

Ireland Water Polo Rule Book for approved by the National Water
Polo Committee May 2019



Ireland Water Polo

Rule Book

May 2019

**SECTION 1.
DEFINITIONS
&
CONTENTS**

1. FOREWORD

Swim Ireland is the National Governing body for swimming, water-polo, diving and associated aquatic sports for the whole of Ireland and is recognised as such by the Irish Sports Council, Sport N.I., the Olympic Council of Ireland and the Irish Government. Ireland Water Polo is a term which refers to the group of Swim Ireland Clubs registered with Swim Ireland as engaging in the discipline of Water Polo.

The Irish Amateur Swimming Association Limited, trading as Swim Ireland is a company limited by guarantee and its constituent documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association (M&As). The M&As of a company provides the legal framework within which the Company will operate but does not provide the level of detail required for the day-to-day operation of the organisation. The general operation of water-polo has been delegated by the Swim Ireland Board to the National Water Polo Committee (NWPC) and this Rule Book deals with the more general aspects of the day-to-day operations of water-polo.

Please note that this Rule Book refers to other documentation that may be pertinent for the purposes of Swim Ireland Rules and Regulations. Such documentation can be obtained from the Swim Ireland offices and/or on the Swim Ireland website at www.swimireland.ie. In the event that any rule contained herein conflicts with the Swim Ireland Articles of Association or Swim Ireland Rule Book these documents take precedent.

Any changes to this Rule Book that come into conflict with the Swim Ireland M&A's cannot be accepted. Any changes to this Rule Book are subject to approval by the Board of Swim Ireland

The rule book is set out in three sections:

- Section one sets out the general rules in relation to how Water Polo operates within Swim Ireland. The Governance structure dictates that authority is invested in the NWPC by the Board of Swim Ireland and the section clarifies the role and responsibilities of the Committee and how Water Polo Regions, Clubs and individual members operate within.
- Section Two details how the Water Polo Competitions will be managed. Primary responsibility for the running of Water Polo events lies with the Competitions Committee which is appointed by the NWPC.
- Section Three relates to the Complaints and Disciplinary Process with sanctions detailed in Appendix One

1.1. Definitions

“Affiliate Member”	has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles;
“AGM”	Any reference to Annual General Meeting refers to the Swim Ireland AGM
“Annual Conference”	shall mean the Annual Conference of Water Polo Clubs which is called in accordance within these rules.

“Articles”	means the Articles of Association of Swim Ireland for the time being and as amended from time to time;
“Associate Member”	means a Water Polo coach duly qualified and recognised as such by the Swim Ireland and who is affiliated to Swim Ireland subject to and in accordance with the terms of membership as set out in the Articles;
“Board”	Any reference to the ‘Board’ shall mean the Swim Ireland Board of Directors;
“Club”	has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles;
“Club Committee”	means the Club Management Committee and any other committee or subcommittee established by the Club for any purpose;
“Club Member”	has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles;
“Company”	means the Irish Amateur Swimming Association Limited trading as Swim Ireland;
“Connacht Region”	means the counties of Galway, Leitrim, Longford, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo;
“FINA”	has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles;
“General Meeting”	shall mean the Annual Water Polo Conference or any other general meeting of Water Polo Clubs which is called in accordance with this Rule Book.
“Leinster Region”	means the counties of Carlow, Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Louth, Meath, Offaly, Westmeath, Wexford and Wicklow;
“LEN”	has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles;
“M&A”	means the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Swim Ireland;
“Members”	means Club Members, Associate Members and Affiliate Members;
“Munster Region”	means the counties of Clare, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford;
“National Plan”	means the Swim Ireland Strategic Plan and any annual plans including the Water Polo Development Plan
“National Team”	means the team of Water Polo selected to represent Ireland at Junior and Senior level, Male and Female;
“NWPC”	means the National Water Polo Committee (NWPC) established by the Board of Swim Ireland and to whom it has delegated responsibility for the day to day operations of Water Polo; Regional Committee or Club.
“Ulster Region”	means the counties of Antrim, Armagh, Cavan, Derry, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Monaghan and Tyrone;
“Region”	means the geographical provinces of Connacht, Leinster, Munster and Ulster;

Regional Nominee the nominee elected from a region to the NWPC to administer and promote the National interests of Ireland Water Polo.

“SI” means Swim Ireland;

“SI Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures” means the complaints and disciplinary procedures adopted by Swim Ireland as amended from time to time;

“Swim Ireland Competition Conditions” means the rules and guidelines published in this document and Swim Ireland from time to time governing the holding of events, demonstrations or competitions at Club, Regional or National Level;

“Water Polo Licence” In order to participate in Water Polo activities, including for the avoidance of doubt, any elections which are specific to Water Polo, a person must hold a Water Polo licence which must be renewed annually. The Water Polo licence fee as determined by the NWPC in conjunction with the Swim Ireland office

1.2 Interpretation

In this Rule Book:

- The singular shall include the plural and vice versa.
- Unless the context or subject otherwise requires, references to words in one gender include references to the other genders.
- Reference to a person shall include an individual, partnership, corporation, Limited Liability Company, business trust, Joint Stock Company, trust, unincorporated association, joint venture, governmental entity or authority or other entity of whatever nature.

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SECTION 2. GOVERNANCE

2. STRUCTURE

2.1 NWPC (NWPC)

The NWPC has been established by the Board to organise and manage the sport of Water Polo in Ireland under the terms defined in the Swim Ireland Articles. In order to be eligible for election onto the NWPC, a person must be a Swim Ireland Member and hold a valid Water Polo Licence unless specifically otherwise approved by the Board. The NWPC shall be comprised of seven (7) members, elected in accordance with the Articles and shall operate within the terms of reference established by the Board. The NWPC supported by Swim Ireland staff is responsible for the day to day running of the sport including but not limited to:

- (i) Ensuring a development plan for the sport is prepared
- (ii) Preparing annual business plans and budgets based on the development plan
- (iii) Appointing the Water Polo Competitions Committee
- (iv) Appointing the Water Polo Development Committee
- (v) Appointing the Water Polo National Squad Coaches
- (vi) Appointing the Water Polo Education Officer
- (vii) Ensuring the operation of the National Water Polo Competitions
- (viii) Approving the international competition programme
- (ix) Ensuring the progress of the development of Water Polo in Ireland, including regional and national academies as decided
- (x) Reviewing Water Polo income, expenditure, and budget
- (xi) Approving the Water Polo National Fixtures Calendar
- (xii) Convening an Annual Water Polo Conference

In pursuance of the above objectives the NWPC shall:

- a) Endeavour to provide a positive and safe environment for all its members;
- b) enforce, through its rules and regulations, the Irish Anti-Doping Rules as published by the Irish Sports Council as amended from time to time;
- c) co-operate and comply with the regulations of FINA, LEN and Swim Ireland;
- d) promote, through its rules and regulations, adherence to the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport as published by the relevant regulatory authorities in Ireland and as amended from time to time; and
- e) promote, through its rules and regulations, adherence to the Swim Ireland Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures as published and as amended from time to time
- f) Agree and ensure that all sub-committees are operating to terms of reference

- g) Ensure that correct recruitment procedures are followed in the appointment of national coaches, leaders and officials
- h) Ensure that terms and conditions and/or written contracts exist in relation to all national coaches and leaders and records are kept of same.

2.2 President

A nominee elected from among the Water Polo Clubs shall hold the office of President of Ireland Water Polo from the conclusion of one Annual Water Polo Conference to the next. The elected nominee shall be such person (who must be a Member of the Company) as the majority of Clubs so determine by voting in favour of such person by ordinary resolution at that Annual Water Polo Conference.

The Ireland Water Polo President shall represent the interests of Water Polo at all ceremonial and representative occasions as required.

2.3 Regions

The Regions exist for the purposes of running regional cups/leagues, interprovincial competitions/leagues, development of Water Polo within their region and the election of a regional nominee to the NWPC. The nominee must be elected prior to the Water Polo Annual Conference. The Water Polo Regions report directly to the NWPC.

Ireland shall be divided into four (4) Regions namely:

- (a) Connacht;
- (b) Leinster;
- (c) Munster; and
- (d) Ulster.

If for any reason it is not possible to organise a Regional Management Committee within a Region a nomination to the National Water Polo Committee may be accepted from the club(s) in that region.

2.4 Clubs

2.4.1 All Clubs must affiliate annually to Swim Ireland, by paying the annual affiliation fee as determined by Swim Ireland and completing the Club Affiliation Pack, available through the Swim Ireland Membership Office, and any other documentation required by Swim Ireland to the satisfaction of Swim Ireland.

2.4.2 All Clubs shall promptly submit all requested information to Swim Ireland.

2.4.3 All Clubs must have constitutional documents and rule books in place which comply with Swim Ireland based guidelines and which do not contain any provisions which conflict with Swim Ireland M&A, Rule Book or any other rules, regulations or directions issued by Swim Ireland.

2.4.4 All Clubs that have U18 members must comply with the child welfare guidelines as outlined in the 'Swim Ireland Safeguarding Policies and Procedures 2010'.

2.4.5 A Club Management Committee must be appointed by each Club and must always be in existence to operate the Club in line with best practice.

