

HANDBOOK

EDUCATION &
EVENTS



NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS LEAGUE HANDBOOK

2025 -2026



Table of Contents

GENERAL	3
INTRODUCTION	3
DOMESTIC COMPETITION OVERVIEW	4
<i>Governance</i>	4
<i>Domestic Competition Calendar</i>	4
LEAGUE LEADERSHIP	4
STAY TO PLAY POLICY	6
1 COMPETITION REGULATIONS	7
1.1 GENERAL	7
1.2 COMPETITION CATEGORIES	7
1.3 ENTRY FORMAT	7
1.4 PARTICIPATION FEES	8
2 COMPETITION RULES	9
2.1 COMPETITION FORMAT	9
2.2 SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS:	10
2.3 TEAM ELIGIBILITY.....	10
2.4 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY	11
2.5 ROSTERS.....	13
2.6 RULES OF PLAY	14
2.7 GAME FORMAT	15
2.8 POOL SPECIFICATIONS	15
2.9 POINT SYSTEM.....	16
2.10 TIE BREAKING PROCEDURE.....	16
2.11 TOURNAMENT MODIFICATIONS	16
2.12 INELIGIBLE PLAYERS.....	16
2.13 TRANSFERS.....	17
2.14 CONDUCT OF GAMES	17
3 CONDUCT.....	17
3.1 GENERAL CONDUCT AND UCCMS	17
3.2 JUDICIARY	17
3.3 DEFINITION.....	17
3.4 RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY	18
3.5 VIDEO REVIEW.....	20
3.6 PROTESTS.....	21
3.7 APPEALS	22
3.8 FORFEITS AND DEFAULTS.....	22
3.9 DEMERITS AND FINES	23
3.10 PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES	24
3.11 CHAPERONE RESPONSIBILITIES	25
3.12 COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES	25
3.13 REFEREES' RESPONSIBILITIES	25

3.14	DELEGATES' RESPONSIBILITIES	26
3.15	DOPING CONTROL	26
4	AWARDS	26
4.1	CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY AND BANNERS.....	26
4.2	INDIVIDUAL AWARDS.....	27
5	APPENDICES	29
5.1	APPENDIX 1: DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE	29
5.2	APPENDIX 2: WPC SAFE SPORT COMPLIANCE PROGRAM.....	31
5.3	APPENDIX 3: WPC STAY TO PLAY POLICY	32
5.4	APPENDIX 4: STATISTICS.....	32
5.5	APPENDIX 5: INCIDENT REPORTING FORM	35
5.6	APPENDIX 6: PROTEST FORM.....	36
5.7	APPENDIX 7: DISCIPLINARY DECISION MAKING TREE.....	37

GENERAL

Introduction

Water Polo Canada (WPC) would like to acknowledge the contributions from the Competition Review Working Group (CRWG) who are integral in guiding the National Championship League (NCL) as well as the Canadian Championships (CC formerly National Provincial Championships). The CRWG was formed in July 2011 and developed the implementation plan for the water polo in Canada Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) and the framework of the NCL. WPC would not have been able to implement the NPC without the support of its Provincial Partners.



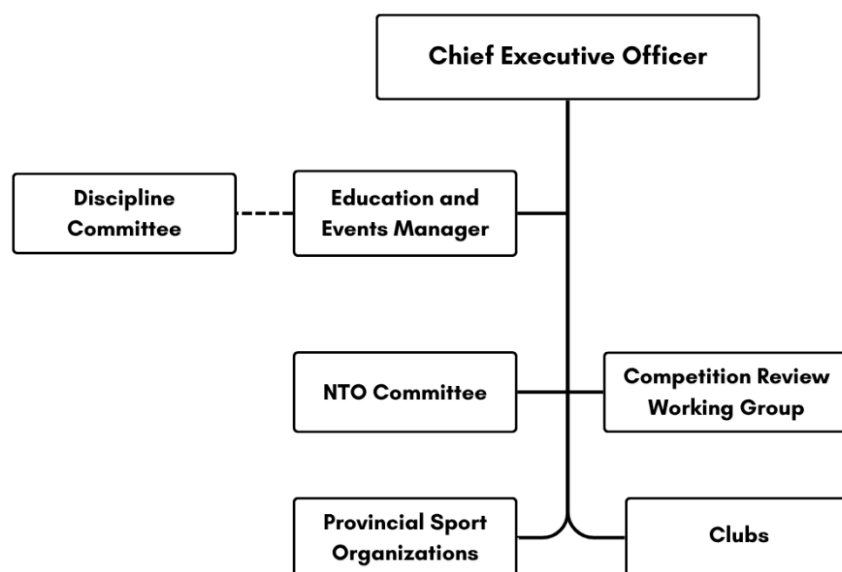
Funded by the
Government
of Canada

Financé par le
gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

Domestic Competition Overview

Governance



Domestic Competition Calendar

Time of Year	Competitions
Fall	Club-run Invitationals
November	NCL Season begins
Winter/Spring	Club-run Invitationals continue
May	Championship Finals season
July	Canadian Championships
Summer	Age Group National Team Programming

League Leadership

Group	Responsibilities
Water Polo Canada	Represented by the Chief Executive Officer and Education and Event Manager. - Overall strategic direction, governance, partnership management, leadership, and financial management of the National Championship League (NCL). - Establishing partnerships with local hospitality groups and establishing preferred hotel rates and other travel and accommodations concessions for participating teams.

	- Establishing a "stay and play" and "travel and play" policy for participating teams and for providing each host club (or PSO) with a hosting kit, including marketing materials and officials' uniforms.
Competition Review Working Group	Helps create, evaluate, review, and implement all technical aspects of WPC's Domestic Competitions.
Discipline Committee	Provides guidance and implements disciplinary standards for competition Reviews and disciplines behaviour deemed to be detrimental to the tournament and WPC and/or contrary to WPC Code of Conduct
National Technical Officials Committee (NTO)	Responsible for Selecting, Scheduling and Evaluating Referees and Delegates for the event.
Officials Working Group (OWG)	Works closely with the NTO to develop and recommend referee and delegate candidates within their province
Local Organizing Committee (LOC)	Formed with assistance from PSO and Local Clubs in order to support the event with volunteers, setup/tear down, hospitality, equipment (as needed) and volunteer training.
Host Clubs	- Provide Minor Officials for each field of play, including a game secretary (6-8 sports), shot clock/game clock worker, penalty secretary, minor officials supervisor, and live stream operator. (min. 4 per FOP) - Manage Setup/takedown of the field of play for all games completed an hour before first game time. - Host a hospitality suite for the volunteers, coaches, and officials for competition events of more than 6 hours per day. For any NCL Finals and Championship events, WPC will provide \$100 per meal per field of play. - The host club will be provided with a guide regarding minimum field of play (FOP) and timing equipment requirements. The host club will be required to use all elements in the host kit provided by WPC at no additional cost to the club. - Ensure all volunteers are well trained in their assigned roles. WPC will provide training opportunities online throughout the season for host clubs, and it is the host club's responsibility to ensure that volunteers attend these training sessions. - Violations of WPC hosting policy during Finals and Championship Events (ex., lack of minor officials/goal

