



2005-2009 FINA Water Polo Rule Changes with Interpretations

- 1.4. The distance between the goal lines shall be not less than 20 meters and not more than 25 meters for games played by women.
- 1.6. The 4 meter line and 7 meter line are eliminated and combined to be a 5 meter line. Markings for the side of the field of play are white for the goal line and half distance line, red from the goal line to the 2 meter line, yellow from the 2 to the 5 meter line, and green from the 5 meter line to the half distance line.
- 4.2. Caps shall be fitted with earguards in all competitions.
- 4.3. A substitute goalkeeper shall wear a red cap numbered 13.
- 5.2. The head coach of the attacking team shall be allowed to move to the 5 meter line at any time.
- 11.1. The duration of the game shall be four periods each of eight minutes actual play.
- 11.2. There shall be a two-minute interval between the first and second periods and between the third and fourth periods and a five-minute interval between the second and third periods.
- 11.2 (and 5.2) Teams shall change ends before starting the third period and the second period of any extra time.
- 11.3. There is a five minute interval before the start of any extra time; and an interval of two minutes between the two extra time periods.
- 11.3(f) In the case of a penalty shoot out, if the goalkeeper is excluded during the penalty shoot out, a player from the nominated five players may substitute for the goalkeeper but without the privileges of the goalkeeper; following the taking of the penalty shot, the goalkeeper may be substituted by another player or alternate goalkeeper.
- 12.1. A timeout may be requested at any time, including after a goal, by the coach of the team in possession of the ball. The players shall immediately return to their respective halves of the field of play.
- 12.2. After a timeout play shall be restarted by the team in possession of the ball putting the ball into play on or behind the half distance line except ...
- 14.3. A goal may be scored by a player immediately shooting from outside 5 meters after the player's team has been awarded a free throw for a foul committed outside 5 meters.
- 16.1. A goal throw shall be awarded when the ball passes fully over the goal line excluding between the goal posts and underneath the crossbar, having last been touched by any player other than the goalkeeper of the defending team.
Interpretation: If the ball is sent out of the side of the field of play following a shot having last been touched by a field player of the defending team, a free throw is awarded to the defending team. This situation is covered under the same Rule as a shot having last been touched by a field player of the defending team and the ball going over the goal line.
- 16.2. The goal throw shall be taken by any player of the team from anywhere within the 2 meter area. The goal throw shall be taken by the player nearest to the ball.
- 17.1. 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 touched by the goalkeeper of the defending team or when a defending player deliberately sends the ball over the goal line.
Interpretation: If a defensive player deflects a pass and sends the ball out over the goal line, play shall be restarted with a corner throw. This action is considered as deliberately sending the ball over the goal line.
- 20.17. It is an ordinary foul for a team to retain possession of the ball for more than 30 seconds of actual play without shooting at their opponent's goal.
- 21.6. It is an exclusion foul to attempt to play or block a shot with two hands outside the 5 meter area. Note: If a defending player who is outside the 5 meter area raises two hands in an attempt to play or block a shot on a goal, the player shall be excluded.
Interpretation: if a defensive player attempts to block a shot with 2 hands, the player shall be punished with a penalty shot when the defensive player is inside the 5 meter area and an exclusion foul when the defensive player is outside the 5 meter area.
NOTE: The player does not actually have to touch the ball and a shot does not have to be actually taken; the player is being punished for intent.
- 21.10. The exclusion foul of misconduct is now defined as the use of unacceptable language, violent or persistent foul play, to refuse obedience to or show disrespect for a referee or official, or behavior against the spirit of the Rules and likely to bring the game into disrepute. (The separate rule for disrespect is eliminated.)
Interpretation: If a player of either team commits misconduct or any other offense during the interval between periods, during a timeout, or prior to the restart after a goal, the player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game and the substitute shall be eligible to re-enter immediately prior to the restart of the game.
NOTE: If the exclusion is during interval time the game will restart with a sprint for the ball; after a timeout with a free throw to the team that requested the timeout; following the goal with a free throw to the team which was defending before the goal was scored.
- 21.11. If a player commits an act of brutality, the offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game and a penalty throw awarded to the opposing team. The offending player may be substituted when four minutes of actual play have



elapsed. (The Note is deleted which stated that in the last minute of the game, the referee may delay calling brutality until next change of possession.)

