

Summary Of Rule Changes Adopted By APC On 1st May 2010

1.b. (vi) Dispute and Abuse. A player may not question or dispute a decision by the umpires at any time by word action or gesture nor may he abuse them.

1. g. Team Shirts. Shirts will be in team colours with the number of the player no less than 9 inches (22cm) high and in contrasting colour on the back. Team shirts must be numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4 and not duplicated. Roman numerals are permitted. Team shirts must not be of black and white stripes so as to be similar to those worn by Umpires. If, in the opinion of the umpires or Tournament Committee, the colours of two competing teams are so alike as to lead to confusion, the team lower in the draw or second named in a league competition shall be instructed to play in another colour. Teams must have available a second set of shirts of contrasting colour.

1. i. Team Captain.

- i. **Appointment.** A captain will be appointed by each team. The umpires should identify the captain before the start of any match.
- ii. **No Appeal.** The team captain or the team manager may not appeal against the appointment of any particular umpire, referee or other official nor against the time or venue of a game.
- iii. **Clarification of a Decision.** The team captain has the right to ask the umpires to clarify a decision they may have made, however, once the umpires have, in their opinion, answered the team captain's query, he may not continue to question or dispute the decision in any way.
- iv. **Report Form.** A team captain may complete a report if he considers that the Tournament Committee have acted improperly or that the umpires have failed in their duties. In the latter case the form must be signed by a second member of his team and be accompanied by substantial evidence such as a DVD or signed statements. The report must be submitted to the Tournament Committee within 12 hours from the end of the match (See Rule 6).

4. b. Veterinary Cover and Use.

- i. Clubs must have an arrangement for cover with a local veterinary practice. For all polo matches a veterinary surgeon who is a current registered member of an Australian State Veterinary Surgeons Board should either be present or on immediate call and a club official should be in attendance at all games in case a welfare problem arises.

5. TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE.

a. Requirement. For any tournament the host club will appoint a Tournament Committee of three or more individuals, who preferably should have no vested interest in the outcome of the event. In the absence of a Tournament Committee, the Polo Manager of the Club or his representative with the umpires and referee shall act as the Tournament Committee.

6. REPORT FORMS

a. Report Forms will be distributed to every club by the State Associations and/or APC and must be held by the Polo Manager. A Report Form shall be filled in by an official such as an umpire or referee or by a team captain (see Rule 11 (iv)) immediately after the game has finished to record any irregularity before, during or after play. The form shall be completed in full and signed by those officials or the team captain and one other member of the team submitting the report.

20. SCORING GOALS AND WINNING

a. To Score. A goal is scored from play when the ball passes between the goal posts or the imaginary vertical lines produced by the inner surfaces of the goal posts and across and clear of the goal line. A ball on the line is still in play. A ball hit directly over the top of either goal post shall not count as a goal because it does not pass between their inner vertical lines. If a ball lodges in the goal post, a hit in will be awarded. If a ball splits, see Rule 31. Should a goal post fall in such a way as to stop a goal which in the judgment of the umpires would have been scored then it should be awarded. A similar ruling will apply if the ball hits a flag at the top of a goalpost.

21. b. Where Thrown In.

- i. Ball hit over sideline or boards. See Rule 22.
- ii. On all other occasions the umpire will stand at the spot as laid down in the specific rule or where the incident took place but at least 20 yards (18 metres) from the sidelines or boards and 10 yards (9 metres) from the goal or back line. The ball to be thrown in towards the nearest sidelines or boards.

21. d. Play Restarted. The umpire, having been satisfied that the teams are apart and ordered, will bowl the ball in underhand, low and hard between the opposing ranks of players; the players to remain stationary until the ball has left his hand. If players are infringing the gap the umpire should blow the whistle to stop the clock and insist on a gap before throwing in the ball. Umpires should penalise a team if the infringement is repeated or considered to be intentional in order to stop the clock.

24. b. Hit In. When the ball is hit behind the back line by the attacking side, the goal judge will place the ball in accordance with Rule 8c. The umpire shall give the team facing the hit reasonable time to get into position before calling 'Play'. None of these players shall be forward of the 30 yard line until the ball is hit or hit at; the team taking the hit may place themselves where they choose. There will be no contact between players from the moment the ball crosses the back line until it is brought back into play. The striker may not tee up the ball but may reposition it once. Once the umpire has called 'Play', the striker may not circle and must hit in immediately. The ball is in play the moment that it has been hit or hit at and missed (see also Rule 32a). Should a member of the team facing the hit cross the 30 yard line before the ball is struck the hit in should be moved forward to the 30 yard line.