	judges, pool not set up per WPC policies, etc.) will result in a \$500 fine per day. - If the Host Club fails to adhere to any of the responsibilities listed above WPC may deliver a fine or determine the Club ineligible for hosting future NCL events.
--	---

Stay to Play Policy

WPC has a stay-and-play policy for all domestic competitions. All clubs in the NCL will be expected to stay at WPC partner hotels for all NCL events where a host partner exists. The hotel partners will be listed on the WPC site. Any club that reserves rooms at a non-partner hotel will violate the policy. Violation of the stay-and-play policy will result in the club paying fines of \$750 per team for regular season violations and \$1000 per team for Finals events violations.

1 Competition Regulations

1.1 General

- 1.1.1 The following Handbook will govern the rules and regulations for the National Championship League.

1.2 Competition Categories

- 1.2.1 16U – athletes born between 2010 and 2013
- 1.2.2 18U – athletes born between 2008 and 2011
- 1.2.3 Senior – athletes born 2009 or earlier
 - a Senior teams may have a maximum of four (4) athletes born in 2010 on each team.
- 1.2.4 Exemptions for athletes who fall outside of the age brackets may be applied for to the Education and Event Manager.
 - a Only applications for athletes one year outside of the bracket will be considered. (For example, a 2014 athlete would be considered to play into 16U).
 - b No athletes may play down an age bracket. The higher end of the age bracket (older date) is a hard limit.
- 1.2.5 Athletes can play in multiple competition categories so long as they are eligible under all other stipulations listed above.

1.3 Entry Format

- 1.3.1 The National Championship League (NCL) is open to all clubs who are properly affiliated with their Provincial Sport Organization and Water Polo Canada and are members in good standing in the current season.
- 1.3.2 Team registration includes all regular season events, the final event and the National Championship unless otherwise indicated in the Registration Guide.
- 1.3.3 The Finals events will provide seeding for the National Championship.
- 1.3.4 The National Championship is now an open competition as a trial for the 2025-26 season.
 - a Teams who were unable to participate in the regular season may participate in the Championship in a secondary tier of play.
 - b Play in the secondary tier would provide national ranking but these teams would not be eligible to win the National Championship.

- 1.3.5 All teams wishing to participate in the NCL must register and pay for their team's entry fee through WPC's Registration Database (RAMP).
 - a Registration and Payment deadlines will be determined annually. Late entries may be accepted on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Education and Event Manager.
 - b These registration requests may be assessed an administration penalty of \$100 per week after the registration deadline up to a maximum of \$500.

1.4 Participation Fees

- 1.4.1 Teams must pay a non-refundable deposit (25% of Registration Fee) at time of Registration.
- 1.4.2 The remaining balance must be paid by the payment deadline established in the Registration Guide.
- 1.4.3 Failure to pay the remaining balance on time will result in an administrative penalty of \$100 per week until the balance is fully paid.
- 1.4.4 All fees are subject to an administrative fee for processing which is established by WPC's Administration Fee, Cancellation Fee and Refund Policy.
- 1.4.5 Clubs that have paid a team deposit fee but choose not to play in the league will forfeit the deposit unless the club has another team in the league, in which case they may apply the deposit to that team's balance.
- 1.4.6 If a team is unable to attend due to extenuating circumstances, they must apply to the Education and Events Manager for special dispensation from the event which will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The Education and Events Manager will then communicate if their removal from the event carries any administrative penalty or further sanction.
- 1.4.7 WPC will be responsible for establishing the overall budget and will determine the deposit amount and final registration fees. The budget includes, but is not limited to:
 - a Pool rental costs
 - b Officials and staff travel and accommodations
 - c Officials and staff honoraria and salary
 - d Officials and staff uniform
 - e Team and individual awards
 - f Marketing and Communication
 - g General Administration

- 1.4.8 WPC will attempt to enter into facility rental agreements directly with the competition venues. In the event a club holds the contract with the competition venue, the club will need to remit an official invoice to WPC to be reimbursed.

2 COMPETITION RULES

2.1 Competition Format

- 2.1.1 The NCL will be conducted in accordance with current World Aquatics rules, except for specific rule adaptations and modifications as stated in this Tournament Handbook and other Rule Interpretation Guidance distributed by the National Technical Officials Committee.
- 2.1.2 The competition format for each category and gender division will be determined by the Education and Events Manager pending the final registrations of the teams with the following principles applied:
- a Where possible, teams will be divided into divisions based on regional proximity
 - b Where possible, categories will have a tiered competition format, with all matches played during large tournament weekends.
- 2.1.3 All age categories shall play a regular season between November and May with teams competing in a Western Conference (BC, AB, SK and MB athletes) and an Eastern Conference (ON, QC and Atlantic Canada).
- 2.1.4 The regular season will culminate in a play off at the Finals Event. The top four finishers in each Finals Event will qualify for Tier 1 of the National Championship with all other teams being incorporated into a Tier 2 and possible Tier 3.
- 2.1.5 Teams will accumulate points as follows:
- a 1st in the standings post event – 5 points
 - b 2nd in the standings of an event – 4 points
 - c 3rd in the standings of an event – 3 points
 - d 4th in the standings of an event – 2 points
 - e 5th in the standings of an event – 1 point
 - f 6th and lower in the standings of the event – 0 points¹

¹ Ranked based on head to head record.

2.2 Scheduling Considerations:

- 2.2.1 Regular season tournaments will be scheduled to have local teams playing first as much as possible. However, best practice is for all teams to be prepared to play as early as possible on Friday.
- 2.2.2 Teams will have a maximum of 2 games per day with a minimum of 2.5 hrs between each game.
- 2.2.3 Team rankings will be tracked across all regular season events and will be used to seed into the Finals Events.
- 2.2.4 Team standings from the Finals Event will inform groups and seeding for the National Championship.

