

# **Pacific Storm Water Polo Club Athlete/Parent Policy Manual**

## **Introduction:**

This Athlete/Parent Policy Manual has been created by the Storm Executive with the intent to better inform you about the Pacific Storm Water Polo Club's, (hereinafter called the Club), structure, its regulations and to communicate the expectations of each athlete and parent.

The Policy Manual is intended to provide information on the most pertinent and significant policies. If an athlete or parent has questions or requires additional information not addressed in this manual, please contact your Team Manager or any of the Executive members.

The Club is a registered non-profit society and was incorporated in October 2008. The Board of Directors is responsible for setting policies and overseeing the operations of the Club and is comprised of volunteers. The primary focus of the Club is to develop and build the sport of water polo at all levels including recreational, development, and competition.

The Club expects the Board, athletes, parents and coaches to appreciate and adhere to the policies and guidelines set forth in this manual.

The training programs undertaken by the Club develop and test both physical and mental abilities. Participation is meant to foster mutual respect, acceptance, and growth as individuals and team players. Possibly the greatest benefits of participating in the Club's programs are the life skills of time management, self-discipline, physical fitness and sportsmanship that Athletes will learn.

Pacific Storm's programs strive to give athletes the opportunity to help develop a positive self-image, physical and mental strength, and achieve individual and team goals through intense training and competitive play.

It is the Club's goal to provide its member families with an overall positive experience that will enrich family's lives for years to come.

## **Coaches:**

The Pacific Storm Water Polo Club takes extreme pride in the quality of coaches it is privileged to offer its athletes.

All Club coaches are expected to exhibit leadership qualities, instill and exhibit sportsmanship, and model exemplary behavior to their athletes.

All coaches are required to undergo a Criminal Background check and provide a clearance of this check in order to coach for the Club.

## **Training Program Structure:**

There are three different age categories in the Club:

- **U14**
- **U16**
- **U18**

The **U14 program** is designed to accommodate the physical and mental abilities of younger athletes who are learning the sport with a primary focus on skill development.

Generally, this age group participates in two to three tournaments per season.

The **U16 & U18** programs take training to the next level by providing a more concentrated and intense training regime designed to develop high performance athletes with a focus on competition. Training at this level requires the highest level of commitment on the part of athletes and parents as practice frequency is between 4 and 5 times per week with 100% attendance expected.

Generally, these groups of athletes travel out of town to tournaments estimated in number between 6 and 8 times per year.

## **Training Schedule:**

The training schedule is published on the club website at [www.stormwaterpolo.ca](http://www.stormwaterpolo.ca) . Be sure to check the website frequently for any schedule changes.

## **Training Expectations:**

- 100% Attendance which includes being punctual – If it is not possible to attend a specific practice, athletes are required to advise their coach in advance and provide a valid explanation. Inquire with coaches as to their preferred communication vehicle – i.e. e-mail, cell phone, etc.
- Come to practice properly attired with swim suit and work out gear.
- Athletes are expected to arrive at practice 15 minutes prior to the published start time.

## **Tournaments:**

- The Club recognizes that tournament travel is a significant cost and not all families are in a financial position to send their child to every tournament. For this reason, it is recommended that parents speak with their child's coach to determine which tournaments will provide the most value for their child to attend from both a cost and playing opportunity perspective.
- Parents' decisions to send their child to a tournament will not guarantee the child equal play time in the water or even a guarantee that the child will play at all. Decisions regarding play time are solely up to the Coach and based on a variety of factors such as ability, level of competition, position, readiness, etc.
- Generally some amount of school is missed in conjunction with most tournaments. Athletes are expected to notify their teachers in advance on these occasions and obtain assignments or study material with them to work on during down time at tournaments.

- Participation in tournaments is not mandatory however if it is the goal of the athlete and his/her family to achieve the highest level of skill, participation in all if not most tournaments is encouraged.
- For athletes, who are 11 and under, it is mandatory for parents to accompany their child on all tournaments.

### **Athlete Expectations:**

All athletes are expected to:

- attend every practice,
- be on time or early
- respect all of the rules of the pool facility including not walking on the deck with shoes; use the change rooms instead of changing on the deck; no use of foul language
- come prepared for dry land as well as water workouts every practice
- contact their coach directly if having to miss practice
- demonstrate a willingness to work hard.
- exhibit positive social interaction with the coaches and teammates
- respect all coaches and teammates
- assist with set up and take down of all equipment used at practice

### **Athlete Discipline Policy:**

All athletes are required to sign and abide by the BCWPA Code of Conduct, WPC Code of Conduct and the Club rules and policies.

