



Referee Newsletter: October 11, 2019

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You Make a Difference

Player Safety should be all referee's primary responsibility. Taking control of the game from deck decorum to the level of physical play, right from the very start, goes a long way in keeping that responsibility. The level of intensity executed by players needs to be smartly controlled in an acceptable manner, within the spirit of the rules. Hard fouls, overaggressive fouls, and fouls with a violent or malicious intent go beyond ordinary exclusion fouls. Once fouls reach this level they need to be dealt with appropriately and early in the game. Otherwise, game control will get out of hand and player safety becomes an issue.

As a referee it is your responsibility to establish a line of acceptable behavior in and out of the water. Communicate your intentions early in the game and be consistent in your application of the rules. Once the level of behavior and physical play crosses your established line, call what you see setting a high precedent. Don't have second thoughts and fall into the trap of thinking you are the "bad guy." The coaches are the ones that create poor decorum on the pool deck and players intensify the level of physical activity in the water. Your job is to maintain control and use the tools in the rulebook to control the game.

Exclusion fouls are an effective tool for maintaining control. There is no limit on how many should be called nor does the number have to be even between both teams. Players dictate how many will be called and sometimes that number will go over thirty in one game. Your evaluation depends on how timely and correctly you call the exclusion fouls according to the rules as written.

Once physical play reaches the level of hard fouls, overaggressive fouls, and fouls with violent or malicious intent, you are now moving away from the realm of exclusion fouls. Now you are looking at Minor acts of Misconduct (MAMs), Misconducts and Flagrant Misconducts. The "Big Three" puts a whole new meaning for the punishment of behavior in the water. You should never apologize or feel bad for enforcing these rules on behavior that is **not** within the spirit of the rules. You are doing what is expected of your position as a referee, controlling the game keeping player safety in mind.

Minor acts of Misconduct (MAMs) start at lower threshold, a level that doesn't quite reach Misconduct. However, a player receiving his or her second in the same game is excluded for the remainder of the game. Misconducts are game exclusions for obscene language, overaggressive fouls, persistent fouls or disrespect to the referee. Flagrant Misconducts are for violent acts with malicious intent including fighting. Throwing a punch, striking a player, elbowing, kicking or head butting in a violent manner are a few examples. It doesn't matter if contact is made, the key words are, violent, malicious and intent. It's penalty is game exclusion, a dead time penalty throw, substitution (20 second exclusion), ball in play to the offended team and the player missing the next scheduled game. In the case of a CWPA team, it is a two game suspension and in the case of an injury, the player can't participate in a game until the injured player is able to return to play.

The following is a summary of the rules with the appropriate hand signals. Don't award an Exclusion Foul or Misconduct when punches are thrown or violent play ensues, it would be an injustice to the game and your fellow referees.

Rule 7/Exclusion Fouls. Section 14. Minor Acts of Misconduct (MAM)

Art. 1. An exclusion foul with a 20-second period of exclusion will be awarded for **minor acts of misconduct (MAM) that are not sufficient to warrant exclusion for the remainder of the game.** Examples of this type of exclusion foul include a player directing minor comments to a referee, such as "Call the foul," or "Where is the push-off?" or "He's inside the two," or making minor gestures to the referee or making minor comments (minor taunting) or gestures or minor shoving of a member of the opposing team. Art. 6. **The second MAM in the same game is exclusion for the remainder of the game.**



Fig. EE. To signal the exclusion of a player for a Minor Act of Misconduct (MAM). The referee rotates one hand in such a way that it is visible to both the field of play and the score table. This is similar to the signal for a game exclusion (Fig. F) but using only one hand. The referee signals the excluded player's cap number to the field of play and then calls out the cap number of the offending player to the score table.

Rule 7/Exclusion Fouls. Section 13. Misconduct.

Art. 1. To be guilty of misconduct, including the use of **obscene, abusive or threatening language or gestures, persistent foul play, or overaggressive fouls, or to refuse obedience to or show disrespect for a referee** or official. **Persistent foul play refers to play that is unacceptable within the spirit of the rules** and that is likely to bring the game into disrepute. Persistent foul play is entirely different from and unrelated to "persisting in an ordinary foul." **Overaggressive fouls are hard fouls unacceptable within the spirit of the rules,** including deliberate elbowing to the head, face or neck or head-butting an opponent. The use of profanity or obscene language is classified as misconduct. Taunting, baiting or ridiculing an opponent are additional examples of misconduct.



Fig. F. To signal the **exclusion of a player from the remainder of the game** with substitution. The referee signals exclusion in accordance with Fig. D (or Fig. E, if appropriate) and then rotates both hands round one another in such a way that is visible to both the field of play and the score table. The referee signals the excluded player's cap number to the field of play and then calls out the number of the offending player to the score table. The referee also must notify the scorer of this ruling, including the general reason for the game exclusion, such as misconduct, interference with a penalty shot, the entrance of a player not entitled to participate, or an excluded player walking on the deck to the re-entry area.

Rule 7/Exclusion Fouls. Section 15. Flagrant Misconduct, Including Fighting

Art. 1. To commit an act of flagrant misconduct (including playing in a violent manner, fighting, biting, kicking or striking or attempting to kick or strike with malicious intent) against an opponent or official, whether during play or during interval time. This includes a player attempting to punch or kick an opponent, whether or not there is contact with the opponent.



Fig. G

Fig. G. To signal the exclusion of a player for flagrant misconduct. The referee signals exclusion in accordance with Fig. D (or Fig. E, if appropriate) and then crosses the arms down over the abdomen in such a way that this signal is visible to both the field of play and the score table. The referee signals the excluded player's cap number to the field of play and then calls out the number of the offending player to the score table. The referee also must notify the scorer of this ruling of flagrant misconduct for notation on the scoresheet.

Rule 7/Exclusion Fouls. Section 11. Kicking or Striking

Art. 1. To kick or strike an opponent intentionally or make disproportionate movements with that intent.

Art. 2. "possession of the ball is not a decisive factor. if the player makes disproportionate movements in an attempt to kick or strike, even if the player fails to make contact."

Art. 3. One of the most serious acts of striking is elbowing backward, which can result in serious injury to the opponent. Similarly, serious injury can occur when a player intentionally heads back into the face of an opponent who is marking the player closely. In these circumstances, the referee would also be justified in punishing the offense under Rule 7-15 (Flagrant Misconduct) rather than under Rule 7-13.

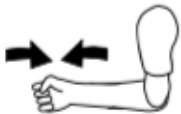


Fig. N. To indicate the exclusion foul of striking an opponent. The referee makes a striking motion with a closed fist starting from a horizontal position.



Fig. M

Fig. M. To indicate the exclusion foul of kicking an opponent. The referee makes a kicking movement.

Rule 8/Penalty Fouls. Section 3. Kicking or Striking Within 5-Meter Area, Flagrant Misconduct or Fighting. For a defending player within the 5-meter area to kick or strike an opponent or for a player at any location in the pool to commit an act of flagrant misconduct or to engage in a fight.

A YouTube video will be available with example clips shortly on the CWPA website Referee Online Education: <https://collegiatewaterpolo.org/cwpa-online-referee-education-series/>