



**NCAA MEN'S AND WOMEN'S WATER POLO PLAYING RULES
INTERPRETATIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS
2026-2027**

September 8, 2026

Direct Substitution by Goalkeeper

Effective with the 2026-2027 NCAA Men's and Women's Water Polo Rules Book, Rule 2, Section 1, Article 1, "Number of Players, Illegal Player," was changed to allow a team to play with seven field players after the beginning of the game. One of the opportunities intended to be provided by the rule change is that, if a team needs to do so, the goalkeeper can be replaced by a field player via direct substitution in the reentry area.

It has been noted, however, that Rule 2, Section 6, Article 1, "Direct (Live-ball Substitution)," states, "If a goalkeeper is substituted under this rule, the substitute shall be required to wear a goalkeeper's cap."

Clarification: The sentence cited above in Rule 2-6-1 remained in the Rules Book as a result of an editorial error. The sentence is not operative and is to be treated as if it had been deleted.

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