

Extended Listing
NFHS Water Polo Rules Changes for 2013-2014

Pages and Rules References are to 2013-14 Rules Book
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1. **Points of Emphasis for Coaches and Referees, #1 - Responsibilities of Sportsmanship (p. 87)** During the contest, each coaching staff has the responsibility to educate and set expectations for good sportsmanship. Should a player display unsporting conduct, he/she is subject to the appropriate penalty. The conduct of fans before and after a contest, as well as the coaching staff, is the responsibility of the school administration. The same expectations of good sportsmanship should be explained to all fans. The host school should have procedures in place to keep officials from being subjected to upset fans, coaches, etc. when exiting the playing venue. Good sportsmanship and expectations for all to practice good sporting conduct is a responsibility that should not be overlooked or forgotten.
Rationale: Although this summary of behavior expectations and supervision is not stated specifically in the playing rules, this point of emphasis clarifies the expectations for good sportsmanship and the responsibilities of the host school for supervising behavior of fans and of coaching staff towards officials during and after the game.
2. **Item #3 above Rule 1 - Prohibition of Use of Tobacco (p. 89)** No team personnel/official/competitor shall use any form of tobacco product from the time they arrive at the site of the competition until they leave following completion of the contest. **PENALTY (3):** Team personnel/competitor(s) shall be disqualified from further participation for the use of any tobacco product.
Rationale: This rule is standard for all NFHS sports.
3. **Rule 1-7 Note 2 Re-entry Area (p. 91)** The depth of the re-entry area shall be determined by the pool configuration, but shall include the space in the shape of a rectangle immediately behind the boundary line. Unless clearly marked by lane lines and/or the back wall of the pool, the referees should notify the captains in the pregame meeting of the specific boundaries of the re-entry area. If the referees do not do this and an excluded player reaches the sidewall of the pool, the player is considered to have passed through the re-entry area.
Rationale: This describes the re-entry area and clarifies that the re-entry area does not necessarily have a precise rear boundary line.
4. **Rule 1-12 Use of Electronic Equipment (p. 91)** **ART. 1...**A team may use electronic devices during the game:
 - a. The location and use of the device(s) shall not be in a restricted area as determined by host management.
 - b. The referee may restrict the use of the device(s) if determined to interfere with the contest.

c. Use of electronic devices by a coach to communicate with a player(s) in the pool is prohibited.

d. A coach who has been removed from the pool area due to unsporting conduct shall not communicate with any team personnel using electronic devices.

NOTE: State associations may also have policies in place to further address the use of electronic devices.

ART. 2...The coach may use electronic devices such as an electronic notepad, smartphone, etc. to instruct players during time-outs or period breaks.

ART. 3...Electronic video devices shall not be used for any review of an official's decision either during a game or after a game.

Rationale: The advancement in technology in the area of electronic audio and video devices has made such items easy to use and very accessible. Their use, if not used during the actual competition when a competitor is in the pool, no longer creates an advantage or disadvantage among teams. The contest officials should be responsible for what takes place in the competition venue, and not monitoring who is using an electronic device in various locations in the facility, which is difficult, at best, to identify. This rule is standard for all NFHS sports.

5. **Rule 4-1-1 Cap Design (p. 93)** Each team shall have two sets of caps manufactured for water polo, one white and the other a dark contrasting color.

Rationale: The caps shall conform to the description of caps in Rule 4, Sections 1-5, and are manufactured specifically for water polo. Players may not use any other type of cap.

6. **Rule 4-1-5 Cap Replacement (p. 94)** If a player loses the cap during play, the player shall replace it at the next appropriate stoppage of the game when the player's team is in possession of the ball. **INTERPRETATION 1:** The referees shall apply the advantage rule (Rule 7-3) in this situation. For risk minimization, the referee should stop play as soon as possible to replace a cap, but should not stop play to replace the cap at the beginning of an extra player situation, at the beginning of a counterattack, if there is the possibility of a direct shot, near the end of the possession time or if the team on offense has the advantage. Stopping play to replace a cap when a player is making progress towards the goal would be considered to give to give an advantage to the offender's team.

Rationale: This provides guidance for the referees in handling cap replacement, a safety issue, in relation to the advantage rule.

7. **Rule 4-2 Ear Guards (p. 94)** **INTERPRETATION:** The ear guards must be a single solid color that matches the color of the cap as closely as possible.

