

FAIRFIELD COUNTY SWIMMING LEAGUE

WATER POLO RULES

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The Code of Conduct must be read prior to the start of every FCSL sanctioned Water Polo event.

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AUTHORITY

FCSL Water Polo will be conducted under the current FINA/USAWP Water Polo Rules with the following modifications and exceptions. They are in addition to and supplement the rules in the General Sports Section of the FCSL Rules.

CONDUCT OF WATER POLO COMPETITION

I. TEAMS & PLAYERS

A. **Age Groups:** Competition will be conducted in three age groups, with ages as determined by FCSL swimming & diving rules:

1. 10 & Under (Mini)
2. 11-13 (Junior)
3. 14-17 (Senior)

Exception: A player may 'play up', but only one year. That is, a player who is 10 may play as a junior; a player who is 13 may play as a senior. However, a player may only play in one age group in a given set of games between two clubs or in FCSL Tournament Competition.

B. **Team Composition**

1. Both Mini and Junior teams must play with a **MINIMUM** of two girls in the water at all times.
2. Senior teams must play with a **MINIMUM** of one girl in the water at all times.
Penalty: The loss of all goals scored by the offending team during the time the team did not comply with this rule. The opposing team will be awarded a penalty shot. No individual player, however, will receive a Major Foul.

NOTE: If a girl is unable to play after the start of a game, whether by illness, injury, or because she has been excluded for the remainder of the game, the team may substitute for her with another eligible girl player (but not a male player).

Alternatively, the team may continue to play without substitution for the missing girl player ('man down') if they do not have any additional eligible girls available, without triggering any penalty under FCSL Water Polo Rules, Article I, section B. 1 & 2.

C. **Combined Teams**

1. In order to encourage participation in the sport of Water Polo, two clubs, neither of which have, in one or more age groups, a sufficient number of players to field a team, may combine to create a team for those age-groups only.
2. Individuals seeking a club, or clubs looking to combine for the season may submit a request in writing to the FCSL V.P. Polo, who will submit the request to the FCSL Board for final determination.

D. **Rosters & Player Eligibility**

1. A team may have **MORE** than 13 players on its roster for any FCSL game or tournament.
Note: Eligible Players may be added to the roster at any time during a game or tournament.
2. A water polo player cannot represent more than one FCSL club/team during a single season. A player **MAY**, however, play water polo for a club other than the club for whom the player swims or dives.
3. In order for a player to be eligible to play in an FCSL Tournament, the player must have played in at least **ONE** game during the regular FCSL season.
Note: A player who is present for a game that is forfeited due to the failure of the opposing club to field a team will be considered to have played in that game.
4. A player who receives a brutality call will be excluded for the duration of that game and for the next game his/her team plays. Any player who receives a second brutality call will be excluded from FCSL Polo for the remainder of the season.

E. Rules for Multiple Age Group Teams from One Club

1. A Club with more than one team competing in an age group will submit a roster per team to the FCSL V.P. Polo prior to any of the Club's first games. These rosters shall include the full name of each contestant and the specific team to which he or she has been assigned.
2. No contestant may compete in the first game for both (or all) teams.
3. There is a grace period during which contestants may be reassigned. The grace period ends *before* each team's second game.
4. Contestants may be reassigned once, either up or down, at the discretion of the coach, before the end of the grace period, at which point the rosters must remain fixed.
5. At the end of the grace period, the coach must submit a copy of each of his or her final rosters to the FCSL V.P. Polo with the changes from the original noted on a cover sheet. The FCSL V.P. Polo will be notified of any member who joins any team after the second game.
6. The penalty for using a contestant in both teams after the grace period is the loss of the game for which he or she is ineligible.
7. In all other ways, the contestants from the two (or more) rosters will be considered as if from separate clubs with all the rights accorded other FCSL contestants. This includes Preliminary and Championship games.

II. TIME FACTORS

A. Periods

1. Mini – Six Minute Running Time Quarters
2. Junior – Seven Minute Running Time Quarters
3. Senior – Eight Minute Running Time Quarters

Note One: The Timekeeper will stop the clock only after a goal is scored, when the ball leaves the field of play, or when requested to do so by the referee. In tournament play, the Timekeeper will stop the clock as per standard FINA rules in the final minute of the game.

Note Two: Overtime, when played, will be 2 Two Minute Running Time Periods for Mini's and Juniors, and 2 Three Minute Running Time Periods for Seniors. During the regular season, overtime periods may be played by agreement of both coaches.

