



Water Polo

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

METROPOLITAN COMPETITION RULES

2019/2020

Version 1 – Effective 1 September 2019

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INTRODUCTION

These Competition rules are made under the authority of Water Polo South Australia (WPSA) to ensure a fair and equitable competition.

The Competition rules contain various directions and requirements of WPSA and are binding on clubs, players, club officials, referees and Tribunals.

Competition rules are made for the dominant purpose of ensuring a safe and fair system or framework within which water polo may be regulated and conducted.

GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

The Constitution of the Water Polo South Australia is the authority under and through which we govern and manage the business of Water Polo in SA.

The Competition Rules of Water Polo South Australia are the framework within which water polo is regulated and conducted. All games shall be played under FINA Rules of Water Polo 2017-2021, unless expressed otherwise in the WPSA Rules.

WPSA also makes policies; such policies formalise the WPSA position on specific issues and/or details the required procedures considered important to effect competent and prudent management and operations.

The Board also passes resolutions; resolutions are a procedural means of formalising and recording a decision, rule, policy or position on a specific issue. The Board may delegate any power (other than the powers of delegation and appeal), authority, duty or function conferred on it by these rules to a person or persons. Limitations which apply to the Board also apply to such delegations.

Any determination, interpretation or variation of any Competition Rules by the Board shall be final and binding upon members of WPSA.

Sub-committees, Advisory Groups and forums may provide recommendations to the Board and General Manager to act on. These recommendations are non-binding, but provide a procedural means of formalising and recording advice to the Board or Executive Officer on a specific issue.

DEFINITIONS

Board means the Board of the WPSA.

Board Member means a member of the Board of the WPSA.

Club Official means a person elected or appointed as a club committee member, coach, team manager, support personnel, timekeeper or any other person acting in an official capacity for a club.

Coach means the senior or head coach of a team, all other coaches are deemed as assistant coaches.

Competition Development Officer means the person who is in charge of competition development for water polo for WPSA.

Executive Officer means the Executive Officer of WPSA and includes any person acting in that position.

Official means Club, referee or WPSA Official as defined in “Club Official”.

Player means a person registered to play in WPSA.

Pool Controller means a person appointed by the **Technical Committee**, who themselves are appointed by the WPSA Board, who will have the full authority of and in addition to the referees.

WPSA Official means a Board Member, staff or any person appointed by the WPSA to act on its behalf.

WPSA means the incorporated body, Water Polo South Australia.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME STATEMENT

1. The objective of the WPSA Spirit of the Game statement is to recognise that there is a critical element of the conduct of a game of Water Polo that cannot be the subject of written rules nor of regulation by the administrators of the competition that is in line with the Think, Act, Play principle.
2. This element is the fairness, decency and honesty that coaches, players, referees and spectators must bring to the conduct of the game on every occasion and in all situations, which arise in the conduct of the game.
3. Water Polo games are played to be won; and Water Polo is a contact sport so it is expected that games will be hard fought and physically demanding. However, WPSA also requires that each game is played within both the written rules of the game and the Spirit of the Game.
4. Each participant is personally responsible for ensuring his or her behaviour is fair, decent and honest.
5. The desire for victory must not outweigh:
 - a) The ideals of sportsmanship which are the foundation of the game; and
 - b) The reputation and integrity of WPSA and its competitions.
6. At the end of a game each person involved with the winning team should honestly be able to say that the team played fairly, decently and honestly, and behaved in a sportsmanlike manner in victory.
7. At the end of a game each person involved with the losing team should honestly be able to say that the team played fairly, decently and honestly, and behaved in a sportsmanlike manner in defeat.

8. Even in the heat of the game all participants must conduct themselves fairly, decently and honestly and with respect for:
 - a) The opposition;
 - b) WPSA;
 - c) The officials; and
 - d) The game of Water Polo.

