

NZCPA Rules, Released April 1999

DEFINITION

Canoe Polo is a competitive game played by two teams of five players each. The object of each team is to score a goal by throwing the ball into the opponents' goal and to prevent the opponents from securing the ball and scoring a goal. The ball may be passed, thrown, pushed, or tapped in any direction, subject to the restrictions laid down in the following rules and conditions.

CONDITIONS FOR PLAY

The following conditions must be met for a game of polo to commence, and for the game to continue.

PLAYING AREA, EQUIPMENT AND OFFICIALS

1. PLAYING AREA:

The Playing-Area (court) shall have:

- rectangular shape 35 metres by 20 metres
- still water at least 90cm deep
- unobstructed height of at least 7 metres above the playing area
- surround of unobstructed water for 1 metre at sidelines and 5 metres at ends
- a designated substitute area behind the goalline at least 3 metres away from the goal or outside the playing area near the goalline
- adequate lighting (light units must not hinder vision)
- clear walkways on each side for referees.

Allowances for Playing Area:

minimum length is 25 metres and maximum 50 metres

length to width ratio of 3 to 2 where possible

minimum unobstructed height of 3 metres and minimum ceiling height of 5 metres.

2. BOUNDARIES AND MARKERS:

The longer boundaries are referred to as the Side-lines.

The shorter boundaries are referred to as the Goal-lines.

Markers indicating the Goal-lines, Half-Way-line and points six (6) metres from each

Goal-line are to be placed along the Side-lines and be clearly visible to both

Referees and players.

The Side-lines are to be indicated by some physical boundary (such as a floating rope).

Each Goal-line is the imaginary line indicated by the Goal-line markers at that end.

3. GOALS:

The Goals will:

consist of open frames one (1) metres high by one and a half (1.5) metres wide (measured internally) hung vertically
be located over the centre of each Goal-Line with their lower inside edge two (2) metres above the surface of the water
have nets which allow the ball to pass freely through the goal frame but indicate clearly that a goal has been scored

- be of a colour that stands out from the background
- be made of a material no more than 5 cm in width
- be held in such a way that they are prevented from swinging
- have supports and nets that do not interfere with any player defending or manoeuvring around the goal area, or with the flight of the ball in the area of play

4. THE BALL:

The ball should:

- be an official waterpolo ball
- have a mass of 400gms to 500gms
- be correctly inflated to 68.5cm to 71cm circumference
- be in good condition.

5. GAME OFFICIALS:

a first referee

- is responsible for the overall control of the game
- in the event of a problem or disagreement, makes the final decision.

a second referee

- is also responsible for the overall control of the game.

a time keeper/s

- records the total playing time
- stops and restarts Game Clock for time-outs
- signals the end of each period of playing time
- times player(s) suspensions and indicates when the period of suspension is completed.

a scorekeeper/s

- keeps accurate records of teams and full details of the play including:
- team lists of players and substitutes
- list of officials
- goals scored, scoring player, time scored
- player(s) suspended and time of incident.

6. TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT:

The following technical equipment shall be provided by the home team:

a Game Clock

- for timing periods of play and intervals between them
- controlled by the Timekeeper
- clearly visible to teams, Officials and spectators.

an official scoresheet

- to be completed by the Scorekeeper.

a scoreboard

- indicating the points scored by each team
- controlled by a Timekeeper or Assistant Scorekeeper
- clearly visible to teams, Officials and spectators.

TEAMS AND THEIR EQUIPMENT

7. TEAMS:

Each team shall:

- consist of a maximum of 8 players including 3 substitutes
- be allowed a further 2 reserves for tournaments
- have a Captain as the representative of the team, who may courteously address an Official on matters of interpretation or to obtain essential information
- be allowed a Coach and an Assistant Coach.

have players with:

- kayaks of the same colour
- helmets of the same colour
- outermost body covering of the same colour distinct from that of the opposition

(the home team, or at a tournament the first named team on the programme, is responsible for ensuring the distinction.)

- individual identification by number
- at least 20cm high on the back
- at least 7.5 cm high on the front
- at least 7.5 cm high on each side of the helmet
- no number duplicate with that of a teammate
- have two sets of uniforms for a tournament; one light, one dark
- have no less than two players on the court during playing time else the game will end with a forfeit by the team
- have no more than five players (less the number of players suspended at the time) on the court during playing time
- have no more than eight players in total on the court and in the substitute area at any one time during the game
- be allowed to substitute players at any time subject to the Rules.

8. KAYAKS:

Polo kayaks must have:

- length not more than 3 metres and not less than 2 metres
- width not more than 60cm and not less than 50cm
- ends in plan, a curve not less than 10cm radius at any point
- bow and stern profiles curve not less than 5cm radius at any point
- padding firmly fixed to the bow and stern impact zones
- minimum dry weight of 7kg.

For full specifications, see separate specifications sheets.

9. PADDLES:

Paddles must:

- be double-bladed and no longer than 220cm
- have blades of no more than 50cm by 25cm in plan with no part of the edge less than 3cm radius in plan or 4mm in thickness
- not have any sharp projections nor any other dangerous features.

10. PERSONAL EQUIPMENT:

All players must wear:

- suitable safety helmets and facemasks
- protecting from the jawline to the rear of the skull from contact with a horizontally held paddle
- body protection (such as a buoyancy vest)
- protecting the body, from the cockpit level to the armpit level, against any impact which may be reasonably anticipated in the course of a game

- no other equipment apart from personal clothing and effects and a spray deck
- no items such as watches or jewellery, and no greasy substances.

11. EXCHANGING EQUIPMENT:

Players may exchange equipment at any time during the game, provided:

- the equipment used in play is not in breach of the rules
- the equipment is collected by the player concerned from their substitutes area.

