



# **WATER POLO**

# **COMPETITION RULES**

**As Approved**  
**6<sup>th</sup> May, 2024**

## SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

### WPCR-1 INTRODUCTION

- a. These rules are intended to supplement the current ASA Statute and the Disciplinary Code and they shall not in any way supersede any rule contained in the said Statute or Disciplinary Code. If, on any point, there is a conflict between the Statute/Disciplinary Code and these Competition Rules, then the provisions of the Statute/Disciplinary Code shall prevail.
- b. These rules shall remain in force until cancelled and/or amended by the Council.

### WPCR-2 LAWS GOVERNING THE GAME

- i. All laws governing the game are to be regulated as per World Aquatics Rules and Regulations unless otherwise specified by local rules and regulations.
- ii. All games, whether organized by the ASA itself and those which, although not so organized, but are officiated by ASA recognized referees, shall be automatically subject to the ASA disciplinary rules and regulations. *(Amended 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2024)*

## SECTION 2 - FORMAT

### WPCR-11 COMPETITIONS

The following competitions shall be organised by the ASA:-

- a. National Water Polo Competitions
- b. Super Cups
- c. Winter Competitions
- d. Women's League and Knock Out Competitions
- e. Age-Group Competitions
- f. Any other competitions.

It is assumed that clubs which participated in any of the above competitions in the previous season would also participate in the same competitions during the following season. Clubs that wish to withdraw from any competition are to inform the General Secretary by not later than the first week of December.

For league competitions, clubs will participate in the division in which they are eligible to participate by virtue of the Classification of the National Water Polo Competitions of the previous season. *(amended 18 January 2022)*

Clubs that would like to participate in any competition in which they did not participate in the previous season are to apply to do so by not later than one week prior to the Calendar Meeting and, in the case of league competitions, shall only be eligible to participate in the lowest division. These applications are to be approved by the Executive Committee.

For Women's and Age Group competitions, late applications may be considered by the Executive Committee (*amended 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*)

## **WPCR-12      NATIONAL WATER POLO COMPETITIONS**

The National Water Polo Competitions shall consist of League Championships and Knock-Outs for the Premier Division Clubs and First Division Clubs. These shall be considered to be one single competition (*as amended at Council 22.01.2018*)

The format of the competitions (including the number of rounds and start and end dates) shall be determined during the annual Calendar meeting for Club Officials that will be held by not later than the 20<sup>th</sup> December and approved by Council (*amended 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019*). – Refer Appendix 1 (*amended 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2024*)

- a. Premier Division League
  - i. The Premier Division shall consist of six (6) clubs.
  
- b. First Division League
  - i. The First Division League shall consist of the remaining clubs who do not form part of the Premier Division and who may apply to participate in the First Division League; (*amended AGM 2016*)
  
- c. Knock-Out Competitions
  - i. Separate KO competitions shall be held for Premier and First Division clubs.
  - ii. The KO competitions shall be held throughout the season as agreed during the Calendar Meeting.
  - iii. Every KO fixture shall be a best-of-1 play-off.

## **WPCR-13      SUPER CUPS**

- a. The Premier League Super Cup will be played between the previous season's Premier Division League champions and the KO winners.
- b. The First Division Super Cup will be played between the previous season's First Division League champions and the KO winners.
- c. The Women Super Cup will be played between the previous season's League champions and the KO winners.
- d. In the case that a team would have won a "double" in the previous season, these matches will be played between the runner-up in the league and the winner of the Knock-Out.
- e. Super Cups will be played as distinct competitions and not as part of another competition.
- f. The games may be played in aid of philanthropic organisations and may be named as required.

#### **WPCR-14      WINTER COMPETITIONS**

The Winter Competitions shall consist of League Championships for the Premier Division Clubs and First Division Clubs. These shall be considered to be one single competition.

The format of the competitions (including the number of rounds and start and end dates) shall be determined during the annual Calendar meeting for Club Officials and Council Members. This will be held as early as possible before the start of the season.

Should the number of clubs applying to participate is nine (9) or less a single competition will be organised.

##### **a. Premier Division Winter League**

- i. The Premier Division Winter League shall consist of the six (6) clubs that are eligible to play in the same season's National Premier Division Competition (*amended 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*).
- ii. The format of the competitions (including the number of rounds and start and end dates) shall be determined during the annual Calendar meeting for Club Officials and Council Members. This will be held as early as possible before the start of the season (*amended – AGM 2019*)

##### **b. First Division Winter League**

- i. The First Division League shall consist of the remaining clubs who do not form part of the Premier Division and who may apply to participate in the First Division Winter League; (*amended 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*)
- ii. The format of the competitions (including the number of rounds and start and end dates) shall be determined during the annual Calendar meeting for Club Officials and Council Members. This will be held as early as possible before the start of the season (*amended – AGM 2019*).

