

2022 ICF CANOE POLO RULE CLARIFICATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

The world of sport (and politics) is changing and the days of remote governance/leadership without consultation are coming to an end. Multiple sports now have members taking a more active part and if excluded are more vocal in person and/or online. This said, it is noted that the federations are the members of the ICF, not individual persons, and care must be taken with voices having a personal agenda that may on occasion be in conflict with their respective federation viewpoints.

The ICF CAP recognised this necessity to involve the community early and while limited in budget successfully staged the 2019 ICF Canoe Polo rules seminar in Madrid, Spain. To hear views across the discipline invitations were sent to those federations that have supported the four categories of Men, Women, U21 Men and U21 Women but of course trying to include continental representation. Unfortunately, the Asian Canoe Polo Technical Delegate was unable to attend, however contact with Asia was made post seminar. There were 18 persons present from 14 countries, with the ICF President attending to give lengthy and detailed input into why Canoe Polo is not in the Olympics. While others could have been added to the seminar, it was a strong, experienced and mixed group.

The seminar was regarded by all as successful, with one significant change being the 'card system'. Feedback was players travel across the world and then get 'sent off' for too long, when for example there is no actual injury. All accepted dangerous fouls must be strongly penalised.

On behalf of the ICF CAP my thanks go to Duncan Cochrane (ICF Advisor), Steve Watts and Curly Barker for their work on these clarifications.

Separately to these rule clarifications, I also note the Appendix for U15 Canoe Polo. While an ICF event is minimum of 15 years of age there is a lot of youth polo being played globally and the group agreed that guidelines would benefit all, with discussion that 3v3 is often too slow and by having 4v4 this would enable a team of 4 plus an adult all in one car.

Finally, my thanks go to all referees for what many forget is their volunteer time. The pandemic has of course been an issue for Canoe Polo and while athletes can work on fitness etc remotely, without games to officiate it has been hard for referees. They will of course as always try their best but as with all sports occasional mistakes will be made and in the same way referees respect the athletes I encourage athletes so far as possible to respect these volunteer officials.

Best wishes for 2022.

Greg Smale
Chair ICF Canoe Polo/ICF Board Member

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COACHES AND MEDICAL STAFF

Previously only athletes had to complete the ICF anti-doping course.

Under rule 1.10.3 coaches and medical personnel have been added to the list.

“1.10.3 - Athletes, coaches and medical personnel, entered in any ICF competition or continental championships must complete the ICF’s anti-doping education programme or equivalent before competing or risk being denied entry to the competition.”

This is a [CR] common rule so applies to all disciplines within the ICF.

[Anti-doping education | ICF - Planet Canoe \(canoeicf.com\)](https://www.canoeicf.com)



SURF WAX

Rule 3.3.5 has been amended to specify the kayak only.

“3.3.5 - Players must not apply any substances to their kayak that changes the frictional coefficient of the original surface.”

Rule 3.3.6 is a new addition to clarify the use of ‘Surf Wax’. It is now only allowed on the shaft of the paddle.

“3.3.6 - Players must not apply 'surf' wax to any equipment other than the shaft of the paddle.”



SPRINT START

“10.4.9 - Only one (1) player from each team may make an attempt to gain possession of the ball. All other players must not be within a radius of three (3) metres from the body of the player attempting for the ball until one (1) player has touched the ball with their hand/s.”

For this clarification it is important to focus on the situations being described.

1. *Outlining how the game is started - one (1) player from each team may make an attempt to gain possession of the ball.*
2. *Both players must attempt to gain possession of the ball. A player who makes no attempt for the ball and instead just deliberately tackles the opponent in a dangerous way will be penalised.*
3. *What other players are allowed to do - All other players must not be within a radius of three (3) metres from the body of the player attempting for the ball.*

There have been a lot of comments about the last section of 10.4.9 - *until one (1) player has touched the ball with their hand/s.*



SPRINT START

Most of the comments have revolved around the player not touching the ball with their hand and using the paddle.

What if the ball bounces away from the players?

If the ball bounces away more than 3 metres during the initial contact, the 'attempt' is over for both players and the ball is now free for **any** player to pick up.

If a player turns on the ball, the ball is not in open play until the player has played the ball with their hand. If a player chooses to play the ball with their paddle instead of their hands, the 'attempt' to gain possession is not over until the ball is either played with the hand or passed or flicked away with the paddle.

If a player chooses to dive in front of an opponent's kayak to gain possession of the ball, and as a result is hit by the opponent's kayak, this will not be considered as a dangerous tackle by the opponent because they did not cause the dangerous kayak tackle.

If one player is clearly first to the ball, the other player (who does not get the ball) must make the effort to avoid any dangerous kayak tackle or contact with the opponent's body.

