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## Welcome

A number of factors led the BCU Polo Committee to the decision to replace the annual Yearbook with a biannual rule book. But broadly speaking the major ones were that the ICF now updates the playing and organisational rules for our sport in January of years ending in an odd number. Also, for up to date information and competition rules the website [canoepolo.org.uk](http://canoepolo.org.uk), is proving a more popular resource for paddlers.

The rule book will appear following the publication of the new ICF rules, so it may be assumed that the next one will appear in May 2015. Until that date this book will form the basis of the rules played at all BCU competitions.

Any minor amendments to rules or interpretations will be communicated via the Polo News, mailing list and published on the website; [canoepolo.org.uk](http://canoepolo.org.uk). It is intended that such interim amends would be kept to an absolute minimum.

The print run has been increased to allow supplies to be available for the full two years, but teams and individuals should be aware that there will be no automatic distribution in 2014. (Look after this book, and make it last!)



Cover photograph: Jack Robson GB U21 Silver Medalist World Champs, Poznan, Poland  
Credit to the WC Organisation

Internal photography supplied by: Glenn Summerbell

**The following advice was inserted in the introduction to the 2011-13 rule book, and while significant advances have been made in consistent application of the rules, it is felt that the information bears repeating.**

Fouls are considered to be deliberate - unless the player makes an attempt to avoid the foul.

Fouls are considered to be dangerous - if significant contact is made illegally with the body or person of an opponent.

As a green card warning is issued for any foul that is deliberate OR dangerous, these definitions have caused a marked rise in the number of green cards issued. The intention of the rule is to encourage players to try harder to not commit fouls, and to try to eliminate the "deliberate" fouls and "dangerous" fouls from the game.

**The global intention here is to reduce the numbers of fouls being committed, rather than to penalise foul after foul.**

In Britain it is fair to say that, many players have still failed to grasp that being awarded a green card gives them the chance to adapt their behaviour, and stop making repeated fouls, without drawing a serious sanction. Many seem to regard a green card as a personal insult.

Club referees are asked to advise and pass on to players that the escalation of cards is avoidable and the Polo Committee will also try to continue and promote and programme of education of players, coaches and referees.

### **SPECIAL NOTE: ICF APPENDIX V: SHOT CLOCK**

At World Championships and some other major ICF competitions a "shot clock" is used. This requires teams to attempt a shot at goal within 60 seconds.

At the time of writing (April 2013) there is an intention to introduce the shot clock at some National events, but cost and technology are proving prohibitive. Teams would also be required to operate the system and they will have to show and take a greater responsibility than is currently usual, for the administration of individual games.

**Any individual who feels they may be able to help with the production or sourcing of a suitable clock system should contact the BCU Canoe Polo Committee.**

International Tournament Organisers can decide at their discretion if they wish to use the shot clock, so teams travelling abroad may find the clocks being used.

For any team or individual who would like a copy of the full ICF rules (including the shot clock appendix), a print friendly version (48 pages) as a PDF will be available for download from the [canoepolo.org.uk](http://canoepolo.org.uk) website. In the mean time anyone who would like more information about the appendix or the ICF rules can contact::

[chief-referee@canoepolo.org.uk](mailto:chief-referee@canoepolo.org.uk)

## **Contents**

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### **Code of Conduct for Referees**

***Voluntary referees are essential to the running of our sport as it currently structured. This code of conduct is indented to help our volunteers operate in a professional manner to the benefit of our sport.***

Referees should at all times devote their entire attention to the game. More specifically they should be:

- Watching the play and not talking to other players / spectators not taking part in the game being played
- Carrying only their refereeing equipment and not coats, drinks bottles etc.

Referees should look like referees at all times.

More specifically they should be:

- Walking up and down following the play and not sitting / leaning
- Dressed appropriately (unless they have just been playing in which case this requirement is relaxed in order to keep things moving)

Referees should take responsibility for keeping their qualifications up to date and arrangement reassessments in good time

Referees should respect the position of authority that they enjoy over the players and exercise their power appropriately

Referees should treat each game as a separate entity and not start with preconceptions about teams or players.

### **General**

1. Referees should officiate games in an unbiased and impartial manner.
2. When playing Referees should respect without question all decisions given by the Referees controlling the game. They should set an example of good sportsmanship for other players to follow.
3. Referees should not publicly criticise the performance and decisions of a Referee officiating a game.

### **Referee Restraint**

4. Keep any verbal instructions to a minimum. If a player requests an explanation of a foul, simply maintain the signal. Do not allow yourself to enter arguments with players, either during or after the game.
5. If players dispute a decision, in general stick with the decision unless the opposite Referee also disagrees. (See section on Send-Off's in reference to continuous/ repeated disputation of decisions).
6. If a goal, goal-penalty or sending off decision is in doubt the Referees should consult. When consulting in a doubtful situation they should be cautious about being influenced by players' reactions as these may be feigns to sway the Referees.

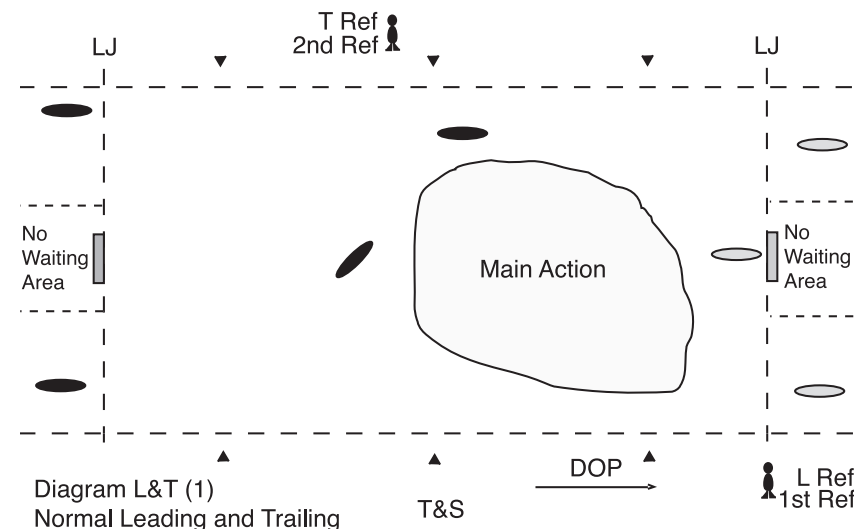
## Duties of Referees

7. During the game the Referees shall have full control of the game, from the entry of teams onto the Playing Area until they leave the Playing Area after completion of the game.  
In this regard, they shall enforce the Game Regulations, and ensure the Competition and Players Personal Equipment are maintained during the game, and shall ensure the competition rules are upheld as they apply to the game.
8. The Referees controlling a game are empowered to order spectators, coaches and other persons not actually playing in the game to leave the competition area.
9. The Referees controlling a game are empowered to bring charges before the BCU Canoe Polo Committee or other appropriate competition committee against persons not actually playing in the game.
10. The First Referee for a game shall ensure the game report sheet is correctly completed including any Send Off Forms.
11. All Referees are required to ensure that if a player is sent off - then a Send Off Form must be completed and sent, either by post or electronically to the Chief Referee. This should ideally be done immediately after the sending off, when events are fresh in the Referee's mind. However, should circumstances make this impossible the form must be completed and dispatched within **7 days of the sending off**.
12. The Chief Referee will maintain a record of all completed sending off forms and will be responsible for tracking and flagging up any patterns of poor behaviour, so that the BCU Polo Committee can consider further disciplinary measures, as it may think fit.

## Referee Coordination

13. The Referee calling an infringement should blow the whistle loudly and immediately the infringement occurs (after deciding whether to play advantage or not - See below). The hand signal should be indicated quickly and clearly after the whistle. The signal must be clear and held until play has restarted.
14. Both Referees should check that the other Referee agrees with their decision. If the two Referees give different decisions each should be prepared to change their call if they are not totally certain of the call. Defer to the other Referee if they are indicating a more serious offence.
15. If one Referee has called an infringement that has not been seen by the other, then the other should indicate the same signal.
16. Where either Referee changes the direction of their signals after giving a positive signal to which the players have responded, a triple blast on the whistle should be used to gain every bodies attention (including the Time Keeper's), indicating a Time-Out, Signal 7 and the new Signal. Both Referees must ensure the teams have time to correct their consequent positioning before the restart occurs. The whistle is then blown to restart the game again.
15. If at any time the two Referees continue to disagree they shall stop the game to consult and if still in disagreement, the First Referee shall make the necessary decision.
16. The Referees should, at the completion of the game, discuss any disputed or contentious decisions to improve their refreeing and understanding of the rules.

## Controlling the field of play using the leading and trailing method



- a) The First Referee shall take that side of the Playing area from which they can ensure the score is correctly recorded. The will usually be the same side as the Time/Score Keepers Table.
- b) Each referee is normally responsible for any play to the right of where they are standing, and play between the two referees to which they are closest.
- c) In general, the Referee should move no further to his/her left than the 6m mark. The aim should be to achieve a "leading" and "trailing" system of controlling the game. The "Leading" Referee should keep up with the play and closely watch the main action in front of the goal. The "Trailing" Referee should be able to view all players on the Playing Area.
- d) Either Referee may call an infringement anywhere on the field, but in most situations should defer to the nearer Referee unless an obvious infringement has not been pulled-up.
- e) Each Referee shall make decisions relating to the side-line nearest to them.
- f) The Referee should quickly move directly to the goal-line on their right, when play is in that vicinity, to be in a position to give decisions on corners and goal-line throws at that end.
- g) The Referees shall normally control the corner and side-line restarts on their side of the Playing Area, and goal-line restarts to their right.
- h) The Referee controlling that side-line should have control over the 1 metre restart condition.