#### **WPCR-15      WOMEN'S COMPETITIONS**

The Women's competitions shall consist of a league and a Knock-Out. Participation shall be by application from affiliated clubs. The closing date for applications shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

The format of the Women's competitions, including venues, shall be determined every season by the Council.

#### **WPCR-16      AGE-GROUP COMPETITIONS**

Age-Group competitions shall be organised for age-groups as defined below

- **U/20** – players must be aged 20 or less on the 31st December of the year of competition;
- **U/18** – players must be aged 18 or less on the 31st December of the year of competition;

- **U/16** – players must be aged 16 or less on the 31st December of the year of competition.
  - **U/14** – players must be aged 14 or less on the 31st December of the year of competition.
  - **U/12** – **players must be aged 12 or less on the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the year of competition.**
- a. Competitions for other age-groups may be organised.
  - b. The format of age-group competitions, including venues, shall be determined every season by the Executive Committee, as recommended by the Youth Committee and approved by Council (*amended 20 January 2024*).

**WPCR-17      OUT OF COMPETITION PARTICIPATION**

- a. The Council may, at its sole discretion, give its permission to a team to participate “out of competition” in any seniors or age-group competition organised by the ASA.
- b. The Youth Water Polo Committee may give its permission to a team to participate “out of competition” in any age-group competition organised by the ASA. Such decisions may be reversed by the Council.
- c. In matches involving teams playing “out of competition”:
  - i. no points shall be earned or lost by either of the teams;
  - ii. disciplinary measures taken in respect of incidents that occur during the match shall apply to both teams. Match suspensions incurred shall be discounted in future matches of the same team with which the suspended player was playing when the offence occurred;
  - iii. match suspensions shall not be discounted.
- d. Teams participating “out of competition” will be allowed to field a maximum of three over-aged players (1 year older than the age-group in which the team is playing in) (*amended 20 January 2024*);
- e. In the case that the team playing out of competition is an ASA selection, then, in all matches played by this selection, any players registered with the opposing team shall play for the ASA selection unless previous arrangements are made.

### SECTION 3 - WATER POLO GAMES

**WPCR-21      DURATION OF THE GAME**

- a. The duration of Senior Men and Women matches shall be as per World Aquatics Water Polo Rule 4
- b. The duration of age-group matches shall be as per the table below (*amended 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*).

	U/20	U/18	U16	U14	U12
<b>Time - 4 sessions (actual play)</b>	8 minutes	8 minutes	8 minutes	7 minutes	6 minutes
<b>Interval between 2nd and 3rd Sessions</b>	3 minutes	3 minutes	3 minutes	2 minutes	2 minutes

- c. The teams, including the players, coaches and officials shall change ends before the start of the 3rd period.
- d. Should the scores be level at full time, in any league game, there shall be a penalty shoot out to determine the result (as per World Aquatics Rule 4.3 and as specified in Appendix 6 of the World Aquatic Rules). Whenever a game is decided through penalty shoot out the winning team will be awarded 2 points and the losing team will be awarded 1 point.

*Effective from Summer 2024 - Amended on 04.03.2024*

**WPCR-22      CAPS**

- a. Caps worn during all ASA Competitions shall be in conformity with World Aquatics Appendix 4.
- b. Clubs are solicited to have an additional set of caps so that if a player’s cap is lost or torn during the match, it can be changed by a cap with the same number.
- c. Caps are not to be taken off until the players have left the pool area and entered the dressing rooms.
- d. Teams listed in the first column of the fixture list shall be considered to be the home team. The home team shall wear white caps.

**WPCR-23      WATER POLO BALLS**

- a. Senior matches (men & women) shall be played with balls that conform to the provisions of ~~FINA~~ World Aquatics Appendix 4 Rule WP-3. Age-group matches shall be played with ball sizes as per the table below (*amended 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*).

U/20	U/18	U/16	U/14	U/12
Size 5	Size 5	Size 5	Size 4	Size 3

- b. Balls for matches played at the National Pool shall be provided by the ASA.
- c. The home team shall provide a minimum of 4 balls in matches that are played in Clubs’ pitches.

**WPCR-24      PITCH RIGGING**

- a. The size of the field of play for Senior matches (men & women) shall be as per World Aquatics Rule 1 and Rule 18.2.2. The pitch shall be set up at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled commencement of the match. The field of play for age-group matches shall be as per the table below (*amended 20 January 2024*).

