

Treatise on Underwater Hockey Fouls

Third Draft – for Referee Review Only

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“A comprehensive guide for new players, experience players, referees and coaches for the purpose of understanding the fouls of underwater hockey and the reasoning of referees.”

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Introduction

A treatise is a formal and systematic written document that covers a subject in detail. Because the International Rules of UWH can only define the rules of the UWH, a lot must be left to the interpretation and judgement of referees, coaches, and players. This document includes the written rule, the accepted interpretations, and methods of prevention for all 11 fouls in the game of underwater hockey.

Guideline for Players Regarding Fouls

If you commit a foul either on purpose or accidental, and it gets called: Do not argue with the referee or display your dissatisfaction. You may open yourself or your team to unnecessary warnings or time penalties. Talk to your captain or coach if you feel dispute resolution is needed. The referee's job after a foul is called is to reset the game as fast as possible.

If you commit a foul either on purpose or accidental, and it doesn't get called: You still committed the foul. Either the refs did not see it, or they deemed it wasn't worth stopping the game to call it. Either way, don't get the idea that you're not causing fouls because you're not getting called. Flagrant violators of the rules do tend to see the penalty box more during tournaments. Practice avoiding fouls, it will make you an asset to your team.

Guideline for Referees Regarding Fouls

Before you stop a game to call a foul, the following conditions must be true:

- You SAW the foul. This does not mean seeing the effect or result of a foul in lieu of seeing a foul. You must only call what you see.
- You determined that the foul was significant enough to affect the match. Some referees will call more fouls than others. You don't need to stop the game every time you see a foul, but you can't let the fouls escalate. Use the advantage rule to determine if the foul you saw will create an advantage for the team of the player who committed the foul.

The referee's purpose is not to control the game, but to keep the game in control.¹ A dangerously played game is not fun for the players and can be detrimental to the progress of the popularity of the sport. As referees, we must be always consistent, accurate and fair in our determinations. As players, we must also have a clear understanding of what the referees are seeing.

What Everyone Needs to Understand About the Advantage Rule

The Advantage Rule is applied when a referee sees a foul, but will wait to see how the play turns-out before making the call or not. For example, if a referee sees a white-stick player in possession of the puck who just received a Stick Infringement from the opponent, that referee will start the Advantage Rule signal, and will wait to see how that play continues. If the white stick player maintains possession of the puck and successfully passes it to a fellow team-mate, then the referee drops the advantage rule and the game can continue. If the black stick player or one of his team-mates happened to gain control of the puck instead, then the referee would stop the game and award the advantage to the white team.

The advantage to players of the Advantage Rule is that it reduces game stoppage. There are fouls that are accidental, and if an advantage isn't derived from it, the game doesn't need to stop. However, the disadvantage to the rule is that players realize that they have been fouled, and they believe that the referee didn't see it or

¹ Credit to Darryl Brambilla, CUGA, for this quote.

didn't care enough to make the call. This thinking often results in resentment and retaliation toward the other team. Key points for referees, coaches, and players regarding the Advantage Rule:

- The Advantage Rule is tool that referees can use at their option. Referees are encouraged to use it. If referees feel an escalation of retaliatory fouls or excessively aggressive behaviors, referees can and will stop applying it.
- Some fouls like Dangerous Play, or a violent Stick Foul require stoppage of the game regardless of advantage.
- If you are a coach or captain and you feel that the game is escalating, mention it to the referees (depending on your Federation's rules). Although the referees may or may not agree with you, remind your players to not engage in the escalation. It is easier for referees to catch retaliations than the original provocation.

Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

- 16.1.1 At any time during play, if a Referee observes an infringement against the team in possession but decides that the rule infringement does not affect the advantage held by the team in possession, play will be allowed to continue as if the infringement had not occurred.
- 16.1.2 If an infringement is observed and the advantage rule is being played, once the advantage is lost or at the next break in play, the Referee may award a delayed penalty.

False Start or Encroachment

Accepted Interpretation

False Start – When one or more players leave the starting point prior to the start signal. Also, if one or more players do not have their hand on the wall when the start signal activates, the player must touch the wall prior to charging the puck.

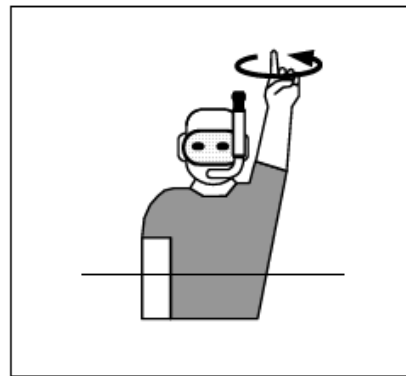
Encroachment – On advantage puck: When one or more players on the offending team cross the referee line prior to a defending player taking possession of the puck. Also, if the defending player does not take possession of the puck within 5 seconds, this signal is also used.

On equal puck: When any player has a head submerged when the start signal activates.

On penalty shot: When the defending player removes his/her hand from the wall while submerging. When one or both of the offending players take possession of the puck prior to the start signal. When the offending players take more than 5 seconds to take possession of the puck.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.22 Breaking, False Start, or Encroachment -
The signal is an arm extended and straight up with index finger pointing up. Hand is then rotated several times such that the index finger inscribes an imaginary circle above the head that is parallel to the surface of the water.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

- 15.1.1 At the beginning of a match, after half-time, after a goal is scored, or after a Penalty Shot has been played, the starting positions of the players of each team are in the water alongside their respective end-lines, with each player having at least one hand in contact with the end-line. This hand must be visible to the Officials.
- 17.3.1.2.2 A time-penalised player shall re-enter the play by gently sliding feet first from a sitting position into the water at the centre line. Illegal entry will incur a 1-minute penalty.
- 17.2.3 In the event that a player or team is cautioned for having left the end-line before the signal to start play was given, the puck will remain at the centre and play will be re-started according to Rule 17.6.
- 17.6.2.2 (The) two Water Referees first align themselves on the puck, then hold up one hand in a “stop” signal with the palm facing the infringing team to indicate an advantage puck; they swim 3m away from the puck towards the infringing team and form an imaginary line across the width of the playing area behind which all players on the infringing team must retreat.
 - 17.6.2.2.1 If the infringing team fails to retreat or stay behind the three metre (3 m) line prior to the re-start of play, then as a further penalty, the puck may be advanced an additional three (3) metres towards the infringing team’s goal.
- 17.6.3 Once the signal to re-commence play has been given by the Chief Referee, the offended team must take possession within five (5) seconds of the signal being given.
- 17.6.3.1 Should the infringed team fail to take possession of a puck within five (5) seconds of the Chief Referee’s signal to re-commence play, the advantage puck is forfeited. Play is then re-started with an equal puck.

