

THE INTERNATIONAL RULES FOR POLO
(With amendments following meeting at Buenos Aires)

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A TEAMS, PLAYERS, SUBSTITUTES AND EQUIPMENT

A.1 TEAMS AND PLAYERS

- (a) The number of players is limited to 4 a side in all games.
- (b) Players must be qualified to play under the Regulations and Rules of the host country of the event.
- (c) Players shall play with the stick in the right hand.
- (d) No individual shall participate as a player or official in any game, if under the influence of drugs, alcohol or any other substance, which may affect the ability to function. A player participating in any game under these rules consents, as a condition of participation, to blood, urine or other tests deemed appropriate by the host organisation.
- (e) The aggregate handicap of a team must fall within the limits specified for an event. No team whose handicap is higher or lower than the specified limits shall be permitted to participate.
- (f) Certain rules regarding eligibility and handicapping may vary from country to country and such rules must be obeyed when playing in that country.

A.2 SUBSTITUTION

- (a) Substitution will be limited to players qualified and properly nominated under the tournament rules; any combination of 4 players so qualified and nominated are eligible to start the game provided the team is within the handicap limits of the tournament and the players are named at least 24 hours prior to games; any subsequent team change due to sickness, injury or other, will be immediately notified to the tournament committee and the opposing team.
- (b) Substitution may only take place during a game if a player becomes sick or injured. If a player becomes sick or injured he, and any other players on the team, can be substituted for provided the team remains within the handicap limit of the tournament and is properly qualified under the tournament rules.
- (c) The handicap of a team in any game shall be its highest total handicap on the field at any one time during that game.”
- (d) Certain rules regarding substitution and handicap alterations may vary from country to country and such rules must be obeyed when playing in that country.

A.3 EQUIPMENT FOR PLAYERS

- (a) Sharp spurs and protruding buckles or studs on a player's boots or knee guards are not allowed.
- (b) Players must wear protective headgear with a chinstrap properly fixed.

(c) Teams must wear distinguishing colours. If the 2 teams in the opinion of the tournament committee or the umpires conducting the game are so alike as to cause confusion, the team with the lower handicap or if equal, lower in the draw or second named in a league, must play in some other colour.

(d) Certain rules regarding equipment for players may vary from country to country and such rules must be obeyed when playing in that country.

B PONIES, PONY EQUIPMENT AND PONY WELFARE

B.1 PONIES

(a) Ponies of any height may be played.

(b) A pony blind in an eye may not be played.

(c) A pony may not be played which is not under proper control or which shows a vice that is a danger to other ponies or players.

(d) A pony played by one team cannot be played by any other team in the same tournament.

B.2 EQUIPMENT FOR PONIES

(a) Protection of ponies by boots or bandages on all 4 legs is compulsory.

(b) Blinkers or any form of noseband or other equipment which obstructs the vision of the pony, are not allowed.

(c) A calkin or stud must only be fitted on the last inch (2.5 cms) of the hind shoes.

(d) Shoes with an outer rim, toe grab, screws, studs with hard centres or frost nails are not allowed.

(e) Certain rules regarding the equipment for ponies may vary from country to country. These rules must be obeyed when playing in that country.

B.3 WELFARE OF PONIES

(a) Players must take all reasonable steps to ensure the welfare of their ponies.

(b) Any pony showing blood, whether from the mouth, flanks or any other part, shall be removed from the game.

(c) After the fall of a pony, it shall be trotted up sound and fit to play before the player remounts.

(d) Any pony that is lame shall be removed from the game.

(e) The umpires have the authority to order the removal of any pony from the game.

(f) Certain rules regarding the welfare of ponies may vary from country to country and such rules must be obeyed when playing in that country.

C DUTIES AND AUTHORITY OF TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE, UMPIRES, REFEREE, GOAL JUDGES, TIMEKEEPER, SCORER AND OTHER OFFICIALS.

C.1 DUTIES AND AUTHORITY OF TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

(a) In most events, the host club will appoint 3 or more qualified individuals, who have little or no interest in the outcome of the event to form a tournament committee. The tournament committee will be charged with the responsibility of running the event, including providing the officials and all the equipment needed by the officials to conduct the event, scheduling of the game(s), the holding of the draw and the resolution of questions arising at any time other than when the umpires are in charge. The decisions of the tournament committee shall be final and may not be objected to by the teams.

(b) No team may appeal in any way against the appointment of any particular umpire or referee. Nor may a team appeal against the times or venue of a game.

(c) Alleged procedural irregularities by the tournament committee may be protested to the governing body FIP, such protests must be in writing, and made without delay.

