

# Welcome to the 2020 Women's College Season

I hope you all had fun and festive holidays and are ready to get back into the swing of the college game. With the season underway, I wanted to make certain that we remind ourselves of areas that are specific to the women's game.

From the points of emphasis in the rule book:

**Applying rules to the women's game.** Officiating the women's game requires an understanding of the importance of the women's suit. Because of the extra material, suit grabbing and holding occurs regularly throughout the pool, and if not addressed by the referees will result in a more stagnant and physical game. Suit holding is a violation of Rule 7-9 and must be treated as such by the referees. Good fundamentals, including collaboration, anticipation and positioning, are critical. Referees must anticipate the play and be in position to see all of the points of contact between each pair of players. This also requires good collaboration between the referees as they look for the best position to see which player initiates the contact. Look for "improbable movement" by either player; movement a player would be unable to make without assistance from another player, as an indication of holding. When an offensive player is in possession of the ball or is trying to create space to receive a pass, referees must be aware of the offensive player's off-hand, which is frequently holding her opponent's suit. This is especially critical at the center forward position, where either player (and most likely both) may be using her opponent's suit to gain an unearned positional advantage or to simulate a foul. On the perimeter (and anywhere in the pool) where the players are facing each other, suit grabbing and holding is likely to be occurring by both players. Likewise, in transition, either player may grab her opponent's suit in order to gain an unearned positional advantage, to negate an earned advantage, or to simulate a foul. Referees must consistently address these situations by applying the rules as written throughout the game.

**ALL** of our rules are important and are to be applied as written while always keeping advantage in mind. A couple rules to remember that are more specific to the women's game and likely to be needed:

## Section 4. Apparel

**Art. 1.** Players shall wear identical nontransparent, one-piece swimsuits. The women's suit must have a solid high back with broad straps. The use of the term "solid back" does not preclude the use of a zipper in a player's suit.

**Art. 6.** A zipper, including the zipper of the goalkeeper suit, that is not fully zipped or is broken is considered to be an article that is likely to cause injury to either that player or to another player. If the zipper becomes unzipped, the player should zip up the suit at the next appropriate stoppage of the game when that player's team is in possession of the ball, without taking away the advantage (see Rule 3-5), just as in the cap replacement rule (see Rule 1-21d). If the zipper cannot be zipped up at that time or if the zipper is broken or the suit torn, the referee shall remove the player and allow the immediate entrance of a substitute, and the original player may be substituted in later after the problem is corrected. No foul is charged to that player.

**Art. 7.** If a replacement suit is readily available at the team bench, the player may immediately put the suit on over the original suit and continue play.

**Art. 4.** Before taking part in a game, players shall remove any articles likely to cause injury, including, but not limited to, the following: jewelry, watches, swim goggles and sharp fingernails or toenails. The referees shall

order the removal of any item they consider likely to cause injury, either to the player wearing the item or to the opposing players in the game.

## **Section 22. Swim Caps**

The only item allowed to be worn under a water polo cap is a swim cap. If a player wears a swim cap under the water polo cap, the color of the swim cap shall match the color of the water polo cap as closely as possible (white with white caps, dark with dark caps). The swim cap worn by a goalkeeper must be red or a color that matches the color of the water polo cap of the goalkeeper as closely as possible (that is, red or dark for the home goalkeeper, red or white for the visiting goalkeeper).

## ***Additional Attention Requested***

Again, **ALL** our rules are important and should be applied correctly and consistently, first whistle to last. I have asked the evaluators in the NEG to give some extra attention to the following areas, making certain that referees are keeping both the offense and the defense in mind:

- Center
  - General heaviness off the ball
  - Use of the ordinary foul when warranted
  - Establish acceptable limits early and stick to it
- Center transition
  - Both into and out of center
  - Establish acceptable limits early and stick to it
- Perimeter
  - Offense holding off defender
  - Defense laying on offense with hands out of the water but forward impeding the offense
  - Defense spinning with hands out of the water yet making contact with body or head of the offense
  - Awareness of perimeter players one or two positions off the ball
  - Establish acceptable limits early and stick to it
- Blocking
  - Defense not allowed to use offense to push themselves up to block the ball
  - Offense not allowed to pull down defenders attempting to block a shot or pass or push off of them to receive the ball
  - Establish acceptable limits early and stick to it
- Simulation and suit holding
  - Call both these early and as often as needed and stick to it

Have a terrific season! Keep the athletes safe and help ensure they are playing in an atmosphere that will allow them to be the very best they can be each and every game.