30. c. Request Stop. During a break in play, or in exceptional circumstances when the clock is not stopped, a player may call to an umpire that his pony is injured, lame or distressed and may need to be changed. The umpires will respond to his call by blowing the whistle if play is not already stopped and proceed as below.

- i. If they are satisfied that the pony needs to be changed, they will call 'Free Change' and all other players may change. Play will be restarted as soon as the player with the pony concerned has returned on a fresh pony and is ready to play.
- ii. If they are not satisfied that the pony needs to be changed then that player and any player on the opposing team only may change but not the remaining players of his team. Play will be restarted as soon as the player with the pony concerned has left the field of play.
- iii. Any unnecessary delay to the restart of the game caused by the player of the pony that needed to be changed will be penalised.
- iv. If the game has been stopped at the request of a player so that a pony can be changed, then the umpires may demand that the pony concerned be tagged or marked under their supervision so that it may not play again.

33. a. Crossing. A player may cross the LOB but may not enter or cross the ROW of a player already established on it if he either endangers that player or causes him to check or pull away. A player crossing behind a player on the ROW will foul if he crosses another player following up on that ROW.

No player may cross or turn across an opposing player who follows the LOB or has the ROW except at such a distance that no risk of a collision or danger to either player is involved. A player crossing behind a player on the ROW will foul if he crosses another player following on the ROW.

33. p. The player with the ball who chooses to stop or slow down to walking speed when he is being challenged but is neither being blocked nor ridden off may then tap the ball only once in any direction, after which he must immediately leave it, accelerate with it or hit it away (Fig xvii). Should he leave it for another member of his team to take, that player, whether challenged or not, must immediately run with it or hit it away without the option of a tap. The opponent is considered to be challenging if he is within one horse's length on either the offside or the nearside of the player with the ball. The penalty for breach of this rule shall normally be Penalty 7 (throw in), but, if the rule is breached persistently by a team, a more severe penalty may be awarded. A player who chooses to tap the ball under the pony of a challenging player will foul if he rides into the challenging player other than by legitimate ride off.

35 e. Ride off an opponent when the ball is out of play or dead. If there is contact between players before the ball is hit or hit at for a hit in or penalty, the umpires should blow the whistle (to stop the clock if it is not already stopped) before the ball is hit or hit at and warn the players or player concerned. Umpires should penalise a team if the infringement is repeated or considered to be intentional in order to stop the clock.

39. PENALTIES - GENERAL

Where the selection of the penalty to be awarded is at the discretion of the umpire, they should take into account the degree of danger, where the foul took place, the direction of play, the position of the players and the frequency of similar fouls. If the umpires cannot decide they should consult the referee. The umpires may move a penalty back from where a foul occurred, for example if a defender fouled within his own 30 yard line near the boards and the goal is not directly threatened the umpires may award a Penalty 3 or 4 as appropriate.

39. c. Circling. Once the umpire has called 'Play', the striker must immediately start to take the hit. The ball must be hit or hit at on the first approach without any circling at the beginning of or during the run up.

40. a. Penalty 1 - Penalty Goal

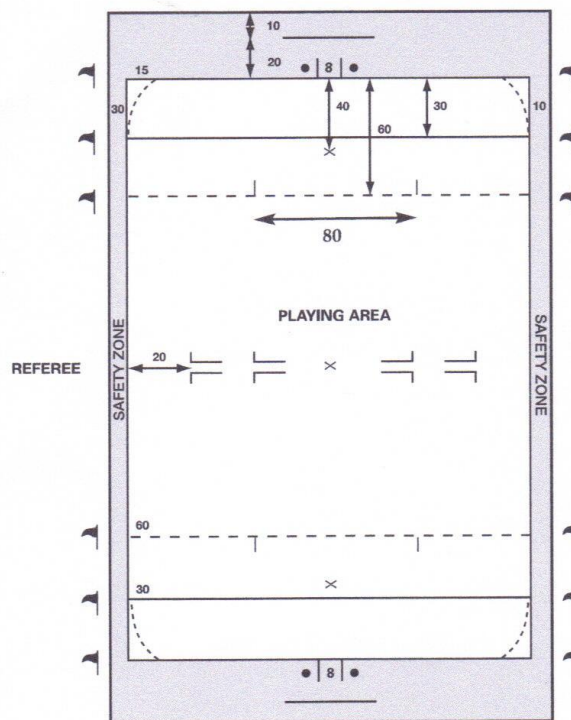
If, in the opinion of the umpire, a player commits a dangerous or deliberate foul in the vicinity of goal in order to save a goal, the team fouled shall be awarded one goal. The umpires should instruct the goal judge to wave his flag to indicate that a goal has been awarded. The game shall be restarted by the umpire throwing in from the spot ten yards from the centre of the goal of the team that fouled towards the boards, with his right side nearest to the backline. The clock will be restarted when the ball leaves the umpire's hand. Ends shall not be changed.

