



Water Polo

Water Polo

Rule Book

September 2026

SECTION 1.

DEFINITIONS & CONTENTS

1. FOREWORD

Swim Ireland is the National Governing body for Swimming, Water Polo, Diving and associated aquatic sports for the whole of Ireland and is recognised as such by Sport Ireland, Sport Northern Ireland, the Olympic Federation of Ireland and the Irish Government. Ireland Water Polo is a term which refers to the group of Swim Ireland Clubs registered with Swim Ireland as engaging in the discipline of Water Polo.

The Irish Amateur Swimming Association Limited, trading as Swim Ireland is a company limited by guarantee and its constituent documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association (M&As). The M&As of a company provides the legal framework within which the Company will operate but does not provide the level of detail required for the day-to-day operation of the organisation. The general operation of Water Polo has been delegated by the Swim Ireland Board to the National Water Polo Committee (NWPC) and this Rule Book deals with the more general aspects of the day-to-day operations of Water Polo.

Please note that this Rule Book refers to other documentation that may be pertinent for the purposes of Swim Ireland Rules and Regulations. Such documentation can be obtained from the Swim Ireland offices and/or on the Swim Ireland website at www.swimireland.ie. In the event that any rule contained herein conflicts with the Swim Ireland Articles of Association or Swim Ireland Rule Book these documents take precedent.

Any changes to this Rule Book that come into conflict with the Swim Ireland M&A's cannot be accepted. Any changes to this Rule Book are subject to approval by the Board of Swim Ireland.

The rule book is set out in five sections:

- Section One sets out the general rules in relation to how Water Polo operates within Swim Ireland. The Governance structure dictates that authority is invested in the NWPC by the Board of Swim Ireland and the section clarifies the role and responsibilities of the Committee and how Water Polo Regions, Clubs and individual members operate within.
- Section Two sets out the governance and structure of Ireland Water Polo. This section details what forms the structure of Ireland Water Polo.
- Section Three details how the Water Polo Competitions will be managed. Primary responsibility for the running of Water Polo events lies with the Competitions Committee which is appointed by the NWPC.
- Section Four relates to the Disciplinary Process with sanctions detailed in Appendix One.
- Section Five relates to the Complaints Process.

1.1. Definitions

“Affiliate Member” has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles.

“AGM” any reference to Annual General Meeting refers to the Swim Ireland AGM.

“Annual Conference” shall mean the Annual Conference of Water Polo Clubs which is called in accordance with these rules.

“Articles” means the Articles of Association of Swim Ireland for the time being and as amended from time to time.

“Associate Member” means a Water Polo coach duly qualified and recognised as such by the Swim Ireland and who is affiliated to Swim Ireland subject to and in accordance with the terms of membership as set out in the Articles.

“Board” any reference to the ‘Board’ shall mean the Swim Ireland Board of Directors.

“Club” has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles.

“Club Committee” means the Club Management Committee and any other committee or subcommittee established by the Club for any purpose.

“Club Member” has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles.

“Company” means the Irish Amateur Swimming Association Limited trading as Swim Ireland.

“Connacht Region” means the counties of Galway, Leitrim, Longford, Mayo, Roscommon, and Sligo.

“General Meeting” shall mean the Annual Water Polo Conference or any other general meeting of Water Polo Clubs which is called in accordance with this Rule Book.

“Leinster Region” means the counties of Carlow, Dublin, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Louth, Meath, Offaly, Westmeath, Wexford, and Wicklow.

“EUROPEAN AQUATICS” has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles.

“M&A” means the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Swim Ireland.

“Members” means Club Members, Associate Members and Affiliate Members.

“Munster Region” means the counties of Clare, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary, and Waterford.

“National Plan” means the Swim Ireland Strategic Plan and any annual plans including the Water Polo Development Plan.

“National Programme” A series of progressive National Squads.

“National Squad” A designated group of players at a specific age range selected to form a squad.

“National Team” A team of players selected from the National Programme to represent Ireland at international tournaments.

“NWPC” means the National Water Polo Committee (NWPC) established by the Board of Swim Ireland and to whom it has delegated responsibility for the day-to-day operations of Water Polo; Regional Committee or Club.

‘Ulster Region’ means the counties of Antrim, Armagh, Cavan, Derry, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Monaghan, and Tyrone.

“Region” means the geographical provinces of Connacht, Leinster, Munster, and Ulster.

“Regional Nominee” the nominee elected from a region to the NWPC to administer and promote the National interests of Ireland Water Polo.

“Residency” Residency is considered in terms of current and historical status for water polo cup competitions conducted by Ireland Water Polo in Ireland. Residency (current) is defined as the place in Ireland where a competitor/player ‘lives or sleeps’ and where he/she regularly, normally or customarily resides (Ordinarily Resident) for 184 days in a year. (Historical) residency is defined as the place or places in Ireland where a competitor was living for a period of more than five (5) years consecutively. Historical residency is not otherwise time limited nor can it become time expired.

“Proof of Residence” Proof of residency may be requested during the process of granting permission to play, where the Competitions Committee or NWPC consider a doubt exists in an individual case. Competitors may be required to provide documentation supporting/establishing residency, either current or historical, which could include an employment contract(s) (based in Ireland), registration on register of electors (UK or Irish national parliamentary elections), school or university registration, tenancy contract, property tax/ownership (Local Property Tax), utility bills (2), or a Garda National Immigration Bureau card. Any documentation provided must be current and date relevant.

“SI” means Swim Ireland.

“SI Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures” means the complaints and disciplinary procedures adopted by Swim Ireland as amended from time to time.

“Swim Ireland Competition Conditions” means the rules and guidelines published in this document and by Swim Ireland from time to time governing the holding of events, demonstrations, or competitions at Club, Regional or National Level.

“Water Polo Licence” In order to participate in Water Polo activities, including for the avoidance of doubt, any elections which are specific to Water Polo, a person must hold a Water Polo licence which must be renewed annually. The Water Polo licence fee as determined by the NWPC in conjunction with the Swim Ireland office.

“WORLD AQUATICS” has the meaning ascribed to it in the Articles.

1.2 Interpretation

In this Rule Book:

- The singular shall include the plural and vice versa.
- Unless the context or subject otherwise requires, references to words in one gender include references to the other genders.
- Reference to a person shall include an individual, partnership, corporation, Limited Liability Company, business trust, Joint Stock Company, trust, unincorporated association, joint venture, governmental entity or authority or other entity of whatever nature.

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SECTION 2.

GOVERNANCE

2. STRUCTURE

2.1 NWPC (NWPC)

The NWPC has been established by the Board of Swim Ireland to organise and manage the sport of Water Polo in Ireland under the terms defined in the Swim Ireland Articles. In order to be eligible for election onto the NWPC, a person must be a Swim Ireland Member and hold a valid Water Polo Licence unless specifically otherwise approved by the Board. The NWPC shall be comprised of at least seven (7) members, elected in accordance with the Articles and shall operate within the terms of reference established by the Board. The NWPC supported by Swim Ireland staff is responsible for the day to day running of the sport including but not limited to:

- i. Ensuring a strategic plan for the sport is prepared
- ii. Preparing annual business plans and budgets based on the strategic plan
- iii. Appointing the Water Polo Competitions Committee
- iv. Appointing the Water Polo National Head Coach and National Squad Coaches
- v. Ensuring the operation of the National Water Polo Competitions
- vi. Approving the international competition programme
- vii. Ensuring the progress of the development of Water Polo in Ireland, including regional and national programmes as decided
- viii. Reviewing Water Polo income, expenditure, and budget
- ix. Approving the Water Polo National Fixtures Calendar
- x. Convening an Annual Water Polo Conference

In pursuance of the above objectives the NWPC shall:

- a) Endeavour to provide a positive and safe environment for all its members.
- b) enforce, through its rules and regulations, the Irish Anti-Doping Rules as published by Sport Ireland as amended from time to time.
- c) co-operate and comply with the regulations of WORLD AQUATICS, EUROPEAN AQUATICS, and Swim Ireland.
- d) promote, through its rules and regulations, adherence to the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport as published by the relevant regulatory authorities in Ireland and as amended from time to time.
- e) promote, through its rules and regulations, adherence to the Swim Ireland Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures as published and as amended from time to time.
- f) promote, the Swim Ireland Water Polo respect charter and code of conduct.
- g) Agree and ensure that all sub-committees are operating to terms of reference.
- h) Ensure that correct recruitment procedures are followed in the appointment of national programme coaches, team managers, and officials.
- i) Ensure that terms and conditions and/or written contracts exist in relation to all national programme coaches and team managers and records are kept of same.
- j) Ensure selection policies for national programmes and national teams are in place and adhered to.

2.2 *President*

A nominee elected from among the Water Polo Clubs shall hold the office of President of Ireland Water Polo from the conclusion of one Annual Water Polo Conference to the next. The elected nominee shall be such person (who must be a Member of the Company) as the majority of Clubs so determine by voting in favour of such person by ordinary resolution at that Annual Water Polo Conference.

The Ireland Water Polo President shall represent the interests of Water Polo at all ceremonial and representative occasions as required.

2.3 *Regions*

The Regions exist for the purposes of running regional cups/leagues, interprovincial competitions/leagues, development of Water Polo within their region and the election of a regional nominee to the NWPC. The nominee must be elected prior to the Water Polo Annual Conference. The Water Polo Regions report directly to the NWPC.

Ireland shall be divided into four (4) Regions namely:

- a) Connacht.
- b) Leinster.
- c) Munster; and
- d) Ulster.

If for any reason it is not possible to organise a Regional Management Committee within a Region a nomination to the National Water Polo Committee may be accepted from the club(s) in that region.

2.4 *Clubs*

2.4.1 All Clubs must affiliate annually to Swim Ireland, by paying the annual affiliation fee as determined by Swim Ireland and complete affiliation through the Swim Ireland Database, and any other documentation required by Swim Ireland to the satisfaction of Swim Ireland.

2.4.2 All Clubs shall promptly submit all requested information to Swim Ireland.

2.4.3 All Clubs must have constitutional documents and rule books in place which comply with Swim Ireland based guidelines and which do not contain any provisions which conflict with Swim Ireland M&A, Rule Book or any other rules, regulations or directions issued by Swim Ireland.

2.4.4 All Clubs that have U18 members must comply with the child welfare guidelines as outlined in the most up to date version of the 'Swim Ireland Safeguarding Policies and Procedures' .