- 16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:
- 16.3.1 Starting play incorrectly according to these rules.
- 16.3.22 Leaving the penalty box incorrectly according to 17.3.1.2.2 (sliding into water from the Penalty Box).

Examples

False Start

A player who leaves the wall prior to the start signal.

A player who does not have one hand visibly noticed on the wall when the start signal activates.

A player who is sitting on the wall when the start signal activates.

A player who starts from the sub box without first touching the wall before the puck is in-play.

A player who leaves the penalty box incorrectly, even if the full time has been served.

Encroachment

During an equal puck – A player who submerges their head before the start signal.

During an advantage puck – A player on the advantage team not taking the puck within 5 seconds.

During an advantage puck – A player on the defensive side crossing the line before the advantage team takes possession of the puck.

Advice to Players

This rule usually gets violated by newer players not having enough tournament experience. Even experienced players have “jumped the gun” on occasion. This advice is good for the newer players:

If the start signal goes off before you’re lined up with the rest of your team, make sure you touch the wall before going after the puck, or wait until the puck is in play before you engage.

Know where to be on Equal Puck: Each team must be on their respective sides of two water referees holding the line, and all heads must be above water prior to the start signal.

Know where to be on Advantage Puck – your team has the advantage: You will know this by looking at the chief ref. If his or her hand is directed toward the other team, your team has been awarded the advantage. Your team can be anywhere in the pool, and you can be submerged prior to the start signal. Once the start signal is fired, your team has 5 seconds to take possession of the puck.

Know where to be on Advantage Puck – the other team has the advantage: You will know this by looking at the chief ref. If his or her hand is directed toward your team, then the other team has been awarded the advantage. All playing members of your team must be behind the line set by the two water referees. Your team may submerge before the start signal is fired, but no one on your team may cross the line until the other team has taken possession of the puck.

Illegal Substitution

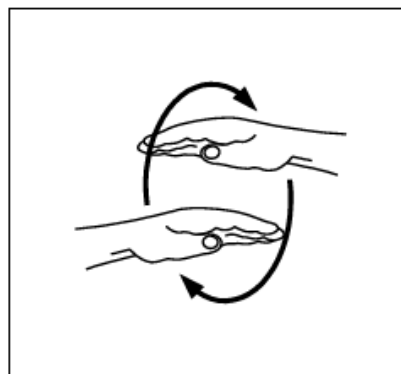
Accepted Interpretation

An Illegal substitution foul is committed in any of the following circumstances:

- A player leaves the sub box before the teammate enters the sub box while game is in play. The head of the player coming in must break the water surface before the subbing player can submerge.
- Submerged player in the sub box while game is in play. Players in the sub box must have snorkels and top of heads out of the water.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.20 Illegal Substitution - An official will signal an illegal substitution by a hand over hand rolling motion.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

- 15.1.1 At the beginning of a match, after half-time, after a goal is scored, or after a Penalty Shot has been played, the starting positions of the players of each team are in the water alongside their respective end-lines, with each player having at least one hand in contact with the end-line. This hand must be visible to the Officials.
- 15.1.2 Substitutes from each team shall be in the team's designated substitution area; and any penalised players shall be in the designated penalty box.
- 15.1.3 From the moment the Chief Referee gives the signal for play to start until the moment the puck becomes "in possession", all players, including the substitutes, who enter the match must start play as per rule 15.1.1. After the puck becomes 'in possession,' players entering the match from their substitution area may enter directly into play and shall enter the water by the rule governing the substitution method in use: deck, in-water, or end-line.
- 16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:
- 16.3.4 Having more than six (6) players in the water whilst the match is in play, or allowing a substitute to enter the water to replace a player sent out of the water for a time penalty, or one who has been dismissed for the rest of the match, EXCEPTING after a goal, when 'free subbing' is allowed as detailed at Rule 15.2.

Also See

15.2.1 for specific rules on Deck Side Substitution

15.2.2 for specific rules on In-Water Side Substitution+

15.2.3 for specific rules on End-Line Substitution

+ In-Water Side Substitution is the preferred method for tournaments.

Examples

A player submerges his or her head in the sub box before the incoming teammate breaks the surface of the water with their head.

A player in the sub box who drops to the bottom of the pool for a better view of the game.

A player who gets out of the sub box without notification to the Chief Ref.

Advice to Players

Make player substitutions part of your practice. A lot of time is wasted on inefficient switch outs. Also, a minute penalty is a very costly to a team for a penalty that is easily avoided.

If your team is playing with less than 4 substitute players, please let the chief ref know. The chief ref may forget to check ahead of time.

Make sure the players on your team know that the incoming player's head must break the surface inside the sub box before the exiting player can submerge to enter the court.

Do not leave a position of a sub box vacant, unless absolutely necessary. See if your coach or non-playing teammate can resolve the issue. Even though the chief referee may be notified of an absence, it won't be communicated to the water referees.

Dangerous Play, Headshot, Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Accepted Interpretation

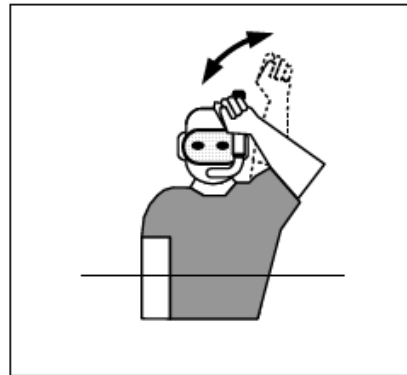
Dangerous Play – any play of the puck that injures any player or puts any player at risk of injury.

