

National Federation of State  
High School Associations



# 2012-13 WATER POLO CASE BOOK



## 2012-13 NFHS Water Polo Case Book (New or revised cases are shaded; edited 8-23-12)

### **Rule 1: Field of Play and Equipment**

**Rule 1-1: Pregame Inspection: Balls; Rule 3-5: Number of Balls; Rule 7-7-b: Referee Reporting**

**Situation:** The referee notes that game balls have been added to the list of items to be inspected. What does the referee check for?

**Ruling:** The referee must check that there are at least five game-quality balls for championship games (one with the referee and two with each goal judge or each bench), and a minimum of three for all other games (one with the referee and one at each bench). The balls must be of game quality and conform to the description of the balls in Rule 3. The referee must report any deficiency immediately to the administrator in charge to see if it is possible to remedy this deficiency before the game. After the game, the referee must report this deficiency to the state association office, school athletic director and assigning authority, unless determined otherwise by state association policy, in order that this should not be a reoccurring problem.

**Rule 1-1: Pregame Inspection; Rule 1-2: Visible Display of Score; Rule 7-7-b: Referee Reporting**

**Situation:** The score board is non-functional and the host uses a game clock and a separate shot clock at the score table. There is no visible display of the score. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** Rule 1-2 requires that there be a display of the score that is visible to the referees, both teams and the score table personnel. In order to comply with this rule, the host must provide a chalkboard, flip cards, etc. The referee must report this deficiency as described above in Rule 1-1 and Rule 7-7-b.

**Rule 1-1: Pregame Inspection; Rule 1-2: Number of Shot Clocks; Rule 7-7-b: Referee Reporting**

**Situation:** Before the start of the game, the visiting coach complains to the referees that there is only one visible shot clock, which is located on the scoreboard at one end of the pool. What is the responsibility of the referee in this situation?

**Ruling:** The rules require a minimum of two shot clocks, each located at one corner of the pool (see Rule 1-2 and the diagram on page 147 of the NFHS Water Polo Rules Book for location of shot clocks). The referee must report this deficiency immediately to the administrator in charge to see if it is possible to remedy this deficiency before the game. After the game, the referee must report this deficiency as described above in Rule 1-1 and Rule 7-7-b.

**Rule 1-1: Pregame Inspection; Rule 1-2: Sounds of Clock Buzzers; Rule 7-7-b: Referee Reporting**

**Situation:** The referee notes in the pregame inspection that the buzzer for the expiration of time on the game clock has the same sound as that of the buzzer on the shot clock. What is the responsibility of the referee in this situation?

**Ruling:** The requirement for a difference in the sounds of the buzzers of the game clock and of the shot clock was effective July 1, 2009. The referee must report this deficiency after the game as described in Rule 1-1 and Rule 7-7-b. To temporarily solve the problem, the referee should instruct either the game timer or the shot clock timer to sound an air horn when the game clock reaches 0:00. This is usually the responsibility of the shot clock timer, as the shot clock is blanked when less than 30 seconds remain in a

period and a new period of possession is awarded, so it is likely that this timer has no other function at that time.

**Rule 1-1: Pregame Inspection; Rule 1-2: Visible Display on the Shot Clocks; Rule 7-7-b: Referee Reporting; Rule 9-2: Display on Shot Clock**

**Situation:** In the pre-game inspection, the referee noticed that the shot clock displayed tenths, such as 3.0 seconds remaining instead of 3, for example, and that if the shot clock is reset when less than 30 seconds remain in the period, the shot clock assumes the time on the game clock. Are these settings correct?

**Ruling:** No. The rules require that the time remaining in the period of possession must be shown only in whole numbers in order for coaches, players, referees and desk personnel to more easily read the time remaining, and that if the shot clock is reset when less than 30 seconds remain in the period, the display is blanked. The referee must have the host correct the default settings on the shot clocks.

**Rule 1-1: Pregame Inspection; Rule 1-3: Field of Play; Rule 7-7-b: Referee Reporting**

**Situation:** The score table is located at one end of the pool. What is the responsibility of the referee?

**Ruling:** The score table shall be located approximately at the center of one side of the pool, in accordance with Rule 1-3 and the diagram on page 147 of the NFHS Water Polo Rules Book. This location in the center of the course provides the optimum view of the field of play for the score table personnel, and for communication between the referees and the score table personnel. The referee shall determine the cause for this position and try to remedy it before the game, working with the administrator in charge. The referee must report this deficiency after the game as described in Rule 1-1 and Rule 7-7-b.

**Rule 1-1: Pregame Inspection; Rule 1-6: Pool Markings; Rule 7-7: Referee Reporting Responsibility**

**Situation:** The referee notes in the pregame inspection that the pool is 25-yards wide and does not have sidelines. What should be the action of the referee prior to the game?

**Ruling:** The pool course must be marked correctly, in accordance with the current rules, effective July 1, 2007. The school is not required to have all the possible deck markings, but correctly-colored sidelines are required if the pool width exceeds 20 meters (66 feet). Cones are not required on the deck; however, the use of cones of adequate size, color and weight on the pool deck is to be encouraged, as these are very easy for players, coaches and referees to see during the game. If there are horizontal markings on the pool deck, it is preferable that these markings extend down over the side of the pool so that they are clearly visible from the water and from the other side of the pool. Sidelines are not required for pools less than 20 meters, or 66 feet wide, but it is still required to have the correct markings for the goal line, 2m line, 5m line and half-distance line on the pool deck. The referee must report any deficiency as described in Rule 1-1 and 7-7-b.

**Rule 1-1: Pregame Inspection; Rule 1-6: Non-Conforming Pool Markings**

**Situation:** A pool course is of the correct dimensions, but the markings (color and position) on the sidelines, the markings (color and position) on the pool deck and the color and placement of cones do not agree with each other (a painted mark on the pool deck is 6 inches from the change in color of the sidelines, which is slightly different from the location of the cones). What should be the action of the referee prior to the game?

**Ruling:** One type of boundary marking (sidelines, cones or deck markers) does not automatically take precedence over other types of markings. The referee must point out major deficiencies to the administrator in charge or, if no administrator is present, to the coach. Any possible change in markings should be made at that time and both teams informed which marking is the correct marking, if they still differ. The referee must report this deficiency after the game as described in Rule 1-1 and Rule 7-7-b.

**Rule 1-1: Pregame Inspection; Rule 1-7: Re-entry Area**

**Situation:** The re-entry area on the end lines (boundary lines) or pool wall is marked in red at one meter on the boundary line at both ends of the field of play, instead of the required two meters. An excluded player re-enters the field of play outside the marked area at approximately 1.5 meters. The exclusion secretary blows the whistle for an improper re-entry. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** Since the player entered the field of play outside the marked re-entry area, the re-entry shall be considered an improper re-entry under Rule 21-13. The referee, however, should have noted this error in the pool marking during the pregame inspection of the facility and should have had the host mark the re-entry areas correctly before the game began. The referee should report the lack of required pool markings after the game as described in Rule 1-1 and Rule 7-7-b.

#### **Rule 1-7: Re-entry Area**

**Situation:** The mark for the re-entry area is on the end line, 2 meters from the corner of the field of play on the side opposite the official table at each end of the pool. As is common, the pool does not have a second line attached to the back of the goal and running over to the side of the pool. This second line would create a definite re-entry area. Since an excluded player must arrive in the re-entry area before being replaced by a substitute, is there a rule requiring a player to pass through a certain defined area behind the end line?

**Ruling:** No. If there is no line or wall forming the back boundary of the re-entry area, the referees should decide before the game begins what the rear boundary of the exclusion area is and inform the captains in the pregame meeting. Depending upon the pool configuration, this rear boundary of the exclusion area, if there is no line extending from the back of the goal to the side of the pool, could be a lane line behind the end line, the pool wall or an area relating to the position of the team bench. This is important in order that the referee and the exclusion secretary can verify that an excluded player went to the re-entry area before the substitute entered. If the referee does not do this and an excluded player reaches the side wall of the pool, the player is considered to have passed through the re-entry area.

#### **Rule 1-12: Use of Video**

**Situation:** A player's nose is broken in a game. During the game, the coach requests to use his/her game tape to prove that an opposing player deliberately hit the player. Is this allowed?

**Ruling:** No. The use of video by officials to make decisions during the game is prohibited.

#### **Rule 1-12: Use of Video**

**Situation:** One team's video shows behavior of a coach that would merit the award of a red card. This is not detected by the referees during the game. Can video review be used to award a red card after a game?

**Ruling:** No. The use of replay or television monitoring by officials to make decisions related to the game is prohibited. Individual state associations may develop policy regarding the use of electronic recording of games and uses of the video following the contest.

### **Rule 3: The Ball**

#### **Rule 3-1: Description of Ball**

**Situation:** The host provides balls that are predominantly yellow with red pentagons. Are these in conformance with the rules?

**Ruling:** Yes. The ball may have colored areas other than panels, such as pentagons or circles, provided that the balls are still predominantly yellow.

#### **Rule 3-5: Ball Retrieval Over End Line**

**Situation:** A ball goes over the end line and remains outside the field of play. A second ball lands in a similar area. The goalkeeper then leaves the field of play to retrieve one of the balls. What should the referee call in this situation?

**Ruling:** The referee should exclude the goalkeeper for 20 seconds for leaving the field of play without permission (Rule 21-4). To prevent this situation from occurring, five game-quality balls must be available for all championship games, and are recommended for all games, one with the referee and two at each bench. When a ball goes out of bounds over the end line, the coach must have a team member from the bench immediately retrieve the ball and return it to the bench. If the coach does not do this, the referee shall warn the coach and, at the next occurrence, shall give the coach a yellow card. The goal judge, if present, or any personnel on the bench should throw in the counter ball when necessary.

**Rule 3-5: Ball Retrieval Over Sideline** (also covered in Rule 19-1-a)

**Situation:** A defender deflects a pass over the sideline. The nearest player on the team on offense swims over the sideline out of the field of play to get the ball, returns to the field of play, and is about to put the ball into play. Should the referee allow that player to put the ball into play?

**Ruling:** No. The player on offense is allowed to reach over the sideline to retrieve a ball and put the ball into play at that point, but the player may not leave the field of play to do so without the permission of the referee. Since the player left the field of play without the permission of the referee to retrieve the ball, the referee should exclude the player for 20 seconds and turn the ball over to the opposing team.

**Rule 4: Caps**

**Rule 4-1-1: Caps of the Home Team Field Players**

**Situation:** The caps of the home team field players are paneled (thirds), with the two side panels navy blue and the top panel orange. The two large white numbers overlap both panels. Is this permissible?

**Ruling:** No. The white numbers must be only on the darker side panels of the cap so that they are visible under poor lighting conditions.

**Rule 4-1-1,2: Team Identification on Caps**

**Question:** How many types of team identification may be located on a cap?

**Answer:** There is no current requirement limiting size or number, **but beginning July 1, 2015**, caps may have, in the center panel(s) with no restrictions as to size or number, only school logos, school name, school mascot and/or other school information, provided that the background remains a contrasting color on the dark caps as listed in the rules and white on the white caps. These designs may not be on the panels with the cap numbers. The usual method of handling any problem with non-conforming caps is, if both teams agree, to allow the game to proceed as opposed to forfeiting the game, but the referee should inform the administrator in charge and the proper authorities, so that this may be corrected for future games (Rule 4-6 and Rule 7-7-b).

**Rule 4-1-3: Piping**

**Situation:** A team has piping on its caps consisting of double stripes or dashed stripes on the seams of the caps. Is this permitted?

**Ruling:** No. Piping may be only any single solid color not to exceed a width of 1 centimeter around the edges of the cap and/or on the seams of the cap. **Colored** piping may be used on both the white and dark caps. The piping may not cross a cap number.

**Rule 4-1-5: Requirement for Caps**

**Question:** Must each player on the bench wear a cap, even if that player is not likely to play?

**Answer:** Yes, each player on the bench must have a cap on at all times in order to distinguish players from staff and to determine the identity of a player on the bench if it is necessary to award a red card to a player on the bench. This rule applies both to substitutes and to players excluded for the remainder of the game for misconduct. The players excluded for misconduct must remain on the bench under supervision for the remainder of the game.

**Rule 4-1-5: Caps and Rule 7-3: Advantage Rule**

**Situation:** An excluded player loses his cap immediately before he is excluded. The referee knows the cap number of that player and provides this to the score table. The player reenters the field of play during the extra player situation when waved in by the score table. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee shall have the player replace the cap at the next appropriate stoppage of the game when the player's team is in possession of the ball.

**Rule 4-4-1: Numbers on Goalkeeper Caps**

**Situation:** The visiting coach substituted in a goalkeeper wearing a solid red #13 cap. Is this permitted?

**Ruling:** No. The NFHS rules state that the caps of the visiting goalkeeper must be divided into red and white thirds or quarters with white ear guards and dark cap numbers. The home goalkeeper caps must be divided into red and dark thirds or quarters with dark ear guards and white or yellow/gold cap numbers. In addition, the backup goalkeeper may not wear cap number 13 in NFHS rules. The referee should inform the coach that this cap is not in compliance with the rules. The referees should report this to the administrator in charge and the proper authorities, as described in Rule 4-6 and Rule 7-7-b, so that this may be corrected.

#### **Rule 4-3, 4-4: Caps of the Goalkeeper**

**Situation:** During the pre-game meeting, the referee notes that visiting team has three goalkeepers, each wearing cap number 1. Is this permitted?

**Ruling:** The cap of the goalkeeper shall be number 1. If there are additional goalkeepers, it is recommended (but not required) that their caps have numbers 1A, 1B, etc. If they all wear cap #1, the referee must notify the scorekeeper when there is a change in goalkeepers.

#### **Rule 4-4-2: Small Cap Numbers**

**Situation:** The caps of the field players have an additional cap number on the front and on the back of the cap, a minimum of four centimeters in height. Are these allowed?

**Ruling:** Yes. These numbers are to assist the referees and scorekeeper to identify the player. They are recommended now and **required as of July 1, 2015.**

#### **Rule 4-5: Goalkeeper's Swim Cap Color**

**Situation:** During the pregame meeting, the referee notes that the visiting goalkeeper is wearing a white swim cap under the water polo cap. Is this permitted?

