

# NEPTUNES WATER POLO CLUB

## PARENT AND ATHLETE HANDBOOK 2019/2020



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## ABOUT NEPTUNES

Neptunes Water Polo Club (1985) is a grassroots, volunteer organization that provides water polo experiences for recreational and competitive players from 10U to adult. We train and compete primarily at Pan Am Pool and Cindy Klassen Recreation Complex (CKRC).

- **Structure...**The Neptunes Board is made up of parents of players, players, and the Head Coach of the Club. Board positions are 2 year terms, and are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) every fall. It is important for Board members to represent the broad spectrum of age groups and competitive levels in the club. Neptunes has a constitution and bylaws, and are sanctioned by Manitoba Water Polo Association (MWPA).
- **Coaches...**Neptunes coaches are volunteers, who receive an honorarium scaled to the number of hours they coach. Neptunes coaches are subject to the minimum standards set out by Manitoba Water Polo Association and Water Polo Canada, including the online Respect in Sport course, criminal record checks, child abuse registry checks, and mandatory certification levels, which increase in accordance with age and competition level.
- **Policies...**Policies are set by the Neptunes Board, except where mandated by the Manitoba Water Polo Association and Water Polo Canada. Some important and relevant policies include:
  - Athlete Code of Conduct
  - Athlete Travel Policy
  - Mouth Guard Policy

## VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Along with your registration, you are required to fulfill a volunteer bond. The purpose of this bond is to motivate and remind parents to volunteer. A healthy club is one where lots of work is shared among many people. Occasionally, clubs break down and even fail because too much of the work is done by only a few people, and those few people burn out. Neptunes will be able to continue to offer great programs at affordable rates as long as parents put in a bit of time, consistently, to help out.

Some of the volunteer opportunities include:

- **On Deck Officials** are often volunteers (parents of athletes, or athletes) filling roles like time keeper, score keeper, goal judge, etc. These are important roles to fill to make sure games at all levels are meaningful and organized. They are good ways to satisfy your volunteer bond. We provide training to do this, and the jobs are a great way to enjoy the game and meet other parents.
- **Board members**
  - Treasurer, President, Secretary, Vice-President
  - Members at large
- **Recruitment of Athletes** (putting up posters, sitting at a recruitment table during events, etc.)
- **Team Managers.** These are parents who assist the coach with communication with athletes and parents, as well as travel coordination when the team travels.
- **Fundraising** (grant application writing, special projects, corporate sponsorship, etc.)

- **Communication** (social media, web page, photography, videography, newsletters, posters, etc.)
- **Special Events** (team specific events, Christmas party, year end banquet)
- **Volunteer Coordination** (primarily organizing on deck officials)
- **Equipment Manager** (purchasing balls, nets, hats, etc.)
- **Merchandise Manager** (purchasing uniforms, backpacks, etc.)
- **Chaperones.** This is typically a role filled by a parent on a travel tournament event.
- **Travel Coordinator** (for major travel events, takes leadership with booking and scheduling flight, hotel, catering, etc.)
- **Representation on the Board of MWPA**
- **Other...**

## SPORT OVERVIEW

**Clubs...**Neptunes and Bushido are the two biggest water polo clubs in Manitoba, based primarily out of Pan Am Pool. A Neptunes chapter also exists in Brandon. WinCity Royals is another club, based at Seargent Tommy Prince Pool. Neptunes and Bushido have been working closely together in recent years, in order to advance water polo in Manitoba and to create more opportunities, particularly for our higher level competitive players. In 2019, Bushido and Neptunes are combining recreational and competitive programs for athletes 16U and older.

**Manitoba Water Polo Association (MWPA)** is the provincial governing body for water polo. They sanction clubs and tournaments, and provide insurance for players. All players in MB must be registered with MWPA. MWPA runs School League, Winter League, 4 on 4 tournaments and the Provincials. There is an executive director and a volunteer Board of Directors made up of players, parents of players, and other stakeholders.

**National Championship League (NCL)** is a national competitive league for ages 14U, 16U, 19U and adult major league (MLWP). It involves inter-provincial tournaments and is where athletes are scouted by national level coaches with possibilities of selection to National Teams. NCL teams are usually club-based, competing in tournaments for a chance to qualify for the National Championships each year. Neptunes and Bushido have recently been cooperating to form NCL teams together. NCL is the best opportunity to learn and grow as a competitive player, and success at this level requires a higher level of training (3-6 times per week, depending on the age).

