



EXPECTED APPLICATION OF GAME MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Rules of the game state that Netball is an exciting, fast and skilful game of fair contest, which should be played with the core values of equal opportunity, fair play and respect for an opponent's skill and safety.

RESPONSIBILITY

Adherence to the rules is the responsibility of players, coaches and umpires.

- Players are responsible for complying with the Rules and participating safely in a sporting and fair manner
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Rules as well as understanding both sporting behaviour and safe practices
- Umpires are responsible for applying the Rules impartially, consistently and with fairness.

It is the sole responsibility of players to respond to rulings made by the umpires and adjust their play accordingly.

An umpire **must** act if Foul Play is observed and the Rules provide **clear consequences** for unfair play, dangerous play and misconduct. While these decisions undoubtedly can have a greater impact in the context of a match, umpires are expected to rule accurately as with any other infringement and not shy away from making such decisions regardless of the time elapsed in a match or what the resulting consequences may be. While umpires are expected to set and maintain clear standards and tone throughout a match, **it is not their responsibility to change the behaviour of players.**

CONTROL STRATEGIES

While the Rules stipulate certain actions an umpire must take for Foul Play infringements, umpires should also be confident in using a range of strategies to set and maintain control of a match. If used skilfully with empathy and understanding, this may in fact assist with minimising infringements by ensuring players are aware of the standards required of them and allowing their skills to be the focus.

An umpire's control of the game, tone of voice and how clear standards are set and maintained will often be indicative of the competence of the umpire and will reflect the respect the players have for the umpire.

Strategies may include the following:

- Change in delivery
- Informal advice
- Calling 'Time' to speak to players

Change in delivery

It is fair to expect in a match that from time to time an umpire's voice, whistle/advantage call may become 'white noise' to a player and may go unnoticed. If following an infringement umpires feel they need to deliver a stronger message which players will note, this can be assisted in a number of ways including:

- Change in whistle tone/volume/length
- Change in voice tone/volume – calm but firm
- Sustained eye contact
- Tactical pause – ensures you get the player's attention
- State playing position first – followed by infringement/sanction (e.g. Centre, Contact, Penalty Pass)
- Body language (e.g. soft arm gesture with hand out and palm extended while setting a sanction can communicate 'stop that now thank you' to a player)

Informal advice

Umpires should have a range of expressions they can use to indicate to players they need to change their behaviour without the need to hold time. This would apply to low-level incidents and should only be used when the Rules do not require a specific consequence for Foul Play infringements. Umpires are expected to know the difference between these two different situations.

If umpires are beginning to think that they may need to speak to players regarding their behaviour, it is important to realise that Rule 13.2.1 specifically covers instances of unfair play. These may in fact be a more appropriate choice than informal advice as there are more meaningful ramifications if their behaviour does not change.

Examples of expressions to advise players to adjust their play when a Caution is not the most appropriate action:

- 'Your distance is fine but you are hitting the ball' – this gives the player the necessary information to change their behaviour. Compare this with 'tidy up GK' – using general phrases such as 'tidy up' is ineffective and should be replaced by specific statements
- Use short, clear instructions
- Do not use phrases such as 'no more' or 'stop' which could be misinterpreted as a formal game management measure.

Calling 'Time' to speak to players

Holding time adds a degree of seriousness when there is a pattern of infringing by a team or when opposing players are both pushing the boundaries of fair play and good sportsmanship. Everyone (including the Team Benches) knows the umpire considers it important enough to stop play. The umpire should include the Captain/s in the discussion.

It is expected that this strategy would be used sparingly as the context requires and again should not be used when formal game management would be more appropriate.

FORMAL GAME MANAGEMENT

Rule 13.2 outlines that foul play is anything a player does within the field of play that is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Rules of the Game or does not meet accepted standards of good sportsmanship (behaviour that meets generally accepted ethical standards in sport, including playing by the Rules, self-discipline, self-control and respecting opponents and officials).

There are specific consequences listed for unfair play, dangerous play and misconduct that umpires must apply and enforce in addition to the relevant sanction.

Rule 13 states that a player who is infringing any part of the foul play rule (13.2) will be disciplined and Rule 13.1 outlines the game management actions that umpires use for instances of Foul Play:

1. Caution
2. Warning
3. Suspend a player
4. Order a player off

Normally an umpire will work through these actions in the order indicated unless an offence is serious enough to require a higher level of game management.

For each game management action, the umpire must hold 'time', use clear and consistent language along with the correct hand signal so everyone is aware of the action taken.