**Ruling:** Yes. Rule 4-5 states that the color of the goalkeeper's swim cap must be red or a color that matches the color of the water polo cap as closely as possible. Therefore, the swim cap worn by a visiting goalkeeper may be white or red, either color of which matches a panel in the water polo cap of the goalkeeper; the swim cap worn by the home goalkeeper may be dark or red. This rule permits all members of a team to wear swim caps of the same color.

### **Rule 5: Teams and Substitutes**

#### **Rule 5-1: Number of Players, Illegal Player**

**Situation:** A player receives a third personal foul, an exclusion foul, at 6:04 in the fourth period and is immediately substituted. The scorekeeper raises the red flag and lowers it after the substitution. Later in the period, a goal is scored at 1:04. The player with the third personal foul enters the field of play at that time after the goal and is observed by the desk at 0:46, just as a goal is scored by that team. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** Since a desk error was not involved, the referee should remove the player for the remainder of the game, remove the goal scored at 0:46, reset the game clock to 1:04, reset the shot clock, and award a penalty throw (Rule 22-6), with the substitute for the player with three personal fouls in the re-entry area until the earliest occurrence of an event described in Rule 21-3.

#### **Rule 5-2-3: Assistant Coach**

**Situation:** The assistant coach stands behind the goal line in front of the bench during play. What is the penalty for this action?

**Ruling:** The assistant coach must remain seated on the bench at all times except during a time-out, after a goal or during a lengthy stoppage of play. The assistant coach may speak to players on the bench and may call out to players in the water from a sitting position. The assistant coach may also move behind the bench to take care of or to speak to a player behind the bench. However, if the assistant coach stands during play, the referee may issue a warning followed by a yellow card and then a red card. If the assistant coach stands, moves up to the 5-meter line **and** coaches, the referee shall issue an immediate red card.



### **Rule 5-4-1: Women's Suits**

**Situation:** In the inspection of players prior to a women's game, the referee notes that one of the goalkeepers is wearing a water polo suit with narrow straps and a low back. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should take no action. The goalkeeper may wear a competitive suit with a low back, with straps of any width.

### **Rule 5-4-1: Exposure and Suit Replacement**

**Situation:** In a tournament, with 44 seconds remaining in the period, a player on offense from the blue team grabs the suit of a player on the white team and causes exposure. The referees exclude the blue player for 20 seconds and turn the ball over. The coach of the white team immediately calls a 30 second time-out. Since the suit of the white player was ripped during this action, the player puts a new suit over the old one, taking longer than 30 seconds. May the referee turn the ball over to the other team? May the referee change the 30 second time-out into a regular two-minute time-out?

**Ruling:** If a replacement suit is readily available at the team bench (it is no longer required that the coach notify the referee prior to the game of the availability of replacement suits), the player may put the suit on over the original suit, usually remaining in the water while doing this, and then continue play. No maximum time is specified in the rules for the replacement of either a suit or cap, but the suit or cap replacement must not take away the advantage. This was not an issue in this case since play was stopped for the time-out. In addition, a referee may not change a 30 second time-out into a regular time-out, even if it takes longer than 30 seconds for the player to put on the suit.

### **Rule 5-4-3: Zippers**

**Situation:** The zipper on the suit of a player is unzipped or broken. What action should the referee take?

**Ruling:** A zipper which is not fully zipped or is broken 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 during the game, the player should zip up the suit at the next appropriate stoppage of the game, when that player's team is in possession of the ball, without taking away the advantage (Rule 7-3), just as in the cap replacement rule (Rule 4-1-5). If the zipper can not be zipped up at that time or if the zipper is broken or suit is torn, the coach may either remove the player, with the immediate entrance of a substitute, and the original player may be substituted in after the problem is corrected (no foul is charged to that player) or the coach may give the player, while still in the water, a replacement suit to put over the original suit. This rule applies to the goalkeeper as well as to the field players.

### **Rule 5-4-3: Articles Likely to Cause Injury: Jewelry**

**Situation:** The referee observes a water polo player wearing a nose stud or a ring in the nose or lip during the pregame meeting. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should require the player to remove these or similar items. These items are jewelry and are regarded as articles likely to cause injury, particularly to the player wearing these items.

### **Rule 5-4-3: Articles Likely to Cause Injury: Nose Guard and Face Mask**

**Situation:** The referee notes that an injured player is wearing a nose guard or face mask made of high impact plastic and soft rubber during a game to protect the nose or orbit from further injury. What is the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** Although these would usually be regarded as articles likely to cause injury either to the player wearing the article or to an opposing player, the nature of these particular protective devices is that they would not be likely to cause injury. Therefore, after the player, parents, prescribing physician and school are informed of the rules and interpretations regarding the use of this type of appliance, and they provide a signed release which covers the state association, the conference, and the referees from any liability, the player could use this type of device. This release must be provided to the referees before each game. Each state association should establish its procedures for the type of form used.

**Rule 5-4-3: Articles Likely to Cause Injury: Plaster of Paris Cast and Finger Splint**

**Situation:** A player requests permission to wear a plaster of paris cast. Another requests to use a finger splint. Should the state association and referee allow either?

**Ruling:** No. The state association and referee need to judge each article for its potential to cause injury. A plaster of paris cast on an arm could cause injury to another player as it is heavier than the normal limb. A finger splint could cause a serious eye injury to another player. Therefore, these types of articles are prohibited by the rules. However, there are protective devices made of more flexible material that can be used on a hand, for example. These must be reviewed by the state association before receiving approval for use.

**Rule 5-4-3: Articles Likely to Cause Injury: Goggles**

**Situation:** In order to participate safely, a player requires prescription goggles due to eye surgery. The athlete has written clearance from the doctor and parents. Since goggles are prohibited, the school has contacted the state association and received written permission as these special goggles do not appear likely to cause injury due to the special material. The letter is provided to the referee prior to competition.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure. The rule requires removal of articles likely to cause injury, but permits the state association and referee to exercise discretion in making that determination. In this situation, an article that is generally prohibited can be considered by the state association if addressing a special need.

**Rule 5-4-3: Elasticized Bandage**

**Situation:** A player is wearing an elasticized bandage on his elbow. Another is using a neoprene brace on the knee. Are these permitted?

**Ruling:** Yes. An elasticized bandage or one of neoprene is not regarded as an article likely to cause injury.

**Rule 5-5-2: Substances on Body**

**Situation:** A player uses zinc oxide on his nose to prevent sunburn. Is this allowed?

**Ruling:** Zinc oxide, in addition to sunscreen, comes in a form that is not oily or greasy. If the zinc oxide is of this type and this is verified by the referee, the player may use this.

**Rule 5-6-1,2: Difference Between Live Time Substitution and Substitution for an Excluded Player**

**Question:** What is the essential difference between a live-time substitution and substitution for an excluded player?

**Answer:** In a live time substitution, the player leaving the field of play must swim directly to the re-entry area and leave under the boundary line. The substitute in the re-entry area may then swim directly out into the field of play.

In substituting for an excluded player, the excluded player may leave the field of play at any point under the sideline or end line and swim to the re-entry area. The substitute may enter the field of play from the re-entry area after the excluded player arrives in the re-entry area and 20 seconds have elapsed or other event listed in Rule 21-3.

**Rule 5-6-1: Direct (Live-Time) Substitution**

**Situation:** A player was in the re-entry area waiting for the opportunity for a direct substitution. The player leaving the pool swam under the sideline, not seen by the referee. Is the scoring table responsible to notify the referee of this violation?

**Answer:** No. It is the responsibility of the referee to call this foul.

**Rule 5-9: Substitution of an Injured Goalkeeper**

**Situation:** The goalkeeper is injured during play. How is the goalkeeper substituted?

**Ruling:** The goalkeeper is removed with immediate substitution (the coach does not need to call a timeout). One of the players or the substitute must take the goalkeeper's cap. The injured player may return later to the game in any position.



## **Rule 6: Officials**

### **Rule 6-1: Number of Referees**

**Situation:** Ten minutes before the listed starting time of the game only one referee was present at a high school game. Efforts failed to contact the missing referee or to locate a qualified replacement referee near the school site. The two coaches agreed to play the game with one referee, per Rule 6-1, at the designated starting time. After 15 minutes of play, early in the second period, the second referee arrived, stating he had had car trouble and was unable to notify the school or coach. What action should the two coaches take?

**Ruling:** It is recommended that the local association provide guidelines to cover waiting time before proceeding with one referee. If there are no guidelines, the two coaches should decide whether to continue with one referee or to let the late referee start officiating at this point in the game.

### **Rule 6-1: Desk Observers**

**Situation:** The visiting team has two official observers at the scoring table. The observers cheer after each goal for their team. What action should the referee take?

**Ruling:** The official observers at the scoring table are considered to be part of the desk officials and must act in a neutral, professional manner during a game. The desk supervisor, if present, or the referees must order the observers to cease this action or leave the scoring table.

## **Rule 7: Referees**

### **Rule 7-1: Authority of Referee**

**Situation:** A player from one team shoots the ball. The referee immediately signals a goal. The goal judge immediately signals no goal. Which takes precedence?

**Ruling:** The referee has complete authority over the goal judges and desk officials; therefore, the ruling is that the goal scored.

### **Rule 7-2: Altering Decision**

**Situation:** The whistle is blown for a foul. One referee points towards one end of the pool, indicating a change in possession. The other referee points towards the original offensive end. Players of the team then on defense turn to swim towards the opposite end of the pool. The referee pointing in that direction, however, drops the hand and the team maintaining possession of the ball continues its offense. What should the referees have done in that situation?

**Ruling:** If the hand signals of the two referees differ (if, for example, the referees point in opposite directions), the ball should be called out of the water; play is resumed as quickly as possible when neither team has an advantage.

### **Rule 7-4-1: Control Over Conduct; Representative of the School on the Bench**

**Situation:** Before the game, the referee observes that there was only one coach and no other representative of the school on the bench. Should the referee take any action?

**Ruling:** There is no requirement that the referee take any action prior to the game. To prevent a potential delay later in the game, however, the referee could ask the coach if he/she wanted to declare another representative of the school prior to the game in case the coach receives a red card during the game.

### **Rule 7-4-2: Control Over Conduct; Coach-Referee Discussions**

**Situation:** The head coach approaches a referee at half time, walking down to the other end of the pool past the other team's bench to the location of the referees. The referee, however, did not allow any conversation with the coach, stating that the coach could not walk past the other team's bench. Is this the correct call?

**Ruling:** No. The head coach may address the referee at this time. The rule provides that the head coach and captain may address the referees at intervals between periods, during time-outs, or with the permission of the referee or, in the case of the head coach, when filing a protest. They may only discuss rule clarifications and misapplication of rules with the officials at these times, not judgment calls made by the referees. The

referee has to either allow the coach to come to the position of the referee or the referee should move to where the coach is located.

**Rule 7-4-4: Issuance of a Yellow Card to a Coach**

**Situation:** During a time-out, the head coach approached the referee to ask for clarification of permissible and non-permissible impeding of the team's 2-meter player. The referee immediately issued the coach a yellow card. Should the referee have allowed this question by the head coach at this time?

**Ruling:** The head coach may discuss rule clarifications and misapplications of rules with the referee at intervals between periods and during time-outs. Judgment calls are not an appropriate topic of discussion at any time. If the question was a request for clarification of a rule, the referee should have answered the question. The referee must distinguish between a discussion clarifying a rule or a potential misapplication of the rule (permissible) or questioning the referee's judgment (impermissible).

**Rule 7-4-4,5: Control Over Conduct**

**Situation:** The referee issues a yellow card to the bench because players are standing. One player on the bench later comments loudly on a referee's call. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should issue a red card to that player. (No warning or yellow card is issued to an individual athlete on the bench.) That player is excluded for the remainder of the game and for the next game.

**Rule 7-4-4,5: Control Over Conduct**

**Situation:** The referee issues a yellow card to the assistant coach on the bench because the assistant coach is standing during play. Later in the game, the assistant coach comments on the performance of the referee. May a referee issue more than one yellow card to the same assistant coach?

**Ruling:** No. A referee may award more than one yellow card to a team, giving them to different individuals on a team (for example, one yellow card to the head coach and another yellow card to an assistant coach), but not more than one yellow card to the same person. If that assistant coach continued with the same behavior, or committed a different type of misbehavior, the referee will award the assistant coach a red card. If a player is standing up and criticizing the referee, the referee may issue a yellow card to the bench (yellow cards are not issued to individual players on the bench). If the behavior continues, the referee will issue that player a red card.

**Rule 7-4-5: Issuance of a Red Card to the Head Coach**

**Situation:** The head coach kicked over a deck marker cone in anger when the non-offending team was countering down the pool. The referee decided to award a red card to the coach. The referee waited until the conclusion of the counterattack in order to not take away the advantage of the non-offending team before stopping play. The referee then called the ball out, showed the red card, then notified the coach and the desk of the card, and removed the head coach from the premises. Is this how the red card should be administered during play?

**Ruling:** Yes. The referee should not take away the advantage from the non-offending team and does not notify the coach until play has stopped.

**Rule 7-4-4: Issuance of a Yellow Card to the Head Coach**

**Situation:** If a referee in the preceding example decided to award the coach a yellow card instead of a red card, what difference in procedure should he follow?

**Ruling:** A yellow card may be displayed during the progress of a game without stoppage of play. At the next normal stoppage of play (for example, at the conclusion of a counterattack, just as with the red card), without taking away the advantage of the non-offending team, the referee shall stop play and notify the coach of the offending team and the score table to whom he had awarded the yellow card.

**Rule 7-4-4,5: Issuance of a Card to the Bench**

**Situation:** If there is no advantage at the time of the misbehavior of bench personnel, can the referee issue a card to the bench at the time of the incident?

**Ruling:** If no advantage is involved, the referee can issue the card immediately.

**Rule 7-4-5: Issuance of a Red Card to a Player**

**Situation:** A player received his/her third personal foul. The player left the pool and moved to the bench. Upon reaching the bench, the player grabbed a counter ball and kicked it into the air. The referee issued a red card to the player. Is this the correct ruling or should the referee have called misconduct?

**Ruling:** This is the correct ruling, as the player had left the pool and was on the bench. The incident must be reported as described in Rule 7-7 and the player is excluded from the next game.

**Rule 7-4-5: Red Card Versus Misconduct**

**Situation:** The referee orders a player to leave the water. The player refuses to leave. The referee issues a red card to the player. Is this the correct penalty?

**Ruling:** Yes. The referee should issue a red card to a player who refuses to leave the water when so ordered.

**Rule 7-4-5: Location of Coach Issued a Red Card**

**Situation:** A coach is issued a red card. The coach remains in one corner of the pool, away from the field of play. Is this allowed?

