

WATER POLO OFFICIATING MANUAL

Produced by

United States Water Polo

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Dedication

*The second edition of the US Water Polo Officiating Manual
is dedicated to the memory of Steven L. Heaston.*

Thanks for your countless hours of effort for the sport you loved so dearly.

Rest in Peace.

USA Water Polo Statement on Violence

There have been increasing numbers of commentaries regarding the level of physical aggression seen in Water Polo games. As provided in the playing rules, incidental contact between players is to be expected during the course of a game.

However, overly aggressive, violent, and/or brutal play have no place within the sport; and, bring disrepute to its integrity. This Manual provides guidelines to distinguish between appropriate physical play and inappropriate and untoward actions. Referees are obliged to enforce the rules to ensure safe play of the game, which may mean that an official has to compromise advantage situations to penalize inappropriate overly aggressive or violent play.

The safety of the players must be the primary concern of each and every Water Polo referee and participant.

Bret B. Bernard, AICP
Past President of United States Water Polo, Inc.

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U.S.A. Representative to ASUA Technical Water Polo Committee

Peter L. Snyder, Ph.D.
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July 1, 2002

Preface to the Third Edition

The goal of officiating any sport, and especially Water Polo, should be to control the game so that the play remains within the adopted rules and the intent expressed behind the written rules. The optimal situation is that after the conclusion of each game the participants do not remember who the referees were. This means that the officials maintained play within the specified rules without unduly influencing the outcome of the match – in other words, allowing the “best” team to win. The purpose of this Officiating Manual is to help each and every Water Polo referee to better understand the playing rules, their intent, and to learn better how to control the game of Water Polo without unnecessarily influencing it.

To accomplish this goal every official should always strive to be more consistent with his/her calls. This consistency should be sought in each game and throughout the Water Polo year. At the same time, it is important that all games be called consistently, not just by one referee but also by all referees. Every referee should have the same philosophical understanding of the game; this Manual provides the basis for that understanding. Officials should whistle the game of Water Polo using the instructions and interpretations in this Manual; this will improve the understanding and consistency of refereeing. This will benefit the players, coaches, administrators, spectators, and fellow referees.

All Water Polo referees are expected to officiate the game as specified in the rules and should strive to call the game as described in this Manual. All revision and changes of the playing and other rules, interpretations, and instructions will be published. Until modifications, revisions, or changes are published – the guide to refereeing Water Polo in the United States of America can be found in the ensuing pages of this Officiating Manual.

We also hope that that this Manual is read and employed by the game’s coaches and administrators so that a common knowledge and understanding of Water Polo and how it should be officiated is shared.

We understand that no individual will agree with every interpretation or instruction provided in a Water Polo Manual or other medium. This is due to our individual and different experiences within the sport. This Water Polo Officiating Manual is, however, a consensus document with contributions from many individuals and groups. Consistent with the collegial production of the first edition, this second edition of the United States Water Polo, Inc. Officiating Manual results from the concerted efforts by many individuals both in the United States and throughout the world.

Many domestic and international coaches and referees have again reviewed it. These include former and current National and Olympic teams’ coaches and game officials. In addition, this Manual has been reviewed and contributed to by the: United States Water Polo National Referees and Coaches Associations; Association Internationale de Arbiters des Water Polo (International Water Polo Referees Association); the World Water Polo Coaches Association; and, the Technical Water Polo Committees for Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA – International Swimming Federation), Amateur Swimming Union of the Americas (ASUA/UANA – Swimming Federation of North and South America), Amateur Asian Swimming Federation (AASF), and Liguee European de Natation (Swimming Federation of Europe).

This Officiating Manual, as with the first edition, is truly a work in progress – a “living” document. It will necessarily change as the sport and rules of Water Polo change. Every individual can assist in maintaining the effectiveness and credibility of this Manual by sending comments and suggestions. We look forward to your review of this document and any thoughts and contributions you may suggest to improve the Manual. These contributions should be provided to the USWP, Inc. National Office. They will be reviewed and appropriately incorporated as the Officiating Manual is reviewed and revised with future editions.

We earnestly hope that this USWP Officiating Manual, and the efforts which produced it, provide a posi-

tive contribution to your understanding, enjoyment, and involvement in the game of Water Polo.

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May 1, 2002

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Peter L. Snyder, Ph.D.
Chair of United States Water Polo, Inc. National Coaches Committee and Association

Terence P. Ma, Ph.D.
Editor, Water Polo Officiating Manual

December 1, 2000

Preface to the First Edition

The U.S. Water Polo Officiating Manual results from concentrated effort by many people in the United States and in other parts of the world. It has been reviewed by many coaches and referees, including current and former National and Olympic team coaches. In addition, this manual has been reviewed by members of the Association of International Arbiters (international water polo referees), the FINA Technical Water Polo Committee, and the World Water Polo Coaches Association.

Every official should strive to be more consistent in his/her calls. At the same time, it is important that all games be called consistently, not just by one referee, but by all referees. Every referee should have the same philosophical understanding of the game; this Manual provides the basis for that understanding. Referees are to call the game of water polo using the interpretations and instructions in this Manual; this will improve the consistency of refereeing, which will benefit spectators, players, and coaches.

No individual will agree with every interpretation and every instruction in a water polo Manual. This is due to our different experiences with the sport. The U.S. Water Polo Officiating Manual is a consensus document with contributions from many groups and individuals. It is a “living” document that will change as the sport of water polo changes. Every individual can help by sending comments and suggestions to the USWP National Office. They will be reviewed as the Manual is reviewed.

All referees are expected to call the game as specified in the water polo rules and as described in this Manual. All revisions and changes of the rules, interpretations, and instructions will be published. Until revisions or changes are published, the guide to how to call the game of water polo in the United States can found in these pages.

There have been increasing numbers of commentaries regarding the level of physical aggression seen in water polo games. Incidental contact between players is expected in the course of a game. However, overly aggressive, violent, and/or brutal play have no place in the sport. This Manual provides guidelines to distinguish between appropriate physical play and inappropriate play. Referees are obligated to enforce the rules to ensure safe play of the game, which may mean that a referee has to violate advantage to penalize inappropriate play. **The safety of the players must be a primary concern of the referee.**

We look forward to your contributions to improve this Manual and hope that this effort provides a positive contribution to your understanding and enjoyment of the game of water polo.

Bret B. Bernard
Past President, U.S. Water Polo, Inc.

Steven L. Heaston
Technical Director, U.S. Water Polo, Inc.

January 1, 1999

Acknowledgments

The Officiating Manual Group of the USA Water Polo National Referees Committee overseeing the production of the second edition of the USA Water Polo Officiating Manual is composed of Bret B. Bernard, former USA representative to the FINA Technical Water Polo Committee (TWPC), Loren A. Bertocci, Ph.D., Technical Director of the Collegiate Water Polo Association, Bill Frady, USA representative to the ASUA TWPC, and Peter L. Snyder, Ph.D., Chairman of the USA Water Polo National Coaches Committee. The co-editors are Terence P. Ma, Ph.D. and Steven J. Rotsart Jr. The first edition of the USA Water Polo Officiating Manual was based on the *CWPA Officiating Guide* by Terence Ma and Loren Bertocci. Grateful appreciation is extended to the CWPA Board of Directors for permission to use the copyrighted material from the *CWPA Guide*.

Numerous individuals who contributed to this document, include Dave Alberstein, Bill Barnett, David Bathurst, Loren Bertocci, Pete Cutino, Greg Gray, Rick Edwards, Al Frowiss, Gene Gill, Steve Heaston, Tom Hermstad, Jack Horton, Bill Jasper, Barbara Kalbus, Jim Lewis, Bruce Morehouse, Bruce Murden, Debbie Nettles, Edward Newland, Joe O'Brien, Kai Palchikoff, Pete Pappas, Ed Reed, Mark Regan, Gary Robinett, Rafael Ruano, Dan Sharadin, Bill Shaw, Mark Standridge, Andy Takata, Hank Vellekamp, Bruce Watson, John D. Whitehouse, Bruce Wigo, Jeff Wilson, Joe Wynne, and others who contributed their thoughts to the Manual.

Other sources of information include the National Referees Committee of USA Water Polo, Southern California Aquatic Federation (SCAF), Mountain Pacific Sports Federation (MPSF), National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), coaches and players, and the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO) and its official magazine *Referee*.

We are particularly grateful to Gianni Lonzi, Chairman of the Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA) TWPC and Vice Chairman of the European (LEN) TWPC, who clarified many of the precepts and concepts from the FINA and LEN perspectives. We also acknowledge the rules clarifications made by the FINA TWPC in its Istanbul meeting of September 1998 and its Long Beach meeting of February 2000; the clarifications are in this document. We especially acknowledge comments from the members of the FINA TWPC who have reviewed this document carefully. We are indebted to John Whitehouse, Honorary Secretary of the FINA TWPC, who has provided detailed information regarding the rulings of the FINA TWPC. We also acknowledge and appreciate the review of this Manual by the Executive Committee of the Association Internationale des Arbiters de Water Polo (AIA) at its meetings in Zagreb (1998), Florence (1999), and Kuwait City (1999).

USA Water Polo is proud that the ASUA TWPC has recommended this Manual as a training aid for referees throughout the Americas. Additionally, we are grateful to the comments and consideration of numerous countries around the world that have reviewed and adopted this Manual, its supporting FINA Rules Video, and the referee clinic materials produced by USA Water Polo.

USA Water Polo, Inc. is the national governing body for the sport of water polo in the United States. The USA Water Polo (USWP) rules are published by USWP and are taken from the FINA rules. The Collegiate Water Polo Association and Mountain Pacific Sports Federation are two of the sponsoring conferences for Men's and Women's Collegiate Varsity and Club Water Polo competition. The National Collegiate Athletic Association is the national sanctioning body for Men's and Women's Varsity water polo. Most Collegiate Club water polo competition is played under NCAA rules. FINA is the international governing body for water polo and all aquatic sports recognized by the International Olympic Committee. The Amateur Swimming Union of the Americas (ASUA) is the governing body for the Americas aquatics continental championships, such as the Pan American Games. SCAF is the organization of water polo referees in southern California

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2002 Points of Emphasis

- **Players must put the ball in play correctly.**
- **Allow the former set and defender to untangle when possession changes; do no call a foul too quickly.**
- **Just because a slough is coming, a referee can still call ordinary or exclusion fouls against the set defender.**
- **Minimize calling offensive fouls away from the ball.**
- **Be an offensive-minded referee.**

2001-2002 PLAYING RULES AND INTERPRETATION CHANGES **(Effective December 1, 2001)**

FINA/USWP Playing Rules Changes:

At the FINA Water Polo Technical Congress held in Fukuoka, Japan, on 19 July 2001, the rules for water polo competition between 2001-2005 were changed. The following is a summary of these rules changes:

WP1.2 New pool figure. The only difference from before is that the minimum distance from the goal line to the wall has been changed from 1.5 meters to 1.66 meters.

WP1.4 Dimensions for a women's field of play removed. Therefore, the maximum size of the women's field of play is the same as the men, 30 meters length by 20 meters width.

WP1.9 Flags for goal judges removed.

WP4.1 Contrasting color for caps. It reads, "Caps shall be of contrasting color, other than solid red, as approved by the referees, but also to contrast with the color of the ball. A team may be required by the referees to wear white or blue caps." (See interpretation below.)

WP4.1 New addition to the rule. It reads, "If a player loses the cap during play, the player shall replace it at the next appropriate stoppage when the player's team is in possession of the ball."

WP6.1 Reference to flag signals deleted.

WP8.2 Flag signals replaced by arm signals for goal judges.

WP9.1 Timekeeper to signal by whistle 45 seconds and full time of each timeout.

WP11.2 Teams change end before first period of extra time.

WP11.3 Shootout if teams are still tied after two periods of extra time. Procedure to do so indicated in note. (See interpretation below.)

WP12.1 Three timeouts per game, third timeout to be used only in extra time.

WP12.3 Note: this rule is incorrectly printed in the 2001-2002 FINA rules. The reference to the third timeout is incorrect and this will be corrected officially in April 2002 printing of the 2002-2004 FINA rules.

WP12.5 Added note that teams must go to their halves of the field of play for a timeout.

Appendix A, Instruction 6 Referees are to point to where a throw is to be taken only if the ball is not already there.

Appendix A, Instruction 12 (clean up of bracketed comment) If two players on opposing teams commit exclusion fouls simultaneously (live time or dead time), both players are excluded and a neutral throw is taken.

2001-2002 PLAYING RULES INTERPRETATION CHANGES

(Effective June 1, 2001)

There are several new interpretations and clarifications. The following have been adopted for use in the USA. These interpretations were developed by the USA Water Polo Playing Rules Committee with the advice and guidance of John Whitehouse, Honorary Secretary of the FINA Technical Water Polo Committee.

WP4.1 Caps: Teams are to wear caps of contrasting colors. Colors must be clearly visibly different when wet and when dry. If the caps are insufficiently different, in the opinion of the referee, the first team listed may be required to wear white caps. The second team listed may be required to wear blue caps. Patterned caps are permitted if the cap numbers are easily, clearly, and visibly different from the background pattern when wet and when dry. If a bathing cap is worn, it must match the color of the water polo cap. It is recommended that teams carry three sets of caps, caps of a contrasting color, white caps, and blue caps.

WP7.5 Yellow and Red Cards: If a coach or team official is disruptive, they are issued a warning by the referee. If there is any additional disruption, a yellow card is issued. A yellow card is a visible warning and is valid for that particular game only. After a yellow card, the coach is still permitted to progress to the four-meter line when his or her team is on attack, shout instructions, and stand. If this coach or team official is disruptive after receiving a yellow card, a red card is assessed. If, in the judgment of the referee, the infraction is severe, a red card may be produced immediately without issuing a warning or a yellow card. If a substitute on the bench is disruptive, that athlete is to receive a red card immediately. There is no warning to an athlete.

If a coach, team official, or athlete receives a red card, that person is to leave the precincts of the pool for the remainder of that game. However, this individual may go to the spectator stands. The coach, team official, or athlete is also suspended from the next game in that tournament. Further disruption may result in removal from the spectator stands (WP7.5) or in suspension from the additional games at that event, as determined by the tournament committee. When an athlete is suspended in tournaments where rosters are declared, that athlete's name must be on the roster of that next game. For example, if only 13 players are allowed, that player must appear on the roster and is ineligible to participate.

WP11.3 Penalty Shootout: If, at the conclusion of extra time, the teams are tied, a penalty shootout will take place. The referees, in the presence of the team captains, will conduct a coin toss to determine which team will shoot first. There will be no change of ends and each team will shoot at their opponent's goal. Each referee will conduct the penalty throws in their offensive end. All players are to remain seated on the team bench during the shootout except for the shooter and the goalkeeper.

In a shallow-deep pool, all penalty throws will be taken in the deep end of the pool and the teams will be allowed to sit on opposite sides of the pool (depending on the physical layout of the pool) outside the seven-meter line.

Each coach is to nominate five players to be shooters. These five players must be listed in the order in which they will shoot. The player must be eligible to play, that is, that athlete must be on the roster and may not have been excluded from the remainder of the game (third personal foul, game exclusion foul). During the shootout, a team may use any eligible player as a goalkeeper. The same player need not serve as goalkeeper for every throw.

The teams will take alternative throws until all five shooters of each team have taken their throws. That is, the first listed player on the first team will shoot, then the first listed player on the other team will shoot. Next, the second listed player on the first team will shoot, then the second listed player on the other team will shoot. If the teams are tied after all five players of each team have shot, then alter-

nating pairs of shots (the first listed players of both teams, then the second listed players of both teams, and so on) will be taken until one team scores and the other team misses. The same players as listed originally by the coach must shoot and they must shoot in the same sequence.

WP12.1 Use of Timeouts: A team is entitled to two timeouts during regular time and a third timeout in extra time for a total of three timeouts. If a team has not used its timeouts during regular time, it may use them during extra time. That is, a team that has not called a timeout in regular time may take three timeouts during extra time.

WP19.1 Taking of a Free Throw: If a ball has been moved closer to the goal than the location of the foul, the team is to take the free throw from behind the line of the foul. It is not necessary for the referee to insist that the free throw be taken at the location of the foul.

WP21.9 & WP 21.11 Disrespect and Misconduct: If a player on a team in possession of the ball (or soon to have possession of the ball as his/her team had just been scored upon) commits a foul of disrespect or misconduct during a timeout or after a goal has been scored, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game with immediate substitution. The “rule of thumb” is that under normal circumstances, the attacking team always has seven players.

If a player on a team not in possession of the ball commits a foul of disrespect or misconduct during timeout or after a goal has been scored, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game and play is restarted with a substitute in the re-entry area.

If a player commits a foul of disrespect or misconduct during the time between periods, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game and the sprint is taken with the teams at full strength.

If a player of either team commits a foul of disrespect or misconduct during play or the time between the calling of a foul and the taking of the free throw, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game, the ball is awarded to the offended team, and play is restarted with a substitute in the re-entry area.

BL6.4.1.2.1 Breaking Tie Breaks: If more than two pairs of teams are tied in points within the same bracket (e.g., for first place and for third place), the lower placing tie is broken first (in this example, the third place tie).

When teams are tied in points, the first comparison is the goal differences between the tied teams and the next highest placing team in the bracket. If they teams are still tied, then compare goals scored against that next highest placing team. If the teams are still tied, then compare goal difference with the second highest team, then compare goals scored against the second highest team, and so on.

1. Introduction

This manual provides referees with the principles of refereeing water polo primarily at the Open level; however, the general principles described can be applied at any level of play. This manual is a *supplement* to the water polo rulebook and the *FINA Instructions to Referees*; it does not take the place of either. Each official should study and know the rules.

Manual is supplement to rule book and FINA instructions to referees.

Four components are critical to becoming a good official: 1) knowledge of the sport, 2) experience and practice, 3) understanding advantage, and 4) discussing the rules and advantage with other officials, coaches, and other knowledgeable water polo people. Participating in clinics and studying officiating manuals will help a referee get a firm understanding of the rules, advantage, and the application of rules and advantage; however, there is no better teacher than officiating games. In a tournament-clinic setting, the official is evaluated and gains additional input. Officials can increase their knowledge of water polo by watching games, observing other referees, studying themselves on video tapes, reading water polo books, and discussing water polo with other officials, coaches and players.

Components to becoming a good official.

1.1 General Principles

All referees should be working under the same philosophical basis and using the same interpretations. Referees will differ slightly on the basis of their understandings and approaches to the game. This Manual discusses the guiding principles that a referee should use when developing an approach to the game.

This Manual provides the guiding principles to be used by referees.

The key to good officiating is *consistency*. Referees should always strive for consistency. No matter how sophisticated and elegant a game philosophy, if a referee is inconsistent, then players and coaches will be less likely to adjust to the referee and will not want that official calling major games. Referees need to be consistent within the boundaries of the published rules and interpretations.

Consistency is key to good officiating.

In developing a better understanding of the game, referees should listen to technical delegates and evaluators, senior referees, fellow officials, coaches, and players. The technical delegates and evaluators provide guidance on how water polo is to be called. Senior referees are “senior” because of demonstrated ability and experience. These higher level officials can provide much information on how referees should be developing their approaches to the game.

Developing a better understanding of the game.

By listening to fellow officials, regardless of their levels, a referee will hear new ideas. A referee with limited experience may ask a question that will force a more experienced official to explain why an automatic call for the past 5 years is correct. A referee should be able to examine each call (or no call) and explain it with respect to the rules and his/her understanding of the game. Referees at the same level, or one with more experience, can challenge an official to rethink a set of calls, or how certain rules are applied.

It is important to listen to coaches and players. By listening, an official can piece together significant issues on which the referee may need to work, including how to better present a foul when it is called. Some coaches have specific plays or philosophical approaches to water polo. It is possible to expand one’s repertoire of calls and become a better referee by interacting with coaches. That is not to say a referee should call a game one way for one coach

and another way for another coach – that is one of the worst things an official can do. Nevertheless, referees can improve their overall game by incorporating aspects of coaches’ comments.

1.2 What is the role of the referee?

Referees are not the stars of the show, and should not draw attention to themselves; rather, they are to ensure the proper outcome of a game. In essence, the referees are impartial observers and, if necessary, mediators between the two teams. They should not be excessively demonstrative with actions such as blowing the whistle or interfering with the game. Referees should be invisible, yet they should have an appreciation for the amount of control over the outcome that they can have on a particular game. They are also not coaches. Referees should be impartial and consistent from one end of the pool to the other and from the beginning to the end of the game. What is a foul in one end is a foul in the other; what is not a foul in one end is not a foul in the other.

Referees are impartial observers and mediators between two teams.

Consistency.

The referee allows players to play the game. It is the job of the referee to call fouls only when necessary. The structure of the game in the water is the responsibility of the players. It is their responsibility to play the game, for the coaches to coach the teams, and for the referees to call the game.

Allow players to play the game.

When referees officiate, they are entrusted with ensuring a just end to the competition. In any given situation, referees are given two extremes: the most correct answer and an absolutely wrong answer. A referee must work toward making calls that are as close as possible to the most correct answer.

Referees ensure a just end result occurs.

Rules and interpretations of water polo change. In addition, the rules are somewhat different, depending if one is officiating a FINA/USWP, Collegiate (NCAA), or a high school (NISCA) match; furthermore, local areas and leagues may add rules. It is the referee’s responsibility to **know the rules under which the match is to be played**. It is impossible for printed materials to be completely up-to-date on every change, revision, and new interpretation. It is the responsibility of the referee to be as knowledgeable as possible about changes. Referees can keep current by attending clinics locally and nationally, reading newsletters, and talking with colleagues.

Know the rules under which the contest is being played.

1.3 Recognizing the Level of Play

It is important the referee recognizes the level of play of the tournament or game and the level of the teams involved. A senior men’s **open** game is played differently from a collegiate men’s **varsity** game, which is played differently from a collegiate **club** game. The level of play determines the degree of advantage associated with each situation; thus, the level of play also dictates how the referee should apply advantage.

Level of play and how it affects the game.

The same amount of physical contact by the defense will have a greater effect on a smaller, weaker, and less skilled player than it will have on a larger, stronger, and more skilled player. That is, for lower versus higher level players, the relative level of advantage shifts more quickly because these lower level players do not have the skills to compensate for, and take advantage of, the same amount of defensive contact as do the higher level players. At the same time, highly skilled players are expected to have the ability to control their bodies so incidental contact remains “incidental” and are not fouls.

In addition, the criteria the referee sets for “good” and “bad” plays

should differ for different levels of play. In a 16-and-under boy’s game, a pass to the set position that is somewhere in the vicinity of the correct hand of the set might be “good enough,” whereas that might not be an acceptable pass in a senior open game. On the other hand, if a team enters a tournament at a specific level (for example, a less experienced junior team entered in a senior tournament), then the referee should not penalize a more skilled senior team for the lack of skill exhibited by the junior team. Fouls committed against or by members of the junior team must be called based on the principles of advantage and the written rules of water polo.

1.4 What is the Perspective of the Referee?

Referees need to recognize that their perspective of water polo differs from those of players or coaches. This difference allows referees to be impartial observers and mediators between the teams.

When players look at the game, they are most concerned about what is happening to them. Even at the highest level of play, players are most aware of what has just happened to them, and a player may express disappointment the referee did not “see” and thus call a foul that occurred. Coaches, on the other hand, are mostly concerned about their team and that team’s advantage; therefore, coaches are looking at the circumstances that have changed the ability of their team to play the game. These perspectives are important and legitimate ways of looking at water polo competition.

Perspective of the players and coaches.

Referees, however, should have a perspective different from coaches, players, and spectators. They are **less concerned** with an **individual** or even a **team**. Rather, the referees should experience and watch the whole pool – what is happening with **both** teams across the entire pool and as the possession and game clocks wind down. They should be cognizant of the entire environment during the conduct of the game. How is it changing? Being able to sense this milieu allows the experienced referee to become an “unnoticed” participant in a match.

Perspective of the referees.

1.5 Striving for Consistency

Referees should always strive for consistency and should call the game the same way from period to period and from game to game. The basic philosophy behind how calls should be made is described in this Manual. It is the responsibility of every referee to make calls according to this philosophy. If all referees work toward this same understanding of the game, then the similarities between referees will also increase. The end result would be a game that would be more comprehensible to the spectators.

Importance of consistency.

1.6 Referee Uniform

Referees should wear the appropriate uniforms as prescribed by the governing body sanctioning the contest.

If a tournament provides an alternate uniform, referees should wear the tournament uniform if the tournament provides enough uniforms so that all the referees can be dressed in this alternate uniform. The two game officials should be dressed in the same uniform.

1.7 The Coach's View of Refereeing Offense and Defense

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- Make the game understandable and consistent, most especially from a player's point of view. Therefore, the fewer exceptions there are to each rule, the easier the game is to teach and learn.
- Allow as many "natural" (i.e. non-exclusion) offensive opportunities to score as are possible without placing too many restrictions on the defense. Ultimately, the strategy for the offensive team is to work towards higher volumes of shots from better percentage positions and passes that facilitate these shots. To elaborate, for **offense**, this would include the following offensive tactics, in no particular order: counterattack (fast break), driving in the frontcourt offense, picks and screens in the frontcourt offense, passes back and forth between offensive players in the frontcourt offense, and shots from the set players. "Earning" exclusion fouls on the opponent is definitely an objective, but not a "natural" offensive opportunity.
- Reward good play with correct interpretations and calls or no-calls; don't reward play that lacks in good fundamentals. This tenet alone will help players progress and learn more quickly. To elaborate, for **defense**, this would include the following tactics, in no particular order: front positioning, passing lane positioning, sloughing or double-teaming, stunting between two offensive players, hips to the surface guarding, hands up guarding, head up positioning (both defense and offense), deflecting passes or shots at the appropriate time (i.e. "playing the ball"), crashing to the set offense position, swimming to a spot to diminish an offensive advantage, and switching players to take away advantage or match up appropriately.
- Encourage good team play.
- Keep a flow to the game so as to heighten the water polo ball handling aspects and diminish the swimming aspects.
- Players should be knowledgeable regarding the spirit of the game as well as the "letter of the law" with hope that the referees will enforce using this guideline.
- The players should, individually or collectively, ultimately determine each offensive and defensive success or failure. A referee's role is to arbitrate in order to facilitate the players' roles in the tactics chosen.
- Make the game enjoyable and safe.

2 Terms

Common terms used in water polo are explained in this section.

2.1 Terms and Procedures Related to Field of Play

2.1.1 Coaches' Positions During Games

Coaches positions during games.
WP 5.2, I5.2.1

All coaches and team officials shall remain seated on the team bench throughout the contest, except during timeouts or breaks between periods. A head coach whose team is on offense (attacking) may come up to his/her defensive 4-

meter line.

The head coach may also be removed from the team bench or playing area whenever the coach’s conduct interferes with the control or progress of the game. When a referee warns a player or assistant coach, the head coach is considered to have been warned. It is the responsibility of the head coach to oversee proper conduct of the team, assistant coach(es), and team official(s). (See also Section 2.5.14 on Yellow and Red Cards).

Coach may be removed if he/she interferes with the control/progress of the game. WP 7.5, I 7.5.1

2.1.2 Field of Play

Field of Play is the area in which the competition is to take place. It is bounded by the end lines (a line that is 0.3 meters behind the goal line) and the side-lines.

Definition of field of play. WP 1.2, 1.4

2.1.3 Near and Far Post

The near post is the goal post closest to the frontcourt referee, and the far post is the one farthest from the frontcourt referee. For this Manual, a “perfect pool” configuration is used; therefore, in a perfect pool, the far post is to the goalkeeper’s right and the near post is to the goalkeeper’s left.

2.1.4 Out-of-Bounds

Whenever the ball passes completely behind the goal line (face of the goal) or completely over the sideline, the ball is out-of-bounds. This condition needs to be met even if there is a lane line that prevents the ball from going completely behind the goal line. Additionally, the ball is out-of-bounds if it hits the wall at the side of the pool above water level (Note: a ball that hits the wall at the side of the pool while floating is not considered to be out-of-bounds.) If the ball hits the top of a lane line denoting the side of the field of play and rebounds back into the field of play, the ball remains in play and has not gone out-of-bounds.

Boundary of the field of play.

Ball must pass the goal line to be out-of-bounds, even if there is a lane line preventing the ball from going past the goal line.

2.1.5 Re-entry Area

The re-entry (exclusion, ejection) area is the place from which players may reenter the field of play. In a perfect pool, this area is behind the goal line to a point 2 meters toward the goal from the sideline opposite the officials’ table. In smaller pools, especially those with wall-mounted goals, the re-entry area may be defined as a smaller location; for example, the corner of the pool opposite the officials’ table.

Definition of re-entry area. WP 1.2, 1.7

In short pools (e.g. 23-25 meters in length), it is permissible for the re-entry area to be located immediately outside the sideline against the wall.

Re-entry area in a smaller pool. I 1.7.1

While the re-entry and team areas are ideally located opposite the officials’ table, the re-entry areas should be located at the foot of the team bench, regardless of whether the team benches are located on the same side or opposite the officials’ table. It is the responsibility of the referee to make sure before the game that the teams know where the re-entry area is located.

Re-entry area should be at the foot of the team bench.

2.1.6 Team Areas (Location of Players Not Involved in Play)

Location of team bench.
WP 5.2, 15.2.2

Players not involved in play, those on the bench, must remain seated on the bench. They may not remain in the water (unless local league/tournament rules permit). The team benches should be located behind the goal line and outside the sideline on the pool deck opposite the officials' table. All players must wear their caps at all times, including those who are not eligible to play (for example, having three personal fouls).

Players must keep their caps on.

2.2 Advantage

Definition of advantage.
WP 7.3

Advantage is the single most important concept in water polo. It is useful to read the advantage rule carefully. WP 7.3 states:

The referee shall refrain from declaring a foul if, in their opinion, such declaration would be an advantage to the offending player's team. The referees shall not declare an ordinary foul when there is still a possibility to play the ball.

[Note. The referees shall apply this principle to the fullest extent. They should not, for example, declare an ordinary foul in favor of a player who is in possession of the ball and making progress toward his opponents' goal, because this is considered to give an advantage to the offender's team.]

Fouls are called based on advantage.

The objective of the advantage rule is clear. If an attacking player or team has advantage, and that advantage is taken away by the defenders, an appropriate penalty must be awarded to that attacking team. If no advantage is taken away, then it may not be necessary to call a foul. The rules are written in favor of the defense. That is, the net result of calling a foul is most typically an interruption of the offense. Thus, with few exceptions, only fouls that affect play at the ball should be called.

A player who has earned a foul should be awarded that foul, as appropriate, based on advantage and the game situation.

The *FINA Instructions to Referees* make it extremely clear that there should not be a lot of whistles in the game; that is, referees should not call many ordinary fouls. Referees are expected to apply to the fullest extent Rule 7.3: "the referee shall not call an ordinary foul if the offense still has the possibility to play the ball." On the other hand, **if a player has been fouled, that player should be awarded an ordinary, exclusion, or penalty foul, as appropriate**, unless not calling the foul increases offensive advantage.

Referees should use positioning on the deck to show attention being given to the game situation instead of calling unnecessary fouls.

Instead of calling an unnecessary foul, referees should show attention to the game by means of their positioning on the deck. After every game, referees should challenge themselves to determine how many unnecessary whistles they blew and whether they misapplied any exclusion or penalty fouls.

2.2.1 Relative Advantage

Do not call fouls that decrease a team's level of advantage.

For the referee to call the game correctly, it is important to recognize different types of advantage and the level of relative advantage. The referee should not call a foul that would decrease the advantage of the attacking or defending team. For example, a 6 (attacking players) on 5 (defending players) advantage

situation is generally not as good as a 2 on 1 advantage. As another example, there are two counterattacking players coming down the pool, and one has the ball. Both defenders are swimming on the backs of the attacking players. The referee could exclude one or both defenders. If the defender of the player with the ball is excluded, this attacking player becomes a passer. The pass can only be made to the teammate across the pool, who may not be in a position to receive the ball because of his/her defender; calling the foul on the defender of the player with the ball was to the advantage of the team committing the foul. On the other hand, if the defender of the player without the ball is excluded, the player with the ball simply can pass the ball across the pool to the open player who has, at worst, a one-on-nobody advantage. Calling this foul in this manner is consistent with the advantage rule. However, if the foul is called such that the counterattack is stopped because the ball has to be moved back, then the call may well have been to the advantage of the defending team and should not have been called.

Committing defensive fouls is common tactical strategy. Referees must select which fouls to call and which fouls to ignore on the basis of advantage.

Because of the concept of “unlimited” fouling, committing defensive fouls is a common tactical strategy. Calling every foul would be tedious and prevent the game from progressing in a reasonable fashion. At the same time, not calling enough fouls could allow the game to degenerate into a brawl. Therefore, the referee must use good judgment to distinguish which fouls to call as ordinary fouls, which fouls to call as exclusion fouls, which fouls to call as penalty fouls, and which fouls to ignore. This judgment is based on advantage.

During a counterattack with two lead breakers, one of whom has the ball, the referee should use advantage as one method of selecting which defending player to exclude.

The key to advantage and relative advantage is recognizing when advantage is increased or decreased and calling the game relative to the level of advantage of a player and/or team. A player may not have advantage (not in position to play the ball or contribute to a team’s offense or defense) or may have shooting advantage (ready to take an imminent shot on goal). Similarly, an attacking team may not have advantage (unable to move the ball into scoring position) or shooting advantage (imminent shot that can be taken by the player with the ball or immediately after it is passed to an open player).

Key to calling advantage and relative advantage.

Referees have a different perspective on the game than players or coaches. Referees should look at the overall advantage between the two teams and not just examine the advantage of an individual player or even of a team. Referees should focus on what is the relative level of offensive advantage and what is the level of defensive advantage. Calls by the referee should rarely be made simply to change the level of advantage, but to restore the level of advantage for the attacking or defending team.

Referee perspective is overall advantage between the two teams.

It is worth emphasizing that there is defensive advantage. It is produced by the combined actions of the attacking players and defending players and increases the ability of the defending team to prevent a goal more effectively.

Defensive advantage.

Finally, often there will be mismatches in team/player abilities in the water. It is not the responsibility of the referee to level the playing field. If a set cannot do an egg-beater kick and thus sinks when there is light, incidental contact from the defender, the defender should not be excluded because of lack of skill by the set. If the defender, however, takes advantage of that player’s lack of skill by holding them down or repeatedly sinking the attacking player, there is a foul. It is the responsibility of the more skilled players to control their bod-

Refereeing mismatches.

ies and their actions. Sometimes, the defending player may be mismatched against a more skilled set player. In these cases, it is not the responsibility of the referee to rescue the defender. The set player has a higher level of relative advantage in this instance, do not take this offensive advantage away by calling fouls quickly.

The artistry and skill in water polo officiating is the ability of the referee to apply the rules and advantage, and to do so in a consistent manner. All the fouls and the applications of the rules described, except for player safety, are subordinate to advantage and calling advantage correctly.

2.2.2 Possessional Advantage

Definition of **possessional advantage**.

A player has possessional advantage when that person *has the ball and can do something with it*. For example, players who voluntarily go under water lose possessional advantage. Players who do not have possessional advantage include: players who receive bad passes, players who do not have full control of the ball, players who are pinned to the side of the pool at midtank or down near the 2-meter line by good defense.

Examples of players who do not have possessional advantage.

If a defending player violates a rule to take away possessional advantage, awarding a free throw (ordinary foul) returns that possessional advantage. The referee's job is to recognize when a player has possessional advantage and the moment it is lost. If a player loses possessional advantage because of bad play, there rarely should be any call on behalf of that player; in contrast, if a defender violating a rule actively takes the advantage away, awarding an ordinary foul should return advantage to that attacking player.

Return possessional advantage only if it was lost due to a foul.

Team possessional advantage.

In addition to individual possessional advantage, there is team possessional advantage. A referee should refrain from calling an ordinary foul if a player has the possibility of making a good pass, even if the player is being fouled; however, an ordinary foul should be called if the ability to make a good pass is taken away by a defender. For example, a player who is pinned at midtank normally does not have possessional advantage. However, if a teammate swims into position to receive a pass, the team increases their possessional advantage because the pinned player now has someone to whom the ball can be passed. Therefore, if the pinned player is being fouled when a teammate swims into position, a foul should be called to award good teamwork.

2.2.3 Positional Advantage

Definition of **positional advantage**.

The next level of advantage is positional advantage. When a defender violates a rule to take away positional advantage of an attacking player, an exclusion foul usually should be called. Essentially, positional advantage is (1) when the attacking player is in position to advance the ball into scoring position, regardless of whether that individual actually has possession of the ball, and (2) when the defender is not in position to defend the goal. The most obvious example is when the head of the attacking player involved in the play of the ball is closer to the goal than the defender's head (outside the 4-meter area). Finally, it is important to recognize that just because an individual player has lost positional advantage, a foul should not be called automatically. The referee should look to the advantage of the entire attacking team. If the overall team advantage has not been lost, or if calling the foul would decrease the advantage of the attacking team (for example, imminent shot on goal), the foul should not be called.

Positional advantage is relative to both the attacking and defending players.

Be aware of overall team advantage. Do not call fouls automatically.

Here are examples of when positional advantage should or should not be applied.

- The lead break is a half-body length ahead of the defender. The defender pulls back on the lead break at about the 6-meter line. If the lead break loses position relative to the defender, the defender took away positional advantage by holding and pulling back a player not holding the ball. This defending player should be excluded for this foul.

Pullback on lead break inside the 7-meter line and outside the 4-meter area. If the attacking player loses position, an exclusion foul should be called.

If the lead break has the ball and is able to make relatively unimpeded and reasonable progress toward the goal, the holding or pulling back by the defender has not altered the positional advantage of the attacking player. In this case, the referee may refrain from calling a foul because the result would be to award the attacking player a free throw, in effect removing that individual from the offense. Compared to the scoring threat posed by an offensive player swimming in toward the goal in possession of the ball (with no defender between the attacking player and the goaltender), this “foul” is to the advantage of the team committing the foul and should, therefore, not be called.

In same situation, if lead break can continue to make progress, do not call the foul quickly.

If the referee withholds calling this immediate exclusion foul, several other things might happen: 1) the defender might hold or pull back this player again (harder) so positional advantage is lost, then an exclusion should be called; 2) the offensive player might get to the 4-meter line, at which point, if the defender commits a foul, a penalty foul is called; 3) the offensive player might take the ball in, shoot, and score, in which case the offense has benefited from the referee’s refraining from calling a foul; or 4) the offensive player takes the ball in and fails to score. In this last case, the offensive player was allowed to keep the positional advantage, to raise it to a probable goal advantage, and then was unable to convert. In each of these situations, the offense had its attacking advantage maximized.

- A driver has the ball and turns the defender such that the attacking player is facing the goal. As this player swims toward the goal, the defender pulls back the attacking player at about the 6-meter line. This pullback causes the driver to lose momentum and thus positional advantage; therefore, the defender should be excluded immediately. Once a defending player is turned, that defender has the obligation to get off the attacking player *and* to demonstrate that the defender is not impeding or otherwise preventing free movement of the attacking player. If the attacking player appears to be impeded from forward motion, an exclusion foul should be called.

If perimeter player with the ball turns defender, an exclusion should be called for a pullback that causes the driver to lose momentum.

Once a defending player is turned, that defender has the obligation to get off the attacker and to demonstrate that the defender is not com-

A wing player turns outside and is swimming down the sideline. When this player is pulled back, it is unlikely that positional advantage has been lost relative to where the player was before the foul. Thus, at most, the attacking player may have lost possessional advantage. That is, the defense did not take away the ability of this player to make progress towards the goal. Consequently, a referee may choose to call an ordinary foul due to a loss of possessional advantage. An exclusion foul would be called only if the attacking player lost position towards the goal relative to the defender’s and no other defender was present between that attacking player and the goal.

If no relative position is lost by the attacking player as a consequence of a foul, an exclusion foul is not typically called.

No foul if the defender goes around the set player. However, if the defender moves the set player out of position, an exclusion foul should be called.

- The set is in good position to receive a pass, and a good pass is thrown. Normally, it is up to the set to maintain position and to react to the ball. If the defender sees the ball coming and goes around the set (even if there is incidental contact), there should not be a foul; however, if the defender holds, sinks, or pulls back on the set while executing a move to get around the set, the defender should be excluded. Similarly, if the defender pulls or shoves the set out of position so the set cannot receive the ball, the defender has taken away the positional advantage of the set and should be excluded.

Attacking player in position to receive a good pass is held, sank, or pulled back by a defender. An exclusion foul should be called.

- The perimeter player is in good position to receive a pass, and a good pass is thrown. If the defender sees the ball coming and holds, sinks, or pulls back on the perimeter player while executing a move to prevent the perimeter player from receiving the pass, the defender should be excluded. Similarly, if the defender pulls or shoves the perimeter player out of position so the player cannot receive the ball, the defender has taken away the positional advantage of the set and should be excluded.

The examples describe the positional advantage of the attacking team. It is important to note that the defending team may also have positional advantage. If the attacking team takes away defensive advantage and gains an advantage because of its actions, an ordinary foul against the attacking team (offensive foul) should be called. Here are two examples of defensive positional advantage.

Defensive positional advantage.

- The defender has his/her hips up and is in the desired driving lane. The defender has position over the attacking player. The driver swims over the defender. This player has violated the defender’s positional advantage. Similarly, it would be a violation of the defender’s positional advantage if the attacking player grabbed onto the defender and pulled by.

Attacking player swims over defender.

