

# MATCH PROTOCOLS FOR UMPIRES (2018)

These Protocols outline the procedures to be used in conjunction with the Rules of Netball (2018). Protocols are usually listed according to the Rules section to which they refer but, when it is more appropriate, may be linked to another section.

## **RULE 3. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS**

- i. The event organiser prepares the playing enclosure, the goalposts and ball to the specifications stated [Rules 3.1-3.3].
  - a. Before a match the umpires inspect the field of play and the goalposts to check they conform to the Rules and provide a safe environment for play [Rules 3.1, 3.2]
  - b. This inspection may be made at any time prior to a match. If made several hours before a match a further brief inspection is desirable before play starts.
- ii. The event organiser provides at least two balls. These must meet all the specifications stated and be in a good condition [Rule 3.3]:
  - a. The umpires select the match ball and a spare ball to be held at the official bench
  - b. The same ball is used throughout the match unless the umpires instruct that it is replaced.

## **RULE 4. MATCH DURATION**

- i. Before a match the umpires check with the event organiser:
  - a. The length of the half-time interval [Rule 4.1 (i)]
  - b. Whether extra time will be played if scores are tied at full-time (including the length of each half) [Rule 4.2].
- ii. During an interval the umpires may leave the playing enclosure. If they leave, the reserve umpire remains there to check no changes occur to the field of play that could necessitate a further inspection.

## **RULE 5. MATCH PERSONNEL**

- i. The match officials are two umpires and a reserve umpire. The match officials wear clothing that is distinct from the teams' playing uniforms and suitable sports footwear [Rule 5.2 (i) (a)].
- ii. Prior to the match the umpires check the players in their respective changing rooms to ensure they meet all requirements [Rule 5.1.1 (iv)].
  - a. It is recommended the umpires carry out the check of both teams together.
  - b. Umpires should remind players to check they are not wearing any adornments or jewellery before carrying out the inspection.
  - c. Umpires should be satisfied that hair is suitably tied back so as not to provide a hazard or distraction for other players on the court.
- iii. The captains toss for choice of first centre pass or goal end [Rule 5.1.1 (v)]. The toss is conducted on the court or court surround and is observed by the reserve umpire who conveys the result to the umpires.
- iv. After the captains have tossed the umpires toss for goal end [Rule 5.2.1 (i)]:
  - a. The toss is taken and is observed by the reserve umpire.
  - b. A member of either team may request to be present to observe the toss.
- v. Before play commences the umpires check:
  - a. Players meet the requirements for play [Rule 5.1.1 (i)] and the teams can be easily distinguished on the court (if necessary the teams will be required to wear bibs that distinguish them more easily or, if available, an alternative uniform).
  - b. Primary care persons are wearing appropriate identification [Rule 5.1.2 (ii) (b)]
  - c. The on-court captain for each team - if the captain leaves the court during the match the umpires ensure they are advised which player is the replacement captain [Rule 5.1.1 (v) (d)]. The most appropriate way to manage this is, if the umpire needs to speak to a captain during the match, the umpire would say to the team 'who is your on-court captain?'
  - d. Scorers and timekeepers are ready to commence their duties [Rules 5.3.1 and 5.3.2].

- vi. The reserve umpire is seated beside the official bench during the match. The reserve umpire will remain alert throughout the game and not undertake any duties other than those detailed below or within the Rules of Netball (2018). The reserve umpire must be ready to take the court at any time in the event of injury/illness to either of the match umpires. Any changeover of umpires should involve no disruption to the game but in extreme cases, the very minimum time disruption.
- vii. Throughout the match, the reserve umpire will keep track of all centre passes and, immediately a goal is scored, will clearly signal the direction of the pass.
- viii. At all times the reserve umpire will be aware of the court surround and alert to the needs of the umpires on court, responding to either as required.
- ix. Should the electronic devices fail, the reserve umpire will end each quarter and/or the match.