2.4.5 A Club Management Committee must be appointed by each Club and must always be in existence to operate the Club in line with best practice.

2.4.6 All Club Committees must regularly consult club personnel (including teachers, coaches, and Children's Officers) and must fully consider any reports, recommendations, or complaints of such Club personnel.

2.4.7 All persons operating in Clubs as teachers or coaches must meet the following requirements: active Swim Ireland club membership, hold relevant Swim Ireland qualification, and have an active Register of Aquatic Professional credential.

2.4.8 All Clubs shall adopt and comply with Swim Ireland's complaints and disciplinary procedures. In the event of a Club failing to comply with or enforce any disciplinary or other measure determined

by Swim Ireland, the Board may suspend or terminate the affiliation of such Club with Swim Ireland. Any proceeding against a Club shall be brought in accordance with the provisions of the Swim Ireland Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures.

2.4.9 All Clubs will endeavour that terms and conditions and/or written contracts exist in relation to all leaders (i.e., coaches, teachers) in the Club and records are kept of same.

2.4.10 All Clubs shall ensure that they have a safety statement.

2.4.11 All Clubs shall ensure that the rules of the Club are set up and implemented.

2.4.12 All Clubs shall ensure that correct recruitment procedures are followed in the appointment of teachers/coaches and leaders.

2.4.13 All Clubs shall ensure that a recording of incidents/injuries is maintained including incident-action-outcome.

2.4.14 All Clubs shall ensure that minutes of Club Committee meetings and Club General Meetings are kept (including Club Treasurer's reports).

2.4.15 All Clubs shall ensure that they encourage regular turnover of Club Committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience.

2.4.16 Clubs shall comply with all affiliation regulations and procedures set down by the Company whether in the Rules or any byelaws or standing orders and as drawn up by the Board from time to time and shall be bound by these Rules.

2.4.17 A Club's rules, byelaws, procedures, and standing orders shall not be in conflict with any provision of the Company Articles or the Rules.

2.4.18 A Club Member who ceases to be a member of a Club automatically ceases to be a Member of the Company.

2.4.19 Each Club shall promptly inform the Company and provide any requested details to the Company of any changes in its membership.

2.4.20 In the event of a Club failing to comply with or failing to enforce any disciplinary or other measure prescribed by the Board, the Disciplinary and Complaints Committee and/or Swim Ireland in general meeting, the Club shall be liable to be disaffiliated from Swim Ireland in accordance with the procedures for disaffiliation set down in the Rules or any byelaws or standing orders.

2.4.21 In the event of a Club failing to pay levies (league fees, competition fees, and affiliation fees) or fines, the Club shall be suspended from participating in all activities until such time as the levies or fines are paid.

2.5 *Competitions Committee*

The NWPC, in accordance with [2.1 \(iii\)](#) shall appoint a Water Polo Competitions Committee, who shall lead in the management and operations of all Water Polo Competitions taking place within Ireland unless otherwise specifically directed by the NWPC or Swim Ireland. The Committee shall be supported by Swim Ireland Staff.

2.5.1 *Role of Competitions Committee*

- Support the Swim Ireland Representative to appoint officials to all National Competitions.
- Prepare and approve National League Fixtures.

- Co-ordinate pool bookings with Swim Ireland Representative within approved budgets.
- Prepare budgets and ensure all National Competitions run within approved budgets.
- Ensure availability of persons for set up and take down of equipment at all National Competitions.
- Monitor the condition of our relevant Water Polo equipment e.g., timing equipment etc., and report to NWPC in good time any proposals to repair/replace equipment, as necessary.
- Any other duties required to ensure the running of all National Competitions within Ireland.

2.6 General Operational Matters

All members and clubs must affiliate to Swim Ireland on an annual basis based on the rules in operation at that time. All members and clubs are bound by and must comply with the rules and regulations contained in the following documents (as amended from time to time) *:

- Swim Ireland's M&A
- Swim Ireland's Rule Book
- This Rule Book
- Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland's Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Children's Sport in Ireland
- Swim Ireland's Safeguarding Policy Document
- Swim Ireland's Codes of Conduct
- Swim Ireland's Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures
- The Irish Anti-Doping Rules (or equivalent rules produced by Sport Ireland) and the WORLD AQUATICS Technical and Anti-Doping Regulations
- Swim Ireland's, EUROPEAN AQUATICS's and WORLD AQUATICS's Competition Rules
- Applicable Regional Bodies' and Clubs' constitutional documents, rules, and regulations
- Any other rules, directions and regulations adopted by the Board.

2.7 Water Polo Licence

In order to participate in Water Polo activities, including any and all elections related to Water Polo, a participant must hold a valid, in date Water Polo licence which must be renewed annually. To obtain a Water Polo licence a person must:

- Must fill out an application form which shall include full name, address, and Swim Ireland membership number and, in the case of underage competitors, date of birth. All applications must be signed by the Club Honorary Secretary.
- Must pay the Water Polo licence fee as determined by the NWPC in conjunction with the Swim Ireland office.

If a role on the NWPC is held by a non-Water Polo member as set out in the Swim Ireland M&A, they are exempt from holding a Water Polo License but must be a registered member of Swim Ireland.

2.8 Members Rights

In addition to their rights as Swim Ireland members, subject to compliance with conditions set down in [2.6](#), Water Polo club members shall have the following rights only:

- The right to compete, for their club at all Water Polo competitions held by or under the auspices of Swim Ireland subject to compliance with the relevant rules of the competition.
- The right (through their registered clubs) to notice of, and to attend at, general meetings/annual conference of Water Polo Clubs.
- The right to speak and vote at general meetings/annual conference of Ireland Water Polo but only as a delegate or delegates duly elected by that Member's Club.

- d) The right through their Club and only if agreed by the Club at a general meeting of the Club, to put forward notices of motion at any general meeting of Ireland Water Polo subject to compliance with the applicable standing orders of Ireland Water Polo in relation thereto.
- e) The right to stand for election to serve on the NWPC.
- f) The right to stand for election for the position of President of Ireland Water Polo.
- g) The right to be considered a registered member of a club, members must be registered through that club with Swim Ireland.

2.9 *Water Polo Transfers*

The Water Polo licence determines a player's eligibility to play for or vote in Water Polo elections on behalf of a particular club. A transfer changes the club for which a player is licenced. Where a member wishes to leave one Club and join another Club (new or existing) they must arrange for a Swim Ireland transfer to be completed. All applications must include:

- a) Written clearance from the club he wishes to leave.
- b) Written acceptance from the club he wishes to join; and
- c) A written request from him seeking to transfer.

If the transferring member owes fees to Swim Ireland or the Club or holds Club property and/or has had a complaint made against them which is in process or pending or in relation to which a sanction has been issued but not yet served, then the Club may withhold approving the transfer until the matter is reasonably resolved, otherwise the Club must complete the transfer form as appropriate within 7 days of receipt of the transfer request via the SI club portal.

Transfers are automatically in force once both clubs have approved the transfer request and it is complete on the SI portal. The Swim Ireland Membership Office and/or Honourable Water Polo Secretary shall inform the relevant Regional Secretaries of all transfers.

Where a member's original Club does not re-affiliate with Swim Ireland in the relevant year or is dissolved, a transfer is not required by the member joining another Club and there will be no transfer fee.

Where a player has not competed for at least two years, this fee shall be waived. Other transfer requirements shall not be waived under this rule.

2.9.1 *Transfer Windows*

Transfer window shall be open from 1st June to 31st January annually.

2.9.2 *Single Transfer Rule*

A player can only undertake one transfer within any period of 12 weeks unless approved by NWPC.

2.9.3 *Irish Senior Cup Cut-off Date for Transfers*

In the case of the Irish Senior Cup, all players must have completed any requisite transfer - whether domestic or international – along with the relevant registration and Water Polo license with Swim Ireland by 31st of January in the season that the Irish Senior Cup takes place. All transfers, including any EUROPEAN AQUATICS International Transfers, must be concluded on or prior to this date.

2.10 *Annual Water Polo Conference*

The NWPC shall convene an Annual Conference each year approximately 2 months in advance of the Swim Ireland AGM ("Water Polo Conference"). At each Water Polo Conference, the attendees shall vote in respect of the election of any vacancies to the NWPC and such other business as may be put forward by the NWPC.

- a) No business shall be transacted at any Annual Conference unless a quorum is present. Save as otherwise provided in these Rules, twenty (20) Delegates entitled to attend and cast votes and who are present in person shall constitute a quorum.
- b) If such a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting, or if during a meeting such a quorum ceases to be present, the meeting shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week at the same time and place or to such time and place as the NWPC may determine and if at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting the Members present shall be a quorum.
- c) The Annual Water Polo Conference shall be run in accordance with Swim Ireland Standing Orders for the General Meetings as amended from time to time.
- d) The NWPC may alter or amend or disallow any proposition or motion which offends against either or both of the memorandum of association and/or the articles of association of the Company and/or which the NWPC considers may either bring the sport into disrepute and/or be against the best interests of the Company. The NWPC shall inform, in writing, any Clubs whose motion is altered, amended, composited, or disallowed in accordance with this rule.
- e) No amendments will be accepted to motions at the Annual Conference.
- f) Where a motion is put forward to amend 'Section 4. Disciplinary or Section 5. Complaints of the Water Polo Rule Book it will require 75% in favour to pass any such motions.
- g) Appendix 1 Disciplinary Sanctions may be amended by a majority (50% plus 1). In the period between Water Polo Conferences, Appendix 1 may also be amended by unanimous vote of the NWPC provided that at least 28 clear days' notice of any such amendment is provided to the clubs.
- h) Notice of the Annual Conference shall be given to all clubs within 28 clear days prior to such conference taking place.
- i) Candidates wishing to stand for election to the NWPC must receive the nomination of at least two (2) Clubs, one of which must be their own.
- j) The names of nominees for election/motions must be notified to the Swim Ireland office no later than 14 Clear Days prior to the date of the Annual Conference.
- k) Each Affiliated Water Polo Club shall be entitled to send two (2) Delegates to the Annual Conference/General Meetings. All voting Delegates must be Members of the Company and that club in their own right. A Delegate shall be elected by a Club in accordance with the procedure in the Club's rules for electing Delegates at its general meeting. Each Club shall notify the Swim Ireland office in writing of the Delegate(s) within 7 days of advance of the General Meeting.
- l) Two delegates from each Water Polo club in attendance shall be entitled to vote on any motion before the Water Polo Conference/General Meeting.
- m) All Regional Nominees shall be elected by that region prior to the Annual Conference taking place and will be ratified at the Annual Conference.
- n) Delegates may only speak or vote in accordance with the terms of their membership set out in Rule 2.7.
- o) A Parent or guardian of Club Members who are under the age of eighteen and are not Club Members in their own right may be appointed as a club delegate.