Head shot – when a puck is launched at another player's head. A head shot can be considered if the puck hits the opponent's head, comes near it, or ricochets off the defenders stick toward the head.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct – Any display of conduct that does not honor the game: physical attacks, rough play, yelling at or insulting officials or players (including team-mates), or refusing to accept decisions made by the officials.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.21 Unsportsmanlike Conduct - Signaled by clenching a fist and then repeatedly tapping the top of one's head with the thumb-side of the fist.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

- 14.1.10 When players are swimming on the surface, over-arm strokes are permitted only when other players are not in danger of being struck.
- 16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:
 - *16.3.8 Obstructing an opponent in any way whilst not in possession of the puck.
 - 16.3.9 Behaving in any way or displaying conduct that in the opinion of the Officials can be considered contrary to the sportsmanlike conduct of the match.
 - *16.3.14 Removing or attempting to remove an opponent's equipment.
 - 16.3.15 Insulting, by word or gesture, other players or the Officials.
 - 16.3.16 Refusing to accept any decisions made by the Officials.
 - 16.3.17 Physically attacking or deliberately hurting an opponent or striking or attempting to strike an opponent with any part of the body or equipment. This includes any action taken in retaliation.
 - 16.3.20 Removing the puck from the goal.
 - 16.3.21 Dangerous play.

Examples

Dangerous Play

On a sloped pool, players should not use the edge to launch a puck skyward to the shallow end or launch a puck downward from the shallow end. Pucks are often shot out of control and without looking ahead in this situation.

A player attacking, or severely fouling another player. If a player were to use his or her stick at an opponent's neck to prevent the opponent from obtaining the puck, it would be better to call Dangerous Play instead of Stick Foul. Although it is still a Stick Foul, this is severe and warrants a time penalty.

Threatening shot – Sometimes an offensive player will fake a shot or take a “practice swing” causing the defender to flinch or refocus attention to protecting from injury. The intention of dangerous play is also considered to be Dangerous Play.

A player launching a puck into a crowd of players with or without an intended target.

Head Shot

A direct shot the head, whether it hits the mask, snorkel, ear caps, neck, skin or chin. Referees shouldn't worry if the players continue play, or if there is no visible sign of injury. Referees should stop the game, and check on the player. If there is any noticeable damage to the player (bleeding, confusion, dizziness), the player needs to get off the court. If it's severe enough, a referee or teammate can escort them to a safe point in the pool where first aid can be provided.

Once the player is determined to be ok, or removed from the pool, a ref should determine the proper penalty. If the shot looked to be malicious or purposely shot, a two- or five-minute penalty should be applied. If it was carelessness, or because the player “wasn't thinking”, a two-minute penalty should be applied. If it appeared to be unintentional (such as a ricochet, self-infliction, or a faulty knock down), then an advantage puck may be all that is necessary. The penalty should be applied according to the nature of the offense, not the severity of injury.

An attempted head shot that made the would-be-receiver duck, flinch or take evasive maneuvers should be considered a Head Shot.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Fighting, yelling – regardless of the source of aggression. It could be shown against opponents, team-mates, referees, coaches, audience members.

Professional Fouls – professional fouls are any intentionally or deliberately committed fouls by players that are intended to slow down, pester, annoy, or injure an opponent. They are often committed at the bottom of the pool and other locations refs are least likely to see: pushing off the shoulder of an opponent, and stealing the puck; pinching; free-arm elbow to the rib-cage; launching off another player to get to the surface.

Retaliation. Sometimes a referee only sees the reaction to professional foul. Although it's great to catch the offending professional foul, retaliation by hitting, excessive fouling, or pronounced displays of anger is still a foul.

A player throwing his or her stick out of the pool to express anger.

A player playing a puck after a goal has been made.

A player playing a puck after the “stop-game” signal has gone off.

A player using the wrong color stick.

A player not using proper equipment or proper player identification.

Advice to Players

Dangerous Play and Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Keep your anger in check. Anger is a normal human emotion that we all experience. However, what actions we choose to do as a result from that emotion can be detrimental and unsafe to other players. It may not be apparent to the angry player at the time, but Dangerous Play and Unsportsmanlike Conduct makes the team look bad, and the whole sport look bad.

If a player on your team is at risk or at fault for Dangerous Play or Unsportsmanlike Conduct, do what you can to calm that player. If not, it might cost your team serious time penalties. It is difficult to play when the whole team is angry and there is one teammate or more serving 2- or 5-minute penalties for this foul. Referees are serious about keeping the game safe, and you should be serious about honoring the game.

Head Shot

Being able to shoot a puck through the water at any height is a valuable skill to have. Being able to accurately land the puck at your intended target is more valuable to your team and the sport of UWH. Anytime you launch the puck from the bottom, you are taking a risk. Therefore, don't just practice shooting the puck, but practice shooting the puck and hitting your targets.

If a player gets hit in the head due to your actions: The referee's primary concern at this point is the condition of the other player. After the referee checks on the other player, he or she will determine the next action of the game. Most likely, you will serve a time penalty based on your actions. If it was confirmed by other refs that it was miss and the player was not hit, the result could be equal puck or advantage against your team. If it looked to be aggressively accidental, or intentional, you could serve a 2- or 5-minute penalty. Your time penalty is proportional to your actions, not the amount of damage caused to the other player. Referees are not very forgiving when it comes to headshots. You will most likely serve a penalty worse than what you feel you deserve. Serve your penalty, and do not argue your case with anyone of the referee staff.

If you get hit in the head: One of two things will happen – either the referees will stop the game, or the referees won't stop the game. You would hope that one of the referees saw the foul and would stop the game. At any time, if you are injured and a referee did not stop the game, sub out and get necessary medical attention. Have your captain or coach let the chief referee know that there had been an injury. If the referees did stop the game, at least one of them will come to check on you. If you're bleeding or show any signs of concussion, a referee will ask you to leave the court, and may even escort you. A sub can take your place, and the referee must get back to the game. Additional medical attention will need to be administered by someone else. You may not reenter the game until you are cleared by your coach or captain (depending on your Federation's rules).