Note Three: If at the end of the two overtime periods one team shall have scored more total goals, that team will be declared the winner. If the score is still tied, the teams will play additional periods until the first goal is scored. At the scoring of the goal, not the end of the period, the game will be over and a winner declared.

B. Shot Clock

FCSL games will be played WITHOUT a Shot Clock. However, the referee may, after giving a warning, call a 'stall' whenever, in the judgment of the referee, a team in the lead has the ball and does not attempt a shot in a reasonable period of time.

III. FIELD OF PLAY

- A. In shallow/deep pools, teams will change ends of the pool after the first and third quarters of regulation play and after each overtime period. In all-deep pools, FINA rules will apply.
- B. Shooting directly off a Free Throw, which is permitted under FINA Rules when outside the Five-Meter Line, is **not** allowed in FCSL Water Polo at the Junior and Mini levels only. At the FCSL Senior level the applicable FINA rule will apply.

IV. EQUIPMENT

A. Balls

1. Mini's: Mikasa Junior Game Ball (WP 6008) or equivalent
2. Juniors: Mikasa Womens' Game Ball (WP 6009) or equivalent
3. Seniors: Mikasa Mens' Game Ball (WP 6000) or equivalent

B. Markings

1. Markings must be provided for the two-meter, five-meter and mid-pool lines. Where possible, these shall be on both sides of the pool.
Recommendation: Red Cones for the two-meter markers,
Yellow Cones for the five-meter markers, Blue Cones for the mid-pool markers.

V. FORFEITS

- A.** A club that forfeits 2 games in a given age-group (Mini, Junior, Senior) will not be eligible for the FCSL Championship Tournament in that age-group.
- B.** If a club forfeits a game or games and fails to notify the opposing club at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled game(s), the club will be fined. The fine will equal the fee owed the referee for that game for both teams. Thus, for forfeiture of 1 game, the fine will be \$50, for 2 games, \$80, and for 3 games, \$110 (\$160 when two referees are assigned to the Senior game). This fine will be used to pay the referee.

Definition: A **forfeit** occurs whenever a team fails to field a team of six players, as required by League rules, within 30 minutes of the scheduled starting time of the game.

VI. RECORDS OF GAMES

A. Water Polo Score Table

The table shall be placed separate from the two team benches but with an **unobstructed** view of the pool. Each team must **supply** a responsible person to man the table with a stop-watch and score-sheet.

- B.** The **Official Score Sheet** (see Appendix XVII) shall be the home club's copy of the Score Sheet, which shall be retained by and at the home club. No other copy shall have official standing. In the case of a dispute, if the home club is unable to produce the original score sheet, the visiting club's score sheet will be used to settle the dispute.
- C.** The head coach of the home club will make freely available a **copy** of The Official Score Sheet to the visiting club's coach.
- D.** Each coach shall keep all of his club's Official Score Sheets intact and **available for inspection** by the Board. These records may not be destroyed until one week after the Championship Swim Finals (the last event of the FCSL season).
- E.** It is the responsibility of the home club to **inform** the FCSL webmaster of **the scores** of the games played. This should be done within 24 hours.
- F.** **Brutality penalties** must be noted on the score sheet and initialed by the referee. The home club will be responsible for informing the FCSL V.P. Polo and the Coaches Rep's of brutality calls. (See also Article VII - Conduct & Discipline)

VII CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary Actions

These regulations contain basic regulations for fair play and general discipline in FCSL Water Polo. They include actions related to incidents involving teams, players, coaches, officials and spectators or player family members.

They are designed to enable the sport of Water Polo to be played within FCSL in a fair manner without bringing the sport into disrepute, thereby supporting and enabling the sport to flourish.

A. Exiting the Pool

If a player exits the pool in front of or near the opposing bench, that player may be assessed a 5 Meter penalty by the Referee. See also WP5.2, & 5.3

B. Adult on Senior Bench

When a team has only Water Polo coaches of High School or College age, the FCSL Rules require that all Senior Teams will include a non-playing adult (Coach, Club Employee or Club Member) to sit on the team bench with the players during Senior level Water Polo games to help keep order and discourage any actions which might break the Rules and/or the Code of Conduct..

If such an adult is required but missing, the game may be delayed up to 30 minutes after the scheduled start of the game before the game is forfeit.

C. Not a Brutality

If a player, coach or spectator breaks the Water Polo Rules or Code of Conduct but in a manner not considered to be an act of brutality, then the Referee shall act according to these FCSL Rules, including the imposition of Time-Outs, or Ejections, or requesting the offender to leave the pool venue. Should a player or team not desist, or not leave when requested the game will be forfeit.