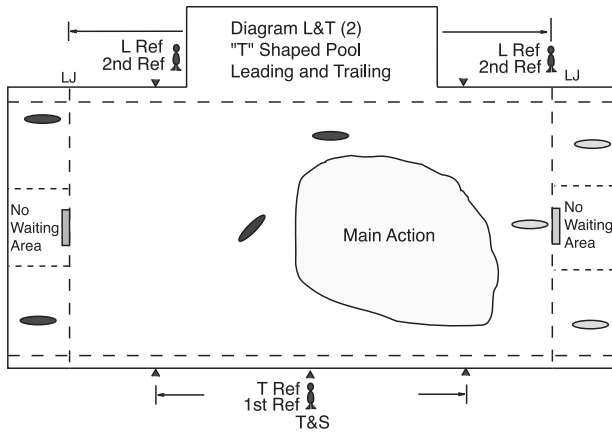
### Legend for Diagrams

L Ref – Leading Referee  
T Ref – Trailing Referee

T&S – Timekeeper & Scorekeeper  
LJ – Line Judge

i) "T" shaped pools (see Diagram L&T 2). In some pools it is necessary to have three referees, where there is a diving pit or similar. In this instance the first referee should take the long side line, that runs the length of the playing area. The two second referees take the short

sides, each covering the appropriate goal line. This means that the first referee switches from being the leading to trailing referee in the middle area of the pitch. Each referee should be prepared to call fouls at any point on the playing area.



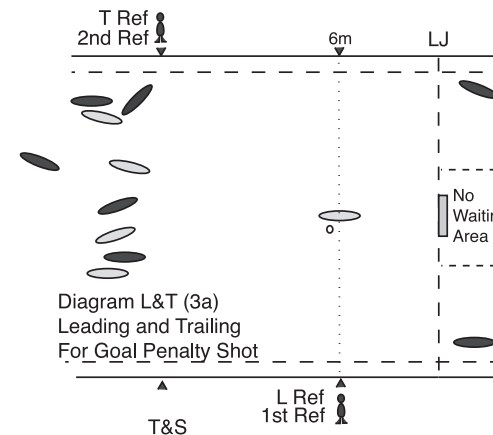
**Legend for Diagrams**

- L Ref - Leading Referee
- T Ref - Trailing Referee
- T&S - Timekeeper & Scorekeeper
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j) Controlling Goal Penalty (see Diagram L&T 3)

- The Leading Referee should move to the 6 metre (for Goal Penalty Shot) mark and be responsible for controlling the taking of the shot.
- The Trailing Referee should take up a position to control the other players.
- When all the other players are correctly positioned, the Trailing Referee will raise their Hand.

- If the Leading Referee has the ball, it should be thrown to the shooter when all the other players are in the correct position as directed by the Trailing Referee.
- Leading Referee can then blow the whistle (so long as the shooter is correctly positioned) for the shot to be taken.



**Legend for Diagrams**

- L Ref - Leading Referee
- T Ref - Trailing Referee
- T&S - Timekeeper & Scorekeeper
- LJ - Line Judge

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## BCU Anti-doping Policy

For the first time in the 2006/2007 season Canoe Polo was actively tested for doping purposes. at National League level. Subsequently there have been further tests at other events and all athletes should be aware that there will be an on-going policy of testing.

All players at Division One standard and/or playing in the Great Britain squads must realise that they may be asked to submit to anti-doping testing.

The aims and purpose of the British Canoe Union (BCU) Anti-Doping policy are to:

- Uphold and preserve the ethics of Sport
- Safeguard the physical health and mental integrity of the athletes
- To ensure that all Athletes have an opportunity to compete equally

Therefore, the policy of the BCU is to promote Canoeing as a drug-free sport and that the BCU is committed to educate and inform all athletes, coaches and support personnel about the dangers of drugs and to test athletes to confirm and maintain their drug-free status.

Full details of the current BCU and ICF Anti-Doping rules together with additional information and advice relating to the BCU Anti-Doping policy can be found on the BCU website – [www.bcu.org.uk](http://www.bcu.org.uk) – Within the “About Us” Directory.

*Andy Goodsell, Anti-Doping Officer, British Canoe Union - [andy.goodsell@bcu.org.uk](mailto:andy.goodsell@bcu.org.uk)*



## BCU CANOE POLO RULES

These rules are intended to be identical to the 2013 ICF Canoe Polo Competition rules except where specifically indicated:

### UK: UK only text

Paragraphs that have been updated for the 2013 rules are indicated with an italic in the text: *Updated for 2013*

Emphasis to certain words and phrases is denoted by bold italic text: ***for emphasis***

In the event of any discrepancy the rule written here will apply unless specific clarification to the contrary is published by the Chief Referee or the BCU Canoe Polo Committee.

### Useful abbreviations / definitions

BCU British Canoe Union

CPC Canoe Polo Committee

DOP Direction of Play

GPS Goal Penalty Shot

ICF International Canoe Federation

L&T Leading & Trailing

Balls Out of Play

Side Line, Goal Line & Corners

Free Throw

The ball has to be passed before a direct shot at goal can be taken.

Free Shot

The player taking the throw may shoot directly at goal if they wish.

Leading Ref.

Referee in front of the main action of the game.

Trailing Ref.

Referee following behind the main action of the game.

## ICF Rules January 2013

### CHAPTER 3 - GAME REGULATIONS

#### Rule Section Title

35. PLAYING AREA
36. PLAYING AREA BOUNDARIES & MARKERS
37. GOALS
38. THE BALL
39. GAME OFFICIALS
40. REFEREES
41. GOAL LINE JUDGES
42. SCRUTINEER
43. TIMEKEEPERS
44. SCOREKEEPER
45. NUMBER OF PLAYERS
46. CHOICE OF END
47. IDENTIFICATION
48. KAYAKS
49. PADDLES
50. PERSONAL EQUIPMENT
51. TRADE-MARKS AND ADVERTISING SYMBOLS
52. EXCHANGING EQUIPMENT
53. SCRUTINEERING
54. PLAYING TIME
55. TIME-OUT
56. COMMENCEMENT OF PLAY
57. BALL OUT OF PLAY
58. SCORING A GOAL
59. RESTART AFTER GOAL
60. CAPSIZED PLAYER
61. ENTRY TO THE PLAYING AREA, RE-ENTRY, SUBSTITUTION AND EXCHANGING EQUIPMENT
62. ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION AND ENTRY TO THE PLAYING AREA
63. ILLEGAL USE OF THE PADDLE
64. ILLEGAL POSSESSION
65. ILLEGAL HAND TACKLE
66. ILLEGAL KAYAK TACKLE
67. ILLEGAL JOSTLE
68. ILLEGAL SCREEN
69. ILLEGAL HOLDING
70. UNSPORTING BEHAVIOUR
71. DEFENCE OF GOAL
72. REFEREE'S BALL
73. ADVANTAGE
74. SANCTIONS
75. TAKING THROWS
76. TAKING A GOAL PENALTY-SHOT
77. COMPLETION OF PLAY
78. OVERTIME

## Definitions

The following definitions are to be used when determining the severity of a foul and to assist in the severity of the sanction given.

**Deliberate Foul** - A foul where no effort was made to avoid the illegal play. Any deliberate foul should receive a minimum of a green card- either immediately or at the next break in play if playing advantage. Also see note regarding green and yellow cards

**Dangerous Foul** - Is significant contact with the opponent's arm, head or body that may result in personal injury and is illegal. Also see note regarding green and yellow cards. Any dangerous foul should receive a minimum of a green card- either immediately or at the next break in play if playing advantage.

**Significant contact** - Any high impact or continuous contact, that may result in equipment damage or personal injury. This definition should be used when deciding the severity of illegal kayak tackles, illegal hand tackles, or illegal use of paddle or illegal holding, and whether or not a green, yellow or red card should be awarded.

**The act of passing or shooting** - Begins when a player has the ball in their hand, or balancing on their paddle, and is clearly attempting to pass the ball to a team mate, or shoot at goal.

**A Near Certain Goal** - The referee must be certain that a goal was the most likely end result if play had continued.

**Defending player** - Any member of the team that does not have possession of the ball.

**Attacking player** - Any member of the team that currently has possession of the ball

**Team Possession** - A team is considered to have team possession and therefore be the attacking team if any member of that team has possession or control of the ball.

**Control of the ball** - A player is considered to have control of the ball if that player is in possession of the ball, or is the nearest player to the ball and is within 3 metres of the ball on the water.

## 35. PLAYING AREA

35.1 The playing area shall be rectangular, and have a length of thirty-five (35) metres and a width of twenty-three (23) metres. The Immediate-Surround of the playing area shall be an unobstructed area of water, with where possible a minimum width of one metre outside all boundaries.

35.2 The water throughout the playing area must be still water at least ninety (90) centimetres deep.

35.3 There must be a clear height of at least three (3) metres without obstacles, and a minimum ceiling height of five (5) metres, above the playing area.

35.4 There shall be a walkway on each side of the playing area kept clear for the referees.

## 36. PLAYING AREA BOUNDARIES AND MARKERS

36.1 The longer boundaries are to be referred to as the sidelines, the shorter boundaries as the goal lines.

**UK: The Pool Side may be used for the sideline if required.**

36.2 The sidelines and goal lines are to be indicated by a floating lane rope. The section of the goal line four (4) metres either side of the centre of the goal frame should be free from floats so as not to interfere with the positioning of the goalkeeper.

36.3 Markers indicating the goal lines, half way line and points six (6) metres from each goal line are to be placed along the sidelines, and be clearly visible to both referees and players.