Rationale: This clarifies that stars or other decorations may not be used on the ear guards, which serve both for protection and for identification of the team to which a player belongs. The color of the ear guards on the field players' caps must match the color of the caps as clearly as possible: dark on dark caps, white on white caps. The ear guards of the home goalkeeper must be a matching dark color; the ear guards of the visiting goalkeeper must be white.

8. **Rule 5-4-1 Competitive Swim Suits (p. 98)** Players shall wear non-transparent, one-piece competitive swim suits.
Rationale: Rule 5-4-1, Note 1 already specifies that the goalkeeper's swim suit must be a competitive suit. This clarifies that all suits for water polo must be competitive swim suits.
9. **Rule 5-4-3, Accommodations for Athletes with Special Needs NOTE (p. 98)**
Each state association may, in keeping with applicable laws, authorize exceptions to NFHS playing rules to provide reasonable accommodations to individual participants with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as those individuals with unique and extenuating circumstances. The accommodations should not fundamentally alter the sport, ~~allow an otherwise illegal piece of equipment,~~ heighten risk to the athlete/others or place opponents at a disadvantage. ~~Interpretation 4. A manufactured protective foam helmet designed to protect the athlete in the event of further contact to the head may be worn following state association policy for medical accommodations. Any cap worn over the device or any painting of the number on the device itself must comply with Rule 4, caps. All state association policies and procedures should be followed for clearance to wear the helmet.~~
Rationale: The rules no longer specifically address the wearing of soft head gear for an injury. The decision to request the use of such an item for a medical reason and the decision to permit the wearing of such an item shall be considered on an individual basis by the state association. This change clarifies that, in specific situations, an accommodation will necessitate the use of equipment that might otherwise be illegal as long as it does not place the athlete or others at a greater risk of injury and/or fundamentally alter the nature of the sport.
10. **Rule 7-8 Change in Duties of Referees After Game (p. 106)** The referees must check and verify the score and sign the scoresheet after the conclusion of the game. The referees must also verify that all incidents of misconduct, flagrant misconduct, fighting, yellow cards, red cards and protests have been recorded on the scoresheet. The referees must inform the appropriate coaches after the game of the occurrence of these reportable fouls (exception: yellow card). It is not necessary for the referees to check the remainder of game information unless a protest is involved.
Rationale: This change will decrease the time the referee must spend after a game checking the scoresheet as the referees must only verify the score of the game and inform the coach(es) of reportable fouls unless a protest is involved.
11. **Rule 7-9-h Error in Operation of Game Clock and/or Shot Clock (p.107)** If there are error(s) in the operation of the game clock and/or shot clock, the referee shall correct the error(s) and resume play. (See Appendix E-14.)
NOTE 1. The whistle stops play. If the buzzer for the end of the possession time on the shot clock sounds immediately after the referee whistles for a foul, the referee administering the free throw must determine whether this was a clock operator error (failure to stop the clock in a timely manner) or if the clock was operated correctly and the buzzer sounded after the whistle due to normal

human reaction time. The former is a correctable error; the latter is not. (See also Appendix E-14.)

Rationale: This note establishes the principle that not all errors should be corrected.

NOTE 2. If the referee removes the ball from a player fouled outside the 5-meter line to correct a clock error, the referee, after returning the ball to the player fouled, shall allow the player to take a direct shot on goal. (See Rule 14-3.)

Rationale: Note 2 adds this clock error to the list of correctable errors in Rule 7-9. It was formerly listed only in Rule 14-3. Rule 14-3-5, Interpretation 2 also specifies that the referee shall restart the game with a whistle.