2.11 Special Water Polo Conference

The NWPC shall convene a special conference where:

- a) A resolution to that effect is passed at the Annual Conference, or
- b) A request is approved by two thirds of the NWPC, or
- c) A request is received from five clubs, each of whom held an EGM and passed a resolution to request such a meeting, or
- d) A request is received from the Swim Ireland Board.

2.11.1

A Special Conference shall be held within 21 days of the passing of the resolution or receipt of the request. No item, which is not included in the published Agenda, shall be discussed at a special conference.

2.11.2

At least fourteen days' notice of meeting, stating where and when it will be held, shall be sent to all those entitled to attend the general conference. Each Notice of Meeting shall be accompanied by an Agenda of the matters to be discussed and voted upon.

2.11.3

Seven clear days' notice shall be sent for an adjourned general conference. It shall not be necessary to circulate an Agenda.

2.11.4

Save for the article above the rules for the meeting of the annual conference shall apply to the special conference.

SECTION 3.

COMPETITION RULES

3. COMPETITION & LEAGUE RULES

3.1 *General Competition Rules*

All competitions, tournaments and exhibitions must be approved by the NWPC in accordance with the rules and regulations of Swim Ireland, EUROPEAN AQUATICS and WORLD AQUATICS.

3.1.1 *Permission to hold/host a Tournament*

An affiliated club wishing to hold an Invitation Tournament must receive written permission from the Regional Water Polo Committee to which it is affiliated or, in the case of clubs wishing to hold an Invitation Tournament involving Clubs outside its region, must receive written permission from the NWPC.

3.1.2 *Documentation*

All advertisements, entry forms, programmes, tickets, and official notices shall include the words “under Ireland Water Polo Rules”.

3.1.3. *Minimum Numbers*

The Minimum number of licensed players that must accompany an entry for a competition shall be numerically the minimum playing strength for that competition, unless otherwise stated in the rules.

3.1.4. *Unlicensed Players*

A club playing an unlicensed player shall concede a walkover in that match and all subsequent matches that the player takes part in while unlicensed and walkover fines will be charged accordingly. There shall, in addition, be a fine equal to twice the normal Licence fee or as set out annually by the Competitions Committee and/or the NWPC. There shall be no appeal against this ruling.

3.1.5 *Players*

All Players must be registered with Swim Ireland each year and the teams in which they will play. Once a player is registered with a team, that player is only permitted to play within that team, unless a transfer application is received within the appropriate transfer window. Where clubs have multiple teams in the National Leagues, these clubs must submit individual team sheets before the commencement of the upcoming season.

Players are permitted to ONLY play for one registered Water Polo club and are only permitted to play National Competitions with the club they are registered with through Swim Ireland. This Rule applies to all National Leagues Men's, Women's, and Junior Leagues if applicable except in the following situations:

- a) An under 16 player whose primary club participate in the U16 league but not in the MNLD 2 or 3. A player can register with a second club who participates in these leagues to be able to play in a National senior league but continue to play with their primary club in the U16 league.
- b) If availing of 3.1.5a and their primary club has a team in MNLD1, they would not be able participate in MNLD1 for their primary club if playing in MNLD2 or 3 with their secondary club.
- c) An under 16 player whose primary club does not have a team participating in the U16 league. A player can register with a second club who participates in this league to be able to play in their age group league. They will be able to continue to play in a National senior league with their primary club.

3.1.6 Costumes

The costumes for all competitors shall be in good moral taste shall be non-transparent and shall comply with WORLD AQUATICS Rules of Water Polo. The Referee of a competition has the authority to exclude any player whose costume does not comply with this rule.

3.1.7 Caps

For all competitions the “home” team (first named on the fixture list) shall wear white caps.

3.1.8 Fixtures

Fixture lists shall as far as possible be circulated at least twenty-eight days prior to the start of the National Leagues.

3.1.9 Match Scheduling

Where more than one match is taking place at the same venue, matches shall follow immediately after the previous match has concluded or at the designated time. If the previous match was a walkover, the next match shall start at the designated time unless agreed by both teams and match officials.

The National Fixtures Secretary or Swim Ireland Office may adjust match times within a time window of 4 hours on any listed match day; this will only occur for administrative and scheduling purposes and, where possible, will be subject to a 7-day notice period to clubs

3.1.10 Location

Each team shall nominate a home location (pool) for the purpose of the National League and that each team will play a home game in their nominated location and an away game in the nominated location of the opposing team.

3.1.11 Administration

For all National League and Irish Cup matches, Swim Ireland shall be responsible for the booking of the pool, the collection of admission fees and the payment of pool rental and the provision of the necessary equipment.

3.1.12 Under-Age Competitors

In the case of under-age competitions, a list of all competitors taking part on behalf of a Club shall be sent to Swim Ireland at least two weeks prior to the competition in question. This list will include Swim Ireland registration number and dates of birth for each player which may be subject to verification.

A ‘combination team’ shall be included in each underage cup up to and including U16. This team shall comprise of players from any club who do not have 7 players to enter a team. This team shall not progress past the group stages of the competition. Clubs who wish to have players on the combination team must send a list to Swim Ireland one month prior to the competition in question. This list will include Swim Ireland registration number and dates of birth for each player which may be subject to verification.

3.1.13 Violent Actions

The offence of violent actions shall carry an immediate and automatic one match ban for a first and each offence. The Disciplinary & Complaints Commissioner (DCC) will then assess the severity of incident and may increase a suspension or sanction in accordance with the schedule of sanctions at Appendix A of these rules. The automatic one match ban will be included as part of any subsequent sanction determined and issued by the DCC.

3.2. Referees

3.2.1 Referees Controller

The NWPC may appoint a Referees Controller whose responsibility it shall be to appoint suitably qualified referees as required for National Leagues, Cup Competitions, and Interprovincial Competitions in conjunction with the Competitions Committee.

3.2.2 Referee Requirements & Reports

All competitions under the auspices of Ireland Water Polo shall be controlled by two neutral referees except in extraordinary circumstances, and with the agreement of both teams. Referees shall complete a match report for every match (on the match sheet) and report/comment on all misconducts (XMs), violent actions (XBs) and Red cards issued during a match. Reports will be signed by both referees and submitted to the Competitions Committee and Swim Ireland.

3.2.3 Appointment of Referees

The Referees Controller shall ensure that the appointed Referees are not registered members of the competing clubs or directly related to any player, coach, or team manager unless prior agreement has been given by both clubs, to such an appointment. Where agreement is not reached the appointed referee will step down from the match and be replaced where possible.

3.2.4 National League Referees

Referees for all matches in the National League shall be appointed by the Referees Controller in consultation with nominated regional referee controllers. Referees from outside a region may be appointed by agreement with the region, to control matches at venues under the jurisdiction of that region. Unless as otherwise decided by the NWPC, such referees shall be paid expenses as agreed by the NWPC.

3.2.5 Minimum Requirements

Except in exceptional circumstances, all matches in the National League shall be controlled by two referees.

3.2.6 Water Polo Delegate

A suitably qualified Ireland Water Polo delegate may be appointed to oversee National Competitions. A delegate is required at all National Cup competitions.

The delegate shall:

- a) Evaluate the Referees.
- b) Debrief and advise referees and table officials as soon as possible after the game.
- c) Keep a delegate match sheet, which may be used to correct the match sheet.
- d) Arbitrate on any protests or problems occurring during the game.

3.3 Payment

3.3.1 Payment

Generally, and unless good cause has been shown, entries will not be accepted if the amount tendered is less than the full amount due or if the information requested is inaccurate or incomplete. There will be no appeal against a decision by the Honorary Treasurer in conjunction with the Swim Ireland Finance Manager that good cause has not been shown.

3.3.2. Right to Refuse entry

No entry shall be accepted from a Club in default of fees, walkover fines or other financial commitments to Ireland Water Polo from the previous season, unless fully paid by the closing date for receipt of entries.

3.3.3 Suspensions

The Swim Ireland office shall send regular statements to Clubs detailing monies due. Any Club failing to pay these monies within 28 days of the date of such statements shall stand suspended until such payments are made.

3.4. Eligibility

3.4.1 Eligibility to Compete

In order to be eligible to compete, players must be ordinarily or historically resident in Ireland and fulfil the eligibility criteria for the competition they are entering. Players who have good reasons may apply in writing to the Competitions Committee for a dispensation from the constraints of this Rule, provided they are licensed with Ireland Water Polo by the closing date for the relevant competition.

Except as provided for in the Transfer Rules ([Section 2.9](#)), no player may play for more than one Club in the National League, irrespective of the divisions being contested by the clubs concerned, without the permission of the Competitions Committee.

Where a Club is entering more than one division in the National League, players must be named on each team at the start of the season and any transfers must comply with the deadlines set by the current Ireland Water Polo transfer regulations. No transfer fees will be required.

3.4.2 Foreign National Squad Players

No player who has been a member of a National squad of any other National Federation shall be eligible to play for a Club playing in any Ireland Water Polo competition without the prior written permission of the Competitions Committee and/or the NWPC.

3.4.3 Transfer Deadline

In the case of the Irish Senior Cup, all players must have completed any requisite transfer - whether domestic or international - along with the relevant registration and Water Polo license with Swim Ireland - by 31st of January in the season that the Irish Senior Cup takes place.

All transfers must be in accordance with [Section 2.9](#) of this rule book.

3.5 Playing times and Timeouts

The playing times and timeouts for matches in all National Competitions will be set out annually by the Competitions Committee.

3.6 Scoring

For league games (excluding MNLD1 and WNLD1) points shall be awarded as follows:

- a) Win - 3 Points
- b) Draw - 1 Point
- c) Loss - 0 Points

For MNLD1 and WNLD1 and all cup competitions (Including the ISC Qualifiers) the World Aquatics rule 4.3 will be implemented.