If a player deliberately dives under an opponent in an attempt to gain possession of the ball, the opposing player will not be sanctioned with a card for any dangerous contact.



PLAYERS IN THE ACT OF SHOOTING/PASSING

New wording:

“10.25.2.e - A player using one or both hands that results in contact with the opponent's arm, or with the ball that is still in contact with the opponent's hand, while they are in the act of shooting or passing, that affects the throwing action of the opponent. If the player who is attempting a shot or pass contacts the stationary hands or arms of a defending player, as part of the throwing action, the defending player will not be penalised.”

This new wording clarifies the protection of a player in the act of shooting or passing.

Any contact that affects the throwing action of an opponent is illegal and will be penalized, UNLESS the defenders' arms or hands are stationary as per the next slide.

PLAYERS IN THE ACT OF SHOOTING/PASSING

“10.25.2.e - If the player who is attempting a shot or pass contacts the stationary hands or arms of a defending player, as part of the throwing action, the defending player will not be penalised.”

The defending player is allowed to defend shots at goal or passes with stationary arms or hands and no longer has to move their arms out of the way.

However, they must not move their hands towards the opposition when they are in the act of passing/shooting.



GOAL PENALTY SHOT

The undefended goal penalty shot has been removed, so all penalties are now taken **with** a goalkeeper. **Any** player may take the shot at goal and **any** player may be the goalkeeper.

There is also a clarification of where players may sit when the penalty is being taken:

“10.38.4 - All other players and their equipment must be positioned behind the six (6) metre line. Only substitutes or players sent off may be behind the goal line.”

If the penalty is scored, this now counts towards the power play and the team is allowed to bring a player back on.

If the sanction card is the players 3rd (Red) the team must wait the full 2 minutes before they bring another player back on.





REVISION OF CARD SYSTEM



The card system for Canoe Polo has been changed. Coaches, Players and Officials should now think of the card system as 1,2,3 rather than Green, Yellow, Red.

The 1st card (green) and the 2nd card (yellow) have the same punishment – a player is sent off for a maximum of 2 minutes or until the opposition score. (Power Play as per rule 10.33)

A player who receives a 3rd card (Red) is sent off for the rest of the game. They can only be replaced by another player after the full 2 minute sanction

Note: There are no Team Warnings or ‘team’ cards in the new rules.

Remember: 10.28.1 - The Referee can impose any combination of the following sanctions for illegal-play depending on the severity and/or frequency of offences being penalised”

10.32.4 - A referee may move straight to the 2nd or 3rd card level (yellow or red) for any deliberate foul that in the Referee’s opinion is of major influence to the game.

CRITICAL CHANGES AND CLARIFICATIONS

*“10.35.2 - A sanction card will be awarded to a player who commits a repeated deliberate **OR** dangerous foul. “*

A repeated deliberate foul (no effort made to avoid the illegal play) will result in a sanction card.

A Dangerous foul - (significant contact with the opponent's arm, head or body that may result in personal injury) will result in a sanction card.

Remember: *“10.35.3 - A sanction card will be awarded to the offending player who commits a deliberate **OR** dangerous foul for which the Referee awards a goal penalty shot.”*

Note: Fouls that are clearly accidental will not receive a card. Sanction Cards are for the “big” fouls that are dangerous, not for the “minor” fouls that have minimal force or contact or where the player tries their best to avoid the foul e.g. a defender trying to keep paddle out of arms reach, or a player who tries to control their kayak on a sprint start.



AWARDING RED CARDS

To make it clear for players, coaches and spectators, only 1 sanction card will be shown when penalising a player or official.

In order to distinguish the 3rd Sanction Card from the Ejection Red Card, the signal pictured opposite will be used.

“10.32.3.a - The player receives an ejection red card. This player is excluded for the rest of that game and suspended for the following game. The team cannot replace this player.”

The ejection Red Card is reserved for the most serious fouls in the game. The player is sent off for the rest of the game and cannot be replaced.

When awarding an Ejection red – Show the red card only holding the card in one hand, crossed arms with clenched fist above the shoulder (so that it is visible in front and behind) and verbal statement “ejection red” to the player.

This indicates the end of the game for the player concerned, and that no replacement is possible for the benefit of the coach and team mates and spectators.



EJECTION RED IN FINAL



“13.17 A player receiving an ejection red card in a final will be referred to their National Federation for consideration of any disciplinary action.”

With the sport gaining a wider audience through social media, players need to be aware of the impact of their conduct during the game AND during the period after the end of the game before they leave the field of play.

Note: this is a photo from the previous rules. The Ejection Red Card signal as per slide 13 would now be used.





ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION

“10.36.1 - A coach or team captain can, at an appropriate moment, ask for clarification of a specific decision by the referees but only:

10.36.1.a - At half time or conclusion of the game.