12. SCRUTINEERING:

Scrutineering:

- is the inspection of players' equipment to standards of safety, fairplay (size), and public relations
- shall be completed by the referees before the commencement of play
- shall be referred to the competition committee on issues over boat design, specifications or modifications

Players' equipment is subject to scrutineering before, during and/or after a game.

A referee must dismiss from the playing area any player whose equipment is in breach of the rules, at the first break in play once aware of the infringement.

RULES OF PLAY

STARTING, FINISHING, SCORING AND WINNING

1. THE WINNER:

The winner of the game is the team scoring the most goals.

2. PLAYING TIME:

Playing Time will be four quarters of 10 minutes (7 minutes minimum) unless extra periods must be played.

Teams will change direction of attack after completion of each period of each half.

Periods of play will be separated with a 3 minute half time break and 1 minute breaks between any other periods of play.

Time-out:

Time-out occurs and the game clock is stopped when an official signals to stop play for ball-out-of-play, infringements, time-outs or held ball. The clock is restarted as play restarts with a throw of the ball. Time-out will only occur

after a goal when specifically signalled by an official, or for Centre Restarts (if applicable).

A Referee's Time-out occurs when a referee signals time-out to suspend play from continuing for reasons including communication with other officials or players, maintaining conditions of play or other situations at their discretion.

A Charged Time-out may be requested by a team and signalled to the referee during any break in play when the ball is at that team's disposal for the restart or before a Referee's Ball, except during the last two minutes of any period of play. Signal 8 applies.

The teams will be allowed 1 minute (30 seconds minimum) before play is to be restarted. Each team shall be allowed two charged time-outs per half.

ICF Variation:

Playing Time may be two halves of 10 minutes. Teams will change direction of attack after completion of each period of play.

3. CHOICE OF END:

If the two teams cannot agree on ends, the captains shall toss for choice of ends in the first half.

4. COMMENCEMENT OF PLAY:

The game is started for each period of play with:

- all players lining up with the back of their kayaks on or behind their own goal line at least 10 seconds before the start-time
- the referee blowing a whistle, then immediately throwing the ball to the point in the centre of the playing area
- only one player from each team attempting to gain possession of the ball.

5. SCORING A GOAL:

A goal is scored when the whole of the ball passes through the plane of the front of the goal frame. Signal 3 applies.

If the ball is prevented from entering the goal by a defender's paddle which enters the goal from behind then a goal is awarded.

If the goal is not rigidly fixed, and moves, the ball must go through the goal frame, not where the goal frame should be.

Any goals scored by a team that is in infringement of the Rules will be disallowed. Signal 4 applies. Where the ball enters the goal before the infringement occurs, the goal is allowed but a foul may still be sanctioned with a suspension.

6. RESTART AFTER GOAL:

After a goal has been scored, play is restarted with a Goal-line Throw from the team who have conceded the goal. Play is not restarted with the referee's whistle unless a Referee's or Charged Time-out has occurred.

Centre Restart Variation (per ICF Rules):

After a goal has been scored, a player from the team conceding the goal will take the restart throw with their body at the centre of the playing area. Play is restarted with the referee's whistle. All other players of both teams must have their boats in their own halves and be relatively stationary at the time of the whistle. The Centre Restart must be taken within five seconds of the Referee's signal.

7. COMPLETION OF PLAY:

The Timekeeper will indicate the end of the period of playing time by the use of a loud signal. The ball is dead at the start of the signal.

If a Goal-Penalty-Shot or Free Shot should be awarded for a foul prior to the signal for completion of play, the shot must be taken before play is to be considered completed.

Signal 2 should be used by the Referee if the Timekeeper's signal needs to be confirmed, or after the period of play is completed following a Goal-Penalty-Shot or Free Shot.

8. TIE-BREAKING:

In the event of a draw at the completion of the normal playing time when a decision is essential, the winner will be the team with the greatest half-time score, or if that was a tie, the team with the first goal scored. Otherwise, the tie may be broken by successive lots of Extra-Time, Sudden Death and/or a Penalty-Shoot-Out as required by Competition Rules.

9. EXTRA TIME:

Extra time shall be up to two sets of two periods of three minutes each.

Sudden death shall be up to four periods of three minutes each, with the team scoring the first goal deemed the winner.

10. PENALTY SHOOT-OUT

The five players from each team on the court at the end of play will take part in the 6 metre penalty-shoot-out.

Any player who is suspended will not take part in the 6 metre penalty-shoot-out and their team will forfeit that shot.

All remaining players from each team will each take goal penalty shots at the same goal, alternating between teams after each shot.

The captains shall toss for choice of first shot.

After each team has completed their entitlement of shots, the team with the greater number of goals will be the winning team.

If the score is still equal then the teams will take alternate shots until, with an equal number of shots, one team has scored more goals.

PLAYER SPECIFICS

11. RELATIONSHIPS:

Possession of the Ball:

A player is in possession of the ball when they are the only player with the ball in hand, or when they are the closest to having the ball in hand while the ball is within their arm's reach but not when receiving a pass.

Control of the Ball:

A player is in control of the ball when in possession of the ball, or when they are the closest player to the ball and within 3 metres beyond arm's reach of the ball. A team is in control of the ball when a player of that team is in control of the ball, when the ball is being passed between teammates, or in a dead ball situation when the ball is at their disposal for the restart.

Team control continues until an opponent secures control of the ball, or until the ball becomes dead.

The Act of Shooting:

A player is in the act of shooting when they have the ball in hand/s or on the paddle and, in the judgement of the referee, they are attempting to shoot the ball at the goal. The act of shooting includes when the ball is drawn back before the shot and continues until the ball leaves the player's hand.