(d) Any question regarding a player or a pony may be referred by the umpires to the tournament committee after the game.

C.2 UMPIRES AND REFEREE

(a) The rules shall be administered in a game by two umpires, who shall be mounted to enable them to keep close to the play, and a referee who shall remain off the field of play in a central position. The tournament committee may decide that 1 umpire and the referee may be dispensed with. All decisions of the umpires shall be final. In the event that 2 are serving and they disagree, the referee shall decide which umpire's opinion is to prevail or call no foul. In the event the umpires disagree, after hearing the testimony of the goal judges(s), as to whether a goal has been scored, the referee shall give the benefit of any doubt to the defending team.

(b) Discretion of Umpires.

Should any incident or question not provided for in these rules or in the rules prevailing in the country where the game is being played arise in a game, such incident or question shall be decided by the umpires. If the umpires disagree, the Referee's decision shall be final.

(c) The umpires' authority begins when the umpires take to the field and ends when they leave the field. During this time, any infringement of the rules constitutes a foul and the umpires will stop the game unless interrupting the game and awarding a penalty results in a disadvantage to the team fouled.

C.3 GOAL JUDGES

(a) In important games, goal judges shall be appointed, each of whom shall give testimony to the umpire at the latter's request as to the goals scored or other points of the game near the goal, but the umpire shall make all final decisions.

(b) When the ball is hit across the back line, a goal judge should signal and then quickly place a new ball on level ground on the field within 1 foot of the spot where it crossed the line except that it must not be nearer than 4 yards from the goal posts or sideboards.

C.4 TIMEKEEPER AND SCORER

An official timekeeper and scorer shall be employed at all games. Their authority must be subordinate to the final authority of the umpire.

C.5 OTHER OFFICIALS

Certain rules regarding Officials, their equipment and authority may vary from country to country and such rules must be obeyed when playing in that country.

D GAME FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

D.1 FIELD OF PLAY

(a) A full size field of play shall be 300 yards (275 meters) in length by 200 yards (180 meters) in width if unboarded; and 300 yards (275 meters) in length by 160 yards (140 meters) in width if boarded.

(b) The goals shall not be less than 250 yards (230 meters) apart; each goal shall be 8 yards (7.3 meters) wide and centred at each end of the field.

(c) The goal posts shall be at least 10 feet (3 meters) high, and light enough to give way if collided with.

(d) The boards shall not exceed 11 inches (28 centimetres) in height.

D.2 SIZE OF BALL

The size of the ball shall be 3 to 3.5 inches (76 to 89 millimetres) in diameter; the weight of the ball shall be within the limits of 4.25 to 4.75 ounces (120 to 135 grams).

D.3 RUN-OFF AREA

(a) The run-off area is recommended to extend 10 yards beyond the boards or side lines and 30 yards beyond the back line.

(b) No person other than players and umpires is allowed in the run-off area during play; except a stick holder may cross the safety zone to hand a player a new stick. A player requiring a stick, pony or other assistance from an outside person during play must ride to the boards, side or end lines to procure it, no person may come on to the field of play to assist.

(c) No pony is allowed within the run-off area during play except those being ridden by a player or umpire.

(d) Any incidence of the game which occurs in the run-off area shall be treated as though it occurred on the field of play.

E DURATION OF GAMES, CHUKKERS, WINNING OF GAME; GOALS AND HANDICAPS

E.1 DURATION OF GAMES

The standard duration of a game shall be 6 chukkers. The number of chukkers in a game may be varied by the tournament committee. There may not be more than 8 chukkers, not including extra time. In all games there shall be a half time interval of 5 minutes; all other intervals between chukkers will be 3 minutes. 5 minutes shall be allowed before the first chukker of extra time if it is to be played. In games of 7 or 5 chukkers, the interval will be after the fourth or third chukker respectively. With the exception of the said intervals, play shall be continuous.

E.2 DURATION OF CHUKKERS

(a) The bell shall be sounded 1 minute before each chukker as a warning of its commencement and again at the time each chukker is to commence.

(b) Each chukker will be 7 minutes in length. At the end of 6½ minutes of playing time, a bell will be sounded to indicate 30 seconds remain in the chukker. At the end of 7 minutes of playing time, a horn will sound to terminate the chukker.

(c) If a foul is called and confirmed by the officials when less than 5 seconds remain in the chukker, then the clock will be reset to provide 5 seconds of play.

(d) Should the score be tied at the end of the last regular chukker, the game shall be resumed with an extra chukker played under the same conditions as described in the above sections with intervals between chukkers as provided in Rule E.1. If the game goes to a second extra chukker, the goals shall be widened to 16 yards (14.6 meters) and teams will change ends. The first team to score in the extra chukker(s) wins the game.

