

2026-2027

Athlete and Family Handbook and Standards



Tualatin Hills Water Polo Club

15707 SW Walker Rd, Beaverton, OR 97006

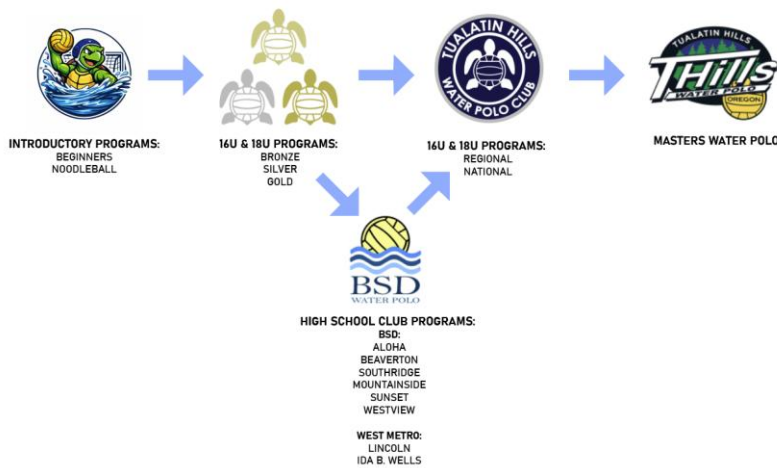


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Club Mission

The Tualatin Hills Water Polo Club (THWPC) is a non-profit athletic club operating in the facilities operated by Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District in Beaverton, Oregon. The Club's mission is to serve all members of our community who have a desire to participate in the sport of water polo as a recreational activity, and to provide dedicated athletes with the opportunity to practice and compete at the highest possible level.



Purpose

The club operates year-round, with elementary and middle school athletes participating all year except August. High school athletes play for their schools from mid-August to mid-November, with THWPC running the Beaverton School District program. After the high school season, athletes return to club polo through July. In spring and summer, teams of all ages compete in tournaments across Washington, California, and locally. THWPC frequently sends multiple teams to the National USAWP Junior Olympic Competition, joining 780 teams and 10,000 athletes.

THWPC Directory

THWPC Board Members

Board President	Tim Clay	President@thillswaterpolo.org
Vice President	Joey Kraget	
Secretary	Kelley Leisenger	
Treasurer	Vacant	
Member at Large	Meredith Farrell	
Member at Large		
Member at Large	Aaron Parker	
Member at Large		

Administration

Admin	Dan Jones	admin@thillswaterpolo.org
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Coaching Staff

Head Coach	Blake Hokkanen	Coachblake@thillswaterpolo.org
Assistant Coach	Deanna Jones	
Assistant Coach		
Student Coaches		
Student Coaches		

THWPC Sessions

Season	Dates	Programs
Fall	August 24 - November 14	THWPC Youth Programs, Beaverton School District Club Water Polo
Early Winter	November 15th - January 2nd	THWPC Youth & High School Programs, Masters
Mid Winter	January 3rd - February 20th	THWPC Youth & High School Programs, Masters
Late Winter	February 21st - March 27th	THWPC Youth & High School Programs, Masters
Spring	March 28 th – May 31st	THWPC Youth & High School Programs, Masters
Summer	JUN. 1 – JUL. 31	THWPC Youth & High School Programs, Masters

Sessions are scheduled in alignment with the Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District calendar. Session dates and lengths may vary throughout the year.

THWPC Programs

Program	USA WP Membership	Age	Commitment per Week	Hours per Week	Cost
Beginners	Bronze	6 - 12	1 practice weekly	1.25	Refer to website
Bronze	Bronze	8 - 12	3 practices weekly	3	Refer to website
Silver	Bronze	10 - 14	3 practices weekly	4.5 - 5.5	Refer to website
Gold	Gold	10 - 14	4 - 5 practices weekly (water and dryland)	10 - 12	Refer to website
Regional	Bronze	High School Only (13-18)	3 practices weekly	5	Refer to website
National	Gold	High School Only (13-18)	4 - 5 practices weekly (water and dryland)	12	Refer to website

Masters	Bronze	18+ years old (Graduated High School)	1.5 - 3
USA Water Polo Membership is required for all Programs. Training Schedule and locations can be found at https://thillswaterpolo.org/			
Program	Program Definition	Requirements	Primary Focus
Beginners	An entry-level instructional program for athletes new to water polo, focused on introducing fundamental skills and basic game concepts in a structured, supportive setting.	Comfortable standing independently in 3.5 feet of water	Fundamental skills, basic rules, positional understanding, teamwork, and sportsmanship
Bronze	A developmental program for athletes ready to advance skills and increase commitment through structured weekly training and local competition.	Swim continuously: 50 yards freestyle, 50 yards backstroke, 25 yards breaststroke Coach evaluation of skill proficiency, effort, and readiness	Skill refinement, endurance, game awareness, accountability, and competitive readiness
Silver	A higher-commitment program for athletes focused on advancing skills and competing at an increased level with expanded tactical instruction and tournament play.	Swim continuously: 100 yards freestyle, 100 yards backstroke, 50 yards breaststroke Ongoing coach evaluation of skill, effort, coachability, and readiness Active participation in local tournaments and competitive events	Advanced fundamentals, tactical systems, competitive application, teamwork, and confidence under pressure
Gold	The highest level within the developmental pathway, designed for dedicated athletes prepared for advanced competition and increased performance expectations. Builds upon Bronze and Silver foundations and prepares athletes for high-level local and travel tournaments.	Swim continuously: 400 yards freestyle, 200 yards backstroke, 200 yards breaststroke Ongoing coach evaluation of skill execution, tactics, conditioning, work ethic, and commitment Participation in local and travel tournaments Required dryland training	Elite skill refinement, leadership, accountability, advanced competition, and performance excellence
Regional	A flexible training and competition option for high school-aged athletes balancing athletic development with	High school-aged	Continued skill development, local competition, teamwork, and maintaining game readiness

