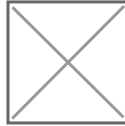


Q&A

VRC 2019-2020: Tower Takeover

Tagged: T1



Welcome to the official VEX Robotics Competition Question & Answer system, where all registered teams have the opportunity to ask for official rules interpretations and clarifications. This Q&A system is the only source for official VRC Tower Takeover rules clarifications, and the clarifications made here from the Game Design Committee (GDC) are considered as official and binding as the written [Game Manual](#) itself.

Please review the [Q&A Usage Guidelines](#) before posting. This system is only intended for specific VRC Tower Takeover rules questions.

- For event, registration, or other competition support questions, please contact your [REC Foundation Regional Support Manager](#).
 - For VEX technical support, contact support@vex.com or sales@vex.com.
- For game questions, suggestions, or concerns outside of specific and official rules questions, contact GDC@vex.com.

Index

[<R12> Non-functional decoration.](#)

[Labeled Game Elements](#)

[Should Scorekeeper referee pick up robot in Robot Skills Matches?](#)

[Controller Placement After Match](#)

[Correct Scoring](#)

[Implementation of a consistent escalation of repeated minor violations to major violations](#)

[<T1>Head Referees have ultimate and final authority on all gameplay ruling decisions during the competition.](#)

[Match Anomaly Log Publicity](#)

435: <R12> Non-functional decoration.

27-Nov-2019

R12 T1

In the Game Manual it states in <R12> that the Inspector will have final say as to whether as to what is considered non-functional decoration. Given that Inspectors do not go through the same training as many Head Referees, what happens when a Head Referee deems something as functional? <T1> says the Head Referee has the ultimate say about what is permissible in matches.

Which has precedent? <R12> or <T1>?

Answered by Game Design Committee

This scenario is covered by rule R2-e, which states the following:

If a Robot has passed inspection, but is later found to be in violation of a Robot rule during a Match, then they will be Disqualified from that Match and <R2d> will apply until the violation is remedied and the Team is re-inspected.

R2-e is primarily intended for a scenario where a Robot has been modified since inspection. However, it is also intended as a "catch" for a scenario where a Head Referee identifies a violation that an inspector may have missed.

Most Robot rules can be considered as "inspection rules", in the context that there may not be a Head Referee present during inspection. So, statements such as "inspectors have the final say" imply that this is being questioned during inspection. Once a Robot passes inspection, R2-e and T1 come into effect for the duration of the Tournament.

3104: Labeled Game Elements

22-Feb-2026

T1 T4

[<T4><T4>](#)

Often events in our region are a communal effort with multiple different organizations providing fields for official game-play. Many organizations mark ownership of their fields and game elements with permanent markers, labels, or other alterations.

1. To what extent does an Event Partner have the authority to declare a labeled or altered game element appropriate for official matches?
2. Does this authority lie within the Event Partner, Head Referee, or a combination of the two?
3. When are labels, permanent markers, or other markings considered to be as substantial alteration to game-play (if at all)

[Example of labeled beam](#)

Answered by Game Design Committee

Adding a small mark (for example, a Team number) to identify the team or organization that owns a part or Scoring Object is permissible. In general, using a permanent marker to write a number is preferable to adding a label or something similar that may affect a Robot during a Match.

1. To what extent does an Event Partner have the authority to declare a labeled or altered game element appropriate for official matches?
2. Does this authority lie within the Event Partner, Head Referee, or a combination of the two?

An Event Partner has final authority on the game elements that are used at their event, and can disallow game elements for nearly any reason.

3. When are labels, permanent markers, or other markings considered to be as substantial alteration to game-play (if at all)

If a marking or label has affected a Robot during a Match, or in the Event Partner's opinion seems likely to do so, it probably isn't suitable for use in a scored Match at a qualifying event.

3062: Should Scorekeeper referee pick up robot in Robot Skills Matches?