- 2.4.6** All Club Committees must consult regularly club personnel (including teachers, coaches and Children’s Officers) and must fully consider any reports, recommendations or complaints of such Club personnel.
- 2.4.7** All persons working in Clubs as teachers or coaches must be suitably qualified, insured and licensed to carry out such work and must be Members of Swim Ireland.
- 2.4.8** All Clubs shall adopt and comply with Swim Ireland’s complaints and disciplinary procedures. In the event of a Club failing to comply with or enforce any disciplinary or other measure determined by Swim Ireland, the Board may suspend or terminate the affiliation of such Club with Swim Ireland. Any proceeding against a Club shall be brought in accordance with the provisions of the Swim Ireland Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures.
- 2.4.9** All Clubs will endeavour that terms and conditions and/or written contracts exist in relation to all leaders (i.e. coaches, teachers) in the Club and records are kept of same.
- 2.4.10** All Clubs shall ensure that they have a safety statement.
- 2.4.11** All Clubs shall ensure that the rules of the Club are set up and implemented.
- 2.4.12** All Clubs shall ensure that correct recruitment procedures are followed in the appointment of teachers/coaches and leaders.
- 2.4.13** All Clubs shall ensure that a recording of incidents/injuries is maintained including incident-action-outcome
- 2.4.14** All Clubs shall ensure that minutes of Club Committee meetings and Club General Meetings are kept (including Club Treasurer’s reports).
- 2.4.15** All Clubs shall ensure that they encourage regular turnover of Club Committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience.
- 2.4.16** Clubs shall comply with all affiliation regulations and procedures set down by the Company whether in the Rules or any bye-laws or standing orders and as drawn up by the Board from time to time and shall be bound by these Rules.
- 2.4.17** A Club’s rules, bye-laws, procedures and standing orders shall not be in conflict with any provision of the Company Articles or the Rules.
- 2.4.18** A Club Member who ceases to be a member of a Club automatically ceases to be a Member of the Company.
- 2.4.19** Each Club shall promptly inform the Company and provide any requested details to the Company of any changes in its membership.
- 2.4.20** In the event of a Club failing to comply with or failing to enforce any disciplinary or other measure prescribed by the Board, the Disciplinary and Complaints Committee and/or Swim Ireland in general meeting, the Club shall be liable to be disaffiliated from Swim Ireland in accordance with the procedures for disaffiliation set down in the Rules or any bye-laws or standing orders.

2.4.21 In the event of a Club failing to pay levies (league fees, competition fees, and affiliation fees) or fines, the Club shall be suspended from participating in all activities until such time as the levies or fines are paid.

2.5 Competitions Committee

The NWPC, in accordance with 2.1 (iii) shall appoint a Water Polo Competitions Committee, who shall lead in the management and operations of all Water Polo leagues taking place within Ireland unless otherwise specifically directed by the National Water Polo Committee or Swim Ireland. The Committee shall be supported by Swim Ireland Staff.

2.5.1 Role of Competitions Committee

- Support the Swim Ireland Representative to appoint officials to all National Leagues
- Prepare and approve National League Fixtures
- Co-ordinate pool bookings within approved budgets
- Prepare budgets and ensure all National Leagues run within approved budgets
- Ensure availability of persons for set up and take down at all National Leagues
- Monitor the condition of our relevant Water Polo equipment e.g. timing equipment etc., and report to NWPC in good time any proposals to repair/replace equipment as necessary.
- Any other duties required to ensure the running of all National Leagues within Ireland.

2.6 General Operational Matters

All members and clubs must affiliate to Swim Ireland on an annual basis based on the rules in operation at that time. All members and clubs are bound by and must comply with the rules and regulations contained in the following documents (as amended from time to time) *:

- (i) Swim Ireland's M&A
- (ii) Swim Ireland's Rule Book
- (iii) This Rule Book
- (iv) Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland's Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Children's Sport in Ireland
- (v) Swim Ireland's Safeguarding Policy Document
- (vi) Swim Ireland's Codes of Conduct
- (vii) Swim Ireland's Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures
- (viii) The Irish Anti-Doping Rules (or equivalent rules produced by the Irish Sports Council) and the FINA Technical and Anti-Doping Regulations
- (ix) Swim Ireland's, LEN's and FINA's Competition Rules
- (x) Applicable Regional Bodies' and Clubs' constitutional documents, rules and regulations
- (xi) any other rules, directions and regulations adopted by the Board

2.7 Water Polo Licence

In order to participate in Water Polo activities, including any and all elections related to Water Polo, a participant must hold a valid, in date Water Polo licence which must be renewed annually. To obtain a Water Polo licence a person must:

- a) be a member of a Swim Ireland affiliated Water Polo club; or
- b) be an associate member of Swim Ireland with a Water Polo qualification
- c) Must fill out an application form which shall include full name, address, and Swim Ireland membership number and, in the case of underage competitors, date of birth. All applications must be signed by the Club Honorary Secretary.

- d) Must pay the Water Polo licence fee as determined by the NWPC in conjunction with the Swim Ireland office

2.8 Members Rights

In addition to their rights as Swim Ireland members, subject to compliance with conditions set down in 2.6, Water Polo club members shall have the following rights only;

- a) the right to compete, for their club at all Water Polo competitions held by or under the auspices of Swim Ireland subject to compliance with the relevant rules of the competition;
- b) the right (through their registered clubs) to notice of, and to attend at, general meetings/annual conference of Water Polo Clubs
- c) the right to speak and vote at general meetings/annual conference of Ireland Water Polo but only as a delegate or delegates duly elected by that Member's Club;
- d) the right through their Club and only if agreed by the Club at a general meeting of the Club, to put forward notices of motion at any general meeting of Ireland Water Polo subject to compliance with the applicable standing orders of Ireland Water Polo in relation thereto;
- e) the right to stand for election to serve on the NWPC
- f) the right to stand for election for the position of President of Ireland Water Polo
- g) The right to be considered a registered member of a club, members must be registered through that club with Swim Ireland.

Associate Members, who are not club members with specific Water Polo qualifications, shall have the following rights only:

- a) the right to notice of, and to attend at, general meetings of the Ireland Water Polo
- b) Associate Members shall not have the right to speak or to vote at general meetings of Ireland Water Polo.
- c) Each Associate Member shall sign a legally binding undertaking to the Company (in such form as the Board may require) to adhere to the Swim Ireland Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures applicable in carrying on the profession or practice of teaching/operation or management of swimming and associated disciplines.

2.9 Water Polo Transfers

The Water Polo licence determines a player's eligibility to play for or vote in Water Polo elections on behalf of a particular club. A transfer changes the club for which a player is licenced to a new club. Where a member wishes to leave one Club and join another Club (new or existing) he must arrange for the Swim Ireland transfer form to be completed and returned to the Swim Ireland Membership Office together with the appropriate fee as determined by Swim Ireland. All applications must include:

- a) Written clearance from the club he wishes to leave;
- b) Written acceptance from the club he wishes to join; and

- c) A written request from him seeking to transfer.

If the transferring member owes fees to Swim Ireland or the Club or holds Club property and/or has had a complaint made against them which is in process or pending or in relation to which a sanction has been issued but not yet served, then the Club may withhold the transfer form until the matter is reasonably resolved, otherwise the Club must complete the transfer form as appropriate within 7 days of receipt of the transfer request

Transfers are automatically in force within 7 clear days of their confirmed receipt by the Swim Ireland office. Responsibility for obtaining confirmation of receipt rests with the Club or transferee. The Swim Ireland Membership Office and/or Honourable Water Polo Secretary shall inform the relevant Regional Secretaries of all transfers.

Where a member's original Club does not re-affiliate with Swim Ireland in the relevant year or is dissolved, a transfer is not required by the member joining another Club and there will be no transfer fee

Where a player has not competed for at least two years, this fee shall be waived. Other transfer requirements shall not be waived under this rule.

2.9.1 Transfer Windows

Transfer window shall be open from 1st June to 31st January annually.

2.9.2 Single Transfer Rule

A player can only undertake one transfer within any period of 12 weeks unless approved by NWPC.

2.9.3 Cut off Dates

The cut-off date for registering players for the Irish Senior Cup is January 31st of the season the Irish Senior Cup takes place. All transfers, including any LEN International Transfers, must be concluded on or prior to this date.

2.10 Annual Water Polo Conference

- a) The NWPC shall convene an Annual Conference each year approximately 2 months in advance of the Swim Ireland AGM ("Water Polo Conference"). At each Water Polo Conference, the attendees shall vote in respect of the election of any vacancies to the NWPC and such other business as may be put forward by the NWPC.
- b) No business shall be transacted at any Annual Conference unless a quorum is present. Save as otherwise provided in these Rules, twenty (20) Delegates entitled to attend and cast votes and who are present in person shall constitute a quorum.
- c) If such a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting, or if during a meeting such a quorum ceases to be present, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and place or to such time and place as the NWPC may determine and if at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting the Members present shall be a quorum.
- d) The Annual Water Polo Conference shall be run in accordance with Swim Ireland Standing Orders for the General Meetings as amended from time to time.
- e) The NWPC may alter or amend or disallow any proposition or motion which offends against either or both of the memorandum of association and/or the articles of association of the Company and/or which the NWPC considers may either bring the sport into disrepute and/or be against the

best interests of the Company. The NWPC shall inform, in writing, any Clubs whose motion is altered, amended, composited or disallowed in accordance with this rule.