2.3 Team Eligibility

- 2.3.1 Teams must be members of a club affiliated to Member Provincial Sport Organizations to participate in the entirety of the NCL. International teams are eligible to participate in the National Championship event but are not able to win the title of Canadian Champion.
- 2.3.2 Teams must submit an initial roster of ten (10) athletes at time of registration. The full roster (capped at 30 athletes) will be due by two weeks out from the event to ensure all participants are safe sport certified. Athletes and staff must appear on this final roster to be eligible to sit on the bench.
- 2.3.3 Teams must also indicate team chaperones and chaperones on their initial roster submission and must be at least 25 years of age, registered and in good standing and meet all safe sport requirements of Volunteers with Direct Athlete Contact.
- 2.3.4 One of the members of the team's coaches must be of the same gender as the team competing. This coach must meet the minimum standards of certification.
- 2.3.5 Head and Assistant coaches must meet the following criteria to be eligible to coach and sit on the bench, in accordance with the rules.
 - a Certification Level – Competition-Introduction Trained or higher
 - b Registration Level – Perform in Water Polo
 - c Criminal Record Check on file with WPC dated after August 31, 2023
 - d WPC Screening Disclosure Form (only once)
 - e WPC Annual Screening Renewal Form (completed annually starting the year after Screening Disclosure Form)
 - f NCCP Safe Sport Training Module

- g NCCP Understanding the Rule of Two Module
 - h NCCP Inclusion and Diversity in Aquatic Sports Module
 - i NCCP Making Head Way in Sport Module
 - j CCES True Sport Clean quiz
- 2.3.6 As a result of not having the proper coaching certification or a head coach present (player coaches are not permitted), the team will receive three (3) demerits per game/offence
- 2.3.7 Each athlete must wear similar attire which includes the following: water polo caps; bathing caps; player's clothing; and bathing suits.
- 2.3.8 Athlete attire must be blank or contain the province's logo or team name.
- 2.3.9 Athletes can wear different versions of attire (i.e. swimsuits) as long as the design and major color schemes of the attire remain the same (ex. Suits must have the same base colour, but if the logo switches from the left side to the right side, that is acceptable).
- 2.3.10 WPC Age Group National Team clothing, or clothing from another country is prohibited.
- 2.3.11 All bench staff must wear similar attire which includes the following: pants, capris, shorts, t-shirt, golf shirt and dress shirt.
- a Pants, capris, or shorts must be blank or contain the province's logo or team name. All bench staff must wear the same style of pants, capris or shorts.
- 2.3.12 A t-shirt, golf shirt or dress shirt must be blank or contain the province's logo or team name. All bench staff must wear the same t-shirt, golf shirt or dress shirt.
- 2.3.13 Baseball caps are permitted if they are blank or contain the province's logo.
- 2.3.14 WPC and National Team clothing or clothing from another country is prohibited.
- 2.3.15 This uniform standard applies to deck wear, opening ceremonies, pre/during/post games and awards ceremonies, and failure to follow the standards will result in one demerit point per game for each person applied to the offending team.

2.4 Player Eligibility

- 2.4.1 Players must be Canadian Citizens, Permanent Residents of Canada or be a resident of another country who is living in Canada under an

appropriate visa (including minors) and in good standing with the Club, PSO and WPC. Players must be registered in the Perform in Water Polo category in RAMP.

2.4.2 Participants may not be listed as an athlete and a coach on the same roster.

2.4.3 Athletes may only compete with the club with which they are registered as a primary club member. The following exceptions will apply:

- a Senior NCL athletes, excluding Senior National Team athletes, may participate on any team provided they meet the requirements in 2.4.6 and 2.4.7 below.
- b Athletes who receive funding from their home province but wish to play for an NCL club outside of their home province because 1) they are training at the NTC and/or 2) there are no NCL clubs within their province, are eligible to apply for an exemption that will allow them to compete for a club in a different province, without having to give up their home province registration.

2.4.4 Athletes who participate in one NCL category for their home club but cannot play for their club in a 2nd NCL category because their club has not entered a team into that category can submit an exemption request to play for a club in a different province of registration (without switching their registration) if they meet all the following conditions:

- a The athlete is playing in either the 16 and under, 18 and under NCL category for their primary club.
- b The athlete cannot play in either the 16 and under, 18 and under NCL category for their primary club because their club does not offer that team.
- c The athlete is unable to play in the specified NCL category for another club in their province of registration because no other club(s) has registered a team in the specified NCL category or the club(s) who have entered cannot accommodate the athlete on their team(s).
- d If an athlete meets all the above conditions, they are eligible to apply for an exemption to rule 2.4.4. The exemption request must be submitted to the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway and the League and Events Lead and must clearly show the required conditions have been met.
- e Player Loan forms must be submitted to Education and Event Manager

prior to an athlete being eligible to compete. The WPC office will confirm once the athlete is eligible to be added to the team's roster.

2.4.5 Athletes and coaches must compete in at least one full regular season event to be eligible for a Finals Event.

2.4.6 Athletes and coaches must compete in their finals event to be eligible to participate at the National Championship.

2.4.7 2.4.5 and 2.4.6 do not apply to the 16U age category. To be eligible for 16U Nationals, an athlete must compete in either the regular event or the finals event to be eligible.

2.4.8 Senior National Team Talent Pool are exempt from this requirement.

2.4.9 Exemptions to 2.4.5 and 2.4.6 will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Education and Event Manager. Teams must apply for exemptions a minimum of 21 days in advance of the event.

2.4.10 Athletes training at the National Team Centre (NTC) full-time are eligible to play in the NCL. NTC athletes must have their club choice approved by the Senior National Team Staff in conjunction with the Senior Manager of Pathways and Leagues and the League and Events Lead. WPC will consider the following criteria when determining whether to accept or deny a placement for the athlete: club history of the athlete, positional need of the team, previous league placement of the team, logistics, and competitive balance. The Senior NT athletes are on loan from the NT during the Senior season, and as such, ALL NT activities will take precedence over Senior games.

2.5 Rosters

2.5.1 Rosters must be submitted by the deadline established in this handbook. Late rosters will have a \$100 penalty applied to them which must be paid prior to the first game.

