Inner Tube Water Polo Rules

Play is governed by FINA Water Polo Rules, with the following adjustments:

1. AREA OF PLAY
   1. The active playing area is designated as:
      1. Touch Line: each walled side of the pool
      2. Goal Line: green roped area in the pool, encompassing the front edge of each goal, marked by a green cone
      3. End Line: walled edge of the pool behind the Goal Line
   2. Defined Areas
      1. Goal Area: established with red cones, 3-yards from the Goal Line and stretches the width of the pool.
         1. Defensive players may enter this area at any time.
         2. Offensive players must be in possession of the ball or attempting to retrieve the ball. If an offensive player enters the area with the ball but subsequently passes the ball, that player has three (3) seconds to leave the area.
      2. Penalty Area: established with yellow cones, 6-yards from the Goal Line and stretches the width of the pool.
      3. Exclusion Area: any point behind the offending team’s Goal Line.

2. PLAYERS & SUBSTITUTIONS
   1. Teams must start and end the game with at least five (5) players.
      1. A team with five players or more must play or the forfeit procedure will go into effect.
      2. During the course of the game, if a team drops below 5 players that team will receive the loss according to team misconduct scoring rules.
      3. If an injury results in a team dropping below five players, play will stop and a standard loss will be recorded.
      4. These rules will be applied regardless of game score at the time of incident.
   2. The Players
      1. Each team will play 6 players plus a goalie for a total of 7 players in the pool at once.
      2. The minimum number of players required to start is 5, with one person required to play as goalie.
      3. The maximum number of players any team roster may have is 14.
   3. Goalie Play:
      1. There can only be one designated goalie for each team.
      2. The goalie may not throw the ball more than half the length of the pool at any time.
      3. The goalie may leave his/her tube to block (diving block) an attempted shot from his/her opponent and may retrieve the ball while still out of his/her tube, provided that:
         1. The ball cannot be played until the goalie is completely in his/her tube (includes passing to teammates).
         2. The goalie is back in his/her tube within 7-seconds after gaining possession.
      4. Another team player may not sit with his/her tube between the scoring goal posts and under the crossbar for more than 5-seconds (Obstruction Penalty).
   4. Substitutions
      1. All substitutions must occur in a team’s Defensive Zone, but anywhere along that team’s end line.
      2. Open substitutions may occur after a goal, during a timeout, beginning of a new half, or to replace an injured player. This does not need to occur in the Substitution Area.
      3. Substitutions may occur during play. The substituting player (“coming on”) must wait to enter the pool until the original player (“coming off”) has touched the side of the pool. The player coming on must use the original player’s tube, but may use any means
necessary to safely enter the pool for play. The player coming off must quickly exit the pool or cause the player coming on to be penalized.

3. **EQUIPMENT**
   1. Participants are required to wear proper swim attire. No t-shirts or cut off shorts.
   2. Caps and goggles are suggested but not required, and will not be provided by Intramural Sports.
   3. A participant must remain in his/her tube at all times. Player must sit/lay in the tube with the person’s belly button pointed toward the ceiling/sky.
      1. If a player falls out, he/she must attempt to get into the tube immediately.
      2. No movement in the pool or touching the ball is allowed if a player is not sitting in his/her tube (Exception: if a player needs the assistance of the side of the pool, he/she must move to the side of the pool away from the goal and active play).
      3. Any successful shot on goal which results in the player leaving the tube will be disallowed.

4. **TIMING**
   1. **Delay Time** – Once at the scheduled game time:
      1. If a team does not have five (5) players signed in at game time, that team will be given 10-minutes to have five players sign in before the game is declared a forfeit.
      2. If neither team has five players signed in, both teams shall have 10-minutes to have five players sign in before the game is declared a double forfeit.
      3. Time used to wait for the minimum number of players will be off the game clock and delaying teams will receive a Sportsmanship Deduction for delaying the start of the game. The first team ready to play will receive one (1) goal for every minute (rounded up) that the game is delayed (up to the end of the Delay Time period).
         1. One team ready to play: Team A has enough players at game time and Team B’s fifth player signs in with 9:18 remaining on the clock. As the wait was over seven minutes, Team A will start the game with a 8-0 lead and 9:18 remaining in the first half.
         2. Neither team ready to play: Team A’s fifth player signs in with 13:00 on the clock, and Team B’s fifth signs in with 8:00 left on the clock. Team A will start the game 6-0 with 8:00 remaining in the first half.
      4. The clock will not stop to have players sign in, and game play must begin before the 10-minute period has been completed. Once all teams are ready, the ball will be put into play in accordance with the Start of Game rules.
   2. **Game Timing:**
      1. The game will consist of two 15-minute halves with a running clock. The clock will stop for all Penalty Throws and Exclusion Penalties in the last two (2) minutes of the second half.
      2. There will be five (5) minutes between halves (goalies change ends).
      3. There will be two (2) 30-second time-outs per game (player possession is required).
      4. **Overtime**
         1. Regular season games will not have an overtime period, where tied games will remain a tie.
         2. Overtime periods during tournament play will be three (3) minutes. Regular timing rules will apply.
      5. A Game Forfeit will be recorded as a win for the officially designated team and any points accumulated will be the final score. If the team designated with the forfeit is winning at the time a forfeit is awarded, the final score will be 10-0.

