North Delta Sunfish Swim Club

Water Polo Summer Game Policy (Updated 2025)

1. Purpose and Philosophy

Sunfish Water Polo provides athletes with opportunities to develop skills, compete respectfully, and represent the club with pride. Regular-season tournaments focus on development and fair play, while Regional and Provincial Championships prioritize competitive performance and qualification.

2. Regular-Season Tournaments (Non-Regional / Non-Provincial)

Regular tournaments are treated as developmental events, similar in value to practices. The emphasis is on learning, teamwork, and equal opportunity.

Playing Time

- Coaches aim to provide reasonably equal playing time for all athletes throughout regular-season tournaments.
- Beach water polo's quick rotations and short quarters make these events essential for learning game flow, positioning, and decision-making.
- **Playing time will generally not be reduced based on practice attendance; however, consistent attendance is necessary to ensure athletes have the skills and readiness required for safe participation, and players who have missed significant practice time may receive reduced playing time for safety reasons.**
- If roster size prevents meaningful playing time for all athletes, coaches may forfeit a game to protect athlete development. A game should not be forfeited if reasonable playing time is achievable.

Medal Rounds at Regular-Season Tournaments

- **During medal-round games, coaches may adjust playing time to prioritize competitive success.**
- Some athletes may receive less playing time in medal rounds than in earlier games.
- Coaches will communicate expectations so families understand the competitive structure.

Roster Size & Commitment

- Athletes must commit to tournaments **at least one week in advance** to allow coaches to form and enter rosters.
- Late roster updates may be accepted only if roster numbers allow for meaningful playing time.
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- Oversized rosters reduce development opportunities; coaches may split teams (if tournament host permits more than 1 entry) or decline late additions to maintain quality of play.

Sportsmanship

- Athletes must demonstrate **Sunfish team spirit**, supporting teammates and showing respect to opponents, officials, and volunteers.
- Poor sportsmanship—verbal, physical, or behavioral—will result in removal from games and may require review by the Head Coach and Director of Water Polo before attending future events.
- Any concerns must be reported to the Head Coach and Director of Water Polo promptly.

3. Regional Championships

Regionals differ from regular tournaments: **the goal is qualification for Provincials**, not equal playing time.

Team Selection

- Only one team per age group may be submitted.
- The Head Coach, with input from the coaching staff, selects the roster based on the best combination of athletes to field a competitive team.
- Athletes must demonstrate consistent sportsmanship throughout the season—at practices, games, team events, and interactions with teammates and other clubs.
- Athletes typically remain in their age group; movement to an older group requires Head Coach justification, approval from the Director of Water Polo.
- Team selections will be posted one week prior to Regionals and Provincials.
- Any athlete not selected will be informed in person by the Head Coach before the roster is published.

Playing Time at Regionals

- Playing time will not be equal at Regionals.
- Coaches will prioritize competitive success and qualification for Provincials.
- Some athletes may receive limited or no playing time in certain games.
- If the team is winning by a safe margin, coaches should increase playing time for developing athletes to ensure the experience remains valuable.

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4. Provincial Championships

- The **goal at Provincials is to place as high as possible.**
- Playing time may be uneven, and some athletes may not play in certain games.
- Coaches must notify families in advance if their athlete is likely to receive limited playing time so families can make informed travel decisions.

5. Club Values

Sunfish water polo is built on:

- Fair play
- Athlete development
- Respect for officials and opponents
- Positive team culture