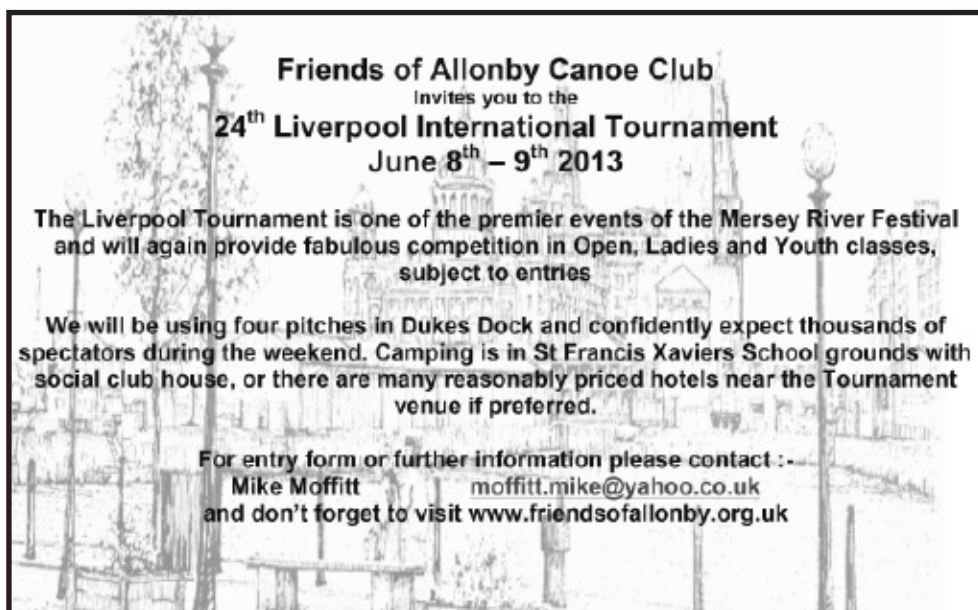
36.4 Markers indicating the substitute-areas are to be placed on the goal lines four metres either side of the centre of the goal frame, and be clearly visible to both referees and players.

## 37. GOALS

37.1 Each goal will be located over the centre of each goal line with their lower inside edge two (2) metres above the surface of the water. Each goal is to be held in such a way that it is prevented from swinging or moving. The goal supports should not interfere with any player defending or manoeuvring around the goal area, or with the flight of the ball in the area of play.

37.2 Each goal will consist of an open frames one (1) metre high by one and a half (1.5) metres wide (measured internally) hung vertically. The maximum width of a material used to construct the goal frame will be five (5) centimetres. The goal frames should not have any vertical or horizontal bars parallel to the main goal frame which may cause the ball to rebound out of the goal frame. The front face of the frame must be free from any loose netting, net fastenings or sharp edges which may impede the flight of the ball or damage the ball or players equipment. The front face of The frame must be red and white striped- each stripe being of 20 centimetres length. For venues involving multiple fields all goals must be identical.

37.3 Each goal is to have a net made from a strong shock absorbing material, which allows the ball to pass freely through the goal frame but indicate clearly that a goal has been scored. The net shall be a minimum of fifty (50) centimetres deep and have no loose or hanging ends which may interfere with players or their equipment or blow in the wind or that may impede the ball entering the goal.





## 38. THE BALL

**UK: Size 5 Will be used for Open. Size 4 will be used for Ladies and Youth.**

- 38.1 The ball shall be round and shall have an air chamber with a self-closing valve. It shall be waterproof, without external strapping or any covering of grease or similar substance.
- 38.2 The weight of the ball shall be not less than four hundred (400) grams and not more than four hundred and fifty (450) grams.
- 38.3 For games played by Men, Under-21 Men and Master Men, the circumference of the ball shall not be less than sixty-eight (68) and not more than seventy-one (71) centimetres, and its pressure shall be 90-97 kPa (kilo pascals).
- 38.4 For games played by Women, Under-21 Women and Master Women, the circumference of the ball shall not be less than sixty-five (65) and not more than sixty-seven (67) centimetres, and its pressure shall be 83-90 kPa (kilo pascals).

## 39. GAME OFFICIALS

- 39.1 The game officials shall consist of two (2) referees, two (2) goal line judges, one (1) scrutineer, two (2) timekeepers and one (1) scorekeeper.
- 39.1.1 Depending on the degree of importance games can be controlled by teams of between three (3) and eight (8) officials. Where there are only three (3) game officials, two (2) shall be the referees who shall take on the additional duties of the goal line judges and the scrutineer and one timekeeper taking over the duties of the timekeepers and scorekeeper.

## 40. REFEREES

- 40.1 The referees shall be in absolute control of the game. Their authority over the players shall be effective during the whole time that they and the players are within the competition area.
- 40.2 All decisions of the referees on questions of fact shall be final and their interpretation of the rules shall be obeyed throughout the game. No protest or appeal can be made in relation to an interpretive decision of a referee. The referees shall not make any presumption as to the facts of any situation during the game but shall interpret what they observe to the best of their ability.
- 40.3 The referees shall whistle to start and restart the game and to declare goals, goal line throws, corner throws, infringements of the rules and time-outs. A referee may alter their decision provided they do so before the ball is put back into play. The referee must ensure that before the game is restarted that in their sole discretion neither team is disadvantaged.
- 40.4 The referees shall have the power to order the removal from the competition area any person whose behaviour prevents the referees from carrying out their duties in a proper and impartial manner.
- 40.5 The referees shall have the power to abandon the game at any time if, in their opinion, the behaviour of the players, team-officials or other circumstances prevent it from being brought to a proper conclusion. If the game has to be abandoned the referees shall report their actions to the Chief Official.
- 40.6 Where the referees cannot agree on a decision the first named referee will take the final decision.

- 40.7 If either referee is unable to continue to referee a game due to injury, illness or other reason, the Chief Referee will replace that referee with a suitably qualified replacement.

**UK: This short section is added for more completeness from ICF Chapter 2 Rule 30:- Some of the points mentioned are as follows:-**

The referees shall:

Provide their own equipment; the dress of referees is an appropriate black shirt and shorts or trousers. Referees should also wear sports shoes or appropriate alternatives.

Provide written reports (one from each Referee) to the Chief Referee of all incidents resulting in a player being sent off, immediately upon completion of the game in which the incident occurred. Such report should include any request for further disciplinary action;

Referees, whilst acting in any capacity with their team, lose their Referee status. They should respect without question all decisions given by the Referees controlling the game. They should set an example of good sports behaviour for other players to follow.

**UK: The tournament or league organiser will take on this responsibility if the chief referee is not present.**

## 41. GOAL LINE JUDGES

- 41.1 The goal line judges shall be situated diagonally opposite each other on the left-hand side of each referee.
- 41.2 The duties of the goal line judges shall be to signal until acknowledged by the referee by:
- 41.2.1 Raising a green flag **(UK: or hand)** when the players are correctly positioned on their respective goal lines at the start of a period;
- 41.2.2 Raising a red flag **(UK: or hand)** to indicate the ball is out of play by crossing the goal line. (Goal line-throw, corner-throw, goal);
- 41.2.3 Waving a red flag **(UK: or hand)** for an improper start or restart;
- 41.2.4 Waving a red flag **(UK: or hand)** for an improper re-entry of an excluded player or improper entry of a substitute.
- 41.3 Pointing both the red and green flag **(UK: or both hands)** at the goal when the ball enters the goal frame.
- 41.3.1 Each goal line judge shall be provided by the organising committee with a supply of balls of the correct size. When the original ball has gone outside the field of play, they shall throw a new ball, when directed by the referee, to the goalkeeper (for a goal throw) or to the nearest player of the attacking team (for a corner throw).



## 42. SCRUTINEER

42.1 The scrutineer will be responsible for checking the equipment of all players before and during their game. They may also check equipment at any other time during a competition.

**UK: The BCU Canoe Polo Committee, National Leagues Organiser, National Leagues Secretaries or relevant Competition Organising Committee may appoint a Scrutineer for any applicable event.**

## 43. TIMEKEEPERS

43.1 The timekeepers shall be situated at the official's table.

43.2 The duties of the timekeepers shall be to:

43.2.1 Record the exact periods of playing time, time-outs and the intervals between the periods;

43.2.2 Control the periods of time-outs and to signal the period by raising a red flag, except that a referee shall signal the end of a time-out;

43.2.3 Record the send-off times of players ordered from the playing area in accordance with the rules, together with the re-entry times of such players or their substitutes;

43.2.4 Control the periods of exclusion of players and to signal the end of the period of exclusion by a visual electronic device or by raising and waving a green flag;

43.3 A timekeeper shall signal by any means provided it is distinctive, acoustically efficient and readily understood, the end of each period independently of the referees and their signal shall take immediate effect except in the case of the simultaneous award by a referee of a goal penalty shot, in which event the goal penalty shot shall be taken in accordance with the rules;

43.3.1 The first timekeepers shall perform the duties stated in 43.2.1 and 43.2.2 and the second timekeeper shall perform 43.2.3 and 43.2.4.

## 44. SCOREKEEPER

44.1 The scorekeeper shall be situated at the official table.

44.2 The duties of the scorekeeper shall be to:

44.2.1 Record the awarded goals and maintain the scoreboard during the game;

44.2.2 Maintain the record of the game, including the players, the score, time-outs, green, yellow and red cards awarded against each player.

**UK: The scorekeeper should draw attention to the referee by suitable means (such as waving their hand) to indicate a player has accumulated either three (3) Green Cards (=Yellow Card) or two (2) Yellow Cards (=Red Card) indicating the one currently being issued as applicable.**

## 45. NUMBER OF PLAYERS

45.1 Each team may consist of a maximum of eight (8) players for any one game. No more than five (5) players are permitted on the playing area at any one time. Any other players at that moment are to be considered as substitutes. A team must begin each game with five (5) players, ready to start on their own goal line. If a team is reduced to two (2) players at any time the referee shall end the game and refer the matter to the competition committee who shall decide the appropriate action to be taken.

45.2 The list of players names and numbers for a game must be handed to the appropriate official before the time indicated by the Competition Committee.

**UK: From ICF Chapter 2 article 21.1.3 – Up to ten (10) players may be used for each team as a squad (throughout a competition or league season), but a maximum of 8 players may be used for any game with a maximum of 5 on the playing area at any one time. The National Leagues Organiser may allow teams to use more than 10 players in a season in exceptional circumstances.**

## 46. CHOICE OF END

46.1 The first named team on the game sheet will start on the goal line at the left-hand side of the official table unless one of the captains or the Chief Official request a toss of a coin to determine the choice of ends.

## 47. IDENTIFICATION

**UK: Please note - all aspects of these rules apply in BCU competitions, teams and individuals should not assume they have a right to play if they do not meet the standards set here.**

47.1 All players of the same team must have kayaks with decks of the same colour, spray decks of the same colour, outmost body covering of the same colour, helmets of the same colour and shirts of the same colour.

**UK: Spray decks should be the same colour for the top division in each class. Only the sleeve (or notably visible) areas of shirts should be the same colour. Short and long Sleeves may be mixed throughout the same team.**

47.2 If the referee or scrutineer determines there is inadequate distinction between the teams, the first named team on the game sheet will be required to change their body identification colours.

