

A Player's Guide to the 6th Edition of the GC Rules

Take a deeeeeeeeeeeep breath.....and relax!!

None of the changes introduced in this edition involve a major rethink and there are some interesting new ideas. Advantage play is included in the rules for the first time and the sections on Time-Limited games and Handicap play have been expanded. The text has been improved and shortened to make the rules easier to understand and apply. In certain circumstances, a stroke can now be *annulled* and there are some variations in how to manage wrong ball play and hoops run out of order.

Listed below are the main changes that players need to know, and I have listed them in what I think is approximately their order of importance and/or frequency.

As you work through the list, have a copy of the 6thEd Rules handy so you can read the details in each of the rule references in the brackets

These two changes will be apparent in every game played from July 1.

- If your side wins the toss at the start of the game you can now choose whether to play first or second. If you choose to play first, you must play the Blue ball first. If you choose to play second you will play Red following after whoever played Blue from the other side. (5.1)
- It is now mandatory for halfway markers (if used) to be ON the Boundary. (4.2.5)

What does it mean to have a stroke "annulled" ?

It's like "turning back time" to how things were before the stroke was played. (6.3.6)

What errors result in a stroke being annulled ?

- A side plays when not entitled to play. (10.3)
- A stroke is played after play has been forestalled. (13)
- An extra stroke is played unlawfully and this is noticed before the other side plays. (20.5.3)

What has changed in Edition 6 when dealing with Wrong Ball (WB) play?

- There is no longer any special treatment of a wrong ball played in the first four strokes of a game. It is now dealt with in the same way as any other wrong ball play that occurs in a game.
- WB play at any time in a game should be analysed and dealt with in this order: (10.2.2)

Did a side play when they were not entitled to?

YES - then the last stroke played is *annulled* and any fault committed is ignored. Play continues with the correct side playing the next ball in sequence after the ball that was played in the stroke preceding the WB play. (10.3)

NO - go to next question.

Was the previous stroke played with an opponent ball and the last stroke played by the other side?

YES - any points scored by both these strokes are cancelled and play continues with a Penalty Area Continuation. (10.4)

NO - go to next question.

Did the correct side play the partner ball of the ball that should have been played?

YES - their opponents choose between Replace and Replay (10.5.5) or Ball Swap (10.5.6)

NO - only Replace and Replay applies. (10.5.5)

What if a hoop has been run out-of-order or is being contested out-of-order ?

If a player notices this before a referee does, a Penalty Area Continuation is avoided! (7.9.2)

What if all players in a game deem their stroke to have been played?

This is an *impasse*. Rule 15.3 describes how to deal with this situation.

Some interesting new details to keep in mind from the sections on Time-Limited Games & Handicap Play

- If the last stroke played before time expires needs to be replayed, the replay is regarded as part of that last stroke i.e. the replay must go ahead even though time has expired. (19.1.2)
- Suppose a "receiver" (a player with an extra stroke) has just played and committed a fault. As usual, their opponents then have a choice about whether any ball(s) moved by that stroke are replaced or are left where they stopped. If the receiver plans to play an extra stroke next, they can wait to announce their decision until after the opponents have made their choice about whether or not to replace the ball(s). In Edition 6, the choice to play an extra stroke after committing a fault no longer forces the balls moved in the "faulty" stroke to be replaced.