	<b>U/20</b>	<b>U/18</b>	<b>U/16</b>	<b>U/14</b>	<b>U/12</b>
<b>Pitch Length</b>	30m	30m	25-30m	25m	25m
<b>Pitch Width</b>	15m-20m	15m-20m	15m-20m	15m-20m	15m-20m
<b>Goal Width (Inner Sides)</b>	3m	3m	3m	3m	3m
<b>Goal Height (Inner Sides)</b>	0.9m	0.9m	0.9m	0.9m	0.9m

- b. The Executive Committee may approve requests made by clubs to allow inconsistencies with the provision of this rule due to limitations imposed by the structure of the particular club’s facilities.
- c. White cones – goal line and half distance line  
 Red cones – 2 metres from the goal lines  
 Yellow cones – 6 metres from the goal lines  
 Red cones – 5m from the goal lines (*as amended 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021*)

**WPCR-25      TEAM LINE-UPS**

- a. For all matches at the Tal-Qroqq Sports Complex, Official Team Line-Ups should be sent by email to [info@asaofmalta.eu](mailto:info@asaofmalta.eu) in the morning of the actual match day, and not later than 1 hour prior to the start of the first match on the actual match day. For matches held at the Clubs’ premises or Cottonera Pool Complex, Official Team line-ups must be presented to the match secretariat at least 30 minutes before the scheduled start of the match. The line-ups must include
- The name of the team and the opponent;
  - The competition, date and time;
  - The cap numbers and the **full** names of the players that will be participating in the match;
  - The team captain and vice-captain are to be named;
  - The designation and **full** name of the officials who will be on the team’s bench;
  - The full name of the medical persons (where applicable);
  - The signature of the team captain or team/club official;
- b. Only players included in the line-ups are eligible to participate in the match.

- c. Line-ups may be amended up to the start of the match in question. Any amendments are to be signed by the team captain or team/club official.
- d. Line-ups may not be amended once the match has started. *(amended 20 January 2024)*.

**WPCR-26      NUMBER OF PLAYERS**

- a. *Each team shall consist of seven players, one of whom shall be the goalkeeper, and not more than 7 reserves, This applies to all competitions organised by or played under the aegis of the ASA except for Women's competitions where they will be allowed to have 8 reserves. This rule supersedes the provisions of Rule 2.1 of the World Aquatics Rules (Amended 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2024).*
- b. As from season 2024 each team may have a maximum of one player of non-Maltese nationality in its line-up for any Senior match organised by or played under the aegis of the ASA. This rule shall apply at least until the end of season 2026 *(as amended at AGM 2022)*
- c. The following rules shall apply for age-group matches:  
U/12, U/14. U/16. U/18 and U20 (All Competitions) - Teams may include players who are Resident Foreigners in their line-up. These players shall be registered on the ASA Senior or Junior registration form. In addition, the registration forms of players of non-Maltese nationality that will be participating in U/12, U/14. U/16. U/18 and U20 competitions are to be accompanied by proof that the player was ordinarily resident in Malta for at least nine months preceding the commencement date of such competition which proof may include evidence that the player would have attended school in Malta for the whole of the previous scholastic year and/or evidence that the player would have worked in Malta in the preceding 9 months. The General Secretary of the ASA will be the sole judge on the validity of such evidence *(amended 20 January 2024)*.
- d. Resident Foreigners, who would have participated in any age group competitions organised by the ASA, during three of the previous five years, will be eligible to participate in the senior competition organised by or played under the aegis of the ASA *(amended – AGM 2019)*. Resident Foreigners who have fulfilled this condition in previous seasons, will remain eligible to play as a local resident.
- e. Since no age-group competitions are organised for the women, female Resident Foreigners who provide proof that they have been in Malta for at least 9 months prior to the submission of their registration form, will be eligible to participate in the Senior Women's competitions organised by or played under the aegis of the ASA *(amended 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021)*

**WPCR-27      ASA IDENTITY CARDS**

A player must be in possession of an ASA Identity Card before he/she is eligible to participate in an age-group competition. These identity cards are issued when a recent passport-sized photograph is submitted to the ASA Secretariat four (4) days before the start of the water polo event in which the player will be participating. A player without the required card shall not form part of the team's line-up. It is the responsibility of the club's officials to make the necessary arrangement to collect the players' Identity Cards from the ASA Office. Cards are to be inspected by the match referee prior to the commencement of any age-group match. A game shall not be played if each team does not present at least seven identity cards *(amended 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019)*.



**WPCR-28 EXCLUDED PLAYERS**

- a. Players excluded for the rest of the match by the referee for misconduct or violent action, may go up into the stands for the remainder of the match in which he/she was shown a red card (*amended 20 January 2024*).
- b. The excluded player shall keep to his team's side of the pool and should not cross over to the opponent's side for any reason whatsoever.
- c. Players who may not participate any further in the match because of three personal faults are to remain seated on the substitutes' bench wearing their caps.

