

Major Differences Between 2010-12 NCAA and 2010-11 NFHS Water Polo Rules
7-1-10 (new differences shaded)

1. Risk management warnings
NCAA – There are no risk management warnings concerning diving into pool or emergency procedures.
NFHS – Risk management warning: Referee Points of Emphasis #1 and: above Rule 1-1. Players shall enter the water feet first at all times and there are general directions for referees related to summoning emergency assistance.

2. Length of course (Rule 1-4)
NCAA - Maximum length of course in pools with floating goals from goal line to goal line men 30 meters, women 25 meters; maximum length of course in pools with wall goals from wall to wall men 30 meters, women 25 meters; responsibility of host institution to provide a field of play that meets as closely as possible the maximum measurements for length and width and equals or exceeds the minimum depth required.
NFHS – Length of course in pools with floating goals shall be 25 meters (25 yards) for men and women, as measured from goal line to goal line; length of course in pools with wall goals shall be 25 meters (25 yards) for men and women, as measured from wall to wall. State associations may require maximum course length with floating goals for championships.

3. Video (Rule 1-12)
NCAA – There is no playing rule that prohibits a non-participating institution from videotaping games. Conference or local rules may prohibit this action. Video review is not permitted during the course of a game. However, conferences may have rules allowing the conference to utilize video after a game to determine if an incorrect student-athlete is serving a postgame suspension, etc.
NFHS – The use of electronic equipment to visually record games competition is not prohibited by the rules. Individual state associations may develop policy regarding the electronic recording of games and uses. However, it is considered unsporting to use electronic equipment for visual replay for coaching purposes during the game or any intermission. Further, the use of replay, television monitoring or any electronic equipment by the officials to make decisions related to the game is prohibited.

4. Number of balls (Rule 3-5)
NCAA - At least five game-quality balls must be available for all games.
NFHS - Five game-quality balls must be available for all championship games and are recommended for all games.

5. Description of caps numbers (Rule 4-4)
NCAA - Must be a single solid color with no border.
NFHS - Numbers may have a very narrow inconspicuous border, such as light grey. The large central part of the number on the dark cap must be white or yellow. The large central part of the number on the white cap must be a dark color (colors permitted listed).

6. Size of commemorative patch (Rule 5-4)
NCAA – Size not to exceed 2 1/4 square inches.
NFHS – Size not to exceed four square inches.

7. Articles likely to cause injury (Rule 5-4)
NCAA - Medical and religious medals not specifically included as articles likely to cause injury; remainder of list the same. Procedure established for use of prescription goggles of type designed for contact sports and for other similar items.
NFHS – Articles likely to cause injury include jewelry, medical or religious medals, watches, swim goggles, protective helmets and sharp fingernails and toenails. State associations should develop a procedure for use of items such as prescription goggles, face mask, etc. The state association should be contacted by the school representative should an item be prohibited by a referee which is designed for an injury or accommodation for a disability, should there be a question on permission to wear the article.

8. Tournament committee (Rule 6-3)
NCAA – No description of tournament committee, although in practice there is one at major tournaments; however, it is usually not composed of tournament coaches.
NFHS – It is recommended that the coaches of the teams and/or the officials in the tournament compose a committee that will make immediate decisions not covered by the rules.

9. Time of beginning of jurisdiction of referee (Rule 7-1) (In both organization jurisdiction of referee ends 5 minutes after end of game or after any protest procedure is complete)
NCAA – Jurisdiction begins 30 minutes before game. Referee must pass rules test.
NFHS – Jurisdiction begins 15 minutes before game. Referees must arrive at pool at least 15 minutes before start of game. No requirement for rules test.