47.3 The players of a team shall each be numbered from 1 to 99. This number shall be displayed on the body covering and on the helmet. *Players may choose to have their family name on the rear of their body covering. This family name may be above or below their number but must be in the same position for the whole team.*

**UK: The players of a team shall be numbered 1 to 15.**

47.4 The numbers will be clearly legible to the referees from anywhere on the field and must clearly individually identify each player in a team. A number at least 20 cm high must be on the back of the body. A number at least 10 cm height must be on the front of the body. Numbers at least 7.5 cm high must be on each side of the helmet. The captain of each team shall be distinguished from the rest of the team by an armband.

## 48. KAYAKS

48.1 Only Kayaks approved by the scrutineer may be used.

For full specifications on kayaks and padding - see page 33.

**UK: Full up to date kayak specifications of Polo Kayaks are available on request from the Polo Committee or from the BCU Canoe Polo Committee's web site.**

## 49. PADDLES

- 49.1 Double-bladed paddles approved by the scrutineer may be used.  
For full specifications on paddles - see page 38.

## 50. PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

- 50.1 Each player must wear one helmet with face mask, approved by the scrutineer.  
For full specifications on helmet and face masks - see appendix Scrutineering.

**UK: In line with European law, all helmets used for kayaking must be CE approved as such.**

- 50.2 Body protection, approved by the scrutineer, must be worn.

For full specifications on body protection - see appendix Scrutineering.

- 50.3 A shirt with sleeves, which at least covers the mid upper arm, must be worn.  
The players shall not have grease, oil or any similar substance on their arms and neck.

- 50.4 Beside the equipment and clothing listed above, personal clothing and effects, and a spray deck for the player is permitted. Extra protective equipment on the hands, forearm and elbows is permitted provided it is firm fitting, securely attached and with no sharp edges such that they do not endanger any other player. No other equipment is permitted. A player must not wear any items (such as jewellery) that can endanger either the wearer or any other player.

**UK: Jewellery includes items such as rings, bracelets (including friendship/charity bands), necklaces and earrings. Non removable rings with no protruding gems may be taped up.**

- 50.5 Players may not apply any greasy substances to their equipment.

## 51. TRADE-MARKS AND ADVERTISING SYMBOLS

- 51.1 Kayaks, accessories and sportswear may carry trademarks, advertising symbols, and words.

- 51.2 Any trademarks, advertising symbols and words should be placed in such a way that it does not interfere with competitors identification and does not affect the outcome of the race or game.

- 51.3 The advertising of tobacco smoking and strong spirit drinks will not be accepted.

## 52. EXCHANGING EQUIPMENT

- 52.1 Each player is permitted to leave the playing area and exchange any piece of equipment, at any time during the game, provided the equipment has been approved by the scrutineer. The player concerned must collect equipment being exchanged from their substitutes area.

## 53. SCRUTINEERING

- 53.1 Players' equipment is subject to scrutineering before, during or after a game.

A referee must dismiss from the playing area, once aware of the infringement, any player whose equipment is in breach of the rules, either at the first break in play or direct if the equipment has become dangerous for the players.

## 54. PLAYING TIME

- 54.1 Playing time shall normally be two (2) periods each of ten (10) minutes duration, unless overtime is needed to decide the result. The minimum playing time will be two periods of seven (7) minutes.

**UK: The minimum playing time will be two periods of five (5) minutes.**

- 54.2 The half time interval shall normally be three (3) minutes. The minimum half time interval will be one (1) minute.

- 54.3 The teams shall change ends after each period of play.

- 54.4 The referee may call time-out during the playing time. The timekeeper will stop the clock when the referee signals for time-out and restart the clock when the referee restarts the game with a whistle.

## 55. TIME-OUT

- 55.1 The referee shall use a triple whistle to stop the game for time-out, except when a goal is scored in which case a long whistle blast will be used.

- 55.2 Time-out must be given if a capsized player or their equipment is interfering with play.

- 55.3 Time-out should be used immediately when game regulations are dangerously breached or if field equipment needs correction or adjustment (for example: endangering another player due to a broken paddle).

- 55.4 Time-out should be used if any injury has occurred, or a player is illegally on the field, provided this does not disadvantage the other team.

- 55.5 Time-out must be used after a goal is scored, or a goal-penalty-shot is awarded or for any other incidences at the discretion of the referee.

- 55.6 If the referee has stopped the game, not during a break in play and where neither team was at fault (e.g. Referee error, faulty goals, injury) the play will be restarted with a free throw to the team that last had possession. Where time-out was given for a capsized player the opposition is given a free throw to restart.

**UK: Due to restrictions on water time normally there will not be a Time-out following a goal being scored.**

If the referee cannot determine who had possession at the time of the whistle, the referee will restart the game with a referee's ball.

**Signal 8 applies.**





## 56. COMMENCEMENT OF PLAY

56.1 At the beginning of each period of play, five (5) players from each team line up ready to start, stationary and with some part of their kayaks on their own goal line. If the team deliberately causes an unnecessary delay a start infringement will be called. **Signal 1, 15 and 17 (team warning) apply.**

**UK:** In a smaller than regulation sized pitch such as a swimming pool, then the players can line up with their kayaks touching the back wall rather than the goal line. In normal play, the boundary will be played to the face of the goal.

56.2 If a team has insufficient players to start the game 5 minutes after the programmed start time the game will be declared a forfeit and referred to the competition committee. **Signal 2 applies.**

56.3 The referee blows the whistle to start play and then releases or throws the ball into the centre of the playing area.

56.4 If the ball is released or thrown giving one team definite advantage, the referee calls for the ball and restarts the period of play.

56.5 Physical assistance from other players is not allowed on the player attempting for the ball. Infringement incurs a free throw. **Signals 1 and 14 apply.**

56.6 Only one player from each team may make an attempt to gain possession of the ball. Any other player that accompanies the player attempting for the ball must not be within a radius of three (3) metres from the body of the player attempting for the ball. Infringement incurs a free throw. **Signals 1 and 14 apply.**

## 57. BALL OUT PLAY

57.1 Sideline and overhead obstacle: When any part of the ball touches the physical sideline or the vertical plane of the physical sideline, or touches any overhead obstacle, the team that was not the last to touch it with their paddle, kayak or person is awarded a sideline-throw.

**UK:** In the situation of a low overhead obstacle (beyond the competition organisers control), which can risk interfering with the normal flight of the ball, a sideline throw will be taken by the team who was in the process of passing/shooting at the time the ball directly hit the obstruction if it changes the flight of the ball.

57.1.1 If the physical sideline is moved out of position as a consequence of normal play, the boundary including the vertical plane above moves with it. **Signals 5 and 14 apply.**

57.1.2 Sideline throw: The player taking the throw must position their kayak at the point of exit of the ball, or the point on the sideline nearest to the point of contact with an overhead obstacle.

57.2 *Goal line throw: The goal line is always measured by the vertical plane of the goal frame in all situations even if the goal frame or the physical goal line are moved out of position as a consequence of normal play. A goal line or corner throw will be awarded when any part of the ball touches the vertical plane of the front of the goal frame except where a ball rebounds off the goal frame (not the goal supports) into the playing area, or where the ball is prevented from completely entering the goal by a defenders paddle and rebounds back into the field of play, or where a goal is scored.*

57.2.1 Goal line throw: When the ball goes out over the teams own goal line and has been last touched by the other team then a goal line throw will be awarded. **Signals 6 and 14 apply.** The player taking the throw must be positioned with their kayak on the goal line.

57.3 Corner-throw: When the ball goes out over the teams own goal line and was last touched by their own team then a corner throw will be awarded. **Signals 5 and 14 apply.** The player taking the throw must be positioned with their kayak in the corner of the playing area.

**UK:** If the side of the pool is being used as the sideline, then player taking the Corner Throw must position their kayak parallel to the side of the pool.

## 58. SCORING A GOAL

58.1 A team scores a goal when the whole of the ball passes through the plane of the front of the goal frame of their opponent's goal. If a goal is not rigidly fixed, and moves the ball must go through the goal frame. The referee will indicate the number of the player scoring the goal to the scorekeeper. **Signal 3 applies** and one long whistle blast by the referee. Time-out must be used after a goal is scored.

58.2 If the ball is prevented from entering a goal by either a defender's or substitutes paddle that enters the goal from behind, then a goal is awarded.

## 59. RESTART AFTER GOAL

59.1 After a goal is scored, the team that conceded the goal takes the restart throw. The player taking the throw must position part of their kayak in the centre of the playing area. The referee blows the whistle to restart play. The player is not required to hold the ball above their head.

59.2 All other players must be positioned with their bodies in the other half of the playing area until play restarts.

## 60. CAPSIZED PLAYER

60.1 If a player capsizes and leaves their kayak, the player may not take any further part in the play and must leave the playing area immediately, with all of their equipment. If a player who has capsized wishes to rejoin the game the player must do so according to the rules of entry to the field of play. No person may enter the playing area to assist a player with their equipment, and no-one may obstruct the referee while assisting a player. A team may be penalised during a game for any illegal outside assistance, or for any interference with the opposition that constitutes outside assistance. The referee to determine the severity of the sanction.



## 61. ENTRY TO THE PLAYING AREA, RE-ENTRY, SUBSTITUTION AND EXCHANGING EQUIPMENT

- 61.1 No more than the legally allowed number of players from a team may be on the playing area at any one time.
- 61.2 Substitutes must wait in their own substitute's area.
- 61.3 Substitution is allowed at any time including during time outs. Exit and entry of players for substitution may be anywhere along the teams own goal line provided all of the player's kayak and equipment has left the playing area before the substitute may enter the playing area. A player leaving the playing area solely as part of the action of the game is not subject to the conditions for re-entry.
- 61.4 A capsized player who has not left the playing area at their goal line may be substituted not earlier than the next break in play. All of the capsized players equipment (for example kayak and paddle) must be removed from the playing area before a substitution is allowed.
- 61.5 Each player is permitted to leave the playing area and exchange any piece of equipment, at any time during the game, provided the equipment has been approved by the Scrutineer. The player concerned must collect equipment being exchanged from their substitute's area.

