



Manitoba Schools  
Water Polo League (MSWPL)

# **Policies and Procedures Manual**

2017

(Proposed changes highlighted in yellow)

## **Mission Statement**

The Manitoba Schools Water Polo League (MSWPL) will promote the benefits of participation in water polo. The league will be a positive environment that provides competitive opportunities in an educational setting for all athletes, coaches and officials.

### **1. Member**

- 1.1 Member is defined as a school who has at least one team registered in good standing with both the league and the Manitoba Water Polo Association (MWPA)
- 1.2 All players must be registered with the MWPA, and therefore Water Polo Canada and meet any subsequent obligations required by these bodies.
- 1.3 Members have one vote each on league management issues.
- 1.4 Members have one vote each at the MWPA Annual Meetings or Special Meetings as defined in the MWPA Constitution.

### **2. League**

- 2.1 The MSWPL is a sub group of the MWPA and is entitled to all benefits there within.
- 2.2 The MSWPL sets its own policies regarding league rules of play and membership within the league.
- 2.3 The MWPA reserves all rights not directly stated or defined within the MSWPL.
- 2.4 The MWPA sanctions all competitions and activities of the MSWPL.
- 2.5 Teams must submit initial team rosters, MWPA Registration forms, MSWPL Athlete Code of Conduct Forms and Coach Code of Conduct Forms to the MWPA office/administrator/league convenor before the start of the first league game.

\*Rosters must be complete and signed by the school principal to certify the academic status of all athletes.

Player additions made after the league start-up must be accompanied by a new principal signed roster sheet.

### **3. Team Membership**

3.1 Competition will be provided for the following teams:

Varsity: Made up of students from grades 11 – 12, though open to grade 9 – 12 students

Junior Varsity: Made up of students from grades 9 – 10, though open to grade 8 – 10 students

Middle Years: Made up of students from grades 7 – 8, though open to grade 6 – 8 students.

Note #1: Players, who fall in the specified teams above, may not play on any other team. (Eg. Grade 7 cannot play for a HS team – Grade 10 can not play for a MY team.)

Note #2: Any student at a school that does not field a team in the student's attended grade group league will have the option to request and play on a different school grade group league team without prejudice. A "request for transfer" form must be completed.

3.2 Players on a given school team must be attending students of that school, in the stated grade category and under 19 years of age as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of the league year.

Attending is defined as not graduated and taking a half time load or graduated and taking a half time plus load.

3.3 Registration information on each player must be submitted to the MWPA office or League Convenor prior to participating in any league game.

3.4 Imports will be discouraged, but may be considered on a one-to one basis, with the main criteria being to have athletes playing with the school team closest to their school and within the same school division. Teams will only be allowed a maximum of 2 transfers. If there is no team in the athletes' school division or the athlete attends a private school, the athlete will be placed on a team at the discretion of the committee. Stacking of teams or recruitment of athletes to school teams will not be allowed. Athletes wishing to be considered for placement on a team must submit a "request for transfer" form to MWPA Office no later than the announced deadline in order to be considered for placement. If the Management Committee approves an import request the rationale must be made public to all teams in the League. Teams have seven days to appeal an import decision that has been made by the Management Committee.

An import is defined as any student not attending that school, including middle years students, and younger.

Imports will not be assigned after the first league games have been played. Teams must make any requests for athlete transfers to the MWPA Office. Such requests will be considered by the management committee.

3.5 Athletes who change schools must play with the school they were registered with as of September 30<sup>th</sup> of that school year. Students who wish to change teams after this time will be required to file an appeal and have coaches from both the previous school and the new school provide letters to support the appeal.

Each appeal will be considered and results determined by the Management Committee.

3.6 All team members must be registered with the MWPA by the date specified to be eligible for play-offs. (If not specified date will be set for beginning of second round).

3.7 Players barred from further play by the MWPA for whatever reason are also ineligible for play within our league.

3.8 Players on a team's roster must be in attendance for 50% of the league's games in order to be eligible for play-offs. Exceptional circumstances (e.g. medical) may be brought to the attention of the Management Committee in cases where a player has not been able to play 50% of the games.

3.9 Any teams traveling must be sanctioned by the MWPA and must have the appropriate paper work filed prior to any out of town events.

3.10 All teams must have a representative present at the pre-season meeting. Failure to do so will result in a \$50 fine, payable to MWPA prior to their first game. Any unpaid fine will result in a game forfeit.

#### **4. Rules Committee**

4.1 All rules and policies are modified on a yearly basis by member vote at the league annual meeting in September.

4.2 The MSWPL Management Committee shall be composed of:

- i) the MWPA Representative who will be the Chair of the Committee
- ii) the Referee-In-Chief, selected by the Committee Chair
- iii) one school representative from each division of play in the Varsity, Junior Varsity and the Middle Years Leagues, voted in at MSWPL September Meeting.
- iv) the League Convenor (non-voting member) selected by MWPA

4.3 The Management Committee shall oversee:

- i) discipline of players
- ii) discipline of coaches
- iii) dispute settlement
- iv) appeals

It is the role of the Management Committee to ensure that the league Code of Conduct for the players and coaches are being adhered to.