10. Time of award of red card (Rule 7-4)
NCAA – Referee may award a red card to a coach, team official or player for disruptive behavior at any time from 30 minutes before the game to five minutes after the conclusion of the game or until any protest filing procedure has been completed.
NFHS – No specific time stated. However, rules do not preclude a referee from giving a red card to a coach, other team official, or player who accosts a referee after a game,

11. Location of player, coach or team official receiving a red card (Rule 7-4) or who was excluded for flagrant misconduct (Rule 21-11) during the remainder of that game in which event occurred
NCAA – The player, coach, or team official must leave the bench and may sit in bleachers during rest of game but can not communicate with team or referees during the remainder of the game until after the jurisdiction of the referees.
NFHS – The player must leave the bench and must sit in the bleachers, under supervision; coach or team official must leave the pool facility during that game. Coach or team official or player must have no contact with team in game in which flagrant misconduct occurred or red card was received until after the jurisdiction of the referees after the game.

12. Location of player, coach, or team official receiving a red card or who was excluded for flagrant misconduct) during the subsequent game in which the suspension is being served (Rule 7-4 and Rule 21-11)
NCAA – The person receiving the red card (coach, other team official, player) or who committed brutality may be in the bleachers but may not communicate with the team, team officials or referees from 30 minutes before the game, during that game, and up to 5 minutes after the conclusion of the game or until any protest filing procedure has been completed. Rules regulate type of game in which next-game suspension may be served.
NFHS - Athlete or coach or other team official may be in the stands during that game but may not communicate with the team, team officials or referees; however, a state association may have specific rules governing if athlete or coach or team official may be in audience or pool area during the next game in which the game suspension is being served. There are no specific rules regulating type of game in which the-game suspension may be served. Associations may have specific rules.
13. Length of each period of play (Rule 11-1)
NCAA – Eight minutes actual play.
NFHS – Seven minutes actual play for varsity; recommended 6-minute periods for junior varsity, 5-minute periods for freshman-sophomore games.
14. Interval at half-time (Rule 11-2)
NCAA – Interval cannot be longer than 5 minutes unless for promotional considerations with agreement of both coaches.
NFHS – Interval can not be longer than 5 minutes.
15. Name for sudden-death overtime (Rule 11-3)
NCAA – Called sudden-death overtime.
NFHS – Called sudden-victory overtime.
16. Tournament variations (Rule 11-5):
NCAA – Are no tournament variations; each game must be standard (including overtime).
NFHS – Can be tournament variations as long as are announced ahead of time; these include length of periods, duration of period breaks, number, type and length of timeouts, type and duration of overtime, and requirement for overtime (for example, in a tournament with the group system of play, games may end in a tie).
17. 30-second timeout (Rule 12-7)
NCAA – One per game.
NFHS – No 30-second timeout except as a tournament variation (see Rule 11-5).
18. Display of timeouts remaining (Rule 12-1)
NCAA – Number of timeouts remaining shall be visible to both teams.
NFHS – No such requirement.
19. Possession time (Rule 20-16)
NCAA - 35 seconds
NFHS - 30 seconds

20. Direct shot after removal of ball from field of play to correct a clock error (Rule 14-3)
NCAA – A direct shot may not be taken after removal of ball from field of play to correct a clock error.
NFHS – A direct shot may be taken from the restart following the return of the ball to the player fouled outside the 5-meter line when correcting a clock error.
21. Penalty for flagrant misconduct (Rule 21-11)
NCAA exclusion from remainder of the game and suspension from next game for 1st offense; automatic 2-game suspension for second incident; automatic 3-game suspension with conference review for third incident in that season
NFHS – removal from remainder of game and next game; state association may add additional penalties
22. Penalty for fighting (Rule 21-11)
NCAA - exclusion from remainder of the game and suspension from next two games; automatic suspension from 3 games with conference review for 2nd offense, exclusion for remainder of season with conference review for 3rd offense
NFHS – removal from remainder of game and next game; state association may add additional penalties
23. Bleeding (Rule 25-2)
NCAA – After the bleeding has stopped, the player is permitted to be a substitute in the ordinary course of the game.
NFHS – After the bleeding has stopped, the wound covered, the suit or body appropriately cleaned and/or the suit is changed, the player may return to competition as a substitute.
24. Loss of consciousness (Rule 25-4)
NCAA – If a player leaves the game for being rendered unconscious or for displaying concussion-like symptoms, the player must be cleared by team physician or designee. Player shall not return to activity or play the same day.
NFHS – Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a conclusion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.