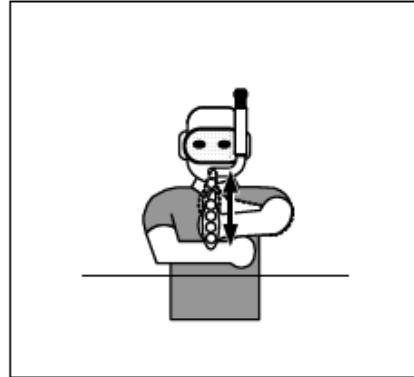
Stick Infringement

Accepted Interpretation

Any incorrect use of the stick. The stick must be in a gloved hand. The stick must be held by the handle of the stick. The stick must be used to play against the puck, and not against other sticks, equipment or bodies.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.17 Stick Infringement - Signal is a repeated chopping motion of one hand against the middle forearm of the other arm. The forearm is held parallel to the chest at arms-length away from the body.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

- 14.1.1 Only the “playing area of the stick” may be used to move the puck. The “playing area” is that area of the stick not covered by the player’s hand when the stick is gripped in a natural manner excluding any part of the stick, which extends past the protected little finger.
 - 14.1.3 The puck must not be lifted up or carried in any direction whilst balanced on the stick; and should a puck be lifted accidentally onto a stick, it must be dropped off the stick immediately.
 - 14.1.4 The stick may be held in either the right or left hand; changing playing hands is allowed.
 - 14.1.5 A player may have two hands on the stick when not in possession of the puck (e.g. trying to achieve a streamlined position when sprinting toward a puck at the Centre Point of the playing area or trying to retrieve a dropped stick).
 - 14.1.6 The free hand may not be used to support the stick, stick hand, or arm whilst in possession of the puck.
 - 14.1.7 Whilst a match is in play, the puck may be pushed or passed in any direction anywhere within the playing area by the player in possession. See Rule 16.2 for exception: Delay of Game.
 - 14.1.8 At no time may a player handle the puck with either the free or playing hand. Should the puck accidentally touch the back of the playing hand, this will not be considered handling the puck unless used deliberately to advance the puck.
 - 14.1.9 The puck, while being propelled by the stick, may rest against the index finger when the hand is in its natural position of holding the stick.
 - 14.1.10 When players are swimming on the surface, over-arm strokes are permitted only when other players are not in danger of being struck.
- 16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:
- 16.3.23 Use of the stick, other than to play the puck legally.

Examples

A player with a white stick is advancing toward her goal. A player with a black stick reaches under her stick and steals the puck. The player with the black stick is at foul because his stick made contact with the white stick prior to making contact with the puck.

A player with a black stick is in possession of the puck and is almost to goal. Her teammate tries to help with that goal by pushing on the back of the stick with her stick. Not only is that a foul committed by the black team but will result in a No-Goal.

A player stealing a puck from an opponent by swooping the puck out of the cradle of the stick. Normally, this would not be a foul. However, if the stick of the opponent makes contact with anything other than the puck, it is a Stick Infringement.

A player at the surface accidentally clocks another player in the head with his stick. This is a Stick Infringement whether it is accidental or not. An intentional blow to the head could also be considered Dangerous Play.

A player reclaims a stick that was knocked out of his hand, but he grabs it by the playing end and proceeds to play the puck with the handle end. Because the stick is being improperly used, this is a Stick Infringement.

A defensive player attempts to steal the puck. The offensive player curls properly to maintain possession. As the defender pulls his stick back, he scrapes the neck of the offender. This is a Stick Infringement against the defender because his stick was not in contact with the puck, but in contact with a body.

Advice to Players

This foul is called more often in tournaments than all other fouls. It's very easy to accidentally commit and takes practice to keep this foul from happening. When this foul gets called against your team, your team not only loses advantage, it also loses its progress momentum. During regular practices, teams should do the following:

- Practice passing the puck between players.
- Practice offensive moves such as curling.
- Practice defensive moves such as stealing the puck.

In individual practice, you should do the following:

- Practice agility drills.
- Practice puck handling skills.
- Get very strategic about stealing the puck.

Obstruction (Barging, Shepherding, Blocking)

Accepted Interpretation

The Obstruction Foul can be committed by either an offender or defender in the game. There are three classifications of obstruction that are used:

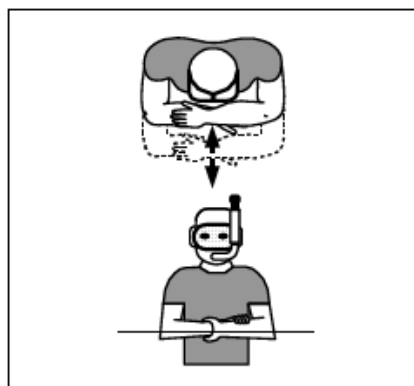
Barging - For offender: When a player in possession of the puck runs into player(s) while advancing the puck.
For defender: When a defender runs into a player who has possession of the puck and impedes their advancement.

Shepherding (aka screening) – When a player on the offensive team is too close to the teammate who is in possession of the puck, causing the puck to be inaccessible.

Blocking – Any attempt to prevent the motion or progress of another player or to prevent the puck from being accessible.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.14 Obstruction, Barging, Blocking, or Shepherding - General blocking fouls are signaled by the two arms above the water being clasped at the wrists and moving the joined arms in and out from the chest.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

- 16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:
- 16.3.2 Standing on or pushing-off the playing area in a manner that interferes with match play.
- *16.3.8 Obstructing an opponent in any way whilst not in possession of the puck.
- 16.3.11 Covering or obstructing the puck with any part of the body or equipment, while not in possession of the puck, to prevent access to the puck by other players.
- 16.3.12 Attempting to gain possession of the puck by use of obstruction.
- 16.3.12.1 Using any form of 'active' obstruction to prevent an opponent from gaining access to the puck, even when the infringing player is in possession of the puck; e.g. by using a 'locked' free-arm to keep another player away from the puck, or by pulling the puck back behind the body whilst advancing forward and using the body to 'push' another player out of the way when they are attempting to gain access to the puck. Note: Curling whilst in possession of the puck, or simply pulling the puck back under the body when an individual is stationary is not deemed to be obstruction so long as the puck remains on a player's stick.
- *16.3.13 Using hands, arms, or body in any way to grasp, pull, or push an opponent or his/her stick.

