

**East Carolina University
Intramural Sports
Inner Tube Water Polo Rules**

I. **Equipment**

- A. Clothing – Appropriate swimwear must be worn by all participants. All SRC Indoor Pool Regulations must be followed in order to participate.
- B. NO SHOES
- C. Hats – Hats such as **baseball caps, bandannas, and knit stocking hats** may not be worn during intramural competition
- D. Jewelry – **NO JEWELRY!** Earrings, rings, watches, bracelets and necklaces may not be worn during intramural competition. There will be no exceptions to this rule. Inner tubes will be provided by Intramural Sports.
- E. Balls – Game balls will be provided by Intramural Sports. The game ball will not be permitted for warm-up, but teams may bring their own water polo ball for warm-up.

II. **Players**

- A. The game shall be played with six (6) players on each team. A minimum of five (5) players is required to begin and continue play.
- B. All teams will be co-rec, with at least one (1) male and one (1) female on each team. The remaining players may be designated as either male or female, at each team's discretion.
- C. One player must be designated as a goalie. The goalie may be substituted out, but the official must be informed if this occurs.
- D. Substitutions must be made from the team's goal area. Play resumes, following a substitution, when the officials blows the whistle to start play.
- E. Unlimited substitutions shall be allowed by either team at the following dead ball opportunities:
 - 1. Between halves.
 - 2. After a goal is scored.
 - 3. Before a goalie throw.
 - 4. Following a caution or ejection.
 - 5. Throw-in (if team has possession)
- F. The team NOT in possession may substitute at a throw-in, if the team in possession is also substituting.

III. **Playing Area**

All games will be played within the Indoor Lane Pool in the Student Recreation Center.

IV. **Playing Time**

- A. The game consists of two 18-minute halves, with a two (2) minute halftime.
- B. The clock shall run continuously.
- C. There will be no timeouts.

V. **Start of Play**

- A. **Game time is forfeit time!** If a team does not have the minimum five (5) players at game time, the opposing team may choose to wait 10 minutes for the other team to show, or take the forfeit immediately at game time.
- B. A coin toss at the beginning of the game will determine which team has the choice of goal to defend. Teams will exchange ends between halves.
- C. Each half will begin with all players touching the wall of the pool in their own end. The official will toss the ball into the center of the pool and sound the whistle to begin play.
- D. At the official's signal, players may move to secure the ball. Pushing off the wall with a player's own hands or feet is legal to start play.

VI. **Game Play**

- A. Players must remain seated in their inner tube, with both legs on top of the tube. A player may not make contact with the ball if he/she is not properly seated in his/her inner tube.
- B. Each team will advance the ball toward the opponent's goal by throwing, carrying, or pushing the ball. Players control the ball by pushing it in the water, or holding it with **ONE HAND ONLY**. The ball may not be held in a player's lap, against their body, or against the inner tube.
- C. The ball may not be dunked, held or submerged underwater at any time.

- D. The ball may be caught with both hands, but must then be carried with only one hand. In the event of a simultaneous catch by the offense and defense, the ball will be awarded to the defense at that spot.
- E. For any pass, shot attempt, or throw, **the ball may only be released with one hand.**
- F. **NO CONTACT** may be made with any other players, or players' inner tubes, whatsoever.
 - a. Penalty for contact during a shot attempt. The penalty should be a direct free throw from the flags above. In this situation, the ball is live if deflected by the goalie.
- G. The ball may be swatted from an opposing player's hand, provided no contact is made.
- H. The ball may not be contacted with a player's legs and/or feet. No kicking or swinging of the legs to defend/distract an opponent is permitted.
- I. Play must be continuous. Any team attempting to stall (judged by the official) shall first be given a verbal warning. The official will then begin a 10-second count, during which time a shot or pass must be attempted.
- J. During game play, a player may not hold onto, or push off the sides of the pool and/or lane dividers.

Exception: the wall may be used only to aid a player getting back into his/her tube.

VII. **Ball In and Out of Play**

- A. The ball is out when it has been deflected outside of the pool, or touched the uppermost portion of the pool deck.
- B. The ball is put back into play with a throw-in, at the spot nearest where it went out, by a member of the team who did not touch the ball last. The thrower must use **one hand**, while maintaining contact with the side of the pool with his/her other hand. If a throw-in is illegal, the throw-in is then taken by the opposing team.
- C. If the ball completely crosses the end line, it will become the goalkeeper's ball at that end, regardless of which team touched it last.

