

2007-08 NFHS Instructions to Referees and Points of Emphasis for Coaches and Referees

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Water Polo Rules Committee

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Attended 2007 annual meeting before completing term on committee: Carin Crawford, San Diego State University; Carl Quigley, St. Francis College (New York)

Major Rules Changes for 2007-08

The major changed NCAA rules for 2007-08 are identified in the rules by a screened background. To assist referees and coaches, NCAA differences from FINA/USWP rules are indicated in bold.

<i>Rule, section</i>	<i>page(s)</i>
1-6 Description of required pool markings clarified	
3-5 Five balls required for games, ball retrieval added	
3-5 Player in field of play may not leave to retrieve a ball without permission of referee	
4-5 Goalkeeper swim cap may be red or dark for home goalkeeper and red or white for visiting goalkeeper	
5-2 Head coach may advance up along pool side when making substitutions after goal	
5-2 Definition of shallow-deep pool added	
5-5 Referee checks for correct color of swim cap in pre-game meeting	
6-1 All desk officials must act in neutral, professional manner	
7-4 Red cards usually not issued to players in the water if the player is still eligible to play	
7-5 If referee removes player, coach or other team official from pool area, the referee also awards a red card	
7-7 Referee reports all conduct that requires a game suspension	
7-8 Referee should check score and number of timeouts taken after each period	
7-9 Correctable error in extraman situation described	
7-10 Protest may be filed during game	
12-1 Referee must remove ball during a timeout	
12-2 Referee may not shorten a timeout unless instructed by team calling timeout	
12-4, 6 How play is restarted after a timeout clarified	
12-8 Television halftime no longer than 10 minutes	
14-3 Referee does not signal the eligibility of player to take a direct shot on goal	
20-18 Clarification of wasting time added	
21-3 Substitution rule for excluded goalkeeper changed	
21-10 Penalty added for player committing disrespect after third personal foul added	
21-10 Penalty for minor act of disrespect changed	

- 21-10 Signal for minor act of disrespect added
- 21-18-c, App.A-10Penalty changed for simultaneous award of penalty foul and neutral throw
- 23-3 Method of taking penalty throw described
- App.A-19Responsibility of back court referee in direct shot on goal added
- App.B-AA, BBReferee signals added for high cap numbers
- App. C Change in tournament advancement described

Instructions to Referees and

Points Of Emphasis

These points of emphasis for referees are guidelines in order to bring about consistency in the interpretation and application of the rules of the game. It is important that referees call the NCAA National Federation High School Water Polo Rules as written and as interpreted in these Rules rule book or as distributed as interpretations during the year.

11. **Promoting Offensive Action.** Referees should promote offensive action. The referees shall refrain from declaring a foul if, in their opinion, such declaration would be an advantage to the offending player's team. It is always permissible for the referees to delay their whistle briefly to make sure that any offensive advantage is not taken away. When in doubt, the referees should make their call in favor of the offensive team. The referees should avoid calling ordinary defensive fouls (notably at set) away from the ball as this takes away the advantage and flow from the team on offense. If the referees have decided not to call a series of minor fouls committed by the defense, then they should not call an equally minor offensive foul a moment later at that same spot. Likewise, referees should call ball -under only when the ball is clearly under water for more than a fraction of a second.

22. **Calling Offensive Fouls.** Referees should avoid calling minor offensive fouls away from the ball if they do not affect the game. Sometimes it is correct to delay making a call for a split-second to see if the offensive foul will affect the game. In most cases referees should call fouls on the offensive team as ordinary offensive fouls (ball turnover, with no exclusion). At the center forward position, the referee should call an offensive exclusion foul only in the most severe cases (an offensive turnover usually being the more appropriate call). However, if the offense commits a gross or overly physical foul, such as kicking or elbowing, it should be called immediately as an offensive exclusion foul or even an offensive misconduct foul.