Examples

Barging

A player in possession of the puck moves forward on a break-away and runs head-first into an opponent who is stationary. The player in possession is at fault because there was forward advancement of the puck while the offender made contact.

There is a white stick and a black stick pushing equally against the puck. The player of the black stick decides to gain extra leverage by throwing his body into the other player. Since both players had their stick on the puck, they were both in possession of the puck and both trying to advance it in opposite directions. The black stick player is at fault for Obstruction by Barging because he actively threw his body into the other player to gain advantage.

A defender approaches an offender in attempt to steal the puck. Instead of putting his stick on the puck prior to turning his back to the offender, he turns his back, collides with the offender, then swims off with the puck. The defender is at fault for Obstruction by Barging because he made contact with the opponent's body before touching the puck. If he had stolen the puck first, then rolled his body, that would not be considered an Obstruction Foul by Barging.

NOT A FOUL: A player in possession of the puck comes into close range of a defender and decides to curl to maintain possession of the puck. While curling, the offender's body collides with the defender's body, but the puck remains stationary. If the offender managed to provide forward motion of the puck while making contact, then the offender would be at fault for an Obstruction Foul by Barging.

A player is in possession of the puck and advancing down the sideline while pulling the puck behind him. His shoulder makes contact with a defender who is stationary. The offender is at fault for this foul because he made contact with an opponent while advancing the puck forward.

Shepherding

NOT A FOUL: Two players on the same team are side by side heading for the goal. The player on the right, has the puck on the stick in the right hand (making the puck accessible). There are no defenders coming from the left side or trying to get in-between the two offenders. No defender is being blocked, and the puck is accessible; therefore, not a foul.

Two players on the same team are side by side heading for the goal. This time, the puck is between the two teammates, making the puck inaccessible. Obstruction Foul by shepherding.

One player is heading for the goal and a defender makes a move to steal the puck. A teammate of the offender swims between the offender and the defender, blocking the puck from the defender. Although the puck was accessible, the 2nd offender actively blocked the defender, which makes that an Obstruction Foul by shepherding.

Blocking

NOT A FOUL: An offender is on her way to the goal. A defender is stationary but is in the way of her path. This is not considered blocking because the defender is not actively preventing the offender from getting around.

A player with a white stick gains possession of the puck after a strike, a slow-moving defender is blocking her path. Because the defender was moving, this is considered active blocking, and therefore an Obstruction Foul by Blocking.

A team member on the offensive team spreads his arms and legs out to stop 2 defenders from advancing toward the puck, even though the player in possession of the puck wasn't aware of it. This is an Obstruction Foul by Blocking on the offensive team.

A player standing on the pool bottom. If it's not in the middle of a play, it might not be called, but it's still an Obstruction Foul by Blocking.

A player pitching the puck into the wall or corner and covering the puck so that is not accessible at all.

Advice to Players

It is legal to streamline while traveling with the puck (extending your free arm forward). However, the closer you get to a defender, the more likely a referee will call that as an Obstruction by Blocking Foul. Also, if your hand is too close to the puck, it could be considered Obstruction by Blocking, even if a defender isn't nearby.

Don't swim with the puck on your trailing side. It's legal to do that too, but the minute you bump someone, even accidental, a referee may consider that Obstruction by Barging.

Don't take the puck with you when you curl – leave the puck stationary, and go around it.

Don't get between a defender and your teammate who has the puck. If your teammate has the puck, allow enough room for a defender to get between you.

Practice puck handling and passing skills. The longer you're in possession of the puck, the greater the chances of an Obstruction Foul.

When attempting to steal the puck, practice getting your stick to touch the puck before any accidental body contact. When defending the puck, practice keeping the puck stationary before any accidental body contact.

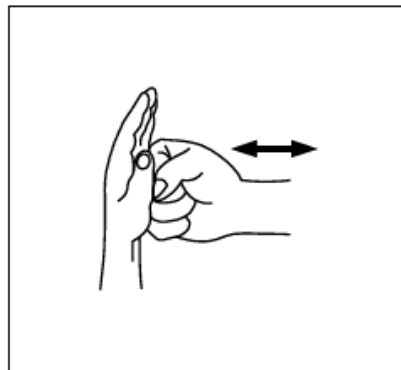
Illegal Advancement of Puck

Accepted Interpretation

Advancement of the puck must be only by use of the stick. Any advancement of the puck by anything other than the stick (eg; glove, extended finger or knuckle, body parts, or other equipment) is considered illegal advancement of the puck.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.15 Advancing the puck with the Glove, Free Hand, or Body - These fouls are signaled by one fist punching into the palm of the other hand, followed by touching the part of the body used to illegally advance the puck.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

- 14.1.8 At no time may a player handle the puck with either the free or playing hand. Should the puck accidentally touch the back of the playing hand, this will not be considered handling the puck unless used deliberately to advance the puck.
- 14.1.9 The puck, while being propelled by the stick, may rest against the index finger when the hand is in its natural position of holding the stick.
- 16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:
 - 16.3.5 Advancing or attempting to play the puck with anything other than the playing area of stick.
 - 16.3.6 Handling the puck with the free or playing hand, including guiding the puck with an outstretched finger.
 - 16.3.6.1 If the puck accidentally touches the back of the playing hand, this will not be considered handling the puck unless used deliberately to propel the puck.
 - 16.3.7 Lifting or carrying the puck balanced on a stick.

