



PLAYING RULES BULLETIN

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Introduction

Since the last Playing Rules' update in 2020 several questions have been raised by National organisations and individuals about specific rules and their interpretation.

In this Bulletin and the following ones, the IKF-PRC will try to clarify some of those questions and highlight some topics about the most recent changes of the Playing Rules.

Also, we try to include in the bulletin some topics where the PRC noted that different interpretations and ways referees act in identical situations exist.

1. The exclusion of the “diving” rule from the Playing Rules.

Many remarks have been made and questions raised about the fact that in the 2020 Korfball Playing Rules’ update, the rule “to take hold of, catch or tap the ball when any part of the body other than the feet is touching the ground” was eliminated, and as a consequence the game would have become more dangerous with an increase of situations where players dive to catch the ball.

The PRC wants to clarify that in previous versions (prior to 2020) of the korfball rule, there was no mention of the word “diving”. The rule mentioned above did exist and described an infringement whenever a player- at the moment that he takes possession of the ball- has any part of the body other than the feet in contact with the ground. This, however, did not mean that it was not possible to dive! If the player ‘dives’ and taps or takes possession of the ball before contacting the ground with some part of the body other than the feet, it was not an infringement.

After the reorganization of the rules in 2020, it was for the first time that the term ‘diving’ emerged in the Playing Rules. It was mentioned that diving to take possession of the ball is one of the action examples that should be whistled by the referees as an infringement of the playing rule “6.13 To play in a dangerous manner”, when that action, done by a player, could endanger the physical integrity of other players in the game.

Based on this we conclude that referees have all the necessary tools to prevent any player during the game from taking actions that could endanger the physical integrity of other players in the game, including diving when it is done in a dangerous manner.

In conclusion: diving to catch or tap the ball is permitted if the player does so in a manner that is not dangerous to another player or official and this applies both to when a player jumps up into the air or when a player dives across or down onto the floor.

The referees must consider various factors, these include but are not limited to:

- ✓ Did the player take care to avoid danger to other participants?
- ✓ Did the player have a realistic chance of obtaining the ball safely?
- ✓ Did the player's actions cause danger after the initial dive? For example, after diving and sliding along the floor did they cause another player to fall over?

2. How to manage the final 25 seconds of a match when the attacking team is leading by one goal?

Some referees are awarding a yellow card in the last minute of the match for intentional infringements made by the team who are down in the score by one or more goals and wants to force a free pass and possibly sequentially a penalty.

The PRC wants to clarify that infringements that should lead to a yellow or red card or not, should be judged by the referee duo independently from the time in the game or from the score.

An intentional infringement (like 6.7, 6.11, 6.12 by one of the defenders in the defence zone) by the team which is one goal down and would like to regain possession of the ball by causing an intentional infringement, should be sanctioned (as normal during the entire game), by a free pass

(Rule 7.1c)- as is normal during the entire game). If the infringement warrants a penalty sanction (7.1d), then a penalty should be given.

The defending team may even then infringe twice during the preparation time of the free pass to create a penalty and these actions should not automatically be considered as misconduct.

These (intentional) infringements to cause a free pass or penalty should be viewed as 'normal' tactic gameplay and should not be regarded as 'unsporting action' or 'misbehaviour'. It should be viewed as part of the korfbal end gameplay.

Of course, the disciplinary action of a yellow or red card should follow when the infringement is such that it fulfils the requirements for these cards (Rule 7.6).

3. *A re-start should not be awarded when the referee can play on.*

It has been observed in korfbal matches in different countries and, even within the same competition, a different procedure regarding the referees' actions to whistle fouls punished with a restart (unintentional and without uncontrolled physical contact when the non-infringing team keeps possession of the ball), during the first seconds of the shot clock and when it is close to zero.

This procedure of stopping the match to whistle for a restart in favour of the team already in possession of the ball, to reset the shot clock, is against what is stipulated in the korfbal rules and causes a lack of consistency and different criteria for interpretation of the rules.

The PRC wants to clarify that:

- Referees should not award Restarts to 'reset' the shot clock when time is running down.
- If it is possible to play on as the 'good' team has the ball in attack, the game should continue.
- It is permitted to award a restart if the referee deems it necessary to stop the game in order to ensure safety or to manage the game.

4. *Substitution before and after penalty.*

During the recent U17 tournament there was a discussion about the use of substitutions around a penalty throw.

Playing Rule 5.9:

“On a substitution, a player may not return to the other zone at the same time.

The game must be restarted before he is again eligible to be used as a substitute.”