VIII. **Scoring**

- A. **No shot may be attempted from within ten (10) feet of the goal**, as indicated by pylons on the pool deck.
- B. A goal is scored when the ball completely over the end line and into the goal.
- C. **Any goal scored by a female will be worth two (2) points.**
- D. After each goal scored, the ball is put back into play by the goalkeeper.
- E. Mercy Rule - if, at any point in the game, a team is leading by fifteen (15) or more goals, the game shall be over.

VIII. **Goalkeeper Restrictions**

- A. The goalkeeper may be either male or female.
- B. The goalkeeper must release the ball within five (5) seconds of gaining possession. The ball may not be thrown or skipped beyond the halfway point of the pool, as designated by pylons on the pool deck.
- C. The goalkeeper may position themselves in the inner tube however they choose, sitting on or standing inside, provided that at least one body part (arm, leg or body) is through the center of the tube at all times.
- D. The goalkeeper may not use the side of the pool to aid them in defending the goal area.
- E. The ball **may** be passed back to the goalkeeper by a player on his/her own team.

IX. **Free Throws**

- A. Free throws are awarded for violations during the game. All free throws are indirect, meaning a goal may not be scored directly from a free throw, but must first be passed to another player.
- B. Free throws will be administered from the spot nearest the spot of the foul.
- C. A free throw will be awarded to the opposing team in the case of the following violations:
 1. Illegal carrying of the ball
 2. Holding the ball underwater
 3. Releasing the ball with both hands
 4. Stalling play
 5. Attempting a direct shot at goal on a free throw
 6. Holding onto or pushing off sides of the pool and/or lane dividers during regular play
 7. Illegal contact on a player or tube
 8. Kicking

XV. Tie Game

- A. Any games ending in a tie during the regular season, shall remain a tie.
- B. During playoffs, the following penalty throw procedure will be used for games ending in a tie:
 1. A coin toss to determine who will throw first.
 2. Each captain will chose three (3) players and arrange them in the order desired.
 3. Each team will be given three (3) penalty throws, taken by the designated players in that order.
 4. Throws will alternate between teams, until all three (3) throws have been taken by each team.
 5. All penalty throws will be taken from ten (10) feet, as indicated by pylons beside the pool. Both teams will use the same goal.
 6. The goalkeeper may move horizontally or vertically, but may not move forward until the ball has been released. If this is violated, the thrower may take the result of the throw or attempt a re-throw.
 7. The goalkeeper may be substituted for, but the official must be informed.
 8. If the score still remains tied after the penalty throws, the process shall be repeated in a **sudden victory format**, using the same three (3) players in the same order.

XVI. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

- A. Unsportsmanlike conduct is penalized by a free throw. The official may remove a player or spectator from the game and playing area if they deem it necessary. Any player that has been removed from the game must leave the field area.
- B. Minor fouls result from excessively rough play, such as excessive contact, pushing, kicking, dunking, OR unsportsmanlike conduct such as cursing, arguing with officials, and delay of game. All minor fouls result in a Yellow card, and a free throw for the offended team from the spot of the foul.
- C. Flagrant fouls refer to intent to injure another player through excessive force or aggression. All flagrant fouls result in a Red card, and a goal is awarded to the offended team.
- D. Any player receiving a Yellow card must be substituted for immediately. Any player receiving two (2) Yellow cards, will result in a Red card.
- E. Any player receiving a Red card is ejected from the game, and must leave the playing area immediately. If a player is ejected by receiving two (2) Yellow cards, a substitute can replace the ejected player; however, if a player is disqualified by receiving one (1) Red card, a substitute shall not replace the ejected player.
- F. **A team which reaches or exceeds the established limit for misconduct points (3) shall have the game immediately terminated and forfeited to the opponent. Teams will accumulate misconduct points for minors (1/2 point per yellow card) and flagrants (2 points per red card).** Therefore, any of the following combinations of cards which are given to one team will result in termination of the game: six yellow cards; one red card and two or more yellow cards; or two red cards.