



New Instruction to Rule 6-5 and Appendix C Officiating in a Shallow Bottom Pool

Taken together, Rule 6-5-2 and Appendix C proscribe a special set of rules for officiating in a shallow bottom pool. The biggest difference is that if a defensive player uses the bottom to impede an offensive player this action is treated as holding (exclusion) rather than impeding, and this is to be called even if the offensive player is holding the ball. The idea behind this tougher punishment is to have it serve as a deterrent to defenders using the bottom to their advantage. Likewise, if an offensive player uses the bottom to their advantage this should be an offensive foul and a turnover.

The biggest dilemma for an official comes when both the offensive and defensive players are using the bottom. This happens most frequently at the Center Forward position and if not dealt with effectively by the official can lead to increased physicality, frustration and inconsistent application of the rules. Depending on what the referee observes at the Center Forward position, he or she has four options: (1) Defensive exclusion, (2) Offensive turnover, (3) No-Call, (4) Double foul (face-off). However, this instruction clarifies that in the special circumstance where it is clear that both the offensive and defensive players are using the bottom, **as soon as the ball is passed into the Center Forward position an ordinary foul should be awarded to the Center Forward.** This serves as warning to the offense that the referee is aware that the Center Forward is using the bottom and simultaneously prevents the offense from using the bottom to gain an unearned advantage, while allowing them to maintain possession of the ball. This also serves as a warning to the defense that the referee is aware that the defender is using the bottom and if that action continues and the offensive player does not use the bottom, the defender will be excluded per Rule 6-5-1.

To summarize, in a shallow bottom pool, when the ball is passed to the Center Forward position there are four possible scenarios:

Situation	Correct Referee Response
Only the defensive player using the bottom	Exclusion foul per Rule 6-5-1
Only the offensive player using the bottom	Offensive foul – Turnover
Neither player using the bottom	Officiate the play according to rules as written
Both players using the bottom*	Ordinary foul awarded to the offense as soon as the ball arrives at the Center Forward Position*

*New Instruction

As always, if you have questions or comments, please direct them to Bob Corb, National Coordinator of Officials. ncaacoordinator@earthlink.net (562) 773-7413.