12. **Rule 7-9-m Failure of the Game Clock Operator to Cancel Remainder of Time-out if the Team Ends the Time-out Early (p. 107)** If the team in possession of the ball ends a time-out early and, in error, the game timer does not cancel the remainder of the time-out, resulting in a failure of the game clock to start, but play is restarted and a goal is scored before the error is discovered, the goal shall be counted if, in the opinion of the referees, the goal would have counted if the game clock had started. The game and shot clocks shall then be set to reflect how much time the referees estimated had elapsed.
INTERPRETATION: If the goal did not score, the coach may request to take the time-out over, since his/her strategy was evident to the opposing team.
Rationale: This error should be corrected in the interest of fairness.
13. **Rule 7-10-3 Protest (p. 108)** **NOTE:** It is preferable for the coach to protest during the game as soon as possible after the protestable event occurs in order that as little as possible of the game will have to be replayed if the protest is upheld.
Rationale: A protest should be filed as soon as possible after the event occurs so that the game is not prolonged, that the same players would still be eligible to play and out of fairness to both teams and the referees.
14. **Rule 7-10-5 Protest Note 1 (p. 109)** If the protest is upheld, the game shall be replayed from the point of the event protested. (See Rule 11-6). An upheld protest should not disadvantage the offended team by the correction of the protest.
Rationale: This principle would help decide if a correctable error should be addressed.
15. **Rule 9-2 Resetting the Shot Clock Note (p. 110)** Even though these directions refer to starting and stopping the shot clock, the shot clock timer usually only resets the shot clock as the shot clock is usually integrated with the game clock.
Rationale: Accuracy is increased if starting and stopping the two clocks is integrated, which is the usual method of operation if the school has an electronic timing system.

16. **Rule 9-2-c Ball Under Interpretation (p. 111) and Rule 20-6 Ball Under Interpretation (p. 126)** Rule 20-6 states that it is an ordinary foul to take or hold the entire ball under the water when tackled. Therefore, if the referee signals “ball under” (App. F, Fig. Q), the timer must reset the shot clock as this signal indicates that the player committed the ordinary foul of taking the ball under, resulting in a change of possession and a new shot clock.
Rationale: The use of the ball-under signal by the referees when a player takes the ball under when tackled (an ordinary foul) clarifies that the shot clock timer should reset the shot clock.
17. **Rule 9-2 Blanking Shot Clock Note (p. 111)** The timekeeper shall blank the shot clock when less than 30 seconds remain in a period and a new 30 second period of possession is awarded. **Note:** The shot clock is usually set to blank automatically when less than 30 seconds remain in the period and a new period of possession is awarded. The shot clock should not assume the game time.
Rationale: The blanking of the shot clock assists the referees and the team personnel know that there is less than 30 seconds remaining in the period.
18. **Rule 11-2 Interval Between Periods Note (p. 113)** If both teams are ready to start before the conclusion of the five-minute interval between the second and third periods, the two minute interval between the first and second periods and the two-minute interval between the third and fourth periods, the referee may start play.
Rationale: This clarifies that the game may start before the conclusion of the interval between other periods of the game in addition to halftime, provided both teams are ready to resume play.
19. **Rule 12-1-1 Cancellation of Time Remaining in a Time-out Note (p. 114)** The referees must determine prior to the game if the referees or if the game timer shall time the regular time-outs and if the time remaining on a time-out will be displayed on the scoreboard.
Rationale: The referee needs to know if the time remaining in a time-out will be displayed on the electronic scoreboard. This is important as, in some types of clocks, the game clock will not start if the time-out was stopped early, unless the time remaining in the time-out is cancelled. In other types of clocks, the time remaining in the time-out will be cancelled automatically when the timer starts the game clock after the time-out.
20. **Rule 13-4 Note (p. 118)** If a player pushes off the wall when not entitled to, per Rule 13-2, the referee conducting the start shall award a free throw to the opposing team at the half-distance line at the side wall.
Rationale: This clarifies that the free throw is always awarded after an improperly-taken sprint at the side wall, not in the center or any other position on the half-distance line.
21. **Rule 14-3-3 Direct Shot on Goal (p. 118)** A goal may be scored by a player immediately shooting from outside five meters after the player’s team has been awarded a free throw for an ordinary or exclusion foul committed outside five

meters. The referee administering the free throw near the 5-meter line should determine if that foul is inside or outside the 5-meter line in order to determine whether a direct shot on goal can be taken. If the player is eligible to take a direct shot, that referee should immediately point with one arm diagonal to the body to the 5-meter marker on the pool deck to indicate that the player is eligible to shoot a direct shot on goal.

Interpretation: The 5-meter marker may be a yellow cone on the pool deck at the 5-meter mark, the change in color of the sideline at 5 meters, the end of the yellow horizontal marker on the pool deck, etc.

Rationale: Since there is no actual 5-meter line in the water, the player frequently is not certain if he/she is eligible to take a direct shot on goal. With this change, the player will know that he/she is eligible to take a direct shot on goal if the referee administering the free throw is pointing at the 5-meter mark. The marker most commonly-used is a yellow cone on the pool deck at the 5-meter mark.