## 62. ILLEGAL SUBSTITUTION AND ENTRY TO THE PLAYING AREA

- 62.1 Where more than the legally allowed number of players from a team are in the playing area at any one time the player(s) coming illegally into the playing area should be given a yellow card(s). If it is not clear which player(s) should exit the playing area then the team's captain must nominate a player(s). Infringement incurs a sanction. Signals 7 and 14 apply.
- 62.2 When a substitute places their paddle in the playing area to prevent a goal from being scored, a goal penalty shot is awarded. The offending player is penalised with a red card. Infringement incurs a sanction. Signals 16 and 7 apply

## 63. ILLEGAL USE OF THE PADDLE

### **Signals 12 and 15 apply.**

The following are defined as illegal use of the paddle.

- 63.1 Contacting an opponent's person.
- 63.2 Playing, or attempting to play, the ball with a paddle when the ball is within arms reach of an opponent, and that opponent is attempting to play the ball with their hand.
- 63.3 Playing or attempting to play the ball with a paddle across the bow of an opponent's kayak, within arms reach of the opponent in a normal paddling position.

### **UK: In this instance a foul is committed even if the opponent is not attempting to play the ball at the time.**

- 63.4 Placing a paddle within arms reach of an opponent who has the ball in their hand. A goalkeeper is excluded from this rule and is allowed to directly defend against a shot at goal as long as the paddle is not moved towards the opponent at the time of the shot and it does not result in significant contact with the opponent.

- 63.5 When a player, with their paddle, attempts to restrict an opponent using their paddle.
- 63.6 Playing an opponents paddle instead of the ball.
- 63.7 Throwing a paddle.
- 63.8 Any other use of a paddle that endangers a player.

## 64. ILLEGAL POSSESSION

### **Signals 11 and 15 apply.**

- 64.1 A player is in possession of the ball when they have the ball in their hand or are in a position to reach the ball with their hand, the ball being on the water and not in the air. A player balancing the ball on their paddle will also be considered to be in possession.
- 64.2 A player must dispose of the ball within five (5) seconds of gaining possession, either by passing it to another player or by performing one throw causing the ball to travel by at least one metre measured horizontally from the point of release.
- 64.3 If a player shares possession with another player or the ball moves out of arms reach whilst being tackled, the five (5) seconds shall begin again once a player has regained possession.
- 64.4 A player who capsizes to the point of the whole of their body and head going under water is considered to have lost possession if they do not have the ball in their hand(s).
- 64.5 A player may not manoeuvre their kayak with their hands or paddle while the ball is resting on their spray deck.

## 65. ILLEGAL HAND TACKLE

### **Signals 10 and 15 apply.**

A Hand-Tackle is a player pushing an opponent with one (1) hand. The following hand-tackles are illegal:

- 65.1 Any hand-tackle where the tackled player does not have possession of the ball or is sharing possession of the ball with another player.
- 65.2 Any body contact other than one open hand to the opponents' back, upper arm or side.
- 65.3 Any hand-tackle, which endangers the tackled player.

## 66. ILLEGAL KAYAK TACKLE

### **Signals 10 and 15 apply.**

A kayak-tackle is a player manoeuvring their kayak against an opponent's kayak in an attempt to gain possession of the ball. The following kayak-tackles are illegal.

- 66.1 Any kayak-tackle that results in significant contact between the tackler's kayak and the head or body of an opposing player, or endangering a player. The player's arm shall not be considered to be part of the body when any part of it is elevated away from the body.
- 66.2 *Any deliberate kayak-tackle that results in significant or continuous contact with the opponent's spray deck or where the tackler continues to tackle into or over the spray deck. After a kayak tackle, when the ball is no longer in possession of either player, they may move off each others kayaks by using their hands in a controlled action.*

- 66.3 A player in possession of the ball who fails to avoid significant contact between the bow of his kayak and the head or body of the opponent.
- 66.4 Any hard tackle, that results in significant contact to the side of the kayak, at an angle between eighty (80) and one hundred (100) degrees.
- 66.5 Tackling an opponent who is not within three (3) metres of the ball.
- 66.6 Tackling an opponent when the tackler is not competing for the ball.

## 67. ILLEGAL JOSTLE

### 67.1 *Signals 10 and 15 apply.*

A jostle is a player manoeuvring their kayak against an opponent's kayak between the six (6) metre line and the goal line, at the attacking end of the field, to gain a position. The following jostling is illegal.

- 67.2 When a player is stationary or attempting to maintain a position and their body is moved by more than half a metre by sustained contact from an opponent's kayak.
- 67.3 When the contact to the opponent's kayak would be defined as an illegal kayak tackle under any section of rule 66.
- 67.4 *When the body of the jostled player is behind the goal line.*

## 68. ILLEGAL OBSTRUCTION

### *Signals 9 and 15 apply.*

The following obstruction is illegal:

- 68.1 A player actively or deliberately impeding the progress of an opponent when neither player is within three (3) metres of the ball except where the players are jostling for position at the attacking end of the field as covered in rule 67.  
**Note: A player is considered to be actively impeding the progress of an opponent when their kayak is moving or they are attempting active paddle strokes.**
- 68.2 A player who is not competing for the ball who actively impedes the progress of an opponent who is competing for the ball on the water and not in the air.

## 69. ILLEGAL HOLDING

### *Signals 9 and 15 apply.*

The following holding is illegal:

- 69.1 A player gaining support or propulsion by placing their hand, arm, body or paddle on an opponent's kayak, or holding the opposing player or their equipment.
- 69.2 A player using for propulsion or support, or moving out of place, any playing area equipment e.g. Boundary markers, goal supports, or any surrounding object.
- 69.3 A player using their paddle to lift, pull or hold an opponents kayak while jostling for position in the six metre area, or attempting a kayak or hand tackle.
- 69.4 A player fending off an opponents attempted hand or kayak tackle with their hand or forearm, or with the movement of the elbow towards their opponent.
- 69.5 A player using a forceful action with one or both hands that results in significant contact with the opponent's arm, or with the ball that is still in contact with the opponent's hand.

## 70. UNSPORTING BEHAVIOUR

### *Signal 17 with a green card applies.*

The following is defined as unsporting behaviour:

- 70.1 Any infringement committed by a player during a break in play.
- 70.2 Hindering another player's attempt at righting themselves after capsizing. A player who is upside down must be allowed to get their head and both shoulders above the water before an opponent is allowed to attempt another tackle.
- 70.3 Interference with the equipment of an opponent. Such as holding or moving another player's paddle out of their reach, or deliberately preventing the player from regaining possession of the paddle.
- 70.4 Use of deliberate delaying tactics. Such as throwing the ball away, or deliberately obstructing the opposition, to delay a quick restart after an infringement. When a team is penalised, any player on that team who has possession of the ball must immediately place the ball on the water and not impede or delay the opposition in any way from taking a quick restart.
- 70.5 Players showing dissent.
- 70.6 Retaliation.
- 70.7 Foul or abusive language.
- 70.8 Other unsporting behaviour to a player, referee or other official or behaviour considered detrimental to the game, at the discretion of the referee.
- 70.9 Bouncing the ball out of play off an opponent's kayak to gain advantage.

## 71. DEFENCE OF GOAL

- 71.1 The one defending player most directly under the goal, in order to defend the goal with the paddle is considered to be the goalkeeper at that time. The goalkeeper's body must be facing into the playing area and attempting to maintain a position within one metre of the centre of the goal line. If two or more players are directly under the goal, the player most directly under the goal is considered the goalkeeper at that time.
- 71.2 If the goalkeeper is not in possession of the ball and is moved or unbalanced by contact from an opposing player, then that player has committed an illegal tackle. Infringement incurs a sanction. **Signals 10 and 15 apply.**
- 71.3 If an attacker moves the goalkeeper by pushing a defender into the goalkeeper, where none of the defenders have possession of the ball, the attacker shall be penalised. If the defender has an opportunity to avoid contact with the goalkeeper after being pushed, but does not, the attacker will not be penalised.
- 71.4 If a defender pushes the attacker onto the goalkeeper, then the attacker should not be penalised. If the attacker has an opportunity to avoid contact with the goalkeeper after being pushed, but does not, the attacker will be penalised.
- 71.5 If an attacker, in possession of the ball, whose original direction or speed would not have led to contact with the goalkeeper is pushed onto the goalkeeper by a defender, the attacker will not be penalised.
- 71.6 A goalkeeper who is not in possession of the ball, but is attempting for the ball on the water, can be tackled like any other player. If the goalkeeper does not gain possession they will not regain goalkeeper status until the attacker has shot or passed the ball. After the attacker loses possession of the ball, the attacker must not actively impede the goalkeeper's attempt to regain or maintain their position.



- 71.7 Within the six (6) metre area, an attacker must not actively prevent a defender from taking the position as goalkeeper. A defender will be allowed to push an attacker with the kayak, in order to take the position of goalkeeper without penalty, unless dangerous play is used.
- 71.8 As soon as a team has control of the ball they can no longer be considered to be defending and thus cannot have a player defined as a goalkeeper.

## 72. REFEREE'S BALL

- 72.1 A referee's ball will be declared when two or more players of opposing teams have one or more hands firmly on the ball, so that the players share possession of the ball for five (5) seconds.  
If initial contact is made directly with the ball illegal holding will only apply if either player uses the opposition for support.
- 72.2 If the referee needs to stop the game, not during a break in play and where neither team is at fault (e.g. Referee error, faulty goals, injury) and the referee cannot determine who had possession at the time of the whistle, the referee will restart the game with a referee's ball.
- 72.3 A referee's ball will be taken at the nearest point on the sideline to the incident. Where a referee's ball is awarded for an incident that occurs between the six (6) metre line and the goal line, the referee's ball will be held at the nearest six (6) metre line. **Signal 8 and Time-out applies.**
- 72.4 Two opposing players will line up at right angles to the sideline, on the side nearest their own goal line, near to the sideline where the situation occurred, one metre apart facing the referee. They will place their paddles on the water, but not between their kayaks and their hands on the deck of the kayak or on their paddle.
- 72.5 All other players must be at least three (3) metres away from the point between the two players participating in the referee's ball.
- 72.6 The referee will throw the ball on the water between the players and blow the whistle to restart play. Both players must make an attempt for the ball with their hands as soon as it touches the water.  
The players must not play the ball before it hits the water.  
Infringement incurs a sanction.  
**Signals 11 and 15 apply.**

## 73. ADVANTAGE

- 73.1 The referees can play advantage when an infringement occurs as long as neither has blown their whistle. The referees should play advantage if the team that was infringed upon is more benefited by play continuing. When playing advantage, the referees should recognise the illegal play by signalling and calling 'play on'.  
**Signals 13 and 14 apply.**
- 73.2 The referee can penalise any player who causes an infringement for which advantage is played at the next break in play with a green, yellow or red card.
- 73.3 When playing advantage, the next pass or shot should be completed and if there is no clear advantage, the original infringement should be called and appropriate sanction(s) and signals given. The referee is to indicate where the sanction should be taken.