27-Jan-2026

RSC5 T1

[<RSC5>](#) a.iii says that the team "may ask the Head Referee to pick up the Robot" if the team members cannot reach it. Shouldn't it be Head Referee or *Scorekeeper Referee*, since Head Referees are not required to watch the Robot Skills Matches per [<T1.f>](#) (last bullet point)? Also, should this apply to both Autonomous and Driving Skills Matches? (RSC5 is defined specifically for Autonomous Skills Matches)

Answered by Game Design Committee

Yes, a Scorekeeper Referee can take the place of a Head Referee if the Drive Team Members cannot reach their Robot for a [<GG10>](#) or [<RSC5>](#) reset during a Driving Skills or Autonomous Coding Skills Match. Note that resets in Driving Skills Matches are constrained by all of the criteria of [<GG10>](#), and are only available when the Robot requires assistance (not as a strategy).

3047: Controller Placement After Match

21-Jan-2026

GG4 S1 SC1 T1 T4

At the end of a match's *Driver Controlled Period*, a referee instructs drivers to put their controllers down on the ground. The driver cannot put the controller down in the field because doing so may put them in violation of [<SC1>](#) and [<GG4>](#). The driver also feels putting the controller down on the ground might be unsafe due to tripping hazards ([<S1>](#)). Also, due to concerns about damage to their controllers and/or the smart cable connection if the controller is accidentally kicked, stepped on, etc., the driver does not want to put their controller on the ground. This concern about damage to the controller is the result of a prior experience with a controller on the ground being stepped on and rendered unusable. However, the referee insists on drivers placing their controllers on the ground even after hearing the team's concern.

Does [<T1>](#) allow for the referee to require this procedure? Does this procedure fall under [<T4>](#), and if so, should this be explained by the event partner prior to the start of matches (such as during an event meeting)?

Answered by Game Design Committee

Although putting controllers down at the end of the Match is not specifically described or required in the game manual, it can be a reasonable request based on the circumstances of the event. If an event intends to require this of Teams, it's best to communicate it to all Teams during the pre-event meeting.

If a Head Referee asks a Team or Teams to put their controllers down, either during a Disablement or at the end of the Match, the Drive Team Member(s) should place their controller(s) on the ground or another safe location out of the Field. Note that, per [<GG11>](#) controllers must stay connected to the Field until Teams have been given permission to retrieve their Robots.

