

MIDLAKES WATER POLO (MWP) 2019 OPERATING PLAN

A. Guiding Philosophy

Midlakes Water Polo is a recreational league that emphasizes sportsmanship, education, skill development, and participation through friendly competition. Coaches and parents must ensure the safety of all participants, guarantee the professionalism of the sport, and serve as role models and ambassadors for their respective Clubs, Midlakes Water Polo, and Midlakes Swim League.

B. Fees

All Clubs that wish to participate in Midlakes Water Polo must contribute to the financial health of the organization by paying the following fees. All fees should be paid by check made payable to Midlakes Swim League. Clubs that fail to submit fees within 30 days of receiving invoice will be ineligible to play the following season.

1. Participation Fee due at the Spring Meeting or within 30 days of final invoice:
 - a. \$50 per Club
2. Regular Season Fee:
 - a. \$80 to field a 10&U Coed Team
 - b. \$80 to field a 12&U Coed Team
 - c. \$80 to field a 14&U Coed Team
 - d. \$80 to field a 15&O Coed Team
 - e. \$80 to field an Open Men's Team
 - f. \$80 to field an Open Women's Team
3. Championship Tournament Fee:
 - a. \$80 to field a 10&U Coed Team
 - b. \$80 to field a 12&U Coed Team
 - c. \$120 to field a 14&U Coed Team
 - d. \$120 to field a 15&O Coed Team

C. Club Requirements

All Clubs that wish to participate in Midlakes Water Polo must fulfill the following conditions:

1. Exist as a member in good standing of Midlakes Swim League
2. Provide Proof of Insurance (see article VIII of the Midlakes Swim League By-Laws)
3. Ensure each player's guardian signs a Hold Harmless Agreement and Lystedt Law Parent/Athlete Form. These forms will be controlled and held on file at each Club.
4. Hire a coach or coaches and ensure their compliance with all rules and regulations
5. Designate a Club Representative to serve on the Water Polo Committee
6. Host Preseason Clinics, Regular Season matches, or Championship Tournament matches as able or required.
7. Pay final Invoice for Water Polo participation and regular and championship fees within 30 days of final invoice.
8. Each club will provide a **trained** timekeeper, game book, and pool monitor to assist at games.
9. Each participating Club must provide a coach for their program. Coaches are responsible for:
 - a. Obtaining current and valid certifications in First Aid, CPR, and either Lifeguard Training or Coaches Safety Training before the season begins. All coaches (heads and assistants) should be certified prior to coaching a practice, but must be certified prior to coaching a game.

- b. Attending a mandatory Midlakes Water Polo coaching and rules clinic; turning in copies of required coaching certifications (lifeguard training OR coach's safety training). All coaches must fulfill the above requirements in advance of the first season game.
- c. Maintaining an official team roster of all players participating in the Regular Season. The roster must include first and last names, date of birth, competition age, and gender for each player. Coaches will submit the roster to the Water Polo Communications Director (WPCD) by the Monday following the first week of games. Coaches will ensure that their rosters remain up-to-date throughout the season- including adding or removing players as necessary.
- d. Submitting a Championship Roster at the Championship Tournament Coaches Meeting. The roster must include first and last names, date of birth, competition age, and gender for each player. Coaches will submit the roster to the WPCD and the Tournament Director at the Championship Tournament Coaches Meeting. Teams will not be eligible to compete in the tournament unless and until a roster has been submitted.
- e. Communicating any forfeits or factors that affect competition in a timely and forthright manner
- f. Providing accurate and reliable contact information to the WPCD for communication purposes
- g. Conducting themselves in a professional and responsible manner
- h. Attending all meetings as required by the Water Polo Ref and Coach Director (WPRCD). These meetings will include:
 - i. Preseason Coaches Meeting
 - ii. Championship Tournament Coaches Meeting

D. Water Polo Committee

Midlakes Water Polo (MWP) exists as an affiliated sport of Midlakes Swim League (MSL). As such, MWP remains under the ultimate supervision of the MSL Board of Governors as well as the MSL by-laws and expectations. Certain accommodations to facilitate the smooth operation of MWP may be made with the consent of the MSL Board of Governors. The MSL Board of Governors authorizes the establishment of a Water Polo Committee to assist in governing, organizing, and administering MWP