**WPCR-29 TEAM OFFICIALS**

- a. Team Officials shall be limited to one head coach, two team officials and two medical persons. The head coach and the two team officials shall sit on the substitutes' bench while the two medical persons shall sit behind the substitutes' bench (by the wall). The medical persons are to remain seated throughout the match and are only allowed to approach their team players should an injury occur (*amended 20 January 2024*).
- b. The head coach of the attacking team shall be allowed to move to the 5-meter line at any time.
- c. Only the head coach or team official is allowed to approach the Table during a match. Disciplinary action shall be taken against offenders.
- d. All the officials shall wear the same club's uniform.
- e. At the end of the match, the coach and the team official shall direct the team straight to the dressing rooms and shall not allow any lingering, verbal or physical contact with the opposing team and or supporters. The retiring teams shall keep to their side of the pool and should not cross over to the other side for any reason whatsoever. Disciplinary action will be taken against offenders.
- f. Each club will be responsible for all their Officials and medical staff (*amended 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*).

**WPCR-30 MATCH OFFICIALS, REFEREES & TABLE OFFICIALS**

- a. Only referees appointed by the ASA shall control competition matches organised by or played under the aegis of the ASA.
- b. It is the responsibility of the ASA to appoint table officials for senior men matches played at any venue (*amended 20 January 2024*).
- c. For Women and Age Group matches played at clubs' premises or at the Cottonera Pool, the home Club shall appoint table officials (match secretary and time-keepers) for the match and provide all the timing equipment required. These officials are to present

- themselves to the referee/s before the match starts. Two officials of the away team have the right to sit at the secretary's table to act as observers (*amended 20 January 2024*).
- d. For matches played at clubs' premises, the home club shall ensure that the table officials are supplied with a copy of the World Aquatics WP Rules before the match.
  - e. At the end of matches played at the National Pool, the match secretary shall give the original match record to the ASA Secretary or in his absence to an ASA Official.
  - f. At the end of the matches not played at the National Pool, the match secretary shall give the original match record and the team line-ups to the referee (*amended 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*).
  - g. The copies of the match records are to be handed to the official of the participating teams. It is the duty of the club official to collect a copy of the match card at the end of the match, failing which, the club will be considered as having received said copy of the match card (vide Disciplinary Commissioner's Terms of Reference Article DC-07 regarding contestation of any report on the match cards).
  - h. One Committee Member of the home club should be present during matches played at their club premises. The name of the Committee Member is to be written on the match-card in the space marked Delegates. Should no Committee Member be available to be present, the club is to inform the ASA of this fact and they are to supply the name of the substitute 'delegate' by not later than 24 hours before the match in question (*amended 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*)

#### **WPCR-31 MATCH DELEGATE AND MATCH REFEREES' ASSESSOR**

- A match delegate may be appointed by the ASA to observe match proceedings. He shall have the right to make reports about any incidents that may take place in and out of the pool (*amended 20 January 2024*).
- The match referees' assessor will assess the match officials on the forms provided. A record of each referee's mark for each match will be kept (*amended 20 January 2024*).

#### **WPCR-32 RESTRICTED AREA AND SECURITY**

- a. The Restricted Areas at the National Pool during water polo matches consist of
  - The VIP stand;
  - The referees' office at pool deck level.
  - Those areas reserved for the referees, goal judges, the match secretariat, athletes and team officials.
  - The whole pool deck (including the deck surrounding the Diving Pool)
  - Those sections on pool stands/terraces that are indicated to be Guest or VIP areas. (*amended – AGM 2019*)
  - Additional restricted areas identified by the Executive Committee from time to time and communicated to the clubs (*amended 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021*)
- b. The Restricted Areas during matches and/or competitions played at Clubs' premises consist of

- The area around the secretariat's table.
  - A two-metre area around the pool.
  - A referees' changing room.
- c. The organising club shall make available to the referee/s a secure changing room together with a key to the room.
- d. It is the responsibility of the organising Club to ensure that only the match officials, team players, two team officials per club and a medical doctor/physiotherapist are present in the restricted area.
- e. The organising Club shall be responsible for all security arrangement during matches and/or competitions played on their premises. The organising Club should make the required security arrangements in good time before the actual date of the event.
- f. Unauthorized entry into the restricted areas may result in disciplinary action being taken against the individual/s involved.