12. DEFENCE OF GOAL:

Goalkeeper:

The one defending player most directly under the goal, and attempting to maintain position within one horizontal metre of the goal frame, is considered to be the goalkeeper at that time. As soon as a team gains control of the ball they cannot have a player qualify as a goalkeeper.

CONDUCT OF PLAY AND ILLEGAL PLAY

13. ILLEGAL PLAY:

A violation is an infraction of the Rules, the penalty for which is the loss of the ball.

A foul is a violation involving illegal-paddle-use, personal contact or unsporting behaviour, penalised according to the provisions of the relevant section of the Rules.

A deliberate foul is a foul which in the opinion of the Referee was committed by a player in disregard of the Rules.

A dangerous foul is a foul involving paddle contact with the opponent or with the ball in the opponent's hand, or contact with the body of an opponent by the impact zone of a kayak.

14. START INFRINGEMENT:

Failure to comply with the limits governing commencement of play is a violation, Signal 1 applies.

15. ENTRY TO THE PLAYING AREA, RE-ENTRY AND SUBSTITUTION:

No more than 5 players from the one team, less the number of players in that team sent off at the time, may be on the playing area at one time.

Substitutes and suspended players must wait behind the goal-line at least 3m away from goal or leave the playing area and pool surrounds.

Infringement is a violation and may incur a sanction when the opposing team have lost any possible advantage. Signal 12 applies.

If the infringement is accidental but influences the play of an opponent or gains advantage for the infringing player, a violation will be called. If the infringement does not influence the play of an opponent nor gains advantage for the infringing player, a violation will not be called.

If the infringement is deliberate, a foul will be called and the player coming onto the playing area may be suspended, and the team plays with one less player on the court than they were legally allowed to play with prior to the offence, for the duration of the suspension. The player going onto the playing area shall be sanctioned. If it is not clear who has to go off the playing area the captain must nominate who is to go off. A Penalty Goal shall be awarded if the infringing player prevented a shot at goal from going to completion.

Substitution:

Substitution is allowed at any time, with the exception of the limits provided in the Rules for substituting a capsized player or a suspended player.

Entry and exit of players for substitution must be at the team's goal-line.

The whole of a player's kayak, body and equipment must leave the playing area before their substitute may begin to enter the playing area with any part of their body or equipment.

16. CAPSIZED PLAYER:

A player who exits their kayak may not interfere with or take any further part in the play and must leave the playing area immediately, with all of their equipment, before re-entry or substitution may take place. Infringement is a violation and incurs a sanction, Signal 12 applies.

A player who has left the playing area other than across their Goal-Line may be substituted only after the next ball-out-of-play or change in possession. Infringement is a violation and incurs a sanction when the opposing team have lost any possible advantage, Signal 12 applies.

17. BALL OUT-OF-BOUNDS:

The ball is caused to go out-of-bounds when any part of the ball touches the line or the vertical plane of the Side-line or Goal-Line, or touches any Overhead-obstacle or the goal supports. The team that was not the last to touch it with their paddle, boat or person is awarded a throw-in as follows:

If a player deliberately causes the ball to go out-of-bounds, by throwing or tapping it onto an opponent's body or equipment or by pushing it out with water or waves, the throw-in shall be awarded to the opponents, even though it was last touched by that team.

Side-line throw: Signal 5 applies.

Where the ball goes out-of bounds over the sideline or by contact with an overhead obstacle, the player taking the throw-in must position their body on the sideline at or opposite the point of exit of the ball.

Goal-line throw: Signal 6 applies.

Where the ball goes out-of-bounds over the Goal Line and an attacking player was last to touch the ball, the throw-in is taken from anywhere along the goal line.

Corner throw: Signal 7 applies.

Where the ball goes out-of-bounds over the Goal Line and a defending player was last to touch the ball, the player taking the throw-in must position their body in the corner of the Playing-area.

A ball which rebounds off the goal frame (not the goal supports) into the playing-area is deemed to remain in play. A ball which rebounds off the goal supports is deemed out-of-bounds over the Goal Line.

If the physical side-line is moved out of position during play then the boundary moves with it. The boundary is where the physical line is, not where it should be.

Non-Fixed Goal Frames: If the ball is in flight or in hand, the goal frame generally determines the boundary. Otherwise it will generally be determined as the imaginary line between the goal line markers.

18. REFEREE'S BALL:

If the Referee needs to stop the game when no infringement has occurred, the game will be restarted with a Free Throw from the team that clearly had control of the ball at the time. If team control was unclear, the game was stopped for Held Ball or double-foul situations, or there is referee indecision, the game will be restarted with a Referee's ball, Signal 9 applies.

Any two opposing players will line up at right angles to the side-line, near to the sideline where the situation occurred, one metre apart. They will place their paddles on the water, but not between the kayaks.

Each player must be on the side nearest their own goal, kayak nose approximately a half-metre from the side-line, with their hands on the deck of the kayak or on their paddle.

All other players must be at least 3m away (body to body) from the opponent involved in the Referee's ball.

The Referee will throw the ball on the water between the two players and they will make an attempt for the ball with their hands. The referee shall not blow their whistle to restart play. Play restarts as the referee throws the ball and players may then begin to move.

The players must not contact the ball before it hits the water, and both players MUST make an attempt for the ball. A player cannot wait for the opponent to gain possession and then hand-tackle the opponent. Infringement is a violation and may incur a sanction, Signal 12 applies.

A Held Ball shall be declared when two or more players of opposing teams have one or more hands firmly on the ball so that neither player could gain possession without undue roughness, and is declared when, after sharing the ball in hand, one player has failed in an attempt to gain possession.

19. GOALKEEPER INFRINGEMENT:

A violation shall be called if an attacking player is deemed responsible for moving or unbalancing the goalkeeper either directly or through contact with another player. Signal 11 applies.