33. **Competing for Position at Set.** When the ball is not at set, referees should allow competing for position between the center forward and the set defender. However, neither player can commit an exclusion foul to gain a better position or to keep an

existing position. Excessive force, overly physical play, arms out of the water and around an opponent, and suit grabbing to change or hold position should be called as an offensive turnover or a defensive exclusion foul or even as misconduct, depending upon the nature of the foul. If both the center forward and the set defender are facing each other and holding, the offensive player must let go and face the ball before the pass is thrown to set, or an offensive foul should be called.

44. **Calling the Set Position.** Among the most important aspects of the game for referees to call consistently is the play at set. Referees should consider the negative consequences of blowing a quick whistle. When the ball comes into set, the referees need to be patient in allowing the center forward the opportunity to play the ball. A quick whistle at set may take away an offensive advantage and eliminate, however unintentionally, the scoring threat of the center forward. If the set defender has established an appropriate defensive position and the foul is not overly aggressive and doesn't take away a scoring advantage, then an ordinary foul should be called.

55. **Calling Set When a Slough is Coming.** When the ball is at set and a slough is coming, referees may call either an ordinary foul or an exclusion foul against the set defender. If the center forward has an advantage and wants to try to shoot, the referees should wait momentarily and then call an exclusion foul if the defender commits a foul to prevent a shot attempt. If the center forward has no advantage and is just trying to pass to an open teammate, it is correct for the referees to call a quick ordinary foul so that the offensive team maintains possession. However, if a bad pass is made which that is closer to the defense, then the referee may refrain from calling a foul. If there is no slough coming, the referees should let the center forward work with the ball to try to create an advantage. The referee should call a foul if the advantage is taken away (usually an exclusion foul in this case).

66. **Calling Inside the 5-Meter Area.** To determine whether there should be an exclusion foul or a 5-meter penalty called, the referees must concentrate on determining the defender's position in relation to the center forward. The offensive player having an advantageous position and a probable goal are the crucial factors in determining whether a 5-meter penalty is the appropriate call.

77. **Calling the Transition Out of the 2-Meter Area.** Referees should allow the former center forward and set defender to untangle after a possession change. Do not call a foul too quickly. However, once these players have untangled, a foul can be called on either or both of these players for a kick off or for a hold, sink or a pull back. This concept refers to the former center forward and set defender and not to other players in the water.

88. **Control of the Game.** It is important for the referees to keep control of the game. A player who commits an overaggressive, dangerous or violent foul should be called for either misconduct or brutality and removed for the remainder of the game, rather than just excluded for 20 seconds. Players in the water who show disrespect toward the referees should be removed promptly for the remainder of the game for misconduct or for 20 seconds for a minor act of disrespect.

99. **Control of the Benches.** Referees should be certain to keep control of the benches. However, they should not listen for and be overly sensitive to comments by coaches and players on the bench, as well as and they should not try to "catch" a coach

saying something. If the coaches or players on the bench start questioning calls, the referees should issue a stern warning. If the head coach, assistant coach or players continue to question the referees' calls, a yellow card shall be issued to the head coach, assistant coach or bench as appropriate, to be followed by a red card to the head coach, assistant coach or to an individual player on the bench, if necessary. (The assistant coach assumes the rights and privileges of the head coach when the head coach receives a red card during a game.) The head coach and captain may address the referee at the intervals between periods, during timeouts or with permission of the referee. In addition, the head coach may speak to the referee when filing a protest. The rule relating to who may address the referee (Rule 7-4) and at what times shall be enforced consistently and according to the rules. The referees must apply the rules equally and fairly, regardless of gender, experience, responsibilities or intonation of voice of the coach.

1010. **Consistency of Calls.** Referees should call fouls consistently throughout each possession, period and game. Referees should call an exclusion or ordinary foul even if only a few seconds remain in that possession, in the period or in the game. Perimeter fouls (ordinary and exclusion) must be called consistently throughout the game, including the last minute when the team with the lead has the ball.

