

# AUSTRALIAN RULES OF POLO

As adopted by



Effective 20 August 2018

AUSTRALIAN POLO FEDERATION LTD  
PO BOX 150, Windsor, NSW 2756  
T 0459 272 277 F (02) 4311 2660  
Email [apf@australianpolo.com.au](mailto:apf@australianpolo.com.au)  
Website [www.australianpolo.com.au](http://www.australianpolo.com.au)

---

## Revision Information

---

Document Number	Policies	Revision Date	Version	Approved
		May 2004	V4.0	
	2009 Hurlingham Polo Association Field Rules	Feb 2010	V5.1	
		May 2010	V6.0	
		April 2011	V7.0	28.04.2011
APFRPMAY12/8.0	Update to 2012 HPA rules	31 May 2012	V8.0	31.5.2012
APFRPMAY13/9.0	Update to 2013 HPA rules	May 2013	V9.0	18.7.2013
APFRPMAY14/10.0	Update to 2014 HPA rules	May 2014	V10.0	14.5.2014
APFRPJUN15/11.0	Update to 2015 HPA rules	June 2015	V11.0	30.6.2015
APFRPAUG16/12.0	Update to 2016 HPA rules and new APF rules: 2.11 Documentation – DPI requirements New Concussion Policy Annex B - Goal Umpires - change in requirement Annex D - acceptance of entries	August 2016	V12.0	05.08.2016
APFRPJUL17/13.0	Update to 2017 HPA rules	June 2017	V13.0	15.07.2017
APFRPFEB18/14.0	Update to 2018 HPA rules	February 2018	V14.0	26.02.2018
APFRPJUN18/15.0	Medical attendance & helmet rules	June 2018	V15.0	20.08.2018

---

## THE ETHICS AND ETIQUETTE OF POLO

---

**Aim -** *To ensure that all participants of polo have maximum enjoyment and an opportunity to play in a well umpired, fair and true match.*

### **Responsibility of Players:**

1. Adhere to the rules set out in the APF Rule Book.
2. Be dressed suitably for playing, umpiring and prize giving Whites, Boots and Helmets (where applicable).
3. Behave in a manner that is sportsmanlike (both amateur and professional).
4. **Zero tolerance** will be strictly enforced with the onus on the captains to control their team or risk being called in front of the disciplinary committee for misconduct.
5. **Cheating** in polo is unacceptable. Also, any inference of teams “lying down”, fixed matches, or conduct unbecoming in any form will be dealt with in a manner whereby all offenders involved shall be harshly disciplined (severe fines and lengthy suspensions).
6. Respect players, officials, grooms and spectators with language and actions that are deemed acceptable.
7. Ensure that horses are treated and turned out properly. The ever increasing risk of bans placed on horse sports is imminent and we need to be vigilant.
8. Fulfill duties allocated to you by tournament committees, or find an acceptable and appropriate replacement.
9. Be aware that misrepresentation of any goods at the point of sale is illegal (e.g. Incorrect information pertaining to horse sales).

### **Responsibility of Umpires:**

1. Be punctual, decisive, pro-active, unbiased, non-confrontational, conversant with the APF rules, conscientious and communicate well.
2. Enforce zero tolerance.
3. Remember that you are responsible for your actions as an umpire. If an incident occurs and you haven't acted correctly, you will be disciplined accordingly (fines and suspension).
4. The way you umpire will reflect the way you are umpired. If you feel you have been badly umpired and you are to then umpire, be professional and do the best you can. Don't forget, two wrongs don't make a right.

## APF Rules and Regulations for Polo 2018

Polo is a game that owes much of its unique appeal to the fact that it should be played not only within its rules but also within the spirit of the game. Any action which is seen to abuse this spirit causes injury to the game itself. The major responsibility for ensuring the spirit of fair play rests with the players. For reasons of simplicity the masculine gender is used to denote both masculine and feminine throughout the Rules.

### Part 1: Game and Field Rules

Part 1 sets out the 'International Rules' for how the game should be played and aligns very closely with those of the AAP and USPA. The shading indicates that the rule is a change to the 2017 APF rules or is different to the AAP or USPA rule.

### Part 2: APF Supplementary Rules and Regulations

Each country or association has different and additional rules for certain aspects such as membership, players and their equipment, substitution, tournament conditions, and pony welfare. The APF's 'Supplementary Rules and Regulations' are set out in Part 2 and if they conflict have precedence over Part 1.

- Annex A:** Layout of the Field.
- Annex B:** Heat Policy.
- Annex C:** Tournament Conditions, Player Eligibility and Team Entries.
- Annex D:** Format, Scheduling and Order of Merit.
- Annex E** Club Responsibilities
- Annex F** Rules and Guidelines for Game Officials.
- Annex G** Diagrams

**Liability.** *All affiliated clubs, associate members and persons who have agreed or are deemed to be subject to these Regulations acknowledge that neither the APF nor any of its officers, employees or agents nor any match or club officials shall be liable to them in respect of any loss or damage whatsoever which is or alleged to be occasioned by or to arise from any action taken or purportedly taken in pursuance of these Regulations or from any failure so to act even where the act or omission as the case may be shall have been negligent provided always that this shall not affect any liability of such persons in respect of personal injury occasioned by negligence.*

# AUSTRALIAN POLO FEDERATION

## RULES & REGULATIONS 2018

### PART 1

1. FACILITIES AND ACCESS DURING PLAY .....	9
a. Field of Play .....	9
b. Safety Zone .....	9
c. Goals and goal Line .....	9
d. Boards .....	9
e. Ball .....	9
f. Access during Play.....	9
2. Players.....	9
a. Team .....	9
b. Team Captain .....	9
c. Right Hand Only .....	9
d. Leaving the Field .....	9
e. Drink and Drugs .....	10
f. Substitution.....	10
3. PLAYERS EQUIPMENT .....	10
4. Ponies.....	10
5. Officials .....	11
a. Authority .....	11
b. Referee.....	11
c. Umpires.....	11
d. Goal Judge.....	11
e. Timekeeper .....	11
f. Scorer .....	11
g. Assistant Scorer .....	11
6. Spare .....	11
7. COMMON TERMS AND RULES .....	11
a. Foul .....	12
b. States of Play.....	12
i. Ball in Play... ..	12
ii. Ball out of Ply .....	12
iii. Dead Ball .....	12
iv. Break in Play.....	12
v. Neutral .....	12
c. Throw-in.....	12
d. Offside.....	12
e. Behind the Ball.....	12
8. WINNING, GOALS ON HANDICAP AND SCORING GOALS .....	12
a. Winning.....	12
b. Goals on Handicap .....	12
c. Scoring Goals.....	12
d. Redress on Score.....	12
e. Undecided Goal.....	12

f. Whistle Blown as Goal Scored .....	12
i. No Foul.....	12
ii. Foul by Defending Team .....	12
iii. Foul by Attacking Team .....	12
9. DURATION OF THE GAME .....	12
a. Number of Chukkas.....	12
b. Intervals .....	13
10. UNFINISHED GAME .....	13
11. DURATION OF CHUKKAS .....	13
a. Normal Chukka.....	13
b. Final Chukka .....	13
c. Extra Time .....	13
d. Stopping of the Clock .....	13
12. START OF PLAY .....	13
13. SPARE .....	13
14. CHANGING ENDS.....	13
15. ATTACKER HITS BEHIND (HIT OR KNOCK IN).....	14
16. DEFENDER HITS BEHIND (SAFETY 60) .....	14
17. BALL HIT OUT OF PLAY OVER THE BOARDS OR SIDE LINE .....	14
a. Between the Two 60 Yard Lines.....	14
b. Within the 60 Yard Line at Either End.....	14
18. RESTART AFTER INTERVAL BETWEEN CHUKKAS .....	14
19. RESTART WHEN THE BALL HAS NOT LEFT THE FIELD OF PLAY .....	14
20. BURIED OR DAMAGED BALL .....	15
21. LOST HELMET OR BROKEN EQUIPMENT.....	15
22. DISMOUNTED PLAYER.....	15
23. INJURED OR FALLEN PLAYER.....	15
24. INJURED DISTRESSED FALLEN OR FATIGUED PONY OR LOST SHOE .....	15
25. SPARE .....	16
26. SPARE .....	16
27. CROSSING.....	16
28. PRECEDENCE BETWEEN PLAYERS AND THE LINE OF THE BALL .....	16
29. POSSESSION OF THE BALL .....	16
a. Ball Deflected.....	17
b. Changing the LOB.....	17
c. Hitting Past a Player .....	17
d. Moving the Ball – One Tap Rule.....	17
e. Turning and Play on the Boards.....	17
30. CARRYING THE BALL.....	17
31. HOOKING .....	17
32. RIDING OFF .....	17
33. BLOCKING.....	17
34. DANGEROUS RIDING OR PLAY .....	17
35. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT.....	18
36. SPARE .....	18
37. FOUL NO FOUL AND ADVANTAGE RULE .....	18
38. TAKING OF PENALTY HITS .....	18
39. PENALTY 1 .....	19

40. PENALTY 2 - SPOT OR 30 YARD HIT.....	19
41. PENALTY 3 – 40 YARD HIT .....	19
42. PENALTY 4 – 60 YARD HIT .....	19
43. PENALTY 5A – SPOT .....	19
44. PENALTY 5B – CENTRE .....	20
45. PENALTY 6 – SAFETY 60 .....	20
46. PENALTY 7A – INFRINGEMENT PENALTY RETAKEN .....	20
a. Infringement by Team Facing Hit.....	20
b. Infringement by Both Teams .....	20
47. PENALTY 7B – INFRINGEMENT PENALTY 5A – SPOT.....	20
48. PENALTY 8 – THROW-IN.....	20
49. PENALTY 9A – PONY SENT OFF FOR EQUIPMENT.....	20
50. PENALTY 9B – PLAYER SENT OFF FOR EQUIPMENT .....	20
51. AWARDING OF FLAGS .....	20
a. Yellow Flag and Sin Bin .....	20
b. Red Flag.....	21
c. Flag after the Game .....	21

## **PART 2**

2.1 FACILITIES.....	22
2.2 PLAYERS.....	22
a. Membership and Handicaps .....	22
b. Tournament Conditions, Player Eligibility and Team Entries.....	22
c. Tournament format, Scheduling and Order of Merit .....	22
d. Use of Members Details and Images .....	22
e. Visiting Players.....	22
f. Suspension .....	22
g. Banned Substances and Dope Testing of Players .....	22
h. Protective Headgear for Grooms and Stickholders .....	22
i. Doctors Certificate .....	22
j. National Representative .....	23
k. Polo Ground .....	23
l. Betting.....	23
m. Misconduct .....	23
n. Social Media.....	23
2.3 PLAYERS EQUIPMENT.....	23
a. Helmets.....	23
b. Spurs .....	23
c. Whips .....	23
2.4 PONIES AND PONY WELFARE.....	23
a. Pony Welfare and Ownership .....	23
b. Tack.....	24
c. Restrictions on Ponies.....	24
d. Old Ponies .....	24

e. Limit on Time played and Chukkas .....	24
f. Umpire Ponies.....	24
g. Inspection of Ponies.....	24
h. Complaints .....	24
j. Medication .....	24
(i) Permitted Medication.....	24
(ii) Medication at Polo.....	25
(iii) Testing.....	25
k. Documentation .....	25
l. Contagious or Infectious Diseases .....	25
m. Shoes and Shoeing.....	25
n. Water Polo .....	25
o. Muzzles .....	25

2.5 SPARE

2.6 OFFICIALS ..... 25

a. Membership of the APF.....	25
b. Dress .....	25
c. Visiting Clubs.....	26
d. Alcohol and Drugs .....	26
e. Selection of Officials.....	26
f. One Umpire.....	26
g. Umpire Discretion .....	26
h. International Games .....	26
i. Guidelines for Officials.....	26

2.7 REPORT FORMS.....26

ANNEX A - SUGGESTED LAYOUT OF THE FIELD OF PLAY .....	28
ANNEX B - HEAT POLICY.....	29
ANNEX C - TOURNAMNET CONDITIONS PLAYER ELIGIBILITY AND TEAM ETHICS .....	31
ANNEX D - FORMAT -SCHEDULING AND ORDER OF MERIT.....	35
ANNEX E - CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES.....	42
ANNEX F - GUIDELINES FOR GAME OFFICIALS.....	46
ANNEX G - ANNEX DIAGRAMS .....	55



**Part 1**  
**Game and Field Rules for Polo**  
**2018**

**SECTION 1 - PRELIMINARY RULES FOR THE GAME**

**1. FACILITIES AND ACCESS DURING PLAY.** See Annex A.

- a. **Field of Play.** The field of play is the prepared area bounded by the side line or boards and the back line.
  - (i) **Full Size.** The measurements of a full size field of play shall be:  
Length: 300 yards (275 meters)  
Width 200 yards (180 meters) if unboarded and 160 yards (146 meters) if boarded.
  - (ii) **Minimum Size.** The minimum measurements for a field of play shall be:  
Length 250 yards (230 meters)  
Width 175 yards (160 meters) if unboarded and 145 yards (130 meters) if boarded.
- b. **Safety Zone.** The safety zone is the prepared area that extends beyond each end and along each side of the field of play. The safety zone should be marked and it is recommended to extend 10 yards beyond the side lines/boards and at least 30 yards beyond the back line and should be prepared to the same standard as the field of play. Any incident which occurs in the safety zone shall be treated as though it occurred on the field of play itself
- c. **Goals and Goal Line.** The goal posts shall be 8 yards (7.3 metres) apart (inside measurement) and centred at each end of the field of play. The goal line is that part of the back line between the two goal posts at either end of the field of play. The goal posts shall be at least 10 feet (3 metres) high, and light enough to give way if collided with.
- d. **Boards.** Boards, if used, shall not exceed 11 inches (28 cm) in height and shall be at least one inch thick. They may be curved at the ends of the field of play.
- e. **Ball.** The ball shall be 3 to 3.5 inches (76 to 89 millimetres) in diameter and within the limits of 4.25 to 4.75 ounces (120 to 135 grams).
- f. **Access during Play.** During play, the field of play and safety zone are restricted to the players, umpires and goal judges except that:
  - (i) A stick holder may enter the safety zone but not the field of play to hand over a stick to a player.
  - (ii) Players may change ponies in allocated box areas (marked out or imaginary) at any of the four corners of the field of play. They may not change in the safety zones between the two 30 yard lines.
  - (iii) Ponies may be ridden between the pony lines and the changing boxes within the safety zone during play providing that they are ridden in a sensible manner and at a safe speed.

**2. PLAYERS.**

- a. **Team.** A team is limited to 4 players on the field of play in all games.
- b. **Team Captain.** An on-field Team Captain must be nominated to the umpires at the beginning of the game and only he may speak with the umpires.
- c. **Right Hand Only.** The right hand only is to be used to hold the stick to hit the ball or hook another player's stick.
- d. **Leaving the Field.** A player may not leave the field of play during the course of a chukka without the permission of the umpires except to change a pony or a stick or for a legitimate run off.
- e. **Drink and Drugs.** No player may play in any match, practice game or chukka under the influence of alcohol or any illegal stimulant or drug.

- f. **Substitution.** If a match is about to start or has started and a player is late or unable to play through accident, sickness or duty, he may be replaced by a substitute. The substitute must be qualified to play in the tournament and the team must remain qualified after the substitution has been made. If the game is on handicap and a higher handicap player is qualified to play, the goals awarded on handicap will be recalculated as if he had started the game. It is the responsibility of the team to mount the substitute. Further substitution rules may apply for specific tournaments or in different countries.

### 3. PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

- a. No one shall be allowed to play polo unless they are wearing protective headgear with the chinstrap or harness correctly fastened. See rule 2.3a
- b. Polo boots and protective kneepads must always be worn during play.
- c. Any spur likely to wound a horse is not allowed.
- d. Any equipment that has sharp projections which might cause injury to another player or pony is forbidden.
- e. Goggles, elbow pads and gum shields are recommended.
- f. Team shirts must not be of black and white vertical stripes and must be numbered 1, 2, 3 and 4. The numbers should be no less than 9 inches high in contrasting colour on the back. If, in the opinion of the umpires or Tournament Committee, the colours of two competing teams are so alike as to lead to confusion, by mutual consent one team to change or by toss of coin to decide. The numbers on the team shirts must be 1 to 4 and not be duplicated.

### 4. PONIES.

- a. Ponies of any height may be played.
- b. A pony may not play if:
  - It has a contagious or infectious disease.
  - It is blind in an eye or is not under proper control or showing a vice so that is a danger to other ponies or players.
  - It is lame, showing any signs of distress or blood from any part unless it is superficial so that any bleeding can be stopped and a club official or the umpires are content.
  - It has any form of open tracheotomy (tubing) or has been de-nerved (chemically or surgically desensitized). If desensitized temporarily then it must not be played until full sensation has returned.
- c. Ponies must be protected by bandages or boots on all four legs and must have their tails put up. Ponies are expected to be well turned out and the following is not allowed:
  - Poor or badly fitted tack.
  - Blinkers or any form of noseband or other equipment which might obstruct the vision of the pony.
  - A noseband, headpiece or headcollar which incorporates wire or any sharp material.
  - Any equipment that has sharp projections which might cause injury to the pony or any other pony or player.
- d. **Shoes**
  - (i) Rimmed shoes may be worn but the rim must be on the inside of the shoe only.
  - (ii) A calkin or stud must be of less than 0.5 inches (13 mm) cubed or hexagonal, and must be fitted on the last inch (25mm) of the outside heel of the hind shoe. If a shoe has a calkin or fixed stud it must be balanced by a raised and feathered inside heel tapered for a minimum of 1.5 inches (40 mm). A non-slip plug or road plug may be fitted. A plug is sunken into the shoe by a farrier and is not to be confused with any form of stud. A removable stud, which is the type strongly recommended, should be removed before the pony leaves the grounds.
  - (iii) Frost nails, road studs, screws and fancy spikes or any protruding nails or sharp edges on a shoe are not allowed. A pony may be shod with a maximum of two road nails or non-slip nails per shoe in order that it may be exercised safely on the roads. Such nails must not be on the widest part of the shoe.

- (iv) A pony may be played without all four shoes or without hind shoes. Should this lead to the pony not being under proper control so as to be a danger to itself or others then it should be ordered off by the umpires.