40.b (ii) 30 Yard Hit - Undefended.

- The striker may hit or hit at the ball only once. The rest of his team must be behind the ball when it is hit or hit at and have no play.
 - The team facing the hit have no play. They must be behind their back line, may not stand between the goal posts nor behind the goal, and must allow the ball to come to a rest. They have no play and any intentional or unintentional distraction will result in the penalty being retaken if no goal has been scored.
 - Should the ball on the one hit fail to cross the goal or back line or rebound into play off a goal post the Umpire should blow his whistle; the team facing the hit will be awarded a hit from where the ball came to rest, as for a Penalty 5a. The ball may be moved outwards towards the boards or sideline should a goal post interfere with the player taking the hit.
- If any member of the team facing the hit is seen to be fouling during the taking of the hit the umpire should wait to see if a goal is scored and, if so, a goal shall be awarded, the goal judge should wave his flag and play restarted as normal with a throw in from the centre or as allowed for in Rule 20c(ii). If a goal was not scored then the umpire should blow his whistle and order the penalty to be retaken.

ANNEX A - SUGGESTED LAYOUT OF THE FIELD OF PLAY

See also Rule 11



Sockets for widened goals 4 yards out from each goal post

Length: 300 yards (274 metres) maximum, 250 yards (229 metres) minimum.

Width: 200 yards (183 metres) maximum unboarded, 160 yards (146 metres) maximum boarded.

Safety Zone: At sides about 10 yards (9 metres), at ends about 30 yards (27.5 metres).

Markings: Broken lines or full marking may be used across the grounds. Marks on the boards or flags (clear of the safety zone) are useful as a guide to the umpires. Two short lines at right angles to the 60 yard line should be drawn 40 yards (36.5 metres) out from the centre of the goal. A line of tees approximately two foot apart clear of the centre spot should be marked on the centre line. A double tee as shown will help keep teams apart at the throw in. These should be two feet (0.61 metres) apart. A line of about 50 yards (45.7 metres) in length should be drawn on the end safety zone about 20 yards (18 metres) from the back line as shown behind which the goal judges should stand.

ANNEX B - NOTES FOR OFFICIALS

3. THE UMPIRES

c. Line of the Ball (LOB) and Right of Way (ROW). It is very important that the Umpires understand the meaning of the Right of Way which is set out in detail in Rule 32 b. The umpires must watch the play very closely to pick up the

Line of the Ball every time the ball is hit and from this they must judge which player or players have the Right of Way. In general terms the player following down the line with the ball on his offside has precedence over all others. A player riding in the direction that the ball is travelling at an angle to its line has the ROW over a player meeting at an angle but two players with one meeting and one following on the exact line have equal rights. A player who strikes the ball and then deviates from its line surrenders his right to the ROW. Two players making a play on each other, whether following or meeting, have the ROW over a single player coming from either direction (Two Against One Rule). A player playing the ball on his nearside has no claim to the ROW but may continue to play the ball as long as he does not endanger a player who can legitimately make a play. Should a player check on the ROW an opponent may enter and take up the ROW providing it was safe for him to do so. Should he do so safely then the player who gave up the ROW cannot accelerate to ride into his opponent from behind. Equally an opponent may not ride into an opponent with the ROW in such a way as to cause him to hook up to avoid a nasty ride off