2.5.2 Teams must submit an initial roster of at least ten (10) athletes at the registration deadline. Teams may manage their roster throughout the entire season via RAMP Interactive© and will be permitted to have up to thirty (30) athletes on their online roster. The roster will close two weeks prior to a team's first competition date. Athletes and staff must appear on the online roster to be eligible to compete and sit on the bench.

2.5.3 Final game rosters, with cap numbers, must be submitted the Monday before an event to ensure that all safe sport requirements are completed and that there is ample time to finalize 6-8 rosters.

- 2.5.4 Teams are not required to have a second goaltender. Any goaltender is required to wear a red cap with any number. Any athlete on a team's signed game roster can be cap switched into a goaltender cap during the game.
- 2.5.5 The Head Coach of the team must confirm and sign their official cap numbers at least 30 minutes prior to the start of each match.
- 2.5.6 A maximum of sixteen (16) players and three (3) certified staff are permitted to be rostered and to sit on the team bench, all of whom must appear on the online team roster. Teams may rotate head coaches each match.
- 2.5.7 An athlete who is not on the team bench for the start of the game, will not be eligible to participate in that game.
- 2.5.8 When coaching minors, one of the team's coaches must be the same gender as the team competing. This coach must meet the minimum certification standards and be at least 18 years of age before the start of the NCL Season.
- 2.5.9 Head Coaches must sign the log at the Minor Officials Table confirming that the roster on 6-8 is accurate prior to the start of the game. Only coaches and athletes that are present may be activated prior to the game. All other players or coaches must be de-activated. This will be confirmed by the Game Secretary.
- 2.5.10 Athletes may only appear on one (1) roster per division, per year.
- 2.5.11 Clubs who enter multiple teams in a single NCL division, excluding 16U (ex: two 18U boys' teams), can move athletes between their multiple teams, under certain requirements.
- 2.5.12 Each eligible team may move **a maximum of four** players during an NCL season.
- a A club that has two teams entered a single category would, therefore, have a possible maximum of eight roster moves in one season, four players moving from Team A to Team B and four players moving from Team B to Team A).
- 2.5.13 Eligible teams must make any roster moves before National Championships.

2.6 Rules of Play

- 2.6.1 Before the season, and at any time during the season, WPC in collaboration with NTO will communicate any league specific modifications for rules and rule interpretations, ranging from technical, physicality, and

game management rules, including adding/adjusting the number of referees and delegates assigned to each game.

- 2.6.2 The team must start the game with a goalie in the water, after which time, the goalie may substitute for a 7th field player. In accordance with the rules, the team may substitute between goalies wearing red hats. Only during half or after an injury, with permission from the referee, can a field player be substituted in the water with a goalie wearing a red cap. Rather, field players and goalies can be substituted on the bench at any time. Any goalie substitutions on the bench must be made visible to the referee and/or minor officials table to be recorded.
- 2.6.3 There will be zero tolerance for violent acts committed in the water. Any elbows, knees, head-butts, closed fists, punching, striking or other physical action purposefully directed towards an opponent with intent to injure will result in brutality and violent action

2.7 Game Format

- 2.7.1 16U
 - a Quarter Duration: 7 Minute Stop Time
 - b Interval Times: 2 minutes between all quarters, 3 minutes before a penalty shootout
 - c Possession Time: 30 seconds
 - d Secondary Possession Time: 20 seconds
 - e Players: 6 Field Players and 1 Goalie to start each game
 - f Ball Size: Female Games Size 4 (6.5–7.5 PSI), Male Games Size 4 (7.5–8.5 PSI)
- 2.7.2 18U & Senior, same as 2.7.1 except:
 - a Quarter Duration: 8 Minute Stop Time
- 2.7.3 Stop time will be used throughout the game, unless a 10-goal differential is reached. Once a 10-goal differential is reached run time will be used for the rest of the game for all situations, except with timeouts. If the timeclock and possession clock are not able to be asynchronously, then run time will be used in interval time only.

2.8 Pool Specifications

- 2.8.1 Distance between goal lines 25m, allowable variance $\leq 3.75\text{m}$
- 2.8.2 Width of Field of Play 20m, allowable variance $\leq 3.0\text{m}$
- 2.8.3 Depth of Field of Play 2m, allowable variance $\leq 0.3\text{m}$

2.9 Point System

2.9.1 During Finals and Championship Events, teams will receive points as follows:

- a Win in regular time – 3 points
- b Win after penalty shootout – 2 points
- c Loss after penalty shootout – 1 point
- d Loss in regular – 0 points

2.10 Tie Breaking Procedure

2.10.1 Regular Season event games may end in a tie. As teams proceed through group phase of each weekend, ties will be settled pursuant to World Aquatics Tie-Breaking Rules section 10.9.1.11.1.1.

2.10.2 Finals and Championship event games that end in a tie after regular time will proceed to a shootout to decide a winner.

2.11 Tournament Modifications

2.11.1 Should any aspect of competition regulations need to be modified for a particular event, this will be communicated to teams via the pre-tournament technical bulletin in advance of the event.

2.12 Ineligible Players

2.12.1 If an athlete's hat number does not match what is on the signed roster, the onsite Water Polo Canada delegate will change it in the 6-8 game sheet App. It is the team's responsibility to ensure that all athletes' names are correctly spelled and cap numbers are accurate. The team will be assessed one demerit for signing an incorrect scoresheet.

2.12.2 If an athlete on a team's master roster but not listed on the scoresheet, is found in the water or on the team bench, the delegate will add the missing player's name to the scoresheet. The team will be assessed 1 demerit for signing an incorrect scoresheet.

2.12.3 If during a game, an athlete who is not registered on a team's master roster and is found to be in the water, the athlete shall not be permitted to play or continue to play. If the game has started, the offending team will forfeit the game. In this scenario, an Incident Report must be written and submitted to the NTO Coordinator and Education and Events Manager. If an ineligible athlete is found after the match ends, the game will not be replayed and the game will be considered a forfeit. The Discipline

Committee will review the report to determine if suspension, fines, or another penalty should be added.

2.13 Transfers

2.13.1 The Education and Event Manager must receive a list of all permanent or temporary transfers for all divisions prior to the first NCL event in each conference. This applies to athletes and coaches permanently moving from one club to another and to those being loaned to another club to participate in the NCL.