**Water Polo Canada (WPC)** is the governing body for Water Polo in Canada. WPC runs the NCL, and the Age Group National Teams. WPC also authorizes Regional Development Centres, through which high performance camps are run. These camps are excellent learning opportunities.

**Range of Opportunities** exist for water polo players. Recreational play, refereeing, coaching, and competitive level play including international opportunities are all available. Many Manitoba water polo players have also secured scholarships to play and attend university.

**FINA** is the international federation recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for administering international competition in water sports, including water polo. They develop the rules that are followed at high level competitive competitions, like NCL.

**A tough sport!** Water polo is a physical sport with a reputation for strong physiques and scrappy play under the water. One way Neptunes protects players from injury is to require all players 14 years and older to wear mouth guards during all competitions. Dealing with the physical aspect of water polo helps athletes develop resiliency and assertiveness. It's also a great place to learn to swim, develop leadership and tactical skills, and build life-long relationships. Water Polo is a gateway to other skills and jobs, including refereeing, coaching, and lifeguarding.

## WHY WATER POLO?

- **Swimming!** Chasing a ball makes learning to swim fun! Water polo athletes benefit from swimming lessons and even some speed swimming, but playing the game itself improves swimming rapidly. Many athletes who don't excel at land sports do find a place in water polo.
- **Team**...as a team sport, water polo teaches key skills of cooperation, strategy, acceptance, support of teammates, and healthy independence. Neptunes works hard as a club to ensure that positive team dynamics are nurtured.
- **Leadership**...water polo provides many opportunities for players to take on formal and informal leadership roles, both in the water and on deck. Leading team drills, giving guidance to less experienced players, helping with drills, assisting the coach, being a role model for younger players, coaching, refereeing, and more.
- **Grit**...it's hard to imagine a sport with more grit than water polo. Fighting through fatigue, struggling for the ball, learning through failures and successes; these all build resilience, fight and determination.
- **Referee**...every year, MWPA holds workshops to train players to be referees. Because the players know the game, they make the best referees. This is also a great opportunity to build leadership, practice a great life skill, and earn some cash!
- **Coach**...coaching workshops are available, and as players get older, there are opportunities to coach players at the younger levels both in the club, and in School League. It's hard to think of a better leadership opportunity that's easily transferable to the rest of life.

## COMMUNICATION

Neptunes is always trying to improve and refine our communication. This also relies on volunteers. The following are communication tools:

- **Website**...the Neptunes website has all of the information needed to register your athlete, including all relevant forms. It also includes practice schedules for each age group. We attempt

to keep the website updated with current photos and club updates; however this relies on volunteers.

- **Team Snap**...this is the tool used to send team and club emails, and to track availability of athletes for games and tournaments.
- **Social Media**...Facebook is our primary tool currently.
- **Newsletter**... produced at key times during the season, depending on volunteer time.
- **Meetings**...Neptunes tries to have two club meetings per year, including the AGM in fall. It is also effective to have smaller team meetings, and these happen as needed.

## CALENDAR

The following events normally happen throughout the water polo season. For a season specific calendar with actual dates, visit the website.

- **NCL team registration deadlines:**
  - 16U and 19U: August
  - 14U: November
- **Season practices commence:** September and October, depending on pool maintenance schedules.
- **Neptunes Annual General Meeting:** late Sept/early Oct
- **School League** (run by MWPA): Late September until early December
  - Middle Years League and High School League. If your child does not attend a school with a team, and wants to play, you can contact MWPA and they can try to find a team for your child.
  - School League combines club players and players who have never played. It is a great opportunity for club players to provide mentorship and leadership as players, and eventually as coaches and referees.
- **4 on 4 tournament and Winter League:** Throughout fall/winter. These are local competitive game opportunities which are important to keep our players engaged. It is important to have parents assist with score and time keeping.
- **Provincials:** Late April or early May
- **End of season banquet:** Late April or early May
- **NCL tournaments:**
  - 14U: January through May
  - 16U/19U: November through April
  - Major League: November through March

## CONTACT (2019/2020)

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