### **RULE 6. MATCH PROCEDURES**

- i. An umpire's whistle starts and stops play [Rule 5.2.1 (ii)] as follows:
  - a. To instruct the timekeeper to commence timing (at the beginning of a period of play or to restart play after a stoppage) - long whistle [with hand signal 1]
  - b. During play (for an infringement, a toss up, to restart play after a goal or, when needed, to indicate the ball is out of court) - medium whistle [with hand signal as appropriate]
  - c. To instruct the timekeeper to hold time - medium whistle roll [with hand signal 2]
  - d. To end a period of play - long whistle roll.
- ii. Throughout a match both umpires immediately indicate the team to take a centre pass [hand signal 3]. The controlling umpire calls the centre pass.
  - a. If the umpires disagree the umpire nearer the official bench checks the centre pass with the scorer (time may be held while a check is made) [Rule 6.1.1 (iv) (a)].
  - b. If both umpires indicate the centre pass incorrectly, the scorer notifies them so a check can be made - notification must be made before the centre pass has been taken. Before the match the event organiser advises the means of notification [Rule 6.1.1 (iv) (b)] - it is recommended that umpire alerts be used for this purpose.
  - c. Process:
    - (a) Scorers to confirm incorrect Centre Pass.
    - (b) Scorers to notify Timer 1, who activates the umpire alert.
    - (c) If notification provided prior to Centre Pass being taken, umpires to hold time and seek clarification from Official Bench.
    - (d) If the Centre Pass is taken before notification can be made, note this on the Score Sheet by circling the Centre Pass where the difference occurred and continue in the pattern that the Umpires have indicated. Draw this to the attention of the Umpires at the end of the quarter.
  - d. If time is held immediately after a goal has been scored, the scorer will indicate the direction of the centre pass to restart play.
  - e. The umpires may request a 'centre pass check' from the scorer as required.
  - f. The reserve umpire is also responsible for indicating each centre pass.
- iii. When the ball goes out of court the umpire controlling the side/goal line indicates the direction of the team to take the throw in [hand signal 3 or 4] and calls which team has been awarded the throw in.
- iv. For any stoppage:
  - a. Either umpire may hold time as appropriate. If a player is shooting for goal the shot may be completed before play is stopped, unless circumstances require time to be held urgently.
  - b. During a stoppage, both umpires remain on their respective side lines unless the situation requires a different course of action. The team bench side umpire moves back to the side line to manage the stoppage and where appropriate, positions themselves between the two team benches. The co-umpire moves to an appropriate position on their sideline or goal line to assist if required and maintain visual contact of their co-umpire.
  - c. For other stoppages [Rule 9.3.2] the co-umpire may cross the court, depending on the reason for the stoppage.

- v. At the end of each period of play:
- The timekeeper advises both umpires simultaneously when the specified time is reached. The controlling umpire immediately ends play unless it is to be extended for a penalty pass to be taken [Rules 4.1 (iii) & 7.1.3 (iii)]. In this case the umpire will advise the players that play is being extended for the sanction to be taken. The protocol is as follows:
    - Umpire blows whistle to penalise infringement (will occur before notification of time).
    - Timekeeper advises umpire of time (either audible signal or umpire alert unit). Umpire does not blow whistle.
    - Umpire sets sanction as per normal protocol.
    - If goal is successful, umpire raises arm to indicate goal scored (hand signal 7) and uses long whistle roll to indicate end of period of play.
    - If goal is unsuccessful, umpire uses long whistle roll to indicate end of period of play.
  - In the event the controlling umpire is unaware play should end, the co-umpire will signal the end of play [Rule 5.2.1 (ii) (a)]. (It is recommended that an audible sound is used by the timekeeper eg air-horn, with umpire alerts used as backup in the event of a malfunction).
  - Should neither umpire respond, then the reserve umpire is alerted and immediately ends play.
  - The umpires meet mid-court, and while walking off the court together check the next centre pass with each other then check with the scorer.

### **RULE 7. SANCTIONS**

- When penalising an infringement the umpire:
  - States the infringement and the sanction, together with the appropriate hand signal. In the case of a contact infringement, the umpire may add a brief verbal descriptor to indicate the nature of the contact eg 'contact - knees', 'contact - on ball', 'contact - holding'
  - Indicates where the sanction is to be taken. While reasonable flexibility may be used through the court it is important the position is clearly indicated in the goal circle or when it involves different court areas.
- For Rule 7.1.3 (iv) 3 seconds is measured from the time BOTH players are in position.

### **RULE 8. STARTING PLAY**

- Warning whistles are given prior to the start of play:
  - 30 seconds before play - medium whistle roll
  - 10 seconds before play - long whistle roll.
- At the beginning of each quarter, the umpire crossing the court to the other sideline will carry the ball and hand it to the Centre taking the centre pass (if the player is on the court) or place it on the ground in the centre circle. The umpire will then turn and back away to the designated sideline.

