

**TANDRIDGE CANOE POLO REFEREE RULES**  
For current National League Rules, visit [www.canoepolo.org.uk/rules](http://www.canoepolo.org.uk/rules)

**COMMENCEMENT OF PLAY**

All players line up with the back of their boats touching the edge of the pool.

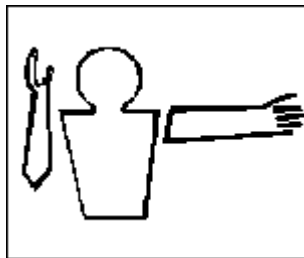
The referee blows his whistle to start play and then releases or throws the ball into the centre of the playing area.

Only 1 team member can go for the ball – all other players must be 3m away.

**Start infringement:**

- If a player goes for the ball too early
- If a player is not lined up correctly
- If more than 1 player goes for the ball

**Signal:**



**START / INFRINGEMENT**

Arm forward and bent upwards with palm open and facing sideways head level.

**Sanction: Free Throw to opposing team**

Note that a FREE THROW means that the opposing team gain possession of the ball and may pass to another player after presenting the ball.

The player taking the FREE THROW may not have a shot at goal.

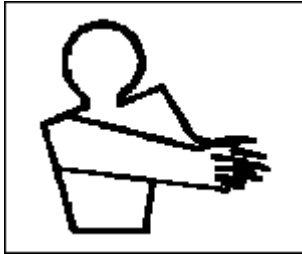
If the player taking the FREE THROW does not present the ball to the Referee before throwing it, the opposing team is given a FREE THROW.

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**SCORING A GOAL**

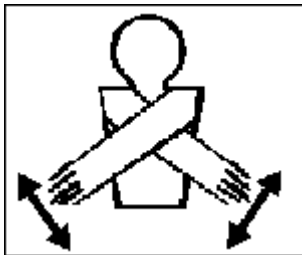
- A team scores a goal when the whole of the ball passes through the plane of the front of the goal frame of their opponent's goal.
- If the ball is prevented from entering a goal by either a defender's or substitute's paddle that enters the goal from behind, then a goal is awarded.

**Signal:**



**GOAL**

Arms extended, palms together. Point to centre of field.



**DISALLOWED GOAL**

Repeated crossing of arms at thigh level. Palms open.

**RESTART AFTER GOAL**

- After a goal, the team who conceded the goal takes the restart throw.
- The ball can be played when
  - all players both teams have their bodies in their own half
  - the referee is ready
- The player taking the throw must position their kayak in the centre of the playing area. Once the referee has whistled, the starting player has 5 seconds during which time the player cannot be touched or tackled

***Both Referees Stand at the Centre***

- *Any player with their body not in the correct position will be asked to move.*
- **The referee blows the whistle to restart play.**

**NOTE: There is NO REQUIREMENT for the player to hold the ball above their head, since the referee has already started play by blowing his whistle.**

**Sanctions:**

- *If a player moves into the wrong position before the whistle is blown then a **Start Infringement** is awarded against that team (even the team who had the ball).*
- *Any further false starts can be penalised with a **Green Card**.*

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**PLAYING AREA**

- Usually the pool or lake is larger than the playing area.
- The playing area is usually marked by floating ropes.
- Tandridge pool is small, meaning the whole pool is the playing area and this means that we've had to adapt the rules as best we can.
- Usually there is room for the goalkeeper to sit under the goal pointing their boat in any direction. At Tandridge this isn't possible, so the goalkeepers have to sit sideways in their boats.
- Usually there is room for reserves to sit in the water behind the goal line, waiting for an opportunity to substitute another player.

**BALL OUT OF PLAY**

Imagine the playing area is a large rectangular box, with two cut-outs for goal.

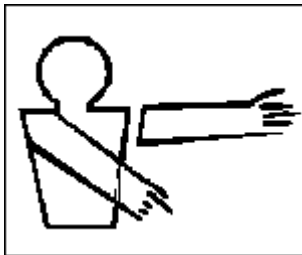
The ball is out of play if the ball touches the sides, top or ends of the box.