**Ruling:** No. The referee must require the coach or other team official to leave the pool facility. The referee may forfeit the game if the coach refuses to leave.

**Rule 7-4-5: Issuance of a Red Card**

**Situation:** The referee issues a red card to the head coach of the blue team. After the head coach left the bench and the premises of the pool, the referee awarded the ball to the white team at the location of the ball. Is this correct?

**Ruling:** No. The ball is not turned over to the opposing team when a red or yellow card is issued.

**Rule 7-5: Spectator Behavior**

**Situation:** A spectator associated with one team starts a fight in the bleachers. What should be the action of the referees?

**Ruling:** The referee stops play and calls for school security to remove the spectator from the site, as opposed to abandoning the game.

**Rule 7-7: Referee Reporting Responsibility**

**Question:** Must a red card be reported to the athletic director of the school of the offending team?

**Answer:** The referee must report the issuance of a red card, misconduct, flagrant misconduct, and fighting to the state association and the commissioner of the local association (when applicable) who will then be responsible for notifying the principal of the offending school. The referee usually also reports this to the assigning authority. Each state association shall establish its requirements for reporting. See Rule 7-7-a for procedure if two states or associations are involved.

**Rule 7-7: Referee Reporting Responsibility**

**Situation:** The referee excludes a player from the remainder of the game for misconduct. How should the referee report this offense?

**Ruling:** Misconduct is a reportable offense to the state association. Each state association determines whether suspension from the next game is also required for the foul of misconduct. The state association reports to the local association, which reports the incident to the principal.

**Rule 7-8: Checking and Signing Scoresheet**

**Situation:** The rule recommends that one of the referees check the scoresheet after each period, particularly for score and number of time-outs taken. Should the referee keep track of the number of fouls issued to each player and inform a coach, when asked, how many personal fouls a player has?

**Ruling:** No. The referee is not responsible for keeping track of the number of personal fouls issued to each player and should not answer such a question. Each team may have an observer at the desk who may convey

this information to the coach. If a coach is uncertain of the number of fouls charged to a particular player, a team official may check with its representative at the desk or, at an appropriate moment, with the scorekeeper, but may not ask the referee.

#### **Rule 7-8: Checking and Signing Scoresheet**

**Situation:** Flagrant misconduct, a fight and players entering the field of play during the fight occur near the end of a game. The referees impose the correct penalties, but do not notify the game secretary of the ruling of flagrant misconduct/fighting as required by the rules. The secretary records these as exclusion fouls, not as flagrant misconduct fouls, on the scoresheet. The referees sign that scoresheet after the game.

**Ruling:** The scoresheet is the official record of the game. The referees erred in signing a scoresheet that did not have the correct notation of these reportable fouls. The referee must check to verify that yellow and red cards, misconduct, flagrant misconduct and fighting are recorded on the scoresheet, and that the appropriate coaches have been informed of the occurrence of these fouls (with the exception of a yellow card unless required by the state association or host commissioner), as there are follow-up penalties for most of these behaviors. To assist the referee with the notification of the head coaches, it is recommended that a triplicate (3-part) scoresheet be used.

#### **Rule 7-9: Correctable Errors**

**Situation:** The referee includes the following in his definition of correctable errors: errors made by players and coaches (such as a coach calling for a time-out at a time not allowed, a player swimming under the end line to retrieve a ball or the substitute for an excluded player entering the field of play before the excluded player arrives). Is this correct?

**Ruling:** No. The definition of a correctable error includes technical errors by desk officials, equipment malfunction, timing errors and misapplication of rules by referees, errors which should be corrected in the interest of fairness. It does not include errors made by coaches or players. Correctable errors are usually corrected by referees as they occur or as they are pointed out by a coach. It is usually not necessary for the coach to file a protest. The deadline for identifying a correctable error is 5 minutes after the completion of the game (this time is selected as it is also the deadline for filing a protest).

#### **Rule 7-9-b: Signal for Re-entry of Player**

**Situation:** A player is excluded for 20 seconds. The player is waved in at the proper time (both the game clock and the shot clock show that 20 seconds have elapsed at the time of the wave-in) and the player comes under the lane line with 9 seconds remaining on the shot clock as a goal is scored. That team's coach states the player was waved in incorrectly and the goal should be removed. What should be the ruling of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee has the authority to determine if the error was significant. In order to disallow a goal, the error must have affected play. In this case, the flag was not late and the player coming under the lane line with 9 seconds remaining on the shot clock would be a typical response time. The referee should take no action.

#### **Rule 7-9-b: Exclusion Secretary Error**

**Situation:** The exclusion secretary fails to wave in the excluded player and a goal scores four seconds later. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should disallow the goal. The game clock should be reset to the re-entry time and the shot clock to 10 seconds. Play should restart with the excluded player (or substitute) in the re-entry area. As soon as play is restarted, the referee should wave in the player.

#### **Rule 7-9-e: Incorrect Player Leaving Field of Play**

**Situation:** White player #4 was excluded. White #10 left by mistake and was behind the boundary line approximately halfway between the goal and the side line. The referee stopped play and motioned to white #4 to leave the field of play. At that time white #10 re-entered the field of play. The referee then excluded white #10 for re-entering the pool from an improper area and restarted play with a 6 on 4, with the blue team scoring nearly immediately. Is this the correct action of the referee?

**Ruling:** No. If an incorrect player leaves the field of play after an exclusion, the referee should stop play quickly, allow the incorrect player to re-enter the field of play, the correct player to leave, reset both clocks and then commence play.

**Rule 7-9-h: Timing Error**

**Situation:** The score is tied in a game. The team with white caps has the ball with 12 seconds remaining in the game and with two seconds remaining on the shot clock. The player with the ball is fouled outside the 5-meter line and the ball is knocked a few feet away. While the player is retrieving the ball, the shot clock expired. What should the referee do in this situation?

**Ruling:** The referee must take the ball from the water, reset the shot clock to two seconds, put two seconds back on the game clock and then give the ball back to the player in the white cap to take the free throw. That player may take a direct shot on goal as the ball may be shot if the referee calls the ball out after a foul committed outside the 5-meter area to correct a clock error (Rule 14-3-e).

**Rule 7-9-h: Timing Error**

**Situation:** A player with a blue cap was excluded at 5:24. The coach of the white team immediately called a time-out. However, both clocks had been restarted and continued to run for 3 seconds, with the shot clock now at 27 seconds and the game clock now at 5:21 before the game was stopped for the time-out. The desk supervisor pointed this out to the referee. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should reset both clocks (game clock to 5:24 and shot clock to 30) so that the excluded player is out for the full 20 seconds and so that the white team has the entire possession time after the time-out before starting play.

**Rule 7-9-h: Timing Error**

**Situation:** The referees exclude a player with 2 seconds remaining in the game and with the shot clock off. The game clock operator does not stop the clock so the clock buzzer sounds before the referee has restarted play. The referee concludes the game at that point, saying the team could not score with 2 seconds remaining. What should the referee do?

**Ruling:** Since the time of the exclusion was at :02 (there was no disagreement on the time), the referee should put 2 seconds on the game clock and restart play. The referee should not judge whether a team could score in the time run off in error.

**Rule 7-9-h: Timing Error**

**Situation:** With 20 seconds remaining in a game and with the score 4-3 in favor of the blue team, a player is excluded from the blue team. The game concludes without a goal scored or an additional personal foul assessed. At that point, the losing coach protests that the game clock was started incorrectly after that exclusion. Investigation reveals that the coach was correct. The game clock was started by mistake when one player passed the ball back to the player who the referee had indicated should put the ball into play. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referees verified that the error had occurred with four seconds being run off before the clock should have started. The referee reset the game clock to the time of the exclusion and the teams replayed the last 20 seconds of the game.

**Rule 7-9-k: Interruption of Extra-Player Situation**

**Situation:** With 4:53 remaining in the game, the team with blue caps has a two-goal lead and is defending a 6-on-5 situation. The white team sets up its power play offense and for 17 seconds maintains possession and successfully passes the ball in order to set up an appropriate shot on goal. With three seconds remaining in the white team's man-up situation, a stray ball from an adjacent warm-up area behind the goal enters the field of play. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** If the entrance of the ball affects play, the referee should stop the game, remove the ball, instruct the timekeepers to reset the game clock and shot clock, and restart the extra player situation. It would not be in the spirit of Rule 7-9 for the referees to restart play with three seconds remaining on the player advantage situation. The offense would not have enough time to benefit from its advantage. The player with the ball

who was outside the 5-meter line could not take a direct shot on goal because the referee had called for the ball (Rule 14-3-e). Knowing this, the defense would press the other five offensive players, most likely preventing a goal in the remaining three seconds. Similar action should also be taken if a lane line holding the goal in place breaks, the clock fails, etc., if the event affects the extra player advantage situation.

**Rule 7-9-k: Correctable Error During an Extra-Player Situation**

**Situation:** A player who lost his cap is excluded. Several players on that team have two personal fouls. The referee informs the desk that he thinks the excluded player is cap number 4, who has only one personal foul. The scorekeeper waves the player in at the end of 20 seconds. It is then immediately discovered that the player is cap #6, rather than cap #4, and that cap #6 now has three personal fouls and is not eligible to play. What should the referee and/or exclusion secretary do?

**Ruling:** The exclusion secretary should immediately blow the whistle and inform the referee that the player has three personal fouls. The referee should remove that player for the remainder of the game, reset the clock to the time of the re-entry of that player (the time of the expiration of the exclusion), reset the shot clock to 10 seconds and restart play. The time is reset to the time the player re-entered rather than the time of the exclusion because the exclusion time had expired without an extra-player goal being scored. The shot clock was not reset, as no shot had been taken and possession had not changed.

**Rule 7-9-k: Exclusion of Player Without a Cap**

**Situation:** A player who lost his/her cap is excluded. The referee starts play without informing the scorekeeper of the cap number of that player. When asked, the referee states he did not know. Several players have two personal fouls. What should be the action of the referee?

**Answer:** The referee should stop play after approximately 5 seconds (to enable the team time to score a quick goal on the extra-player situation), pull the ball out, have the player put on the missing cap, inform the scorekeeper of the cap number and check that the player is an eligible player. The referee should reset the game clock to the time of the exclusion, reset the shot clock and restart play.

**Rule 7-9-m: Example 2: Starting after Time-out**

**Situation:** The coach of the team in dark caps calls a time-out and ends it early. The players assume their positions as after a time-out in the field of play, and the referee blows the whistle to indicate the end of the time-out. The goalkeeper puts the ball into play and passes the ball to a player on the 6-meter line, who then starts to swim with the ball. It is then discovered that the clock had not started after the conclusion of the time-out (the remaining time-out time on the console had not been cancelled, which resulted in a failure of the clock to start). The referee stopped play to correct the problem and restarted play as after a time-out. The coach who had called the time-out protested, requesting that his team be allowed to retake the time-out because his strategy for the after time-out play had been exposed to the opposing team. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** Since the players had assumed positions for a particular play and since the goalkeeper had passed the ball to the player who then started this play, the strategy was evident to the opposing team. Therefore, the protest was granted and the team calling the time-out was permitted to retake the time-out. The clocks are reset appropriately.

**Rule 7-9-m: Example 3: Starting after Time-out**

**Situation:** In the above situation, should the coach of the injured team have had to protest to take the time-out over or should the referee have applied the correctable error principle as in the above situation and restarted by retaking the time-out?

**Ruling:** In any similar situation with failure of the clocks to start after a time-out and play continuing for some time before this problem is discovered, the referee must stop play, correct the clock problem and discuss with the coach if he/she wants to take the time-out over, as the coach's strategy for the after time-out play has been exposed, just as in the case above.

**Rule 7-10: Replay of Protested Game; Rule 11-6: Replay of a Game**

**Situation:** In the situation described in 7-9-h above, the protest was resolved after the conclusion of the game. Must each team restart the game with the same seven players that were in the pool for the last 20 seconds of the game? In this case, there were only 20 seconds to be replayed. In other cases, a much longer period of time or even the entire game must be replayed. What principle must be applied to determine which players are eligible to play?

**Ruling:** The principle to be followed is that if a game (or portion of a game) is to be replayed, the goals, 20-second exclusion fouls (including minor act of misconduct), penalty fouls and time-outs that occurred during the time to be replayed are lined through on the scoresheet; however, misconduct, flagrant misconduct, fighting, red cards and yellow cards are not removed (are not lined through), and are still retained on the scoresheet. Therefore, a player removed for misconduct, for example, at any time during the game, even during the part to be replayed, is not eligible to play. **Note:** If a player received a third personal foul during the part to be replayed, that player would be eligible to participate in the part to be replayed as that foul would have been lined through.

**Rule 7-10: Protests**

**Situation:** The referee turned down a protest and submitted a report in writing as directed, but did not explain to the coach why the protest was rejected. Is this the correct procedure?

**Ruling:** The referee must explain to the coach filing the protest why it was rejected. This response must be in writing, either on the scoresheet or on an attached sheet with the protest, in addition to communicating this response and the rationale to the coach.

**Rule 7-10: Protests**

**Situation:** During the first period of a game, the referees award the incorrect penalty for an improper entry of an excluded player on defense. Either team could have protested the decision at that time, but no protest was filed. The injured team won the game. Can the non-injured team protest after the conclusion of the game, but within the time for filing a protest, that the incorrect penalty was awarded in the first period?

**Ruling:** Yes. Either team may protest the misapplication of a rule during or after the game, within the time limits described in the rule. It is doubtful if this protest would be upheld, as the purpose of a protest is to minimize the damage done by a misapplication of a rule. If the injured team won the game, the losing team should not be able to gain from this type of protest.

**Rule 7-10: Protest Involving Teams From Two or More Conferences**

**Situation:** In a tournament, a protest involves teams from two different conferences. How should this protest be handled?

**Ruling:** If the protest is not handled by the referees and there is no tournament committee, the rule states that the protest is to be settled by the sponsoring conference or agency. If the tournament was sponsored by a particular team in a conference, the appropriate governing authority shall be the conference to which the host school belongs, per state association policy or as otherwise directed by the state association. **The results are then sent to the other conference.**

**Rule 7-11: Forfeit**

**Situation:** Two teams are scheduled to play a tournament game at 5:30 pm, but the start of the game is delayed due to the late completion of a game earlier that day. One coach informs the other coach that his/her team can't stay later to play the game because of travel arrangements. What is the outcome of the game?