## 5. OFFICIALS.

- a. **Authority.** The rules shall normally be administered by two umpires and a referee whose authority will be absolute during and immediately before and after the game on matters regarding the conduct of play. Should any incident occur which is not provided for in the rules such incident or question shall be decided by the umpires unless they disagree in which case they should consult the referee. They will be assisted by goal judges and a timekeeper who may in turn be assisted by a scorer and assistant scorer.
- b. **Referee.** The referee (or third man) should be in an elevated and isolated position at the centre of the ground so that he has a good view and can concentrate on the play. He should not be drawn into conversation or use a mobile phone and must make his position known to the umpires before the game. He will adjudicate, when asked, if the umpires disagree in which event his decision will be final. If the referee is unable to make an informed judgement on the play, then he should rule 'No Foul'.
- c. **Umpires.** There will normally be two mounted umpires who have the duty to control the game according to the rules.
- d. **Goal Judges.** A goal judge shall be appointed for each goal. On occasion, two may be used at each goal. Each 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 the final decision.
- e. **Timekeeper.** A timekeeper shall be appointed in all games and is responsible for keeping the time for the intervals and the time played in each chukka. The timekeeper may also act as the scorer and assistant scorer.
- f. **Scorer.** The scorer will record the goals scored, noting if possible the name of the player scoring the goal, the time at which the goal was scored and the direction of play. He will instruct the assistant scorer to put up the score on the board being particularly careful to check that the correct team has been credited. At all times it is the scorer's figures that count.
- g. **Assistant Scorer.** The assistant scorer is responsible for preparing the scoreboard before the match, and updating goals scored and chukka numbers during the match. He should have communication with the scorer if they are not sitting together.

## 6. SPARE

### SECTION 2 – COMMON TERMS, WINNING, GOALS ON HANDICAP AND SCORING GOALS, DURATION, START OF PLAY

## 7. COMMON TERMS AND RULES.

Below is a list of the terms or rules commonly used with their meaning:

- a. **Foul.** A foul is defined as any infringement of the rules.
- b. **States of Play.**
  - (i) **Ball in Play.** For a throw in, the ball is considered 'in play' the moment it has left the umpires hand, and for a free hit the moment the player taking a free hit has either hit or hit at the ball if missed.
  - (ii) **Ball Out of Play.** The ball is 'out of play' if a goal has been scored or if it has gone over the back or side line or boards for a hit-in, hit or throw-in. A ball on the line is still in play. The whistle is not blown nor the clock stopped.
  - (iii) **Dead Ball.** The ball is 'dead' when the umpire blows his whistle or on the sound of the bell to end the chukka. The clock is stopped.
  - (iv) **Break in Play.** There is a 'break in play' when the ball is 'dead' or 'out of play'.
  - (v) **Neutral.** Play is considered to be 'neutral' when neither side has an advantage or is favoured.

- c. **Throw-In.** Each team shall take up its position opposite the umpire on its own side of an imaginary line at least 2 feet (60 cms) apart. No player shall be within 5 yards of the umpire who shall stand at the spot on the field of play as set out in the Rules and bowl the ball in underarm, low and hard between the opposing ranks of players. The players should remain stationary and have no contact with an opposing player until the ball has left the umpire's hand.
  - d. **Offside.** A player is offside if he enters the field of play from the side of the opposing team for a throw-in, penalty hit or hit-in. If offside, he may not make a play until he has passed a player of his own team who was correctly positioned at the time of the throw-in or hit. For a hit in, he is considered onside if he enters the field of play beyond his own 60 yard line.
  - e. **Behind the Ball.** If a line is drawn through where the ball has been placed parallel to the back line, behind the ball is taken as that part of the field of play which is on that side of the team taking the hit.
- 8. WINNING, GOALS ON HANDICAP AND SCORING GOALS.**
- a. **Winning.** The team with the most goals on the score sheet, including those awarded on handicap and from a Penalty 1 wins the game.
  - b. **Goals on Handicaps.** In all matches played under handicap conditions the difference between the totals of the two team handicaps shall be multiplied by the number of chukkas to be played in the game and then divided by 6 (the number of chukkas upon which handicaps are based). This will give the number of goals to be given to the team with the lower handicap. Any fraction of a goal shall be counted as 'half a goal'.
  - c. **Scoring Goals.** A goal is scored from play when the ball passes between the goal posts or the imaginary vertical lines produced by the inner surfaces of the goal posts and across and clear of the goal line. A ball hit through or directly over either goal post shall not count because it has not passed between the inner vertical lines of the goal posts. If the ball lodges in a goal post, the umpire will blow the whistle and the game shall continue as if the ball had been hit over the back line.
  - d. **Redress on Score.** Any change to the score as posted on the score board must be made before the final whistle.
  - e. **Undecided Goal.** If the two umpires are unable to decide as to whether a goal was scored or not, having consulted the goal judge(s), and if still in doubt the referee, they must give the benefit of the doubt to the defending team.
  - f. **Whistle Blown as Goal Scored.** When the whistle is blown for a foul at the same time that a goal is scored:
    - (i) **No Foul.** If it is confirmed that there is 'No Foul' then the umpires will instruct the goal judge to wave his flag to signify a goal and the clock will be restarted at this point.
    - (ii) **Foul by Defending Team.** If it is decided that the defending team have fouled, the goal will stand and the Umpires shall instruct the goal judge to wave his flag. The umpires then have the option of proceeding as normal or blowing the whistle again and restarting the game with an appropriate penalty.
    - (iii) **Foul by Attacking Team.** If it is decided that the attacking team have fouled, the goal will not be awarded and the umpires shall restart the game with an appropriate penalty.
- 9. DURATION OF THE GAME.**
- a. **Number of Chukkas.** The standard duration of a game shall be 6 chukkas, excluding extra time, but this may be varied by the Tournament Committee according to the level of the polo.
  - b. **Intervals.** Intervals between chukkas will be 3 minutes with a 5 minute interval at half time and before extra time. In games of 5 chukkas, the half time interval shall be after the third chukka. A bell shall be rung at the end of these intervals as a signal to the umpires to restart play.
- 10. UNFINISHED GAME.** Once the game has started it shall be played to a finish unless stopped by the umpire or the host Tournament Committee for some unavoidable cause which prevents a finish

the same day, normally weather. The responsibility rests with the umpires as to whether to stop the match or not, having consulted the team captains. It shall be resumed at the point at which it has stopped as to score, chukka and position of the ball at the earliest convenient time, to be decided upon by the host Tournament Committee. See also Part 2, Annex D, para 16 for recalculating the score if the game could not be completed.

#### 11. DURATION OF CHUKKAS.

- a. **Normal Chukka.** Except for the final chukka or extra time, each chukka shall be a maximum of 7 1/2 minutes. After 7 minutes, the first bell will be rung to indicate that up to 30 seconds remain. If the ball is out of play when the bell is rung, the umpire will blow his whistle to end the chukka. Otherwise, after the first bell is sounded, the chukka will end when there is a break in play or when the second bell is rung. If a foul is awarded, the penalty shall be taken at the beginning of the next chukka.
- b. **Final Chukka.** In the final chukka, the game will end on the first sound of the 7 minute bell unless the teams are tied. If tied, play will continue until either a goal is scored or awarded or until the first sound of the second bell. If a whistle is blown for a penalty during the last 5 seconds of the last chukka, 5 seconds shall be allowed for the execution of any penalty. If 'no foul' is agreed, then play shall continue only for the time remaining when the whistle was blown.
- c. **Extra Time.** If a result is required and the score is still tied, the game will continue with an extra chukka. It will start where the previous chukka ended and shall be played until a goal is scored to determine the game (sudden death or golden goal) or the second bell is sounded as in Rule 11b above. If no goal is scored, teams change ends for any subsequent chukka of extra time and the game shall be re-started at a position corresponding to where the previous chukka ended. See also Part 2, Annex D, para for Widened Goals and para for Penalty Shoot Outs.
- d. **Stopping of the Clock.** The clock shall be stopped only if the umpire blows his whistle. If stopped, the clock shall be restarted when the ball is put back into play. Otherwise, play shall be continuous and the clock shall not be stopped.

12. **START OF PLAY.** The timekeeper will sound the bell five minutes before the advertised time for the start of the match to alert the teams and officials. A captain shall be appointed for each team. The umpires should identify the captain before the start of the game. The two teams shall line up for a throw-in (see Rule 7c) along the centre line but at least 20 yards from the boards/side line.

#### 13. SPARE.

### SECTION 3 – INTERRUPTIONS AND RESTARTS AFTER BREAK IN PLAY

#### 14. CHANGING ENDS.

- a. Ends shall be changed after every goal; play is restarted with a throw-in on the centre line unless a Penalty 1 has been awarded in which case the restart shall be with a Penalty 5b. The players shall be allowed a reasonable time to take up their positions at the speed of a slow canter.
- b. Ends shall also be changed
  - (i) If no goal has been scored by half time.
  - (ii) If the umpires have inadvertently permitted the teams to line up the wrong way, play will continue but if no goal has been scored by the end of the chukka, ends shall be changed and the game restarted at a position corresponding to where the previous chukka ended.
  - (iii) For Extra Time (see Rule 11c).

Play is re-started at a position corresponding to where the previous chukka ended.

15. **ATTACKER HITS BEHIND (HIT OR KNOCK IN).** When the ball is hit over and clear of the back line by the attacking team it shall be a hit-in by the defending team from the spot where it crossed

the back line, but at least 4 yards from the goal posts or boards. The ball will be placed by a goal judge clear of the back line within the field of play.

- a. None of the team facing the free hit shall be within 30 yards of the ball or in front of the 30 yard line until the ball is hit or hit at. In the case of any infringement or delay by the team facing the hit, a Penalty 5b shall be awarded.
- b. The team taking the hit-in may place themselves where they choose. Once the goal judge has placed the ball, the umpire will call "Play" and the hitter must play the ball within 10 seconds. In case of delay the umpire shall blow the whistle and throw-in perpendicular to the back line from the spot where the hit-in should have been taken, with the team due to take the hit-in nearest to the goal.

**16. DEFENDER HITS BEHIND (SAFETY 60).** If the ball is hit over the back line by a defender directly or, having been hit by a defender, has then deflected either off his own pony, another defender's stick, a goal post or the boards, the umpire shall blow the whistle and award a Penalty 6 (Safety 60). However, if the ball deflects off any other player, pony or the umpire before going behind it shall be a hit-in (Rule 15).

**17. BALL HIT OUT OF PLAY OVER THE BOARDS OR SIDE LINE.**

- a. **Between the Two 60 Yard Lines.** Should a player hit the ball over the boards or side lines either directly or off his own pony, then the umpire without blowing his whistle (the clock is not stopped) will place the ball after a lapse of 8 seconds at least 5 yards inside the playing area opposite the point from where it went out and call "play". The striker, an opponent of the player who hit the ball out of play, must within 5 seconds hit the ball without re-placing it. His team mates may be in a position of their choosing. The players of the team facing the hit should be 30 yards away either in front or behind the ball. Should an opponent be within 30 yards of the ball when the hit is taken then he has no play until the hitter has passed the ball or been challenged.
- b. **Within the 60 Yard line at Either End.** Should a player hit the ball over the boards or side lines within the 60 yard line a similar rule will apply as in Rule 17a above except that the umpire will place the ball on the 60 yard line and 10 yards in from the boards or side line. The striker may hit the ball only once and may either pass the ball to a team mate who must be at least 30 yards away or he must shoot for goal.

Should the umpires be unclear as to which team hit the ball out of play or it went off a player or pony (other than that of the player who hit it out) then there will be a throw in by the umpire who will stand with his back to the boards where the ball went out of play.

**18. RESTART AFTER INTERVAL BETWEEN CHUKKAS.** On play being resumed after an interval, the ball shall be put into play in the same manner and position in which it would have been had there been no interval unless ends have been changed in which case play is re-started at a position corresponding to where the previous chukka ended (Rule 14).

**19. RESTART WHEN THE BALL HAS NOT LEFT THE FIELD OF PLAY.** If for any reason other than for a foul leading to a penalty the game has to be stopped without the ball going out of play, it shall be re-started with a throw-in by the umpire from the spot where the ball was when the whistle was blown, facing the nearer side line, but at least 20 yards from the boards or side line and 10 yards from the back line.

**20. BURIED OR DAMAGED BALL.** If the ball is buried or trodden in so that the players are unable to move the ball, the umpire shall blow the whistle and restart the game with a throw-in. If the ball is damaged, the umpire shall stop the game when the play is neutral and replace the ball. A goal will be awarded if a player has managed to hit the larger part of the ball through the goal before the whistle was blown.

**21. LOST HELMET OR BROKEN EQUIPMENT.**

- a. If a player loses his helmet, the umpire shall stop play when neutral to enable the player to recover it.
- b. If an umpire considers that damaged or broken tack might pose a risk to any player or pony, he shall stop the game when the play is neutral. However, the game shall be stopped immediately in the interest of safety for tack which presents an immediate danger to any player or pony such as:
  - Broken bit.
  - A broken rein if single or both if double.
  - Broken girth.
  - Trailing bandages.The umpires may allow the player to rectify the fault immediately on the ground if it can be done quickly. Otherwise, the player must leave the field of play and play will be restarted as soon as the player has done so.

**22. DISMOUNTED PLAYER.** A player may not dismount without good reason and if dismounted may not hit the ball nor interfere in the game.

**23. INJURED OR FALLEN PLAYER.** If a player is injured or falls off, the Umpire shall stop the game immediately if the player or pony is in danger or, if not, when the play is neutral. A player must make every effort to retain hold of his pony. If injured, the team shall be granted a period not exceeding 10 minutes for the player to receive any medical assistance and, if unfit to continue, to produce a substitute within this time. In the case of a serious injury and upon medical advice the umpires may allow additional time. The umpire shall not wait for any other player who may not be present. If subsequently able to resume playing, the injured player may replace his substitute at the start of any chukka.

**24. INJURED, DISTRESSED, FALLEN OR FATIGUED PONY OR LOST SHOE.** The primary responsibility for the welfare of a pony lies with the player but the umpires also have a responsibility during play for the welfare of the ponies.

- a. During a break in play, or exceptionally during play, a player may inform the umpires that his pony is injured or distressed or the umpires may make their own assessment to this effect. In both cases, they should stop play immediately and examine the pony. If in their opinion:
  - (i) The pony is visibly injured or distressed they should call "all may change". The pony in question must be led off the field or taken off by horse ambulance. Play will be restarted with a throw-in from where the ball was when the player with the injured pony has returned on another pony.
  - (ii) The pony is not visibly injured or is fatigued then they should instruct the player to change by leading the pony off the field by the shortest route and then to a changing box or area. No other player on his team may change. Play should be restarted as soon as he has left the field of play. The pony may be tagged or marked under supervision of the umpires so that it may not play again in the match.
- b. If a pony falls so that its shoulder touches the ground the umpires should stop play immediately and, if the player wishes to remount, ensure that it is trotted up and examined for soundness. If sound or if there is no evidence of injury, the player may remount or change ponies in accordance with Rule 24a(i) above.
- c. If a pony throws or skews a shoe the player may be allowed to change at the next break in play. Play will be restarted when the player returns.

**25. SPARE.**

**26. SPARE.**

#### SECTION 4 – PRECEDENCE AND PERSONAL FOULS

**27. CROSSING.** No player shall cross another player who has precedence except at such a distance that not the slightest risk of collision or danger to any player is involved.



- 28. PRECEDENCE BETWEEN PLAYERS AND THE LINE OF THE BALL.** The line of the ball (LOB) is the extended path along which the ball has travelled or is travelling. This includes when it has been kicked by a pony or has hit a players or umpires pony or any other impediment on the field of play. If a player has a free hit but misses the ball, the LOB is taken as that direction in which the player was riding. The LOB is the reference for deciding precedence as between players. See **Annex B.**
- a. Two opposing players riding on the exact LOB and simultaneously making a play on each other, whether following or meeting, have precedence over all other players.
  - b. A player on the exact LOB with the ball on his off side, whether following or meeting, has precedence over any other players, except when meeting two players as above.
  - c. No player shall enter in front of the player on the LOB except at such a speed and distance that not the slightest risk of collision or danger to any player is involved. If a player enters safely and gains control of the ball, an opponent must not ride into him from behind.
  - d. When no player is on the exact LOB and two or more players ride in the same general direction, whether following or meeting, the player riding at the lesser angle to the LOB has precedence. If the players are at equal angles, the player that has the LOB on his off side has precedence.
  - e. Any player riding in the same direction as the ball is travelling or has travelled has precedence over any player or players riding from the opposite direction unless they are in accordance with 28a or b above.
  - f. No player will be considered to have precedence because he was the last to hit the ball if having hit the ball he has then deviated from the exact LOB.
  - g. During a throw-in, a precedence as between players will only be established when the ball leaves the line out, either direct from the throw by the umpire or if hit away by a player. Until such time, players may play the ball from any direction or angle providing they do so without creating danger or a risk of danger to themselves, other players or ponies.
  - h. A player shall not be entitled to play the ball on his nearside if he endangers another player who would otherwise have been able to make or attempt to make a legitimate play.
- 29. POSSESSION OF THE BALL.** A player with possession is entitled to continue down the LOB to hit the ball on his offside unless he is subjected to a legitimate play.
- a. **Ball Deflected.** If one or more players are riding on the LOB with possession and for any reason the ball is unexpectedly deflected for a short distance, those players retain the right to play the ball if they are still able to do so without changing direction, and if not, then to continue on the original LOB for a short distance. They may not make a play on the ball if another player is established on the new LOB.
  - b. **Changing the LOB.**
    - (i) If a player suddenly changes the LOB towards, into or under an opposing player, that player must clear the new LOB and may not make a play; but the player in possession must allow the opposing player to do so. The player in possession will foul if he rides into him in order to claim a foul for himself.
    - (ii) A player in possession with the ball on his offside may move the ball at any angle to his left and a trailing opponent only has a nearside play.
  - c. **Hitting Past a Player.** If a player in possession hits the ball past an opposing player riding on the same line and at the same speed, that opposing player has the right to play the ball on his off side provided that he does not cross the player following. The player following must not ride into him from behind.
  - d. **Moving the Ball – One Tap Rule.** A player in possession of the ball when marked by an opposing player must keep moving the ball. Should he stop or reduce to a walk or walking speed he may tap the ball only once and thereafter he or any member of his team must within 5 seconds either hit the ball away or run with it. A player is considered to be marked when an opposing player is within two ponies' lengths of his own and the player in possession is neither being blocked nor ridden off and therefore has the freedom to continue down the LOB.