1. If the goal-keeper has possession of the ball, or is in control of the ball, a violation shall not be called.

2. If an attacker moves the goalkeeper by pushing a defender into the goalkeeper, a violation shall be called. If the defender fails to use any

opportunity to avoid contact with the goal-keeper after being pushed, a violation shall not be called.

3. If an attacker whose original speed and direction would not have lead to contact with the goalkeeper, is pushed or turned into contact with the goalkeeper by another defender, then a violation shall not be called. If the attacker does not have possession of the ball and, after being pushed or turned towards the goalkeeper, fails to use any opportunity to avoid contact , a violation will be called.

A violation shall be called if an attacking player is deemed responsible for preventing a defender from taking up position as goalkeeper such as by jostling the defender or by positioning themselves in the area under the goal.

20. PLAYING THE BALL:

The ball may be played with either hands or the paddle and may be put, thrown, passed, tapped, pushed, pulled, flicked or blocked in any way that does not endanger, or cause illegal-paddle-use or personal contact with an opponent.

Illegal-paddle-use occurs when a player uses their paddle in a way that endangers or contacts an opponent. Infringement is a foul and may incur a sanction, Signal 13 applies.

Illegal-paddle-use includes:

- contacting an opponent's person with the paddle
- contacting the ball with the paddle when the ball is in the hand of an opponent
- placing a paddle within an opponent's arm's reach in the direction that the opponent is attempting to throw, catch or play the ball with their hand/s.
- striking with the paddle (like a baseball strike)
- throwing a paddle
- playing the opponents paddle when not attempting to play the ball
- any other use of the paddle that endangers a player.

5-seconds Rule:

A player must dispose of the ball within 5 seconds of gaining possession, either by passing it to another player or by throwing it beyond arm's reach horizontally. Infringement is a violation and may incur a sanction, Signal 12 applies.

Progressing with the ball:

To progress with the ball in excess of the following limits is a violation and incurs a sanction, Signal 12 applies.

A player may dribble the ball, by putting the ball on the water and paddling to

collect the ball, providing the ball travels beyond arm's reach within any 5 second period of play.

A player may progress by paddling with the ball in hand, but not on the deck or spraydeck nor carried in any other way such as under the arm.

A player collecting the ball onto the deck or spraydeck may complete the current paddle stroke, but must not allow the ball to rest there when they take their next stroke. A combination of a turning and a power stroke counts as one paddle stroke provided the paddle is not lifted from the water.

A player, having completed paddling, may drift with the ball in possession.

21. PERSONAL CONTACT:

To contact an opponent's body or equipment in excess of the following limits is a foul. Infringement may incur a sanction.

Hand Tackle:

A player may hand-tackle an opponent who is in possession of the ball by pushing the opponent's side or upper arm with an open hand.

The contact may only be with the opponent's side or upper arm including the shoulder or shoulder blade, and the tackle must not endanger the opponent by pushing the opponent so that their head or body is likely to contact the side of the pool. Infringement is a foul and may incur a sanction, Signal 11 applies

Kayak Tackle:

A player may kayak-tackle an opponent who is in control of the ball by using their kayak to push the kayak of the opponent.

The tackler must not cause contact between an impact zone of their kayak and the opponent's body, cause the kayak to travel over the opponent's body, nor have the potential to break the opponent's kayak on impact. The opponent's arm is not considered part of the body.

Obstruction:

Obstruction occurs when the progress of a player is impeded by contact with the kayak of an opponent.

A player may screen an opponent who does not control the ball by attempting to maintain a stationary position to obstruct the opponent.

A player may obstruct an opponent who is in control of the ball.

A player in control of the ball and attempting to gain possession may obstruct an opponent.

Jostling:

A player may jostle an opponent by using the kayak in an attempt to turn the

opponent's kayak when the opponent is positioned at the attacking end with their body in the playing area between the six metre line and the goal-line.

Jostling does not include directly pushing an opponent out of position, pushing or moving to obstruct an opponent who has their body outside the playing area, moving to obstruct an opponent competing for the ball except where the ball is more closely contested or guarded one of their teammates, or any boat contact outside the six-metre area. Infringement is a foul and may incur a sanction, Signal 10 (blocking) or Signal 11 (charging) applies according to the nature of the contact

Charging is a foul which occurs when a player illegally kayak-tackles an opponent, and infringement may incur a sanction, Signal 11 applies. Charging does not include a player in possession of the ball who has stopped paddling, unless the contact is deemed a violation under the provisions of moving the goalkeeper.

A player attempting to make their way by paddling forcibly into or over an opponent in their path is charging.

Blocking is a foul which occurs when a player illegally obstructs an opponent, and infringement may incur a sanction, Signal 10 applies. Blocking includes obstructing a player from taking up position as goalkeeper, and moving while trying to screen except where it can be considered as jostling.

Use of Hands:

Holding occurs when a player restricts the movement of an opponent, or gains support or propulsion, by placing their hand, ball in hand, arm, body, or paddle in contact with the kayak or body of an opponent, or when a player uses for support or propulsion, or moves out of place, any playing area equipment. Infringement is a foul and may incur a sanction, Signal 10 applies.

Illegal use of hands occurs when a player, while attempting to play the ball, contacts the arms or body of an opponent who has the ball in hand. Infringement is a foul and may incur a sanction, Signal 10 applies.

Where a player can gain hold of the ball before contact occurs, a held ball shall be called. If the player loses grip of the ball and takes hold of the opponent, holding shall be called.

22. UNSPORTING BEHAVIOUR:

Unsporting behaviour occurs when a player behaves in a way that is detrimental to the conduct of the game or brings the game into disrepute, at the discretion of the referee. Infringement incurs a sanction, Signal 14 applies.