Examples

1. When the puck is pushed with the glove instead of the stick. Since this is the most frequent type of violation for this foul, it is also known as “gloving”. Here are common instances where the glove is used as illegal advancement:
 - When a player catches a pass and proceeds to move it forward on the glove instead of getting it on the stick before advancing it.
 - When the puck is being battled back and forth at the wall. Players get sloppy and start using their gloves instead of their sticks.
 - An out-stretched finger or a pronounced knuckle on the stick hand while advancing the puck on the stick. If the puck is moving in a direction where a stick couldn’t move it without assistance, it’s very likely that the finger is helping.
2. When the puck is pushed with anything other than the stick. Some examples:
 - Advancement with elbow
 - Advancement with free hand

- Kicking the puck into the goal
- Dragging the puck with a beer belly
- Carrying the puck on stick
- Moving the puck with the free hand.

Advice to Players

1. Practice puck handling skills:
 - When catching the puck from a pass, practice getting the puck on the stick.
 - Practice driving a puck without the assistance of the glove.
 - Practice intercepting passes using the stick, not the glove.
2. Avoid wall battles by passing to a teammate who is not against the wall.
3. Avoid touching the puck with your fin.
4. Learn to roll the puck from an opponent's stick instead of pushing it through.

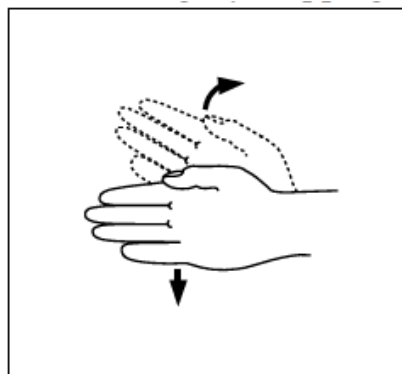
Illegal Stopping

Accepted Interpretation

When a player stops the advancement of the puck by use of anything other than a stick.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.16 Illegally Stopping the Puck - The signal for illegally stopping the puck is an open hand held in a vertical plane and moving up and down in a chopping action.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:

16.3.10 Stopping or attempting to stop a goal being scored with anything other than the playing area of the stick.

*16.3.13 Using hands, arms, or body in any way to grasp, pull, or push an opponent or his/her stick.

Examples

An offensive player makes a high shot, and a defender tries to intercept it with his stick. Instead, the puck gets knocked down by the glove. The defender is at fault for Illegal Stopping.

An offensive player makes a clean high shot, and a defender throws his body in the way so that the puck is stopped with his head. Is it Dangerous Play by the offender, or Illegal Stopping by the defender? Because referees see things from different viewpoints, it could be called either way or both. If the referees saw the scenario differently, they would call a ref time out, discuss the situation and make a call. For the purpose of this example, the defender would be at fault for Illegal Stopping, because he made the effort to put himself at risk.

A player from either team pushes off the bottom causing his fins to interfere with the play of the puck. This is an Illegal Stopping Foul on the player who pushed off the bottom.

A player laying in the goal or blocking the goal with an arm or a leg.

Advice to Players

Illegal Stopping is most often accidentally committed; and referees understand that. This foul mostly gets called when a referee sees that it is affecting the game or is happening quite often. To prevent committing this foul in tournaments, it's best to keep an eye on your teammates and teammates keep an eye on you. It is very difficult for you to determine if you are committing this foul. Here are things to look for:

- How are your players getting to the surface after making a play?
- When a player knocks down a high shot, what made contact with the puck?
- Is anything being used besides a stick to defend the goal?

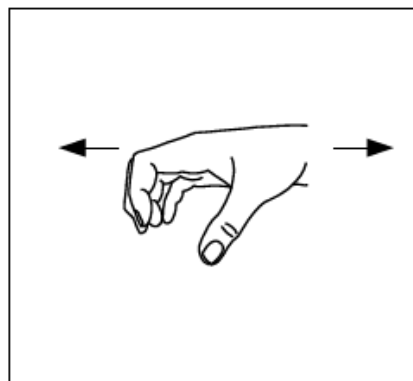
Grabbing the Barrier

Accepted Interpretation

When a player grabs the top of the barrier. Gaining advantage could be understood as gaining advantage in play, gaining a stationary advantage which would prevent other player getting by, or even a viewing advantage. Players can push against the inside wall of the barrier, but cannot hold the barrier.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.23 Grabbing and/or Pulling on Wall Barriers or Gullies - Signal is an open-fingered hand palm down, with fingers curved and moving back and forth in pulling motion. Signal is mimicking the grabbing of the top of an invisible barrier and shaking it.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:

16.3.18 Grabbing or holding the barrier to gain an advantage.

Examples

A player holding the barrier during a scrum alongside the wall.

A player holding the top of the goal during a scrum near the goal.

A player holding the barrier to maintain position while watching a scrum 2 meters behind the scrum.

NOT A FOUL: A player who lays a flat hand across the top of the barrier. However, the instant the fingers curl, a foul is being committed.

NOT A FOUL: A player who lays a hand flat against the vertical surface of the barrier (or wall). Players are permitted to push against vertical barriers.

Advice to Players

Most players do not see barriers in use until their first tournament. It is very easy for new players to grab the barrier during play. It's almost instinctive. During the practice periods before a tournament, practice maneuvering the puck near the barrier while holding your hand vertical against the barrier.

Also, there are many strategies a coach can teach that start with a push against the wall or barrier. Learning these strategies will reduce the desire to grab the barrier.