(e) All chukkers will terminate at 7 minutes, which is confirmed by the horn and the whistle. However to avoid any mistake about whether the horn has actually been sounded or not, or whether such sounding may have been inadvertent or untimely, players should continue to play until they hear the umpire's whistle.

E.3 RUNNING AND STOPPING OF CLOCK

(a) Only if and when the umpire stops the play with a whistle, shall the clock be stopped. The clock shall not be stopped when a goal is scored or the ball otherwise goes out of bounds unless the umpire blows the whistle.

(b) If play is to be resumed by the umpire throwing the ball in between the teams, the clock (if stopped) does not resume running until the ball leaves the umpire's hand.

(c) If play is to be resumed by a team taking a hit, the clock (if stopped) does not start until the ball is hit or hit at.

E.4 WINNING OF GAMES: GOALS

(a) The team that scores the most goals, including goals awarded on handicap and/or by penalty, wins the game.

(b) A goal is scored from play when the ball passes between the goal posts or the imaginary vertical line produced by the inner surfaces of the

goal posts and across and clear of the goal line. The ball must go all of the way over and across the goal line to be a goal. A ball on the line is still in play. A ball hit directly over the top of either goal post shall not count as a goal because it does not pass between the inner vertical lines produced.

(c) Tournaments may be played in whole or part as a league, with 3 or more teams. If so, a points system, 2 for a win, 1 for a tie, should be used; there will be no extra chukkers in the event of a tie. If 2 teams tie, the "who beat who" rule will operate, but if 3 or more teams tie, the points system will be recalculated only to take into account the matches between the tied teams. If this results in 2 teams still being tied, then the "who beat who" rule will apply. If, however, 3 or more teams remain tied on points, the order of merit is established using the total of net goals accredited to each team (i.e. the sum of goals scored minus the sum of goals against, both including those received on handicap), counting only the matches between the tied teams. Should teams still be tied on net goals, then the difference in gross goals determines the order of merit. If teams still remain tied then the host club's Tournament Committee shall determine the winner by (a) a play off, (b) other equitable test or (c) toss of a coin.

(d) No objection may be lodged after the game on a decision made during the game as to whether a goal was scored or not, or whether the recording of goals was accurate or not.

E.5 HANDICAP CALCULATION

In all games played under handicap conditions, the higher handicapped team shall concede to the lower handicapped team the difference in team handicaps, divided by 6 and multiplied by the number of chukkers of play in the game. All fractions of a goal shall be counted as "half a goal". Mistakes in handicaps or in computing goal allowances must be challenged before the game begins, and no objection can be entertained afterwards.

F COMMENCEMENT, INTERRUPTION AND RESUMPTION OF PLAY

F.1 DEAD BALL

(a) The umpire shall carry a whistle, which he shall blow when he wishes to stop the game. The ball is dead at the sound of the whistle and the time it is dead is not counted in the playing time of the period, except as in F.2.

(b) If a whistle is blown for a foul at approximately the same time as the goal is scored:-

(i) The goal will be disallowed if the foul was committed by the attacking team and the foul was confirmed.

(ii) The goal will be allowed if the foul was committed by the attacking team and the foul is over-ruled; or if the foul was committed by the defending team whether or not the foul is confirmed.

(c) If the whistle is blown for a foul at approximately the same time as the ball is hit behind the back line and the foul is over-ruled, the ball shall be hit in or a Penalty 6 taken.

F.2 GAME STOPPED

Play shall be continuous until play and the clock are stopped by the umpire blowing the whistle.

F.3 START OF THE GAME

At the beginning of the game the 2 teams shall line up in the middle of the ground, each team being on its own side of the halfway line. The umpire shall bowl the ball underhand and hard between the opposing ranks of players, from a distance of not less than 5 yards, the players remaining stationary until the ball has left his hand. (See Rule K.1).

F.4 CHANGING ENDS

Ends shall be changed after every goal except where a goal is awarded under Penalty 1. Ends shall also be changed if no goals have been scored by half time (in a 7 or 5 chukker game, after the fourth or third chukker respectively), and play shall be re-started at a position corresponding to the change of ends. After a goal has been scored, the game shall be re-started from the middle of the ground as prescribed in Rule F.3 above. The players shall be allowed a reasonable amount of time in which to reach the middle of the ground at the speed of a slow canter and to take up their positions.

F.5 WRONG LINE UP

(a) If the umpire inadvertently permits lining up the wrong way the responsibility rests with him, and there is no redress, but if at the end of the chukker no goal has been scored the ends shall then be changed.