Unsporting behaviour includes, but is not limited to:
any infringement committed by a player during a break in play

- hindering a player's attempt at righting themselves after capsizing where the player does not have the ball in hand, or attempting another tackle before allowing a capsized player to get their head and shoulders above water where the player has the ball in hand
- interference with the equipment of an opponent such as holding or moving another player's paddle out of their reach, or deliberately preventing the player from regaining possession of the paddle
- use of deliberate delaying tactics such as throwing the ball away, or deliberately obstructing the opposition, to delay a quick restart after an infringement
- a player showing dissent, or disrespectfully addressing a official
- baiting an opponent or obstructing their vision with hands or paddle near their eyes
- retaliation
- foul or abusive language or gestures
- deliberately throwing the ball at an opponent.

23. ADVANTAGE:

Advantage occurs when the referees allow play to continue after an infringement and the team that would have received the sanction is benefited by play continuing.

The Referee should recognise the illegal-play by giving the play-on signal, signal 15, and if necessary saying 'play-on'.

Advantage can be played at the discretion of the referees, but advantage can not be played if a referee has blown the whistle. If the ball is already in flight when the Referee blows the whistle for an infringement, the flight is allowed to go to completion and if the ball, either directly or by deflection, enters the goal to the advantage of the team that would receive the sanction, the goal is allowed.

The play-on signal should also be used if play should continue when players incorrectly perceive play has or should be stopped.

SANCTION AND RESTARTS

24. SANCTIONS:

The sanctions available to the Referee are Free Throws, Free Shots, Goal-Penalty-Shots, Warnings, and Suspensions. The Referees will impose these sanctions individually or in combinations according to the provisions in the Rules.

The Referees must impose a sanction for every infringement for which they have not allowed advantage.

Warning: Green Card applies

A warning may be given in addition to another sanction to warn players that further fouls of a given nature are likely to result in a suspension. Warnings

would generally be issued for dangerous play, repeated or deliberate fouls and disputing a referee's decision.

Goal Penalty Shot: Signal 18 applies.

A Goal-Penalty-Shot is a shot at goal from the 6 metre line without a goalkeeper (see Rule 26).

A Goal-Penalty-Shot will be awarded for a deliberate and/or dangerous foul on a player in the 6m area clearly in the act of shooting, or for a foul on a player in any position passing or positioning for an "otherwise undefended" goal. The goal is "otherwise undefended" when no opponent other than the player committing the foul is in a position to defend the attack at goal.

Free-Shot: Signal 17 applies.

A Free-Shot allows the restarting throw to be a shot directly at goal.

A Free-Shot will be awarded for an infringement where a player is fouled in possession or "otherwise in control of the ball", or in the act of catching or shooting the ball, except where a Goal-Penalty-Shot must be awarded.

A player is "otherwise in control of the ball" when, apart from the player committing the foul, they were the closest to the ball.

Free-Throw: Signal 16 applies.

A Free-Throw requires that the restarting throw is not direct at goal.

A Free-Throw will be awarded for a violation or a foul on a player who is not in possession of the ball or who is passing the ball and a Goal-Penalty-Shot or Free-Shot has not been awarded.

Suspensions: Signal 19 applies.

The Referees may suspend players from play. No replacement by a substitute is allowed during the period of suspension.

Two-minute suspension: Yellow Card applies

A player receiving a yellow card is suspended from play and must retire to the substitute zone without delay for a total of two minutes of playing time.

Suspensions incomplete at the end of a period of play will carry over into the next period of play for completion.

A two-minute suspension could be warranted for a repeat of a foul for which a player has already been warned, a deliberate or dangerous foul, repeated or continuous disputing of Referee decision, retaliation, foul or abusive language or gestures, or significant unsporting behaviour.

Full Suspension: Red Card applies

A player receiving a red card is suspended from play for the rest of the game and must retire via the substitute area without delay.

A full suspension could be warranted for disputing or disregarding a two-minute suspension, a personal attack on a player, repeated or continuous foul or abusive language, or flagrant unsporting behaviour.

25. TAKING THROWS:

A player taking any restart throw, except a Goal-Penalty-Shot (Rule 26) or a Centre Restart (Rule 6), must be relatively stationary and must hold the ball clearly above their head before taking the throw. This indicates to all players and officials that the restart is being taken. Failure to comply is a violation, Signal 12 applies.

The ball is not back in play until it has travelled at least one metre horizontally beyond arm's reach of the restarting player or changed possession to one of their teammates.

The restart throw must be taken within five seconds of a player being in possession of the ball and in position to take the throw, and the player taking the restart may not play the ball again until the ball is back in play. Infringement is a violation, Signal 12 applies. Any intervening dropping or fumbling of the ball is disregarded, providing a legal restart throw is taken within 5 seconds.

For all restart throws, including Goal Penalty Shots and Centre Restarts, no opponent may contact the restarting player's body, kayak or equipment, or attempt to be playing the ball until the ball is back in play. A player must be allowed to take up their position to take a restart throw. Infringement is a foul, Signal 12 (14) applies.

For all restart throws, except a Free-Shot or a Goal-Penalty-Shot, a player must not attempt to shoot at goal until the ball is back in play. Infringement is a violation, Signal 12 applies.

A Free-Throw may be taken from the position at which the infringement occurred, where the ball was at the time of the infringement, or where the ball lands if in flight at the time of the infringement, or further back, by choice of the team receiving the throw.

A Free-Shot must be taken from the position of the ball at the time of the foul, or may be taken as a Free-Throw from further back.

26. TAKING A GOAL-PENALTY-SHOT:

The shooting player takes a stationary position with their body on the six metre line and the ball in hand. Any player may take the goal-penalty shot. All other players must be behind the 6m line and at least 3m away from the shooter. The defenders shall be allowed the positions closest to the shooter.

