



As we head into a new season, the rulebook is being finished, and will be released very soon. However, we wanted to give players a heads up on some of the changes that are on their way. Please be aware that this is not an exhaustive list of the changes and clarifications you can expect to see in this edition of the rulebook. These are the ones with the largest effects, or ones we otherwise believe would be of particular interest to the community.

We will start with the smaller changes and clarifications and work our way up.

## Equipment Changes

There are three notable changes to game equipment:

1. First, we are adding a specific tolerance to the heights of the hoops. This tolerance is +/- 2cm from the current stated heights of the hoops.
2. Second, we are standardizing the length and width of the brooms. The acceptable broom lengths at IQA events will now be 98-102 cm. The acceptable broom widths will now be 25-35 mm. This rule will not prohibit somewhat wider PVC caps designed to cap the ends of otherwise legal brooms.

One thing to be aware of with the broom width is that this is the outer diameter of the broom. With PVC pipe, the measurement in the name of the pipe is not always the outside diameter of the pipe. For example, in the US, 3/4 inch (19 mm) PVC pipe actually has an outside diameter of 1.05 inches (26.7mm), and is thus legal. But in some areas, the name can refer to the outside diameter. If in doubt, measure your broom to be sure.

3. Finally, brooms may not be reinforced with other materials, including tape wrapped around the broom, even if it's only there to decorate the broom. Tape may be used in a small area where the broom would normally be gripped, and to cover the ends of the broom in the absence of caps.

While these rules on brooms will go into effect immediately for IQA events, we do advise that NGB's have an adjustment period, of up to a year, before enforcing the new broom length and width requirements at their own events, particularly at their local events. We do, however, encourage NGB's to give less or potentially even no adjustment period on the reinforcement rule, as this is a safety based rule.

## Terminology Change

Keepers are being reclassified as a form of special or privileged chaser. The name "keeper" will continue to be used to refer to keepers. This will have no effect on the keeper position itself, or the game as a whole. It only serves to eliminate clutter in the rules, such as many uses of "except for keepers and chasers in regard to one another." As such, except where otherwise specified, the term "chaser" should now be understood to refer to chasers AND keepers.

## Notable Clarifications



While other clarifications have been made, these are the ones that address recent controversies, well known inconsistencies between officials, or otherwise might be of higher interest to the public.

- In some areas, there has been controversy as to whether a chaser or seeker may intentionally step into the path of an opponent's bludger, after, or even before, it has been thrown. We are clarifying that this is legal, and we are naming this action "shielding."

This does not allow the chaser or seeker to swat or otherwise propel this bludger; they may only allow it to bounce off of them. And normal right of way rules still apply without change. This means that if both players are moving, the armed beater will have right of way over a seeker or a chaser without a ball.

- There has been some confusion on how to assign a quaffle that goes out of bounds while two opposing players have a hold of it. When two chasers have a notable grip on the quaffle, neither chaser has full control of that ball. If one player steps out during this, this is a loose quaffle out of bounds, but both players are simultaneously the last to touch it before it went out. We are clarifying that the quaffle goes to the opponent of the chaser who stepped out, and thus caused the quaffle to become out.
- There has long been confusion on when an airborne helpless receiver ceases to be helpless. If a player jumps in the air to attempt a catch, and either catches the ball or misses the catch while in the air, they retain their status until (as worded before) they "establish their footing" on the ground. This was too vague. We are changing the standard to the more specific until "their legs have absorbed the shock of the landing." This is more specific, and has a clearer visual cue than the old vague standard.

The player's legs will increasingly bend as they absorb the shock of the landing. When their legs stop bending more, and the player starts straightening their legs and rising back up, the beginning of this rise is a clear signal that the shock of the landing has been absorbed.

- One of the biggest recent controversies has been centered around contact that occurs while jumping to make a shot. Some believed this was an illegal charge where the feet have left the ground, while others saw this as a legal play. We are clarifying it as the latter. And we are doing so by explicitly creating an exception to the leaving the feet during a charge rule when the contact occurs during a jump to attempt a pass or a shot.

Please note that while the player may abandon the pass or shot during this jump, (i.e. they don't actually have to pass or shoot in the end) this basically requires the arm to be out in a throwing position. A player may not have the ball down or tucked during the contact, pull the ball out afterwards, and then claim they were attempting to throw the ball as a defense against the penalty.

## **Small but noteworthy changes**

There are a few changes which will rarely impact games but which may garner an outsized amount of attention, and as such we are including them here:

- Illegally wearing jewelry will now be an ejection offense in most cases, rather than a red card.



If the jewelry injures someone, or otherwise affects play, it will still be a red card.

- Delaying the start of the game, including by failing to leave your team huddle when directed, or not being present on time, now falls under delay of game.