(b) If a player is on the wrong side of the line up, he may not make a play until he is behind a member of his own team.

F.6 ATTACKER HITS BEHIND

(a) The ball must go over and be clear of the back line to be out.

(b) When the ball is hit behind the back line by the attacking team, it shall be hit in by the defending team from the spot where it crossed the line, but at least 4 yards from the goal posts or boards, when the umpire calls "Play". None of the attacking team shall be behind the striker and shall not be within 30 yards of the back line until the ball is hit or hit at; the defending team being free to place themselves where they choose.

(c) Players shall have a reasonable time to get in to position.

(d) In the event the hitting team does not hit in promptly following the call of "Play" or hits or hits at the ball before play is called, the umpire shall sound the whistle and throw the ball in underhand and hard, at the spot where the ball crossed the back line at right angles to it. For such a throw in, the team which delayed play shall be on the side nearest the goal.

F.7 DEFENDER HITS BEHIND

If the ball is hit behind the back line by one of the defending team, either directly or after glancing off his own pony, or after glancing off the side boards or goal post, Penalty 6 shall be exacted. If the ball strikes any other object before going behind, it shall be hit in in accordance with Rule F.6.

F.8 BALL HIT OUT

(a) The ball shall go over and clear of the side lines or boards to be out of play.

(b) When the ball is hit over the boards or side line, it must be bowled in underhand and hard, by the umpire into the field of play from a point just inside the boards or lines where it went out, on an imaginary line parallel to the two goals, and between the opposing ranks of players, each team being on its own side of the imaginary line. No player may stand within 5 yards of the umpire. Players must remain stationary until the ball has left the umpire's hand. A reasonable time must be allowed for players to line up. (See F.5 (b)).

F.9 RE-STARTING WHEN THE BALL WAS NOT OUT

If for any reason the game has to be stopped without the ball going out of play, it shall be re-started in the following manner. The umpire shall stand at the spot where the ball was when the incident occurred, facing the nearer side of the field of play, but not nearer the boards or side line than 20 yards. Both teams shall take up their positions, each team being on its own side of an imaginary line, parallel to the goal lines and extending through the umpire to the sides of the grounds. No player may stand within 5 yards of the umpire. The umpire shall bowl the ball underhand and hard, between the opposing ranks of players, towards the nearer side of the ground, the players remaining stationary until the ball has left his hand. (See F.5 (b)).

F.10 RE-STARTING AFTER INTERVAL

On play being resumed after an interval, the ball shall be put in play in the normal manner which would have been allowed had there been no interval, i.e. in accordance with Rules F.4, 6, 7 and 9, as the case may be. The umpires must not wait for players who are late.

F.11 DAMAGED BALL

If the ball is damaged or trodden into the ground, the umpire shall stop the game and re-start it with a new ball, in the manner described in Rule F.9. The game shall be stopped and the ball changed when the damaged ball is in such a position that neither team is favoured thereby. Until the game is stopped, the larger part of a broken ball is the one considered to be in play; if the ball breaks when a penalty is being taken and it effects the free hit, the penalty shall be taken again with the new ball.

F.12 CARRYING THE BALL

A player may not catch, kick or hit the ball with anything but his stick. He may block with any part of his body but not with an open hand. He may not carry the ball. If the ball becomes lodged against a player, his pony or its equipment, in such a way that it cannot be dropped immediately, the umpire shall blow his whistle and re-start the game in accordance with Rule F.9 at the point where it was first carried.

F.13 WHEN THE GAME IS NOT STOPPED

It shall be within the discretion of the umpire not to stop the game for the purpose of inflicting a penalty, if the stopping of the game and the inflicting of the penalty would be a disadvantage to the fouled team.

F.14 UNFINISHED GAME

Once a game has started it shall be played to a finish unless stopped by the umpire for some unavoidable cause which prevents a finish the same day, such as darkness or weather, in which case it shall be resumed at the point at which it has stopped, as to score, period and position of the ball, at the earliest convenient time, to be decided upon by the committee conducting the tournament.

G LINE OF BALL

G.1 The line of the ball is the line of its course or that line produced at any moment.

G.2 When the Line of the Ball changes and, as a result the Right of Way changes, a player must be granted the necessary time to clear the new Right of Way.

G.3 A player clearing the Right of Way may make no offensive or defensive play in so doing and must take the most effective way to clear that Right of Way.

G.4 If in the process of clearing the line a pony kicks the ball, this is not considered making a play.

H RIGHT OF WAY

H.1 At each moment of the game there shall exist as between any 2 or more players in the proximity of the ball a Right of Way, which shall be considered to extend ahead of the player entitled to it, and in the direction in which that player is riding.

