule violations, unsportsmanlike conduct and illegal substitution.
* Disqualification (red card) – awarded after three 2-minute suspensions have been issued; the disqualified player must leave both the court and bench but the team may replace the player after the 2-minute suspension expires.
* Exclusion is awarded for assault; the excluded player’s team continues short one player for the rest of the game.

** The game is quite fast and includes much contact as the defenders try to bodily stop the attackers from approaching the goal. Only frontal contact by the defenders is allowed; when a defender stops an attacker with their arms on the side, the play is stopped and restarted from the 9-meter line, with the attacking team in possession. If the contact between the players is particularly rough (even if it is indeed frontal), the referees may award a 9-meter penalty to the attacking team, or a 7-meter penalty and sometimes even give the defender a yellow (warning) or a red card (expulsion). Conversely, if the attacker is at fault the possession of the ball can be awarded to the defending team. Players may also cause the possession to be lost if they make more than three steps per one bounce of the ball off the floor.

Passing - is the most important element of team handball. It allows a player to move the ball quickly and accurately so as to advance the ball and set up scoring opportunities. Team handball passing fundamentals are quite similar to those utilized in basketball. Short distance passes: bounce, close hand-off, hook, chest, shovel or scoop, and two hand overhead. Medium distance passes include: ground or roller, jump, baseball, and side arm.
**Dribble** - is used to advance the ball up the court when a player is not closely guarded and to gain “rhythm” when attempting to move the ball for purposes of attacking the goal or setting up a possible scoring play. Because of their strong basketball orientation, most Americans have a tendency to dribble too much in team handball. The dribble is similar to that used in basketball except that the player may take 3 steps when the ball is seized by either one or both hands. When the ball is seized, it must be played off within 3 steps or 3 seconds.

**Shooting** - The primary objective of attacking the goal in team handball is to score. Types of shots: jump shot, dive shot, underhand shot, reverse shot (circle), side throw (twister), lob shot, penalty shot.

**Corner throw** - When the ball is played over one’s own goal line by a defending player (except the goalkeeper) on either side of the goal, the game is restarted by means of a throw from the corner of the court by one of the attacking players. The player must place one foot on the corner and throw the ball in, using either hand.

**Referee’s throw** - A ball bounced by the referee to restart the game after an interruption of play caused by players of both teams committing simultaneous infractions of the rules or if the game has been interrupted for some other reason.

**Throw-in** - The method of putting the ball back into play after it has crossed one of the sidelines. The throw is taken by a player of the team in which did not cause the ball to go out. The player making the throw must have both feet touching the surface outside the sideline and throw the ball into the playing area with one or two hands in any manner.

**Throw-off** – It takes place from the center of the court. All players must be on the half with their team. Defending players must keep a distance of at least 3 meters to the thrower. A throw-off occurs at the beginning of each period and after the opposing team scores a goal. It must be cleared by the referees.

**Goalkeeper-throw** – If the ball crosses the outer goal line without interference from the defending team or when deflected by their goalkeeper, a goalkeeper-throw is awarded to the defending team. The goalkeeper resumes the play with a throw from anywhere within their goal area.