Note that the officials may still give a delay of game warning to encourage the team to take the field before giving the blue card.

- When the keeper saves a shot in the keeper zone, and it goes out of bounds without touching anyone else, the quaffle will now be inbounded by the opposing team. (Previously one of the keeper's privileges allowed the keeper to inbound the quaffle in that situation instead).
- When a player has an opposing ball carrier wrapped on the ground when play is stopped, but they didn't have a direct grip on the ball themselves, they currently have to let go of that ball carrier while they stand up, and resume play without contact. This will remain true in the upcoming rulebook, however, a procedure has been added to allow the wrapping player to resume play on any side of the wrapped opponent for the restart.

This will not apply to all cases of players in contact on the ground when play is stopped. It will only apply in cases where the player had their opponent wrapped (by rule) and that opponent had and retained complete and sole possession of a ball.

- Two changes have been made to the minimum player forfeit rules:
  1. First the gender rule exception has been eliminated. If a team cannot field a full legal set of players at any time, they will forfeit, except as described below.
  2. The second change to the minimum player forfeit rules handles minor injuries. If a player sustains a minor injury, and their removal would leave their team unable to field a full legal set of players, the officials will check with the onsite medical staff treating the player. If the staff believe that the player can be cleared to play after approximately a minute or less of actual treatment, the game will remain paused until the player can return, and the team will not forfeit. The officials will not time this minute of treatment. If the medical staff does not believe that the player can be cleared to play in that approximate timeframe, then the forfeit shall be declared.

## Significant Changes

These changes should regularly come into play in games, and have an effect.

- There are several changes surrounding the penalty for third bludger interference.
  1. The penalty will no longer ever be enforced during active play. Instead it will be enforced as a delayed penalty.
  2. The penalty for third bludger interference has been increased to include a quaffle turnover in addition to the current double bludger turnover.
  3. Any goal scored by the fouling team between the time of the foul and the subsequent stoppage shall be disallowed (due to the quaffle turnover).



4. Any snitch catch made by the fouling team between the time of the foul and the subsequent stoppage shall be disallowed

- When the defense commits third bludger interference, or a penalty that results in a penalty card, the offense gets their reset back after the stoppage. This does not allow the team to illegally reset the quaffle during advantage or the delay for a delayed penalty.
- Forcing the quaffle carrier backwards over a restrictor line will now count as a reset (previously this was an exception to the reset rule).
- The prohibition on multiple kicks has been removed. (Dangerous kick rules still apply.)
- The keeper-in-the-keeper-zone timeout has been eliminated in favor of the more expansive USQ style lull-in-play timeout. This type of timeout will allow the speaking captain to request their one timeout at any time before 17 minutes if there is a lull in all aspects of play. The head referee will determine if a lull exists.

If the head referee determines that a lull does not exist, they will simply deny the timeout without penalty. However, a speaking captain who blatantly calls a timeout in the middle of obviously active play can still receive a blue card for an illegal timeout.

Calling a team's timeout during stoppages in play is still an option, and is not being changed.

## Major Changes

There are four of what we classify as major changes. These changes will come into play in all or most games and have a significant impact on the game.

- Alternate positioning after a penalty card or TBI.  
After most penalty cards, and third bludger interference penalties, the chaser who will have the quaffle when play resumes will have a choice of where they resume play. They may choose to resume play where they would restart normally under previous rules, OR they may reposition themselves, depending on where they are.  
If they are outside of the keeper zones, they may retreat to the nearest restrictor line in the direction of their own hoops (midline or own keeper zone line). They may resume anywhere on that restrictor line.  
If they are in their opponent's keeper zone (including being on their opponents' keeper zone line), they instead have the option to resume play by inbounding the quaffle from anywhere on their opponent's end line. If they are in their own team's keeper zone, they do not have the option to move.
- Second Yellow Card  
Players and coaches receiving their second yellow card in the same game will be ejected instead of receiving a red. Their replacement will serve the 1 minute releasable penalty for the yellow card (and any other penalty time the ejected player may have had remaining).



The only kind of red card possible is now a straight red card, which still results in 2 full minutes in the penalty box for the fouling player's replacement.

