

Sutton & Cheam Swimming Club Water Polo Teaching Plan



Introduction

The water polo teaching plan is loosely based on particular age groups to bring it in line with the **ASA's Long Term Athletic Development (LTAD) framework for water polo**. In general however, the plan is fluid and players will normally advance through the scheme by ability.

Logistically, due to the numbers of players in each age group, girls and boys of all age groups will normally train together. This has the advantage of allowing the younger players to be mentored by the older. This enhances the skill acquisition of the younger players.

It should also be noted that girls and boys are able to compete together in mixed teams until aged 15.

"Mini-Polo" FUNDamentals Age 8-11

The club normally introduces water polo to swimmers of about 8 or 9 years of age in the form of "mini-polo"; the only criteria being the ability to swim confidently.



Mini-polo is a smaller, more basic game than Water Polo itself and has been introduced to teach young players of any age up to about eleven years old the basics of the full game. It is also a great multi-skill activity which teaches the fundamentals of aquatics and sport as a whole, in line with **Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD)**.

The best thing about mini-polo is its wide adaptability! You can take any size of pool, whether deep or shallow, any number of young boys and girls, of different ages; ability and size and modify the game to suit requirements. It's as simple as that...there really aren't any rules to use if you don't want.

NO RULES??



In fact, the fewer rules imposed on the players, the easier it is for them to learn and, more importantly, the more fun it is!

Although official equipment is available, it's not necessary - to get started, all we need is a ball and a pool!

At the early stages of the teaching plan, concentration is on the players rather than on team progress and emphasis is therefore more on participation, having fun in the water and playing simple games. However, we also focus on the equipment, the basic techniques and the essential ball skills with 'fun' drills to maintain the interest of the players.

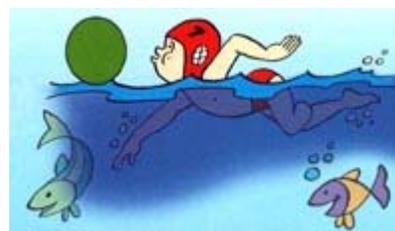
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Water Polo Teaching Plan



During this stage, players are progressively moved on to more advanced skills as they:

- Are able to swim more confidently
- Are at home in the deep end of the pool
- Can perform egg beater leg kick and
- Have some basic ball handling



Familiarisation with the Equipment

Balls
Caps
Pitch size
Use of log books

Costumes
Goals
Pitch markings

Basic skills without the ball

Swimming training for stamina
Leg work (egg-beater)
Focus on body position, legs, arms
Stop and Go!
Starting, stopping, turning without the ball
Changing direction
Sideways movement
Jumping forwards, backwards, sideways, upwards

Swimming training for speed
Head up front crawl
Head up backstroke
Breaststroke
Change strokes
Zig-zag (attack and defence)
Jump half turn

Basic skills with the ball

Swimming with the ball - head up front crawl; head still over the ball
Picking up the ball from underneath

Passing wet and dry
Passing to front, left and right
Catch and pass in one motion
'Walking' the ball
Simple shooting - no defender
Goalkeeping
2 v 1 attack on goal
1 v Goalkeeper attack -receive pass from left and right and shoot

Passing to partner while swimming

Starting, stopping, turning with the ball
Passing long and short
Catching from front, left and right
Position in water - hips up
Dummying
Straight shot and lob
1 v Goalkeeper attack
Basic extra man attack and defence

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Water Polo Teaching Plan



Introduction to competition

Organisation and duration of competitions
One hand
Adaptation of rule for mini polo
Rules relating to pitch markings
Sinking
Entering the water
Refereeing

Basic rules of the game
Standing on the bottom
Ball under
Holding
Pulling back
Game organisation

Basic game tactics

All play all positions
Basic attacking play
Awareness of teammates
Basic defensive play
Goalside marking
Blocking in front

Basic rules of the game
Finding space in attack
Shape - not crowding the 'pit'
Simple press defence
Covering
Counter attacking

Competition

Possession games as an introduction to competition
Under 12 WWPL and LWPL mini polo

Conditioned' competition - small sided games
Basic competition

Age 12-13

Continue swim training for fitness, stamina and speed
Gradual introduction of individual team member responsibilities

Introduce T20 for fitness evaluation
Greater emphasis on 'team' play

Skill Development

Concentration continues on the above skills development as these are basic to the game plus:

'Spider'
Protecting the ball
Shooting - range of shots (back shots, push, tip, etc)

Goalkeeping
Introducing contact
Shooting from pass

More advanced tactical skills and positional play

Narrowing down positional play to 1 or 2 positions
Setting the arc
'Pit' play
Man up

Water discipline
Passing lanes
'Pit' defence
Man down

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Goalkeeping

Positioning
Post to post mobility

Distribution

Competition

Ordinary and major fouls
Entry into the water - during play, substitution, after goal

Player substitution

Under 14 competitions WWPL and LWPL
ASA Academy National Club competition

Regional Training Academy
National Training Academy

Age 14-15

This stage concentrates not only on player development but also on team development; what it means to work as part of a team and being a team member

Lots more of the above - can't have enough of it - plus development of more advanced skills:

Specific positions introduced & developed e.g. goalkeeper left side, right side
Role of C/F ('Pit player'), point, wings, drivers
Marking line of ball and front marking
Stealing and intercepting the ball
Press defence
Beating the press- driving past defender
Managing the 30 second possession clock
Specific positions for set plays and man-ups
Role of the goalkeeper in organising defence
Role of the goalkeeper in organising man-down defence

Positional play around the arc
Role of the 'Pit defender'
Counter attacking
Rotational attack
'Dropping'
Picks and screens
Switching'
Protecting the ball
'Foul'/'No foul'

Competition

Identification of team strengths, weaknesses
Identification of opposition strengths, weaknesses

Adaptation of tactics during game play

Rules
Possession clock
Specific rules for goalkeepers
Rules relating to coach and team positions on poolside

Time-outs
Role of the table
Responsibilities of match officials

Under 16 competitions WWPL and LWPL
ASA Youth National Club competition

Regional Training Youth
National Training Youth

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Age 16-17

Refine above skills

Competition

Integration with senior players

Under 18 competitions WWPL and LWPL
ASA Junior National Club Competition

National Training Junior

Further Development

We also encourage our better junior players to take advantage of county, regional and national training opportunities:

- County Competitions
- Inter Region Competitions
- ASA National Age Group Water Polo Competitions

London Regional Training Centre (Crystal Palace)

Regional Training Centres are an integral part of the National Performance program for Water Polo. There are numerous 'RTC's across the UK, each providing a nationally standardised programme of skill development which prepares young players who have been initially identified as having the potential to become 'elite' performers.

ASA Water Polo Talent Development programme

The ASA has a development pathway to ensure that once a young person's talent is identified, it is nurtured to help them reach their full potential as well as a specific Water Polo Talent Development programme.

Young players who have already shown promise in water polo and who have achieved certain levels of attainment which includes swimming, basic technique and game awareness are given access to quality coaching, athlete educational schemes and sports science within a training camp environment that will help prepare them for future international competition.

Players who excel at the national level may then progress to being selected by British Swimming to join their World Class development programme.