Program	Program Definition	Requirements	Primary Focus
	academic and extracurricular commitments.	Coach evaluation of readiness and engagement Participation in local Bronze-level USAWP tournaments	
National	The highest level of commitment and competition within the club, designed for athletes aspiring to compete at an elite level through intensive training and high-level competition.	Significant time commitment Ongoing coach evaluation of performance and commitment	Elite training, advanced tactics, international competition, leadership, and long-term athletic development
Masters	A program for athletes aged 18 and older that provides consistent pool time, a safe competitive environment, and opportunities to develop and maintain water polo skills.	Age 18+ (graduated high school)	Skill maintenance, fitness, competition, and lifelong engagement in the sport

THWPC Expected Tournament Schedule 2026-27

Location	Events	Dates	Location	Age Groups	Programs	Date Confirmed?
AWAY	Yeti Tournament	09/25 – 09/27	King County Aquatic Center (Federal Way, WA)	12U Coed, 14U	Bronze, Silver & Gold	Confirmed
LOCAL	Oregon Fall League	09/19	Parkrose High School (Portland, OR)	12U Coed, 14U	All Youth Programs	Confirmed
LOCAL	Oregon Fall League	10/03	Parkrose High School (Portland, OR)	12U Coed, 14U	All Youth Programs	Confirmed
AWAY	Spooktacular Tournament	10/23 – 10/25	Saanich Commonwealth Place Pool (Victoria, BC, Canada)	14U	Gold	Confirmed/Passport Required
LOCAL	Oregon Fall League	10/25	Parkrose High School (Portland, OR)	12U Coed, 14U	All Youth Programs	Confirmed
LOCAL	Great Pumpkin Classic	10/31	Albany Community Pool (Albany, OR)	12U Coed, 14U	All Youth Programs	Confirmed
LOCAL	Oregon Fall League	11/07 – 11/08	Parkrose High School (Portland, OR)	12U Coed, 14U	All Youth Programs	Confirmed
AWAY	USA WP Dare to Dream	01/30 – 01/31	Curtis Aquatic Center (Tacoma, WA)	12U Coed, 14U	Beginners, Bronze	NOT YET CONFIRMED
AWAY	KAP7 – Winter Tournament	01/29 – 01/31	Woollett Aquatics Center (Irvine, CA)	14U, 16U, 18U	Gold, National	NOT YET CONFIRMED
AWAY	Valentines Day Tournament	02/05 – 02/07	Saanich Commonwealth Place Pool (Victoria, BC, Canada)	14U, 16U, 18U	Gold, National	NOT YET CONFIRMED/Passport Required
LOCAL	Newberg Spring Tournament	03/05 – 03/07	Chehalem Aquatic Center (Newberg, OR)	12U Coed, 14U, 16U, 18U	All Youth & HS Programs	NOT YET CONFIRMED
HOSTED	THWPC Spring Invite	03/13 – 03/14	Beaverton Swim Center	10U/12U Coed, 14U	All Youth Programs	NOT YET CONFIRMED
AWAY	Sasquatch Tournament	04/02 – 04/04	King County Aquatic Center (Federal Way, WA)	14U, 16U, 18U	Silver, Gold, Regional, National	NOT YET CONFIRMED
AWAY	Navy AC Spring Tournament	04/09 – 04/11	Lejeune Hall (Naval Academy, MD 21402)	14U, 16U, 18U	Gold, National	Confirmed
LOCAL	Santiam Splash	04/09 – 04/11	The Kroc Center (Salem, OR)	14U, 16U, 18U	Silver, Gold, Regional, National	NOT YET CONFIRMED
HOSTED	Rose Cup	05/08 – 05/10	THPRD Aquatic Center	10U/12U Coed, 14U, 16U, 18U	All Youth & HS Programs	NOT YET CONFIRMED
LOCAL	Newberg Summer Tournament	05/28 – 05/30	Chehalem Aquatic Center (Newberg, OR)	12U Coed, 14U, 16U, 18U	All Youth & HS Programs	NOT YET CONFIRMED
TBA	JO Qualification Tournament	06/23 – 06/25	TBA	12U Coed, 14U, 16U, 18U	Bronze, Gold, National	NOT YET CONFIRMED
HOSTED	THWPC Summer Invite	07/10 – 07/11	Raleigh Hills Swim Center	10U Coed, 12U Coed	Beginners, Bronze	NOT YET CONFIRMED
AWAY	JO's National Tournament	09/10 – 09/25	Woollett Aquatics Center (Irvine, CA)	12U Coed, 14U, 16U, 18U	Bronze, Gold, National	Confirmed
AWAY	JO's National Tournament	09/23 – 09/25	Woollett Aquatics Center (Irvine, CA)	12U Coed, 14U, 16U, 18U	Bronze, Gold, National	Confirmed

THWPC Athlete, Family & Coaching Standards

Our Commitment to Athletes and Families

Tualatin Hills Water Polo Club believes youth sports should develop strong athletes and strong people.