d. Crossing, Turning the Ball, Blocking and Tapping. Umpires must take particular note of Rule 33a. which deals with crossing: the fundamental rule of play. Whether a player crosses the ROW of another player in such a way as to foul is a judgment call by the umpires and will depend on their assessment of danger based on speed and distance. In open play the call is often easy enough but is more difficult when a player turns with the ball with an opponent following in close order behind. The player following has to commit to the play and cannot be judged to have committed if he checks or turns in anticipation of a backhand. The umpires must make a judgment on the level of commitment and be prepared to penalise the player turning before a collision occurs. A player may not block the progress of an opponent who is on the ROW by positioning himself in such a way that his opponent cannot move forward. However a player who taps the ball under an opponent's pony and turns onto the new line claiming a foul must himself be penalised. Rule 33p.states that a player who chooses to stop or slow down to walking pace when he is being challenged but is neither being blocked nor ridden off may tap the ball only once in any direction after which he must leave it, accelerate with it or hit it away. Furthermore should he leave it for a player following, whether challenged or not, then that player must immediately run with it or hit it away without the luxury of a tap.

3. h. vii. If a player requests that play be stopped for whatever reason but usually for a lame or distressed pony and the umpires are satisfied that that the request is genuine then all players may change. Should they not be satisfied then only that player and members of the other team may change but play will be started as soon as the player who made the request has left the ground. (See Rule 30c). Note that play will not be stopped for lost or broken tack which in the opinion of the umpires does not constitute a danger. (Rule 26b).

m. Throw-in. (See Rule 21).

- i. **General.** Umpire A, who is to throw in the ball, must ensure that the teams are lined up on a T or equivalent with the nearest players at least five yards from him and with a distinct gap separating the two teams who must remain stationary. There shall be no contact between players on opposing sides before the ball is thrown in. umpire B will be about forty yards away at the back of the throw-in ready to move parallel and level with the play. The ball should be thrown-in hard and under hand so that it remains low to prevent players hitting wildly in the line-out. All rough and dangerous play should be penalised instantly, but Umpires should not penalise players for crossing until the ROW has been clearly established as the ball leaves the lineout. Umpire A will take up position as trailing umpire.

o. Penalties. There are ten specific penalties listed which umpires will use to penalise players for breach of the Rules. They should know both the number and name of the penalties but in any event they must know the name. The majority of penalties in common use involve a hit by the side fouled but the umpires may award a throw-in if a penalty is incorrectly taken or for a breach of the one tap rule, after the ordering off of a pony or player or sending off a player. Umpires must ensure that any penalty awarded is appropriate to the foul committed, taking into account the direction of play, severity, position on the ground at which it occurred and prevalence. They must be consistent in their award, showing equal disfavour to both sides within the above parameters. Rule 39 covers the correct taking of penalties. In brief, teeing up is not allowed and only one player may position the ball, provided he takes no longer than 5 seconds. If the ball rolls into a hole, it may be repositioned once but not after 'Play' has been called. Nor is the striker allowed to circle once the umpire has called 'Play'. Failure to comply is penalised with a throw-in from the spot (Penalty 7) where the penalty was to have been taken. The ball is in play the minute it has been hit or hit at. When taking Penalty 3, 4 or 6, the striker must show the intent to hit the ball with one stroke through the goal. Should the ball fail to reach the back or goal line then play will continue as normal except that during this phase of play the striker or his team mates may only hit the ball with a half shot ie with the head of the stick starting the shot below the shoulder. Failure to comply will be penalised by a free hit from where the penalty was taken. For rules governing the taking of other penalties see below.

ii. Penalty 2 (Hit from the Spot or Thirty Yard Hit). Paragraph two.

Should the captain elect to take the hit from the 30 yard line or the foul occurred outside the 30 yard line and a Penalty 2 has been awarded, Umpire A should place the ball on the line opposite the centre of the goal. Umpire B will be behind one goal post with the goal judge behind the other. The striker has only one hit at the ball and may not circle. The defending team have no play Should the ball fail to cross the back or goal line on the one hit then umpire

A will blow his whistle and award a free hit to the defending side from the spot where the ball came to rest; moving the ball outwards if a goal post would have interfered with the run up.

4. EXPLANATION OF SOME RULES

b. Prolongation in Case of Penalty Awarded (Rule 16c). If the umpires award a penalty within 5 seconds of the end of the match, whether in normal or extra time, they must ensure that the time-keeper is aware of their decision and he knows that 5 seconds of play must be allowed from the moment the penalty striker hits or hits at the ball. On occasion, another penalty can be awarded during the 5 seconds period, in which case the clock should be reset to allow a further 5 seconds of play and so on. Should the referee rule "No Foul" then the non-elapsed time only should be played.