**Ruling:** Unless there is mutual consent of both teams to either reschedule or cancel the game, the game is recorded as a forfeit in favor of the team that was able and ready to play the game at any time that day.



## **Rule 9: Timekeepers**

### **Rule 9-2: Reset of Shot Clock on Ball-Under Call**

**Situation:** The referee signals ball-under but does not turn the ball over, and the original player still maintains possession of the ball. The shot clock operator resets the shot clock and play continues. The coach on defense calls out that the shot clock should not have been reset. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee agrees with the coach, stopping play and stating that there was not a change in possession. Therefore, the referee has the timers reset the game clock to the time of the ball-under call and reset the shot clock to the appropriate time. The shot-clock timer shall reset the shot clock on a ball-under call only if there is a clear change of possession, not a momentary touching or contact with the ball. The player has to be in control of the ball. The referee should be alert for an erroneous resetting of the shot clock after giving a ball-under signal when there is no change in possession.

### **Rule 9-2-a: Error by Shot Clock Timer**

**Situation:** A player shoots the ball near the end of the 30-second period of possession. The shot clock timer fails to reset the shot clock and the shot clock buzzer sounds while the ball is still in the air. The referees do not blow their whistles. The ball subsequently goes into the goal. Does the goal count?

**Ruling:** The goal counts, as failure to reset the shot clock on the shot was an error on the part of the shot clock timer. The shot clock buzzer does not stop play - the referee's whistle stops play.

### **Rule 9-3: Goal Scored at End of Period**

**Situation:** A shot is taken near the end of the period. The buzzer for the end of the period sounds while the ball is in the air. The referee blows the whistle at the sound of the buzzer while the ball is still in the air. The ball subsequently crossed the goal line into the goal. The referee disallowed the goal. Is this decision protestable?

**Ruling:** No. The rule states that if the ball is in flight when the clock buzzer sounds, any resulting goal shall be allowed. However, if the referee blows the whistle at the sound of the clock buzzer and then the ball enters the goal, the goal does not count. This is not protestable, as it is not a correctable error or a misapplication of the rules. The referee made a mistake and the ball became dead at the whistle.

## **Rule 10: Secretaries**

### **Rule 10-1: Duties of the Game Secretary**

**Situation:** The home team scoresheet is the official record of the game. How is the visiting team informed of the occurrence of reportable fouls?

**Ruling:** The referee (Rule 7-8) must verify that both coaches are informed of the occurrence of these fouls. To facilitate this, it is recommended that, if there is not a scorekeeper at the desk from the visiting team, the home team should use either a triplicate scoresheet, so that each coach receives a copy showing clearly the occurrence of these fouls, or a computerized scoresheet, with each coach receiving a copy after the game. The referees must check the scoresheet and verify that it is correct before signing the scoresheet.

### **Rule 10-2: Duties of the Exclusion Secretary and Rule 21-17: Interfering with Play**

**Situation:** A player is excluded for the second time and then interferes with play while leaving the pool. A penalty foul is awarded against the excluded player, making that the player's third personal foul. The exclusion secretary raises the red flag to indicate that this is the third foul on that player. Does the exclusion secretary also blow the whistle, which would stop play?

**Ruling:** No. Even though the exclusion secretary usually blows the whistle **and** raises the red flag when a third personal foul is a penalty foul since substitution must take place before the penalty shot, that is not true in this case since the penalty throw is taken with the substitute for the excluded player in the re-entry area. Therefore, the exclusion secretary shall only raise the red flag.

## **Rule 11: Duration of the Game**

### **Rule 11-2: Interval between Periods**

**Situation:** Both teams come out after approximately 1:15 into the 2-minute break after the first period and inform the referees they are ready to start play. May the referee start play?

**Ruling:** Yes, if both teams come out into the field of play and indicate they are ready to start play. There is no rule specifically prohibiting this, but both teams must agree that they want to shorten the interval between periods.

### **Rule 11-2: Procedure for Shortening Half-time**

**Situation:** One team comes out early at half-time. The referee blows the whistle and then the other team comes out. Is this the correct action of the referee?

**Ruling:** No. The referee shall shorten half-time only if both teams come out and want to start early.

### **Rule 11-6: Replay of a Game**

**Situation:** A coach protests after a game that a referee failed to award a penalty throw when an excluded player on defense entered the field of play early (the referee excluded the player for another 20 seconds, but did not also award a penalty throw) at 7:05 in the third period. From that time to the end of the game, one player was excluded for misconduct at 7:15 in the fourth period, a coach received a red card at 6:16 in the fourth period, several players on both teams scored goals and received exclusion fouls and an assistant coach received a yellow card. The referee granted the protest. How is the game restarted?

**Ruling:** Before restarting the game at 7:05 in the third period by conducting the penalty throw, the referee removed the goals scored from 7:05 in the third period to the end of the game, together with exclusion fouls, penalty fouls and time-outs called during that period of time. The red card, yellow card and the misconduct foul remain on the scoresheet. The player excluded for misconduct and the coach who had received a red card may not play in or coach in the part to be replayed, even though these fouls occurred later in the part of the game to be replayed.

## **Rule 12: Time-outs**

### **Rule 12-1: Visible Display of Time-outs**

**Situation:** The host does not have a visible display of time-outs remaining. Is this required?

**Ruling:** No. There is no NFHS rule that requires a visible display of time-outs remaining.

### **Rule 12-1-2: Use of an Air Horn to call a Time-out**

**Situation:** The tournament host provides an air horn on each bench to use in calling time-outs. Must the team use the air horn to call a time-out?

**Ruling:** There is no requirement that the coach use the air horn to call a time-out. The coach may call "time-out" and signal with the hands forming a T-shape.

### **Rule 12-1: Team on Offense Relinquishes Possession of the Ball**

**Situation:** The team on offense relinquishes possession of the ball just before the shot clock expires by dumping the ball into a vacant area of the pool. The referee blows the whistle. The team that was on defense immediately calls for a time-out. Is this allowed?

**Ruling:** Yes. The team may call a time-out if the team is granted possession of the ball by the most recent action of the referees, even if the team does not have physical possession of the ball. Therefore, in this situation, the team may call a time-out as soon as the referee blows the whistle and awards possession of the ball to the team formerly on defense, even though that team had not yet taken physical possession of the ball.

### **Rule 12-1: Shot over Goal**

**Situation:** Team A shot the ball over the goal. The referee awards possession of the ball to Team B. Team B immediately calls a time-out. What is the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee awards the time-out. Team B may call an immediate time-out, even if the ball is still outside the pool, since the referee awarded possession of the ball to Team B.

**Rule 12-1-3: Times When Defense May Call a Time-out**

**Question:** When may the team on defense call a time-out?

**Answer:** The team on defense may call a time-out (1) immediately after the team on offense calls a time-out (except before a penalty shot); (2) either team may call a time-out after a goal is scored; (3) if a player is bleeding on either team, that team may call a regular time-out instead of immediately replacing the player in order to have two minutes to see if the bleeding stops (see Rule 25-2).

**Rule 12-3-1: Time-out after the Award of a Corner Throw**

**Situation:** A corner throw is awarded. The team on offense immediately calls a time-out. How is the ball put into play after the time-out and what time should be displayed on the shot clock?

**Ruling:** The shot clock must be reset when a corner throw is awarded (Rule 9-2-f). When a time-out is requested before the taking of a corner throw, that throw shall be maintained. Therefore, play is restarted by taking the corner throw, with players taking any position in the field of play, with the shot clock reset.

**Rule 12-3-2: Starting after a Time-out after a Goal**

**Situation:** The team in blue caps scores a goal with 15 seconds remaining in the period. The team in white caps immediately calls a time-out. How should play be restarted after the time-out?

**Ruling:** A player from the team in white caps shall put the ball in play after the time-out at or behind the half-distance line on the whistle of the referee as after a time-out. Players may take any position in the field of play. The shot clock is blanked.

**Rule 12-3-3: Starting after Time-out**

**Situation:** When 30 seconds remain in a regular time-out, the players on the team on offense move down to the offensive end of the pool. Should the referee allow this?

**Ruling:** No, unless the coach calling the time-out had just notified the referee that the team wanted to resume play early. The referee must inform the other team and give the warning signal at that time. If this notification of shortening has not occurred, teams may not take up their positions to restart until the referee signals when 15 seconds remain in the time-out. In this case, if the coach had not requested to start early, the referee must motion the players to return to their half of the course.

**Rule 12-4: Additional Time-out Requested by Team on Offense**

**Situation:** During a regular conference game, the team in possession of the ball requests a time-out by signaling with an air horn. This time-out would be the fourth time-out for that team. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee must stop the game on the signal of the coach. Play shall be restarted by a player of the opposing team putting the ball into play at or behind the half-distance line as after a time-out.

**Rule 12-5: Time-out Called by Coach of Team on Defense**

**Situation:** The team on defense calls a time-out during play and, as a result of the rule violation, the referee immediately awards a penalty throw to the opposing team. Should the referee also charge the team on defense with a time-out?

**Ruling:** No. The team on offense is awarded a penalty throw; the team on defense is not charged with a time-out. However, if the referee believes that the team on defense deliberately called the time-out, for example, to stop a fast break, the action of the coach could be regarded as disruptive behavior and the referee could award the coach a red card (Rule 7-4-5) in addition to awarding the penalty throw.

**Rule 12-6: Time-out Called When Neither Team Has Possession of the Ball**

**Situation:** A coach calls for a time-out when his team had one time-out remaining when neither team has possession of the ball. The referee immediately awards a penalty shot which scored. Is this correct?

**Ruling:** No. The referee should remove the longest time-out available from the team that called the time-out and turn the ball over. The referee should administer a penalty throw only if the team that called the time-out when neither team had possession of the ball had no time-outs remaining.

**Rule 12-7: 30-Second Time-out**

**Situation:** The coach on offense during a tournament with a 30-second option calls a 30-second time-out. The players swim to the side of the pool to listen to the coach. Is this permitted?

**Ruling:** Yes. The referee will sound the warning signal at 20 seconds (Rule 9-1, Note 2). Both teams must be ready to start at the end of 30 seconds.

**Rule 12-7: 30-Second Time-out**

**Situation:** The team on offense calls a second 30-second time-out in a tournament game where the rules only allowed one 30-second time-out per game. What is the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** Since the team had already used its 30-second time-out, the referee shall instead award a regular time-out if the team had a regular time-out available. If the team had already used all its time-outs (regular and 30-second), the ball shall be turned over and the ball put into play at or behind the half-distance line as after a time-out.

**Rule 13: The Start of Play**

**Rule 13-1: Coin Toss**

**Situation:** The head coach of one of the teams in a tournament requested a coin toss prior to the start of the game, stating that the sun was a factor. The program contains the wording that the team in dark caps starts at the right of the scoring table. Should the referee grant this request for a coin toss?

**Ruling:** Yes. Either team has the right to request a coin toss prior to a game. In addition, before the start of the game either coach may request that the teams change ends and benches after each period and overtime period.

**Rule 13-3, Note 3; Rule 15; Rule 7-9-c: Starting with an Incorrect Number of Players at the Beginning of a Game or Period, after a Goal or after a Time-out**

**Situation:** After a goal, with 39 seconds remaining in the second overtime, the team on offense calls a time-out. The referee starts play after the time-out with 7 players on defense and 6 players on offense. This was not discovered for 15 seconds, just as the defense stole the ball. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should reset the game clock to 39 seconds, the shot clock to 30 seconds and restart play with the correct number of players. Although the examples in the rules referenced above refer to starting with an extra player, the intent is that the referee must ensure that the correct number of players is in the water before starting play at the beginning of the game, beginning of a period, after a goal or after a time-out.

**Rule 13-3: Start of Game or a Period**

**Situation:** The referee blows the whistle to start the period with one player from each team sprinting for the ball. A second player on one team crosses the half-distance mark before either sprinter touches the ball. Is this permitted?

**Ruling:** There is no rule against a player crossing half before one of the sprinters touches the ball, provided that the player did not start before the whistle. There is also no rule against a non-sprinting player swimming under water past the half-distance mark.

**Rule 13-3: The Start**

**Situation:** The teams are lined up for the start of the period. One player jumped on the far side. The referee blew the whistle and threw the ball over to the side at which the jump occurred for a player from the opposing team to put the ball into play. Is this the correct procedure?

**Ruling:** No. The referee should award a free throw to the opposing team at half on the wall side by the referee controlling the sprint.

## **Rule 14: Method of Scoring**

### **Rule 14-3-Note 2: Direct Shot on Goal**

**Situation:** A foul is committed just outside the 5-meter line. The referee did not signal that the player with the ball outside the 5-meter line was eligible to take a direct shot on goal; therefore, the player passed the ball instead of taking a direct shot on goal. The coach protested after the game that the player did not take the direct shot because the player was looking for a signal from the referee that the player is eligible to take a direct shot. Would the protest be upheld?

**Ruling:** No. NFHS rules state that the referees shall not use any signal to indicate that a player is eligible to shoot a direct shot on goal.

### **Rule 14-3: Direct Shot**

**Situation:** A player is excluded at 3 meters while the ball is at 6 meters. The player with the ball at 6 meters takes an immediate (direct) shot after the exclusion. Does the goal count?

**Ruling:** No. The referee must turn the ball over. In order for a player to take a direct shot on goal, the foul must be outside the 5-meter line. In this example, the foul was at 3 meters. The player with the ball at 6 meters may take the free throw because he/she is behind the point of the foul; however, this free throw may not be shot on goal because the foul occurred inside 5 meters. For statistical purposes, this shot is not considered to be an attempt as any resulting goal would not have counted.

### **Rule 14-3: Direct Shot**

**Situation:** A player and his defender are both outside the 5-meter line. The shot clock expires and the referee blows the whistle for the ordinary foul of keeping the ball more than 30 seconds without shooting. Can the original defender, now on offense outside his/her 5-meter line, take a direct shot and score a goal?

**Ruling:** The player now on offense can pick up the ball and take a direct shot on the opposing goal because the player is outside his/her 5-meter line. If the ball goes into the goal, the goal counts.

### **Rule 14-3: Direct Shot on Goal: Shooting a Goal Throw**

**Situation:** The rule states that in order to score a goal at least two players of either team, but excluding the defending goalkeeper, must intentionally play or touch the ball except, for example, at the taking of an immediate shot from a goal throw. May a field player or a goalkeeper taking a goal throw take a direct shot on goal?

