

Kearns Water Polo Terms and Team Communication

Advantage Rule – Permits the referee to refrain from calling a foul if calling the foul would result in taking advantage away from the team on offense.

Anticipation – The ability to foresee what will happen next and react accordingly.

Attacker – A perimeter player. Another name for the driver position. A field player that usually does not play the center or center defender positions.

Back Door – The area opposite of the defender. Also what should be yelled if someone is open on the other side of their defender. The offensive player will usually do backstroke away from their defender.

Bait – To make an opponent wrongfully think you are not a threat to block a pass or help on a drive.

Balance – Having an equal number of players on each side of the pool, not having players clumped together.

Ball Side Defense – Positioning yourself and staying between the opponent you are guarding and the ball.

Ball Side Drive – A drive where the offensive player tries to get on the ball side of their defender.

Ball under – An ordinary foul which results in a turn over. It should only be called if a defender is “tackling” the offensive person taking the ball under.

Blind Side – The visual area around a player in which he/she cannot see.

BPAC Awareness – Players must be aware of where the **B**all is, their **P**layer, their **A**rea, and the position of the **C**enter.

Break-away – The person that got a good jump at the start of the counter attack and has an advantage, usually down the middle.

Bunny – “To bunny the goalie.” To shoot the ball right over the goalies head, between their “bunny ears”.

Cage – Another word for the goal.

Catch Cross Face – To receive a dry pass from someone who is on the opposite side of your strong hand.

Catch Strong Side – To receive a dry pass from someone who is on the side of your strong hand.

Center – The person in the front court offense that is positioned right in front of the defending team’s goal. Also called 2 M Player and Hole Set.

Center Base Position – The body position that one should try to get into before making a move to shoot from the center position or to make a pass or draw a foul when pressed on the perimeter. It is a mostly vertical body position with hands sculling in front, similar to sitting in a chair.

Center Defender – The person in charge of defending the Center or hole man. Also called Hole guard and 2 M Defender.

Cherry Picker – A person at their offensive end when they should be playing defense.

Close out – While on defense, to move towards the person with the ball in a shot blocking position.

Corner throw – (“2 Meter” throw) A free throw taken on the 2-meter mark on either side of the pool. Awarded when the ball goes out of bounds, over the goal line, being last touched by the goalie of the defending team.

Counterattack (Fast-Break) – A term used to describe transition play from defense to front court offense. If a goal is not scored during the counterattack, the team will set up their front court offense.

Crash – On defense, after the offense made a Center Entry Pass, swim hard towards the hole to try to steal the ball or foul their center.

Deceptive Pass – Making a pass that tricks the defense and is not obvious where you are passing it.

Defensive Hole (D-Hole) – The person in charge of defending the hole man. Also called Center

Defender and 2 M Defender.

Double Post Offense – An system of offense where two players, instead of one, play the center position.

Double Threat Position – An offensive position where the player is vertical and has the ball up in the air, ready to pass or shoot. The player may also move forward or laterally while in this position.

Drawing (Faking) a foul – An effective way to make the defender have to back off so the offensive player can make a pass easier. Done by trying to move around the defender, getting contact, and then letting go of the ball (a little acting helps too! – but don't go under water and don't expect the call).

Remember – it's not a foul if you don't let go of the ball. Get the ball up quickly and make the pass.

Dribbling – Swimming with the ball in front of the head.

Drifting – To move without taking a stroke, usually sculling with the hands and doing a reverse eggbeater.

Drive – Swimming toward the goal, quickly, trying to beat your defender to get inside water, to set a pick, or to get open for a pass or a shot.

Drop Defense – Similar to a zone defense, where the defensive players drop off their man slightly to prevent the ball from being passed into the hole or to steal the ball when it is passed into the hole.

There are several types of Drop Defenses, depending on which defensive players drop.

Dry Pass – A pass from one player's hand to another players hand without touching the water.

Early Wet, Late Dry – A concept when making a pass. If the player to receive the ball is still swimming toward the goal is still outside about 4 meters, make the pass wet in front of them. If the player is already inside 4 meters, it's typically better to make the pass to them dry.

Egg beater – A type of kick which gives good stability. An alternating breaststroke kick.

Entry Pass – A pass made to the center (2 M Player) when they are set up in the hole. Usually should be to the water (wet) in front of their hand and opposite the defender.

Extra Stroke Principle – Regaining proper defensive position after getting beat on a drive.

Exclusion (Ejection or Kick Out) – A major foul which requires a player to go to the penalty area for 20 seconds, until his/her player recovers the ball, or if the opposing team scores.

Face Guarding – When the defender is overly watching their opponent and not also paying attention to their area or where the ball is (Bad!)

Face-off (Neutral throw) – When the referee cannot determine whose ball it should be or if two players foul at the same time. Two players from opposing teams will face the referee equal distance from the referee and the referee will toss the ball into the air. Similar to a jump ball in basketball.