- a A player or coach who moves between cities, whether from within Canada or outside Canada, in the middle of the NCL season can apply for an exemption to the deadline rule. The Education and Events Manager will review the application and determine if the transfer will be approved.

2.14 Conduct of Games

3 CONDUCT

3.1 General Conduct and UCCMS

3.1.1 Participants of NCL are signatories of the UCCMS, which supersedes the larger NCL code of conduct.

3.1.2 In addition to the responsibilities listed below, It Is expected that all participants are expected to adhere to WPC's code of conduct.

3.2 Judiciary

3.2.1 This section is specific to the NCL and is meant to deal with "Field of Play" or "NCL environment" situations different from those addressed in Section 4 above. For situations that constitute UCCMS violations, Section 4 "supersedes" such NCL-specific processes.

3.3 Definition

3.3.1 This section applies to clubs, teams, athletes, coaches, officials, chaperones, parent fans, and other team personnel and herein will be referred to as a "participant."

3.3.2 An incident may be defined as one of the following:

- a an event in which a participant is ejected from the game or competition venue due to any behaviour deemed detrimental to the image of the

league, WPC and the sport of water polo (e.g., violent action, red card and misconduct), or failure to follow protocols about leaving the field of play after receiving a red card..

b Incidents may occur during any part of an NCL event.

c Withdrawals, forfeits or code of conduct violations.

3.3.3 Each discipline issue will remain on a participant's record for five (5) years. A physical assault of another participant outside of the field of play will remain on a participant's record indefinitely.

3.3.4 A major incident requires four (4) or more games of suspension and must be reviewed by the discipline committee.

3.3.5 Other incidents may be deemed major if they involve repeat offenders, defaults, forfeits, withdrawals, illegal participants, and a failure to adhere to sanctions or code of conduct violations.

3.3.6 Sanctions will apply to all WPC events and may be carried over to other categories and seasons in which that participant is partaking.

3.4 Responsibilities and Authority

3.4.1 The NCL incident form is found here and must be completed by game officials (referees and delegates) and submitted for all incidents defined in section 5.1. above, immediately after the conclusion of the match/incident.

3.4.2 Following each NCL event, the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway or Leagues & Events Lead will update a report outlining sanctions placed on individual players or coaches. In any incident where a suspension is delivered, delegates must first review this report to determine if additional suspensions will be delivered.

3.4.3 All sanctions will be communicated to the team within two hours of a game completion. A copy of the incident form may be provided upon request.

3.4.4 WPC Representatives have the authority to give an athlete, coach or spectator a yellow or red card, depending on the action of the participant, if they see an action that the official misses.

3.4.5 The delegate(s) may suspend a participant up to a maximum of one (1) game without review by the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway and the League and Events Lead. An NCL Incident Form must be submitted.

3.4.6 The Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway and the League and Events Lead may suspend a participant up to a maximum of three (3) games without review by the Discipline Committee. A written report must be

provided to the participant in question (via the club) prior to the sanction being applied.

3.4.7 The Discipline Committee will review all major incident reports and provide a written discipline report to the relevant parties (via the clubs) after reviewing the incident.

3.4.8 The Discipline Committee may also review minor incidents at the request of the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway and the League and Events Lead.

3.4.9 Water Polo Canada can transfer any NCL incident review from the NCL judiciary process to the WPC Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure policy, if deemed appropriate by the executive director of WPC. A violent action will carry at least an automatic one (1) game suspension. A second violent action within the same season, regardless of the category, will carry an at least an automatic three (3) game suspension. A third violent action within the same season will result in a suspension for the remainder of the season.

3.4.10 Default Standards

Incident	Automatic Suspension	Additional Sanction
Players who receive 3 misconducts or disqualifications ²	1	May have additional pending the antecedent incident
Players who receive 4 misconducts or disqualifications ¹	Suspended Pending Review	Major Incident Review by Discipline Committee
Coaching Red Card ³ regardless of the coaching role or level in which the red card was received.	1	
Second Coaching Red Card ²	2	
Third Coaching Red Card ²	3	
Fourth Coaching Red Card	Suspended Pending Review	Major Incident Review by Discipline Committee

² Total misconduct or disqualification events regardless of category or conduct.

³ Regardless of coaching role or level in which the red card was received.

- 3.4.11 A coach is unable to participate in any games until the suspension has been served with the appropriate team. If a coach receives a red card and the suspension cannot be served because the team the coach received the red card with has no games remaining in the season, the carded individual will not be allowed to coach another one of his/her NCL teams without first serving the suspension with that team.
- 3.4.12 An official exemption can be requested to the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathways in extenuating circumstances where a suspension will extend to an unreasonable amount of games because of this rule. The exemption request will be responded to before the next event, regardless of age category.
- 3.4.13 All decisions from the Education and Event Manager and/or the discipline committee will be sent to the club of the involved participants.

3.5 Video Review

- 3.5.1 A video review may be initiated at any time by the game's delegate or the Education and Events Manager to review an incident in order to assess potential disciplinary action pertaining to perceived violent action or game misconduct behaviours.
- 3.5.2 A video review may be requested for disciplinary action by a team's head coach within 30 minutes of a game's completion. This review may be for new claims or for a review of a call for additional sanctions to be put in place. A fee of \$200 CAD, payable by cash only, must accompany the request for video review. This fee will be refunded if the review results in new or additional disciplinary action. The process below outlines how the video review request can be submitted and the process that will be followed to review video.
- 3.5.3 The Head Coach of a team must request to the Education and Events Manager or the NTO lead that a game situation to be reviewed for potential disciplinary action.
- 3.5.4 Potential violent action that was missed or not appropriately sanctioned may be reviewed utilizing this procedure.
- 3.5.5 The Education and Events Manager and the NTO will then review the video to decide if an incident did occur. It is important to note that only the official WPC video will be reviewed at this time.

- 3.5.6 The Education and Events Manager along with the NTO will discuss with the officials and delegate of the game to gain an understanding from their point of view what took place during the game.
- 3.5.7 The Education and Events Manager and the NTO may request from both team's additional video footage of the incident.
- 3.5.8 Potential outcomes of the decision process:
- a If the video is reviewed and it is determined that there is no violent action, no further action will be taken
 - b If the video is reviewed and a violent action was found, sanctions will be applied as per relevant sections of this handbook.
 - c If the video is reviewed and no violent action was found, but aggressive play was found that would otherwise warrant a one game suspension, then that suspension would be applied, and the deposit would be returned.
 - d If the incident requires further investigation/review the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway and/or the League and Events Lead and NTO will provide all evidence to the Disciplinary Committee for further review and discussion, as well as the recommendation on sanctions that will be given.