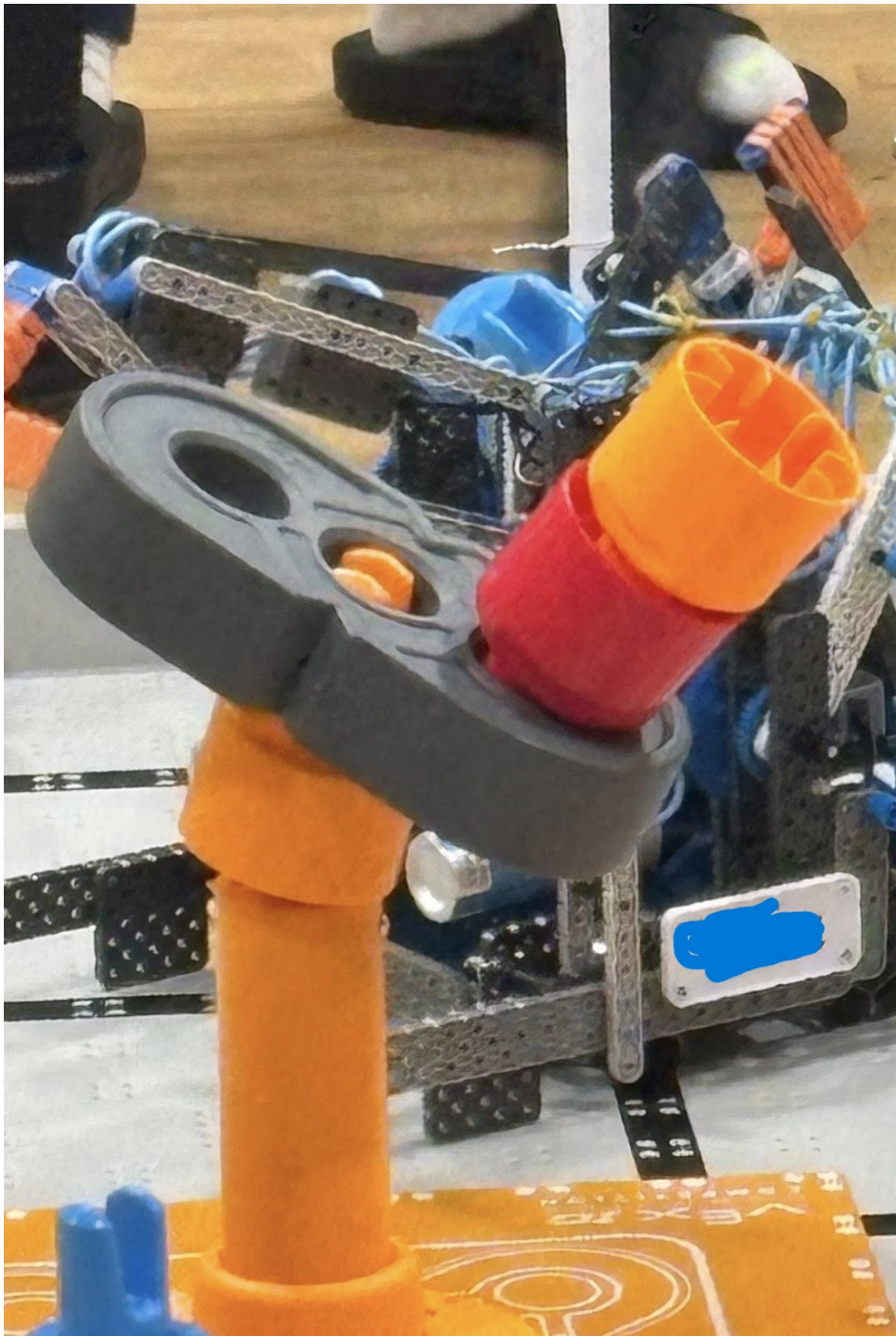
3030: Correct Scoring

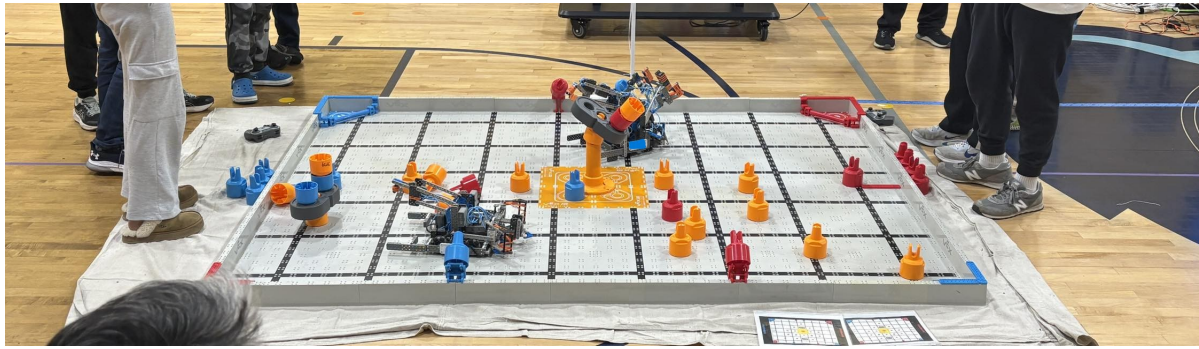
10-Jan-2026

SC3 T1

[<T1><SC3>](#)

This was scored as a 75 in a finals match, we are trying to figure out where those points were awarded because it appears nothing on the standoff is fully nested.





What would be the correct way to address a question in the finals scoring if it is not our match but would affect us being knocked out of the lead?

