



VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

MEMORANDUM

April 13, 2011

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TO: Men's and Women's Head Water Polo Coaches and Commissioners
at Conferences that Sponsor Water Polo.

FROM: Bob Corb, coordinator of officials
NCAA Water Polo Rules Subcommittee

Barbara Kalbus, secretary-rules editor
NCAA Water Polo Rules Subcommittee

Tom Whittemore, chair
NCAA Water Polo Rules Subcommittee.

SUBJECT: Team Bench Decorum.

Recent national evaluators' conference calls have included discussions about inappropriate bench decorum occurring this season. This memorandum serves as a reminder for coaches and referees with respect to the expectations for maintaining bench decorum.

Since NCAA and FINA rules differ on how referees are to manage bench decorum, it is imperative that referees understand and enforce the NCAA rules regarding conduct expected by coaches (see Rule 5-2) and the control by referees over conduct and the actions that can be taken when a violation occurs (see Rule 7-4). It is also critical that the rules are applied consistently for both teams throughout a contest.

Referees have the authority and responsibility to control bench decorum, and the following steps outline the options available listed in Rule 7-4 of the 2010-12 Water Polo Rules and Interpretations book. Additional instruction is available from the casebook, from official interpretations issued throughout the year and from discussions at referee clinics.

Step 1--Coach-Referee Dialogue. The head coach may express a concern or ask for a clarification during a timeout, between periods, or when filing a protest (see Rule 7-4). The referee is expected to listen to the coach and provide an explanation if asked for a clarification. The referee also has the option of having

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brief discussions with the head coach after a goal, on a corner throw or at other times when the ball is out of play. The team captain may also address the referees at intervals between periods and during timeouts. Judgment calls are not an appropriate topic of discussion at any time.

Step 2—Formal Verbal Warning. When bench behavior continues to be an issue, the referee should issue a verbal warning and describe the inappropriate behavior. When issued, the warning needs to be timely and clearly articulated, including the improper behavior and the future consequences for additional breaches in bench decorum to coaches or players on the bench.

Step 3--Yellow Card. According to the NCAA rules, multiple yellow cards may be issued to different staff members and to the bench in the same game. The yellow card is a visible warning to the head coach, an assistant coach or the players collectively on the bench for inappropriate behavior as described in the rules. When a referee issues a yellow card, explicit language should be used to describe the infraction committed, who committed the infraction and the future consequences for additional breaches in bench decorum. The ball is always removed from the water when a yellow card is issued.

Step 4--Red Card. A red card may be issued for disruptive behavior by the head coach, an assistant coach, other team officials on the bench or to individual player(s) on the bench. Only the head coach and the team captain are allowed to talk with referees during the game and only at designated times. Assistant coaches and other players may not talk with referees at any time during the game. If in the judgment of the referee the infraction is severe, a red card may be issued immediately – to the head coach, to an assistant coach, to a team official on the bench, to a player on the bench – without a warning or yellow card. When both referees work together to manage bench decorum and display respect for the coaches, commonly the issuance of a red card is not necessary.

In summary, coaches are expected to know the rules and behave appropriately, referees are expected to know and enforce the rules as written, and evaluators are to support the four steps through their assessment of a referee's performance. Referees must hold the correct individual accountable by using the appropriate intervention at the correct time, issuing red cards when necessary, and always to the person who deserves it.

If you are receiving this information as a conference supervisor of officials, please forward it to your conference evaluators and referees. Questions should be directed to Bob Corb at 562/216-3328 or ncaacoordinator@earthlink.net.

BC/BK/TW:nb

cc: Conference Supervisors of Officials
Selected NCAA Staff Members