

Player Selection Policy

Our mission - why we exist:

To see our players and others benefit from water polo - through friendship, fun, commitment, discipline, team ethos, health, fitness and winning.

Aims:

Sedgefield Water Polo Club (SWPC) through its constitution aims:

- To promote, foster and encourage water polo, and associated aquatic sports and disciplines
- To foster enjoyment, achievement and satisfaction for all members, competitors, officials, coaches and supporters
- To recruit and encourage water polo players to participate in water polo as a sporting activity

Why we have a player selection policy:

SWPC want to ensure every player gets an opportunity to participate in and be fairly considered for the teams they are eligible to play for. Therefore SWPC want a player selection policy that is:

- Able to be applied consistently,
- As fair as possible to all players, and
- Consistent with our Club's Aims.

How this player selection policy works:

This policy document is intended to provide positive guidance to the Club Members about player selection. If you think this policy document needs reviewing by the committee, please submit a request for a review in writing to the Club Administrator, explaining your reasons why changes are needed and your suggested improvements.

What our player selection policy addresses:

- Who may be considered for selection in age group team?
- Who does the selecting?
- What is the process for trials and team selections?
- How are selection decisions made?
- What are the Coaches looking for?
- When can players play up an age group?
- When can external players be selected?
- How much Pool time at competitions?

Who may be considered for selection in an age group team?

Any player who is the correct age for an age group team may be considered for selection. The committee considers it is contrary to the Aims of the Club to select a player from a younger age group to play in an older age group grade if they take the place of a player who is the correct age for that grade of water polo. The Club does not want to risk losing an older player to the sport when they:

- Enjoy playing,
- Still have the potential to develop,
- May become a Coach, Life Guard or Water Polo Official

Therefore:

- Players may not opt to play up in an older age group and forsake their true age group.
- A player should not be selected to play up in an older age group if there are already sufficient players in that age group.

The policy on younger players playing up an age group is set out in full later in this policy document.

Who does the selecting?

SWPC Coaching team will comprise a selection panel for any team and is chaired by the Head Coach. Final decisions will be made by the Head Coach. This is to ensure, as much as possible, that every player in the age group gets an opportunity to be considered without bias.

SWPC is committed to an independent player selection process and will endeavour to ensure it selections are as fair as possible. Because SWPC is largely a family club of volunteers it is inevitable that from time to time conflicts of interest may arise when parents, take on coaching and/or other roles. The SWPC Committee will work to minimise these situations, but should conflicts of interest arise the relevant people will be reminded of the need for independence and impartiality, and players should take comfort from their integrity.

What is the process for team selection?

The SWPC recognises there may need to be some flexibility in the selection process to take account of particular circumstances as they arise. However the committee will try to ensure the selection process is managed consistently across all age groups.

SWPC wants to minimise players being selected for teams, and then pulling out (for reasons other than injury or serious adversity). A player pulling out of a team after being selected is not fair on teammates, coaches, managers, and most importantly, on those players who were not selected for that team.

Therefore:

Once SWPC decides to enter a competition and notification is sent out to all SWPC members, players wanting to be considered for selection should email the Club Administrator of their intention to be considered for selection. This will give the Club an indication of the number of players available for teams it will be naming.

Any potential issues regarding a player's performance and availability (e.g. they might not be able to make all the games in a tournament) should be brought to the Head Coaches attention before the teams are named. Team selections will be named in a timely fashion.

Once a team selection is announced, it cannot be re-negotiated by the players or their families.

However, the Club reserves the right to alter a team selection for a short period after it is announced. It is expected all players will respect the selection and support the coaches and managers in building an effective and competitive team(s).

If at any time a member has any concerns regarding this selection process, those concerns should always be communicated to the SWPC Committee in writing, through our Club Administrator.

Members should refrain from discussing concerns regarding selections with coaches directly, unless invited to do so by the SWPC Committee.

How are selection decisions made?

The Club's aim when selecting teams is to ensure every eligible player has been individually considered.

Usually, the coaches for the teams being selected and the SWPC Head Coach will meet before to discuss the strategy for team selection and any specific tournament requirements.

The role of the Coaching team is to assess the players according to the agreed criteria (see below for more details), and begin the selection process.

The SWPC Committee expects the selection process to be robust.

If the Coaches can agree on the appropriate team for particular players then those players will be selected for that team. If the Coaches cannot agree on the appropriate team for any particular players then those players will be set aside – and a spare place will be left for them in the teams they are being considered for.