H.2 The Right of Way entitles a player to take the ball on the offside, but see H.9 (a). No player may have the ball directly in front of or on the near-side if by so doing an opponent is endangered who could have safely attempted to hook that player's stick or to hit the ball had the original player been placed with the ball on the offside. This subsection takes precedence over the subsections 7 and 8 below.

H.3 The Right of Way is not identical to and must not be confused with the Line of the Ball. The Line of the Ball is a frame of reference for the Right of Way. The last striker has no automatic Right of Way to the next play.

H.4 No player shall enter or cross this Right of Way except at such a distance that not the slightest risk of collision or danger to any player is involved.

- H.5** Two players when riding in the same direction on the Line of the Ball, either following or meeting the ball, and simultaneously making a play against each other, have the Right of Way over a single player coming from any direction.
- H.6** The player following the ball and nearest to it on its exact line and taking it on his off-side, is entitled to the Right of Way over all other players, except against 2 players as defined in H.5 above.
- H.7** A player may have the ball on the near-side if any of the following conditions are met:-
- (a) A legal ride off has been executed.
 - (b) The opponent is travelling parallel and level, or nearly parallel and level to the player. Players are considered level when the mounts are overlapped on one another. If an opponent moves ahead so that the player nearer the Line of the Ball is no longer level, that player must switch to the offside giving the opponent a near-side play; this does not permit the opponent to endanger the player.
 - (c) If the opponent is far enough behind for the player to safely complete the play.
- H.8** As between 2 players, when one is following the ball and the other meeting the ball:-
- (a) Regardless of their respective angles, a player following the ball has the Right of Way over an opponent meeting the ball, other than an opponent meeting the ball with the line of the ball on the offside, who is on the exact line of the ball who has not crossed and does not subsequently cross the Line of the Ball at an unsafe distance in front of the player following the ball. An opponent meeting the ball in this fashion has the Right of Way over a player following the ball at an angle.
 - (b) Once safely placed with the ball on the offside, a player following the Line of the Ball has the Right of Way over an opponent meeting the ball. The opponent meeting the ball may do so only if he keeps the Line of the Ball on his offside throughout the play and does not infringe the player's Right of Way.
- H.9** As between 2 players, when both are following or both are meeting the ball:-
- (a) The player riding parallel to or at the lesser angle to the line of the ball has the Right of Way over the opponent riding at the greater angle to the Line of the Ball.
 - (b) If the line of the ball is on the near side of both players and they are not riding level, the player nearer the line of the ball must play it on his off-side and allow his opponent a near-side play.
 - (c) In the rare case of 2 players on opposite sides of the Line of the Ball riding at exactly equal angles to it, both players have the Right of Way up to the line until the angle of one to the line becomes less than the angle of the other.

I CHECKING

- I.1** No player may check or pull up either on or across the Right of Way if by so doing he runs the slightest risk of collision with any other player entitled to it.
- I.2** A player may check and play the ball at a reduced speed provided any other players following on that Right of Way have time to adjust and there is no risk of a collision.
- I.3** If a player enters safely on the Right of Way and does not check, an opponent must not ride into him from behind, but must take the ball on the near side of his pony.
- I.4** (a) A player in possession of the ball on the Right of Way with an opponent in a position to attempt a defensive play must not walk or stop. Should the player walk or stop, the umpire must blow the whistle and throw the ball in towards the nearer sideboards or sidelines.
(b) If the offensive player stops as a result of a Right of Way foul, that foul shall be called against the opponent and play resumed with the appropriate penalty.

J DANGEROUS RIDING

A player may not ride in a manner which creates danger to another pony, player or official or which places the welfare of his own pony at undue risk. A player must be travelling at a similar speed to the opponent and all ride-offs must be shoulder to shoulder. In particular a player may not:

- (a) Ride off at too great an angle.
- (b) Ride off at a speed that is not compatible with the speed of the opponent.
- (c) Ride into an opponent behind the saddle.
- (d) Ride an opponent across or into the Right of Way of another player at an unsafe distance.
- (e) Ride off an opponent who is already being ridden off by another member of the team (Sandwiching). However, it is not a foul for a player to hook or strike an opponent's stick whilst the opponent is being ridden-off by a team mate of the player hooking or striking.
- (g) Continue to ride off another player over the goal line, thereby endangering a goal judge.
- (h) Ride his mount up into the backhand stroke of another player from behind.
- (j) Ride his mount up the line of the ball from behind and into the stroke of an opponent making a full forehand shot.
- (k) Use his pony to spoil a shot by riding over the ball and into an opposing player who has already started the downward swing of a full shot.
- (l) Zigzag in front of another player in such a way as to impede his progress within his Right of Way or cause the latter either to have to check his pace or risk a fall.

