



SWPSA – Codes of Conduct

Schools Water Polo South Africa (SWPSA) recognises the importance of ensuring the values of water polo are upheld and have taken positive steps to ensure that the schools water polo community are aware of our member protection policy, as well as our desire for all to enjoy the sport and play in the spirit of the game.

There are three slogans that underpin promoting positive behaviour and respect – **Think, Act, Play**. The slogans include:

- **Think before you speak:** What you say and do shapes the culture of our sport. Your words can influence the way people are seen and treated by others, and the way in which people feel about themselves. It can also impact the way the community perceives our sport. Remember – what you say matters.
- **Act with respect:** Showing respect and treating everyone fairly is just as important as the game. No matter who you are or where you come from, treating each other with respect and dignity ensures everyone can enjoy the game. Whether you're playing, coaching or supporting from the sidelines – respect the referee's decision. Remember – to earn respect, you must give it.
- **Play in the spirit of the game:** The way you play, coach and support say a lot about your character. Playing in the spirit of the game is more than just the rules. Players that keep their cool under pressure, even when things are not going their way, have a better chance of winning the game. Coaches that encourage sportsmanship get the best from their players. Parents that set a good example help their children enjoy the game. Remember – take responsibility for your actions and play in the spirit of the game.

The target groups include players, coaches, managers, officials, parents, spectators, administrators and volunteers i.e. essentially the entire Schools Water Polo community. Whatever your role in the sport, remember that you are inspiring and influencing others, and what you say and do matters.

The following pages detail the Codes of Conduct that support SWPSA's values and are to be adhered to under all circumstances.



The values of Water Polo in SWPSA are:

1. We act with **Respect**: we play fair, ensuring what we do is ethical, transparent, and honest.
2. We are **Inclusive**: we are a welcoming community for everyone.
3. We embrace **Sportsmanship**: we collaborate and act with a unity of purpose in the best interest of sport.
4. We experience **Enjoyment**: we love our sport and enjoy the camaraderie of our community.
5. We are continually in **Pursuit of Excellence**: we inspire people to be their best and do their best.

It is the expectation of SWPSA that all persons associated with our sport including players, coaches, managers, officials, parents, spectators, administrators and volunteers abide by the Codes of Conduct detailed below. Non-compliance with the Code of Conduct will be referred to the Executive Committee of SWPSA for formal investigation and resolution.

Player / Athlete – Code of Conduct

1. Abide by the **Think, Act, Play** Guidelines.
2. Play by the rules and enjoy the opportunities that playing water polo presents.
3. Never argue with an official. If you disagree, have your captain, coach or manager approach the official after the game.
4. Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials and sledging other players, deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent are not acceptable or permitted behaviours in any sport.
5. Work equally hard for yourself and/or your team. Your team's performance will benefit and so will you.
6. Be a positive role model and display sportsmanship both in and out of the water. Applaud all good plays whether they are made by your team or the opposition.
7. Treat all participants in your sport as you like to be treated. Do not bully or take unfair advantage of another competitor.
8. Cooperate with your coach, teammates and opponents. Without them there would be no competition.
9. Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit, not just to please parents and coaches.
10. Be humble when celebrating success and gracious in defeat. Inevitably you will be on both sides of the equation in your sporting journey.
11. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
12. Do not advocate, prescribe, recommend, support, administer or participate in the use of drugs, stimulants, or doping practices in respect of any athlete and abide by the anti-doping code of the World Anti-Doping Association or codes aligned therewith.



Coach and Manager – Code of Conduct

1. Abide by the **Think, Act, Play** Guidelines.
2. Be a positive role model for water polo and your athletes. Remember players, parents and supporters are watching and will often follow your lead.
3. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every player, opponent, coach and official. Treat everyone equally regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity or religion.
4. Ensure the athlete's time spent with you is a positive one. All athletes are deserving of equal attention and opportunities.
5. Treat each athlete as an individual. Respect the talent, development stage and goals of each individual athlete. Help each athlete reach their full potential.
6. Provide a drug free environment. Do not advocate, prescribe, recommend, support, administer or participate in the use of drugs, stimulants, or doping practices in respect of any athlete and abide by the anti-doping code of the World Anti-Doping Association or codes aligned therewith.
7. Be fair, considerate and honest with athletes.
8. Be professional and accept responsibility for your actions.
9. Make a commitment to providing a quality service to your athletes.
10. Work hard, do your best and encourage your players to do the same. Your team's performance will benefit and so will you.
11. Operate within the rules of your sport.
12. Provide a safe environment for training and competition. Adhere to the child safety and safeguarding practices according to the legal procedures guided by South Africa's legal framework, and SWPSA's safeguarding and child protection practices. Any physical contact with athletes should be:
 - Appropriate to the situation
 - Necessary for the athlete's skill development
 - Refrain from any form of personal abuse towards your athletes.
13. Be humble when celebrating success and gracious in defeat. Inevitably you will be on both sides of the equation in your sporting journey.
14. Refrain from any form of harassment.
15. Show concern and caution towards sick and injured athletes and follow the advice of a physician when determining whether an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition.
16. Refrain from inappropriate behaviour towards officials, parents and administrators.
17. Set an example for continuous improvement by spending time on your own development as a coach and share this with your athletes. Keep up to date with latest coaching practices and the principles of growth and development of young players.