All matches will be played to a definite result. In the event of a tie at the end of normal time, the game shall go into a "penalty shoot-out" in accordance with WORLD AQUATICS Rules. Points shall be awarded as follows:

- a) Win in regular time - 3 Points
- b) Win after PSO – 2 Points

- c) Loss after PSO – 1 Point
- d) Loss in regular time - 0 Points

Where teams are tied with the same number of points in the final points table and where a decision must be reached in relation to final positions, it shall be decided as follows:

- a) The team which has gained the most points in matches between the teams shall be ranked higher.
- b) If the teams are still tied, the team with the largest difference between goals scored for and against in results between the teams shall be ranked higher.
- c) If the teams are still tied, the team having scored the higher number of goals in matches between the teams will be ranked higher.
- d) If there is still a tie, then the team with the largest difference between goals scored for and against in all matches shall be ranked higher.
- e) If the teams are still tied, the team having scored the higher number of goals in all matches will be ranked higher.
- f) If the teams are still tied, a playoff match shall be played.

For the purpose of calculating either goal difference or goals scored, the goals in any penalty shoot-out will not be taken into consideration.

3.7 Walkovers

3.7.1 Definition of Walkover

- a) For Cup and League Competitions, a team that has not the required number of players for the minimum playing strength in the said competition when the referee signals the start of the match, shall be deemed to have conceded a walkover.
- b) Where a team fails to fulfil a fixture in any Ireland Water Polo competition, they shall be deemed to have conceded a walkover and the fine shall be as fixed by the NWPC.

3.7.2 Goal Difference

For the purposes of 'Goal Difference', Walkovers shall be rated in accordance with Ireland Water Polo Rules (Currently 4-0).

3.7.3 Points Deduction

A Club conceding a walkover in National League Divisions 1 and 2 shall also be deducted four (4) points from their point's total.

3.7.4 Multiple Walkovers

Where a team concedes three walkovers in the same division of the National League, they shall be deemed to have withdrawn from that division and all matches involving that team shall be deemed to be unplayed when drawing up the final points table for that division. Teams excluded under this Rule shall still be liable for all match fees, or walkover fines at the discretion of the Competitions Committee.

3.7.5 Postponements

Once the fixtures list has been published, any requests from clubs for a postponement or change to the fixtures list must be made by following the Fixture Change Request Process and completing a Fixture Change Request form, both of which are available on the Water Polo website. Fixture change requests will only be affected after the clubs involved receive written permission from the Competition Committee. Amendments to the fixtures list will only be granted in extraordinary circumstances

3.7.6 Walkover Fines

All walkover fines, save as otherwise provided for in these rules, shall be in accordance with Ireland Water Polo Walkover Charges as decided by the NWPC. The NWPC shall also have the right to instruct the offending Club to pay part or all of the travelling team's expenses in the case where a "home" team conceded the walkover.

3.8 Tournaments Rules

Save as otherwise provided for, all Irish Cup Competitions shall, where possible be played as tournaments at a centralised venue. Male and female Irish cup competitions may be played as separate tournaments in different venues and dates, resources dependent.

3.8.1 Caps

Players must keep the same cap numbers for the duration of the tournament. The first goalkeeper should wear number 1 red cap and the second goalkeeper red number 13 cap. In the event that an outfield player has to play in goal, he shall wear the red "no number" or red number 1 cap and the coach must inform the referees / table of the player's original number.

3.8.2 Match Sheets

Each team must list their squad of up to 15 players before the start of their first match. In the event that a team has 14 or 15 players, they must inform the table ½ an hour before each match which 1 or 2 players are not playing. The team coach and management team will also be listed. Team captains will sign all match sheets to certify the veracity of the team list.

3.8.3 Pool Fees

Each team must pay their pool fees to the Swim Ireland office by an agreed date before their first game. Any team which fails to do so will not be allowed to play, will forfeit their games, and will be liable for walkover fines for their matches, in addition to still being liable for the pool fees.

3.8.4 Violent Actions

Any player excluded for the remainder of the game, for violent actions, (with substitute allowed after 4 minutes), shall be suspended for at least the next game. The Tournament Director and/or Jury of Appeal may impose a greater penalty due to the nature of the violent actions. Any such punishment shall be in addition to or included in any punishment that Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary & Complaints Commissioner or Disciplinary Hearing may impose at a later date.

3.8.5 Yellow Cards

Any Head Coach who behaves inappropriately towards the referees/match officials will receive a yellow card. This is a warning and is only applicable in the match in question – it is not carried forward to his next match.

3.8.6 Red Card

Any coach, player or other official, who receives a red card must immediately leave the poolside and go to the spectator area, without speaking to or communicating with his team. After receiving a red card, the coach may not attempt to coach, instruct, or communicate with his team from the spectator area. If he attempts to do so, he will be instructed to leave from the precincts of the pool and further sanctioned.

3.8.7 Accreditation

Accreditation of all players, coaches, team officials and managers, and tournament officials will be in place for all National Cup competitions. Clubs will be required to submit team lists in advance of competitions with appropriate individual photographs and will be issued with Accreditation Passes.

Accreditation Passes must be worn and visible throughout the tournament on pool side and in pool changing villages.

3.9 Sanctions

A coach, player or other official who receives a red card will receive a sanction as specified in Appendix 1 Disciplinary Sanctions. The Tournament Director and/or Jury of Appeal may impose a greater penalty due to the nature of the offence. Any such punishment shall be in addition to any punishment that the Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary Committee may impose at any later hearing.

In the event of a red card for the head coach, the second or assistant coach may stand and coach the team but may not move to 5 metres - they must remain at the bench.

If a coach receives a red card and consequent suspension, they may not coach or play in a game involving a team of another gender in the Cup competition until that suspension has been served.

3.10 Team Benches

All players not in the water at a given time must remain seated at the team bench at all times. Any assistant coaches or team managers must also remain seated at all times. An assistant coach or team manager who breaches this Rule shall receive a red card. A player, who is excluded from the remainder of the game by way of 3 personal fouls, must remain on the team bench, with their cap on. A player excluded from the remainder of the game by the referee (for Misconduct, violent actions etc.) Shall immediately leave the team bench.

3.11 Jurisdiction

3.11.1 General Jurisdiction

Ireland Water Polo recognises EUROPEAN AQUATICS & WORLD AQUATICS as the Bodies governing Water Polo internationally, and the National Swimming Federations affiliated to EUROPEAN AQUATICS & WORLD AQUATICS as the governing Bodies of the sport in their respective countries. Any sentence of disqualification or suspension passed by any of these organisations shall be binding on Ireland Water Polo.

3.12 Judicial Authority

3.12.1 Levels of Official Authority in Competitions

The levels of official authority shall be, in this order:

- The match referees.
- The Tournament Director (in a tournament only).
- The Jury of Appeal (in a tournament only).
- The Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary and Complaints Commissioner (DCC).
- The Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary Appeals Committee (DAC).
- The Swim Ireland Complaints & Disciplinary Committee (SICDC).
- Just Sport Ireland (JSI).

3.13 Match Referees

Match Referees are responsible for the enforcement of EUROPEAN AQUATICS, WORLD AQUATICS & Ireland Water Polo Rules and the promoter's conditions governing the event. They shall have full authority over all spectators, officials, and competitors in observance of rules and respect charter.

3.14 Tournament Director

The Tournament Director shall be responsible for dealing with protests and shall have full authority over all spectators, officials and competitors and shall impose penalties under these rules The

Tournament Director will conduct any technical meetings for the event and emphasise the need for fair play by both competitors, team officials and spectators alike throughout the tournament.

3.15 Jury of Appeal – Tournament Suspensions

In the event that a suspension imposed on an individual or team during a tournament is appealed, the Jury of Appeal shall convene to hear the appeal (on payment of the required appeal fee) against sanctions imposed on any player, coach or other team official who has received a suspension following a red card from the referee. The Jury of Appeal shall also hear an appeal (on payment of the required appeal fee) against sanctions imposed on any player who has received a suspension following a violent actions offence. Any penalty imposed by the Jury of Appeal shall be in addition to any further punishment deemed suitable by the Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary & Complaints Commissioner at a later date. The DCC may take into consideration any sanctioned imposed. The Jury of Appeal shall be mindful of any and all WORLD AQUATICS, EUROPEAN AQUATICS, and Ireland Water Polo directives currently in force. EUROPEAN AQUATICS and WORLD AQUATICS tournament Rules shall be observed at tournaments.

3.15.1 Composition of Jury of Appeal

The Jury of Appeal shall normally comprise the Tournament Director and the Tournament Referees not involved in the incident or match.

3.16 Referees' Reports

A referee shall report to a Tournament Director or the Competitions Committee any player excluded for the remainder of the game, with substitution after 4 minutes, for violent actions in all competitions. A referee may report any other incident that he considers serious enough. The Competitions Committee shall refer any Referee Report it to the Ireland Water Polo Disciplinary & Complaints Commissioner. Unless there is overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the Referee's report shall be taken as fact.

3.17 Protests

3.17.1 Definition

A protest is an allegation that the WORLD AQUATICS, EUROPEAN AQUATICS or Ireland Water Polo Laws or the promoter's conditions governing a competition have not been complied with or have been misinterpreted. No protest or appeal shall be entertained on decisions of fact or application of the Rules by referees.

3.17.2 Lodging a Protest

A player, Club or Official taking part in a Water Polo competition/tournament may lodge a protest. The protest must be lodged in writing to the Tournament Director and accompanied by a protest fee as currently set by the NWPC in consultation with Swim Ireland. If a protest is upheld the protest fee will be returned.

3.17.4 Protests before a Competition

When the reason for a protest is known before the competition takes place, it must be lodge with the NWPC before the start of the event, or it shall not be heard. The organising committee shall inform all other teams before the competition starts either by email or at the Technical Meeting. 'Before a competition' is considered to be when team lists are submitted, and accreditation approved in the case of tournaments.

3.17.5 Adjudication

The organising Body (or Jury of Appeal) shall hear a protest, except that if the protest involves infringement of Ireland Water Polo Rules it shall be referred to the Competitions Committee who may consult with the Disciplinary Commissioner.

3.18 Decisions

3.18.1 Decision

If a protest is upheld, the Tournament Director/Jury of Appeal will rectify the issue raised. Upheld Protest decisions will be advised to all other participants. Protests not upheld will be notified to the individual/club concerned who may appeal to the DCC who can make a determination from documents provided by the protester(s) and the Jury of Appeal. Thereafter any further appeal made be under the Complaints Process.

