

OBSERVATIONS OF THE FINA TWPC-C FORc THE PRELIMINARY GAMES OF FINA-LEN WORLD LEAGUE/EUROPA CUP AND FOR THE FINA INTER-CONTINENTAL CUP.

The TWPC-C wants to highlight the points of emphasis after the conclusion of the first part of 2nd round of the FINA-LEN World League/Europa Cup.

1. Physicality on the center position

It is extremely important to establish the line of acceptance of level of physicality on center position in the first minutes of the game.

All kind of pushing, grabbing, impeding with arms or body by defender should not be tolerated.

The timing to call exclusion is a very crucial factor. In most of the situations, an exclusion should be called in the first instance when foul has occurred and not after 10-15 seconds of brutal fighting.

By establishing clear criteria for acceptance of physicality level from the first period of the game the referee sets the tone for the rest of the game and will be able to control the game more easy.

To control the level of physicality, the referee has an important tool which is the possibility to call exclusions on the center without ball. In most of the cases it is not necessary to wait until ball arrives to the center to call exclusion.

TWPC's intend is to eliminate the use of arms and body by the defender in order to gain positional advantage

2. Impeding on the perimeter and contra attack

It is absolutely essential to enforce the rules we have in our Rule Book.

To hold an opponent not in possession of the ball, to prevent free movement is IMPEDING and has to be punished.

We observe a lot of situations when impeding should be called in perimeter and transition in contra attack situations.

In the perimeter every time a referee observes holding by a defender to his opponent before ball arrives, an exclusion foul should be considered.

Impeding with the stretched arm to prevent driver from moving forward has to be called all the time. This also happens very frequently while the Centre Forward is swimming to take position in front of the goal and has to be punished.

3. Exclusion Versus Ordinary foul

Very often referees consider only two options when the ball arrives to the center position: exclusion or no call. There is another option, ordinary foul, which always should be considered.

There is no automatic exclusion when the ball arrives to the center position, even when referee sees pull back or other violation of defender.

Exclusion is compensation for advantage taken away illegally. If there is no advantage present, it cannot be compensated.

There is no advantage if center is:

- His back towards the goal and his position too far from the goal (approx. 4m)
- His back towards the goal and outside of the goal posts
- When other defenders are around

In these situations ordinary foul can be called to maintain possession

4. Contra fouls

Contra fouls are not part of our game, especially fouls away from the ball position.

They break the natural flow of the game, are hardly understandable by the public and completely not understandable by TV viewers.

Referees should keep the number of contra fouls at the minimal level.

As we see, analyzing the games, most of the contra fouls are the reaction of the attacker to continuous abuse by a defender. In many situations the attacker is being held, impeded or illegally pushed out of position. And when he/she slightly pushes off from the defender the contra foul is being called. This is a wrong interpretation of a contra foul.

Calling the first violation and not the reaction will eliminate the big number of contra fouls.

When contra fouls are being called, the majority of them should be called in proximity of the location of the ball. Only contra fouls for aggressive, violent play should be called always without relation to the location of the ball.

If a referee believes that the attacker gained the position by an illegal move, wait until he/she receives the ball and then call the contra foul. Just taking position illegally doesn't constitute that a player has advantage now. The advantage appears when he/she receives the ball. And this is correct time to call a contra foul.

When a Centre Forward initiates contact by impeding the defender resulting in advantage when he/she receives the ball, this offensive foul should be called.

The referee must always indicate the reason of the contra foul by using the signals from the Rule Book to make his decision understandable for players, coaches and spectators.

5. Behavior of the benches

It is observed in recent games that the behavior of some team officials is absolutely not in line with the Rules. Coaches are very loudly protesting to the referee's decisions, stay at 2m- 2.5m in defense, they come to referee to discuss and protest without receiving any warning or sanction.

The referee can give one warning but after that he must quickly use the yellow or red card to control these situations and not wait till multiple situations of protests and misbehavior have happened.

Issuing a yellow card in the last quarter of the game while observing this situation from the beginning will reduce overall referees evaluation grade drastically.

6. Decorum of the game

FINA is working very hard to improve the image of our sport in general and the FINA World League competition in particular.

It is absolutely essential for all parties involved, including referees, to keep decorum and entourage of the game at the highest possible level.

Referee must be familiar and follow the whole protocol of the game.

TWPC-C observed that in some games basic protocol rules for water polo game have not been followed. For instance, substitute players from one team were sitting in the water (in an indoor pool) while other team's players were sitting on the bench.

In another case all team bathrobes were hanging on the rail next to the benches creating a poor image for TV viewers.

TWPC wants to remind to referees that the deck area around the field of play should be kept clean and neat. The general protocol of the game should be followed precisely.

General remarks.

TWPC would like to remind to referees that all games of the FINA-LEN World League/Europa Cup preliminary rounds are broadcasted and webcasted.

The TWPC is carefully following and analyzing all games in all aspects.

It is absolutely essential for referees to follow all instructions established by the FINA Water Polo Rules and TWPC.

Not following the requirements of the FINA TWPC will affect the referee's evaluation and accordingly future assignments.