A goal is scored if the whole ball goes completely through the goal-cut out.

**Infringement : Ball out of play - Sideline and Overhead Obstacle:**

- If the ball touches the vertical plane of the sideline or an overhead obstacle.

**Signal:**



**SIDELINE THROW / CORNER**

Point at sideline. Other arm showing direction of play.

**Sanction:**

- Award the team that was not the last to touch it with their paddle, kayak or person a **sideline-throw**.

**Taking a sideline-throw:**

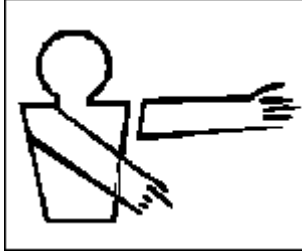
- The player takes the throw from the point of exit of the ball or the point on the sideline nearest to the point of contact of an overhead-obstacle.
- The player must present the ball by holding it above his head. He then has 5 seconds in which to pass the ball.
- If the player **does not present the ball**, the other team is awarded a **free throw**.

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**Ball out of play - Goal-line / Corner throw**

- If the ball touches the end of the playing area between the corner markers including the goal supports.
- The only EXCEPTIONS are if a ball rebounds off the goal frame (not the goal supports) into the playing area OR if a goal is scored.

**Signal:**



**SIDELINE THROW / CORNER**

Point at sideline. Other arm showing direction of play.

**Awarding a goal-line or corner throw**

- When the ball goes out over the team's own goal line and has been last touched by **the other team** then a **goal line throw** will be awarded.
- When the ball goes out over the team's own goal line and has been last touched by **their own team** then a **corner throw** will be awarded

**Taking a Goal Line Throw (Free Throw)**

- The player taking the throw must be positioned with their kayak on the goal line.

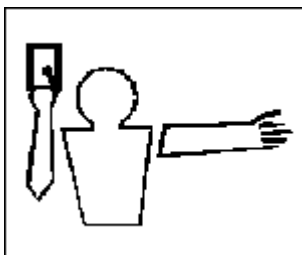
**Taking a Corner Throw (Free Throw)**

- The player taking the throw must be positioned with their kayak in the corner of the playing area.

**Note:** The referee not controlling the corner thrower should be looking for illegal tackles and illegal screens under the goal or out in the general area of play.

**Also:** Deliberately bouncing a ball on an opponent's boat to gain a boundary throw is considered dangerous and unsporting and will be penalised with a Green Card.

**REFEREE'S CARDS**



**SHOWING CARDS**

Green card - warning

Yellow card - 2 minutes send off

Red card - send off for the rest of game

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**POSSESSION**

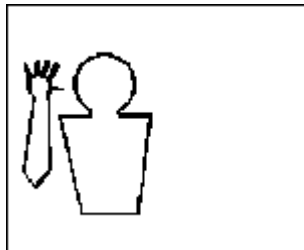
A player is in possession of the ball

- when they have the ball in their hand
- when they are in a position to reach the ball with their hand, the ball being on the water and not in the air.
- when they are balancing the ball on their paddle.

**ILLEGAL POSSESSION**

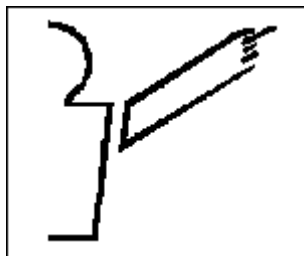
- Failure to present the ball.
- A player must dispose of the ball within five (5) seconds of gaining possession, either by passing it to another player or by throwing the ball one metre horizontally (not up and down vertically).
- If the ball moves out of arm's reach whilst being tackled, the five (5) seconds shall begin again once a player has regained possession.
- A player who capsizes to the point of the whole of their body and head going under water is considered to have lost possession if they do not have the ball in their hand(s).
- A player may not manoeuvre their kayak with their hands or paddle whilst the ball is resting on their spray deck.

**Signals:**



**SECONDS / POSSESSION**

Hold hand up at side at head level, palm forward. Spread all fingers for the period of 2 seconds, and then point at the position where the free shot has to be taken. Other arm showing direction of play.