We believe athletes grow when they are challenged, held accountable, supported, and treated with respect. Competitive athletics can and should be demanding. Coaches should expect effort, discipline, resilience, teamwork, and accountability from their athletes.

Our goal is a culture built on:

High Expectations. High Accountability. High Support.

Every athlete should have the opportunity to leave THWPC a stronger water polo player, teammate, competitor, and person.

These standards apply to athletes, families, coaches, volunteers, administrators, and Board members.

What Athletes Can Expect From THWPC Coaches

THWPC coaches have significant influence over young athletes. With that influence comes responsibility. Families and athletes can expect THWPC coaches to:

- Treat athletes with dignity and respect
- Create an environment that supports physical and emotional safety
- Establish clear, developmentally appropriate expectations for effort, behavior, attendance, teamwork, and sportsmanship
- Provide instruction and feedback intended to develop athletes
- Hold athletes accountable for their own conduct
- Apply discipline fairly and with an identifiable connection to athlete behavior or team expectations
- Consider an athlete's age, physical condition, environment, equipment, weather, and other relevant safety factors when assigning conditioning or consequences
- Communicate significant behavioral or disciplinary concerns to parents or guardians as soon as reasonably possible
- Maintain appropriate coach-athlete boundaries
- Follow all applicable USA Water Polo, SafeSport, THPRD, and THWPC policies

- Model the sportsmanship, self-control, accountability, and respect expected from THWPC athletes and families

Coaching Style

Water polo is a demanding sport. Coaches may be direct. Practices may be difficult. Athletes may receive critical feedback, lose playing time, perform conditioning, or experience other reasonable consequences related to effort, attendance, sportsmanship, team rules, or behavior.

Discipline

Athlete discipline should:

- Address the athlete's own behavior, choices, effort, or failure to meet a communicated team expectation
- Be proportionate and developmentally appropriate
- Be conducted under conditions that reasonably protect athlete safety
- Avoid humiliation, degradation, retaliation, or intentionally singling out an athlete for embarrassment
- Never be imposed on an athlete as punishment for the conduct, disagreement, complaint, or behavior of the athlete's parent or guardian
- Physical conditioning may be an appropriate component of training or athlete discipline when it is reasonable, safe, developmentally appropriate, and related to legitimate team or athlete expectations
- When conditioning occurs, athletes should have appropriate gear and conditions for the activity, or the activity should be adjusted to meet what gear and conditions are available

What Coaches Can Expect From Families

A healthy club culture requires accountability in both directions.

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Treat coaches, athletes, officials, volunteers, Board members, and other families respectfully.
- Allow coaches to coach during practices and competitions
- Address concerns privately and through the club's established concern process
- Avoid confronting coaches immediately before, during, or after competition
- Avoid directing athletes from the stands

- Respect appropriate coaching decisions regarding strategy, team placement, roster selection, and playing time
- Provide coaches with relevant information affecting an athlete's participation or safety
- Follow THWPC, THPRD, USA Water Polo, and SafeSport requirements
- Recognize that disagreement with a coaching decision does not necessarily mean the decision was inappropriate
- Parents are also entitled to ask questions, raise concerns, and respectfully disagree with decisions without fear that doing so will negatively affect their athlete.

Raising a Concern: Where Do I Start?

THWPC wants concerns raised early enough, or as soon as they can, so they can be addressed.

The appropriate starting point depends on the nature of the concern.

Level 1: Routine Questions > Start with the Coach and TurtleTalk@thillswaterpolo.org

Examples include:

- Playing time
- Team placement
- Practice expectations
- Tournament selection
- Skill development
- Routine athlete feedback
- Minor interpersonal concerns

Parents should email and/or request a private conversation at an appropriate time rather than addressing the issue immediately before, during, or after practice or competition.

Level 2: Unresolved or Significant Coaching Concerns > Submit to THWPC Board

If:

- the concern was raised with the coach and remains unresolved
- the concern involves repeated conduct
- the parent does not believe direct discussion has been productive

The Board may gather information from the parent, athlete, coach, witnesses, administrators, or others with relevant information.

Level 3: Safety, Abuse, Retaliation or Serious Misconduct

Concerns involving potential:

- abuse;
- harassment;
- discrimination;
- retaliation;
- threats;
- serious athlete safety concerns;
- prohibited coach-athlete conduct; or
- conduct potentially subject to mandatory SafeSport reporting

should be reported directly through the THWPC board and/or USA Water Polo/SafeSport reporting pathway.

Nothing in THWPC's internal concern process replaces or limits any person's obligation or ability to make a report required or permitted under SafeSport rules or applicable law.

What Happens When a Concern Is Reported?

THWPC recognizes that submitting a concern and hearing nothing afterward can undermine trust even when work is occurring behind the scenes.

For concerns submitted to the Board, THWPC will strive to:

- Acknowledge receipt promptly
- Identify who is responsible for reviewing the concern
- Gather information from appropriate individuals
- Determine whether the issue involves club policy, SafeSport requirements, personnel matters, or another governing authority
- Take appropriate action when warranted
- Communicate to the reporting family an expected timeline for the review period
- Communicate to the reporting family when the review is complete

THWPC may not be able to share confidential personnel information, information concerning another athlete, or details of disciplinary action.

However, when appropriate, the reporting family should receive confirmation that:

- the concern was reviewed;

- the appropriate decision-making body considered it;
- any required reporting obligations were evaluated; and
- appropriate action was taken based on the findings.

SafeSport Is a Standard, Not Our Only Standard

A determination that conduct does not constitute a SafeSport violation does not necessarily mean that the conduct meets THWPC's expectations.