On the Referee's whistle general play shall resume. The Goal-Penalty-Shot must be taken within five seconds of the Referee's signal.

The shooting player must attempt a shot at goal and may not replay the ball until it has touched the Goal Frame or another player. Failure to comply is a violation. Signal 12 applies.

Any infringement by a defender will result in the Goal-Penalty-Shot being retaken if unsuccessful or the goal awarded if successful.

Any infringement by an attacker will result in a Free Throw to the other team, and the goal if successful will be disallowed.

27. REFEREE SIGNALS:

The Referee shall indicate a situation (violation, foul, goal etc.) by a blow on the whistle and giving the appropriate hand signals.

Where a Free-Throw or Free-Shot is awarded the Referee will indicate the direction and type of award (Free-Throw or Free-Shot) with one arm/hand, and indicate the infringement type (Illegal-tackle etc.) with the other arm/hand.

If necessary, the Referee should momentarily point to the place where the throw is to be taken, using the arm that was indicating the offence, while maintaining the free-shot/free-throw indication with the other hand.

ADVICE TO REFEREES:

Principles of the Rules:

Referees and players must understand the principles behind the development and application of the Rules. These principles are:

1/ Definition:

Boundaries and Limits must be set which define the game of Canoe Polo, but do not unnecessarily restrict players from natural sequences of play.

2/ Safety:

Limits must be set on the degree of physical contact involved, maintaining the safety of players.

3/ Fair Play:

Limits must be set to allow players reasonable freedom of movement and to reduce frustration from being denied involvement in play.

4/ Spectacle:

The Rules must not unnecessarily eliminate the spectacle from the game, maintaining the enjoyment and attraction to spectators and all parties involved.

5/ Referee Ability:

The Rules must allow the game to be refereed at all levels with consistency but without the need for expensive equipment such as photographic replays.

Role of the Referee:

Efficient refereeing will do much to raise the whole standard of the game at all levels by training players to observe the Rules. A referee should therefore have a thorough understanding of the Rules.

A referee should help in the enjoyment of the game endeavouring to interpret the Rules so that each and every game is played in the right spirit. There are four paramount considerations:

- 1) the referees must obtain and retain control of a game.
- 2) the referees must never allow an advantage to be gained by a breach of the Rules.
- 3) the whistle must be used as sparingly as possible.
- 4) the two referees should cooperate to ensure consistency of application, interpretation, and effectiveness of the Rules.

It is a mistaken idea that it is the duty of a referee to penalise every breach of the Rules, as this may cause undue delay and irritation. When no advantage results to the infringing team, it is unnecessary to penalise minor infringements. Penalties will have greater significance if referees restrict their use as much as possible to the more serious breaches of the Rules such as fouls. However a referee should never be over lenient, and play contrary to the spirit of the Rules must be severely reprimanded in the interests of the players and the game itself.

As a referee impresses on the players that the Rules will be enforced, it will generally be found that rough and dangerous play will cease. A game that is let out of hand will be difficult to pull back into control. Players should be given the impression that if they try to cooperate, the referees will interrupt the flow of the game only when it is essential for its fair and proper conduct.

Referees should see themselves as judges of the Rules rather than enforcers of the Rules, primarily deciding matters between the teams and players, rather than enforcing rules on the players. Where possible referees should anticipate conflict and officiate to resolve it without the need for appeal by the players.

Referees must maintain a calm and impersonal attitude to the officiating games in an unbiased and impartial manner.

Dress:

The referees should wear:

- reasonable footwear
- back or black/white striped shirt
- black shorts or trousers

Duties of Referees:

The Referees shall have full control of the game, from entry of teams onto the playing area until they leave the playing area after completion of the game. In this regard they shall enforce the Rules, and ensure the conditions for play are maintained during the game, and ensure competition rules are upheld as they apply to the game.

Referees controlling a game are empowered to order spectators, coaches and other persons not actually playing in the game to leave the competition area.

Positioning of the Referees:

Referees should cooperate to ensure reasonable attention is given to all players on the playing area, sharing and exchanging responsibilities as play moves throughout the playing area, and maintaining correct position to see all breaches of the Rules.

Referees should adopt a 'Leading/ Trailing' system of control with each referee moving along the sideline generally keeping play to their left (as they view the playing area). In this way referees should move no further than 2/3 of the way from their right hand goal line.

The Leading Referee should keep up with play as it progresses up the playing area, and as play enters the six-metre area should position themselves on the Goal Line to ensure correct decision on goals and out of bounds.

The Trailing Referee should follow play as it progresses up the playing area.

The Referee closest to the ball should focus on controlling the on-the-ball while the other Referee should be able to observe all players on the playing area observing for any illegal off-the-ball play. When play is within the six-metre area, the Leading Referee (on the goal line) would generally be observing the play under and around the goal, while the Trailing Referee would be observing play on-the-ball. If the play on-the-ball moves into the corner closest to the Leading Referee, the referees would temporarily exchange their focus of attention. Often, while the Leading Referee is in the position to make decision on 'when' the ball goes out-of-bounds over the Goal

Line, they must look to the Trailing Referee for a decision on 'who' put the ball out.

Referee Coordination:

When signalling an infringement each referee should check with the other that they are in agreement. If different signals have been given, each referee should be prepared to change their call if they are not totally certain of the call, or where the other referee is signalling the earlier offence.

Where any referee changes the direction of the signal after having given a positive signal to which players have responded, the referees must ensure the teams have time to correct their consequent positioning before a restart.

If at any time the two referees continue to disagree, they should stop the game and consult to resolve the situation.

Communication:

The whistle should always be blown decisively and loudly enough for all players to hear it, and signals should be maintained long enough to ensure that all players are aware of the decision.

