



CMAS

INTERNATIONAL RULES FOR UNDERWATER RUGBY

Short description of underwater rugby

Underwater rugby is a challenging three-dimensional sport played at and below the surface of the water in a swimming pool, with the depth of the playing area to be minimum 3,5 meters, and no more than 5 meters. It is played by two teams which each can have a maximum of 6 players in the water at any time. Each of the players are wearing basic skin diving equipment, which includes mask, snorkel and fins, and also swim suits and a cap of matching colours; one team white, the other team black or dark blue. The object of the game is to put the ball into the opposing team's goal. The ball is heavy, and will sink to the bottom of the pool if dropped. The goals are shaped as baskets, and one goal is located at each end on the bottom of the pool.

Under water rugby is a physical contact sport. The rules are for the most part natural, meaning that they are based on fair play and practical, common sense. With the knowledge that one is not allowed to attack/move an opponent that does not have the ball - unless one is in possession of the ball oneself, and a general understanding of fair play, one is basically ready.

There are three referees in a match, two in the water, and one deck referee. The most obvious reason for a sport to have rules and referees is that the rules describe how the game is played and what a player is allowed to do, and that the referees are there to ensure that the players follow the rules. However, the most important purpose for the referees is to ensure the safety of all persons in and around the pool, this is especially true in an as physical sport as under water rugby. It is therefore important that in any situation where anyone might be harmed, when in doubt, the referee should stop the play and give a penalty. At the same time, in order to avoid penalties, the players should make their actions very clear so that the referees cannot misinterpret the situation.



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1 Definitions, Area and Equipment of Play

1.1 Definitions

1.1.1 Match:

The time from the start of the first period until the end of last period/penalty throw, including the intervals between periods/penalty throws and including the time-outs.

1.1.2 Game:

The time from start of the first period until the end of last period/penalty throw, excluding the intervals between periods/penalty throws and excluding the time-outs.

1.1.3 Play:

The time when the match-clock is ticking, including the penalty throws.

1.1.4 Normal play:

The time when the match-clock is ticking, excluding the penalty throws.

1.1.5 Penalty-throw shoot-out:

A series of penalty-throws, at the end of the match, consisting of at least 3 penalty-throws to each team.

1.1.6 Deck referee:

The deck referee in the match is the main referee for the match. He/she is positioned at the side of the pool, along the playing area.

1.1.7 Water referee:

Each of the two water referees in each game is positioned in the playing area of the water, one on each side along the playing area.

1.1.8 Chief referee:

The chief referee for the tournament. At World or Zone Championships the chief referee is appointed by the CMAS.

1.1.9 Jury:

The jury is elected according to the CMAS Rules & Regulations at the team leader meeting. It is the highest authority in the tournament.

1.1.10 Match Protocol Table:

A table situated at the side of the playing area, behind the deck referee. Here the match protocol is adjourned and the match clock is kept.

1.1.11 Team Leader:

A person, normally a non-player, representing the team.

1.1.12 Team Captain:

A representative among the players for each team.



1.1.13 Exchange player:

A player among the maximum 12 active players, that is presently not in the playing area or in the penalty bench area.

1.1.14 Reserve:

A player among the maximum 15 players of the team listed in the match protocol, neither a player nor an exchange player, and listed as a reserve.

1.2 **Playing Area (see Appendix 1)**

1.2.1 Dimensions;

Length: The playing area shall be 12 m - 18 m long.

Width: The playing area shall be 8 m - 12 m in width.

Depth: The depth of water shall be 3.5 m - 5 m.

It is preferred that the poolsides are perpendicular to the bottom.

Ladders, gutters, pool-landings, starting-blocks, etc. are not part of the playing area even when they are within the playing area.

1.2.2 Marking of playing area;

A rope along the surface of the water shall mark the open length of the playing area. Another marker should be visible at the bottom of the pool.

1.2.3 Entrance lane;

An additional line, parallel to the marker for the playing area, at 3 m distance from this, shall indicate the entrance lane.

1.2.4 Exchange area;

The exchange areas shall be on the side of the pool at either end of the playing area and the entrance lane and shall be indicated by lines on the pool deck. The full length of the short side of the playing area and entrance lane is the exchange area.

1.2.5 Exchange bench;

The exchange bench/chairs shall be on the side of the pool at both ends of the entrance lane, within the exchange area.

1.2.6 Exit line;

The short ends of each end of the playing area, separating the playing area and the exchange area. The exit line does not continue beyond the playing area, i.e. it does not extend to divide the entrance line and the exchange area.

1.2.7 Penalty bench area;

The penalty bench area shall be situated close to the exchange area but clearly separated.



1.2.8 Free throw clearance zone:

The full sphere covering 2 meters from the place the free throw is taken.

1.2.9 Halfway line;

The halfway line is an imaginary line in the pool, at equal lengths from each team's exchange area.

1.2.10 Centre line;

The centre line is an imaginary line in the pool, dividing the playing area in two equal halves and running through the two teams' goals.

1.3 Goal (see Appendix 2)

1.3.1 Goal positions;

The goals consist of two rigid baskets, one of which stands at the middle of each end of the playing area, on the bottom of the swimming pool, against the wall. It shall not be possible to play the ball between the goal and the wall. The goals should not be easily moved during a match.

1.3.2 Goal dimensions;

The goal's dimensions shall be 450 mm high and 390 - 400 mm top inside diameter.

1.3.3 Goal protective padding;

The edge of the basket shall be covered with a soft pad.

1.4 Underwater Ball (see Appendix 3)

1.4.1 Ball descent rate;

A ball filled with water so that it is negatively buoyant shall be used for playing. It shall have a descent rate of 1000 - 1250 mm per second. (C.f. Appendix 3)

1.4.2 Ball circumference;

It shall have a circumference of 520 - 540 mm for men's matches, and 490 - 510 mm for women's matches.

1.4.3 Ball visual appearance;

It shall be coloured black, or any other dark colour, and white, of good contrast, or it shall be plain red. The ball shall be easily visible in the water.

1.4.4 Ball selection;

At World or Zone Championships, all teams have the possibility to present a ball for consideration. The referees will check the circumference, negative buoyancy, hardness, grip, colour, contrast, direction stability etc. This will be done at a time and place stated at the



team leaders meeting. If necessary, the referees may reduce the number of balls to be tested.

The representative from each team may give their vote to which ball is to be used in the tournament. A minimum of three balls each for men's and women's matches are ranked. The balls are marked clearly, and are kept close to hand in the immediate vicinity of the match protocol table. The balls should be kept hanging in separate nets or fully immersed in buckets with water.

1.5 Signal Equipment

1.5.1 Signal equipment;

Signal equipment must be provided and tested before the tournament. The start/stop signals should be clearly audible in all parts of the playing area, in the entrance lane and on land.

1.5.2 Equipment safety

All equipment used in the swimming pool area shall fulfill local and national requirements for use in the designated area. All equipment shall be safe.

1.5.3 Number of signal equipment;

There shall be equipment for signalling devices for all three referees that allow them to freely cover the area they need; i.e. the water referees must at least reach to/beyond the goals, and the deck referee should at a minimum be able to walk along the full length of the playing area.



2 Team Duties, Team Formation and Equipment

2.1 Players' and Team Leader's duties

2.1.1 It is the players' and team leader's responsibility;

- 2.1.1.a To behave in a manner that will promote the sport at all times during the tournament
- 2.1.1.b To know and act according to the rules
- 2.1.1.c To ensure that their equipment conforms to the rules at all times during the match (C.f. rule 1.1.1)
- 2.1.1.d To follow the instructions from the referees at all times during the match (C.f. rule 1.1.1)

2.1.2 It is the team leader's responsibility;

- 2.1.2.a To provide a list, at a time and place stated by the organizer, containing the name of the team leader, the name and corresponding cap number for all players to be used in the match. The team captain shall be marked with "Captain" or "C". Reserves shall be marked with "Reserve" or "R". The name of the team leader shall also be given. The list must be provided at a time and place stated by the organizer.
- 2.1.2.b The behaviour of all non-players in the exchange area. (C.f. 2.2.4.c)
- 2.1.2.c To sign any protest on behalf of the team
- 2.1.2.d If no name has been provided for the team leader in the protocol, the team captain is regarded as the team leader. If no team captain is marked, the player (not a reserve) with lowest cap number is regarded as both team captain and team leader.

2.1.3 Team captain's privileges;

When the team captain is marked in the protocol (C.f. rule 2.1.2.a) and can be identified according to rule 2.4.4, he/she has the privilege to discuss with the deck referee any questions related to the interpretation of the rules that may arise in the game.

The team captains may also be summoned to the deck referee for information regarding warnings, etc. Vigilance is imperative; otherwise the information may be missed. (C.f. rule 6.1.3)

2.1.4 Protest;

- 2.1.4.a The team can normally only turn in a protest to the match if the match protocol has not been signed by any member of the team.
- 2.1.4.b A protest must be delivered in writing to the organizer within 30 minutes after the end of the match. The protest fee stated for the tournament must be delivered at the same time. (C.f. rule 3.1.2.m)



- 2.1.4.c The protest may only be signed by the team leader. (C.f. rule 2.1.2.c and 2.1.2.d)
- 2.1.4.d It is the team leader's duty to ensure that the protest is delivered to the correct recipient, and that the recipient mark the time of delivery and sign for the protest fee in full name on the actual protest.