- 4.4 The Referee in Chief of every game may, at their choosing, make any call they deem appropriate before, during, or after the game with specific reference to the Code of Conduct.
- 4.5 The MSWPL shall provide copies of the league policy manual to each coach whose responsibility it is to inform their players of the policies and rules of the league.

## **5. Rules of Play**

- 5.1 FINA rules apply except for the following rules adopted by our league (a link to the FINA Rules can be found at <https://www.waterpolo.ca/rules.aspx>)
  - 5.1.1 All co-ed teams shall play on a “mixed” basis with a minimum of three girls in the water at all times.
    - 5.1.1.1 Middle year teams must have a minimum of 2 females in the water at all times.
  - 5.1.2 At the beginning of the first and third quarters the swim off must be taken by a female on each team, and the first player to touch the ball must be a female. At the beginning of the second and fourth quarters the swim off must be taken by a male on each team, and the first player to touch the ball must be a male.
  - 5.1.3 All games shall be played with a size 4 ball.
  - 5.1.4 Varsity and Junior Varsity games will be composed of four, six minute running time periods with two minutes rest between periods. The last minute of each quarter will be stop time.
  - 5.1.5 Middle Years games will have the following additional rule modifications:
    - 5.1.5.1 Games will be composed of four, 5 minute running time periods, with two minutes of rest between periods. The last minute of each quarter will be stop time.
    - 5.1.5.2 Each team will have 5 players in the water at a time. This includes 4 players and a goalie.
    - 5.1.5.3 Teams must change their goalie after the 2<sup>nd</sup> period. Additional goalie changes are allowed.
    - 5.1.5.4 Goals may not be scored from a shot taken past the half line, except in the final 10 seconds of each quarter.
    - 5.1.5.5 Goals may not be scored on a free throw.
    - 5.1.5.6 Teams must have a minimum of 7 players on the roster. Games may not begin with fewer than 4 players present.

- 5.1.5.7 There is no maximum roster size, but teams with greater than 11 players will be encouraged to form additional teams.
- 5.1.5.8 Exclusions will be “touch and go”.
- 5.1.5.9 Field of play will be 15m x 10m (where supported by the facilities).
- 5.1.5.10 Two referees will typically be assigned. If only one referee is available, they shall be of senior referee status.
- 5.1.6 Each team is allowed one timeout per game, which can be called at any time during the game when the team is in possession of the ball.
- 5.1.7 Ties will stand except in play-offs where there shall be a penalty shoot out to determine the result. If a penalty shootout is necessary, the following procedure shall be followed:
  - 5.1.7.1 The respective coaches of the teams will nominate five players and goalkeeper who will participate in the penalty shootout; the goalkeeper may be changed at any time provided the substitute was listed amongst the team list in that game
  - 5.1.7.2 The five players nominated will be required to be listed in order alternating boy/girl or girl/boy and that order will determine the sequence in which those players will shoot at their opponents goal; the sequence cannot be changed
  - 5.1.7.3 No players excluded for the game are eligible to be listed amongst those players to shoot or substitute as goalkeeper
  - 5.1.7.4 Shots will be taken alternately at each end of the field of play, unless conditions at one end of the field of play advantage and/or disadvantage a team, in which case all shots may be taken at the same end. The players taking the shots will remain in the water in front of their bench, the goalkeepers will change ends, and all players not involved must sit on their team bench
  - 5.1.7.5 Should teams still be tied following the completion of the initial five penalty shots, the same five players shall then take alternate shots until one team misses and the other scores
- 5.1.8 Referees will be assigned by the Operations Referee.
- 5.1.9 Referees will not be assigned to a game in which there is a conflict of interest.
- 5.1.10 In the case of play-off games coaches may request or reject referees providing they do so at least one week prior to game day.
- 5.1.11 Varsity and Junior Varsity teams will not have a maximum size roster although teams with greater than 15 athletes are encouraged to develop two teams. Varsity and Junior Varsity games will be played with seven players and may not be played with less than five players in the water.
- 5.1.12 All players must keep the same hat number throughout the season as indicated on the team roster. On co-ed teams where there are more than 18 players a male and a female player should share a hat number.

- 5.1.13 Schools operating more than one team may not move players back and forth. The agreed upon rule is that if a player plays two games on their school's higher ranked team they must remain on that team for the remainder of the season.
- 5.1.14 All teams must have a coach and a teacher contact on the bench during all games one of who must sign the game sheet before the start time of the game.
- 5.2 A game will be considered a default (7-0) if a team is unable to fulfill rules 5.1.1, 5.1.10 and 5.1.11 by the scheduled start of the game.
- 5.3 Sportsmanship Rules
- All members of the league will read, sign and follow the Codes of Conduct. Sportsmanship must be promoted at all times.
- 5.4 Coaches or athletes who are charged with disrespect (verbal or physical abuse of an official, throwing items, etc.) will be suspended pending a review by the Management Committee.
- 5.5 It is the responsibility of the teams assigned on league schedules to assist in setting up equipment, take down, and providing a minor official.