**Ruling:** Yes. A goal throw can be taken by any player of the team from anywhere within the 2-meter area, but shall be taken by the player nearest to the ball (Rule 16-2).

### **Rule 14-3: Direct Shot from Ball Leaving Side of Field of Play**

**Situation:** A defending field player on the white team tips a shot over the sideline. After the ball is given to the white goalkeeper to put into play, the goalkeeper takes a direct shot on goal and the ball enters the goal. Should the referee allow the goal?

**Ruling:** No. The goal does not count since a goal may not be scored directly from the restart after the ball leaves the side of the field of play. However, the ball may be shot and a goal scored if the ball went over the goal line and is awarded to the goalkeeper.

### **Rule 14-3: Direct Shot if Ball Removed From the Field of Play by Referee to Correct a Clock Error**

**Situation:** With two seconds remaining in the game, the referee blows the whistle for a foul at 6 meters. The desk lets the clock run and the buzzer sounds for the end of the game. The referee removes the ball from the field of play to correct the clock error. After the problem is corrected, the referee tosses the ball in to the player at 6 meters who was fouled at 6 meters. The player immediately takes a direct shot on goal and scores. Should the referee allow this goal?

**Ruling:** Yes. A goal may not usually be scored after the referee removes the ball from the field of play. However, the referee removed the ball after a foul to correct a clock error. Therefore, the player fouled may take a direct shot.

### **Rule 14-3: Direct Shot on Goal**

**Situation:** A foul is committed outside the 5-meter line. One of the players behind the point of the foul takes an immediate direct shot at the goal and scores. Does the goal count?

**Ruling:** The goal counts. Rule 14-3 specifically states that, if after the award of a foul outside 5 meters, a goal may be scored under this rule if the ball is returned without delay to either the place where the foul was committed, to any place on the same line as the foul or to any place behind the line of the foul, provided the shot is then immediately made from that position.

### **Rule 14-6-e: Illegal Shot**

**Situation:** A player is fouled inside the 5-meter line and takes a direct shot on goal. A defending field player puts up two hands. Should the referee award a penalty shot?

**Ruling:** No. The referee should turn the ball over to the defense since the ball was shot illegally as the foul was inside the 5m line (therefore, any resulting goal would not have been counted).

### **Rule 16: Goal Throws**

#### **Rule 16-2: Method of Taking a Goal Throw**

**Situation:** A player other than the goalkeeper takes the goal throw. Should the referee allow this?

**Ruling:** Yes. A goal throw may be taken by any player of the team from anywhere within the 2 meter area. The player should be the player nearest to the ball. Therefore, if the ball is shot over the goal and the coach on the bench throws a ball in, the goalkeeper is the player who usually puts the ball into play. If the ball goes behind the goal line but is within or just behind the end line, the closest player to the ball reaches for the ball (without leaving the field of play) and puts the ball into play.

### **Rule 17: Corner Throw**

#### **Rule 17-1: Rebounding Ball**

**Situation:** A player on offense shoots the ball. The ball rebounds off the goalkeeper or off the face of the goal. The rebounding ball strikes a defender and the ball then bounces over the goal line out of bounds. To which team should the referee award the ball?

**Ruling:** The referee should award a corner throw to the offense. The actual shot was completed when the ball rebounded off the goalkeeper or off the face of the goal. Since the rebound after the shot subsequently struck a defender and the ball then bounced from the defender over the goal line, the referee should award a corner throw because the team on defense last touched the ball.

#### **Rule 17-2: Taking a Corner Throw**

**Situation:** The referee awards a corner throw. The player picks up the ball at the sideline on the 2-meter line, puts it into play and then swims with the ball before passing the ball. What should the referee call?

**Ruling:** The referee should make no call, as this action is permitted.

### **Rule 18 Neutral Throws**

#### **Rule 18-1: When Awarded**

**Situation:** A player from each team is excluded when neither team has possession of the ball. How should the game be restarted? When may the excluded players re-enter the field of play?

**Ruling:** The game is restarted with a neutral throw. Both excluded players may enter after the next change in possession after the neutral throw provided that the entering players have reached their re-entry areas. The player reaching the re-entry area first after a change in possession may enter immediately without waiting for the second player.

## **Rule 19 Free Throws**

### **Rule 19-1: Location of Free Throw; Rule 14-3: Method of Scoring**

**Situation:** A player is fouled six meters from the goal, directly in front of the goal. Prior to that player putting the ball into play, an exclusion foul is called at three meters. The player outside the 6-meter line takes a direct shot on goal. Is this allowed?

**Ruling:** No. The player on the perimeter is not eligible to take a direct shot on goal because the most recent foul was inside the 5-meter line. Therefore, the ball is turned over.

### **Rule 19-1: Location of Free Throw; Rule 14-3: Method of Scoring**

**Situation:** A player on defense fouls the center forward inside the 5-meter area. Prior to the free throw, an exclusion foul is committed by a player on defense on the perimeter, outside the 5-meter line. Where is the free throw taken?

**Ruling:** The free throw should be taken at the point of the exclusion foul or behind. The player taking the free throw may take a direct shot on goal.

### **Rule 19-1: Start of Game Clock**

**Situation:** The shot clock expires and, as a result, the ball turns over at the 5-meter line. A player now on offense at the 5-meter line throws the ball back to the goalkeeper who then passes it down court. When does the game clock operator start the game clock?

**Ruling:** The timer starts the game clock when the player on offense at the 5-meter line passes the ball back to the goalkeeper.

### **Rule 19-1-c: Contra Foul**

**Situation:** A contra foul was committed by white #10 at two meters when the ball was at eight meters. Blue #7 at eight meters picked up the ball and took a direct shot on the opposite goal, the ball entering the goal. Does this goal count?

**Ruling:** Yes. The shot meets the criteria for a direct shot: because the foul was outside the 5-meter line for that team and the shooter shot it directly from outside the 5-meter line.

### **Rule 19-4: Putting the Ball into Play**

**Situation:** The player taking the free throw holds the ball in his hand and starts swimming with the ball still held in his/her hand. The referee turns the ball over for failure to put the ball into play. Is this the correct call?

**Ruling:** The referee made the correct call. The rule states 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. The player can take the free throw either by dropping it from a raised hand onto the surface of the water or by throwing it into the air and then swimming with the ball. Therefore, according to the rule, the player did not put the ball into play, as the ball did not leave the player's hand.

### **Rule 19-4: Putting the Ball into Play**

**Situation:** The player taking the free throw picks up the ball and spins it in his/her hand and starts swimming with the ball still held in his/her hand. The referee turns the ball over for failure to put the ball into play. Is this the correct call?

**Ruling:** No. If the player picks up the ball and spins it in his/her hand, the player is considered to have put the ball into play.



## **Rule 20: Ordinary Fouls**

### **Rule 20-6: Taking the Ball Under**

**Question:** What is the difference between taking the ball under when tackled and taking the ball under when challenged?

**Answer - Tackled:** It is an ordinary foul to take or hold the ball under water when tackled (contact by the defensive player on the shoulder, arm or hand holding the ball). It makes no difference that the ball goes under the water against that player's will. The foul is awarded against the player who was in contact with the ball at the moment it was taken under water.

**Answer - Challenged:** This refers to the situation where the goalkeeper or another player takes the ball under water to keep the opponent from getting the ball if the opponent goes after, chases or approaches that player. A player can not take the ball under to keep an opponent from getting the ball. An ordinary foul is awarded unless this action inside the 5-meter line prevents a probable goal, in which case a penalty throw should be awarded.

### **Rule 20-8: Using Two Hands to Block a Pass Outside the 5-Meter Line**

**Situation:** A player uses two hands outside the 5-meter line to block a pass. The referee blows the whistle for an ordinary foul. Is this correct?

**Ruling:** No. It is an exclusion foul to attempt to block a pass with two hands outside the 5-meter line. It is an ordinary foul to touch the ball that is not being shot or passed with two hands at the same time.

### **Rule 20-8: Using Two Hands**

**Situation:** During an extra-player situation, a shot is taken with three seconds remaining on the game clock. The ball rebounds off the goalkeeper to a player of the team on offense. The ball makes contact with both hands of that player, who then pushes the ball into the goal with two hands as the buzzer sounds for the conclusion of the game. Does the goal count?

**Ruling:** No, the goal does not count. It is an ordinary foul to play or touch the ball with two hands at the same time, whether it is a player on offense or on defense.

### **Rule 20-9: Player Going Under Water after a Shot on Goal**

**Situation:** After an unsuccessful shot on goal, one player remains behind on the counter and goes under water. After a few seconds the player emerges, steals the ball from the goalkeeper and puts the ball into the goal. Does the goal count?

**Ruling:** Yes. There is no rule against this action. This is not considered to fall under the definition of ducking under.

### **Rule 20-9 and Rule 20-10: Change in Rules Relating to Dead Time**

**Situation:** There used to be rules relating to dead-time fouls, double dead-time fouls and there were differing penalties for fouls of impeding or pushing off if the fouls were committed during dead time or live time. These rules are missing from current rules. What is the significance of this change?

**Ruling:** Several years ago, the rules provided a different penalty for a foul committed during dead time (before the ball was put into play) as compared with live time (after the ball was put into play). There was also a difference as to where the ball was put in play if there was a double exclusion during dead time or during live time. In practice, however, there was no difference and the term now used is "during play" to encompass both these periods of time. There is no difference in the penalty awarded or in the location where the ball is put into play if the foul is committed before or after the ball is put into play. The change in the wording brings the language of the rules into conformance with actual practice. (**Note:** The terms are still used with penalty throws. In a dead-time penalty throw, the ball is immediately dead after the penalty throw, whether made or missed. In a live-time penalty throw, the ball remains in play if it rebounds from the goal posts or goalkeeper.)

**Rule 20-14 Goalkeeper Past Half-Distance Line; Rule 21-10: Misconduct**

**Situation:** The goalkeeper goes past half. The referee warns the player not to repeat this foul. However, the goalkeeper then immediately again swims past half. May the referee exclude the player for the remainder of the game for misconduct?

**Ruling:** Yes, if the referee believes that the player is refusing obedience to or showing disrespect to the referee, fouls that are included in the definition of misconduct.

**Rule 20-15: Ball Out of Bounds Over Sideline**

**Situation:** A defending goalkeeper tips a shot over the sideline. To which team should the referee award the ball? To which team should the referee award the ball if a defending field player tips a shot over the sideline?

**Ruling:** The referee should award the ball to the offense if the defending goalkeeper tips the shot over the sideline, at or behind the point at which the ball goes over the sideline. This ball may not be shot because it went out over the sideline. If a defending field player tips a shot over the sideline, the ball is put in play by the defense (which may include the goalkeeper) at the point where the ball went over the sideline or at any point behind this point. This ball may not be shot, even if the goalkeeper puts the ball in play at or behind the 2-meter line, because the ball went out over the sideline.

**Rule 20-16: Keeping the Ball More Than 30 Seconds Without Shooting**

**Situation:** The ball is in the offensive end of the field of play with 10 seconds remaining in the game. The goalkeeper is the only offensive player in the defensive end. A player on offense passes the ball back to the goalkeeper. Should the referee turn the ball over?

**Ruling:** No. The referee should allow play to continue. The rule requiring the team to advance the ball (play offense) has been eliminated. The goalkeeper can hold the ball until the game clock expires. If the team on offense had thrown the ball into an empty area of the pool, the referee could then have blown the whistle and turned the ball over for relinquishing possession of the ball.

**Rule 20-16: Keeping the Ball More Than 30 Seconds Without Shooting**

**Situation:** When four seconds remain on the shot clock, a player in a blue cap on offense makes a poor pass to another player on the blue team. That player misses the pass and the ball lands between two players, one from each team. The player in the blue cap recovers possession of the ball. Should the shot clock timer reset the shot clock when the ball lands between the two players?

**Ruling:** No. The shot clock timer should not reset the shot clock. The team on offense must actually relinquish possession of the ball. Therefore, in this situation, possession remains with the team on offense until the team on defense clearly takes possession of the ball or until the shot clock expires.

**Rule 20-16: Keeping the Ball More Than 30 Seconds Without Shooting**

**Situation:** The blue team is in possession of the ball with six seconds remaining on the game clock and four seconds remaining on the shot clock at the end of the fourth period. A player on the blue team throws the ball into a vacant area of the field of play and that team starts swimming towards the other end of the pool. Should the referee immediately blow the whistle for relinquishing possession of the ball? Should the shot clock timer immediately reset (blank) the shot clock?

**Ruling:** The referee should blow the whistle for relinquishing possession of the ball and point in the opposite direction. The shot clock is then reset (blanked) and the game clock restarted when the ball is put into play by the opposing team at the location of the ball.

**Rule 20-16: Time-Out after Relinquishing Possession of the Ball**

**Situation:** The team in white caps relinquishes possession of the ball by throwing the ball into a vacant area of the pool. The referee then blows the whistle and points in the opposite direction, indicating that the team relinquishes possession of the ball. May the team in blue caps immediately call a time-out?

**Ruling:** Yes. A player in a blue cap does not have to first swim over to physically take possession of the ball. As soon as the referee blows the whistle and turns the ball over, the team in blue caps may call a time-out and the referee shall immediately award that team a time-out.

### **Rule 20-16: Keeping the Ball More Than 30 Seconds Without Shooting**

**Question:** When does the referee blow the whistle for a team relinquishing possession of the ball: when the ball leaves the hand of the player dumping the ball or when the ball lands in a vacant area of the pool?

**Answer:** The referee blows the whistle when the referee determines the team relinquished possession of the ball. The shot clock is reset when the referee blows the whistle and turns the ball over to the opposing team. The referee must be certain that all members of that team refuse to play the ball before blowing the whistle. If a player of the team that apparently has relinquished possession of the ball is swimming towards the ball to retake possession of the ball, the referee shall not blow the whistle and the game clock and shot clock continue running.

### **Rule 21: Exclusion Fouls**

#### **Rule 21-2, Rule 21-3-1, Rule 21-4: Method of Leaving the Field of Play**

**Situation:** In a 25-yard pool with wall goals and with walls instead of sidelines on the sides of the field of play, an excluded player climbs from the pool and walks to the re-entry area. What is the call of the referee?

**Ruling:** The player is excluded from the remainder of the game. An excluded player must not leave the water to reach the re-entry area. This is a game exclusion, but is not considered to be misconduct.