2.2 Team Composition

2.2.1 Number of players;

A team consists of a maximum of 15 players, six in the water, six exchange players and three reserves.

A team may consist of less than 15 players, but must have a minimum of six players at the start of the match.

2.2.2 Exchange players;

All players among the 12 (or minimum six) in a team that are in the exchange area are called exchange players. If a team has more than six players, all excess players must be in the exchange area at all times during the game (C.f. rule 1.1.2).

2.2.3 Reserves;

There are no requirements to the whereabouts or doing of the reserves. However, if they are in the exchange area, they must comply with rule 2.2.4.

The reserves are allowed to warm up in the pool outside of the entrance lane and the playing-area if the pool is suitable.

2.2.4 Exchange area;

- 2.2.4.a The teams may have persons that are not playing in the exchange area during the game. The team leader is responsible for their behaviour (C.f. rule 2.1.2.b).
- 2.2.4.b All non-players in the exchange area must be easily distinguished from the players and must at a minimum have their torsos and shoulders covered and not be wearing a cap, mask or fins. The deck referee may require any number of these persons to leave the area if he/she finds them to impede the refereeing or to interfere with the game.
- 2.2.4.c All persons in the exchange area are obliged to follow the rules of this game, and if a non-player commits a rule infringement, the team may be penalized. If a time-penalty is awarded, the referee asks the team to choose a player, of the referee may choose a player randomly if the team does not react. The person causing the penalty must leave the exchange area and its immediate vicinity.



2.3 Personal Equipment

2.3.1 Equipment not in order;

A player, that at any time during the game does not fulfil the rules for personal equipment, may be taken out of the water or denied access to the water by the referees. The player may be given a time-penalty.

A player taken out by a referee is not allowed to re-enter the water until the deck referee is satisfied that the equipment is in good order.

2.3.2 Required personal equipment;

Each player shall be equipped with a cap, a swimsuit, mask, snorkel and fins.

- 2.3.2.a Any potentially harmful projecting edges on any piece of equipment must be covered
- 2.3.2.b The fins may be secured by fin retainers
- 2.3.2.c The fins may be as long as wanted
- 2.3.2.d Mono fins may not be used
- 2.3.2.e Fins must be large/stiff enough to seize water resistance, this in order to prevent/minimize damage from kicks
- 2.3.2.f Fins must be designed so that they cannot hurt anyone.
- 2.3.2.g If brittle material is used in parts of any equipment, care should be taken so that the equipment cannot harm anyone if broken.
- 2.3.2.h The caps must have ear protectors fitted, and these protectors may not be removed, or altered in any way. This to prevent ear damage
- 2.3.2.i A rubber swim cap worn underneath the numbered cap must not cover the external auditory canal. This to prevent ear damage. The rubber cap must follow team colour.
- 2.3.2.j The player's number shall be unique to each player, and the number shall be between 1 – 99.

The players' number must be clearly visible for all three referees
If the cap number is (partially or fully) covered, the player must write his/her number on the outside of the shoulder, using a waterproof marker

The number marked on skin with waterproof marker must be visible throughout the game (C.f. rule 1.1.2).

2.3.3 Prevention of injury;

- 2.3.3.a Players may not wear anything that in any way can cause injury to any person.
- 2.3.3.b The nails must be cut short, and may not be sharp.



- 2.3.3.c The binding of fingers together with smooth tape is allowed, providing the fingers remain flexible.
- 2.3.3.d All projecting edges, i.e., on masks, and buckles of fins, must be smoothed and/or covered; this may be done with tape or a similar material.
- 2.3.3.e A player who realizes, or ought to have realized, that his/her equipment can be dangerous must leave the water immediately, and inform the deck referee of dangerous equipment left in the area.

2.3.4 Body friction;

If a player's body is slippery when wet, he/she may be denied participation in the game. No part of the body must be lubricated with any cream or equivalent. (C.f. rule 3.1.2.c)

2.3.5 Grip enhancing substance;

It is not allowed to use any grip enhancing substance on any part of the body. (C.f. rule 3.1.2.c)

2.3.6 Oxygen enhanced air;

A player in the list of player for the match may not breathe air enriched with oxygen or any other substance. A player breathing O₂/O₂-enriched air is automatically considered to have left the match and is not allowed to return to the playing area. When oxygen is given as first aid, no prior notification to the referees is necessary, but information should be given as soon as possible.

2.3.7 Defect equipment;

If part of player's equipment becomes defective during play, the player may repair his/her equipment without leaving the water if it can be done without interfering with the progress of the game or the safety of all persons.

If a player does leave the water in order to repair the equipment, this should be done by means of a normal exchange (C.f. rule 4.2.1 and 2.2.2).

2.4 **Team Identification**

2.4.1 Equipment not in order;

A player that at any time during the game does not fulfil the rules for team identification may be taken out of the water or denied access to the water by the referee. The player may be given a time-penalty.

A player taken out by a referee is not allowed to re-enter the water until the deck referee is satisfied that the equipment is in good order.



2.4.2 Team colours;

All members on the team shall wear numbered caps of the same colour. The caps may not have a contrasting colour outline.

If a player uses a rubber swim cap, or any other remedy, all visible parts must be of the same colour.

2.4.3 Suit colours;

Each team must be in possession of a dark blue or black set and a white set of swim-suits and caps in corresponding colours.

The swim-suits may have small areas with flag colours, team/country names, etc., but the suit colour must be clearly dominant. No contrasting outline of the swimsuit is allowed. Shoulder straps and top front part of the female swimsuit must follow suit colour.

The swimsuit must be clearly light/dark in the water. Transparent suits with darker suits underneath, or suits underneath of contrasting colour that are visible through or outside of the top suit should be considered incongruous.

2.4.4 Team captains;

The team captains' names should be marked as captain in the match protocol, and the captains shall wear a band on the upper part of one arm. The band must follow team colour.

2.4.5 Wristbands;

The team wearing dark caps and swim-suits must wear dark wristbands. The team wearing white caps and swim-suits must wear white wristbands. It must not be possible to hook fingers onto the wristbands.

2.4.6 Extra personal protection;

It is allowed to play with elbow- and knee-protectors, etc, made of soft material, if they are of team colour or of the player's skin colour. It must not possibly cause injury to any person, like cutting, hooking of fingers, etc. (C.f. rule 2.3.3.a.)



3 Officials and Jury

3.1 Number, Titles and Duties

3.1.1 Number of referees;

At least three referees shall be responsible for each match and their decisions are binding. (C.f. 3.2.5)

3.1.2 Deck referee;

The deck referee observes the game from the pool side and is responsible for:

- 3.1.2.a All aspects and the overall conduct of the game
- 3.1.2.b The playing area, exchange areas, penalty bench areas, the goal and the ball. Any discrepancies from the rules should be marked in the match protocol.
- 3.1.2.c Checking of the equipment, wet body friction, grip enhancing substance, etc. of the two teams before the match
- 3.1.2.d Checking that the player's names and numbers are entered in the match protocol before the start of the match.
- 3.1.2.e The start of:
 - Start of each period
 - Start of play after a goal has been scored
 - Start of free throws awarded by the deck referee
 - Start of team balls
 - Start of referee balls
 - Start of penalty throws
 - Start of play whenever a warning has been awarded
 - Start of play whenever a time-penalty has been awarded
- 3.1.2.f The playing time
- 3.1.2.g The exchange players
- 3.1.2.h The time penalties
- 3.1.2.i Any observed rule infringement
- 3.1.2.j Continuously check the players equipment and retrieve from/deny access to the water any player whose equipment does not conform to the rules
- 3.1.2.k The substitutions
- 3.1.2.l Keeping the match protocol
- 3.1.2.m That the time for the end of the match is noted in the match protocol.



3.1.2.n For any situation not covered in these rules, to make a decision based on his/her sound judgement

The deck referee may have one or more assistants to undertake for instance the following duties on his/her behalf:

- Keeping time
- Keeping the match protocol
- Checking the personal equipment of the players before the start of the game
- Checking players in the penalty bench area
- Checking exchanges
- Checking expelled players
- Checking players who leave the water in order to repair their equipment

3.1.3 Water referees;

Two referees are in the water, one at each side of the playing area, and they are called water referees. The water referees are responsible for:

- 3.1.3.a Any observed rule infringement
- 3.1.3.b Start the game after awarding a free throw (when no time-penalty nor warning was awarded)
- 3.1.3.c Signal when a goal is scored by two long continuous sounds
- 3.1.3.d Continuously check the players' personal equipment and retrieve from the water any player whose equipment does not conform to the rules
- 3.1.3.e Continuously check the goals, marker and other equipment conform to the rules
- 3.1.3.f Give the ball to the attacker when a penalty-throw has been awarded
- 3.1.3.g Place the ball at the middle of the pool after a penalty throw running full time without scoring
- 3.1.3.h Place the ball at the middle of the pool at the beginning of each period

3.1.4 Injured player;

The referees shall interrupt the game immediately if, in their opinion, a player is seriously injured.