1. The Water Polo Committee shall consist of the following members & positions:
 - a. **Water Polo Referee & Coach Director (WPRCD)**
 - i. **WPRCD cannot** also serve as a Club Representative or Coach
 - ii. Serve as the Head Referee.
 - iii. Recruit, train, and schedule referees for Regular and Tournament matches
 - iv. Determine the style of play
 - v. Rule book interpretation
 - vi. Enforce standards of conduct
 - vii. Handle issues of poor sportsmanship, poor conduct, and major rules violations
 - viii. Determine remedial actions or penalties resulting from infractions.
 - ix. Review and approved regular season and championship tournament seeding and schedule
 - x. Conduct a mandatory Midlakes Water Polo coaching and rules clinic at the beginning of the season and at a minimum:
 1. Verifying successful completion of all coaching requirements, (lifeguard training OR coach's safety training).
 2. Reviewing league goals for each age group

3. Reviewing any new rules or changes
 4. Reviewing expectations of performance and conduct
 5. Reviewing notification responsibilities in case of forfeits
- x. Schedule and conduct a Championship Tournament Coach's Meeting on the last Sunday following the completion of the regular season games and prior to the start of championship week.
 - xi. Approve all club combinations, and authorized preseason exemptions to club assignments as deemed necessary, taking into account section F subsection 5 of this operating plan.

b. Water Polo Communications Director (WPCD)

- i. **WPCD** can also serve as a Club Representative or Coach
- ii. Serve as the Committee Secretary at the WPC meetings and publish meeting notes within 7 days of meeting.
- iii. Collect proof of certifications from coaches turned in to **WPCRD** at clinic/meeting and keep on file for **3years?**
- iv. Collect Regular Season rosters from coaches by the Monday following the first week of games
- v. Managing the Water Polo website, which shall include:
 1. Regular and Tournament schedules and results
 2. Dates, locations, agendas, and minutes for all meetings
 3. Contact and roster information for each Club coach and Representative
 4. Copies of the Operating Plan, championship roster forms, and other documents
 5. Links to the MSL website
 6. Archived results from previous Regular and Tournament seasons
 7. Any other information deemed necessary
- vi. Create and distribute a post season survey and compile a Season in Review report at the end of each competitive season and present the report to the WPC and MSL Board of Governors. The report shall include:
 1. A summary of season positives and negatives
 2. Preliminary financials including participation and Tournament fees
 3. Final standings from both the regular season and Tournament
 4. Final Regular and Tournament roster numbers from participating clubs
 5. Anticipated regular season roster numbers for the following season
 6. Recommended club combinations for the following season to **WPCRD** and WPC for consideration.

c. Water Polo Budget Director (WPBD)

- i. **WPBD** can also serve as a Club Representative
- ii. Invoice all clubs in according with the Fee schedule outlined and within one week of the completion of the tournament.
- iii. Submit to MLS preseason estimated budget by end of first week of practice.
- iv. Review with WPC budget and stipend amount for consideration of **WPCRD** and WCD.
- v. Present to WPC Financial report from previous year and work with committee to prepare budget to be presented to MSL for upcoming season.

d. Water Polo Scheduling Director (WPSD)

- i. **WPSD** can also serve as a Club Representative.
- ii. Schedule all Regular Season and Championship Tournament matches, including start times and brackets.

- iii. Present draft schedules to the Water Polo Committee for review and input electronically. Get guidance and final approval from **WPCRD**.
- iv. Alter the Regular and Tournament schedules as necessary as directed by **WPCRD**.
- v. Solicit and confirm hosts for Regular and Tournament matches prior to the start of the season. If no Clubs volunteers to host, the Water Polo Scheduling direct may require any Club to host with the consent of the Water Polo Committee and MLS Board. No Club may be required to host in this manner more than twice in any three years

e. **Water Polo Marketing Director (WPMD)**

- i. **WPMD** can also serve as a Club Representative
- ii. Works with MSL to promote Water Polo at the club level.
- iii. Serves as the WPC liaison to the MSL board of Governors.
- iv. Helps clubs with communication to advertise season, find parent representatives and hire coaches.
- v. Works with **MPCRD** to help advertise for referee's
- vi. Responsible for organizing and crafting apparel plan and order and disseminating information thru **WPCD**.
- vii. Must receive board approval for the expenditure of any funds.
- viii. Help with fundraiser fulfillment as required.

f. Club Representatives

- i. One (1) representative from each club participating in water polo. Each member has one (1) vote. Club Representatives may be Members, parents or employees of their respective Club and may serve in any position on the committee as outline above except **WPCRD**.
- ii. Assist with the organization of regular season play as requested
- iii. Assist with the organization of the Championship Tournament as requested
- iv. Review, advise, and allocate preliminary budget. To include potential stipends to be paid for critical committee positions as listed above. Final approval for stipends is with MSL board of Governors.
- v. May request through **MPCD** additional WPC meetings if deemed necessary by electronic vote of more than 51% of club representatives.
- vi. Nominate an individual to serve as the **WPRDC**
- vii. Set a value for the stipend to be paid for the execution of the responsibilities of any of the WPC positions (not to include parent Representative)
 - 1. This value must be approved by a majority of committee members and will be presented to MSL for final approval prior to the year of effect
 - 2. The committee shall review the value of the stipend in conjunction with the nomination of a **WPCRD**.