(m) Pull across or over a pony's legs either in front or behind in such a manner as to risk tripping either pony.

(n) A player who rides at an opponent in such a manner as to intimidate and cause him to pull out or miss his stroke, although no foul or cross actually occurs, shall be penalized as if it had.

K USE OF THE WHIP/SPURS

K.1 (a) Whips and/or spurs may not be used unnecessarily or excessively.

(b) Polo clubs and umpires must ensure that, save for exceptional circumstances, whips are not used to strike ponies on the field of play except when the ball is in play.

(c) Umpires should at least start the game with a Penalty 5 (b) if a player strikes a pony on the field of play after the umpires have ridden on to the field of play and before the ball is in play.

(d) A player must not strike another player or his pony with his whip.

L ROUGH OR ABUSIVE PLAY

L.1 No player may seize with the hand, strike or push with the head, hand, arm, or elbow, but a player may push with the arm above the elbow, provided the elbow is kept close to the side.

L.2 No player may physically abuse another player or the player's own or another player's pony.

L.3 A player deliberately striking another player or another player's pony with hand, whip or stick shall be ejected from the remainder of the game with no substitution in accordance with Penalty 10 and the incident shall be reported by the umpire to the appropriate Disciplinary Committee.

M MISUSE OF THE STICK

M.1 No player may hook an opponent's stick, unless he is on the same side of the opponent's pony as the ball, or in a direct line behind, and his stick is neither over or under the body or across the legs of an opponent's pony, nor may any player hook or strike at an opponent's stick unless all of the opponent's stick is below the opponent's shoulder level. The stick may not be hooked or struck unless the opponent is in the act of striking the ball.

M.2 No player may reach immediately over and across or under and across any part of an opponent's pony to strike at the ball, nor may he hit into or amongst the legs of an opponent's pony.

M.3 No player may intentionally strike another player or his pony or another player's pony with his polo stick.

M.4 No player may use his stick dangerously, or hold it in such a way as to interfere with another player or his pony such as:-

- (a) Taking a full swing at the ball from the throw-in or in a melee in such a way as to endanger other players or ponies.
- (b) Striking at the ball in the air in such a way as to endanger other players or ponies.
- (c) Taking a full swing under a pony's neck in such a way as to endanger another player or pony riding alongside.
- (d) Striking an opponent's stick in such a way as he may cause injury to that player or his pony.
- (e) Striking the ball after the whistle.
- (f) "Windmilling" or "helicoptering".

N LOSS OR BREAKAGE OF EQUIPMENT

N.1 If a player loses his headgear the umpire shall stop the game as soon as an opportunity occurs that favours neither team.

N.2 In the event of broken tack or equipment:-

(a) The game shall be stopped immediately if the breakage presents a risk to player or pony such as:-

- (i) Broken girth.
- (ii) Broken martingale.
- (iii) Broken rein, if single.
- (iv) Broken or loose bit.
- (v) Loose bandages or boots.

(b) The game should not be stopped immediately, but as soon as an opportunity occurs that favours neither team for breakage of a non-dangerous nature such as:-

- (i) Lost or broken stirrup leather or iron.
- (ii) Lost or broken curb chain.
- (iii) Lost bandages or boots.

(c) When time is given for lost or broken equipment, the player may return on another pony.

O ACCIDENT OR INJURY TO PLAYER OR PONY

O.1 If a pony falls, goes lame or may be injured, the umpire shall stop the game immediately.

O.2 If a pony throws a shoe, the player may be given time out to change the pony when the game is next stopped.

O.3 If a player falls off his pony the umpire shall not stop the game until the ball is in a neutral position, unless he is of the opinion that the player is injured or is liable to be injured. What constitutes a fall is left to the decision of the umpire.

O.4 A dismounted player may not interfere with the game in any way.

O.5 When the game has been stopped in accordance with Rules N or O above, the umpire shall re-start the game in the manner laid down in

Rule F.9, directly the player concerned is ready to resume play. The umpire shall not wait for any other player who may not be present.