Assistance is given to the injured player. A new player from the exchange bench may enter the water (C.f. rule 4.2.1). A player given oxygen/oxygen enriched air is considered to have left the match.

The game is restarted by a referee ball or team ball (C.f. 4.1.4 and 4.1.5).

3.1.5 Player with decreased level of consciousness;

The referees have the authority to withdraw a player from the water:

- 3.1.5.a If he/she becomes obviously overstrained and exhausted.



3.1.6 Expulsion of a player;

The referees have the authority to expel a player from further participation in the match.

- 3.1.6.a A referee can expel a player in case of unsporting or violent behaviour.

An exchange player may replace the expelled player after the team has served a five - 5 minutes penalty, and may thereafter continue with six players in the water and maximum five exchange players.

This rule should only be used in severe case, if the referee is not sure whether to expel the player or award a time penalty, he/she should always award a time-penalty. (C.f. rule 5.1.1 or 5.1.2)

A player may be expelled due to unsporting or violent behaviour at any time or place during the tournament, not only during matches.

The expelled player must leave the immediate vicinity of the playing area/exchange area. In addition, the player may not participate in the next match. A reserve may enter the game in the next match.

A player expelled due to infringement of rule 3.1.6.a shall be reported to his/her federation by use of form in appendix 5.

- 3.1.6.b A referee can expel a player in the case of the player repeatedly breaking the rules.

A referee must give clear warning to a player that the player will be expelled if he/she continues to commit offences, c.f. rule 6.1.1.b. A player given 2 + 2 minutes time-penalties according to rule 6.3.1.g is automatically regarded to have been warned.

An exchange player may replace the expelled player after the team has served a five - 5 minutes penalty, and may thereafter continue with six players in the water and maximum five exchange players.

The expelled player must leave the immediate vicinity of the playing area/exchange area. In addition, the player may not participate in the next match. A reserve may enter the game in the next match.

- 3.1.6.c A player may be expelled for incidents occurring at any time during the tournament.

Any severe unsporting at any time during a tournament may cause the player to be expelled from games (or the tournament). Unsporting behaviour reported to the jury may cause the jury to be summoned, to hear the case, and possibly to expel the player for one or more matches, or for the remainder of the tournament.



If the player is expelled from one or more matches, or from the whole tournament, a reserve player may enter the game in the next match.

3.1.6.d An expelled player may not be in the immediate vicinity of the playing area/exchange area, and the player may not communicate with his/her team neither during the match he/she is expelled from nor the matches he/she is denied participation in. The referee may, if necessary, demand that the player leaves the pool area.

3.1.6.e A player expelled by rule 3.1.6.a or 3.1.6.b is not regarded as a player serving a time-penalty, and does not count in rule 6.3.6.

3.1.6.f When the behaviour that caused a player to be expelled due to infringement of rule 3.1.6.a is considered exceptionally grave, a referee in the match or the chief referee may demand that the jury shall evaluate if the case is severe enough to expel the player for more than one match, or from the tournament.

If the player is expelled for more than one match, or from the whole tournament, a reserve may enter the game in the next match.

3.1.7 Change of ball;

During the match, the ball may only be exchanged with the approval of the deck referee.

The deck referee shall make sure that both team captains are informed about the exchange of the ball. The reason for the exchange shall be entered in the match protocol.

3.1.8 Separation of teams;

The referees may, at any time during the match, request that the players go to their respective sides. A visual signal, (C.f. rule 3.1.10) is given by the referees.

This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- When the water referees cannot watch the players or the playing area, for example during a referee conference, if water referees need to check any equipment, etc.
- When the game is interrupted for an unknown or long time, for example due to signal equipment failure, etc.
- When the referee's action will hinder the players to perform their tasks, for example giving a warning to a player that is covering the goal also during the stop of the play
- When the referee wants to give information to the team captains, regarding warnings etc., and either is hindered in performing their tasks during the stop of the play



3.1.9 Extension of playing time;

The referee may extend the playing time. (C.f. rule 5.1.18)

3.1.10 Audible and visual signals;

The referees shall make themselves distinctive by audible and visual signals.

The signals are shown in appendix 4.

Whenever possible, the referees are encouraged to announce briefly the reasons for stoppages of play.

It is recommended that all referees repeat each other's signals.

3.2 Officials' Equipment

3.2.1 Referees' equipment;

3.2.1.a Audible signal equipment: All three referees shall be equipped with means of making audible signals for start and stop of play. (C.f. rule 1.5)

3.2.1.b Compressed air: The two water referees may use compressed air equipment if considered necessary.

In World and Zone Championship games, both water referees shall use compressed air equipment.

3.2.2 Deck referee;

The deck referee shall wear a white shirt/t-shirt and white pants/shorts.

3.2.3 Water referees;

The water referees shall wear a dark T-shirt or a diving suit. The dark part must at least cover the torso and the shoulders, this so that the deck referee can see the direction of the free throw signalled. The water referees may wear a red cap. The ear-protectors on the cap may be of any colour.

3.2.4 Personal protection;

Water referees using any personal protection (elbow- or knee-protectors, etc.) should preferably choose his/her skin colour, or, as a second alternative, bright red.

3.2.5 Video;

Video is not to be used by the referees or jury for any other reason than situations that may lead to an expulsion.

3.2.6 Jury;

A jury must be elected according to CMAS rules.



4 The Game

4.1 Starting Play

The team mentioned first in the playing schedule wears dark swim-suits and caps.

4.1.1 Start of a period;

At the beginning of each period, the ball is placed on the bottom of the pool in the middle of the playing area.

4.1.1.a All players in the water must be at their respective pool ends with at least one hand touching the wall at the surface

4.1.1.b The exchange players sit on the exchange bench/chairs

4.1.1.c The deck referee starts the game by a long continuous sound

4.1.1.d In the case of a false start at the beginning of a period, the play shall be stopped and restarted after the clock is reset to the starting time

In order to position the ball at the start of play, a ring or low bowl may be used, provided it will not endanger the players.

4.1.2 Start of play after a goal is scored;

After a goal is scored, the teams return to their ends. Then, following the referee's signal, the team against which the goal was scored, attacks with the ball:

4.1.2.a The ball shall be kept at the surface, partly above the water, visible to the deck referee. The teams should be given a reasonable time to prepare for the start (C.f. rule 5.1.18).

4.1.2.b When the play is restarted after a goal, all the players in the water at the time of the start signal, must touch with a hand, the pool wall at the surface, on their respective sides, before joining the play.

4.1.2.c When attacking immediately after a goal has been scored, the ball shall be held visibly until 2 meters distance from any player of the opposing team. The ball may not be held behind the back, between the legs, etc. (C.f. rule 5.1.15)

4.1.3 Start of play after a penalty throw;

On completion of a penalty throw the game is started again as follows:

4.1.3.a If a goal was scored, the team that defended the penalty-throw starts with the ball and the play is started as per rule 4.1.2.

4.1.3.b If the penalty throw was interrupted by an offence committed by the defender, the penalty throw is stopped and another penalty throw is awarded. (C.f. rule 6.4.6) The defender shall immediately go to the penalty bench and is given a 2 minutes time penalty. The time for the time penalty starts when normal play again resumes after the penalty throws.



- 4.1.3.c If a goal was not scored at full time of the penalty throw, or if the penalty throw was interrupted by an offence committed by the attacking player (C.f. rule 6.4.7), the game is started as normal start of periods, c.f. rule 4.1.1

A water referee places the ball in the middle of the playing area.

4.1.4 Team ball;

The referee may award a team ball when the play was stopped and no goal, free throw or penalty throw was awarded, and a referee ball is considered obviously unfair.

One team is given the ball. Both teams must have all their players on their respective halves of the playing area. The ball is presented at the surface along the centre line (C.f. appendix 1), and the play is started with a normal start signal.

This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- The play was stopped due to an injured defender, when the attacking team clearly was in possession of the ball
- Signal equipment failure when one team clearly was in possession of the ball
- Erroneous signal is made by a referee when one team clearly was in possession of the ball

4.1.5 Referee ball;

If the game is stopped and no goal, penalty throw, free throw or team ball was awarded, the play will be started by a referee ball.

A "referee ball" shall be thrown by the deck referee into the water at the halfway line.

4.2 Exchange and Substitution of Players

4.2.1 Exchange of players during the game;

All players among the 12 (or minimum six) in a team, that are in the exchange area, are called exchange players. If a team has more than six players, all additional players must be in the exchange area at all times during the game (C.f. rule 1.1.2).