- 2. The Water Polo Committee shall meet at least three (3) times during each calendar year modeled on the structure present in the MSL. Additional meetings may occur as required and voted on by 51% of voting committee
 - a. A Spring Meeting will include revisions or changes to the Operating Plan, a determination of final member clubs for the upcoming season, notification of any mergers or club combinations, a review of financials, and an assessment of fundraising needs and opportunities. This meeting should occur no later than the week of the MSL Spring Meeting.

- b. A Preseason Meeting will include finalizing the regular and championship schedule and ensuring the functionality and availability of any necessary equipment. This meeting should occur in June.
- c. A Postseason Meeting will include a presentation by the **WPRCD, WPMD, WPSD, WPBD, WPCD** covering season in Review Report, financials, assessing participation levels, and proposals for changes to the Midlakes Water Polo League Operating Plan. This meeting should occur no later than the week of the MSL Fall Meeting.

F. Competitive Regulations

Current FINA and United States Water Polo (USWP) rules shall apply to Midlakes Water Polo except where they conflict with this Operating Plan as outlined in Appendix A.

1. Competition Age
 - a. A player's age for the season is their age on June 15 of that season
2. Alcohol
 - a. There shall be no alcohol in the "zone of competition" which is defined as a distance at least 10 feet away from the edge of the pool
3. Competition Groups
 - a. Midlakes Water Polo shall offer competition structured by age group using the following classifications. The Water Polo League Director, with the consent of the Water Polo Committee, may add to or alter these classifications as necessary.
 - i. 10&U Coed
 - ii. 12&U Coed
 - iii. 14&U Coed
 - iv. 15&O Coed
 - v. Open Coed
 - b. Players may compete in more than one competition group ("play up") for the same Club as necessary provided their name appears on the official roster and their age reflects the general limits of each classification. MWP recommends players not play up more than one competition group.
 - c. As a general guideline, MWP recommends a minimum starting age of 8 years
 - d. Open age groups consist of current or former dues paying members of MSL Clubs, or current coaches of MSL Clubs who wish to play for their own teams, and who exceed the age limits and eligibility requirements of the 15&O group.
4. Eligibility
 - a. **Players must be active, dues paying members of a Member Club in good standing of MSL**
 - b. All eligibility rules with regard to age of competitors for MSL apply equally to MWP
 - c. Competitors may only compete for one (1) Club during the course of a single season except where that Club is part of a Combined Team
 - d. Players must be listed on official team rosters (both Regular Season and Tournament rosters) submitted to Midlakes before they may compete
 - e. Players must compete in at least one (1) regular season game in order to participate in the Championship Tournament
 - f. Players who belong to a Member Club in good standing of MSL, and whose Club does not field its own water polo team, may petition the **WPRCD** for placement in another program. Any players placed in this manner must pay the participation fee of the team to which they are assigned. In cases where the player is placed on Combined Team, the player will pay the average of any differing participation fees. The final placement is at the sole discretion of the Water Polo League

Director, but efforts will be made to take factors such as location, travel, time, etc. into account. The Water Polo League Director must finalize placement before an individual may compete for any Club.

