



BALLARAT JUNIOR WATER POLO TOURNAMENT U12 + U14



Referee Guidelines

To ensure consistency of refereeing for the tournament, please review the following guidelines and apply them to your refereeing for the weekend;

1. **Rules.** For the tournament the rules will be generally those used in the Victorian Championships relevant to each grade.
2. **Referees.** Each team will be required to supply a referee. As a general rule that referee will be expected to referee the match following their teams game. There will be some nominated tournament referees so the team referee may not have to referee every game following their own.
3. **Duration.** Games times will be 5 minute quarters, 1 min at $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ time breaks and 2 mins at $\frac{1}{2}$ time break.
4. **Shot Clock.** U14 and u16 will use the 20/30 second shot clock as per senior games. Basically, 30 seconds is applied at the start of each quarter, after a goal reset and from a goal throw. 20 seconds is applied for a corner throw or after an exclusion. No shot clock for u12 games.
5. **Tie-Break.** The only games that will require a tie-break scenario will be the medal round games. All other games can end in a draw. In the event of a drawn final, the result will be decided by Golden Goal in a 5th Quarter. Subsequent quarters will also be 5 minutes. There will be a 3 minute break between the 4th and 5th quarters and if necessary a 1 minute break between the 5th and 6th quarter. Crossover games operate on the same basis as regular games with the same rules, i.e. no tiebreak.
6. **Goal Line Start.** Starts for each quarter will be from the goal line, not the 2m line
7. **Player Game Time.** During the first and second quarter of each game, in both u12 and u14 grades, substitution of players will only be allowed at around the two and half minute mark. All players on the bench from each team need to play the 2nd half of the quarter and the equivalent number of field players from the first half of the quarter must be rested for the remainder of that quarter. This rule does not apply to the u16 grade
Please ensure you discuss this with the coaches prior to the matches and impress upon them the importance of getting the substitution completed quickly to maintain the schedule.
The game should be paused as close as possible to the two and a half minute mark and at a time that doesn't disadvantage either team. Game clock should be paused during this substitution.
This is in alignment with WPA national junior competition rules.
During the 2nd half of the game substitution can occur in the normal fashion.
8. **Mercy Rule.** In the u12 grade, when a team takes a lead of 5 or more goals, the mercy rule will be applied. At the restart after scoring the team in the lead shall start with their players between the 2m and 5m lines while the trailing team can still start at the centre line. This will allow them to advance to the 5m unhindered and afford them a better chance to score. This rule can also be applied to the u14 and u16 grades if there is an obvious mismatch and both coaches agree to it.
9. **Inside 2m Rule.** For the u12 grade we will play this passively and take the opportunity to instruct players on the rule. If they are inside 2m without the ball allow it but if it gets passed to them while in there then award the turnover. In the u14 grade, the rule should be played actively as per normal rules, turnover as soon as its violated.
10. **U12 CF/CB Rotation.** If a free is awarded to the CF they are supposed to swim out of the CF position and allow a second pair to come in. In reality this happens rarely in u12 games as they do not set up traditional structures yet.
11. **Exclusions.** Try to avoid exclusions for the u12 age group unless they are obvious. Ensure you explain why the exclusion occurred at the next break in play or completion of the match. For the u12 grade there is no time the player needs to stay in the exclusion area, they just need to enter the area then can re-enter immediately. For u14 exclusions should be awarded as per the rules and the exclusion time is 20 seconds
12. **Free Throw.** When a free throw is awarded, a player can play the ball by dropping it into the water, throwing it up in the air or passing it. For u12 allow some flexibility here and explain the rule to the kids. For u14 apply the rule as normal where it should be played within a 'reasonable' time or generally around 3 seconds.
13. **Shooting from Free.** Allowed for u14 and u16 outside 6m if taken immediately. Not allowed for u12.
14. **Nail Checks.** Nail checks should be completed on all teams for games on the Friday night session (if applicable) or Saturday morning session. All teams should be covered by this point and it shouldn't be required unless requested after this.
15. **Game Schedule.** Lunch breaks & goal change breaks may be shortened to ensure game schedule remains on track
16. **Decision Clarifications.** The purpose of the tournament is to allow kids that are new to the sport to gain a better understanding of the rules and structure of the game before starting to play in the state championships. If at any stage there is general confusion about a decision you have made, particularly in the u12 grade, you are encouraged to stop play momentarily, explain the decision and then proceed with play. Avoid this during the medal games and game clock will not stop during any such pause.
17. **Referee Flexibility.** For the u12 grade, Referees may provide instructions to players and allow advantage calls to maintain the flow of the game. u14 games should be refereed according to FINA Rules or those noted above.