### **RULE 9. DURING PLAY**

- Stoppages for Injury/illness or blood [Rule 9.3.1]:
  - If an on court player requests time to be held the umpire asks 'why?' If the reason relates to injury/ illness or blood, time is held.
  - Whilst either umpire may hold time as appropriate for injury/illness or blood [Rule 5.2.1 (vi)], the protocol is that the decision to stop play should be made by the Umpire controlling play (i.e. play is in that Umpire's half). To stop play, the Umpire:
    - signals the holding of time (hand signal 2), face the Timekeeper and simultaneously blows the whistle - medium whistle roll.
    - Points to the player for whom play has been stopped and calls the playing position.
    - notes the position of the ball without picking it up or holding it.
    - The bench-side umpire advises the timekeeper of the reason and the player involved.
  - Primary care person/s may come onto the court to assess the player's injury/illness and to assist the player from the court. The player concerned must leave the court and play restarts within 30 seconds (the timekeeper warns the umpire when 10 seconds remain).
  - If the injury/illness is such that the player cannot be moved safely from the court within 30 seconds the primary care person/s alert the nearer umpire and advise the action that is appropriate. The umpire should ask the primary carer 'do you need help to move them?' The umpires also remain alert for the need to check if a delay appears likely. The umpire decides how long time is held but endeavours to restart play as soon as possible.

- e. Either umpire holds play when blood is seen on a player, the ball or the court. If blood is on the player or the player's clothing, the player must leave the court within 30 seconds and may not return to the court until this has been cleaned or clothing replaced. For blood on either the ball or the court, time is held until this has been cleaned. Alternatively the ball may be replaced. In addition, any other players with blood on them are also required to leave the court to be cleaned and/or clothing replaced. Time will not normally be given to clean up players on the court. However, in the event that several players are affected, the umpires may decide to take whatever action they deem appropriate.
  - f. During a stoppage for injury/illness or blood, team officials and bench players may move onto the court surround so players may receive coaching and/or hydration.
  - g. When time is held for blood, injury or illness to a player, substitutes or team changes may be made at any time during the stoppage [Rule 9.3.1 (vii)]. Substitutes may not enter the court until time has been held. The player concerned must leave the court before play may recommence.
- ii. Other stoppages [Rule 9.3.2]:
- a. For all other stoppages, the decision to hold play and the length of the stoppage is at the discretion of the umpires (either umpire may act as appropriate).
  - b. It is important that consistent standards are used when deciding whether to hold time or not. Loss of playing time is equally important at any time during a match, not just in the final minutes of a closely contested match.
  - c. The co-umpire may hold play if an act of foul play is observed that is not seen by the controlling umpire [Rule 5.2.1 (vi)] – refer section 13 for more details.

### **RULE 13. GAME MANAGEMENT**

Players are expected to play the Game in such a way that they comply with the Rules and participate safely in a sporting and fair manner [refer Section 1 Introduction]. Umpires have a responsibility to ensure this is done. The foul play rule [Rule 13.2] outlines specific behaviours that will require the umpire to act.

- i. Rule 13.1 provides a structured set of actions for umpires. These actions range from 'caution' (for less serious offences and usually as a first step) to 'ordering off' (for a serious offence). The controlling umpire:
  - a. Will usually apply the actions listed in the order shown (but may decide to apply a more serious action if appropriate).
  - b. Will hold time in order to speak to the player/s concerned.
  - c. Must clearly specify the concern and, if appropriate, any actions that will follow if the behaviour is not corrected.
  - d. May confer with the co-umpire before deciding the action to be taken.
- ii. The umpire may, without holding time, informally advise player/s to adjust their play. This would usually apply to an isolated incident or to low-level incidents that do not require a caution. Note: this is considered to be 'effective game management' not 'coaching'.
- iii. If a player receives a caution, warning, is suspended or ordered off, the umpire indicates this to the official bench and the co-umpire by using the appropriate hand signal. If necessary, the controlling umpire may hold time to inform the co-umpire of the reasons for this action or alternatively advise the co-umpire at the interval or next stoppage.
- iv. The co-umpire may hold play if an act of foul play is observed that is not seen by the controlling umpire. Such cases should be limited to 'serious actions' (i.e. those that require an official warning, suspension or ordering off). The co-umpire provides details to the controlling umpire and recommends to the controlling umpire the action that should be taken.
- v. The umpire may hold time and request the captain/s to speak to any players whose behaviour is causing concern [Rule 5.1.1 (v) (c)]. The umpire will restart play as quickly as possible.
- vi. A suspended player is under the control of the reserve umpire during the suspension. When advised by the timekeeper that the time has elapsed (it is advisable that the timekeeper notifies the reserve umpire at 1.50 seconds and at 2.00 minutes), the reserve umpire will stand with the suspended player and indicate to the player when to re-enter the court. If it is the Centre player, the controlling umpire will hold time to allow the player to return to their original playing position.
- vii. In the event that team official/s or bench player/s do not respond to the actions outlined in Rule 13.3 (ii) (a) and (b), the umpire requests the event organiser to remove them from the playing enclosure for the remainder of the match (including any contact with the team during intervals).