- The defender is in the passing lane and ballside of the attacking player. The attacking player grabs the defender’s arm and uses the arm as leverage to get around the defender to receive the ball. In this instance, the attacking player took away the defender’s positional advantage, and an offensive foul should be called.

2.2.4 Probable Goal Advantage

Definition of **probable goal advantage**.

Loss of advantage outside the 4-meter area is not loss of probable goal advantage. See I 22.2.1.

A player in position to score a probable goal has probable goal advantage. When a defender takes away probable goal advantage within the 4-meter area, a penalty foul should be assessed. The shot or offensive advantage must be a “high percentage” opportunity. Loss of advantage outside the 4-meter area would not be a loss of probable goal advantage and, thus, would not result in a penalty foul. Loss of advantage within the 4-meter area can result in a penalty foul if the defense takes away a high percentage opportunity by an attacking player with “inside water” (head is closer to the goal than the nearest defender, excluding the goalkeeper).

Considerations for probable goal advantage.

Typically, probable goal advantage results from 1) the attacking player moving toward the goal, 2) the attacking player having control of the ball, and 3) the attacking player having inside water. In some instances, the player may not have the ball but is moving toward the goal with inside water. If this individual is the intended recipient of a good pass, then this attacking player has probable goal advantage.

If a player turns the defender and, in so doing, places or throws the ball out of reach, this attacking player no longer controls the ball; thus, a probable goal is unlikely. Consequently, a penalty foul should not be called. As the attacking player attempts to retrieve the ball, however, the referee should consider whether this player is impeded (ordinary foul) or held, sunk, or pulled back (exclusion foul), and the referee should make the appropriate call (no call or foul).

If player loses control of the ball due to his/her own actions, no probable goal advantage was lost. Consequently, no penalty foul.

The positions of the other defenders also bear on whether or not the attacking player has probable goal advantage. A defender who recognizes that a teammate has given up goal-side position can prevent the attacking player from gaining probable goal advantage by getting between the attacking player and the goal. By doing so, the attacking player does not have inside water; thus, the attacking player cannot have probable goal advantage.

Location/position of defending players determine whether there is probable goal advantage.

A player does not necessarily have to be getting ready to shoot the ball to have probable goal advantage. At the same time, if a foul is committed while the player is in the act of shooting, there is rarely any reason to call a penalty foul, except for circumstances such as splashing a player taking a shot while inside the 4-meter area, etc. If the player has the ball in hand, it is not a foul to impede, push, push off, hold, sink, or pull back that player. However, the referee must be aware that it is still a foul to kick or strike that player.

There can be a loss of probable goal advantage even if the player is not getting ready to shoot.

If player is in the act of shooting (holding the ball), then there are few reasons to call a foul. It is not a foul to impede, hold, sink, or pull back a

Normally, the general philosophy is that if an attacking player is in good position to score a natural goal, the referee should allow the player every opportunity to do so. If the actions of the defense result in this opportunity being taken away (within the 4-meter area), a penalty foul should be called.

Here are situations that illustrate the application of probable goal advantage.

- A lead break is swimming toward the goal with the ball and there are no any defenders (besides the goalkeeper) between this attacking player and the goal. A defender is riding on the driver’s back and is holding or sinking the attacking player outside the 4-meter area. The referee may want to withhold calling an exclusion foul to allow the attacking player to earn a penalty foul when the lead break reaches the strike zone; however, if the fouls are such this attacking player no longer can maintain the attack, an exclusion foul should be called.

Holding, sinking, pulling back a one-on-nobody – withhold exclusion if player can reach the strike zone.

If the lead breaker loses control of the ball as a result of a foul after passing the 4-meter line, the defender, who is behind this breaker, has taken away probable goal advantage by holding, sinking, and/or pulling back an offensive player not holding the ball and has inside water. In these cases, a penalty foul should be awarded. At the same time, if the impeding by the defender does not cause the lead breaker to lose control of the ball, or if the lead breaker loses control of the ball due to poor ball handling, the referee might refrain from calling a penalty foul. When the referee withholds a call and the lead break swims all the way into the goalkeeper, who takes the ball away, then no foul should be called.

Holding, sinking, pulling back a one-on-nobody in the strike zone – when and when not to call a penalty foul.

If the referee does withhold the penalty foul call, the referee must be convinced the player is able to make a legitimate shot on goal **with the likelihood of scoring**. If that player is capable of selecting the appropriate shot

Withhold calling a penalty foul only if the player is able to make a legitimate shot with the likelihood of scoring.

and getting it off with the probability of scoring a goal, then a penalty foul might not be called quickly; however, if an attacking player would only be able to make a weak attempt due to continued fouling from behind, a penalty foul should be awarded.

Preventing attacking team from regaining possession of the ball after a shot.

- The goaltender blocks a shot by the lead break who is less than a meter away. The ball ends up nearby and is closer to the shooter or another attacking player than to the closest defender. The attacking player closest to the ball tries to swim for the ball, but a defender grabs hold and prevents the attacking player from retrieving the ball. The attacking team still has probable goal advantage because its players still have a good chance of shooting and scoring a goal if the ball is retrieved quickly. If the defending team takes away this advantage, a penalty foul should be called.

Pullback of shooting arm (not holding the ball) from behind.

- In a player advantage situation, the wing player has the ball and has moved to about the 1/2-meter line. The near post player has backed up to about the 4-meter line and the other post player is on the 2-meter line facing the goal and is goalside of the defender. A good pass is made from the wing to the far post player, who is going to tip the ball into the goal. The defender grabs the shooting arm of post player and prevents the tip. This is taking away the post player's probable goal advantage. However, if the defender is ballside of the post player, or if the pass is too high, there is no loss of probable goal advantage and, generally, no call should be made.

Set turns and puts down ball at 3.5m.

- The set is at the 3.5-meter line. The set turns and is tackled by a defender while the set is holding the ball; there is no foul. The set releases the ball into the water; there is no immediate foul. The defender must be given a short amount of time to recognize that the set has released the ball, and the defender must get off the attacking player. At this point, the set has earned superior inside position and is a major scoring threat. The set now tries to pick up the ball again. If the defender prevents that from happening, that defender has taken away the set's probable goal advantage, and a penalty foul should be called.

Why a defender may still be committing a penalty foul even though he/she has both hands in the air.

Most defenders will raise their arms into the air to demonstrate they are not holding the attacking player once they are turned; however, the defender may still be sinking the attacking player and impeding the attacking player from getting the ball and shoot it using the defender's chin, chest, or legs. In all cases, the referee must judge if a foul is being committed. If there is a foul, a penalty throw is to be awarded. The position of the defender's hand(s) or arms is only one factor in arriving at the proper conclusion.

Set turns into goalkeeper; no penalty foul.

- The set is at the 2-meter line and turns the defender, and the set releases the ball at about the 1-meter line. Presumably, the goaltender is in position to take the ball away from the set. There is no positional or probable goal advantage; thus, in most cases, no foul should be called. If the ball is dropped equidistant between or closer to the attacking player than the goalkeeper, and if the ability of that attacking player to regain possession of the ball is lost or reduced as a result of a hold by the defender, an ordinary foul may be called. The reason for the call is that the defender's foul took away the attacking player's ability to maintain possession advantage of the ball. However, because of the proximity of the goalkeeper, the set player does not have any probable goal advantage, and thus would not be awarded with a penalty throw.

2.3 Categories of Fouls

One useful way of considering fouls is that there are three “categories” of fouls. Within each category, fouls range from less severe to most severe. In general, fouls of play are those fouls that are a normal and constituent part of the game of water polo. These fouls are often part of a tactical strategy used by the defense. These fouls should be called based on flow and what is happening in the game. Fouls of aggression are those fouls that relate to the intensity of play. While aggressive or intense play may be appropriate to the game of water polo, overly aggressive play is not. Fouls of aggression are often called outside of flow. Fouls of conduct are those fouls that have nothing to do with water polo and are simply fouls of inappropriate behavior. The rules regarding these fouls should be enforced vigorously.

2.3.1 Fouls of Play

Fouls of play are those that are related to the play of the game. They can be categorized as shown in the following table.

<i>Action:</i>	<i>Sanction:</i>
Marking	No call
Impeding	No call or ordinary foul
Pushing or pushing off	No call or ordinary foul
Hand checking	Exclusion
Holding	Exclusion
Sinking	Exclusion
Pulling Back	Exclusion

Marking is when players use their hands to keep contact with their opponent so that they know where the opponent is. The contact simply keeps track of the opponent and does not move or impede the opponent. This type of contact is legal and is not a foul.

Impeding is when players prevent the free movement of opponents who are not holding the ball by making contact with them. Pushing or pushing off can be committed by the attacking and defensive teams. The contact starts with the hand and/or foot in contact with the opponent and then space is created between the two contestants due to the push.

Handchecking occurs when a defending player places one or two hands that blocks the forward motion of, or forcibly redirects the movement of, an opposing player. As described below (Section 3.4.5), handchecking, holding, sinking, or pulling back an opponent who is not holding the ball are exclusion fouls.

These fouls are called only when the person against whom the foul is committed is not holding the ball. Regardless of whether or not the ball is at the location of the foul, it is possible to make these calls in order to facilitate the attacking team’s advantage. These fouls can be committed with one hand

Three categories of fouls:

Fouls of play

Definition of fouls of play. The actions and their consequences.

Marking.

Impeding, pushing, and pushing off.

Handchecking, holding, sinking, pulling back.

These fouls are committed against persons who are **not** holding the ball and can be committed with one hand or two hands.

or two hands. The criteria for calling these fouls include the effect of the foul on the play and the relative level of advantage the two teams have. It is noted that if a foul is committed inside the 4-meter area when the attacking player has a probable goal advantage, then a penalty foul should be called.

2.3.2 Fouls of Aggression

As with any other team sport in which players are opposed by other players, players are encouraged to play with intensity and to be aggressive in their objective – winning the game. In a sport where the defense commits fouls as a part of its tactical strategy, officials are required to maintain a proper balance between calling fouls and maintaining offensive advantage; thus, referees often do not call fouls because they would decrease the level of offensive advantage.

Unfortunately, when fouls are called selectively with respect to advantage, and when the game is played in water where players are not able to discern what and where the advantage may be, players can become frustrated and start to direct their frustration toward their opponents. Moreover, some players find it difficult to limit their level of aggression within appropriate limits in intense games.

It is the responsibility of the referee to call fouls of aggression and to set clear limits on what is acceptable and not acceptable play. It is too late to start calling fouls of aggression in the second period of the game. Referees must call the appropriate fouls starting from the very first possession of the game.

Referees must call fouls of aggression and set clear limits on what is or is not acceptable play.

Fouls of aggression can be categorized as follows:

<i>Action:</i>	<i>Sanction:</i>
Aggressive play	See Fouls of Play
Overly aggressive play	Ordinary or exclusion foul
Kicking or striking	Exclusion (or penalty) foul
Head butt	Exclusion or more
Violence	Game exclusion (with substitution)
Brutality	Game exclusion (no substitution) Next game suspension

Playing aggressively is permissible in water polo. This may include challenging an opponent from the very first stroke of a counterattack to a hard press when trying to steal the ball. The fouls, when present, are fouls of play and thus the appropriate sanction, if any, should be imposed.

Aggressive play is permissible (and expected).

When players engage in overly aggressive play, they generally escalate their play from acceptable play to borderline to overly aggressive. Referees should establish clear limits on aggressive play. For example, if a referee observes a player starting to escalate, calling an ordinary foul quickly might give that player enough time to settle down and play within limits. Sometimes, a warning is adequate to help the players regain their perspective. If the play was borderline the first time the foul was committed (and either a no-call or ordinary foul was called), then it might be appropriate to call an exclusion foul the next time the player fouls the same way. It is very difficult to start calling fouls later in the game. It is easiest to start calling the fouls early in the game.

Establish limits to control overly aggressive play. Call fouls early as it is difficult to start calling fouls late in the game.

Kicking or striking, or attempting to kick or strike, is an exclusion foul. Kicking or striking should be called when there is clear intent to kick or strike. There are few reasons why this foul would not be called. The only justification might be that the team on offense has an extremely high level of relative advantage. These fouls occur outside of flow, and thus can be called outside of flow.

Kicking or striking is exclusion foul.
WP 21.8

Head butts are defined as a type of striking (see Section 3.4.6). These fouls are dangerous and should be called consistently when they occur. Depending on the severity of the foul, the referee may even choose to make a violence call or, very rarely, a brutality call, for a head butt. However, referees need to distinguish between intentional head butts (intent to strike with the head) and contact between the head of the attacking player and the defender’s face due to the natural movement of the attacking player and the inappropriate positioning of the defender’s head on the attacking player’s shoulder.

Head butts are a form of striking.

A violence call is made for actions by a player that endangers the health or safety of another player. It is a form of misconduct. The act need not be intentional. Players are expected to maintain good control over their bodies in the water. If they are unable to do so, and endangers another player, then they should be sanctioned under this rule.

Violence is misconduct.
WP 21.9

Brutality is kicking or striking an opponent with malicious intent. That is, there is an intent to injure the opposing player. Brutalities result in the player being excluded from the remainder of the game without substitution. That player is also automatically suspended from their next game. The tournament or competition committee may also impose additional sanctions. There is no reason why a referee will not call a brutality. If it occurs, it must be called.

Definition of brutality and sanction.
Brutalities must be called under all circumstances.
WP 21.10

2.3.2.1 Player Safety Comes First

Referees are charged with ensuring the safety of the players during the conduct of the game. Referees, therefore, sometimes must call fouls that are outside the “flow” and violate advantage. The objective of these calls should be to stop the inappropriate activities of players who are violating the spirit of the rules and the game, especially when these activities can escalate into violent or even brutal fouls.

Violate advantage to protect player safety.

Here are examples of fouls a referee may choose to call:

- The set has lost the ball under heavy defensive pressure. The counterattack is progressing down the pool. The former set player kicks or strikes (not a brutality) at the opponent while swimming down the pool behind the line of attack. This type of behavior may escalate and result in retaliation by the defender. This is one instance when the backcourt referee, following the trailers, may decide to call an exclusion, even though the foul is behind the line of attack. Typically, this call is made only if there is no threat of an immediate score. If both players are exchanging kicks and/or strikes, double live-time exclusions may be warranted.

Kicking or striking behind the line of attack.

Flailing at attack player by defender, especially near the face or neck, is considered striking.

Most contact to the opponent's head, face, or neck is considered striking.

Levels of fouls that can be called for aggressive fouls by an attacking team player.

- If a defender is exhibiting poor technique and is flailing away at the attacking player, especially if any of the contact is near the face or neck, the defender should be excluded, even if the attacking player is holding the ball or is still able to make a move with the ball.
- If a player's hands make contact on or across the opponent's head, face, or neck, this player should be excluded. It does not matter if the player was on offense or on defense. The only exception would be for brief, nonviolent, incidental contact. Otherwise, it does not matter whether or not the act was intentional, the mere presence of the hands on those body parts is reason for the exclusion.
- An offensive player strikes or kicks at the defender. This can be penalized with a simple offensive ordinary foul (and, therefore, loss of possession), an offensive personal foul (for kicking or striking) which would result in a loss of possession and charging that player with a personal foul and excluding the player for 20 seconds, or an offensive brutality foul that would result in the loss of possession as well as a game exclusion without substitution for the attacking player. The referee determines the appropriate call based on the severity of the foul.

In sum, fouls that potentially put players in danger are to be called. These behaviors are not acceptable within the spirit of the sport and do not belong in a water polo game.

2.3.3 Fouls of Conduct

What are fouls of conduct?

Fouls of conduct are fouls due to inappropriate behavior. They may occur while a coach, team official, or player is on the team bench (out of the water), or in the water during play. If the inappropriate behavior is exhibited by a coach, team official, or player on the team bench, the referee should issue a red or yellow card, as appropriate (Section 2.5.14). Inappropriate behavior from the team benches should not be tolerated.

Fouls of conduct in the water can be summarized as follows:

<i>Action:</i>	<i>Sanction:</i>
Disobedience	Game exclusion (with substitution)
Disrespect	Game exclusion (with substitution)
Misconduct	Game exclusion (with substitution)
Unsportsmanlike conduct	Game exclusion (with substitution)

Disobedience.
WP 22.11

Disobedience is failure to obey the instructions of a referee. It includes failure to heed a warning from an official. The sanction for disobedience is a game exclusion with substitution. The only exception provided for in the rules related to the sanction of a goalkeeper failing to take proper position for a penalty throw. The sanction in that case is a single, normal exclusion.

Disrespect is inappropriate conduct exhibited to a referee or an official. This includes, leaving the water during play, inappropriate language or gestures, splashing at officials, etc. The sanction is a game exclusion with substitution. In the event that an act of disrespect or disobedience takes place between periods or prior to the restart after a goal, the player is excluded but the teams start even up.

Disrespect.
WP 22.11

Misconduct is inappropriate behavior exhibited to a coach, another athlete, or spectator. It includes use of foul or obscene language or gestures, or unsportsmanlike conduct, which is any behavior that is considered to bring ill-repute to the sport. The sanction is a game exclusion with substitution.

Misconduct.
WP 22.9

These fouls must be called consistently and these rules must be enforced vigorously. These fouls can be called the moment it happens. Sometimes, the referee may choose to withhold a call because of an extremely high level of offensive advantage for the opposing team. In this case, the referee should make the call after the relative level of advantage has changed. Typically, the foul should be called as soon as possible.

Fouls of conduct **must** be called.

2.4 Terms and Procedures Related to Actual Play

2.4.1 Abandon (Stopping/Ending) a Game

A referee may abandon a game if it is not possible to complete the game (for example, insufficient number of players at the scheduled start time or behavior of players, coaches, spectators prevent proper conclusion of the game). When the referee abandons the game, the score at that time stands. The referee may not forfeit games – that decision is made by the tournament committee or according to local league rules.

Conditions under which a game can be abandoned.
WP 7.4, 7.6

Referees may not forfeit games.
I 7.6.1

2.4.2 Calling for the Ball

During a game, it may be necessary to call for the ball (for example, because of an incorrect signal by the referees, a neutral throw, etc.). The referee should blow several short blasts of the whistle to get the attention of the players, make a sign representing the ball (circular motion with both hands), and indicate the referee to whom the ball should be tossed. If there is confusion among the players, the referee should verbally direct the players to throw the ball to the appropriate referee.

The ball should be called out whenever:

- The referees intend to address a coach or player to give a warning, instruction, etc.
- A player needs to tie a cap or to replace a suit or a cap.
- When two referees signal different directions simultaneously.
- When a referee mistakenly points in the wrong direction.
- When there is an injury to a player and play must be stopped.
- When there are problems with the game and/or possession clock or other clarification at the official’s table.

After removing ball from water, wait until there is no advantage before resuming play.
Appendix A I-13

Cannot shoot ball if it had been called out of the water.
WP 14.3 Notes.

After calling for the ball, play is resumed by a free throw (or other throw as called for in the rules). In the case of a free throw, the referee must ensure that neither team has an advantage before signaling the player to take the throw. The free throw is to be taken at the location of the ball (or foul, as appropriate) when the ball was called out of the water. A player taking a free throw after the ball has been called out of the water may not shoot directly on goal.

2.4.3 Counterattack (Fast Break)

A counterattack is when there is a transition from defense to offense. The swimming phase as the ball is advanced down the pool is the counterattack phase. When a frontcourt offense (static or swimming) starts, the counterattack is considered to have been completed. When the fast break occurs, the first attacking player or players down the pool are the “lead breakers.” The last players down the pool are the “trailers.”

2.4.4 Dead Time

What is dead time?

The time between the calling of a foul and the moment the ball is put into play is referred to as “dead time” because the clock is stopped. Water polo is the only sport that actually speeds up after a whistle, that is during dead time, as opposed to other sports where a whistle is a signal for play to stop. During this period, it is an exclusion foul for a player of the team not in possession of the ball to commit a foul of impeding, pushing, or pushing off from an opponent.

Dead time fouls.
WP 21.12, 21.13

At all times, it is the obligation of the referee to assess whether or not any foul, in this case a dead time foul and its exclusion, would take away offensive advantage if it was called. It is an exclusion foul for a defending player to impede or push during dead time, because these fouls may result in a loss of position and thus a loss of offensive advantage. If the foul by the defender does not result in loss or change of offensive advantage, the referee should refrain from calling the foul, if refraining from calling the foul would be to the advantage of the team being fouled.

For example, if a player is fouled outside 7-meters, that player may now shoot the ball directly at the goal. While the referee may call a dead time exclusion at the set position, which will provide the attacking team with a player advantage situation and a new 35-second possession clock in certain circumstances, the call may interfere with the ability of the perimeter player to take an immediate shot and, thus, reduce the relative advantage of that team.

Preventing a drive during dead time should be an exclusion (holding).

During dead time, referees must be alert for play that decreases offensive advantage. For example, if the foul is at set, a defender who impedes/holds and, thus, prevents a driver from attacking, should be excluded, especially if the set is looking to pass to this driver. To encourage an active, driving game, referees should call exclusion fouls in “dead time,” regardless of whether the player fouled is the prime-intended recipient of the free thrower’s pass, or going “back door,” outside the direct view of the passer. When the referee makes this call, however, it should not take away the ability of the set to make the quick pass to a driver coming from elsewhere in the pool.

During dead time, there may be an increase in holding, sinking, or pulling back at set. These should be called, even though they are not dead time fouls, per se.

Because of the contemporary emphasis on set play, when a foul occurs on the perimeter, many defenders at set increase the vigor of their defense. By doing so, they often hold, sink, or pull back on the set not holding the ball. In these cases, the defender should be excluded as called for under the rules (but be aware of whether there may be a direct shot coming). These exclusions do not explicitly fall

under the dead time rules (impeding, pushing, or pushing off); however, the referee is obligated to penalize the defense for poor and/or inappropriate play during dead time, as in live time.

During dead time, the offense may also violate the rules by impeding, pushing, or pushing off an opponent. If this action increases the level of offensive advantage, thereby decreasing the level of defensive advantage, an offensive foul should be called. The referee should not call these fouls, however, if they do not directly affect play. In contrast, offensive fouls related to holding, sinking, and pulling back should almost always be called. These fouls are usually called as ordinary fouls, and the opposing team is awarded a free throw when such a foul is called. However, if the foul is particularly hard or flagrant, then an offensive exclusion foul may be called.

Offensive fouls. Note that they should only be called if they affect play unless they are particularly hard or flagrant.

The referee is cautioned to stay within the confines of the rulebook. The “advantage rule” is clear and is not an excuse for not calling a foul when one occurs (see discussions of fouls in Section 3).

2.4.5 Drop/Crash Defense

A crash or drop defense uses a “crasher” or “slougher” to help defend against (usually) the set. In such a system, one or more players play closer in toward the set position to decrease the amount of space through which the ball can be passed to the set, to help defend against the actions of the set (double team) and/or to steal the ball from the set. The drop/crash defense is sometimes called a zone defense.

2.4.6 Flow of the Game

Many people put great stock in a referee’s ability to call the “flow of the game.” Almost every referee sees flow differently. Basically, most games have a subjective rhythm to them; it occurs in the water and is affected by events in the water and on the pool deck. Flow waxes and wanes and changes tempo. Generally, some things just feel right when they take place. Some things just feel wrong; thus, refereeing the “flow of the game” is the ability of the referee to make sure those things that are right take place and to remove from the game those things that are wrong. Alternatively, refereeing the flow of the game is to ensure the natural progression of the water polo match comes to its proper conclusion.

Flow is not an easy concept, and the perception of flow changes as a referee develops. Typically, flow is more apparent in games where the referees and players are more skilled. There tends to be less flow in games with less experienced referees and between less skilled opponents.

2.4.7 Hands-Up Defense

An extremely common misconception by many players is that they are playing hands-up defense because both hands are above the surface of the water. Many coaches and players also believe if the hands are up, there can be no foul. Conversely, many believe if the hands are down, there must be a foul. None of these situations are entirely correct.

There may still be fouls called when the player has both hands up in the air. Just because both hands are down does not mean that there is a foul.

When hands are up, player may still be impeding, holding, sinking, or pulling back.

Sometimes players have their hands in the air but are restricting the ability of an attacking player from moving, even though the attacking player is not holding the ball; this is, at the least, impeding. Frequently players have their hands out of the water, but they are squeezing the neck or shoulders of the attacking player with their forearms and sinking them with their elbows; the hands may be up, but there is still a foul of holding and/or sinking a player, which is an exclusion foul. Simply having one's hands in the air does not eliminate the possibility of holding, sinking, or pulling back with the forearms, elbows, arms, chest, or chin. Similarly, just because a player has his/her arms and hands in the air does not mean a foul was not committed in the process of getting the hands and arms in the air. *A foul occurs when a defender does something to impede, hold, sink, or pull back an opponent; therefore, the referee should consider whether or not the actions of the defender reduced the level of advantage of an attacking player and not just the physical locations of the hands.*

Fouls may be committed with one hand or two hands.

Another common belief is that a "foul" committed with only one hand, particularly by the set defender, cannot result in an exclusion, whereas a "foul" committed with two hands is always an exclusion foul. **Regardless of whether one hand or two hands are used, it is possible for a player to impede or to hold, sink, or pull back on a player who is not holding the ball.** These fouls must be called unless it is absolutely clear calling the foul would reduce the level of offensive advantage.

2.4.8 If a Team Puts the Ball into Its Own Goal, Who Is Awarded the Goal?

If team scores on itself.
I 14.1.1

In the unlikely event a team puts the ball into its own goal, the goal is awarded to the player on the opposing team closest to the goal.

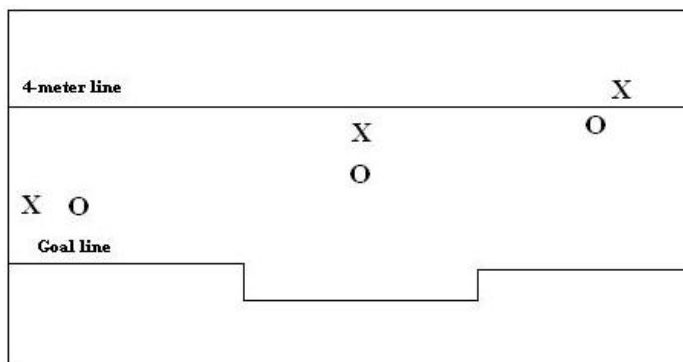
If the goalkeeper drops ball on goal throw or free throw and it enters the goal.
I 16.2.1

If the goalkeeper drops the ball when taking a goal throw or free throw and allows the ball to enter the goal, the goalkeeper is to take the throw again. No goal is scored in this instance.

If the ball is shot illegally, no goal is awarded.
I 16.1.1

If the ball is shot illegally (for example, shot on free throw for a foul inside 7 meter line, shot on free throw after a timeout, shot on free throw at the restart after a goal, etc.), no goal is scored regardless of whether the goalkeeper or another defending player tips the ball into the goal. A goal in this circumstance is counted only if the ball is played (controlled) by a player of either team after the free throw and then goes into the goal.

2.4.9 Inside Water



Inside water is defined as a player having his/her head closer to the goal being attacked than the opposing player's head. In addition, it also presumes that there is no other player of the opposing team between the player having inside water and the goal, except the defending goalkeeper. The above diagram illustrates three instances of "inside water" for the attacking (O) player over the defending (X) player.

2.4.10 Passing Lanes

The passing lane is a direct, straight line between the ball and the potential receiver of the ball.

2.4.11 "Play the Ball and Not the Player"

"Play the ball and not the player" has been a guiding phrase in water polo for years. However, it is not found in the rulebook. This phrase is commonly misinterpreted and overused.

The object of the game is for the attacking team to win. Thus the defending team has an obligation to prevent the ball from going into its goal. In the process of trying to win or trying to prevent a goal, attacking players must direct their efforts toward increasing their level of offensive advantage, and defending players must direct their efforts toward increasing their level of defensive advantage or minimizing offensive advantage, which may not be accomplished by impeding, pushing, pushing off from, holding, pulling back, or sinking an opponent who is not holding the ball. Players are obligated to direct their efforts toward the ball and not their opponents. Thus, it is normal for coaches and players to think of "playing the ball and not the player."

It is important for referees to remember that water polo is a contact sport, which means there will be contact between players as the offense strives to move the ball towards its opponent's goal. Attacking players, however, may not advance the ball by moving the opposing player out of the way or by going through or over a defender. Likewise, a defender cannot prevent the attacking team from advancing the ball by moving an attacking player out of the way or preventing the attacking player from going around the defender. When players of either team impede, hold, sink, or pull back an opposing player who is not holding the ball, they are in violation of the rules. The rules are designed to allow the referee to restore a player's level of advantage when the opposing team takes it away.

2.4.12 Strong and Weak Sides

The strong side is the side of the pool in which the ball is located, and, thus, the opposite side is the weak side.

2.4.13 Whistles and Signals

There are no "standard" whistles in the sport of water polo; however, some common practices are used among more experienced referees. If all referees follow similar whistle patterns, it makes it easier for players to know what has just been called without looking up at the referees.

It is recommended that all referees use the following whistles and signals:

- One whistle for an ordinary foul. Both referees should point in the direction of the attack. The referee points in the direction the ball is to move by fully extending the arm closest to the goal being attacked parallel to the ground. The referee calling the foul should point with a finger and bent arm to the location where the ball is to be put in play, only if the ball is not at the location where it is to be put into play..
- Two short blasts for a foul that awards possession of the ball to the other team. Thus, this whistle would be used in the case of an offensive foul, if the attacking team caused the ball to go out-of-bounds on the sideline, or for the expiration of the 35-second possession clock. Both referees should point in the new direction of attack.
- Two (or more) short blasts followed by a long blast for an exclusion foul. The first movement of the referee calling the foul is to point in the direction of the attack. The referee will then point at the player committing the foul with the other arm and sweep that arm toward the player's re-entry area.
- One short blast followed by a long blast for a penalty foul. On the long blast, raise the hand closest to the goal with 4 fingers stretched out.
- One whistle for an out-of-bounds call for the team that keeps possession of the ball. For example, if the ball is tipped out-of-bounds at the sidelines by the defending team, the team on offense keeps the ball. For this, there should be only one whistle blast. If the ball is shot and goes out-of-bounds without being tipped, it should be one whistle blast.
- Two whistles for an out-of-bounds call resulting in a corner throw. The first whistle should be longer to indicate something out of the ordinary (and to differentiate it from an offensive foul), and the second whistle should be shorter. On the first whistle, the referee should indicate the direction the ball should be going, and on the second whistle indicate to which corner (far or near) the ball is to be put in play. If the ball is to be put in play in the far corner (the side of the pool where the backcourt referee is), the backcourt referee should advance toward the 2-meter line and indicate where the ball is to be put in play. The signal for a tip should be made by the referee after all these other signals.
- For a goal, signal with one long blast of the whistle. The water polo rulebook indicates the referee should point to the center of the pool for a goal. This signal may look like the sign for an offensive foul; therefore, many officials choose to point into the goal to indicate a goal before pointing to the middle of the pool. After each goal, the backcourt referee should make sure the score has been added correctly on the scoreboard.
- Numbers are signaled to players and the table with both hands. Sometimes players do not know the number signals; referees may choose to help those players by calling out the number. Calling out the number of an excluded player is not required under the rules. The number "10" is signified by a closed fist. Do not signal the number 10 with two hands. All other numbers above 5 are to be signaled with both hands.

2.4.14 Yellow and Red Cards

If a coach or team official is disruptive, they are issued a warning by the referee. If there is any additional disruption, a yellow card is issued. A yellow card is a visible warning and is valid for that particular game only. After a yellow card, the coach is still permitted to progress to the four-meter line when his or her team is on attack, shout instructions, and stand. If this coach or team official is disruptive after receiving a yellow card, a red card is assessed. If, in the judgment of the referee, the infraction is severe, a red card may be produced immediately without issuing a warning or a yellow card. If a substitute on the bench is disruptive, that athlete is to receive a red card immediately. There is no warning to an athlete.

If a coach, team official, or athlete receives a red card, that person is to leave the precincts of the pool for the remainder of that game. However, this individual may go to the spectator stands. The coach, team official, or athlete is also suspended from the next game in that tournament. Further disruption may result in removal from the spectator stands (WP7.5) or in suspension from the additional games at that event, as determined by the tournament committee. When an athlete is suspended in tournaments where rosters are declared, that athlete's name must be on the roster of that next game. For example, if only 13 players are allowed, that player must appear on the roster and is ineligible to participate.

3 Play of the Game

In this section, the responsibilities and activities of the referee and the rules of the game are discussed, with respect to their general applications and associated interpretations. Some rules are discussed together because they belong as a group. Not all rules are discussed here. It is the responsibility of the referee to learn and know the rules as they are written in the rulebook for water polo.

3.1 Pregame Activities

3.1.1 Arriving and Checking Out the Facilities

If this is a new site to the referee, that individual should plan on being dressed and ready to go no less than 30 minutes before the game. Upon arrival, an official should meet with the host team coach, with the tournament director, with the person in charge of the facility, and with fellow referees. This will help keep participants calm by knowing the referees have arrived and are ready to do their jobs. If the officials have been to the site before, they should try to arrive at least 30 minutes before the first game, or no less than 15 minutes before the second or subsequent game during the tournament.

While the promoting organization is responsible for setting up the site, the referee should make sure the facilities are properly marked, that the correct type of balls are going to be used for the contest, and that the balls are properly inflated. This does not mean the referee must measure the goals, the 2-meter line, etc. However, the referee must be aware of the markers that are going to be used for the 2-meter, 4-meter, 7-meter and halfway lines. All markings should **always** be in meters. The referee should also be aware of the boundary lines (end lines and sidelines) for the field of play. Lastly, the referee should know the following parameters:

Promoting organization is responsible for field markings, but the referee should make ensure that the field and equipment are ready to be used.
WP 1.1

The 7-meter line should always be marked in meters (not yards).
I 1.6.1

- Where will the sprint be?
- Where are the re-entry areas?
- Where are out-of-bounds (for example, at the wall, at a lane line, at the goal line)?
- Are the officials refereeing to their left because of pool configuration (for example, L-shaped pool) or because of obstructions (diving boards in the way)?
- Are the officials going to be refereeing side-by-side (for example, L-shaped pool or one side is too far from field of play) or because of obstructions (diving boards in the way)?

If cones are used to mark the 2-meter, 4-meter, and/or 7-meter lines, the apex of the cone tip is where that line is located. If a marker is used, the edge of the marker closest to the goal is where the line is located.

Location of cones and markers relative to the line.
I 1.6.2

In the process of getting to know the facility, a referee should know what signals will be used to indicate the end of a 35-second possession clock and the end of a period. The easiest thing to do is to ask personnel staffing the table to sound the signals for the end of 35-second possession clock and for the end of the period, which should be different.

Number and locations of clocks.
I 1.2.3

It is recommended that four possession clocks are used, one at each corner of the pool. If only two clocks are available, they should be located across the pool from the frontcourt referee. In the event that it is not possible to place the possession clocks opposite the frontcourt referee, then they may be placed on the same side as the official's table. The game clock should be in a location so both teams can see it easily. Referees should remind hosts what the physical layout should be.

3.1.2 Caps

Teams are to wear caps of contrasting colors. Colors must be clearly visibly different when wet and when dry. If the caps are insufficiently different, in the opinion of the referee, the first team listed may be required to wear white caps. The second team listed may be required to wear blue caps. Patterned caps are permitted if the cap numbers are easily, clearly, and visibly different from the background pattern when wet and when dry. If a bathing cap is worn, it must match the color of the water polo cap. It is recommended that teams carry three sets of caps, caps of a contrasting color, white caps, and blue caps.

Teams are encouraged to have two goalkeeper caps. When a team plans on substituting a goalkeeper, the substitute may replace his/her regular cap with the spare goalkeeper cap; therefore, there is a minimum of lost time while making a substitution.

3.1.3 Checking Players for Illegal Items and Items Likely to Cause Injury

A referee is **not required** to check players before a game for illegal items or items likely to cause injury. It is the responsibility of the teams and coaches to ensure players are in compliance. Local custom and league rules may require a referee check for illegal items. It is recommended that referees check players before the first game at any tournament and on a regular basis. After the start of play, if a player is found with an item likely to cause injury or other illegal item (including grease on their bodies), that player is excluded from the remainder of the game with immediate substitution. If the violation is borderline and clearly unintentional, referees should use their best judgment as to whether the player should be removed from the game.

It is recommended that referees check for illegal items and articles likely to cause injury prior to the first game at any tournament and on a regular basis. Sanction after the start of play is game exclusion with immediate substitution regardless of whether or not the player had been checked prior to the start of the game.
WP 5.4, 5.5, I 5.4.1, I 5.4.2

The items to be checked include long finger- and toenails (always check **both**), bracelets (neck, wrist, or ankle), jewelry for body piercings, rings (finger or toes), casts, glasses, goggles, etc. Goggles of any sort are not permitted; only prescription athletic glasses are allowed. Any item that cannot be removed (bracelet, ring, etc.) must be securely wrapped in place by water-proofed athletic tape. No hard casts are permitted at any time. If a player appears to be injured before the start of play, check with the coach and ask if that player is capable of playing. It is the responsibility of the coach on deck to ensure that the players are in good physical condition to play and are playing under safe conditions.

Items likely to cause injury include this list.
I 5.4.3

If a team requests that referees check an opponent during a game, the official who checked the team with the player in question should check that player. If neither official checked before the start of the game, then either official may do the check during the game.

3.1.4 Checking the Score Sheet During and After a Game

The score sheet kept by the secretary is the official game log, which means the score sheet should always be correct. It is the responsibility of the referees to ensure an accurate score sheet is kept. An inaccurate score sheet makes the results of a game subject to protest. A sample score sheet and the instructions to the secretary for how to keep a score sheet can be found in the Desk Official’s Manual (Section 6).

During the game, the referee on the side of the secretary’s table should tell the table the number of the player who was excluded or who scored. This may be done with hand signals, verbally, or both. If the table is being informed by hand signals, the referee should check with the secretary to make sure the secretary knows what has been signaled. If the secretary working at the table appears inexperienced, it would be useful to check frequently during the first period that the correct information is being entered in the correct way in the correct places on the score sheet. Only check when the game clock is stopped (for example, after a goal). If there is an error, it is better to correct it as soon as possible rather than to wait until the end of the period or the game. One way to check is to make sure the score has been correctly added onto the scoreboard before the ball is put into play after a goal.

If both coaches advise the referee that the score is incorrect, and both coaches agree as to what the correct score should be, the official should write the correct score in the running game log. In addition, note that the correct

score was agreed to by both coaches, and sign the game log at this point. The score should be continued from that point forward, using the corrected score.

At the conclusion of the game, both referees should check and sign the score sheet. The things that should be checked include the following:

- The score of the game should be the same in three different places. The score listed in the **Progress of the Game** section should be the same as the **Period-by-Period** score. The number of goals by the first team (as indicated by the individual marks for each player of that team) and the number of goals of the other team (as indicated next to the players of the other team) should match the “Progress” and “Period” scores.
- The total number of exclusions, timeouts, and yellow/red cards should equal the number of blank spaces in the **Progress of the Game** section where the running score is being kept.

While referees are not obligated to check whether the correct number of exclusions and goals are attributed to each player, it would be reasonable to check these items during especially important games such as the advancement rounds of play-off or championship tournaments.

3.1.5 Meetings with Captains and Coaches

With the exceptions noted, the referees are not obligated to meet with team representatives (captains and/or coaches); however, depending on local rules, a pregame meeting may be mandated. Referees are encouraged to hold meetings with captains and coaches, especially if there are ground rules that are different from the “ideal pool.” It is the responsibility of the referees to ensure both teams know the ground rules. Both officials should be present for meetings with the team representatives but only one official should speak.

The topics that should be covered in a meeting with coaches and captains include

- Choice of ends: The referees should flip a coin so the teams can choose ends to start the game; there are no additional coin flips after that initial toss. The teams change ends after the second period (and prior to the start of extra time). Referees change sides for periods when the teams do not change ends.
- For shallow-deep pools prior to the start of the game a coach may request for the teams to switch ends every period. In this case, the referees do not switch sides during the game.
- The referees may want to ask coaches and/or captains if the players conform with the rules on fingernails, toenails, and foreign substances. It is the responsibility of the individual players to ensure that they are in compliance with the rule.
- Any ground rules, which include, but are not limited to, overhead obstructions, boundary definitions, how each period will be started (sprint from the wall, goal line or the 2-meter line), where the re-entry

For imperfect pool conditions (for example, shallow-deep), a coach may request that the teams and benches switch ends every period.
I 11.2.1

areas are, where the benches are located, the location of the clocks, and any other facility-specific issues.

- Any pregame questions.
- In general, no one is to address the referee during the game. This should be made clear to the players during the meeting with the captains and coaches.
- In general, the referee should not address players and/or coaches. If they do so, it is when it is deemed appropriate for clarification purposes.
- Be sure to remind the captains to communicate to their respective teams and coaches what they have been told.

No one is to address the referee during the game.
I 21.11.1

The referee should not address players and/or coaches except for clarification purposes.
I 21.11.1

3.1.6 Replacing Caps and Suits

Referees should not tolerate the situation where the players of one team repeatedly lose their caps or have their caps untied. If a cap comes off during play in the pool, play should be stopped at the first opportunity when neither team has an advantage, and the player is instructed to put the cap back on. This stoppage may only be called when the team whose player is missing a cap has possession of the ball. The ball is to be called out from the water while the cap is being tied. Players should be instructed to tie their caps at an appropriate stoppage whenever the referee notices that caps are not tied properly.