#### **Rule 21-2: Substitution for an Excluded Player**

**Situation:** A player is excluded and arrives in the re-entry area. The coach plans to substitute for the excluded player. Must the excluded player remain in the re-entry area until the intended substitute arrives in the re-entry area?

**Ruling:** No. The excluded player is not required to remain in the re-entry area until the substitute arrives.

#### **Rule 21-2: Fouls that are Game Exclusions but Not Misconduct**

**Question:** What are examples of fouls that are penalized by exclusion of the offending player from the remainder of the game, but the game exclusion is not classified as misconduct?

**Answer:** Rule 5-5, a player uses a substance on the hands to improve the grip on the ball after a warning; Rule 21-2, an excluded player leaving field of play and walking to re-entry area; Rule 21-14, interference with a penalty throw; Rule 22-5, for a goalkeeper or any other defending player to pull over the goal completely; Rule 22-6, if a player not entitled to participate, such as an eighth player or a player with three personal fouls, enters the field of play. The referee uses the same signal (Appendix B, Figure F) as for misconduct, since the signal means exclusion from the remainder of the game. Therefore, the referee must notify the scorekeeper of the general reason for the game exclusion, since, of these fouls, only misconduct is reportable.

#### **Rule 21-3: Substitution for an Excluded Goalkeeper During the Exclusion Period**

**Situation:** A goalkeeper is excluded for 20 seconds. The team on offense immediately calls a time-out. The team on defense during that time-out substitutes a different goalkeeper (with a goalkeeper's cap) into the goal for an exiting field player and another field player takes the place of the excluded goalkeeper in the re-entry area. Is this allowed?

**Ruling:** No. The excluded goalkeeper is considered to be that team's goalkeeper even though this player is in the re-entry area. That field player's replacement can only be another field player, not a goalkeeper in a goalkeeper's cap. The referee should not allow this substitution and does not start play until the situation is corrected.

#### **Rule 21-3: Signal for Re-entry of Excluded Player**

**Situation:** A player is excluded. Should the referee watch the clock and wave in the excluded player at the end of 20 seconds?

**Ruling:** No. The duty of the exclusion secretary is to wave in the excluded player at the conclusion of the exclusion time. The defensive referee shall signal re-entry by a hand signal when the excluded player's team has retaken possession of the ball during actual play.

**Rule 21-3: Signal for Re-entry of an Excluded Player**

**Situation:** Should the excluded player watch the referee or watch the exclusion secretary in order to know when to re-enter the pool at the end of 20 seconds?

**Ruling:** The excluded player should watch the exclusion secretary at the desk in order to know when to re-enter at the end of the exclusion period. It is not a duty of the referee to signal the passage of 20 seconds and the excluded player should not have to guess which person to watch for the passage of the exclusion time. Before 20 seconds have elapsed, the excluded player may re-enter upon the referee's signal of a change in possession. The exclusion secretary does not raise the flag unless 20 seconds have elapsed.

**Rule 21-3: Re-entry of an Excluded Player**

**Situation:** Usually the exclusion secretary waves in the excluded player or substitute after 20 seconds of actual play have elapsed. When does the exclusion secretary not wave in the excluded player or substitute at this time?

**Ruling:** The exclusion secretary does not raise the flag of the appropriate color if the excluded player has not reached the re-entry area when 20 seconds have elapsed (Rule 21-3); if the head of the excluded player has not risen above the surface of the water in the re-entry area before that player or a substitute may enter (Rule 21-2); if the excluded player climbed from the side of the pool and did not go to the re-entry area (the substitute may not enter until after a time-out, a goal or at the start of the next period) (Rule 21-2); or if the excluded player has three personal fouls and is no longer eligible to play and was not substituted for (Rule 21-3).

**Rule 21-3: Re-entry of an Excluded Player**

**Situation:** If the ball is stolen when 10 seconds remain in an exclusion or if possession changes because the referee awards an offensive foul, the referee turns and starts to walk towards the other end of the pool with the hand pointing to that end of the pool. May the excluded player re-enter (1) if the referee motions with the other hand for the player to enter; (2) if the referee does not motion with the other hand for the player to enter, but is pointing with one arm towards the other end of the pool and walking that way?

**Ruling:** Yes, in both cases. The player may enter as the referee's signal to award the throw or the change in possession qualifies as the re-entry signal, provided that the excluded player has reached the re-entry area in accordance with the rules.

**Rule 21-3: Calling Time-out**

**Situation:** An excluded player is in the re-entry area. The ball is shot and goes over the goal. The referee blows the whistle and signals a change in possession. The excluded player enters the pool. May the coach on offense call a time-out as soon as the referee blows the whistle for the change in possession after the shot and points in the other direction?

**Ruling:** Yes, as that team is now on offense.

**Rule 21-3: Re-entry Area**

**Situation:** The rule states that the excluded player or a substitute shall be permitted to re-enter the field of play when signaled when 20 seconds of actual play have elapsed provided that the player is in the re-entry area. If the flag is raised and if the excluded player goes under the end line in the re-entry area but swims underwater a short distance towards the center of the pool before the player's head surfaces, should this be considered an illegal re-entry?

**Ruling:** No. There is no requirement that the excluded player must emerge from the re-entry area into an area within the imaginary continuation of the boundary of the re-entry area (in other words, there is no requirement that the player must only swim directly straight ahead into the field of play rather than entering on a diagonal from the re-entry area).

**Rule 21-3: Entry of an Excluded Player Before Reaching the Re-entry Area**

**Situation:** A player on the white team is excluded. A player on the blue team immediately takes a direct shot on goal. The shot goes over the goal line and the referee blows the whistle to award the ball to the white team. The excluded player turns, before reaching the re-entry area, and starts to swim towards the other end

of the pool. Before the ball is put into play after the direct shot, the coach of the white team calls a time-out. Should the excluded player be charged with a penalty foul for interfering with play (Rule 21-17) after the exclusion, based on the fact that the player, although starting to swim towards the corner, immediately turns on the change of possession, and starts swimming towards the offensive end?

**Ruling:** No. The player is not considered to interfere in this example, as the direct shot is taken immediately after the exclusion and the coach of the team now on offense calls a time-out immediately after this action before the restart of play. However, if the excluded player had interfered with the direct shot or with any of the players then on offense on the player's way towards the re-entry area, a penalty foul should be called.

#### **Rule 21-3: Entry of an Excluded Player Who Did Not Leave the Field of Play**

**Situation:** A player on the white team is excluded. A player on the blue team immediately takes a direct shot on goal. The shot goes over the goal line and the referee blows the whistle to award the ball to the white team. The excluded player turns, before reaching the re-entry area, and starts to swim towards the other end of the pool. Should this excluded player be charged with a penalty foul for interfering with play (Rule 21-17) or should the player be charged with an improper re-entry of a player on offense (Rule 21-13) after the exclusion, based on the fact that the player, although starting to swim towards the corner, immediately turns on the change of possession and starts swimming towards the offensive end?

**Ruling:** The player is not considered to interfere in this example, as the direct shot was taken immediately after the exclusion. Rule 21-17 is only intended to apply to the situation occurring during the time of the exclusion. If the excluded player had interfered with the direct shot or with any of the players then on offense on the player's way towards the re-entry area, then a penalty foul should be called under Rule 21-17. If the player has not left the field of play, but his team retakes possession of the ball, the rule to be applied is Rule 21-13, improper re-entry of a player on offense (as the player never went to the re-entry area). The ball shall be turned over and the offending player excluded and charged with another personal foul.

#### **Rule 21-4, Rule 25-1: Leaving the Water**

**Question:** What is the definition of a player leaving the field of play as opposed to a player leaving the water or leaving the pool?

**Answer:** The field of play is defined as the area between the sidelines and the end lines. Leaving the field of play usually refers to a player going under the sideline or under the end line, but staying in the water. Leaving the pool or leaving the water usually refers to a player climbing out of the pool onto the pool deck or sitting on the steps. If a non-excluded player leaves the field of play without the permission of the referee, the player is excluded for 20 seconds. If an excluded player leaves the pool other than from the re-entry area or leaves the pool to walk on the deck to the re-entry area, the player is excluded for the remainder of the game.

#### **Rule 21-4: Player Leaving the Water**

**Situation:** A player exits the water at the re-entry area, believing she is excluded after the referee turned the ball over when she committed an offensive foul. When she realizes the error, she returns to the field of play from the re-entry area at the direction of her coach. The referee made no call. Is this correct?

**Ruling:** The rule states that if a player has left the water legitimately, the player may re-enter from the re-entry area with the referee's permission. The referee observed and understood the situation, and, by not blowing the whistle, tacitly gave her permission to reenter.

#### **Rule 21-5: Guarding a Player Taking a Free Throw**

**Situation:** A field player guarding a player who is taking a free throw has one arm raised behind the head but the body and arm are within inches of the player on offense. May the referee call interference with the free throw?

**Ruling:** Yes. There is no set distance the player on defense has to be away from the player on offense with the hand straight up or behind the head; the rule is that the player on defense can not interfere with the free throw. For example, the raised hand might be behind the head of the player on defense, but if that defending player is so close that the player on offense cannot make a throwing motion without hitting the player on

defense, the defender has to back away or be called for interfering with the free throw. However, the player on offense 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.

**Rule 21-5: Guarding a Shooter on a Direct Shot on Goal**

**Situation:** A player is fouled at the 6-meter line. The player picks the ball up and attempts a direct shot on goal. How may a defender guard this player?

**Ruling:** There is no difference in how a player may guard a player who is attempting a direct shot on goal or one who is attempting to pass. The guard may have only one arm up, which may be straight up or behind the guard's head, an appropriate distance away so that the guard is not considered to be interfering with the free throw. The penalty for interference is either an exclusion foul, if the defender is outside the 5-meter line, or a penalty foul, if the defender is inside the 5-meter line.

**Rule 21-5: Interfering with Free Throws**

**Situation:** A defender gives the appropriate space to the offensive player for a free throw or direct shot outside the 5-meter line, but the defender is aggressively waving his/her hand behind the head in an attempt to cover more area to block a shot. Should the defender be excluded?

**Ruling:** The rule is that the defender can not interfere with the taking of a free throw, goal throw, corner throw or direct shot on goal. There is no set distance that the defender must be away from the person putting the ball in play or taking a direct shot – the key is that the defender can not interfere. If the referee considers that the distance away is such that the defender is not interfering, the defender can wave a hand, either behind the head or directly above the head in an effort to shot block.

**Rule 21-6, Rule 22-2: Use of Two Hands**

**Situation:** A player puts two hands up to show that the player is not fouling the attacking player. Should the referee allow this? Are there other examples where the use of two hands might be permissible?

**Ruling:** The player may put two hands up in this situation, on the perimeter, for example, but the player may not put up two hands if the offensive player is attempting to shoot or pass (in each of these cases the player must be prepared to immediately drop one hand if the situation changes). **Note:** It is usually relatively easy to distinguish between a defender who is trying to show he/she is not fouling, as opposed to a defender raising both hands to block a shot or pass. If an offensive player with his/her back to the goal attempts to shoot, the defender who had raised two hands to show he/she was not fouling must immediately lower one hand. Impermissible use of two hands include the following: a player may not put up two hands to block or to attempt to block a shot or pass outside the 5-meter area (exclusion foul); a player may not put up two hands to block or attempt to block a shot within the 5-meter area (penalty foul); a player may not put up two hands to block or attempt to block a pass to prevent a probable goal inside the 5-meter area (penalty foul); a player may not put up two hands to block or attempt to block a pass, which would not lead to a probable goal inside the 5-meter area (exclusion foul). It is the position of the defender that determines the penalty awarded (exclusion foul or penalty foul) when the defender is attempting to block a shot or pass.

**Rule 21-7: Splashing Intentionally**

**Situation:** A player inside the 5-meter line splashes a player outside the 5-meter line. What should the referee call?

**Ruling:** The referee should exclude the player for 20 seconds. The penalty issued depends on the location of the face splashed, not on the location of the defender. In this case, the player on offense (the player splashed) was outside the 5-meter line; therefore, an exclusion foul is called. If the player splashed is inside the 5-meter line and is attempting to shoot, a penalty foul should be called.

**Rule 21-10-1, Rule 21-11-7, Rule 4-1-5: Location of Player Excluded from Remainder of Game for Misconduct, Flagrant Misconduct, or Three Personal Fouls**

**Situation:** A player excluded from the remainder of the game for misconduct or for having three personal fouls leaves the team bench for the spectator stands. Should the referee allow this?

**Ruling:** No. The player must remain on the team bench with cap on for the remainder of the game in the case of either misconduct or for being charged with three personal fouls. The player is required to leave the team bench if the player receives a red card or is excluded for flagrant misconduct (Rule 21-11-7), but must then remain in the spectator stands for the remainder of the game under direct supervision. That player may not communicate with the team, team officials or referees until after the period of the jurisdiction of the referees (five minutes after the conclusion of the game or until the end of the protest-filing process).

**Rule 21-10-1, Rule 21-10-2: Taunting a Player**

**Situation:** A player taunts another player. What should the referee call?

**Ruling:** This depends on the severity of the offense. The referee should call either misconduct or a minor act of misconduct or nothing.

**Rule 21-10-1: Excessive Celebrating**

**Situation:** After scoring a goal in a close game, the shooter cheered, waving his/her fist at the opposing players and goalkeeper. In the same game, the goalkeeper on that team took similar action if he/she blocked the ball, in addition to directing profane language at the shooter. The referee makes the call as misconduct.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure. If, in the referee's judgment, the player's action is deemed to be taunting, baiting or ridiculing the opponent, the player has committed an act of misconduct. The use of profanity in this situation is misconduct.

**Rule 21-10-1: Profanity**

**Situation:** An excluded player swears at the referee while leaving the pool. The referee awards an additional exclusion foul of a minor act of misconduct. Is this the correct call?

**Ruling:** No. The use of profanity is considered to be misconduct. The referee should exclude the player for the remainder of the game for misconduct.

**Rule 21-10-1: Interval Time**

**Situation:** The referee removes the ball from the pool to issue a red card, to correct a clock error or to replace a cap. A player on defense commits an act of misconduct during this time when the ball was out of the pool. Is this time considered to be interval time, which would require the referee to start play even-up, or should the substitute for that excluded player be in the re-entry area for 20 seconds or the earliest occurrence of an event described in Rule 21-3?