5. Club Combinations
 - a. The WPRCD may combine Clubs to compete together as a single team when necessary. The Water Polo Committee and coaches may suggest potential combinations, but the final decision resides with the WPRCD.
 - b. Combined Clubs need not compete together in every age group
 - c. Factors influencing Combinations include total roster numbers, numbers within each age group, location of clubs, availability of facilities and staff, and support from Club boards and parents
 - d. Preliminary Combinations will be announced at the Fall Meeting after the current season and confirmed at the Spring Meeting prior to the next season
 - e. Combinations remain in effect for one (1) competition season only but may be renewed indefinitely as needed
 - f. Combined Clubs must ensure equitable division of responsibility for financial obligations, staffing, hosting, promotion, communication, and development
 - g. Coaches and Club Representatives must furnish any and all information requested by the Water Polo League Director with respect to Combinations. Such information may include but not be limited to projected roster sizes, facility and staff availability, etc.
6. Conduct & Sportsmanship
 - a. **Players, coaches, and spectators must behave in an appropriate fashion at all games. Inappropriate behavior that violates the spirit of Midlakes Water Polo and/or Midlakes Swim League shall be referred to the Water Polo Committee. Some examples of inappropriate behavior are:**
 - i. **Arguing referee calls**
 - ii. **Using profanity**
 - iii. **Taunting opponents, referees, or spectators**
 - b. When necessary, referees may discipline offenders with a graduated system of penalties beginning with a warning, followed by removal from the game and a referral of the offender to the Water Polo Committee
 - c. The Water Polo Committee may impose additional discipline including a further one (1) game suspension, suspension for the remainder of the season, lifetime suspension, and/or monetary fines
 - d. With respect to incidents of punching, kicking, elbowing, or the attempt to intentionally injure another player, such action will constitute a brutality and carry with it a suspension for the remainder of the season
 - i. Referees shall identify whether an action constitutes a brutality and shall refer the offender to the Water Polo League Director and Water Polo Committee for final judgment
7. Officials for Games
 - a. Referee
 - i. Shall be in absolute control of the game. Their authority over the players shall be effective during the whole time that they and the players are within the precincts of the pool. All decisions of the referees on questions of fact shall be final and their interpretation of the Rules shall be obeyed throughout the game. The referees shall not make any presumption as to the facts of any situation during the game but shall interpret what they observe to the best of their ability

- ii. Shall be responsible for accurate, faithful, and equal application of the Rules (including exceptions noted in this Operating Plan) to both teams
 - iii. Shall also assume the responsibilities of Goal Judges when necessary
 - iv. Regular Season games must have at least one (1) referee. Championship Games (not Tournament games) must have at least two (2) referees
 - b. Timekeeper
 - i. Shall record the exact periods of play, timeouts, and the intervals between the periods
 - ii. Shall record the periods of continuous possession of the ball by each team
 - iii. Shall record the exclusion times of players ordered from the water in accordance with the Rules, together with the re-entry times of such players or their substitutes
 - iv. Shall audibly announce the start of the last minute of the game
 - v. Shall signal by whistle after 45 seconds and at the end of each timeout
 - vi. Regular Season games must have at least one (1) Timekeeper. Tournament and Championship Games must have two (2) timekeepers
 - vii. When necessary, may also take on the role of the Secretary
 - c. Book Official
 - i. Shall maintain the record of the game, including the players, the score, timeouts, exclusion fouls, penalty fouls, and personal fouls awarded against each player
 - ii. Shall control the periods of exclusion of players and signal the expiration of the period of exclusion
 - iii. Shall signal, without delay, the award of a third personal foul against any player
 - iv. Not required for Regular Season games. At least one (1) must be present for Tournament and Championship games
8. **Logos**
- a. **No logos for club teams other than Midlakes Swim League Club shall be allowed on player suits, caps or any League or Coach attire. For Players in 15&U only, he/she *will* be allowed to wear high school team logo custom water polo swimsuits only if player has no alternative suit (Club suits are not allowed).**

H. Season Structure

The Water Polo Season shall consist of three parts: Preseason, Regular Season, and the Championship Tournament.

- 1. Preseason
 - a. The preseason constitutes all MWP activity prior to the first Monday of the regular season
 - b. Activities during this time may include League-organized clinics, individual club clinics, preseason practices, fundraisers, administrative meetings, and other events
- 2. Regular Season