D. Brutality

Shall a player, team, coach, official or spectator commit an offense against the rules which is considered to be a brutality or other egregious offense, then the Referee shall impose suitable sanctions under the Rules and that offense may cause a Grievance Committee meeting to be called.

A brutality or other act of violence shall include any act resulting in injury, use of any object to inflict harm upon another, fighting, verbal abuse whether by players, officials or spectators, repeated foul language, incitement, taunting or bullying.

Any action which is defined in generally accepted Water Polo Rules (such as FINA or NCAA) as a Brutality shall be considered a brutality by FCSL. Any action which is against the laws of the State or Town shall be considered an offense.

Such an offense shall be reported by the match referees. In addition, team coaches or other pool officials are encouraged to notify the FCSL President, the FCSL Water Polo Vice President or Water Polo Coaches Representative immediately but no later than within 2 days of the incident.

E. Grievance Committee

The Grievance Committee shall comprise the FCSL President, FCSL Water Polo Vice President, FCSL Water Polo Coaches Representative, and two others appointed by the FCSL President, normally being members of the FCSL Board.. See also Conflict of Interest section

The Committee shall be tasked to promptly investigate the complaint including interviewing involved players, coaches and any other pertinent person.

The Committee will circulate the status of the investigation, with a summary of the incident, to the whole FCSL Board but may omit identifying the complainant or subject of the complaint in the interest of privacy.

The Committee shall have the authority to suspend players, coaches, and officials while the investigation is being carried out and after the investigation is complete, and may temporarily ban any player, coach or official for the rest of the current season or beyond. Particularly egregious situations may cause a permanent ban on players, coaches or officials with the consent of the FCSL Board.

In addition other penalties or actions may be imposed including requiring written apologies from the offending player, coach or official.

Any spectator or family member may be similarly banned from the pool deck during water polo games and the incident reported to their Club, and in particularly egregious situations such adults may be reported to the local police.

F. Grievance Appeal Committee

Once the Grievance Committee has met and decided upon the facts of the incident and any penalties, an appeal may be requested by the offending player, coach, official or spectator. If such an appeal is granted it is expected that the Appeal Committee will meet within one week of the Appeal request being received.

The Appeal Committee shall include the original members of the Grievance Committee, the FCSL President, the three FCSL Vice Presidents(Swimming, Diving, Water Polo), and the 3 Coaches Representatives (including Swimming , Diving, Water Polo) and the Rules Chair. Or, if not all are available, a minimum of seven members will be required to avoid delay.

Omitting any eligible members of the Appeal Committee who may not be able to meet within that time frame, will not negate the formal disposition of such an appeal provided that appropriate notice has been given and the Member's input sought where possible.

If the appellant agrees, an email vote by the Board members shall be considered to have the same force and effect as a vote in person.

The Appeal Committee shall promptly report their recommendations to the whole FCSL Board.

G. No Conflict of Interest

No member of the Grievance Committee, nor the Grievance Appeal Committee, may serve regarding any instance or situation in which there may be considered to be a conflict of interest, such as family of a complainant or subject of the complaint, nor a representative from the club of such.

VII. DIVISIONAL RANKING

A. Divisional Ranking

Club Teams will be ranked overall in each Division by their overall winning percentage from their win-loss-tie record of all their regular season league games. Each tie will represent half a win.

The winning percentage will be averaged over the total number of games played by the Mini, Junior and Senior teams for any club. Clubs without 3 teams can be averaged based on the results of their 2 teams.

Example:

Mini team won 3, lost 1, tied 1 game

Junior team won 2, lost 3 games

Senior team won 3 games, lost 2 games

Total of 15 games, of which 8 games won, 6 games lost, and one game tied

Winning total is 8.5

Winning Percentage calculation gives 8.5 divided by 15

i.e. 56.67%

The Club Team with the highest Winning Percentage in each Division will be promoted to the next higher Division, while the Club Team with the lowest Winning Percentage in each Division will be relegated to the next lowest Division.

Movement between Divisions may be affected by any new water polo Club Teams joining the League or by teams dropping out.

All team levels (Mini's, Junior or Senior teams) in any Club Team will play in the same Division unless any of those teams has been combined with the team of a higher ranked Club.

In that case, the Combined Team will play in the higher Division.

See also Water Polo Rules Article I, Teams and Players, section C. Combined Teams.

B. Ranking Ties

If Club Teams tie for first or last position in a Division then that tie will be resolved by reference to the head-to-head record of the two or more Club Teams involved in the tie.

Any tie still remaining shall be resolved by reference to the head-to-head result of the Junior teams games of the two or more club teams involved in the tie.