### **WPCR-33      YELLOW AND RED CARDS**

- a. Yellow and red cards may only be shown by the referee/s controlling the match.
- b. Players may be shown yellow and/or red cards as provided by World Aquatics Rule 16.
- c. Whenever a referee is of the opinion that a coach has misbehaved, he/she shall show the coach the yellow card if this is his first offence of the match. Subsequent misbehaviour must be penalised with a red card. The yellow card cannot be shown to any of the other team officials.
- d. Whenever a referee is of the opinion that an assistant coach, team official or player on the substitute bench has misbehaved, he/she shall show him the red card directly.
- e. When a coach, assistant coach, team official or player on the substitute bench is shown a red card, he shall be dismissed for the rest of the match (*amended 20 January 2024*).
- f. When a coach, assistant coach, team official or player on the substitute bench is shown a direct red card, the referee is to make a detailed report of the incident/s on the match-card.
- g. The referee/s must clearly indicate in their report if a red card shown to a coach was the result of two yellow cards.
- h. No reports need to be filed when a single yellow card is shown.

## SECTION 4 - GENERAL

### WPCR-41 SUBMISSION OF REGISTRATION FORMS (PLAYERS OF MALTESE NATIONALITY)

- a. Registration Forms for players of Maltese nationality shall be submitted to the ASA office at least four (4) days before the start of the match in which the player will be participating.
- b. Loan Registration Forms
  - i. These forms shall be submitted to the ASA Office at any given time during a competition, provided the player going on loan has not been listed in any other clubs' team list, or played for any other club during that same competition.
  - ii. Should the Loan Form be for an athlete participating in an age-group competition, said Loan Form is to be submitted together with a passport photo, 4 days before the start of the match in which the player will be participating in (*amended 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019*)
- c. Shared Player Form
  - i. These forms shall be submitted to the ASA Office at any given time during a competition, provided the player being shared has not been listed in any other clubs' team list, or played for any other club during that same competition.
  - ii. Should the Shared Player Form be for an athlete participating in an age-group competition, said Shared Player Form is to be submitted together with a passport photo, 4 days before the start of the match in which the player will be participating in (*amended 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019*)
- d. A player shall not participate in the same competition with different Clubs in the same season (ASA Statute Rule 35a)

### WPCR-42 POINTS

In each match, in all competitions, or phases of a competition, played on a league basis,

- 3 points shall be awarded to the winning team;
- 1 point shall be awarded to each team if the result is a draw;
- 0 points shall be awarded to the losing team.

### WPCR-43 CLASSIFICATION

In all Water Polo Leagues including age-group competitions (Men and Women) classification shall be determined by awarding:

- 3 points shall be awarded for a win;
- 1 point for a draw;

#### League Format (No Play Offs)

If 2 or more teams finish with the same number of points and these teams have the most points in the league, and the championship has to be determined, a deciding match will take place as detailed hereunder.

- a) If only 2 teams are on equal points, then the decider shall be played between these 2 teams;

- b) If more than 2 teams are on equal points, then a “temporary” classification shall be established:
- the team which won the greater number of direct encounters. In the case that the number of victories is equal then the team with the better net result (aggregate score) in the direct encounters shall be the winner;
  - If still tied, the team with the best goal difference (in the temporary classification);
  - If still tied, the team which scored most goals (in the temporary classification);
  - And if still tied, the result against the next highest placed team(s)

The top 2 teams in this “temporary” classification shall then play each other in the decider. The decider shall be played by not later than 3 days after the last match of the league. The date is to be determined before the start of the competition (amended 20 January 2024).

#### League Format (With Play Offs)

If 2 or more teams are on equal points

- the team which won the greater number of direct encounters. In the case that the number of victories is equal then the team with the better net result (aggregate score) in the direct encounters shall be the winner;
- If still tied, the team with the best goal difference (in the temporary classification);
- If still tied, the team which scored most goals (in the temporary classification);
- And if still tied, the result against the next highest placed team(s)

If 2 or more teams finish with the same number of points and these teams do not have the most points in the league, then the classification shall be determined as follows:

- the team which won the greater number of direct encounters will be placed higher. In the case that the number of victories is equal then the team with the better net result (aggregate score) in the direct encounters shall be the winner;
- If still tied, the team with the best goal difference (in the temporary classification);
- If still tied, the team which scored most goals (in the temporary classification);
- And if still tied, the result against the highest placed team(s). (amended 20 January 2024).

#### **WPCR-44      PLAY-OFFS**

- a. Each match in a play-off series will be played until a winner is determined.
- b. A team will be declared the winner of a play-off series when it is not possible for the other team to win more games than the winner. Once a winner has been declared, the rest of the games in the series will not be played.
- c. 4 types of play-off series shall be utilised:
  - Best-of-1 play-off – this just a fancy name for a “decider”;
  - Best-of-2 series – the aggregate score of the two matches will be taken into consideration; (as amended at Council 22.01.2018)
  - Best-of-3 series - the first team to win 2 matches will be the winner;
  - Best-of-5 series - the first team to win 3 matches will be the winner.
- d. The “better” placed team plays the first game as the “home” team.

