



## **Summary of Key Changes for 2022 to the USPA Outdoor Rules and USPA Tournament Conditions Affecting Team Formation**

### **Revisions to Part I and Part III.A of the USPA Tournament Conditions**

The revision to Part I adds a definition for “Series of Events,” with examples being (i) the Gauntlet of Polo® and (ii) the Regional President’s Cups which culminate in the National President’s Cup. It specifies that the management or Host Tournament Committee of a Series of Events must accept entries in each Event in the Series on an Event-by-Event basis unless it has received prior written approval from the USPA Tournament Coordinator or Tournament Committee to accept only entries in all the Events in the Series.

The revision to Part III.A clarifies that the U.S. Open Polo Championship® will be played without handicap, subject to USPA Outdoor Rule 1.c (see directly below).

### **Revisions to USPA Outdoor Rule 1**

The 2021 version of this rule requires that if a team has a player or players changed in handicap at any time from the draw through the team’s last game in an Event, and this makes the team’s handicap more than two goals over the upper limit of the Event, the team may not continue and must conform itself to the original Event handicap limits. This has resulted in real or perceived pressure on the USPA Handicap Committee to not re-handicap players who are playing above their ratings on an emergency basis for fear of being blamed for “blowing up” the team.

The revisions to this rule allow the rostered team at the time of the draw to continue to play together for an entire Event or League it has entered, or for a Series of Events it has entered, even if rostered players are raised in handicap during the Event, League or Series of Events. That team need not reform; instead, it must give the difference in team handicaps to its opponents. The rule also allows the rostered team to be different from the team on the entry form if the team captain elects to declare before the first game in the Event, League or Series of Events that the team on the field for that game is the rostered team. The rule does not protect substitutes; it only protects the rostered team. *Read the revised rule carefully and keep it in mind when you choose your rostered team.*

### **New Optional Tournament Condition XII for USPA Outdoor Rule 19**

With notice to the teams before the draw, the Host Tournament Committee in an Event, League, or Series of Events with an upper handicap limit above 18 goals may use a revised version of USPA Outdoor Rule 19 under which individual handicaps for substitute players of -0.5 goals, 0.5 goals, or 1.5 goals are fully counted when calculating the team handicap but individual handicaps for rostered players of -0.5 goals, 0.5 goals, or 1.5 goals are rounded down to -1 goal, 0 goals or 1 goal respectively when calculating the team handicap. This Optional Tournament Condition is intended to eliminate the unfairness in playing conditions created in high-goal polo under the 2021 version of Outdoor Rule 19 which allows substitutes handicapped 0.5 to play for rostered players handicapped 0. *Read the Optional Tournament Condition carefully and keep it in mind when you choose your rostered team and substitutes.*

### **Revisions to Interpretations for USPA Outdoor Rule 2.c**

This revision establishes that when a player is deemed ineligible because he or she has already played on a team in the same Event that has not yet been eliminated from the Event, the second team that he or she plays on (as an ineligible player) shall be the team that forfeits.



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#### **Revisions to USPA Outdoor Rule 4**

This revision requires that any protective vest worn outside a player's jersey must be the same color as the jersey.

#### **Revisions to USPA Outdoor Rule 5.g and Interpretations for USPA Outdoor Rule 5**

These revisions replace the terms "whip" and "spurs" with the terms "artificial aides (riding crop and spurs)." The interpretation provides guidance for players and Umpires about how the Rule should be applied and states that the rule applies before, during and after a game to players and members of a team organization who are located anywhere on the field or in close proximity to the field.

#### **Revisions to USPA Outdoor Rule 33**

These revisions, which were first approved as a variance in May 2021, allow the Umpires to issue three yellow cards for post-game misconduct. When this occurs, the player is required to sit out for the first four minutes of play in his or her next game of equal or higher handicap for the same team with no substitute allowed.

#### **Revisions to USPA Outdoor Rules 36 and 37**

These revisions, which were first approved as a variance in May 2021, allow a player who is off the field during the execution of a defended penalty to return to his or her proper position before or after play is called, as long as that player returns unobtrusively by a route that is on the field and no closer than 30 yards from the spot where the ball is placed for the penalty shot. When the ball is hit or hit at, any such player who has not reached his or her proper position may not make a play until he or she has passed a teammate who was properly positioned at that time.