Rule 1 – ANNUAL TEAM NOMINATIONS

- 1.1 Nomination process;
 - a) All clubs shall nominate teams for each competition (as prescribed by WPSA) to the Competition Development Officer via the outlined process.
 - b) Team nominations will close no later than three weeks before the commencement of the season. No team nomination will be accepted after the due date, unless approved by the Technical Committee, in conjunction with the Competition Development Officer, at their absolute discretion.
 - c) Teams accepted to play in the nominated year shall pay the nomination fee as specified by WPSA.
 - d) The Executive Officer, in conjunction with the WPSA Board and Technical Committee, has the right not to accept a team's nomination or may at their absolute discretion apply such additional conditions as they deem appropriate for a team's nomination to be accepted.
 - e) At their absolute discretion, the Executive Officer, in conjunction with the WPSA Board and Technical Committee, may fine a club as prescribed where the club nominates a team after the advertised nomination date.
 - f) When a club nominates a team in a B grade and below competition, the club must also nominate a referee with requisite experience/qualification to umpire within the respective competition. Referee nominations are to be submitted to the Water Polo SA Office at the time of team nomination. Failure to comply will result in fines as per Fine Table 1.
 - g) Any club which withdraws a nominated team from any competition before round 3 of the relevant season shall not receive a financial penalty.
 - h) Any club which withdraws a nominated team from any competition after round 3 of the relevant season shall pay the full team nomination fee.
 - i) Any club which has a team that forfeits four qualifying games within the first half of the season may have their team removed from the competition at the discretion of the Technical Committee, in conjunction with Competition Development Officer.

Rule 2 – TEAM GRADING, RELEGATION AND PROMOTION

- 2.1 Clubs nominate their teams online after receiving the registration form from WPSA.
- 2.2 For grading purposes, in each competition, the process will be as follows;
 - 2.2.1 Each club will nominate a team/s for the relevant competition.
 - 2.2.2 The Technical Committee will review nominated teams for each competition and decide on an initial grading. Documents to assist with initial grading include but not limited to:
 - a) Previous year competition results;
 - b) Submitted team lists from the teams; and
 - c) A submission from the club regarding grading, if required.
 - 2.2.3 Excluding A Grade, WPSA will then use the first five (5) rounds of the competition to confirm grading and will re-grade teams as necessary. Any decision made to move a team up or down is at the absolute discretion of WPSA in conjunction with the Technical Committee.
- 2.3. WPSA may relegate or promote a team for fixturing and grade composition.

Rule 3 – PLAYER AND OFFICIALS REGISTRATION

- 3.1 All players and officials must be registered with Water Polo SA to be eligible to play, coach or referee.
- 3.2 To be registered, a person must be registered on the WPSA designated online registration system.
- 3.3 If the registration is subject to a Player Transfer and Clearance, the player is not permitted to register with the destination club until the transfer is approved.
- 3.4 Any person who makes a false declaration on his/her application for registration shall have his/her registration cancelled and fined as prescribed by WPSA.
- 3.5 Players may only play for the club they are registered with through WPSA. To be read in conjunction with Rule 4.6 and Rule 12.

Rule 4 – TEAM COMPOSITION

- 4.1 Prior to Round 4, clubs must send their finalised team list for each team nominated. Prior to Round 4, players are able to play up a grade, but are unable to play down a grade, unless approved by WPSA. Teams playing ineligible players, as deemed by the competition rules, will forfeit all the games these players have played in.
 - 4.1.1 Newly commencing players after this point must have their names added to an amended team list prior to playing their first game.

- 4.2 Any player not checked in by half-time is ineligible to participate in the game unless approved by the referee and the opposition coach. This may only occur after a goal has been scored or at stoppages due to quarter time or half time breaks.
- 4.3 A junior age player can play a maximum of 3 games each week across the junior and senior competition, unless an exemption is submitted to and granted by WPSA. Failure to comply will result in a forfeit as per Rule 4.1.
- 4.4 No player can play two games in the same age group or grade on the same day. Failure to comply will result in a forfeit as per Rule 4.1.
- 4.5 A player playing in the 14 and under competition is ineligible to play in the Senior Competition, unless prior permission from the Technical Committee has been granted. Failure to comply will result in a forfeit as per Rule 4.1.
- 4.6 Player loan agreements between clubs for composite team arrangements are optional and subject to the approval of WPSA.
- 4.7 Clubs must identify those players who will participate in the National League squad, these players are referred to as “Exclusive A Grade Players”; a list of which must be submitted to the Water Polo Office at the commencement of the National League Pre-Season.
- 4.8 Players outside the defined list, as referred to in Rule 4.7, are eligible to play in both the A Grade and B grade competition in the same fixture week.