- e. **Turning and Play on the Boards.** The first player to the ball may not turn in front of a player on the LOB but if the player following checks or reduces speed the first player may then turn the ball in either direction providing that he maintains speed and continues the play. If the play is on the boards, the player, once he has turned must keep going in his chosen direction.
- 30. CARRYING THE BALL.** A player may not catch, kick, direct 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 intentionally. 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 restart the game with a throw-in at the point where it was first carried.
- 31. HOOKING.** No player may hook an opponent's stick unless on the same side of the opponent's pony as the ball, or in a direct line behind, and the stick is neither over, nor under, nor across any part of the opponent's pony, nor between a pony's legs. All of the stick of the player being hooked must be below his shoulder, he must be in the act of hitting the ball and his stick must not be hooked or struck with excessive force. An offside backhand stroke can be hooked during the wind up of the swing when the stick is behind the player but only on that part of the stick which is below the shoulder. However, the nearside backhand may not be hooked behind the player.
- 32. RIDING OFF.** A player may ride off an opponent provided that the ponies are travelling at the same speed, are shoulder to shoulder and come together at a safe angle. When riding off, the elbow must be kept close to the side and a player may not push with the head, hand, arm, or elbow another player.
- 33. BLOCKING.** When play is resumed with a hit after a break in play, it is not permitted for any member of the team taking the hit to ride off or block an opponent attempting to make a play on the hitter. If the ball is then left for a team mate following, the player leaving it may not then ride off or block an opponent attempting to make a play on the player who has been left the ball.
- 34. DANGEROUS RIDING OR PLAY.** No player may ride or use his stick in a manner which creates danger to another pony, player, official or any other person or which places the welfare of his own pony at undue risk. The following are examples of what may be considered to be dangerous play and may lead to the umpires awarding a red or yellow flag in addition to any penalty:
- a. Riding off at such an angle as to endanger a player or a pony or unbalance the pony, or in front of or behind the saddle, or when the speed difference between both players could cause danger.
  - b. Continuing to ride off another player over the back line or through the goal thereby endangering a goal judge.
  - c. Riding his pony from behind into the forehand or backhand stroke of an opponent.
  - d. Zigzagging in front of another player in such a way as to cause the latter either to have to check his pace or risk a fall.
  - e. Pulling across another player, in front or behind, in such a manner as to risk danger to either pony.
  - f. Riding an opponent across another player on the line of the ball or in such a way as to endanger an umpire.
  - g. Riding off an opposing player at the same time as another member of his team (sandwiching).
  - h. Riding at an opponent in such a manner as to intimidate and cause the opponent to pull out or miss the stroke although no foul or cross actually occurs.
  - i. Use his stick improperly or dangerously, such as playing a full shot in a melee or ride off, especially under a pony's neck when being ridden off, swinging the stick in a windmill or helicopter fashion, or holding it in such a way as to interfere with another player or his pony.
- 35. UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT.** No player, team or member of a team's organization may behave in a way which is inappropriate or risks bringing the game into disrepute. The following are

examples of what may be considered to be unsportsmanlike conduct and may lead to the umpires awarding a red or yellow flag in addition to any penalty:

- a. Showing disrespect or using vulgar or abusive language or gestures to any official, player, coach, or spectator. This includes continuing to appeal or argue with the umpires or officials, verbally, by gesture or with a stick.
- b. Seizing with the hand any part of another player or another player's pony or their equipment.
- c. Striking another player or another player's pony with his stick, whip, hand or fist.
- d. Unnecessarily causing delay that is unwarranted or advantageous to the player's own team before or during a game whether or not the ball is out of play or dead.
- e. Feigning injury to a pony or as a player in order to get play stopped.
- f. Refusing to continue to play or leaving the field of play during the course of a chukka without the permission of the umpires except to change a pony or a stick or for a legitimate run off.
- g. Abuse of a pony such as using a whip when the ball is out of play, using a whip or spurs unnecessarily or in excess at any time, or hauling or jabbing a pony in the mouth.
- h. Hitting the ball intentionally or recklessly beyond the safety zone or when it is out of play or dead, in such a way that it could cause injury to a spectator or official, or damage to property.

### 36. SPARE.

## SECTION 5 – PENALTIES

**37. FOUL, NO FOUL AND ADVANTAGE RULE.** The umpires should stop play for a foul by blowing the whistle. If the umpires themselves agree after consultation that there was no foul, or the referee rules 'No Foul', the shall be a throw-in towards the nearest boards or side line from the spot where the ball was when the alleged foul took place. The umpires may elect not to blow the whistle or delay doing so if doing so results in a disadvantage to the team fouled

**38. TAKING OF PENALTY HITS.** For a penalty hit, making a tee is not allowed. Once the umpire has dropped the ball, he will call "Play" and the team fouled must play the ball within 20 seconds.

**39. PENALTY 1.** If, in the opinion of the umpires, a player commits a dangerous or deliberate foul in the vicinity of goal in order to save a goal, the team fouled shall be awarded one goal. The game shall be resumed with a Penalty 5b in favour of the team fouled, ends having been changed.

**40. PENALTY 2 - SPOT OR 30 YARD HIT.** If the foul occurred within the 30 yard line the Captain of the team fouled shall be offered the choice of:

*Either:*

a. a free hit (defended) from the spot where the foul occurred:

- All of the team taking the hit to be positioned behind the ball. The player taking the hit has one free hit but thereafter may continue to hit the ball.
- The team facing the hit may defend the hit but may not be within 30 yards of the ball or in front of their back line, nor enter the field of play through the goal posts.

*Or:*

b. one free hit (undefended) 30 yards from the goal line of the team that has fouled opposite the centre of the goal:

- All of the team taking the hit to be behind the 30 yard line. The player taking the hit may hit or hit at the ball only once and may not make another play. Should the ball fail to cross the goal or back line or rebound into play off a goal post the team facing the hit will be awarded a free hit from where the ball came to rest, as for a Penalty 5a. The ball may be moved outwards towards the boards or side line should a goal post interfere with the player taking the hit.
- The team facing the hit has no play. They shall be positioned behind their back line and may not stand between the goal posts or behind the goal. They may not distract the player taking the penalty, including unintentionally, and must allow the ball to come to a rest.

- 41. PENALTY 3 - 40 YARD HIT.** One free hit 40 yards from the goal line of the team that has fouled opposite the centre of the goal.
- a. All of the team taking the hit to be behind the 40 yard line. The free hit shall be taken in one stroke with the intent to score. If the player taking the hit mishits, misdirects or misses the ball, he or any member of his team may only hit or hit at the ball with a half shot, that is with the head of the stick starting the downward swing below the shoulder of the hitter, until the ball has been hit or hit at by a player of the team facing the hit.
  - b. All of the team facing the hit to be positioned behind their back line but outside of the goal until the ball is hit or hit at. Once the ball is put into play, no player of the team facing the hit may enter the field through the goal posts.
- 42. PENALTY 4 – 60 YARD HIT.** One free hit by the team fouled from the centre of the 60 yard line nearest the goal of the team that has fouled.
- a. The team taking the hit to be free to place themselves where they choose. The free hit shall be taken in one stroke with the intent to score. If the player taking the hit mishits, misdirects or misses the ball, he or any member of his team may only hit or hit at the ball with a half shot, that is with the head of the stick starting the downward swing below the shoulder of the hitter, until the ball has been hit or hit at by a player of the team facing the hit. However, the stick may be raised above the shoulder to stop or re-direct the ball
  - b. All of the team facing the hit to be behind the 30 yard line until the ball is hit or hit at.
- 43. PENALTY 5A – SPOT.** A Penalty 5a shall be a free hit from the spot where the ball was when the foul occurred, but at least 4 yards from the boards or side lines.
- a. The team taking the hit to be free to position themselves where they choose.
  - b. The team facing the hit to be behind an imaginary line parallel to the back line and 30 yards from the ball.
- 44. PENALTY 5B - CENTRE.** A Penalty 5b shall be a free hit from the centre of the field of play.
- a. The team taking the hit to be free to position themselves where they choose.
  - b. The team facing the hit to be behind an imaginary line parallel to the back line and 30 yards from the ball.
- 45. PENALTY 6 – SAFETY 60.** One free hit from a spot on the 60 yard line opposite where the ball crossed the back line, but no more than 40 yards out from the centre.
- a. The team taking the hit to be free to position themselves where they choose. The free hit shall be taken in one stroke with the intent to score as for a Penalty 3;
  - b. The team facing the hit to be behind the 30 yard line until the ball is hit or hit at.
- 46. PENALTY 7A - INFRINGEMENT PENALTY RETAKEN.**
- a. **Infringement by Team Facing the Hit.** If the team facing the hit fails to carry out the correct procedure and no goal has been scored or awarded, the penalty shall be re-taken. In the case of a Penalty 5, it should be moved up 30 yards. If the penalty hit would have resulted in a goal, but is stopped by a player of the team facing the hit and that team has failed to carry out the correct procedure a goal shall be awarded.
  - b. **Infringement by Both Teams.** If both teams fail to carry out the correct procedure the penalty shall be re-taken at the same point and under the same conditions.
- 47. PENALTY 7B – INFRINGEMENT PENALTY 5A - SPOT.** If the team taking the hit fails to carry out the correct procedure the team facing the hit shall be awarded a Penalty 5a from the spot where the penalty was due to be or was taken.

- 48. PENALTY 8 – THROW-IN.** The umpire shall throw the ball in towards the nearest boards from where ball was when the whistle was blown. For a throw-in for delay when taking a hit-in, see Rule 15b
- 49. PENALTY 9A – PONY SENT OFF FOR EQUIPMENT.** The pony shall be sent off the field of play and shall not be allowed to play again until the cause of the violation has been rectified. As soon as the pony has left the field the game shall resume immediately.
- 50. PENALTY 9B – PLAYER SENT OFF FOR EQUIPMENT.** The player shall be sent off the field of play and shall not be allowed to play again until the cause of the violation has been rectified. As soon as the player has left the field the game shall resume immediately.
- 51. AWARDING OF FLAGS.** In addition to any penalty awarded, a flag may be given to a player by the umpires. A flag may be given for the breach of any rule but will usually be awarded for dangerous play, unsportsmanlike conduct or persistent breach of the rules. The umpires must agree that a player should be awarded a flag and if not in agreement, consult with the referee. They must also obtain the acknowledgement of the player(s) awarded the flag and their team captain(s).
- a. Yellow Flags and Sin Bin.** A player may be sin binned (sent off) for 2 minutes for a first offence but if a player incurs 2 yellow flags within one match, that player will automatically be sin-binned for 2 minutes of play. The player shall return to the pony lines or a location as designated by the host club (the sin bin) where he will remain for two minutes of playing time; this includes the time when the ball is out of play but not when the ball is dead and the clock stopped. This may run across two chukkas. The referee or time keeper will fly a flag during this period and as soon as it is lowered the player may re-join the game in an on-side position.
- (i)** If that match ends before the 2 minutes has finished, unless the Club or State Disciplinary Officer decides otherwise, that player will start the next match on a yellow flag.
- (ii)** If a player incurs 3 yellow flags in any one tournament (of 12 goals or over), unless the Club or State Disciplinary Officer decides otherwise, that player will start all subsequent matches in that tournament on a yellow flag.
- (iii)** If a player receives a 4<sup>th</sup> yellow flag in any tournament of 12 goals or over, that player will be sinned binned for 2 minutes.
- (iv)** Unless the Club or State Disciplinary Officer decides otherwise, that player shall be stood down as follows:
- If awarded 5 Yellow Flags – for the next match;  
If awarded 6 Yellow flags – for the next two matches;
- The player will normally be stood down for the next match in the tournament or at the same level but if this is not possible, the match ban shall be at the discretion of the Disciplinary Officer and may be carried forward.
- b. Red Flag.**
- (i)** A player may be given a red flag and sent off for the rest of the match for a first or second offence but a red flag will be automatic if he has already been sent off for 2 minutes and is awarded a further yellow flag. The sent off player may be substituted but only by a qualified player of the same handicap or less after 2 minutes of playing time as above.
- (ii)** A player will automatically be awarded a red flag if they have left the field or game without permission of the umpires.
- (iii)** Any player given a red flag will automatically be suspended for the next match of the tournament and the suspension may be increased by a Disciplinary Hearing. If it is the last match in the tournament, the suspension shall apply to another match or matches of equivalent standing as decided by the club or State Association as appropriate. A report form shall be completed by the umpires.
- c. Flag after the Game.** A player may be awarded a yellow or red flag after the final chukka has ended. A player awarded a yellow flag under these circumstances will start the next match on a yellow; if awarded a red flag, Rule 51b(iii) shall apply. A report form shall be completed by the umpires.

**Rules for Polo**  
**Part 2**  
**2018**  
**APF Supplementary Rules and Regulations**

**SECTION 1 - PRELIMINARY RULES FOR THE GAME**

**2.1 FACILITIES.** Sockets for widened goals should be placed 4 yards out from each goal post.

**2.2 PLAYERS.**

**a. Membership and Handicaps.**

- (i) No person may play in any match, organised game or club chukka at or conducted by a club affiliated to the APF unless they are a registered member of the APF.
- (ii) Every affiliated playing member of the APF shall have a handicap ranging from 5 to 10. 5 graded players may only play matches at clubs of which they are a member; they may not play in tournaments. To be upgraded to a - 2 handicap a player must take and pass the Rules Test, the club assigns a fair and accurate T handicap when they consider that he is sufficiently experienced as a player, and meets the handicap evaluation guidelines as shown in the Handicap Policy Annex A. Clubs must inform the State Handicap Committee of any T handicaps assigned. See the APF Handicap Policy for Handicapping Rules and Regulations at: <http://www.australianpolo.com.au/Rules-and-Policies/APF-Policies>

**b. Tournament Conditions, Player Eligibility and Team Entries.** See Annex C.

**c. Tournament Format, Scheduling and Order of Merit.** See Annex D.

**d. Use of Members' Details and Images.** The APF may, for the purpose of promoting the game of polo generally or any particular polo tournament, use or consent to a sponsor or promoter using any non-confidential, biographical or historical details or any still or moving pictorial image of any club member.

**e. Visiting Players.** Any APF member visiting a club of which he is not a member will be subject to the same rules of discipline and behaviour that govern the membership of that club.

**f. Suspension.** Any player who has been suspended by another national association and where suspension has been notified to the APF, will not be allowed to play in Australia for the period of their suspension except with the permission of the APF.

**g. Banned Substances and Dope Testing of Players.** No player may play in any match, practice game or chukka under the influence of any illegal stimulant or drug, including any substance referred to in the World Anti-Doping Code Prohibited List. In February 2018, the WADA Prohibited List was accessible on the internet through the website of the World Anti-Doping Agency ([www.wada-ama.org](http://www.wada-ama.org)). See APF Anti-Doping Policy and APF Safety Testing Policy at <http://www.australianpolo.com.au/Rules-and-Policies/APF-Policies>. A player may not refuse to take a first or second drug or alcohol test if required to do so by any person duly authorised by the APF, State Association or the Tournament Committee.

**h. Protective Headgear and Footwear for Grooms and Stickholders.** Everyone, including grooms and stick holders, must wear protective headgear with the chinstrap or harness correctly fastened when riding at a polo ground. Appropriate footwear shall be worn by all persons handling or riding horses at a polo ground or venue. Thongs, sneakers, open toed boots or shoes are not permitted. Closed toed boots shall be worn at all times. It is the responsibility of any employer to ensure that an employee whether full or part time does so.

**i. Doctors Certificate.**

- (i) Following a potential concussion a player may not return to play that day and can

only return to practice games or matches with a formal medical clearance for participating in contact sport.

(ii) A club may require, for whatever reason, a player to produce a signed doctor's certificate proving his fitness to play prior to him taking part in any match or chukka.

j. **Spare.**

k. **Polo Ground.** The polo ground is taken to be the enclosed area which includes the field(s) of play, the clubhouse or similar facility, the pony lines, horsebox park and any practice areas of an affiliated or provisionally affiliated club or the private grounds being used by such clubs for any chukkas or games played under APF rules by APF members.

l. **Betting.** There is no organised betting allowed in polo and a member may not knowingly permit any member of his family, or anyone directly connected in any way to his polo to become involved in such betting.

m. **Misconduct.** Misconduct means conduct, wherever it may take place, which in the opinion of a Board is prejudicial to the interests and good order or reputation of the APF or the game of polo and may include, without limitations, repeated, persistent or serious breach of the APF's playing or other Rules or Regulations or Directives, from time to time in force, or is otherwise unsporting.

n. **Social Media.** The use of social media to denigrate or abuse the game, other players or officials may be deemed to be misconduct.

## 2.3 PLAYERS EQUIPMENT.

- a. **Helmets.** All players shall wear an approved helmet with the chin strap fastened at all times whilst playing the sport of polo. Any person riding a horse at a polo ground or venue must wear a helmet and
- The helmet must have a three-point harness attachment
  - It must be noted Helmet Manufacturers generally recommend replacing a helmet every 5 years.
  - Players and Clubs should be conscious that if a player has a hard-blow impact accident while wearing their helmet, that it should immediately be replaced with a new model as there may be damage to the helmet that is not visible to the naked eye.
  - It is recommended that players take note that:
    - I. the Australian Horse Industry Council Horsesafe code of practice states "*Helmets that comply with AS/NZS3838 or ASTM F1163 and are less than five years old from the date of manufacture are deemed to provide an adequate level of protection to the wearer in all circumstances. Helmets that have had significant impacts (i.e. where the strength and integrity of the shell is likely to have been compromised) or have been otherwise structurally damaged must not be used.*"
    - II. From 01 January 2018 HPA rules stipulate that helmets must be type approved to the standard PAS015:2011 or PAS015:1998 with CE mark (type approval must be performed by a UK headquartered Notified Body for Personal Protective Equipment), SNELL E2001, VG1 01.040 2014-12, or UTAC/CRITT 04/2015.
    - III. The USPA has developed standards by which various helmets can be evaluated in terms of how much protection they afford. Players are encouraged to take these standards into consideration in the selection of a helmet. As of June 1, 2020, the protective helmet required (by USPA) for players by this rule must be NOCSAE-approved.