**FREE SHOT**

Arm extended, index finger pointing at goal in direction of attack. Other arm showing offence signal.

**Sanction: FREE SHOT to opposing team**

- A FREE SHOT means that the opposing team may have a shot at goal after presenting the ball.
- If the player taking the FREE SHOT does not present the ball to the Referee before throwing it, the opposing team is given a FREE THROW.

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**CAPSIZED PLAYER**

If a player capsizes and leaves their kayak, the player may not take any further part in the play and must leave the playing area immediately, with all of their equipment.

No person may enter the playing area to assist a player with their equipment, and no-one may obstruct the referee while assisting a player.

A team may be penalised during a game for any illegal outside assistance, or for any interference with the opposition that constitutes outside assistance. The referee can determine the severity of the sanction.

***The calling of a Time-Out should only be carried out when a capsized player is in danger or they are interfering with play.***

***Restart should be in favour of the team who had possession of the ball at that time.***



**TIME OUT**

Form "T" with hands above head.

If a player leaves the playing area over his own goal line with all his kit, he may re-enter the playing area whenever he is ready.

- If he has left the playing area anywhere else, he or another substitute must wait for the referee to whistle a break in play before re-entering the playing area. They may only enter over their own goal line.

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**REFEREE'S BALL**

- A referee's ball is declared when two or more players of opposing teams have one or more hands firmly on the ball, so that the players share possession of the ball for 5 seconds.
- If the referee needs to stop the game, not during a break in play and where neither team is at fault (e.g. referee error, faulty goals, injury) and the referee cannot determine who had possession at the time of the whistle, the referee will restart the game with a referee's ball.

**Signals:**

REFEREE'S BALL: Arms extended forward at shoulder level, fists clenched, thumbs up and "Time Out".



**TIME OUT**

Form "T" with hands above head.

**How to take the referee's ball:**

- A referee's ball will be taken at the nearest point on the sideline to the incident. Where a referee's ball is awarded for an incident that occurs between the 6m line and the goal line, the referee's ball will be held at the nearest 6m line.
- Two opposing players will line up at right angles to the sideline, on the side nearest their own goal line, near to the sideline where the situation occurred, 1m apart facing the referee. They will place their paddles on the water, but not between their kayaks and their hands on the deck of the kayak or on their paddle.
- All other players must be at least 3m away from the point between the two players.

**Infringements:**

*If another player tackles the opponents into the 3m area they can be penalised with an **Illegal Kayak Tackle**;*

*If any player paddles into the 3m area, they can be penalised with a **Start Infringement**.*

*In either case, there is no longer any need to continue with the Referee's Ball.*

- The referee will throw the ball on the water between the players and blow the whistle to restart play. Both players must make an attempt for the ball with their hands as soon as it touches the water.

**Infringements:** The players must not play the ball before it hits the water. Infringement results in **Illegal Possession & Free Shot**.

***Open play resumes on the whistle, which is blown at the time of throwing the ball in, so a direct shot at goal is permitted.***

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**ADVANTAGE**

The referee can allow play to continue when the team in possession is benefited by play continuing as a result of an infringement by an opponent, if neither referee has blown the whistle.

Question: What is the real advantage?

Answer: A goal

Don't stop a goal-scoring opportunity if the team in possession has been fouled.

A Near Certain Goal = an empty goal without a goalkeeper. The ref should allow play to continue.

Note to referee - be sure that a Goal is the most likely outcome when playing the advantage.

- The referee should recognise the illegal play by signalling play-on. Wherever possible, also call "Play-On" to the players so they do not need to stop and look around.
- In the case of a dangerous/deliberate illegal play, give the card at the next break in play. Give Time Out if necessary to ensure that the dangerous or deliberate illegal play is dealt with.

A direct shot at goal is still permitted as no foul has been called.

**Sanction:**

- The referee can penalise any player who causes an infringement for which advantage is played at the next break in play with a yellow or red card.