Should there still be a tie remaining then the head to head results of the Mini level games, and next, if necessary, the Senior level games, may be used to resolve the tie.

VIII. WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS

A. Mini & Junior Water Polo Team Championships

Divisional Championships will be held in each Water Polo Division for both the Mini and the Junior level teams.

The first four (4) teams in each Division, with seeding determined by Divisional Ranking, will participate in the Divisional Championship Tournament. Each Mini or Junior team playing in the Divisional Championships will participate in two games.

The first seed team will first play the fourth seed team; while the second seed team will first play the third seed team.

The winning team from the first two games will play again to determine the First Place team, i.e. the Divisional Champions, and the Second Place team.

The losing teams from the first two games will play again to determine the Third Place team.

B. Senior Water Polo Team Championships

A single Senior Championship Tournament contested by eight (8) Senior level teams will be held for all Divisions combined.

A Seeding Meeting will be conducted by the FCSL Water Polo Vice President and FCSL Water Polo Coaches Representative in consultation with, and with input from, all the FCSL Water Polo coaches.

Each Senior team seeded in the Senior Water Polo Championships Tournament will play a total of three games in seeded competition.

The two Senior teams winning both their first and second games will then play to determine First Place, i.e. the Senior Champions. The losing team in that game will take Second Place in the Senior Championships.

The two Senior teams winning their first game, but losing their second game, will play to determine Third Place.

The four Senior teams losing their first game in the Championships will enter the Consolation Round.

The two winning teams in the first Consolation Round games will play off to determine Fifth Place in the Championships while the two losing teams will play off to determine Seventh Place.

C. Ties in Water Polo Championship Games

At any FCSL Water Polo Championship, games ending in ties after regular time may continue in overtime as described in FCSL Water Polo Rules, Article II, Section A.

D. Championship Tournament Director

Each Championship Tournament Director will be assigned by the Water Polo Vice President. The Tournament Director will be responsible for all aspects of running a Championship Tournament under the direction of the Water Polo Vice President.

E. Special Circumstances

The Championship Tournament Director may, at his/her discretion, in consultation with the Water Polo Vice President, and/or the Water Polo Coaches Representative, change the format of the Tournament due to weather or other factors, if the Tournament is running behind schedule.

F. Team Volunteer Responsibilities

All teams participating in a Water Polo Championship Tournament will be notified by the Water Polo Vice President of their Volunteer Responsibilities prior to the Tournament, including, but not limited to supplying Score-Table Workers. Any team not fulfilling their responsibilities may be subject to the team being disqualified from the Tournament and/or other penalties.

FAIRFIELD COUNTY SWIMMING LEAGUE

FINA/USAWP RULES

FCSL Water Polo will be conducted under the current FINA/USAWP Water Polo Rules with modifications and exceptions as described in the FCSL Water Polo Rules, which are in addition to and supplement the rules in the General Sports Section of the FCSL Rules.

USA Water Polo Rules are updated in line with FINA Water Polo Rules, generally every 4 years.

FINA & USA Water Polo Rules have been updated and links to the new Rules: New FINA WP Rules 2020, New FINA Rules - USAWP Implementation 2020, and the previously published New USAWP Rules Implementation 2019 are listed on the FCSL Website in the Downloads and Rules section under the Water Polo heading.

Please NOTE:

FCSL Water Polo will follow the **updated USAWP rules subject** to the following:

1. Goalies will not be allowed to go past half court. [*Different from USAWP*]
2. The free throw will take place where the ball is located at the time of the foul NOT where the foul itself takes place. [*New rule; consistent with USAWP*]
3. If a player is inside the 5M mark and they are fouled from behind they will receive a penalty shot whether the player drops the ball or not. [*New rules; consistent with USA WP*]
4. If a player is fouled inside the 6M line, the player needs to pass the ball to someone else on the same team. (Updated June 9, 2022)
5. A Senior player (only) can shoot immediately after being fouled outside the 6M line. (Upd' June 9, 2022)
6. A Senior player can put the ball in play to self and then shoot if the Senior player was fouled outside the 6M line. (Updated June 9, 2022)

Links to the previous 2009-2017 USAWP Playing Rules, Rules Changes Summary, and New Rules Points of Interest pdf files are still located at <http://www.usawaterpolo.org>
Click on Resources for Rules-Ethics.

There are also links to various pdf files in the Water Polo list on the Downloads page on fcsl.info

We suggest you download these pdf files to your smartphone, tablet or laptop, or print them out.

They must be available for reference at each FCSL Water Polo game at the Scoring Desk.

* Updated June 9, 2022