

# BEACH WATER POLO RULES



FÉDÉRATION  
INTERNATIONALE  
DE NATATION

## **BWP 1 FIELD OF PLAY**

**BWP 1.1** The distance between the goal line at each end of field of play shall be 15 metres. The width of field of play shall be 10 metres.

**BWP 1.2** The depth of the water of playing area must not be less than 2.00 metres.

**BWP 1.3** Distinctive buoys shall be provided on both sides of the playing area:

- a) 2 metre area red buoys
- b) 5 metre area yellow buoys
- c) remainder of the playing area green buoys
- d) half distance line white buoys

**BWP 1.4** Red buoys shall be placed at each end 2 metres from the corner of the playing area on the side of opposite to the official table to denote the touching corner.

**BWP 1.5** The boundary of the field of play at each end shall be in line with the front of the goalpost.

**BWP 1.6** The secretary shall be provided with separate white, blue, red, and yellow flags, each measuring 0.35 metres x 0.20 metres.

## **BWP 2 GOALPOSTS**

**BWP 2.1** Two goalposts and crossbar rigidly constructed, rectangular with a dimension of 0.075 metres facing to the field of play and painted in any colour. The goals shall be located on the goal lines at each of the field of play end and equal distances from the sides.

**BWP 2.2** The inner sides of the goal posts shall be 2.5 metres and the crossbar shall be 0.80 metres from the surface of the water.

**BWP 2.3** The limp nets shall be securely fastened to the goal posts to prevent the ball from going underneath or through the side of net. The depth of the goals shall not be less than 0.30 metres.

## **BWP 3 THE BALL**

**BWP 3.1** 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.

**BWP 3.2** The weight of the ball shall be not less than 400 grammes and not more than 450 grammes.

**BWP 3.3** For the games played by men, the circumference of the ball shall be not less than 0.68 metres and not more than 0.71 metres, and its pressure shall be 55 - 62 kPa (kilopascals) (8 - 9 pounds per square inch atmospheric).

**BWP 3.4** For games play by women, the circumference of the ball shall be not less than 0.65 metres and not more than 0.67 metres, and pressure shall be 48 - 55 kPa (kilopascals) (7 - 8 pounds per square inch atmospheric).

## **BWP 4 CAPS**

**BWP 4.1** Caps shall be of contrasting colors other than solid red, as approved by the referee, but also to contrast with the colour of the ball. A team may be required by the referee to wear white or blue caps. The goalkeepers shall wear red caps. Caps shall be fastened under the chin. Caps shall be fitted with malleable ear protectors which shall be the same colour as the team's caps except that the goalkeeper may have red ear protectors.

**BWP 4.2** Caps shall be numbered on both sides with 0.10 metres in height. The goalkeeper shall wear cap number 1 and the other caps shall be numbered 2 to 7.

**BWP 4.3** A player who substitutes the goalkeeper shall wear a red cap. A player shall not be allowed to change cap number during the game except with the permission of the referee and with notification to the secretary. Caps shall be worn throughout the entire game. If a player loses the cap during play, the player shall replace it at the next appropriate stoppage of the game when the player's team is in possession of the ball.

**BWP 4.4** For international games, the caps shall display on the front the international three letter country code and may display the national flag.

## **BWP 5 TEAMS AND SUBSTITUTES**

**BWP 5.1** Each team shall consist of four players, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper, and not more than three reserves who may be used as substitutes.

**BWP 5.2** The head coach, other officials and all players who are not in the game at that time, shall sit on the pontoon and shall not move away from there.

**BWP 5.3** Teams shall change ends at half time.

**BWP 5.4** The substitutes' benches in beach water polo can be a pontoon and must be placed on the other side of the field of play from the referee and match officials.

**BWP 5.5** Each team shall have a captain who shall be responsible for the behavior of the team.

**BWP 5.6** Players have to present themselves for matches with fingernails properly cut and shall remove any articles that are likely to cause injury. Players shall not have grease, oil or any similar or foreign substance on the body or hands. If the referee ascertains before the start of play that such a substance has been used, he shall order it to be removed immediately. If the offence is detected after the play has started, the offending player shall be excluded for remainder of the game with immediate substitution.

**BWP 5.7** Each team shall have three substitutes who may participate in the game replacing a player. A substitute may enter the game from the touching corner as soon as the exiting player has visibly risen to the surface of the water from the touching corner.