- 4.2.1.a An exchange player may be changed at will with any player in the water by flying change.
- 4.2.1.b A player to be exchanged shall leave the playing area only by crossing the exit line of his team. (C.f. rule 1.2.6 and Appendix 1)
- The player is considered to have left the water when his/her whole body is out of the water, even if part of the fins in front of the toes still is in the water.

If the water in the pool is level with the deck of the pool, the player leaving the water is considered to have left the water when standing



on his/her knees on the side of the pool, even if part of feet in front of the ankles is still in the water.

- 4.2.1.c An exchange player may not enter the water until the player to be replaced has completely left the water and is in the exchange area of his team.

If the water in the pool is level with the deck of the pool, the player entering the water may place the sole of his foot on the edge of the pool, with part of feet in front of the ankles in the water, ready to kick off, before the player leaving the water is out of the water.

- 4.2.1.d An exchange player may enter the pool only via the entrance lane. The player must enter the playing area before the halfway line of the playing area.
- 4.2.1.e A player that is hurt, disorientated, carries dangerous equipment, etc, may leave the water anywhere, but must then walk carefully back to his/her team's exchange area before he/she can be replaced by another player, or is re-entering the water.

4.2.2 Use of reserves;

- 4.2.2.a Each team has the right to make three substitutions during a match.
- 4.2.2.b The deck referee must be informed of the substitution and the players' numbers must be given to the match protocol table before the substitution is made. (C.f. rule 1.1.10)
- 4.2.2.c A team may perform the substitution only when the play has already been stopped.
- 4.2.2.d A substitution must not slow down the speed of the game, for example during a free throw to the opposing team. A substitution not fully prepared with information of cap numbers, involved players not ready, etc., may therefore be denied by the referee. Equally, a call for substitution at an unnecessary late time of a stop may be denied.
- 4.2.2.e A player who has been taken out may join the game again, but this counts as the second substitution.

4.3 Duration of Play

4.3.1 Parts of the match;

A match consist of the regular playing time and, if necessary, extra time and a penalty shoot-out.

The duration of the game shall be 2 x 15 minutes effective playing time (C.f. Rule 4.3.3).

4.3.2 At half time;

- The interval shall be five minutes.
- The team shall change ends.
- The water referees shall not change sides.



4.3.3 Play interruption;

On all play interruptions the match clock is stopped.

4.3.4 Play interruption at end of a period;

4.3.4.a A penalty throw shall always be carried out regardless of the expiration of playing time.

If necessary, the playing time must be extended in order to carry out a penalty throw.

4.3.4.b If a goal, free throw, time penalty, team ball or referee ball is awarded while the time is running out, the deck referee shall administer the match protocol and/or penalties. Thereafter the period is stopped with audible and visible signals.

4.3.5 Match needing decision;

When a match in which a decision must be reached, finishes in a draw, it shall be extended after an interval of five minutes, the teams not changing sides, by:

4.3.5.a Extra time;

The extra time is one period of up to fifteen minutes so called sudden death. The team who makes the first goal is the winner of the game. The game is stopped immediately after the goal is scored.

4.3.5.b Penalty-throw shoot-out;

If the game cannot be decided by sudden death, the team shall carry out a penalty throw shoot-out, first with three penalty throws to each team (three rounds);

- Three different players from each team shall carry out the three penalty throws
- The goal defender may be changed at will
- The teams carry out the penalty throws in turns
- Lots are drawn to decide which team should start with the first penalty throw
- A player given a time-penalty during a penalty-throw shoot-out may not participate again in the same or the next round of the shoot-out, neither as an attacker nor as a defender (C.f. rule 6.4.6 and 6.4.7)

4.3.5.c Penalty-throw shoot-out (continued);

If the game cannot be decided by the first three penalty-throws in the shoot-out, the penalty-throw shoot-out continues, one penalty-throw to each team until one team achieves a leading position;

- Each team carries out one penalty-throw by a different player
- No player, including the three players who performed the penalty-throws from 4.3.5.b, shall perform again, until all the players on their teams have each performed a penalty throw
- The goal defender may be changed at will



- A player given a time-penalty during a penalty-throw shoot-out may not participate again in the same or the next round of the shoot-out, neither as an attacker nor as a defender

4.3.6 Time-out;

- 4.3.6.a Each team has the right call for one time-out in each match.
- 4.3.6.b Any player in the water or any person in the exchange area may claim a time out for the team
- 4.3.6.c A time-out can only be claimed during an interruption. The time-out may not be the cause of the interruption
- 4.3.6.d The duration of the time-out is one minute
- 4.3.6.e The visual signal for a time-out call is the same as for the time-out sign used by the referees. (C.f. rule 3.1.10)
- 4.3.6.f The deck referee makes an audible (game interruption) signal followed by the visible time-out signal. (C.f. rule 3.1.10)
- 4.3.6.g During a time-out, both teams shall move to their respective ends of the playing area
- 4.3.6.h The one minute time-out is started when the deck referee gives the time-out signal. When the full minute is over, the deck referee gives a new (game interruption) signal and positions him/herself to start the game, (i.e. at the correct position showing visual signal for a free throw/penalty throw, etc.). The teams are given a reasonable time to get in position and the play is started. (C.f. rule 5.1.18)

4.3.7 Sequence of signals;

If a referee for some reason is hindered in making an immediate signal, his/her observations and decisions will still be valid even if another signal is given first.

This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situation;

- If a water referee has observed a goal/rule infringement without being able to give a signal before the signal for the end of the period, he/she will simply inform the deck referee and the goal, penalty, etc., is awarded. It is recommended that the referees make a short conference to ensure the right order of the events.

Among the reasons for not giving an immediate signal could be:

- One referee has applied the delayed call rule (C.f. rule 6.5.2)
- A player has become entangled in the line for the signal equipment and the referee has to let go of the signal equipment
- The referee needs more information in order to decide whether the ball is within or behind the goal
- The referee needs time to evaluate the situation
- Defective signal equipment



4.4 Scoring Procedure

4.4.1 Scoring;

- 4.4.1.a A goal is scored when the ball is completely below the goal edge.
It is indicated by a referee with two long continuous sounds.
- 4.4.1.b Not valid
- 4.4.1.c The player who scored should give a signal visible to the deck referee by raising a closed fist above the surface of the water immediately after immersing. If no signal is given, the goal will still be awarded, but the player's number might not be noted in the match protocol.

4.4.2 Result in match;

The team that achieves the most goals in a match is the winner.
If both teams have the same number of goals, the game is a draw.

4.4.3 Result in tournament;

In a tournament, the winning team of each game shall receive three points, whilst in a match ending in a draw each team receives one point.

The team with the most points is the winner of the tournament.

If there are teams with the same number of points, the classification is carried out as follows:

- 4.4.3.a The games in which these teams played against each other shall be the deciding factor (in order of priority; points, goal difference and most scored goals).
- 4.4.3.b If there is no decision, the goal difference of all games is decisive.
- 4.4.3.c If the goal difference of all games is equal, the team with most scored goals is the winner.
- 4.4.3.d If the number of scored goals also is equal, a new game shall be played observing rule 4.3.5 if needed.

4.5 Stopping Play

4.5.1 Stopping of play;

The play is interruption for:

- A goal
- A penalty, a free throw or a warning
- End of a period or of a penalty throw
- Any situation where a referee consider it necessary

The play is considered interrupted at the first sound.

4.5.2 Match clock;



The match clock is stopped during play interruptions.

4.5.3 Audible signals for stop of play;

A game is stopped by:

- 4.5.3.a Two long continuous sounds when a goal is scored.
- 4.5.3.b Repeated short signals for all other reasons for stopping play.
-



5 Foul Play

5.1 Foul Play

For the rules 5.1.7 - 5.1.12 it is up to the referee to decide the harshness of the infringement and thereby also of the penalty, whether to give a time-penalty, a warning or only a free throw. The referee should among other things take into consideration the actual/potential danger, how purposeful/provocative the rule infringement was, repetition, and how much the offender could have gained from the rule infringement if gone unnoticed. If a player can gain a lot, for example to make or prevent a goal, he/she should also risk a lot, i.e. a time-penalty.

Since the referees cannot possibly see all rule infringements, the penalties should be proportionally harsher than the potential damage/gain, this in order to encourage fair play.

Experience has shown that warnings do not necessarily encourage the desired change in behaviour, while time-penalties do. The referee should make a judgement on whether or not the team misuses the opportunity given with the warning. (C.f. 6.1.1) If change in behaviour comes too slowly, direct penalties should be given. Equally, if a team breaks many different rules, warnings will only slow down the game, and the use of direct time-penalties is advised, particularly in games not using effective time.

It is not feasible to describe all possible rule infringements in these rules. Examples are given to set a standard and to trigger the referees' imagination. For the examples given, it should be understood that the rules are typically applicable in, but not limited to, the situations described.

The following is considered illegal behaviour:



5.1.1 Unsporting or provocative behaviour;

To behave in any way unsporting or provocative.