Far Side – The side of the pool that the coach is not standing on. Something the coach will yell to help the players understand that they need to get the ball the side of the pool opposite the coach. May also say "other side".

Field Player – All players other than the goalie.

Foul and Drop – A technique where a defensive player intentionally fouls the person with the ball and then quickly covers another player on offense.

Free Throw – Usually when a player is fouled by a defender, but also anytime the ball is being put back into play after having been out of bounds, after a time out, etc. The team awarded the free throw has a "reasonable amount of time" (about 3–5 seconds) to put the ball into play or it is a turnover. The ball is put in play by either passing it, dribbling with it, tossing it up into the air letting it come back down to the water, or lifting above your head and dropping it. **YOU CANNOT SHOOT A FREE THROW EXCEPT OUTSIDE 5 METERS.** The defense has to give the offense about one meter of room until they have put it in play.

Front Court – The offensive half of the pool when a team is on offense. Opposite of Back Court.

Fronting – When the Center Defender plays in front of the Center, trying to stop the pass into the hole. This actually allows the hole man to have inside water. If the fronting occurs outside the 4 or 5 the offense should feed the ball inside. The defender should not front outside about 4 meters.

Game Clock – The clock that displays the time remaining in the period.

Gapping (Splitting) – On defense, to play in between two offense players, ready to guard either of them if they get the ball, and ready to counter attack.

Goal Throw – A free throw taken, usually by the goalie, after the ball went out of bounds, over the goal line, being last touched by any player other than the goalie of the defending team.

Goalie – The player that protects the goal. The only player who is allowed to touch the ball with two hands and, in the case of the shallow end goalie, is allowed to use the bottom.

Help the Ball – A phrase used to make a release move to get open for a pass from a teammate who is getting pressured while trying to make a pass.

Hip Over – A move used to change directions in the pool quickly. While swimming freestyle, you stop, draw your knees up to your chest as you pivot the opposite direction while staying on your stomach, and then do a lunge kick to get yourself going again. Also called a reversal.

Hole – The area of the pool located directly in front of the goal out to about 5 meters.

Hole Guard – (2 M Guard, 2 M Defender, Center Defender) – The player on defense with the primary responsibility to defend the other team's center.

Hole man (2-meter man) – (Man is short for Human). The field player that sets up in the hole. Most teams offenses revolve around getting the ball in to the hole man who then either tries to shoot or, after being fouled, looks to pass it to someone for a shot, usually a driver. Also called the Center or the 2 Meter Player.

Horizontal Body Position – When your body is parallel to the water surface; hips up on the surface. Used while swimming and while stationary.

Impeding – To prevent or reduce the free movement of an opposing player, usually with your body but also with your arm. An ordinary foul. Note the difference between impeding and holding, sinking, or pulling back (an ejection).

Inside Water – When a player on offense is between the goal and the defender. This is a huge advantage for the player on offense and if they don't have the ball already they should get it. Even if they don't score a goal, they will often draw an ejection or a Penalty shot. The defensive player's main job is to not give up inside water; stay between them and the goal (except when fronting the hole).

Lanes – In defense, short for passing lanes. The area between the person with the ball and their teammate. Where a defender should typically be when the team is running a press defense.

Man-down – The time of play in which a defending team has one less player, normally due to an ejection.

Man-up – The time of play in which the team on offense has an advantage due to a defensive player being ejected. The offensive set up typically changes into a 4-2 set up during man-ups; pass it around the outside (perimeter), look for the best shot, which is sometimes a high dry pass to one of the post players.

My Side – The side of the pool that the coach is standing on. Something the coach will yell to help the players understand that they need to get the ball the coach's side of the pool. May also say "This side".

Near Side – The side of the goal closest to the shooter. Goalies will usually try to take away the near side and make the shooter shoot cross cage.

Neutral Throw – Also called a face off or jump ball, the referee tosses the ball up between two players to decide possession of the ball.

Numbers – "To have numbers on the other team." Usually during a counter attack; to have an

advantage on the other team (i.e., 2 on 1, 3 on 2, 4 on 3, etc.). Also a term used by the defense to “call numbers” to make sure everyone know who is guarding who.

Numbering System – A system where each position is given a number

Passing Lane – A defensive position between the ball and another offensive player. “Lanes”.

Penalty Shot (5-meter shot) – A shot awarded to the offense when a defender commits a foul on a player on offense who is inside five meters and for which a goal would have resulted. The shot is taken on the five meter line on the referees command.

Pick (Screen) – This term describes the method for an offensive player freeing himself or another offensive player by swimming so close to another offensive player that the defender cannot stay with the person or by an offensive player blocking another teammates defender so that they can get free for a shot.

Pocket – When a team is Man-up, it is the area on each side of the pool on about the 3-4 Meter line outside the posts. The 1 and 5 positions sometimes slide into the pocket.