Note: There is an error in the first sentence of Rule 14-3-3 in the Rules Book. The first two words in Article 3 should be The referee (as opposed to “The referees”), as only the referee administering the free throw determines if the player is eligible to shoot a direct shot on goal.

22. **Rule 14-3-4 Location of Free Throw in Case of Offensive Foul (p. 118)** If at the award of a foul outside 5 meters, the ball is inside 5 meters or closer to the defending team’s goal, 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. (This article does not apply to a free throw awarded for an offensive foul called on a player outside 5 meters with the ball inside 5 meters, as the free throw for an offensive foul (Rule 19-1-c) shall be taken at the location of the ball when the foul is awarded.)

Rationale: This clarifies where the ball is put in play in the case of an offensive foul.

23. **Rule 14-3-5 Interpretation 2 Direct Shot Taken After Clock Error (p. 119)** A player may take a direct shot on goal after the referee returns the ball to the player fouled outside the 5-meter line after removing the ball to correct a clock error. For example, near the end of the game, the referee blew the whistle for a foul committed outside the 5-meter line. The clock operator let the clock run two seconds and the buzzer sounded, ending the game. The referee should correct the clock error, then return the ball to the player fouled, who may then take a direct shot on goal. The referee shall restart the game with a whistle.

Rationale: This clarifies how the referee should restart play after correcting a clock error when a direct shot is involved.

24. **Rule 16-1 Goal Throws When Awarded Note (p. 121)** The remainder of Section 1 of Rule 16 has been moved to Rule 19-1-c as the examples formerly listed in Rule 16-1 are now considered to be examples of free throws taken after an offensive (contra) foul. However, one exception to this note is if a shot on goal is taken improperly and goes out of the field of play. In this situation the ball will

usually be thrown by someone on the bench to the goalkeeper or to another field player at the two-meter line who will then take the goal throw. If the ball leaves the field of play and then rebounds back into the field of play, the ball must still go back to the two-meter area where the free throw is taken. Free throws taken in this situation may be shot at the opposing goal unless the ball left the field of play over the sideline.

Rationale: The four situations that were formerly listed as examples that resulted in goal throws were moved from Rule 16-1 to Rule 19-1 as they need to be treated in the same manner as any other offensive foul. That is, when the entire ball has passed over the goal line between the goal posts and underneath the cross bar, or strikes the goal posts, crossbar or the defending goalkeeper directly from (1) a free throw awarded inside 5 meters; (2) a free throw awarded outside 5 meters not taken immediately in accordance with the rules; (3) a goal throw not taken immediately; or (4) if a corner throw is shot, all need to be treated in the same manner as any other offensive foul (the resultant free throw should be taken at the location of the ball when the defending team takes possession of the ball (Rule 19-1-c) as opposed to going back to the goalkeeper for a goal throw).

25. **Rule 18-1-e Neutral Throw (p. 122-3)** A neutral throw shall be awarded (e) when the ball unintentionally strikes or lodges in an overhead obstruction. **INTERPRETATION:** The player with the ball near the end of the 30-second possession time throws the ball up to the ceiling. If the referee feels that this is a deliberate attempt to have a neutral throw called, the referee should turn the ball over.

Rationale: If, in the opinion of the referee, the player deliberately tried to have the ball hit the ceiling in order to have a neutral throw awarded, the referee should turn the ball over rather than rewarding the team about to lose the ball with a neutral throw.

26. **Rule 19-1-c Offensive Foul - Where Free Throw Taken (p. 123)** In the event of an offensive foul, the free throw is taken at the location of the ball when the foul is awarded (this pertains to both ordinary offensive fouls and exclusion offensive fouls).

Rationale: This clarifies that the rule for the location of the free throw applies to both offensive ordinary fouls and offensive exclusion fouls. The ball is turned over and the free throw is taken at the location of the ball.

27. **Rule 19-1-d Improperly Taken Shots on Goal Note (p. 123)** Improperly-taken shots on goal should be treated like any other offensive (contra) foul (free throw is taken at the spot of the ball). Examples of improperly taken shots on goal are when the entire ball has passed fully over the goal line between the goal posts and underneath the crossbar or strikes the goal posts, crossbar or the defending goal keeper directly from (1) a free throw awarded inside 5 meters; (2) a free throw awarded outside 5 meters not taken immediately in accordance with the rules; (3) a goal throw not taken immediately; or (4) a corner throw. Interpretation 1: If the ball is in the air when an offensive foul is called, the location of the ball when the foul is called shall be considered to be the location where the team

awarded the free throw takes possession of the ball, except if the ball is inside the 2-meter area, the free throw shall be taken on the 2-meter line.