The referee should be aware of borderline cases that might qualify for use of expulsion. (C.f. rule 3.1.6.a)

This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- To act in a manner that signals contempt to the rules, the officials or any other player or person
- Foul language
- Taking the ball out of the goal before a scoring signal is made
- During a “swim-by”, to knock the ball out of the hand of an opponent awarded a free throw
- To bring opponents equipment into your own exchange area, or “hiding” it in the gutter, behind starting blocks, etc. Opponents equipment shall be left where it is, delivered directly to the opponents exchange area or given to a referee if considered dangerous
- Splashing water in the face of an opponent (during discussions, etc.)

5.1.2 Unnecessary hard or violent play;

To kick or to hit any player, or to play unnecessarily violently. To press onto the opponent’s head, or to twist the head. Furthermore, it is forbidden to use too much force to the head, or to grasp around the head. It is forbidden to touch an opponent’s head above the surface.

This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- The defenders, typically backs, trying to repel an attacker by kicking him/her with the heel of the feet/fins. The player shall be given a time penalty also if the kick misses. However, the defender may defend by placing the foot softly onto the chest of the attacker in order to keep him/her at a distance. If in doubt whether it is a soft touch or a kick, the referee should make the penalty call
- When the ball is blocked in a group, a player might try to free him/herself by wiggling. Wiggling with elbows/arms away from the body, or fast moving of knees/heels, etc. may harm anyone around, and this person should be given a time-penalty, preferably before anyone is hurt. However, wiggling with elbows held alongside the body, and movements only causing “soft hits” on persons around should be allowed
- When a player holding the ball has been caught around the legs by an opponent, the player may not kick uncritically to get free. Referees shall stop dangerous behaviour before anyone is hurt
- To touch the head of any player above the surface, most commonly seen during blockings in the surface or during ”discussions”
- For an attacker with the ball to give a sudden jerk only to the side of the head of a goal defender
- For a player to press against the face/chin of an opponent, causing the head to be moved backwards or upwards.

The referee should be aware of borderline cases that might qualify the player to be expelled. (C.f. rule 3.1.6.a)



5.1.3 Excess of players in the water;

For one team to have more than six players simultaneously in the water (and penalty bench area) during the game. (C.f. rule 1.1.2.)

The deck referee or his/her assistant check that the correct number of exchange players are in the exchange area at any one time during the game. If one or more exchange players are missing from the exchange area and he/she has not given official notice of departure to the deck referee, this will indicate that there are too many players in the water and should be punished as per rule 5.1.3.

Use of delayed call, rule 6.5.2, may be observed.

5.1.4 Incorrect entering and exiting of the water;

- 5.1.4.a To enter the water anywhere else than via the entrance lane during the game (C.f. 1.1.2), or to enter the water in any potentially dangerous manner during the match. (C.f. 4.2.1.d and 1.1.1)
- 5.1.4.b To leave the playing area anywhere else than by crossing the exit line. (C.f. rules 4.2.1.b, 4.2.1.e and 1.2.6)

5.1.5 Incorrect use of players;

For a team to use an illegal player, i.e. any player other than the 12 players with corresponding caps listed in the protocol. The illegally used player must leave the playing area, and the team is given a time-penalty, during which the team may correct the list/person/cap etc.

The deck referee may allow the player given the time-penalty to leave the area in order to facilitate collecting correct caps, etc.

If a player that is not listed among the 12 players (not including reserves) in the match protocol, scores, the goal is annulled.

5.1.6 Removal of an opponent away from the goal;

When neither player is in possession of the ball, for a player to pull or to push an opponent away from the goal, at any time during a game.

The referee shall be aware that infringements of this rule often happen when the ball is in a different place, and also before the play has been started at a free throw.

As a team can gain very much by breaking this rule (a goal scored or prevented) the player should normally be given a direct time-penalty.

This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- All open fights on the goal when none involved has the ball, the person that started moving the other player is the offender



- When an attacker has achieved a good position at the goal, awaiting his/her team-mates to come with the ball. A defender swim between the attacker and the goal and thereby wedges the attacker away from the goal
- When a goal defender is in position, an attacker slowly squeezes an arm between the goal defender and the goal (or poolside), slowly pushing the goal defender away from the goal.
- An attacker not in possession of the ball who has occupied the opponent's goal may not move an opponent lying directly above/upon him/her. If neither receives the ball, the attacker must, when he/she moves away, do so without moving the opponent in any direction.
- An player not in possession of the ball positioning him/herself underneath an opponent may not, accidentally or intentionally, cause the opponent to be moved when he/she leaves the position. This is typically seen when an attacker swims upwards, hooking a shoulder, hip, thigh, hand, etc. under a goal defender, pulling the goal defender a shorter or longer distance away from the goal. The goal defender should not be shifted at all by the attackers movements.

5.1.7 Not to return to starting position after a goal is scored;

To continue to play after a goal or penalty throw, without first having returned to the start position as described in rule 4.1.2.

5.1.8 Illegal use of the goal (and poolside);

For a player, with any part of the body, to grab, pull or wedge onto the goal, or to squeeze between the poolside and the goal, in order to benefit from this in any way. The geographical position of the ball or which team is in possession of the ball, is irrelevant in this case.

A player may not push onto the inside of the goal. For example, he/she may not use the goal as a fixed point and an arm/leg as a lever in order to take a ball that is partly into the goal, out of the goal, nor may he/she cover the goal with even slightly bent elbows going into the goal.

It is allowed to push onto the outside of the goal, to swim onto it or to kick or push off from it.

It is allowed (not using the side of the pool) to swim a team-mate onto the goal. It is also allowed (not using the side of the pool), to swim an opponent onto the goal if either player holds the ball. No part of the body must come inside the goal because of this, if so, the player who pushes is considered to break this rule.

However, it is not foul play if a player has part of his/her body involuntarily pressed down by an opponent into the goal; e.g., shoulder, elbow, knee, etc.

As a team can gain very much by breaking this rule (a goal scored or prevented) the player should normally be given a direct time-penalty.



This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- An attacker, without the ball, pulling him/herself in position on the goal that he/she otherwise would not have been able to reach or that it would have taken more time to swim into
- An attacker, without the ball, pulling him/herself in position on the goal before the defender
- A defender pulling him/herself in position just before the attacker arrives, where he/she might otherwise not have reached
- A goal defender squeezing him/herself between the pool wall and the inside or top of the goal. This can often be spotted from a white stripe of skin, where the brim of the goal presses against for example the outside/back of the shoulder, pressing the blood away
- A goal defender grabbing the brim or a bar of the goal to avoid being pushed off, or just to rest
- A player who is “waiting his/her turn” is holding onto the goal in order not to be pushed away in the turmoil
- A defender using the brim or a bar of the goal as a “fixed point”, to hold away an attacker
- A player hooking his/her arm/leg between the poolside and the goal underneath the brim of the goal
- A player hooking an upper arm, the thigh or the calf of the leg under the brim of the goal, in order to not float up or not to be removed by an attacker with the ball
- An attacker hooking onto the goal for example using a thigh, to use this as a “fixed point” to pull him/herself back to the goal when scoring.

5.1.9 To attack an opponent’s equipment;

To attack any of the opponent's equipment, i.e. mask, snorkel, fins, swimsuit or cap.

As soon as a player grasps the mask/cover the glass of an opponents mask, a free throw may be given, regardless of whether the move was intentional or not. If the referee interprets that the player was trying or succeeding in disarranging the mask, a time-penalty should be awarded. A grasp around the head of an opponent, or when swimming over, must not cause the equipment to be disarranged.

It is also forbidden to push or throw the ball against the mask of an opponent on purpose.

It is forbidden to hold onto, or deliberately to touch, the mask or snorkel of an opponent.

It is forbidden to grab/hold the fins of an opponent. It is allowed to push the fins, for example using the side of an arm, if either is in possession of the ball.

It is forbidden to pull or hold onto the opponent's swim-suit or cap. Nor is it allowed to hold on to an opponent using a grip where only fabric is held, or when some fingers grabs/entangles the cap string or swim-suit, etc.



It is allowed to touch the fabric of the swim-suit/cap using grips that would be allowed if the suit/cap had not been there.

5.1.10 Strangulation;

To use a strangling hold on the neck. It is of no importance which part of the offender's body or equipment that causes the strangulation, or if a third person's limbs, etc. is causing the strangulation. As this can cause serious injury, when in doubt, the referees shall make the call.

5.1.11 Incorrect ball handling;

5.1.11.a For a player at any time during stoppage of the play, to keep, to take possession of, or to hide the ball, when it is the other team that should have the ball (free throw, team ball, penalty throw, after a goal is scored). The ball must be dropped to the bottom of the pool.

5.1.11.b To keep possession of the ball after a referee ball is signalled. The ball should either be dropped to the bottom of the pool or given to the deck referee.

5.1.12 Incorrect general behaviour;

For any player in the water or the exchange area, or for any non-player in the exchange area, to break any of the rules in this rulebook.