- b. **Spurs.** Any spur likely to wound a horse is not allowed. Spurs, including any rowel, must be blunt with the shank of no more than 1.25 inches (3 cm) pointing downwards and to the rear.
- c. **Whips.** Whips must not be more than 48 inches long including any tag. Broken whips are not allowed.

## 2.4 PONIES AND PONY WELFARE.

- a. **Pony Welfare and Ownership.** The ultimate responsibility for care and welfare of a pony rests at all times with the owner who must take all responsible steps to ensure the welfare of their ponies, including during the winter months. 'Owner' shall mean the individual or individuals whom the Disciplinary Committee is satisfied in fact enjoy the rights, privileges and powers incidental to ownership. This includes, without limitation, the power to make decisions concerning the care and welfare of the animal, whether such individual(s) had any legal status as owner or not. In the case of hirelings, a member of the APF involved in the hiring of ponies has the responsibility of 'owner' until the pony or ponies concerned have been handed over officially to another member of the APF or his agent.
- b. **Tack.**
  - (i) A hackamore or bitless bridle may only be used in practice chukkas at the discretion of the club.
  - (ii) Any bit, whether single or double, with the mouthpiece of less than 0.25 inch (6.50 mm) in diameter at its narrowest point or a curb bit with a cheek length of more than 6 inches (15.2cms) is not permitted.
  - (iii) A tongue tie is not allowed unless used under veterinary advice, Club Horse Welfare Officer to be notified of its use. Tongue ties are to be applied immediately before a game and removed immediately after a game, maximum time a tongue tie is to be on the horse is 10 minutes. Specifications: Tongue Ties must be a nylon stocking, leather strap or rubber band and be at least 25mm in width. Proper application: All tongue ties are to be looped around the tongue and either attached to the bit or secured around the jaw. Tongue ties must be clearly visible at all times.
- c. **Restrictions on Ponies.** In high and medium goal tournaments, a pony played by one team cannot be played by any other team in the same tournament. This rule also applies to intermediate tournaments except that dispensation may be granted by the Tournament Committee.
- d. **Old Ponies.** Owners of old ponies aged 16 or over are advised to have a heart and eye test done by an Australian State Veterinary Surgeons Board at the start of each season.
- e. **Limit of Time Played and Chukkas.** In the normal duration of a match, a pony must not play for more than 71/2 minutes without a 10 minute break and not more than two full non-consecutive chukkas, or 15 minutes in total. Should a match go to extra time then a pony that has played two chukkas may be played for as much time as the extra chukka lasts providing it has had a break of at least ten minutes. A pony must not play more than three full chukkas or the equivalent time in any one day or at more than two locations.
- f. **Umpire Ponies.** A pony that has played in a match at 8 goal level or below may be used as an umpire pony if it has had a break of at least one chukka or vice versa. Above 8 goal, any pony that has played in a match should not subsequently be used as an umpire pony or vice versa.
- g. **Inspection of Ponies.** The Chief Horse Welfare Officer may ask a veterinary surgeon, a member of the Horse Welfare Committee or any other suitable person to inspect ponies belonging to a member or affiliated club, whether on a polo ground, in a yard or turned out. If the member or club refuse permission for the inspection, which may be carried out at short notice, they will be reported to the State Disciplinary Committee.
- h. **Complaints.** If a complaint is received, whether from the general public, a veterinary surgeon, a club official, an officer of any other horse welfare body or from a member of the Welfare

Committee, a Report Form should be completed and sent to the APF Horse Welfare Committee and the club concerned. The Chairman will liaise with the club concerned as to the action to be taken; if it is necessary for an inspection to be made with a veterinary surgeon his cost will be borne by the club concerned. A Club Disciplinary Committee is obliged to hold a Hearing if they receive a report from a veterinary surgeon who is a current registered member of an Australian State Veterinary Surgeons Board concerning abuse or cruelty to any pony. A report of that hearing must be sent to the APF Horse Welfare Committee Chairman.

**j. Medication.**

**(i) Permitted Medication.** The administration to a pony of any drug or substance that is not a normal constituent of horse feed is prohibited with the exception of those listed below as permitted medication subject to their always being prescribed and administered within the manufacturers' recommendations and therapeutic guidelines and within APF rules:

- Licenced Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)
- Corticosteroids
- Dembrexine
- Clenbuterol (e.g. Ventipulmin®)
- Isoxsuprine
- Altrenogest
- Cemetidine
- Ranitidine
- Omeprazole (e.g. Gastrogard®)
- Antibiotics

**(ii) Medication at Polo.** A pony which has been medicated by any route (by injection or ingestion) at polo may not play thereafter that same day. The only exception is if a minor and unobtrusive injury or wound is treated or repaired that will not affect its performance and the pony is then passed fit to play by a current registered member of an Australian State Veterinary Surgeons Board.

**(iii) Testing.** Both random and specific tests will be arranged by the APF in conjunction with the relevant State Association on the instructions of the chief horse welfare officer as considered necessary.

The services of the following Forensic Laboratories may be used: NSW – Australian Racing Forensic Laboratory, QLD- Queensland Racing Science Centre, VIC- Racing Analytical Services Limited, SA- Racing Analytical Services Limited, WA- Racing Laboratory Chemistry Centre. If the result of a test on a sample of a pony's blood shows the presence of a substance above the permitted level, a report form must be completed and copies sent to the player, the owner of the pony, their club and to the Chairman of the Welfare Committee. The club may be directed by the APF to hold a disciplinary hearing. In any case, members are required to cooperate with the APF in producing any evidence relevant to any such enquiry by the club or the APF when requested to do so.

**k. Documentation.** All clubs, tournament committees, players and other participants must conform with their relevant State Department of Primary Industry (DPI) documentation and biosecurity requirements.

**l. Contagious or Infectious Diseases.** Any pony owner, stable manager or polo club that has a suspected case of a contagious disease such as ringworm or an infectious disease such as strangles or equine herpes must inform the State Association and/or APF immediately with details of the action being taken. No infected pony or others in contact will be brought to a polo ground until clearance is given by a current registered member of an Australian State Veterinary Surgeons Board.

**m. Shoes and Shoeing.** The lateral extension or projection of a shoe must not be more than 5mm proud of the hoof wall.



- n. **Water at Polo.** Water should not be withheld for an extended period and should be offered to ponies after they have played.
- o. **Muzzles.** Muzzles should only be used for short periods to prevent a pony from feeding. They must not be adapted in any way to reduce the ability to breathe or drink.

## 2.5 SPARE

## 2.6 OFFICIALS.

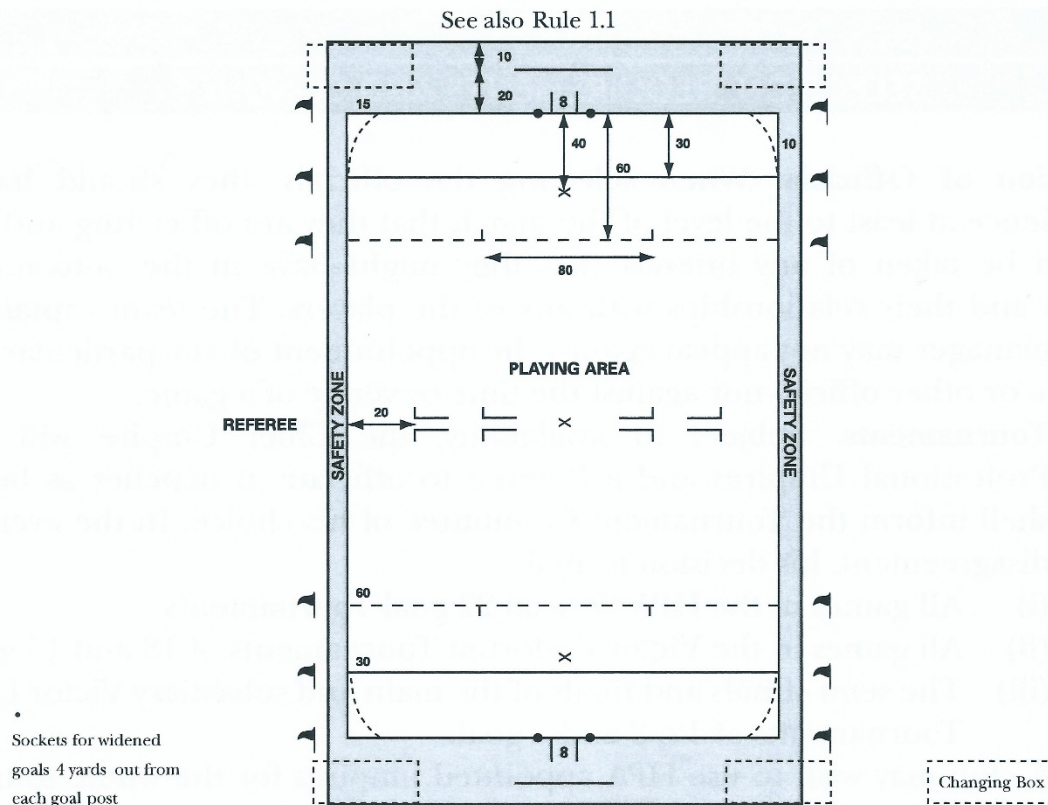
- a. **Membership of the APF.** No person may umpire or referee any match at or conducted by an affiliated club or State Association unless they are a member of the APF.
- b. **Dress.** Umpires must wear an umpires shirt or jacket (normally black and white vertical lines) with clean white breeches or jeans and polished boots and a helmet.
- c. **Visiting Clubs.** Any referee or umpire or any other official visiting a club of which they are not a member will be subject to the same rules of discipline and behaviour that govern the membership of that club.
- d. **Alcohol and Drugs.** An official may not smoke or use a mobile phone during the course of a game and may only drink (non alcoholic) between chukkas nor may any official be under the influence of any illegal stimulant or drug, including any substance listed on the World Anti-Doping Code Prohibited List. In February 2018, the WADA Prohibited List was accessible on the internet through the website of the World Anti-Doping Agency ([www.wada-ama.org](http://www.wada-ama.org)). See APF Anti-Doping Policy and APF Safety Testing Policy at <http://www.australianpolo.com.au/Rules-and-Policies/APF-Policies>.
- e. **Selection of Officials.** When selecting the officials, they should have polo experience at least to the level of the match that they are officiating and account should be taken of any interest that they might have in the outcome of the match and their relationships with any of the players. The team captain or the team manager may not appeal against the appointment of any particular umpire, referee or other official nor against the time or venue of a game.
- f. **One Umpire.** The Tournament Committee may stipulate in the tournament conditions that there will only be one Umpire or, if this has not been done and in order to get a match started, invite the two Captains to agree to only one. When there is only one umpire, there will normally be a referee but he too on occasion may be dispensed with. If there is only one umpire the mounted umpire can ask for the view of the referee if there is one but the umpire has to make the decision
- g. **Umpires Discretion.** Should a goal post be knocked down or similar incident not covered in the rules, then the umpires should allow play to continue until it is neutral. Should a goal post fall in such a way as to stop a goal which in the judgement of the umpires would have been scored then it should be awarded. A similar ruling will apply if the ball hits a flag at the top of a goalpost
- h. **International Games.** International games will be played under these rules unless any changes have been mutually agreed by the team managers/captains and recorded in writing before the match. The International Committee have the responsibility to nominate the match officials in consultation with the Chief Umpire. A list of officials should be given to each team manager/captain who will make a selection in order of preference from the list. The Chief Umpire, in consultation with the Chairman of the International Committee will then make the final selection. Any umpire selected should be practised and fully conversant with the current APF rules.
- i. **Guidelines for Officials.** See Annex F.

## 2.7 REPORT FORMS.

- a. A Report Form shall be completed and signed by the umpires and referee for the following:
  - If a team is judged not to be trying.
  - If a player is sent off for the rest of a game.
  - If a player's spurs or whip are not in accordance with the rules.

- For excessive misuse of the whip or stick or dangerous riding.
  - If a pony is seen to be either showing vice or not under proper control
  - If a pony is seen to be blind in one eye or to have had any form of tracheotomy or to have been de-nerved.
  - If a player has been awarded a red flag during a game.
  - If a player has been awarded a yellow or red flag after the final chukka has ended.
  - Any action which is considered to have brought the game into disrepute.
- b.** A report form may be completed by the team captain if he considers that the Tournament Committee have acted improperly or that the umpires have failed in their duties. In the latter case the form must be signed by a second member of his team and be accompanied by substantial evidence such as a DVD or signed statements. The report must be submitted to the Tournament Committee or State Association within 24 hours from the end of the match.
- c.** Completed report forms must be sent to the APF and the relevant State Association and a copy retained by the Club. An official of the State Association or APF may instruct a Club to hold an enquiry or a Club may act on its own initiative. It is of paramount importance that, if possible, any incident leading to a report is dealt with immediately.

## ANNEX A – SUGGESTED LAYOUT OF THE FIELD OF PLAY



**Length:** 300 yards (275 metres) maximum, 250 yards (230 metres) minimum.

**Width:** 200 yards (183 metres) maximum if unboarded, 160 yards (145 metres) maximum if boarded.

**Safety Zone:** At sides about 10 yards, at ends about 30 yards.

**Markings:**

- Broken lines or full marking for the 30 and 60 yard line may be used across the grounds.
- Marks on the boards or flags which must be clear of the safety zone are useful as a guide to the umpires.
- Two short lines at right angles on the 60 yard line should be drawn 40 yards out from the centre of the goal.
- A series of double tees with lines approximately two feet apart clear of the middle should be marked across the centre line of the playing area.
- A line of about 50 yards in length should be drawn at both ends about 20 yards from the back line behind which the goal judges should stand.
- **Boards:**
- Boards may be curved from the 30 yard line to 15 yards into the back line.
- They should be easily replaceable during a match if damaged.
- A triangular arris rail (4x2in) may be fitted at the base of the board to deflect the ball back into play.
- Boards should be inspected regularly to ensure that there are no protrusions or splinters that might injure ponies.

Note: Widened Goals are used by HPA for Polo in UK and Ireland for extra chukkas in drawn matches.

## ANNEX B – HEAT POLICY

1. **De-hydration control/heat.** The body's natural cooling system does not cope with heat and heat illness can occur if:
  - the circulation is overloaded by too much heat and physical activity,
  - too little sweat is produced e.g. if the person is dehydrated,
  - sweat cannot evaporate freely from the skin (e.g. high humidity, excessive clothing or low air movement).
2. To protect members and others, when temperatures are extreme it is recommended the tournament management committee do everything practicable to avoid playing in the extreme heat. This can include postponing or canceling the tournament, in the same way as in the event of wet weather. They may also shorten the chukkas, or play fewer chukkas if they see the need. The welfare of players and horses is to have priority over commercial considerations
3. In order to ascertain; whether the conditions are extreme, the risk of thermal injury and the appropriate course of action to take. The following Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) tables should be used (see Annex B.# 5 for calculation table):

<u>WBGT</u>	<u>Risk of Thermal Injury</u>
Under<22	Minimal
Over>22 but under<28	Moderate
Over>28 but under<32	High
Over>32	Extreme

4. **Appropriate Course of Action:**
  - a. **Over>28 - Under<32 on WBGT** = refer to Club Horse Welfare Officer for approval to play- considerations in deciding whether play should go ahead include:
    - Intensity of play for horses (low goal/high goal)
    - Acclimatization to heat for horses (used to conditions or not)
    - Fitness of horses
    - Age of horses – older horses do not deal as well with heat
    - Available shade

**If play does go ahead the following modifications should be considered:-**

    - shorten chukkas/number of chukkas
    - Re-schedule to cooler time of the day
    - Include free horse change 4 to 5 minutes into each chukka; a free change will be called during a neutral play at the umpires' discretion.
    - Max 1 chukka per horse, Or Lengthen min. time between chukkas for horses (20-30 mins.)
    - Increase length of break of play between chukkas i.e. 5-10 mins
    - A Vet must be in attendance
    - Temperate water available for horses to drink
    - Sponge horses between chukkas
    - Horses to be cooled using repeated wash/scrape method.
  - b. **32.0 And Over on WBGT** = No Play - polo must not be played

5. WBGT Calculation Table

		Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) from Temperature and Relative Humidity																														
		Temperature (°C)																														
Relative Humidity (%)	0	15	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	20	21	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	32
	5	16	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	33	33	34	35
	10	16	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	36	37	
	15	17	17	18	19	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	
	20	17	18	18	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39			
	25	18	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39					
	30	18	19	20	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	39							
	35	18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39								
	40	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39									
	45	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	35	36	37	38											
	50	20	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	37	39												
	55	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	36	37	38													
60	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	38															
65	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	34	36	37	38																
70	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	33	34	35	36	38	39	WBGT > 40															
75	22	23	24	25	26	27	29	30	31	32	33	35	36	37	39																	
80	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	32	33	34	36	37	38																		
85	23	24	25	26	28	29	30	31	32	34	35	37	38	39																		
90	24	25	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	35	36	37	39																			
95	24	25	26	27	29	30	31	33	34	35	37	38																				
100	24	26	27	28	29	31	32	33	35	36	38	39																				

Note: This table is compiled from an approximate formula which only depends on temperature and humidity. The formula is valid for full sunshine and a light winds

6. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) is able to provide information on thermal comfort and heat stress indicators on a regional basis through its website, in the form of web bulb global temperature or **WBGT**. True WBGT takes into account temperature, humidity, wind speed and solar radiation. However, the Bureau can only provide a calculated WBGT measurement which does not take into account wind speed and solar radiation. Nevertheless, the Tournament Committee is able to access this information from the BOM website as it is updated during the day, and therefore able to monitor for the possibility of adverse conditions for playing polo in hot weather.