Rationale: Improperly-taken shots on goal should be treated like any other offensive foul (free throw is taken at the spot of the ball). See also Rule 16-1 Note.

Note that there is an error in location and shading in the 2013-14 rules book in this rule: (3) and (4) on the top of page 124 should be shaded as they are new and they belong in the list under Note on the previous page, as shown in the wording above.

28. **Rule 20-6 Interpretation Ball Under (p. 126)** If the referee signals “ball under” (Appendix F, Fig. Q), this means that the action of the player on offense is the ordinary foul of taking the ball under when tackled, and must result in a change of possession and a new shot clock.

Rationale: The use of the “ball-under” signal by the referees when a player takes the ball under when tackled (an ordinary foul) clarifies that the shot clock timer should reset the shot clock at this signal. See also Rule 9-2-c.

29. **Rule 20-11 Interpretation 2 Penalty for Being Inside the 2-meter Area (p. 128)** An offensive player who attempts to swim from one deep wing position to the other side inside the 2-meter area is in violation of this rule that it is an ordinary foul to be inside the 2-meter area and an offensive foul should be called

Rationale: Referees should not penalize an attacking player who momentarily enters the 2-meter area without interfering with play. However, in this case, the player would be considered to be interfering with play as that player is forcing a change in how or where the defense plays. The ball should be turned over.

30. **Rule 20-16-b Interpretation Resetting the Shot Clock for Ball Under Call (p. 129)** The shot clock is reset when the ball comes into the possession of the opposing team. “Possession” shall not include the ball merely being touched in flight by an opposing player. Interpretation: If the referee signals “ball under”, the timer should reset the shot clock as to take or hold the ball under water when tackled is an ordinary foul (Rule 20-6) and the ball is turned over.

Rationale: It is an ordinary foul to keep the ball for more than 30 seconds without shooting. The use of the “ball under” signal assists the shot clock timer to know when to reset the shot clock since taking the ball under is an ordinary foul and the ball is turned over.

31. **Rule 21-10-1 Interpretation 2 Splashing Intentionally (p. 136)** A player on the team on offense committed the exclusion foul of splashing intentionally (Rule 21-7) in the face of an opponent at the 8-meter line during interval time. The referee excluded the player for 20 seconds and turned the ball over as opposed to excluding the player from the remainder of the game for misconduct, since the foul of splashing is not classified as misconduct, even if committed during interval time.

Rationale: This clarifies that the player who splashed an opponent intentionally may not be excluded for the remainder of the game for misconduct, since splashing is a 20-second exclusion foul (Rule 21-7), not misconduct (a game

exclusion foul) (Rule 21-10-1). Therefore, the player would be excluded only for 20 seconds, rather than for the remainder of the game.

32. **Appendix D Diagram of Pool with Floating Goals and Diagram of Pool with Wall Goals (p. 148, 149)** Hereinafter set forth, information on the diagrams in this book is suggestive only; it is not required by NFHS rules. The construction and layout of all venues used for high school competition are subject to any controlling laws and building codes, and to the sound judgment of the persons in charge of the facilities.

Rationale: The diagrams for the two types of pools (pools with floating goals and pools with wall goals) have been enlarged and placed on separate pages. Under each drawing is this NFHS statement, which applies to all NFHS sports.

33. **Appendix E Instructions for the Use of Two Referees #18 (p. 151)** The referee administering a free throw near the 5-meter line should decide if that foul is inside or outside the 5-meter line in order to determine whether a direct shot on goal can be taken. If that player is eligible to take the direct shot, the referee should immediately point with one arm diagonal to the body to the 5-meter marker on the pool deck.

Rationale: Since there is no actual 5-meter line in the water, the player frequently is not certain if he/she is eligible to take a direct shot on goal. With this change, the player will know that he/she is eligible to take a direct shot on goal if the referee administering the free throw is pointing at the 5-meter marker on the pool deck (yellow cone on pool deck at the 5-meter mark, change in color of the sidelines at 5 meters, the end of the yellow horizontal marker on the pool deck, etc.).