3.18.2 No decision reached

If no decision has been reached by the organising body (or Jury of Appeal) within 21 days an appeal may be made to the NWPC, which shall hear the case as soon as possible through the office of the DCC.

3.18.3 Withholding of Prizes

When a protest is made in accordance with the relevant rules all prizes shall be withheld until the protest and any appeal therefrom has been decided. The prizes shall be awarded in accordance with the final decision.

3.18.4 Return of Protest Fee

If a protest is upheld, the protest fee shall be returned.

4. NATIONAL SENIOR CUPS

4.1 The Irish Senior Cup

4.1.1 General

The Irish Senior Cup shall be a competition open to all clubs affiliated to Ireland Water Polo, with one entry per Club being accepted. There shall be separate competitions for Men and Women and there may be different rules applicable to Men's and Women's Cups. For all Cup Competitions, there shall be a Jury of Appeal, in accordance with Ireland Water Polo Tournament Rules ([Section 3.8](#)). The (cup) competitions will normally be at the end of the playing season for senior players, no later than the end of May annually.

4.1.2 Eligibility

All players who wish to play in the Irish Senior Cup must:

- a) have played a minimum of six (6) games in the Irish National League in the immediate previous season and/or current season (combined),
- b) have completed any transfers as per [Section 2.9.3](#),
- c) be a registered member with Swim Ireland with an active Water Polo license by 31st of January in the season that the Irish Senior Cup takes place for the team in which they will play with
- d) hold residency in Ireland

4.1.3 Referees

Referees shall be appointed by the Referees Controller in consultation with the Competition Committee for qualification rounds and by the NWPC in consultation with the Referees Controller and

the Competitions Committee for finals weekends. International referees may be used for the Irish Senior Cups finals as appropriate.

4.2 The Men's Irish Senior Cup

4.2.1 Entries

Where more than eight entries are received, a qualification tournament shall take place at venues and on dates to be decided by the Competitions Committee. The top 4 teams from the previous season's Men's National League Division 1 (MNLD1) shall not take part in the qualification tournament and shall be deemed pre-qualified. The Tournament proper (The Irish Senior Cup Final Tournament or Irish Senior Cup) shall consist of 4 qualifiers from the qualification tournament and the pre-qualified top 4 teams from the previous season's MNLD 1.

4.2.2 Final Tournament Draw and Format

The draw for the Finals Tournament shall be a seeded open draw.

The Finals Tournament competition shall be 8 teams divided into two groups (A & B) of four teams, played on a round robin basis with the top two teams advancing to the semi-finals.

The draw for the group phase shall be drawn from two separate classification pots, namely the top 4 league pot and the qualifiers pot. Two teams will be drawn consecutively from each pot, commencing with the Top 4 league pot, and allocated alternatively to Groups A & B, until all teams are drawn. The running order of matches will commence with two matches from Group A followed by Group B.

The semi-finals shall be contested between the winner of one group and the runner-up in the other and visa-versa. The order of the Semi-Finals shall be:

- Winner of Group A vs Runner Up in Group B
- Winner of Group B vs Runner Up in Group A

4.3 The Women's Irish Senior Cup

4.3.1 Entries

Where more than 6 entries are received, a qualification tournament shall take place at venues and on dates to be decided by the Competitions Committee. The top 2 teams from the previous season's Women's National League Division 1 (WNLD1) shall not take part in the qualification tournament and shall be deemed pre-qualified. The Tournament proper (The Irish Senior Cup Final Tournament or Irish Senior Cup) shall consist of 4 qualifiers from the qualification tournament and the pre-qualified top 2 teams from the previous season's WNLD 1.

4.3.2 Final Tournament Draw and Format

The draw for the Finals Tournament shall be a seeded open draw.

The Finals Tournament competition shall be 6 teams divided into two groups (A & B) of three teams, played on a round robin basis with the top two teams advancing to the semi-finals.

The draw for the group phase shall be drawn from two separate classification pots, namely the Top 2 League pot and the qualifiers pot. Two teams will be drawn for drawn consecutively from each pot, commencing with the Top 2 League pot, and allocated alternatively to Groups A & B, until all teams are drawn. The running order of matches will commence with one match from Group A, followed by Group B.

The semi-finals shall be contested between the winner of one group and the runner-up in the other. The order of the Semi-Finals shall be:

- Winner of Group A vs Runner Up in Group B
- Winner of Group B vs Runner Up in Group A

4.4 *Qualification Draw*

The draw for the qualification tournament shall be an open draw and will be recorded. The format of any qualification tournament will be determined by the Competitions Committee and approved by the NWPC.

4.5 *Rules*

For all Irish Senior Cup matches Ireland Water Polo Tournament Rules above shall apply and playing time, pitch and ball size shall be in accordance with the WORLD AQUATICS Rules of Water Polo unless otherwise stated by the Competitions Committee.

4.6 *Medals*

Teams shall consist of a maximum of 14 players from a panel of 15 players. The maximum number of medals awarded shall be 18 to include team officials.

4.7 *Withdrawals*

Where a team withdraws from the Irish Senior Cup Finals tournament, the withdrawal fine shall be as laid down by the NWPC or the cost of pool rental, whichever is the greater. Where a team withdraws from the qualification tournament, the withdrawal fine shall be as laid down by the Competitions Committee and/or the NWPC or the cost of pool rental, whichever is the greater.

5. NATIONAL DIVISION ONE CUPS

5.1 *Brother Phillip Cup for Men (MNLD1 Cup)*

5.1.1 *Entries*

The National Mens Division One Cup (Br Philip Cup) shall be played at one venue over one weekend on a tournament basis.

The competition is open for entry to men's national league division teams to a maximum of 8 teams, strength of men's division one. Where there is a vacant place due to non-entry by a division 1 team(s) entries will be sought from the national league division 2 teams and a qualifying competition held to allocate places in the finals.

5.1.2 *Eligibility*

All players must be a registered member with Swim Ireland with an active Water Polo license for the team in which they will play with along with holding residency in Ireland at the time of submission of team sheets for that year's competition.

5.2 *Mens National League Division Two Cup (MNLD2 Cup)*

5.2.1 *Entries*

The Competitions Committee and the NWPC may invite entries for a Men's National League Division Two Cup. The format of this competition will be as decided by the Competition's Committee subject to the number of teams entered and pool availability. The competition is open for entry to men's national league division two and three teams to a maximum of 8 teams.

5.2.2 *Eligibility*

All players must be a registered member with Swim Ireland with an active Water Polo license for the team in which they will play with along with holding residency in Ireland at the time of submission of team sheets for that year's competition.

No players who have been named as a division one player or have played the required 5 MNLD1 games during that season is eligible to play in the MNLD2 Cup.

If a Division two clubs enters the MNLD1 Cup due to a vacancy as mentioned in section 5.1.1, then this team will not be eligible to enter the MNLD2 Cup.

5.3 Women's National Division One Cup (WNLD1 Cup)

5.3.1 Entries

The National Women's Division One Cup shall be played at one venue over one weekend on a tournament basis.

The competition is open for entry to women's national league division one teams to a maximum of 6 teams. Where there is a vacant place due to non-entry by a division 1 team(s) entries will be sought from the national league division two teams and a qualifying competition held to allocate places in the finals.

5.3.2 Eligibility

All players must be a registered member with Swim Ireland with an active Water Polo license for the team in which they will play with along with holding residency in Ireland at the time of submission of team sheets for that year's competition.

5.4 Women's National League Division Two Cup (WNLD2 Cup)

5.4.1 Entries

The Competitions Committee and the NWPC may invite entries for a Women's National League Division Two Cup. The format of this competition will be as decided by the Competition's Committee subject to the number of teams entered and pool availability. The competition is open for entry to women's national league division two teams to a maximum of 8 teams.

5.4.2 Eligibility

All players must be a registered member with Swim Ireland with an active Water Polo license for the team in which they will play with along with holding residency in Ireland at the time of submission of team sheets for that year's competition.

No players who have been named as a division one player or have played the required 5 WNLD1 games during that season is eligible to play in the WNLD2 Cup.

If a Division two clubs enters the WNLD1 Cup due to a vacancy as mentioned in section 5.3.1, then this team will not be eligible to enter the MNLD2 Cup.

5.5 Final Tournament Draw and Format

The draw for the Division One and Two Cups shall be an open draw and will be recorded. The format of the tournament will be determined by the Competitions Committee and approved by the NWPC.

5.6 Rules

For all Division One and Two Cup matches Ireland Water Polo Tournament Rules above shall apply and playing time, pitch and ball size shall be in accordance with the WORLD AQUATICS Rules of Water Polo, unless otherwise stated by the Competitions Committee.

5.7 Medals

Teams shall consist of a maximum of 14 players from a panel of 15 players. The maximum number of medals awarded shall be 18 to include team officials.

5.8 *Withdrawals*

Where a team withdraws from a cup competition after publication of the draw and within four weeks of commencing date shall pay a withdrawal fine as laid down by the Competitions Committee and/or the NWPC or the pool rental, whichever is the higher.

6. UNDERAGE NATIONAL CUPS

6.1 *Competitions*

The Underage National Cups covers the following cup competitions.

- a) The Irish Under 19 Cups
- b) The Irish Under 16 Cups
- c) The Irish Under 14 Cups
- d) The Irish Under 12 Mixed Cup

6.2 *Entries*

The Irish Underage Cups shall be open to all affiliated Clubs.

There shall be separate Irish Cups for male and female except for the Irish Under 12 Cup which is a mixed gender competition.

6.3 *Eligibility*

The competition committee shall set out the age of births for the underage cups annually. Players for these competitions shall be born on the 1st January or later in the birth year of the cup competition.

All players must be a registered member with Swim Ireland with an active Water Polo license for the team in which they will play with, along with holding residency in Ireland at the time of submission of team sheets for that year's competition.

6.4 *Final Tournament Draw and Format*

The draw for the underage cups shall be an open draw and will be recorded. The format of the tournaments will be determined by the Competitions Committee and approved by the NWPC.

6.5 *Rules*

The Competitions Committee will set the tournament specific rules. These will be circulated in advance of the tournament taking place.

