

Idiot's Guide To Canoe Polo

Introduction

There are five people on each team and the halves are between 6 and 10 minutes long.

At the start of play each team line up with the back of their boats on their goal line. On the whistle one player from each team sprints for the ball which is thrown into the middle of the pool.

The ball can only be held for five seconds before it is passed (to yourself or another player).

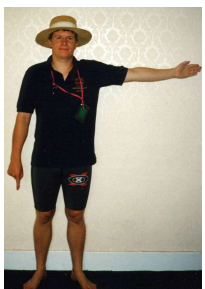
Always look carefully at the referee. Whenever they blow the whistle the game will stop and they will signal clearly why they have blown the whistle and if it was a foul they will indicate which team now has possession.

One arm will indicate the direction of play (d.o.p.) normally by a finger pointing at the opposition goal indicating a free (direct) shot for a foul or an straight open palm stretching along the side line indicating a free throw (indirect) for a ball out of play in the appropriate direction whilst the other arm shows the infringement. Looking at the referee every time the whistle goes will help you understand the game a lot quicker.

Below are some common signals. These are all free throws (indirect):



Goal Throw - One arm shows d.o.p. other arm outstretched parallel with goal line.



Side line - One arm points downwards indicating where the ball went out of play, other shows d.o.p. To take the sideline line the boat up parallel and against the side line.

Corner - Same signal as side line but can be taken from either corner (confusing). To take a

corner the player must line their boat up against the sideline as close to the corner as possible.



Goal - arms extended palms together pointing to centre of pitch

After a goal is scored, each team returns to their own half and a player from the team who conceded the goal presents the ball in the centre, waits for a whistle then play is restarted.

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Half/Full time - is signalled by a long blast on the whistle, arms crossed in front of chest.

Presenting the ball - After a whistle is blown for a foul etc the restart must be made by presenting the ball up at arms length before playing it.

It is important to practice presenting the ball because if all get lazy we confuse the referee and they are starting to clamp down!

These are the most regularly seen fouls (These are all normally free shots- direct):

Do not do anything which will endanger you or another player. You are not allowed to touch another player, his boat or equipment with your paddle or body.

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The ball can be played (or flicked) with the paddles.



Paddle foul - one hand showing d.o.p. the other making a chopping motion on upper arm. Paddles are not allowed to be placed within arms reach of a player in possession of the ball or used to propel off another boat. If the paddle is used to reach across a boat there must be no contact.



Illegal possession - one hand d.o.p. other hand fingers spread

5 Second possession: To restart the 5 seconds the ball must travel out of arms reach more than 1 metre horizontally. You can pass to another player or if you throw it at least a metre ahead of you, you can paddle on to it and throw it again and so dribble up the pitch.



Illegal tackle (Kayak or hand) - one arm d.o.p. other hand on hip.

Some boat to boat contact is allowed if you are tackling the player in possession (see later) of the ball but the end of your boat should never enter the cockpit area or touch another players body. Ramming is also not allowed. Coming in at speed broad-siding another boat is a foul and will evoke a nasty response in people who own an expensive boat!!!

If a foul is called the ball may be played from where the foul is or where the ball was at the time which ever gives the most advantage. Remember once you are in a position to play the ball you only have 5 seconds to through it a metre so don't hang around! Look to the referee for guidance on where to play the foul from but don't wait for him to blow his whistle for you to take the throw as he wont... until 5 seconds later when you would have lost possession again!

And now for some definitions of when you can do what!

Goalkeeping: The goalkeeper defends the goal by holding the paddles upright and blocking the ball with their blade. When they have their paddles raised under the goal with the opposition in possession the opposition is not allowed to push the goalie out of

position i.e. there must be no boat to boat contact between opposition and goalie. Also the opposition may not push a defenders boat so that the action of pushing causes the defender to bump into the goalie. However players must actively try to avoid being pushed onto the goalie for a foul to have occurred. The foul is an illegal kayak tackle. Players may not stop a goalie trying to take up position under the goal.

Possession: A player is in possession if they have the ball in their hand or the ball is in the water (**not the air!**) and within arms reach of that player or they are manoeuvring the ball with their paddle. If a player is in possession of the ball they may be tackled for control of the ball.