**WPCR-45 PRESENTATION OF TROPHIES**

- a. It is the responsibility of the team captain to present himself/herself to receive the Winners or the Second Placed / Runners Up trophy, at the end of the final match or at a time when requested by the ASA. (Vide Disciplinary Code)
- b. It is also the responsibility of the Head coach and Team Official accompanying the team, to ascertain that the Team Captain presents himself/herself for the presentation of the Trophies. (Vide Disciplinary Code) (*amended 20 January 2024*).

**WPCR-46 WITHDRAWAL FROM COMPETITION AND WALK-OVERS**

- a. If a team withdraws or is removed from a competition after same would have commenced, all points derived from matches played against this team shall be cancelled and the classification adjusted accordingly. The team shall be subject to disciplinary actions as per the Disciplinary Code in force.
- b. If a team concedes more than 2 walk-overs in a competition, that team shall be considered as having withdrawn from the competition in which the walk-overs were conceded. All points derived from matches played against this team shall be cancelled and the classification adjusted accordingly. The team shall be subject to disciplinary actions as per the Disciplinary Code in force.

**WPCR-47 PROTESTS**

- a. Protests on points of fact during and/or after a match shall not be upheld as per (Appendix 5 – Item 7 WP 7.1 - All decisions of the referee/s on questions of fact shall be final and their interpretation of the rules shall be obeyed throughout the game).
- b. Protests on technical errors can be made only during a match by the coach or the team official. Protests on technical errors lodged at the end of the match will not be upheld. The procedure for protests on technical errors is as follows:-
  - The coach or team official must calmly approach the match secretary or the referee immediately the incident occurs, clearly indicating that he would like to lodge a technical protest.
  - At the first suitable stoppage, the match secretary shall whistle and the referee shall call for the ball.
  - The match secretary shall call a team official of each team and both referees to the Secretariat's table. The match secretary may ask any ASA Official to be present. The team official who lodged the technical protest shall be asked to present his case. The match secretary/ASA officials and the referees will rule after consulting the FINA Rules if required. This ruling is final and cannot be appealed during or after the match.
  - If the protest is not upheld, the match shall proceed without further delay.
  - If the protest is upheld, then the match shall restart from the point in which the technical error occurred, with the match clock and shot-clocks being reset to that time. All actions, except brutality, recorded in the match card between the technical error and the stoppage of the match shall be null and void.

- c. Protests regarding LEN ITC forms can only be made if a request for transfer is not submitted to LEN by the Federation of the player/s of non-Maltese nationality who is/are to be registered with the Maltese clubs. It is the responsibility of the Maltese Club to ensure the foreign club submits to LEN through its Federation the required transfer certificate and request proof that same had in fact been submitted. All registration rules applying at the time of registration of a Water Polo Player of Non-Maltese nationality shall continue to apply and therefore protests regarding these rules may be made.

**WPCR-48 SUCCESSFULLY CONTESTED REPORTS**

If a referee's report is successfully contested and the Disciplinary / Adjudicating Body overturns the referees' report, this will have no effect on the result of the match. The fines and/or suspensions imposed on the player/s and/or the club will be cancelled.

## SECTION 5 - MISCELLANEOUS

### WPCR-51 PLAYERS OF NON-MALTESE NATIONALITY

- a. All ASA Rules regulating the registration of players shall apply for the registration of players of non-Maltese nationality with the exception of Rule 34(a)(viii)(g): “Signature of any two of the Club officials of the previous Club (if applicable) authorising the transfer”.
- b. The following rules shall apply and shall regulate the registration of Players of non-Maltese nationality:
  - i. For the scope of the registration of non-Maltese Players, the Water Polo season shall be deemed to consist of the following phases:
    - a. The Winter League;
    - b. The 1<sup>st</sup> round of the Premier and First Division leagues (or Preliminary Round as the case may apply) (*amended 20 January 2024*);
    - c. The 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent rounds of the Premier and First Division leagues.
    - d. In the case that matches in connection with the Knock-Out competitions are scheduled to be played in the interval between any of these phases, then the Knock-Out matches shall be deemed to form part of the earlier phase.
  - ii. Clubs may register different players of non-Maltese nationality for each of these phases provided that the relative registration forms are submitted to the ASA Office at least four (4) days prior to the start of the first match of the phase in which the players will be participating. This rule applies to all categories.
  - iii. In order to be eligible to participate in the final phase of the season, that is, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent rounds of the Premier and First Division leagues, players of non-Maltese nationality had to be in Malta 4 days prior to the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and subsequent rounds of the Premier and First division leagues and had to remain in Malta until the end of the competitions. Such players cannot be absent from Malta for more than two weeks (*amended 9 May 2023*).
  - iv. Players of non-Maltese nationality, who, for some reason or other, are not residing in Malta for a continuous period of fifteen (15) days during the final phase, will be ineligible to participate further in the said phase.
  - v. Clubs are to inform the ASA, in writing, whenever any player of non-Maltese player, registered with their club, is leaving the Island.
  - vi. In order to participate in any competition organized by/or under the aegis of the ASA of Malta, the clubs registering players of non-Maltese nationality must submit a LEN ITC form duly signed and stamped by the federation the player had previously been registered with, and approved by LEN.
  - vii. It is not necessary for a club to submit a new Registration Form for a player of non-Maltese nationality for each phase of a Water Polo season if the player is being retained for more than one phase.
  - viii. The minimum registration period of players of non-Maltese nationality may be of less than four competitive seasons only if these are registered on the ASA form issued specifically for use by players of non-Maltese nationality. Players of non-Maltese nationality are to produce an International Transfer Certificate if their registration period exceeds one competitive season.