1111. **Putting the Ball into Play.** Referees should ensure that players who are awarded a free throw put the ball into play properly and within a reasonable length of time. Referees should also make sure that defensive players do not interfere with the free throw by waving an arm or moving an arm toward the player with the free throw.

1212. **Direct Shots on Goal.** The referees shall not use any signal, such as raising an arm or showing five fingers, to indicate that a player is eligible to shoot a direct shot on goal after that player's team has been awarded a free throw for a foul committed outside 5 meters. The shot must be taken without delay, but referees should allow a player who is fouled at or outside 5 meters the opportunity to retrieve the ball, to get in a normal shooting position and to look at the goal before taking a direct shot. The player taking the direct shot on goal may take a lob shot as long as it is without delay and without faking. There is no set distance a defensive player with the hand up behind the head has to be away from the offensive player, but if that defensive player is so close that the offensive player cannot make a throwing motion without hitting the defensive player, the defensive player has to back away or be called for interfering with the free throw. However, the offensive player may not unnecessarily lean or make some extraordinary arm motion into the defender to create this contact; that is, the free throw should be in a normal throwing motion.

1313. **Two Two-Hands Rule.** Referees must be certain to immediately call an exclusion foul if a defender puts two hands up in an attempt to block a shot while outside the 5-meter line and as a penalty foul if the defender puts two hands up to block a shot while inside the 5-meter line. The defensive player does not have to touch the ball nor does a shot need to be taken, because the defensive player is being punished for intent. It is also a penalty foul if the defensive player inside the 5-meter line puts two hands up in an attempt to block a pass that would have resulted in a probable goal.

1414. **Fouling During a 6 on 5.** Referees must carefully watch defenders during a 6 on 5 to be sure they are not sinking offensive players or grabbing their arms, especially on

the posts. If they do, an exclusion foul (or a penalty foul if a goal was likely to occur) should be called.

1515. **Drive/Perimeter Defense.** A defender cannot hand-check, impede, hold or grab the suit of an attacker who is trying to gain an offensive advantage. Referees should exclude a defender who moves laterally to prevent an attacker from driving. However, if the offensive player swims over a defensive player who has established a positional advantage, an offensive foul should be called and the ball turned over. In addition, if a defender grabs the arm or hand or sinks a perimeter player before a pass has arrived, the defender should be excluded.

1616. **Ducking Under.** The referees should not call an exclusion foul on the defense if the offensive player ducks under the defender and then the defender puts both arms in the air to show there is no foul. The defender does not need to get off the offensive player, as it was the offensive player who went under water to put the players into that position. However, the defender may not use one or both hands to hold down the offensive player.

1717. **Double Exclusions.** Calling double exclusions will eliminate much of the wrestling that occurs, but the referees must be certain that both players have fouled each other before calling a double exclusion. If the center forward and the set defender are both being overly physical, it is correct for the referees to exclude both players and award the ball back to the offense with a new 35-second shot clock. However, it is preferable if the referee can determine which player fouled first, as it is better to call either a defensive exclusion if it was the defense or (usually) an offensive turnover if it was the offense.

18. **Referee Instructions for Penalty Shot.** All players must leave the 5-meter area and be at least 2 meters from the shooter. A player of the defensive team shall have the first right to take the position on each side of the shooter. The referee controlling the penalty throw shall signal for the throw to be taken by whistle and by simultaneously lowering the arm. The lack of specificity in designating the position of the referee when the whistle is blown allows the referee controlling the taking of the shot to determine the most advantageous position for that referee to watch the shooter, the defensive players and the goalkeeper. The other referee shall watch the backcourt/back court for interference. The shooter may not move forward until the ball leaves his/her hand. The defensive players may not interfere with the taking of the penalty throw (shout, whistle, splash, hit the shooter's arm, etc.) up to the time the ball leaves the hand of the shooter. When the whistle is blown, the defensive players on each side of the shooter may only move forward towards the goal, not towards the shooter. After the ball is released, the defensive players may move towards the shooter.