If a player's suit needs to be replaced, play should be stopped when the same condition as stopping play for a cap. The player is instructed to replace the suit. The ball is to be called out from the water while the suit is being replaced.

The ball is put back in play with a free throw at the location where it was removed from the pool. The ball may not be shot directly at the goal on this free throw. The referee should indicate that play may be restarted with a blast of the whistle when neither team has an advantage.

3.1.7 Working With the Table

When a referee arrives on site, regardless of whether it is for the first time or for the twentieth time of the season, the referee will want to find out if all the clocks (game, 35-second possession, timeout) and horns are working properly. The official may want to check in with the table staff to see if they know the rules and their duties. Depending on how knowledgeable or experienced the table officials are, the referee may want to review with the secretaries and timers their responsibilities. The duties and responsibilities of the table staff are described in the Desk Officials Manual (Section 6).

The referees should check with the exclusion secretary to make sure this person knows when to notify an excluded player to re-enter the field of play. The exclusion secretary is to raise a white or blue flag after the conclusion of the 20-second-exclusion period to signal that the player may reenter the field of play. A white flag is raised for the first team listed; a blue flag is raised for the second team listed. The flag should be held up and not waved. In addi-

General description of the duties and responsibilities of the exclusion secretary. See Section 6 for further details.

The flag should not be raised nor should a referee wave in a player who is not eligible to play.
I 21.3.1

tion, the flag should be kept up for several seconds after the player has reentered the field of play so the referee can visually ascertain the player entered legally. The flag is not to be raised unless the player is in the re-entry area. The white or blue flag should not be raised if the player in the re-entry area is not eligible to play (for example, if the player has three personal faults). In this case, a red flag (signaling a player's third personal foul) should be held up. In the event of a player receiving a third personal foul in the course of a double exclusion, the secretary should raise both the red flag and the flag (white or blue) signaling the color of the player's team with one hand. The flag should not be raised if a player is re-entering because of a change of possession or because of a goal.

While discussing flags with the table, the referee should find out how they will notify the officials of a third personal foul.

The secretary is to blow a whistle or other device (such as an air horn) and raise a red flag for the reentry of a player with three personal fouls and for a player receiving a third personal foul that is a penalty foul. Inform the secretary that a whistle stops play. A whistle and red flag may be used to signify a penalty foul is the third personal foul being charged to a player. That whistle, however, must be sounded as soon as possible **before** the administration of the penalty throw. When a whistle is used by the table, it should be a continuous whistle for 5 or 6 seconds.

Allowing observers at table.
I 6.1.1

If the personnel at the table do not understand their functions, it is the responsibility of the referee to ensure, before the game starts, that they know what needs to be done during the game. This may mean that the referee locates the home team coach or tournament director and has that person train the table, or the referees may choose to do so themselves. While there is no provision for observers to be at the table, it is not unreasonable to allow one observer from each team at the table.

While it is not usually necessary to tell the table what their responsibilities are, it may sometimes be necessary to remind them they should pay attention to the game. Food and drink at the officials' table should not be consumed unless there is a break (timeout, between periods). Conversation should be kept focused on the events of the game. When working the officials' table, the secretaries and timers are to be as impartial as possible, which means they should not be cheering, shouting, or coaching from the table.

3.1.8 Working with a Partner

Under the assumption a referee is not working the game alone, the two game officials should meet before each game. The subjects the two referees should cover include, but are not be limited to the following:

- Any new interpretations.
- Any special features of the facility or teams.
- Areas of coverage for the two referees; be sure to discuss what each wants to cover in frontcourt, in backcourt, and during transitions. Review the types of signals to be used to indicate an official needs help from the partner.

During the game itself, it may be appropriate to talk briefly between periods. These discussions could include the following:

- Any noted tendencies of the players and/or of the teams; referees must not allow the fact that players and teams have tendencies to lull them into any predisposition or to be surprised when the player/team does something different.
- If it appears an official is screened from a player committing a specific type of foul, the two partners may want to briefly discuss what was observed.
- If the tenor of the game appears to be changing, or if it appears something is going to happen, the partners should discuss the situation.
- The two game officials may be the only nonpartisans in the facility; therefore, referees should spend the time needed to support each other's calls and actions. The two referees are a team, and both referees are equally responsible for the outcome of the game. **An "error" by one referee is considered to be an error by both.**

Generally, if the call is a 50-50 call (that is, the frontcourt referee thinks it should go one way and the backcourt referee thinks it should go the other way), then the call should be deferred to the judgment of the frontcourt referee. The exception is if either referee rules the ball was tipped, it is a tip.

Defer 50-50 calls to the frontcourt referee.

If it is clear, however, both referees are adamant about their opinions, then a neutral throw should be taken with the exception that a personal or major foul always takes precedence over an ordinary foul. For example, if the backcourt referee calls an exclusion foul at the same time the frontcourt referee calls an ordinary foul (for an offensive), the exclusion foul takes precedence.

It is useful for the referees to communicate with each other to ensure proper actions have been taken. For example, if a referee calls an ordinary foul against the defense during dead time, it would be reasonable for the other referee to check whether it really was dead time. If it was, then the defender should be excluded.

After a game, both referees should check and sign the score sheet and then leave together. Referees are urged to change their clothes and not to wear their uniforms when they are not officiating. Even if an official has only one game off, the referee may want to change into a "civilian" clothes for the "off" game.

3.2 Areas of Responsibility During Play

3.2.1 Lining Up the Players at Start of Game and Periods

At the beginning of the game and every period, the two referees are to line up at the half-way marks on opposite sides of the pool. The referee dropping the ball into the sprint area (tableside) should raise the left arm to a horizontal position, indicating that the table and referee are ready to start. The

Start play with referees on opposite sides of the pool.

other referee raises an arm that the teams are ready. The referee on the side of the table should aid in ensuring the teams are getting into position. At the moment the second referee has an arm raised, the starting referee should immediately blow the whistle and drop the horizontally held arm to start the sprint.

When players are lined up at the start, it is not necessary to make sure they start precisely on the wall, on the goal line, or on the 2-meter mark. It is only important the players sprinting for the ball (usually more than one on each team) have equal opportunity to get to the ball from where they start. It is not necessary, therefore, and not recommended, that referees line up players and then run to the center of the pool to drop the ball. During the sprint, both referees should watch for illegal attempts to get to the ball first (pushing by a teammate, pushing off the sidelines or wall, etc.). The referee across from the table should be watching both teams as they start. This referee has the best perspective as to whether the teams started simultaneously or whether one team started ahead of the whistle. As the players approach the ball, the referee dropping the ball should watch both sprinters to see if they pull on the lane lines or the side of the pool.

At the start of the game, there must be seven players for each team.
I 5.1.1

At the beginning of the game, there must be seven players in the pool for each team – a goalkeeper and six field players. They should be lined up at least 1 meter apart and 1 meter from the goal posts; the goalkeeper does not have to be inside the goal. There may be up to two players inside the goal.

“No contest” if the teams are not ready to start at the scheduled time.
I 11.1.1

It is a “no contest” if the teams are not ready to start at the scheduled start time of the game. Be aware there may be local league rules that affect this situation. Players on the team that was on time do not have to line up in the water for the game to be called a no contest; however, they must be dressed and ready to play (everyone on or near the team bench).

Starting position of referees working on the same side of the pool.

If both officials are working on the same side of the pool, the referee going to the **right** will drop the ball at the halfway mark. The other official should verify the team to the left is ready to start, and raise the right arm. When that arm is raised, the referee dropping the ball should determine the team to the right is ready. At that point, that referee should raise the left arm, drop it vertically while simultaneously blowing the whistle.

If there is a foul during the sprint at the start of the period, the ball is awarded to the opposing team at the halfway line.
WP 20.2, 20.3, I 20.2.1

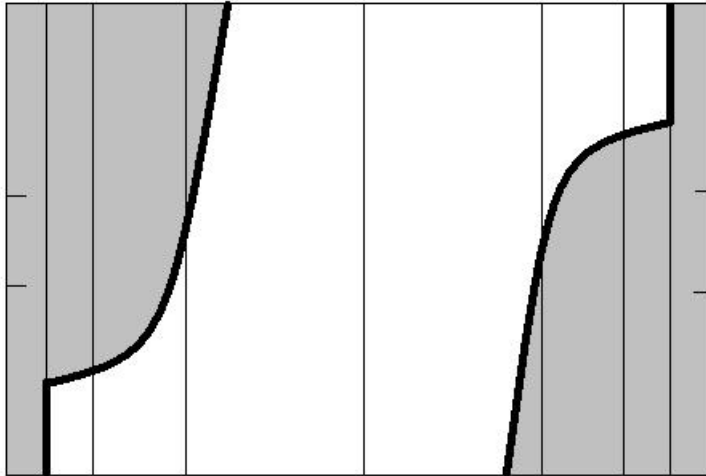
If the referee dropping the ball throws it to the advantage of one team (not in the middle of the pool), that referee shall blow the whistle multiple times to stop the sprint. A player should give the ball to the referee, who will indicate that the ball was not thrown in properly and will then administer a neutral throw.

If the sprinter advances beyond the starting line at the start of a period, before the referee has given the signal to start, or if a player assists the sprinter at the start of the period, the referee awards the ball to the other team at the halfway line (the point where the ball is already, which is at or behind the point of the foul). The team receiving the ball may take the restart as soon as they get to the ball.

3.2.2 Frontcourt Referee Area of Responsibility During Set Play

The frontcourt referee is responsible, for and has overall control of, the offense. The official is responsible for an area that arcs from about 3 meters outside the far post to about the 8 meter line.

Additionally, the front court referee is responsible for enforcing 2-meter violations.



In addition to the players and positions, the frontcourt referee is responsible for the goal line. When a ball reaches the goal line or end line, it is the responsibility of the frontcourt referee to make the appropriate call. It is **strongly** recommended that referees make calls involving the goal line (goals, out-of-bounds, etc.) while standing at the goal line. After a shot, once it passes the goal line, regardless of whether it enters the goal or not, the frontcourt referee should immediately look at the players. Under these circumstances, some players may think that the referee will not be paying attention and commit fouls of aggression or conduct. Those fouls must be called.

Referees should make calls involving the goal line while standing at the goal line.

The frontcourt and backcourt referees should come to agreement about who is responsible for watching, and being responsible for, drivers who transit into the normal frontcourt area (usually considered to be between the 4- and 7-meter lines). If various players drift out of the normal frontcourt area, the frontcourt referee can still follow them out. When there is a great deal of activity at set or in a double post situation, the frontcourt referee may wish to signal to the backcourt referee and request assistance in watching the pair of players at the frontcourt referee's feet. These signals should be worked out between the referees in their pregame meeting.

The basic position of the frontcourt referee is between the 2- and 4-meter lines. The referee should be looking primarily at the set, the set defender, and the goalkeeper. Of secondary importance, unless the ball is at that position, the referee is keeping an eye on other players in his/her primary area of responsibility. This is particularly true of the defending player at the wing position who may be playing a drop defense (or a slougher/crasher from the wing position). At the same time, the referee should know where the ball is and what the players with the ball are doing. For example, the frontcourt referee does not want to bring back a good steal on the perimeter with a foul called at set. Similarly, a foul should not be called in the frontcourt when a perimeter player is about to make a shot. A more detailed discussion of officiating the set position is in Section 4.3.

Basic position of the frontcourt referee.

It is important for the frontcourt referee to know the location of the 2-

and 4-meter lines. When a frontcourt referee first arrives at the frontcourt, this official should be aware of where the 7-meter line is. The referee should stop at the 4-meter line first before moving into a different position. This is especially important in facilities where the color of the cones used to denote the goal, 2-meter, 4-meter and 7-meter lines are the same.

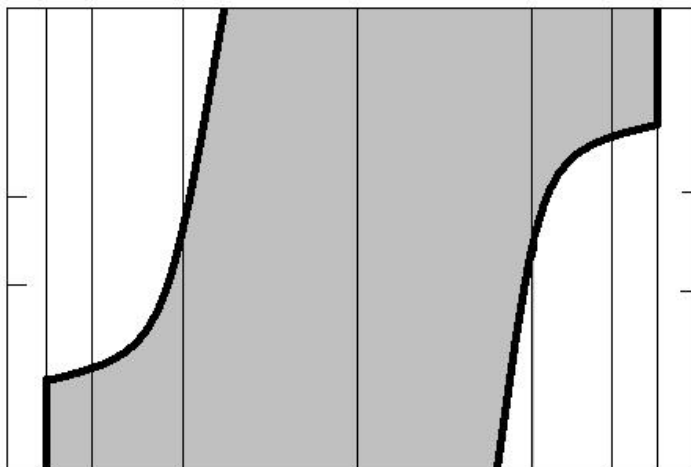
Finding the best position to referee frontcourt is going to be different for every set (and may differ during a game, depending on what the set is doing). Typically, most referees like to look in at set; this means they are usually positioned farther away from the goal than the set is. The advantage is that the referee can see what the set is doing. The disadvantage is that it can be difficult to judge borderline goals when the official is that far away. Moreover, it may often be difficult to see what is happening when the set is turning away from the referee. Lastly, it is difficult to judge which player(s) may be inside the 2-meter line.

Some referees prefer to look out at the set position. Typically, these referees will stand somewhere behind (goalside) of the set position and look out. The advantage to this position is that the referee does not have to do much to open up and see the entire field of play. In addition, a referee in this position is ready to judge borderline goals and sets that are turning away from the official. The main disadvantage to this position is that it is often difficult for the referee to see what the offensive set player is trying to do with the ball.

Best position to referee set changes with the game situation.

There is no single correct or best position for the referee to officiate the frontcourt. It should be emphasized that the frontcourt referee should move to obtain the best view of the activities at the set position. The referee should be aware of what the offensive player is trying to accomplish and what the defender is trying to do. Moreover, what does the position of the defender allow the attacking player to do? To address these issues, a referee may be looking in part of the time and looking out part of the time. The referee should, however, avoid moving so much that he/she appears to be fidgeting, impatient, nervous, or uncomfortable.

3.2.3 Backcourt Referee Area of Responsibility During Set Play



Responsibility and default position for the backcourt referee.

The backcourt referee is generally responsible for the perimeter. The default position of the backcourt referee is near the last pair in the pool. At the same time it is important that the backcourt referee be able to judge whether a foul occurred inside or outside the 7-meter line, whether a direct shot from a free throw was properly taken, and whether a shot was taken from behind the 7-meter line. In

addition, if a player puts the ball in play and swims toward the goal, the backcourt referee is responsible for knowing whether or not the ball may be legally shot on goal. However, the primary responsibility of the backcourt referee is to the players and their conduct in the water; the secondary responsibility of the backcourt referee is to judge the 7-meter line.

The backcourt referee assists the frontcourt referee in watching for two-handed blocks or fist blocks by defenders, goalie push-off from the wall or goal, and tips on shots on goal. It is important for the backcourt referee to realize that the frontcourt referee is in a position to judge best whether a ball crossed the goal line. In most of these cases, the backcourt referee has a better angle and perspective than the frontcourt referee for tips, two-handed blocks, etc. This official, therefore, can make a more correct judgment regarding these situations. Even more importantly, the backcourt referee may be the only one who can tell if a shot went into and then immediately rebounded out of the goal, usually near the far post. In all cases, the backcourt referee should signal by hand, *but not by whistle*, whether the ball was tipped, by whom, and whether the ball went across the goal line between or outside the posts. It is recommended that the frontcourt referee should look to the backcourt referee in these circumstances. If the frontcourt referee misses the backcourt official's signal, however, then the backcourt referee should inform the frontcourt official by whistle and/or verbally.

The backcourt referee assists the frontcourt referee on shots.

Sometimes there may be more than one pair of players behind the halfway mark without the ball. In these cases, the backcourt referee should generally stay closer to the pairs of players. If the ball is in the backcourt, the referee should generally maintain a position parallel with or slightly behind the location of the ball. When the perimeter referee is away from the 7-meter line, the frontcourt referee should be aware of what the backcourt referee is doing and be ready to move toward the 7-meter line if necessary. Since it may be difficult for the backcourt official to make it up the pool in time to make a judgment at the 7-meter line in these types of cases, the frontcourt referee must be prepared to assume this responsibility.

When the ball is at set, or about to be passed to set, the backcourt referee should be watching the initial portions of drives the inlet pass to set, and pick plays, particularly on the weak side. The two most predominant types of fouls are defensive pullbacks and offensive fouls. The most common foul is the one committed by the defense for impeding or holding a driver (a player not in possession of the ball) and thus preventing the attacking player from swimming and attaining a higher level of offensive advantage. This is almost always an exclusion foul. A more detailed discussion about refereeing the perimeter is in Section 4.2.

Watch for most common defensive (and offensive) fouls.

Offensive fouls are much less common. The typical offensive foul occurs when an attacking player pulls back the defender so the attacking player has a path of clear water toward the goal. Another typical offensive foul is for an attacking player to swim over or roll over a defending player and then receives the ball. These offensive fouls should result in the ball being turned over. However, referees should not call offensive fouls away from the ball unless it affects play or is particularly egregious.

Generally, the backcourt referee will call perimeter ordinary fouls, exclusion fouls and, less often, offensive fouls. For the most part, however, the backcourt referee must be careful only to make calls relevant to the game. For example, a pullback by the defender on a driver on the weak side during a

strong side turn by the set should not be called if it appears the set is likely to have a good scoring opportunity. Similarly, an offensive foul on the weak side while a set is turning to the strong side, should not be called.

The backcourt referee should almost never call in the frontcourt. The only exceptions are as follows:

When the backcourt referee calls in the front court.

- Obvious gross offensive fouls that the frontcourt referee would not have been able to see because of the frontcourt referee’s position relative to the players.
- Fouls committed on the far side (backcourt referee side) when there are many players in the frontcourt referee’s area of coverage.
- Obvious defensive fouls that are overaggressive or fouls that endanger a player that the frontcourt referee would not have been able to see because of the frontcourt referee’s position relative to the players.
- At the request of the frontcourt referee.

In these cases, the backcourt referee must signal clearly the reason why the foul was called.

3.2.4 Frontcourt Referee’s Area of Responsibility During Player Advantage Play

Responsibility during player advantage situations.

If a player has been excluded, most teams will set up a player advantage (man-up, 6-on-5) play. Many plays call for putting players in different positions; however, the basic responsibility of the frontcourt referee remains the same. Instead of focusing on what an individual group of players are doing, the focus is primarily on the pattern of how the attacking and defending players are interacting and their relationship to the 2-meter line. However, referees should pay particular attention to the actions of the attacking and defensive players at the posts

Area of responsibility and default position during player advantage situations.

The frontcourt referee should be primarily watching the post player closest to the referee and the goalkeeper. If the player on the far side of the pool is playing inside the 2-meter line with the ball, then the frontcourt referee has responsibility for that player as well. The default position of the frontcourt referee is near the 2-meter line or parallel to the location of the ball when it is inside the 2-meter line. Philosophically, one can think of the 2 meter line as an added defender past which an attacking player cannot go unless the attacking player or a member of that team has the ball and is inside the 2 meter line. When a pass is made to a player on or near the 2 meter line, the frontcourt referee should exercise careful judgment as to whether or not the 2 meter line was violated.

Importance of 2-meter line during player advantage situations.

Common exclusion fouls during player advantage situations.

The most common exclusion foul is committed at the wings when the attacking player is fouled and then is sunk so the defender has time to make it back to defend against a free pass to the post player. The referee should also be watching the defending players who may be sinking the post players by pushing on their shoulders. A somewhat less common foul is a pullback from goalside of the post players during a pass to them. More typically, the pass is an inside pass, and the pullback is from behind. If this takes place, a penalty foul should be awarded.

Sometimes, the post player may hold a defender and prevent them from coming out and defending against another player, particularly one with the ball. If that attacking team gains an advantage from that ploy (that is, the outside player is able to take a shot), then an offensive foul should be called.

Offensive foul for holding (impeding) defender.

When shots are taken, the frontcourt referee should try to determine if the shot was good, tipped, or out-of-bounds. If a shot is blocked by a defender other than the goalkeeper, the backcourt referee is primarily responsible for determining whether the block was done with two hands or with a fist. In addition, both referees should be watching to see whether or not the goalkeeper pushes off the goal or the wall to block a shot. In all these cases, a penalty foul should be awarded.

What the frontcourt referee is looking for during shots.

3.2.4 Backcourt Referee’s Area of Responsibility During Player Advantage Play

During a player advantage play, the backcourt referee also has specific responsibilities. The default position for the backcourt official is near the 7-meter line. For the same reasons as noted previously, the 7-meter line must be monitored for direct shots. The players for whom the backcourt referee is primarily responsible for perimeter positions.

Default position and area of responsibility of backcourt referee during player advantage.

The most common fouls the backcourt referee should watch for are overly aggressive fouls on the perimeter players. Most fouls on these players will be ordinary fouls; however, if the foul is overly aggressive or if the player is sunk so that the defender has time to crash back, that defender should be excluded. The backcourt referee should also be aware of whether there is any splashing. Deliberate splashing in the face of an attacking player is a exclusion foul. If a player holding the ball inside the 4-meter area is splashed while in the process of taking a shot, a penalty foul should usually be called.

Common exclusion fouls to watch for.

The backcourt referee has the best angle to determine whether or not a defending player tipped a shot out-of-bounds. This official should watch for 2-handed blocks as it is rarely possible for the frontcourt referee to see these fouls. If a defending player blocks a shot with two hands inside the 4-meter area, a penalty foul should be called.

3.2.6 Transitions

3.2.6.1 Player Advantage Transitions

Most player advantage goals are scored during the transition from set offense to player advantage offense and when the exclusion ends and the defense switches back to a set defense. During these periods of transitions, the referee typically is checking to make sure the correct player is leaving (or entering) the pool and trying to watch all the players change their positions; therefore, it is easy to miss fouls during this time.

Be alert during player-advantage situation transitions.

After a player has been excluded, that player is to swim immediately toward the re-entry area without interfering with play. If a player chooses not to go immediately, the referee may deem the player as deliberately interfering with play and award a penalty foul in addition to the exclusion foul. If the player chooses to swim through the player advantage offense, the referee may choose to award a penalty foul if the player may have affected play by the attacking team.

3.2.6.2 Frontcourt to Backcourt Referee Transitions

Stand still and watch; don't be on the move too quickly.

The referee who was in the frontcourt will now be the backcourt referee. The first thing the referee should do is to stand still and watch the set, the set defender, and goalkeeper as they untangle and begin to make their transition to the other end of the pool. If the referee slowly rotates his/her shoulders toward the new attacking end, the referee can also see the players on the trail end of the counterattack. Before the referee moves away from this position, the referee should wait for the former set and defender to start swimming down the pool.

Be aware that the start of the counterattack is a critical time. Watch for potential defensive and offensive fouls.

The start of the counterattack is a critical time. In general, the referee should wait and allow the two set players to untangle without calling a quick foul. **At the same time**, the referee should be aware that, if the set lost the ball, especially if the ball was lost due to aggressive defensive play, that player might decide to retaliate against the defender. In addition, the former set defender may decide to grab-and-go (sometimes called gross-and-go) by grabbing the set player, shoving that player to one side, and start sprinting down the pool. Depending on the level of aggression used in committing this foul, a regular offensive foul or an offensive exclusion foul can be called. Anytime a player grabs the defender in the head or neck region, the referee should consider calling an offensive exclusion. In most cases, just the presence of the referee watching will deter players from physical retaliations.

- Retaliation by former set player.
- Grab-and-go by former set defender.

Fouls to the head and neck area can be exclusions.

One common strategy is for the set defender to swim and force the set player to swim down the pool to play defense. This is done to contribute to the set player getting tired. Moreover, if the defender is able to get down field quickly, that team is likely to have a player advantage period until the slower set player finishes swimming down to play defense. If the set player is allowed to hold the former set defender and prevent that player from swimming on a counterattack, the former set player is decreasing the overall level of advantage of the new attacking team and violating the set defender's positional advantage. Holding, sinking, or pulling back is an exclusion foul. Depending on the level of advantage at the front end of the counterattack and where the ball is, an exclusion should be called against the set player in this circumstance.

Holding by former set might be where the counterattack loses advantage. This can be an exclusion foul.

Positioning of the referee relative to the counterattack.

In general, the position of the backcourt referee is to follow the counterattack, to monitor the first long pass, and to watch all pairs of players, except for the two lead pairs. Be especially aware of the pairs in the middle of the pool. Note any sudden changes of player positions relative to each other. These rapid changes are usually the result of an offensive foul (resulting in an ordinary foul being called) or defensive foul (almost always resulting in an exclusion foul being called). The referee should rarely be in front of the trailing pair, especially if the ball is in the hands of the goalkeeper.

Few fouls should be called behind the line of attack. Call fouls where the advantage is taken away.

As a rule of thumb, there should be few fouls called behind the line of attack. The only exceptions would be gross offensive fouls, gross defensive exclusion fouls (usually kicking or striking), fouls resulting in a game exclusion of a player, and those called for safety reasons. If there is no advantage in front of the line of attack, however, an exclusion should be called at the point where the advantage was taken away. The reason for this is that in a counterattack with two good teams, often the sixth player down the pool, frequently the player who was the set guard, will be the player with positional advantage. The pullback of this player, albeit behind the line of attack, may be the reason the counterattack is stalled. This warrants the exclusion of the player who committed the foul.

A counterattacking player who is ahead or closer to the goal being attacked has a positional advantage. A defender who swims on the legs of such an attacking player should be considered holding or sinking that attacking player. If a referee determines that the defending player is holding or sinking the counterattacking player, the defender may be excluded. A referee should only withhold this call if the attacking team has a better advantage in the counterattack. For example, if the attacking team has a 1-0, 2-1, or 3-2 advantage, a backcourt exclusion (resulting in a 6-on-5) would decrease the level of offensive advantage; therefore such a foul should not be called. If the attacking team has a 4-3, 5-4, or 6-5 advantage, however, the referee may choose to call the exclusion. The rule of thumb is that the award should be as good as, if not better than, the advantage that would be taken away at the award of the exclusion (for example, a 2-1 counterattack is better than a 6-5 set offense).

Rule of thumb: The award of a foul should be as good as the on-going advantage that was taken away by the foul.

If the attacking player is in front of the defender and swims into (bears into) the defender, typically there is no foul. Moreover, if the attacking player with offensive advantage gets in front of a defender and stops, that attacking player has position. Regardless of whether the attacking player acts as if the defender is preventing the attacking player from moving, the referee should allow the defending player a little time to stop and to get both arms into the air to demonstrate that the attacking player is not being held. No automatic foul should be called in this circumstance.

Be aware of relationship between defender and attacking player during the counterattack. Whoever got there first owns that water.

During counterattacks, referees should also be aware of fouls committed by the attacking team. As described, a grab-and-go is one example of what an attacking player might do. In addition, they may also impede the progress of the defenders. If an attacking player who is swimming next to or behind a defender ducks under that defender, the referee may consider this an offensive foul for impeding.

At the start of a counterattack, when the ball has been awarded to the goalkeeper, many referees focus on watching the players going down field. It is important that the goalkeeper take the goal throw properly. The goalkeeper has the right to an unimpeded free throw. Sometimes players will attack the goalkeeper by swimming under water as the other players are progressing down the pool in a counterattack. Referees should be alert to this situation and watch the goalkeeper make the outlet pass.

3.2.6.3 Backcourt to Frontcourt Referee Transitions

The referee who was in the backcourt is now the attack referee. This means that this person is responsible for the conduct of the attack. In general, this official should try to anticipate the counterattack and be on the move by the time it starts. (This takes a lot of practice and many games.)

Anticipate counterattacks. Be on the move as they start.

It is strongly recommended that referees get in front of the lead breakers quickly and walk backwards to better observe the play. The advantage of this position is that the referee is able to see the entire counterattack coming down the pool and is in the best position to judge the relative advantage of the attacking team.

Get in front of the counterattack and walk backwards.

When the referee gets down into the frontcourt, it is usually best to stop around the 4-meter line until the ball has gone past the 4-meter line or a set offense has started. The referee, though, should be aware of the location of the ball and the backcourt referee. It is this referee's responsibility to make sure the 7-meter line is covered until the backcourt official arrives. If the back-

court referee is far in the backcourt, the frontcourt referee **needs to assume full responsibility for monitoring the 7-meter line** until the backcourt referee comes down. One technique of accomplishing both these goals is to walk backwards and stop at the 4-meter line before returning to cover the 7-meter line.

Watch the lead end of the counterattack. Be aware of holding fouls that may occur by the team that just lost the ball.

At the start of the counterattack, the frontcourt referee should be particularly aware of the players at point and at the weak side flat. Those pairs are usually the lead breakers. Be particularly alert for the player who was on offense (who was facing the goal and is now facing the wrong way) holding an opponent who was on defense and is now moving (or attempting to move) towards the other end of the pool. This hold is common; it is a personal foul. The offending player should be excluded at once, so when the foul is called it is called **ahead of the ball** and the position of the ball **does not have to be changed**. Also, referees should observe and call fouls in the middle of the pool until a set offense develops. Pullbacks or impeding of the lead breakers can significantly change the advantage of a team, so referees should watch for sudden changes of positions of players relative to each other. For example, a two-on-none may be changed to a two-on-one because of a pullback. A two-on-one is significantly less advantageous for the attacking team.

The frontcourt referee has the responsibility for watching the development of the counterattack and the level of advantage it may have. Calling the counterattack correctly is ensuring the level of advantage gained or lost by the attacking team is due to the skill of the players in the water and not due to a foul.

3.2.7 Near the End of Periods

When there is little time left on the clock (typically less than 5 seconds) before the end of a period, the frontcourt referee should move toward the goal line to judge what happens in a last-moment shot. If a goal is scored and the teams are lined up to start with little time left on the clock (less than about 10 seconds), the backcourt referee should line up the players, making sure that the players are on their respective sides of the halfway line, and the frontcourt referee should line up at the goal line. The backcourt referee is primarily responsible for checking the game clock before the restart of the game so that the frontcourt referee can be warned if the time is short. Both referees should assume responsibility to ensure that the 35-second possession clock is blanked correctly.

Near the end of a period, many teams will set up plays (at the re-start after a goal or after a timeout) in which part of the strategy is to prevent the defending team from getting to the player with the ball. Some players accomplish this strategy by holding the defensive players. Referees should be aware of this situation and call the appropriate fouls that affect the play.

Some teams set up a defense outside the 4-meter line. If a player outside the 4-meter area goes off the bottom or blocks the shot with a fist or two hands in the last second of play, no foul is called. It is an ordinary foul to block a shot with a fist or two hands or by going off the bottom outside the 4-meter line; therefore, only an ordinary foul took place at the end of the period.

3.2.8 Watching for Goals, Tips, and Out-of-Bounds

Both referees should be watching if a ball goes into the goal, is tipped, or goes out-of-bounds. The backcourt referee should always signal, without using a whistle, that the ball was a goal, tipped, or out-of-bounds. The frontcourt referee should check with the backcourt referee before making a call. Sometimes it is possible to hear a tip as well. Referees should pay attention to both the visual and auditory indications that a ball may have been tipped. If one referee rules a ball was

If one referee rules that a ball was tipped, it was a tip.

tipped, it is a tip.

If the ball was tipped out-of-bounds by the defense over the end line, a corner throw is taken on the side the ball went out-of-bounds. A corner throw is taken at the “corner” of the 2-meter and sidelines. The middle of the goal is used to judge on which side the ball is to be put into play. A ball that exits the pool over the near half of the goal line should be put in play in the near corner. If the ball exits the pool over the far half of the goal line, it should be put in play in the far corner.

Corner throws are taken on the side the ball went out-of-bounds.

Once the frontcourt referee awards a corner throw, that official must decide on which side of the pool the ball is to be put into play based on the criteria described above. Once this decision is made, and the correct corner indicated by the referee, the ball must be put into play in the indicated corner. If the ball is to be put in play in the far corner, the backcourt referee should advance towards the 2-meter line indicating where the ball is to be put in play.

The frontcourt referee determines which side the ball is to be put into play. The ball must be put in play in the indicated corner.

3.2.9 When Four Eyes are Better Than None

During set offenses, there is a tendency for fouls at the far post (at or near the wing positions) to be missed. Similarly, fouls in the area between the flat and the wing positions are often missed because both referees assume the other official is watching that area. Both referees should watch those areas and call fouls there. Similarly, both referees should watch drivers as they make the transition towards the 4-meter line. The backcourt referee, however, should be careful not to call a foul in those areas when the attacking team has an offensive advantage away from that foul.

3.2.10 Working as a Team

The two referees are likely to be the only two people in the pool area who do not care who wins or loses the game; thus, they must provide support to each other throughout the game. This does not mean they should call in each other’s areas. The backcourt referee, in particular, should be aware of whether there is a lot of activity at set. If there is, the backcourt referee should see if the frontcourt referee is going to need help calling the wing position. If there is to be any discussion between the two referees, they should call the ball out of the water and talk quickly. When the referees are conferring, they should watch the pool. It is the responsibility of the frontcourt referee to explain (quickly) to the players in the water what happened and what the ruling will be.

If a coach needs to be warned, the referee should call for the ball to be passed to the official on the table side. Only the referee on the side of the benches should go and warn the coach. If a referee is talking to a coach, the other official should be watching the pool. At the end of the game, the referees should quickly review and sign the score sheet and leave the pool deck together.

3.3 During the Game

3.3.1 Carryover of Exclusions Between Periods

The 20-second-exclusion period of a player carries over between periods. If a player has been excluded and time has not expired prior to the end of a period, that player remains in the re-entry area during the sprint at the start of the next period. If the excluded player’s team gains possession of the ball at the sprint, the player should be waved in by the backcourt referee. Otherwise, the

Exclusions carry over between periods. If the excluded player’s team gains possession of the ball at the start of a period, that player may re-enter.

If a shot is taken at the end of a period, the teams restart at even strength if the ball goes out-of-bounds without having been touched by a defender, or if the goalkeeper catches the ball on the shot.

I 21.3.2

player must remain in the re-entry area until the full 20 seconds have expired, there is a change of possession, or a goal is scored. If a shot is taken at the end of a period and the ball goes out-of-bounds without having been tipped by a defender, the teams start even up at the beginning of the next period.

In principle, if the ball would have been awarded to the defending team if there were time remaining on the clock, then the teams start even. If the ball would not necessarily have been awarded to the defending team, then the team with the excluded player starts with a player in the re-entry area. For example, if a ball is tipped out-of-bounds by the defending team, that team starts the sprint with a player in the re-entry area. If the goalkeeper catches the ball on a shot immediately after the signal for the end of the period, then the teams start even.

3.3.2 Change of Possession of the Ball

A change in possession takes place if a player of the opposing team is able to pass the ball, control the ball, or swim with the ball. In the event of a tip, a glancing touch, or a melee in which no player has clear control of the ball, there is no change of possession.

3.3.3 Direct Shot on Free Throw or Goal Throw

When a free throw is awarded for a foul outside the 7-meter line, the player taking the free throw or goal throw has the opportunity to shoot the ball immediately and directly at the opponent's goal. In general, the criteria to determine whether the shot is immediate are the same as determining whether a penalty throw was taken immediately. A player who picks up the ball and looks around may not shoot the ball. A player who looks around for a pass while delaying getting to the ball may not shoot it. A player who fakes or pumps the ball may not shoot it. A player who places a hand on the ball, gets his/her legs set, and then shoots the ball, should be allowed to score the goal, unless it took that person too long to get ready for the shot.

A direct shot on a free throw may not be taken upon:

- Restarting after calling a timeout.
- Restarting after a goal.
- Restarting following an injury timeout.
- Restarting following replacement of a cap or suit.
- If the foul is committed inside 7 meters even if the free throw is taken outside 7 meters.
- Restarting after the referee has called for the ball.
- Restarting after the ball has left the field of play. *Exception:* all goal throws may be shot regardless of whether the ball was within the field of play or had left the field of play.
- Any other undue delay before taking the shot.

Criteria to determine if a direct shot on a free throw or goal throw was immediate.

Conditions as to when a direct shot may not be taken.
WP 14.3

All goal throws may be shot regardless of whether the ball was within the field of play or had left the field of play.

I 14.3.2

If a player shoots directly on a free throw when it is not permitted (for example, shot taken after the ball was put into play outside the 7-meter area and before a second player has intentionally played the ball; shot taken on a free throw inside the 7-meter area), then an ordinary foul is called and no goal is awarded. A goal throw is taken regardless of whether the ball went into the goal, out-of-bounds, or was deflected by a defending player.

If a direct shot was taken illegally, a goal throw is awarded even if a defender or goalkeeper tipped the ball into the goal.
I 16.1.1

A defending player who tips a ball into a goal while attempting to block an illegally taken shot is not deemed to be “intentionally playing the ball.” If an attacking player awarded a free throw outside 7 meters puts the ball in play and then shoots the ball, just because a defending player tipped the ball does not mean the shot was legal. Similarly, if a player inside seven meter takes an immediate shot on a free throw, it is still an illegal shot. In the case of an illegal shot, a goal throw is awarded to the defending goalkeeper, and no goal is awarded.

If a direct shot was taken illegally, a goal throw is awarded to the opposing goalkeeper.
WP 16.1

When taking a direct shot on a free throw, the player must release the ball with his/her head outside the 7-meter line for the shot to be legal.

On a direct shot on free throw, the ball must be released with the player’s head outside the 7m line.
I 14.3.3

3.3.4 “Drawing Fouls”

There is a common misperception that one of the objectives of the attacking team is to draw fouls. This idea is contrary to the correct application of the advantage rule.

The Advantage rule instructs referees to refrain from calling fouls that are to the advantage of the team committing the foul. Thus, implicit in this rule is the concept that a foul is called only if there is an advantage to the team committing a foul. A defender who is impeding a player who is not **making an attempt** to pass the ball, advance the ball into scoring position, or shoot the ball, does not gain an advantage by the act of impeding. Thus no foul needs to be called. However, if the offensive player is unable to attack the goal due to a violation of the rules by the defense, then a foul has been committed and should be called.

3.3.5 Ducking Under Water

Ducking under water by any player is to be discouraged. Three general situations exist where players duck under water: between adjacent players during counterattacks or drives, at the set position, and on the perimeter.

During counterattacks and drives, a player who has the clear lead may bear into the trailing player or get immediately in front of the trailing player. This is generally not a foul. In contrast, a player who is even with or behind an opponent would commit an impeding foul (or perhaps even holding, sinking, or pulling back) when they duck below a player who is swimming next to them. If the foul affects the offensive team’s advantage, the foul may be called.

A player who ducks under an opponent who is even with or ahead of the player may be impeding, holding, sinking, or pulling back on that opponent.

At set, in the course of striving for position, some players duck under the opposing player to try and improve position. A player who has position on the surface of the water cannot be pushed out of the way by a player who is under water. Pushing a defender away to gain position is an offensive foul, regardless

of whether the maneuver was performed on the surface of the water or as a result of ducking under the defender. Similarly, taking an attacking player out of position by ducking under a player is, at least, impeding and could also be holding or pulling back. In these cases, the appropriate foul should be called.

In the past, when an attacking player controlling, but not holding, the ball on the perimeter ducked under water, an ordinary foul was called. In reality, however, in most cases, no foul was committed; the player merely ducked under water. If the attacking player ducks under water and pushes his/her head into the body of the defending player, that can be offensive impeding; an offensive foul should be called when that ducking under initiates contact that gains an advantage for that player.

Ducking the head underwater and pushing it into a defender is not an automatic foul against the defense. In fact, it may be an offensive foul.

If the attacking player voluntarily goes under water, that player may not know where the ball is; thus, if the defender swims over the attacking player to get at the ball, there is still no foul. A foul is committed if the defending player purposefully kicks or strikes at the attacking player or prevents that player from coming to the surface of the water. In these latter cases, the defending player should be excluded.

An attacking player who voluntarily goes underwater gives up possessional advantage.

3.3.6 Extra Time

No extra time is played unless the game requires a definitive result. If extra time is to be played, the teams will be allowed a 5-minute break before the start of extra time periods (two periods of 3-minutes each). The teams change ends prior to the first period of extra time. After the first period of extra time, there will be a one-minute break for the referees to change sides. At the conclusion of the second extra time period, if the score is still tied, a penalty shootout will take place (see section 3.3.19).

Defense commits fouls against underwater attacker only if the defender kicks or strikes, or prevents the attacking player from coming to the surface of the water.

How to set the clocks for a third period of extra time.
I 11.3.1

3.3.7 Ineligible Players

An ineligible player is an eighth player, one who has received three personal fouls, or a player who has been excluded from the game.

If play is started at the beginning of a period, after a goal, or after a timeout with an ineligible player, the referee should stop play immediately, reset the game and possession clocks, allow an immediate substitute, if appropriate, and restart play. If this occurs at the start of a period, the sprint is taken again. No penalty shot is awarded.

Ineligible player at restart.
I 15.1.1

If an eighth player enters the field of play during live time, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game, with substitution. Play resumes with a penalty throw taken by the opposing team with the teams at even strength.

Eighth player enters the field of play during live time.
I 22.8.1

If an ineligible player is discovered in the water, the referees should determine whether this player was visibly "red flagged." If the player was visibly red flagged, then the player should be removed and an immediate substitute allowed; play restarts with a penalty throw taken by the opposing team. If the player was not visibly red flagged, the clocks are reset to the time of the third foul, and the game is resumed from that point.