Hand Tackling: The player in possession of the ball (See above as they don't have to be holding it) can be hand tackled (pushed!) by the use of a single open hand (no punching) pushing the opponents side, upper arm or back. Don't push the player on to the side or onto another boat as that's nasty (and illegal). Alternatively the ball can be knocked out of somebody's hands with your hand so long as only the ball and not the player is touched.

Kayak Tackling: The player in possession of the ball (or attempting to gain possession within 3 metres of the ball) can also be kayak tackled. You do this to try and steal the ball when it is in the water or to force a bad pass. You are not allowed to tackle the boat at an angle of between 80 and 100° as it breaks boats! Again you cannot endanger the player so you must avoid the body and the spray deck area of the kayak.

Illegal Jostle (Illegal tackle signal): Within the six metre area players are allowed to jostle for position. However if they are trying to maintain position they are not allowed to be pushed out of that position by more than half a metre by an opponent.



Illegal holding/screen (Obstruction)

One hand d.o.p. other hand holding up a clenched fist

Holding: Players are not allowed to lean on an oppositions boat; or impede or hold on to a player or his equipment. Also the side of the pool may not be used for support or propulsion.

Illegal Screen- If a player has not got the ball they have the right to paddle unimpeded towards the goal or the ball (unless they are within 3 metres of the ball) from anywhere in the pool outside the six metre zone. This means players may not move their boats to deliberately obstruct somebody's path or force them into the side. Although if they have set up position they are allowed a static screen (without active paddle strokes).

Finally some more advanced signals:



Advantage: One hand shows d.o.p. other waves on at hip level.

If the referee decides that calling up a foul would unfairly disadvantage the team in possession, advantage may be played by the referee shouting play on and signalling by waving a hand forward at hip level. If a whistle has been blown, advantage cannot then be called.



Time Out: Open hands forming a T at chest height. Called to stop the clock if there is an unreasonable delay (equipment problem, injury etc) or if a referee's ball or penalty shot is called. Play restarts on a whistle.



Referee's Ball: Both Hands Show thumb's up at chest height

If the referee blows their whistle when neither team was at fault or in sole possession a referee's ball is called. A player from each team lines up, tip of the kayak touching the sideline 1 metre apart, paddles by their side and hands on there spray deck and the referee throws the ball between them. The ball is not in play until it touches the water.

Sanctions

Free Throw: The d.o.p. hand showing open palm parallel to the side line. (See side line picture etc)
Awarded for all balls out of play (corner, side line, goal throw), start infringements, centre restarts and failing to present the ball.
This is indirect so the ball must be dribbled, passed or touched by the opposition before a shot on goal can occur.

Free Shot: Signalled by a pointed finger at the oppositions goal with the d.o.p. hand.
Awarded for almost all fouls. Here the ball may be played anywhere including at goal. (See illegal tackle signal)
N.B. Please note a lot of the photos are quite old and therefore are showing fouls as free throws and not free shots as they are now.



Penalty Shot: Both hands pointing a finger at goal followed by time out. If a player is fouled in the act of shooting in the 6 metre area or a foul is deemed particularly nasty a penalty shot may be awarded. All players retreat to the halfway line and one player sits on the 6 metre line and has a free shot at an open goal!

Easy? Hmmm!

If somehow the ball fails to reach the goal or rebounds off the frame, somebody else must touch the ball before the idiot who missed can.

Cards: Shown after a time out signal

Green card (warning) for being naughty (unsportsman like conduct etc) or

Yellow card - sent off for two minutes (after two green's or something nasty) or

Red card - sent off for the rest of the game (after two yellows or being a very naughty boy indeed)

Substitutions

A team can have up to three substitutes in a game who sit behind their own goal line (This is also where people who are yellow carded must sit) but they can't sit directly behind the actual goal. Substitutions are unlimited and rolling so they can happen at any time during a game. But the player coming off must have all their equipment and boat across their goal line before the sub takes

place. If somebody swims, all their equipment must be taken off the pitch then a substitution can only take place at the next break in play unless they and all their equipment is taken behind their goal line or if they want to re-enter the game it must be done from their own goal line.

Now Watch, Learn And Have a Go!!!

This guide is intended to encourage beginners to learn the basic rules of canoe polo and is not intended to be a definitive set of rules. Feel free to download and distribute this guide amongst your club.

If you have any comments then e-mail me:

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