*Heat stress is most likely to occur on days when the ambient temperature is 35°C or above, or when the “WBGT shade” is 26 or above.*

7. It is the responsibility of the Tournament Committee acting at any polo event to obtain the forecast conditions and monitor the Thermal Comfort Observations as provided on the Bureau of Meteorology website:

NSW <http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDN65179.shtml>

VIC [www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV65079.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV65079.shtml)

QLD [www.bom.gov.au/products/IDQ65214.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDQ65214.shtml)

SA [www.bom.gov.au/products/IDS65004.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDS65004.shtml)

WA [www.bom.gov.au/products/IDW65100.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDW65100.shtml)

TAS [www.bom.gov.au/products/IDT65050.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDT65050.shtml)

**ANNEX C - TOURNAMENT CONDITIONS, PLAYER ELIGABILITY AND TEAM ENTRIES**

**C1. Tournament Conditions.** The conditions for tournaments are set by the host club but clubs are encouraged to follow the guidelines as set out below:

<i>Goal Level</i>	<i>Min H'cap</i>	<i>Max H'cap</i>	<i>H'cap limit of two Best Players</i>
<i>Sub-zero</i>	<i>-2</i>	<i>-1</i>	
<i>0</i>	<i>-2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>-2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>-2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>-1</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>8</i>	<i>-1</i>		<i>9</i>
<i>12</i>	<i>0</i>		
<i>Over 12g</i>	<i>0</i>		

**C2. Spare**

**C3. Spare**

**C4. Pairing of Players.** Two players may be paired so that each plays a designated number of chukkas within one team.

**C5. One Team.** No player may play for more than one team in the tournament except if authorized as a substitute.

**C6. Coaching.** Coaching during play is forbidden from anywhere and by any form of communication.

**C7. Spare.**

**C8. Entry Form.** To enter, the team captain/manager must submit a completed entry form and send it to the Tournament Committee with the entry fee before the closing date. The team must be qualified to play in the tournament and the entry form must contain the names of at least three players whose total handicap adds up at least to the minimum handicap of the tournament and nominate the team captain. The entry form will contain a declaration which the team captain or manager must sign to the effect that the players nominated on the form or subsequently to be added or changed are qualified to play in the tournament or match and that the handicap and status of the players are correctly recorded.

**C9. No Play Dates.** No Play Dates shall be at the discretion of the Tournament Committee and cannot be guaranteed.

**C10. Umpire Ponies.** Ponies must be suitable to umpire the level being played. A pony to be ridden by an umpire must be equipped as for playing except that the tail need not be put up. See also Rule 2.17.

**C11. Players Raised in Handicap during the Season.** If the handicap of a player or players in a team has been raised during the season then:

- a. A team will not be allowed to play over the handicap limit with a player raised mid-season unless that player has either already played with that team or been listed as a member of a team on the entry form for a tournament within seven days of the date when his new handicap became

effective.

- b. The same rules as the above shall apply as to the handicap limits for individual players.
- c. Any substitution of the player, or players raised must bring the team handicap back to within the limits of the tournament.

**C12. Team Change.** Should a team captain or manager wish to change or add a player at any time before a match is about to start, he must submit an application to the Tournament Committee. Should the club official responsible be unable to check the eligibility of that player for whatever reason, then that player shall not play. The club official should inform the opposing team of any changes or addition as soon as possible. If the match is about to start or has started, then that player is a substitute. It is recognised that in higher goal (12g+) the replacement of a high goal player within the rules may be more difficult.

- a. **League Phase in 12 Goal +.** If a player is unable to play in the next match of the league phase, then his replacement in the team must be qualified. If no qualified player of the same handicap is available then a double substitution may be made.
- b. **Main Knockout Phase in 12 Goal +.** If a player of 2 goals and above cannot play due to an injury certified by a doctor, that player may be replaced by a player who is no longer part of the main tournament but is qualified in all other respects. Special rules, which should be detailed in the tournament conditions, may apply to any subsidiary knockout phase.

**C13. Withdrawal.** A team that has entered a tournament may not withdraw once the schedule has been published without the permission of the Tournament Committee which should only be given in exceptional circumstances. A team that pulls out immediately before or during a match without such consent will invoke a charge of misconduct. A Tournament Committee has the right to disqualify a team at any time.

**C14. Not Trying.** If in the opinion of the umpires or the referee or the Tournament Committee, a team is believed to be not trying, the team should be warned by the umpires. If the team fails to comply with this instruction, the umpires shall submit a report form. The team or individual players may be subject to a Disciplinary Enquiry by the Tournament Committee who may take any action considered appropriate, including the disqualification of the team and its members from playing in the rest of the tournament. If it is considered appropriate by the Tournament Committee to refer the matter to the State Association or APF, the team will be suspended pending adjudication by the State Association or APF.

**C15. Effect of Disqualification or Withdrawal.** If a team is disqualified or its withdrawal is accepted by the Tournament Committee and the team has already played in the tournament then, in a knockout, the team which they have played and beaten in the previous round may go through to the next round. In a league or group all the matches which the team has played will be declared null and void with points and goals gained by their opponents subtracted from their total.

**C16. Substitution.** See Rule 2f. The Tournament Committee, having been satisfied that there is a genuine need for a substitute, will ask the captain of the team requiring the substitute for his choice.

- a. **Chosen Substitute Not Qualified.** Should the chosen substitute not be qualified, the Tournament Committee must establish if there is another qualified substitute readily available. This is to include a player of the same handicap or one goal less than the player he will replace.
- b. **No Qualified Player Available.** If no qualified player is readily available, the Tournament

Committee may agree to a player being used who has played or be due to play in another team. A player who is no longer in the tournament should play in preference to one who is still in it.

- c. Same Handicap or Lower.** If the substitute is of the same handicap as the player he has replaced or lower, then the score will not be altered. A team whose total handicap was below the upper limit of the tournament is not obliged to take a substitute of a higher handicap. However, if they choose to do so, up to the tournament limit, then the score will be altered immediately to reflect the increased total handicap of the team irrespective of when the substitution occurs.
- d. Player Raised in Handicap.** A player whose handicap has been raised mid-season may not play as a substitute if the team's total handicap thereby exceeds the tournaments limits, or to that to which it was raised by a second member of the team whose handicap was also raised mid-season.
- e. Team Raised in Handicap.** If a team is playing above the handicap limit of a tournament by virtue of including a player or players raised in handicap during the season, and one or both of those players has to be substituted during a match, any substitution must be on the basis of the original handicap of those players before they were raised. However, if another player in that team is substituted, the original total handicap of the team may stand.
- f. Double Substitution.** If a player is injured so that he cannot continue to play and, even though a qualified substitute may be available, a team may choose to make a double substitution. The injured player may be replaced by a player of a lesser handicap and another player on the team may be replaced to bring the team back to its original level (but see Rule 2.2c(ii)). Both substitutes must be qualified and therefore must not have played or be due to play in the tournament.
- g. Substituted Player May Replace Substitute.** A substituted player may replace his substitute at the start of but not during any chukka. Should the substitute have been of a higher handicap so that the score was altered it shall not be changed again. If the substitute was of lower handicap and had started the match so that his handicap was shown within the team total then the score will be altered if the substituted player joins the team.
- h. Three Man Teams.** If a player is late or unable to play as a match is about to start, then a team may play with three players but the team aggregate handicap must remain within the tournament limits. The team will start with the aggregate handicap of the three players. If the fourth player or his substitute subsequently joins in, which he may do only at the start of but not during a chukka in the match, the handicap of the team will be recalculated to include the handicap of the joining player if one goal or above and the score board altered accordingly in favour of the opposing team. If the joining player's handicap is 0 goal or below then no alteration will be made to the score.
- i. Sent Off or Injured.** A team may be reduced to three men (no qualified substitute or player sent off) in which case it may play with an aggregate handicap below or above the limits of the tournament. But, in the event of a subsequent substitution, the handicap of the injured or sent off player must continue to be included in the calculation when judging the eligibility of the substitute.
- j. Effect on Substitute.** A player who has substituted for another under Rule 2.2b(ii) should not be disqualified from continuing with his original team, or from joining another team if he is



not already in one. He may also continue to play in the team in which he has played as a substitute if the original player is still not available and his own team is no longer in the tournament.

**C17. Substitution in the Higher Goal (12g+).** In 12 goal+ the substitution of a player within the above rules may be difficult and therefore teams may nominate substitutes as follows:

- a. League Phase.** A team may nominate as a substitute a qualified player of 8 goals or above who is playing in another team in the tournament to be a substitute.
- b. Main Knockout Phase.** A team may nominate a substitute for each of its players. Any player who has been knocked out in a previous round is eligible to substitute provided that he is qualified. He is not eligible if he has been knocked out in the same round; for example, another quarter finals played the day before.

In each case, the list of substitutes shall be emailed to the Polo Manager by mid-day (or 5pm) on the day before the match. Otherwise, a team shall be subject to the substitution rules as set out in C16.

## ANNEX D - FORMAT, SCHEDULING AND ORDER OF MERIT

1. **Closing Date and Acceptance.** As a general rule the Tournament Committee should accept all entries up to the closing date. They may try to achieve extra entries in order to give a better balance to the tournament (eg to achieve eight teams rather than seven) but the process should not be so drawn out that the issuing of the schedule is delayed. It is, however, at the discretion of the Tournament Committee to refuse an entry, to ballot out teams or to run a tournament on an invitation basis. Any refusal of entry will only be made in consideration of all APF Rules and Policies and in accordance with the APF and State Association Constitutions.
2. **Format and Schedule.** Once entries have been received and if it is not in the tournament conditions, the Polo Manager must decide whether the tournament should be run as a knockout, league, group or combination of both. It has become increasingly popular to start a tournament on a league or group basis, as this guarantees each team a number of matches, and then to move on to a knockout phase. The Tournament Committee should whenever possible arrange a balanced and achievable schedule for a tournament at their club which will need to take account of the number of entries, the playing days available and the other commitments of the teams and players. The schedule of the matches should include where appropriate nominated umpires and referees.
3. **Widened Goals.** The schedule should state whether goals will be widened. Goals will normally be widened for the second chukka of extra time but if the tournament conditions state or team captains agree to save ponies and time, the first chukka of extra time may start with widened goals. If goals are widened the chukka will be started with a throw in from the centre, ends having been changed.
4. **Penalty Shoot Out.** A penalty shoot-out may be used to produce a result or order of merit. See para 11. The availability of players, the number of teams involved and the weather might influence how the shoot-out is conducted which shall be at the discretion of the Tournament Committee but the format of the shoot-out should be decided and promulgated before the start of the tournament or at least 24 hours before the game likely to involve a shoot-out is due to be played. Players eligible to take part shall be restricted to:
  - those who were listed on the team entry form for the tournament or
  - those who played the whole of the last match or
  - the substitute of a player who is injured in the last match but only if the injured player's inability to take part is supported by a Doctor's certificate.
 The following format is recommended and shall be the default position:
  - Two players are nominated from each team to take the penalties on behalf of their team.
  - A coin will be tossed with the winner electing whether to go first or second. Teams and players then alternate as each player has two free hits at goal from the 30 yard spot and then the 60 yard spot. Both are undefended.
  - If this results in a tie and a result is required, the 60 yard penalties will continue until a winner can be declared by sudden death.
5. **Away Games.** The schedule may require teams to play qualifying matches at other clubs. This will be arranged by agreement between polo managers and clubs are expected to co-operate in accepting teams which may not be from their own club. Qualifying matches are taken as part of the tournament and the rules on substitution and use of ponies shall apply.
6. **Private Grounds.** All private grounds must have been inspected by an official of the APF and passed before they may be used for matches played in APF sanctioned tournaments. A Tournament Committee that, in agreement with the owner, schedules a match to be played on a private ground, must contact the Polo Manager of the Club designated as the overseeing club for that ground. The Polo Manager should inform the Tournament Committee of the matches and teams that have been played at that ground in previous tournaments. If in agreement, then

the designated club must have at the ground an official who shall be responsible for all matters concerning the match.

7. **No Appeal.** The team captain or the team manager may not appeal against the time or venue of a game.

#### Format

8. **Knock Out Tournament.** A knockout tournament is one in which teams are drawn to play one or more of preliminary rounds, quarter finals, semi-finals and finals. Unless there are eight or sixteen teams in the tournament there will be a requirement to have bye rounds. The method of placing these is shown in the table below. It is often popular to have a subsidiary to the main tournament to give the teams beaten in the first round a minimum of two matches. The subsidiary matches should be scheduled so that they fall as close as possible to the time and date of the equivalent matches arranged for the winning teams.

#### Method of Drawing Byes in Tournaments – All Byes are in the first round

No of Teams	Byes at Top	Byes at Bottom
5	1	2
6	1	1
7	0	1
8	0	0
9	3	4
10	3	3
11	2	3
12	2	2
13	1	2
14	1	1
15	0	1
16	0	0

#### 9. Leagues and Group Tournaments.

- a. **League.** A league tournament may consist of one or more leagues with each team in its league normally playing the others. In a league of four each team plays three matches. A league tournament may be used to produce a winner or to decide by an order of merit (Para 9) which team shall qualify for the knockout phase of the tournament.
- (i) There should always be the same or more places for teams in a knockout phase than the number of leagues or groups.
- (ii) Leagues of three teams are to be avoided if possible as they are more prone to match fixing than larger leagues. If used, the team that loses the first match in its league should ideally play the third team next so that the next league match will count towards the overall result
- (iii) For reasons of time or availability it may sometimes be necessary to schedule a tournament in which all the teams in a league do not play each other; for example, if there are five teams and only time for each team to play two matches. Scoring will be as laid down in Para 12.
- b. **Group.** A group is divided into two subgroups of two or more teams. With a group of six teams in two subgroups of three teams, each team will play three games. Each subgroup should have the same number of teams and each team should play against each team in the other subgroup. The group system should be used sparingly as all the teams within a group have not played each other, and one sub group may be stronger than the other. Hence the

group system can sometimes lead to maverick results which are only partially offset by seeding or by combining all the results within the group (Para 12).

- c. **Combined Leagues and Groups.** Sometimes, in order to achieve a uniform number of matches played, the league and group system can be combined. For example, if there are fourteen teams in a tournament, the Committee can schedule two leagues of four teams and a group of six teams (two subgroups of three teams each) so that every team plays three matches in this phase.
  - d. **One Day Round Robin.** If three teams are to play on one day, then a Round Robin is a good answer. Normally each team plays two chukkas against the other. Two of the teams play consecutively e.g. the first four chukkas or the last four and the third team has a break in the middle. It is recommended that each match should end on the first bell whether the score is level or not and that two points are awarded for a win and one for a draw.
- 10. Progression and Placing of Teams for Knockout Phase.** Once an order of merit has been established then a knockout phase may be held. If eight teams are to enter the knockout phase then quarter finals will be played but if only four then Semi-finals will be played. The order of merit as outlined in Paragraph 4 above will normally be used to place teams for the knockout phase of a tournament.

Quarter Finals: 1 v 8	Semi Finals: 1 v 4
4 v 5	2 v 3
3 v 6	
2 v 7	

These placings may be altered for scheduling reasons or to avoid teams that have played each other in the league phase meeting in the early rounds of the knockout. A draw can also be made.

### Order of Merit

**11. Order of Merit.**

- a. **Points System.** To establish an order of merit a points system for games will operate as follows:

Played for a Win:	Win = 2	Lose = 0
Played for a Draw:	Win = 2	Draw = 1
		Lose = 0

In addition, a record of goal must be maintained as follows:

- Goals For: the sum of the goals scored by and accredited to a team.
- Goals Against: the sum of the goals scored against a team.
- Goal Difference: the sum of the 'Goals For' versus 'Goals Against' which may result in a minus total.

- b. **Penalty Shoot-Out.** The Tournament Committee shall normally specify in the Tournament Conditions that a Penalty Shootout will be held if necessary after the league or group phase to decide the order of merit between teams tied on points. See para 4. Notwithstanding that, the Tournament Committee may also inform teams prior to a game that a penalty shoot-out will be used to decide the order of merit should they consider that it will contribute to the uncertainty of the outcome. Where more than two teams are tied on points it is possible that one of the tied teams may have beaten the other teams tied on points, in which case that team should go through first leaving the remaining teams to take part in the shootout should it still be necessary.

- 12. League in which all the Teams have played each other.** In a tournament that involves leagues in which all the teams within each league have played each other a record of the results should be drawn up as in the Examples. The order of merit is established initially by taking the number of points scored by each team in its league (Example A).