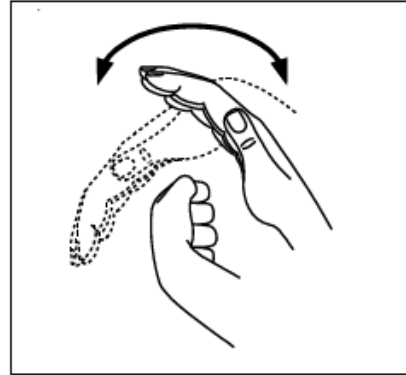
Out of Bounds

Accepted Interpretation

If the puck is knocked past the court boundary lines (over or under the barriers), the player who had possession of the puck prior to it being knocked out of bounds is considered the offender.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.25 Side-Line-Out or Puck Out-of-Bounds - Signal is a straight forearm and hand, fingers straight and together, forearm and hand held parallel to the water surface with palm facing chest, and extended away from the chest by the length of the upper arm. The other hand then makes a diving motion over the stationary forearm/hand mimicking a puck being flicked over a barrier. This signal is then to be followed by the appropriate equal puck or advantage puck signal.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

16.2 Defines “delay of game”, and 16.2.3 below relates out of bounds fouls as a delay of game strategy

- *16.2.3 • If a player flicks the puck out of bounds, the Referee will stop play and award an advantage puck to the nonoffending team. The offending team shall receive a caution (1st infringement) and the offending player shall have a 1-minute time penalty awarded against them (2nd and subsequent infringements).
 - If the stick or body of an opponent deflects a puck after it has been flicked and then goes out of bounds, this will not be considered a delay of game infringement. If a puck is deflected by the stick or body of a teammate after it has been flicked, and then goes out of bounds, this will not be considered a delay of game infringement unless, in the opinion of the referee, the deflection was an intentional manoeuvre to stall or delay the game.
 - In the case of such an intentional deflection, if the offending team has already received a team caution for the offense, the player who deflected the puck out of bounds shall have a 1-minute time penalty awarded against them, while the player who flicked the puck shall not receive a penalty.
 - If one or more players from the offending team are serving penalty time at the time the puck is deflected out of bounds, the referee may be permitted to assume that the out of bounds deflection was an intentional delay-of game manoeuvre.

Examples

A puck getting stuck under the matting of a Sport Court.

A player using the wall or barrier as a playing surface for the puck.

A player with a black stick makes a pass to a teammate, but an opponent attempting block the pass manages to knock it out of bounds. Foul is on white team.

A shot a goal is made, and the puck deflects from the goal back and falls behind the goal.

A scrum happens at the edge of the wall. Suddenly the puck flips up and goes over the barrier. The ref can't identify which team committed the foul. It will be called Equal Puck.

White team is obviously delaying the game, taking advantage of any time-wasting event. A defender from the black team moves forward to capture the puck, and the player in possession conveniently moves the puck out of bounds. Not only is the foul called on the white team, but the offending player may receive a warning, team warning, or a 1-minute penalty.

White stick is maneuvering a puck down the side boundary. Black stick hits the white stick and puck goes out of bounds. A Stick Foul is called on the black team. Although the white stick was in possession of the puck when it went out of bounds, the Stick Foul preceded the Out of Bounds fouls.

Advice to Players

This rule is usually violated accidentally and is generally understood well by players. The only confusion players seem to have regarding this rule is when they decide to play the puck on the vertical surface of the wall. Many pools have a rounded corner between the wall and the floor which makes it easy to get the puck on the wall. Since the wall is not a playing surface, it is therefore Out-of-Bounds when on the wall.

Delay of Game (aka Corner Rule)

Accepted Interpretation

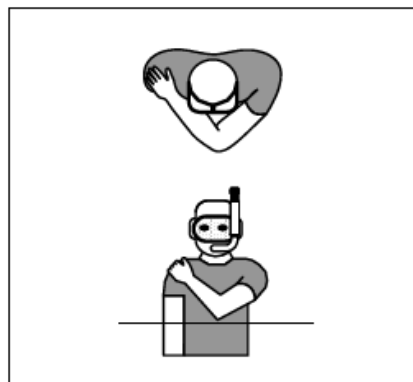
Corner Delay – When a player moves the puck to the corner, either that player, or a succeeding teammate taking possession of the puck, must move it past the 1-meter corner radius or relinquish possession.

Using out of bounds as a delay – If a puck is knocked out of bounds, the out of bounds signal will be used before the delay of game signal is used. However, if a puck being knocked out of bounds is determined by the officials as a strategy to delay the game, time penalties can be given to offending players.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.26 Delay of Game Infringement

If a 'Delay of Game infringement' is awarded involving the 'corner' area of the playing court, this is signaled by laying one hand on the opposed shoulder with a horizontal arm, pointing elbow at the infringing players.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

16.2 Delay of Game

- 16.2.1 Play that is meant to delay or stall or has the effect of delaying or stalling the game may be considered foul play.
- 16.2.1.1 The marked arc belongs to the corner, and once the puck makes contact with the arc the corner rule is invoked.
- 16.2.2 The "corner" is defined as that part of the playing area bounded by the side and end walls (or side and end lines) and a circular arc of 1-metre radius whose centre is at the intersection (or projected intersection in the case of a curved corner) of the side and end walls (or side and end lines). There are four such 'corners' in a single playing area, and a delay of game penalty (see Rule 16.2.2.1) may be incurred by either team in any of these four corners.
- 16.2.2.1 If two members of the same team hold the puck in a corner in succession with neither player making an obvious attempt to manoeuvre the puck out of the corner **OR** a player from the opposing team taking possession of the puck, the Referee will stop play and award an advantage puck to the non-offending team. The offending team shall receive a caution (1st infringement) and for all subsequent infringements the second player to hold the puck in the corner shall have a 1-minute time penalty awarded against them.
- *16.2.3
 - If a player flicks the puck out of bounds, the Referee will stop play and award an advantage puck to the nonoffending team. The offending team shall receive a caution (1st infringement) and the offending player shall have a 1-minute time penalty awarded against them (2nd and subsequent infringements).
 - If the stick or body of an opponent deflects a puck after it has been flicked and then goes out of bounds, this will not be considered a delay of game infringement. If a puck is deflected by the stick or body of a teammate after it has been flicked, and then goes out of bounds, this will not be considered a delay of game infringement unless, in the opinion of the referee, the deflection was an intentional manoeuvre to stall or delay the game.