19. **Recognition of and Correction of Errors.** The referees must be aware of and, if possible, correct certain errors as described in Rule 7-9 in the interest of fairness. No team shall gain an advantage over an opponent because of this type of error.

20. **Exposure.** In women's competition, a defender shall be excluded for 20 seconds after grabbing an offensive player's suit and causing breast exposure. Likewise, when an offensive player grabs the defender and causes exposure, the player shall be excluded for 20 seconds. Finally, if a player grabs her own suit and exposes a breast, a minor act of disrespect with a 20-second exclusion shall be called.

21. **Zippers.** To decrease the incidence of exposure, it is recommended that the swim suits be full-back and that the zipper is fully zipped. If the zipper becomes unzipped, the player should zip up the suit at the next appropriate stoppage of the game when the player's team is in possession of the ball, without taking away the advantage, just as in the cap replacement rule (Rule 4-1). If the zipper can not be fixed at that time or if a suit is torn, the referees should remove the player, allow the immediate entrance of a substitute, and the original player may be substituted in after the problem is corrected.

2122. **Shortening a Timeout.** The team which that called a timeout may shorten the timeout by informing the referee at any time before 1:45 minutes have elapsed that the team is ready to resume play. The referee shall blow a whistle when so informed as a signal to both teams that play will start in 15 seconds. The referee may not decide to end the timeout when the referee sees the team that called the timeout swimming out into the field of play.

2223. **Non-conforming Pool Markings.** In order to assist institutions to conform with the rules on pool markings, the referee should inform the school administrator, such as the athletic director, coach before a the game of any issues with the field of play and caps that need to be corrected in the future. Since the width of many pools is greater than 20 meters, side lines must be used in such cases and they must be marked as described in the rules. If cones are used, they must be of adequate size and weight. In there is no administrator present, the referees should point out major deficiencies to the coach, but not engage in any discussion over the situation (Rule 7-1). After the game, the referee must report to the conference and assigning authority (Rule 7-7) any conduct that requires a game suspension, and any issues with non-conforming caps, equipment deficiencies or recurring desk problems. This discussion with the administrator or coach and the conference reporting responsibility with regard to facilities are required in order to attempt to alleviate these problems.

24. **Tournament Variations.** Referees should note that the tournament host this year may include a 20-second time-out as an additional tournament variation. This and any other variations (such as length of periods, length and number of timeouts, time between periods, type of overtime, etc.) must be communicated to the teams and referees in advance of the tournament.

25. **Risk Management Warning.** Referees and coaches should note the risk management warning prior to Rule 1: **Players shall enter the water feet first at all times.** The referee must point out the rule to coaches whose players are not in compliance with the rule. If the situation persists, the referee must notify the appropriate authority as determined by the Association or Section (each Association or Section must draw up guidelines for the reporting of non-compliant coaches/schools). No game penalties may be instituted nor does the games official contact the school directly.

26. **Videotaping Games and Video Review:** 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.

Summary of Important Rule Changes for Coaches and Referees

The following list includes important points about the conduct of water polo games and a summary of important rule changes:

1. Playing (conduct) rules (Rule 5 and Rules 11-25) may not be altered except for experimental purposes approved by the NCAA Water Polo Rules Committee. The administrative rules (Rules 1-4 and Rules 6-10) cannot be altered except as indicated in the rules. For example, the length of periods, time between periods, type of overtime played or the number of timeouts may not be altered during any NCAA water polo contest (tournament or regular season).
2. It is important that the host institution ensure that the desk is staffed adequately, with experienced personnel. The instructions for desk personnel are included in Appendix E. The desk of the home team must accommodate a minimum of one observer from the visiting team. All desk officials must act in a neutral, professional manner during the game.
3. There is no playing rule to prohibit a non-participating institution from videotaping games. Conference or local rules may prohibit this action. Video review is not permitted during the course of the 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 post-game suspension, to determine if brutality occurred that was not detected during the game, or to further penalize a participant for unsportsmanlike conduct.
4. Coaches are reminded that the buzzer for the expiration of time on the game clock must have a different sound from that of the buzzer on the shot clock. This is recommended for immediate implementation and required by July 1, 2009. If the buzzers are not different, the game timer must signal the end of each period by a distinctive sound, such as an airhorn (see Rule 9-3).
5. The complete requirements for pool markings are in effect July 1, 2007. If colored side lines are used in the pool, long markers on the pool deck or colored tile on the pool wall and deck, the distance from the end line to the goal line shall be marked in white, from the goal line to the 2-meter line shall be marked in red, from the 2-meter line to the 5-meter line shall be marked in yellow, and from the 5-meter line to the half-distance line shall be marked in green or color other than yellow or red. If cones are used on the pool deck, a white cone is used on the goal line, a red cone on the 2-meter line, a yellow cone on the 5-meter line and a white cone on the half-distance line. The cones shall be of adequate size and weight so that they are visible and remain at the correct location.
6. Five, game-quality balls must be available for all games. If there are not goal judges, one ball shall be with the referee and two at each bench. If the ball goes out of bounds over the end line, the coach must have a team member from the bench immediately retrieve the ball. If the coach does not do this, the referee shall warn the coach and, at

the next occurrence, give the coach a yellow card.

7. The color of any swim cap worn by the goalkeeper may be red or it may match the color of those worn by that team's field players. That is, the swim cap may be red or dark for the home goalkeeper or red or white for the visiting goalkeeper. The referee shall check for the color of all swim caps during the pregame meeting.

8. An objective method of determining if a pool should be classified as shallow-deep has been established. A pool is considered to be shallow-deep if any portion of the water polo course is less than 6 feet, 6 inches (2.0m) in depth. If a pool is so classified and one coach requests to change ends each period, the referees shall change sides before the second period, the fourth period, before the first period of any overtime and before the first sudden-death overtime period.

9. Referees must report conduct which requires a game suspension (brutality, fighting, issuance of a red card) as well as any issues with the field of play, non-conforming caps, issuance of red cards, abandonment or forfeit of games, etc., committed by a competing institution to the conference office(s) and assignment authority. The conferences shall report these violations, including issues with field of play and non-conforming caps to the athletic director of the appropriate institution to ensure the issues are corrected.

10. In the interest of fairness, the rules have been clarified to clearly state that desk errors, timing errors, equipment malfunction, difference in signals of referees and misapplication of rules should not affect the outcome of the game and must be corrected by the referees. Several additional examples have been added to the list in Rule 7-9.

11. The wording of the protest rule (7-10) has been changed to clarify that a protest may be filed during a game and at any time up to five minutes after the conclusion of the game. If the event is not protested at the time it occurs, it may still be protested at the conclusion of the game, within the time limits described in the Rule 7-10. Protests are allowed for misapplication of the rules, equipment malfunction, and errors in recording information or other desk errors, but not for judgment calls.

Examples of misapplication of rules include:

a. A player of the team not in possession of the ball is excluded for 20 seconds and enters illegally during the extraman play. The referee excludes the player for 20 seconds and continues play. This is protestable as Rule 21-15 requires a penalty shot in this situation in addition to the exclusion.

b. A player interferes with the taking of a penalty shot. The referee excludes the player for 20 seconds and retakes the penalty shot if missed. This is protestable as the player should have been excluded for the remainder of the game (Rule 21-16).

c. The desk waves in an excluded player who has not reached the exclusion area. The referee awards a penalty foul. This is protestable as the referee should have corrected the error (Rule 7-9-j).