SafeSport requirements establish important protections for athletes. THWPC may establish additional expectations for coaching, athlete and parent conduct, communication, discipline, travel, professionalism, and club culture.

The Board may therefore determine that conduct does not require a SafeSport report or sanction while still identifying expectations, education, policy changes, corrective action, or other opportunities for improvement.

What Athletes Can Expect From THWPC

Athletes can expect:

- Coaching intended to help them improve
- Clear expectations
- Appropriate accountability
- Respectful treatment
- Reasonable opportunities to ask questions
- Freedom from retaliation when they or their parents raise a good-faith concern
- Coaches and adults who follow SafeSport requirements and club policies

Athletes should also expect to be challenged. Being uncomfortable because a coach asks an athlete to work harder, corrects poor behavior, limits playing time, or provides difficult feedback is not inherently inappropriate.

What Families Can Expect From the Board

The THWPC Board is responsible for the governance and oversight of the club.

Families can expect the Board to:

- Put athlete safety first
- Oversee the coaching program
- Establish and consistently apply club policies
- Listen to member concerns

- Address significant issues
- Protect appropriate confidentiality
- Provide reasonable financial transparency
- Evaluate concerns without predetermining outcomes
- Distinguish between disagreements, policy violations, safety issues, and SafeSport matters
- Take corrective action when warranted
- Regularly review policies and learn from situations that expose gaps or ambiguity

Not every concern will result in the outcome requested by the person raising it. Every good-faith concern should, however, be treated respectfully and evaluated through an appropriate process.

Shared Accountability

A successful youth sports organization requires accountability from everyone.

Athletes are accountable for effort, sportsmanship, behavior, attendance, teamwork, and following team expectations.

Parents and guardians are accountable for respectful communication, appropriate sideline behavior, financial commitments, volunteer responsibilities, and supporting the team environment.

Coaches are accountable for athlete development, safety, appropriate discipline, communication, professionalism, and adherence to club expectations.

The Board and Administrative Staff are accountable for governance, financial stewardship, policy, oversight, responsiveness, and maintaining a club culture consistent with THWPC's mission as well as timely communication, accurate records, and effective operational support

We can expect one another to communicate respectfully, act in good faith, put athletes first, and work toward a club culture worthy of the young people entrusted to us.

Annual Review

These standards will be reviewed annually by the THWPC Board of Directors along with the Athlete and Parent Handbook and Standards and the Tournament & Travel Policy.

The Board may revise these standards as the club grows, governing requirements change, or experience identifies opportunities for improvement.

Codes of Conduct

Athlete Code of Conduct

Oregon State Regulations:

- All people must shower before entering the pool.
- Street Shoes are not allowed on deck.
- Players will not be permitted in the pool without a coach present.
- Food/Beverages are not allowed in the dressing rooms or pool area.
- Diving is always forbidden at the shallow end of the pool.

Tualatin Hills Park and Recreation District Policies:

- All state regulations will be enforced by THPRD staff.
- Players are not permitted in THPRD employee areas.
- There are pay phones located by pools for players' use. Business/office phones are for staff use only.
- THPRD is not responsible for lost or stolen articles.

Player Obligations (Discipline Policy):

- All practices are mandatory. Illness, work conflicts and family emergencies are the only exceptions for missing a scheduled practice. Players must provide prior notice if they are missing practice through text/team app, email, in person, or phone call to their coach.
- Failure to attend your scheduled practices, games, or tournaments may forfeit play time in future games or tournaments.
- If an athlete must leave practice early, they must have prior approval of the coach on deck.
- Disrespectful behavior and foul language will not be tolerated and a suspension may be made.
- Stealing, provoking fights, vandalism, or continued disrespectful behavior may lead to dismissal from the team.
- Brutality in a game will not be tolerated and may lead to a suspension or team dismissal.
- Players are responsible for cleaning up after practices, games, and hosting tournaments.

Competition Expectations

Playing Time Philosophy

At competitive levels, decisions are performance-based. At developmental levels, playing time is more evenly distributed.

Tournament playing time for all ages may vary, depending on:

- Attendance at practice
- Effort in practice
- Tactical matchups
- Team needs
- Attitude and coachability

Parent Code of Conduct

Parents and family members are role models and expected to:

- Always support and encourage all athletes in a positive and respectful manner.
- Treat coaches, officials, teammates, opponents, and other parents with respect, courtesy, and fairness.
- Respect the role of coaches and avoid giving direction or advice to athletes during games or practices.
- Refrain from using profanity, derogatory language, or gestures at any event.
- Respect the decisions of officials, refraining from criticism or challenges before, during, or after competition.
- Understand that coaches are responsible for the team's training, strategy, and playing time decisions.
- Communicate concerns to coaches privately at an agreed-upon time, not in front of athletes or other families.
- Represent the club in a positive manner at all events, practices, and tournaments.

The following behaviors are prohibited by parents and spectators:

- Negative or hostile sideline behavior including yelling at players, coaches, officials, or other parents.
- Confronting coaches or officials during or immediately after games.
- Criticizing coaches, officials, or athletes publicly or on social media.
- Any form of harassment, discrimination, or demeaning language toward others.
- Coaching players from the stands during games or practices.

Consequences for violations may include verbal warnings, written warnings, removal from events, suspension of attendance at games or practices, or further action.

THWPC Tournament & Travel Quick Guide for Families

This guide summarizes how tournaments, travel, and costs work for THWPC athletes. The Full Tournament and Travel Policy governs all situations.