**BWP 5.8** A goalkeeper who has been replaced by a substitute may play in any position.

**BWP 5.9** A substitute may enter the field of play from any place:

- a) during the interval between periods of play
- b) after a goal has been scored
- c) during time out
- d) to replace a player who is bleeding or injured

**BWP 5.10** The goalkeeper shall not be permitted to go out of the team's half of the field of play and may touch the ball with 2 hands inside the teams' 5 metre area.

## **BWP 6 OFFICIALS**

**BWP 6.1** In all official competitions the match officials shall be as follows:

- a) one referee
- b) two secretaries
- c) two timekeepers

**BWP 6.2** The duties of the secretaries shall be:

- a) to maintain the record of the game, including the players, the score, time outs, exclusion fouls and penalty fouls awards against each player.
- b) to signal with the red flag and whistle for any improper re-entry of an excluded player or substitute.
- c) after 2 minutes, the secretary should signal the re-entry of a substitute for a player who has committed brutality by raising the yellow flag along with the appropriate coloured flag.

**BWP 6.3** The duties of the timekeeper shall be:

- a) to record the exact periods of actual play, time outs and the intervals between the periods.
- b) to record the periods of continuous possession of the ball by each team.
- c) to announce the start of the last minute of the game .
- d) to signal by whistle after 45 seconds and at the end of each time out.

**BWP 6.4** A timekeeper shall signal by whistling (acoustically efficient and readily understood) the end of each period independently of the referee and the signal shall take immediate effect and stop the game except:

- a) in the case of the simultaneous award by the referee of a penalty throw, in which event the penalty throw shall be taken.
- b) if the ball is in flight and crosses the goal line, in which event any resulting goal shall be allowed.

## **BWP 7 REFEREE**

**BWP 7.1** The referee has absolute jurisdiction over the game, from the time the teams enter the playing area until they leave. All decisions are final and have to be accepted by all players and coaches. The referee may alter a decision, as long as this is done before the ball is back in play.

**BWP 7.2** The referee shall whistle to start the game and to declare goals, goal throws, corner throws, neutral throws, and infringements of the rules.

**BWP 7.3** The referee can apply the advantage rule so as not to favor the team that has committed the offence and should not stop play unless it is absolutely necessary.

**BWP 7.4** The referee has the power to order any player from the water in accordance with the rules. If a player refuses to obey the referee's instructions, the match shall be abandoned and the game awarded five (5) goals to zero (0) to the opposing team.

**BWP 7.5** The referee shall have the power to order the removal from the precincts of the pool any player, substitute, spectator or official whose behavior prevents the referee from carrying out his or her duties in an impartial manner.

**BWP 7.6** The referee shall have the power to abandon the game at any time if the referee believes that behavior of players or spectators, or any other circumstances, prevent the match from taking place in a fair and correct manner. If the game has to be abandoned, the referee shall report their actions to the competent authority.

## **BWP 8 DURATION OF THE GAME**

**BWP 8.1** The duration of the game shall be two periods each of ten (10) minutes actual play. Time shall commence at the start of each period when a player touches the ball. At all signals for stoppages, the recording watch shall be stopped until the ball is put back into play by the ball leaving the hand of the player taking the appropriate throw or when the ball is touched by a player following a neutral throw.

**BWP 8.2** There shall be a five (5) minute interval between two periods. The teams, including the players, coaches and officials, shall change ends in the interval time.

**BWP 8.3** Should the scores be level at full time in any game for which a definite result is required, there shall be a penalty shoot out to determine the result.

- (a) the three players nominated will be required to be listed in order and that order will determine the sequence, which cannot be changed.
- (b) no players excluded for remainder of the game are eligible to be listed among those players to shoot.
- (c) shots will be taken alternately at either end of the pool, unless conditions at one end of the field of play advantage or disadvantage a team, in which case all shots may be taken at the same end. All players taking the shots will remain in the water in front of their pontoon and the other players will be required to be seated on the team's pontoon. If the goalkeeper is excluded during the penalty shoot-out, a player from the nominated three players may substitute for the goalkeeper but without the privileges of the goalkeeper. Following the taking of the penalty shot, the player may be substituted by another player or goalkeeper. If a field player is excluded during the penalty shoot-out, the player's position is removed from the list of the three players participating in the penalty shoot-out, and a substitute player is placed in the last position of the list.
- (d) the team to shoot first will be determined by toss of a coin.
- (e) should teams still be tied following the completion of the initial three penalty shots, the same three players shall then take alternate shots until one team misses and the other scores.