## 74. SANCTIONS

The referee can impose any combination of the following sanctions for illegal-play depending on the severity and/or frequency of offences being penalised. The sanctions available to the referees are Free Throws, Free Shots, Goal Penalty Shots, Warnings, Yellow Card Send Off and Red Card Send Off. The following definitions should be used when determining which sanction to impose:

- Deliberate Foul: a foul where no effort was made to avoid the illegal play.
- Dangerous Foul: is significant contact with the opponent's arm, head or body that may result in personal injury and is illegal.
- Significant contact: any hard contact that may result in equipment damage or personal injury.
- The act of passing or shooting: begins when a player has the ball in their hand, or balancing on their paddle, and is clearly attempting to pass the ball to a team mate, or shoot at goal.
- A Near Certain Goal: The referee must be certain that a goal was the most likely end result if play had continued.
- Control of the ball: A player is considered to have control of the ball if that player is in possession of the ball, or is the nearest player to the ball and is within 3 metres of the ball on the water.
- Team Possession: a team is considered to have team possession and therefore be the attacking team if any member of that team has possession or control of the ball.

- 74.1 Goal-penalty-shot.  
**Signal 16 and time out applies.**
- 74.1.1 Inside the six (6) metre area, a goal-penalty-shot will be awarded for any deliberate or dangerous foul on a player in the act of shooting.
- 74.1.2 Inside the six (6) metre area, a goal-penalty-shot will be awarded for any deliberate or dangerous foul on a player in the act of passing or positioning for a near-certain goal.
- 74.1.3 Inside the six (6) metre area, a goal penalty shot will be awarded for a deliberate or dangerous foul on a player who is attempting to take a free shot.
- 74.1.4 Outside the six (6) metre area, a goal-penalty-shot will be awarded for any deliberate or dangerous foul on a player in the act of shooting for a near-certain goal while the goal is not defended.
- 74.1.5 Outside the six (6) metre area, a goal-penalty-shot will be awarded for any deliberate or dangerous foul on a player in the act of passing or positioning for a near-certain goal while the goal is not defended.
- 74.2 Free shot.  
**Signal 15 applies.**  
A Free Shot may be a direct shot at goal.
- 74.2.1 A free shot will be awarded for any foul on a player unless a goal penalty shot is awarded.

- 74.3 Free throw.  
**Signal 14 applies.**  
A Free Throw may not be a direct shot at goal.
- 74.3.1 A free throw will be awarded for any ball out of play, or when a goal penalty shot or free shot has not been awarded.
- 74.3.2 A free throw must not be a direct shot at goal. Infringement incurs a sanction and the opposition is awarded a free throw. **Signals 11 and 14 apply.** Side line throws, goal line throws, corner throws and centre restarts are considered to be free throws and may not be direct at goal.
- 74.4 Red Card:  
A player, team coach or team official is sent off for the rest of the game and may not be replaced.  
**Signal 17 with Red card applies.**
- 74.4.1 A red card will be awarded to a player receiving a second yellow card for any reason or where a yellow card is disputed.
- 74.4.2 A red card should be awarded to a team coach or team official when a green card is disputed or has not had the desired effect of causing the person to control their play or attitude.
- 74.4.3 A red card should be awarded if a personal attack on a player occurs.
- 74.4.4 A red card should be awarded for a deliberate or dangerous foul, that in the referee's opinion is of major influence to the game, irrespective of any other sanction awarded.
- 74.4.5 A player, team coach or team official receiving a red card during a competition will automatically receive a one game suspension, and be unable to take part in the next game in that competition.
- 74.4.6 A player, team coach or team official receiving a red card during a competition may be referred to the competition committee for further disciplinary action by either referee if they feel further action or sanctions are necessary.
- UK: Referees should bring the Red card to the attention of the tournament organiser who will enforce the rule at all UK competitions (National League, Regional and Summer C class "Internationals"). For the avoidance of doubt this penalty will not cross between competitions or seasons of play (but will cross between separate days / evening of the same season's series). The suspension affects the player and not the team. Hence the team may have 5 players on the pitch for the next game if they have sufficient substitutes available. A team will not be penalised for playing with less than 5 players if it is directly as a result of this rule.**
- 74.5 Yellow Card:  
A player is sent off for two (2) minutes and must not be replaced. Timing of the send off is suspended for periods of time out or between periods of play.  
**Signal 17 with Yellow card applies.**
- 74.5.1 A yellow card will be awarded to a player receiving an individual green card for any reason which results in that player having a total of 3 green card including team warnings.

- UK: Clarification - When a player is given an individual green card, then if they already have two green cards for whatever reason (including team warnings) they will be awarded a yellow card. If a team green is awarded, then players who might already have 2 green cards will not be issued with a yellow unless they personally committed a foul leading to the team green.**
- 74.5.2 A yellow card will be awarded for a deliberate or dangerous foul on a player that prevents the scoring of a near certain goal, except where the referee feels that the awarding of a goal penalty shot is sufficient sanction.
- 74.5.3 A yellow card will be awarded for a foul that the referee considers both deliberate and dangerous unless a red card is awarded.
- 74.5.4 A yellow card will be awarded for a deliberate or dangerous foul that is repeated, or after a green card or team warning has already been awarded to that player or their team for the same offence.
- 74.5.5 A yellow card will be awarded for repeated and continuous disputing of referee's decisions.
- 74.5.6 A yellow card will be awarded for foul or abusive language directed at an opponent or official.
- 74.5.7 Players sent off must obey the rules of entry to the playing area for re-entry at the completion of the send-off period.
- 74.6 Green Card Warning:  
Designed to warn a player, team coach or team official to control their play or behaviour or risk a yellow card, or red card send off if the infringement(s) continue.  
**Signal 17 with green card applies.**
- 74.6.1 A green card warning will be awarded for any deliberate or dangerous foul except where a yellow or red card is awarded.
- 74.6.2 A green card will be awarded to a player, team coach or team official for unnecessary verbal communication directed at a referee, official or opponent, or any other unsporting behaviour except where a yellow or red card is awarded.
- 74.6.3 A green card will be awarded to a team coach or team official if they leave the coaches area during play.
- 74.7 Team Warning.  
**Signal 17 with a green card applies.**  
A team warning occurs when a referee awards a green card to all players on a team.
- 74.7.1 A team warning will be awarded to a team by either referee if more than 1 player on the same team are guilty of the same deliberate or dangerous foul.
- 74.7.2 A team warning will be awarded to a team by either referee if more than 1 player on the same team are guilty of unnecessary verbal communication directed at a referee, official or opponent, or any other unsporting behaviour that is repeated by more than 1 player of the same team.
- 74.7.3 After a team warning has been given for a particular infringement, a yellow card will be awarded to any player of that team for any subsequent deliberate or dangerous infringement for the same offence.

## 75. TAKING THROWS

75.1 The player taking any goal line throw, corner throw, sideline throw, free throw or free shot must be in the correct position and stationary before taking the throw. The player must clearly hold the ball stationary for a moment above shoulder level to indicate they are taking the throw. The player's initial throw must travel one metre measured horizontally from point of release or change possession to another player of the same team. Infringement incurs a sanction with the opposing team being awarded possession of the ball.

**Signals 11 and 14 apply.**

75.2 When taking any free throw, or free shot, the player taking the free throw or free shot must be allowed to take up their position to take the throw. No opponent may prevent the player taking up their position or contact the player or their equipment, or deliberately prevent or restrict the movement of the player taking the throw until the ball is back in play. Infringement occurs a sanction.

**Signals 11 and 15 or 16 apply.**

75.3 The ball is not in play until it has travelled one (1) metre measured horizontally from point of release or changed possession to another player of the same team. The opposition must not attempt to prevent the ball from travelling one metre measured horizontally or changing possession. Infringement incurs a sanction. **Signals 11 and 15 or 16 apply.** The only exception will be for Free Shots awarded within 2 metres of the goal: Defenders (including the goal keeper) will be allowed to block the free shot after release, but before it has travelled 1 metre from the point of release, with a stationary paddle or stationary hand(s).

75.4 All defender's paddles and hands must be kept out of arms reach and any movement towards the player taking the free shot by either a paddle or hand(s), or blocking the ball before it has been released will be deemed a deliberate action and result in a goal penalty shot being awarded.

75.5 The player must throw the ball within five (5) seconds of being in possession and in a position to take the throw. The five seconds for the restart applies from when any member of the team is in a position to pick up the ball and take the throw. Any dropping or fumbling of the ball will not be considered, provided the initial throw is taken within the five seconds. Infringement incurs a sanction with the opposing team awarded possession of the ball. **Signals 11 and 14 applies.**

75.6 Following an infringement that led to the awarding of a free shot or free throw, the referee will indicate where the free shot or free throw will be taken. The free shot or free throw will be taken: either where the infringement occurred, or where the ball was at the time of the infringement, or where the ball landed if it was in flight at the time of the infringement, whichever most advantages the team receiving the sanction.

## 76. TAKING A GOAL PENALTY-SHOT

The player taking the goal penalty-shot will be stationary with their body on the six (6) metre line.

All other players must be positioned with their bodies in the other half of the playing area until play restarts.

The shot will be taken when referee blows the whistle.