Verbal instructions must be kept to a minimum. The signals should provide sufficient explanation, but where necessary a further demonstration may be given.

The whistle is not blown for the taking of restarts. The whistle signals play to stop, while the restart is signalled by a player holding the ball up clearly above their head.

A triple whistle blast should be used to attract players attention.

Advantage:

Referees must not play advantage once the whistle has blown, except for the situation where the ball is in flight at the time the whistle is blown. In this case the flight is allowed to go to completion and if a goal is scored to the advantage of the team that would receive the restart, the goal will be allowed.

Where a player shoots after the whistle has been blown, advantage can not be played. The referee should avoid this situation by allowing a player attempting to shoot ample opportunity to complete their shot even after the foul has occurred. A Free Shot can then be awarded if the shot is unsuccessful.

In the case of dangerous play, playing advantage should be avoided, unless stopping play significantly disadvantages the fouled team.

Advantage should be played for up to one pass after the violation. If, after a foul, the ensuing result is a bad pass or shot that is not favourable to the fouled team, play can then be stopped and taken back to a restart.

If a foul warrants a warning or a suspension, the referees should allow play to continue until all advantage is lost, then stop play and proceed with sanctions.

COMMENTS ON THE RULES

Rules referring to a specific situation override those rules referring to more general play, but in the case of that specific situation only.

Commencement of Play:

If a team fails to position themselves within the 10 seconds of being signalled to do so, the referee should throw the ball to the centre of the pool, blow the whistle and signal the start infringement.

While only one player from each team may attempt to gain possession of the ball, any accompanying player must withdraw before becoming in a position that intimidates or interferes with the contesting opponent. Once the initial contest for possession has taken place, other players may move in to support or contest the ball.

Deliberate Foul

A defender who delays a restart or does not attempt to allow the required free space of one metre beyond arm's reach of a player taking a restart throw is committing a Deliberate Foul. A Goal Penalty Shot will be awarded when a defender commits a Deliberate Foul on a player positioning for or taking a Free Shot.

Restarts:

When a player has the ball in their hand and their team is penalised, the player is only entitled to place the ball on either side of the kayak or hand it to the opposing player. If the ball was on the water at the time of the infringement, it must not be moved except to give it to an opposition player ready to take the free throw. If the team penalised have kayaks restricting the taking of the throw, the ball must be given to the opposition or they must move their kayaks away from the ball.

A player taking a Restart Throw is allowed clear space of one metre horizontally beyond arm's reach in which to take the throw. Defending players are not required to physically retire that distance, but must not defend or interfere with the restarting player in any way until the ball has travelled the one metre beyond arm's reach (or to another player). The Restarting player must also demonstrate clearly that the ball is back in play and contestable again, by holding the ball above their head and making a clear pass at least one metre beyond their arm's reach (or to a teammate).

The Goalkeeper may attempt to play the ball within the one horizontal metre beyond arm's reach, but must not breach the restrictions on illegal-paddle-use applicable to general play.

Illegal Paddle Use:

Many misconceptions have developed with regard to what constitutes illegal-paddle-use. A number of clarifications are therefore required to ensure that referees are not penalising play that is neither dangerous nor against the spirit of the game.

A player may momentarily touch an opponent's kayak with their paddle when attempting for the ball across an opponent's kayak. This does not constitute dangerous play nor illegal holding.

A player may attempt for the ball using their paddle within arm's reach of the opponent, provided that the paddle does not come within arm's reach in the direction that the opponent is attempting to play the ball (including the direction in which the ball is drawn back before a shot). The emphasis here is that the part of the paddle used to play the ball remains out of arm's reach of a player with the ball in hand or attempting to take the ball into hand.

Where a player has the ball in hand, an opponent must not allow their paddle to touch the ball. A player who is using a paddle to block a shot or pass should move it away from the opponent if the opponent comes close enough for the paddle to be within arm's reach. No exception is made for the goalkeeper, who is still able to defend a shot at goal by attempting to play the ball after it has left the shooter's hand.

A player who has the ball in their hand should be entitled to move, but not grab, an opponent's paddle (but not the goalkeeper's) to allow a clear shot, if the paddle is within arm's reach. The movement should be one of pushing the paddle away, rather than that of pulling the paddle down.

Illegal-Kayak-Tackle (Charging):

Continued or forceful contact with the opponent's spraydeck would be considered an illegal-kayak-tackle. This would not include a defender leaning their kayak to allow contact with the spraydeck.

Where two players are competing for control of the ball and the bows of their kayaks are approaching each other's bodies, the player in greater control of the ball before the tackle occurred shall be considered the tackled player. The player less in control shall be considered the tackling player. Greater responsibility for any body contact that occurs should go with the tackling player. Thus, unless they lean into the path of an oncoming tackler or manoeuvre their bow or stern up to contact the tackler's body and hence either forfeit any sanction or are penalised accordingly, the tackled player would not be deemed responsible for the body contact.

Where two players bring their kayaks into contact where neither player is in control of the ball, a player pushing the kayak of an opponent with an impact zone of their kayak will be deemed to be making a kayak-tackle. A player contacting an opponent kayak with the side of their kayak will be deemed to be obstructing. The referee will need to determine which player, if any, should be penalised.

Use of Hands:

If a player's kayak becomes stranded under or on top of another player's kayak, once the ball is no longer in control of either player, they may move apart from each other by using their hands to perform a gentle push on the opponent's kayak.

A player fending off a hand tackle, with their forearm or hand or paddle, is guilty of Illegal-Use-of-Hands or Illegal-Paddle-Use.

Hand Tackle:

A hand-tackle will not be considered dangerous if it is only the opponent's outstretched arms that is likely to contact the side of the pool or if the opponent's head or body is only likely to contact the side of the pool as a result of the tackle.