**BWP 8.4** Any visible clock shall show the time in descending manner.

**BWP 8.5** If a game (or part of a game) must be replayed, then goals, personal fouls and time outs that occurred during the time to be replayed are deleted from the game score sheet, however brutality, misconduct, and any red card exclusions are recorded on the game score sheet.

## **BWP 9 TIME OUTS**

**BWP 9.1** Each team may request one time out in each period of play. The duration of the time out shall be one minute.

**BWP 9.2** A time out may be requested at any time by the coach of the team in possession of the ball calling time out and signaling to the referee or secretary with hands forming a T-shape. If a time out is requested, the secretary or referee shall immediately stop the game by whistle and players shall return to their respective halves of the field of play.

**BWP 9.3** Play shall be restarted upon the whistle of the referee by the team in possession of the ball putting the ball into play on or behind the half distance line, except that if a time out is requested before the taking of penalty throw or corner throw, that throw shall be maintained.

The possession clock continues from the recommencement of play after the time out.

**BWP 9.4** If the coach in the possession of the ball requests an additional time out to which the team is not entitled, the game shall be stopped and play shall then be restarted by a player of opposing team putting the ball into play at the half distance line.

If the coach of the team not in possession of the ball requests a time out, the game shall be stopped and a penalty throw awarded to the opposing team.

## **BWP 10 THE START OF PLAY**

**BWP 10.1** The first team listed in the official program will wear white caps or the caps reflecting the colour of their country and will start the game to the left of the official table. The other team will wear blue caps or caps of a contrasting colour and will start the game to the right of the official table.

**BWP 10.2** At the start of each period, both teams will line up on their side of the playing area. When the referee is satisfied both teams are ready the referee shall blow the whistle to start and then throw the ball into play on the half distance line.

**BWP 10.3** If the ball is thrown giving one team a definite advantage, the referee shall call for the ball and award a neutral throw on the half distance line.

## **BWP 11 SCORING**

**BWP 11.1** A goal shall be scored when the entire ball has passed fully over the goal line, between the goal posts and underneath the crossbar.

**BWP 11.2** A goal can be scored by any player from any part of the field of play, except that the goalkeeper shall not be permitted to go or touch the ball beyond the half distance line. The goalkeeper can only score from inside the half distance line.

**BWP 11.3** A goal can be scored with any part of the body except the clenched fist.

**BWP 11.4** A goal can be scored only if two players from either team intentionally play or touch the ball after the start of play.

**BWP 11.5** A goal may be scored by a player shooting from outside 5 metres after the player's team has been awarded a free throw for a foul committed outside 5 metres.

**BWP 11.6** A goal shall be scored if, at the expiration of 30 seconds possession or at the end of a period, the ball is in flight and enters the goal.

**BWP 11.7** A goal may be scored by dribbling the ball into the goal. At the start or any restart of the game, at least two players of either team excluding the defending goalkeeper must intentionally play or touch the ball except at the taking of:

- (a) a penalty throw
- (b) free throw thrown by a player into the player's own goal
- (c) an immediate shot from a goal throw
- (d) an immediate shot from a free throw award outside 5 metres

**BWP 11.8** A goal may not be scored under this rule direct from the restart following:

- (a) a time out
- (b) a goal
- (c) an injury, including bleeding
- (d) the replacement of a cap
- (e) the referee calling for the ball
- (f) the ball leaving the side of the field of play
- (g) any other delay

## **BWP 12      RESTARTING AFTER A GOAL**

**BWP 12.1** The goalkeeper shall put the ball into play from the two metre line immediately after a goal has been scored.

## **BWP 13      GOAL THROW**

**BWP 13.1** A goal throw shall be awarded when the entire ball passes over the goal line, having last been touched by any player other than the defending goalkeeper.

**BWP 13.2** The goal throw shall be taken by any player of the team from anywhere within 2 metre area.

## **BWP 14      CORNER THROW**

**BWP 14.1** A corner throw shall be awarded when the entire ball leaves the field of play over the goal lines, having last been touched by the goalkeeper of the defending team or when a defending player deliberately sends the ball over the goal line.

**BWP 14.2** A corner throw shall be taken by a player of the attacking team from the buoy marking the 2 metre area on the side nearest to which the ball crossed the goal line.