- f) No amendments will be accepted to motions at the Annual Conference save those in respect of motions to amend Section 3 ‘Competitions’ of the Water Polo Rule Book and only then in accordance with Swim Ireland Standing Orders.
- g) Where a motion is put forward to amend ‘Section 3. Competition Rules’ of the Water Polo Rule Book a majority (50% plus 1) is required to pass such motion. All other sections of the Rule Book will require 75% in favour to pass any such motions.
- h) Appendix 1 Disciplinary Sanctions may be amended by a majority (50% plus 1). In the period between Water Polo Conferences, Appendix 1 may also be amended by unanimous vote of the NWPC provided that at least 28 clear days’ notice of any such amendment is provided to the clubs.
- i) Notice of the Annual Conference shall be given to all clubs within 28 clear days prior to such conference taking place.
- j) Candidates wishing to stand for election to the NWPC must receive the nomination of at least two (2) Clubs, one of which must be their own.
- k) The names of nominees for election/motions must be notified to the Secretary no later than 14 Clear Days prior to the date of the Annual Conference.
- l) Each Affiliated Water Polo Club shall be entitled to send two (2) Delegates to the Annual Conference/General Meetings. All voting Delegates must be Members of the Company and that club in their own right. A Delegate shall be elected by a Club in accordance with the procedure in the Club’s rules for electing Delegates at its general meeting. Each Club shall notify the Secretary in writing of the Delegate(s) within 7 days of advance of the General Meeting.
- m) Two delegates from each Water Polo club in attendance shall be entitled to vote on any motion before the Water Polo Conference/General Meeting.
- n) All Regional Nominees shall be elected by that region prior to the Annual Conference taking place and will be ratified at the Annual Conference.
- o) Delegates may only speak or vote in accordance with the terms of their membership set out in Rule 2.7
- p) A Parent or guardian of Club Members who are under the age of eighteen and are not Club Members in their own right may be appointed as a club delegate.

2.11 Special Water Polo Conference

The NWPC shall convene a special conference where:

- (a) A resolution to that effect is passed at the Annual Conference, or
- (b) A request is approved by two thirds of the NWPC, or
- (c) A request is received from five clubs, each of whom held an EGM and passed a resolution to request such a meeting, or
- (d) A request is received from Swim Ireland Board

2.11.1

A Special Conference shall be held within 21 days of the passing of the resolution or receipt of the request. No item, which is not included in the published Agenda, shall be discussed at a general conference.

2.11.2

At least fourteen days' notice of meeting, stating where and when it will be held, shall be sent to all those entitled to attend the general conference. Each Notice of Meeting shall be accompanied by an Agenda of the matters to be discussed and voted upon.

2.11.3

Seven clear days' notice shall be sent for an adjourned general conference. It shall not be necessary to circulate an Agenda.

2.11.4

Save for the article above the rules for the meeting of the annual conference shall apply to the special conference.

**SECTION 3.
Competition
Rules**

3. COMPETITION & LEAGUE RULES

3.1 General Competition Rules

All competitions, tournaments and exhibitions must be approved by the NWPC in accordance with the rules and regulations of Swim Ireland, the League Européenne de Natation (LEN) and the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA).

3.1.1 Permission

An affiliated club wishing to hold an Invitation Tournament must receive written permission from the Regional Water Polo Committee to which it is affiliated or, in the case of clubs wishing to hold an Invitation Tournament involving Clubs outside its region, must receive written permission from the NWPC

3.1.2 Documentation

All advertisements, entry forms, programmes, tickets and official notices shall include the words “under Ireland Water Polo Rules”

3.1.3. Minimum Numbers

The Minimum number of licensed players that must accompany an entry for a competition shall be numerically the minimum playing strength for that competition, unless otherwise stated in the rules.

3.1.4. Unlicensed Players

A club playing an unlicensed player shall concede a walkover in that match and all subsequent matches that the player takes part in while unlicensed and walkover fines will be charged accordingly. There shall, in addition, be a fine equal to twice the normal Licence fee. There shall be no appeal against this ruling.

3.1.5 Players

All Players must be registered with Swim Ireland each year and the teams in which they will play. Once a player is registered with a team, that player is only permitted to play within that team, unless a transfer application is received within the appropriate transfer window. Where clubs have multiple teams in the National Leagues, these clubs must submit individual team sheets before the commencement of the upcoming season.

Players are permitted to ONLY play for one registered Water Polo club and are only permitted to play National League with the club they are registered through Swim Ireland with. This Rule applies to all national leagues Men's, Women's and Junior Leagues if applicable.

3.1.6 Costumes

The costumes for all competitors shall be in good moral taste shall be non-transparent and shall comply with FINA Rules of Water Polo. The Referee of a competition has the authority to exclude any player whose costume does not comply with this rule.

3.1.7 Match Scheduling

Where more than one match is taking place at the same venue, matches shall follow immediately after the previous match has concluded or at the designated time. If the previous match was a walkover, the next match shall start at the designated time unless agreed by both teams and match officials. Match time maybe adjusted for administrative and scheduling purposes by the National Fixtures Secretary subject to a 7 day notice period, within a time window of 4 hours on any listed match day

3.1.8 Administration

For all National League and Irish Cup matches, Ireland Water Polo/Swim Ireland shall be responsible for the booking of the pool, the collection of admission fees and the payment of pool rental and the provision of the necessary equipment.

3.1.9 Under-Age Competitors

In the case of under-age competitions, a list of all competitors taking part on behalf of a Club shall be sent to Swim Ireland at least two weeks prior to the competition in question. This list will include, Swim Ireland registration number and dates of birth for each player which may be subject to verification

3.1.10 Brutality

The offence of brutality shall carry an immediate and automatic one match ban for a first and each offence, followed by a hearing to determine severity of incident and/or increase of suspension

3.2. Referees

3.2.1 Referees Controller

The NWPC may appoint a Referees Controller whose responsibility it shall be to appoint suitably qualified referees and table officials as required for national leagues, Cup Competitions and Interprovincial Competition in conjunction with the Water Polo Competitions Committee.

3.2.2 Referee Requirements

All competitions under the auspices of Ireland Water Polo shall be controlled by two referees except in extraordinary circumstances, and with the agreement of both teams.

3.2.3 Appointment of Referees

The Referees Controller shall ensure that the appointed Referees are not registered members of the competing clubs or directly related to any player, unless prior agreement has been given by both clubs, to such an appointment.

3.2.4 Water Polo Delegate

A suitably qualified Ireland Water Polo delegate may be appointed to oversee National Competitions. A delegate is required at all National Cup competitions. The delegate shall

- a) Evaluate the Referees
- b) Debrief and advise referees and table officials as soon as possible after the game
- c) Keep a delegate match sheet, which may be used to correct the match sheet
- d) Arbitrate on any protests or problems occurring during the game

3.3 Payment

3.3.1 Payment

Generally, and unless good cause has been shown, entries will not be accepted if the amount tendered is less than the full amount due or if the information requested is inaccurate or incomplete. There will be no appeal against a decision by the Honorary Treasurer in conjunction with the Swim Ireland Finance Manager that good cause has not been shown.

3.3.2. Right to Refuse entry

No entry shall be accepted from a Club in default of fees, walkover fines or other financial commitments to Ireland Water Polo from the previous season, unless fully paid by the closing date for receipt of entries

3.3.3 Suspensions

The Swim Ireland office shall send regular statements to Clubs detailing monies due. Any Club failing to pay these monies within 28 days of the date of such statements shall stand suspended until such payments are made

3.4. Player Definitions

3.4.1 Overseas players

‘Overseas players’ are defined as those players, moving or transferring to Swim Ireland/ Ireland Water Polo from another Water Polo jurisdiction, who have not been registered with Swim Ireland/ Ireland Water Polo for each of the three seasons prior to the playing season applying and who have not regularly played under the auspices of Ireland Water Polo during each of those three seasons.

3.4.2. Core Team Players

‘Core team players’ are defined as those players born on the island of Ireland and those who, though not having been born on the island of Ireland, have been registered with Ireland Water Polo & Swim Ireland and have been living in Ireland for each of the three seasons prior to the playing season applying and have regularly played under the auspices of Ireland Water Polo during each of those three seasons. Once a player has attained Core Team Player status, the player shall retain that status unless he/she transfers to another water polo jurisdiction.

3.4.3 Definition of ‘Regularly Played’

‘Regularly played’ is defined as having played in at least six National League games in each of the preceding three seasons applying. The responsibility for substantiation of a ‘regularly played’ assertion rests with a club who may be asked to provide the relevant match sheets.

3.4.4 Non-Residents

Rule 3.4.10 shall also apply to holders of Irish Passports and British Passports who were not born in Ireland or have not been resident in Ireland for the preceding twelve months.

3.4.5 Core Team Qualification Exemptions

The Competitions Committee may grant ‘core team’ qualification exemptions, by application, in cases

such as maternity related playing breaks and also potentially in relation to participation of teams representing a University or College, the final decision on eligibility of such exemptions being the responsibility of the Competitions Committee.