Rule 5 – MATCHES

- 5.1 The Technical Committee shall determine the fixtures for qualifying and finals matches for the year.
- 5.2 No team shall play in any match without sanction of WPSA.
- 5.3 From qualifying round matches WPSA shall keep for each grade a premiership table showing matches won, matches lost, matches drawn, points scored for and against, and premiership points determined as follows:
 - a) 3 points for winning a match;
 - b) 2 points for a drawn match;
 - c) 1 point for a loss; and
 - d) Zero (0) points for a forfeit.
- 5.4 All official matches, as deemed by WPSA must use an approved match-quality Water Polo Ball (Mikasa; Kap7). Each team is responsible for providing two such balls for each and every official match. Failure to comply will result in fines as per Fine Table 1.
- 5.5 Competition rules shall follow FINA Water Polo rules, unless where stated.

- 5.6 If forfeiting, clubs/teams must notify WPSA office in writing at least 48 hours before their scheduled game, incurring a \$25 administration fee. Failing to do so, the club/team will incur a \$150 fine.
- 5.7 Qualification for finals shall be determined in order on competition result ladder by:
- 1) Teams total number of points (In divisions where teams play uneven number of games, competition points gained will be divided by the maximum number of possible competition points and multiplied by 100 to give a “percentage of possible points”).
 - 2) If two teams finish on the same number of points or percentage of possible points, further classification will be established as follows:
 - a) Teams’ total goal difference;
 - b) Teams’ total goals awarded;
 - c) Total number of points earned in games between respective teams;
 - d) Goal difference in games between respective teams.
- 5.8 Where a match is abandoned or terminated before the scheduled end or the result of the match is in dispute, WPSA at their absolute discretion may determine the result or order the match be replayed at such time and place as they see fit.
- 5.9 For matches where 1 clock is used for 2 playing fields the timekeeper will count off the last 10 seconds of the 30-second shot clock and 20-second exclusion duration.
- 5.10 Matches must start and finish on time. If the start of the game is delayed for any reason referees are to calculate the length of the quarters, once both sides are ready to start. The quarter length will be dependent on the total allocated time left. This will ensure the following games will start on time.
- 5.11 Misconduct towards referees and officials will not be tolerated. All players, officials and spectators reported by referees for misconduct, bringing the game into disrepute, or brutality shall be administered under the Water Polo SA Judiciary Procedures (available to download at: https://waterpolosa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/WPSA-Judiciary-Policy_October-2016.pdf).
- 5.12 The playing week for fixtures and competition commences Monday and ends Sunday.

Rule 6 – FIELD OF PLAY AND DURATION OF GAMES

6.1 Age-based competition format:

	12 & Under	14 & Under	16 & Under	18 & Under Boys U17 & Under Girls
Ball Size	Boys' – Size 3 Girls' – Size 3	Boys' – Size 4 Girls' – Size 4	Boys' – Size 5 Girls' – Size 4	Boys' – Size 5 Girls' – Size 4
Field Size	20m – 25m Length 12.5m – 15m Wide	20m – 25m Length 15m Wide	25m Length 20m Wide	25m Length 20m Wide Boys' Finals Series: 30m Length 20m Wide
Game Duration (including finals)	4 quarters of 4 mins actual time or 6 minutes running clock, with intervals of 1, 2, 1 mins.	4 quarters of 5 mins actual time or 7 minutes running clock, with intervals of 1, 2, 1 mins.	4 quarters of 6 mins actual time or 8 minutes running clock, with intervals of 1, 2, 1 mins. 1 T.O. in minor rounds, 2 T.O.s in Final series.	4 quarters of 7 mins actual time, with intervals of 1, 2, 1 mins. 1 T.O. in minor rounds, 2 T.O.s in Final series.
Shot Clock	None	30 Seconds Where Possible	30 Seconds	30 Seconds
Players in Field	7	7	7	7

*** Subject to pool space and availability, priority is always to play actual over running clock.**

6.2 The 12 & Under competitions are to be played with the following addition rules:

- 6.2.1 All players must play at least one (1) full period during the first half of the game.
- 6.2.2 After a minor foul has been awarded to the Centre Forward, both the Centre Forward and the Centre Back must swim out of the centre position to allow for a new player to drive or set-up in the Centre Forward position.