**BWP 14.3** At the taking of a corner throw, no players of attacking team can be within the 2 metre area.

**BWP 14.4** A goal can be scored by a direct shot from a corner throw.

## **BWP 15      NEUTRAL THROW**

**BWP 15.1** A neutral throw shall be awarded:

- a) when at the start of a period, the referee had not thrown the ball fairly at the swim up
- b) when two players commit a foul simultaneously
- b) when the ball touches some obstacle within the field of play

## **BWP 16      FREE THROW**

**BWP 16.1** A free throw shall indicate that a foul has been committed. The referee shall blow the whistle and point with one arm where the foul took place and, with the other arm, point the direction of the attack of the team to which the free throw has been awarded.

**BWP 16.2** The free throw shall be taken by that player of the team to which the throw has been awarded who is nearest the place where the foul occurred.

**BWP 16.3** The free throw must be taken in such manner so as to enable all the other players to see that the throw has been taken. The player can either throw the ball up into the air or let it fall on to the water.

**BWP 16.4** The responsibility for returning the ball to the player who is to take the free throw shall be that of the team to which the free throw is awarded.

**BWP 16.5** The time allowed for a player to take a free throw shall be at the discretion of the referee. It shall be reasonable and without undue delay but does not have to be immediate. It shall be an offence if a player who is clearly in a position most readily to take a free throw does not do so.

## **BWP 17 ORDINARY FOULS**

**BWP 17.1** The penalty for an ordinary foul shall be a free throw awarded to the opposing team.

**BWP 17.2** The referee must award ordinary fouls in accordance with the rules to enable the attacking team to develop an advantage situation.

**BWP 17.3** It shall be an ordinary foul to commit any of the following offences:

- a) to start the swim up before the referee's whistle is blown;
- b) to assist or push a player at the start of a period or at any time during the game;
- c) to hold on or push off equipment or structures around the field of play or the goal posts;
- d) to take the entire ball underwater when tackled by an opponent, even if the action of taking the ball underwater was indirectly caused by the opponent's action;
- e) to touch the ball with two hands at the same time, except for the goalkeeper within the team's own 5 metre area;
- f) to pull or push or obstruct an opponent while the player is not in possession of the ball;
- g) to push off an opponent:
- h) for another member of the team in whose favor a free throw has been awarded to commit another ordinary foul before the free throw is taken;
- i) to receive the ball in the 2 metre area of the opponents' goal line except when behind the line of the ball;
- j) to take a penalty throw in an irregular manner;
- k) to send the ball over the buoys delineating the sides of the field of play (the ball remains in play if it just touches the sides of the field of play);
- l) for a goalkeeper to touch the ball with two hands at the same time outside the goalkeeper's 5 metre area;
- m) for the goalkeeper to go beyond the half distance line;
- n) for a team to retain possession of the ball for more than 30 seconds of actual play without shooting at their opponent's goal. The timekeeper recording the possession time shall reset the clock:
  - (i) when the ball has left the hand of the player shooting at goal. If the ball rebounds into play from the goal, crossbar or the goalkeeper, the possession time shall not recommence until the ball comes into the possession of one of the teams;
  - (ii) when the ball comes into the possession of the opposing team. Possession shall not include merely being touched in flight by an opposing player;
  - (iii) when the ball is put into play following the award of an exclusion foul, penalty foul, goal throw, corner throw or neutral throw:  
Visible clocks shall show the time in a descending manner (show the possession time remaining).

## **BWP 18 EXCLUSION FOULS**

**BWP 18.1** It shall be an exclusion foul to commit any of the following offences which shall be punished (except in the case of penalty throw) by the award of a free throw to the opposing team. The excluded player shall touch that part of the goal line indicated by red buoy and rejoin play immediately. A penalty will be awarded against the team of that player who, when leaving the playing area after being excluded, interferes with play.

**BWP 18.2** For a player to leave the water during play, except in the case of accident, and injury, or with the permission of the referee.

**BWP 18.3** To interfere with the taking of a free throw, goal throw or corner throw:

- a) intentionally pushing the ball away to delay the throw
- b) any attempt to play the ball before it leaves the hand of the player taking the throw

**BWP 18.4** To intentionally splash water in the face of an opponent.  
The punishment for intentionally splashing an opponent is exclusion under BWP18-1 and a penalty throw if the opponent is inside the 5 metre area.

**BWP 18.5** To hold, sink or pull back an opponent who is not holding the ball.

**BWP 18.6** To impede an opponent's movement who is not in possession of the ball (by holding the player or any part of the body).

**BWP 18.7** To kick or strike an opponent intentionally or make disproportionate movement with that intent.

**BWP 18.8** To be guilty of misconduct, including the use of unacceptable language, violent or persistent foul play, to refuse obedience or show disrespect to the referee or official, or behavior against the spirit of the rules and likely to bring the game into disrepute. The offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game, with immediate substitution.