- ix. Clubs registering players of non-Maltese nationality that were registered with a local club that same or during the previous competitive season, shall be obliged to pay a transfer fee as regulated by the parameters stipulated in the ASA Transfer Tribunal Code.
- x. It is the obligation and duty of the registering club to enquire, seek and obtain the necessary permits as required by the relevant authorities.

#### **WPCR-52      SHARED PLAYERS**

Players who are eligible to participate in an age-group Water Polo competition organised by the ASA during a particular season may be given permission by their club to play for another club in the same season subject to the conditions below.

- a. Players that are given this permission shall be referred to as “Shared Players”. The club who is making the player available shall be referred to as the “Grantor” and the club that shall be making use of the player shall be referred to as the “Grantee”. The Grantor and the Grantee may be in any division.
- b. The Shared Player must be registered either as a Senior Player or as a Junior Player with the Grantor. Players who are registered on Loan may not be shared.
- c. Shared players may be of any nationality.
- d. Two types of player sharing are allowed:
  - i. The Grantor gives permission to any of its age-group players to play for the first team of the Grantee. In this case the Shared Player is only eligible to play for the Grantor’s age-group teams (as eligible by virtue of date of birth) and for the Grantee’s first (senior) team.
  - ii. The Grantor gives permission to any of its age-group players to play for the age-group teams of the Grantee. In this case the Shared Player is only eligible to play for the Grantor’s first (senior) team and for the Grantee’s age-group teams (as eligible by virtue of date of birth).
- e. Sharing of players must be made on an appropriate form supplied by the ASA. Shared Players Forms shall be submitted to the ASA Office at any given time during a competition, provided the player being shared has not been listed in any other clubs team list, or played for any other club during that same competition.
- f. A “sharing” will remain in effect till the end of the competition (i.e. the competition in which the Grantee is participating) in which it was made.
- g. A club may give permission to any number of its players to be available as Shared Players, provided that a Grantor may only allow:
  - in the Male category, a maximum of four of its players to be available as Shared Players to one Grantee under WPCR52 (d) (i) and a maximum of four of its players to be available as Shared Players to one Grantee under WPCR52 (d) (ii);
  - in the Female category, a maximum of four of its players to be available as Shared Players to one Grantee under WPCR52 (d) (i) and a maximum of four of its players to be available as Shared Players to one Grantee under WPCR52 (d) (ii).

***Provided*** that if a club is not participating in a specific age group competition it may give permission to any number of its players to be available as Shared Players to another club that is participating in the said age group competition under WPCR52 (d)

(ii).

**Provided** further that a Grantee that has four Shared Players registered with it from one Grantor under WPCR52 (d) (i) in the Male category, may not give permission to any of its players to be available as Shared Players with the same Grantor under WPCR52 (d) (ii) in the Male category (amended 20 January 2024).

**Provided** further that, for summer season 2024 only, the above stated four shared players shall be allowed to be increased to six. (Amended 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2024)

- h. If a shared player is suspended from all ASA activities, then this suspension shall apply to both the Grantor and the Grantee. However, the period of suspension that is in force in the period between the imposition of a fine by the ASA on a shared player and its payment, shall apply only to the player's activity with the club that he was representing when the fine was imposed.

### **WPCR-53      PLAYERS HONOURS**

The ASA shall organise Players Honours governed by the provisions below.