This situation can be seen in the match Catalonia- England during this tournament

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7DkKhFK3Us> starting from 31.20.

- ✓ Penalty is awarded;
- ✓ Player #19 out and player #7 in;
- ✓ Penalty taken and scored;
- ✓ Player #18 out player #19 in (again).

The discussion that is now being held is that the match was not resumed with the taking of the penalty and therefore no substitutions should have been allowed after the goal. This situation can indeed be explained from different perspectives.

IKF|PRC wants to clarify that the above question whether the game is restarted when one of the referees of the referee duo whistles for taking the penalty must be answered with: yes!

The substitution directly after the scored penalty is allowed, because the game was restarted at the blow of the whistle for taking the penalty and stopped again after the penalty was scored. This is explained below.

This must be concluded from rule 4.6, combined with 7.5b. One of the referees must blow his whistle (according to 4.6b) to restart the game when the player is ready for taking a penalty (and when conditions under 7.5b are satisfied). This action by one of the referees means that the game has been restarted. When the penalty would have been missed the game just continues without any additional whistle by the referee, implying that with the whistle for taking the penalty the game has restarted indeed.

What might be confusing is that according to 5.2 the game clock does not start at the blow of the whistle for taking the penalty. The starting of the game clock doesn't determine whether the game has started or not: the referee blowing his whistle is the determining action.

The reason that the game clock is not started at the taking of the penalty by the whistle of the referee is that it can be guaranteed that the taker of the penalty can take the time needed to take the penalty (7.5d), especially at the end of the game and the end of each period. If the game clock would be started towards the end of a period or the end of the game rule 7.5d is not respected.

The game and the game clock (playing time) start and stops always on the whistle of the referee with the exception of the taking of a penalty where the game starts with the referee's whistle, but the game clock doesn't until one of two things happens:

- ✓ The penalty is converted into a goal. The game clock only starts on the referee's whistle for the throw-off after a goal.

- ✓ The penalty is not converted into a goal. The game clock starts with the first touch of the ball by any player.

5. *When does a players gain possession of the ball?*

There have been different interpretations by players, coaches, and some referees regarding the application of playing rule "6.11 To hinder an opponent excessively", concerning "Whenever a player hinders an opponent and knocks, takes or runs the ball out of his hands."

To be considered an infringement of this rule, the player who suffered a foul must have the ball in his possession.

Therefore, to assess the possibility of the existence of an infringement, it is of prime importance to have a good understanding of when a player has possession of the ball or not.

Thus, the PRC wants to clarify that for a player to be considered to having possession of the ball he must have control of the ball. This means that he alone can immediately move the ball.

The fact that a player has contacted the ball with their hand(s) does not necessarily mean they have control.

Possession can be obtained by:

- ✓ Handling the ball with two hands.
- ✓ Having the ball at rest or controlled with one hand.
- ✓ Have the hand on the top of the ball when the ball is on the floor.

6. *Player 'shoots' at the korf from an out-ball to achieve a shot clock reset.*

The situation occurs when a player shoots to the korf from an out-ball with the intention of obtaining 25 seconds of the shot clock by the ball touching the korf.

IKF|PRC wants to clarify that the shot clock will not be reset at an out-ball (when the shot clock has been stopped according to 6.16d) and the attacking player shoots/throws the ball against the korf with the aim to obtain a shot clock reset.

A score by a taker of the out-ball is an infringement of 6.10. Therefore, a throw against the korf should be viewed as a throw, and not as a shot. As a consequence, the shot clock should **not** be reset to 25 seconds according to 6.16b (the ball touches the korf after a shot by an attacker). When an attacker seizes the ball after it has been brought into play, the shot clock will start counting down and will be reset to 25 at the next shot by an attacker.

It is allowed to throw the ball against the korf, but the shot clock is not reset to 25. The throw could be a faulty pass that hits the korf, and the game could just be played-on.

This is a very similar situation as described in the Powerpoint file “Role and Tasks of the Jury in IKF Matches” (on shot clock situations):

- a defender throws the ball to the attack, and it touches the korf. Should the shot clock be reset at 25"?
- It was agreed that although theoretically a defender could shoot but not score that any throw made from the defense zone should be considered to be a throw and never a shot.

7. New drawing explaining how to mark the free pass and penalty areas.

We noted that there is a different understanding of the correct way to mark the free pass and penalty areas and many high-level competitions are played with the wrong measures and lines. (See drawing below or in the 11.2 Playing Rules 2023. The outside of the line indicating the free pass area in front of the korf should pass just ‘in front of’ the post (as indicated by the figure bottom left).