Ineligible player discovered in the water during play.
I 22.8.2

3.3.8 Illegal Reentry by a Player on the Defending Team

If a player reenters the field of play illegally and does not interfere with play, then the player should be excluded. This is for a player or substitute who reenters illegally (for example, pushing off the wall or bottom of the pool, etc.) after the expiration of the 20-second exclusion period. If this occurs in the last minute of the game or the last minute of the second extra time period, the player will be excluded for the remainder of the game, with substitution, and a penalty throw will be awarded to the opposing team.

Illegal re-entry by player who does not interfere with play.
WP 21.15

If a player or substitute reenters the field of play early or reenters the field of play illegally at the end of the exclusion period with a “clear intent to interfere with play,” a penalty foul is awarded. The excluded player or substitute must return to the re-entry area for the remainder of the exclusion period, until there is a score, or until the defending team regains possession of the ball. If the attacking team is in a position to shoot at goal, the referee shall wait to see if a goal is scored before stopping play. If a goal is scored, the penalty throw is not awarded, but a personal foul is recorded against the offending player. If a goal is not scored, the referee shall then immediately award a penalty throw.

Illegal re-entry by player who deliberately interferes with play.
WP 22.6

3.3.9 Medical Retirement from the Game

If a player is bleeding, stop the game as soon as possible. The player is to be substituted, and the substitute may enter the pool from any point in any fashion; play is resumed immediately. The player who was bleeding may reenter play as a substitute after the player received medical attention and the bleeding has stopped.

For bleeding player, stop play as soon as possible.
WP 5.7, 25.2

A player who is bleeding may leave the field of play immediately without first obtaining a referee’s permission. If this occurs during live time, a substitute may enter immediately from the re-entry area closest to that player’s defensive goal. If a player is injured and not bleeding, the referee determines whether it is a significant injury (the player needs quick assistance) or whether the player is able to make it to the re-entry area for substitution without undue delay.

Bleeding player may leave field of play without referee’s permission during live time and a substitute may enter immediately from the re-entry area.
I 25.2.1

If the player needs assistance, the referee halts the match and has the appropriate person start the clock for a 3-minute injury stoppage. If the player is recovered at or before the end of the injury stoppage, play resumes immediately after both teams are ready and there is no advantage to either team. The ball is put in play at the point where it was when play was stopped. Any player, other than the injured player, may be substituted for during this stoppage.

Injury stoppage.
WP 25.3

If the player is not recovered by the end of the 3-minute injury stoppage, or if the coach decides at any time during the injury stoppage the player will retire for medical reasons, a substitute may be made immediately, and play is to resume. A player who retires for medical reasons may not re-enter the game; any player, other than the injured player, may be substituted for during this stoppage.

Substitutions during injury stoppage.
I 25.5.1

3.3.10 Picks

Picks are an integral part of the driving game and are often run imme-

During picks, watch for impeding, pushing, pushing off, holding, sinking, or pulling back. Call those fouls that affect play.

A player who has arrived at a particular location has "possession" of that water.

Offensive and defensive fouls are possible. Call the relevant fouls.

Player who inadvertently leaves the field of play.
I 21.4.1

Player who inadvertently leaves the field of play and re-enters illegally.
I 21.4.2

Player who leaves the water during live time commits disrespect.
WP 21.2

No additional sanction for player with third foul or game exclusion if he/she leaves the water to go to the re-entry area.
I 21.2.1

diately after a foul at set so attacking players can get free, or at least get ballside to receive a pass. A common misconception is that only swimming picks are legal and that a "standing pick" (an attacking player is vertical in the water) is illegal; the rules do not support this interpretation. A player who has arrived at a particular location in the pool has "possession" of that water. A defending player who tries to swim over an opponent setting a stationary pick commits the foul. It should be noted that many players take advantage of a pick situation to hold onto their opponents to prevent their receiving an unimpeded pass (defender action) or to prevent their defending against a pass (attacker action). These are illegal and should be penalized appropriately. **Offensive and defensive fouls are possible during picks; the referee should watch carefully to determine whether any holding or pushing off took place.** If the foul increases the level of advantage of that team, an appropriate penalty (exclusion on the defending team; offensive foul on the attacking team) should be called. In these situations, the attacking and defending teams are obligated to demonstrate they are not committing fouls.

3.3.11 Players Leaving the Field of Play During Live Time

Whether by accident or confusion, it sometimes happens that a player who has not been excluded leaves the field of play. If a player leaves the field of play inadvertently under these circumstances, that player must go to the defensive re-entry area and may reenter immediately from that location. The referee does not have to wave in this player. If a player who leaves the playing field inadvertently (but remains in the water) and who reenters from anywhere other than the re-entry area, that player is assessed an exclusion foul.

If that player, or any player, actually gets out of the pool (leaves the water) before going into the re-entry area, the player is excluded from the game (for disrespect), with substitution. The only exception to this rule is that players may exit the pool from any place after a goal, for a timeout, and after a period.

If a player who has received a third personal foul or a game excluding foul leaves the water to go to the re-entry area, no additional penalty is assessed, and a substitute will be allowed to re-enter at the appropriate time. If that player does not go into the re-entry area, however, the substitute may not reenter until after a timeout, a goal, or at the start of the next period.

3.3.12 Refereeing Shallow-Deep Pools

Water polo is not designed to be played in shallow water. For these games, the teams may request that they switch team benches and ends every period. In this event, the referee with more shallow-water experience takes and remains at the shallow end. In general, players cannot remain off the bottom; therefore, referees should develop a clear understanding of how to call the bottom, communicate it to the teams before the game, and call the game consistently.

The way to officiate in a shallow-end pool is to apply the rules as they are written. It is an ordinary foul to stand or push off from the bottom, except to rest. When this occurs (as when a player leaps off the bottom to receive a pass), call it a foul, as written. If a defensive player uses the bottom in the 4-meter area, and it prevents an offensive player from receiving a pass that would have resulted in a probable goal, it is a penalty foul (it is then a foul committed in the 4-meter area that prevented a probable goal). If a defensive player stands on the bottom and uses

this leverage to prevent an offensive player from swimming to the desired place, this is the same as holding a player in the deep end and doing the same thing; this is an exclusion foul, just as it would be in the deep end. If an offensive player, usually the set, uses the bottom to turn the defender, or to push off to get more leverage for the shot, it is an ordinary foul, and the defensive team is awarded a free throw at or behind the point of the foul. If both players are using the bottom to advantage and it is impossible to determine who used it first, both players are committing an ordinary foul at the same time. This should be considered as two simultaneous fouls, one for each team, and a neutral throw is awarded. The advantage to this approach is simple: it is an ordinary foul to use the bottom to advantage. The disadvantage is that it becomes easy for referees to lose perspective of the flow of the game and what is actually happening in the water. Use this approach, therefore, only for lower level competition.

In an alternate approach, advise players the game will be called as if they are in deep water. If a player does something that looks like something he/she cannot do in deep water, call a foul. Using this method, player are expected to maintain water level within about 6 inches of the top of their shoulders at all times. Call an ordinary foul quickly at the set position (this is now primarily a passing position). Any player using the bottom to increase their leverage against an opposing player has committed a foul (offensive foul, ordinary foul, exclusion foul, or penalty foul, as appropriate). The advantage of this style of calling the bottom is that the referee is more closely calling the flow of the game and is focusing on what is happening in the pool. The disadvantage of this approach is that it requires the referee to exercise judgment continually with regard to the relative advantage between players and the degree to which advantage is increased/decreased through the use of the bottom. It will likely mean the shallow end and the deep end are called very differently. Use this approach for higher level competitions.

3.3.13 Resetting the Possession Clock

The possession clock is reset for the following situations:

- When a team maintains possession of the ball for 35 seconds without shooting at their opponent’s goal. The ball is awarded to the opposing team and the possession clock is reset.
- When a shot is taken. If the shot does not score or if the ball does not go out of bounds, the possession clock is reset again when a player of either team retakes possession of the ball. For example, the possession clock is reset when the goalkeeper catches the ball. If the ball “bars down” into open water, the possession clock is reset when the first player of either team takes control of the ball.
- When the opposing team takes control of the ball.
- On the award of:
 1. exclusion foul

When the possession clock is reset.

- 2. penalty foul
- 3. goal throw
- 4. corner throw
- 5. neutral throw

The possession clock is not reset if a ball under call is made unless there has been a clear change of possession. The possession clock is not reset if the ball is tipped out-of-bounds on the side of the pool unless there will be a change of possession.

When the possession clock is not reset.

3.3.14 Restarting After a Goal

After a goal has been scored, players must go to their respective halves of the pool. The frontcourt referee (person who was just in the backcourt) should raise a hand when ready and start walking backwards toward the frontcourt. The backcourt referee restarts play by blowing a whistle and dropping a hand from a horizontal position. Prior to the restart of play, both referees are responsible for making sure the field of play is clear of exiting players who might interfere with play and that a correct number of players are in the water. It is the responsibility of both referees to ensure all substitutions are completed. If play is restarted with an incorrect number of players, the ball is pulled out, the game clock reset to the time of the last goal, the 35-second possession clock is reset, and play is restarted.

Restart with incorrect number of players. See also Section 3.3.5.

The ball must be played intentionally by at least two players (excluding the defending goalkeeper) before a goal can be scored. A defending player who deflects an illegally taken shot is not considered to have played the ball intentionally.

To start play, the player may drop the ball and then swim with the ball, pass the ball forward, pass the ball backwards, or pass the ball sideways. The ball does not have to start at the middle of the pool. If the player starting play passes the ball back to the attacking goalkeeper and the ball ends up in the goal, a goal is scored.

Restart after a goal.
I 15.1.2

After a goal, each team may freely substitute any or all of its players. The coach may leave the bench area and talk to his/her players while making substitutions. Once play starts, the coach must return to the team area.

Coach may leave bench to talk to players while making substitutions.
I 5.2.3

3.3.15 Restart After the Ball Goes Out-of-Bounds

When the ball goes out-of-bounds on the side of the pool, the goal judge (or table) should throw the ball to the nearest player behind the place where the ball went out-of-bounds. In principle, the ball is most often thrown directly to the goalkeeper. If the ball goes out-of-bounds, players should retrieve the ball **only** if it is immediately outside the field of play (next to a lane line) when they do not need to leave the field of play. Players should **not** leave the field of play to retrieve a ball. The ball should be thrown to them as quickly as possible by the goal judge and/or table.

To whom ball should be thrown if it goes out-of-bounds and when may players retrieve a ball that has gone out-of-bounds.
I 19.1.1

If the ball goes out-of-bounds over a sideline, the ball may not be shot at the opponent's goal at the restart. However, if the ball is awarded to the goalkeeper

for a goal throw, that throw may be shot directly at the opponent’s goal.

WP 14.3, I 14.3.2

3.3.16 Substitutions

After a goal, timeout, or between periods, any player may be substituted for any other player. In these cases, the players may enter the pool from any location and in any way. The only exception is that a player not eligible to play (has three personal fouls) or is currently excluded, may not enter the field of play.

WP 5.7

At any time during live time or dead time, with the exception of the time being taken to administer a penalty throw, players may be substituted through the re-entry area. To perform this “running substitution,” the head of the exiting player must break the surface of the water in the re-entry area before the new player may enter the pool. The entering player may not push off the side or bottom or dive in.

WP 5.6, 21.3, 21.15

Any eligible player may substitute for any other player. In the case of an exclusion, it is the player that is excluded and not a position. For example, if a goalkeeper is excluded, a substitute wearing a goalkeeper’s cap may re-enter the pool for an exiting field player. In this instance, although the original goalkeeper was excluded, the team can play the player advantage period with a substitute goalkeeper (with all the goalkeeper’s privileges), five field players, and a field player in the re-entry area just as long as the substitution was done legally (from the re-entry area during live time or from any location during timeouts or between periods).

Any player may substitute for any other player.

In case of exclusion, a substitute may play in any position, regardless of the position at which the excluded player played.
I 5.6.1

For substitutions during live time, the player leaving the field of play must exit through the re-entry area. Any player who leaves the field of play at a location other than the re-entry area (for example, sideline or end line outside the re-entry area) is deemed guilty of disrespect and is excluded for the remainder of the game, with substitution.

For live time substitutions, player must leave the field of play through the re-entry area.
I 21.11.2

If a player enters the re-entry area before the substitute gets there, that individual may leave the pool. If an excluded player is being substituted for, the excluded player does not have to remain in the re-entry area and may leave the pool immediately after entering the re-entry area.

Excluded player may leave pool from re-entry area – does not have to wait for the arrival of a substitute.
WP 21.2.1 Notes.

If a timeout is called, an excluded player may leave the water to go to the team huddle. The player may go directly to the team bench after the timeout, even if he/she has not reached the re-entry area. The excluded player does not have to go to the re-entry area to be substituted under this circumstance.

Excluded player who is being substituted does not have to go to re-entry area after a timeout.
I 5.7.1

A substitute is an illegal player if this player enters the pool before the exiting player rises visibly in the re-entry area. That substitute is excluded for the remainder of the game. Play is resumed with a penalty shot with the teams at even strength.

Substitute who enters before player leaves field of play is an ineligible (8th) player. See Section 3.3.5.

3.3.17 Taking a Free Throw (Putting Ball in Play)

A player who is in position to most readily take a free throw is to take the throw. Provided the throw is taken without undue delay, it is not necessary for the throw to be taken by the nearest player.

Who is to take free throw.
I 19.2.1

Free throw taken without undue delay.
WP 19.2, 20.14, I 19.2.2

A free throw to put the ball in play must be made within a reasonable amount of time and without undue delay. As a rule of thumb, 3 seconds from the time when a player gets control of the ball is a reasonable amount of time to put the ball into play.

Enforce putting the ball in play.
WP 16.2 Note, 19.4

Players are to put the ball in play by releasing the ball in such a way that other players, the referees, and the timers can see it, for example, tossing the ball into the air, visibly dropping the ball onto the surface of the water, or passing the ball. Players must put the ball in play prior to swimming (dribbling) the ball. Failure to put the ball in play is an ordinary foul, and the opposing team is awarded the ball at the point of the foul. **Referees are to enforce this provision of the rules without exception.**

Where the ball is put into play.
WP 19.1, 17.2, 16.2

After a foul, the rule states that the ball is put in play at the point of the foul. The only exception is if the ball is behind the point of the foul (farther from the defending team’s goal). In this case, the ball is to be put in play at the location of the ball. If the ball has moved forward or parallel to the location of the foul, the ball is returned to the approximate zone of the foul and the free throw is taken at that point. Referees should recognize that it is not important to have the ball put in play at the precise location of the foul. In principle, the closer it is to the goal under attack the foul occurs, the ball should be put in play closer to the location of the foul. Generally speaking, the ball can be put in play anywhere just as long as it is farther away from the goal than the location of the foul.

WP 17.2, I 17.2.1, WP 16.2

Corner throws must be taken in the corner (**at the side of the pool at the 2-meter line**). Goal throws must be taken by the goalkeeper within the 2-meter area.

I 19.1.1

If the ball is thrown out-of-bounds, the goal judge, table, or other authorized person may throw a ball to the nearest player behind where the ball went out-of-bounds. That player may put the ball in play from that location.

It should be noted that immediately after an exclusion foul has been called, there is oftentimes a play to try and get the quick score. It is important that referees recognize this as a potential situation. They should signal the number of the excluded player quickly and allow the ball to be put in play quickly.

3.3.18 Taking of a Neutral Throw

Setting up a neutral throw.
I 18.2.1

A neutral throw is often called a face-off or jump ball. Two players, one from each team, are lined up on their defensive sides. That is, the white team player should be closest to the white goal and the other team player should be closest to the other goal. The referee throws the ball into the air (not directly into the water), and the two players selected for the throw are to go for the ball. At least one of the two players selected for the neutral throw must touch the ball before any other player may touch the ball. The ball need not touch the water before it can be played. At least two players, excluding the defending goalkeeper, must intentionally play the ball before it can be shot on goal. The 35-second possession clock is reset before the administration of a neutral throw, and it is restarted when a player gains possession of the ball.

Ball is to be thrown into the air.
I 18.2.2

One of the selected players must touch the ball before it can be played by any other player. I 18.2.3

Two players must play the ball before it can be shot.
I 18.2.4

In general, the two players involved in the double foul should be selected for the neutral throw. If the two referees call ordinary fouls in different parts of the

pool against different teams, or if the call is for a double exclusion, the referee administering the neutral throw should select the two players closest to the ball. The goalkeeper should not be selected to participate in neutral throws. If the referee is unable to conduct the neutral throw because the players are delaying the game by failing to get into proper positions, the referee may select two other players to take the neutral throw.

Selection of players to take the neutral throw.

3.3.19 Taking of the Penalty Shootout

If, at the conclusion of extra time, the teams are tied, a penalty shootout will take place. The referees, in the presence of the team captains, will conduct a coin toss to determine which team will shoot first. There will be no change of ends and each team will shoot at their opponent's goal. Each referee will conduct the penalty throws in their offensive end. All players are to remain seated on the team bench during the shootout except for the shooter and the goalkeeper. In a shallow-deep pool, all penalty throws will be taken in the deep end of the pool and the teams will be allowed to sit on opposite sides of the pool (depending on the physical layout of the pool) outside the seven-meter line.

Administering a penalty shootout

Each coach is to nominate five players to be shooters. These five players must be listed in the order in which they will shoot. The player must be eligible to play, that is, that athlete must be on the roster and may not have been excluded from the remainder of the game (third personal foul, game exclusion foul). During the shootout, a team may use any eligible player as a goalkeeper. The same player need not serve as goalkeeper for every throw.

Five players must be selected and documented for player number and shooting order

The teams will take alternative throws until all five shooters of each team have taken their throws. That is, the first listed player on the first team will shoot, then the first listed player on the other team will shoot. Next, the second listed player on the first team will shoot, then the second listed player on the other team will shoot. If the teams are tied after all five players of each team have shot, then alternating pairs of shots (the first listed players of both teams, then the second listed players of both teams, and so on) will be taken until one team scores and the other team misses. The same players as listed originally by the coach must shoot and they must shoot in the same sequence.

3.3.20 Taking of Penalty Throws

Immediately after a penalty foul is called, players may not be substituted before the taking of a penalty throw unless a timeout is called by the team in possession of the ball (team for whom the penalty foul was called). If a timeout is called, all players may be freely substituted. If the penalty foul was the player's third foul, the player is removed from the water and an immediate substitution is allowed prior to the taking of the penalty throw.

If a penalty throw is a player's third foul, that player is to be substituted for prior to the taking of the penalty throw.
WP 24.2

The defending team may not put a field player in the goal to defend against a penalty throw unless the goalkeeper is not in the game (goalkeeper has been excluded or the team is playing with only field players). In this scenario, this player does not have the privileges of a goaltender.

Defending team may not replace the goalkeeper with a field player for the taking of a penalty throw.
I 23.2.1

With floating goals, no portion of the goalkeeper's body, at water level, may be beyond the goal line. With wall-mounted goals, the defending

Positioning of the goalkeeper.
WP 23.2, 21.17
(Wall mounted goals: I 23.2.2)

goalkeeper must assume a position with hips on the goal line. The goalkeeper should be moved into position before the taking of the throw. If the goalkeeper does not listen to instructions, the referee may issue a formal warning for the goal-tender to assume the proper position. If the goalkeeper then does not assume the proper position, then this player may be excluded. At this point, a field player may take the place of the goalkeeper in the cage; however, without the goalkeeper’s privileges. If the goalkeeper cheats out just before the whistle is blown for the penalty throw and blocks the shot, the penalty throw should be retaken (no additional personal foul is charged to the goalkeeper). No rule says the referee has to wait until the goalkeeper is ready before administering the penalty throw; it is the responsibility of the goaltender to be prepared.

The player taking the penalty throw may take the throw from anywhere on the 4-meter line. No player is allowed within the 4-meter area, other than the goalkeeper, or within 2 meters of the shooter. A defending player has the right of the inside position closest to the shooter, but must be at least 2 meters away. It is important to note that the rules specify the goals be 3 meters wide. This means that if the defensive players are opposite the posts, a position many players have been taught to assume, they must (by definition) be less than 2 meters away from the shooter. This is a violation of the rules and is an unnecessary distraction for the shooter. Referees should move the defensive players away so they are not within 2 meters of the shooter. If a player will not move away after being warned, that player is at risk of being charged with disobeying the instructions of the referee or interfering with the conduct of a penalty throw, either of which results in the offending player being excluded for the remainder of the game with substitution after 20 seconds, a change of possession, or a goal. This is a serious offense so it is good policy to 1) move the defenders away from the shooter before allowing the penalty throw to commence, and 2) if a warning needs to be given, that it be clearly given (best to use two whistle blasts and raise the forefinger in a warning gesture) so everyone knows a formal warning has been issued.

Who administers the penalty throw.
WP 23.3, Appendix A-7.

The frontcourt referee should administer penalty throws for right-handed players. At the request of a left-handed player, the backcourt referee will administer that penalty throw. In both cases, the other official should keep watch over all other players and for players who might interfere with the penalty throw. Most referees will administer the penalty throw from the 4-meter line. Other referees prefer to be at the 2-meter line or goal line.

WP 23.6

If the signal for the end of the period is sounded at the same time as the awarding of the penalty throw, the referees will clear the pool of all players except for the shooter and the goalkeeper. The throw will then be administered.

WP 15.1, 25.4, 19.2, 14.3

3.3.21 Taking a Restart

A restart is a free throw taken to start play upon the instruction of the referee. Restarts are taken after goals and when the ball is taken out of the playing field by the referee. A player must put the ball in play within about 3 seconds of the referee’s signal to restart play (blast of the whistle). The ball may not be shot directly on goal on a restart.

3.3.22 Timeouts

Each team is entitled to three timeouts, two of which can be used at any time (regular time or extra time) and one of which can only be used in extra time. A team must have possession of the ball to call a timeout. Under the rules, the team

Taking of timeouts.
WP 12.1, 12.2; I 12.2.1

just scored upon must put the ball in play first before calling for a timeout. If the referee mistakenly awards a timeout before the team putting the ball in play, 1 second should be taken off the game and possession clocks.

A timeout may be called at any time by the coach on the deck of the team in possession of the ball by saying "timeout" and making a "T" sign with the hands. If the player/coach is in the field, a player on the bench is to call for timeouts. It is strongly recommended that each team bench be issued an air-horn that is used to call the timeout.

Airhorns recommended for the calling of timeouts.

The teams must huddle in their defensive half of the playing field. They may not enter the opposing team's half of the playing field until the table (or referee) has signaled (with a horn or whistle) that 45 seconds of the timeout has elapsed. All players may be freely substituted during a timeout. Players may take whatever position they want in the pool (including the goalkeeper, except the goalkeeper may not pass the halfway mark). At full time, the referee should blow a whistle for the ball to be put in play (by the team calling the timeout). Both teams should be warned to get into position before the referee signals for the ball to be put in play. The referee is not obligated to wait until there is no advantage to either team before putting the ball into play. If the defending team is ready at the end of the timeout and the team calling the timeout is not ready (still talking and not making progress towards the playing field), the referee may turn the ball over to the defending team for undue delay by the attacking team in taking a free throw.

Procedure for resuming play after a timeout.
I 12.2.2

After a timeout, the ball is put into play on the halfway line, unless the timeout was called immediately after the award of a corner throw or penalty throw. In those two cases, a corner throw or penalty throw, respectively, is taken to resume play.

It is the responsibility of the teams to call timeouts only when they have possession of the ball. If the team in possession of the ball calls a timeout in which they are not entitled, the ball is immediately awarded to the opposing team in the middle of the halfway line. If the team not in possession of the ball (when the other team has the ball) calls an illegal timeout, a penalty throw is awarded and play resumes upon the taking of the penalty throw. If a team calls for a timeout when neither team has possession of the ball, the opposing team is awarded the ball at the location of the ball. Sanctions are assessed immediately upon the calling for a timeout by the team.

Sanctions for illegally called timeouts.
WP 12.3, 12.4, I 12.4.1

Referees should be alert to situations when coaches may want to call timeouts. For example, if an exclusion is called in the backcourt, some coaches will call timeouts to allow their team to set up their player advantage offense. Similarly, if the ball turns over to a team behind by a point or so near the end of a period, coaches will often call timeouts to set up a play. Regardless, coaches should be allowed to come past the 4-meter line towards the referee so that a timeout can be called, especially in noisy environments.

3.3.23 Two Hands

A field player violates the two hands rule if contact with the ball is made simultaneously with both hands, with both wrists, or with one hand and the wrist of the other limb. It is not a violation to move the ball quickly from one hand to the other. It also is not a violation to block a ball with both fore-arms simultaneously.

Definition of two hands.
I 20.8.1

It is a penalty foul to block a shot with two hands if the defender is inside the 4-meter area (except the goalkeeper). However, if the defending player is outside the 4-meter area, it is an ordinary foul and the ball is awarded to the attacking team.

3.3.24 Waving In Players

It is the responsibility of the backcourt official to wave in an excluded player when there has been a change in possession of the ball. Although the backcourt referee has primary responsibility for waving in a player, the frontcourt referee may also aid in this process.

Responsibility for waving in an excluded player by a referee.
WP 21.3 Notes.

During live time, as soon as the referee has determined that there is a change of possession, that official is to indicate the new direction of attack with a horizontally held arm. As soon as the excluded player sees this signal, that player is allowed to reenter the field of play from the re-entry area. Although referees are encouraged to make a “wave in” signal, the player does not have to await that signal to reenter. If a player has not yet reached the re-entry area when the referee signals a change in possession, the player must still exit the pool into the re-entry area before coming back in and participating in the play.

Signal for re-entry of an excluded player during live time.
I 21.3.3

Once a referee awards and signals a change in possession of the ball (ball going out-of-bounds, ball under by the attacking team, offensive foul, etc.), an excluded player in the re-entry area may reenter the field of play immediately and does not have to wait for the referee to wave that individual in. This means that the player may re-enter the field of play *before* the ball is put into play. However, referees are still encouraged to “wave” the excluded player back in although it is not necessary for the excluded player to await the wave-in signal before re-entering the field of play.

Signal for re-entry of excluded player at any other time.
I 21.3.4

At the expiration of 20-second-exclusion period, the exclusion secretary is to wave in the excluded player. The exclusion secretary should be reminded to keep holding up the flag for a period of time after the player has reentered; this allows the referee to ensure the entry was legal. The flag should not be raised just because the exclusion time has expired. The flag should be raised only if there is a player and/or substitute in the re-entry area who is eligible to reenter the pool at the end of the exclusion period.

If it is clear that the table has not signaled the player to reenter when the exclusion period ends, the referees also may wave in the player. Upon a double exclusion, the players may be waved in after 20 seconds have expired, a change in possession (meaning the first change of possession from the team who got possession of the ball in the neutral throw), or a goal has been scored. After a goal is scored, the referee does not have to wave in the player.

3.4 General Consideration of Specific Fouls

In the following sections, specific groups of fouls are discussed. Note: Any foul that might be called has to be considered within the general context of advantage, with certain exceptions (as noted).

Penalize play or behavior that is not acceptable within the spirit of the rules or play.

3.4.1 Aggressive and Overly Aggressive Play

Water polo is a contact sport. However, overly aggressive play, kicking or striking, violent play, unsportsmanlike conduct, persistent foul play, and brutal play are not acceptable. A referee **must** penalize play or behavior not acceptable

within the spirit of the rules or play, or likely to bring the sport into disrepute. While fouls are called subject to the proper application of advantage, it is sometimes necessary to violate advantage and call fouls for acts that do not belong in the game.

It is appropriate to apply the concept of “play the ball, not the player” when considering aggressive fouls. When a player makes a play directed at the ball, incidental contact with the opposing player is generally insignificant and unlikely to be called. When a player focuses attention on the opponent to prevent the opponent from having access to the ball, moving the ball, or controlling the ball, then, most typically, a foul will have been committed. The type of foul (ordinary, exclusion, or game exclusion) depends on the amount of contact made and not whether it was made.

Use principle of “play the ball, not the man.”

When a player impedes, pushes, or pushes off an opposing player to get at the ball, the referee should call an ordinary foul. When a defending player holds, sinks, or pulls back an attacking player, that defending player should be excluded. Perhaps the most common foul observed on the perimeter is a heavy, hard foul followed by a push off by the defender. When the defender pushes off the attacking player, the attacking player is sunk or is delayed in getting the ball to take a free throw. The act as described can be considered to be sinking a player not holding the ball, striking a player, or interfering with the taking of a free throw, and all are adequate justifications for excluding the defending player; therefore, an exclusion should be called.

Fouls of play. Ordinary fouls and exclusion fouls. See Section 2.4.1

Some defending players attack so aggressively their actions can be considered kicking or striking. When a defending or attacking player kicks or strikes an opponent, that player should be excluded for overaggressive fouling or kicking or striking – or excluded from the game with substitution for misconduct (violent or persistent foul play). Over-aggressive fouling anywhere in the pool is an exclusion.

Fouls of aggression. See Section 2.4.2.

Lastly, some defenders flail away at the attacking players with karate-chop-like motions. This type of poor defensive technique should not be tolerated. The defenders should be excluded for 20 seconds for kicking or striking or for the remainder of the game with substitution for misconduct, violence, or persistent foul play (unsportsmanlike conduct). Referees should carefully consider the situation and apply the correct rule.

Fouls by flailing at an opponent may be considered striking.

3.4.2 Ball Under

Ball under is when a player takes the ball under water when tackled. As a rule of thumb, tackled means there is contact to the shoulder, arm, forearm, wrist, or hand on the side of the hand holding the ball. When the entire ball is fully submerged under these conditions, then ball under should be called. Referees should call ball under only if there is physical contact between the two players. If there is no contact, then ball under should not be called. Likewise, if the ball goes under for only a fraction of a second, then ball under should not be called. In any event, referees must call ball under consistently from period-to-period and game-to-game.

Ball under. I 20.6.1

The 35-second possession clock is reset for ball under only if there is a change in possession. A change in possession requires that a player have **control** of the ball. For example, if a defending player reaches around an attacking player and takes the ball under, there is no reset of the possession clock as that

defender did not have control of the ball.

3.4.3 Disobedience, Disrespect, and Misconduct

If a player refuses to obey the referees' directions, or if a player exhibits disrespect to the referees or game officials, the player must be removed from the game with substitution. Acts of disrespect to referees or game officials include making derogatory remarks, inappropriate or foul language, inappropriate gestures, splashing, etc.

Definition of disobedience and disrespect.
I 21.11.3

Misconduct includes the use of obscene or disparaging gestures, foul language, violent play, persistent foul play, etc. directed at any individual, excluding the referees or game officials. A player who chooses to use foul, vulgar, and/or obscene language is to be excluded under this rule. Taunting an opponent is misconduct.

Definition of misconduct.
I 21.9.1

The sanction for an act of disobedience, disrespect or misconduct is a game exclusion, with substitution. If a player on a team in possession of the ball (or soon to have possession of the ball as his/her team had just been scored upon) commits a foul of disrespect or misconduct during a timeout or after a goal has been scored, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game with immediate substitution. The "rule of thumb" is that under normal circumstances, the attacking team always plays at full strength.

Sanction and enforcement for disobedience and disrespect.
WP 21.11, 21.11 Note.

Sanction and enforcement for misconduct.
I 21.9.2

If a player on a team not in possession of the ball commits a foul of disrespect or misconduct during timeout or after a goal has been scored, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game and play is restarted with a substitute in the re-entry area.

If a player commits a foul of disrespect or misconduct during the time between periods, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game and the sprint is taken with the teams at full strength.

If a player of either team commits a foul of disrespect or misconduct during play or the time between the calling of a foul and the taking of the free throw, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game, the ball is awarded to the offended team, and play is restarted with a substitute in the re-entry area.

3.4.4 Empty Goal Fouls

By definition, if the goal is empty (no defending player in the goal), the probability of scoring a goal is high. Whenever a goalkeeper leaves the goal, many fouls on an attacking player in possession of the ball or the intended recipient of a good pass (inside the 4-meter area) could result in a penalty foul. A penalty foul may be called for a foul committed inside the 4-meter area. If a goalkeeper who fouls a player outside the 4-meter area who is at the lead end of the counterattack, the goalkeeper may have, at most, committed an exclusion foul.

When the defense leaves the goal undefended, the probability of a goal is high. Therefore, when fouls occur within the 4-meter area with an undefended goal, a penalty foul could be called.

Note: A penalty foul cannot be called under these circumstances for a foul committed outside the 4-meter area.

Criteria for deciding on a foul must be based on whether or not a probable goal would have been scored. No automatic penalty foul should be awarded.

Criteria for deciding an appropriate foul should be the same for the goalkeeper as for any other defending player. Referees must judge whether or not a probable goal would have occurred. For example, if a goalkeeper leaves the goal to attempt to steal the ball from a set player who is being defended by the set defender, depending on the actions of the two defensive players, an ordinary foul, an exclusion foul, or a penalty foul may be called. No automatic penalty foul should be awarded.

The referee should remember that often there is another player (goalkeeper) between the person committing the foul and the goal. Therefore, if the goalkeeper moves out and commits a foul, and at the same time, another defending player has gone into and is able to defend the goal, then the goalkeeper has not committed an empty goal foul (because there is a player in the goal). The appropriate foul, depending on what the goalkeeper did, should be called in this instance.

If the goalkeeper or other defending player takes the ball under water when under attack near the goal, a penalty throw is to be awarded. Note: For ball under to be called, there must be physical contact between the players. Merely taking the ball underwater is not sufficient. Please see the section on *Penalty Fouls* (Section 3.4.12) for principles on applying these rules.

3.4.5 Handchecking, Holding, Sinking or Pulling Back

Handchecks are contacts made by a defender that blocks the forward motion of, or forcibly redirects the movement of, an opposing player. Typically, handchecks prevent a horizontal attacking player (swimming) from passing a vertical defender (nonswimming). **Handchecking is an exclusion foul.** These fouls occur most often after an ordinary foul is called at set. Another form of this foul is when the defensive player stretches an arm outside shoulder width, grabs the driver, and rolls under the driver. If the referee does not watch and catch the whole sequence, it looks as if an attacking player is swimming over a defender, which would be an offensive foul. In actuality, it should be an exclusion on the defender for grabbing and holding the driver.

Handchecking is an exclusion foul (holding or pulling back).

Another form of holding is when a defender stretches arm outside shoulder width, grabs the driver, and rolls under. It may look like an offensive foul, but in fact, is holding by the defense.

Defenders “own” the position in the water where they are, and have the right to prevent attacking players from swimming over them. The space to which the defender is entitled is the width of the shoulders. Defenders who have their hips up and are properly positioned may prevent a driver from moving by getting into the driving lane ahead of the attacking player. This is good defense. If the defender prevents an attacking player’s driving by holding, pushing (live or dead time), or by impeding (dead time), then the defender should be excluded.

Defenders “own” the position in the water where they are located. The space is about shoulder width.

It is an exclusion foul to hold, sink, or pull back an opponent who is not holding the ball. Holding the ball does not include dribbling the ball. The rule applies to attacking and defending players, and can be called in any part of the field of play. Generally, only those fouls that affect play and/or change the level of advantage are called. For example, a defender who pulls back an attacking player at the halfway line while the set is working the ball and turning the defender may not be affecting play. This foul is generally not called under these circumstance. Holding, sinking, or pulling back should not be ignored and should be called consistently throughout the field of play; however, referees should allow scoring to occur and may choose to withhold calling a foul because of a high scoring potential.

WP 21.6

Holding, sinking, and pulling back applies to attacking and defending players.

In the women’s game, many defenders, particularly at the set position, play defense by holding onto the suit of the attacking player. An ordinary foul would not be appropriate. If, because of the hold, the attacking player is not able to gain position to receive the ball, or is moved out of position to receive the ball, an exclusion foul should be called.

It is not a foul to hold, sink, or pull back a player who is holding the ball. When the attacking player releases the ball, the referee should allow the defender a small amount of time to recognize that the ball has been released and to get off.

It is not an exclusion foul for a defender to hold, sink, or pull back a player who is holding the ball. If a player is holding the ball and releases the ball, the defender is obligated to stop holding, sinking, or pulling back on the player with the ball. The referee should recognize that the obligation is for the defender to stop holding, sinking, or pulling back immediately, not to have already stopped holding, sinking, or pulling back. A small amount of time should be allowed for the defender to realize the attacking player is no longer holding the ball, that the defender needs to get off, and then for the defender to get off.

3.4.6 Head Butt

Definition of head butt.

A head butt occurs when a player hits back with the head at an opponent by forcefully and quickly moving the head. Such an act can cause a great deal of injury to the player being struck. This is often the same as kicking or striking with another part of the body. Such a foul can be considered a violation (in ascending order of severity) of impeding, kicking or striking, violence or misconduct, or even brutality. A head butt may be an offensive foul, an exclusion foul, an exclusion with substitution, or a brutality, depending on the severity and intent of the attacking player.

Sometimes it is difficult to discriminate between a “head butt” and the natural motions of the head as two players strive for position or possession of the ball. The key to determining a head butt is if there was a striking motion of the head. In general, this can be determined by the chin’s moving up and away from the chest in a forceful manner. In contrast, a player trying to break loose from a defender will have the chin tucked in.

Some defenders choose to place their heads on the attacking players’ shoulders. Some attacking players move their heads around a lot when they are working the ball. This situation, where the defender has placed his/her head on the attacking player’s shoulder and the back of the attacking player’s head then makes (sometimes hard) contact with the face of the defending player, is more a case of bad defensive positioning than of a head butt. Although referees should be careful to protect a defender who is playing good defense, this protection should not extend to punishing an attacking player because the defender is in bad defensive position.

3.4.7 Inside the Two Meter Area

It is not necessary to call a 2-meter violation against an attacking player who enters the 2-meter area inadvertently and makes an immediate effort to get back out.
I 20.12.1

The rule reads that an attacking player may not be inside the 2-meter area unless that individual has possession of the ball or is behind the line of the ball. The 2-meter line should be called strictly. An attacking player who is inside the 2-meter area ahead of the ball is in violation of the rule. A player who enters the 2-meter area “momentarily,” however, should not be called for a 2-meter violation unless he/she receives the ball or gains an advantage by being inside the two meter area. “Momentary” means that, in the judgment of the referee, the player inadvertently entered the 2-meter area and makes an immediate effort to get out. Some defenders try to grab an attacking player, push or pull the attacking player into the 2-meter area, and expect the referee to call a 2-meter violation. The referee should not call a 2-meter violation; rather this could be an exclusion foul on the defender for holding an opponent who is not holding the ball.

3.4.8 Interfering With a Free Throw

WP 21.5

After the referee calls a foul, the offended team is awarded a free throw, which is a free pass or direct shot on goal by the attacking team. If the defender moves the ball away from the attacking player after a foul, that defender should be

excluded for interfering with a free throw. For example, if a player commits a foul with one hand and with a different hand, flips the ball away, this player must be excluded for interfering with a free throw.

In general, the attacking player should have an unimpeded free throw. The defender should not be held to an extraordinary standard of having to move away from the attacking player. If the defender is obviously not interfering with the free throw, they should not be penalized because they did not get out of the way; but it is still the responsibility of the defender to demonstrate that he/she is not interfering with the free throw.

Guideline for free throws on the perimeter.

As a guideline, on the perimeter the defending player should be at least an arm's length (the attacking player's arm's length) away. The rulebook clearly illustrates that the defending player may not have an arm raised and leaning forward toward the passer. Generally, the defender can put up the "back" arm up (arm behind the defender's head away from the player with the free throw) while vertical in the water. The player taking the free throw should have unimpeded space to take the free throw and follow through with a pass or shot. A defending player who interferes with this process may be excluded.

Guideline for free throws at set.

At the set position, the defender does not necessarily have to move away from the player who has been fouled. The defender is obligated, however, to demonstrate that there is no undue interference with the ability of the set to make a free throw.

A player awarded a free throw has to be given time to be ready to put the ball in play. Failure by the defender to give the player time or space to take a proper free throw should be considered interfering with the free throw. Another form of interfering with a free throw is for a defender to hit the ball or the arm of the attacking player before the ball has left the hand of the player taking the free throw. Many referees forget this constitutes interfering with a free throw. Lastly, the attacking player must be allowed to get the ball to put it in play. Any defending player who impedes the free motion of an attacking team member getting the ball is interfering with a free throw.

After a free throw has been awarded, the defending player may not touch the thrower during the free throw or a direct shot on goal. It is the obligation of the defending players to demonstrate they are not touching the thrower. The defending players may not wave their hands, "track the ball," or block the vision of the thrower. On the other hand, an attacking player who forces space by pushing the ball at a player (who obviously is not preventing or otherwise impeding the free throw) has committed an offensive foul.

Many referees have considered that it is interfering with a free throw if a defending player touches the ball after a foul. Often, this would be a correct call. However, under some circumstances where the defending player is returning the ball to the fouled player, an exclusion foul may not be appropriate. When a referee allows the defense to aid in returning the ball to the attacking team, discretion should be used to determine when the ball should be put into play. For example, if the ball was knocked into the goal and the goalkeeper returned the ball to the attacking player, the goalkeeper should not be excluded. However, if the remaining attacking players are still sprinting down the pool, the referee should allow some discretion in the amount of time allowed to put the ball in play. After all, if the attacking player had to swim into

the goal to retrieve the ball and bring it back to the point of the foul, the remaining attack players would have already arrived.