Point – The player on offense located on top. About 8 or 9 meters from the goal, center cage.

Poker Face – To give the appearance of being calm and under control.

Press Defense – A team defense strategy where each defensive player plays close to their man, usually in the passing lane, and the Center Defender fronts the Center. Also called man-to-man defense.

Pressure Pass – For the player on offense to make a pass while being pressured by a defender. The offensive player will usually be in the center base position and may use a variety of techniques to make a pass (i.e., step out, draw a foul, 1/4 turn, ½ turn, etc.).

Read – The ability of a player to understand what the other team is doing.

Rear Back (RB) – An explosive move by a player on offense to go from a horizontal swimming position to a vertical position in order to free him/her from the defender for a shot. Also called a pop up.

Red – When the shot clock is down to five seconds. The ball either needs to be shot or dumped into the corner. If on offense, start getting back on defense. If on defense, start the counter attack.

Re-entry (Ejection) Area – The location of the pool behind each goal line, on their goalies end of the pool, (usually by your team’s bench) where an ejected player or their substitute awaits re-entry.

Release – To make yourself open for a pass or shot.

Right Back Pass – Making a pass quickly back to the person that passed you the ball. Usually to make them “live” again after they were fouled.

Safe Water – An area where a defensive player cannot easily get the ball. This is where a wet pass usually needs to be thrown. (see “wet pass”)

Sculling – A technique of moving your hands in the water to help you move in different directions. Sometimes done in a vertical or horizontal position, or on your side.

Seal Off – Used to make it difficult for the defender to get around you. Typically done by putting your back into the defender with arms wide, moving laterally when the defender tries to go around you.

Shot Clock – The clock which displays the time remaining for the team on offense to shoot. It will start at 30 seconds and if it expires before a shot is attempted, the other team gets the ball. The shot clock is reset after a shot attempt, a turnover, or an ejection.

Slough – The action taken by a defender when he/she moves away from his opponent to help defend another area, usually the hole. Also what should be yelled by a person on offense when sloughed off of.

Sprint – The manner in which a game begins each quarter to see which team will get possession of the ball first. One person is designated as the sprinter; they try to get the ball.

Square Out – A release move used to get away from the defense and give the goalie someone to pass to, especially during a counter attack.

Step Out – Usually starting in the center base position, a move used while on offense to create separation from the defender in order to make a pass or a shot.

Stomach to Back – Going from swimming freestyle to swimming backstroke. An effective way to make yourself available (release) for a pass from the goalie when you are ahead of your defender on a counter attack without slowing down too much.

Strike Zone – Area of the pool directly in front of the goal out to about 6 meters. Tight, knock down, defense is needed on any offensive player with the ball.

Strong side – (1) The side of the pool in which the ball is located. (2) The left side of the pool for a right hander or the right side of the pool for a left hander.

Storm – To swim towards someone very hard. Usually on defense.

Stunt – To move towards an opponent while on defense to make them think you are going to defend them.

Switch – To trade the player you are guarding with a teammate while on defense.

Turn an Opponent – A move used to gain advantage on the defender by using leverage to move around an opponent, usually with the ball.

Turn Side – The direction an offensive player will typically turn to make a move with the ball. While on defense, it is usually best to guard this side of an opponent.

Umbrella Offense – A system of offense where the team sets up in an umbrella shape and tries to score using ball side drives from a pass from the wing.

Up-Slide-Up – A technique used to move forward with the ball in the double threat position. Uses breaststroke kicks.

V Release – Going from freestyle to backstroke in a V pattern (i.e., 2 strokes forward, 2 strokes back). An effective way to make yourself available (release) to receive a pass.

Vertical Body Position – When your body is perpendicular to the water surface. Usually stationary, but sometimes also moving.

Walking – Using mostly just an eggbeater kick to make yourself move in different directions while your body is in a vertical position.

Weak Side – The side of the pool in which the ball is not located. Also the word (“Weak”) that should be yelled if you are open on the weak side in order to get the person with the ball to look to you. **NOTE:** If you are open but not on the weak side of the pool, you should yell “ball” or the person’s name who has the ball.

Wet Pass – A pass to the water near a teammate. Needed when the player being passed to is covered tight (a dry pass in that situation can be knocked away without a foul being called). The pass needs to be made to “safe water”.

Wet Shot – A shot that is attempted while the offensive player is in a horizontal position swimming towards the goal. Also called an off the water shot.

Wing – Area of the pool outside the goal posts between the 2 and 4 meter lines. Also the name for the player(s) in that area.

Yellow – When the shot clock is down to 10 seconds.

3-3 – A structure of front court offense where three players are up top (about 6M line) and three are down low (about 2M line). This is the standard set up for front court offense when both teams are at full strength.

4-2 – A structure of front court offense used where four people are set up on the 2 meter line and two people are set up on about the 6M line on the posts. This is the standard set up during a man up situation.