Tournament Types

Local Tournaments

Local tournaments usually occur within 100 miles and do not require overnight lodging.

- Families provide transportation

Travel Tournaments

Travel tournaments require overnight lodging and additional travel costs.

- All ages/groups travel and stay with their families/adult unless otherwise communicated and arranged
 - The National (18U) group may travel as a team for certain tournaments

Commitment & Financial Responsibility

Once an athlete registers and is selected, participation is expected.

- Participating in any portion of a tournament confirms full financial responsibility
- Costs apply regardless of playing time, injury, or discipline unless the club cancels the tournament

If an athlete withdraws:

- Local withdrawals may affect future selection
- Travel withdrawals may still require payment if costs have already been incurred and a replacement cannot be found

Travel Costs

Families are responsible for the actual per-athlete cost of travel, which may include:

- Tournament entry fees, Athlete **and** Adult Airfare, Hotel, Transportation, Coaches' travel expenses
- Meals unless otherwise noted and Personal spending

If participation numbers change and costs increase, families will be notified before additional payment is requested.

The club is not responsible for additional costs caused by weather, airline issues, facility closures, or other events outside the club's control.

Travel Logistics

Air Travel

When airline travel is required:

- THWPC does not purchase airline tickets for athletes or their adult
- Parents/Adults and their athlete may book any flight arriving by the required arrival date/time

Driving Tournaments

For driving-distance tournaments:

- The coach will announce required reporting time to location

Full Travel and Tournament Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This policy explains how tournament participation and travel operate.
- 1.2. Our priorities are:
 - 1.2.1. Athlete safety
 - 1.2.2. Fair selection and competitive integrity
 - 1.2.3. Financial clarity
 - 1.2.4. Consistent enforcement
 - 1.2.5. Clear, simple processes for families
- 1.3. This policy applies to all athletes, parents, coaches and volunteers

2. Definitions

2.1. Local Tournament

- 2.1.1. An event, usually within 100 miles, that does not require overnight lodging
- 2.1.2. Travel to local tournaments is the responsibility of the family

2.2. Travel Tournament

- 2.2.1. An event requiring overnight lodging and travel with additional cost

2.3. Official Commitment

- 2.3.1. An athlete has accepted the invitation and met all required sign-up and deposit deadlines
- 2.3.2. Financial obligations related to tournament participation are governed by Section 9

2.4. Travel Squad

- 2.4.1. Athletes selected and committed to represent the club at a travel tournament.

3. Tournament Eligibility and Selection

- 3.1. Club Authority

3.1.1. THWPC reserves the right to cancel participation for a team or individual athlete.

3.1.2. THWPC reserves the right to remove athletes due to:

3.1.2.1. Practice attendance

3.1.2.2. Attitude and sportsmanship

3.1.2.3. Outstanding balances

3.1.2.4. Failure to meet behavioral expectations

3.2. Coaches may invite athletes from other clubs if necessary to field a competitive roster.

3.3. Decisions regarding roster selection, removal, and discipline are made by the Head Coach in consultation with Club Administration

3.4. Decisions are final for the duration of the tournament

4. Tournament Team Selection (Gold Programs and Above)

4.1. Athletes are selected based on tournament registration and ongoing evaluation

4.2. Selection and playing time are not guaranteed

4.3. Playing time is at the sole discretion of the coaching staff

4.4. Evaluation factors include:

4.4.1. Skill and ability level

4.4.2. Attitude and sportsmanship

4.4.3. Effort and responsiveness to coaching

4.4.4. Practice attendance

4.4.5. Team size and tournament level

4.4.6. Competitive needs of the team

5. Registration and Timelines

5.1. Travel Tournaments

5.1.1. Registration invitations are emailed/posted 4 to 6 weeks prior to the tournament (or as soon as possible)

- 5.1.2. Registration includes estimated costs and details
- 5.1.3. Payment must be received before the written deadline
- 5.1.4. If payment is not received by the deadline, the athlete will not travel
- 5.1.5. Financial obligation begins upon official commitment as described in Section 9

6. Local Tournaments

- 6.1. Registration invitations are emailed/posted as soon as scheduled and confirmed
- 6.2. Carpooling is encouraged

7. Deadline Extensions

- 7.1. Registration deadlines are set to align with host requirements and travel logistics
- 7.2. In exceptional circumstances, coaches may extend deadlines to field a competitive team

8. Commitment Rules

- 8.1. Once an athlete registers and is selected:
 - 8.1.1. Participation is expected
 - 8.1.2. Participation in any portion of a tournament constitutes acceptance of full financial obligation
 - 8.1.3. Financial obligation applies regardless of playing time, injury or illness, disciplinary action, or early removal from participation, unless the club cancels the tournament
 - 8.1.4. If an athlete withdraws from a local tournament after committing, that withdrawal may be considered in future tournament selection decisions
 - 8.1.5. If an athlete withdraws from a travel tournament and a suitable replacement cannot be found and travel costs have already been incurred, the athlete or family is responsible for their portion of unrecoverable costs

9. Cost Responsibility for Travel Tournaments

- 9.1. Travel costs vary depending on the number of athletes attending and the tournament location.

9.2. Families are responsible for their own athlete and responsible adult's cost, as well as team shared costs, even if final costs exceed initial estimates.

9.3. If participation numbers change and costs increase after initial estimates, families will be notified as soon as possible and before additional payment is requested.

9.4. If the club cancels a tournament, every effort will be made to minimize member costs.

9.5. The club is not responsible for additional expenses resulting from weather events, transportation disruptions, airline cancellations, facility closures, public health orders, or other circumstances beyond the club's control.