The team may be penalized with a time-penalty also in the case where non-players in their exchange area commit a rule-infringement. (C.f. rule 2.2.4.c)

As these chapters cover descriptive rules and most do not state any penalty, the referee must evaluate the situation for seriousness, repetition, possible gain, contempt/spite, game fluency interference, etc., and award appropriate penalty according to rule 6.1, 6.2 or 6.3. If a team continues to break the rules it is advised that the referees award a time-penalty every time, as this is proven to be the most efficient way for the teams to change behaviour.

5.1.13 Holding;

To hold, pull, push, etc. an opponent when neither the player nor the opponent is in the possession of the ball. To hold, pull, push, etc. is illegal regardless of which part of the body that is used.

This ban is important in order to maintain a fluid and high quality game. The referees shall, therefore give warning and thereafter time-penalties if the behaviour persists.

This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- A player who has just passed on the ball and is still being held
- A player in the surface is held when he/she wants to position him/herself in the teams play
- A player, wanting to position him/herself around the goal, is held and prevented from doing so



- Two players competing to reach a ball and one player pulls/pushes the other before either has the ball
- A player holding an opponent in order to help a team-mate to reach a free ball
- A player actively “swimming away” an opponent

The referee may give warnings according to rule 6.1 and thereafter time-penalties.

5.1.14 Free throw interference;

- 5.1.14.a The opponents must be outside the free throw clearance zone (C.f. rule 1.2.8) (keep a distance of a minimum of 2 meters from the free throw executor, in order to be allowed to participate in the play. (C.f. rule 6.2.5)
- 5.1.14.b If a player is in the free throw clearance zone before the free throw pass is made, he/she must not interfere with the free throw or participate in the play until he/she is outside the free throw clearance zone. He /she must go outside of the free throw clearance zone before participating, also after the play has started and the free throw pass has been performed

Failure to conform to rule this rule should the first time be accompanied with a warning, and thereafter time-penalties should be given every time it is repeated.

5.1.15 Hiding the ball at start:

Not to hold the ball visible until 2 meters distance of an opponent after start of the game, whenever the game is started according to rule 4.1.2.c.

5.1.16 To lead the ball outside of the playing area;

The ball is considered outside of the playing area when the whole ball is above the surface of the water or outside the playing area sideline(s).

The player who is actively preventing the ball from dropping to the bottom of the pool is said to hold the ball.

The player that holds the ball when it is taken out of the playing area is regarded as the rule-offending player. It is of no importance if the ball touches the torso, head, etc. of another player as long as that player cannot be considered to actually hold the ball.

If an opponent is lifting/pushing the arm/hand that holds the ball or is pushing the player, the person that holds the ball is still regarded as the rule-offending player.

If no player is holding the ball, the free throw goes against the player who last touched the ball.

If players from both teams hold the ball using the arms/hands/legs/etc., there should be a referee ball.



5.1.17 To hold onto any “fixed points” in the pool during play;

During play and when competing of the ball, the players may not make use of any fixed points in the pool, for example ladders, gutters, starting blocks, etc. (C.f. rule 1.2.1)

This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- During blockings in the surface, a player holds onto the gutter or pool deck or standing on the pool landing on pool side wall
- At any time during play, a player using the pool landing and for example a starting block to dive into a situation at or directly below the surface

On the other hand, it is legal to use these fixed point at times;

- At start of periods, to hold onto the gutter or pool deck in order to get a good starting position for the start signal
- For the goal defender to kick off from the pool landing to faster get down the goal
- While resting, hanging on to the gutter, pool deck, starting blocks, etc.
- While exiting the water, to make use anything available

5.1.18 Deliberately delaying the play;

If a team deliberately delays the play of a game the referee may award a warning and thereafter time-penalties. (The player committing the last delay is the player to be given the penalty). If necessary, playing time may be extended (C.f. rule 3.1.10).

The referees shall grant the teams reasonable time to swim to their positions, to correct equipment when it has been disarranged by the opponents, etc. Referees are advised to be flexible regarding substitutions when a team has had an injury player, or whenever the situations call for it.

This rule is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- A team in the lead does not try to play according to the intention of the sport; for example a player is blocking the ball in the foetus position whenever opponents come close
- One team using unnecessary long time in any given situation, practically making it an extra time-out
- In games not using effective time, one team repeatedly using unnecessary long time at free throws, etc.

5.1.19 Rule infringement to prevent a goal;

Any rule infringement in front of or on the way to the goal, that prevents a fairly certain goal being scored.

In borderline cases, when the referee is not sure whether it is a “fairly certain chance of goal”, he/she may just call a time-penalty.

This rule is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- A goal defender squeezing him/herself between the pool wall and the inside of the goal, when the attacker is working to remove the goal defender



- A goal defender grabbing the brim or a bar of the goal when the attacker is working to remove him/her
- A defender using the brim or a bar of the goal as a “fixed point”, to keep away an attacker in a good scoring position
- A defender removing an attacker that doesn't have the ball, away from the goal, when the attacking team is in a good scoring position
- When one or more players of one team hold the opponent/opponents that want to rush to the goal immediately after a change of ball possession, and thereby preventing the attackers to be in majority.

The referee should be aware that normally only the penalty throw or a time-penalty is given. In case of unsporting or violent behaviour (C.f. rule 5.1.1 and 5.1.2), it is recommended to give both a penalty-throw and a time-penalty.



6 Penalties

6.1 Warnings

6.1.1 Reason for warning;

A warning is given to a player or team in order to change unwanted behaviour, when other penalties are considered too harsh.

A warning can be given to any player or team for infringement of any of the rules in this rulebook, or for any inappropriate or provocative behaviour.

There are generally two reasons for the referee to give warnings:

6.1.1.a To change unwanted behaviour

6.1.1.b To warn the player that if he/she continues to break rules, he/she will be expelled by rule 3.1.6.b.

When warnings do not have the desired effect on behaviour, it is advised that direct penalties are used instead. (C.f. 5.1)

6.1.2 Time for warning;

6.1.2.a The referee may stop the play in order to give the warning. The play will start with at free throw against the rule infringing team.

6.1.2.b The referee may give the warning during another stop in the play. The play is then started in the same manner as it would have been started if no warning had been awarded.

6.1.3 Warning notification;

The player or team is given the warning verbally and visually. The warning shall be noted in the match protocol. Preferably, both teams should be informed the reason for the warning. Team leaders/captains must be vigilant for summoning from the referees.

6.1.4 A player repeating the behaviour;

6.1.4.a If a player repeats the behaviour for which he/she was given a warning, the referee may give the player a time-penalty every time the same rule infringement is repeated for the rest of the match.

6.1.4.b If a player is repeatedly warned for, or causing play interruptions for different rule infringements, the referees should evaluate if the player is showing contempt for the rules, opponents, referees, etc., and consider use time-penalties (C.f. rule 5.1.1) or expelling a player by use of rule 3.1.6.b.

6.1.5 The team repeating the behaviour – Team warning;

6.1.5.a If two players on the same team receive warnings for the same type of infringement, the second warning is considered a team warning. The referee shall give a visual sign (C.f. rule 3.1.10).



For the rest of the match, any player of the same team that receives a warning for the same infringement shall be given a time-penalty.

- 6.1.5.b If a team is repeatedly warned for, or causing play interruptions for different rule infringements, the referees should evaluate if the team is showing contempt for the rules, opponents, referees, etc., and consider use time-penalties (C.f. rule 5.1.1).

6.2 Free Throw

6.2.1 Reason for free throws;

A free throw may be awarded by a referee for the infringements of rules 5.1.7 –5.1.18.

6.2.2 Free throw notification;

The referee gives the signal for free throw against the team causing the foul. The free throw is noted in the match protocol.

6.2.3 The offending team's handling of the ball;

The team committing the foul must drop the ball to the bottom of the pool. Failure to do this may be interpreted as an attempt to slow down the opposing team's play, and qualify for a direct time-penalty or at a minimum a warning. (C.f. rule 5.1.11)

6.2.4 Position for the free throw;

The free throw shall always be taken by a player at the surface.

- 6.2.4.a A free throw awarded at the team's own half shall be taken from the centre of the playing area (centre point).
- 6.2.4.b A free throw awarded at the opponents half shall be taken at the place where the incident occurred, but not closer than 3 meters to the defenders' exit line.

6.2.5 Execution of free throws;

- 6.2.5.a A player lying in the surface, in the right place, holds the ball; he/she is the free throw executor. If the executor holds the ball at the surface, the referee should interpret this as that the player wants to start the free throw. The referee should start the play as soon as he/she finds it justifiable regarding the referee's other duties. If the executor holds the ball below the surface, the referee should interpret that as that the executor wants more time before the free throw is started. The referee should give reasonable time before starting the play.
- 6.2.5.b All players of the opposing team must stay outside of the free throw clearance zone (C.f. rule 1.2.8) until the free throw pass has been performed. Any opponent within the free throw clearance zone is in an erroneous position, and has disqualified him/herself from participating in the play until he/she again is outside the free throw clearance zone.



It is of no importance if the start signal for the free throw has been given and the pass has been made, the player must still move out of the free throw clearance zone before he/she again may participate in the play.