If an athlete is found to have behaved disrespectfully or misbehaved, the following disciplinary measures will be taken:

- The athlete will receive a verbal warning by his/her coach.
- If the behaviour continues, the athlete will be asked to leave the practice.
- In the event the behaviour exhibited persists or is deemed to be very serious, a coach in consultation with the Club President & Vice President may impose a suspension from the Club for a discretionary length of time and impose a probationary period.
- In the event the behaviour exhibited is deemed to be extremely serious, the Board reserves the right to terminate the athlete's membership in the Club with no refund obligation at any time and without warning.

There are several reasons why an athlete may be asked to discontinue playing or be suspended such as but not limited to the following:

- exhibiting poor sportsmanship, or lack of respect for authority
- exhibiting a consistently poor attitude or lack of effort
- causing significant disruptions to the team
- dishonesty

## **Athlete Rules & Policies:**

### **Demonstrating Proper Respect:**

The Club expects each athlete to treat all Club coaches, other Club members (athletes), and adults (parents, coaches, officials, etc.) with respect and to address them in a proper manner. When at a tournament, tournament officials, referees, other coaches and opponent players and parents are to be treated with respect. Failure to adhere to this standard may result in the athlete's immediate suspension or dismissal from the Club.

### **Communication & Trust:**

If a player has a problem or concern which involves the team or coach, bring it to the attention of the Team Manager or Coach as soon as it arises so it can be resolved in a timely manner.

### **Team Chemistry & Support:**

A very important part of a team's success is the chemistry that develops between the players. The unity, support, friendship, and effort with each other are imperative to the success of the team. All athletes will be expected to contribute to the team chemistry and to be enthusiastic at both practices and tournaments. Ultimately, sports are supposed to be fun and a poor attitude or an unwillingness to be a "team player" is not in the best interest of the overall team.

### **Grades & School Attitude:**

All Club athletes are encouraged to keep a good academic standing throughout the school year. Grades are an extremely important part of an athlete's future and the Club encourages players to maintain the highest grades each player can achieve. Athletes are expected to take a disciplined and organized approach to their school work and be responsible for advising teachers of tournaments that will require school to be missed and obtaining homework assignments in advance in an effort to keep on top of their grades.

### **Athlete Conduct at Tournaments:**

Athletes are reminded that they are representatives of the Pacific Storm Water Polo club and that they should exercise good judgment and be considerate of others at all times during tournaments.

Athletes are expected to arrive on time as instructed at designated meeting areas and stay with their team during tournaments. Overnight tournaments are not a time to schedule family visits with relatives or friends until after the athlete is released to do so by the coach.

For safety purposes, during away tournaments, players are expected to travel in groups of 3's when not escorted by a chaperone or coach. Players must always receive permission from chaperones before leaving the hotel for any reason.

Players must wear appropriate attire when traveling with the team.

Athletes of the opposite sex are not to be in hotel rooms together unless under the supervision of a chaperone.

The use or possession of unlawful drugs or alcohol is strictly prohibited. Any athlete found to have either consumed or be in possession of unlawful drugs or alcohol will be sent home at the earliest opportunity at the expense of their parents.

Any athlete having been found to have engaged in an act of theft, including shop lifting, or any other illegal activity will also be sent home at the earliest opportunity at the expense of their parents.

### **Team Managers:**

Each team will have a team manager. The team manager is an important member of the Club who enhances the team's organization and cohesiveness. An effective team manager enables the coach to focus on coaching rather than paperwork and therefore, if at all possible, the team manager should be the first point of contact for questions from parents.

Team manager responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- communicating information to athletes & parents regarding upcoming events, changes in practice schedules, etc.
- maintaining updated player accounts for each player on roster
- collection of money for tournaments, travel, clothing, fundraisers, etc. and give to treasure in a timely manner for deposit
- upon receiving travel package information from the Tournaments/Travel Coordinator, communicate and coordinate travel for his/her roster of athletes.
- distribute team clothing ordered to players
- coordinate team dinners at tournaments or seasonal team socials, etc.
- If able to fulfill all of the responsibilities of chaperone, shall have first option to Chaperone managed team on away trips.