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### **TAKING THROWS**

***For a Free Throw, Free Shot, Side Line, Goal Line or Corner Throw only, the ball may cross over the boundary lines as part of the action of throwing the ball.***

- The player taking any goal line-throw, corner-throw, sideline-throw, free-throw or free-shot must hold the ball above their head, at arm's length with their kayak stationary, before taking the throw. The player's initial throw must travel 1m horizontally from the point of release or change possession to another player of the same team.  
**Infringement:** incurs ***Illegal Possession & Free Throw*** with the opposing team being awarded possession of the ball.
- Free-throws, goal line-throws, corner-throws, restart throws and sideline-throws may not be direct at goal.
- If a player taking a Free Throw (not a Free-Shot) attempts a direct shot at goal and the ball enters the goal mouth, either directly or having deflected off an opponent's equipment, then a disallowed goal is signalled and a Goal-Line Throw is to be awarded.
- ***The attempt itself at the goal from a Free Throw is not to be penalised.***

***If an opponent interferes with a Boundary Throw, Free Shot or Free Throw, they will be penalised with an illegal Possession foul. The Free Shot/Throw will be the same as the initial foul being taken.***

### **GOAL PENALTY SHOT**

A goal penalty shot will be awarded for any deliberate and/or dangerous offence in the six (6) metre area where a player is fouled in the act of shooting, or passing or positioning for a near certain goal or in the act of taking a free shot.

#### **Taking a goal penalty shot**

- The player taking the goal penalty shot will be stationary with their body on the 6m line.
- The trailing referee will be at the halfway line and all other players behind it
- The leading referee is at the 6m line and restarts play with the whistle. The player must shoot from the 6m spot within 5 seconds of the whistle. As a Goal Penalty Shot is started with a whistle there is no requirement for the player to present the ball above their head.
- The player taking the shot may not play the ball again until it has touched another player or another player's equipment or the goal frame.
- Substitutes are not permitted to remain directly behind the goal (which is a no waiting area.)

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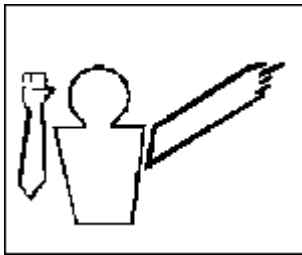
**HAND TACKLES**

**You may push an opponent's back, upper arm or side with your open hand provided they have possession of the ball and are not within 1m of another boat or the poolside. The opponent's head and shoulders must be above the water before a re-tackle.**

The following hand tackles are illegal:

- Any hand tackle where the tackled player does not have possession of the ball.
- Any body contact other than an open hand to the back, upper arm or side.
- Any hand tackle, which endangers the tackled player.
- A player may not fend off a tackle with the hand or forearm or with the movement of the elbow towards the hand-tackler. Referee can give a green card.

**Signal:**



Clench fist, pumped up and down, and then point at the position where the free shot has to be taken. Other arm showing direction of play.

**Sanction: FREE SHOT to opposing team**

Note that a FREE SHOT means that the opposing team may have a shot at goal after presenting the ball.

If the player taking the FREE SHOT does not present the ball to the Referee before throwing it, the opposing team is given a FREE THROW.

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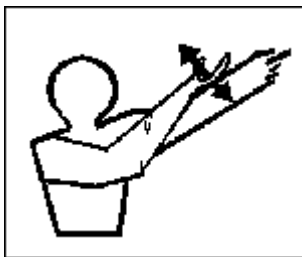
**ILLEGAL USE OF THE PADDLE**

The following are defined as illegal use of the paddle.

**Infringements**

- The paddle touching an opponent's body.
- Playing, or attempting to play, the ball with a paddle when the ball is within arm's reach of an opponent, and that opponent is attempting to play the ball with their hand.
- Playing or attempting to play the ball with a paddle across the bow of an opponent's kayak, within arm's reach of the opponent in a normal paddling position.
- Placing a paddle within arm's reach of an opponent who has the ball in their hand. A goalkeeper is excluded from this rule and is allowed to directly defend against a shot at goal as long as the paddle is not moved towards the opponent at the time of the shot and is not used in a deliberately dangerous manner.
- When a player, with their paddle, attempts to restrict an opponent using their paddle.
- Playing an opponent's paddle instead of the ball.
- Throwing a paddle.
- Any other use of a paddle that endangers a player.
- A player may not fend off any hand tackle using their paddle.