3.4.9 Interfering With Play by an Excluded Player

When a player has been excluded, that player must swim to the re-entry area immediately. If a player decides to stay in the water near where the foul occurred, the referee may interpret that as interfering with play. For example, a set defender who is excluded while the ball is on the perimeter may choose to remain near the set until another defender can come and help defend against this attacking player. If a defender was not present, the set could have an almost unimpeded and undefended shot on goal. In this circumstance, a set defender who delays leaving the set has significantly affected the offensive advantage, and the referee may call a penalty foul quickly.

Example: Set defender stays near the set player until another defender arrives.

If the excluded player chooses to swim through the middle of a player advantage offense, the referee may interpret this as interfering with play. It is important to remember that the wording of the rule is “intentional interference.” A player who intentionally swims directly through the middle of the other team’s player advantage offense is **intentionally** inserting a distraction that would not be there if the excluded player had swum around the play. If the excluded player was located **inside** the area of the player advantage offense, then that player should leave that area quickly without obstructing or interfering with the play.

Example: Excluded player who swims through the middle of the player advantage offense.

If a player leaving the field of play over a lane line at the end of the pool affects the alignment of the goal when a shot is in the process of being taken or if the ball hits the posts under these circumstances, a penalty foul should be called. In sum, if an excluded player intentionally interferes with play, a penalty throw should be awarded.

Example: Player affecting the alignment of the goal when leaving the field of play.

If a player kicks or strikes at an opponent after being excluded, a minimum of a penalty throw and an additional personal foul should be assessed. The referee may also choose to exclude the player from the remainder of the game for misconduct, or call a brutality if appropriate. If a brutality is called in these circumstances, one penalty shot is taken. The offending team may not substitute for the player excluded for a brutality.

Excluded player who kicks or strikes after being excluded.

If an excluded player is swimming out of the way and is hit by a ball that rebounded off the goal or was missed by an attacking player due to a bad pass, this should not be considered deliberately interfering with play. No penalty foul is awarded. In this circumstance, the excluded player is obligated to move quickly out of the way without affecting the ability of other players to get to the ball.

If the excluded player is out of the way and is inadvertently struck by the ball (for example, bad pass, rebound from shot), no penalty foul should be assessed.

3.4.10 Kicking, Striking, Violent, or Brutal Play

The referee must set clear boundaries in the first period of what will be tolerated in physically aggressive play. It is too late to start calling these fouls in the second period. These limits should be made clear to the players early. Violent or brutal play does not belong in water polo.

Violent or brutal play does not belong in water polo.

The three levels of penalties for improper play are: 1) exclusion for overly aggressive play, including kicking or striking; 2) game exclusion with substitution for disobedience, disrespect, or misconduct; and 3) game exclusion without substitution for brutalities. These penalties apply to the attacking and defending teams. In

Three levels of sanctions for fouls of aggression.

addition, it does not matter whether or not the person being fouled is holding the ball. If the foul is committed, then the offender should be penalized appropriately.

In the case of overly aggressive play, the player committing the foul should be excluded. Particular attention should be paid to situations where a defender’s hands or forearms are around an attacking player’s head, face, or neck. These are considered “striking” fouls. In most such cases, due to the likelihood of serious injury, the offending player should be excluded. If the player kicks or strikes an opponent (even if the kick or strike does not land), the player should be excluded.

If a player engages in play that can be considered violent or persistent foul play, the player is excluded from the game, with substitution. It is the responsibility of the players to have control over their bodies and its actions. If a player commits an act of violence or misconduct, regardless of whether or not it was intentional, the player should be excluded from the game, with substitution.

Violent or persistent fouls play is misconduct. Sanction is game exclusion with substitution.

Brutality is kicking, striking or attempting to kick or strike with malicious intent; thus, a brutality foul must have malicious intent, or, in other words, there must be an obvious intent to injure. In addition, players are responsible for controlling their actions and reactions to other players. Any time a player intentionally hits or hits at another player with a closed fist or with a foot, this should be considered a brutality.

Brutality requires malicious intent. Sanction is game exclusion without substitution.

If a player commits an act of brutality, the player is excluded from the remainder of the game, without substitution. A penalty shot is also awarded if the brutality takes place within the 4-meter area. When a brutality is called on a player, that player is automatically suspended from participating in the next contest. The team may not replace that individual on the roster for that next contest (that is, if one player of a 13-player roster is suspended for a brutality, the next game, that team can only declare 12 players).

Intentional striking with closed fist or foot should be considered a brutality.
I 21.10.1

Player who commits a brutality is automatically suspended from the next game. The team may not replace that individual on the roster for the next game.
I 21.10.2

When a referee makes a brutality call, it needs to be recorded appropriately in the score sheet. In addition, the circumstances around the call should be put into written form and submitted to USA Water Polo according to the Brutality Review Process (see Section XXX). The tournament/competition committee may elect to impose additional sanctions if they deem it appropriate.

Recording requirements.

Referees should always bear in mind the *FINA Instructions to Referees* which states:

In the rules there are three similar but different types of exclusions (WP22.7; WP22.8 and WP22.9) with three different sanctions for kicking, striking, violent foul play and brutality. In the rules WP22.7 and WP22.9 the criterion “intention” is mentioned, the difference between these fouls must be the degree or gravity of fouling. On the other hand, the criterion to distinguish between violence and brutality must be the “intention” to cause an injury.

In sum, referees should think of the three levels of sanction, single exclusion for kicking or striking, game exclusion with substitution for violence, and game exclusion without substitution for brutality. It does not

matter who commits the foul; these fouls, especially violence and brutality, must always be called. In the case of brutalities, referees should not be thinking of the consequence of the call (to the player, to the team in this game and the next game); if a brutality was committed, it must be called.

3.4.11 Marking and Impeding

Definition of marking.

Marking is when the defender takes a hand and makes slight touches on an attacking player so the defender can keep track of the attacking player. This is generally not impeding and thus is legal. This differs from impeding or handchecking.

Definition of impeding.

Impeding is to obstruct or otherwise prevent the free movement of a player on the opposing team who is not holding the ball. Impeding by the defense may include swimming on the legs or back of an attacking player. Referees should take care to distinguish between whether the foul was actually impeding (ordinary foul) or holding, sinking, or pulling back (exclusion foul).

Attacking players can also impede. For example, attacking players may spread their arms wide and lean back into their defenders. This is a form of impeding, regardless of whether this occurs on the perimeter or at set. The referee should allow the defender to try and get around the attacking player to get to the ball. If the attacking player continues to impede the defender, however, then an offensive foul may be called. It is more common just to allow the defensive player more latitude to reach around and take away the ball.

One common form of impeding that may be committed by the attacking or defending team is when a player swimming side-by-side with an opposing player puts an arm out and blocks the forward motion of the opposing player. This permits the player committing the foul to gain an advantage over the opposing player. If the advantage gained by the players involved affects the play of the game, then an offensive foul (against an attacking player) or an exclusion foul (against the defender) should be called.

3.3.12 Penalty Fouls

Penalty fouls are committed within the 4-meter area and prevent a probable goal.

Penalty fouls are awarded when a foul is committed **within the 4-meter area** and the foul prevents a probable goal. The *FINA Instructions to Referees* is explicit in its descriptions of penalty fouls. Penalty fouls can be called when the player has possession of the ball or when the player is the intended recipient of a good pass. In each case, it is assumed the only defending player between the attacking player and the goal is the goalkeeper.

Penalty fouls should almost always be called immediately.

Once a player has earned a penalty foul, the referee can choose to award the foul immediately. If the player got position and did everything else right, that player has earned a relatively unimpeded shot at the goal. The penalty foul should almost always be called. A referee may choose to refrain from calling a penalty foul and allow a natural goal if and only if the referee is convinced that the shooter has full control of the ball and can immediately shoot and score. If there is any question whether the player can score, for any reason, then the penalty foul must be called.

Classic pull-back resulting in a penalty foul.

The classic penalty foul is when a player is dribbling the ball ahead of a defender and is held, sunk, or pulled back just inside the 4-meter line. The criteria the referee should use to determine whether a penalty foul should be called include:

- Is the attacking player swimming toward the goal?
- Does the attacking player have inside water?
- Did the attacking player have control of the ball?

One criterion for determining whether an attacker had a “probable goal advantage” is whether or not that player was within the strike zone. Another important criterion is whether the attacking player has inside water. For example, if the set turns so his/her head is behind or parallel to the defender, puts the ball down, and then is pulled back such that it is not possible to continue the attack, an exclusion may be called. If the set has turned such that his/her head is closer to the goal than the defender’s head (has inside water), then a penalty foul should be called.

Criteria for determining probable goal advantage and thus when a penalty foul can be called.

Location of the attacking player’s head is closer to the goal than the defender’s head.

It is also important to determine if the player had control of the ball at the time of the foul. If, for example, the ball was no longer in the player’s control (squirted out to the side) at the time of the foul, an exclusion foul, at most, should be called. Similarly, if the attacking player has swum into a crowd or into the goalkeeper, the player may not have control of the ball, and a penalty foul should not be called.

Does the attacking player have control of the ball?

When players have possession of the ball and have their backs to the goal, penalty fouls rarely should be called, unless the goal is completely empty and the foul prevented a goal from being scored. If an attacking set is working the ball, the referee may want to withhold calling a foul and wait to see if the set can complete the play and score. If the set turns the defender, usually there is no foul (on the offense or defense). If the set now releases the ball, no automatic foul should be called. The referee must allow time for the defender to recognize that the attacking player has released the ball and get off the attacking player. If the defender fails to do so, the referee may consider a penalty foul; however, if the set turns and releases the ball in front of the goalkeeper, the goalkeeper should be allowed to take the ball away, or, an ordinary foul might be called (if the ball was closer to the set than the goalkeeper).

Allow the set to work. When the set turns the defender and lets go of the ball, there is no immediate foul. Does the defender get off?

Did the set turn into the goalkeeper?

In the circumstance when the player does not have possession of the ball, a penalty foul should be called only if a foul prevented a probable goal. For example, if an attacking player is lined up at about the 2-meter line and is the recipient of a good inside pass, a defender who pulls back on the player’s arm has committed a penalty foul. Referees should carefully assess if the attacking player was really in position for a probable goal. If a player awaiting an inside pass is located outside the goal posts, it is unlikely the player would have an easy and unimpeded shot on goal. If the foul took that attacking player out of position, an exclusion foul may be more appropriate under these circumstances.

Conditions for penalty foul for player not in possession of the ball.

In general, penalty fouls supercede ordinary and exclusion fouls. If a player fouls violently from behind within the 4-meter area, it is reasonable to exclude the player from the remainder of the game for violence and to award a penalty foul. The referee should be sure the player was committing an act of violence before the double foul (game exclusion with substitution and penalty foul) is awarded.

Penalty fouls may also be awarded while the attacking player is holding the ball inside the 4-meter area. Situations when this can occur include:

Penalty fouls awarded while the attacking player is holding the ball.

- When the goalkeeper or other defending player changes the alignment of the goal on a shot.
- When the attacking player is splashed.
- When the defending player kicks or strikes inside the 4-meter area.
- When the defending player commits a violent or brutal act.
- When a player or substitute enters improperly and affects play.
- When a player or substitute who is not entitled to play (for example an eighth player) enters the field of play.
- Improper re-entry by a player or substitute during the last minute of play.

Referees are reminded that brutalities committed inside the defensive 4 meter area always results in a penalty throw in addition to any other sanction imposed by the Rules.

If a goalkeeper or other defending player is tackled and takes the ball completely underwater while close to the goal, and if there are no other players between that defender and the goal, a penalty foul should be called. If the goalkeeper or other defending player is outside the away from the goal, “ball under” should be called, and a free throw is awarded to the opposing team. There must be physical contact between the attacking player and the defender for “ball under” to be called.

If a penalty throw is awarded for the exclusion fouls of splashing (WP 21.6), holding, sinking or pulling back (WP 21.7), or kicking or striking (WP 21.8), the player is charged with a personal foul. This player (or substitute if it was a third personal foul) remains in the field of play during the taking of the penalty throw.

3.4.13 Splashing

It is an exclusion foul to splash water in an opponent’s face. This is true for the offense and defense. It does not matter whether the opposing player has or was holding the ball. No warning is necessary. For example, if an attacking player splashes at a goalkeeper so that the goalkeeper cannot see an oncoming shot, the player making the splash may be excluded.

If a player within the 4-meter area is splashed while in the process of taking a shot (even if the player is driving toward the goal and has inside water), a penalty throw should be awarded. It does not matter that the attacking player was holding the ball; splashing is not allowed at any time. The location of the player about to take the shot is the only element in making this judgment. Regardless of whether or not the defending player who is splashing is inside or outside the 4-meter area, if the shooter is inside the 4-meter area, it is a penalty foul. In this instance, the player who splashed is assessed a personal foul and remains in the field of play for the taking of the penalty throw.

3.4.14 Two Handed Fouls

In many instances, defensive players foul the attack player by holding, sinking, or pulling back using two hands. These are obvious exclusion fouls and should be called immediately. However, sometimes an act of impeding using two hands would be, at most, an ordinary foul.

3.4.15 Wasting Time

Wasting time is committed by the attacking team before the expiration of their possession time with the ball. The rulebook specifies it is wasting time when an attacking team passes the ball back to the goalkeeper when the goalkeeper is the

only player of that team in the defensive half of the pool and throwing the ball into a vacant corner.

Referees are instructed that wasting time should not be called unless it is determined that there is intentional wasting of time, especially in the last minute of play. The same standard for wasting time should be applied from the first minute of the game to the last minute of the game.

The team in the lead is not to be punished because it is in the lead. It is recommended that referees follow these guidelines for the calling of the wasting time rule:

- The technical situations (throwing the ball to the goalkeeper when the goalkeeper is the only player of that team in the defensive half of the field and throwing the ball into a vacant corner) must be called.
- If the defense is not attempting to get to the ball, stalling is not to be called.
- A team that has a lead should not be penalized with stalling calls because they have a lead.

If a referee does not call a stalling foul in the first period, when the goaltender holds the ball for 15 seconds before passing it to the attack half of the pool, then a goaltender who holds the ball for 15 seconds in the last minute of play should not be penalized for holding the ball. It is not the “fault” of the referee that one team is winning. The winning team should be allowed to win without interference from the referees.

No rule requires teams to “advance the ball.” Stalling should not be called against a team because it is not advancing the ball.

Two defined forms of wasting time:

- Passing the ball back to the goalkeeper who is the only player of that team in the defensive half of the pool
- Throwing the ball into a vacant corner.

Do not call wasting time unless there is a clear intent to waste time.

Do not punish the team in the lead simply because they have the lead.

No requirement to advance the ball.

4 General Officiating Principles

4.1 Recognizing Good Play

The referee is to mediate between two teams allowing them to play within the spirit and letter of water polo rules. In the previous sections, specific rules and advantage were discussed. To properly administer the rules and advantage, the referee must make a concerted effort to understand the differences between good play and bad play. Good play by either team should be rewarded; bad play should be discouraged.

Reward good play; discourage bad play.

The objective of the attacking team is to score goals by increasing the level of offensive advantage. Examples of good attacking team play include good passes to set, good picks and drives, attaining positional and probable goal advantage positions so it is possible to score, draw exclusion and penalty fouls, and demonstrating good ball-handling skills and teamwork.

The objective of the defending team is to prevent goals. Examples of good defensive play include minimizing the lanes, staying ball side without fouling, gaining and keeping superior defensive position, and showing that the defender is not fouling. **It is important to remember that it is the obligation of the defending players to demonstrate that they are not committing a foul.**

Obligation is on the defense to show that they are not committing fouls.

Good play is easy to recognize because the referee will not find it necessary to whistle a foul. In the following sections, a few principles related to recognizing good and bad play, and how referees should apply the rules and advantage, will be discussed.

4.1.1 The Offense Has To Play Good Offense

In years past, a component of the philosophy of refereeing water polo has been to assist the offense in moving the ball quickly down the pool and in preserving possession on the perimeter. The threshold for calling perimeter fouls was low. This approach is not recommended. Referees should allow the attacking team to play offense and the defending team to play defense. If the offense gets in trouble, it is not the responsibility of the referees to rescue them.

Good pass to set:

- Hold, sink, pull back by defender to prevent set from play – exclusion foul.
- Impede as sloughers are arriving – ordinary foul.

Pass arrives as sloughers arrive, unless it is a perfect pass, there is rarely a reason to call a foul in this case.

Ball lands giving the attacking and defending players equal opportunity to get to the ball – no foul for incidental contact.

Poor pass – rarely a foul.

- The attacking team makes a good pass into set. No defender (except the set defender who is behind the set player) is within three strokes. The set should be allowed to try and score. If the defender holds, sinks, or pulls back the set so that the attacking player is unable to play the ball, then the defender should be excluded. If the set is unable to control the ball because of the set defender’s impeding and the sloughers are arriving, an ordinary foul should be called.
- The ball is passed to the set while two or more defenders are crashing in and are about a stroke away. Unless there is a perfect pass and the attacking player has an equal or better chance to get the ball before the defenders, there is no foul. Generally, the ball should not be passed to the set in this situation. Why does the offensive team not pass the ball to the unguarded players who have had their defenders leave them to crash in toward the set? At the same time, the defending team is obligated to demonstrate they are not committing fouls. A referee would call an ordinary foul if, and only if, the attacking player has an equal or better opportunity to get the ball and is prevented from doing so.
- The ball is passed to the set and lands in a position where the set and set defender have equal opportunity to get at the ball. Even if there is incidental contact between the two players when they are going for the ball, no foul should be called. This pass provides no possessional advantage to the offensive team. In principle, the referee should expect players contesting possession of the ball to make incidental contact. For this type of contact, no foul should be called. However, if the defense impedes the attacking player from the ball, a call should be made on behalf of the attacking team. Generally, a foul in a 50/50 situation, should always be made in favor of the offense.
- The attacking team makes a poor pass. For example, the set defender is in the lane of the set. The ball is passed to the set, and the defender places an arm on the set while reaching for the ball; there is no foul. The ball should not have been passed to the set when the defender is ball side.
- The ball is passed to the set and lands equidistant between the set and a defending player. In this circumstance, if both players have an equal, unimpeded opportunity to get the ball, no foul should be called.

If the attacking player is held, even momentarily, when the ball is equidistant or closer to the attacking player than to a defender, an ordinary or exclusion foul, depending on the severity of the contact, should be called. If the ball is closer to the defending player, no foul should be called, even if the attacking player was momentarily held. In principle, when the opportunities are equal between the attacking team and the defending team, the attacking team should get the benefit of the call.

Ball lands equidistant between set and a defender. If the set is held, an ordinary or exclusion may be called, depending on the severity of the hold.

- An attacking player swims into a crowd of (two or more) defenders. This is bad offense. The offense chose not to pass the ball to unguarded teammates and chose to swim the ball into a crowd of defenders. No possessional advantage exists, and the defenders should end up with the ball.
- An attacking player with the ball swims down to the 2-meter line at the side of the pool. A defender is pressing and may be slightly impeding the attacking player. Generally, no call should be on behalf of this attacking player. The referee should watch the whole pool and examine what the offense is doing. If all the attacking players are well guarded and there is no overall team advantage, no call should be made. If an undefended driver is sprinting toward the goal, however, and there is contact on the player with the ball, an ordinary foul should be called quickly.
- An attacking player is pinned to the sideline well back from the 7-meter line. Unless there is gross sinking by the defending player, the defending player should be given every opportunity to steal the ball; however, if the attacking team has rotated a player into position to receive a pass, an ordinary foul may be called. The principle that should be applied is that the referee should not call an unnecessary foul just to advance the ball.
- An attacking player is turning and ducks his/her head under water. The defender reaches over and takes the ball. Even though there may have been incidental contact, there is no foul. A player who voluntarily goes under water may no longer know where the ball is and has lost so much offensive advantage it is unlikely an ordinary foul could be called.
- If the ball is taken from the attacking player while the ball is being held, regardless of whether it is being held from the top, side, or bottom, there is no foul.

Attacking player swims into a crowd of opponents – no foul.

Attacking player swims down to 2-meter line at side of pool – few fouls are called in this circumstance.

Attacking player pinned to sideline well back from 7-meter line – few fouls unless there is a teammate who can receive a pass.

Attacking player ducks under and defender takes ball with incidental contact – no foul.

Ball is taken from attacking player who is holding the ball – no foul.

4.1.2 Allow Good Defense

The corollary of making the offense play good offense is allowing the defense to play good defense. Good defense can be defined broadly as playing towards the ball without playing through the shoulders of the offensive player, without impeding the free movements of the offensive player, and without holding, sinking, or pulling back the offensive player not holding the ball. For example, if the set is not paying attention to the fact a slougher is coming in, when the ball is lost, it should not be returned to the offense unless the set de-

fender was fouling the set player preventing the set from controlling the ball.

General broad definition of good defense.

It is not often discussed, but there is such a thing as “defensive advantage,” which may be at a single player or it could be spread out among the entire team. It could be attacking players who put themselves out of position to play the ball; it could be forced by good defense. The referee should recognize this advantage. A call should be made to return advantage to the attacking team (when fouled by the defense) or to give the ball to the defense (when the attacking team violates defensive advantage – offensive foul).

Defensive advantage.

It is the obligation of the defender to show the player is not committing a foul. For example, if a defender has one arm up and one arm down, that does not automatically mean a foul is being committed. The referee should move closer to the players to determine if there really is a foul. If players, for example, are at the 4 position (across the pool from the backcourt referee), a referee might be more apt to call the foul if the attacking player appears to be fouled. It should not be an automatic foul on the defense, regardless of whether the defender has one or two arms in the water. Rather, the referee should call the fouls that are present.

4.1.3 Let the Offense Play

When players strive for position, the ball, and advantage, there will be physical contact between them. Players may attempt to get into good positions to receive the ball (on offense), to steal the ball (on defense), or to deny an attacking player a pass (by a defender closing a passing lane). All these activities may result in contact with an opponent.

There may be physical contact when players strive for the ball and for position.

In this process of striving for position, some of the contact may be considered fouls. The obligation is for referees to recognize who committed the first foul, which, typically, is committed by the defense. If this is true, the attacking player should be allowed the opportunity to move from a disadvantaged position that was brought about by the defensive foul. When the attacking player makes a move to get out from under a foul, no offensive foul should be called unless the move is designed to create advantage over the defender and not just to remove the attacking player from under the defender’s foul.

Recognize who committed the first foul.

In the interests of allowing an offensive player maximum opportunity to establish and maintain a position of offensive advantage, the defense is often given leeway in being physically aggressive toward the attacking player. It is not proper, therefore, to punish the attacking player for something that allows play of the ball while under heavy defensive pressure. This is often true particularly at the set position.

When attacking player makes a move to get from under a foul – an offensive foul should **not** be called unless the move created an undue advantage.

If set defender is given leeway to be physically aggressive against set, do not call foul against set when moving out from under foul to play the ball.

If referees allow the defender to have a certain amount of physical contact with the attacking player, that same level of physical contact should be permitted to the attacking player, especially if the contact by the attacking player is to remove him/herself from the foul. It may not be appropriate to call an offensive foul against the attacking player in this instance. This situation, of course, may escalate if excessive physical contact is allowed. Therefore, referees are cautioned to set limits on the amount of physical contact allowed the defending players early in the game.

The rules do not differ for the set position as opposed to any other position. The same rules and interpretations apply; however, because the set’s level of offensive advantage is generally much higher than any other player’s, more leeway

is given for that individual to play offense.

Sometimes the ball is overpassed to players on the perimeter. A struggle ensues between the attacking and defending players trying to reach the ball. Since it was a bad pass, the offense should not automatically get a foul to return the ball to them. The attacking and defending players have the right to the ball. If the two players are struggling for the ball, then no foul should be called unless one player impedes the other. If both players become concerned with impeding each other, no foul should be called until one player decides to go for the ball and is impeded by the other. In this last situation, it does not make a difference if it was a bad pass by the offense, a player impeding the opponent from getting at the ball commits the foul. It is not rewarding a bad pass, but rewarding possessional advantage. Moreover, if the defender prevents the attacking player from moving by handchecking or grabbing and holding, then an exclusion may be called.

Rules are the same for the set and the perimeter. However, more leeway is generally given at the set position.

Do not call automatic, quick fouls on behalf of the offense when they misplay the ball. Call the fouls that occur and interfere with play.

4.1.4 What is an Offensive Foul?

Offensive fouls occur if the action of the attacking player increases the ability of the attacking team to receive the ball or gain a better shot on goal. Offensive fouls should almost never be called away from the ball. Offensive fouls result in a free throw for the opposing team. If the action of the attacking player does not increase personal or team advantage, probably no foul should be called. The Referees should not call every foul by the attacking team. **Only offensive fouls that affect play are to be called.** If the foul does not have anything to do with the play, then it does not have to be called. However, offensive fouls of aggression should be called (See Section 3.4.10).

Here are some examples of potential offensive fouls situations:

- The attacking player starts a drive into open water. The defender moves and gets into position in front of the attacking player before the move is started, no immediate offensive or defensive foul should be called. However, if the defender hooks the arm of the attacking player or slides into the open water in which the attacking was going by means of some form of contact with the attacking player and thus prevents the attacker from moving forward, an exclusion foul should be called.
- An attacking player swims into a defender and goes backwards to get off the defender. Just because this action results in creating space between the defender and the attacking player, this is not an offensive foul unless the attacking player pushes off and receives the ball almost immediately. Simply creating space does not mean an offensive fouls should be called. It should only be called if the push-off affected the play.
- If an attacking player swims into, sinks, and then swims over the defending player, this is an offensive foul.
- If attacking players push off or pull by defenders so they have the lead on the drive, these are offensive fouls only if the attacking players get the ball soon after the foul. Defending players have the obligation to catch up to the attacking players and play de-

Simple offensive fouls.

The only offensive fouls that should be called are those that affect play.

Drive into open water.

Defender prevents attacker from moving into open water.

Pushing off defender.

Into and over defender (sinking).

fense. If the defenders make no effort toward playing defense, then they should not be rewarded for their inactivity. On the other hand, if the attacking player receives the ball shortly after committing an offensive foul, the offensive foul should be called and the ball given to the defending team, because the attacking team gained advantage because of a foul.

Pushing off or pulling by defender.

- An offensive foul for “pushing” or “pushing off” should only be called if the elbow or hand can clearly be seen to push off from the defender over the water or the defensive player’s position is significantly altered. Similarly, if a female player is clearly holding the suit of her defender and does not allow her defender to move into better defensive position, then an offensive foul should be called.
- The set and defender are facing each other. The attacking player’s first move is made while on the back instead of the stomach. The referee should watch this situation carefully and call an offensive foul only if the set pushes off from the defender. An automatic foul should not be called, regardless of whether the set’s first move was on the stomach or back.

Watch carefully for push off – do not make an automatic call.

Offensive fouls should be called only when the attacking players gain undue advantage because of their actions. An offensive foul should not be called because there was incidental contact between two players. If no undue advantage was gained, no call should be made.

The second type of offensive foul is when the attacking player does something to the defender that is not acceptable behavior (kicking or striking, violence, brutality, misconduct, etc.). This type of foul should not be tolerated, and the appropriate penalty should be applied. An offensive personal foul (an exclusion called against an attacking player) is a strong signal to the attacking team that these fouls will not be tolerated.

4.2 Calling the Perimeter

Offensive fouls that are fouls of aggression.

Much of the current strategy of water polo revolves around getting the ball to the open player on a counterattack or to the set. Once the ball gets to these players, the expectation is that they will attempt to score, pass the ball to another player who can shoot, or pass the ball back out the perimeter.

The *FINA Instructions to Referees* make it clear that referees should not call ordinary fouls if there is still a chance to play the ball. If the defender holds, sinks, or pulls back an attacking player who is not holding the ball, or if a player kicks or strikes an opponent (regardless of whether the ball is being held), the appropriate penalty should be applied. This is true at every position in the pool. Referees, however, should exercise caution and should not call fouls that do not affect play (with the exception of those called to protect players). Referee should only call what they see and give the benefit of doubt to the offense.

Ordinary fouls should rarely be called when there is still a change to play the ball.

If a player has possession of the ball and is prevented from getting into position to pass the ball because of a foul, an ordinary foul should be called. If a player can make a play (pass the ball or do something reasonable with the ball) and is prevented from doing so because of good defense, no foul should be called. If the defending team does not play good defense, the benefit of the call should go to the

attacking team. In practice, the referee should rapidly determine if the attacking player’s opportunity to play the ball is being taken away by a foul. If it is, then the foul should be called quickly and without delay. Failing to do so means the attacking team loses time on the possession clock, even though a foul has been committed. If the referee judges, however, that the attacking player and team fails to take the opportunity of making a play or is not playing offense, then no call should be made on their behalf.

In general, only call fouls that affect the play.

If the attacking player is making an effort to advance the ball, either by a layout to pass or a hard turn to drive, and puts down the ball because of defensive pressure, the defending player is obligated to demonstrate that a foul is no longer being committed. No automatic foul should be called since the defending player should be given an opportunity to get off; however, if the defender persists in impeding the attacking player, an ordinary foul could be called. If the defender holds, sinks, or pulls back the attacking player to prevent the attacker from getting the ball, an ordinary or exclusion foul could be called, depending on the possessional or positional advantage of the attacking player. At the same time, the attacking player is obligated to play good offense and maintain control of the ball. The referee should endeavor to maintain offensive advantage (at or away from the ball), which can result in a foul or no call, depending on the particular situation. In these circumstances, the referee must remember the players are operating within the context of the game; therefore, referees should be aware of the overall offensive situations and defensive positions.

In earlier sections, relative, positional, and possessional advantages were discussed. These concepts are very important with respect to how the perimeter is to be called. All perimeter calls should be made with these principles in mind. Here are examples of exclusion fouls that should be called regularly and consistently on the perimeter:

- Holding, sinking, or pulling back a player who is in possession of the ball but not holding it.
- Holding, sinking, or pulling back a player with positional advantage and is not holding the ball.
- Holding, sinking, or pulling back an attacking player to prevent the receipt of a good pass.
- Holding, sinking, or pulling back with two hands on a player not holding the ball.
- Any play to an opponent’s head, face, or neck.
- Any time a defending player fouls an attacking player and then pushes off, sinking the attacking player.
- Any interference with a free throw.
- Any time a player is fouled and the ball is flipped away. If the foul is with one hand and the ball is flipped away with the other, the referee should often consider this an exclusion foul. If the ball is flipped away by the same arm committing the foul (one continuous motion), then an exclusion should not be called.

Types of exclusion fouls that can be called on the perimeter.

If an attacking player with the ball on the perimeter turns the defender and can now drive toward the goal, the referee should carefully watch that defender. If the defender in any way holds, sinks or pulls back the attacking player who is not holding the ball, the defender should be excluded. If the driving lane is totally open, however, and the attacking player appears to be able to

get free, the referee could withhold the whistle for a short period of time to allow the attacker to break free. If, however, the driving lanes are closed down by other defenders, and they had the time to close the lanes because the attacking player was being held, then the defender fouling the player with the ball should be excluded.

Attacking player who turns defender.

The above paragraphs deal with the situation where the attacking player on the perimeter has the ball. However, referees should also call fouls that are away from the ball. Many teams have their players drive, especially when an ordinary foul is being called at set. If the referee allows the defenders to hold or handcheck the attacking players and by doing so prevent attackers from driving, then an important part of the attacking team strategy is nullified. Thus, referees should call exclusion fouls for handchecking, holding, sinking, or pulling back players who are not holding the ball if the attacking team does not have a higher level of relative advantage (for example, the set is turning the defender and ready to shoot).

Call fouls that prevent drives from occurring (handchecking, holding, sinking, pulling back).

Oftentimes, referees will note that the 35-second possession clock is almost expired and do not make any calls, particularly if the counterattack is already going in the other direction. However, it is important to remember that the attacking team has 35 seconds of possession of the ball. If a foul occurs with very little time in the 35-second possession clock, or the game clock, for that matter, the appropriate fouls should still be called. The attacking team may shoot the ball for fouls committed outside the 7-meter line, therefore, when the possession or game clock is low, some teams purposely try to earn a foul so that they can shoot. If referees fail to call these fouls, when present, they are nullifying one aspect of the attacking team's game plan.

Call the fouls that occur, even if there is very little time left on the clock.

4.3 Refereeing the Set Position

The set position is the most difficult area to call. There are multiple components to the set game. The referee must be able to recognize the various aspects of set play and be able to call them correctly. The following sections are a general introduction to officiating the set position.

4.3.1 Basic Philosophical Principles

In general, contact between opposing players is permitted.

- Referees should allow opposing players to strive for position. They should intervene only to penalize a foul committed by a player of the team in possession of the ball, to award an ordinary foul, exclusion foul, or a penalty foul.
- If the attacking team gains an advantage by means of a foul, an offensive foul should be called.
- The defense is allowed to do its best to prevent the set from scoring; however, if they do so by taking away the positional advantage of the set, then the defender is to be excluded.
- If the set defender did everything right, the set is forced, at worst, to be a passer by earning an ordinary foul. Thus, ordinary fouls should be called at set.

Allow players to strive from the ball.

Call offensive fouls that gain advantage by means of the foul.

Be aware how defense prevents set from scoring.

The basic premise is that the intent of the set is to get into position and try to pass the ball to a shooter (usually a driver) or to try and shoot the ball. Another alternative is for the set to pass the ball out, which is a reset of the offense. If the defense can force a pass out to the perimeter, they have successfully defended

against the set in that series. The key for the referee is to watch and determine if the defender forces the set out of position by means of a foul. If the defender prevents and impedes the attacking player from getting into position, it would be reasonable to call an ordinary foul or to call an exclusion. The referee should be watching what positions the set and set defender have and how their positions are changed relative to each other, the other players in the pool, and the location of the ball. If their positions did not change legally, a foul should be called.

Call ordinary fouls at set.

What set player is really trying to do.

Within the first few possessions, the referee should know who the primary set is and if that person is right-handed or left-handed, if that person prefers to work to the right or to the left, and if there is a preference of turning the set defender to the right, to the left, or shoot around the defender. After a few more possessions, the referee should know if the set likes to look to the strong side or weak side for a pass after an ordinary foul, if there is a favorite player to whom the set prefers to pass the ball, what position the primary set plays in player advantage offense, and if the player is going coast-to-coast (from offensive set position to defensive set position).

What referees should know (discover) about the set.

The goal is for the referee to gain an appreciation of that player and his/her tendencies. This allows the referee to be in tune with what the player is trying to do. At the same time, it is important for the referee to remember that knowing a player's tendencies does not mean that the referee should presuppose the player will make the same move in exactly the same way every time. Instead of over-anticipating a player's actions, the referee should allow the player to do what he/she wants to do, and then intervene if there is a foul. Just as the player might fool the defending team, the referee can be fooled as well!

Gain an appreciation for the set player and his/her tendencies. However, do not presuppose what that player will do next.

Referees should watch whether the set appears to be prevented from playing offense because of impeding, holding, sinking, or pulling back. A foul is called when this happens. This is the fundamental element to calling the set position.

Element used to call the set position.

Generally, both the defending and attacking players should be watched. If the attacking player is unable to play offense because of what the defender is doing, then a foul is called. Similarly, if the attacking player takes undue advantage of the defender, an offensive foul should be called. Regardless, the defender is obligated to demonstrate that no foul is being committed. Criteria that some referees use to set the limits on the amount of physical play allowed at the set position include:

- Is the set player in good offensive position or moving to good offensive position?
- Is the defensive player in good defensive position or moving to good defensive position relative to the ball, the attacking player, and the rest of the players?
- Is there a mismatch at set? Is the set player much stronger and/or skilled than the defender, or vice versa?

What both the attacking and defending players at set.

Elements used to set limits of physical play at set.

The questions that referees should address are (1) what is the advantage of the attacking and defending players at set relative to each other and (2) what is the relationship between the set players, the ball, and the other players. If there is little to no difference in advantage regardless of what they are doing

If physical play exceeds appropriate limits, call fouls regardless of whether or not the ball is there.

(assuming that they are playing within the rules), then there is little reason to call a foul. **However, if the level of physical play exceeds appropriate limits, then a foul should be called, regardless of whether or not the ball is there.** Referees are reminded to established the level of physical play they will permit early in the game so that inappropriate play does not escalate.

Finally, referees should look at the attacking and defending players within the context of the whole game; that is, what is the physical positioning of the players on the attacking team (and not just the set)? What is the physical positioning of the defending players? Where is the ball and what is happening where the ball is located? Some criteria a referee may want to use in these circumstances include:

Know the context of what is happening.

- Are the other attacking players opening up water for the set player to work when the ball is passed to set?
- Are the defenders in a zone or sloughing defense?
- Are the drivers staying near the set player allowing their defenders to help the set defender?
- Are the defenders in good defensive position and blocking the passing lanes (clean passage of the ball to set)?
- Is the ball about to be stolen on the perimeter?

Gain an appreciation of what a team is trying to do based on the context of what is happening in the game.

In addition to gaining an appreciation of the physical layout of the game, it is important to understand the temporal layout as well. How much time is left on the possession clock? What about the game clock? What period is it? What is the score in the game? What the attacking players and defending players do will vary, depending on a number of factors. For example, a team that is behind by a goal may play a hard pressing defense near the end of the game in an attempt to steal the ball. The team that is ahead is likely to try and protect their lead. Thus, that team is simply trying to protect the ball, and not necessarily trying to score additional goals. Even within the context of a single possession, where is the ball when there are only a few seconds remaining on the possession clock? The referee should try to anticipate the actions of the players within the context of the whole game and not just of a single pair of players in the midst of one possession.

4.3.2 Striving for Position

The *FINA Instructions to Referees* indicate that a “struggle for position” is to be allowed. In this Manual, the term “strive for position” is used. The reason is that “struggle” may imply to some individuals that it is permissible for players to initiate and maintain more than incidental contact. This is not the case. Rather, players who initiate or maintain more than incidental contact are in violation of water polo rules.

Incidental contact between the set and set defender will occur as the two players strive for position; this should be ignored. If the offensive or defensive player, however, grabs the opponent and moves the other player out of position, that is a foul. If the relative level of advantage changes due to the foul by the attacking or defending player, the appropriate foul should be called. The defensive and attacking players have equal rights to play the ball. If a player has superior position in relation to the ball, then that player has advantage over the other.

Incidental contact is permissible. Moving an opponent out of the way is a foul.

The *FINA Instructions to Referees* clearly state that ordinary fouls away from the ball should rarely, if ever, be called. Every so often, the referee will note an ordinary foul has been committed away from the ball. These fouls may be called and should be called consistently; calling them should be tempered by the overall advantage of the two teams. Fouls should not be called simply because referees

want to make sure that their whistles are still working.

The guiding principles to calling fouls at set, and indeed anywhere in the pool, include the following:

- The burden of proof is on the defense. It is the defense that is obligated to prove they are not committing a foul.
- The advantage is always for the offense. If a call is 50-50, it should be made in favor of the offense. It should be tempered by determining the positions of the offensive and defensive players and whether or not the players are in their proper positions.
- The player who initiates contact should be the one who is penalized. If the referee allows aggressive contact by the defending player, it would be inappropriate to call an offensive foul for the attacking player who makes contact to remove him/herself from a foul.
- The referees should not focus on just one situation or just one pair of players. The referees should be aware of all the pairs of players, be focused on those who are in their primary area of responsibility, and know where the ball is at all times.

When a ball is being passed to set, the set is obligated to hold position to receive the pass. If the defender fouls the set before the ball arrives, the defender is not playing for the ball and should be excluded. Repeated fouls that may be overaggressive should be considered a form of striking; this is an exclusion foul. Similarly, if the first foul is borderline “overaggressive,” the second foul of a similar nature should result in an exclusion of the defender.

If the defender goes over the attacking player to get at the ball, a foul will have been committed. When a defending player goes around or reaches under an attacking player, few fouls will be called. In general, if the defending player’s move is directed first and foremost at the ball, typically contact may result in an ordinary foul. If the defender commits a controlled foul (does not hold, sink, or pull back) with two hands, an ordinary foul may be called. If the defending player’s first move is to hold, sink, or pull back the attacking player, especially if the fouls are committed with two hands, an exclusion foul should be called. Referees should note that fouls committed by one hand are often exclusion fouls. Alternatively, just because a foul is committed by two hands does not automatically mean it is an exclusion foul. The referee should assess carefully the impact of the foul and the level of advantage the attacking player and team lost due to the foul. This will guide the referee’s calling of the appropriate level of foul.

If the defender goes around the attacking player without holding, sinking, or pulling back, the steal (if that is what occurs) should be allowed. If the ball is thrown so both the attacking and defending players have equal chance to get the ball, no foul should be called. If the ball is passed such that it is about the same distance between the set and a defender who is sloughing in for the ball, there should be no call, and the referee should wait to see which player gets to the ball first and establishes possession. Few reasons exist why an ordinary foul should be called at set against the defense as the ball arrives on a good pass. If the defender takes away the set player’s positional advantage on a good pass, then that is an exclusion foul or possibly a penalty foul. If there was no

Superior position is a higher level of advantage.

Few, if any, ordinary fouls away from the ball.

Guiding principles to calling fouls.

Foul before the ball arrives – usually holding, sinking, or pulling back.

Call overly aggressive fouls.

How a defender goes for the ball often determines whether a foul and what kind of foul has occurred.

Considerations for defensive play at set.

change in positional advantage, then the referee should allow the set player to work with the ball and attempt to score. However, if the defender forces the set player to lose control of the ball by impeding or pushing the set player, or if the defender limits the ability of the set player to have access to the ball by impeding when sloughers are swimming in, then an ordinary foul could be called in this instance.