- 6.2.5.c The executor must pass on the ball within three seconds of the start signal. He/she must not change geographical position in the water until the ball is handed over. The executor must physically let go of the ball before he/she may take it again.
- 6.2.5.d An opponent that is not keeping the required distance of 2 meters from the executor and is participating in the play before he/she again is outside of the free throw clearance zone, shall be warned and thereafter given a time-penalty every time throughout the match if the interference is repeated. (C.f. rule 5.1.14)

6.2.6 Signal for start of free throw;

The free throw is given clearance by the referee who previously interrupted the play. This is not valid if there is a time-penalty or warning given at the same time, as the deck referee must check the penalized player, protocol, time-keeping, etc. The deck referee will therefore start the play, when a time-penalty has also been awarded.

6.2.7 Incorrect free throw;

If the free throw is not carried out correctly the offending team receives a free throw.

6.3 Time Penalty

6.3.1 Time-penalty;

- 6.3.1.a A time penalty requires the player given the time-penalty to go directly to the penalty bench area, and stay there until the 2 minutes effective playing time has elapsed. No other person is allowed in the penalty box area. The player may join his/her team in the exchange area during time-outs and during the breaks between periods and also between the sudden death period and penalty throw shoot-outs.
- 6.3.1.b The clock for the time-penalty is stopped and restarted whenever the match clock is stopped and restarted.
- 6.3.1.c The team must play the duration of the time-penalty with one person less in the water.
- 6.3.1.d If the player given the time-penalty him/herself caused a penalty throw (C.f. rule 5.1.19 / 5.1.1) or the time-penalty was awarded after (or simultaneously) with the penalty-throw, the time for the time-penalty does not start until normal play is started after the completion of the penalty-throw.
- 6.3.1.e The opposing team is given a free throw.
- 6.3.1.f If the referee does not know which player broke the rules, or if the time-penalty was caused by a non-player in the exchange area, the



referee asks the team to choose a player, of the referee may choose a player randomly if the team does not react.

- 6.3.1.g If a player given a time-penalty does not immediately go to the penalty bench area, or in any way shows contempt to the decision or any person, he/she may be given an additional time-penalty; resulting in 2 + 2 minutes time-penalty. The two time-penalties are treated as separate time-penalties, for example regarding rule 6.3.6. A player continuing this behaviour may be expelled according to rule 3.1.6.b.
- 6.3.1.h If a time penalty is awarded for an infringement of rule 5.1.3 (excess of players in the water), the referee must ensure that the team has the correct number of players in the water before starting the game.
- 6.3.1.i Penalties may be given for infringement of the rules 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 (unsporting and violent behaviour) also immediately after the match is over, if the behaviour is related to the match. The penalties shall be reported as normal in the match protocol.

6.3.2 Reason for time-penalty;

A time penalty may be awarded by a referee for infringements of rules 5.1.1. – 5.1.12, or after repetitive infringement of any rule.

It should be noted that infringements of rules 5.1.7 – 5.1.12 may instead be punished with only a free throw. The referee shall judge whether to call a time-penalty or just a free throw, based on, among other things; potential or real harm inflicted, intention, repetitiveness, possible gain and the general development and the mood in the game.

6.3.3 The offending team's handling of the ball;

The team committing the offence must drop the ball to the bottom of the pool. Failure to do this may be interpreted as provocative behaviour or as an attempt to slow down the opposing team's play, and qualify for a direct time-penalty or at a minimum a warning. (C.f. rules 5.1.1 and 5.1.11)

6.3.4 The player causing the time-penalty;

When the foul occurs, the players causing the foul shall go directly to the penalty bench area for two minutes at the referee's request.

The player given the time penalty should be in the penalty bench area before the referee restarts the game.

6.3.5 Signals at the end of a time-penalty;

The penalty bench area shall be in the immediate vicinity of but clearly separated from, the exchange area. When 10 seconds remain of the time-penalty, the deck referee or an assistant raises an arm. At the completion of the time-penalty, the arm is purposefully lowered. During the last 10 seconds of the time penalty, the player given the time-penalty is allowed to enter into the exchange area, but he/she or any other player replacing him/her cannot enter the water until the full time-penalty is served. (C.f. rule 3.1.10)



6.3.6 Time-penalties cleared before full time is served;

If one team is outnumbered due to time penalties and the opposing team scores, the oldest time-penalty will be considered served.

If the teams have equal numbers of players in the penalty bench area, neither of them is considered outnumbered. If one team has an expelled player (from 3.1.6.a or 3.1.6.b) and both team have one player serving a time-penalty, no team is considered outnumbered, even though one team has more players in the water.

Note that a player expelled by rule 3.1.6.a or 3.1.6.b is not said to be given a time-penalty, and does not serve the time in the penalty bench area.

This rule must be observed also during penalty throws.

6.3.7 Time-penalties during penalty-throw shoot-outs;

Special rules regarding penalty-throw shoot-outs are given in rules 4.3.5.b and 4.3.5.c.

6.4 Penalty Throw

6.4.1 Reason for penalty throws;

A penalty throw may be awarded for infringement of rule 5.1.19.

6.4.2 The offending team's handling of the ball;

The team committing the offence must drop the ball to the bottom of the pool. Failure to do this may be interpreted as provocative behaviour or as an attempt to slow down the opposing team's play, and qualify for a direct time-penalty or at a minimum a warning. (C.f. rules 5.1.1 and 5.1.11)

6.4.3 Time for penalty-throws;

A penalty-throw is carried out within effective playing time and, if necessary, the playing time must be extended in order to complete the penalty-throw.

6.4.4 Execution of penalty throws;

- 6.4.4.a The penalty throw is carried out by one player from each team in front of the offending team's goal.
- 6.4.4.b Neither player may be a player serving a time-penalty, nor may it be an expelled player.
- 6.4.4.c The teams choose their own players to carry out the penalty throw. The other players shall be outside the playing area during the penalty throw. They may lie in the entrance lane.
- 6.4.4.d The attacker shall start from the centre of the playing area.



- 6.4.4.e A water referee gives the ball to the attacker.
- 6.4.4.f The goal defender shall be above his/her own goal and may not be more than 2 m away from the pool edge at kick-off from the water surface.
- 6.4.4.g The start signal is given by the deck referee. Signal as for starting play; a long continuous sound.
- 6.4.4.h The goal defender may not attack the attacker before both have dived.
- 6.4.4.i The attacker has 45 seconds to make a goal.
- 6.4.4.j When the goal defender has dived, he/she must be within reach of the goal the whole time. This means that the goal defender may choose any position (sitting upright, lying flat, etc.) but must at all time be able to touch the goal if stretching an arm/leg, without moving body position.
The goal defender may not go away from the goal voluntarily, if he/she is pulled away from the goal by the attacker he/she must swim back to the goal when he/she is no longer held.
- 6.4.4.k The goal defender is not allowed to bring the attacker to the surface, it must be stressed that it is the ball that should be brought to the surface.
- 6.4.4.l Both the attacker and the defender may repeatedly emerge/submerge during the penalty-throw.
- 6.4.4.m The referees must not inform the teams of the remaining time of the 45 seconds. The teams may inform their players from their own half of the playing area.

6.4.5 The penalty throw is finished:

- 6.4.5.a When the attacker succeeds in scoring a goal.
- 6.4.5.b When the goal defender succeeds in obtaining the ball and is controlling it above the surface of the water.
- 6.4.5.c When the play is stopped due to a rule infringement from either player. (C.f. rules 6.4.6 and 6.4.7)
- 6.4.5.d When 45 seconds have elapsed without a goal.

6.4.6 Incorrect behaviour by the defender;

If the penalty throw is interrupted by incorrect behaviour of the defending team, another penalty throw shall be given.

The player causing this has to leave the water immediately and carry out a 2 minutes time penalty after the completion of the penalty throw.

The time for the time penalty start when normal play is started, after the completion of the penalty throw.



6.4.7 Incorrect behaviour by the attacker;

If the penalty throw is interrupted by incorrect behaviour by the attacking team, the game is started as normal start of periods, (c.f. rule 4.1.1.)

6.4.8 Penalty-throw shoot-out;

Special rules regarding penalty-throw shoot-outs are given in rules 4.3.5.b and 4.3.5.c.

6.5 Advantage Rule and Delayed Call

Use of both rule 6.5.1 and 6.5.2 will make the game more fluent. On the other hand, it might also frustrate a law-abiding team and encourage a law-infringing team, as they often believe that the referees do not see the infringements. Referees should therefore be aware of the general mood in the match, and consider use of warnings and free throws instead of using the advantage rule and delayed call.

Neither the advantage rule nor the delayed call shall be used if the infringement should cause a player to be expelled (C.f. rules 3.1.6.a or 3.1.6.b).

6.5.1 Advantage rule;

If at any time during the play the referees decide that a rule infringement does not affect the advantage held by the team in possession, play may be allowed to continue as if the offence had not occurred. This is termed as “playing the advantage rule”.