### **Chaperones:**

Chaperones are adults (25+ years of age) who are willing to supervise and care for the general welfare of the players during overnight and out of town events.

### **Chaperone Expectations:**

- Are on duty at all times during overnight travel unless otherwise excused by another chaperone. Coaches are responsible for supervision during practice or competition. The interaction between chaperones and coaches is very important.
- Must attend all away tournament games.

- Use of illegal substances is prohibited while on chaperone duty. Alcohol cannot be consumed while chaperoning and when driving duties have yet to be fulfilled during the day or evening.
- Are expected to behave responsibly at all times and exercise good judgment in the interest of the athletes.
- Are expected to set curfews in consultation with the coaches and ensure the curfew is enforced.
- Have the right to inspect all bags and personal belongings of any athlete on the team.
- Are to report any discovery of use or possession of an illegal substance or alcohol on the part of athletes to the coach immediately and together determine the appropriate course of action.
- Are to report any serious behavioral problem on the part of athletes to the coaches and together determine the appropriate course of action.

**Chaperone responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:**

- Escort athletes starting from the departure point to the return point for all away trips with the primary responsibility being overall athlete health & welfare.
- Obtain rental vehicle and responsible for driving athletes to & from hotel; to and from restaurants; to and from any outings; to and from airport and must feel confident driving a 7 passenger van.
- Coordinate with coaches the schedule of the team for reporting times to pools, designated rest times and any leisure activities.
- Responsible for making restaurant reservations for the team.
- Responsible for obtaining healthy food items (if budgeted) that can be kept in the hotel and distributed to the athletes as needed and coordinate with the Food Room Coordinator if one available.

## **Fees:**

These are outlined on the registration form and are dependent upon your athlete's level. Please see the website [www.stormwaterpolo.ca](http://www.stormwaterpolo.ca) for fee structure and schedule.

## **Payment Policy:**

The Club is a non-profit organization that is supported by its members. The Club has a number of financial obligations in accordance with its budget which include but are not limited to the following: Coaches salaries; pool rental; equipment, and costs associated with tournament and training travel. The Club relies upon timely payment from its members in order to meet its financial obligations.

If registration fees are not provided as outlined in the fee schedule upon registration through post-dated cheques, the athlete will not be able to practice or compete until such payment is received in full. In order for a member to be considered "in good standing" his/her account must be up to date. Athletes whose accounts are not considered in good standing will not be allowed to participate in tournaments until such time the account has been restored to in good standing status.

The Club does recognize that from time to time, families may encounter an unanticipated period of financial hardship which may impact their ability to meet their membership financial obligations. In the event of unanticipated financial hardship, requests for payment accommodations may be made directly to the Treasurer who will review the request on an individual basis with the Board.

## **Payment & Refund Policy**

### **PAYMENT**

#### **Competitive/High Performance Program Fees – Under 18:**

Payment for the Competitive/High Performance season is to be made by the first day of the season in September as noted on the website for each season program and may be provided in one of the two following ways:

- In full, on one cheque, cash, or money order; or
- In 2 cheque installments with the first dated September 11<sup>th</sup> and the second November 11<sup>th</sup> – both of which must be provided at the first practice of the season.

#### **Half Time U16 (Girls Only) & Development – Under 14 Fees:**

- In full on one cheque, cash or money order due at the first practice of the season

**\*\*NOTE\*\* Athletes will not be allowed to enter the pool and commence participation in the program until such time payment has been made as outlined above.**

### **NSF CHEQUES**

All NSF Cheques will be subject to a \$30.00 fee. Any member who submits a NSF cheque to pay Storm Registration fees will be asked to pay future fees in cash or by certified cheque.

## REFUNDS

### Prior to the commencement of practices:

- Prior to the first practice of each season, a participant is entitled to a full refund minus the cost of Storm Club team clothing items (if already ordered) and a **\$75.00 Administration Fee**.

### Within the first 14 days of the season:

- After the first (1<sup>st</sup>) water polo practice of the season and for the first 14 days of the season, a participant is entitled to a full refund minus the cost of Storm Club team clothing items (if already ordered), a **\$75.00 Administration fee, and a \$50.00 withdrawal fee**.