- O.6** If a player be injured, a period not exceeding 15 minutes shall be allowed for his recovery. If the injured player is unfit to play after 15 minutes, the game shall be re-started with a substitute in place of the injured player. If, however, the injured player subsequently recovers he may replace the player who was substituted in his place, but the handicap of the higher handicapped player will be counted in accordance with Rule A 2.
- O.7** If a player be disabled by a foul, and an eligible substitute cannot be found, the umpire may decide to remove a player from the fouling team. The player removed shall be the one whose handicap is nearest above the disabled player. However, if the disabled player is equal to or higher than that of any of his opponents, the Captain of the team fouled will designate the one to retire. The game shall continue and no change in handicap shall be made: if the team fouling refuses to continue the game, it shall forfeit the game. (See Penalty 10).

P SELECTION OF PENALTIES

- P.1** There are degrees of dangerous play and unfair play which give the advantage to the team fouling. The penalty to be inflicted is left to the discretion of the umpires and shall only be referred to the referee in the event of the umpires disagreeing on the penalty.
- P.2** Personal fouls involving unsportsmanlike conduct such as, but not limited to:-
- Disrespect towards the officials.
 - Arguing with the umpires or other officials.
 - Foul or abusive language to anybody on the field.
 - Appealing for fouls verbally or with a stick.

Must, at a minimum, be penalised progressively as follows:-

- Penalty for first offence.
- A more severe penalty if a penalty has been previously awarded
- Penalty 10(a) (~~player excluded~~) will be awarded with a player being ~~suspended~~ excluded from the remainder of the chukker.
- Penalty 10(b) (~~player excluded~~) will be awarded with a player being ~~suspended~~ excluded from the remainder of the game.

This does not preclude the umpires ~~imposing~~ awarding Penalty 10(a) or 10(b) (~~player excluded~~) at the first offence.

- P.3** If in the opinion of the umpire, a player commits a dangerous or deliberate foul in the vicinity of goal in order to save a goal Penalty 1 (goal) will be awarded.

Q TAKING OF PENALTIES

(a) When taking penalties 3, 4, 6 or 5(a) within the 60 yard line, the hitter and his team members, after the initial hit at the ball may not hit or hit at the ball with more than a half stroke, nor may they hit the ball in such a way that the Umpire considers to be dangerous, until the ball has been hit or hit at by an opponent or the whistle blows.

(b) Teeing up. Building a tee is not allowed; only one player at a time may position the ball and once the umpires have called 'play', the ball may not be repositioned.

(c) In all free hits, the ball shall be considered in play the moment it has been either hit or hit at and missed. The player shall hit the ball, or hit at it, in the first attempt; the striker is not allowed to go over the ball, or circle during the final approach, or do an excessively long preparation run.

(d) "Behind the ball" should be interpreted as being behind the line parallel to the back line and running through the point from which the penalty is being taken. Any attempt by a defender to approach the striker from behind that line shall be penalised.

(e) The only variation to Q. (a) will be that when taking Penalties 2 or 3, the Penalty may be defended or undefended, according to the rules of the country where the game is being played.

R SPECIFIC PENALTIES

Penalty 1 - Penalty Goal

(a) The team fouled shall be allowed one goal.

(b) The game shall be restarted at a spot ten yards from the middle of the fouler's goal in the manner prescribed in Rule F.9. Ends shall not be changed.

Penalty 2 - 30 Yard Hit

(a) A free hit at the ball from a spot 30 yards from the goal line of the team fouling, opposite the middle of the goal or, if preferred, from where the foul occurred (the choice to rest with the Captain of the team fouled).

The fouling team must be behind the back line, but not between the goal posts, and they may not defend the penalty conversion attempt. None of the team fouled to be nearer the goal line or back line than the ball is at the moment it is hit or hit at. The team fouled may hit or hit at the ball only once. If the ball fails to clear the backline, the defending team will be awarded a free hit from the spot where the ball stopped, (R.5 (a)). Should the spot be within 4 yards of a goal post, the ball shall be placed 4 yards either side of the nearest goal post for a free hit by a defending player.

In the event of the Captain of the team fouled electing to take the penalty from the spot where the foul occurred, none of the defending team to be within 30 yards of the ball, nor come out from between the goal posts.

(b) When a technical foul is given as well as Penalty 2, if the goal is scored the game should be started with a 5 (b); if the original shot fails, another Penalty 2 should be awarded for the technical foul.

Penalty 3 - 40 Yard Hit

(a) A free hit at the ball from a spot 40 yards from the goal line of the team fouling opposite the middle of the goal.

All the team fouling must be behind their back line until the ball is hit or hit at, but not between the goal posts, nor when the ball is brought into play may any of the team ride out from between the goal posts; none of the team fouled must be nearer the goal line or back line than the ball is, at the moment it is hit or hit at.