- a. **Two Teams Tied on Points.**

- (i) If two teams are tied on points, then the team that won the match between them goes above the other (Example B).
    - (ii) If the result of the match between the two tied teams was a draw, the first placed team will be that with the best 'goal difference' counting all the matches played by the two teams in their league.
    - (iii) If the teams are tied on 'goal difference', the first placed team will be the one with the most 'goals scored', again counting all the matches played by the two teams in their league.
  - b. Three Teams Tied on Points.** If three teams are tied on points, recalculate the points scored counting only the matches played between the tied teams.
    - (i) If this results in two teams still being tied on points, the team that won the match between them goes above the other.
    - (ii) If three teams are still tied on points, again taking into account the scores within the tied teams, the order of merit is established from the 'goal difference' credited to each team. Thus the team with the best 'goal difference' goes first, the second best goes second and the third goes third. If this results in two of the teams still being tied on 'goal difference', the team that won the match between them goes above the other.
    - (iii) If three teams are still tied 'goals scored' shall determine the order of merit. If this results in two of the teams being tied on 'goals scored', the team that won the match between them goes above the other (Example E).
  - c. Four or More Teams Tied.** In the event that four or more teams are tied on points, then proceed as for three teams tied (Para 12b).
- 13. Groups and Leagues in which all Teams have not played each other.** In a tournament which involves groups or leagues in which all teams have not played each other, the result of all matches within the league and group will be taken. Thus for example with two subgroups, each of two teams playing across, the result of all four matches will be taken together (Examples C, D and F). The order of merit will be drawn up as in Para 11 but note if teams have played each other then the winner of that match will go above in a two-way tie (Example D).
- 14. Across Leagues and Groups.**
- a.** As a first step establish the order of merit within each league or group using the system laid down in Para 11 and 12 above. The first team in each league and group have an automatic place in the knockout phase.
  - b.** If it is necessary to establish an order of merit between the first placed teams in each league and/or group to allocate the playoff places in the knock out phase (Para 8) take all the matches that the teams have played in their league or group to establish the order of merit between them again using the system in Paras 12 or 13.
  - c.** If it is necessary to achieve an order of merit between the second or third and so on placed teams in each league and or/group proceed as for the first placed teams above. A Tournament Committee may however wish to include a special rule in the schedule if the tournament does include a group or groups as those teams in a group are at a disadvantage (there are always more teams than in a league) when an order of merit is drawn up using the system outlined above. (See Note 2 to Example J)
  - d.** In the event that there are an unequal number of teams in each league then eliminate the bottom team and recalculate the scores. The original placings will stand ie, the team that came first in the league before equalisation will remain first but the points, goal difference and goals scored credited to it after equalisation will be used for comparison with the equivalent placed teams in the other leagues. Thus, if required, an overall order of merit, involving all the teams in a tournament can be drawn up. (See Examples H and J).
- 15. Teams still Tied.** If teams remain tied having applied all the above methods to separate them, if a play off or penalty shoot- out has not been scheduled or there is not enough time, then the Tournament Committee shall determine the order of merit in the sequence below:

- a. The best 'goal difference' achieved in any one game.
  - b. The best 'goals scored' achieved in any one game.
  - c. The toss of a coin.
- 16. Unfinished Game.** Every effort should be made to reschedule a game so that it can be played or completed or produce a result by penalty shootout as outlined in para 4 but as a last resort the result of a match can be calculated as follows:
- a. If not played:**
    - (i) Taking all the matches played in the league or group concerned, establish the 'goal difference' for each team. The score is then calculated by dividing the 'goal difference' of each team by the number of matches played by each team; all fractions to count as half.
    - (ii) If this produces a tie in a tournament in which matches are to be played for a win then a similar calculation will be made taking account of 'goals scored'.
    - (iii) If two teams remain tied then Para 15 will apply.
  - b. If started but not completed:**
    - (i) The score will be calculated by taking the score of each team at the time the match was abandoned. These scores are then each divided by the number of chukkas completed and multiplied by the total number of chukkas due to be played in the match to give the score; all fractions to count as half.
    - (ii) If the teams were equal when the match was abandoned, each team will be awarded half a point.
- 17. Tournament Played Open and Handicap.** If the tournament is played both open and on handicap:
- a. Scoreboard.** The scoreboard should show the 'Open' score with any goals awarded on handicap displayed separately below the appropriate team.
  - b. Last Chukka.** Matches must be played for a win in both the open and handicap sections. Although there may be a win in one section at the end of the last chukka, play may have to continue in order to get a win in the other section. When the result of one section has been established, then that result will not be altered by the subsequent play that may have been required to get a match result in the other section. It is important that umpires and time-keepers are briefed on this requirement.
  - c. Order of Merit.** A team that wins both the open and handicap section in a league must go for the open final. When the order of merit is being calculated, all matches are counted. If two or more teams are tied on points, only matches between the tied teams are counted as in Para 12a except that a team that has won the open section of the league shall not be considered as a tied team.
- 18. Cancellation.** If the result of a league is known before the last matches are played and the result cannot be influenced by those matches, they may be cancelled provided the Tournament Committee, the club where the matches were due to be played and both team captains all agree.



**EXAMPLES TO ANNEX D**

**Example A - League with no teams tied on points**

League 1	A team	B team	C team	No team	Win/Lose	Points	Goals Scored	Goals Against	Goal Difference	Place
A team		7 - 8	12 - 7		LW	2	19	15	+4	2
B team	8 - 7		9 - 4		WW	4	17	11	+6	1
C team	7 - 12	4 - 9			LL	0	11	21	-10	3
No team										

**Example B - League with two teams tied on points**

League 1	A team	B team	C team	D team	Win/Lose	Points	Goals Scored	Goals Against	Goal Difference	Place
A team		10 - 7	7 - 9	6 - 7	WLL	2	23	23	0	4
B team	7 - 10		11 - 6	9 - 8	LWW	4	27	24	+3	1
C team	9 - 7	6 - 11		4 - 5	WLL	2	19	23	-4	3
D team	7 - 6	8 - 9	5 - 4		WLW	4	20	19	+1	2

B team and D team are tied on points. B team won the match between them so go first. Likewise C team beat A team so they go into third despite the fact that they have a worse goal difference.

**Example C - 4 teams grouped in 2 sub groups.**

Sub Group 1	A team	B team	C team	D team	Win/Lose	Points	Goals Scored	Goals Against	Goal Difference	Place
A team			9 - 6	7 - 6	WW	4	16	12	+4	1
B team			6 - 5	7 - 4	WW	4	13	9	+4	2
Sub Group 2										
C team	6 - 9	5 - 6			LL	0	11	15	-4	3
D team	6 - 7	4 - 7			LL	0	10	14	-4	4

Teams play across. A team and B team each have four points so go straight to goal difference and the scores are still tied; go to goals scored and A team go first and B team second. Likewise C team go third and D team fourth.

**Example D - 4 teams grouped in 2 sub groups.**

Sub Group 1	A team	B team	C team	D team	Win/Lose	Points	Goals Scored	Goals Against	Goal Difference	Place
A team			5 - 4	3 - 4	WL	2	8	8	0	2
B team			4 - 10	4 - 7	LL	0	8	17	-9	4
Sub Group 2										
C team	4 - 5	10 - 4			LW	2	14	19	+5	3
D team	4 - 3	7 - 4			WW	4	11	7	+4	1

Teams play across. D team goes first with 4 points. Team A and C are tied on points. As A team beat C team they go second with C team third.

**Example E - 4 teams in a league with 3 teams tied on points.**

League 1	A team	B team	C team	D team	Win/Lose	Points	Goals Scored	Goals Against	Goal Difference	Place
A team		10 - 5	6½ - 10	8 - 0	WLW	4	24½	15	+9½	1
B team	5 - 10		9 - 3	7 - 3	LWW	4	21	16	+5	2
C team	10 - 6½	3 - 9		3 - 1	WLW	4	16	16½	-½	3
D team	0 - 8	3 - 7	1 - 3		LLL	0	4	18	-14	4

Three teams tied on points so the 4th team (D team) is discounted and the scores are recalculated taking into account only the scores between the remaining three teams. See below.



**Annex D to Part 2 APF Rules 2018**

League 4	K team	L team	M team	N team							
K team		3½ - 12	7½ - 7	3 - 3½	LWL	2	14	22½	-8½	3	-
L team	12 - 3½		6 - 4	5 - 6½	WWL	4	23	14	+9	2	-
M team	7 - 7½	4 - 6		6 - 6½	LLL	0	17	20	-3	4	-
N team	3½ - 3	6½ - 5	6 - 6½		WWW	6	16½	14	-2½	1	-

To establish the order within the league and which teams therefore qualify for the knock out phase, all matches are counted. The next step is to reduce League 4 to three teams by eliminating the bottom team and recalculating the score as shown following in order to produce an order of merit across the leagues.

League 4	K team	L team	M team	N team							
K team		3½ - 12		3 - 3½	LL	0	6½	15½	-9	3	12
L team	12 - 3½			5 - 6½	WL	2	17	14	+9	2	5
M team											
N team	3½ - 3	6½ - 5			WW	4	10	8	+2	1	3

The winners of each league go into the main semi final: D team go 1st, A team 2nd, N team 3rd and H team 4th. In the subsidiary semi final, L team go 5th, B team 6th having been equal on points and goal difference but scored more than G team who go 7th and F team go 8th. N team and L team will qualify in their original league placings even if their positions change following equalisation.

**Example J - The tournament has a group of 4 and 3 leagues of 3. There is to be a main and subsidiary semi-final.**

Sub Group 1	A team	B team	C team	D team	Win/Lose	Points	Goals Scored	Goals Against	Goal Difference	Place in League	Overall Place
A team			8½ - 6	7 - 6	WW	4	15½	12	+3½	2	5
B team			6 - 5	7 - 4	WW	4	13	9	+4	1	3
Sub Group 2											
C team	6 - 8½	5 - 6			LL	0	11	14½	-3½	3	10
D team	6 - 7	4 - 7			LL	0	10	14	-4	4	11
League 1	E team	F team	G team	No team							
E team		6 - 8	7 - 3		LW	2	13	11	+2	2	6
F team	8 - 6		8 - 4		WW	4	16	10	+6	1	1
G team	6 - 7	4 - 8			LL	0	7	15	-8	0	13
No team											
League 2	H team	J team	K team	No team							
H team		4 - 5	7 - 5		LW	2	11	10	+1	1	4
J team	5 - 4		4 - 6		WL	2	9	10	-1	3	9
K team	5 - 7	6 - 4			LW	2	11	11	0	2	8
No team											
League 3	L team	M team	N team	No team							
L team		4½ - 7	5½ - 8		LL	0	10	15	-5	3	12
M team	7 - 4½		3 - 5		WL	2	10	9½	+½	2	7
N team	8 - 5½	5 - 3			WW	4	13	8½	+4½	1	2
No team											

**Note 1.** The winners of each league/group go into the main semi finals. In this case there are 3 teams on 4 points so the order of merit for those 3 is decided on goal difference: 1st F team, 2nd N team, 3rd B team. H team is 4th as they won their league. Note that A team who won both their matches and has 4 points is not in the semi-finals. Then, taking the seconds in each league/group, A team is 5th with 4 points. There are then 3 teams placed 2nd with 2 points so the order of merit is again decided on goal difference: E team 6th, M team 7th and K team 8th. Also note two teams from the group and one from each league do not get another game.

**Note 2.** The Tournament Committee may include in the schedule a special ruling which in this case might read 'Should the worst 2nd best team in the leagues be below the third best team in the group in the order of merit then the team in the group will go forward to fill the eighth place.' In this example the order of merit stands as the third best team in the group (C) had 0 points whereas the worst second in the league (K) had 2 points.



## ANNEX E – CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES

- E1. General.** However affiliated clubs and associations constitute themselves, they are obliged to:
- a. Abide by the Rules, Regulations and Directives of the APF and the relevant State Association, including the APF Heat Policy – see Annex B.
  - b. Subscribe to the objects of the APF and the relevant State Association as set out in their constitutions.
  - c. Acknowledge and take account of the interests of other affiliated clubs and associations.
- E2. Returns.** Clubs must submit returns to the Clubs must submit returns to the State Associations and or APF as follows:
- a. Affiliation fees
  - b. List of club office bearers, club captain, chief umpire and horse welfare officer
  - c. Polo Ground/Field Locations. *Note: The polo ground is taken to be the enclosed area which includes the field(s) of play, the clubhouse or similar facility, the pony lines, horsebox park and any practice areas of an affiliated or provisionally affiliated club or the private grounds being used by such clubs for any chukkas or games played under APF rules by APF members.*
  - d. Fixture List for the next season
  - e. Handicap recommendations. Mid-season and end of season handicap recommendations as required under the APF Handicap Policy.
  - f. Event Checklist. An event checklist must be completed for all APF endorsed events.
  - g. Incident Reports. To be completed and submitted as soon as possible after an incident. See the Incident Report Form Guide for the mandatory reporting requirements at: <http://www.australianpolo.com.au/Rules-and-Policies/APF-Policies>
- E3. Membership.** Clubs are responsible for ensuring that membership formalities are completed correctly before any player takes part in a match, game or chukka.
- E4. Handicaps.**
- a. **Club Handicap Committees.** Each affiliated club must have a Handicap Committee.
  - b. **Recommendations.** It shall forward its recommendations for the alteration of handicaps and the allotment of new handicaps to the State Association Handicap Committee for approval at such times as it thinks fit or is required to do so by the APF Handicap Policy. The Handicap Policy is at: <http://www.australianpolo.com.au/Rules-and-Policies/APF-Policies>
- E5. Tournament Committee.**
- a. **Requirement.** For any tournament the host club will appoint a Tournament Committee (TC) of three or more individuals, who preferably should have no vested interest in the outcome of the event. In the absence of a Tournament Committee, the Polo Manager of the Club or his representative with the umpires and referee shall act as the Tournament Committee.
  - b. **Authority and Duties.** The Tournament Committee has authority over all matters pertaining to the Tournament. This will include jurisdiction over any offence committed within the Polo Grounds (see Rule2.2k) except that the authority of the referee and the umpires will be absolute immediately before, during and immediately after the game on matters regarding the conduct of play. The Tournament Committee will be charged with the overall responsibility for the running of the tournament which shall include:
    - Checking the eligibility of each entry.
    - Format of the tournament, scheduling of games, deciding how match results are achieved if required and the order of merit. See Annex D.
    - Checking the eligibility of any team change and informing the opposing team and of any substitution.
    - Appointment of officials. The team captain or the team manager may not appeal against the appointment of any particular umpire, referee or other official nor against the time or venue of a game.
    - Provision of the grounds and the necessary equipment.

- Overseeing, through the Club Welfare Officer, the welfare of ponies in particular their condition, shoeing and watering.
- c. **Entry Forms.** A Club wishing to run a tournament must prepare an entry form which should include the following:
- Name of tournament.
  - Handicap level.
  - Inclusive dates.
  - No Play Dates.
  - Status (eg, official or if not, any special conditions that apply).
  - Entry fee and note of any additional cost of officials, medical cover etc.
  - Closing date of entry.
  - Blank line so teams can enter dates on which they would prefer not to play.
  - For leagues or groups whether matches are to be played to a result or may finish in a draw.
  - Any disclaimer and additional information.
  - Declaration as to eligibility of those entered.
  - Signature Block.

**E6. Incidents and Report Forms.**

- a. **Incidents.** The Tournament Committee (TC) oversees safety, planning and logistics. Immediately an incident occurs, the TC will assess the scene, identify risks, secure the area and determine if it is just basic first aid, or an ambulance, police or emergency service that is required. The TC will also advise to stop the event or to continue, depending on the type and location of the incident. The TC must appoint an Incident Controller (IC) for each tournament. The IC will be responsible for coordinating all of the duties of the TC.
- b. **Report Forms.** Clubs must report all incidents that occur during any polo event, including club events and tournaments. Incidents must be reported within three days of their occurrence. Club Captains are required to provide appropriate reports from witnesses to the incident. The APF will develop a new electronic form that all Clubs can access easily enabling the Club Captain to record an incident correctly. These records will then be retained by the state Associations and APF to ensure accurate data to assist in developing insurance policies and medical requirements that reflect what happens on the polo field and hence the greatest needs of players.
- Report forms will be made available by the APF to every club and should be held by the Polo Managers at the ground where the polo is being played. A Report Form shall be completed and signed by the umpires and referee for any of the offences listed under Rule 2.7.

**E7. Umpiring.** Each club shall appoint a **Club Chief Umpire** who should:

- a. Have a thorough knowledge of the Rules of Polo.
- b. Attend Umpire Meetings and pass on the conclusions to their Club members.
- c. Ensure that any directives are passed on to all playing members.
- d. Assist the Polo Manager in the appointment of umpires.
- e. Arrange Rules and Umpires Tests. The Tests are set by the APF and should be invigilated by accredited umpire trainers with the completed marked papers being sent to the APF. Only those of -1 and above should normally take the Umpire test.
- f. Be part of the Club Disciplinary Committee.
- g. Assist the Polo Manager in acting on complaints received in relation to umpiring.
- h. Liaise with the Regional Chief Umpire to conduct umpiring seminars with a view to improving the standard of umpiring throughout the Club.

**E8. Pony Welfare.** Each club shall appoint a **Club Welfare Officer** who has a responsibility for pony welfare. The Welfare Officer or his representative should be conversant with the Rules of Polo, in particular those concerning player's equipment, ponies and tack and when play is stopped for injury to a pony or tack. He should also:

- a. Ensure that his club members understand that they are responsible for the welfare of their ponies throughout the year.
- b. Attend the APF or State Association Horse Welfare meetings as required and pass on the information to his club members.
- c. Complete returns as required by the APF on injuries or fatalities that may have occurred during the season
- d. Maintain close contact with the local Veterinary Practice to ensure that the Club's responsibilities are met.
- e. Check that relevant State Department of Primary Industries biosecurity and reporting requirements are met.
- f. Check that for the players' safety ponies aged 16 or over have had a heart and eye test done by a current registered member of Australian State Veterinary Surgeons Board at the start of each season.
- g. Oversee the maintenance and equipment of the horse ambulance and periodic practices of the procedure for taking an injured horse from the field of play.
- h. Monitor the use of muzzles in the stables, especially those on site and the wintering of ponies within the area of responsibility of the club.
- i. Be present at all matches so that he can:
  - (i) Monitor the pony lines throughout the season, but particularly at the beginning of the season, to check for skin disease, malnutrition, abuse and incorrectly fitted or illegal equipment. Any ponies in a poor condition should be referred to a current registered member of Australian State Veterinary Surgeons Board and if a pony has to be stopped from playing because of its poor condition, a report form must be sent to the Chairman of the Horse Welfare Committee, the State Association and the APF.
  - (ii) Check on horse transport in particular adequate ventilation and safe flooring, partitions and ramps.
  - (iii) Ensure that clean fresh water is available in the pony lines and that ponies are not watered direct from a trough but that a clean bucket is used to fill others
  - (iv) Check that there is no abuse of ponies by players within the grounds of the club or on the field of play and, if appropriate, submit a Report Form to the Tournament Committee. Report forms may be submitted for any welfare incident but should be for:
    - Excessive use of the whip or spurs.
    - Dangerous riding.
    - Any abuse of ponies on or off the ground.
    - Any use of non-registered vets.
  - (v) Check that:
    - Ponies are tied up sensibly and head collars are not left hanging.
    - Umpire ponies are well turned out and healthy.
    - Ponies are not allowed to continue to play if lame or showing blood (see Rule 4b).
    - Ponies do not travel in studs.
    - Tongue ties if used are only fitted in accordance with rule 2.4b(iii) and removed as soon as possible.
    - Bandages are put on last and not left on after the game.
- j. **Veterinary Cover.** A veterinary surgeon who is a current registered member of Australian State Veterinary Surgeons Board must either be present or on immediate call at all matches. In addition, a nominated club official should be in attendance at all matches and practice chukkas arranged by the club to deal with welfare issues. In the absence of a current registered member of Australian State Veterinary Surgeons Board (Vet), the Host Club Tournament Committee has the authority to stop a pony from playing.
- k. **Best Playing or Turned Out Pony.** Clubs are encouraged to award a prize for the best playing or best turned out pony. They must however ensure that the pony is in a fit state to collect its

prize - i.e. that it is not distressed, looks well and does not have spur or whip marks, a cut mouth, sore back or any other signs of injury. If a pony has received an accidental injury, such as a tread, then it should not be excluded from collecting its prize, provided that the injury has been properly treated. If a veterinary surgeon is present he should be asked to inspect the pony prior to the presentation.