6.6 *Medals*

Teams shall consist of a maximum of 14 players from a panel of 15 players. The maximum number of medals awarded shall be 18 to include team officials.

6.7 *Withdrawals*

Where a team withdraws from a cup competition after publication of the draw and within four weeks of commencing date shall pay a withdrawal fine as laid down by the Competitions Committee and/or the NWPC or the pool rental, whichever is the higher.

7. THE INTERPROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

7.1 *Entries*

The Competitions Committee shall organise Interprovincial matches each year and will be open to each of the provinces to enter a male and female team in each of the age grades set out.

7.2 *Eligibility*

Only members of properly affiliated Clubs may be selected to represent a Region. A player must play for the Province in which he plays.

Players for these competitions shall be under the age of the interprovincial on January 1st in the year of the competition. The years of birth shall be set out annually by the Competitions Committee.

All players must be a registered member with Swim Ireland with an active Water Polo license for the team in which they will play with along with holding residency in Ireland at the time of submission of team sheets for that year's competition.

7.3 Rules

The Competitions Committee will set the tournament specific rules and format. These will be circulated in advance of the tournament taking place.

7.4 Medals

Teams shall consist of a maximum of 14 players from a panel of 15 players. The maximum number of medals awarded shall be 18 to include team officials.

7.5 Withdrawals

Where a team withdraws from the competition after publication of the fixtures and within four weeks of commencing date shall pay a withdrawal fine as laid down by the Competitions Committee and/or the NWPC or the pool rental, whichever is the higher.

8. NATIONAL WATERPOLO LEAGUES

8.1 Entry

The National Leagues shall be open to all affiliated Clubs. Teams shall be divided into Divisions whose composition and format shall be in accordance with these Rules. Except as otherwise provided for in these Rules, promotion and relegation shall apply.

Entries for the National League shall be at the invitation of the Competitions Committee. Such invitation shall specify the minimum playing strength for each division.

Entries accompanied by the appropriate fees and other charges and documentation specified shall close with the Swim Ireland offices on date as decided by the Competitions Committee each year. Late or incomplete entries shall not be accepted.

In special circumstances an entry may be accepted from a club whose specific purpose is participation in Water Polo competition and whose playing members are drawn from other swimming or Water Polo clubs who have not sufficient members to enter a team.

The NWPC shall decide the commencing date for the National Leagues normally in September annually, with senior competitions ending by end of May following and junior competitions by end of June following.

9. MEN'S NATIONAL WATERPOLO LEAGUES

9.1 General

Entries for the National Leagues for men shall be divided into three Divisions, namely National League Division 1, National League Division 2 and the National Pathway League. The competitions committee may decide to run a league at under 19 level if there are sufficient entries.

9.2 Entries

A club may enter one team in each of the National Leagues. Where clubs have entered in more than one National League, eleven players must be named on each team at the start of the season and any transfers must comply with the deadlines set by the current Ireland Water Polo transfer regulations.

9.3 Rules

9.3.1 National League Division One (MNLD 1)

- a) MNLD 1 shall consist of not more than 8 teams from 8 clubs, with only one team per club permitted in this division.
- b) Playing teams per match shall consist of not more than fourteen players. Teams shall at the start of the season name eleven (11) players who can only play in this Division.
- c) Other club players who play in lower Divisions may play up in this Division to make up the team of fourteen but once a player has competed in five (5) MNLD 1 matches he is automatically graded as an MNLD 1 player and may NOT play in any lower division. A player may be transferred back to the lower division, at no cost, within the transfer deadline in a season but may not then play again in the MNLD 1 within that season. The entry fee shall be decided by the NWPC in consultation with Swim Ireland.
- d) There will be no league restrictions for players under 16 plus 2 years older, except if they are a named Division 1 player. Players under this rule can play unlimited Division 1 matches. The year of birth of these years will be confirmed by the competitions committee at the start of each season.

Promotion/Relegation

- e) The bottom team will be relegated to Division 2.
- f) The first-place team in MNLD 2 at the end of the National League shall be promoted automatically, provided the club does not have a team in the MNLD 1.
- g) In the event that no club qualifies for the vacant 8th position, open due to relegation, the NWPC may invite the next highest placed club in the MNLD 2 to enter the MNLD 1 for the following season.
- h) The NWPC may also invite the relegated club to remain in MNLD 1 if no club from MNLD 2 wishes to be promoted.

9.3.2 Men's National League Division 2 (MNLD 2)

- a) MNLD2 shall be open to all affiliated clubs, including clubs with a team in National league Division One.
- b) Teams shall consist of eleven (11) named players registered at the start of the season who can play in this Division. Named MNLD 2 players may play in MNLD 1 to make up a match team of fourteen players.
- c) When a named MNLD 2 player has competed in five (5) MNLD 1 matches in a season he shall be graded as a MNLD 1 player and may not play in MNLD 2 for the remainder of the season, unless transferred back within the transfer deadline, with the exception of the players under U16 +2 rule as referenced under 9.3.1d.
- d) Clubs may be permitted to enter up to two teams into this division, approved by the NWPC, where sufficient space and capacity allows. Such entrants shall be categorised as two separate clubs, retaining the club identity but graded as A & B teams, with 11 players named on each team. Players may be transferred between these teams during the transfer window (at no cost).

Promotion / Relegation

- e) The first-place team in MNLD 2 at the end of the National League shall be promoted automatically, provided the club does not have a team in the MNLD 1.

- f) In the event that no club qualifies for the vacant 8th position, open due to relegation, the NWPC may invite the next highest placed club in the MNLD 2 to enter the MNLD 1 for the following season.
- g) There will be no relegation to the Men's National Pathway League (MNPL)

9.3.3 *Men's National Pathway League (MNPL)*

- a) Men's National Pathway League shall be open to all affiliated clubs, including clubs with a team in National league Division One and Two
- b) Named MNLD1 and MNLD2 players are not eligible to play in MNPL unless transferred back from being a named MNLD1 or MNLD2 player within the transfer deadline.
- c) When a MNPL player has competed in five (5) MNLD 1 or MNLD2 matches in a season he shall be graded as a MNLD 1 or MNLD 2 player and may not play in MNPL for the remainder of the season, unless transferred back within the transfer deadline, with the exception of the players under U16 +2 rule as referenced under 9.3.1d.

10. WOMEN'S NATIONAL WATERPOLO LEAGUES

10.1 *General*

Entries for the National Leagues for women shall be divided into two Divisions, namely National League Division 1 and National League Division 2. The competitions committee may decide to run a league at under 19 level if there are sufficient entries.

10.2 *Entries*

A club may enter one team in each of the National Leagues. Where clubs have entered in more than one National League, eleven players must be named on each team at the start of the season and any transfers must comply with the deadlines set by the current Ireland Water Polo transfer regulations.

10.3 *Rules*

10.3.1 *Women's National League Division 1 (WNLD 1)*

- a) WNLD 1 shall consist of not more than 8 teams from 8 clubs, with only one team per club permitted in this division.
- b) Playing teams per match shall consist of not more than fourteen players. Teams shall at the start of the season name eleven (11) players who can only play in this Division.
- c) Other club players who play in the Division 2 (if established) may play up in Division 1 to make up the team of fourteen players but once a player has competed in five (5) WNLD 1 matches she is automatically graded as an WNLD 1 player and may NOT play in the lower division. A player may be transferred back to the lower division, at no cost, within the transfer deadline in a season but may not then play again in the WNLD 1 within that season.
- d) There will be no league restrictions for players under 16 plus 2 years older, except if they are a named Division 1 player. Players under this rule can play unlimited Division 1 matches.

Promotion/Relegation

- e) There will be no relegation in the WNLD1 unless there is 8 clubs in the division and the first-place team in WNLD 2 at the end of the National League wish to enter WNLD1, provided the club does not have a team already in the WNLD 1.
- f) In the event that no club qualifies for the vacant 8th position, open due to relegation, the NWPC may invite the next highest placed club in the WNLD 2 to enter the WNLD 1 for the following season.

- g) The NWPC may also invite the relegated club to remain in WNLD 1 if no club from WNLD 2 wishes to be promoted.

10.3.2 Women's National League Division 2 (WNLD 2)

The Competitions Committee and the NWPC may invite entries for a Women's National League Division Two. The format of this competition, subject to four entries being received, will be as decided by the Competition's Committee. Where a WNLD 2 is established, all female players will be accommodated within these two leagues and there will not be a league at under 19 level. Where a WNLD 2 is not established entries will be sought for an Under 19 League.

- a) WNLD2 shall be open to all affiliated clubs, including clubs with a team in National league Division One.
- b) Teams shall consist of ten (10) named players registered at the start of the season who can play in this Division. Named WNLD 2 players may play in WNLD 1 to make up a match team of fourteen players.
- c) When a named WNLD 2 player has competed in five (5) WNLD 1 matches in a season he shall be graded as a WNLD 1 player and may not play in WNLD 2 for the remainder of the season, unless transferred back within the transfer deadline, with the exception of the players under U16 +2 rule as referenced under 10.3.1d.
- d) Clubs may be permitted to enter up to two teams into this division, approved by the NWPC, where sufficient space and capacity allows. Such entrants shall be categorised as two separate clubs, retaining the club identity but graded as A & B teams, with 11 players named on each team. Players may be transferred between these teams during the transfer window (at no cost).

11. UNDERAGE NATIONAL LEAGUES

11.1 General

The NWPC through the Competitions Committee will establish underage national leagues for both Boys and Girls at Under 16 level. The year of birth will be determined by the competitions committee annually, in line with international commitments.

The Competitions Committee and the NWPC may also invite entries for underage blitz's to be run for certain age groups. The format of these blitz's will be as decided by the Competition's Committee and will be subject to entries received and pool availability.

11.2 Entries

Entries for the National Leagues for Boys and Girls will be accepted from all affiliated clubs. Clubs may enter up to two teams designated as A & B. In the case of such entries, clubs must name fourteen players, prior to their first match, for their A team who cannot play for their club B team during the season. Players may be moved from a club A & B team once annually during the January transfer window.

11.3 League Structure

The Competitions Committee will set the structure for these leagues annually and will be dependent upon number of entries and pool availability.

SECTION 4.