6.2.3 No shots allowed after any free throw awarded.

6.2.4 No set exclusion duration; excluded player may return to the game after having raised its head in the exclusion area. Referee has flexibility to retain a player in the exclusion area during stoppage of play (e.g. injury).

6.3 Open competition format:

	Seniors (B Grade and below)	A Grade
Ball Size	Men's – Size 5 Women's – Size 4	Men's – Size 5 Women's – Size 4
Field Size	25m Length 20m Wide	Men's: 30m Length, 20m wide Women's: 25m Length, 20m wide
Game Duration (including finals)	4 quarters of 6 mins actual playing time, with intervals of 1, 2, 1 mins. 1 T.O. in minor rounds, 2 T.O.s in Final series.	4 quarters 7 mins actual playing time, with intervals of 2, 3, 2 mins. 1 T.O. in minor rounds, 2 T.O.s in Final series.
Shot Clock	30 Seconds	30 Seconds
Players in Field	7	7

* Subject to pool space and availability, priority is always to play actual over running clock.

6.4 Player's age is defined as the age as of 31st December of the current year.

Rule 7 – TABLE OFFICIALS AND REFEREES

7.1 Each team must supply a table official, one to fulfil the role of timekeeper the other of secretary. Failure to provide a table official will result in a fine as per Fine Table 1.

7.2 All referees must be appropriately attired in a white shirt and appropriate footwear. For all major series matches referees must wear, in addition to the white shirt, white pants and appropriate footwear.

- 7.3 There shall be no discussion pool-side with referees. Questions concerning clarification in relation to scores and player exclusions should be directed to the Game Secretary. Questions related to interpretations should be directed to the Pool Controller or in writing to the Technical Committee.
- 7.4 At the discretion of the Technical Committee, certain games/fixtures may be allocated a Pool Controller, which will have the full authority of and in addition to the appointed referees' authority. The appointed Pool Controller must be dressed in official clothing and identifiable. It is preferable that the Pool Controller will make themselves known to both competing team coaches prior to the matches commencing.
- 7.5 Time outs apply for major series matches only for divisions other than A-Grade.

Rule 8 – PLAYER ELIGIBILITY FOR FINALS

- 8.1 A player must play at least 5 games or one third (33%) [rounded up] of the minor round games for their club, whichever is least, in the qualifying rounds to qualify for finals. The finals eligibility in regards to the minimum number of games to be played per finals per competition will be set and displayed online via the online competitions platform and confirmed to all clubs at the beginning of the season once round 4 is completed.
- 8.2 Clubs must run a report through the online database at least two (2) weeks before semi-finals to check on their players' eligibility for finals.
- 8.3 If any questions arise in regards to the eligibility of players, the club must seek clarification from WPSA Office no later than a week before finals.
- 8.4 The team for which a player is eligible during the finals is determined by the most number of games played during the senior grade preliminary rounds. If an equal number of games are played in different grades, eligibility shall be for the highest grade played.
- 8.5 Players who have played in multiple age groups must have qualified for all age groups if they are to play finals in respective age groups (Juniors only).
- 8.6 Final series is defined as both Semi and Grand finals, so any player playing in a semi-final is considered to have committed to that final series.

Rule 9 – PRE-MATCH PROVISIONS

- 9.1 Clubs must supply their own individually numbered caps.

- 9.2 The first mentioned team on fixtures wears white and second mentioned team wears blue caps. Clubs can wear their own coloured caps, should they be not white or blue the first mentioned team must have lighter colour set (closer to white) and the second mentioned team wears the darker (closer to blue). Clubs must submit their own coloured caps to WPSA for approval at least two (2) weeks before round one (1). Failure to comply will result in a forfeit.
- 9.3 Each team shall line up five (5) minutes before the time advertised for the match, to be inspected by the referee to ensure sheets are filled in correctly and that each player has nails checked, etc. Failure to comply will result in fines the offending club as per Fines Table 1.
- 9.4 Water Polo SA encourages all players to wear a mouth guard.
- 9.5 Game sheets must be completed in legible print including first name and surname.
- 9.6 Sunscreen use is encouraged when playing in outdoor pools and must be alcohol based (not slippery).
- 9.7 First-named teams shall be responsible for the setting up of the venue fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled starting time. They are responsible for ensuring that timing equipment used is of an appropriate standard and in working order, an officials table is erected and that game sheets are available.
- 9.8 First-named teams shall be responsible for the packing up of the venue immediately after the final match has concluded. They are responsible for ensuring that timing equipment used is stored in the appropriate area, and that game sheets are correctly put away in the appropriate folder.
- 9.9 In line with the FINA Rules, the playing uniform shall comprise of club bathers and caps registered and approved by WPSA. Where a player does not wear the correct registered playing bathers and/or caps (A Grade only) the club shall incur a fine as prescribed by Fine Table 1.
- 9.10 All players must shake the hand of the referee at the end of each match. Failure to comply will result in an initial warning to the offending club and continued failure to do so will be treated as misconduct.