## **6. League Structure**

- 6.1 Our league is divided into tiers based on the results of the seeding round robin and/or previous years' standings.
- 6.2 Tiers or divisions will consist of a minimum of five teams.
- 6.3 Balance of fees or a letter of commitment, signed by the school administrator, are due prior to the first game.
- 6.4 All divisions or tiers will be acknowledged in terms of trophies, awards, and all-star team designations.
- 6.5 League fees will be such that fees collected shall cover the league costs. MWPA will assess league fees.
- 6.6 Recommendations for change to this policy manual must be submitted to the Management Committee to be reviewed and forwarded to MWPA for ratification.

## **7. Awards**

- 7.1 The following awards will be presented at the league banquet:

- Medals shall be presented to all team members of the first, second, and third ranked teams of **division A and B in High School, and division A in Middle Years.**
- A banner shall be presented to the first and second ranked team of each division.
- All other awards shall be presented to team members by their respective coaches at the coach's leisure.
- Each coach will be presented with blank certificates provided by MWPA for the use of presenting to their respective athletes.
- Awards may be chosen by the coaches for the current season of games.

7.1.1 Players who are charged with disrespect (for verbal/physical abuse of official) or brutality calls will be ineligible to receive any individual awards. Coaches guilty of disrespect towards an official will be ineligible to receive Coach of the Year Award.

## **8. Play-Off Format**

8.1 The play-off format is to be designed at the September meeting to reflect membership numbers.

8.1.1 For play-off purposes, ties in league standings to be broken by:

- a) your record against the team you are tied with
- b) goals for/against between the teams that are tied
- c) goals for/against; for the purposes of this rule the maximum goal differential per game is seven goals
- d) number of goals against for that round of play
- e) flip of the coin

The purpose of this policy is to prevent any need for teams to run up the score on a weaker team.

8.2 Players must have participated in at least 50% of their team's league play in order to be eligible for the play-offs. Medical exceptions can be considered by appeal to the Management Committee.

8.3 Two inexcusable defaults during the season or one during play-offs will result in a team's elimination from play-offs. Appeals must be made to the Management Committee within two days of the default. The Management Committee must respond in writing within one week of receipt of the appeal.

Teams unable to field a team on a given schedule date should notify their opponents in advance so the game may be re-scheduled. This re-scheduling must be mutually agreed upon by all parties. Failure to reach an agreement will result in a default for the team that was originally unable to field a team.

8.3.1 Defaults will be recorded as 7-0 losses.



## **9. League Fees**

9.1 The MSWPL shall charge its member teams a league fee sufficient to cover all operating costs including:

- Pool time
- League hats
- Referee fees
- Administration fees

9.2 The MWPA shall be asked each year for an operating grant to help cover the cost of league operations.

9.3 To keep league fees down the league shall consist of approximately 10 league games, dependant on the number of member teams. Play-offs will continue to offer a “minimal format” to keep costs down and avoid “mismatch” games.

## Appendix 1

### Duty List

1. **The Management Committee** (see policy 4.2 for make-up of Committee) shall:
  - i) Interpret league policies in case of disagreements.
  - ii) Settle disputes that may arise.
  - iii) Develop new policies in situations where league policies do not apply
  - iv) Meet, or communicate (e-mail, telephone) as needed.
  - v) Write a year-end report and submit it to the MWPA by January 31.
  - vi) Promote the MSWPL.
  - vii) Liaise with the media
  - viii) Submit an operating budget to MWPA by September 15.
  
2. **The League Convenor** is selected by the MWPA and is a non-voting member of the Management Committee. The duties of the Convenor are:
  - i) To schedule league tournaments and games.
  - ii) To supervise league tournaments and games, and help with pool set-up, take down, and minor officiating as necessary.
  - iii) To report all game results to the MWPA by Sunday evening.
  - iv) To communicate with all school coaches, teacher contacts and school administration as necessary regarding policies and procedures of MSWPL.
  - v) Develop a working budget with the Management Committee for submission and approval by MWPA by September.
  - vi) Organize Awards Party/League wind-up.
  - vii) To work with the Management Committee to ensure that the league achieves it's Mission Statement.
  
3. **The Referee-In-Chief** is selected by the Chair of the Management Committee. The duties of the Referee in Chief are:
  - i) To work with the MWPA to coordinate the education of league referees.
  - ii) Be on deck or designate a replacement for every game.
  
4. **Operations Referee** is selected by the Management Committee. The duties of the Operations Referee are:
  - i) To coordinate game referees for regular league, and tournament play.
  - ii) To work with MWPA to assist in the education of league referees.
  - iii) To be on deck when the Referee-in-Chief is unable to do so.