



Memorandum

Date: 1 August 2016

Re: Rule Clarification – Rule 9.3.1 Stoppages – Injury/Illness or Blood

Over the past months, Netball Australia has received a large number of queries regarding Rule 9.3.1. (Stoppages – Injury/Illness or Blood). The purpose of this memorandum is to address common areas of confusion, and to assist in the consistent and correct application of the Rule.

- In ordinary circumstances, the umpire shall hold time for injury/illness or blood after receiving a request from an on-court player (Refer Rule 9.3.1). The player requesting time does not need to be the injured/ill player, or the player who is bleeding.
- Rule 9.3.1 further provides that in **exceptional circumstances**, the umpire may hold time for injury/illness or blood without a request being made. An example would be a situation where the injured or ill player is physically unable to call time and no other on-court player does so, and there is an overriding concern for player safety. Another example would be where there is obvious blood on a player but they are unwilling to request time – again, overriding health and safety concerns would require the umpire to hold time in order for the situation to be dealt with.
- Regardless of whether time is held for injury/illness or blood following a request from an on-court player, or by an umpire in the absence of such a request, the same provisions apply (that is – Rule 9.3.1(i)-(ix) inclusive). In particular, the player concerned **must** leave the court. Therefore, umpires should exercise caution in holding time without receiving a request from an on-court player, and should be sure that there really are **“exceptional circumstances”** that require this action to be taken.
- Rule 9.3.1(ii) provides that the player concerned (that is, the player for whom time has been called) **“must leave the court within 30 seconds”** and that any treatment must be received off the Court. This means that on any occasion when time is requested and held for a player due to injury, illness or blood, **that player is required to go off**. It does not matter whether the player needs or receives treatment or not, and it does not matter whether any treatment given can be completed within 30 seconds. The player is not permitted to continue if time has been held for them.
- Rule 9.3.1(vii) states that during a stoppage for injury/illness or blood, both teams may make substitutions or team changes, provided these are completed within the time allowed for the stoppage by the umpires. In ordinary circumstances, this time is **up to 30 seconds** (refer Rule 9.3.1(ii) – player concerned must leave the court **within 30 seconds**). Any substitutions or team changes made by either team must therefore be completed within the time allowed for the stoppage – being the time taken for the injured/ill/bleeding player to leave the court, which usually will not exceed 30 seconds



- If the stoppage extends beyond 30 seconds because the player concerned cannot be removed from the court safely within 30 seconds (refer Rule 9.3.1(iv)) or, the case of blood, in order for the ball, court or clothing to be cleaned (refer Rule 9.3.1(vi)), the teams have the whole of the time allowed for the stoppage to make substitutions and/or team changes. The player concerned must still leave the court. This applies even if, in the case of blood, the player would be in a position to continue by the time the clean-up process has been completed.
- The player concerned may be replaced during the stoppage (refer Rule 9.3.1(vii)). Alternatively, play may resume with the position left vacant. If the player concerned is Centre, one player must move to play at Centre to allow the match to continue (refer Rule 9.3.1(viii)).
- If the position is vacant, the player concerned or a substitute may subsequently, after advising the Umpire, take the Court immediately after one of the following:
 - (a) a goal has been scored (in this case, the player concerned or the substitute must play in the position left vacant);
 - (b) a stoppage for injury, illness or blood;
 - (c) an interval.

Thus, in the case of (a), if the player concerned was playing Centre at the time of leaving the court, they would not return to the original position (Centre), but to the position left vacant.

It is not possible for the vacant position to be filled at another time when play has stopped (for example, when a sanction or action is taken). It may only be filled when one of the three events specified in Rule 9.3.1(ix) occurs.