- a. The best player in each of the categories below shall be declared Player of the Year
- i. Premier Division, including any preliminary rounds and play-offs, if any
  - ii. First Division, including any preliminary rounds and play-offs, if any
  - iii. Women's Competitions
  - iv. U/20
  - v. U/18
  - vi. U/16
  - vii. U/14
  - viii. U/12
  - ix. Any other category as decided by the Council.
- b. i. Player of the Month may be awarded during any competition.  
ii. The ASA can also organise other awards during the various competitions, namely:-
- Best Player – Winter Competitions;
  - Best Player – Summer Competitions;
  - Best Goalkeeper;
  - Best Referee
- c. Only players of Maltese nationality can be declared Players of the Year (amended 20 January 2024).

#### Premier Division, First Division and Women's Honours

- d. The Council shall nominate a panel of persons who shall be given the right to select the best player of "approved" matches. This panel shall consist of
- i. Council members eligible to vote on WP matters
  - ii. 1 Club Official (President, Secretary or Treasurer) to be selected by the clubs
  - iii. All members of the Executive Committee
  - iv. Water Polo National Team Coaches
  - v. First Team club coaches
  - vi. First Team – Team Official to be nominated by the Club (and communicated to the Executive Committee)
  - vii. Active referees

- viii. Not more than 5 members of the Media who regularly attend and report on water polo matches.
- e. An individual will only have 1 vote if he/she falls into more than 1 of the above categories.
- f. Voting shall take place in the competitions chosen by the Executive Committee
- g. Voting shall be conducted as follows:
  - i. At the end of each matchday, the Vice President Water Polo will send an email to each member of the panel from a pre-determined address. Votes are to be submitted within 48 hours of receipt of said email.
  - ii. Each member of the panel is to submit the names of three players, giving votes of 5, 3 and 1. Out of these 3 votes, a maximum of 2 votes can be given to players from the same team.
  - iii. For the National Team matches, the Panel are to submit an overall vote for the entire competition (and not per match).
  - iv. At the end of the season (including any international commitments of the Senior National Teams), the panel will be requested to submit a separate vote (5, 3, 1) for the entire season (Winter, Summer and National Team matches)
- h. One point shall be deducted for every match that a player is suspended in.
- i. If 10 votes or less are cast for any particular month, these shall be discarded (*amended 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019*).
- j. The player obtaining the greatest number of votes/points in each category shall be declared the winner of that competition and category.

#### Age-Group Competitions

- a) Voting shall take place in all league competitions of these categories.
- b) Club coaches of the Age-Group teams, National Coaches and any other persons nominated by Council shall have the right to select the best player of each of the age-group category competitions. Their selections are to be submitted to the General Secretary at the end of the season (*amended 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017*).

#### All Competitions

- a. Any player found guilty of brutality shall not be considered during that particular month and any votes received will be discarded (*amended 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019*).
- b. The players obtaining the greatest number of votes/points in each category shall be declared Player of the Year of that category.

## **Appendix 1**

### **As per provisions of WPCR 12**

#### **NATIONAL SENIOR MEN COMPETITIONS FORMAT 2025-2027**

The ASA will organize the **National Senior Water polo Competitions** during the seasons 2025 – 2027 under the following format :

From Season 2025, the participating clubs will be initially seeded based on their ranking in the BOV Summer League 2024 giving the Positions 1-12.

Any club not participating in 2025 loses its ranking and the clubs that were ranked below it move one place up.

Any new club joining the league will be ranked in last position for the first year.

During the start of the Summer season, the teams ranked 1-4 in the previous Summer league are guaranteed a place in the Premier Division League. They will play a mini league of a one round robin tournament between them with the winner being declared the **President's Cup** Winner.

At the same time, the teams ranked 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> in the previous Summer league will play a mini league of a one round robin tournament between them with the winner being declared the Winner of the Competition (which may be given a name at a later stage).

Moreover the top 2 placed teams in this mini-league will qualify to play in the Premier Division during that current season. The teams ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> in this mini league will play in the Summer First Division league that season.

At the same time, the teams ranked 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> in the previous Summer league will play a mini league of a one round robin tournament between them with the winner being declared the Winner of the Competition (*which may be given a name at a later stage*). These teams will participate in the Summer First Division League that season.

Once the above phase is over the National Summer League will be played in two divisions – Premier and First Division of 6 teams each (unless there are less or more teams in which case the number of teams in the First Division is increased or decreased). These leagues will be played on the basis of a two – round, round robin format with the Top 4 teams in each division qualifying for the semifinal playoffs.

The semifinal playoffs will be played over 3 matches, with the first match being awarded to the highest placed team in the league table after 2 rounds (So the top 2 teams of each division start one match up against the teams placed 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>)- Pos 1 Vs Pos 4 and Pos 2 Vs Pos 3.

The winners of the semifinal playoffs will play each other in a best of 3 matches final, with both teams starting level.

Approved unanimously by all clubs through email voting – 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2024