



**NCAA MEN’S AND WOMEN’S WATER POLO PLAYING RULES
INTERPRETATIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS
2024 – 2025**

September 11, 2024

Improper Entry Prior to a Penalty Throw or a Corner Throw.

Rule 7, Section 15, “Entering Field of Play Improperly” (sometimes referred to as “Improper Entry”), addresses an excluded player (or their substitute) who enters the field of play without having received a signal from the exclusion secretary or the referee (early reentry), from a place other than the exclusion area, by jumping or pushing off from the side or wall or a lane line, or by affecting the alignment of the goal.

For an Improper Entry, the player who enters improperly is given an additional personal foul and goes to their exclusion area for up to 20 seconds. If the offending player’s team was in possession of the ball at the time of the entry, a free throw is awarded to the opposing team, and an extra player opportunity ensues. If the offending player’s team was not in possession of the ball at the time of the entry, a penalty shot is awarded to the opposing team with the offending player in the exclusion area.

In the Fall of 2018, an interpretation was issued on the NCAA Advantage to address the application of this rule when a player in the exclusion area briefly and erroneously enters the field of play after a penalty is called. The interpretation stated that this rule is intended to be applied to situations when the ball is in play and that during the time between the calling and the taking of a penalty throw; an excluded player or substitute reentering improperly should be sent back to the exclusion area with no additional penalty. However, if the player reenters improperly once the administration of the penalty throw has commenced – Rule 7, Section 15 applies – and an additional personal foul and a second penalty shot are to be awarded.

Questions have arisen regarding whether this interpretation would also apply if an excluded player briefly and erroneously enters the field of play after a corner throw has been called.

Interpretation:

During the time between the calling and the taking of a corner throw, an excluded player reentering improperly should be sent back to the exclusion area with no additional penalty. However, if the excluded player reenters improperly once the administration of the corner throw has commenced – Rule 7, Section 15 – applies, and an additional personal foul and a penalty shot is to be awarded.

Administration of a penalty throw or a corner throw commences when the referee begins positioning the players prior to the throw.

For questions regarding this interpretation, please contact the NCAA Water Polo Secretary-Rules Editor, David Alberstein – albersteind@gmail.com.