

TEAM HANDBALL STUDY GUIDE

(revised 07/05)

I. HISTORY

- A. The sport began in Denmark around 1900 as a means for soccer players to stay in shape during the cold winter months.
- B. Team Handball first appeared in the Olympics as a full medal sport in Berlin in 1936 as an outdoor game with 11 players on each side.
- C. It was not played again at the Olympic Games until 1972 in Munich, where it was played indoors with seven players on each side.
- D. Women's handball was added to the Olympics in 1976.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE GAME

- A. Team handball combines elements of **soccer** and **basketball**, as players move the ball down the court and score by throwing the ball past a goalie into a net.
- B. It has been called soccer with hands, ice hockey without ice and water polo without water.
- C. It most closely resembles basketball since passing and dribbling, pick and rolls and fastbreaks are all part of this exciting, fast-paced sport.
- D. Handball as it is known internationally, is ranked in the **top five** sports in worldwide popularity.

III. THE COURT AND EQUIPMENT

- A. The **court** is slightly larger than a basketball court.
- B. The most important line on the court is the **six-meter** line or the goal line.
- C. The area enclosed by the six-meter line is called the goal area or the circle. Only the goalie is allowed inside this area.
- D. The **nine-meter**, or the free throw line, is used for minor penalties and the seven-meter line, or penalty line, is used for major penalties that are awarded a penalty shot.
- E. The **ball** is made of leather and is about the size of a large cantalope.
- F. The **goal** measures two meters (6'7") high and three meters (9'10") wide.

IV. HOW TO PLAY

- A. The offense takes position along the centerline and the game is started by a **throw-off** (a pass to a teammate at the centerline). The throw-off is repeated after each goal is scored.
- B. The ball is advanced (moved) by a combination of running, passing and dribbling.
- C. Players **are** allowed to:
 1. Run with the ball 3 steps
 2. Hold the ball 3 seconds
 3. Unlimited dribble with 3 steps allowed before and after dribbling. Dribbling rules are similar to those used in basketball (double dribble, palming, traveling, etc.).
- D. Players **are not** allowed to:
 1. Endanger an opponent with the ball (throw the ball at your opponents).
 2. Pull, hit, or punch the ball out of the hands of an opponent.
 3. Contact the ball below the knee (kick).
 4. Dive for a rolling or stationary ball (except for the goalie in his/her own area)
- E. **Scoring:**
 1. The basic objective of the game is to throw or shoot the ball in to the goal.
 2. Goal is scored when the entire ball crosses the goal line inside the goal.
 3. Each goal counts one point.
 4. Scores in the 20's and 30's are common.
 5. Most goals are scored in the corners of the goal and the ball may bounce off the floor into the goal.

- F. **Penalties:** There are two different throws awarded when a foul is committed:
1. Penalty throw: awarded when a player is fouled and the referee feels that the player had a chance to score.
 2. Free throw: awarded when a player is fouled and did not have a chance to score.
- G. The **official game** is two fast-paced **30** minutes halves. The clock is a running clock that runs continuously except for injuries. There are **no time-outs**. Teams **may not stall** or **play passively**. In world-class tournaments as many as 45 goal attempts are made by one team, with some shots racing toward the goal at 75 miles per hour. In these games, there is an average of one goal attempt every 28 seconds.

V. PLAYER POSITIONS (official)

- A. Each team has **seven players** (six court players and a goalie). Players move on the entire court executing both offense and defense.
- B. **Goalkeeper:** The goalie is the defender responsible for preventing goals, and the first player to start the fast break. He/She is the only player allowed in the goal area. The goalie may use all parts of his/her body to prevent a goal.
- C. **Wings (left and right) :** On offense, they keep the ball moving. The wing is the first player down the court on a fast break. On defense, the wing prevents offensive movement of the ball and players.
- D. **Circle Runner:** The circle is positioned in the center of the six-meter line setting screens and Picks to disrupt the defense. Generally plays with his/her back to the goal.. On defense, the circle plays in the middle, blocking jump shots and restricting offensive movement.
- E. **Back (left and right):** Known as “big shooters” who try to score with jump shots over the defense or set shots through the defense. On defense, they play between the wings along the six –meter line and go out to the nine-meter line to defend attacking players.
- F. **Center Back (the playmaker):** calls the plays, sets up the offense, shoots from all areas of the court, and is usually the ball handler (similar to the point guard in basketball).