9.6. Travel Costs not covered by session fees include but are not limited to:

9.6.1. Tournament Entry Fees

9.6.2. Airfare (for athlete and adult)

9.6.3. Hotel (for athlete and adult)

9.6.4. Transportation

9.6.5. Coaches' travel expenses

9.6.6. Meals unless otherwise noted

9.6.7. Personal spending

10. Refunds and Cancellation

10.1. Deposits are non-refundable unless the club cancels the tournament.

10.2. If a family cancels after official commitment, refunds are limited to costs not already incurred

10.3. Travel costs already paid or committed by the club are not refundable

11. Behavior During Tournaments

11.1.1. During competition and pool deck activities, supervision is provided by the coaching staff.

11.1.2. Club supervision does not extend beyond official check-in and dismissal times, except when team travel is occurring (National/18U).

12. Travel Safety Rules (for National/18U)

- 12.1. No switching vans unless directed by a coach or chaperone.
- 12.2. No switching hotel rooms unless approved by coaches and chaperones.
- 12.3. No athlete may room with an unrelated adult unless prior written parental authorization is provided.
- 12.4. Athletes must remain with the team during travel activities unless directed otherwise by the Head Coach.
- 12.5. Curfew and lights-out times are set by coaches.
- 12.6. Hotel room checks will be conducted periodically.
- 12.7. Hotel rooms must be left in original condition.
- 12.8. Hotel room assignments are same-gender only, generally 4 to a room.
- 12.9. If mixed genders are present:
 - 12.9.1. A minimum of three athletes must be present in the room.
 - 12.9.2. Room doors must remain open.
- 12.10. Athletes must leave immediately if prohibited activities occur. Failure to leave will result in being considered a participant in the prohibited activity.
 - 12.10.1. Athletes must report unsafe or dangerous conduct.
 - 12.10.2. Reports may be made to any coach or chaperone and will be handled in accordance with SafeSport reporting obligations.
 - 12.10.3. Prohibited behaviors include:
 - 12.10.3.1. Drugs unless legally prescribed, alcohol, or tobacco regardless of athlete age
 - 12.10.3.2. Disrespectful behavior or foul language
 - 12.10.3.3. Hotel disruption
 - 12.10.3.4. Inviting non-club members into hotel rooms
 - 12.10.3.5. Sharing room numbers or phone numbers with non-club members
 - 12.10.3.6. Visiting non-club hotel rooms without permission
 - 12.10.4. Sharing room keys outside of coaches and chaperones

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- 12.10.5. Failure to observe curfew
- 12.10.6. Failure to follow coach or chaperone directives
- 12.10.7. Deliberate and unnecessary brutality
- 12.10.8. Any illegal activity

12.11. Discipline decisions may be made immediately when safety is at risk.

12.11.1. The club reserves the right to impose discipline without prior warning depending on severity.

12.11.1.1. Violations may result in:

- 12.11.1.1.1. Restriction of participation
- 12.11.1.1.2. Written report to Board and parents
- 12.11.1.1.3. Removal from Travel Squad
- 12.11.1.1.4. Being sent home
- 12.11.1.1.5. Suspension or expulsion

13. Annual Review

13.1. This policy will be reviewed annually by club leadership.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can my athlete try water polo before signing up?

Yes! First-time athletes are welcome to try THWPC with a free one-week trial. You must register online before entering the water.

2. Do athletes have to attend the same practice days each week?

Yes. Our training is progressive, so it is important that coaches know which athletes are scheduled to attend on each practice day.

3. Do athletes have to purchase all the team gear?

No. Only 14U athletes and older who participate in tournaments are required to purchase team gear. This includes a team suit, bag, two cotton t-shirts and a travel polo shirt.

4. Are tournaments and games an additional cost?

Yes, but costs vary depending on tournament location.

5. Do athletes have to play in tournaments?

No, but we strongly encourage athletes to try. Tournaments are the best place to apply the skills athletes are developing in practice.

6. If my athlete attends a tournament, are they guaranteed to play every game?

No. Coaches make an effort to give athletes playing opportunities, but playing time is not guaranteed.

If a coach believes an athlete is unlikely to receive playing time at a particular event, families will be notified.

7. What should athletes bring to practice?

Athletes should bring: swimsuit, towel, goggles (if desired), running shoes (if doing dryland), water bottle

8. Where can I find information about the THPRD frequent user pass?

The THPRD website provides current information about frequent user passes and out-of-district assessments. More information can be found here:

<https://www.thprd.org/index.html>

9. Do you offer swimming lessons?

No, THWPC does not provide swim lessons. If you are looking for lessons, please contact THPRD or a local swim club.

10. Do athletes work on swimming strokes?

Our goal is to develop water polo players, not competitive swimmers. However, swimming is a major part of the game. If stroke correction is needed, coaches will provide stroke guidance to support player development.

11. Will water polo ruin my athlete's swim stroke?

No! Water polo uses techniques that differ from competitive swimming. Any adjustments made for water polo can be easily corrected during swim training.

12. My athlete is a strong swimmer. Will they automatically be good at water polo?"

Strong swimming skills are a great foundation, but water polo requires additional skills that take time to develop. These include ball handling, eggbeater kicking, passing, and game awareness.

Many strong swimmers are new to these skills at first, and that's completely normal. With consistent practice, athletes quickly learn the techniques that make water polo such a fun and dynamic sport.

What is Water Polo?