5-seconds-rule:

Where the ball is contacted by another player, another 5 seconds is allowed for disposal of the ball.

A player who capsizes to the point of the whole of their body and head going under water is considered to have lost possession, if they do not hold onto the ball.

Deviations from ICF and ACF Rules and Interpretations.

NZCPA Interpretation are written in plain text.

ICF and ACF Interpretations are written in **Italics**.

Definitions

Charging **Illegal Kayak Tackle**

Suspensions **Sendoffs**

Full Suspension **Rest of Game Sendoff**

Blocking **Illegal Obstruction**

Screening **Not defined**

Held Ball **Not defined**

Violation **Not defined**

Foul **Not defined**

Possession **Sole Possession**

Deliberate Foul **ACF have broader definition**

Dangerous Foul **ACF have broader definition**

Goal-line Condition 2 (Page 1)

The goal-line should be marked only by markers on the sidelines with no floating line in between.

**ICF require floating goal-line*

*ACF specify it as optional but discourage it.**

Scoresheets Condition 5 (Page 2)

ICF and ACF don't require recording the time goals are scored

Teams Condition 7 (Page 3)

A team may have ten players compete in one game.

A team must have no less than two players on the court during playing time else may forfeit the game.

**ICF impose forfeit if a team is reduced to less than three, while requiring a full five for commencement of play.*

*ACF require four players for commencement**

Paddles Condition 9 (Page 3)

Paddles must be no less than 4mm in thickness

ICF require no less than 5mm in thickness

Facemasks Condition 10 (Page 4)

Facemasks are required

ICF are introducing requirement for facemasks presently

Body protection Condition 10 (Page 4)

ACF have more explicit specifications for body protection (at least 15mm thick continuing to within 1 palm width of each of the cockpit and the armpit)

Scrutineering Condition 12 (Page 4)

ICF and ACF have not defined the purpose of scrutineering

Referees visually scrutineer players except for scrutineering to specification over boat design or modification.

ICF and ACF require more stringent scrutineering to specification of all equipment before each competition.

Playing Time Rule 2 (Page 5)

Play is four quarters of 10 minutes each.

Time Out Rule 2 (Page 5)

Clock stops when whistle is blown, restarted when ball is thrown back into play.

ICF and ACF clock is only stopped at timeout signal by referee (but at late stages of the game this becomes at most infringements)

Restart after Goal Rule 6 (Page 5)

After a goal is scored, play is restarted with a Goal-line Throw.

ICF and ACF retain Centre Restarts.

Illegal substitution Rule 15 (Page 7)

Illegal substitution can be disregarded if inconsequential, or penalised with loss of ball, or if deliberate penalised with suspensions

**ICF make no allowance for accidental illegal substitution and penalise any case with suspensions*

*ACF penalise accidental cases with reduction in players by one until next break in play**

Deliberate putting the ball out of bounds Rule 17 (Page 8)

Deliberate putting the ball out of bounds will be penalised and awarded to opponents

ACF and ICF rules only restrict any player from repeated bouncing out off an opponents boat.

Held Ball Rule 18 (Page 9)

Undefined in ACF or ICF rules, loosely covered through interpretations of other rules but with much inconsistency

Goalkeeper Rule 19 (Page 9)

ICF require the paddle to be up for player to be considered goal keeper

Striking Rule 20 (Page 10)

ICF and ACF have a technical definition of strike that is inconsistent with play

5 seconds rule Rule 20 (Page 10)

**ICF and ACF require the ball is thrown one metre beyond possession but with contradiction*

Rule 16.6.2 contradicts 16.6.1*

Paddling with the ball Rule 20 (Page 10)

ICF nor ACF have explicitly included this as illegal

Kayak Tackle Rule 21 (Page 10), Comments on the Rules (Page 18)

ICF and ACF interpretations labour in detail on the manner in which the kayak tackle happens ie "hard, at 90 degrees, momentary impact"

When two players are competing for control of the ball, and both of their noses of their kayaks are approaching each others bodies, the player most in control of the ball shall be considered the tackled player.

**ICF have not addressed this situation.*

*ACF require a player must maintain control of their own kayak as they secure the ball and avoid boat contact with the body of an opponent who is tackling them**

Jostling Rule 21 (Page 11)

ICF and ACF allow a player to be pushed from their position by up to half a metre at a time

Obstruction Rule 21 (Page 11)

A player attempting to maintain a stationary position may obstruct an opponent

**Neither ICF nor ACF explicitly acknowledge*

1) that a player who is stationary can obstruct without penalty, and as a result,
2) where a player paddles to maintain stationary position while obstructing
*ACF tend to penalise for obstruction rather than penalise the kayak tackle as the first offence **

Illegal use of hands Rule 21 (Page 11)

Undefined in ACF and ICF but loosely covered under interpretation of hand tackle/holding with much inconsistency

Goal Penalty Shots Rule 24 (Page 12)

**ICF award penalty shots for a foul on a player in the 6m area in the act of shooting with much inconsistency and no rider for fouls outside the 6m
ACF include rider for outside the 6m area but only award them in the 6m area for blatant fouls on a player shooting.**

Free Throw/ Free Shot Rule 24 (Page 12)

ACF and ICF currently award: Free Shot for a foul on a player in the act of shooting or for any dangerous play (any contact with an opponent's body)

Suspensions Rule 24 (Page 13)

ACF is more rigid with application of sendoffs with little discretion for referee

Taking a Goal Penalty Shot Rule 26 (Page 14)

**ICF require all other players in the other half
ACF allow teammates to take up positions between the shooter and defenders**

Referees Shirts Rule 28 (Page 16)

ICF require black

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