**Signal:**



**ILLEGAL USE OF PADDLE**

The side of the other hand repeatedly chops the upper arm showing direction of play for the period of 2 seconds, and then point at the position where the free shot has to be taken.

**Sanction: FREE SHOT to opposing team**

Note that a FREE SHOT means that the opposing team may have a shot at goal after presenting the ball.

If the player taking the FREE SHOT does not present the ball to the Referee before throwing it, the opposing team is given a FREE THROW.

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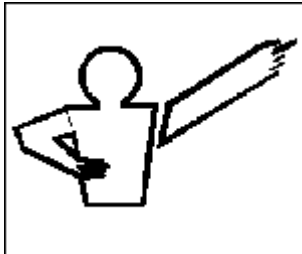
**KAYAK TACKLES**

**A kayak-tackle is a player manoeuvring their kayak against an opponent's kayak in an attempt to gain possession of the ball.**

The following kayak-tackles are illegal:

- Any kayak-tackle that results in the tacklers kayak contacting the body of a player and/or endangering a player. The player's arm shall not be considered to be part of the body when any part of it is elevated away from the body.
- Any kayak-tackle where the kayak comes in contact with the opponent's spray deck following a legal tackle will not be penalised unless the player continues to tackle into the spray deck.
- A player in possession of the ball who fails to control the bow of their kayak and also fails to avoid contact with the body of an opponent.
- Any hard tackle to the side of the kayak if it is at angles between eighty (80) and hundred (100) degrees and by momentary contact.
- Tackling an opponent who is not within three (3) metres of the ball.
- Tackling an opponent when the tackler is not competing for the ball.

**Signal:**



Hold clenched fist against hip for the period of 2 seconds, and then point at the position where the free shot has to be taken. Other arm showing direction of play.

**Sanction: FREE SHOT to opposing team**

Note that a FREE SHOT means that the opposing team may have a shot at goal after presenting the ball.

If the player taking the FREE SHOT does not present the ball to the Referee before throwing it, the opposing team is given a FREE THROW.

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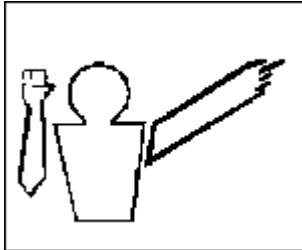
**ILLEGAL SCREEN & OBSTRUCTION / HOLDING**

An illegal screen is when a player purposely paddles across the path of an opposing player, except where both players are paddling towards the ball.

Illegal obstruction or holding is when a player puts their hand, arm, body or paddle on an opponent's kayak, or holds the opposing player or equipment.

Illegal holding is also when the poolside or any playing area equipment is used for propulsion or support.

**Signal:**



Hold one arm up in the air fist clenched for the period of 2 seconds, and then point at the position where the free shot has to be taken. Other arm showing direction of play.

**Sanction: FREE SHOT to opposing team**

Note that a FREE SHOT means that the opposing team may have a shot at goal after presenting the ball.

If the player taking the FREE SHOT does not present the ball to the Referee before throwing it, the opposing team is given a FREE THROW.

**ILLEGAL JOSTLE**

This can happen when 2 players are trying to maintain a water position in the 6m area around goal.

It is illegal when

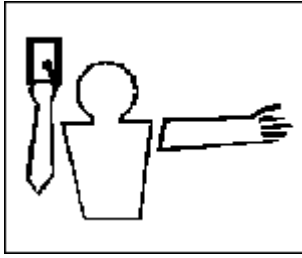
- Moving someone half a metre or more
- When a player is manoeuvring their kayak against an opponent's kayak between the 6m line and the goal line to gain a position when neither player is attempting for the ball

A player who is behind the goal line cannot be jostled.

Use the same static fist signal as for obstruction.

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**UNSPORTING BEHAVIOUR**



- Green card - warning

Any infringement committed by a player during a break in play.