3.6 Protests

- 3.6.1 The Education and Events Manager will review all protests. All decisions rendered by the Education and Events Manager are final and cannot be appealed.
- 3.6.2 Teams may only protest a technical error, and not a referee's rule interpretation.
- 3.6.3 All protests must be in writing using the Protest Form (either online or paper copy) and submitted to the game's Delegate within 30 minutes of the completion of the game. Once a protest has been submitted, teams must refrain from engaging on the matter unless under questioning from the Education and Events Manager. Failure to abide by this requirement will result in the protest being rejected.
- 3.6.4 The protest must be submitted with a \$200 CAD cash fee which will be returned if the protest is successful.

3.7 Appeals

- 3.7.1 Incidents may be appealed except for protests and referee rule interpretations; the Discipline Committee is the final arbiter of all discipline issues.
- 3.7.2 Player transfer requests may not be appealed.
- 3.7.3 Suspensions of one game from a delegate may be appealed directly to Education and Events Manager.
- 3.7.4 Suspensions of three (3) games or less from the Education and Events Manager may be appealed directly to the Discipline Committee.
- 3.7.5 All other appeals must be made to the Water Polo Canada Chief Executive Officer.
- 3.7.6 Decisions from the Discipline Committee cannot be appealed.
- 3.7.7 Appeals must be submitted within 24 hours after the interested parties receive the verdict and may only be submitted by email accompanied by a \$200 administration fee payable by e-transfer to esmith@waterpolo.ca. Provinces represented by their Executive Director must submit appeals on behalf of all teams.
- 3.7.8 While under review, the rendered verdict will remain active and the participant must adhere to the imposed sanctions and decisions.
- 3.7.9 Appeals will be reviewed and decided within seven business days after receiving the official request and payment.
- 3.7.10 The province will be reimbursed the administration fee if the appeal is successful.

3.8 Forfeits and Defaults

- 3.8.1 A team that forfeits a game will receive a sanction of \$250 per game forfeited.
- 3.8.2 A team that does not have at least 8 players on the bench at the start of a game will be considered a default and will be treated the same as a forfeit.
- 3.8.3 Forfeits that result because of a force majeure or other circumstance outside of a team's control will not result in a sanction. WPC will review these situations on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.8.4 Where a team forfeits a game, the game result will be recorded as 5-0 win against the team that forfeited.

3.9 Demerits and Fines

- 3.9.1 For minor violations of the Tournament Handbook, teams will receive demerits. After receiving six (6) demerits, the team will be fined \$250. If a team receives a further three (3) demerits, another fine of \$250 will be applied. After the tenth (10th) demerit point, a fine of \$100 for each additional demerit point will be applied.
- 3.9.2 A coach, after receiving six (6) demerit points, regardless of the team or division will be fined \$250. A subsequent fine of \$250 for every two (2) additional demerit points thereafter.
- 3.9.3 Fines must be paid via RAMP within 1 week of receiving the fine, unless otherwise indicated in writing by the Education and Events Manager.
- 3.9.4 Additional items not covered in the table below may result in demerit points or fines and will be communicated on a case-by-case basis by the Education and Events Manager.
- 3.9.5 Summary of Demerit Points & Fines

Infraction	Demerit Points	Fine (if applicable)
Player Misconduct (excluding for illegal entry)	2	
Coaching Red Card	2	
Violent Action	4	
Late Roster Submission		\$100
Failing to sign pregame roster	1	
Signing an incorrect pregame roster	1	
Violation of WPC Clothing Policy	1 (per team, per infraction)	
No Certified Coach (due to red card)	3	
Littering bench or pool deck	1	\$50 per occurrence
Violation of Stay to Play Policy		\$1000 / per team

- 3.9.6 Clubs are ultimately responsible for the conduct of their teams In any category. Should the demerits gather by a club throughout all NCL categories reflect poor conduct, fines may be applied.

3.10 Participant Responsibilities

- 3.10.1 A participant of the NCL shall agree to the following:
- a No possession or use of any illegal substances, recreational drugs and/or performance enhancing drugs.
 - b Zero possession or consumption of alcohol at any time from the time the player leaves their home and until they return back.
 - c Bear any and all responsibility for any physical damage occurring or costs arising from missing items in the room, unless some other person(s) are proven responsible. If more than one participant is sharing a room, costs will be shared equally if there is no admission of guilt. The relevant PSO shall be responsible for paying the costs and then collecting any damages from the participants.
- 3.10.2 Any contravention of the above or unacceptable behaviour is sufficient grounds for a participant to be sent home at his/her own expense immediately. When this is not possible, the offender shall, at their own expense be sent home as soon as possible, disqualified from further

Number of Teams	Number of Demerits	Fine Amount
3	18	\$750
4	24	\$1000
5	30	\$1250
6+	36	\$1500

games
within
the

tournament and face further disciplinary decisions regarding continued eligibility in competitions and membership in Canada.

- 3.10.3 Unacceptable behaviour shall include:
- a Committing any act which would be considered an offence under federal, provincial or municipal laws, or rules of the facility.
 - b Gross misbehaviour
 - c Unsportsmanlike conduct

dA participant reporting for a game in an impaired condition

3.11 Chaperone Responsibilities

- 3.11.1 Be responsible for the safety, well being and supervision of all players, in conjunction with the team coach.
- 3.11.2 Be responsible for the behaviour of players during the times they are not under the control of the coaching staff or manager.
- 3.11.3 Report to the coach any sickness or injury; any incidents likely to bring discredit to the team, PSO or WPC.
- 3.11.4 Together with the coach, decide upon disciplinary action to be taken.

3.12 Coaches' Responsibilities

- 3.12.1 Determine curfew times, no later than midnight (or 11pm as may be imposed by the host hotel).
- 3.12.2 Determine team meeting times and places.
- 3.12.3 Control athletes during practices and games.
- 3.12.4 Assume duties of chaperone when the team chaperone may be unavailable.
- 3.12.5 Be ultimately accountable for the conduct of the team as a whole before, during and after games.