If the infringement is of a repetitive character, it is recommended not to use the advantage rule.

If the infringement is of a violent character, the advantage rule should not be used.

6.5.2 Delayed call;

When a referee considers that a rule infringement might not affect the advantage held by the offended team, the referee may allow the play to continue for a short while, to see how the situation develops. If the offended team is not able to gain from the situation, the call should be made, and the warning/free throw/time-penalty/penalty throw should be awarded.

This is especially applicable in, but not limited to, the following situations;

- The defending team uses undue tricks to defend the goal and the referee waits to check if a goal nevertheless is scored.



7 Organisation

7.1.1 Responsibility for playing area;

The organising club or association is responsible for ensuring that the playing area, goal and ball all conform to the rules.

7.1.2 Responsibility for rule changes in a given championship;

The organising club or association is responsible for notification of any rule changes applicable at the championship. For World or Zone Championships, changes must be accepted by CMAS beforehand.

7.1.3 Responsibility for personnel;

The organising club or association is responsible for supplying personnel for the match protocols table, and all accessories needed to keep the match protocol.

7.1.4 Responsibility for balls;

The organising club or association is responsible for providing at least one ball, for both men's and women's matches, that fulfil the requirements. They are also responsible for providing nets or buckets for all match balls.

7.1.5 Responsibility for equipment for referees;

The organising club or association is responsible for providing all the compressed air units for the underwater referees. The compressed air units should be suitable for the speedy movements needed to follow the play in the pool, i.e. not being attached to large vests with water-trapping pockets, etc.

Regulators should be suitable for working in all positions, as referees often will be on their backs, up side down, etc.

The organising club is responsible for providing weight belts with possibilities of easily obtaining a large variety of weights.

7.1.6 The players play at their own risk.

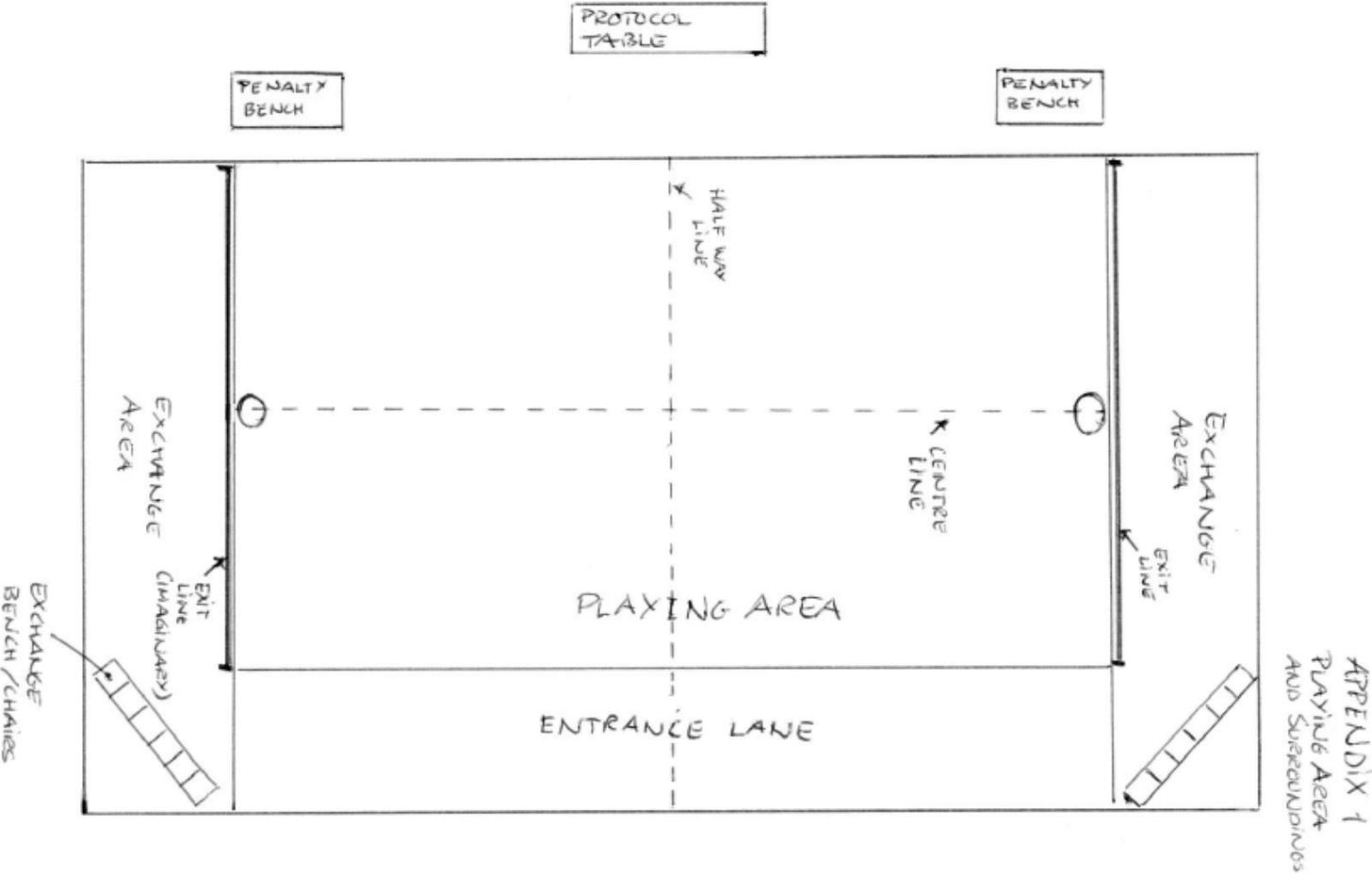
With five Appendices.

THE DEFINITIVE TEXT OF THESE RULES IS THE ENGLISH VERSION.



PLAYING AREA

APPENDIX 1





Appendix 2

Goal

Pos.	No.	Description	Material
8	3	nut M 10	stainless
7	3	stud bolt, M 10 x 25	stainless
6	1	soft pad	neoprene
5	1	round steel bar, 10 Ø x 1350	stainless
4	16	round steel bar, 10 Ø x 455	stainless
3	1	disc, 320 Ø x 5	stainless
2	1	disc, r = 700, t = 5	rubber
1	1	disc, 320 Ø x 1,5	stainless



Appendix 3

Filling and Handling Instructions for Underwater Rugby Balls

Circumference for women: 490 - 510 mm

Circumference for men: 520 - 540 mm

Negative buoyancy: 1000 - 1250 mm/s

1. Equipment necessary to fill balls:

- 1 football pump – plastic if available
- 1 basketball filler needle (2 mm Ø x 30 mm long)
alternative: Spraying pump, e.g. garden spray (qualified to operate at 3 bar).
A brass tube 2 mm Ø x 30 mm long must be soldered into the spray-jet opening*. Such tubes can be bought in any supermarket for building materials. Or ask at any butcher shop to get their usual liquid-injection pump loaned and connect a hose adapter with the filling needle.
- 1 brass tube 2 mm Ø x 200 mm long*
(* tubes to be rounded on one edge before use)
- 1800 g common salt
- 1 container with 5 litres water heated up to app. 50 °C

2. Filling Procedure:

Completely dissolve the salt before filling it into the spraying pump. During filling operation ball must be put into cold water to maintain plastic shell elasticity.

Insert (soaped) filling needle carefully into ball valve. Press out all remaining air. Fill football pump with salt water and press into ball. Repeat process until circumference has reached 570 mm. This fatiguing procedure is not necessary when applying the "alternatives". After 24 hours insert one end luted 200 mm tube (ball valve down). Push through and allow remainder of air to escape. Also drain saltwater until circumference of 520 - 540 mm is reached. "Gurgling" must not be heard any more!
A filled ball weighs 3000 g ± 20 g.



3. Surface Treatment – to improve grip:

Rub the dry surface with emery paper 600 until no shine is visible when held against sun. Carefully cut away all fringes.

Attention: Use of more coarse grained emery paper renders the ball unserviceable!

The pentagons faded due to rubbing can be restored by using EDDING 800 waterproof crayon. Ball will be ready for use after a drying time of 12 hours.

4. Handling and Care:

To maintain its roundness the ball must be hanged up in a net! From time to time or before start of the seasonal competitions ball must be thoroughly cleaned (with soap or similar). Repainting of pentagons also could be advisable after a longer period of use.



APPENDIX 5

Player incident report, Under Water Rugby

To the Federation of the _____ national under water rugby team.

In the tournament _____

Date: _____

the player _____

was expelled during a match between

_____ and _____.

The player was expelled by rule 3.1.6.a, “Unsporting or violent behaviour”;

- ◇ Violent behaviour
- ◇ Other (provocative, threatening, etc.)

Further information (if required)

The player was/was not further expelled **for more than one match /** from the tournament.

- ◇ The penalty awarded is considered proportionate, and no further action is asked **for this incident.**
- ◇ The chief referee of the tournament asks **the national federation of the player** to take appropriate action to prevent future repetition.

Regards

Chief referee