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Rule	Type of Foul Play	Sanction	Game Management Action
Unfair Play 13.2.1	(i) Delaying play	Penalty pass	Advance the Penalty pass and the player is Cautioned
	(ii) Intentional infringing	Penalty pass	The player is Cautioned. If the player continues to infringe either a warning will be given or, if considered appropriate, the umpire will suspend the player
	(iii) Infringements when the ball is not in play	Free pass (for minor infringement) or Penalty pass (for major infringement)	If the action is considered appropriate, the player is Cautioned
	(iv) Persistent infringing	Penalty pass	The player is Cautioned. If the player continues to infringe either a warning will be given or, if considered appropriate, the umpire will suspend the player
	(v) Intimidation	Penalty pass	The player is Cautioned
	(vi) Retaliation	Penalty pass	The player is Cautioned. If the action is considered to be serious the player is given a warning or suspended
Dangerous Play 13.2.2	Accidental action	Penalty pass	The umpire will issue a Warning or Suspend the player
	Deliberate action	Penalty pass	The umpire will suspend the player or, in a serious case, order the player off
Misconduct 13.2.3	(i) Dissent with an umpire	Penalty pass	The player is either Cautioned or given a Warning. In a serious case the umpire will suspend the player
	(ii) Actions contrary to good sportsmanship	Penalty pass	The player is either given a Warning or Suspended. In a serious case the umpire will order the player off
	(iii) Continued misconduct	Penalty pass	The player is ordered off

Advancing the Penalty Pass

- This game management action of advancing the penalty may **only** be used for Delaying play
- An umpire can only advance the Penalty pass within the half they control and then the co-umpire may advance the Penalty pass further (up to half a third in total)

Caution

- Ensure the word 'caution' is used and the player is advised of the behaviour for which the caution is being given. A caution signals to a player that the behaviour specified needs to change and repeated offences may result in further disciplinary action being taken if they infringe again
- A caution is not binding on the co-umpire

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- If a player accumulates cautions for different instances of foul play, an umpire should seriously consider escalating this to a warning as the player is not adjusting the behaviour.

Warning

- Ensure the word 'warning' is used and the player is advised of the behaviour for which the warning is being given and that they will be suspended if the behaviour continues
- A warning would not normally be the first step unless the incident is serious enough to require this
- If the warning is for intentional or persistent infringing, be clear about what exact infringement/s have led to the warning. Umpires are often quick to issue a warning for relatively minor offences (e.g. breaking) but fail to deal with more serious persistent infringements (e.g. contact on the shooter's arm/ball at almost every shot)
- There is no such thing as a 'first Warning'! **Only one Warning** is given and acted on if there is any further instances of Foul Play
- Following a warning, if the same player commits a further act of foul play that in itself justifies a warning, the umpire would suspend the player
- Rule 13.1(ii) makes it clear that a warning is considered to have been made jointly by the two umpires and is binding on the co-umpire. The umpires may quickly confer before deciding on the action to be taken. It is important that the co-umpire is aware that a warning has been given and the reasons for it.

Suspension

Although the suspension of a player is relatively rare, umpires should not hesitate to use this when appropriate. If a warning has already been given, a suspension **must** follow if further foul play infringing occurs. In the case of dangerous play or misconduct, a player may be suspended without a warning if the umpire considers this action is justified.

- Ensure the word 'suspension' is used and the player is advised of the behaviour for which the suspension is being applied
- The length of time for the suspension is 2 minutes playing time
- If appropriate, the umpires can work together to advise the Timekeepers and Scorers of the details. The reserve umpire is responsible for the oversight of the suspended player while they are off the Court
- A suspended player is able to join the rest of the team during an interval but not during any stoppages
- Rule 13.1(ii) makes it clear that a suspension is considered to have been made jointly by the two umpires and is binding on the co-umpire. The umpires may quickly confer on-Court before deciding on the action to be taken. It is important that the co-umpire is aware of the reasons for the suspension.
- A player can only be suspended **once**. Following a suspension, any further act of foul play committed by that player (including during the suspension period) will be treated as continued misconduct and the player is ordered off.

Ordering off

The umpire may order a player off the court for a deliberate act of dangerous play or continued misconduct. This would normally follow a suspension but the umpire may order a player off if he/she considers the action is justified.

- Ensure the words 'ordering off' are used and the player is advised of the behaviour/s for which the ordering off is being applied
- The player is sent to the team bench for the remainder of the match
- Given the seriousness of this consequence and the inevitable impact on the potential outcome of the match, umpires may quickly confer on-Court with each other before finalising this action.