- Hindering another player's attempt at righting themselves after capsizing. A player who is upside down must be allowed to get their head and both shoulders above the water before an opponent is allowed to attempt another tackle.
- Interference with the equipment of an opponent. Such as holding or moving another player's paddle out of their reach, or deliberately preventing the player from regaining possession of the paddle.
- Use of deliberate delaying tactics. Such as throwing the ball away, or deliberately obstructing the opposition, to delay a quick restart after an infringement.
- Players showing dissent.
- Retaliation.
- Foul or abusive language.
- Other unsporting behaviour to a player, referee or other official or behaviour considered detrimental to the game, at the discretion of the referee.

The referee has the right to give a Team Green Card in some instances of unsporting behaviour

**SANCTIONS**

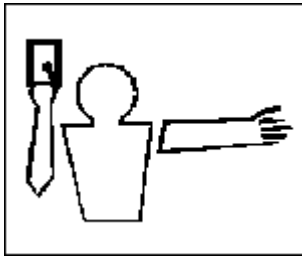
The referee can impose any combination of sanctions for illegal-play depending on the severity and/or frequency of offences being penalised.

The referee may send a player off the playing area for varying periods depending on the severity and/or frequency of offence being penalised.

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## REFEREE'S CARDS

### Signal with Referee's Card



#### SHOWING CARDS

Green card - warning

Yellow card - 2 minutes send off

Red card - send off for the rest of game

### GREEN CARD – WARNING

- A green card should be awarded for deliberate unsporting behaviour of major influence to the state of the game.
- A green card should be awarded for unnecessary verbal communication to the referee, dangerous play and/or unsporting behaviour.
- If the same offence occurs, the second green card is now a Team Green, ie all members of the team have a green card recorded against them.
- If the team gets a third green card for the same offence, it become a Yellow for the player with the first Green Card for that offence.

**Since Green Cards are counted as a means of recording a pattern of bad behaviour of a player, Referees should ensure they are used in the same way as a Yellow and Red Card in terms of calling a Time-Out and then clearly indicating the details to the scorekeeper including player number.**

### YELLOW CARD – PLAYER SENT OFF FOR 2 MINUTES

- A yellow card must be awarded to a player receiving a third green card.
- A yellow card should be awarded for a deliberate and/or dangerous foul that prevents the scoring of a near certain goal where the referee feels that the awarding of only a free shot will not have the desired effect.
- A yellow card should be awarded for dangerous illegal play, that is deliberate, repeated, or where no attempt is made to avoid dangerous play.
- A yellow card should be awarded for repeated disputing of referee's decisions.
- A yellow card should be awarded for the first instance of foul or abusive language.
- Players sent off must obey the rules of entry to the playing area for re-entry at the completion of the send-off period.

### RED CARD – PLAYER SENT OFF FOR REST OF GAME

- A red card must be awarded to a player receiving a second yellow card.
- A red card should be awarded when a yellow card is disputed or has not had the desired effect of causing the player to control their play or attitude.
- A red card should be awarded if a personal attack on a player occurs.
- A red card should be awarded for repeated foul or abusive language.
- If a player is sent off for the rest of the game, the player cannot be replaced by a substitute.

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**Process for Sending a Player Off with a Yellow or Red Card**

- Use a triple whistle to attract attention and Indicate a Time-Out
- The Timekeeper should acknowledge they have seen the Time-Out signal by raising their arm.
- Issue the Appropriate Yellow or Red Send-Off Card.
- Show the card and player number (use a clenched fist to indicate 10 if required), to the Timekeeper and Scorekeeper, and wait for acknowledgement.
- The Scorekeeper should record the player's team and number and the duration of the send-off.
- Make sure the player leaves the Playing Area.
- The Referee uses the whistle to restart play. The Timekeeper should restart the clock at that time.

*If a sent-off player does re-enter the field without being signalled to do so, then as soon as the Referee is aware of it they shall stop the game, send off the player for the rest of the game (using a Red Card) and award a Free-Throw to the opposition. If the sent-off player's team has scored any goals while the player has wrongly been on the Playing Area, those goals will be disallowed.*