**Ruling:** This time is not considered to be interval time. Interval time is defined as the time between periods, during a time-out, before the restart after a goal or before a penalty throw is taken. The definition of interval time does not include the time during which the referee removes the ball from the field to correct a clock error or for a player to replace a cap, etc. The player who committed misconduct in the situation described above should be removed for the remainder of the game and the referee should restart play with a substitute in the re-entry period. If the act of misconduct had been committed by a player on offense, that player should be removed for the remainder of the game, the ball turned over and the referee should restart play with a substitute in the re-entry area.

**Rule 21-10-2: Minor Act of Misconduct; Rule 21-17: Interfering with Play**

**Situation:** A player is excluded, but does not leave the field of play. The referee then charges the player with a minor act of misconduct. Is this the correct call?

**Ruling:** No. The correct rule to be applied is Rule 21-17, Interfering with Play. This is the rule to be applied if an excluded player does not commence leaving the field of play almost immediately. A penalty throw shall be awarded to the opposing team and an additional personal foul charged to the excluded player. The player is in the re-entry area for the taking of the penalty shot.

**Rule 21-10: Minor Act of Misconduct Turning Into Misconduct**

**Situation:** A player commits an exclusion foul and then that player makes a few minor comments to the referee. However, the player's comments escalated before the referee blew the whistle to call a minor act of misconduct. What should the referee call?



**Ruling:** The referee should exclude the player for the remainder of the game for misconduct. Play is restarted with a substitute in the re-entry area.

**Rule 21-10-1: Misconduct Committed by a Player in the Re-entry Area**

**Situation:** A player is excluded for the first time. After being in the re-entry area for several seconds, the player speaks to her coach on the bench, making a remark critical of the referee. What should be the action of the referee if the referee overhears this comment?

**Ruling:** Although the referee should not focus on discussions between the coach and players, if the referee does hear the remark and feels it is directed at him, the referee may award that player a second exclusion foul for the minor act of misconduct or may exclude the player for the remainder of the game for misconduct for showing disrespect to the referee. If the referee excludes the player for the remainder of the game, a substitute must replace that player in the re-entry area. In either case, the re-entry time of the excluded player is 20 seconds from the time of the second foul and the shot clock is reset.

**Rule 21-10-1: Misconduct after a Goal**

**Situation:** A player in a white cap sinks a player in a blue cap immediately after the player in the blue cap scores a goal. The referee calls misconduct, excluding the player in the white cap for the remainder of the game with a substitute in the re-entry area and awarding the ball to the blue team. Is this the correct call?

**Ruling:** No. This action occurred after a goal, the time classified as interval time. If the referee felt that the action of the player in the white cap merited a misconduct call, the referee must exclude the player for the remainder of the game and the teams start even-up with a free throw taken by the team in white caps as after a goal.

**Rule 21-10-1,2: Misconduct or Minor Act of Misconduct During a Time-out**

**Situation:** Either misconduct or a minor act of misconduct is committed during a time-out. Is the shot clock reset before play is resumed?

**Ruling:** No. The shot clock is not reset in this situation. Although usually the shot clock is reset after the award of an exclusion foul, this is an exception since the act of misconduct or minor act of misconduct was committed during a time-out. The player who committed misconduct is excluded for the remainder of the game with immediate substitution. After the conclusion of the time-out, the game starts even-up with a free throw by the team that was in possession of the ball before the time-out was called. If a minor act of misconduct is committed during a time-out, that player is excluded for 20 seconds with immediate substitution. After the conclusion of the time-out, the game starts even-up with a free throw by the team that was in possession of the ball at the time the time-out was called. The excluded player, provided that this foul was not that player's third personal foul, can return later to the game as a substitute.

**Rule 21-10-2: Minor Act of Misconduct after a Third Personal Foul**

**Situation:** A player is excluded for the third time. On the way out from the pool, the player commits a minor act of misconduct. A live-time penalty throw is awarded, with the substitute for that player in the re-entry area. The penalty shot rebounds from the goal post to a player on the team shooting the penalty shot. May the excluded player enter?

**Ruling.** No. There has been no change in possession. The player must remain out for 20 seconds or until the ball changes hands.

**Rule 21-10-1: Misconduct after a Third Personal Foul – an Exclusion Foul**

**Situation:** A player commits misconduct after a third personal foul, an exclusion foul. The referee issues a red card. Is this the correct penalty?

**Ruling:** No. The referee should award a live-time penalty shot, with a substitute in the re-entry area. A red card would be issued if a player refuses to leave the water when so ordered after a call of misconduct.

**Rule 21-10-1: Misconduct During Time-out**

**Situation:** The team in dark caps had possession of the ball. The coach of this team called a regular time-out. During this time-out, the referee excluded a player with a dark cap for the remainder of the game for misconduct. How shall the referee restart play after this time-out?

**Ruling:** At the conclusion of the time-out, the referee should restart play even-up, with a player from the team with dark caps putting the ball into play. The shot clock is not reset.

**Rule 21-10-1: Misconduct**

**Situation:** A player is disrespectful to the referee while exiting the pool after being excluded for misconduct, that player's first personal foul. What should the referee call?

**Ruling:** The player is excluded for the remainder of the game and a penalty throw is awarded. If the player continues to be disrespectful to the referee, the referee should also issue a red card to the player. The player is also excluded from the next game because of the receipt of the red card. The substitute may enter after the earliest occurrence of an event described in Rule 21-3.

**Rule 21-11: Penalty for Biting an Opposing Player**

**Situation:** A player complains to her coach that she has been bitten and shows the coach her arm, which has bite marks. She states that she knows which player on the opposing team bit her. The coach talks to the referee, demanding that the referee punish the alleged player for the violation. The referee does not call a violation.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure. The referee shall not punish a player for an action that he/she has not observed. The referee may indicate to the coach that he/she is watching for this type of activity. If the referee suspects biting is occurring, he/she may comment to the opposing coach that a concern has been raised.

**Rule 21-11: Throwing a Ball with Excessive Force at an Opponent**

**Situation:** After a goal is scored, the goalkeeper picks up the ball and throws it with force at an opposing player. In this situation, the referee determines the action is considered a minor act of misconduct.

**Ruling:** Correct procedure. The referee, in observing the player's action to throw a ball at an opponent, has observed an act of misconduct and, based on the circumstances for that individual situation, may call a minor act of misconduct, misconduct or flagrant misconduct.

**Rule 21-11, Articles 1-4: Comparison of the Penalty for Flagrant Misconduct Occurring During Play and During Interval Time**

**Situation:** A player commits flagrant misconduct during play or during interval time (during a time-out, between periods or after a goal or before a penalty throw). Is there a difference in how the penalty is awarded during these different times?

**Ruling:** No. The general penalty is the same in both cases. The player committing flagrant misconduct is excluded for the remainder of the game, a dead-time penalty throw awarded and the team shooting the penalty throw shall get the ball back at or behind the half-distance line as after a time-out, whether the penalty shot is made or missed. The substitute for the excluded player must remain in the re-entry area for 20 seconds or until the earliest occurrence of an event referred to in Rule 21-3. If the act of flagrant misconduct occurred during a time-out, the team calling the time-out is still charged with the time-out and the penalty shot is not taken until after the conclusion of the time-out. This is in contrast with misconduct, where the penalty is different if the foul occurs during play as compared with interval time.

**Rule 21-11, Articles 1-3: Flagrant Misconduct During the Game**

**Situation:** A player with a white cap is excluded during play. During the time before the ball is put into play (while the referee is removing the player and communicating this information to the scoring table), a player on the blue team commits an act of flagrant misconduct. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should take the ball from the water, remove the player who committed the act of flagrant misconduct from the remainder of the game and allow the excluded white player to enter (as there was a change of possession due to the call of flagrant misconduct). The referee should then conduct the dead-time penalty throw. The team shooting the penalty throw shall get the ball back at or behind the half-

distance line as after a time-out, whether the penalty shot is made or missed. The substitute for the excluded player must remain in the re-entry area for 20 seconds or until the earliest occurrence of an event referred to in Rule 21-3.

**Rule 21-11: Double Flagrant Misconduct when Neither Team has Possession**

**Situation:** A double flagrant misconduct foul is called when neither team has possession of the ball. How does the referee conduct the penalty throws and restart the game?

**Ruling:** The offending players are removed for the remainder of the game, with their substitutes in the re-entry areas. The first dead-time penalty throw is taken by the team that last had possession. This results in a goal or no goal. The second team then takes a dead-time penalty throw. This results in a goal or no goal. The referee will then conduct a neutral throw on the half-distance line. The excluded players may not enter until the next change in possession after the neutral throw or until the earliest occurrence of one of the events described in Rule 21-3.

**Rule 21-11-9: Penalty for Flagrant Misconduct, Including Fighting**

**Situation:** Players participate in a fight during a game. The appropriate penalties as described in the rules are awarded during the game. What penalty is awarded subsequent to the game?

**Ruling:** The players are suspended from the next traditional season game. A state association may enact more serious penalties for flagrant misconduct or for participating in a fight, including suspension for multiple games or for the remainder of the season.

**Rule 21-12: Simultaneous Exclusion Fouls**

**Situation:** The referee calls a double exclusion just as the game clock goes to 0 and the buzzer sounds. The referee states it is interval time and the next period starts even-up with substitutes for those players in the field of play, with the excluded players eligible to enter as substitutes after 20 seconds. Is this the correct call?

**Ruling:** No. This is correct only if the call on the two players was for double misconduct, which was not the case here. The next period should have started with a sprint, with the excluded players or their substitutes in the re-entry areas. The players can enter immediately after the sprint only if there is a change of possession on the sprint.

**Rule 21-12: Near Simultaneous Exclusion Fouls**

**Situation:** A player with a dark cap is excluded. Several seconds later, but before the ball is put into play, a player in a white cap is excluded. The player in the dark cap reaches his re-entry area. The coach asks the referee if his player could enter because the first foul was some time before the white player was excluded – they were not simultaneous. The referee denies the request. What should have been the action of the referee?

**Answer:** The referee should have allowed the player in the dark cap to re-enter, as the exclusion fouls were not simultaneous. The player in the white cap should be out for 20 seconds or the earliest occurrence of an event described in rule 21-3.

**Rule 21-12: Re-entry after Double Exclusion**

**Situation:** A double exclusion occurs when 3 seconds remain in a period when the team with blue caps has possession of the ball. Time expires with that team still retaining possession of the ball. The team with blue caps wins the sprint at the beginning of the next period and the excluded player with the blue cap immediately enters the pool from the re-entry area. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The player should be excluded for 20 seconds and a free throw awarded to the opposing team (Rule 21-13) because there was no change of possession (Rule 21-3). To avoid this situation, it is suggested that in the case of a double exclusion near the end of the period, the referee remind the benches and desk during the interval that both teams start down a player and which team had possession of the ball at the end of the period.

**Rule 21-13: Entering Field of Play Improperly: Early Entry of an Excluded Player**

**Situation:** An excluded player re-enters the pool early. The referee awards a penalty throw and excludes the player from the remainder of the game. Is this the correct ruling?

**Ruling:** No. If a player on the defensive team enters early or improperly, the player is excluded for an additional 20 seconds and a penalty throw awarded to the attacking team. If a player on the offensive team enters improperly, the player is excluded for an additional 20 seconds and a free throw awarded to the opposing team.

**Rule 21-13: Entering Field of Play Improperly on Defense**

**Situation:** Player #8 is excluded and a substitute in cap #11 replaces him/her in the re-entry area. The substitute enters early, before being waved in. What penalty should be charged to each player?

**Ruling:** Player #8 is charged with the original exclusion foul. Player #11 is excluded for 20 seconds and a penalty throw is awarded to the opposing team for the early re-entry of a player on defense. That player (#11) should receive only one personal foul, marked as EP on the scoresheet.

**Rule 21-13: Entering Field of Play Improperly**

**Situation:** A player is excluded and is in the re-entry area. The team on offense shoots and the goalkeeper tips the ball out over the goal line. The excluded player enters the field of play. Is this an improper re-entry?

**Ruling:** Yes. Since the goalkeeper tips the ball out over the goal line, a corner throw is awarded to the team on offense. Therefore, there is no change of possession. The player entering the pool is excluded again for an additional 20 seconds and a penalty throw is awarded. The player receives only one additional foul, marked EP on the scoresheet. The re-entry time of the subsequent exclusion is calculated from the time of the improper re-entry of the excluded player.

**Rule 21-14: Interference with Penalty Throw**

**Situation:** Immediately after the referee blows the whistle for the taking of a penalty throw, the player on the left side of the shooter hits the shooter's arm before the shooter releases the ball. The penalty shot does not score. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** It is a game exclusion for a person to interfere with the taking of a penalty throw, (it does not matter if this interference occurs before the referee blew the whistle or after the referee blew the whistle, but before the shooter released the ball). It is considered interference if a defensive player on the side of the shooter moves towards the shooter or hits the player's arm (shooting arm or non-shooting arm) before the shooter releases the ball or if a defender takes other actions towards the shooter such as shouting, splashing or whistling. The offending player is excluded for the remainder of the game with the substitute in the re-entry area, and the penalty shot is retaken. If this penalty shot is scored, the substitute enters immediately. If the shot is missed, the substitute may not enter until after the earliest occurrence of an event described in Rule 21-3.

**Rule 21-14: Interference with Penalty Throw**

**Situation:** If the player in the above case who was interfered with scored the original penalty shot, what should the referee call?

**Ruling:** The penalty shot is counted and the substitute enters immediately. The player who interfered with the penalty shot is still excluded for the remainder of the game. **Note:** This game exclusion is not considered to be misconduct.

**Rule 21-14: Misconduct Before a Penalty Throw is Taken**

**Situation:** If a player on either team commits an act of misconduct before a penalty throw is taken, what should the referee call?

**Ruling:** Since a player committed misconduct before the penalty throw was taken, the offending player is excluded for the remainder of the game and a substitute enters before the penalty throw is taken, as this time is considered to be interval time.

**Rule 21-15: Goalkeeper Failure to Take Position on Goal Line**

**Situation:** During the administration of a penalty throw, the goalkeeper comes forward before the shot is administered. What should the referee do?

**Ruling:** The referee should warn the goalkeeper. If the goalkeeper fails to take up the correct position on the goal line after having been warned once by the referee, the referee should then exclude the goalkeeper for 20 seconds. Another defending player may take the position of the goalkeeper, but without the goalkeeper's privileges or limitations.