3.4.6 Overseas Player Eligibility to Compete

3.4.7 Irish Born players

Irish-born players, who are resident outside Ireland, for reasons of work or study, shall be eligible to play for a Club in competition under the auspices of Ireland Water Polo provided they have been licensed both with Ireland Water Polo and Swim Ireland by the closing date for entries for that competition. Players who have good reasons may apply in writing to the Ireland Water Polo Competitions Committee for a dispensation from the constraints of this Rule.

3.4.8 Teams

Teams are permitted to play up to a maximum of 2 (two) overseas players per 13-member team sheet for all national league and cup competitions, the remainder of players being made up of core team players. There is no restriction placed upon Clubs in relation to the number of overseas players registered to play. Restrictions under this rule will only apply to players aged 18 and over.

3.4.9 National Squad Players

No player who has been a member of a National squad of any other National Federation shall be eligible to play for a Club playing in any Ireland Water Polo competition without the prior permission of the Competitions Committee.

3.4.10 Permission to play

A club wishing to play any foreign National must seek the permission of the NWPC. Any club wishing to play a foreign National in any Irish Cup must obtain the permission of the NWPC by the 31st of January the year of the tournament/at least fourteen days prior to the start of the tournament. The start of an Irish Cup shall be the date of the first match of the competition.

3.4.11 Transfer Deadline

In the case of the Irish Senior Cup, all players must have completed any requisite transfer - whether domestic or international - by 31st of January in the season of said Cup. Only players who are licensed playing members of the club on this date may play in the Irish Senior Cup.

3.5 Walkovers

3.5.1 Definition of Walkover

- a. For Cup and League Competitions, a team that has not the required number of players for the minimum playing strength in the said competition when the referee signals the start of the match, shall be deemed to have conceded a walkover.
- b. Where a team fails to fulfil a fixture in any Ireland Water Polo competition, they shall be deemed to have conceded a walkover and the fine shall be as fixed by the NWPC.
- c. The Competitions Committee must notify the NWPC secretary of any walkovers within 7 days.

3.5.2 Goal Difference

For the purposes of 'Goal Difference', Walkovers shall be rated in accordance with Ireland Water Polo Rules (Currently 4-0).

3.5.3 Points Deduction

A Club conceding a walkover in National League Divisions 1 and 2 shall also be deducted four (4) points from their point's total.

3.6 Fines

3.6.1 Walkover Fines

All walkover fines, save as otherwise provided for in these rules, shall be in accordance with Ireland Water Polo Walkover Charges as decided by the by the NWPC. The NWPC shall also have the right to instruct the offending Club to pay part or all of the travelling team's expenses in the case where a "home" team conceded the walkover.

3.7. Tournaments Rules

Save as otherwise provided for, all Irish Cup Competitions shall be played as tournaments at a centralised venue

3.7.1 Caps

Players must keep the same cap numbers for the duration of the tournament. The first goalkeeper should wear number 1 red cap and the second goalkeeper red number 13 cap. In the event that an outfield player has to play in goal, he shall wear the red “no number” or red number 1 cap and the coach must inform the referees / table of the player’s original number.

3.7.2 Match Sheets

Each team must list their squad of up to 15 players before the start of their first match. In the event that a team has 14 or 15 players, they must inform the table ½ an hour before each match which 1 or 2 players are not playing.

3.7.3 Pool Fees

Each team must pay their pool fees to the Swim Ireland office by an agreed date before their first game. Any team which fails to do so will not be allowed to play, will forfeit their games, and will be liable for walkover fines for their matches, in addition to still being liable for the pool fees

3.7.4 Brutality

Any player excluded for the remainder of the game without substitute for 4 minutes, for brutality shall be suspended for at least the next game. The Tournament Director and/or Jury of Appeal may impose a greater penalty due to the nature of the brutality. Any such punishment shall be in addition to any punishment that Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary Committee may impose at a later hearing.

3.7.5 Yellow Cards

Any Head Coach who behaves inappropriately towards the referees/match officials will receive a yellow card. This is a warning and is only applicable in the match in question – it is not carried forward to his next match.

3.7.6 Red Card

Any coach, player or other official, who receives a red card must immediately leave the poolside and go to the spectator area, without speaking to or communicating with his team. After receiving a red card, the coach may not attempt to coach, instruct or communicate with his team from the spectator area. If he attempts to do so, he will be ejected from the precincts of the pool and further sanctioned.

3.8 Sanctions

A coach, player or other official who receives a red card will receive a sanction as specified in Appendix 1 Disciplinary Sanctions. The Tournament Director and/or Jury of Appeal may impose a greater penalty due to the nature of the offence. Any such punishment shall be in addition to any punishment that the Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary Committee may impose at any later hearing.

In the event of a red card for the head coach, the second or assistant coach may stand and coach the team but may not move to 5 metres - he must remain at the bench.

If a coach receives a red card and consequent suspension, he may not coach or play in a game involving a team of another gender in the Cup competition until that suspension has been served.

3.9. Team Benches

All players not in the water at a given time must remain seated at the team bench at all times. Any assistant coaches or team managers must also remain seated at all times. An assistant coach or team manager who breaches this Rule shall receive a red card. A player, who is excluded from the remainder of the game by way of 3 personal fouls, must remain on the team bench, with their cap on. A player excluded from the

remainder of the game by the referee (for Misconduct, Brutality etc.) Shall immediately leave the team bench.

3.10 Results

Points shall be awarded as follows:

- a) Win - 3 Points
- b) Draw - 1 Point
- c) Loss - 0 Points

All knockout matches will be played to a definite result. In the event of a tie at the end of normal time, there will be extra time in accordance with the rules laid out for the tournament. If still tied, the game shall go into a “penalty shoot-out” in accordance with FINA Rules.

3.11 Timeouts

In the event of a game continuing into extra time, each team receives an additional (third) timeout. This may only be used in extra time. If the team still has one or both of their original timeouts unused, they can also use these during extra time.

4. THE IRISH SENIOR CUP

4.1 General

The Irish Senior Cup shall be a competition open to all clubs affiliated to Ireland Water Polo, with one entry per Club being accepted. There shall be separate competitions for Men and Women and there may be different rules applicable to Men’s and Women’s Cups. For all Cup Competitions, there shall be a Jury of Appeal, in accordance with Ireland Water Polo Tournament Rules

4.2 Eligibility

All players who wish to play in the Irish Senior Cup must have played a minimum of six (6) games in the Irish National League.

4.3 Referees

Referees shall be appointed by the Referees Controller in consultation with the Tournament Director –

5. THE MEN’S IRISH SENIOR CUP

5.1 Entries

Where more than eight entries are received, a qualification tournament shall take place at venues and on dates to be decided by the Competitions Committee. The top 4 teams from the previous season’s Premier Division of the League shall not take part in the qualification tournament.

The Tournament proper (The Irish Senior Cup Final Tournament or Irish Senior Cup) shall consist of 4 qualifiers from the qualification tournament and the top 4 teams from the previous season’s Premier Division.

5.2 Draw

The draw for the qualification tournament shall be an open draw.

5.3 Rules

For all Irish Senior Cup matches Ireland Water Polo Tournament Rules above shall apply. Additionally:

- a) Playing times shall be in accordance with FINA Rules of Water polo
- b) Extra time shall also be in accordance with FINA Rules of Water polo.

For the Tournament proper, the eight teams shall be divided by draw into two groups of four. Each team shall play the other three teams in its group. Two teams shall qualify from each group. The teams exempted from pre-qualifying shall be seeded in the Tournament Proper as follows:

- 1st and 4th from the preceding years NLD1 into Group A and
- 2nd and 3rd from the preceding years NLD1 into Group B.

The semi-finals shall be contested between the winner of one group and the runner-up in the other. The order of the Semi-finals shall be:

- Winner of Group A vs Runner Up in Group B
- Winner of Group B vs Runner Up in Group A

5.4 Medals

The maximum number of medals that shall be awarded shall be 16.

5.5 Withdrawals

Where a team withdraws from the Irish Senior Cup Finals tournament, the withdrawal fine shall be as laid down by the NWPC or the cost of pool rental, whichever is the greater.

Where a team withdraws from the qualification tournament, the withdrawal fine shall be as laid down by the NWPC or the cost of pool rental, whichever is the greater.

6.1 THE WOMEN'S IRISH SENIOR CUP

6.1 Eligibility

Where more than 6 entries are received, a qualification tournament shall take place at venues and on dates to be decided by the Competitions Committee. The top 2 teams from the previous season's Women's National League Division 1 shall not take part in the qualification tournament.

Any Qualification shall follow as far as possible the Rules for the Men's Irish Senior Cup.

The Tournament proper (The Irish Senior Cup Final Tournament or Irish Senior Cup) shall consist of 4 qualifiers from the qualification tournament and the top 2 teams from the previous season's Women's National League division 1. In 2 groups by open draw, each team shall play each other team in a 'round-robin' and the top 2 teams shall contest in Semi-Final crossovers where the winners will compete in the Irish Senior Cup Final.

6.2 Draw

The draw for the qualification tournament shall be an open draw.

6.3 Rules

For all Irish Senior Cup matches Ireland Water Polo Tournament Rules above shall apply. Additionally:

- a) Playing times shall be in accordance with FINA Rules of Water Polo;

- b) Extra time shall be also being in accordance with FINA Rules of Water Polo.