5. CLUB WELFARE OFFICER

Every club should appoint a Welfare Officer to oversee the welfare of all the ponies owned by members of the club and also those that may be visiting for matches. The ultimate responsibility, however, remains with the owner (See the APC Risk Management Policy & Procedures Section 2.1.5.1). During matches the Club Welfare Officer should monitor the pony lines to ensure that the APC guidelines are observed. They should take note of the APC Risk Management Policy & Procedures Section 2 and Rules 3 and 4. Although umpires are responsible for pony welfare during a match, Welfare Officers should nonetheless take note of any abuse by players and bring it to the attention of the Tournament Committee if the umpires fail to react. A report form (see Rule 6) may be completed and sent to the APC Horse Welfare Committee and State Association.

They should be in close touch with the Club's designated veterinary practice to ensure that during matches cover is in place as laid down in Rule 4b. They should ensure that a horse ambulance is on standby at every match and that the team operating it have practised procedures (Rule 4p) and finally, should the worst happen, they should be conversant with the APC Risk Management Policy & Procedures Section 2.1.7 (Pony Put Down). As well as a winch and screens the horse ambulance should carry ropes, a drag mat, a spare headcollar, a tarpaulin, a bucket of sand and a knife for slitting saddlery.

6. THE TIMEKEEPER AND SCORER

- v. **Ringing the Bell.** It is the Timekeeper's duty to ring the bell when 7 minutes of playing time has elapsed, and again 30 seconds later if play has not already stopped. Great care must be taken that the first stroke of the bell coincides exactly with the termination of the 7 and 7 ½ minutes as the ball may go through the goal just before the first stroke of the bell in which case the goal should be allowed or just after in which case the goal should be disallowed. The Timekeeper's responsibility in this matter is therefore of great importance.

7. THE GOAL JUDGES

h. Hit Over Back Line by Defender. If the ball was hit over the back line by a defender, then the umpires will award Penalty 6 which is taken on the 60 yard line opposite where the ball went out of play but no further than 40 yards out from the centre. The umpires might ask the goal judge for help in deciding if a defender or attacker hit the ball over the back line (see Rule 24 and 25).

ANNEX C - GUIDELINES FOR TOURNAMENTS

2. **ENTRY.** The Tournament Committee should whenever possible arrange a balanced and achievable schedule for a tournament at their club. This may require teams entered to play qualifying matches at other clubs.

8. PENALTY SHOOT OUT. ...

.....The shoot out can take place at two separate locations and at different times. Should the match have started then the number of penalty shots to be taken can be reduced pro rata to the number of chukkas played. If used to break a tie then all team members should take a strike from the 40 yard spot and if still a tie continue until it is broken.

ANNEX D - CONDITIONS FOR OFFICIAL APC TOURNAMENTS

2. **b. Substitution.** A substitution may take place if a player is injured during a match or warm up. As above a distinction is drawn:

- i. **League Phase.** A team may nominate a player of 8 goal or above who is playing in the tournament to act as a substitute in the event of injury to one of its players. The player may then come in as a substitute for an injured player of 8 goals or above. Otherwise the rules for substitution as laid down in Rule 2 apply.
- ii. **Main Knockout Phase.** A team must nominate a qualified substitute for each of its players and give the list to the Polo Manager by 5pm the evening previous to the match. For a player of 8 goals and above a similarly handicapped player who has played in the tournament but not in the main tournament knockout phase is deemed to be qualified. This does not prevent a team reverting to the substitution rules as set out in Rule 2.

ANNEX E ORDER OF MERIT WITHIN AND ACROSS LEAGUES & GROUPS

(See also Annex C)

- b. If it is necessary to establish an order of merit between the first placed teams in each league to allocate the playoff places in the knock out phase (see Paragraph 6 below), take all the matches that the teams have played in their league or group to establish the order of merit between them again using the system in Paragraph 2 or 3.

- c. If it is necessary to achieve an order of merit between the second or third and so on placed teams in each league and/or group proceed as for the first placed teams above. A Tournament Committee may however wish to include a special rule in the schedule if the tournament does include a group or groups as those teams in a group are at a disadvantage (there are always more teams than in a league) when an order of merit is drawn up using the system outlined above. (See Note 2 to Example J)