**Rule 21-17: Excluded Player Interfering With Play**

**Situation:** An excluded player swims through the 6-on-5 to reach the re-entry area. What should the referee call?

**Ruling:** If the referee believes there is interference with play, the referee awards a penalty throw and another personal foul against the excluded player. The penalty throw is taken with the excluded player (or substitute) in the re-entry area. The re-entry time is 20 seconds from the time the penalty throw is awarded.

**Rule 21-17, Rule 22-4: Excluded Player Interfering with Play**

**Situation:** A player was excluded for a pull-back. Immediately after the whistle for the exclusion, the player, knowing that he was excluded, grabbed the ball and intentionally threw it to the other end of the pool. What should the referee call?

**Ruling:** Since the excluded player intentionally interfered with play on the way out, the referee should award a penalty throw. The referee should also exclude the player for the remainder of the game for misconduct for showing disrespect to the referee.

**Rule 21-17, Rule 22-4: Excluded Player Interfering with Play**

**Situation:** A player was excluded for the first time and did not immediately start to leave the field of play. The referee called a minor act of misconduct, making that player's second personal foul. Is this the correct penalty?

**Ruling:** No. The referee should award a penalty foul because the excluded player interfered with play (that foul making that player's second personal foul). The penalty throw should be taken with the excluded player in the re-entry area.

**Rule 22: Penalty Fouls**

**Rule 22-2-b: Two-Hand Shot Block Inside 5-Meter Line**

**Situation:** A player within the 5-meter area puts up two hands in an attempt to block a shot. The referee blows the whistle for the foul when the ball is in the air. The shot goes out of bounds over the goal line, untouched by any player. What should be the award of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should award a penalty foul. The defending player does not have to touch the ball nor does a shot have to be taken. The player is being punished for intent.

**Rule 22-2-b: Two-Hand Shot Block Inside 5-Meter Line**

**Situation:** A player within the 5-meter area puts up two hands in an attempt to block a shot. The referee blows a whistle for the foul when the ball is in the air. The ball goes into the goal, untouched by any player. What should be the award of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should award a penalty foul and does not count the goal. The goal does not count because the ball was in flight towards the goal when the referee blew the whistle for a foul (Rule 14-6-a).

**Rule 22-2-b: Two-Hand Shot Block Inside 5-Meter Line**

**Situation:** A player within the 5-meter area puts up two hands in an attempt to block a shot. The ball goes into the goal, untouched by any player. The referee then blows the whistle for the foul. Should the referee count the goal? Should the referee award a penalty foul?

**Ruling:** Since the goal scored, the goal counts and the referee should not award the penalty foul against the player who put up two hands.

**Rule 22-2-b: Two-Hand Block of a Pass Inside 5-Meter Line**

**Situation:** A player within the 5-meter area puts up two hands to block or to attempt to block a pass which would lead to a probable goal. What action should the referee take?

**Ruling:** It is a penalty foul for a defending player to commit any foul within the 5-meter area, but for which a goal would probably have resulted. Therefore, if the defending player intentionally blocks or attempts to block a pass with two hands which prevents a probable goal, a penalty foul is awarded.

**Rule 22-2-b: Two-Hand Block of a Pass Inside 5-Meter Line**

**Situation:** A player within the 5-meter area puts up two hands to block or to attempt to block a pass which would not lead to a probable goal. What is the ruling of the referee?

**Ruling:** It is not a penalty foul if the ball is being passed to a player who is in such a position that the pass would not have led to a probable goal. The referee should call an exclusion foul in this case.

**Rule 22-2-f: Goalkeeper Pushes off Wall**

**Situation:** The goalkeeper pushes off the wall in an attempt to block a shot. What is the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** If the ball goes into the goal, the goal is scored. If the shot is blocked, a penalty throw is awarded.

**Rule 22-3: Misconduct Committed Within the 5-Meter Line**

**Situation:** A player taunts a player inside the 5-meter line. What punishment is awarded by the referee against the player?

**Ruling:** Taunting is considered to be misconduct. The referee should exclude the player for the remainder of the game for misconduct. No penalty shot is awarded.

**Rule 22-3: Kicking or Striking Within 5-meter Area**

**Situation:** A defending player kicks an offensive player within the 5-meter area. What penalty is awarded against that defending player?

**Ruling:** A penalty throw is awarded.

**Rule 22-6: Player Not Entitled to Participate Entering the Field of Play**

**Situation:** A player is removed for the remainder of the game upon the award of a third personal foul. The red flag is raised properly and is observed by the referees. Later in the game, the player enters during live time after a change in possession as a substitute for an excluded player and is observed by the desk shortly after. What should the exclusion secretary and referee do?

**Ruling:** The exclusion secretary blows the whistle as soon as the player with three personal fouls is observed. The referee then removes the player, the substitute for that player moves into the re-entry area, the game clock is reset to the time of entrance of the illegal player and a penalty throw is awarded. The substitute may enter after the earliest occurrence of an event described in Rule 21-3.

**Rule 22-8: Award of Penalty Foul in the Last Minute**

**Situation:** A penalty foul is awarded in the last minute of the game, in the last minute of the second overtime period or at any time during sudden-victory overtime periods. May the coach elect to maintain possession of the ball in lieu of taking the penalty throw?

**Ruling:** Yes, the coach may elect to maintain possession of the ball in this situation, instead of taking a live-time penalty throw. The team will be awarded a free throw on or behind half with a new shot clock and will start play as after a time-out.

**Rule 22-8 and Rule 21-11: Flagrant Misconduct Foul in the Last Minute of the Game**

**Situation:** An act of flagrant misconduct is committed by a player on the white team in the last minute of the game. The player is excluded for the remainder of the game. The blue team is ahead by one goal. Should

the referee ask the coach of the blue team if he/she prefers to take the penalty throw or to maintain possession of the ball?

**Ruling:** Yes. By rule, the referee must ask the coach his/her preference, although here there may be no advantage to be gained by the coach declining to take the penalty throw and keeping the ball, since the penalty throw awarded for flagrant misconduct is a dead-time penalty throw. If the coach decides to take the penalty throw, the dead-time penalty throw is taken with the substitute for the excluded player in the re-entry area. The team retains possession of the ball, whether the penalty throw is made or missed, and the substitute for the excluded player must remain in the re-entry area for 20 seconds, or until the earliest occurrence of an event described in Rule 21-3. The team starts play at the half-distance line as after a time-out with a new shot clock. If the coach declines to take the penalty throw, the substitute must remain in the re-entry area for 20 seconds or until the earliest occurrence of an event described in Rule 21-3, and the team is awarded a free throw on or behind the half-distance line, the shot clock is reset and the team will start play as after a time-out.

#### **Rule 22-8: Simultaneous Acts of Flagrant Misconduct in the Last Minute of the Game**

**Situation:** In the last minute of the game, the referee calls simultaneous acts of flagrant misconduct when neither team has possession of the ball. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** Both players are excluded for the remainder of the game and a dead-time penalty throw awarded each team. In this situation, since neither team had possession of the ball, neither team may decline the penalty throw. The team last in possession of the ball will shoot the first dead-time penalty throw, followed by the other team. Play is then restarted with a neutral throw at half with both substitutes in the re-entry areas for 20 seconds or until the earliest occurrence of an event referred to in Rule 21-3.

#### **Rule 23: Penalty Throws**

##### **Rule 23-2: Penalty Throw**

**Situation:** The goalkeeper is excluded for 20 seconds and, on the way out, interferes with play, resulting in the award of a penalty throw. A field player takes the place of the goalkeeper in the goal with the goalkeeper in the re-entry area during the taking of the penalty throw. The field player comes forward with both hands outstretched to the side in an attempt to block the penalty throw. The player blocks the penalty throw with one hand out of bounds over the goal line. What should the referee call?

**Ruling:** The referee should call a penalty foul against that player because the field player in the goal does not have the privileges of a goalkeeper. It is a penalty foul if a field player raised two hands in an attempt to block a shot inside the 5-meter area, no matter how high the player raised the hands, if the player blocked the ball with one or both hands, if the player did not actually touch the ball or if the shot missed the goal completely. The player should retake the penalty shot. However, if the penalty shot had scored, the goal would count and no foul would be awarded against the field player in the goal.

##### **Rule 23-2: Position of Other Players and Goalkeeper**

**Situation:** A penalty foul is awarded against a player on the blue team. The head coach of the blue team directs one of the field players to take the goalkeeper's place in the goal for the taking of the penalty throw. Should the referee allow this?

**Ruling:** No. The goalkeeper is the only person who can defend a penalty throw, provided that there is a player in a goalkeeper's cap in the water at that time. The rule that states this most clearly is Rule 23-2: "With floating goals, the defending goalkeeper shall be positioned between the goal posts with no part of the goalkeeper's 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 the goalkeeper's privileges and limitations."



### **Rule 23-3: Position of Referee Administering the Penalty Throw**

**Situation:** The referee administers a penalty throw while standing on the goal line. Should this be allowed?

**Ruling:** This is acceptable as there is no particular point specified in the rules for the referee to administer the penalty throw. This lack of specificity in designating the position of the referee when the whistle is blown allows the referee controlling the taking of the throw to determine the most advantageous position for that referee to watch the shooter, the defensive players and the goalkeeper.

### **Rule 23-3: Role of the Back Court Referee in a Penalty Throw**

**Situation:** The front court referee prepares to administer a penalty throw. The back court referee takes a position farther behind in the back court. The front court referee raises the arm to administer the penalty throw, blows the whistle and lowers the arm. At the same time, the back court referee blows a whistle to indicate interference. The player shoots and scores the penalty shot. Should the goal be allowed?

**Ruling:** Yes. The front court referee, the referee controlling the throw, is responsible for lining up the players, the back court referee watches for interference. Since the whistles were simultaneous, the goal counts; the player who interfered with the shooter is excluded for the remainder of the game (Rule 21-14).

### **Rule 23-4: Taking of a Penalty Shot**

**Situation:** After the referee blows the whistle for the penalty shot, but before the ball leaves the hand of the shooter, the defensive players on either side of the shooter move forward towards center cage. Is this permitted?

**Ruling:** Yes. After the whistle, but before the ball is released, the defensive player on either side of the shooter may move forward at an angle towards the goal as long as the player does not interfere with the penalty shot. After the ball is released, the defensive players may move towards the shooter.

### **Rule 23-4: Taking of a Penalty Shot**

**Situation:** The referee lines up the shooter on the 5-meter line in preparation for taking the penalty shot. The referee then blows the whistle. Simultaneously, the shooter lunges forward slightly with his upper body before releasing the ball, which goes into the goal. Does the goal count? What if he lunges forward with one foot?

**Ruling:** No. No part of the shooter's body may be inside the 5-meter line before the ball leaves the hand of the shooter.

### **Rule 23-4: How Taken; Rule 20-12: Failing to Take Penalty Throw Correctly**

**Situation:** A penalty throw is awarded. After the shooter is lined up on the 5-meter line, the referee blows the whistle for the taking of the throw. The shooter throws the ball down about one foot directly in front of her, then swims the ball to the 2-meter line and shoots the ball into the cage. Does the goal count? Would the answer be different if the shooter dropped the ball accidentally and then picked up the ball and shot it?

**Ruling:** The goal would not count in either case. Rule 23-4 states that the player taking the penalty throw shall throw the ball immediately with an uninterrupted movement directly at the goal. In both cases described above, the shooter did not throw the ball directly at the goal. Therefore, the goal does not count and the ball is turned over to the opposing team (Rule 20-12: failing to take penalty throw correctly is an ordinary foul).

## **Rule 25: Accident, Injury and Illness**

### **Rule 25-1: Leaving the Field of Play**

**Situation:** The referee stops play for an injury, malfunctioning equipment or to replace a cap. May the players hang onto the side of the field of play in a pool without sidelines or move under the sideline to hang onto the pool wall?

**Ruling:** The referee must indicate to the players if they can hang onto the side of the pool or if they must remain within the field of play. The referee usually requires the players to remain within the field of play in the case of a cap off or missing or for resetting a clock. If there is a lengthy equipment malfunction, the

referee may indicate that the players may hang onto the sides of the pool or may move to their bench. Players may not leave the field of play nor hang on the sidelines, etc., without the referee's permission.

#### **Rule 25-2: Bleeding**

**Situation:** The referee notices that a player on the white team (the team on defense) is bleeding during play. The referee blows the whistle. Since the referee knows that the white team has a time-out remaining, the referee asks the coach if he/she wishes to call a time-out instead of immediately replacing the player and starting play with a substitute. The coach calls the time-out. During this time, the bleeding stops. At the conclusion of the time-out, the player resumes play with the team. Is this procedure allowed by the rules?

**Ruling:** Yes. Since there is no three-minute injury time-out in NFHS rules, as there is in FINA rules, this is the only way the coach on defense may have some time to allow the bleeding to stop and to have the player immediately continue play, as opposed to immediately removing the player.

#### **Rule 25-4: Concussion**

**Situation:** A player accidentally hits another player in the head. That player later appears dizzy. What should be the action of the referee?

**Ruling:** The referee should stop play and refer the player to the coach for proper care and evaluation. The player must be cleared by an appropriate health-care professional before returning to play, if diagnosed with a concussion. In the vast majority of cases, the player and his/her coach will be the first to notice the signs and symptoms which go along with a possible concussion. However, all parties should be familiar with these signs and symptoms. The referee's role is to stop play, remove the player for evaluation, with immediate substitution. For further information, refer to Appendix H, Suggested Guidelines for Management of Concussion, page 159.

#### **Appendix E: Signals to be Used by Officials**

##### **Appendix E-Fig. F, G, CC: Referee Signals for Exclusion Fouls**

**Situation:** The referee needs to distinguish between the fouls of flagrant misconduct, misconduct and a minor act of misconduct because of differing penalties for these fouls. What signals should the referee use?

**Ruling:** The referee crosses the arms down across the abdomen for flagrant misconduct (Fig. G); rotates both hands round one another for exclusion from the remainder of the game (usually for misconduct) (Fig. F); and makes a rolling motion with one arm instead of two arms for a minor act of misconduct (Fig. CC). In addition the referee must notify the scoring table verbally of these fouls and the scorekeeper must record the nature of the foul (for example E-flagrant misconduct, E-misconduct, or E-MAM). However, if the player was excluded for the remainder of the game for interfering with a penalty shot, for example, the referee must inform the scorekeeper, who will then record the foul as E-game or, for example, E-game interference with penalty throw.