

OFFICIAL RULES INTERPRETATIONS FROM THE IHF/PRC

1. In the August 2005 rule book there was one change introduced regarding the reporting obligation and expectation of further punishment for rules violations in the final minute, where the last opportunity for the opponents to create a scoring chance is illegally removed.

The wording in the new Clarification 6g refers to “a player uses methods that could be seen as falling under Rules 8:5 or 8:6”, i.e., a dangerous foul or seriously unsportsmanlike conduct. Doubts about the correct interpretation seem to have arisen, and at the same time players seem to have thought that using a foul that is not normally judged as ‘dangerous’ would be a way of avoiding a disqualification and a report to the authorities.

Therefore, the IHF/PRC wishes to make clear that the distinction between what is a ‘progressive’ foul under rule 8:3 and a ‘dangerous’ foul under rule 8:5 must **not** be changed in last minute of the match. In other words, if there is a ‘progressive’ type of foul while the ball **is in play**, the correct punishment is a 2-minute suspension, not a ‘red card,’ and no report is required.

However, it is a different matter if the ball is **not** in play, for instance after a goal and before the throw-off, or while the opponents are getting ready to take a free-throw, throw-in or goalkeeper-throw. If in this situation, a player, for instance, grabs the opponent so that the throw is delayed or cannot be executed, then it is not a matter of a foul but of **unsportsmanlike conduct**. It has nothing to do with rules 8:3 and 8:5. The same thing applies, of course, if a player interferes with the ball, without touching an opponent, but with same effect of making the throw impossible.

During an earlier stage of the game, this is typically judged as unsportsmanlike conduct under rule 8:4 and causes a progressive punishment. However, **when a referee judges whether an act of unsportsmanlike behavior is to be seen as ‘serious’ or not, i.e., falling under 8:6 or ‘just’ 8:4, it is in principle always correct and necessary to take the situation into account.** Clearly, if the **situation** is that the game is in its final minute and the game is still undecided, then **any** form of unsportsmanlike conduct is correctly seen as being ‘**seriously**’ unsportsmanlike, if it has the effect of preventing the opponents from trying to create one final scoring chance. In other words, a disqualification and a written report are necessary.

Continental and national federations are encouraged to consult with the IHF/PRC if there is still some remaining doubt about the correct interpretation.

2. When some important changes were made in rule 6:5 between ‘rolling ball in the goal area’ (still in play) and ‘ball coming to a stop in the goal area’ (no longer in play), it was unfortunately overlooked that a change in **rule 5:10** would also be necessary. In rule 5:10 it says that a free-throw for the opponents is awarded if **the goalkeeper touches the ball with the foot when it is stationary** on the floor in the goal area. This is obviously wrong. **The ball is not in**

play, and the game must be continued with a goalkeeper-throw. (If the goalkeeper were guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct in this situation, for instance by kicking the ball away, there should be a personal punishment, but the game must still be restarted with a goalkeeper-throw).

3. The rules regarding the execution of a free-throw after the expiration of playing time were changed. Among other things, the defending team is no longer allowed to make a player substitution. However, an exception was made for the special case where the referee decides that the goalkeeper is too injured to remain in his/her position. In this case a substitution is allowed.

The question has now arisen about the situation where the goalkeeper is given a 2-minute suspension in connection with the awarding of the final free-throw. The IHF/PRC has decided that it would not be reasonable to prohibit a goalkeeper substitution in this case. Accordingly, a goalkeeper substitution under normal substitution rules is allowed (although of course the total number of players on the court must be reduced by one).

4. A mistake has been discovered in the Catalog of Questions on the Rules. In question number 95, the correct answers are **a and c** (but **not d**).

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IHF / PRC