Playing Area:

The typical playing area is 25 meters by 20 meters, with a minimum depth of 1.8 meters (6 feet). The size of the playing area varies considerably depending on what facility the game is played at.

Five Important Marks on the side of the pool:

- **Two-meter Line:** The first mark out 2 meters from each goal usually indicated with a red marker or cone. The offensive team will often station a player on this line in front of the goal. The two meter man or Hole Set)
- **Five-meter Line:** The second mark out five meters from each goal usually indicated with a red marker or cone. Marker or penalty shots (five-meter shots).
- **Six-meter Line:** The second mark out five meters from each goal usually indicated with a yellow marker or cone. When an offensive player is fouled outside of the five-meter line they are rewarded with a free pass, shoot, or pop the ball live.
- **Half Line:** The center of the playing area is usually marked by a green or white marker or cone. This is where the ball is dropped to begin a quarter and where both teams line up after a goal is scored by either team.
- **2-meter Box:** 2M outside either end of the goal posts, usually marked by a red marker or cone. Players can now move closer to the goal line (inside the 2-meter line) on the wings without the ball, if they are outside the designated box area, reducing premature offside penalties.

Equipment:

Two goals, a water polo ball (each team will also be given one counter ball to throw in if the ball in use goes off deck), and numbered water polo caps (White is VISITING, Dark is HOME).

Players:

Each team is allowed up to 13 to 15 players (depending on facility), with only 6 field players and one goalie starting at a time. Players tread water the entire game and cannot touch the bottom or sides of the pool. If a player did so the referee would call an offensive. All field players may only handle the ball with one hand, and the goalkeepers may use both hands.

The Game:

Water polo is divided up into four quarters. Each quarter starts with teams lined up on opposite goal lines (the ends of the pool). On a signal (whistle) from the referee, both teams sprint to the middle of the pool to the ball. Most games at T-Hills will play in the ball are dropped on the side the table is on. The team that wins the sprint will admittedly set up their offense on the opposite side of the pool. If it is not clear who won the sprint the referee may call a jump ball. The objective of the game is to score the most goals throughout the entire game. A goal can be scored when the ball completely passes the goal line or the goals post. After a goal teams will line up at half on their side. The team that did not score the goal will start with the ball. The ball is not put in play and players may not move past the half marker until the ball has passed.

Game & Shot Clock:

The four quarters in a water polo game are all the same amount of time, being 5-7 minutes in length depending on the age or skill level. There is a two-minute rest period between quarters and when playing in a shallow deep course teams will switch every quarter break. Quarter breaks allow players to rest and coaches to instruct players. During the game there will also be a shot clock running too. The shot clock in water polo is much like the shot clock in basketball. When a team begins their offensive possession the shot clock will begin. The shot clock is 30 seconds long and does not restart unless the offensive team shoots or the other team gains possession of the ball.

Water polo is a combination of swimming, wrestling, basketball, soccer and baseball. It requires three basic fundamental skills: swimming, treading (eggbeater) and passing (ball skills). Six field players swim, tread, pass and shoot in an attempt to score into a goal defended by a goalie.

Basic water polo strategy is most similar to basketball. Teams set up a five-player semicircle around the goal (the perimeter). Perimeter players can pass the ball, drive, set picks and shoot. A sixth player, the center (a.k.a. set), sits 2 meters out from the opposing team's goal with his/her back facing the goal and attempts to get open for a shot. Positions in the pool are identified by numbers, listed in the diagram below:



Course and Markings

Olympic and collegiate pool size is 30 meters x 20 meters. A typical age group pool size is 25 meters x 6-8 lanes. Three colored markers define the water polo course. Red markers indicate the 2-meter line. Offensive players cannot be inside the red marker unless the ball is also inside the red marker. Yellow markers indicate the 5-meter line. If an offensive player is fouled behind the yellow marker, he/she may shoot immediately (no faking or hesitating) or take a free pass. If an offensive player is fouled inside the yellow marker, he/she must take a free pass. White markers indicate mid-pool. After a goal, play re-starts at mid-pool. Goalies cannot cross the white marker.

Game Times and Shot Clock

Games are divided into four quarters. Quarter length depends on the level of play. Olympic and collegiate quarters are eight minutes. Age group quarters are typically five to six minutes. Teams may not have continuous possession of the ball for more than 30 seconds — this is called the shot clock. Shot clocks are re-set after turnovers, shots on goal and ejection fouls. Shot and game clocks stop when the ball is not "in play" (the time between a foul occurring and a free throw being taken) or a goal is scored.

Fouls

Fouls are critical to the strategy and flow of a water polo game. They occur frequently during offensive possessions. Referees signal fouls by blowing their whistle and pointing their arm in the direction of the team that was awarded the foul. Unlike most sports, defensive fouls are not always bad. Sometimes they are part of the defense strategy.

Offensive players will sometimes attempt to "draw" a foul in order to earn a free pass. It is not uncommon for more offensive motion immediately after a foul has been called.

- One whistle: minor/ordinary foul (offense keeps the ball)
- Two whistles: offensive foul (defense gets the ball)
- Three whistles: major/personal foul (offense keeps the ball while defender sits in penalty box for 20 seconds)

Minor (ordinary) Fouls

The most common minor foul is impeding the free movement of a player who is not holding the ball. To draw a foul, the offensive player must let go of the ball and show the referee that he/she is being held while keeping his/her head above water.