- The Start of the Game

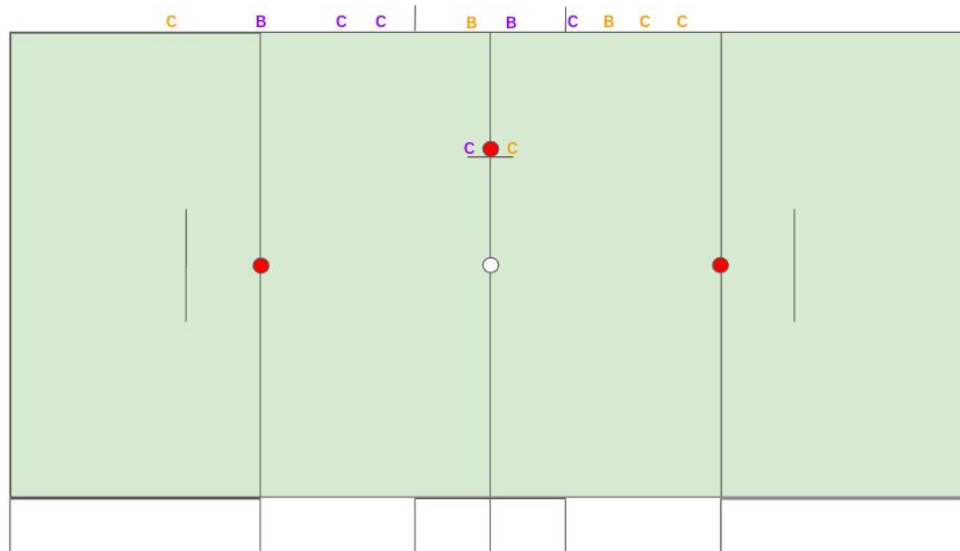
More details will be provided in the rulebook itself, but to avoid inundating this section with details, we'll stick to the basics here.

The quaffle will be in the middle of the midfield line. The bludgers will be at the following locations: one each at the middle of each keeper zone line, and the last bludger one quarter of the way along the midfield line (closer to the sideline away from the benches).

One chaser from each team will line up at the midline bludger, one beater from each team will line up at the intersection of the midline and the sideline away from the benches. One of these players must be the first to legally touch the quaffle and midline bludger respectively.

The remaining starting players will also line up on the sideline away from the benches, but they must be at least 4 meters away from the midline. Exactly one of the chasers in this group must line up in their opponent's half. On brooms up, everyone is released into the field.

Below is a diagram with an example of how teams could line up. With the purple team and orange team taking different approaches. Purple is defending the left side, and orange is defending the right side:



Purple's beater is lined up with the bludger on their keeper zone line, and their offensive zone chaser is as close to the midline as possible. Meanwhile orange's beater has elected to move closer to midfield, potentially to assist with retrieving the midline bludger (their partner could slap the midline bludger towards them), and orange's chaser has taken up an aggressive position deep inside of Purple's half, possibly hoping for a quick pass and score.

While we made several adjustments to the original idea, the base idea for this system, without which we would not have gotten close to this, was created and presented to us by Christos Kaldis of Canada. The IQA Rules Team would like to thank Christos Kaldis for providing us with this idea.



- Catches that result in the catching team still being behind no longer have to end the game. When a catch results in the catching team leading, the catching team will still win. These catches are not affected by this change. In other words, in games where (under previous rules) the catching team immediately wins, the catching team will still immediately win.

When a catch results in the catching team still trailing (or results in a tie), the game will proceed to a new kind of extra time (still called overtime):

- After the catch is confirmed, a set score shall be announced equal to the leading team's score at the time of the catch plus 30.
- Any otherwise good goals that occurred between the time of the catch and the whistle to stop play for the snitch catch shall then be counted and added to the appropriate team's score.
- The seekers shall return to their benches as subs, and the snitch runner shall leave the field. There will be no seekers or snitch runner for the rest of the game.
- Play will resume as it would from a normal stoppage.
- The first team to reach the set score will win.

At any time after the catch has been confirmed, the teams may concede the game without forfeiting:

- If the conceding team is trailing, the game will simply be declared over. The score at the time of concession shall be the final score.
- If a team, for some reason, decides to concede while leading or tied, the opposing team shall be granted the points necessary to take a 10 point lead, and the game will be declared over with the resulting score being the final score.  
This will not be treated as a forfeit.

In a related change, snitch runners will be required, as part of the code of conduct, to not take extended advantage of defensive seekers. Within 3 seconds of realizing they are being defended by a seeker, the snitch runner must either move out from the area the seeker is defending or attempt to dismount the defending seeker.

If the snitch runner is not certain if they are being actively defended (rather than being attacked) by a seeker, they are instructed to act on the assumption that they are being defended.

## In conclusion

All of the changes here are summarized to inform our community of what changes are coming. There are details, such as specific detailed procedures, and small notes that cover corner cases that may not be mentioned above. The full wording for all rules will be available upon the release of the rulebook later this month.

If you have any questions that you wish to ask as to how these rules will work, feel free to message Michael Clark-Polner directly, or email [gameplay@iqasport.org](mailto:gameplay@iqasport.org).

We know this season will look a bit different than seasons past, but we look forward to getting back onto the field in each country under this new rulebook when it is safe to do so.