3.13 Referees' Responsibilities

- 3.13.1 Be responsible for the safety and well-being, in conjunction with the team, coach, be responsible for behaviour of players during warm-up, game time and post activity on the pool deck.
- 3.13.2 Represent yourself to the best of your ability in a neutral manner as a referee of WPC.
- 3.13.3 Represent yourself to the best of your ability in a professional manner as a representative of WPC.
- 3.13.4 Disclose any and all perceived or real conflicts of interest to the Chair of the NTO and Education and Events Manager of WPC, in advance of the season/competition or immediately as they arise.
- 3.13.5 Be present on deck, dressed and with all materials ready and tested a minimum of 30 minutes before each game.
- 3.13.6 Focus on the refereeing and avoid unnecessary critiques with competition leads during competition. A referee liaison will be available to you for any issues that arise.

- 3.13.7 Avoid one-on-one conversations with athletes, especially minors, about their water polo play or any other matter, unless with permission/request from the club coach.

3.14 Delegates' Responsibilities

- 3.14.1 Ensure the Field of Play is set and secure prior to the start of any game.
- 3.14.2 Ensure the game is conducted in a manner consistent with the current rule interpretations of World Aquatics (as may be modified by WPC).
- 3.14.3 Review and debrief the game as it was whistled with each of the referees post game.
- 3.14.4 Receive and escalate any protests of video reviews as laid out in this handbook.
- 3.14.5 Submit any and all incident reports from the game in a timely manner (by 30 minutes post game).

3.15 Doping Control

- 3.15.1 Water Polo Canada has adopted the policies of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) and the Canadian Anti-Doping Program (CADP) available online at <http://www.cces.ca/en/antidoping/cadp>. WPC strongly opposes the use, possession and supply of banned substances and practices in competitive water polo either during training or in competition in Canada or abroad by Canadian athletes, coaches, medical, paramedical or other support staff.
- 3.15.2 As a deterrent, WPC will participate in announce and unannounced doping control of athletes in accordance with the CCES and CAPD.

4 AWARDS

4.1 Championship Trophy and Banners

- 4.1.1 Water Polo Canada will provide a trophy and banner to the winning teams as well as medals (gold, silver and bronze) for each of the Championship events identified below:
 - a 16 and under Western Champions
 - b 16 and under Eastern Champions
 - c 16 and under National Champions
 - d 18 and under Western Champions
 - e 18 and under Eastern Champions

- f 18 and under National Champions
- g Senior National Champions

4.2 Individual Awards

4.2.1 The following individual awards will be presented at the respective 16 and under and 18 and under Western and Eastern Championship events:

- a Regular season All-Star Team - Presented to athletes who have demonstrated exceptional performance, leadership, and sportsmanship throughout the regular season, as selected by league officials and coaches.
- b Regular season Top Goal Scorer - Presented to the athlete who records the highest total number of goals during the regular season across all sanctioned league games.

4.2.2 The following individual awards will be presented at the 16 and under, 18 and under and Senior National Championships.

- a Most Value Goaltender - Presented to the goaltender who demonstrates outstanding performance, consistency, and impact on team success throughout the Championship event.
- b Most Valuable Coach - Presented to the coach who best exemplifies leadership, preparation, and positive team culture, contributing significantly to their team's success during the Championship.
- c Most Valuable Player - Presented to the athlete who has shown exceptional overall performance, leadership, and influence on the outcome of games throughout the Championship.
- d Most Valuable Defensive Player - Presented to the athlete recognized for superior defensive play, tactical awareness, and contribution to their team's defensive strength during the Championship.
- e Tournament Top Goal Scorer- Presented to the athlete who records the highest number of goals during the Championship event.

4.2.3 Participating teams will be asked to provide votes for regular season awards and all-star team awards. The team of delegates responsible for Championship events will select the Most Valuable awards.

4.2.4 The NCL Club Cup will be awarded at the 18U National Finals to the club that has accumulated the most points over the course of the NCL season across all six divisions of competition. Points will be awarded as follows:

- a Conference Championships: 3 points for Gold, 2 points for Silver, 1 point for Bronze.
- b National Championships: 6 points for Gold, 4 points for Silver, 2 points for Bronze.

5 APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix 1: Discipline Committee Terms of Reference

Name: Discipline Committee

Mandate:

- To provide guidance and implement standards for all competition related matters, any behaviour deemed to be detrimental to the image of the league or contrary to the WPC code of conduct, and as defined in the Judiciary for the various NCL age categories (16 and under, 18 and under, Senior).

Key Duties:

1. Create disciplinary standards for all NCL categories.
2. Review the Judiciary section of the NCL Handbook on an annual basis.
3. Record keeping of all incident reports.
4. Record keeping of participants' disciplinary records.
5. Review minor incidents as needed.
6. Review and evaluate all major incidents.
7. Final arbiter in the appeal process.
8. Create precedents for minor and major incidents.
9. Ensure written reports are being distributed to interested parties on a timely basis as per the standards outlined in the NCL Handbook.

Authority:

- The discipline Committee will work with the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathways and the League & Events Manager and provide recommendations to WPC regarding the judiciary section of the NCL Handbook.

Composition:

- League and Events Lead – Chair
- Neutral representative
- NTO Chair
- International Liaison
- Members will recuse themselves and comparable replacements will be identified in situations where there are conflicts of interest

Appointment and Succession:

- WPC staff will be appointed.

- Neutral representative will be appointed by the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway and the League and Events Lead.
- NTO Chair will be contracted by WPC.
- International liaison appointed by the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway and the League and Events Lead.
- Replacement members will be appointed by the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway and the League and Events Lead.

Meetings:

- The Discipline Committee will meet on an ad-hoc basis by conference call or webinar.

Objectives:

1. To develop, maintain and implement judiciary standards for the NCL.
2. Review the NCL Handbook section related to judiciary on an annual basis.

5.2 Appendix 2: WPC Safe Sport Compliance Program

Requirements	NCL Athlete (<16)	NCL Athlete (16 +)	NCL Coach	NCL Referee/ Delegate	NCL Team Manager/ Chaperone
WPC Participant / Registrant's Acknowledgement and Consent forms & WPC Concussion Code of Conduct	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enhanced Criminal Record Check (CRC) (E-PIC)			✓	✓	✓
WPC Screening Disclosure Form (Every 3 years) OR Annual Screening Renewal Form (Year 2 & 3)			✓	✓	✓
Respect in Sport for Activity Leaders			✓Either	✓Either	✓Either
Safe Sport Training			Or ✓	Or ✓	Or ✓
Understanding the Rule of Two		✓	✓	✓	✓
Inclusion and Diversity in Aquatic Sports			✓		
Making Head Way in Sports (Generic)			✓	✓	✓
Skilled Interaction for Officials				✓	
CCES True Sport Clean (Untracked) Quiz					
Comp-Intro Trained or Higher					
Provincial Competition Referee or Higher (Referees ONLY)				✓	

5.3 Appendix 3: WPC Stay to Play Policy

[Link](#)

5.4 Appendix 4: Statistics

Overview: For the 2025-26 NCL Season, the following categories of statistics will be recorded in the 6-8 Scoredesk Application.

