



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

February 17, 2025

Requests to Change Ends after Each Period

A question has arisen as to whether a coach may, after ends have been agreed upon at the pregame meeting, request a change of ends after each period. The short answer is “no.”

NCAA Water Polo Rule 2, Section 2-C states, “If requested by one coach, the teams must change ends and benches after each period (and overtime periods). In this instance, the referees do not change sides during the game. This rule applies to all types of pools (all deep or shallow-deep).”

Rule 4, Section 15, Article 2, in part, states, “if requested by one coach before the start of the game, the teams must change ends and benches after each period.”

Rule 2, Section 5, Article 1 Note, in part, states, “A meeting of captains and referees shall be held before the game to discuss the ground rules, the fingernails rule and to answer any questions. Coaches may attend this meeting with the captains and referees.”

The discussion of ground rules during the pregame meeting, which the coaches may attend, includes a determination of whether either team would like to flip a coin to determine defensive ends during the first period or agree to remain at the ends where each team is warming up. This meeting, or prior to this meeting, is the time for a coach or team captain speaking for the coach to request a change of ends after each period. If one team requests a change of ends after each period, the request must be granted and a coin toss must be conducted to determine ends during the first period. Once initial ends and how often ends will be changed have been determined during the pregame meeting, a coach may not intervene later to overturn that determination.

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