10.36.1.b - When the ball is out of the playing area.

10.36.2 - No communication with the referees is allowed when the ball is in play or when the referees are actively performing their game duties. Other team officials must not communicate with the referees.”

This allows a player or coach to understand what a call was for, however Players/Coaches **should not expect a long conversation.**

Short phrases will be used by the referee to explain e.g. “The paddle was too close”, “Obstruction on player 6”.

The referee will not change or override a decision, just provide a reason for the call that was made.

It is important for the Captain to identify themselves by the use of an armband (this is already a requirement in the rule 3.6.4).



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SO FAR!

Q1. Does a goal scored from a goal penalty shot count as a goal toward the power play sanction card?

A. Yes, unlike previous rules if a player scores the penalty, this is the end of the power play. The team who received the sanction card and conceded the goal from the GPS can bring a player back on. The exception is if it's a player's 3rd sanction card (Red) they are off for the rest of that game. The team must wait the full 2 minutes before bringing another player back on.

Q2. To clarify, is the first sanction card (green) now a 2 min power play send off?

A. Yes. Both the 1st (Green) and 2nd (Yellow) Sanction cards now result in a Power Play as per Rule 10.33

Q3. If a repeated deliberate or dangerous foul is committed that will result in a sanction card, but the referee plays advantage and a goal is scored. Is the Power Play over?

A. No, as per Rule 10.35.4 "A sanction card awarded after the referee(s) have played advantage will take effect from when the sanction card is awarded, not from when the foul occurred." So if the referee has played advantage and a goal is scored, Award the goal, then award the Sanction card for the foul.

Q4. Is a player's third sanction card (red) still a power play card?

A. No, if a player receives a third sanction card, the player is excluded for the rest of the game and team must wait the full 2 minutes before bringing another player back on.

Q5. Rule 10.32.3.b states that a 3rd sanction card (Red) has a player excluded for the rest of the game but can be replaced after 2mins. So if I'm right a team will only be reduced in total players for the remainder of the game if it's an "ejection red card", for a "normal" red card a player can be replaced after 2mins?

A. Correct. A 3rd card is a red card and the player cannot be replaced for the full 2 minutes. A player who receives an Ejection red card cannot be replaced for the remainder of the game and the individual will automatically receive a one (1) game suspension and be unable to take part in the next game in that competition as per rule 10.34.4

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SO FAR!

Q6. Does the sanction card awarded with a GPS still start at yellow or will it now be a green card if it is the sanctioned player's first card?

A. If it is the player's first sanction card then it will be a green card. If it is the player's 2nd card it will be yellow. If it is their 3rd card it will be red. If the foul is deliberate or dangerous (or both) and of major influence to the game the referee can move straight to the 2nd or 3rd card.

Q7. Rule 10.35.2 states " A sanction card will be awarded to a player who commits a repeated deliberate OR dangerous foul. ". Does this mean the player will be given a card if they do a deliberate paddle foul then a deliberate kayak tackle. So two deliberate actions. Or should we only give the card if the offence is the same i.e. two deliberate paddle fouls?

A. The sanction card will be awarded for the second deliberate foul of any type (Paddle foul + Obstruction, kayak tackle + illegal holding, etc.). So the card is not only for deliberate fouls of the same type.

Q8. What happens if a player commits a foul that is both deliberate and dangerous ?

A. A player who commits a blatant foul that is both deliberate and dangerous (significant contact with the opponent's arm, head or body that may result in personal injury) that in the Referee's opinion is of major influence to the game should receive an Ejection Red Card. For other incidents, a referee may move straight to the 2nd or 3rd card level (yellow or red) depending on the severity of the foul as per rule 10.32.4

Q9. There are two references to yellow and red cards in the published rules at 10.18.1 and 10.18.2. These do not mean anything now. Can they be changed rather than wait for another ICF Congress?

A. Yes these two errors (as you say they mean nothing now) are in the process of being changed to sanction card (10.18.1) and Ejection Red (10.18.2) and re-published.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SO FAR!

Q10. Am I allowed to take the ball from an opponent's hand with my hand?

A. If the player is **not** attempting to pass or shoot, then yes, you can make an attempt to get the ball, as long as you do not do it dangerously or illegally under Rule 10.25 Illegal Holding and in particular 10.25.e. Please refer back to slides 8&9 for further information.

Q11. Should the new rule 13.16 be applicable to ANY player in their final game of championship (not just finalists).

A. In the 2022 rules it only applies to the grand final. If a player receives an ejection red in their final/last game rule 13.17 allows this to be referred to the Competition Committee for consideration. They may in the circumstances consider this serious enough to refer to a national federation. The intention of the rule is to highlight the importance of a good positive behaviour during a grand final.