- Goals
- Personal Fouls (penalties/exclusions)
- Earned Exclusions (& penalties)
- Assists
- Steals
- Turnovers
- Offensives
- Blocks (Goalies / Field Player)
- Time outs & Cards

This guide will help to inform how to properly record these statistics so that they can be applied and reviewed player-to-player consistently across all conferences. The primary requirement for this Appendix will be to have Game Secretaries who are clear and focused on the game and are adept at using the application. They should make use of the training videos and demo account for 6-8 Scoredesk in advance of their first game.

Goals	A goal can be recorded in 4 different ways: Penalty - used to record a goal that is successful after a 5m penalty throw. 6 on 5 - used to record a goal that is successful while a team is still playing 6 on 5. The goal must be made prior to the 20 seconds elapsing. Counter - Used to record a goal that is successful after a player who was on defence, steals the ball and goes on offence and scores before the defence can be setup. Natural - Used to record all other successful goal throws
Personal Foul	This is used to record when a defensive player commits a major foul and the referee either gives that player an exclusion or awards the offensive player a penalty throw.
Earned Exclusions / Penalties	When you record an exclusion or penalty, the pop-up window will prompt you to record who <i>earned</i> that exclusion or penalty. For exclusions, this is the offensive player who was either sunk, pulled back, impeded or was otherwise the recipient of overly

	aggressive play. For a penalty, this was the player who was going to shoot and was likely going to score when they were attacked. Note: not all exclusions or penalties will result in someone who 'earned' that foul.
Assists	An assist is recorded for the player who passes to another player and it very clearly leads to a goal. This can happen in the following situations. The key characteristic to being able to record an assist is that the pass needs to come directly to another player either direct to hand or a wet pass that can be quickly picked up and scored.
Steals	When an athlete legally takes the ball away from another athlete or intercepts the pass that was intended for the athlete they were guarding. Examples include: Double Steal - When an athlete throws a pass to the center, the defender tips the ball and another player crashes to steal the ball. Both players were needed for that steal to happen and both should receive a steal stat on the game desk. Perimeter - When a player takes the ball from the player they are guarding, either by intercepting a pass or simply stripping the ball. Ball Under - When a player pushes the other player's hand under water with the ball. Counter Attack - On the transition from defence to offence, a defensive player steals the pass, many times from the goalie or from another player trying to push the counter attack.
Block	When a defensive player stops or redirects the ball, which prevents a goal from being scored. Field Players - A defensive player blocks the shot by an offensive player with a body part, normally the arm/hand. Partial blocks or tips which result in goals do NOT count as blocks. Goalie - A goalie is awarded a block when they have any connection with the ball off a shot even if it leads to out of bounds or a rebound goal. Can be as small as a fingertip touch.
Turnovers	When an athlete loses possession of the ball to the opposing team before a shot is attempted. Examples include: Bad Pass : When an athlete throws the ball intended for their teammate, but the pass is taken by the other team. The athlete that threw this bad pass gets a turnover. The player who takes the ball does not get a steal. Putting in Play : When an athlete does not pop the ball (to put it back in play) after a foul or change of possession.

	Inside the Goal Area: When a player goes inside the goal area without the ball this counts as a turnover for that player, even though they don't have the ball. Ball Under: When a player pushes the ball under water as a result of another player pushing their hand. The player who pushed the ball under gets a steal, the player who ended up putting the ball under gets a turnover. Center: 3 scenarios Ball is thrown to center and immediately that ball is intercepted or stolen by any of the defenders. The player who threw the ball into center gets a turnover. The player throws the ball to center, who touches the ball but doesn't have sufficient time to score a goal or pass the ball out. This is NOT considered a turnover for any player. The ball is thrown to center who has sufficient time, makes a move and loses the ball. The center gets a turnover.
Offensives	When an offensive player commits a foul on offense that results in a turnover. Types of Offensives: Protecting the Ball: While protecting the ball, the athlete is using their off hand to push the defender away (out of the water) in order to make a pass. This is considered an offensive. Over-aggressive: While trying to gain position, a player commits an over-aggressive foul, such as swinging their elbow or arm (center), headbutting/ throwing head, or grabbing a player on top and moving them. Duck Under: When a player on offense (trying to gain position) swims under the other player in order to try to earn an ejection or gain position. Push Off: When a player pushes off (or kicks off) of a defender in order to be free.
Timeouts & Cards	Teams get a maximum of two timeouts per game. Assistant Coaches - can only receive a red card, then they are removed from the bench. Head Coaches - can receive a yellow card (warning) then a red card. Simulation or Team Warnings (yellow cards) also get recorded under the coach but do not count towards their personal cards. Players - can only receive red cards for misconducts and they are removed from the game.

Source: <https://68coaching.com/68-game-stat-definitions>

5.5 Appendix 5: Incident Reporting Form

Incident Reporting Form

Date: _____ Location: _____
 Game#: _____ Time/Quarter of Incident: _____
 Event: _____ Incident Type: _____

Officials

Delegate(s): _____
 Referees: _____

Game and Incident Participant Details

	White Team	Blue Team	
Team			
Coach			
Hat #	Name	Hat #	Name

Incident Description by referee(s) or delegate(s)

Decisions / Recommendations by delegate(s)

Refer to Discipline
 Committee? _____

Game _____ # of
 Suspensions? _____ Games?: _____

Assigned Sanction
 / Follow-up _____

5.6 Appendix 6: Protest Form

Event:	Date:	Time/Quarter of incident:
Game #:	White Team:	Blue Team:
World Aquatics or Handbook rule(s) in violation:		
What technical error occurred and who was at fault?		
How did the technical error affect the outcome of the game?		
Diagram (if applicable)		

5.7 Appendix 7: Disciplinary Decision Making Tree

