

2019/2020 New Rule Summary

6m replaces 5m

The 5m cone now is only used to denote where penalty throws are to be taken from.

Otherwise, the 6m replaces the 5m in all ways.

If a foul is awarded outside 6m, the player is free to:

- shoot straight away
- self-play the ball (needs to clearly leave the hand, approx. 10cm), then baulk/dribble/shoot from anywhere (incl. inside 6m)
- pass straight away (if a player raises up to try and make a pass, they MUST self play if unable to make a pass once returning to water-level).

Self-Play

Players MUST visibly self-play after a foul if they do not take the free immediately. If they fail to do so a contra foul is to be awarded (turn over). Things to note:

- Dribbling the ball is NOT considered playing the ball, instead the ball needs to be picked up and thrown forward if the player wishes to swim off with the ball
- Ball must VISIBLY leave the hand, taken to be around 10cm, umpires must watch their fouls to see if this occurs (not set and forget which was the previous norm)
- Players who have committed the foul must still MOVE BACK 1m before defending as before, i.e. they still cannot defend straight away if the opposition player self-plays immediately
- GK are to be given leeway with self-playing if obviously looking to make a pass after a turn over free-throw. If they try to swim forward with the ball or shoot they MUST have self-passed prior
- Players can shoot immediately, or self-pass then swim/shoot, from corner throws.

Flying Substitutions

- Players can enter, through the exclusion box area, into a designated area (bench-side, opposite to the table) where they can swim up to, but not further than half-way to substitute.
- The substitution must occur in the designated area, with both players heads being above the water and a high-five above water must be executed before the new player can enter the field of play (under the lane-rope).
- In pools without large flying substitution areas, players can enter through the exclusion box, and make their way up to 5m cone (SA adaption) keeping one hand on the wall. This will need to be discussed with umpires/pool controllers prior to the game.
- Flying substitutions can only be made after a REASONABLE amount of time after dead time (assumed to be 1 full attack and defence after a time out/goal scored/swim up).

Goal Keepers

Goal keepers are now allowed to cross half-way. Once they leave the 2m zone, they lose all goal keeper privileges (2 hands, punch the ball, etc.) and are to be treated no different to regular field players.

Exclusions now Penalties (!?)

If a player with the ball is swimming towards the goal, and has clear water to the goals (i.e. no defender that would be able to reasonably block a shot), is fouled from behind or the side, a PENALTY is awarded even if the player is HOLDING the ball at the time.

If a defender could have blocked it (i.e. a CB in front and within arms reach) then an EXCLUSION is to be awarded as normal (attacking player NOT holding the ball).

This takes some adjusting to from an umpiring perspective.

Also if a GK comes out to challenge and does not get the ball CLEANLY then a PENALTY is awarded.

Final Notes

Fouls are to be played where the BALL is, not in line with where the FOUL occurred.

In the past off-ball major fouls were not to be awarded if behind play (CF/CB wrestling during transition), now as the players can self-play where they are (not send ball back), if the player and ball are outside 6m, behind play major fouls SHOULD be awarded.

Shot clock has changed as well. Any reset of the shot clock is 20s UNLESS there is a change in possession in which case it's 30s.