DISCIPLINARY

4. IRELAND WATER POLO DISCIPLINARY AND COMPLAINTS COMMISSIONER

4.1 *Disciplinary and Complaints Commissioner (DCC)*

The Ireland Water Polo National Committee shall appoint a Disciplinary & Complaints Commissioner (DCC) in a dual role to receive and determine Referee's Reports, Complaints or Appeals from any person, Club or Region, provided that the decision involves the interpretation of Ireland Water Polo Laws, Bylaws, Rules or Regulations or the conditions governing Ireland Water Polo competitions. All disciplinary matters arising from National competitions shall be received by the Ireland Water Polo DCC.

The DCC shall have the following functions:

- a) To be the recipient of any written Complaint and Disciplinary Report.
- b) To review a Disciplinary Report and where any Disciplinary Report makes reference to suspected child abuse the DCC shall immediately notify the Swim Ireland Mandated Person and the National Children's Officer.
- c) To determine whether a prima facie case has been made against a Respondent on receipt of a Disciplinary Report.
- d) To deal with any Disciplinary Report in accordance with section 4 below.
- e) To refer the Disciplinary Report to the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee, established in accordance with para 4.6, where in the opinion of the DCC the matter is so serious as to require referral to such a committee, rather than dealt with by the DCC in accordance with section 4 below.
- f) To dismiss a Disciplinary Report where, in the opinion of the DCC, a prima facie case to answer has not been established.
- g) To correspond with and notify the parties of all necessary information prior to a Hearing before the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee.
- h) To prepare documents for the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee.
- i) To present the case in respect of a disciplinary matter before the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee, including the calling of witnesses etc.
- j) To maintain a record of decisions of the Complaints and Disciplinary Committee.
- k) To liaise with Swim Ireland and to return all records to the Office on completion.
- l) To ensure that sanctions are observed by Respondents.

4.2 *Definition of Disciplinary Report*

A Disciplinary Report is synonymous with a Referee's report. A Referee should complete and sign the Referee's report immediately after a game. It is recognised that Referees are often under pressure when completing a report and may omit detail. A referee is permitted to add further detail to a report at any time before the submission of the report to the NWPC. For the avoidance of doubt, after the signing of a report, the referee is only permitted to add further detail of a previously detailed disciplinary offence, and not permitted to cite a new offence.

If the referee wishes to cite a player or coach for any matter that occurred after the signing of the Referee's report, same should take the form of a complaint as per Section 5 below. In the event of a referee making a complaint about something that occurred after the signing of the Referee's report, no fee will be required for such complaint.

If any official, including table official, is subject to verbal or physical abuse by a player or official during the course of a game, same should immediately be reported to the referee, who should administer the appropriate penalty and include a record of same in the Referee's report. Any such incident shall be dealt with as a disciplinary offence.

If any official, including table official, is subject verbal or physical abuse by a player or official after a game, the said official should make a complaint in accordance with Section 5. In the event of an official making a complaint about something that occurred after the signing of the Referee's report, no fee will be required for such complaint.

4.3 *Consideration of Reports*

In the course of an investigation of any Disciplinary Report, the DCC may consider any evidence he/she deems relevant and shall have the right to make enquiries of any individuals and seek any information or documents in relation to the matter. For the avoidance of doubt, where necessary, the DCC is entitled to consult with the judge/official/Responsible Person to clarify any issues arising in relation to a Disciplinary Report, including his/her handwriting. A Responsible Person means the Member in ultimate authority over a Member, Team or Delegation at an event.

4.3 *DISCIPLINARY*

4.3.1 *Adjudication*

The DCC shall, in matters of Discipline, adjudicate on any Referee's Report. For the avoidance of doubt, a Referee's report is taken as fact of the matters contained therein, and in the absence of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, such as an authorised video of a game, the Referee's Report may not be challenged.

In the first instance, the DCC shall determine if the sanctions falling with the powers of the DCC, as per Appendix A, are adequate to deal with the offence, and if so proceed to impose the appropriate sanction. The DCC will inform the individual/club of his/her determination and such communication shall include the parties right to appeal within 5 days. All sanctions will be notified to the Competitions Committee, the Secretary of the NWPC and the SI office (Water Polo).

In the event that the DCC determines that a Disciplinary Report is so serious that the sanctions available to the DCC are not adequate, the DDC must refer the matter to a Complaints and Disciplinary Panel for adjudication in accordance with 4.3.2 below

4.3.2 *Disciplinary Committee*

The DCC may refer any matter of discipline directly to a Disciplinary Committee (DC) if he/she believes such a matter is serious and merits such consideration. The composition of a DC shall be in accordance with para 4.6 and the Committee shall be appointed by the DCC.

The DCC will notify the individual/club of the date of hearing, which may be remote, and the individual/club will be entitled to attend and make representations in relation to appropriate sanction only, and to advance matters of personal mitigation

The Disciplinary Committee will inform the individual/club of its determination and proposed sanction in accordance with Appendix A and such communication shall include the parties right to appeal within 5 days to the Chairperson of the DC. All sanctions will be notified to the Competitions Committee, the Secretary of the NWPC and the SI office (Water Polo).

4.3.3 *Disciplinary Appeals*

An individual/club may appeal the determination of the DCC or a DC within 5 days. All appeals will be in writing to the Honorary Secretary of the NWPC and with the appropriate fee as set down by the

NWPC. Such appeals will be investigated by the Disciplinary Appeals Committee (DAC) appointed by the NWPC and be conducted under the procedures outlined in [para 4.8](#). In the case of a Disciplinary Appeal Hearing (DAH), the DCC shall present the case against the individual/club, and the DCC shall be entitled to introduce such evidence and witnesses as the DCC may at his/her discretion decide is appropriate.

[4.4 Disciplinary Appeal Committee \(DAC\)](#)

Where an appeal is lodged with the Honorary Secretary of the NWPC against the determination of the Disciplinary & Complaints Commissioner, the NWPC shall appoint, from the Disciplinary Panel, three persons (Disciplinary Appeal Committee (DAC)) to conduct an appeal hearing. The DAC shall appoint a Chairperson for each appeal to be heard. The DAC shall be appointed by, as a minimum, two of the following: Ireland Water Polo Chairperson, Ireland Water Polo Secretary, and Ireland Water Polo Treasurer.

[4.5 Notification](#)

Prior to referring the appeal to a Disciplinary Appeal Hearing (DAH) held by the Disciplinary Appeal Committee (DAC) through the Hon Secretary of the NWPC, the DCC shall notify and provide the individual/club and any other relevant party with the following information and documentation:

- Copy of the written Disciplinary Report
- The relevant rule allegedly breached
- Copy of supporting documents relied on by either party
- The parties to the report
- The procedures involved
- The possible sanctions
- The rights of the parties at the Hearing
- Any other procedural requirements

[4.6 Disciplinary Appeals Panel - Composition](#)

The Disciplinary Panel shall comprise of up to twelve responsible individuals. Unless the NWPC decides otherwise, this Panel shall comprise the members of the NWPC, the members of the Regional Committees and the National Coaches.

[4.7 Independence of Disciplinary Appeal Committee \(DAC\)](#)

The persons appointed to hear the matter shall be from the Appeals panel (4.6) and not be related to either the appellant or accused by virtue of the following:

- a) Membership of a club, either as player, coach or other club official; or
- b) Relationship of family; or
- c) Relationship of marriage or cohabitation, or
- d) Participation in the match or complaint in question.

[4.8 Disciplinary Appeal Hearing \(DAH\)](#)

A Disciplinary Appeal Hearing (DAH) shall take place, within 30 days of receipt of a Disciplinary Appeal. The Chairperson of the Disciplinary Appeal Committee (DAC) shall write to the relevant parties advising them of:

- Composition of the Committee
- Declaration that the Committee Members have no interest in the outcome
- The parties to the Disciplinary Action
- The offence alleged and relevant rule
- The rights of the parties

- List of witnesses to be called
- Procedures involved
- Potential sanctions
- Confirmation of documents to hand
- Invitation for any further evidence to be relied on/submissions in writing
- Time, date, and venue for Hearing.

4.9 Appeals against Regional Disciplinary Decisions

The Disciplinary Appeals Committee (DAC) shall also hear appeals against Regional Disciplinary Committee decisions.

4.10 Non-Attendance at a Disciplinary Appeal Hearing

In the event of non-attendance, without reasonable cause, of an individual/club at an Appeal Hearing, the DAC will be entitled to base its decision on the information and evidence it has received.

4.11 Imposing Sanctions

On deciding culpability but prior to the imposition of a sanction, the DAC shall take into account any aggravating/mitigating factors. After deciding on culpability, the DAC shall impose a sanction as set out in Appendix A Sanctions. All sanctions will be notified by the Chairperson of the DAC to the Competitions Committee, the Secretary of the NWPC and the SI office (Water Polo).

4.12 Withdrawals from a Disciplinary Appeals Hearing or Process

An individual/club may withdraw from an Appeal Hearing or Process prior to the assembly of the DAC but not less than 7 days in advance of assembly of the DAH.

4.13 Court Hearings

Facts established in a Court Hearing where that Court has imposed sanction on a Respondent shall be irrefutable evidence of those facts against a Respondent in a Disciplinary Hearing.

SECTION 5.

COMPLAINTS

5. COMPLAINTS

5.1 Definition of complaint

A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction, by any person, Club, Body or Region, with an action of any other person, Club, Body or Region in connection with the sport.

5.2 Lodging a complaint

A complaint may be lodged by sending the Honorary Secretary of Ireland Water Polo a detailed written statement of the action with which the complainant is dissatisfied and the reasons for his dissatisfaction. A complaint must:

- Be accompanied by a fee as currently set by the NWPC (no fee is required in respect of a complaint lodged in accordance with 4.2 above)
- Reach the Honorary Secretary not later than fourteen days after the alleged incident, which gave rise to it.
- Where a complaint is received outside the time limit, the NWPC may extend the time if the complainant can show good cause for the delay.