Interpretation: When a player is excluded for brutality the secretary, after 4 minutes, will signal the substitute to re-enter the field of play with two flags, one yellow flag and the other flag of the corresponding cap color.

Interpretation: If a brutality is called during interval time, timeout or after a goal, the referee will exclude the player with a substitute after 4 minutes. Play will be restarted by the referee blowing the whistle to start play in the normal manner, then immediately stopping play, and then a penalty shot shall be taken. If the penalty shot is scored, the defending team will start play with a free throw at the half distance line. If the shot is missed, play will continue in the normal manner.

Interpretation: If simultaneous brutalities are called during interval time, the referee will exclude both players with substitution after 4 minutes of play. The game shall be restarted in the normal manner with a sprint, and once one team has gained possession, the referees will stop the game and award a penalty throw to the team that gained possession. The first penalty shot will be taken which will result in a goal or no goal. Play will be stopped and the second penalty shot will be taken by the other team which will result in a goal or no goal. Referees will then award a free throw on the half distance line to the team that gained possession on the sprint.

Interpretation: If simultaneous brutalities are called during timeout or after a goal, the referees will exclude both players with substitution after 4 minutes of play. The first penalty shot (taken by the team that normally would have possession) will result in a goal or no goal. Play will be stopped and the second penalty shot will be taken which will result in a goal or no goal. The referees will then award a free throw on the half distance line to the team that normally would have gained possession after the timeout or after the goal.

21.13 For a player of each team to commit the foul of impeding (20.9), pushing or pushing off an opponent (20.10) or an exclusion foul (21.4-21.11) simultaneously before a free throw, goal throw, corner throw, penalty throw or neutral throw is taken, both players shall be excluded and the team on attack shall maintain possession of the ball with a new 30 second possession clock, restarting the play by taking the free throw, goal throw, corner throw or penalty throw. If neither team has possession, then a neutral throw is awarded. Note: Also see Appendix A-12.

21.15 It is an exclusion foul for an excluded player or a substitute to enter the field of play improperly. If this offense is committed by a player of the team not in possession of the ball, the offending player shall be excluded for 20 seconds and a penalty shot awarded to the opposing team; if this offense is committed by a player of the team in possession of the ball, the offending player shall be excluded for 20 seconds and a free throw awarded to the opposing team.

Interpretation: If a defensive player re-enters the field of play improperly, the player is excluded for an additional 20 seconds and a penalty throw is awarded to the attacking team. However, on the score sheet only one additional personal foul (marked as E.P.) shall be recorded against the offending player.

Interpretation: If an offensive player re-enters the field of play improperly, the player is excluded for an additional 20 seconds and a free throw is awarded to the opposing team. On the score sheet an additional personal foul shall be recorded against the offending player.

22. References to entering improperly during the last minute of the game or during the last minute of the second period of any extra time have been removed from the rules.

22.2. A penalty shot is awarded for those penalty fouls committed inside the 5 meter line. It is a penalty foul for a defending player intentionally to play or attempt to play the ball or block a shot with two hands or for a defending player intentionally to block or attempt to block a pass with two hands inside the 5 meter area.

Interpretation: if a defensive player attempts to block a shot with 2 hands, the player shall be punished with a penalty shot when the defensive player is inside the 5 meter area and an exclusion foul when the defensive player is outside the 5 meter area

NOTE: The defensive player does not have to touch the ball and a shot does not have to be taken. The player is being punished for intent.

Interpretation: A field player who replaces an excluded goalkeeper must play the position without the privileges of the goalkeeper. If the player attempts to play the ball with two hands, a penalty throw shall be awarded.

22.8 If in the last minute of the game a penalty throw is awarded to a team, the coach may elect to maintain possession of the ball and be awarded a free throw, with a new 30-second clock.

Interpretation: If a team is awarded a penalty throw in the last minute of regulation time or the last minute of the second extra time period, the coach may request to maintain the possession of the ball in lieu of taking the penalty throw. The coach must show the referee immediately by crossing arms in front of the chest to signal possession, or show 5 fingers to request a penalty throw. If a team requests possession, play shall be restarted on the half distance line or behind the half distance line with a new possession clock.

23.1 The penalty shot is taken from the 5 meter line.

Appendix A-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 the team in possession shall restart play with a free throw or, if the exclusion fouls are committed in dead time, with the free throw already awarded to the team in possession.