- l. Horse Ambulance Cover.** Either a trailer with motor vehicle attached or a low loading lorry each with ramp equipped with a winch and screens must be available near to the ground at all times during play. Clubs should practice the procedure from time to time. As well as a winch and screens the horse ambulance should carry ropes, a drag mat, a spare head-collar, a tarpaulin, a bucket of sand, a knife for slitting saddlery and two lead ropes to cross tie a horse if necessary. If a trailer, the horse ambulance should and be hooked up prior to the start of a match with an earmarked readily available driver. There should also be earmarked a team of knowledgeable helpers on hand to help with an injured horse.
- m. Pony Euthanasia.** In the event that it is considered essential on humane grounds to put a pony down every reasonable effort should be made to contact the owner or his representative to obtain consent. In the absence of a legitimate representative refer to "owner" as defined in Rule 2.4. Immediate euthanasia should be reserved for a pony that is 'in extremis' ie there is confidence that movement is inhumane and there is no foreseeable prospect of the pony recovering from its injuries. Chemical euthanasia is the method of choice in areas of public view. This will require carcass removal and incineration.

**E9. Medical Cover.** Clubs should appoint a designated person as **Club Safety Officer or Incident Controller** who shall complete returns on player injuries or fatalities as required by the APF.

- a.** At least one qualified first aid provider with an Approved Level 2 Australian First Aid Certification be present at every polo tournament or event including club chukkas.

A Qualified Person means one of the following:

- a.** A person having attended and completed a (Workplace Level 2) Senior First Aid Course covering CPR from a Nationally Registered Training Organisation (RTO), or an equivalent qualification, and completed such post-training refresher courses as are required to maintain a current attendance certificate.
  - b.** A qualified Medical Practitioner registered with the Medical Board of Australia, or equivalent bodies abroad.
- b.** At major tournaments an ambulance with qualified personnel shall be available at the venue. Tournament organisers shall determine the recommended level of ambulance service required in consultation with their respective State Ambulance Service. State Ambulance Services will assist event organisers to identify possible Occupational Health & Safety issues with regards to the event, the general safety and wellbeing of the event's participants and the safety of staff and spectators. Some State Ambulance Services may also provide a team, who will conduct a risk assessment of the event to establish the most appropriate level of response for the polo event and if applicable develop a Health Emergency Management Plan. Including:
    - whether an ambulance is required at the event
    - the level of clinical skills required
    - the number of ambulances required
  - c.** At all Tournaments an approved standard of First Aid equipment (kit) shall be available at all times. It is suggested that clubs consult with local medical personnel on what constitutes and adequate First Aid Kit.
  - d.** Emergency Vehicles must have access to all parts of the event venue at all times.

- e. The TC must arrange adequate communication involving all emergency services and key officials.
- f. Ensure that an appropriate Emergency Procedure and Emergency Contact Details are readily available in the Club House and are kept on display in a suitable location such as the Public-Address point.
- g. Local Emergency Services shall be advised of the forthcoming event identifying:
  - Event name.
  - Exact location of the event (e.g. street address).
  - Event type/tournament
  - Date of event.
  - Start and finish time of the event.
  - Is the event licensed?
  - Will there be any nearby road closures?
  - What are the access and egress points for Emergency Services or an Ambulance?
  - What is the name and mobile contact details of an onsite contact on the day should Emergency Services or the Ambulance require it.
- h. At major tournaments organisers shall prepare a plan that identifies:
  - i. Where first aid/medical staff are positioned?
  - ii. Will they only be staffing static posts and/or will they have a response capability within the event?
  - iii. Will they be able to bring patients back to the static post?
  - iv. Do they have an Event Medical Plan or equivalent, for example will they have an ambulance or other medical equipment available?
- i. Should the umpire require medical assistance for an injured player, he should signal by waving his stick above his head.
- j. **Concussion.**
  - (i) In the event of a player being or seeming to be concussed the umpires, or if no umpires are present the senior player on the ground, will stop the game and arrange for the player to be medically assessed by a qualified medical professional, as soon as possible after the injury. If in doubt as to whether a concussion may have occurred – sit the player out. The player may not return to play that day and can only return to practice games or matches with a formal medical clearance for participating in contact sport.

**It is critical that all individuals dealing with potentially concussed players understand that concussion is an evolving phenomenon and subtle symptoms and signs often become far more significant in the hours and days following injury.**

**(ii) Concussion management resources:**

The pocket concussion recognition tool must be available during events to all umpires, clubs, tournament committees at events - see: <http://bjsm.bmj.com/content/47/5/267.full.pdf>  
For detailed up to date information on recognising & managing concussion, and a return to play, see the Australian Institute of Sport/Australian Medical Association concussion dedicated website - <https://concussioninsport.gov.au/>

- E10. Discipline.** Each Club shall appoint a **Club Disciplinary Officer** who should, in conjunction with the Polo Manager:
- a. Maintain good discipline amongst the players and members of the Club.
  - b. Keep a record of all report forms issued by the Club including those issued by other clubs to the members.
  - c. Advise the Club Committee in good time of any incident which may need further investigation or lead to the need for a Club Disciplinary Board.

- d. Be fully conversant with the Procedure for setting up a Club Disciplinary Board as laid down in the APF Disciplinary Policy.
- e. Inform the relevant State Association and APF of the proceedings and on their advice hold a Club Disciplinary Board or refer the case to the relevant State Association for a State Disciplinary hearing.
- f. Take follow up action as laid down.

In smaller clubs this duty may be carried out by the Polo Manager.

**E11. 24/7 Public Liability Insurance.** Suitable Public Liability Insurance must be taken out by clubs or venue owners to ensure complete coverage when APF events are held and also when they are not being held. For example, when trades people are working on the site.

**E12. Horses with Vice.** The Tournament Committee (TC) must not allow horses that kick or have a history of bad behaviour that may endanger players, staff, spectators or other horses on to the field of play, or in the general vicinity of a tournament. (see rule 4b)

## GUIDELINES FOR GAME OFFICIALS

### The Referee

1. **Radios.** Ideally, the referee should be in contact with the umpires by radio. If in contact with the umpires by radio the Referee may invite the umpires to blow the whistle and award a penalty, particularly if he considers that there is a dangerous play or a foul off the play which the umpires have not seen, or if he considers that the umpires are not being shown due respect. Radios also enable the referee to brief the commentator. In any event, the referee should be able to contact the umpires at the end of each chukka and they should report to him at half time so that he can discuss with them the conduct of the game.
2. **No Radios.**
  - If the referee is satisfied that a foul occurred he should stand and raise one hand above his head and point with the other in the direction in which the hit is to be taken.
  - If he is not satisfied that a foul occurred he should stand and move his hands horizontally across his body.
  - If the referee is in any doubt, he should call the umpires to the side of the ground so that he can consult with them quickly out of earshot of the players and spectators. The umpires may consult in this way with the referee in their own right.
  - If the umpires disagree as to the penalty to be awarded, they will point to the two alternative spots (e.g. centre or 60) and the referee will point to the spot from which he considers the penalty should be taken.
3. **Yellow Flag.** It is the responsibility of the referee to establish if any players are starting on a yellow flag and to ensure that the umpires are passed that information.
4. **Appeals to the Referee.** Discussion between the umpires and reference to the referee will delay the game unnecessarily and undermine the authority of the umpires. The umpires after discussion are perfectly entitled to throw the ball in without reference to the referee. However, if they disagree as to the whether there has been a foul or as to what penalty to award, they shall appeal to the referee by raising an arm.

### The Umpires

5. **Personal Preparation and Conduct.** Polo is one of the hardest games to umpire and the umpire must:
  - a. Know the rules. This should include the names of all the Penalties
  - b. Concentrate on the play throughout.
  - c. Be respectful, consistent, fair, clear, firm and decisive.
6. **Prior to the Game.**
  - a. An umpire should be issued by the host club with an umpire shirt, whistle (check that it works), yellow and red cards, and pick up stick.
  - b. Check that the pony looks up to the job and is tacked for polo with ball bags.
  - c. Check on the teams' colours to ensure that there is sufficient contrast. The Umpires have the ultimate say.
  - d. Check whether any player is starting on a yellow flag.
  - e. Check on the other officials, the location of the referee, that the radios are working if being used, that the time keeper is alert.
  - f. Check on the location of the medical support.
  - g. Check the scoreboard to ensure any handicap difference has been correctly credited.
  - h. The umpires with the help of the referee if he is on the radio must police changing of ponies, ensuring that it is fair to both sides, so the changing boxes (if used) must be clarified with the host club.
  - i. Decide on which side and back line each is to take.

- 7. Start of the Game.**
  - a. If no parade, ride onto the ground together at least two minutes before the scheduled start time of the match. The umpires should be informed if there is going to be a parade before the match. If so, it is advisable for the umpires to have decided ends before going onto the ground.
  - b. Identify the two team captains and toss for ends. The captain of the visiting team is normally asked to make the call.
  - c. Check the handicaps of the two teams and confirm that both team captains agree with the score as posted.
  - d. Check that the teams know where they can change ponies.
  - e. Check the length and serviceability of whips, length and sharpness of spurs, and that the players are wearing helmets with a 3-point harness. If not, the player shall not be allowed to play until he has a helmet that has been cleared as compliant with Rule 2.3a by a club official.
- 8. Game Stopped or Abandoned.** Should the umpires decide that a match should be stopped, normally due to inclement weather making playing conditions unsafe, they and the referee should consult with the two team captains. If the game is to be stopped then the responsibility for restarting, rescheduling or scoring the match as if completed rests with the Tournament Committee.
- 9. Splitting the Field.** Each umpire should have a back line and side line which dictates their positioning and it is important that umpires are clear as to their positioning during play and for all throw-ins and free hits.
- 10. Free Hits.** Unless stated otherwise, an Umpire should normally go behind the striker for any free hit away from his back line so that he can either see and follow the line and get a clear view of an opposing player coming in for a meet, or for hits to goal see the flight of the ball which he must watch carefully as many disputes arise as to whether the ball went between the inside edge of the posts projected vertically upwards or not. The other umpire should be checking that the opposing side are not closer than permitted and should move up the ground level with the play, or for shots to goal checking that the ball was across and clear of the goal line and/or between the goal posts.
  - a. **Penalties 2, 3, 4 and 6.** Back line umpire behind the right-hand goal post looking onto the field of play with goal judge behind the other. If the team that has fouled is infringing the rules, the umpire shall raise an arm and allow the penalty to be taken as normal; if successful, play will be started with a Penalty 5b, teams having changed ends; if unsuccessful then a Penalty 7a shall be awarded.
  - b. **Penalties 3, 4 and 6.** The stick may be raised above the shoulder of any player to stop or deflect the ball providing that the head of the stick does not move a significant distance as contact is made with the ball. Any action which the umpires consider dangerous should be penalised. Be on guard to penalise a full shot after the initial hit. A Penalty 8 will normally be awarded for any infringement by any member of the team taking the penalty but a Penalty 5a should be awarded from where the penalty was taken or was due to be taken if the infringement is considered to be deliberate or is a repeat offence.
  - c. **Penalty 5a.** Penalty 5a (spot) should not be awarded against a defending team within their own 60 yard line. It would allow the team fouled to dribble the ball, which they would prefer, so it is important that the team that has fouled is suitably penalised. The umpires should award a Penalty 2, 3 or 4 having considered where the foul took place, the severity of the foul and the likelihood of a goal being scored if the attacker had not been fouled. There is no rule to say that the ball may not be taken back for a penalty.
  - d. **Penalty 6.** The defending player will often argue that it was off another player and it is crucial that the rule is understood. If the view of the goal judge is consulted, ask for the



facts, who hit the ball last and what it then deflected off, so that the rule can then be applied.

- e. **Ball Hit Out.** If a team fails to play the ball within the 5 seconds, a Penalty 5a shall be awarded against them. If a player of the opposing team is within 30 yards and makes a play, a Penalty hit that moves the ball up the field shall be awarded.
11. **Calling Play and Delay.** 'Play' should be called as soon as the ball is dropped by an umpire or placed by a goal judge.
    - a. **Hitting Before 'Play' is Called.** If the striker hits or hits at the ball before "Play" is called the umpire shall blow his whistle and instruct the penalty to be retaken. If the offence is repeated, then the team should be penalised with a Penalty 8 (Throw-in).
    - b. **Delay.** Delay is Unsportsmanlike Conduct and is often used to enable another member of the team to change ponies. A player may be warned but only once. He should then be penalised and may be awarded a yellow flag (see Rule 35d).
  12. **Throw Ins.** An umpire takes any throw-in if it is away from his side line and then follows the line. The other umpire should position himself about 40 yards behind the players and then move up the ground level with the play. See Rule 7c. The ball should be thrown in in a consistent manner; hard, under hand and low to prevent players hitting wildly in the line-out. All rough and dangerous play should be penalised instantly but umpires should not normally penalise players for crossing until the ball has left the lineout unless it is dangerous.
  13. **Keeping up with Play.** Umpires must keep up with the game. Players are more likely to accept the foul if the umpire is close to the play.
  14. **Goal Scored.** When a goal is scored, unless there is reason to allow the goal scorer more time to return to the centre, the aim should be to throw in the ball within about 25 seconds. Should a team cause unnecessary delay, a Penalty 5b awarded.
  15. **Advantage Rule.** If an umpire chooses to allow play to continue he should say 'Play On' and raise his hand to signal that he has seen the foul but is playing the advantage. If the player fouled is unable to maintain the advantage then play should be stopped and the penalty awarded. The Advantage Rule should be used with discretion as the team fouled will usually prefer a penalty rather than to have play continue.
  16. **Blowing for a Foul.** Umpires must blow the whistle quickly, decisively and loudly with one long blast to stop the play. A strong whistle is a sign of confidence and the timekeeper must be able to hear the whistle as well in order to stop the clock
    - a. If either umpire sees a foul he should blow the whistle. If the umpire on the line blows for a crossing foul, the other umpire should usually defer to him unless he is very clear that the distance and speed were safe.
    - b. Having blown his whistle an umpire should take into account the degree of danger, where the foul took place, the direction of play, the position of the players and the frequency of similar fouls. He should check quickly that the other umpire agrees with the foul and the proposed penalty. This should be done by pointing or another pre-arranged signal. A defending team that has fouled has the opportunity to regroup and get into the best position for defence, thus the penalty should be made to count and moved up the ground. The penalty should be increased for any persistent breach of a rule.
    - c. The foul (umpires should know both the number and name of the penalties), the team that has fouled and the penalty awarded should then be announced and the umpire should drop the ball and call 'play' at which point the team fouled has 20 seconds to position and hit the ball. The ball should normally be dropped by the umpire due to go behind the striker.
    - d. If the whistle has been blown for a foul as a goal is scored see Rule 8f. If it is agreed that the defending team have committed a foul, the umpires have the option of a Penalty 1, a

Penalty 5b or throw-in as normal. If awarding a penalty, the whistle must be blown to stop the clock.

**17. Appealing by Players**

- a. Helicoptering or any appeal which is dangerous or abusive must be penalised without warning.
- b. Avoid getting into discussion with any player during the game but this does not mean that you cannot speak to players who genuinely wish to know why they have fouled, especially at the lower levels, and there can always be a discussion at the end of the game although this should be avoided if players are aggressive or upset. In avoiding discussion at any time, be polite and non-committal.

**18. Blowing to Stop the Clock.**

- a. It is not in the gift of the team captains to agree time out except if agreed for friendly matches or for a team is on borrowed ponies.
- b. An umpire, particularly if he is alone, may blow the whistle to stop the clock for a good reason, such as to get into position or to pick up a ball.
- c. **For Players or Ponies.** The umpires have a responsibility to do all that they can to prevent accident or injury to players or ponies and to protect the image of the sport and must therefore have a clear understanding of Rules 3, 4 and 21 - 24.
  - (i) If a pony has a bad fall or collision then it should be changed even though it might appear sound so that it can be more thoroughly checked in the pony lines.
  - (ii) If tack has been broken by contact with another pony and it is a danger to the player, start of play will be delayed until the player's return.
  - (iii) Time out should not be given for lost or broken tack such as a martingale, stirrup leather or iron, lost bandages or boots if, in the umpires opinion, there is no danger to the players or ponies.
  - (iv) If a player dismounts without good reason or makes insufficient effort to retain hold of his pony, a penalty should be awarded against his team.

**19. Accident.** In the event of a serious accident to a player or pony then the umpires must stop the game and summon medical or veterinary assistance by radio or waving the pick-up stick above their head.

- a. **Player.** They should keep everyone away from the medical team except those who are actively helping, consult with the Team Captain about possible substitutes and keep the commentator informed. The umpires should endeavour to restart the match as soon as possible and within 10 minutes. In the event of a player being or seeming to be concussed the umpires will stop the game and arrange for the player to be medically assessed by a qualified medical professional, as soon as possible after the injury. If in doubt as to whether a concussion may have occurred – sit the player out. The player may not return to play that day and can only return to practice games or matches with a formal medical clearance for participating in contact sport.
- b. **Pony.** If a pony is injured or stays down, the umpires **must tell** the players to form a circle. This will shield the pony from spectators and as a herd animal help it to settle. If a Veterinary Officer is present, he will take charge. Otherwise the umpires should ensure that screens are erected, if necessary, and the pony is removed by trailer from the ground as humanely and speedily as possible. The commentator should be kept informed.

**20. Line of the Ball and Precedence.** As a general principle, the player who creates the danger should be penalised. It is important to try to be consistent in what is blown and what is allowed.

- a. **Line of the Ball (LOB).** The LOB is the key reference from which the umpire must make his judgement as to who has precedence and he must therefore watch the play very closely to pick up the LOB every time the ball is hit and then immediately identify if anyone is on the exact LOB travelling in either direction. If no player is on the LOB, he is then looking for a

player travelling in the same direction as the ball and at the narrowest angle. If at the narrowest angle a player has the right to play the ball on his off side and, because he has that option can only play the ball on his nearside if he can do so without endangering a player who is in position or can get into position to make a legitimate play without crossing the player with precedence.