The five (5) second rule applies.

Play will restart on the whistle. No presentation of the ball is required.

The player taking the shot may not play the ball again until it has touched another player or another player's equipment or the goal frame.

## 77. COMPLETION OF PLAY

77.1 The timekeeper will indicate the end of the period of playing time by the use of a loud signal. The ball is dead at the start of the signal. The referee shall use **signal 2** to confirm the timekeeper's signal.

77.2 If a goal penalty-shot has been awarded prior to the signal for completion of play, the goal penalty-shot must be taken before play is to be considered completed. In this situation, the ball shall after it has been thrown immediately be dead if it hits the water or the goal frame and comes back into the playing area.

## 78. OVERTIME

78.1 Overtime shall consist of consecutive periods of five (5) minutes each; with the team scoring the first goal deemed the winner. There shall be a three (3) minute break before overtime commences and a one (1) minute break between periods, with a change of ends.

**UK: It is recognised that for organisational reasons that at some tournaments where games require a result, the Tournament Organiser may have to adapt some Overtime Rules to ensure the smooth running of the event.**

## SPECIAL NOTE: ICF APPENDIX V: SHOT CLOCK

At World Championships and some other major ICF competitions a "shot clock" is used. This requires teams to attempt a shot at goal within 60 seconds.

At the time of writing (April 2013) there is an intention to introduce the shot clock at some National events, but cost and technology are proving prohibitive. Teams would also be required to operate the system and they will have to show and take a greater responsibility than is currently usual, for the administration of individual games.

**Any individual who feels they may be able to help with the production or sourcing of a suitable clock system should contact the BCU Canoe Polo Committee.**

International Tournament Organisers can decide at their discretion if they wish to use the shot clock, so teams travelling abroad may find the clocks being used.

For any team or individual who would like a copy of the full ICF rules (including the shot clock appendix), a print friendly version (48 pages) as a PDF will be available for download from the [canoepolo.org.uk](http://canoepolo.org.uk) website. In the mean time anyone who would like more information about the appendix or the ICF rules can contact:

**chief-referee@canoepolo.org.uk**



## APPENDIX-REFEREE HAND SIGNALS

### 1. START / INFRINGEMENT

Arm forward and bent upwards with palm open and facing sideways head level.



### 2. COMPLETION OF HALF / FULL TIME

Arms crossed in front of chest. Palms out.



### 3. GOAL

Arms extended, palms together.  
Point to centre of field.



### 4. DISALLOWED GOAL

Repeated crossing of arms at thigh level. Palms open.



### 5. SIDELINE THROW / CORNER

Point at sideline.  
Other arm showing direction of play.



### 6. GOAL LINE THROW

Point open hand, arm extended along goal line.  
Other arm showing direction of play.



### 7. TIME OUT

Form "T" with hands above head.



### 8. REFEREE'S BALL

Arms extended forward at shoulder level, fists clenched, thumbs up.



### 9. OBSTRUCTION / HOLDING

Hold one arm up in the air fist clenched for the period of 2 seconds, and then point at the position where the free shot has to be taken.

Other arm showing direction of play.



### 10. ILLEGAL TACKLE

Hold clenched fist against hip for the period of 2 seconds, and then point at the position where the free shot has to be taken.

Other arm showing direction of play.



### 11. 5 SECONDS / POSSESSION

Hold hand up at side at head level, palm forward. Spread all fingers for the period of 2 seconds, and then point at the position where the free shot has to be taken.

Other arm showing direction of play.



### 12. ILLEGAL USE OF PADDLE

The side of the other hand repeatedly chops the upper arm showing in direction of play for the period of 2 seconds, and then point at the position where the free shot has to be taken.



### 13. PLAY ON / ADVANTAGE

One arm elbow bent, hand pushing back and forth across the body at hip level at least three (3) times.

**UK: Also call "Play On"**

Other arm showing direction of play.



### 14. FREE THROW

Arm extended, palm open, pointing in direction of play parallel to side of field.

Other arm showing offence signal (1, 5, 6, 11 or 13).



### 15. FREE SHOT

Arm extended, index finger pointing at goal in direction of attack.

Other arm showing offence signal (9, 10, 11 or 12).



## 16. GOAL PENALTY SHOT

Both arms extended index fingers together and pointing at goal.



## 17. SHOWING CARDS

- Green card - warning
- Yellow card - 2 minutes send off
- Red card - send off for the rest of game

Hold card above head. Other arm pointing to player.

If necessary, indicate number of player with fingers.

Use clenched fist to indicate ten where a number 10 or larger is required.



## 18. UNSPORTING BEHAVIOUR

One index finger on one hand waved from side to side repeatedly



## Kit Specifications

Kayaks	Page 33
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Paddles	Page 38
Paddle Gauge	Page 39
Helmet	Page 39
Face-Protector (Face-Guard)	Page 39
Body Protection	Page 40

## KIT SPECIFICATIONS

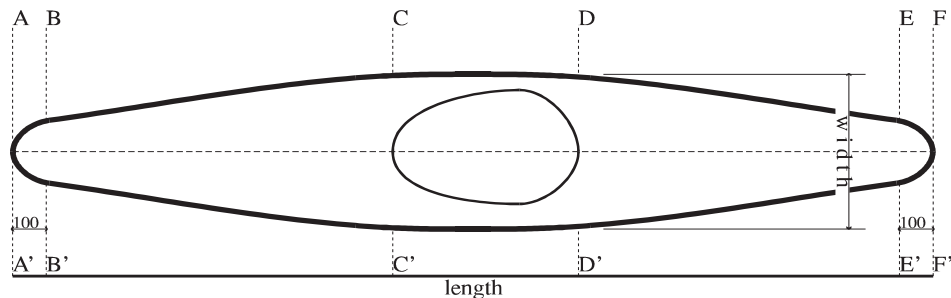
### 101. KAYAK – GENERAL

1. A canoe polo kayak with integrated bumpers, or a kayak to have padding fixed later, must not be longer than 3000 mm and must not be wider than 600 mm.
2. Front and rear 'impact zones' must be rounded and padded as these rules so as to not cause injury to other players and to reduce/prevent damage to their equipment. For kayaks with integrated padding the length of the kayak will be measured with the padding in place.
3. The weight, including padding, may not be less than 7kg.
4. There may be no sharp projections or edges.  
All curves must stay within these rules.
5. Padding as in these rules, must be firmly fixed to the front and rear of the kayak.
6. The kayak will be scrutinized with gauges.
7. All references to plan, side, section, zones ends and axis refer to the kayak as set up in a normal position, and remaining in the same position for all measurements.

### 8. Kayak-Safety requirements

- 8.1. The kayak may have no sharp projections or edges or other dangerous features. For glass (composite) kayaks, all metal bolts, screws or other fixing devices should have low profile parts on the surface, be smooth to the touch and be recessed wherever possible. Concave sections are allowable throughout the kayak so long as they do not present themselves as a dangerous feature. All metal bolts, screws or other fixing devices present in plastic kayaks must be recessed. Carry handles of any type are not permitted.
- 8.2. The kayak must have soft, shock absorbing material firmly affixed to the front and rear impact ends, sufficient to prevent injury to players and to reduce damage to equipment. The padding must comply with the detailed specifications.
- 8.3. The kayak must have sufficient buoyancy to keep it afloat, so that some part breaks the surface of the water, even when it is completely full of water.

## 9. KAYAK PLAN VIEW OF SECTIONS/ZONES



Length: Maximum 3000 mm

Width: Maximum 600 mm

Section AA' to BB' - Front Impact Zone 100 mm minimum radius at any point on B-A-B'

Section BB' to CC' - Front Section

Section CC' to DD' - Cockpit Section

Section DD' to EE' - Rear Section

Section EE' to FF' - Rear Impact Zone 100 mm minimum radius at any point on E-F-E'

## 10. Kayak – Edge

- 10.1. The edge, is the line around the kayak (not necessarily the join or gunwale line) where the side or end meets the vertical tangent. References to the top, upper, lower or bottom of a kayak are relative to this edge.
- 10.2. The edge of the kayak must be of sufficient radius so as not to cause injury to a player on impact.
- 10.3. In profile, the minimum radius of curvature for the edge in each section is detailed in the following paragraphs.
- 10.4. In plan, the minimum radius of convex curvature for the edge is 100 mm throughout the edge of the kayak.

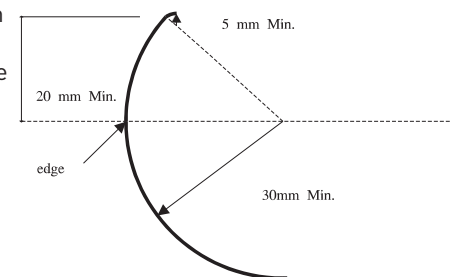
## 11. Kayak – Shape in Plan

- 11.1. In both front and rear impact zones, the minimum radius of convex curvature allowed is 100 mm. A minimum width of 200 mm within the first 100 mm must be reached. This first 100 mm is measured from the back of the padding against the kayak.

## 12. Kayak-Top and Bottom surface

- 12.1. The top and bottom surfaces including impact zones (excluding those parts of the cockpit covered by a spray deck) must be smooth so as not to cause injury to a player.
- 12.2. Top Surface in profile: Minimum radius of convex curvature allowed in the top surface of the impact zone is 20 mm.

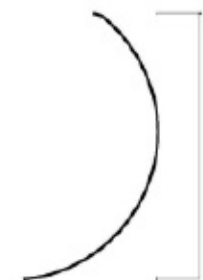
- 12.3. Section AA' to FF' – the entire length of the kayak top, edge and bottom surface in profile. For the part 20mm measured vertically above the edge (point Y), and for the bottom surface the minimum radius of convex curvature allowed is 30mm.
- 12.4. Section BB'-FF' - For the top surface in profile the minimum radius of convex curvature allowed throughout the entire length of the kayak except the front impact zone is 5mm.



- 12.5. Recesses in the hull or deck for the purpose of hiding bolt or screw heads etc. are to be permitted. Recesses should be safer than a projecting fixing device in order to be legal. Where recesses are provided to improve safety by eliminating projecting fixing devices, the 5mm radius shall be relaxed as far as it would cover the radius of any transition curve between the deck and the side surfaces of any such recess.