4.3.3 No Calls or Calling a Foul

When the ball is passed to set, it is up to the attacking player to do something with the ball. The referee should carefully consider if the attacking player is holding the ball or has released the ball. If the defender is turned by the set, it is not an offensive foul unless the referee clearly sees the attacking player use a part of the body to turn the defender. If the set grabs a defender’s arm and pulls it down to aid in spinning around the defender, it is an offensive foul.

When the ball arrives at set, let that player do something with the ball.

Sometimes the defender will hit the attacking player’s arm fairly hard, causing the ball to pop away from the set. The referee might want to consider whether or not a foul should be called or whether the set should be allowed to step forward, pick up the ball, turn toward the goal, and shoot. If the defending player is pressing the attacking player out and sloughers (crashers) are coming in, and if the attacking player has an opportunity for a good pass to an open teammate despite being fouled, no foul should be called. If the foul, however, causes the set to lose control of the ball into the hands of a slougher, then the ordinary foul should be called. On the other hand, if the set is not aware the sloughers are coming in, or is holding the ball, no call should be made.

Be selective in calling fouls at set. Sometimes, allow the set a chance to score is better than calling a foul.

Before intervening in the play, the referee should wait to see if the set is able to improve his/her position, complete a move, shoot, or pass the ball out.

When in doubt, delay calling a foul; a late whistle is better than an early one.

A “no call” is a difficult decision for less experienced referees to make because it often appears as if the referee missed something. Less experienced referees should, and in many cases will, call more ordinary fouls in the early stages of their careers than more experienced referees will call in the same situations. This is acceptable as long as fouls are applied consistently. As referees gain experience and expertise, they will call fewer and fewer fouls as they learn to discriminate between those actions that do not require intervention and those that do.

The “no call.”

4.3.4 Ordinary, Exclusion, or Penalty Fouls At Set

A situation wherein a referee needs to have exquisite judgment over what type of foul should be called is outlined. The set has the ball and releases it while being pulled back by the defender. No call should be made. If the set makes a second attempt to get to the ball and is prevented from doing so by the defender, then an exclusion foul should be called. If, however, there are sloughers coming in and the set releases the ball as a result of being pulled back by the defender, in some cases an ordinary foul should be called, but in other cases an exclusion should be called. A “no call” may also be appropriate. There is no automatic call in this circumstance. The correct call would depend on the whole context of the offense and defense at the time of the foul.

The set turns the defender while holding the ball. The defender may hold or sink the set while going for the ball. The set releases the ball, and no foul is called immediately. The referee should allow the defender a short amount of time to recognize the ball has been released and to get off the attacking player; however, if the defending player fails to let go, a penalty foul should be called. If the de-

fender initially lets go of the attacking player but prevents the set from reaching for the ball again (for example, impeding or sinking), then a penalty foul should be awarded in this instance. This would be true if the set was between 3 and 4 meters. The closer to the goal the set is, however, the more likely it is for the defending goalkeeper to be there to take away the ball. No foul should be called in this case, because the attacking player has given up the probable goal advantage.

Considerations when calling set players who turn their defenders.

The set has gained and is holding position. The ball is passed to this player. The set defender is impeding in a manner so that the set is not able to get the ball. If there are no defenders around, then a no call may be appropriate if, in the judgment of the referee, the set can break free and maintain offensive advantage. If the set is being held, then an exclusion may be appropriate. Alternatively, if sloughers are on their way in, and the set had only a small amount of time to work the ball, an ordinary foul may be appropriate to reset the offense. If there was holding, sinking, or pulling back, then an exclusion may be called. If the sloughers are already within a stroke of the set when the ball arrives, no call may be appropriate.

When the ball is passed to set, allow the situation to dictate when to call fouls to maximize the scoring opportunities of the attacking team.

A defensive effort to steal or reach the ball by going around the set is considered fair play, as long as there is no foul involved. If there is a foul, the referee needs to determine if an ordinary foul or an exclusion foul should be called. **The guiding principle is position and technique should be rewarded.** Poor technique that results in contact to the head or neck of the set or any holding, sinking, or pulling back, should result in an exclusion.

Previously, referees were taught that they should allow fouls to go during the last few seconds of a possession; the philosophy has changed. The offense has a full 35 seconds to attack its opponent’s goal. No foul is permitted just because the offense is down to their last few seconds of possession. If the defender commits a foul, then the appropriate foul (ordinary, exclusion, or penalty) should be applied, even if it is during the last second of a possession period.

For both the offense and defense, position and technique should be rewarded.

As a general guide, after the attacking player releases the ball, it must be kept within that player’s controllable space. Controllable space is that portion of the pool that is within reach of the player (usually within arms length) but not within easy reach of an opposing player (for example, the set defender or goalkeeper or slougher). If the set releases the ball close to the goalkeeper, the referee may call an ordinary foul if the defending player impedes the set’s ability to regain possession of the ball; a penalty may also be appropriate in this instance. Similarly, if the set releases the ball close to a slougher, the referee may call the ordinary foul if the player is impeded. There is rarely a reason to call an exclusion foul in these circumstances. Regardless, before a foul, if any, is called, referees need to determine whether the set had the ball within controllable space or had given up possession of the ball.

Call appropriate fouls regardless of time remaining on the clock.

Guideline for calling set is how well that player controls the ball and maintains controllable space for the ball.

5 Ten Commandments of Water Polo Referees

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Officiating water polo is a myriad complex of subtleties. Much of this Manual is devoted to the philosophical and technical details that form the basis of how referees call the game. However, these technical competencies alone do not make the referee.

Water polo is the only team sport for which there must be a referee. Have you ever seen a pick-up water polo game or scrimmage without a “referee”? It is simply not possible to play water polo with players calling their own fouls. Someone must call fouls from on deck. The reason is that fouls are an integral part of the water polo game. It is the only team sport that I know that relies on fouling as a primary defensive tactic. Consequently, having a referee oversee scrimmages or games is absolutely essential.

The “best” referees within and outside the United States all have a certain flair about them. This flair embodies the image of “Referee.” It is this embodiment, this perceptive edge, that makes these officials successful. If one has chosen officiating as an avocation, then regardless of whether or not one is paid for services rendered, whether or not one makes a profit as a referee, whether or not one referees ten or 500 games a year, whether or not one referees primarily high school junior varsity games or international competition, there are a set of principles that can guide you to better success as an official.

Regardless of whether you are the best referee in the world, or the lowest rated newcomer in the country, your successes and failures can be traced to your adherence of these guidelines. These, then, are the Ten Commandments of water polo referees. Following these Commandments will not necessarily make you one of the best referees. Failure to follow these simple rules will mean that you will ultimately be less successful than you otherwise could have been.

First Commandment: Be Professional

Professionalism is not an internal trait. It is comprised of those things that are perceived by players, coaches, fellow referees, evaluators, and assignors. These perceptions are not based on your technical skills and expertise, but on your interactions with these people. In sum, professionalism is the perception by other people of what constitutes your internal traits.

Be Professional On Deck

How you are judged as a referee will be assessed from the moment you arrive on site to the time you leave. It does not matter whether you are doing a single game, or many games that day, the fact that you are a referee is enough to place value judgments on you.

- Be prompt.
- Have a neat and clean appearance.
- Have a good attitude.
- Don't be overly friendly with players, coaches, and spectators.
- Maintain focus.
- Communicate with the desk both before and during the game. Sign the book after the game.
- Try not to be noticed.
- Be firm on all your calls.
- Keep coaches and players quiet about your calls.
- Leave when the game is over.

Be Professional Off The Deck

The ultimate success of a referee depends, in large measure, on the quality of that person's game assignments. Assignments are given on the basis of skill, ability, and a set of intangibles. These intangibles relate to the coaches' and assignors' perceptions of a referee's reliability and professionalism. There are no referee who are so good that they don't need to be professional when interacting with coaches and assignors.

- Don't talk to the public about games.
- Don't gamble on water polo.
- Accept only one assignment for any particular time or day (don't double book).
- Don't switch games with other officials.
- Don't cancel games except in an emergency.

Second Commandment: Know the Rules

In many ways, the water polo rules engender a cavalier attitude to the game. The reason is that no matter what an official does, it can explain away on the basis of "advantage" or "flow." Referees also make judgments regarding whether play was "good" or "bad" and base their decisions on those judgments. While these are definitely elements in how a referee calls the game, these decisions must be based on knowing the rules. An official who does not know the rules cannot be confident that the decisions are correct. Moreover, the decisions are now subject to second-guessing by spectators, players, coaches, other referees, and even the referee him/herself!

In the United States, we essentially have four sets of rules, FINA/USWP, NCAA Men (collegiate), NCAA Women (collegiate), and high school. Paradoxically, the closer the rules have gotten to each other, the more difficult it is to remember which rules and interpretations belong to which. Moreover, with modern means of mass communication, new interpretations and clarifications are being sent out quickly and rapidly to everyone – yet not all rules and interpretations are used for all the various sets of rules. It is the obligation of the referee not only to know the rules, but which rules under which the contest will be conducted.

- Study the rules book, old rules tests, and the Manual.
- Read the rulebook once a month at a minimum.
- Keep up with the latest interpretations.
- Know the differences in FINA, USWP, NCAA, and NISCA rules.
- Go to all referees clinics.

Third Commandment: Know the Game

The objective of the game of water polo is quite simple. Players on offense try to throw the ball into the goal; players on defense try to prevent the ball from going into the goal. While the objective is very simple, the means by which teams and individual players try to accomplish these ends are more complex. There are only so many ways the ball can be put into the goal. As teams discover and re-discover ways to trick their opponents into giving them a reasonable opportunity to score, the opposing teams find new ways to counter these tactics. To facilitate what happens in the water, it is essential that the referees gain a good appreciation of what tactics are being developed and how they are being used.

Though apparent, it is important to remember that the sport is played in water. There is only a limited number of ways a body can move in water. The laws of physics, particularly those of action and reaction, are most evident in this environment. Consequently, referees should be able to tell what is and is not possible in the water. By carefully observing the interactions between two players, an official can be confident that of knowing what has just happened, even if direct observation of the interaction is hampered by water.

- Read water polo books.
- Watch coaching videos.

- Attend coaching clinics.
- Go to as many top-level games as possible.
- Talk to coaches about strategies during the off-season.
- Learn the “moves” of top-level players.

Fourth Commandment: Develop a Good Philosophy of the Game

Referees are obligated to express their understanding of the game through their philosophical approach to calling the game. It is important that referees recognize their individual styles and how they approach the game. Certain styles of play will be more closely matched to your philosophical approach than others. That does not mean that you should adapt your approach to the various teams. However, recognition of your philosophical approach will help you assess what is ongoing within a game, and in your post-game self-evaluations.

- Are you an offensive or defensive minded referee?
- How tight will you call at set?
- How will you call the counterattack?
- How much will you allow on the perimeter?
- Think about the advantage rule and how you will call it.
- Determine what coaches and players can get away with.

Fifth Commandment: Call the Game, Not the Fouls

The rules of water polo are written for the defense. All a team has to do to interrupt the progress of the attack is commit a foul. Thus, committing defensive fouls is an important tactic that teams use. If referees concentrated solely on fouls, then the game would simply not progress and the attack will die each and every time. Thus, it is very important for referees to recognize this and learn to call the game. That is, referees should be able to balance between the calling of the fouls and allowing the attacking team to score.

- Reward good play; penalize bad play.
- Don't be ticky-tack.
- Don't call fouls that have no affect on the game, but be sure to keep control.
- Don't just concentrate on fouls; watch the whole game.
- Watch the entire pool, but concentrate on your area.

Sixth Commandment: Apply the Advantage Rule

The single most important principle to calling the game is advantage. This is the justification by which a referee chooses whether or not a foul should be called. Earlier in this Manual, there is a discussion of the theoretical basis for calling the advantage rule. The bottom line on calling the advantage rule is this – if the call would interfere with the natural progress of the play, it should not be called. After a foul is called, the level of advantage the offended team has should be at least as good as, if not better, than it was prior to the call. At the same time, if players become inappropriate aggressive or commit fouls of conduct, then those fouls should be called. The safety of the players is of paramount concern.

On Counterattacks

- Let player with the ball continue to swim until guard takes advantage away by fouling – then call exclusion or penalty foul.
- Don't call foul behind line of ball if offense has advantage.

On the Perimeter

- Don't call ordinary foul so defensive player can "foul and drop" taking away offensive pass into set position.
- Don't let defensive player foul grossly and then drop to cover lead break. If you call a foul, call an exclusion.

At Set

- Don't take away set's chance to shoot or turn by calling ordinary foul in no slough if coming.
- If a good pass is thrown to set and you let set player work for shot even though that player is fouled, be sure and call foul as slougher starts to come (set no longer has an advantage and is being fouled – call an ordinary or exclusion foul).

Seventh Commandment: Referee the Flow

Flow is one of the more nebulous concepts in water polo. A game has a feel to it. This feel is tempered by the intensity of the play, what the players are doing in the water, and environment under which the game is being played. Flow changes from moment to moment and from game to game. Referees should officiate to the flow of the game. Sometimes, it is just as important to make a call as to allow play to continue. Thus, refereeing the flow is allowing the game to progress along a natural pattern, and not one that is superimposed onto the game by the referee or the players.

- The job of the referee is to control the game so that the players determine the outcome.
- Try to make it so that what is supposed to happen actually happens.
- Don't call fouls that do not affect play. Call exclusions for actions that take away offensive advantage.
- Don't interject with ordinary fouls unless you have to in order to keep game flowing.
- Match your calls to the tempo and intensity of the action.

Eighth Commandment: Strive for Consistency

Consistency Is the Most Important Attribute of a Good Referee

This is the "Holy Grail" of water polo refereeing. If a referee is consistent, then regardless of whether the players, teams, or coaches agree or disagree with that official, they will always know what that official will do. Alternatively, if an official has a particularly elegant approach to the game that allows for great variation in calls due to an innate ability to out-think the game, then that it is unlikely that this person would be asked to do many games that "matter." After all, a player or coach would much rather have an average official who is absolutely consistent rather than a fine referee who has a high degree of variation when they make their calls.

There Are Four Levels of Consistency

- From month-to-month, week-to-week, game-to-game. Players and coaches will know what type of game will be called when they know you are the referee.
- From period-to-period. What you call in the first period should be the same as in the last.
- Between white and dark. If you are inconsistent here, the coaches and players will feel you are "cheating" their team.
- Between you and the other referee. It would be nice if both referees called exactly the same, but this is impossible. Clinics can help eliminate major differences. Don't try to change your game to match your partner or you will lose consistency.

Ninth Commandment: Work With Your Partner

Under most circumstances, the only other person who does not care who wins or loses the game is going to be your partner. Your partner is the person with whom you must have a functional relationship both on the deck and off the deck. Moreover, as the water polo community is very small, any other referee is a potential partner at some point. Therefore, it is to your benefit to work with your partner during the game and your potential partners. Support each other and the calls that each make. A referee might make a call with which you disagree, but you have a different angle and a different view of the game. Moreover, you didn't need to make the decision; your partner did.

- Talk before the game and between periods.
- Be sure the entire pool is covered.
- Don't call in his area unless you agreed before the game.
- Don't openly criticize the other referee or make strange movements if you don't like his call.

Tenth Commandment: Constantly Try To Improve

There is always something to work on in a game. The referee who has attained perfection should quit (because there is nothing else to accomplish) or face reality (which is more likely the case). A corollary of trying to improve is recognizing and admitting mistakes. If you recognize your mistakes, or even mistakes in others, then there is a possibility that the next time the situation arises, a better solution will be applied.

- Referee scrimmages before the season starts.
- Practice whistles and hand signals.
- Attend all referee clinics.
- Talk to other referees.
- Go observe major tournaments to try to learn from referees.
- Listen to evaluators and other referees.
- Watch videos of your games.
- Learn from your mistakes.

6 Desk Official's Manual

Barbara Kalbus, Ph.D. and Terence P. Ma, Ph.D.

It is recommended that for most competitions, the Officials' Table (or Desk) should be composed of six officials:

1. Desk Manager
2. Scorer (Secretary No. 1)
3. Exclusion Secretary (Secretary No. 2)
4. Game Timer
5. 35-Second Timer
6. Timeout Timer

At major competitions, it is usually advisable to have back-up personnel available and ready to assist staff. In addition, it is frequently useful to have a "spotter" who can watch the referees and the game to ensure that the correct times, teams, and player numbers are reported to the Scorer.

This Manual will briefly outline the responsibilities of the Desk Officials, as a group, and then discuss the duties and responsibilities of each position. The last six pages of the Manual are outlines for each of the positions. Sponsoring institutions are encouraged to reproduce these last six pages and provide them to various desk personnel. A sample score sheet and Personal Foul Record are also provided.

6.1 Conduct

Desk officials should remember that they are tournament and game staff. This means that they are expected to exhibit a degree of professionalism and decorum. The table staff are there to do a job; therefore, they should be focused on their responsibilities.

The game referees are in charge and responsible for all things that happen during the game. The referees' decisions are final and are not subject to appeal. The table staff is there to work with the referees. If there is any disagreement between the table staff and the referee, the referee's instructions are to be followed.

These are the guidelines that table staff should follow:

- *Uniform:* Desk officials should be dressed appropriately. It is recommended that they wear a similar shirt (tournament shirt or T-shirt).
- *Be Ready to Start:* It is recommended that table staff be at the table and ready to go 25 minutes before the game. After they arrive, they should check:
 - Is the equipment present and working correctly? If air horns are to be used for timeouts, check that there are a sufficient number? Do they work? Table equipment should include:
 - Control device for game clock.
 - Control device for 35-second possession clock.
 - Stop watch for timing timeouts.
 - Score sheets and writing implements for score sheet.
 - Table flags (red, white, blue).
 - Whistle or other sound-producing device.
 - Scoreboard control device (or materials to post scores).
 - Board to post number of timeouts remaining.
 - Towel to keep balls and table dry.
 - Airhorns (optional – for requesting timeouts).
 - Are the rosters submitted and correct? Is the score sheet filled out and ready to go?
 - Are the balls ready to go and properly inflated?
 - Are the spare game balls given out to the appropriate personnel (such as goal

judges, ball thrower at table, team benches, etc.)?

- *Neutrality:* Desk officials must exhibit proper professional decorum. This means that the table staff should not be cheering, yelling, shouting, or screaming. Table staff and personnel at table should appear completely neutral.
- *Conduct:* There should be a minimum of talking at the table. Desk officials should pay attention to the game as it is progressing. Discussions at table should be focused on the tasks at hand, and not on any other subject. Friends should be discouraged from visiting table staff.
- *Eating and Drinking:* Food and drink at the table should only be consumed when there is a break (for example, time out, between periods). At all other times, food and drink should be put aside and placed in a location where it cannot spill onto the equipment (for example, timing devices, sound devices, etc.) and score sheet.

Making Mistakes: Because table staffs are often not trained fully, there may be errors. Sometimes, the table staff simply is not sure if something is correct. In these cases, they should inform the referee immediately, especially if the game clock is stopped. It is better to resolve any questions or problems as soon as possible rather than wait until the end of the period or end of the game.

6.2 General Concepts

Some of the general concepts of the game are related to how the personnel at table make their judgments. These fundamental principles are discussed here.

Amount of Time for Game (and Period): A game consists of four periods of seven minutes each. In some competitions, the periods may be shorter. There is a two-minute interval between each period. If a definite outcome to the game is necessary, extra time is played. There is a five-minute interval before extra time. Extra time consists of two periods of three minutes each with one minute between the two extra time periods. If the score is still tied, a penalty shootout is administered.

Change of Possession of the Ball: A change in possession of the ball takes place if a player of the opposing team is able to pass the ball, control the ball, or swim with the ball. In the event of a tip, a glancing touch, or a melee in which no player has clear control of the ball, there is no change of possession. There must be a clear change of possession when the ball is stolen or when ball-under is called before the 35-second possession clock is reset.

Injury Stoppage: In the case of accident, injury, or illness without bleeding, the referee may suspend the game for not more than three minutes. All players, except the injured player, may be substituted during this time. At the end of the injury timeout, the injured player may resume play or leave the game. If the player retires due to an injury, that player may not return at any time during that game. If a player is bleeding, the referee shall remove the player immediately and allow a substitute to enter the field of play immediately. After the bleeding has stopped, that player may return to the game. No timeout is changed to either team for an injury stoppage.

Leaving the Field of Play: If a player has been excluded, that player is to leave the field of play by going directly to the re-entry area closest to that player's own goal without interfering with play. This includes swimming under water, going outside the boundaries of the field of play and swimming down to the re-entry area. When the player leaves the field of play, he/she may not interfere with the alignment of the goal. A player who leaves the water during live time while the game is in progress commits the foul of disrespect and is excluded from the remainder of the game with substitution.

Personal Foul: A personal foul is any foul that is recorded against a player. These include Exclusion Fouls and Penalty Fouls. There are three general types of personal fouls:

- Regular exclusion foul. The opposing team is given a player advantage situation until a goal is scored, the defending team regains possession of the ball, or 20 seconds of game time have elapsed.
- Game exclusion foul. Depending on the foul, a substitute may be allowed in immediately, after a player advantage situation (a goal is scored, the defending team regains possession of the ball, or 20 seconds of game time have elapsed), or not at all (for a brutality foul).
- Penalty foul. The opposing team is awarded a penalty throw. Depending on the foul, the player com-

mitting the foul may or may not be removed from the field of play.

When a personal foul is called, it is recorded on the score sheet by the Scorer and on the Personal Foul Record by the Exclusion Secretary.

Players Who Are Not Eligible To Play: Players are not eligible to play if they have been assessed a third personal foul, a game excluding foul, or a red card. If a player has been excluded and the exclusion time is carried over to the next period, that player may not participate in the sprint.

Proper Re-entry During Play: When a player receives the signal to re-enter (change of possession signal by the referee or a flag from the Exclusion Secretary), the player must slip in and swim into the field of play from the Re-entry Area. The excluded player may not jump in, dive in, or push off from the wall or bottom.

Putting the Ball in Play: A player may put the ball in play by tossing the ball into the air, dropping it onto the surface of the water, or passing the ball to another player. In some instances, the player may put the ball in play by shooting the ball (for example, for a penalty shot or for a direct shot on a free throw for a foul taken outside the 7-meter line).

Re-entry Area: The re-entry area is an area at the defensive end of the pool at the foot of the team bench. In a perfect pool, it extends 2 meters from the sideline towards the goal and is located behind the end line. In a smaller pool, a smaller re-entry area may be defined. In wide, but short pools, the re-entry area may be located outside the sideline behind the goal line. In narrow and short pools, the excluded player is to sit on the deck at the corner at the foot of the team bench.

Sanctions for Illegal Re-entry: If an improper or early reentry occurs with the object of preventing a goal, the player is assessed another personal foul. That player must return to the re-entry area to complete any time remaining of the original exclusion, and play is restarted with a penalty throw. If a player enters improperly or early during the last minute of the game, during the last minute of the second extra time period, or any time during a third extra time period, the player is excluded from the remainder of the game, with substitution, and a penalty throw is taken.

Starting Play With Too Many Players: If there are too many players in the water at the start of a period, the extra players are removed (no fouls assessed) and the period, including sprint, is restarted. The game clock and 35-second clocks are both reset. If there are too many players in the water at the restart after a goal or a timeout, the extra players are removed (no fouls assessed) and the game restarted. The game and 35-second possession clocks are both reset.

Substituting for Excluded Players: Players who have been excluded may be substituted. The excluded player does not have to await the arrival of the substitute, but may leave the re-entry area immediately. A substitute may not re-enter the field of play until it is legal to do so. For example, the substitute may not re-enter until the head of the excluded player has broken the surface of the water within the re-entry area. An excluded player may leave the pool during a timeout to meet with the team. In this case, the excluded player does not have to go to the re-entry area before the substitute is eligible to re-enter.

Timeouts: Each team is allowed three timeouts each of one minute duration. Two of the timeouts may be taken at any time during the game (regular time or extra time). The third timeout may only be taken in extra time. The coach of the team in possession of the ball may call a timeout from the team area. This is done by sound device (recommended) or by signaling with both hands forming a "T" and shouting "Timeout." If a timeout is requested after a goal, the team just scored upon must put the ball in play before the referee can award a timeout to that team.

When a timeout is awarded, the two teams must go to their defensive half of the field of play. The Timeout Timer will signal the expiration of 45 seconds. At this point, players may assume any position in the field of play within the rules. At the end of the full minute, the Timeout Timer will signal the end of the timeout period. Play is restarted on a signal from the referee. For timeouts called immediately after the award of a corner throw or penalty throw, the corner throw or penalty throw, as appropriate, will be taken to restart play. For all other called timeouts, a free throw will be taken at the halfway line.

If a coach of the team in possession of the ball requests a timeout beyond the number allowed, the ball is awarded to the opposing team at the halfway line. If a coach of a team not in possession of the ball re-

quests a timeout, a penalty shot is awarded (no personal foul is assessed). If a coach of a team requests timeout when neither team has possession of the ball, the ball is awarded to the opposing team at the location of the ball.

When Players May Re-enter the Field of Play: An excluded player or substitute may re-enter the field of play after a goal, a change of possession, or after the 20-second exclusion period has expired. After a goal, the player may re-enter from any place in any fashion. For a change of possession, as soon as the referee indicates the new direction of attack, the player or substitute may re-enter if the excluded player has already reached the re-entry area. Otherwise, the player or substitute may re-enter as soon as they reach the re-entry area. After the expiration of the 20-second exclusion period, the Exclusion Secretary will raise a flag to indicate that the player may re-enter.

Where to Put the Ball In Play: The ball is to be put in play at the location of the foul. However, if the ball has moved behind the line of the foul, then the ball can be put in play at the point of the foul. The two exceptions are (1) for defensive dead-time fouls when the original throw is taken and (2) for fouls within the two meter area when the resulting free throw is taken on the 2-meter line opposite to where the foul took place unless the ball is farther from the goal than the point of the foul. Corner throws are taken at the side of the field of play at the 2-meter line. Goal throws are taken anywhere inside the 2-meter area by the goalkeeper. Penalty throws are taken anywhere on the 4-meter line.

6.2.1 Numbers

The referees will signal the numbers to the table using two hands. The numbers are:

- 1 – Thumb only.
- 2 – Thumb and index finger.
- 3 – Thumb, index, and middle fingers.
- 4 – Index, middle, ring, and little fingers.
- 5 – All five digits on the hand.
- 6 – All five digits on one hand; the thumb of the other hand.
- 7 – All five digits on one hand; the thumb and index finger of the other hand.
- 8 – All five digits on one hand; the thumb, index, and middle fingers of the other hand.
- 9 – All five digits on one hand; the index, middle, ring, and little fingers of the other hand.
- 10 – A fist with one hand.
- 11 – A fist with one hand; the thumb of the other hand.
- 12 – A fist with one hand; the thumb and index finger of the other hand.
- 13 – A fist with one hand; the thumb, index, and middle fingers of the other hand.
- 14 – A fist with one hand; the index, middle, ring and little fingers of the other hand.
- 15 – A fist with one hand; all five digits with the other hand.

6.3 Desk Manager

The Desk Manager is the coordinator of what happens at the table. The duties of the Desk Manager includes:

- Ensures that there are few problems at the table and to communicate with the referees, coaches, and team officials with regard to what is happening.
- Supervises the other desk positions and should be ready to step in and assist at any position at any time.
- Trains new table staff to ensure that they know what they are going to do
- Reviews the score sheet to ensure that it is correct. This should be done on a regular basis during the game and after every period.
- Ensures that the score sheet is signed by both referees after a game.
- Inform the referee that a player has been assessed a third personal foul. This is purely informational and is to assist the referees in ensuring that ineligible players do not re-enter the field of play.
- Inform the referee when a team has called its last timeout.
- Assist the referee by watching whether or not a player who has been excluded from the remainder of the game (third personal foul, game exclusion foul) keeps his/her cap on. Inform the referee if that player does not do so.
- Assists the referee by watching whether or not players who are not eligible to play are in the water. Inform the referee if a player who is not eligible to play is in the water.
- Assist the referee by watching and ensuring that players and team officials remain in their team areas.
- The desk manager should notify the referee immediately if a player in the water is bleeding.

6.4 Scorer (Secretary No. 1)

- Get the team rosters for each team with cap numbers for each player before the start of the game (preferably at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the game).
- Record the cap numbers and names on the score sheet (be sure to put the team players of the first team listed (designated “W”) on the left and the other team’s players (designated “B”) on the right).
- Record the names of the referees, date, time, place, and game number onto the score sheet.
- Record all events at the *Progress of the Game* section of the score sheet. Be sure to note the **game time**, the **team color** (W or B), and the **cap number** or person (for example, coach, assistance coach, etc.). The following key should be used for the remarks section:

- G Natural goal.
- G/E Player advantage goal.
- G/P Goal from a penalty throw.
- E Exclusion foul.
- P Penalty foul.
- M Game exclusion foul.
- B Brutality foul.
- YC Yellow card.
- RC Red card.
- TO Time out.

If a goal was scored, then the running score (W-D) should be written in the space provided. If some event other than a goal occurred, then the space for the running score is kept blank.

After each period, a single line in the *Progress of the Game* section should be skipped. That line should be filled in to provide a visual signal where periods ended.

- Record all goals in the box next to the player’s name for that period. At a minimum, use a vertical hash mark (|) for each goal. The following key is recommended:
 - Vertical hash mark (|) for a natural goal.
 - The letter “P” for a goal from a penalty throw.
 - The letter “E” for an player advantage goal.
- Record all personal fouls in the boxes provided. Indicate the type of foul and the period of the foul. For example, for an exclusion foul in the 2nd period, put “E/2” in the box. For a penalty foul in the 4th period, put “P/4” in the box. Use the following codes:
 - E Exclusion foul.
 - P Penalty foul.
 - M Game exclusion foul.
 - B Brutality foul.

For game exclusion fouls (for example, misconduct or disrespect) and brutalities, draw a horizontal line crossing the remaining spaces.

- Record the period and time in which timeouts are called in the boxes on the score sheet as well as under Progress of the Game.
- At the end of each period, record that period’s number of goals in the summary box on the score sheet. Check that the number of blank spots in the running score column equals the number of personal fouls marked plus timeouts called, plus the number of yellow and red cards issued. Check the number of fouls with the exclusion time-

keeper.

- At the end of the game, total the score of each period and have the referees sign the score sheet.
- Assume the duties of the Desk Manager if one is not present.
- If there is no Timeout Timer, the Scorer should watch for a called timeout and signal with an appropriate noise-making device the calling of a timeout by a coach.

6.5 Exclusion Secretary (Secretary No. 2)

- The exclusion secretary shall keep a “Personal Foul Record”. Fouls for the first team listed are recorded on the left side; the fouls for the second team listed are recorded on the right side.
- For every personal foul, record:
 - The type of foul (E for exclusion; P for penalty; M for game exclusion; B for brutality).
 - The cap number.
 - The time of the foul.
 - The time the player or substitute is eligible to re-enter.
- Help the Scorer identify players with three personal fouls. Be aware of players with 2 fouls.
- Compare records of fouls with the Scorer after each period.
- The Exclusion Secretary signals the re-entry of an excluded player or substitute after the expiration of the 20-second exclusion period by raising a white flag for a player on the first team listed and a blue flag for a player on the second team listed.
- Exclusion time carries over between periods. If time remains on an exclusion at the end of a period, let the referee know how much time remains in the exclusion. Aid the referee in making sure that the excluded player does not participate in the sprint and that the player or a substitute is in the re-entry area.
- When a player has three personal fouls, the Exclusion Secretary will raise a red flag to indicate to the player, the teams, and the referees that the player has three personal fouls. Keep the red flag raised until the player is substituted for.
 - If the third personal foul is a penalty foul, the Exclusion Secretary will signal the referee immediately with a sound making device so that a substitute may enter prior to the taking of the penalty throw.
 - If the third personal foul was an exclusion or game exclusion foul, the substitute may re-enter after a goal, a change in possession, or the expiration of the 20 second exclusion period.
- To signal re-entry of a player, raise a flag so that the player, both team benches (especially the bench of the excluded player), and the referees can see it. Hold the flag still. Try to put it against a neutral background. Keep the flag up for several seconds after the player has re-entered to indicate to the referee that it was a legal re-entry.
- Do ***not*** raise the flag unless the player is eligible to re-enter. The excluded player must be in the re-entry area (head breaks the surface of the water in the re-entry area). A substitute may re-enter for an excluded player. A substitute is not eligible to re-enter if the excluded player has not yet reached the re-entry area unless it is at the start of a period or after a timeout had been called.
- In the event of a double exclusion (one player of each team), both players are eligible to re-enter after a goal, after the first change of possession after the neutral throw, or the expiration of 20 seconds.
 - Raise both flags simultaneously at the end of the exclusion period if both players have reached their respective re-entry areas. However, if only one player has reached the re-entry area at the end of the exclusion period, then raise the flag of that player’s team. Raise the other flag when the other player reaches the re-entry area.
 - If one of the players involved in a double exclusion receives a third personal foul because of the double exclusion, raise (in the same hand) the flag corresponding to the color of the cap of the player with the third foul with the red flag. Keep both flags raised until that player has been substituted for.
- The Exclusion Secretary should aid the referee in ensuring that only players who are eligible to play start at the beginning of a period, after a goal, or after a timeout.

Signal the referee with a red flag and a sound-making device if there is an early entry by a player or substitute (prior to the end of the 20 second exclusion period) or if the player or substitute entered from an incorrect location (some place other than the re-entry area).

6.6 Game Timer

- At the beginning of a period, start the game clock when the first player touches the ball. If the referee restarts a period, the game clock should be reset. Only reset the clock when instructed by the referee.
- Stop the clock on the referee's whistle.

Start the clock when the ball is put in play. The ball must visibly leave the hand of the player taking the throw before the ball is in play. *Note:* Be aware that the referee may want the ball moved to the point of the foul, to the correct corner, or to the correct location of the pool. Be sure the clock is not started until the actual throw is taken.

Start the clock:

- After a goal, when a player visibly puts the ball in play;
 - After a timeout, when a player visibly puts the ball in play;
 - On a free throw after a foul, when a player visibly puts the ball in play;
 - On a corner throw (taken at the side of the field of play at the 2-meter line), when a player visibly puts the ball in play;
 - On a goal throw (taken within the 2-meter area), when the goalkeeper visibly puts the ball in play;
 - On a neutral throw (face off; jump ball), when a player touches the ball (the ball may be touched in the air);
 - On a penalty throw, when the ball leaves the hand of the shooter. Do not stop the clock until the referee blows the whistle. For example, if the ball does not go into the goal and rebounds into the field of play, do not stop the clock.
- If the scoreboard displays exclusions, enter the exclusion on the board before the ball is put into play and the game clock started.
 - Record the score on the scoreboard after each goal.
 - Announce the start of the last minute of the game and the last minute of the second extra time period.
 - Signal the end of each period by buzzer or gun or some other means, provided it is distinctive, acoustically efficient, and readily understood.
 - Display the intervals between periods on the game clock if technology permits. Otherwise, time the interval between periods with a hand held device.
 - Between periods reset the game clock to the correct period length and check that the proper period is displayed on the clock.
 - Assume the duties of the Timeout Timer if one is not present.
 - Timing of the timeouts (see Timeout Timer section).
 - Timing any injury stoppages.

6.7 35-Second Timer

- At the beginning of a period, start the game clock when the first player gains possession of the ball. If the referee restarts a period, the 35-second possession clock should be reset. Only reset the clock when instructed by the referee.
 - Stop the clock on the referee's whistle.
 - Start the clock when the ball is put in play. The ball must visibly leave the hand of the player taking the throw before the ball is in play. *Note:* Be aware that the referee may want the ball moved to the point of the foul, to the correct corner, or to the correct location of the pool. Be sure the clock is not started until the actual throw is taken.
 - When there is a change of possession with less than 35 seconds remaining in the period, turn off ("blank") the 35-second possession clock.
 - Do **not** reset the 35-second possession clock when a timeout is called and awarded.
- If a visible mistake is made on the 35-second possession clock, the referee should correct the mistake immediately.

Start the 35-second possession clock:

- After a goal, when a player visibly puts the ball in play;
 - After a timeout, when a player visibly puts the ball in play;
 - On a free throw after a foul, when a player visibly puts the ball in play;
 - On a corner throw (taken at the side of the field of play at the 2-meter line), when a player visibly puts the ball in play;
 - On a goal throw (taken within the 2-meter area), when the goalkeeper visibly puts the ball in play;
 - On a neutral throw (face off; jump ball), when a player touches the ball (the ball may be touched in the air);
- On a penalty throw.

Reset the 35-second possession clock:

- After a goal.
 - After an attempt at a goal. It may be a shot even if the ball does not reach the goal line. If the shot rebounds off the goalkeeper, other defensive player, or goal back into the field of play, the clock is reset again when a player takes possession of the ball.
 - After a change of possession of the ball during live time (for example, a steal). Remember that a change in possession requires the new team to have control of the ball. If there is a referee's whistle immediately after a change of possession, do not reset the clock until you are sure the referee has not returned the ball to the original attacking team.
 - For a ball under call only if there is a clear change in possession. The player must be in control of the ball for a change in possession.
 - After a change of possession of the ball awarded by the referee (for example, if the 35-second possession period expires without the team taking a shot on goal).
 - For a goal throw or corner throw. The 35-second possession clock is not reset if the ball goes out-of-bounds on the side of the pool last touched by a defensive player.
 - For a neutral throw.
 - For an offensive foul. The ball is awarded to the opposing team.
 - For a wasting time foul. If a player throws the ball into a vacant corner prior to the end of the 35-second, reset the clock when the referee blows the whistle and start it when a player puts the ball in play.
 - For an exclusion foul.
- For a penalty foul. If the shot misses and rebounds into the field of play, restart the clock when a player takes possession of the ball.

6.8 Timeout Timer

(Note: If there is not a separate person at the Official Table assigned these duties, the Scorer shall stop the game with an appropriate noise making device when a timeout is requested and the Game Timer shall perform the remainder of the duties.)

- When a timeout is requested by a coach, the Timeout Timer should indicate this with an appropriate device. The Timeout Timer is not required to determine whether the team of the coach calling for the timeout has possession of the ball. Whether the timeout is to be awarded or whether sanctions are to be imposed is determined by the game referees.
- If a timeout is awarded by the referees, the Timeout Timer immediately starts a clock at the Table.
- The Timeout Timer will signal when 45 seconds of the timeout have elapsed. This lets the teams know that they make take up their positions to restart play.
- At 60 seconds, the Timeout Timer will signal the end of the timeout.
- If a board is provided to indicate the number of timeouts each team has remaining, the Timeout Timer shall change the number appropriately to indicate the number of timeouts remaining.

If the referees call for an Injury Stoppage, the Timeout Timer shall start a clock and inform the referee when 2 minutes 30 seconds have elapsed and the full 3 minutes have elapsed.

WATER POLO SCORE SHEET

Game Number: _____

Place/Event: _____ Referee: _____ Table Manager: _____
 Date: _____ Time: _____ Referee: _____ Delegate: _____

WHITE TEAM:

DARK TEAM:

Cap	Name:	Att	Fouls	Goals by Period							Cap	Name:	Att	Fouls	Goals by Period										
				1	2	3	4	OT1	OT2	OT3					1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT1	OT2	OT3				
1																									
2																									
3																									
4																									
5																									
6																									
7																									
8																									
9																									
10																									
11																									
12																									
13																									

Progress of the Game:

Time	Cap #	Team	Remarks	W-D	Time	Cap #	Team	Remarks	W-D	Time	Cap #	Team	Remarks	W-D	Time	Cap #	Team	Remarks	W-D	

Score	W	D	Timeouts:		
1				W <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>	
2					
3			D <table border="1" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"><tr><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		
4					
OT1			Referee Signatures: _____		
OT2					
OT3					
Final:					

PERSONAL FOUL RECORD

Game Number: _____

Place/Event: _____

Referee: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Referee: _____

Table Manager: _____

Delegate: _____

WHITE TEAM:

SYMBOL:	CAP:	TIME OUT:	TIME IN:

DARK TEAM:

SYMBOL:	CAP:	TIME OUT:	TIME IN:

OUT - IN
 00 - 40
 01 - 41
 02 - 42
 03 - 43
 04 - 44
 05 - 45
 06 - 46
 07 - 47
 08 - 48
 09 - 49
 10 - 50
 11 - 51
 12 - 52
 13 - 53
 14 - 54
 15 - 55
 16 - 56
 17 - 57
 18 - 58
 19 - 59
 20 - 00
 21 - 01
 22 - 02
 23 - 03
 24 - 04
 25 - 05
 26 - 06
 27 - 07
 28 - 08
 29 - 09
 30 - 10
 31 - 11
 32 - 12
 33 - 13
 34 - 14
 35 - 15
 36 - 16
 37 - 17
 38 - 18
 39 - 19
 40 - 20
 41 - 21
 42 - 22
 43 - 23
 44 - 24
 45 - 25
 46 - 26
 47 - 27
 48 - 28
 49 - 29
 50 - 30
 51 - 31
 52 - 32
 53 - 33
 54 - 34
 55 - 35
 56 - 36
 57 - 37
 58 - 38
 59 - 39
 00 - 40

Symbols: E – Exclusion Foul
 P – Penalty Foul
 M – Game Exclusion foul
 B – Brutality Foul



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE
DE NATATION
FINA

PENALTY SHOOT OUT

TEAM.....CAP COLOUR

TEAM.....CAP COLOUR

GOALKEEPER

GOALKEEPER

	CAP NO	PLAYER	GOALS	TOTAL

	CAP NO	PLAYER	GOALS	TOTAL



**FINA Playing Rules
2001-2002**

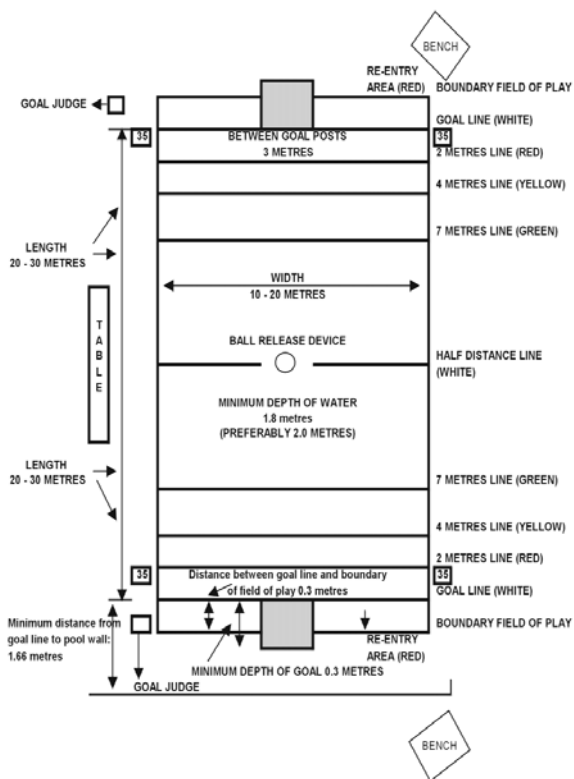
Effective October 1st, 2001

Edited to be consistent with American spelling and for consistent formatting.