Examples of judgment calls of the referees, which may not be protested, include:

a. The referee signals that a direct shot on goal scores. The decision of the referee that the shot was taken correctly cannot be protested.

b. A player initiates a drive. The referee calls no foul on the defense. The coach can not

protest later than the player was held or sunk at that time.

c The goalkeeper is excluded and a field player enters the goal and blocks a shot. The referee allows play to continue. The coach can not protest later stating that the player really had two hands up, even though blocking the ball with only one hand.

12. A 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 procedures have been completed. The individual must leave the bench and not communicate with the team during the remainder of that game until to five minutes after the conclusion of the game or when any protest filing procedure has been completed. During the subsequent game the player, coach or other team official may not communicate with the team, team officials or referees by any method during the entire time of jurisdiction of the referees (from 30 minutes before the game to five minutes after the conclusion of the game or when any protest filing procedure has been completed).

13. Red cards may be issued to individual players on the bench for disruptive behavior but are usually not issued to players in the water who are still eligible to play, unless otherwise specified in the Rules.

14. The referee shall not use any signal, such as raising an arm or showing five fingers, to indicate that a player is eligible to shoot a direct shot on goal after that player's team has been awarded a free throw for a foul committed outside 5 meters.

15. The procedures for taking a penalty throw have been expanded to include that the shooter may not move forward until the ball leaves the hand; the defensive players may not interfere with the taking of the penalty throw up to the time the ball leaves the hand of the shooter; when the whistle is blown, the defensive players on each side of the shooter may only move forward towards the goal, not towards the shooter; after the ball is released, the defensive players may move towards the shooter.

16. An excluded goalkeeper's substitute may only be another goalkeeper; an excluded field player's substitute may only be another field player. Therefore, if a goalkeeper is excluded, a substitute wearing a goalkeeper's cap may not be substituted in for an exiting field player during that exclusion period.

17. If a player commits an act of disrespect to the referee on the way out from the pool after committing that player's third personal foul, the player is removed for the remainder of the game, the substitute may not enter for 20 seconds or until the occurrence of an event described in 21-3, and a penalty throw is awarded.

18. The penalty for a minor act of disrespect committed immediately after an exclusion foul has been changed from a penalty throw to the award of another exclusion foul. However, if a player commits a minor act of disrespect while exiting the pool after a third exclusion foul, a penalty throw is awarded. If the player committed the minor act of disrespect after a third personal foul which is a penalty foul, both penalty throws shall be taken, with the first penalty throw being a dead-time penalty throw.

19. The penalties for exposure in women's competition have been clarified. A defender shall be excluded for 20 seconds after grabbing an offensive player's suit and causing breast exposure. When an offensive player grabs the defender and causes exposure, the player shall be excluded for 20 seconds. Finally, if a player grabs her own suit and

exposes a breast, a minor act of disrespect with a 20-second exclusion shall be called. To decrease the incidence of exposure, it is recommended that the swim suits be full-back and that the zipper is fully zipped. A zipper which is not fully zipped is considered to be an article which is likely to cause injury to either that player or to another player. If the zipper becomes unzipped, the player should zip up the suit at the next appropriate stoppage of the game when the player's team is in possession of the ball, without taking away the advantage, just as in the cap replacement rule (4-1). If the zipper can not be fixed at that time or if a suit is torn, the referees should remove the player, allow the immediate entrance of a substitute, and the original player may be substituted in after the problem is corrected.

20..The method of tournament advancement has been changed. If three teams are tied in points in a bracket, the goal difference between these three teams shall be calculated. If the tie is broken, the team with the greatest goal difference shall advance first. The second and third places are determined by which team won the game between the remaining two teams. Additional examples are given in Appendix C.

21. A referee signal of a rolling motion with one arm has been added to indicate the exclusion foul of a minor act of disrespect. This foul must be noted on the score sheet as E-MAD.

22. When one referee awards an exclusion foul and at the same time the other referee awards a penalty foul but for opposing teams, both the offending players are excluded and a neutral throw awarded.