Other ordinary fouls include:

- Two hands (touching the ball with two hands)
- Ball under (taking the ball under water when pressured)
- Offensive foul (pushing off or head-butting a defender when holding the ball)
- Off the bottom (standing on the bottom of the pool)
- Delay of game (delaying too long before taking a free throw)

After a minor foul, a member of the fouled team must put the ball in play by taking a free throw. There is no limit to the number of minor fouls a player can commit.

Major (personal) Fouls

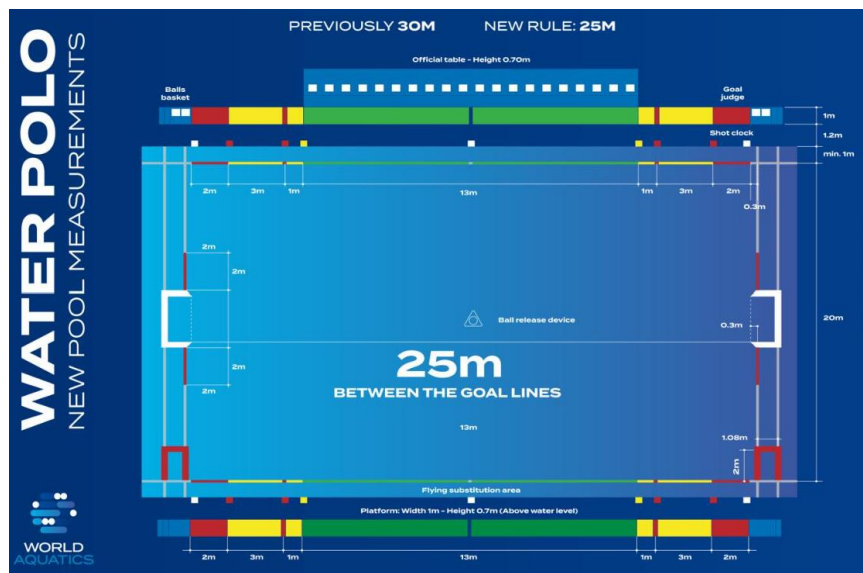
The most common major foul (a.k.a. kick-out) occurs when a defensive player holds, sinks or pulls back an offensive player that is not holding the ball. Other major fouls include interfering with a free pass or kicking/striking an opposing player.

Most major fouls result in the player being excluded for 20 seconds, causing his/her team to be temporarily down a player. Referees signal major fouls by blowing two short then one long whistle blast, pointing to the excluded player; and moving his/her arm towards the penalty area. The excluded player must sit in the penalty area for 20 seconds unless a goal

is scored or a change of possession occurs. If a player commits three major fouls, they must sit out the remainder of the game.

Another common major foul is a penalty foul. Penalty fouls occur when a defensive player commits a foul in the penalty area (inside the yellow marker and between the goal posts) that prevents a probable goal. After a penalty foul, the offensive team is awarded a penalty shot from the yellow marker.

Please note that officiating is subjective and open to interpretation by the referees.



Volunteer Hours and Fundraising

Parent Volunteer Commitment

Tualatin Hills Water Polo Club is a volunteer-supported organization. Like most youth sports clubs, we rely on parent participation to operate tournaments, events, and club activities. Volunteer support helps keep registration fees lower and allows the club to provide more opportunities for our athletes.

Many of the club's volunteer needs occur during club-hosted tournaments and events, as described in the Tournament and Travel Policy. These events require significant operational support and are an important part of sustaining the club's programs.

Volunteer Requirement

For the 2026-2027 club year (ending August 1, 2027), each club family is required to complete 8 volunteer hours (does not apply to BSD only families).

Volunteer hours are calculated per family household, not per athlete. Families with multiple athletes in the club are responsible for the same volunteer requirement as families with one athlete.

Volunteer opportunities may include, but are not limited to:

- Tournament operations (game table, timing, scoring)
- Event setup and cleanup
- Hospitality or concessions
- Fundraising events
- Committee participation
- Board positions

Volunteer opportunities will be communicated through the club and are typically filled on a first-come basis.

Because the majority of volunteer needs occur during tournaments, families should expect to assist during at least one club-hosted tournament or major club event each season.

Tournament Hosting

When THWPC hosts tournaments, a large number of volunteers are required for the event to run successfully. Families will be asked to assist with assigned shifts to support these events.

Hosting tournaments is an important source of revenue for the club and helps offset operating costs.

Volunteer Buyout Option

Families who are unable to fulfill the volunteer requirement may choose a volunteer buyout option of \$250 per season.

This option helps the club hire support staff or cover operational needs when volunteer coverage is limited.

Athlete Volunteer Participation

Athletes age 12 and older may assist with approved volunteer roles.

Athlete volunteer service may count toward the family volunteer requirement, but may not exceed 50% of the total required hours.

Tracking and Completion

Families are responsible for signing up for volunteer roles and completing their required hours. The club will provide instructions for tracking volunteer participation.

If volunteer requirements are not fulfilled by the end of the season, the club will assess the volunteer buyout fee. The buyout fee will be prorated per hour volunteered (\$31 per missing volunteer hour)

If a family signs up for a volunteer shift and is unable to attend, it is their responsibility to arrange a replacement or notify the club in advance.

Tournament and Practice Participation and Account Standing

Athletes whose families have not fulfilled volunteer commitments or paid the associated buyout will not be considered in good standing until the requirement is satisfied, consistent with the club's Tournament and Travel Policies.

Accounts must remain in good standing for athletes to participate in practices, games, and tournaments.

Shared Responsibility

Volunteer participation is a shared responsibility across the club community. When families contribute their time, it allows coaches to focus on athlete development and helps ensure a positive experience for all athletes.