For the Tournament proper, the 6 teams shall be divided in open draw into two groups of 3. Each team shall play the other 2 teams in its group. 2 teams shall qualify from each group.

The semi-finals shall be contested between the winner of one group and the runner-up in the other. The order of the Semi-finals shall be:

- Winner of Group A vs Runner Up in Group B
- Winner of Group B vs Runner Up in Group A

6.4 Medals

The maximum number of medals that shall be awarded shall be 16.

6.5 Withdrawals

Where a team withdraws from the Irish Senior Cup Finals tournament, the withdrawal fine shall be as laid down by the NWPC or the cost of pool rental, whichever is the greater.

Where a team withdraws from the qualification tournament, the withdrawal fine shall be as laid down by the NWPC or the cost of pool rental, whichever is the greater.

7. THE IRISH UNDER 19 CUP

7.1 Entries

The Irish Under-19 Cup shall be open to all affiliated Clubs.

There shall be separate Irish Under-19 Cups for Men and Women.

7.2 Eligibility

Players for this competition shall be under 19 years on January 1st in the year of competition.

7.3 Rules

The NWPC will set the tournament specific rules. These will be circulated in advance of the tournament taking place

7.4 Withdrawals

A team withdrawing from the Irish under 19 Cup after publication of the draw and within four weeks of commencing date shall pay a withdrawal fine as laid down by the NWPC or the pool rental, whichever is the higher.

8. THE IRISH UNDER 17 CUP

8.1 Entries

The Irish under 17 Cup shall be open to all fully affiliated clubs.

There shall be separate Irish under 17 Cups for Men and Women.

8.2 Eligibility

Players for this competition shall be under 17 years on January 1st in the year of competition.

8.3 Rules

The NWPC will set the tournament specific rules. These will be circulated in advance of the tournament taking place

8.4 Medals

Teams shall consist of a maximum of 13 players from a panel of 15 players. The maximum number of medals awarded shall be 16.

8.5 Withdrawals

A team withdrawing from the Irish under 17 Cup after publication of the draw and within four weeks of commencing date shall pay a withdrawal fine as laid down by the NWPC or the pool rental, whichever is the higher.

9. THE IRISH UNDER 15 CUP

9.1 Entries

The Irish under 15 Cup shall be open to all fully affiliated Clubs

The Irish U/15 cup shall be a development competition open to teams of same gender

9.2 Eligibility

Players for this competition shall be under 15 years on January 1st in the year of competition.

9.3 Rules

The NWPC will set the tournament specific rules. These will be circulated in advance of the tournament taking place

9.4 Medals

Teams shall consist of a maximum of 13 players from a panel of 15 players. The maximum number of medals awarded shall be 16.

9.5 Withdrawals

A team withdrawing from the Irish Under 15 Cup after publication of the draw and within four weeks of commencing date shall pay a withdrawal fine as laid down by the NWPC or the pool rental, whichever is the higher.

10. THE IRISH UNDER 13 MIXED GENDER DEVELOPMENT CUP

10.1 Entries

The Irish Under 13 Cup shall be open to all fully affiliated Clubs.

The Irish U/13 cup shall be a development competition open to teams of a mixed gender

10.2 Eligibility

Players for this competition shall be under 13 years on January 1st in the year of competition.

10.3 Rules

The NWPC will set tournament specific rules for all under 13 mixed gender cups. These will be circulated in advance of the tournament taking place.

10.4 Medals

Teams shall consist of a maximum of 13 players from a panel of 15 players. The maximum number of medals awarded shall be 16.

10.5 Withdrawals

A team withdrawing from the Irish Under-13 Cup after publication of the draw and within four weeks of commencing date shall pay a withdrawal fine as laid down by the NWPC or the pool rental, whichever is the higher.

11. THE INTERPROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

11.1 Entries

The Competitions Committee shall organise Interprovincial matches each year.

11.1.1 Entry Closing Date

Entries shall be sought at least eight weeks before the published date. Only written entries accompanied by a bond as fixed by the Competitions Committee and the Swim Ireland offices shall be accepted. This bond shall be refunded if the Region fulfils its commitments to the Interprovincial series concerned.

11.1.2 Conditions of Entry

Only members of properly affiliated Clubs may be selected to represent a Region. A player must play for the Province in which he plays.

11.2 Rules

Where more than one match is to take place in a given Interprovincial series, the Rules governing teams shall be for the corresponding Cup competitions.

The duration of the Interprovincial matches shall be set by the competitions committee.

11.3 Draw

The draw for the Interprovincial matches shall be made by the Competitions Committee

11.4 Officials

The Ireland Water Polo Referees Controller shall appoint the referees for the Interprovincial matches. Other match officials shall be from the host Region.

11.5 Notice

At least fourteen days' notice of the times and venue shall be given for all Interprovincial matches.

11.6 Winners

The winners of the National Interprovincial Championships shall be eligible to play in the LEN Club Competition. In the event that the National League Champions elect to play in the Euro League, then the Interprovincial Champions may play in the LEN Trophy. If not, the Interprovincial Champions may play in whichever LEN Club competition they wish.

12. THE NATIONAL WATERPOLO LEAGUES:

12.1 Entry

The National Leagues shall be open to all affiliated Clubs. Teams shall be divided into Divisions whose composition and format shall be in accordance with these Rules. Except as otherwise provided for in these Rules, promotion and relegation shall apply.

Entries for the National League shall be at the invitation of the Competitions Committee. Such invitation shall specify the minimum playing strength for each division.

Entries accompanied by the appropriate fees and other charges and documentation specified shall close with the Swim Ireland offices on date as decided by the Competitions Committee each year. Late or incomplete entries shall not be accepted.

In special circumstances an entry may be accepted from a club whose specific purpose is participation in Water Polo competition and whose playing members are drawn from other swimming or Water Polo clubs who have not sufficient members to enter a team.

12.2 Fixtures

Fixture lists shall as far as possible be circulated at least twenty-eight days prior to the start of the National Leagues.

12.3 Referees

12.3.1 Appointments

Referees for all matches in the National League shall be appointed by the Referees Controller. Referees from outside a region may be appointed to control matches at venues under the jurisdiction of another region. Unless as otherwise decided by the NWPC, such referees shall be paid expenses as agreed by the NWPC.

12.3.2 Minimum Requirements

Except in exceptional circumstances, all matches in the National League shall be controlled by two referees.

12.4 Location

Each team shall nominate a home location (pool) for the purpose of the National League and that each team will play a home game in their nominated location and an away game in the nominated location of the opposing team.

12.5 Caps

The “home” team (first named on the fixture list) shall wear white caps.

12.6 Eligibility

Except as provided for in the Transfer Rules, no player may play for more than one Club in the National League, irrespective of the divisions being contested by the clubs concerned, without the permission of the Competitions Committee.

In accordance with the Transfer Rules, players may only transfer during the Transfer Windows.

All players in the National League shall hold a current Swim Ireland and Ireland Water Polo licence in accordance with these Rules.

Where a Club is entering more than one division in the National League, players must be named on each team at the start of the season and any transfers must comply with the deadlines set by the current Ireland Water Polo transfer regulations. No transfer fees will be required.

12.7 Scoring

Winners of a fixture shall be awarded three points. A draw shall be awarded one point to each team.

Where teams are tied with the same number of points in the final points table and where a decision must be reached in relation to final positions, it shall be decided as follows:

- a) The team which has gained the most points in matches between the teams shall be ranked higher.
- b) If the teams are still tied, the team with the largest difference between goals scored for and against in results between the teams shall be ranked higher.
- c) If the teams are still tied, the team having scored the higher number of goals in matches between the teams will be ranked higher.
- d) If there is still a tie, then the team with the largest difference between goals scored for and against in all matches shall be ranked higher.
- e) If the teams are still tied, the team having scored the higher number of goals in all matches will be ranked higher.
- f) If the teams are still tied, a playoff match shall be played.

12.8 Playing times

The playing times for matches in the National League shall be as follows:

- National Premier League: four periods of 8 minutes actual play;
- National League Division 2: four periods of 7 minutes actual play;
- National League Division 3: four periods of 7 minutes actual play;
- Women's Premier League Division 1: four periods of 8 minutes actual play.
- Women's National League Division 2: as decided by the Competitions Committee.

All fixtures shall commence at the appointed time. If the previous match was a walkover, the next match shall start at the designated time. Teams not having the minimum playing strength, ready to enter the water, when requested by the referee, shall be deemed to have conceded a walkover.

12.9 Walkovers

Walkover fines shall be as laid down by the Water Polo Competitions Committee and payable in accordance with these Rules.

12.9.1 Multiple Walkovers

Where a team concedes three walkovers in the same division of the National League, they shall be deemed to have withdrawn from that division and all matches involving that team shall be deemed to be unplayed when drawing up the final points table for that division. Teams excluded under this Rule shall still be liable for all match fees, or walkover fines at the discretion of the Competitions Committee.

12.9.2 Postponements

Requests for postponements of fixtures must be made, in writing and stating the reasons for the request, to the Competitions Committee. The postponement can only be effected after obtaining the written permission of the Committee. Such permission shall only be granted in extraordinary circumstances. The Law applies to all requests for re-scheduling of fixtures once the fixture list has been circulated.