- In the case of such an intentional deflection, if the offending team has already received a team caution for the offense, the player who deflected the puck out of bounds shall have a 1-minute time penalty awarded against them, while the player who flicked the puck shall not receive a penalty.
- If one or more players from the offending team are serving penalty time at the time the puck is deflected out of bounds, the referee may be permitted to assume that the out of bounds deflection was an intentional delay-of game manoeuvre.

16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:

16.3.3 Delay of Game infractions

Examples

NOT A FOUL: Black stick puts the puck in the corner and holds it there. A teammate replaces the first player and continues to hold the puck in the corner. That second player manages to move the puck out of the corner past the 1 meter mark. Foul avoided.

Black stick puts the puck in the corner and holds it there. A teammate replaces the first player and continues to hold the puck in the corner. That second player can't get the puck out of the corner, decides to abandon it and go up for air. The foul has been committed by the black team. However, a good ref will hold the advantage rule to see what happens next. If a white stick pulls it out past the 1 meter line, the advantage rule may be dropped, and play continues. But if a black stick either held the puck or tried to pull it out, the ref may decide to call the foul.

Black stick puts the puck in the corner and holds it there. A white stick relieves the black stick and continues to hold it there. The white stick can't get the puck out of the corner, decides to abandon it and go up for air. The foul has now been committed by the white team. Again, a good ref will hold the advantage rule to see what happens next. If no attempt is being made to get the puck out of the corner by either team, the ref may call the foul against the white team. If it does manage to get out of the 1 meter line, the referee may drop the advantage.

Advice to Players

There are many ways players can delay games. If a referee determines that a game is being delayed, he or she will call the foul that was committed, issue a warning, advantage, or time penalty within the limits of their duties. Although the foul is called Delay of Game, the signal for the foul is only used when players are not abiding by the Corner Rule.

Before this foul existed, a strong team would park the puck in corner and hold it there to delay the game. It made the game frustrating to opposing teams, and brought the spirit of the sport down. The corner rule was made to prevent the delaying of the game by parking the puck in the corner.

There is nothing wrong with parking the puck in the corner. It is a good strategy to use when you find yourself alone against too many defenders. You can hold it there while your teammates catch up to you, get a breath, or realign the offensive strategy. It's best to have a teammate take your position and get it out of the 1-meter line.

Remember, as you are holding the puck in the corner, the puck must be accessible to a defending player. If you jam the puck in the corner, and cover the puck with your body, you have committed an Obstruction Foul. You also run the risk of having that foul called as well as a time penalty to serve.

“Making the puck accessible” does not mean you have to make it available or give up possession of the puck to your opponent. It means that you must provide a means of access to the puck, which you make as inconvenient as possible to the defender. Consider this scenario:

Your opponent is in possession of the puck and is holding it in the corner waiting for a teammate to come for the puck. You want to relieve your opponent of the puck before his teammate gets there. You come down on your opponent’s left side, but he throws his body in your way before you get to the puck. The right side is now open, and you try to go for it. He again throws his body in the way leaving the left side accessible. Many players in this situation would complain that puck wasn’t accessible. From the referee’s point of view: the puck was accessible; it just wasn’t accessible to you.

Things to remember regarding the puck in the corner:

- If you put the puck there, it’s usually best to pass to a teammate to get it out.
- If you steal a puck from the corner, or a teammate has passed it to you, get it out of the 1 meter line. Fail, and you run the risk of a Delay of Game Foul. Your opponent may also try to prevent you from getting it out of there so the foul could be called on you.
- If you are holding a puck in the corner, remember to maintain accessibility to the puck.

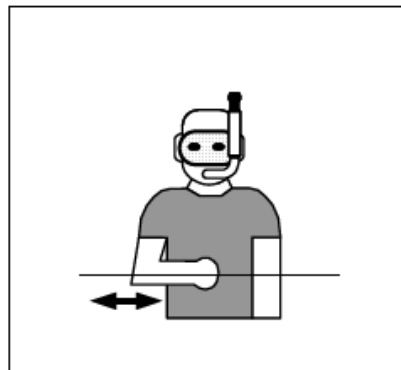
Free Arm

Accepted Interpretation

A player can only use their free arm for maneuvering themselves around. The free hand may not be used to support the stick, stick hand, or arm while in possession of the puck. The free arm cannot be used to push defenders away from the puck, nor can it be used to gain access to the puck.

Signal (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

13.1.13 Illegal Use of Free Arm - Illegal use of free arm is signaled by one arm parallel to the water, bent at the elbow with fist clenched: the arm moves in a horizontal pumping motion.



Reference (CMAS Rules, ver 10.0)

14.1.6 The free hand may not be used to support the stick, stick hand, or arm whilst in possession of the puck.

16.3 Players may be penalised for the following rule infringements:

*16.3.13 Using hands, arms, or body in any way to grasp, pull, or push an opponent or his/her stick.

*16.3.14 Removing or attempting to remove an opponent's equipment.

16.3.19 Free arm violation.

Examples

A player changes direction and uses his free arm to maneuver around. She accidentally pulls the mask off of another player. It doesn't matter if the other player was an opponent or a teammate. It's still a foul. If it was indeed a teammate, it's unlikely that a referee would call it, but they can.

A player in possession of the puck uses the elbow of his free arm to slow down an opponent that is swimming parallel to him.

A player uses his free hand to launch himself off the shoulder of an opponent who is in possession of the puck and then successfully steals the puck.

A player grabbing the wrist of an opponent's stick arm, or any other body part or equipment.

A player swimming with both hands on the stick is not a foul. However, if the stick touches the puck with both hands on it, then it's a Free Arm Foul.

Advice to Players

With new players, an accidental Free Arm foul is very common. When practicing puck handling skills, try keeping your free arm by your side. This helps keep you conscious of your free arm's activity.

With experienced players, Free Arm Fouls are more deliberate. Make sure you are only using that free arm for maneuvering.

To be included or changed in next drafts:

- Clarify accuracy; insert other suggestions by referees.
- Update the graphics.
- Include a penalties section for each foul.
- ?? Add chapter on Calls: Advantage Rule, Equal Puck, Advantage Puck, Penalty Shot, Penalty Goal.