5. **SCORING**
   1. The following scale will award points:
      1. One (1) point for each goal scored
      2. One (1) point for each successful penalty shot
3. Zero (0) points for successful shots made from within the Goal Area (Exception: Offensive player tube is pushed by a Defender into the Goal Area)

2. Mercy Rule: If any team gains a point differential matching the outlined criteria, the game will be ended
   1. 12 goals with 10-minutes remaining in game
   2. Eight (8) goals with 5-minutes remaining in game
   3. Five (5) goals with 2-minutes remaining in game

6. START & RESTART OF PLAY
   1. Game Start:
      1. Each team will choose one representative to participate in the “Swim-Off”, who will join the Referee at mid-pool. All other players will sit in their tubes, legally, and touch the end line.
      2. Each representative will start by legally sitting in their tube and touching the side of the pool at the Referee’s feet
      3. The match will begin when the Referee tosses the ball to the middle of the pool, and the two representatives race for possession. The first swimmer to gain possession of the ball while still in their tube will get the first possession. The clock will begin when possession is gained, and all other players may move from their starting positions at that time.
      4. The team not establishing first possession will start the Second Half with possession.
   2. After a goal scored, the goalie will begin play with a throw-in. The Referee will provide an indication as to when to begin play.
   3. Any designated Throw shall be taken in a manner to enable all players to observe the ball leaving the hand of the player taking the throw. The ball shall be in play once it leaves the hand of the player taking the throw.
   4. Free Throw
      1. Will be awarded for any Ordinary Foul, and will take place at the spot of the infringement.
      2. The player closest to the ball/foul area will be the player to initiate the Free Throw.
      3. If awarded within the Penalty Area, another player must touch the ball before it may enter the goal.
      4. If awarded within the Goal Area, the ball must be moved to the Goal Area Line.
      5. During the Free Throw, the ball must leave the hand of the player taking the Free Throw, wherein the player may also be permitted to carry or dribble the ball before passing to another player.
   5. Offensive Possession & Closely Guarded:
      1. An offensive player may be in possession of the ball for an unlimited amount of time if a defensive player is not deemed to be in a defensive position (closely guarded).
      2. Closely Guarded is determined by a defensive player positioned approximately one (1) tube length away from the offensive player in possession (about 4 feet) with one hand in a defensive posture.
      3. An offensive player who is being Closely Guarded will have 10-seconds to release possession, or an Ordinary Foul will be assessed. The offensive player may pass, shoot, or lose possession in such a way as to not be guaranteed immediate repossess.
   6. Corner Throw
      1. Will be awarded when any defensive player causes the ball to cross the Goal Line without causing the ball to go into the goal.
      2. The Corner Throw shall be taken at the Red Cone near the side of the pool as designated by the Referee.
   7. Goal Throw
      1. Will be awarded when any offensive player causes
         1. The ball to cross the Goal Line without causing the ball to go into the goal
         2. The ball to enter the goal during a designated Free Throw
2. Any member of the defending team may take the Goal Throw, provided they are within the Goal Area.

7. FOULS
1. Ordinary Foul
   1. All Ordinary Fouls will result in a Free Throw for the opposing team
   2. The following are Ordinary Fouls:
      1. Using/touching the floor of the pool, sides of the pool, or any pool structure for any playing advantage
      2. Holding the ball under water
      3. Causing the ball to touch or cross the side of the playing area (out of bounds)
      4. Offensive player entering the Goal Area without possession of the ball
      5. Goalie throwing the ball more than half the distance of the pool (the starting position will be at the halfway line)
      6. Goalie holding the ball for more than the allotted 7-seconds (Corner Throw given)
      7. Player holding the ball for more than 10-seconds while being guarded by opposing player
      8. Holding onto the pool wall while in possession of the ball (includes Goalie)
      9. Purposefully splashing opposing players (official’s discretion; includes Goalie)
     10. Holding, pushing, dunking, or dumping an opponent not possessing the ball
     11. Any indirect, dangerous play
     12. Other minor violations of play (official’s discretion)

2. Exclusion Fouls
   1. All Exclusion Fouls will result in the offending player being removed from play, without substitution. The offended team will receive a Free Throw. If an Excluded Player interferes with play in any way, the game will be forfeited to the offended team, regardless of game score or situation.
   2. The following are Exclusion Penalties, resulting in a Free Throw and an Exclusion to the offender (penalty may be upgraded if deemed appropriate by the Referee)
      1. Holding, pushing, dunking, striking, or dumping an opponent.
      2. Purposefully interfering with the goal, thereby preventing a possible goal
      3. Any dangerous play
      4. Persistently repeating an infraction/exhibiting un-sportsman like conduct
      5. Game Misconduct

3. Penalty Fouls
   1. All Penalty Fouls will result in a Penalty Throw for the offended team.
   2. Any Exclusion Foul committed by a defender within the Penalty Area will result in a Penalty Foul.
   3. Penalty Throws
      1. Any player on the offended team may take the Penalty Throw from any point along the Penalty Area Line
      2. All other players are to leave the Penalty Area. All players will move away from the player making the Penalty Throw.
      3. Once the ball is thrown, the ball is considered in play. Any resulting actions will be conducted accordingly. The non-throwing players may only become involved with play once the ball has been touched by the Goalkeeper or the crossbar/goal posts.
      4. Penalty Throws, if awarded at/near the conclusion of a half, will proceed with all players not involved with the throw leaving the water.
   4. Personal Foul: A personal foul will be recorded against any player who commits an Exclusion Foul or Penalty Foul.
      1. Each player will be afforded four (4) personal fouls prior to game disqualification
2. Once the fourth foul is received, the player will move to the exclusion area first. Following the completion of the player’s exclusion, he/she may be substituted. If the fourth foul is received on a penalty foul, the player may be substituted immediately.