(b) In carrying out Penalty 3, if the free hit would, in the opinion of the umpire have resulted in a goal, but is stopped by one of the team fouling coming out from between the goal posts, or crossing the back line before the ball was struck, such shot is to count as a goal to the team fouled. If the player who stopped the ball did not infringe these rules, but another member of his team did, Penalty 7 (a) shall be exacted.

Penalty 4 - 60 Yard Hit

A free hit at the ball from a spot 60 yards from the goal line of the team fouling opposite the middle of the goal; the team fouling shall be behind the 30 yard line, the team fouled being free to place themselves where they choose.

Penalty 5(a) - Free Hit from the Spot

A free hit at the ball from where it was when the foul took place, but not nearer the boards or side lines than four yards. None of the team fouling to be within 30 yards of the ball, nor behind the ball, the team fouled being free to place themselves where they choose. (Rule Q. (d)).

Penalty 5(b) - Free Hit from the Centre

A free hit at the ball from the centre of the ground, none of the team fouling to be within 30 yards of the ball, nor behind the ball, the team fouled being free to place themselves where they choose. (Rule Q. (d)).

Penalty 6 - 60 Yard Hit Opposite where Ball Crossed Back Line (Defenders hit the ball behind)

A free hit at the ball from a spot 60 yards distant from the back line, opposite where the ball crossed it, but not nearer the boards or side lines than four yards. None of the team fouling to be within 30 yards of the ball, nor behind the ball the team fouled being free to place themselves where they choose. (Rule Q. (d)).

Violation of Penalties

Penalty 7(a) – Another Free Hit

If the team fouling fail to carry out Penalty 2, 3, 4, or 6 correctly the team fouled shall be allowed another free hit at the ball, unless a goal has been scored or awarded. If the team fouling fail to carry out Penalty 5 correctly, the umpire shall advance the ball by 30 yards for the re-hit.

If both sides fail to carry out Penalty 2 or 3 correctly, another Free Hit must be taken by the team fouled, irrespective of the result of the previous Free Hit.

Penalty 7(b) - Hit in by Defenders from Middle of Own Goal

If the team fouled fail to carry out Penalty 2 or 3 correctly, the defenders shall be allowed a hit in from the middle of their own goal. None of the attacking team shall be within 30 yards of the back line until the ball is hit, or hit at, the defenders being free to place themselves where they choose. (Rule Q.(d)).

Penalty 7(c) - Hit in from 30 Yard Line

If the attacking team fail to carry out Rule F.6 or Penalty 7 (b) correctly, the defenders shall be allowed to hit in from the 30 yard line, from the spot opposite where the first hit was made or would have been made. None of the team penalised shall be within 30 yards of the ball until it is hit or hit at; the team taking the penalty being free to place themselves where they choose. Any further infringement of Rule F.6 or Penalty 7 (b) or (c) by the attacking team, the defenders must be allowed a Penalty 5(b).

Penalty 7(d) - Unnecessary Delay

In the event of unnecessary delay by the team fouled when called on by the umpire to take a penalty hit, the umpire shall restart the game from the spot where the hit should have been taken in accordance with Rule F.9 or F.6(d).

Penalty 7(e) - Violation of Rule Q.(a)

If the attacking team fail to carry out Rule Q.(a) correctly, the defending team shall have a free hit at the ball, as per Penalty 5(a).

Penalty 8(a) – Blind Pony Disqualified

For infringement of Rule B.1(b), the pony blind of an eye must be reported by the umpire in writing to the Committee conducting the tournament who shall take all steps necessary to ensure that it shall not be played again in any tournament.

Penalty 8(b) - Pony Disqualified

For infringement of Rule B.1 (c) and (d): the pony must be ordered off the ground by the umpire and disqualified from being played again during the game or match.

Penalty 8(c) - Pony Ordered Off

For infringement of Rule B.2; the pony must be ordered off the ground by the umpire and disqualified from playing again until the offence has been removed.

Penalty 9) - Player Ordered Off

For infringement of Rule A.3; the player must be ordered off the ground by the umpire and disqualified from playing again until he has removed the offence.

Player Excluded

The umpires may exclude a player as below, in addition to any other penalty, in the case of a deliberate foul, dangerous foul, or conduct prejudicial to the game. In all cases, the umpires must agree or if not in agreement ask the referee to decide. Any player sent off must return immediately to his pony lines, he must not remain in the safety zone. The team to which the excluded player belonged shall continue with three players only or forfeit the game provided the tournament committee of the club running the game agrees.

Penalty 10(a) - Player Excluded for the Rest of the Chukka

Penalty 10(b) - Player Excluded for the Rest of the Match

For a more serious offence, the umpires may exclude a player for the rest of the match.

THE INTERNATIONAL RULES FOR POLO

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