- b. Crossing and Turning the Ball.** Whether a player crosses another player in such a way as to foul is a judgement call by the umpires and will depend on their assessment of danger based on speed and distance. In open play the call is often easy but is more difficult when a player turns with the ball with an opponent following close behind. The player following has to commit to the play and is not committed if he checks or turns in anticipation of a backhand. The umpires must make a judgement on the level of commitment and be prepared to penalise the player turning before a collision occurs.
  - c. Possession of the Ball.** A player may not block the progress of an opponent in possession by positioning himself in such a way that his opponent cannot move forward. A player in possession should be allowed approximately 5 feet wide measured from the ball to the player's near side leg to continue down the LOB. Preventing the player from moving forward (shading) is done at all speeds and should be blown straight away and any penalty must be moved up the field.
  - d. Moving the Ball – One Tap Rule.** A player should be blown if he slows down, taps the ball once and then either he or a team mate fails to hit it way or run with it within 5 seconds from the tap.
  - e. Checking.** A player will often check to avoid a ride off, either because he knows he is beaten or to gain a foul on the basis that his opponent has not entered safely in front of him. It is a judgement as to whether the player checked and his opponent entered safely or he checked to avoid a nasty ride off. One of the players will always disagree so consistency is key. Should a player check so that an opponent can enter safely in front, the player cannot then accelerate into his opponent from behind.
  - f. Riding Off.** Shoulder to shoulder and same speed is key, and then a safe angle relative to the speed; as the speed increases so the angle needs to decrease. If a player rides in from behind, he must be penalised, whether or not his opponent is playing a forehand or backhand shot. A player may not put his pony at risk by riding over the ball and into an opponent who has already started the downward swing of a full forehand or backhand stroke. This does not prevent a player from riding off when an opponent is tapping the ball or has not started the downward swing of a full forehand or backhand stroke.
  - g. Hooking** A player may hook legitimately the stick of an opponent at the same time as the opponent is being ridden off by a team mate.
  - h. Dangerous Play.** A player who is holding the ball should be penalised if he is judged to have created the danger by then playing a full shot into a player or pony who has positioned himself legitimately.
  - i. Unsportsmanlike Conduct.**
    - (i)** Unless there are exceptional circumstances a player must be penalised if either he whips his pony when the ball is dead or whips with excessive force, in particular with his hand off the reins, or so that the crack can be heard around the ground or is persistent in the use of the whip.
    - (ii)** If a hit is made after the whistle for a foul, the umpires should either increase the severity of the penalty if the hit is by a member of the fouling team, or cancel the penalty, or decrease its severity if the hit is by a member of the team fouled.
- 21. Flags.** A 'technical' is no longer awarded and the umpires have the option of awarding a yellow or red flag. A player should be awarded a flag for any dangerous or deliberate foul or unsportsmanlike conduct. See Rule 51.

- 22. Report Forms.** The umpires are required to fill in a Report Form for certain irregularities or incidents of misconduct during or after the game (See Part 2 rule 2.7a). A Report Form will not normally be completed for a yellow flag unless the offence is committed after the end of the match. A report form shall be completed for a red flag.

#### The Goal Judges – Rule 5d

- 23.** It is recommended that Clubs draw up their own set of standing orders to be issued on signature to all goal judges. The Club has the responsibility to ensure that:
- Goal judges are fully trained, fit and active, and 16 years of age or over, with parental permission if required.
  - A line is drawn 20 yards away and parallel to the goal line.
  - Goal Judges are not used when play is in progress simultaneously on two grounds with back-to-back goals.
  - They have a bag or box of balls, a white flag and access to spare goal posts.
  - They have the ability to change a goal post if it is broken and widen the goals if required.
  - They are properly briefed as set out below.
- 24.** The goal judge should never get into discussion with a player as he is answerable only to the umpires who should protect him from pressure and abuse.
- 25. Before Play.** The goal judges should be in position 10 minutes before the start of the game. They should:
- Wear distinctive clothing such as white coats and protective headgear (a riding or cricket helmet is recommended but not a cycle helmet) which should be issued to them. Wet weather clothing should also be available.
  - Ensure that all impedimenta, e.g. chairs, ball boxes, spare goal posts, is at least 30 yards behind goal posts. Other items such as bicycles should be placed well away from the ground so that they are not a danger to players or loose horses.
  - Check that the goals posts are in the correct position and that they are vertical.
  - Check that they can distinguish from the team colours which side is attacking and which defending.
- 26. During Play.** The goal judge must observe the play carefully at all times as the situation can change very quickly. At all times however, he must remain behind the 20 yard line until the ball is out of play and the ponies have slowed down. When play comes down the left hand side of the ground, the goal judge should begin to move to the right to keep the ball in his sight between the posts and if the play comes from the right, he should move to the left. Should there be two goal judges for each goal, they will work as a pair. They must be particularly alert to avoid being ridden down as the options for the players are reduced. The goal judge must also keep his eye on the ponies as they approach to see which way they are turning or swinging. Evasive action should be taken if essential but it is normally better to stand still as the player will turn away. It is an offence for two players to ride each other off over the goal line.
- 27. Between Chukkas.** Between chukkas he must remain alert to players coming onto the ground to stick and ball and the umpires coming to replenish their ball bags. He should tread-in in front of his own goal, especially at half time, and collect up any stray balls.
- 28. Umpires Whistle.** The goal judge must also be on the alert for an umpire's whistle which will render the ball dead. The ball should not be hit after the whistle so if the ball subsequently goes through the goal or over the back line, no action should be taken by the goal judge.
- 29. Goal Scored.**
- **Certain Goal Scored.** If the goal judge is certain that a goal has been scored (i.e. the ball went over and clear of the goal line and inside the goal post projected vertically), even though play continues, he will wave his flag vigorously over his head. Judgement may be

required if the ball hits a flag blowing in the wind, or if the ball swerves in the air or goes over the post.

- **Uncertain if Goal Scored.** It is sometimes difficult for the goal judge to be certain that a goal was scored. In this event, he should make no signal. The umpires should ask for his view but the decision will be made by the umpires who will instruct him either to wave his flag to signify a goal or to place the ball for a hit-in.

**30. Ball Hit Over Back Line.**

- **By Attacker.** If the ball is hit over the back line by an attacker, then the goal judge should signal by holding a ball above his head. When the ponies have slowed down he should run forward (the clock is not stopped) and place a ball within the field of play and clear of the back line at the point where it crossed but no nearer than 4 yards from a goal post or the boards. He should place the ball so that is sitting on grass and easy to hit. The hitter has to hit the ball within 10 seconds of him placing it so there is no time for a player to re-position the ball. He should then pick up any loose balls and return swiftly behind the 20 yard line.
- **By Defender.** If the ball is hit over the back line by a defender, then the umpires will blow the whistle and award Penalty 6 which is free hit on the 60 yard line opposite where the ball crossed the back line but no further than 40 yards out from the centre. The umpires might ask the goal judge who hit the ball over the back line or the last pony or stick off which the ball deflected.

**31. Penalty 1.** If the umpires award a Penalty 1 or a goal as a result of a foul by a defender, they will instruct the goal judge to wave his flag as if a goal had been scored.

**32. Positioning for Free Hits at Goal.** Looking onto the field of play, the goal judge should be positioned so that he can see whether the ball passes inside the inner edge of the left-hand goal post. He should be well back so as not interfere with players. An umpire will cover the right-hand goal post. The umpires will normally raise a hand if they are satisfied that it was a goal

**The Timekeeper – Rule 5e**

**33.** The club has a responsibility to ensure that the timekeeper is provided with a bell or horn and a proper polo stop-clock, which can be stopped and started at will. This clock will govern the time; any clock on the scoreboard is for guidance only. He will also require an ordinary stopwatch as a back-up and to time the extra 5 seconds of play (see below) and when a player is sent off for 2 minutes of play.

**34. First Chukka.** Five minutes before the advertised start time ring the bell to alert the teams and officials. Ring the bell again if instructed to do so.

**35. Intervals.** Intervals are 3 minutes between chukkas and 5 minutes at half time, taken after the 3rd chukka in a 5 chukka match. Ring the bell when the 3 or 5 minutes is up. In the event of a tie and extra time, the interval shall be 5 minutes.

**36. Starting the Clock.** Do not start the clock until the ball is put into play. For a throw-in, it is when the ball leaves the umpire's hand and for a free hit it is when the player hits or hits at the ball.

**37. Stopping the Clock.** During a chukka the clock is only stopped when the umpires blow the whistle. This will usually be for a foul but may be for another reason such as an injury or fall.

Note that the clock is not stopped:

- when the ball is hit out of play, over the side-lines or boards or backline, unless over his own backline by a defending player in which case the umpires will blow the whistle.
- when a goal is scored unless the umpires blow for a foul as a goal is scored. If the umpires decide there was no foul and to award a goal they will instruct the goal judge to wave his flag and at this moment the clock should be restarted. However, should the umpire blow his whistle for a second time this will indicate that a penalty has been awarded in which case the clock should not be restarted until the ball is put into play.

- 38. End of Normal Chukka.** It is the Timekeeper's duty to ring the bell when 7 minutes of playing time has elapsed, and again 30 seconds later if play has not already stopped. Great care must be taken that the first stroke of the bell coincides exactly with the termination of the 7 and 71/2 minutes as the ball may go through the goal just before the first stroke of the bell in which case the goal should be allowed, or just after in which case the goal should be disallowed. The Timekeeper's responsibility in this matter is therefore of great importance.
- 39. Last Chukka.** The last chukka ends on the first bell unless teams are tied in which case the extra 30 seconds are played.
- 40. Additional 5 Seconds.** It is very important that the timekeeper understands when he adds 5 seconds as his bell, which might be the first or second bell depending on whether teams are tied, ends the chukka. If the whistle is blown within the last 5 seconds of the final chukka, either prior to the first bell, or to the second bell because teams were tied when the first bell was rung:
- If no penalty is awarded, play shall continue for the time that remained before the whistle was blown after which time the bell shall be rung. In this instance it is unlikely that the score will change and teams may or may not be tied.
  - If a penalty is awarded, a further 5 seconds of play from the time the ball is put into play shall be allowed after which time the bell shall be rung. If there were 3 seconds left, the time keeper must allow 5 seconds, so 2 seconds will have been added to the game. In this instance, the score might change to give the lead to one team or to produce tied teams or to leave teams tied.

Note that within the last few seconds, the whistle might be blown again in which case the above applies.

#### The Scorer – Rule 5f & g

- 41. Scorer.** The Scorer will record the goals scored, noting if possible the name of the player scoring the goal, the time at which the goal was scored and the direction of play. He will instruct the Assistant Scorer to put up the score on the board being particularly careful to check that the correct team has been credited. At all times it is the Scorer's figures that count.
- The Polo Manager should provide a score sheet completed as far as possible. From this sheet the handicap received by a team will be put on the board by the Assistant Scorer. The Scorer will particularly note the colours in which the teams are playing and alter details on the score sheet if necessary.

#### Table of Goals Awarded on Handicap

Handicap Goal Difference	Six Chukkas	Five Chukkas	Four Chukkas
1	1	½	½
2	2	1 ½	1 ½
3	3	2 ½	2
4	4	3 ½	2 ½
5	5	4 ½	3 ½
6	6	5	4

- At the end of the match, the Scorer will add up the goals received on handicap and scored, fill in such details as weather, the time the match was completed and any unusual occurrences, sign the form as correct and hand it in to the Polo Manager. This score sheet will then act as the official record of the match.
- Objections.** No objection may be lodged after the game to the Tournament Committee, umpires or the goal judges as to whether a goal was scored or not, or an error was made in recording the score or team handicap. Note, however, that it is the duty of the umpires to

draw team captains' attention to the score as posted before a match (i.e. any goals received on handicap) and changes may be made as agreed. If the umpires fail to carry out this duty, or there is a mistake, there can be no objection from either team after the start of the second chukka.

- 42. The Assistant Scorer.** The Assistant Scorer is responsible for preparing the scoreboard before the match, and updating goals scored and chukka numbers during the match. He should have communication with the Scorer if they are not sitting together.

ANNEX G – DIAGRAMS

ANNEX C – DIAGRAMS

**Rule 1.33a**

Two players riding on the exact LOB and simultaneously making a play on each other, whether following or meeting, have precedence over all other players.

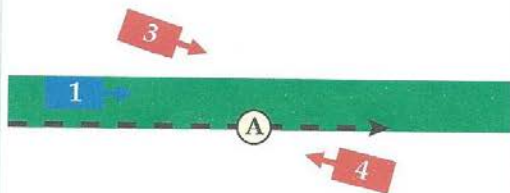


*Fig i*

*Red 4 and Blue 1 are on the exact LOB and have precedence over all other players. Red 2 has no play.*

**Rule 1.33b**

A player on the exact LOB with the ball on his off side, whether following or meeting, has precedence over any other players, except when meeting two players as above.



*Fig ii*

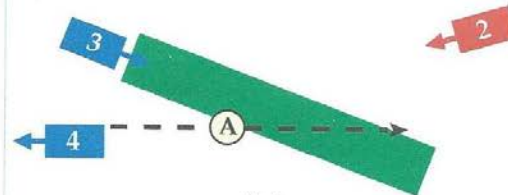


*Fig iii*

*Blue 1 is on the exact LOB and has the precedence over all other players except when meeting two players on the exact LOB as in Fig i.*

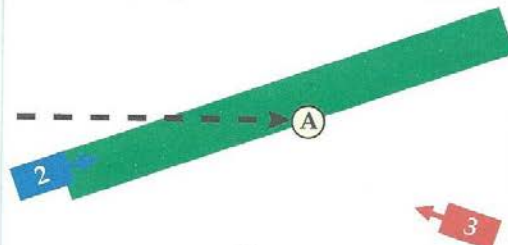
**Rule 1.33c**

Any player riding in the same direction as the ball is travelling or has travelled has precedence over any player or players riding from the opposite direction unless they are in accordance with 1.33a or b above, Fig i, ii and iii.



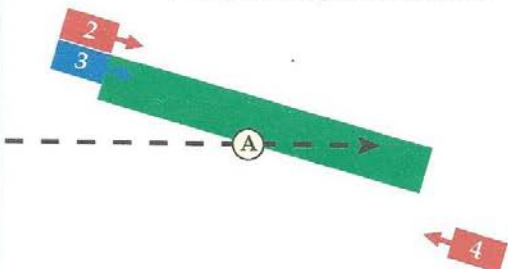
*Fig iv*

*Blue 4 backs the ball to A. Blue 3 has precedence over Red 2 as he is travelling in the direction that the ball was hit.*



*Fig v*

*Blue 2 has precedence as he is travelling in the same direction as the ball. Red 3 may attempt to hook Blue 2's stick provided he does not cross or impede Blue 2 in any way. Red 3 would only have precedence if on the exact LOB.*



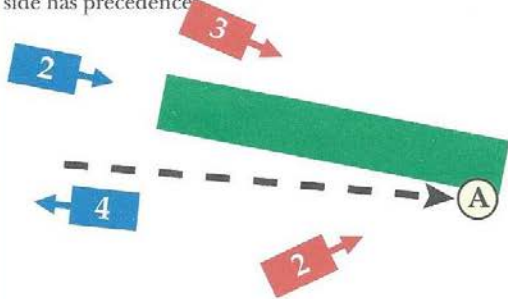
*Fig vi*

*Blue 3 and Red 2 are travelling in the same direction and have precedence. If Red 4 was meeting on the exact LOB, Red 4 would have precedence.*

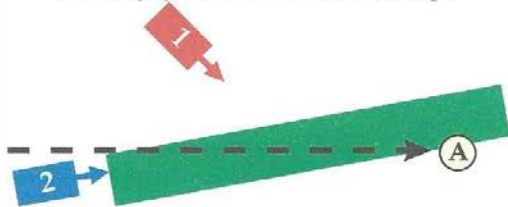


**Rule 1.33d**

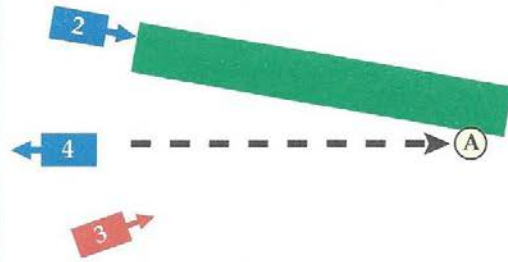
When no player is on the exact LOB and two or more players ride in the same general direction, whether following or meeting, the player riding at the lesser angle to the LOB has precedence. If the players are at equal angles, the player that has the LOB on his off side has precedence.



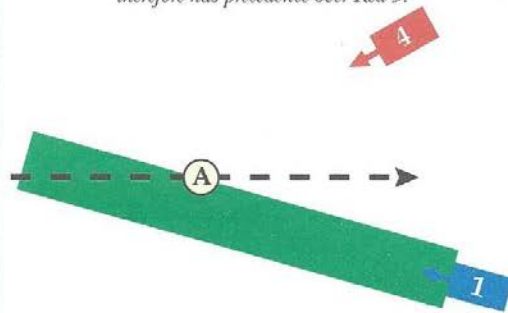
*Fig vii*  
Blue 4 hits a backhand to A. Blue 2 has precedence over both Red players as he is at the narrowest angle.



*Fig viii*  
Blue 2 is at the narrowest angle and therefore has precedence over Red 1.



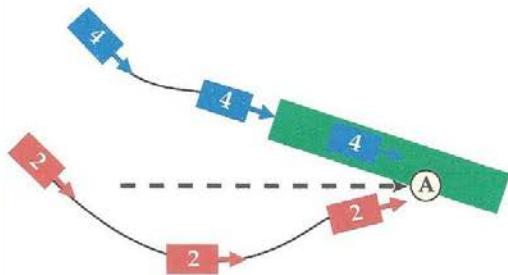
*Fig ix*  
Blue 4 hits backhand to A. Blue 2 and Red 3 appear to be at equal angles. Blue 2 has the LOB on his offside and therefore has precedence over Red 3.



*Fig x*  
Blue 1 is at the narrowest angle and has precedence. If Red 4 was considered to be approaching at an equal angle, Blue 1 would still have precedence because the LOB is on his offside.

**Rule 1.33e**

No player will be considered to have precedence because he was the last to hit it.



*Fig xi*  
If Red 2 hits the ball under the neck to A but does not manage to stay on the exact LOB then Rule 1.33d applies and Blue 4 has precedence.