12.9.3 Walkover Fines

The walkover fine shall be as laid down by the NWPC in consultation with the Swim Ireland offices. The Competitions Committee may, in the case of a walkover conceded to a team travelling to a venue in another Region, order part, or all or none of the fine to be paid to the visiting team.

13. MEN'S NATIONAL WATERPOLO LEAGUES

13.1 General

Entries for the National League shall be divided into 3 Divisions, 8 in National Premier League, 8 in National League Division 2, with the remainder making up National League Division 3. The National League Divisions shall be played over two rounds, following which; the Division will be split into Top and Bottom halves and a further (1) round played.

Save as otherwise provided for, all National League Competitions shall be played on a Tournament basis, with 2 'rounds' of matches per Divisional weekend.

**Please note competition structure is currently undertaking review process for consideration at the Annual Conference 2015.*

13.2 Entries

A club may enter more than one team across all divisions (A team, B team, C team etc.). Players must be named on each team at the start of the season and any transfers must comply with the deadlines set by the current Ireland Water Polo transfer regulations, with one exception i.e. No transfer fees will be required.

13.3 Rules

The NWPC shall decide the commencing date for the National Leagues. The National Leagues shall commence on the second weekend in September Annually.

13.3.1 Premier League

For the National League:

- a) Men's Premier League shall consist of not more than 8 teams,
- b) Teams shall consist of not more than thirteen players; Teams shall at the start of the season name 10 players who can only play in this Division. Other club players who play in lower Divisions may play up in this Division to make up the team of thirteen.
- c) The entry fee shall be decided by the NWPC in consultation with Swim Ireland;
- d) Playing times shall be in accordance with Rule 12.8;
- e) Referees shall be appointed in accordance with these Rules;
- f) The bottom team will be relegated to Division 2 and the second last team may be challenged by the Runner-up in National League Division 2 (NLD 2) for the National League Division 1 (NLD 1) position.

13.3.2, Division 2

For the National League, Division 2:

- a) Division 2 of the National League shall be open to teams from affiliated clubs, including clubs with teams in Division One of the National League;
- b) Division 2 shall consist of not more than 8 teams;
- c) Teams shall consist of not more than thirteen players; Teams shall at the start of the season name 10 players who can play in this Division or Division 1. Other club players may play in this Division to make up the team of thirteen with the exception of players named in the Division 1 designated 10 players.

- d) The entry fee shall be decided by the NWPC in consultation with Swim Ireland;
- e) Playing times shall be in accordance with Rule 12.8;
- f) The first-placed team in NLD 2 at the end of the National League be promoted automatically and a promotion play-off shall be played between the 2nd team in NLD 2 and the 2nd last placed team in NLD 1. The winner of this play-off retains a place in NLD 1 and the losing team demoted to NLD 2. Play-off games are played to a result.
- g) The bottom team in NLD 2 at the end of the National League be relegated automatically and a relegation play-off shall be played between the 2nd last team in NLD 2 and the 2nd placed team in NLD 3. The winner of this play-off retains a place in NLD 2 and the losing team demoted to NLD 3. Play-off games are played to a result.

13.3.3 Division 3

For the National League, Division 3:

- a) Entry to this division shall be open to all affiliated clubs, including those with teams in either or both of the higher divisions;
- b) The NWPC shall determine the number of teams
- c) Teams shall consist of not more than thirteen players; Any club players may play in this Division to make up the team of thirteen with the exception of players named in the Division 1 or Division 2 designated players.
- g) The entry fee shall be as decided by the NWPC in consultation with Swim Ireland;
- d) Playing times shall be in accordance with Rule 12.8;
- e) The first-placed team in NLD 3 at the end of the National League be promoted automatically and a promotion play-off shall be played between the 2nd team in NLD 3 and the 2nd last placed team in NLD 2. The winner of this play-off retains a place in NLD 2 and the losing team demoted to NLD 3. Play-off games are played to a result.

14. THE WOMEN'S NATIONAL WATERPOLO LEAGUES

**Please note competition structure is currently undertaking review process for consideration at the Annual Conference 2015.*

14.1. Premier League

The Women's National Premier League shall be open to all affiliated Clubs.

14.2 Division 1

The Competitions Committee shall decide the number of teams in the Women's National League Division

14.3 Division 2

The Competitions Committee may at its discretion invite entries for a Women's National League Division Two. The format of this competition will be as decided by the Committee. It shall take place subject to four entries being received.

14.4 Playing Times

Playing times shall be in accordance with Rule 17.8

14.5 Rules

All other playing conditions shall be as in the Men's National Leagues.

15. KNOCKOUT CUPS

15.1. Brother Phillip Knockout Cup for Men

Save as otherwise provided for, the Br Philip Knockout Cup for Men shall be played at one venue over one weekend on a Knockout basis.

15.1.1 Draw

The Draw shall be made for the entire competition through to the final and matches fixed by the Honorary Competitions Secretary.

15.1.2 Rules

All other conditions (Playing times etc. - shall be the same as the Men's NLD 1)

15.2 The Women's Knockout Cup

Save as otherwise provided for, the National Women's Knockout Cup shall be played at 1 venue over one weekend

15.2.1 Draw

The Draw shall be made for the entire competition through to the final and matches fixed by the Honorary Competitions Secretary.

15.2.2 Rules

All other conditions (Playing times etc. - shall be the same as the Women's NLD)

**SECTION 4.
COMPLAINTS
&
DISCIPLINARY**

16. JURISDICTION

16.1 General Jurisdiction

Ireland Water Polo recognises LEN & FINA as the Bodies governing Water Polo internationally, and the National Swimming Federations affiliated to LEN & FINA as the governing Bodies of the sport in their respective countries. Any sentence of disqualification or suspension passed by any of these organisations shall be binding on Ireland Water Polo.

16.2 Judicial Authority

16.2.1 Levels of Judicial Authority

The levels of judicial authority shall be, in this order:

- The match referees;
- The Tournament Director (in a tournament only);
- The Jury of Appeal (in a tournament only);
- The Ireland Water Polo Complaints and Disciplinary Committee, via Disciplinary Commissioner;
- The Swim Ireland Complaints & Disciplinary Committee;
- Just Sport Ireland (JSI)

16.3 Match Referees

Match Referees are responsible for the enforcement of LEN, FINA & Ireland Water Polo Rules and the promoter's conditions governing the event. They are also responsible for dealing with protests and shall have full authority over all spectators, officials and competitors.

16.4 Tournament Director

The Tournament Director shall impose penalties, under current FINA and LEN Rules for brutality and Red Cards issued to Officials and Players

16.5 Jury of Appeal

In the event that a suspension imposed on an individual or team during a tournament is appealed, the Jury of Appeal shall convene to hear the appeal (on payment of the required appeal fee) against sanctions imposed on any player, coach or other team official who has received a suspension following a red card from the referee. The Jury of Appeal shall also hear an appeal (on payment of the required appeal fee) against sanctions imposed on any player who has received a suspension following a Brutality offence. Any penalty imposed by the Jury of Appeal shall be in addition to any further punishment deemed suitable by the Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary Committee. They shall be mindful of any and all FINA, LEN and Ireland Water Polo directives currently in force. LEN and FINA tournament Rules shall be observed at tournaments.

16.5.1 Composition of Jury of Appeal

The Jury of Appeal shall normally comprise the Tournament Director and the Tournament Referees not involved in the incident or match.

16.6 Referees' Reports

16.6.1

A referee shall report to the Competitions Committee any player excluded for the remainder of the game without substitution for brutality.

16.6.2

A referee may report any other incident that he considers serious enough. The Competitions Committee shall refer it to the Ireland Water Polo Complaints & Disciplinary Commissioner.

16.6.3

Referee's reports shall be dealt with in the same manner as complaints, save that the referee shall not be required to enclose any complaint fee.

16.6.4

Unless there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the Referee's report shall be taken as fact.

17. PROTESTS

17.1 Definition

A protest is an allegation that the FINA, LEN or Ireland Water Polo Laws or the promoter's conditions governing a competition have not been complied with or have been misinterpreted. No protest or appeal shall be entertained on decisions of fact or application of the Rules by referees.

17.2. Lodging a Protest

A player, Club or Official taking part in a Water Polo competition may lodge a protest. The protest must be lodged in writing and accompanied by a protest fee as currently set by the Competitions Committee in consultation with Swim Ireland

17.2.1 Protests during a Competition

Where a protest arises during a competition it shall be made to a referee, if regarding the Rules of Water Polo, otherwise, it shall be made to the Tournament Director or appropriate Ireland Water Polo official.

17.2.2 Protests before a Competition

When the reason for a protest is known before the competition takes place, it must be lodged with a referee before the start of the event or it shall not be heard. The organising committee shall inform all other teams before the competition starts.

17.2.3 Adjudication

The organising Body (or Jury of Appeal) shall hear a protest, except that if the protest involves infringement of Ireland Water Polo Rules it shall be referred to the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee.

17.3 Decisions

17.3.1 No decision reached

If no decision has been reached by the organising body (or Jury of Appeal) within 21 days an appeal may be made to the NWPC, which shall hear the case and have powers to pay the whole or part of the expenses incurred by the parties concerned.

17.3.2 Withholding of Prizes

When a protest is made in accordance with the relevant rules all prizes shall be withheld until the protest and any appeal therefrom has been decided. The prizes shall be awarded in accordance with the final decision.