Referee / Official – Code of Conduct

1. Abide by the **Think, Act, Play** Guidelines.
2. Be a positive role model for other referees and officials.
3. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every player, coach, official, administrator, parent and spectator regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion or ability involved with water polo and encourage other referees / officials to demonstrate these qualities. Treat others as you wish to be treated.
4. Be professional in your appearance, manner, behaviour and ensure your preparation to undertake your role allows you to be at your best, when officiating. Accept responsibility for all actions taken.
5. Provide a drug free environment. Do not advocate, prescribe, recommend, support, administer or participate in the use of drugs, stimulants, or doping practices in respect of any athlete and abide by the anti-doping code of the World Anti-Doping Association or codes aligned therewith.
6. Make a commitment to providing quality service to officiating by seeking continual improvement of your officiating knowledge and skill through study, practical courses, and regular updating of any competencies.
7. Operate within the rules and spirit of water polo.
8. Refrain from any form of personal abuse towards athletes, officials, parents and coaches.
9. Refrain from any form of sexual harassment.
10. Place the safety and welfare of the participants above all else.
11. Always be impartial. Avoid any situation which may lead to a conflict of interest.
12. Show concern and caution towards sick and injured athletes.
13. Encourage inclusivity and access to all areas of officiating.



Parent / Guardian – Code of Conduct

1. Abide by the **Think, Act, Play** Guidelines.
2. Remember that children participate in sport for their enjoyment, not yours.
3. Encourage children to participate, do not force them. The world is littered with talented, but burned-out athletes who stop playing too early!
4. Focus on your child's efforts and performance rather than winning or losing.
5. Resilience and perseverance are essential characteristics for any successful athlete, and you must help your child develop those characteristics.
6. Refrain from offering advice to your child especially immediately after the game. Instead, win or lose tell them that you enjoy watching them play and have fun.
7. Be humble when celebrating success and gracious in defeat. Inevitably the team you are supporting will be on both sides of the equation in your sporting journey.
8. Encourage children always to play according to the rules and to settle disagreements without resorting to hostility, abuse or violence.
9. Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing a competition. Be an understanding listener rather than a critic, judge and/or fixer.
10. Remember that children learn best by example. Appreciate good performances and skillful plays by all participants and respect official's decisions.
11. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from sporting activities.
12. Respect officials' decisions and teach children to do likewise.
13. Let the coach do the coaching and the manager, manage the team.
14. Show appreciation for volunteer coaches, officials and administrators. Without them, your child could not participate.
15. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Spectator – Code of Conduct

1. Abide by the **Think, Act, Play** Guidelines.
2. Remember that people participate in sport for their enjoyment and benefit, not yours.
3. Applaud good performance and efforts from all individuals and teams. Congratulate all participants on their performance regardless of the game's outcome.
4. Respect the decisions of officials and teach players to do the same. Without officials we don't have a sport.
5. Never ridicule or scold a player for making a mistake. Positive comments are motivational.
6. Condemn the use of violence in any form, whether it is by spectators, coaches, officials or players.
7. Show respect for your team's opponents – without them there would be no game! Treat others as you wish to be treated.
8. Encourage players to follow the rules and the official's decisions.
9. Do not use foul language, sledge or harass players, coaches or officials.
10. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.



Administrators and Volunteers – Code of Conduct (Includes Executive Committee Members, Provincial Heads, IPT LOC members, Contractors and appointed officers of SWPSA)

1. Abide by the **Think, Act, Play** Guidelines.
2. Involve young people in planning, leadership, evaluation and decision making related to the activity.
3. Give all people equal opportunities to participate, regardless of gender, race, background or age.
4. Create pathways for young people to participate in sport not just as a player but as a coach, referee, administrator, etc.
5. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every player, coach, official, administrator, parent and spectator regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion or ability involved with water polo and encourage other referees / officials to demonstrate these qualities. Treat others as you wish to be treated.
6. Ensure that rules, equipment, length of games and training schedules are modified to suit the age, ability and maturity level of players.
7. Provide quality supervision and instruction for junior players.
8. Remember that young people participate for their enjoyment and benefit. Focus on developing their intrinsic motivation and do not over emphasise results and awards.
9. Help coaches and officials highlight appropriate behaviour and skill development and help improve the standards of coaching and officiating.
10. Ensure that everyone involved in junior sport emphasises fair play, and not winning at all costs.
11. Provide a safe environment. Adhere to the child safety and safeguarding practices according to the legal procedures guided by South Africa's legal framework, and SWPSA's safeguarding and child protection practices.
12. Remember, you set an example. Your behaviour and comments should be positive and supportive.
13. Make it clear that abusing people in any way is unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action.
14. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person regardless of their age, gender, ability, cultural background or religion.