Answered by Game Design Committee

We believe our answer to scenario 2 in [Q&A 2716](#) addresses the first part of your question.

There is currently no way for a Team to protest or raise concerns about a score from a Match that they didn't participate in, and we acknowledge that implementing a process to allow it would be helpful to all teams. The GDC is working with multiple events and Head Referees to evaluate potential solutions.

3014: Implementation of a consistent escalation of repeated minor violations to major violations

2-Jan-2026

G3 GG8 T1

Note: This question was revised by the GDC for clarity and readability.

Is the following permissible?

It is announced at the driver's meeting that the 4th time a minor violation of a specific rule is recorded in the match anomaly log for a team, the 4th and all further violations of the same specific rule will be escalated to major violations. 4 violations of a specific rule, keep in mind the minimum number of matches for an official event is 6 so 4 is more than half of the minimum number of required matches, is explicitly stated at the drivers meeting to be the threshold value for the number of occurrences that will lead to a major violation.

Per [<T1b>](#), a team has had 3 matches at a tournament where they have been explicitly told about their minor violations of [<GG8>](#) each match that their license plates have fallen off. At the conclusion of the 4th match at a tournament where a license plate has fallen off, a 4th minor violation of [<GG8>](#), the team is disqualified from this match.

Answered by Game Design Committee

As described in the definition of Violation in the game manual, "Multiple Minor Violations within a Match or tournament may escalate to a Major Violation at the Head Referee's discretion or as specified in a rule."

It would be reasonable for a Head Referee to notify Teams that their 4th Minor Violation of a specific rule without specific guidance (and any subsequent Violations of that rule) would become a Major Violation and Disqualification for the Match. This guidance should be provided to all Teams at the event, ideally during the event meeting. However, this guidance might not be appropriate at all times during a season, or as blanket guidance for all rules and events.

2289: <T1>Head Referees have ultimate and final authority on all gameplay ruling decisions during the competition.

11-Nov-2024

T1

<T1>

Is the RSM allowed to overturn an existing ruling from the head referee of an event midway through the matches, causing multiple teams to be DQed in their currently playing matches? The head referee in this event has completed and passed the certification, the ruling that was overturned pertained to R9G and visual feedback.

Answered by Game Design Committee

No. As stated in rule <T1>, "The Head Referee has ultimate and final authority on all gameplay ruling decisions during the competition." Additionally, the introduction to *Section 3: The Robot* in the game manual states that, "The Head Referee has final authority regarding all Robot rules, since it is ultimately their decision whether a Robot takes the field for a Match after inspection has concluded (per <R3d> and <R3e>)."

REC Foundation staff members, the Event Partner, and other volunteers may provide the Head Referee with information about rules and rulings from official Q&As, but the final decision and ruling on any gameplay matter must always come from the Head Referee. If multiple Head Referees are working together and both observe a Match for which a ruling must be made, they must work together to reach a ruling.

As stated in the Commitment to Event Excellence, which is agreed to by every Event Partner, the REC Foundation has the right to modify volunteer and Key Volunteer assignments at events. However, RECF staff do not have the right to overturn or make rulings about game play or robots.

1961: Match Anomaly Log Publicity

19-Feb-2024

T1

<T1> states referees should record violations on the Match Anomaly log. I am asking about the visibility of this anomaly log.

Which of the following would be legal / preferred at an event? The match anomaly log is:

1. Kept completely private, only for referees and not to be shown to teams
2. Only show violations from a team to the team members
3. Only show violations from a team to the team members or their alliance partners' team members
4. Kept completely public, for all teams to see to see all other teams' violations

Answered by Game Design Committee

Given the often sensitive information included in Match Anomaly logs, they should not be made available for Teams to view. Discussing and disclosing Violations awarded during the event (Violation counts, rule numbers, match numbers, etc.) with the Team that earned them is fine, but the logs themselves shouldn't be shared beyond the Head Referees and other field staff.