WP1 FIELD OF PLAY & EQUIPMENT

WP1.1 The promoting organization shall be responsible for the correct measurements and markings of the field of play and shall provide all stipulated fixtures and equipment.

WP1.2 The layout and markings of the field of play for a game officiated by two referees shall be in accordance with the following diagram:



WP1.3 In a game officiated by one referee, the referee shall officiate on the same side as the official table, and the goal judges shall be situated on the opposite side.

WP1.4 The distance between the goal lines shall be not less than 20 meters and not more than 30 meters. The width of the field of play shall be not less than 10 meters and not more than 20 meters. The boundary of the field of play at each end shall be 0.30 meters behind the goal line.

WP1.5 For FINA events the dimensions of the field of play, water depth and temperature, and light intensity shall be as set forth in FR 7.2, FR 7.3, FR 7.4 and FR 8.3.

WP1.6 Distinctive marks shall be provided on both sides of the field of play to denote the following:

- white marks – goal line and half distance line
- red marks – 2 meters from goal lines
- yellow marks – 4 meters from goal lines
- green marks – 7 meters from goal lines

WP1.7 A red mark shall be placed at each end of the field of play, 2 meters from the corner of the field of play on the side opposite to the official table, to denote the re-entry area.

WP1.8 Sufficient space shall be provided to enable the referees to have free movement from end to end of the field of play. Space shall also be provided at the goal lines for the goal judges.

WP1.9 The secretary shall be provided with separate red, white and blue flags, each measuring 0.35 meters x 0.20 meters.

WP2 GOALS

WP2.1 Two goal posts and a crossbar, rigidly constructed, rectangular with a dimension of 0.075 meters facing the field of play and painted white shall be located on the goal lines at each end, equal distances from the sides and not less than 0.30 meters in front of the ends of the field of play.

WP2.2 The inner sides of the goal posts shall be 3 meters apart. When the water is 1.50 meters or more in depth, the underside of the crossbar shall be 0.90 meters from the water surface. When the water is less than 1.50 meters in depth, the underside of the crossbar shall be 2.40 meters from the floor of the pool.

WP2.3 Limp nets shall be securely fastened to the goal posts and crossbar to enclose the entire goal area and shall be attached to the goal fixtures in such a manner as to allow not less than 0.30 meters clear space behind the goal line everywhere within the goal area.

WP3 THE BALL

WP3.1 The ball shall be round and shall have an air chamber with a self-closing valve. It shall be waterproof, without external strapping or any covering of grease or similar substance.

WP3.2 The weight of the ball shall be not less than 400 grams and not more than 450 grams.

WP3.3 For games played by men, the circumference of the ball shall be not less than 0.68 meters and not more than 0.71 meters, and its pressure shall be 90-97 kPa (kilo Pascal's) (13-14 pounds per square inch atmospheric).

WP3.4 For games played by women, the circumference of the ball shall be not less than 0.65 meters and not more than 0.67 meters, and its pressure shall be 83-90 (kilo Pascal's) (12-13 pounds per square inch atmospheric).

WP4 CAPS

WP4.1 Caps shall be of contrasting color, other than solid red, as approved by the referees, but also to contrast with the color of the ball. A team may be required by the referees to wear white or blue caps. The goalkeepers shall wear red caps. Caps shall be fastened under the chin. If a player loses the cap during play, the player shall replace it at the next appropriate stoppage of the game when the player's team is in possession of the ball. Caps shall be worn throughout the entire game.

WP4.2 For Olympic Games, World Championships and other FINA events, caps shall be fitted with malleable ear protectors. It is recommended that caps fitted with ear protectors be used for all other competitions. The ear protectors shall be the same color as the team's caps except that the goalkeeper may have red protectors.

WP4.3 Caps shall be numbered on both sides with numbers 0.10 meters in height. The goalkeeper shall wear cap no. 1 and the other caps shall be numbered 2 to 13. A substitute goalkeeper shall wear the goalkeeper's cap. A player shall not be allowed to change his cap number during the game except with the permission of a referee and with notification to the secretary.

WP4.4 For international games, the caps shall display on the front the international three letter country code and may display the national flag. The country code shall be 0.04 meters in height.

WP5 TEAMS AND SUBSTITUTES

WP5.1 Each team shall consist of seven players, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper and who shall wear the goalkeeper's cap, and not more than six reserves who may be used as substitutes. A team playing with less than 7 players shall not be required to have a goalkeeper.

WP5.2 All players not in the game at that time, together with the coaches and officials with the exception of the head coach, shall sit on the team bench and shall not move away from the bench from the commencement of play, except during the intervals between periods or during timeouts. Teams shall only change ends and benches at half time and before the start of the first period of any extra time. The team benches shall both be situated on the side opposite to the official table.

WP5.3 The captains shall be playing members of their respective teams and each shall be responsible for the good conduct and discipline of his team.

WP5.4 Players shall wear non-transparent costumes or costumes with a separate undergarment and before taking part in a game shall remove any articles likely to cause injury.

WP5.5 Players shall not have grease, oil or any similar substance on the body. If a referee ascertains before the start of play that such a substance has been used, he shall order it to be removed immediately. The start of play shall not be delayed for the substance to be removed. If the offence is detected after the play has started, the offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game and a substitute permitted to enter the field of play immediately from the re-entry area nearest to his own goal line.

WP5.6 At any time in the game, a player may be substituted by leaving the field of play at the re-entry area nearest to his

own goal line. The substitute may enter the field of play from the re-entry area as soon as the player has visibly risen to the surface of the water within the re-entry area. If a goalkeeper is substituted under this Rule, the substitute shall be required to wear a goalkeeper's cap. No substitution shall be made under this Rule between the time a referee awards a penalty throw and the taking of the throw, except at a timeout.

WP5.7 A substitute may enter the field of play from any place:

- (a) during the intervals between periods of play, including any periods of extra time;
- (b) after a goal has been scored;
- (c) during a timeout;
- (d) to replace a player who is bleeding or injured.

WP5.8 A substitute shall be ready to replace a player without delay. If he is not ready, the game shall continue without him and, at any time, he may then enter the field of play from the re-entry area nearest to his own goal line.

WP5.9 A goalkeeper who has been replaced by a substitute may, if he returns to the game, play in any position.

WP5.10 Should a goalkeeper retire from the game through any medical reason, the referees shall allow an immediate substitution, subject to one of the players taking the goalkeeper's cap.

WP6 OFFICIALS

WP6.1 For FINA events the officials shall consist of two referees, two goal judges, timekeepers and secretaries, each with the following powers and duties. Such officials shall also be provided wherever possible for other events, except that in a game refereed by two referees and no goal judges, the referees shall assume the duties (but without making the specified signals) allocated to the goal judges in WP8.2.

[Note. Depending on the degree of importance, games can be controlled by teams of four to eight officials, as follows:

- (a) *Referees and goal judges:*
Two referees and two goal judges; or two referees and no goal judges; or one referee and two goal judges.

- (b) *Timekeepers and secretaries:*
With one timekeeper and one secretary: The timekeeper shall record the periods of continuous possession of the ball by each team, in accordance with WP20.17. The secretary shall record the exact periods of actual play, timeouts and the intervals between periods, maintain the record of the game as set out in WP10.1 and shall also record the respective periods of exclusion of players ordered from the water in accordance with the Rules.

With two timekeepers and one secretary: Timekeeper No. 1 shall record the exact periods of actual play, timeouts and the intervals between periods. Timekeeper No. 2 shall record the periods of continuous possession of the ball by each team, in accordance with WP20.17. The secretary shall maintain the record of the game and perform all other duties as set out in WP10.1.

With two timekeepers and two secretaries: Timekeeper No. 1 shall record the exact periods of actual play, timeouts and the intervals between periods. Timekeeper No. 2 shall record the periods of continuous possession of the ball by each team, in accordance with WP20.17. Secretary No. 1 shall maintain the record of the game as set out in WP10.1(a). Secretary No. 2 shall carry out the duties set out in WP10.1(b), (c) and (d) relating to the improper re-entry of excluded players, improper entry of substitutes, exclusion of players and the third personal foul.]

WP7 REFEREES

WP7.1 The referees shall be in absolute control of the game. Their authority over the players shall be effective during the whole time that they and the players are within the precincts of the pool. All decisions of the referees on questions of fact shall be final and their interpretation of the Rules shall be obeyed throughout the game. The referees shall not make any presumption as to the facts of any situation during the game but shall interpret what they observe to the best of their ability.

WP7.2 The referees shall whistle to start and restart the game and to declare goals, goal throws, corner throws (whether signaled by the goal judge or not), neutral throws and infringements of the Rules. A referee may alter his decision provided he does so before the ball is put back into play.

WP7.3 The referees shall refrain from declaring a foul if, in their opinion, such declaration would be an advantage to the offending player's team. The referees shall not declare an ordinary foul when there is still a possibility to play the ball.

[Note. The referees shall apply this principle to the fullest extent. They should not, for example, declare an ordinary foul in favor of a player who is in possession of the ball and making progress towards his opponents' goal, because this is considered to give an advantage to the offender's team.]

WP7.4 The referees shall have the power to order any player from the water in accordance with the appropriate Rule and to abandon the game should a player refuse to leave the water when so ordered.

WP7.5 The referees shall have the power to order the removal from the precincts of the pool any player, substitute, spectator or official whose behavior prevents the referees from carrying out their duties in a proper and impartial manner.

WP7.6 The referees shall have the power to abandon the game at any time if, in their opinion, the behavior of the players or spectators, or other circumstances prevent it from being brought to a proper conclusion. If the game has to be abandoned the referees shall report their actions to the competent authority.

WP8 GOAL JUDGES

WP8.1 The goal judges shall be situated on the same side as the official table, each on the goal line at the end of the field of play.

WP8.2 The duties of the goal judges shall be:

- (a) to signal by raising one arm vertically when the players

are correctly positioned on their respective goal lines at the start of a period;

- (b) to signal by raising both arms vertically for an improper start or restart;
- (c) to signal by pointing with the arm in the direction of the attack for a goal throw;
- (d) to signal by pointing with the arm in the direction of the attack for a corner throw;
- (e) to signal by raising and crossing both arms for a goal;
- (f) to signal by raising both arms vertically for an improper re-entry of an excluded player or improper entry of a substitute.

WP8.3 Each goal judge shall be provided with a supply of balls and when the original ball has gone outside the field of play, he shall immediately throw a new ball to the goalkeeper (for a goal throw), to the nearest player of the attacking team (for a corner throw), or as otherwise directed by the referee.

WP9 TIMEKEEPERS

WP9.1 The duties of the timekeepers shall be:

- (a) to record the exact periods of actual play, timeouts and the intervals between the periods;
- (b) to record the periods of continuous possession of the ball by each team;
- (c) to record the exclusion times of players ordered from the water in accordance with the Rules, together with the re-entry times of such players or their substitutes;
- (d) to audibly announce the start of the last minute of the game and of the last minute of the second period of any extra time;
- (e) to signal by whistle after 45 seconds and at the end of each timeout.

WP9.2 A timekeeper shall signal by whistle (or by any other means provided it is distinctive, acoustically efficient and readily understood), the end of each period independently of the referees and his signal shall take immediate effect except:

- (a) in the case of the simultaneous award by a referee of a penalty throw, in which event the penalty throw shall be taken in accordance with the Rules;
- (b) if the ball is in flight and crosses the goal line, in which event any resultant goal shall be allowed.

WP10 SECRETARIES

WP10.1 The duties of the secretaries shall be:

- (a) to maintain the record of the game, including the players, the score, timeouts, exclusion fouls, penalty fouls, and personal fouls awarded against each player;
- (b) to control the periods of exclusion of players and to signal the expiration of the period of exclusion by raising the appropriate flag; except that a referee shall signal the re-entry of an excluded player or a substitute when that player's team has retaken possession of the ball;
- (c) to signal with the red flag and by whistle for any improper re-entry of an excluded player or improper entry of a substitute (including after a signal by a goal judge to indicate an improper re-entry or entry), which signal shall stop play immediately;
- (d) to signal, without delay, the award of a third personal foul against any player as follows:
 - (i) with the red flag if the third personal foul is an exclusion foul;

- (ii) with the red flag and a whistle if the third personal foul is a penalty foul.

WP11 DURATION OF THE GAME

WP11.1 The duration of the game shall be four periods each of seven minutes actual play. Time shall commence at the start of each period when a player touches the ball. At all signals for stoppages, the recording watch shall be stopped until the ball is put back into play by the ball leaving the hand of the player taking the appropriate throw or when the ball is touched by a player following a neutral throw.

WP11.2 There shall be a two-minute interval between periods. The teams, including the players, coaches and officials, shall change ends before starting the third period and the first period of any extra time.

WP11.3 Should the scores be level at full time in any game for which a definite result is required, any continuation into extra time shall be after an interval of five minutes. There shall then be played two periods each of three minutes actual play with an interval of one minute for the referees to change sides. If at the end of the two periods of extra time the score is equal, there shall be a penalty shoot out to determine the result.

[Note. If a penalty shoot out is necessary, the following procedure shall be followed by each team shooting five penalty shots at its opponent's goal in alternate succession. The first team shall take its first penalty shot and then the other team shall take its first penalty shot, etc. If a tie shall exist after that procedure, each team shall then take alternate shots until one team scores and the other misses. Different members of the team must shoot each shot.]

WP11.4 Any visible clock shall show the time in a descending manner (that is, to show the time remaining in a period).

WP12 TIMEOUTS

WP12.1 Each team shall be entitled to three timeouts in any game. The third timeout may only be requested during extra time. The duration of the timeout shall be one minute. A timeout may be requested at any time by the coach of the team in possession of the ball calling "timeout" and signaling to the secretary or referee with the hands forming a T-shape. If a timeout is requested, the secretary or referee shall immediately stop the game by whistle.

WP12.2 Play shall be restarted on the whistle of the referee by the team in possession of the ball putting the ball into play on the half distance line, except that:

- (a) if the timeout is requested before the taking of a penalty throw or corner throw, that throw shall be maintained;
- (b) if the timeout is requested after a goal has been scored, the referees shall restart the play in accordance with WP15 (Restarting after the Goal) and then immediately stop the play for the requested timeout.

[Note. The possession clock continues from the recommencement of the play after the timeout.]

WP12.3 If the coach of the team in possession of the ball requests a third or additional timeout to which the team is not entitled, the game shall be stopped and play shall then be restarted by a player of the opposing team putting the ball into

play on the half distance line.

WP12.4 If the coach of the team not in possession of the ball requests a timeout, the game shall be stopped and a penalty throw awarded to the opposing team.

WP12.5 At the restart following a timeout, players may take any position in the field of play, subject to the Rules relating to the taking of penalty throws and corner throws.

[Note. If a timeout is called, the players shall return immediately to their respective halves of the field of play.]

WP13 THE START OF PLAY

WP13.1 Before the start of the game and in the presence of the referees, the captains shall toss a coin, the winner to have the choice of ends.

WP13.2 At the start of each period, the players shall take up positions on their respective goal lines, about one meter apart and at least one meter from the goal posts. Not more than two players shall be allowed between the goal posts. No part of a player's body shall be beyond the goal line at water level.

WP13.3 When the referees are satisfied that the teams are ready, a referee shall blow the whistle to start and then release or throw the ball into play on the half distance line.

WP13.4 If the ball is released or thrown giving one team a definite advantage, the referee shall call for the ball and award a neutral throw on the half distance line.

WP14 METHOD OF SCORING

WP14.1 A goal shall be scored when the entire ball has passed fully over the goal line, between the goal posts and underneath the crossbar.

WP14.2 A goal may be scored from anywhere within the field of play; except that the goal keeper shall not be permitted to go or touch the ball beyond the half distance line.

WP14.3 A goal may be scored by any part of the body except the clenched fist. A goal may be scored by dribbling the ball into the goal. At the start or any restart of the game, at least two players (of either team but excluding the defending goalkeeper) must intentionally play or touch the ball except at the taking of:

- (a) a penalty throw;
- (b) a free throw thrown by a player into his own goal;
- (c) an immediate shot from a goal throw; or
- (d) an immediate shot from a free throw awarded outside 7 meters.

[Notes. A goal may be scored by a player immediately shooting from outside 7 meters after his team has been awarded a free throw for a foul committed outside 7 meters. If the player puts the ball into play, a goal can then only be scored if the ball has been intentionally touched by another player, other than the defending goalkeeper.

If at the award of a foul the ball is closer to the defending team's goal, a goal may be scored under this Rule if the ball is returned without delay to the place where the foul was committed and the shot is then immediately made from that position.

A goal may not be scored under this Rule direct from the restart following:

- (a) a timeout
- (b) a goal
- (c) an injury, including bleeding
- (d) the replacement of a cap
- (e) the referee calling for the ball
- (f) the ball leaving the side of the field of play
- (g) any other delay.]

WP14.4 A goal shall be scored if, at the expiration of 35 seconds possession or at the end of a period, the ball is in flight and enters the goal.

[Notes. In the circumstances of this Rule, if the ball enters the goal after hitting the goal post, crossbar, goalkeeper or other defending player, and/or bouncing off the water, a goal shall be allowed. If the end of the period has been signaled and the ball is then played or touched intentionally by another attacking player on its way into the goal, the goal shall not be allowed.

If the ball is in flight towards the goal in the circumstances of this Rule and the goalkeeper or another defending player pulls down the goal, or within his own 4 meter area a defending player other than the goalkeeper stops the ball with two hands or arms or punches the ball to prevent a goal being scored, the referee shall award a penalty throw if, in his opinion, the ball would have reached the goal line if the offence had not occurred.

If the ball which is in flight towards the goal in the circumstances of this Rule lands on the water and then floats completely over the goal line, the referee shall award a goal only if the ball floats over the goal line immediately due to the momentum of the shot.]

WP15 RESTARTING AFTER A GOAL

WP15.1 After a goal has been scored, the players shall take up positions anywhere within their respective halves of the field of play. No part of a player's body shall be beyond the half distance line at water level. A referee shall restart the game by blowing the whistle. At the time of the restart, actual play shall resume when the ball leaves the hand of a player of the team not having scored the goal. A restart not taken in accordance with this Rule shall be retaken.

WP16 GOAL THROWS

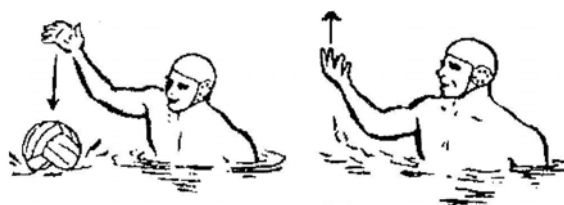
WP16.1 A goal throw shall be awarded:

- (a) when the entire ball has passed fully over the goal line excluding between the goal posts and underneath the crossbar, having last been played or touched by a player of the attacking team;
- (b) when the entire ball has passed fully over the goal line between the goal posts and underneath the crossbar, or strikes the goal posts, crossbar or the defending goalkeeper direct from:
 - (i) free throw awarded inside 7 meters;
 - (ii) a free throw awarded outside 7 meters not taken immediately;
 - (iii) a goal throw not taken immediately;
 - (iv) a corner throw.

WP16.2 The goal throw shall be taken by the defending goalkeeper from anywhere within his 2 meter area. If the

goalkeeper is out of the water, the goal throw shall be taken by another defending player. A goal throw not taken in accordance with this Rule shall be retaken.

[Note. There should be no undue delay in taking a free throw, goal throw or corner throw, which must be taken in such a manner so as to enable the other players to observe the ball leaving the thrower's hand. Players often make the mistake of delaying the throw because they overlook the provisions of WP19.4, which permit the thrower to dribble the ball before passing to another player. The throw can thus be taken immediately, even though the thrower cannot at that moment find a player to whom he might pass the ball. On such an occasion, he is allowed to take the throw either by dropping it from a raised hand on to the surface of the water (figure 1) or by throwing it in the air (figure 2) and he can then swim with or dribble the ball. In either case, the throw must be taken so that the other players are able to observe it.]



WP17 CORNER THROWS

WP17.1 A corner throw shall be awarded when the entire ball has passed fully over the goal line excluding between the goal posts and underneath the crossbar, having last been played or touched by a player of the defending team.

WP17.2 The corner throw shall be taken by a player of the attacking team from the 2 meter mark on the side nearest to which the ball crossed the goal line. The throw need not be taken by the nearest player but shall be taken without undue delay.

[Note. For method of taking throw, see note to WP16.2]

WP17.3 At the taking of a corner throw no players of the attacking team shall be within the 2 meter area.

WP17.4 A corner throw taken from the wrong position or before the players of the attacking team have left the 2 meter area shall be retaken.

WP18 NEUTRAL THROWS

WP18.1 A neutral throw shall be awarded:

- (a) when, at the start of a period, a referee is of the opinion that the ball has fallen in a position to the definite advantage of one team;
- (b) when one or more players of each team commit a foul at the same moment which makes it impossible for the referees to distinguish which player offended first;
- (c) when both referees blow their whistles at the same moment to award ordinary fouls to the opposing teams;
- (d) when a player of each team commits an exclusion foul simultaneously, whether during actual play or in dead time. The neutral throw is to be taken following the exclusion of the offending players;

(e) when the ball strikes or lodges in an overhead obstruction.

WP18.2 At a neutral throw, a referee shall throw the ball into the field of play at approximately the same lateral position as the event occurred in such a manner as to allow the players of both teams to have equal opportunity to reach the ball. A neutral throw awarded within the 2 meter area shall be taken on the 2 meter line.

WP18.3 If at a neutral throw the referee is of the opinion that the ball has fallen in a position to the definite advantage of one team, he shall call for the ball and retake the throw.

WP19 FREE THROWS

WP19.1 A free throw shall be taken at the place where the foul occurred, except:

- (a) if the ball is further from the defending team's goal, the free throw shall be taken from the location of the ball;
- (b) if the foul is committed by a defending player within his 2 meter area, the free throw shall be taken on the 2 meter line opposite to where the foul was committed or, if the ball is outside the 2 meter area, from the location of the ball;
- (c) where otherwise provided for in the Rules.

A free throw taken from the wrong position shall be retaken.

WP19.2 The time allowed for a player to take a free throw shall be at the discretion of the referees; it shall be reasonable and without undue delay but does not have to be immediate. It shall be an offence if a player who is clearly in a position most readily to take a free throw does not do so.

WP19.3 The responsibility for returning the ball to the player who is to take the free throw shall be that of the team to which the free throw is awarded.

WP19.4 The free throw shall be taken in a manner to enable the players to observe the ball leaving the hand of the player taking the throw, who shall also then be permitted to carry or dribble the ball before passing to another player. The ball shall be in play immediately when it leaves the hand of the player taking the free throw.

[Note. For method of taking throw, see note to WP16.2]

WP20 ORDINARY FOULS

WP20.1 It shall be an ordinary foul to commit any of the following offences (WP20.2 to WP20.18), which shall be punished by the award of a free throw to the opposing team.

[Note. The referees must award ordinary fouls in accordance with the Rules to enable the attacking team to develop an advantage situation. However, the referees must have regard to the special circumstance of WP7.3 (Advantage).]

WP20.2 To advance beyond the goal line at the start of a period, before the referee has given the signal to start. The free throw shall be taken from the location of the ball or, if the ball has not been released into the field of play, from the half distance line.

WP20.3 To assist a player at the start of a period or at any other time during the game.

WP20.4 To hold on to or push off from the goal posts or their fixtures, to hold on to or push off from the sides or ends of the pool during actual play or to hold on to the rails except at the start of a period.

WP20.5 To take any active part in the game when standing on the floor of the pool, to walk when play is in progress or to jump from the floor of the pool to play the ball or tackle an opponent. This Rule shall not apply to the goalkeeper while within his 4 meter area.

WP20.6 To take or hold the entire ball under the water when tackled.

[Note. It is an ordinary foul to take or hold the ball under the water when tackled, even if the player holding the ball has his hand forced under the water, with the ball, as a result of the opponent's challenge (figure 3). It makes no difference that the ball goes under the water against his will. What is important is that the foul is awarded against the player who was in contact with the ball at the moment it was taken under the water. It is important to remember that the offence can only occur when a player takes the ball under when tackled. Thus, if the goalkeeper emerges high out of the water to save a shot and then while falling back takes the ball under the water, he has committed no offence; but if he then holds the ball under the water when challenged by an opponent, he will have committed an infringement of this Rule and if his actions prevented a probable goal, a penalty throw must be awarded under WP22.2.]

WP20.7 To strike at the ball with a clenched fist. This Rule shall not apply to the goalkeeper while within his 4 meter area.

WP20.8 To play or touch the ball with two hands at the same time. This Rule shall not apply to the goalkeeper while within his 4 meter area.



Figure3

WP20.9 To impede or otherwise prevent the free movement of an opponent who is not holding the ball, including swimming on the opponent's shoulders, back or legs. "Holding" is lifting, carrying or touching the ball but does not include dribbling the ball.

[Notes. The first thing for the referee to consider is whether the opponent is holding the ball, because if he is doing so, the player making the challenge cannot be penalized for "impeding". It is clear that a player is holding the ball if he holds it raised above the water (figure 4). The player is also holding the ball if he swims with it held in his hand or makes contact with the ball while it is lying on

the surface of the water (figure 5). Swimming with the ball (dribbling), as shown in figure 6, is not considered to be holding.



Figure 4

Figure 5



Figure 6

A common form of impeding is where the player swims across his opponent's legs (figure 7), thus reducing the pace at which he can move and interfering with his normal leg action. Another form is swimming on the opponent's shoulders. It must also be remembered that the foul of impeding can be committed by the player who is in possession of the ball. For example, figure 8 shows a player keeping one hand on the ball and trying to force his opponent away to gain more space for himself. Figure 9 shows a player in possession of the ball impeding his opponent by pushing him back with his head. Care must be taken with figures 8 & 9, because any violent movement by the player in possession of the ball might constitute striking or even brutality; the figures are intended to illustrate impeding without any violent movement. A player may also commit the offence of impeding even if he is not holding or touching the ball. Figure 10 shows a player intentionally blocking his opponent with his body and with his arms flung open, thus making access to the ball impossible. This offence is most often committed near the boundaries of the field of play.]



Figure 7



Figure 8

Figure 9



Figure 10

WP20.10 To push or push off from an opponent who is not holding the ball.

[Note. Pushing can take place in various forms, including with the hand (figure 11) or with the foot (figure 12). In the cases illustrated, the punishment is a free throw for an ordinary foul. However, referees must take care to differentiate between pushing with the foot and kicking - which then becomes an exclusion foul or even brutality. If the foot is already in contact with the opponent when the movement begins, this will usually be pushing, but if the movement begins before such contact with the opponent is made, then this should generally be regarded as kicking.]

WP20.11 For a player of the team in possession of the ball to commit an offence under WP20.9 (to impede an opponent) or WP20.10 (to push or push off from an opponent) before a free throw, goal throw or corner throw is taken.

WP20.12 To be within two meters of the opponents' goal except when behind the line of the ball. It shall not be an offence if a player takes the ball into the 2 meter area and passes it to another player who is behind the line of the ball and who shoots at goal immediately, before the first player has been able to leave the 2 meter area.

[Note. If the player receiving the pass does not shoot at goal, the player who passed the ball must immediately leave the 2 meter area to avoid being penalized under this Rule.]

WP20.13 To take a penalty throw other than in the prescribed manner.

[Note. See WP23.4 for method of taking a penalty throw.]

WP20.14 To delay unduly when taking a free throw, goal throw or corner throw.

[Note. See note to WP16.2]

WP20.15 For a goalkeeper to go or touch the ball beyond the half distance line.

WP20.16 To send the ball out of the side of the field of play, including the ball rebounding from the side of the field of play above water level.

WP20.17 For a team to retain possession of the ball for more than 35 seconds of actual play without shooting at their opponent's goal. The timekeeper recording the possession time shall reset the clock:

- (a) when the ball has left the hand of the player shooting at goal. If the ball rebounds into play from the goal post, crossbar or the goalkeeper, the possession time shall not recommence until the ball comes into the possession of one of the teams;
- (b) when the ball comes into the possession of the opposing team. "Possession" shall not include the ball merely being touched in flight by an opposing player;
- (c) when the ball is put into play following the award of an exclusion foul, penalty foul, goal throw, corner throw or neutral throw.

Visible clocks shall show the time in a descending manner (that is, to show the possession time remaining).

[Note. The timekeeper and referees must decide whether there was a shot goal or not but the referees have the final decision.]

WP20.18 To waste time.

[Notes. It is always permissible for a referee to award an ordinary foul under this Rule before the 35 seconds possession period has elapsed.

If the goalkeeper is the only player of his team in his half of the field of play, it shall be deemed wasting time for him to receive the ball from another member of his team who is in the other half of the field of play.

In the last minute, the referees must be certain that there is intentional wasting time before applying this Rule.]

WP21 EXCLUSION FOULS

WP21.1 It shall be an exclusion foul to commit any of the following offences (WP21.4 to WP21.17), which shall be punished (except as otherwise provided by the Rules) by the award of a free throw to the opposing team and the exclusion of the player who committed the foul.

WP21.2 The excluded player shall move to the re-entry area nearest to his own goal line without leaving the water. An excluded player who removes himself from the water (other than following the entry of a substitute) shall be deemed guilty of an offence under WP21.11 (Disrespect).

[Notes. An excluded player (including any player excluded under the Rules for the remainder of the game) shall remain in the water and move (which may include swimming underwater) to the re-entry position nearest to his own goal line without interfering with the play. He may swim from the field of play at any point on the goal line and may swim behind the goal to reach the re-entry area provided he does not interfere with the alignment of the goal.

On reaching the re-entry area, the excluded player shall be required to visibly rise to the surface of the water before he (or a substitute) shall be permitted to re-enter in accordance with the Rules. However, it shall not be necessary for the excluded player to then remain in the re-entry area to await the arrival of an intended substitute.]

WP21.3 The excluded player or a substitute shall be permitted to re-enter the field of play after the earliest occurrence of one of the following:

- (a) when 20 seconds of actual play have elapsed, at which time the secretary shall raise the appropriate flag provided that the excluded player has reached his re-entry area in accordance with the Rules;
- (b) when a goal has been scored;
- (c) when the excluded player's team has retaken possession of the ball (which means receiving control of the ball) during actual play, at which time the defensive referee shall signal re-entry by a hand signal;
- (d) when the excluded player's team is awarded a free throw or goal throw, the referee's signal to award the throw qualifies as the re-entry signal, provided that the excluded player has reached his re-entry area in accordance with the Rules.

The excluded player or a substitute shall be permitted to re-enter the field of play from the re-entry area nearest to his own goal line, provided that:

- (a) he has received a signal from the secretary or a referee;
- (b) he shall not jump or push off from the side or wall of the

- pool or field of play;
- (c) he shall not affect the alignment of the goal;
- (d) a substitute shall not be permitted to enter in the place of an excluded player until that player has reached the re-entry area nearest to his own goal line.

After a goal has been scored an excluded player or a substitute may re-enter the field of play from any place.

These provisions shall also apply to the entry of a substitute when the excluded player has received three personal fouls or has otherwise been excluded from the remainder of the game in accordance with the Rules.

[Notes. A substitute shall not be signaled in by a referee and nor shall the secretary signal the expiration of 20 seconds exclusion period until the excluded player has reached the re-entry area nearest to his own goal line. This shall also apply to the re-entry of a substitute who is to replace a player excluded from the remainder of the game. In the event of an excluded player failing to return to his re-entry area, a substitute shall not be permitted to enter until a goal has been scored or at the end of a period.

The primary responsibility for giving the signal for the re-entry of an excluded player or a substitute is with the defensive referee. However, the attacking referee may also assist in this regard and the signal of either referee shall be valid. If a referee suspects an improper re-entry or the goal judge signals such an improper re-entry, then he should first satisfy himself that the other referee had not signaled the re-entry.

Before giving the signal for the re-entry of an excluded player or a substitute, the defensive referee should wait momentarily in case the attacking referee whistles to restore possession to the opponent's team.

A change of possession does not occur merely because of the end of a period, but an excluded player or substitute shall be eligible to re-enter if his team wins the ball at the swim up at the start of the next period. If a player is excluded when the end of a period is signaled, the referees and the secretary shall ensure that the teams have the correct number of players before signaling for the restart.]

WP21.4 For a player to leave the water or sit or stand on the steps or side of the pool during play, except in the case of accident, injury, illness or with the permission of a referee.

WP21.5 To interfere with the taking of a free throw, goal throw or corner throw, including:

- (a) intentionally to throw away or fail to release the ball to prevent the normal progress of the game;
- (b) any attempt to play the ball before it has left the hand of the thrower.

[Notes. A player is not to be penalized under this Rule if he does not hear the whistle as a result of being under the water. The referees must determine if the actions of the player are intentional.



Figure 13



Figure 14

Interference with a throw may take place indirectly when the ball is hampered, delayed or prevented from reaching the player who is to take the throw, or it may occur when the execution of the throw is interfered with by an opponent blocking the direction of the throw (figure 13) or by disturbing the actual movement of the thrower (figure 14). For interference with a penalty throw, see also WP21.16]

WP21.6 To splash in the face of an opponent intentionally.

[Notes. Splashing is frequently used as an unfair tactic but is often only penalized in the obvious situation when players are facing one another (see figure 15). However, it can also occur less obviously when a player produces a curtain of water with his arm, seemingly without deliberate intent, in an attempt to block the view of the opponent who is about to shoot at goal or to make a pass.

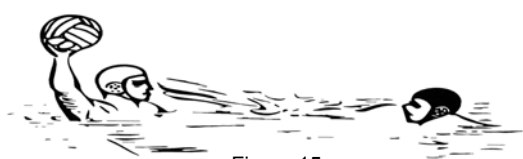


Figure 15

The punishment for intentionally splashing an opponent is exclusion under WP21.6 or a penalty throw under WP22.2 if the opponent is inside the 4 meter area and is attempting to shoot at goal. Whether to award a penalty throw or an exclusion is decided solely by the positioning and actions of the attacking player; whether the offending player is inside the 4 meter area or outside is not a decisive factor.]

WP21.7 To hold, sink or pull back an opponent who is not holding the ball. "Holding" is lifting, carrying or touching the ball, but does not include dribbling the ball.

[Note. The correct application of this Rule is very important both as to the presentation of the game and in arriving at a proper and fair result. The wording of the Rule is clear and explicit and can only be interpreted in one way: to hold (figure 16), sink (figure 17) or pull back (figure 18) an opponent who is not holding the ball is an exclusion foul. It is essential that referees apply this Rule correctly, without personal arbitrary interpretation, to ensure that the proper limits to rough play are not exceeded. In addition, referees must note that an infringement of WP21.7 within the 4 meter area which prevents a probable goal must be punished by the award of a penalty throw.]



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18

WP21.8 To kick or strike an opponent intentionally or make disproportionate movements with that intent.

[Notes. The offence of kicking or striking can take a number of different forms, including being committed by a player in possession of the ball or by an opposing player; possession of the ball is not a decisive factor. What is important is the action of the offending player, including if he makes disproportionate movements in an attempt to kick or strike, even if he fails to make contact.

One of the most serious acts of striking is elbowing backwards (figure 19), which can result in serious injury to the opponent. Similarly, serious injury can occur when a player intentionally heads back into the face of an opponent who is marking him closely. In these circumstances, the referee would also be justified in punishing the offence under WP21.10 (Brutality) rather than under WP21.8]



Figure 19

WP21.9 To be guilty of misconduct, including the use of foul language, violent or persistent foul play, etc. The offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game, with substitution after the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3. [Note. Persistent foul play refers to play which is unacceptable within the spirit of the Rules and which is likely to bring the game into disrepute. Persistent foul play is entirely different and unrelated to "persisting in an ordinary foul".]

[Note. Persistent foul play refers to play which is unacceptable within the spirit of the Rules and which is likely to bring the game into disrepute. Persistent foul play is entirely different and unrelated to "persisting in an ordinary foul".]

WP21.10 To commit an act of brutality (including kicking or striking or attempting to kick or strike with malicious intent) against an opponent or official, whether during play (including any stoppages or timeouts) or the intervals between periods of play. The offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game and shall not be substituted.

[Notes. In the last minute of the game, the referees may delay declaring a brutality offence until the next change of possession.

This Rule shall also apply if an act of brutality occurs during the intervals between periods, except that the free throw shall not be awarded. The offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game, without substitution, and his team shall continue the game with one less player. These provisions shall not apply, however, before the game has actually commenced.

In the case of brutality at any time by a substitute who is not in the water during the play, the offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game. The captain of the team shall be ordered to remove from the water a player of his choice and the team shall continue with one less player. The player who has been removed can subsequently be used during the remainder of the game as one of his team's remaining players in the water and no personal foul shall be awarded in relation to his removal from the water.]

WP21.11 To refuse obedience to or show disrespect for a referee or official. The offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game, with substitution after the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3.

[Note. If a member of a team commits an act of disrespect prior to the restart of play after the opposing team has scored a goal, during the interval between periods or during a timeout, the player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game and the player's team shall be permitted to restart the game with seven players.]

WP21.12 For a player of the team not in possession of the ball to commit any of the following offences before a free throw, goal throw, corner throw or penalty throw is taken or for a player of either team to commit any of the following offences before a neutral throw is taken:

- WP20.9 – to impede an opponent
- WP20.10 – to push or push off from an opponent
- WP21.4 to WP21.11 – to commit an exclusion foul

The original throw (including any neutral throw) shall be maintained. The player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game where the Rules so provide.

WP21.13 For a player of each team to commit any of the following offences simultaneously before a free throw, goal throw, corner throw, penalty throw or neutral throw is taken:

- WP20.9 – to impede an opponent
- WP20.10 – to push or push off from an opponent
- WP21.4 to WP21.11 – to commit an exclusion foul

Both players shall be excluded and a neutral throw awarded; except that if the offences are committed simultaneously at the taking of a penalty throw, the penalty throw shall be maintained. Players shall be excluded from the remainder of the game where the Rules so provide.

[Notes. In the circumstances of this Rule, a change of possession is deemed not to have occurred merely because one team gains possession of the ball from the neutral throw. The players excluded under this Rule shall not be permitted to re-enter until the next earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3 following the neutral throw.

However, this only applies to the two players who were excluded simultaneously and any other players who were already excluded shall be permitted to re-enter if the neutral throw results in a change of possession.

If the two players who have been excluded under this Rule are eligible to re-enter before they have reached their respective re-entry areas, the defensive referee may wave in each player as soon as he is ready to re-enter. The referee does not have to wait until both players are ready to re-enter.]

WP21.14 For a player of the team in possession to commit an offence under WP21.4 to WP21.11 (exclusion fouls) before a free throw, goal throw, corner throw or penalty throw is taken; except that:

- (a) the player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game where the Rules so provide;
- (b) if the offence is committed at the taking of a penalty throw, the penalty throw shall be maintained.

WP21.15 For an excluded player to re-enter or a substitute to

enter the field of play improperly, including:

- (a) without having received a signal from the secretary or referee;
- (b) from any place other than his own re-entry area, except where the Rules provide for immediate substitution;
- (c) by jumping or pushing off from the side or wall of the pool or field of play;
- (d) by affecting the alignment of the goal.

If this offence occurs in the last minute of the game or the last minute of the second period of extra time, the offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game, with substitution after the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3, and a penalty throw awarded to the opposing team.

[Note. It shall be an improper re-entry if an excluded player re-enters or a substitute enters without having received the referee's signal, even if the referee should have given the signal earlier.]

WP21.16 To interfere with the taking of a penalty throw. The offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game with substitution after the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3 and the penalty throw shall be maintained or re-taken as appropriate.

[Note. The most common form of interference with a penalty throw is when an opponent aims a kick at the player taking the throw, just as the throw is about to be taken. It is essential for the referees to ensure that all players are at least 2 meters from the thrower, to prevent such interference taking place. The referee should also allow the defending team the first right to take position.]