Rule 10 – POST MATCH PROVISIONS

- 10.1 Game sheets are to be returned by the referees on the day of the match to Water Polo SA by emailing a copy of the front and back of the scorecard to: competitions@waterpolosa.com.au within 24 hrs of the completed match.

Rule 11 – FINALS FORMAT

- 11.1 In any grade in which there are more than four (4) teams competing in the minor rounds, the four teams which are awarded the highest number of premiership points in the minor round shall compete in the Finals of that grade.
- 11.1.1 Semi Finals:
1st plays 4th
2nd plays 3rd
- 11.1.2 Winners of semi-finals play in the Grand Final.
- 11.1.3 Winner of the grand final shall be the premier team for that grade for that season.
- 11.2 When there are only four (4) teams entered in the grade the finals shall be played between the three (3) teams which are awarded the highest number of premiership points in the minor round as follows:
Semi Final 2nd plays 3rd
Grand Final Winner of Semi-Final plays 1st team
- 11.3 When there are only three (3) teams entered in the grade, no semi-final will be played and the grand final shall be played between the two highest ranked (2) teams which are awarded the highest number of premiership points in the minor round as follows:
No final game 3rd team on ladder after minor round
Grand Final 1st and 2nd team on ladder after minor round
- 11.4 Table Officials, including timekeeper and secretary, need to be deemed, by the Technical Committee, as being competent and having experience with the use of the device at the location of the finals. This will be the preferred outcome where possible. This will still consist of club representatives; such is required for minor round games.

Rule 12 – PLAYER PERMITS

- 12.1 Permits will not be issued on the primary basis of age. A player must play in the division for which they are eligible by age or in a higher division. The Technical Committee may have stipulations for players wishing to play below their age group where extenuating circumstances exist.
- 12.2 Players with disabilities may put forward a proposal to the technical committee to be assessed on individual merit.

- 12.3 All permit requests for players wishing to compete in a division in which their Club has not registered a team, shall be submitted electronically (in writing) to the Technical Committee and will be considered on their merit.
- 12.4 A player who is absent from competition due to representation of Australia (in Squad/Team/Camp), and/or representation of South Australia (a National League Team, a South Australian State Team, a SASI Team or as a member of the Australian Institute of Sport), who may fail to meet the finals eligibility minor round quotas may apply to the Technical Committee for a permit.
- Permits of this nature need to be submitted within 1 week of the representation period and include specific dates of games, trainings, and training camp period. Permits are to be submitted to the Technical Committee in writing (electronically) via the Water Polo SA office to admin@waterpolosa.com.au.
- 12.5 Notice of permitted players will be issued to club presidents and secretaries, with reason for permit being withheld. Should a member have concerns regarding eligibility, they should approach their club president for clarification.
- 12.6 All permit applications must be made using the Technical Committee Request Form (available at: <https://waterpolosa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Technical-Committee-Request-Form.pdf>) submitted electronically via the WPSA Office.

Fine Table 1

Rule	Description	Fee (AUD)
1.1	Failure to nominate a referee as requested by WPSA	\$100
3	Ineligible player (per player) (not exceeding) (\$1000)	\$200
5.4	Failure to provide WPSA Approved Ball (per game)	\$25
5.6	Forfeited Match for non- attendance with 48h notice	\$125
5.6	Forfeited Match for non- attendance without 48h notice	\$150
7.1	Failure to provide a table official	\$25
9.3	Failure to correctly complete the team sheet (per sheet)	\$25
9.9	Incorrect bathers per player (A Grade Only)	\$25