### After the first 14 days of the season:

- After the first 14 days of the season, a participant will only receive a monthly pro-rated refund of fees paid minus the cost of Storm Club team clothing items (if already ordered), a **\$75.00 Administration fee, and the \$50.00 withdrawal fee** in the event of medical reasons which are supported by production of a doctor's note or in the event of special circumstances such as an unforeseen relocation from the area or medical condition of athlete or family member) as identified in writing and submitted to the Storm Executive. In these events refunds will be granted solely at the Executive's discretion.

## Team Uniforms

The following clothing items are considered mandatory and to be ordered at time of registration if athletes do not already have:

- team swim suit
- team t-shirt
- team swim caps (1 blue/1 white and mandatory for girls only)
- water polo practice hats (1 blue/white)

The following items are considered optional:

- team jacket
- team pants
- other miscellaneous team apparel

Clothing orders are to be made at time of registration for mandatory items and through team managers throughout the season as needed or desired for optional items when orders are being placed.

## Parent Expectations:

Parents play a significant role in the Storm Water Polo Program and for the athlete.

- abide by the Parents Code of Conduct for Parents of Pacific Storm Water Polo Club
- provide timely payment of all registration fees
- provide timely payment of all travel and tournament fees as requested

- volunteer for Club activities
- participation in all fundraisers as planned and executed by the Club
- provide or arrange transportation for athletes to/from all practices

### **Fundraising:**

As a non-profit organization, the Club heavily relies upon fundraising in order to ensure that all the Club's financial obligations are met and to provide the most robust experience for athletes as possible.

Every Club member is expected to fully participate in all fundraising activities as outlined in each fundraising initiative.

### **Volunteer Expectations:**

The Club relies solely upon the willingness of members to volunteer in a number of different capacities such as fundraising efforts, to work at tournaments, serve on the executive or committees, etc. which are reliant upon the Club's success. ***For this reason, at least one parent from each family is expected to volunteer in at least one capacity each season.***

There are a number of opportunities and ways to volunteer for the club such as but not limited to the following:

- tournament activities including working at the officials table doing score sheets, shot clock, or kick-outs.
- working in the food room to provide deck food to tournament volunteers
- set-up & tear down of equipment at tournaments
- fundraising activities for the club

### **Medical Release and Authorization for Treatment:**

Parents are required to sign a waiver of liability/responsibility against the Club, its Board, Coaches, and Volunteers in the event of an athlete injury. The form is a necessary medical history and release form. Be sure the information is always kept current, as this information will be used in the event an athlete needs medical attention and a parent or guardian is not present. This form must be completed and on file with the Club before athletes will be allowed to participate in any tournaments.

## **Concussion Management:**

In the event an athlete suffers a concussion during a practice or a competition, the Club has adopted the following plan:

- 1) The athlete should be removed from the pool and not be allowed to return to play in the current game or practice
- 2) The athlete should not be left alone; and regular monitoring for deterioration should be undertaken for the first four hours following the injury
- 3) The athlete should be medically evaluated by a health professional following the injury
- 4) The athlete will only be allowed to return to play upon the provision of a doctor's note

The principal of, **"When in doubt, sit them out"** is to be applied

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

The essential elements of character building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and six core principles including: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and good citizenship. The highest potential of sports is achieved when competition reflects these six pillars of character and both children and their parents are expected to enact these core principles.

The Pacific Storm Water Polo Club (the Club) has adopted these core principles and expects each parent, in support of their athlete(s) to strictly abide by them. As a result, this Code of Conduct has been created for all Club parents to sign.

The following outlines the terms and conditions of the Parent Code of Conduct and agreement to all of the terms are contingent upon family membership in the Club:

- 1) I/We will not force my/our child to participate in the Club against his/her will
- 2) I/We will remember that children participate in sport to have fun and that the game is for youth, not adults
- 3) I/We will inform the Coach of any physical or emotional disability or ailment that may affect the safety of my/our child, or the safety of others
- 4) I/We will learn the rules of the game and the policies of the club
- 5) I/We (and my/our guests) will be a positive role model for my/our child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials, and spectators at every game, practice, tournament, or other event
- 6) I/We (and my/our guests) will not engage in any unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing and taunting; refusing to shake hands; or using profane language or gestures
- 7) I/We will not encourage any behaviours or practices that would endanger the health and wellbeing of the athletes
- 8) I/We will teach my/our child to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence
- 9) I/We will demand that my/our child treat other players, coaches, officials and spectators with respect
- 10) I/We will teach my/our child that doing one's best is more important than winning, so that my/our child will never feel defeated by the outcome of a game of his/her