17.3.3 Return of Protest Fee

If a protest is upheld, the protest fee shall be returned.

18. IRELAND WATER POLO COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY COMMISSIONER

18.1. Complaints and Disciplinary Commissioner (CDC)

The Ireland Water Polo National Committee shall appoint a Complaints & Disciplinary Commissioner to receive and determine Referee's Reports, Complaints or Appeals from any person, Club or Region, provided that the decision involves the interpretation of Ireland Water Polo Laws, Bylaws, Rules or Regulations or the conditions governing Ireland Water Polo competitions. All disciplinary matters arising from National competitions shall be received by the Ireland Water Polo Complaints and Disciplinary Commissioner.

The CDC shall have the following functions:

- a) To be the recipient of any written Complaint and Disciplinary Report
- b) To investigate a Complaint or Disciplinary Report. Where any Complaint or Disciplinary Report makes reference to suspected child abuse the CDC shall immediately notify the National Designated Person and the National Children's Officer;
- c) To determine whether a prima facie case has been made against a Respondent on receipt of a Complaint or an incident which comes to the attention of the CDC but which is not contained in a Complaint or Disciplinary Report;
- d) To refer the Complaint/Disciplinary Report to the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee, established in accordance with Rule 18.3, where in the opinion of the Complaints and Disciplinary Commissioner a prima facie case to answer has been established;
- e) To dismiss a Complaint where, in the opinion of the CDC, a prima facie case to answer has not been established;
- f) To correspond with and notify the parties of all necessary information prior to a Hearing before the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee;
- g) To prepare documents for the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee;
- h) To present the case in respect of a disciplinary matter before the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee, including the calling of witnesses etc;
- i) To maintain a record of decisions of the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee;
- j) To liaise with Swim Ireland and to return all records to the Office on completion
- k) To ensure that sanctions are observed by Respondents.

18.1.1

In the course of an investigation of any Complaint/Disciplinary Report, the CDC may consider any evidence he/she deems relevant and shall have the right to make enquiries of any individuals and seek any information or documents in relation to the matter. For the avoidance of doubt, where necessary, the CDC is entitled to consult with the judge/official/Responsible Person to clarify any issues arising in relation to a Disciplinary Report, including his/her handwriting. A responsible person means the Member in ultimate authority over a Member, Team or Delegation at an event.

18.1.2

Prior to referring the matter to the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee, the CDC shall notify the Respondent and any other relevant party with the following information and documentation:

- i) Copy of the written Complaint/Disciplinary Report;
- ii) The relevant rule allegedly breached;

- iii) Copy of supporting documents relied on by either party;
- iv) The parties to the Complaint;
- v) The procedures involved;
- vi) The possible sanctions;
- vii) The rights of the parties at the Hearing;
- viii) Any other procedural requirements;
- ix) Time, date and venue of the Hearing.

18.2 Disciplinary Panel Composition

The Disciplinary Panel shall comprise of approximately twelve responsible individuals. Unless the NWPC decides otherwise, this Panel shall comprise the members of the NWPC, the members of the Regional Committees and the National Coaches.

18.3 Complaints and Disciplinary Committee

In an instance where the CDC believes there is a need for a disciplinary matter to be heard, the Complaints and Disciplinary Commissioner shall appoint from this panel three persons (The Complaints and Disciplinary Committee) to conduct a hearing. In the event that the Complaints and Disciplinary Commissioner is involved in some way, the Complaints and Disciplinary committee shall be appointed by two of the following: Ireland Water Polo Chairperson, Ireland Water Polo Secretary and Ireland Water Polo Treasurer.

18.4. Independence of Disciplinary Committee

The persons appointed to hear the matter shall not be related to either the complainant or the accused by virtue of the following:

- a) Membership of a club, either as player, coach or other club official; or
- b) Relationship of family; or
- c) Relationship of marriage or cohabitation, or
- d) Participation in the match or complaint in question.

*In the case of a Referee's report, only participation in the match shall apply

18.5 Appeals against Regional Disciplinary Decisions

The Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary Committee shall also hear appeals against Regional Disciplinary Committee decisions

19. COMPLAINTS

19.1 Definition of complaint

A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction, by any person, Club, Body or Region, with an action of any other person, Club, Body or Region in connection with the sport.

19.2 Lodging a complaint

A complaint may be lodged by sending the Honorary Secretary of Ireland Water Polo a detailed written statement of the action with which the complainant is dissatisfied and the reasons for his dissatisfaction.

A complaint must:

- Be accompanied by a fee as currently set by the NWPC
- Reach the Honorary Secretary not later than fourteen days after the alleged incident, which gave rise to it.
- Where a complaint is received outside the time limit, the NWPC may extend the time if the complainant can show good cause for the delay.

19.3.1 Scheduling

Immediately upon receipt of a Referee's Report, appeal or complaint the Competitions Committee shall advise the Complaints and Disciplinary Commissioner and in consultation with said Chairperson arrange the date and place for the hearing. The hearing shall take place as soon as is practicably possible but within 60 days of receipt of the complaint or appeal. Five (5) clear days' notice shall be given in writing to the principle parties interested or involved together with a copy of the complaint or notice of appeal. The Ireland Water Polo Complaints and Disciplinary Committee shall hear the complaint or appeal in accordance with Rule 19.4

19.3.2 Notification

The notification of the hearing shall be sent directly to the respondent.

19.4 Complaints and Disciplinary Hearing

Where a Hearing shall take place, within 60 days of receipt of a Complaint or the commencement of Disciplinary Action, the Chairperson of the relevant Complaints and Disciplinary Committee (in this clause, the "Committee") shall write to the relevant parties advising them of:

- (i) Composition of the Committee;
- (ii) Declaration that the Committee Members have no interest in the outcome;
- (iii) The parties to the Complaint/Disciplinary Action;
- (iv) The offence alleged and relevant rule;
- (v) The rights of the parties;
- (vi) List of witnesses to be called;
- (vii) Procedures involved;
- (viii) Potential sanctions;
- (ix) Confirmation of documents to hand;
- (x) Invitation for any further evidence to be relied on/submissions in writing;
- (xi) Time, date and venue for Hearing.

19.4.1 The Complaints and Disciplinary Committee (CDC)

- a) The Complaints and Disciplinary Committee shall elect a Chairperson.
- b) The Committee shall have discretion to extend the deadline in exceptional circumstances.
- c) In circumstances where an expedited process is necessary, the CDC may designate himself/herself or another Member from the Complaints and Disciplinary Panel to serve as the Committee in the event that it is not possible to constitute the entire Committee in an expedited manner. In such cases, the CDCo or the person designated by the CDCo shall have all the powers of a Committee as if a Committee had been duly convened.
- d) The CDC, in its discretion, may invite other persons (including but not limited to witnesses, officials or experts) to provide evidence or assistance to the Committee in any form.
- e) The CDC shall decide either to convene an Oral Hearing or to decide the matter on a "documents only" basis. In considering the above the CDC shall have regard to the gravity of the Complaint or Disciplinary Action amongst other matters.

- f) The CDC shall conduct the Hearing of any matter in any manner which it deems appropriate;
- g) The CDC shall have the power to convene any meetings by way of teleconference;
- h) The CDC shall have the discretion to accept testimony by telephone, written statement or submission, whether by fax, email or other means;
- i) The CDC shall have the power to decide on the admissibility, relevance and weight of any evidence (including the testimony of any fact or expert witness) and shall not be bound by any laws or rules regarding the conduct of Court proceedings in relation to such matters. Facts may be established by any reliable means, including admissions.

19.4.2 Rights of each party:

Be accompanied at the Oral Hearing if one is convened, by either a Member of Swim Ireland or a close family Member or someone in loco parentis such as an unrelated guardian or custodian. Legal representatives shall not be permitted;

- (ii) Call witnesses. Such witnesses may only be present to give their evidence and which witnesses may be questioned by the CDC;
- (iii) Make submissions in writing or otherwise.

Where a party exercises any or all of the rights as set out in 19.4.2 (i) or 19.4.2 (ii) above then the party shall notify the CDC, Chairperson of the CDC and the other party of the names of any persons accompanying and the names of any witnesses.

19.4.3 Children's Officer

A Children's Officer shall be present at the Hearing where the Complainant or Respondent is under 18 years of age. The Children's Officer shall attend to ensure that the rights of the child are protected at the Hearing. The Children's Officer shall be entitled to make observation to the Committee but shall not be permitted to make any decision on culpability.

Where the witness is under 18 years of age, the Children's Officer shall also be permitted to be present and in this regard full permission of the Parent of the witness must be given in order for the witness to be present.

19.5 Non-Attendance at the hearing

19.5.1

In the case of a Complaint, in the event of the non-attendance, without reasonable cause (considered by the CDC to be justifiable reason for non-attendance) of a Complainant at a Hearing, the Complaint against the Respondent shall be taken no further. In the event of non-attendance, without reasonable cause, of a Respondent at a Hearing, the CDC will be entitled to base its decision on the information and evidence it has received.

19.5.2

The CDC may adjourn or rearrange the Hearing at its discretion. An adjourned or rearranged Hearing shall take place as soon as is practicable.