The Head Coach will then be invited to choose which team the disputed player is selected for – and in so doing the Head Coach will have regard to views of the coaching team

For example, consider a situation where an A and a B team is being selected. The coaches can all agree on 8 of the A team players and 7 of the B team players. However there are 3 players they cannot agree on or are unsure about. In that situation the Head Coach will be invited to decide the appropriate team for the remaining 3 players, having regard to views of the coaches and the information obtained from training.

The number of players named in teams may vary depending on the particular tournament, its venue and the particular players being considered. This is a matter for discussion between the coaches, and there is no hard and fast rule (up to the maximum allowed for the competition).

In the older age groups (U14 and above) players should not be held back from selection into a higher ranked team to bolster the team below (e.g. a player should not be held back from being selected for the A team, to strengthen the B team). However, it is acceptable for a player to be held back for personal development reasons.

Coaches will be open-minded in their selections and will not succumb to preconceived ideas in regards to players. They will act with independence, impartiality and integrity.

If a coach has to consider their own child for selection, it is expected the coach will temporarily step back from the process and allow others to make the decision in respect of that player.

At all times communication between coaches must be respectful and inclusive.

Once a team is named, the coaches are expected to publically support all selections.

What are the Coaches looking for?

Relevant factors that will be taken into account when considering player selection are

- Regular Training Attendance
- Fitness training
- Skills & Ability
 - Watch passing/ shooting ability/ body position/ accuracy
- Game play
 - Identify players who are smart game readers and team orientated
 - Identify the game-driven players as opposed to the social players
 - Attitude pre-game, during game and after time
- Behaviour at training
- Misconduct
- Injuries, illness

Coaches may also seek relevant input from a player's previous team coaches. Players should never presume automatic selection based on previous teams played for.

As much as possible the coaches will try to ensure every player gets a fair opportunity to demonstrate their skills and fitness at training sessions.

When can players play up an age group?

The issue of players playing up an age group (or up more than one age group) has arisen and is the source of debate within the membership. The committee considers that on the whole it is contrary to the Aims of the Club to select a player from a younger age group to play in an older grade if they take the place of a player who is the correct age for that age group of water polo.

Therefore:

A player should not be selected to play up in an older age group if there are already sufficient players in that age group.

Where there are insufficient players for an age group, the coach and/or manager of a team may confirm with the Head Coach asking permission for an appropriate number of younger players to play up.

This will be considered by the Head Coach on a case by case basis. Many things may be taken into consideration and the decision is purely at the discretion of the Head Coach.

Examples of the types of things the Head Coach may consider are:

- Competition rules and requirements
- Whether there are any true age group players within the club that could be asked to join the team – without severely affecting another team or preventing another team from competing
- The effect of bringing in a younger player on the team and any other teams in the age group
- The time remaining before the competition – the closer it is to the competition the harder it may be to introduce new players to a team
- Whether the team will not be able to compete unless younger players are selected.

If the Head Coach decides it is appropriate in the circumstances to introduce younger players to a team the following process will be followed:

- All players from the younger (i.e. one age group down only) group will be invited to train with the older group over a minimum of 2 sessions.
- The Coaches will be open minded in their selection and not succumb to preconceived ideas in regards to players.
- Players will be named in a timely fashion.

Where an age group has insufficient goalies for all of its teams, then, at the Head Coaches discretion, the selection process above may be overlooked and the Head Coach may, at their discretion, appoint a goalie from a younger age group.

If a younger player is selected to play in an older age group team, that player must ensure they are also available to play for their true age group. A player cannot forsake their true age group to play up an age group.

When can external players be selected?

SWPC being a small club means that for some competitions it will have insufficient players in an age group that may prevent it being as successful as the club aims for. In these situations SWPC may approach or be approached by other clubs offering players for selection.

In these situations SWPC must be satisfied that:

- The benefits of selecting an external player, or players, to the future development and standing of SWPC are positive, significant, and warranted
- The selection of the external player, or players, will not disadvantage the development of individual SWPC players and
- The SWPC players displaced by the external player, or players, is/ are not of the standard or potential to justify a place in the SWPC squad/ team

All external players must be registered with SWPC before they are eligible play in any matches.

How much Pool time at competitions?

Pool time during matches is the sole responsibility of the team coach.

Players selected to participate in SWPC teams that have a win focus may not get equal pool time.

If there is another SWPC team in the competition with more of a development focus then players will gain more pool time.

Pool time will be affected depending on the following:

- Competition level
- Match duration i.e. 4 x 8 mins or 2 x 6 mins
- Team size and make up i.e. 13 players including 2 goalkeepers