# **Intro to the Rules of Water Polo**

Here are some of the basic rules of water polo

#### **Definitions**

Minor Foul - The whistle is blown and play stops. If the player who is fouled has the ball, they get a free throw. If the player who is fouled is a defender, they are awarded the ball and get a free throw. The referee will point to the player who has the free throw with one arm and the direction of the team with the other.

Major Foul - The whistle is blown twice. Play stops, and the player who commits the foul gets ejected for 20 seconds. This usually happens to a defensive player. The referee will point to the player who commits the foul (and blow the whistle), and point to the ejection area (and blow the whistle again).

Brutality - Brutality - A brutality is called when a player kicks or strikes (or attempts to kick or strike) an opponent or official with malicious intent. The player who is charged with a brutality is excluded from the rest of the game.

#### **Important Rules**

- 1. Players can touch the ball with only ONE HAND
- 2. Players are allowed only TWO major fouls during a game. On the third, the player is ejected.
- 3. If a defender interferes with a free throw, it is a MAJOR foul (ejection).

### **Examples of Minor Fouls**

- 1. A "False Start" at the beginning of play.
- 2. Holding the ball under water. Even if the defensive player is pushing down your arm! (see picture)



- 3. Touching the ball with two hands
- 4. A player is within 2 meters of the opponent's goal (and the ball is behind the player).
- 5. Pushing off a defensive player



- 6. A player throws the ball out of bounds
- 7. A team keeps the ball for more than 35 seconds without taking a shot.

## **Examples of Major Fouls**

1. "Elbowing"



2. Holding onto the offensive player



3. Interfering with a free throw



4. Pulling back on a player



5. Sinking a player



- 6. Misconduct (foul language, disrespect, etc.)
- 7. Leaving the ejection area illegally