performance

- 11) I/We will praise my/our child for competing fairly and making the best effort possible
- 12) I/We will never ridicule or yell at my/our child or any other participant for making a mistake or losing a competition
- 13) I/We will emphasize skill development and practices and how they benefit my/our child over winning. I/We will also de-emphasize games and competition in the lower age groups
- 14) I/We will promote the emotional and physical well being of the athletes ahead of any personal desire(s) I/We may have for my/our child to win
- 15) I/We will respect the officials and their authority during games and will never question, discuss or confront coaches at the pool and will take time to speak with officials or coaches at an agreed upon time and place
- 16) I/We will demand a sports environment for my/our child that is free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol
- 17) I/We will refrain from coaching my/our child or other athletes during games and practices, unless I/we am/are one of the official coaches of the team
- 18) No athlete will be allowed to participate in any practice or game unless he/she is registered with the Club and the B.C. Water Polo Association
- 19) I/We will refrain from engaging the coaches in conversation during practices and understand that if I have questions for the coaches that I need to schedule a time with the coaches outside of practice at the coaches convenience
- 20) I/We understand that my/our first point of contact with the Club is the Team Manager and questions should be directed to this person whenever possible

I/We also agree that if I/we fail to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, I/we will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:

- The receipt of a verbal warning by an official, Coach, or Board of Director
- The receipt of a written warning of parental suspension\*
- Removal from the current event including a practice, game, or tournament
- Issuance of a parental suspension for the entire season
- Financial penalty in an amount that will be assessed at the discretion of the Board of Directors
- Termination of athlete’s membership from the club

*\*Parental Suspension is defined as the act of prohibiting the parent found to have engaged in inappropriate behaviour, from watching practices, games or tournaments in which their child/children are participating for a defined period of time. Parental suspensions will be provided in writing with the terms of the suspension defined.*

I/We \_\_\_\_\_ have read all of the terms and conditions of the  
Parent(s) Printed Names

Parent(s) Code of Conduct outlined above and accept and agree to abide by all of them. I understand that failure to adhere to any of the terms and conditions may result in disciplinary action as noted in this Code of Conduct, and if not respected, may jeopardize my child/children’s membership in the Club.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Position Paper**

on

**Pacific Storm Water Polo Club's position on supporting the Lower Mainland Water Polo League****Background:**

Over the last couple of years conflicts and debate have arose with respect to the commitment of Pacific Storm Water Polo players to the Lower Mainland Water Polo League (LMLWPL) recreational program. The nature of the conflict and debate has primarily been based on the fact that Storm players who also play in the LMLWPL regularly find their Storm practice schedule conflicts with the LMLWPL practice schedule resulting in them most often missing the LMLWPL practice and games as well. This issue extends beyond this example into conflicts for those junior coaches who are also participating in the LMLWPL as a coach and find their coaching responsibilities conflicting with their Storm Club schedule.

**The Key Question:**

What is Pacific Storm Water Polo Club's position on the LMLWPL and recognizing the fact this league is one of the primary feeders of the year round clubs, how does it offer a level of support that does not jeopardize its own needs?

**Position:**

- Pacific Storm recognizes and will continue to recognize the LWMLPL as a key partner in support of the sport of water polo
- Pacific Storm is committed to supporting the LWMLPL in a variety of different ways which includes but is not limited to the following:
  - Encouraging Storm players to join and play in the LWMLPL. In the event that there is scheduling conflict, the following will take priority:
    - Storm practice vs. LWMLPL practice = Storm practice
    - LWMLPL game vs. Storm practice = LWMLPL game
    - Storm game vs. LWMLPL game = Storm game
    - LWMLPL Coaching commitment vs. Storm practice = LWMLPL coaching commitment
  - Having Storm coaches mentor LWMLPL coaches as requested and negotiated providing them with valuable coaching expertise and insight
  - Encouraging high performance players to obtain "Officials" accreditation which will then translate to providing a wider base of officials for the LWMLPL to draw from
  - Encouraging Storm players to take on coaching opportunities with the LWMLPL
  - Communicate the above expectations to its coaches and athletes to ensure a consistent approach is applied

**Conclusion:**

Pacific Storm is committed to the LWMLPL's ongoing and long-term viability and success and feels the above supports its position.