## 13. Kayak – Depth

- 13.1. The depth at the cockpit must be sufficient to provide some protection from impact for the player.
- 13.2. Throughout the length of the cockpit section of the kayak (from CC' to DD'), on each side of the cockpit, the kayak must vbe at least 160 mm deep, as seen in profile, not including the cockpit edge.



## UK: Boat Designs and approved designs

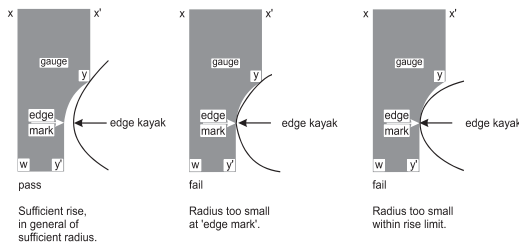
**It is important to note that only boats of an approved design may be used in BCU events. Due to the difficulty for tournament organisers in checking every boat, the BCU Polo Committee has a Boat Checking Panel, that globally checks designs. There are now several levels of check to allow for flexibility in the process. Please see the website [www.canoepolo.org.uk](http://www.canoepolo.org.uk) for details. All those intending to compete in BCU competitions should reassure themselves that the kayak they intend to use is on a list of those approved for use.**

**Individual members who wish to use boats other than, or modified from, an approved design, must get their boat checked prior to using it in any competition.**

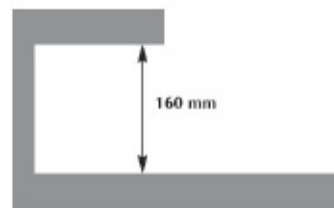
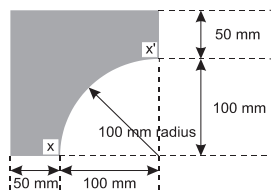
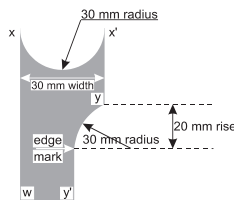


## 102. KAYAK GAUGES

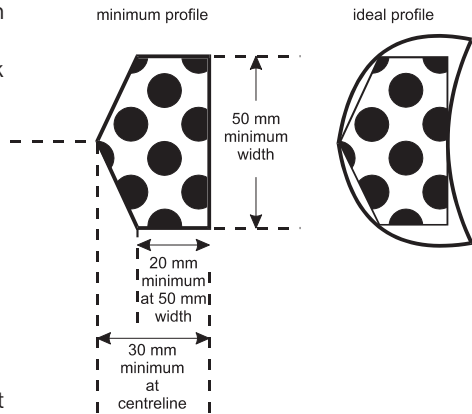
- Standardised gauges are to be used to test compliance with the specifications. The gauges need to be from sheet aluminium and precisely engineered.
- To gauge rise from the edge of the kayak, hold edge W-X of the gauge vertical and perpendicular to the kayak. Align 'edge mark' with the edge of the kayak. Side Y-Y' towards the kayak. Point Y indicates specified rise from the edge.
  - If the 'edge mark' touches the edge, but point Y does not touch the kayak, then either the radius at that point is too small or does not rise high enough.
  - If any points between Y and 'edge mark' on the kayak touch the gauge, but not both Y and 'edge mark', then the radius at that point is too small. If the kayak is exactly to minimum specification point Y and 'edge mark' and all points between will be touching.
  - If both points Y and 'edge mark' touch, but no points between, then the radius at the 'edge mark' must be too small.
  - If that portion of the kayak being tested in general is of more than sufficient radius, point Y will touch, but no other part. In this case the rise test is passed.



- To gauge the radius of curvature the radius portion of the appropriate gauge, must be applied perpendicular to the surface being tested. If both points X and X' touch the surface at the same time without the rest of the kayak, the test is passed.
- The gauges to use for the measuring of the different sections are:
  - Gauge 1, edge gauge, 30 mm radius, 20 mm rise must be used to measure section AA' to FF' – entire length of kayak.
  - Gauge 2, Impact zone gauge, 100 mm radius, must be used to measure in plan sections AA' to BB' (front) and EE' to FF' (back).
  - Gauge 3, depth gauge, 160 mm rise, must be used to measure section CC' to DD' (cockpit area).



## 103. PADDING

- Canoe Polo kayaks with both front and rear integrated bumpers fitted cannot be longer than 3000mm. Kayaks without integrated bumpers may be a maximum of 3100mm once any padding is attached. Kayaks with one integrated bumper and one non-integrated bumper cannot be longer than 3000mm prior to the non-integrated bumper being attached.
  - Soft shock absorbing padding a minimum of 30 mm thick (when uncompressed) at the horizontal centre line and 50 mm wide must be firmly attached to cover the edges of the front and back of the kayak at the ends and extend at least 100 mm from the ends.
  - Soft shock absorbing material must be homogeneous (e.g.: Foam, soft rubber). If it relies on a composite construction for its minimum thickness and shock absorbing property, then the essential shock absorbing property of the padding must not be lost under compression. The characteristics should be measured at the temperatures that will prevail during the competition.
  - The 30 mm thick must be reached on the horizontal centre line. It may be reduced to not less than 20 mm thick at a width of 50mm. The padding must be compressible (by a scrutineer's or player's thumb) by at least 10 mm. The padding must not be compressible to less than 10 mm thickness. The thickness and compression are measured parallel to the axis of the kayak.
 
  - The padding must be positioned on the edge (see definition of edge in kayak specifications) to cover at least 15 mm above and below the edge.
  - The padding must be attached in a way that the edges and ends are not, liable to catch on players or equipment. If tubing is used, the ends of the tubing must be closed or covered.
  - If rivets or bolts (or similar) are used to attach the padding, they must be recessed at least 20mm into the padding from the outer most part.
  - Any method of fitting should ensure there is no possibility of the bumper either falling off or out of position during the course of a competition.
  - For integrated bumpers there should be no (minimal) gap between the start/edge of the bumper and the part of the kayak to which it meets and any part of the kayak that meets the bumper should have a minimum of 5 mm radii.
  - The shape of the kayak beneath the integrated bumper is not important so long as while the bumper is in place the whole kayak meets the specifications outlined in this appendix.
  - For integrated bumpers in general their profile should so far as possible follow the profile of the kayak ends. The integrated bumper must be appropriate for that design of kayak.

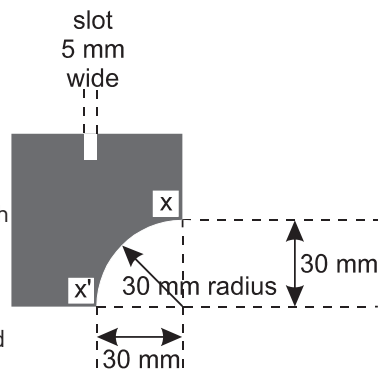
## 104. PADDLE

1. The paddle must be double-bladed with no sharp projections, edges, holes or other dangerous features. The blades shape, thickness and radii must stay within these rules. The paddle will be scrutineered with a gauge.
2. The blades are to be no more than 600 mm x 250 mm in plan measured from where the shaft meets the blade. The edges must have a minimum radius of 30 mm in plan and a minimum thickness of 5 mm. Metal tipped blades are not allowed.
3. The exception to this is those blades where the metal edge is an integral part of the construction as opposed to a rim or trim added to the outside by any means. However if at any point the internal metal component is exposed then it will be considered un-fit for use in canoe polo.

**UK:** *Bolt on external rims are not permitted.*

## 105. PADDLE GAUGE

1. A standardised gauge is to be used to test compliance with the specifications. The gauge needs to be from sheet aluminium and precisely engineered.
2. To gauge the radius of curvature the radius portion of the paddle gauge, must be applied perpendicular to the surface being tested. If both points X and X' touch the surface at the same time without the rest of the paddle, the radius test is passed.



To gauge the thickness of the paddle-blade, hold the slot over the blade. If the paddle does not enter the slot, the test is passed.

**UK:** *If a paddle blade requires more than one (1) layer of PVC tape (normal electrical tape) to bring the edge thickness up to 5mm, then they will not be permitted to be used.*



## 106. HELMET

1. The helmet must be a safety one and suitable. They must protect against any blow, which may be reasonably anticipated in the course of a game covering from the jaw line to the rear point of the skull, such that no contact is possible between the skull and a blade on a horizontally held paddle.

**UK:** *All Helmets for use in BCU events must be CE Approved - Without question.*

## 107. FACE-PROTECTOR

1. The face protector must be of a strong material such as steel or any equal strong material. An object in the shape of a cube no smaller than 7x7x7 cm must not be able to enter through the grill of the face protector. The face protector must be securely fixed to the helmet, without sharp or dangerous fixings. They may not present any sharp or dangerous part. It must protect against any blow that may be reasonably anticipated in the course of a game. It must cover the entire face of the player beginning at the lower level of the chin and covering the surface between the two temples.

**UK:** *Any Strong material may be used in the construction and fitting of the face-guard, providing it is not know to shatter, or cause injury to either the wearer or others.*

*Generally, if a paddle (any legal one) can touch the players face through any holes in the face-guard when in the normal playing position, then that face-guard will not be suitable and will not be permitted to be used.*



## 108. BODY PROTECTION

1. The body protection in the form of a Personal Floatation Device (PDF) that meets suitable accreditation standards for Canoeing. The padding must be at least 15 mm thick. The padding must protect against any impact from other players equipment, which may be reasonably anticipated in the course of a game. The padding must begin no more than 100 mm above the cockpit rim measured at the player's side, with the player sitting normally in their kayak. The gap between the top of the protection at the side and the top of the armpit measured with the arm horizontal must be less than 100 mm.



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## FUTURE RULE BOOKS

The Canoe Polo Rule book is distributed free to all Polo Teams entering the National Leagues and National Championships. It is part of the course material for all Refereeing courses. Additionally copies are supplied to Universities, Regional Polo Organisers and Regional Canoeing Development Officers.

Further copies can be obtained from the Secretary throughout the year at a cost of £5.00 each, which includes postage.

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