- a. The Regular Season begins on the first Monday following the MSL League Championship Finals
 - b. Activities during this time include regular season matches, individual club clinics, practices, fundraisers, administrative meetings, and other events
 - c. Regular Season matches will follow the same basic formula in terms of scheduling:
 - i. 12&U Games will occur on Thursdays
 - ii. 10&U Games will occur on Fridays
 - iii. 14&U Games will occur on Saturdays
 - iv. 15&O Games will occur on Sundays
 - v. All games will occur between 8:00AM – 1:00PM when possible
 - vi. The schedule will attempt to make sure each team plays every other team at least once within each age group
3. Championship Tournament
- a. The Championship Tournament begins on the Wednesday following the conclusion of the regular season. Championship games will be held on the Sunday immediately preceding the first day of the WIAA Fall High School Sports Season.
 - b. Each competition group with two (2) or more teams shall participate in the tournament
 - c. Teams shall be seeded into double elimination brackets using the results from the Regular Season
 - i. Teams in the Open competition group will receive seeding on a random draw, and each team will play all other teams participating in each group
 - d. Championship Tournament matches will follow the same basic formula in terms of scheduling:
 - i. 10&U elimination matches will occur on Wednesday
 - ii. 12&U elimination matches will occur on Thursday
 - iii. 14&U elimination matches will occur on Friday
 - iv. 15&O elimination matches will occur on Saturday
 - v. Championship matches for all age groups will occur on Sunday
 - vi. All elimination matches will occur between 8:00AM – 6:00PM when possible in a single location
 - vii. All Championship matches will occur between 8:00AM – 2:00PM when possible in a single location
 - viii. Locations of tournament play will be based upon Clubs submitting bids to the Water Polo Director. If no Clubs bid to host, the Water Polo Director may require any Club to host with the consent of the Water Polo Committee. No Club may be required to host in this manner more than twice in any three years
 - e. Sample Championship Tournament Bracket and Game Schedule
 - Game 1 @ 8:00 AM (#1 Seed vs. #8 Seed)
 - Game 2 @ 8:45AM (#4 Seed vs. #5 Seed)
 - Game 3 @ 9:30AM (#3 Seed vs. #6 Seed)
 - Game 4 @ 10:15AM (#2 Seed vs. #7 Seed)
 - Game 5 @ 11:00AM (Loser of Game 1 vs. Loser of Game 2)
 - Game 6 @ 11:45AM (Loser of Game 3 vs. Loser of Game 4)
 - Game 7 @ 12:30PM (Winner of Game 1 vs. Winner of Game 2)
 - Game 8 @ 1:15PM (Winner of Game 3 vs. Winner of Game 4)
 - Game 9 @ 2:00PM (Winner of Game 6 vs. Loser of Game 7)
 - Game 10 @ 2:45PM (Winner of Game 5 vs. Loser of Game 8)
 - Game 11 @ 3:30PM (Winner of Game 7 vs. Winner of Game 8)

- Game 12 @ 4:15PM (Winner of Game 9 vs. Winner of Game 10)
 Game 13 @ 5:15PM (Winner of Game 12 vs. Loser of Game 11)
- f. Sample Championship Game Schedule
 Open @ 8:00AM
 10&U @ 9:00AM (Winner of Game 11 vs. Winner of Game 13)
 14&U @ 10:00AM (Winner of Game 11 vs. Winner of Game 13)
 12&U @ 11:00AM (Winner of Game 11 vs. Winner of Game 13)
 15&O @ 12:00PM (Winner of Game 11 vs. Winner of Game 13)

Appendix A

Some rules and practices for MWP vary from FINA and USWP Rules.

1. Quarters of Competition
 - a. Each Regular Season quarter shall consist of six minutes (6:00) of running time (5:00 for 10&U)
 - b. During running time, the clock will only stop at goals and time outs
 - c. Each Championship Tournament quarter shall consist of six minutes (6:00) of stop time (5:00 for 10&U)
2. Timeouts
 - a. During the Regular Season, each team will receive two (2) timeouts per game
 - b. Timeouts will last one minute (1:00)
 - c. If a game reaches sudden death, each team will receive one (1) additional timeout of one minute (1:00)
 - d. During the Championship Tournament, USWP rules for timeouts will apply
3. Assigned Goals
 - a. Teams will change ends of the pool after each quarter in pools where one goal is located at an end that allows goalies to stand
 - b. Teams will change ends of the pool after each half in pools where both goals are in deep water such that both goalies must tread
4. Game Play
 - a. All games must end with a winner
 - b. If teams remain tied at the end of regulation, a Sudden Death period will follow
 - i. A coin toss will determine which goals each team will defend
5. Mercy Rule
 - a. Any game where one team has a seven (7) point advantage over another team will run to a full running clock for the remainder of the contest. The clock will continue to run even if the point differential narrows.
6. Field of Competition
 - a. Whenever possible, games should occur in pools at least 6 lanes wide and in water at least 5 feet deep or greater
 - b. Facilities will, at minimum, provide markers indicating 2 meter, 5 meter, and halfway points
7. Official Call Clarification
 - a. Only a coach may ask for clarification on a call by a referee
 - b. The request must pertain to a specific call and must reference the specific rule or rules the Coach believes are involved in the situation
 - c. Coaches must use a timeout in order to request a clarification
 - d. If a player requests a clarification, that player will be issued a warning. A second request from the same player in the same game will result in removal of that player from the game.
8. Number of Eligible Players:
 - a. Teams must consist of at least 6 eligible players (equivalent to "man down"). Any team that does not have the minimum number of players will forfeit the contest in question.