5.3 Role of the DDC in respect of a Complaint

- a. To be the recipient of any written Complaint from the Hon Secretary of Ireland Water Polo.
- b. To review a Complaint and where any Complaint makes reference to suspected child abuse, the DCC shall immediately notify the Swim Ireland Mandated Person and the National Children's Officer.
- c. To determine whether a prima facie case has been made against a Respondent on receipt of a Complaint.
- d. To refer the Complaint to the Complaints Committee, established in accordance with para 5.5 below, where in the opinion of the DCC a prima facie case to answer has been established.
- e. To dismiss a Complaint where, in the opinion of the DCC, a prima facie case to answer has not been established.
- f. To correspond with and notify the parties of all necessary information prior to a Hearing before the Complaints Committee.
- g. To prepare documents for the Complaints Committee.
- h. To advise and assist the Complaints Committee on the appropriate procedures for dealing with a Complaint and, where required, to liaise with Swim Ireland for advice where any issues arise.
- i. To maintain a record of decisions of the Complaints Committee.
- j. To liaise with Swim Ireland and to return all records to the Office on completion.
- k. To ensure that sanctions are observed by Respondents.

5.4 Scheduling

Immediately upon receipt of a complaint the NWPC shall advise the Complaints and Disciplinary and Complaints Commissioner (DCC) and in consultation, convene a Complaints Committee from among the Disciplinary Panel appointed in accordance with Rules 4.6 and 4.7 and arrange the date and place for the hearing. The hearing shall take place as soon as is practicably possible but within 60 days of receipt of the complaint. Seven (7) clear days' notice shall be given in writing to the principle parties interested or involved together with a copy of the complaint. The Ireland Water Polo Complaints Committee (CC) shall hear the complaint in accordance with the procedures outlined. The notification of the hearing shall be sent directly to the respondent.

5.5 Complaints Hearing

Where a Hearing shall take place, within 60 days of receipt of a Complaint the Chairperson of the relevant Complaints Committee (CC) shall write to the relevant parties advising them of:

- Composition of the Committee
- Declaration that the Committee Members have no interest in the outcome
- The parties to the Complaint
- The offence alleged and relevant rule
- The rights of the parties
- List of witnesses to be called
- Procedures involved
- Potential sanctions
- Confirmation of documents to hand
- Invitation for any further evidence to be relied on/submissions in writing
- Time, date, and venue for Hearing.

5.6 The Complaints Committee (CC)

- The Complaints Committee (CC) shall elect a Chairperson.
- The Committee shall have discretion to extend the deadline in exceptional circumstances.
- In circumstances where an expedited process is necessary, the DCC may designate himself/herself or another Member from the Complaints and Disciplinary Panel to serve as the Committee in the event that it is not possible to constitute the entire Committee in an expedited manner. In such cases, the DCC or the person designated by the DCC shall have all the powers of a Committee as if a Committee had been duly convened.
- The CC, in its discretion, may invite other persons (including but not limited to witnesses, officials or experts) to provide evidence or assistance to the Committee in any form.
- The CC shall decide either to convene an Oral Hearing or to decide the matter on a "documents only" basis. In considering the above the CC shall have regard to the gravity of the Complaint amongst other matters.
- The CC shall conduct the Hearing of any matter in any manner which it deems appropriate.
- The CC shall have the power to convene any meetings by way of teleconference.
- The CC shall have the discretion to accept testimony by telephone, written statement, or submission, whether by fax, email, or other means.
- The CC shall have the power to decide on the admissibility, relevance, and weight of any evidence (including the testimony of any fact or expert witness) and shall not be bound by any laws or rules regarding the conduct of Court proceedings in relation to such matters. Facts may be established by any reliable means, including admissions.

5.6.1 Rights of each party

Each Party may be accompanied at the Oral Hearing if one is convened, by either a Member of Swim Ireland or a close family Member or someone in loco parentis such as an unrelated guardian or custodian. Legal representatives shall not be permitted. Each party may call witnesses and such witnesses may only be present to give their evidence and witnesses may be questioned by the CC. Each party may make submissions in writing or otherwise.

5.6.2 Notification of Attendance of Witnesses

Where a party exercises any or all of the rights as set out in 5.4.2 then the party shall notify the DCC, the Chairperson of the CC and the other party of the names of any persons accompanying and the names of any witnesses.

5.6.3 Children's Officer

A Children's Officer shall be present at the Hearing where the Complainant or Respondent is under 18 years of age. The Children's Officer shall attend to ensure that the rights of the child are protected at the Hearing. The Children's Officer shall be entitled to make observation to the Complaints Committee but shall not be permitted to make any decision on culpability.

Where the witness is under 18 years of age, the Children's Officer shall also be permitted to be present and in this regard full permission of the Parent of the witness must be given in order for the witness to be present.

5.7 Non-Attendance at the Hearing

5.7.1

In the event of the non-attendance of a Complainant at a Hearing, without reasonable cause, considered by the CC to be a justified reason for non-attendance, the Complaint against the Respondent shall be taken no further. In the event of non-attendance, without reasonable cause, of a Respondent at a Hearing, the CC will be entitled to base its decision on the information and evidence it has received.

5.7.2

The CC may adjourn or rearrange the Hearing at its discretion. An adjourned or rearranged Hearing shall take place as soon as is practicable.

5.7.3

The Complainant shall present the case against a Respondent.

5.7.4

Facts established in a Court Hearing where that Court has imposed sanction on a Respondent shall be irrefutable evidence of those facts against a Respondent in a Complaint Hearing.

5.8 Imposing Sanctions

5.8.1

On deciding culpability but prior to the imposition of a sanction, the CC shall take into account any aggravating/mitigating factors.

5.8.2

After deciding on culpability of the Respondent, the CC shall impose a sanction as set out in Appendix A Sanctions.

5.9 Procedures following a Complaint Hearing

5.9.1

The decision of the CC shall be made and notified in writing to the relevant parties within three days of the Hearing by the CC unless the CC deems an extension of time necessary. The CC shall retain the decision on a register and shall notify the Swim Ireland Office accordingly.

5.9.2

The written decision shall be in a format as set out in the appendices. The decision shall include reference to the parties' right to appeal the decision to the Swim Ireland Complaints and Disciplinary Committee within 14 days of the date of the decision.

5.9.3

Pending the appeal, the original sanction imposed by the CC shall remain in force.

5.10 Costs of a Hearing

Generally, any party calling witnesses is responsible for their expenses. However, the Ireland Water Polo Complaints Committee may order any of the persons interested who have received notice of the hearing to pay the whole or part of all the expenses incurred. Where a complaint was originally laid before a Club, Body or Association by a duly appointed official of an Ireland Water Polo Panel or the CC, the NWPC shall in the first instance pay his expenses of attending the hearing of the appeal and shall not order him to pay the whole or any part of the costs.

5.11 Regional Complaints and Disciplinary Committee

The procedure followed by Regions in Disciplinary matters shall be the same as the Ireland Water Polo Complaints and Disciplinary procedure.

Appendix A

DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

VIOLENT ACTIONS WP 22.14 (WORLD AQUATICS rule compliant)

A violent action including playing in a violent manner, kicking, striking, or attempting to do same with malicious intent. (Exclusion with substitution after 4 minutes).

Any player excluded during a game, with substitution after 4 minutes, for violent actions shall be automatically suspended for their next game. The following sanction, inclusive of automatic sanction applied, in a season shall, be applied:

Violent Actions

- **Subject to decision of the DCC (Disciplinary & Complaints Commissioner)**
- **Subject to decision of the DAC (at a Hearing) in event of an appeal to DCC decision or**
- **upon the DCC referring any Disciplinary matter to the DC (Disciplinary Committee) in accordance with Rule 4.3.2**

Offence in a Season	Offences	Sanction (Including automatic sanction)	Sanction Awards after Disciplinary Hearing
1 st Offence	Single violent actions (Blow/Kick)	2 to 4 matches	Up to 6 matches
1 st Offence	Multiple violent actions (Blows/Kicks)	2 to 6 matches	Up to 8 matches
1 st Offence	Violent actions with serious injury	4 to 8 matches	Up to 14 matches

In the event of any subsequent offence or offences within two (2) years of the 1st offence, the Sanctions shall be increased by 50% and the DCC may refer any violent actions report directly to a Disciplinary Committee for a Disciplinary Hearing.

Misconduct WP 22.13 (Player)

Misconduct, including a red card shown to a player, the use of unacceptable language, aggressive persistent foul play, refusal of obedience toward, or show of disrespect for a referee or official (Exclusion with substitution after 20 seconds).

Number of Offences	Sanction
1 st offence	No automatic suspension
2 nd offence	1 x match suspension
3 rd offence	2 x match suspension
4 th offence & subsequent	3 x match suspension

The nature of the offence may determine that the DCC may refer any Misconduct of a serious nature to a Disciplinary Committee (DC) to hold a Disciplinary Hearing (DH) for final determination and sanction. In such situations the DH may apply sanctions up to 12 matches.

In the event of a serious Misconduct by a player the DCC may refer the report directly, at his discretion, to a Disciplinary Committee who may award a sanction up to and including a period of time not exceeding 24 months.

Misconduct WP 21.13 (Red card to a Head coach/ team official)

Misconduct, including the use of unacceptable language aggressive persistent foul play, refusal of obedience toward, or show of disrespect for a referee or official (Exclusion with substitution after 20 seconds).

Number of Offences	Sanction
1st offence	1 match suspension
2nd offence	2 match suspension
3rd offence	3 match suspension
4th offence & subsequent	Up to 12 match suspension may be imposed at a DAH

In the event of a serious Misconduct by a Head Coach or team official the DCC may refer the report directly, at his discretion, to a Disciplinary Hearing who may award a sanction up to and including a period of time not exceeding 24 months.

Suspensions

- Suspensions will apply to all matches at the level in the national league at which the offence occurred.
 - Matches in Division 1 are at the same level as knock out cup, or Irish Senior Cup matches, including qualification matches.
 - Matches in Division 2 are at the same level as knock out cup, or Irish Senior Cup matches, including qualification matches.
 - Matches in underage leagues are at the same level as underage cups in the same underage category.
 - In the event of doubt the DCC and the Competitions Committee shall provide clarity.
- A suspension earned shall be served.
- Suspensions that have not been fully served at the end of the season shall carry over into the next season.
- There should be no meaningless suspensions (transition of underage players to different level) and the DCC will allocate appropriate level matches to serve a suspension.
- A suspension cannot be served in any game that is the subject of a walkover.
- Any suspension of a coach arising from an Interpro game, if not served at that years competition, will carry over to the next club game in any underage category"
- "Any suspension of a player arising from an Interpro game, if not served at that years competition, will carry over to any club game in the same age"

Irish Senior Cups

- At Irish Senior Cup Finals tournaments any player who is under the 1st Offence category for Misconduct shall be granted an amnesty for the start of the tournament.