**BWP 18.9** To commit an act of brutality against an opponent or official, during the game. The offending player shall be excluded from the remainder of the game with substitution after 2 minutes and a penalty throw awarded to the opposing team.

**BWP 18.10** For an excluded player to re-enter or a substitute to enter the playing area improperly, including:

- a) from any place other than the player's own re-entry area
- b) by affecting the alignment of the goal
- c) entering the field of play before the player who is being substituted leaves the field of play

**BWP 18.11** To interfere with the taking of a penalty throw. In which case the player excluded can only re-enter the field of play after the penalty throw has been taken. Players have to be at least 2 metres away from the player taking the penalty throw.

**BWP 18.12** The defending goalkeeper, after having been warned by the referee, for not positioning correctly on the goal line before the taking of a penalty throw. Another defending player may take the position of the goalkeeper but without the privileges of the goalkeeper.

**BWP 18.13** If two players from opposing sides commit simultaneous exclusion fouls, both players will be sent off with the referee restarting the game with a neutral throw.

## **BWP 19 PENALTY FOULS**

**BWP 19.1** It shall be a penalty foul to commit any of the following offences which shall be punished by award of a penalty throw to the opposing team. The referee will indicate that a penalty throw has been awarded by blowing the whistle and raising the arm with five fingers.

**BWP 19.2** For a defending player to commit any foul within the 5 metre area but for which a goal would probably have resulted, including:

- a) sink or displace the goals
- b) for defending player to play the ball with clenched fist
- c) for the goalkeeper or another player to take the ball under the water when tackled

**BWP 19.3** For a defending player within the 5 metre area to kick or strike an opponent or to commit an act of brutality. In the case of brutality, the offending player shall also be excluded from the remainder of the game with substitution after 2 minutes.

**BWP 19.4** For an excluded player intentionally to interfere with play, including affecting the alignment of the goal.

**BWP 19.5** For a player or substitute, of the team not in possession of the ball, to enter the field of play improperly.

**BWP 19.6** If, in the last minute of the game a penalty throw is awarded to a team, the coach may elect to maintain possession of the ball and be awarded a free throw. The timekeeper recording possession time shall reset the clock.

## **BWP 20 PENALTY THROWS**

**BWP 20.1** A penalty throw can be taken by any player of the team in favor of which the throw has been awarded. The penalty throw is taken from 5 metre line.

**BWP 20.2** The defending goalkeeper shall be positioned between the goalposts with no part of the body beyond the goal line at water level.

**BWP 20.3** All players shall leave the 5 metre area and shall be at least 2 metres from the player taking the penalty throw.

**BWP 20.4** The referee, after seeing that all the players are in correct position, will order the taking of the penalty throw in the following manner:

The raised arm will mean ready to shoot and by bringing the referee's arm from vertical to horizontal position and blowing the whistle simultaneously. The lowering of the arm at the same time as the signal by whistle makes it possible under any conditions to execute the penalty throw in accordance with the rules.

**BWP 20.5** The player taking the penalty throw shall have possession of the ball and shall throw it with an uninterrupted movement immediately on the signal of the referee.

**BWP 20.6** If the ball rebounds from the goalpost crossbar or goalkeeper, it remains in play and it shall not be necessary for another player to play or touch the ball before a goal can be scored.

**BWP 20.7** If at precisely the same time as the referee awards a penalty throw the timekeeper whistles for the end of a period, all players except the player taking the penalty throw and the defending goalkeeper shall leave the water before the penalty throw is taken. In this situation the ball shall immediately be dead should it rebound into the field of play.

## **BWP 21 ACCIDENT AND INJURY**

**BWP 21.1** A player shall only be allowed to leave the water during play in the case of accident or injury or with the permission of the referee. A player who has left the water legitimately may re-enter from the re-entry area nearest the player's own goal line at an appropriate stoppage and with the permission of the referee.

**BWP 21.2** If a player is bleeding, the referee shall immediately order the player out of the water with the immediate entry of a substitute. After the bleeding has stopped, the player is permitted to be a substitute in the ordinary course of the game.

**BWP 21.3** If accident or injury, other than bleeding, occurs, the referee, at the referee's discretion, may suspend the game for not more than three minutes, in which case the referee shall instruct the timekeeper as to when the stoppage period is to commence. Except in the circumstances of BWP21-2 (bleeding), the player shall not be allowed to take further part in the game if a substitute has entered.