19.5.3

In the case of a Disciplinary Action, the CDC shall present the case against the Respondent, and the CDCo shall be entitled to introduce such evidence and witnesses as the CDC may at his/her discretion decide is appropriate. In the case of a Complaint, the Complainant shall present the case against a Respondent.

19.5.4

Facts established in a Court Hearing where that Court has imposed sanction on a Respondent shall be irrefutable evidence of those facts against a Respondent in a Complaint or Disciplinary Hearing.

19.6 Disciplinary Reports

A Disciplinary Report shall be, until the contrary is established to satisfaction of the CDC, sufficient evidence of:

- the qualifications and authority of any official/judge/citing commissioner/Responsible Person who has reporting authority; and
- the authority of the official/judge/Responsible Person who signed the Disciplinary Report;
- the facts stated in the Disciplinary Report.

19.7 Imposing Sanctions

19.7.1

On deciding culpability but prior to the imposition of a sanction, the CDC shall take into account any aggravating/mitigating factors.

19.7.2

After deciding on culpability of the Respondent, the CDC shall impose a sanction as set out in Appendix 1. Sanctions.

19.8 Procedures following a hearing

19.8.1

The decision of the CDC shall be made and notified in writing to the relevant parties within three days of the Hearing by the CDC, unless the CDC deems an extension of time necessary. The CDC shall retain the decision on a register and shall notify the Swim Ireland Office accordingly.

19.8.2

The written decision shall be in a format as set out in the appendices. The decision shall include reference to the parties' right to appeal the decision to the Swim Ireland Complaints and Disciplinary Committee within 14 days of the date of the decision.

19.8.3

Pending the appeal, the original sanction imposed by the CDC shall remain in force.

19.9 Costs of a Hearing

Generally, any party calling witnesses is responsible for their expenses. However, the Ireland Water Polo Complaints and Disciplinary Committee may order any of the persons interested who have received notice of the hearing to pay the whole or part of all the expenses incurred. Where a complaint was originally laid before a Club, Body or Association by a duly appointed official of an Ireland Water Polo Panel or the CDC, the NWPC shall in the first instance pay his expenses of attending the hearing of the appeal and shall not order him to pay the whole or any part of the costs.

20. REGIONAL COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

The procedure followed by Regions in Disciplinary matters shall be the same as the Ireland Water Polo Complaints and Disciplinary procedure.

21. DISCIPLINARY APPEALS

21.1 Notice of Appeal

- A decision of the National Complaints and Disciplinary Committee may be appealed to Swim Ireland Complaints and Disciplinary Committee (SICDC).
- A decision of SICDC may not be appealed but may be challenged before Just Sport Ireland (JSI) Arbitration.
- The Appeal to SICDC shall be a fresh Hearing as if the first Hearing before the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee did not take place.
- The appellant shall deliver a written Notice to Appeal to SICDC within seven days of receipt of the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee's written decision specifying:
 - date of decision;
 - the grounds of appeal; and
 - Copy of relevant documentation together with an Appeal fee of €100.
- The procedures as set out in 17.6 of these Procedures shall apply to Appeal Hearings.
- A copy of the Notice of Appeal shall be sent by registered post to the Complaints and Disciplinary Officer of Swim Ireland and the relevant Complaints and Disciplinary Committee and Complainant/Respondent to any Appeal

21.1.1 Regional Appeals

Where the appeal is made from the decision of the Committee of a Region, the Honorary Secretary of the Region shall within fourteen days of the receipt by him of a notice of appeal, send to the CDC a statement of the facts of the case as found by the Executive Committee of the Region, a copy of all minutes and of any documents relating to the matter.

21.1.2 Extension

Where an appeal is made outside the time limit, the CDC may extend the time limit if the appellant can show good cause for the delay.

21.1.3 Notification

The CDC shall within 60 days from the receipt by the Honorary Secretary of a notice of appeal, appoint the date and place of a hearing, and give at least seven clear days' notice in writing to attend the hearing to the appellant made and to the person who laid the original complaint.

21.1.4 Procedure at an Appeal Hearing

At the hearing, the appellant, the person who laid the complaint and the Honorary Chairman (or other authorised representative) of the Complaints & Disciplinary Committee from whose decision, the appeal is made shall have the right, in that order, to address the Committee.

No witness shall be called, save in exceptional circumstances and then only with the permission of the Committee hearing the appeal. An application to call a witness shall not be considered unless the party making the application shall have sent, at least fourteen days before the appeal is due to be heard, to the CDC and to the Honorary Secretary of the Region concerned a copy of the evidence of such witnesses. The party calling such a witness shall be responsible for the attendance and for payment of the witness's expenses.

21.1.5 Powers of Committee

The Committee hearing the appeal shall have the power to:

- Order the appeal fee either in whole or in part to be refunded or retained;
- Increase or decrease any penalty which may have been imposed;
- Quash any such penalty or to substitute any penalty deemed fitting;
- Make such other order or determination as they may think right and just;
- Given that the Executive Committee shall adhere to the current Water Polo Ireland Guidelines for Disciplinary Hearings and Sentences and provided always that the Committee notwithstanding that they are of the opinion that the point raised in the appeal may have decided in favour of the appellant, may dismiss the appeal, if they consider that no miscarriage of justice has actually occurred.

Appendix 1 DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

The following disciplinary sanctions shall be applied by the Ireland Water Polo Complaints and Disciplinary Committee for the offences as outlined in the table below:

Any player excluded during a game without substitute for 4 minutes for brutality shall be automatically suspended for their next game. This sanction is part of the sanctions the CDC may impose at a subsequent Disciplinary Hearing

Brutality (ALL subject to Disciplinary Hearing Decision)

Number of Offences	Offences	Sanction
1 st offence	Single brutality (blow/kick):	2 to 4 matches
1 st offence	Multiple brutality (blows/kicks)	3 to 6 matches
1 st offence	Brutality with serious injury	6 to 12 matches
2 nd offence	Single brutality (blow/kick):	4 to 8 matches
2 nd offence	Multiple brutality (blows/kicks)	6 to 12 matches
2 nd offence	Brutality with serious injury	minimum 12 months
3 rd offence	Single brutality (blow/kick):	minimum 8 matches
3 rd offence	Multiple brutality (blows/kicks)	minimum 12 matches
3 rd offence	Brutality with serious injury	minimum 24 months

Serious Misconduct including threats or threatening behaviour by a coach, player, other team official, parent or spectator towards opposition players before, during or after a game.

Number of Offences	Sanction
1 st offence:	1 match
2 nd offence:	3 matches

Player Excluded for Misconduct, with substitution - including verbal, non-physical abuse of a referee or match official

Number of Offences	Sanction
1 st offence	No automatic suspension
2 nd offence	1 Match automatic suspension
3 rd or subsequent offence	1 Match automatic suspension and a Disciplinary Hearing

The offences below will ALL receive the above sanction and will also be subject to additional Disciplinary sanctions from a Disciplinary Hearing

Serious Misconduct (verbal, non-physical abuse of a referee or match official)

Number of Offences	Sanction
1 st offence	Minimum 2 Match suspension
2 nd or subsequent offence	Minimum 3 Match suspension

Serious Misconduct (threats or threatening behaviour towards referee or match official)

Number of Offences	Sanction
1 st offence	Minimum 4 Match suspension

2 nd or subsequent offence	Minimum 6 Match suspension
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Serious Misconduct (attempted physical abuse of a referee or match official)

Number of Offences	Sanction
1 st offence	Minimum 4 Match suspension
2 nd or subsequent offence	Minimum 6 Match suspension

Serious Misconduct (physical abuse of a referee or match official)

Number of Offences	Sanction
1 st offence	6 to 24 months ban
2 nd or subsequent offence	minimum 36 months to Life Ban

Serious Misconduct (damage or other behaviour likely to bring the Ireland Water Polo into disrepute)

Number of Offences	Sanction
1 st offence	4 to 24 months
2 nd or subsequent offence	minimum 24 months to Life Ban

Red Cards

IRJ 9.1 In the event that a Red Card is issued to a Coach, Other Team Official or player, that individual will be sanctioned automatically in accordance with the following:

Number of Offences	Sanction
First Red Card (in a Season):	No further sanction
Second Red Card (in a Season):	1 match suspension
Third Red Card (in a Season)	1 match suspension plus disciplinary hearing and possible further suspension

Suspensions

IRJ 9.2 Suspensions will apply to matches for the same team at the same level - I.e. A NLD1 Coach or Player will be suspended for the next NLD1 or Irish Senior Cup match(es). In accordance with these Rules, an individual thus suspended may not coach or play in any other competition until the suspension has been served.

IRJ 9.3 Automatic suspensions that have not finished at the end of the season will carry over into the next season.

Notes:

IRJ 9.4 The Disciplinary Committee shall specify matches of an appropriate standard for which the person is suspended and may specify the date of the start of the suspension.

IRJ 9.5 There should be no meaningless suspensions (I.e. Suspending a player for a period during which there are no matches).

IRJ 9.6 A person may not compete in or coach or manage at any other Water Polo or swimming competition during a period of suspension. A suspended person may not officiate at any Water Polo or swimming competition during a period of suspension.

IRJ 9.7 A person's previous disciplinary record shall not be taken into account where the suspension served, finished at least two years previous to his latest disciplinary matter.