WP21.17 For the defending goalkeeper to fail to take up his correct position on the goal line at the taking of a penalty throw having been ordered once to do so by the referee. Another defending player may take the position of the goalkeeper but without his privileges or limitations.

WP21.18 When a player of each team commits an exclusion foul or a penalty foul simultaneously during actual play, both players shall be excluded and a neutral throw awarded.

[Note. See also notes to WP21.13]

WP21.19 When a player is excluded, the exclusion period shall commence immediately when the ball has left the hand of the player taking the free throw or when the ball has been touched following a neutral throw.

WP21.20 If an excluded player intentionally interferes with play, including affecting the alignment of the goal, a penalty throw shall be awarded to the opposing team and a further personal foul awarded against the excluded player. If the excluded player does not commence leaving the field of play almost immediately, the referee may deem this to be intentional interference under this Rule.

WP21.21 In the event of the game continuing into extra time, the exclusion period of any excluded player shall also continue into the extra time. Personal fouls awarded during the periods of normal time shall also carry forward into extra time and any player excluded under the Rules from the remainder of the game shall not be permitted to take part in any periods of extra time.

WP22.2 For a defending player to commit any foul within the 4 meter area but for which a goal would probably have resulted.

[Notes. In addition to other offences preventing a probable goal, it is an offence within the meaning of this Rule:

- (a) for a goalkeeper or other defending player to pull down or otherwise displace the goal (figure 20);
- (b) for a defending player to play the ball with two hands (figure 21);
- (c) for a defending player to play the ball with a clenched fist (figure 22);
- (d) for a goalkeeper or other defending player to take the ball under the water when tackled.



Figure 20

Figure 21



Figure 22

It is important to note that while the fouls described above, and other fouls such as holding, pulling back, impeding, etc., would normally be punished by a free throw (and exclusion if appropriate), they become penalty fouls if committed within the 4 meter area by a defending player if a probable goal would otherwise have been scored.]

WP22.3 For a defending player within the 4 meter area to kick or strike an opponent or to commit an act of brutality. In the case of brutality, the offending player shall also be excluded from the remainder of the game, without substitution, in addition to the award of the penalty.

WP22.4 For an excluded player intentionally to interfere with play, including affecting the alignment of the goal.

WP22.5 For a goalkeeper or any other defending player to pull over the goal completely with the object of preventing a probable goal. The offending player shall also be excluded from the remainder of the game, with substitution after the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3.

WP22.6 For an excluded player to re-enter or a substitute to enter the field of play improperly prior to or at the expiration of an exclusion period with the object of preventing a goal. The offending player shall also leave the field of play to complete any of the original exclusion period remaining, if appropriate.

[Note. In the circumstances of this Rule, if the attacking team is in a position to shoot at goal, the referee shall wait to see if a

goal is scored before stopping the play. If a goal is scored, the penalty throw is not awarded, but a personal foul is recorded against the offending player. If a goal is not scored, the referee shall then immediately award a penalty throw in accordance with this Rule.]

WP22.7 For an excluded player to re-enter or a substitute to enter the field of play improperly during the last minute of the game or the last minute of the second period of any extra time. The offending player shall also be excluded from the remainder of the game, with substitution after the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3.

WP22.8 For a player or substitute who is not entitled under the Rules to participate in the play at that time to enter the field of play. The offending player shall also be excluded from the remainder of the game with substitution, where appropriate, after the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3. This Rule shall not apply to an excluded player who re-enters or a substitute who enters the field of play before the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3.

[Note. If an excluded player and a substitute both enter after the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3, whichever player entered last shall be the player to be penalized under this Rule. If both players enter simultaneously, it shall be the substitute who is to be penalized.]

WP22.9 For the coach of the team not in possession of the ball to request a timeout or for a team official to take any action to prevent a probable goal; except that no personal foul shall be recorded for this offence.

WP23 PENALTY THROWS

WP23.1 A penalty throw shall be taken by any player of the team to which it is awarded, except the goalkeeper, from any point on the opponents' 4 meter line.

WP23.2 All players shall leave the 4 meter area and shall be at least two meters from the player taking the throw. On each side of the player taking the throw, one player of the defending team shall have the first right to take position. The defending goalkeeper shall be positioned between the goal posts with no part of his body beyond the goal line at water level. Should the goalkeeper be out of the water, another player may take the position of the goalkeeper but without his privileges and limitations.

WP23.3 When the referee controlling the taking of the throw is satisfied that the players are in their correct positions he shall signal for the throw to be taken, by whistle and by simultaneously lowering his arm from a vertical to a horizontal position.

[Note. The lowering of the arm at the same time as the signal by whistle makes it possible under any conditions, even amidst noise by spectators, to execute the throw in accordance with the Rules. As the arm is lifted, the player taking the throw will concentrate, for he knows that the signal will follow immediately.]

WP23.4 The player taking the penalty throw shall have possession of the ball and shall immediately throw it with an uninterrupted movement directly at the goal. The player may take the throw by lifting the ball from the water (figure 23) or with the ball held in the raised hand (figure 24) and the ball may be taken backwards from the direction of the goal in preparation for the forward throw, provided that

the continuity of the movement shall not be interrupted before the ball leaves the thrower's hand.



Figure 23

Figure 24

[Note. There is nothing in the Rules to prevent a player taking the throw with his back to the goal while he adopts a half screw or full screw action.]

WP23.5 If the ball rebounds from the goal post, crossbar or goalkeeper it remains in play and it shall not be necessary for another player to play or touch the ball before a goal can be scored.

WP23.6 If at precisely the same time as the referee awards a penalty throw the timekeeper whistles for the end of a period, all players except the player taking the throw and the defending goalkeeper shall leave the water before the penalty throw is taken. In this situation, the ball shall immediately be dead should it rebound into play from the goal post, crossbar or the goalkeeper.

WP24 PERSONAL FOULS

WP24.1 A personal foul shall be recorded against any player who commits an exclusion foul or penalty foul. The referee shall indicate the offending player's cap number to the secretary.

WP24.2 Upon receiving a third personal foul, a player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game with substitution after the earliest occurrence referred to in WP21.3. If the third personal foul is a penalty foul, the entry of the substitute shall be immediate.

WP25 ACCIDENT, INJURY AND ILLNESS

WP25.1 A player shall only be allowed to leave the water, or sit or stand on the steps or side of the pool during play in the case of accident, injury, illness or with the permission of a referee. A player who has left the water legitimately may re-enter from the re-entry area nearest his own goal line at an appropriate stoppage, with the permission of a referee.

WP25.2 If a player is bleeding, the referee shall immediately order the player out of the water with the immediate entry of a substitute and the game shall continue without interruption. After the bleeding has stopped, the player is permitted to be a substitute in the ordinary course of the game.

WP25.3 If accident, injury or illness, other than bleeding, occurs, a referee may at his discretion suspend the game for not more than three minutes, in which case he shall instruct the timekeeper as to when the stoppage period is to commence.

WP25.4 Should the game be stopped through accident, injury, illness, bleeding or other unforeseen reason, the team in possession of the ball at the time of the stoppage shall put the ball into play at the place of stoppage when the play is resumed.

WP25.5 Except in the circumstances of WP25.2 (bleeding), the player shall not be allowed to take further part in the game if a substitute has entered.

APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE USE OF TWO REFEREES

1. The referees are in absolute control of the game and shall have equal powers to declare fouls and penalties. Differences of opinion of the referees shall not serve as a basis for protest or appeal.
2. The committee or organization appointing the referees shall have power to designate the side of the pool from which each referee shall officiate. Referees shall change sides of the pool before the start of any period when the teams do not change ends.
3. At the start of the game and of each period, the starting signal shall be given by the referee on the same side as the official table.
4. After a goal, the signal to restart shall be given by the referee who was controlling the attacking situation when the goal was scored. Before restarting, the referees shall ensure that any substitutions have been completed.
5. Each referee shall have the power to declare fouls in any part of the field of play but each referee shall give his primary attention to the offensive situation attacking the goal to his right. The referee not controlling the attacking situation (the defensive referee) shall maintain a position no closer to the goal being attacked than that player of the attacking team furthest back from the goal.
6. When awarding a free throw, goal throw or corner throw, the referee making the decision shall blow his whistle and both referees shall indicate the direction of the attack, to enable players in different parts of the pool to see quickly which team has been awarded the throw. The referee making the decision shall point to where the throw is to be taken if the ball is not at that position. Referees shall use the signals set out in Appendix B to indicate the nature of the fouls which they are penalizing.
7. The signal for a penalty throw to be taken shall be made by the attacking referee, except that a player who wishes to take the throw with his left hand may request the defensive referee to make the signal.
8. When simultaneous free throws are awarded by both referees to the same team, the award shall go to the player awarded the throw by the attacking referee.
9. When simultaneous awards are made for ordinary fouls but for opposing teams, the award shall be a neutral throw, to be taken by the attacking referee.
10. When one referee awards an exclusion foul and at the same moment the other referee awards a penalty foul but for opposing teams, both the offending players shall be excluded and a neutral throw awarded.
11. When simultaneous awards are made by both referees and one is for an ordinary foul and the other is for an exclusion foul or penalty foul, the exclusion foul or penalty foul award shall be applied.
12. When players of both teams commit an exclusion foul simultaneously, whether during actual play or in dead time, the offending players shall be excluded and a neutral throw awarded.
13. In the event of simultaneous awards of penalty throws to both teams, the first throw shall be taken by the team last in possession of the ball. After the second penalty has been taken, the game shall be restarted with a neutral throw on the half distance line.

APPENDIX B

SIGNALS TO BE USED BY OFFICIALS



Fig. A The referee lowers his arm from a vertical position to signal (i) the start of the period (ii) to restart after a goal (iii) the taking of a penalty throw.

Fig. B To point with one arm in the direction of the attack and to use the other arm to indicate the place where the ball is to be put into play at a free throw, goal throw or corner throw.

Fig. C To signal a neutral throw. The referee points to the place where the neutral throw has been awarded, points both thumbs up and calls for the ball.

Fig. D To signal the exclusion of a player. The referee points to the player and then moves the arm quickly towards the boundary of the field of play. The referee then signals the excluded player's cap number so that it is visible to the field of play and the table.

Fig. E To signal the simultaneous exclusion of two players. The referee points with both hands to the two players, signals their exclusion in accordance with Fig. D, and then immediately signals the players' cap numbers.

Fig. F To signal the exclusion of a player with substitution. The referee signals exclusion in accordance with Fig. D (or Fig. E if appropriate) and then rotates his hands round one another in such a way that is visible to both the field of play and the table. The referee then signals the excluded player's cap number to the table.

Fig. G To signal the exclusion of a player without substitution. The referee signals exclusion in accordance with Fig. D (or Fig. E if appropriate) and then crosses his arms in such a way that is visible to both the field of play and the table. The referee then signals the excluded player's cap number to the table.

Fig. H To signal the award of a penalty throw. The referee raises his arm with four fingers in the air. The referee then signals the offending player's cap number to the table.

Fig. I To signal that a goal has been scored. The referee signals by whistle and by immediately pointing to the center of the field of play.

Fig. J To indicate the exclusion foul of holding an opponent. The referee makes a motion holding the wrist of one hand with the other hand.

Fig. K To indicate the exclusion foul of sinking an opponent. The referee makes a downward motion with both hands starting from a horizontal position.

Fig. L To indicate the exclusion foul of pulling back an opponent. The referee makes a pulling motion with both hands vertically extended and pulling towards his body.

Fig. M To indicate the exclusion foul of kicking an opponent. The referee makes a kicking movement.

Fig. N To indicate the exclusion foul of striking an opponent. The referee makes a striking motion with a closed fist starting from a horizontal position.

Fig. O To indicate the ordinary foul of pushing or pushing off from an opponent. The referee makes a pushing motion away from his body starting from a horizontal position.

Fig. P To indicate the ordinary foul of impeding an opponent. The referee makes a crossing motion with one hand horizontally crossing the other.

Fig. Q To indicate the ordinary foul of taking the ball under the water. The referee makes a downward motion with his hand starting from a horizontal position.

Fig. R To indicate the ordinary foul of standing on the bottom of the pool. The referee raises and lowers one foot.

Fig. S To indicate the ordinary foul of undue delay in the taking of a free throw, goal throw or corner throw. The referee raises his hand once or twice with the palm turned upwards.

Fig. T To indicate a violation of the two-meter Rule. The referee indicates the number 2 by raising the fore and middle fingers in the air with the arm vertically extended.

Fig. U To indicate the ordinary fouls of wasting time and expiry of 35 seconds' possession. The referee moves his hand in a circular motion two or three times.

Fig. V By a goal judge to signal for the start of a period by raising one arm vertically.

Fig. W By a goal judge to signal improper start, restart or improper entry of an excluded player by raising both arms vertically.

Fig. X By a goal judge to signal a goal throw or corner throw by pointing with the arm horizontally in the direction of the attack.

Fig. Y By a goal judge to signal a goal by raising and crossing both arms.

Fig. Z To indicate a player's cap number. To enable the referee to communicate better with the players and the secretary, signals are made using both hands if appropriate where the number exceeds five

One hand shows five fingers with the other hand showing additional fingers to make up the sum of the player's number. For the number ten, a clenched fist is shown. If the number exceeds ten, one hand is shown as a clenched fist with the other hand showing additional fingers to make up the sum of the player's number.

FINA AGE GROUP WATER POLO RULES

WPAG1 All age group competitors remain qualified from 1 January to the following 31 December at their age at the close of day (12 midnight) on 31 December of the year of competition.

WPAG2 Age groupings for Water Polo for boys and girls are as follows:

- 15 years of age and under
- 16 and 17 years of age
- 18, 19 and 20 years of age

The age for Junior World Championships is 20 years and under.

FINA MASTERS WATER POLO RULES

MWP1 Age groups for Masters Water Polo shall apply for men, mixed, and women teams.

MWP2 The age of the youngest member of the team determines the age group of the team. There are no restrictions on the ages of any players older than the youngest player on the team.

MWP3 Age groups for teams are at five-year intervals beginning with 30. i.e. 30+, 35+, 40+ . . .

MWP4 Women players may be members of men's teams.

MWP5 The Water Polo Rules in Part VI of this Handbook shall apply to Masters Water Polo with the following exceptions:

MWP5.1 The uniform distance between the respective goal lines shall be 23.5 meters minimum, and the uniform width of the field of play shall be 17 meters minimum.

MWP5.2 WP13 time standards shall apply except that the duration of the Masters games shall be four periods of five minutes each actual play.

MWP5.3 In any game, each team shall be entitled to two timeouts of one minute duration. A timeout may be called at any time by any player or coach whose team has control of the ball. Such a request may be signalled by calling "timeout" and/or by signalling with hands forming a "T". A timeout may not be called prior to a penalty throw. When a timeout is called, the 35-second clock is not reset. The team calling a timeout resumes play with a goal throw.

FINA FACILITIES RULES (see WP1.5)

FR 7.2 Field of play. The distance between the respective goal lines shall be 30.0 meters. The width of the field of play shall be 20.0 meters. The depth of the water shall be nowhere less than 1.8 meters, preferably 2.0 meters.

FR 7.3 The water temperature shall not be less than 26°±1° Centigrade.

FR 7.4 The light intensity shall not be less than 600 lux.

FR 7.5 Exception from FR 7.2 may be allowed on the discretion of the federation controlling the match.

FR 8.3 The light intensity shall not be less than 1500 lux.

FINA TIE BREAK SYSTEM

BL6.6.1 Classification of Teams

The classification teams in the preliminary rounds will be made on points; namely 2 points won, 1 points for each match drawn, and 0 points for each match lost.

BL 6..6.2 Forfeited Game

If a team forfeits a match, or is disqualified for one or more matches, the match or matches shall be awarded to the opponent with the goal score of 5–0.

BL6.6.3 Tie-Braking

BL6.6.3.1 If two teams shall have equal points, further classification shall be established as follows:

BL6.6.3.1.1 The team winning the game between the two teams shall be placed higher.

BL6.6.3.2 If the game between the two teams resulted in a tie, a further classification shall be established based on their results against the other teams in order of their ranking; first based upon goal difference, and next, based on goals scored. The comparison shall be made first, compared to the highest team, and then, if still tied to the next highest team, and so on.

BL6.6.3.3 If they are still tied, the tie shall be resolved by each team shooting five penalty shots at its opponent's goal in alternate succession. The first team shall take its first penalty shot and then the other team shall take its first penalty shot, etc. If a tie shall exist after that procedure, each team shall then take alternate shots until one team scores and the other misses. Different members of the team must shoot each shot. The procedure shall be conducted following the final game of that round or at the first practical opportunity.

BL6.6.3.2 If three or more teams shall have equal points, further classification shall be established as follows:

BL6.6.3.2.1 Any time during the application of this BL6.6.3.2, when the number of the then tied teams is reduced to two BL6.6.3.1.1, BL 6.6.1..2 and BL6.6.3.1.3 shall be followed.

BL 6.6.3.2.2 The results among the tied teams shall determine the placing. The comparison shall be made upon first, the points of the games among them, next the goal difference, and next, based upon goals scored.

BL 6.6.3.2.3 If more than two teams are then still tied, a further classification shall be established based on their results against the other teams in order of their ranking; difference, and next, based upon goals scored. The comparison shall be made first, compared to the highest team, and then, if still tied, to the next highest team, and so on.

BL 6.6.3.2.4 If they are still tied, the tie shall be resolved by each team shooting five penalty shots at its opponent's goal in alternate succession. The first team shall take its first penalty shot and then the other team shall take its first penalty shot, etc. If a tie shall exist after that procedure, each team shall then take alternate shots until one team misses and the other(s) score. Different members of the team must shoot each shot. The procedure shall be conducted following the final game of that round or at the first practical opportunity.

8 Countdown to the Start of the Game

The following “countdown” should be used, if at all possible.

	Scoreboard time (minutes)
Pool available for practice	25:00
Clear pool	10:00
Introduce visiting team	8:00
Introduce home team	7:00
Announce officials	6:00
National Anthem(s)	5:00
Team Exchange	2:30
Final team huddle	1:30
Game starts	0:00

9 FINA Instructions to Referees

WATER POLO GUIDE

Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur

September 1999

(Printed with permission of the FINA Technical Water Polo Committee)

WP1. FIELD OF PLAY AND EQUIPMENT

Before the game, the referees shall ensure that the field of play and/or audible equipment comply with the rules. They shall also satisfy themselves regarding the signals made by any electronic equipment.

WP4. CAPS

Referees should not tolerate the situation of the players of one team repeatedly losing their caps or having untied caps. When a cap is lost or untied, the referee shall call for the ball at the first appropriate stoppage.

WP5. TEAMS & SUBSTITUTES

- The coach shall be allowed to stand and to move around his team’s bench and when his team is in attack, to advance to his team’s 4-metre mark. When his team is defending, he should return to his bench.
- If the coach makes any remarks to the referee, he shall be instructed by the referee to remain at the bench for the remainder of the game. Any further misbehavior by the coach shall be dealt with as appropriate by the referee or delegate.

The Yellow Card/Red Card system to control the Team Bench must be adopted at all FINA Water Polo Events and will be administered as follows, namely:

- That the issuing (signaling) of the “Yellow Card” by the referee is an official warning to the Team Coach and/or Team Official on the bench.

That the subsequent issuing (signaling) of the “Red Card” by the referee is the signal that the Team Coach and/or Team Official on the bench must retire to the public tribune or to such designated place as designated by the Technical Water Polo Committee. (It should be noted that, should the actions of the Team Coach and/or Team Official warrant, the referee may issue (signal) the “Red Card” without having issued (signaled) the “Yellow Card”, which in normal circumstances would be the initial warning.)

- The coach may freely advance along the pool side when making substitutions after a goal has been

scored.

- (d) Players excluded for the remainder of the game under WP 21.9 (Misconduct), WP 21.10 (Brutality) or WP 21.11 (Disrespect) shall remain at the bench with cap.
- (e) In addition to the captain's responsibilities, the coaches shall also be responsible for the good conduct and discipline of their teams and all persons on the bench. Smoking shall not be permitted.

WP 5.6

At any time during the game, a player may be substituted by leaving the field at the re-entry area nearest to his own goal line. The substitute may enter the field of play from the re-entry area as soon as the departing player has visibly risen to the surface of the water within the re-entry area.

A player cannot be substituted after the calling (awarding) of a penalty throw unless in accordance with WP 24.2 or if a timeout is requested.

If a goal-keeper is substituted, the substitute must invariably enter the field of play wearing the red cap (it is up to the team to provide another cap or whether the player changes cap before entering the field of play – but play should go on). The coach is to indicate to the official table the cap number of the substituting player.

After a goal is scored, the referee should not restart the play until he is satisfied that all substitutions have been completed.

In the case of substitutions during play, the referees should take care not to miss fouls and other incidents while observing that the substitution is made correctly. The secretary is also responsible to ensure that substitutions during play are made correctly.

WP 7. REFEREES

- (a) The referees must use the illustrations as provided in the Rule Book – Appendix B.
- (b) It is not necessary to award a free throw to an attacking player other than the player with the ball, so long as his team is in possession of the ball. However, a free throw shall be awarded if the player with the ball loses possession as a result of a foul or if there is real advantage for his team.
- (c) The referee shall conduct the game in such a way as to assist the teams to develop the play in accordance with the spirit of the rules.

WP 8. GOAL JUDGES

The referees shall be responsible for the award of goals, goal throws and corner throws irrespective of the goal judges.

WP 8.3

That whenever the ball leaves the field of play, i.e. thrown or deflected, the goal judge must immediately on signal from the referee throw the ball to the nearest player of the team, which will not have possession.

WP 12. TIMEOUTS

WP 12.1

Each team shall be entitled to two (2) TIMEOUTS in any game, including extra time. A TIMEOUT may be requested at any time by the coach of the team in possession of the ball by calling "TIMEOUT" and signaling with the hands forming a T-Shape or in another approved manner. When a TIMEOUT is requested, the referees and the secretaries shall stop the game by whistle. The defensive referee should be particularly alert to the possibility of a timeout being called.

N.B. As in almost all cases whenever the TIMEOUT is called, play is developing on the other side of the field of play. The referees, delegate and persons on the official table are looking at the side of play and not in the direction where the coach of the attacking team is sitting. It is recommended that on the official table one person should take care of the TIMEOUTS and pay attention ONLY to the bench of the attacking team to see when the coach calls for the TIMEOUT.

At a TIMEOUT, the defensive referee should take the ball. Other balls may not be used by the players during a TIMEOUT.

RESTARTING AFTER CALLING OF A TIMEOUT

The defensive referee with the ball takes position at the mid-field of play. The timekeeper should make a "WARNING" signal by whistle 15 seconds before the end of the TIMEOUT. Both teams must stay in their respective half fields of play to receive instructions from the coach; teams may only take up their position to restart following a TIMEOUT on the "WARNING" signal from the timekeeper (following the expiration of 45 seconds). The TIMEOUT must be the full 60 seconds. Immediately the defensive referee will throw the ball at the center of the half distance line of the field of play and whistle for the restart of the game with the team in possession of the ball putting the ball into play at the half distance line (All players may take any position in the field of play, which they deem to be most advantageous).

WP 12.2

if TIMEOUT is requested by the coach of the team in possession of the ball, play shall be restarted on the whistle of the referee and the team in possession of the ball putting the ball into play at the half distance line. (All players make take any position in the field of play which they deem to be most advantageous.)

WP 12.2(a)

If TIMEOUT is requested by the coach of the team in possession of the ball after the calling (awarding) of a penalty throw or corner throw, play shall be restarted by the team in possession of the ball taking the penalty throw or corner throw (All players may take any position in the field of play which they deem to be most advantageous but in accordance with the rules pertaining to the taking of penalty throw or corner throw).

WP 12.2(b)

If TIMEOUT is requested after the scoring of a goal, the referee shall restart play in accordance with WP 15 and then immediately stop play for the requested TIMEOUT.

A goal cannot be scored directly from the free throw by which the game is restarted after a timeout. (See notes WP 14.3)

CALLING OF ILLEGAL TIMEOUT

WP 12.3

If a third or additional timeout is requested b the coach of the team in possession of the ball, play shall be restarted on the whistle of the referee and the team previously not in possession of the ball putting it into play at the half distance line. (All players may take any position in the field of play, which they deem to be most advantageous.)

WP 12.4

If the timeout is requested by the coach of the team not in possession of the ball, a penalty throw shall be awarded to the opposing team.

WP 13 THE START OF PLAY

At the start of the game and at the restart of each period the referees shall take up a position opposite one another on the half distance line. The starting referee shall wait with his arm raised in vertical position for the signal of his colleague that both teams are correctly positioned on the goal line. The signal shall be made by raising both hands (above the head) when both teams are positioned correctly. The starting referee shall then signal immediately for the start by blowing his whistle and lowering his arm to a horizontal position. This procedure should reduce the possibility of a false start.

FALSE START

Although this should hopefully never happen if correct signalisation by both referees occurs, if it happens, play should restart from half distance line.

WP 14 METHOD OF SCORING**WP 14.3**

A goal may be scored by any part of the body except the clenched fist. At the start or any restart of the game, at least two players (of either team but excluding the defending goalkeeper) must play or intentionally touch the ball except at the taking of:

- (a) a penalty throw;
- (b) a free throw thrown by a player into his own goal;
- (c) an immediate shot from a goal throw, or an immediate shot from a free throw awarded outside 7 meters.

SHOT AT GOAL FROM FREE THROW OUTSIDE 7 METERS**SCORING A GOAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH WP 14.3 (d).**

The defensive referee can assist by taking apposition near the 7 meter line whenever possible to confirm whether the shot was taken inside or outside the 7 meter area. The shot must be immediate. Referees may find it helpful to use the same criteria as for taking of a penalty throw.

A goal may be scored by a player shooting from outside 7 meters after his team has been awarded a free throw for a foul committed outside 7 meters. This is also to apply to the situation should the ball be closer to the defending team's goal. In this situation, the ball must without delay be returned to the point at which the foul occurred whereupon the player may immediately shoot.

NOT SCORING A GOAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH WP 14.3 (d).

The player may not score in the following circumstances:

- (a) restarting after calling of a timeout
- (b) restarting after a goal
- (c) restarting following injury, or in bleeding
- (d) restarting following replacement of a cap
- (e) restarting after the referee has called for the ball
- (f) restarting after the ball has left the field of play
- (g) restarting after any other delay
- (h) if the foul is committed inside 7 meters even if the position of the ball is outside 7 meters

A direct shot at goal taken after a free throw has been awarded inside the 7 meter line is considered to be an ordinary foul and the referee is to award a free throw to the opposing team, whether this shot has entered the goal or whether the ball has been diverted outside the field of play by a defender.

However, if a player taking the free throw inside the 7 meter line passes the ball to a player on his team and the ball is diverted by a defending player into the goal or outside the field of play, then the resulting goal, corner throw, or free throw is to stand.

WP 15 RESTARTING AFTER A GOAL

After a goal is scored, both referees take up a position on the half-distance line. When both referees are satisfied that any substitutions have been completed, the referee who is to control the attacking play shall raise his hand and advance along the pool side to his right, and the other referee shall restart the play.

The referees shall ensure that the correct number of players are in the water before restarting play.

WP17 CORNER THROWS

At the taking of a corner throw on the side opposite to the attacking referee, the defensive referee shall ensure that the throw is taken from the correct position by going to the 2 meter line, pointing with his right arm to where the ball has to be put into play and with his left arm the direction.

WP18 NEUTRAL THROWS

If referees award free throws simultaneously for ordinary fouls for opposing teams, the award shall be a neutral throw. (A referee should only change his decision under these circumstances if he realizes he made a mistake.)

At a neutral throw, a referee shall throw the ball into the air at approximately the same lateral position where the event occurred (WP 18.2). Referees are reminded that should the players touch the ball before it reaches the water, there is no foul and play should continue.

WP19 FREE THROWS

A free throw shall be taken without undue delay.

Referees are reminded that it is an offense if a player who is clearly in position most readily to take a free throw does not do so. Provided the throw is taken without undue delay, it is not necessary for the throw to be taken by the nearest player.

WP 19.1 TAKING OF A FREE THROW

A free throw shall be taken at the place where the foul occurred, except;

- (a) if the ball is further from the defending team's goal, the free throw shall be taken from the location of the ball
- (b) if a foul is committed by a defending player within his 2 meter area, the free throw shall be taken on the 2 meter line opposite to where the foul was committed or, if the ball is outside the 2 meter area, from the location of the ball
- (c) where otherwise provided in the Rules.

According to this Rule, a free throw shall be taken at the place where the foul occurred but of course there are the three exceptions (a), (b), and (c).

The exceptions as stated in (b) and (c) are quite clear and are being applied generally without any problem whatsoever. However, exception (a) needs some interpretation and clarification as to how it should be applied.

In most cases when a foul is committed the ball is within reach of the player who was fouled and therefore the free throw is taken from where the foul occurred.

There are other situations when after a foul is committed the ball falls in a zone further from the defending team's goal. A free throw in this situation is taken from where the ball is.

However, there are other situations when the exception as stated in (a) should be applied:

Example 1.

If a foul occurs on the 6 meter line and the ball falls on the 3 meter line i.e. between the defending goalkeeper and the point where the foul occurred. One of the players passes the ball back to where the foul occurred, but it should not be interpreted, but it should not be interpreted that it must be passed back to exactly where the foul occurred. If in these circumstances, the ball falls on the 7 meter line, i.e. further from the defending team's goal, then the free throw could be taken from where the ball is located as this confirms with the wording and spirit of exception (a).

Example 2.

If the ball goes out of the field of play in a lateral position, normally the ball falls just outside the line of the field of play within easy reach of the player. He could take the ball (without leaving the field of play) and take the free throw from this point.

WP 20 ORDINARY FOULS

During the last years, you could notice players who, in order to easily get a free throw from the referee, are pushing their own bodies and/or are ducking their heads under water. This behavior should not

be encouraged by the referee easily awarding an ordinary foul.

Award of a free throw must be the result of a “real” ordinary foul. Sometimes, the player in possession of the ball does not only duck his head under water, but moves his head from under water into the body of his opponent. This is, clearly, a foul committed by the player in possession of the ball.

The referee is not the center of interest of the game, the real protagonist is the player. His creativity and his ideas form the attractiveness of the game. The good referee tries to make sure that there is always room for creativity as much as the spirit of the rules permit.

A referee should not try to draw attention to himself by exaggerated gestures or impressive attitude. He should try to referee a game without the abuse of his whistle. This means that his decision should be as clear as it is understandable.

But this means also that he should whistle as little as possible. Often, you can see a situation when a player is still able to pass the ball despite being fouled. A whistle in this case could even be a disadvantage for the attacking team. Often, you can see players who do not want to play the ball without a comfortable free throw. Don't reward the player for this kind of behavior.

Apply the Advantage Rule (WP7.3) to the fullest extent. In most cases, referees should only award ordinary fouls to the attacking player having possession of the ball. Otherwise, the referee could disturb the ideas of the attacking team, which then has to rebuild the attack.

Especially on a pass to the center forward, some referees award an ordinary foul too quickly disturbing the ideas of the attacking players and preventing a possible shooting situation.

It is not in the spirit of the game, if a team losing possession of the ball through a bad pass, that the team is then rewarded by the awarding of a free throw for another foul somewhere else.

Referees are reminded that “impeding” includes an attacking player who is in possession of the ball making backwards movements towards a defender. By observing the position of the attacking player's head, the referee may be able to determine whether the player is pushing backwards or is being pulled back by the defending player.

Referees should not penalize an attacking player who momentarily enters the 2 meter area without interfering with the play.

It is also relevant to give one instruction and interpretation regarding WP 20.17(b) provided that possession shall not include the ball merely being touched in flight by an opposing player.

This Rule is only applied when this occurs during play and the ball remains in the field of play but when it goes out of the field of play over the goal line it is a corner. This is rightly so but when the ball goes outside the field of play on the lateral side and it is merely touched by an opponent the free throw should be taken by the team in possession of the ball and the time should continue and not reset. (The possession time should be reset when the team in possession of the ball has thrown the ball out of the field of play.)

The same concept should be applied in respect to direct shots. If the ball goes out of the field of play over the goal line from the resultant goal throw the goalkeeper could score directly without passing the ball.

Possession time should be reset, whenever:

- (a) a team retains possession of the ball for more than 35 seconds without shooting at their opponents goal
- (b) the ball comes into the possession of the opposing team
- (c) the ball is put into play following the award of a:
 - i. exclusion foul
 - ii. penalty foul.
 - iii. goal throw.
 - iv. corner throw.
 - v. neutral throw.

WP 21 EXCLUSION FOULS

Most often, the point of complaint and criticism of the referees decisions by the coach, players and the fans is the lack of consistency by the referee.

The referee who has the right attitude in mind and behaviour will try to find his level and maintain it throughout the game.

It is important that you apply the Rules appropriately and be consistent from the beginning of the game to the end of the game.

CONSISTENCY IN THE PENALTY AREA

Even though the knowledge of the Rules concerning ordinary fouls, exclusion fouls or penalties seem to be very good for most referees, the decisions in this area cause much controversy. There are several criteria to be used to arrive at the correct decision. It is not east to be consistent as to what kind of foul results in penalty, exclusion or ordinary foul

- If a player is under water when the referee awards a free throw and may not have heard the whistle, the referee shall immediately repeat the whistle when the player has resurfaced.
- In the case of splashing, it is the position of the attacking player, which determines whether a penalty foul or exclusion is awarded. If the attacking player is inside the 4 meter area and a probable goal is prevented by a defending player splashing, it is a penalty irrespective of whether the defending player is inside or outside the 4 meter line. In all other cases, the correct decision is exclusion.
- Exclusion fouls apply equally to the defending and attacking players throughout the entire field of play. Referees must pay particular attention to the offenses of holding, sinking, and pulling back.
- When the ball is in flight and directed towards an attacking player, sinking committed by the defending player must be punished by exclusion. If the attacking player loses the ball or loses the opportunity to receive the ball, because of an ordinary foul by the defending player, the referee shall award a free throw.
- Contact between opposing players is permitted. The referees should allow opposing players to struggle for position and should only intervene to penalize a foul committed by a player of the team in possession of the ball, or to award an exclusion foul or in certain circumstances for an ordinary foul.

Referees are recommended that if an excluded player does not commence leaving the field of play almost immediately, the referee has the power to award a penalty throw for interference.

WP 21.3

The re-entry of an excluded player must be signaled immediately when the referee indicates a change of possession and/or direction of play.

Any form of disrespect towards the referee by a player, whether by word or action, should be punished by exclusion with substitution. The referee should carefully consider the level for this exclusion foul because it is a definitive decision. He should not be too narrow-minded to interpret every critical look, word or gesture of a player as disrespect, but any personal insult should be dealt with by this Rule.

A good referee is SENSIBLE but not SENSITIVE.

WP 22 PENALTY FOULS

THE PROBABLE GOAL

WP 22.2

Says very clearly "ANY FOUL COMMITTED" and this includes also fouls, which in other cases, are only regarded as ordinary fouls. So, the most important criteria is to decide what is "probable". The application used for many years is (with one exception) that the attacking player must be in a position or must make movements towards the goal, either in possession of (but not holding) the ball or awaiting a pass so he can shoot.

It is sometimes critical to decide quickly, whether the attacking player releases the ball and the defending player releases the attacking player more or less at the same moment.

It is the referee who has to decide if it is a lazy attacking player or a good actor who wants the penalty as a gift or if it is an attacking player who wants to score and is still hindered from doing so by any foul.

This situation may occur either after a fight between the center forward and his defending player or by a player swimming in. But the application is clear, in a side position (not swimming towards the goal) or a position with the back to the goal, the referee can imply a probable goal and award a penalty only when the goalkeeper is completely out of his goal (this is the above mentioned exception).

Position or swimming towards the goal implies that it is absolutely forbidden to award a free throw to the attacking player. The principle should also be applied in a side position when he is in a good position to score. As this is a dangerous position for the defending player, the attacking player very often is held by the defending player, which means exclusion foul, while a defending player usually tries to commit only ordinary fouls when the attacking player has his back to the goal.

A penalty throw must always be awarded when a foul committed by a defending player inside the 4 meter area prevents a probable goal, and in the other situations described in WP 22.2 to WP 22.9.

However, the referee should not award a penalty throw:

- i. when the attacking player has his back to the goal
- ii. when the ball is legitimately intercepted by a defending player, or when a bad pass is made (including the ball being too high).

In these situations, the referee shall not make any award in favor of the attacking player even if he has been fouled.

- iii. when the attacking player, holding the ball, turns the defending player in front of the goal, no offense has been committed. If the attacking player releases the ball and the defending player immediately then releases the attacking player, there is still no offense.

However, if the attacking player makes an attempt to regain the ball and is prevented from doing so by a foul committed by the defending player, then a penalty throw is awarded.

It is important to consider whether the attacking player could have reached the pass if the foul was not committed. Do not award a penalty throw on a bad pass.

KICK, STRIKE, BRUTALITY

All referees should note that to kick, strike or commit an act of brutality is ALWAYS a penalty, no matter where it occurs within the 4 meter area.

BRUTALITY

In the Rules there are three similar but different types of exclusions (WP 21.8; WP 21.9 and WP 21.10) with three different sanctions for kicking, striking, violent play and brutality.

As in the Rules WP 21.8 and WP 21.10, the criterion “intention” is mentioned, the difference between these fouls must be the degree or gravity of fouling. On the other hand the criterion to distinguish between violence and brutality must be the “intention” to cause an injury.

WP25. ACCIDENT, INJURY AND ILLNESS

The attention of referees is drawn to the special provision when a player is bleeding. The referee should stop play to allow the player leave the water.

A substitute shall be permitted to enter immediately. When the player has been treated and bleeding has stopped, he may return to the [game] under the normal substitution rules.

APPENDIX A INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE USE OF TWO REFEREES

A referee who has in mind “Help your colleague and YOU help yourself”, follows the right principle.

Both referees are helping each other to recognize and indicate goal or corner throw. The referee in

the back part of the field does not whistle goal or corner throw but may indicate them especially in the case of uncertainty by his colleague.

There is no strict division of the field of play. Generally, the principle should be applied, but whenever the colleague cannot fully control the situation, because players are obstructing his view, the other referee should declare fouls and penalties. He may not refer to the fact that these fouls have been committed in the area of his colleague. This principle applies especially for major fouls. On the other hand, a referee shall not award anything into his colleague's area if it is clear that the colleague is controlling the situation and allowing the advantage to the attacking team.

The key-word for all kinds of situations is communication, and communication in this case does not mean to speak to each other.

Both referees are responsible for the behavior of the players and officials on the bench. They may assist each other with the observation of the bench and intervene to assist their colleague.

The referees shall pay particular attention to the teams while they are changing ends.

Referees should make sure that it is obvious for everybody in the pool that they are going to officiate the game as a couple, which means, to fulfill together the duties before the game, to speak to each other how to apply the guidelines for the two referee system, to assume and together the responsibility for the decisions and to help each other as much as possible. Referees should meet at least 30 minutes before the start of the game.

For technical errors, both the referees are responsible. It is not important which referee has committed the error because the other referee has the chance to correct it if necessary.

If either referee displays the wrong signal, he shall stop the play, call for the ball, display the correct signal and allow the players to take their positions before resuming the play. If both referees simultaneously award free throws but for opposing teams, one referee should not change his opinion or reverse his decision merely to avoid disagreement between the referees.

The referees shall apply the relevant Rules, which deal with simultaneous fouls.

After the game, the referees should leave the poolside together as a team.

APPENDIX B SIGNALS TO BE USED BY OFFICIALS

In order to communicate better with players and the official table, the referees are to signal the number of the caps with both hands. In signaling a player's cap number from 11 to 13, a referee must show a clenched fist with one hand and the rest of the number with the fingers of the other hand. (This will enable also the public to better follow the situation.)

If an incorrect signal by the referee has resulted in a change of possession, the referee should stop play and call for the ball. He should wait until the players have understood the new situation, taken their positions so that there is no disadvantage to any team.

MISTAKES OF JUDGEMENT

Finally, we have to state that, as is the nature of human beings, every referee is liable to commit mistakes. Most players and most coaches at the international level accept this fact as well, though they like to criticize the referees' decisions.

But it is much more important that the referees also recognize and accept this fact.

If a referee has the impression or feeling of having made a mistake, he should never start thinking about it. Otherwise he may commit another mistake.

It is the responsibility of the referee only to interpret what he observes to the best of his ability (WP 7.1).

10 US Water Polo Specific Instructions

10.1 Checking for USWP Membership Cards

If this is a USWP-sanctioned event, the referee must show his/her current USWP membership card to the tournament director. In addition, the referees are to help the tournament director check USWP membership cards of players and coaches, as necessary.

10.2 Caps

Many teams, especially if they compete in high school or college, may have red caps. Depending on league or tournament rules, red field caps may be allowed. The only caution is, if red caps are permitted, it is the responsibility of that team to provide a perioded red and white cap for the goalkeeper of the opposing team. The white-team goalkeeper may not wear a solid red cap if the other team has red caps.

10.3 Reporting Brutalities

After a referee calls a brutality and submits a written report to the tournament or competition committee, the tournament or competition director must submit a written report to the US Water Polo National Office documenting the circumstances and individuals involved in the brutality call. This report must be filed as soon as possible, but no later than a week from the date of the call.

11 Sources for Rule Books and Manuals

United States Water Polo, Inc.
1685 West Uintah
Colorado Springs, CO 80904-2921
Phone: 719-634-0699
Fax: 719-634-0866
E-mail: USWP@USWP.Org

Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA)
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