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Recognizing the need for organized competition, Ontario Water Polo will strategically embark on creating provincially based leagues. This deliberate effort aims to emphasize on the pivotal role of leagues in providing consistent opportunities for athletes to compete, grow, and develop. These leagues serve as essential platforms, not only fostering the development of participants but also allowing Ontario Water Polo to seamlessly integrate scouting and other events, further enhancing the overall experience for the water polo community.

Through the Ontario Provincial League (OPL), we hope to:

- Encourage overall club participation
- Create low barriers of entry for continued participation
- Offer regular meaningful games
- Establish a meaningful Provincial Championship
- Create a qualification event/format to identify teams for National Championships

Governance and Administration:

The League will be governed and administered by Ontario Water Polo. The Technical Coordinator will lead the organizational and strategic direction of the Ontario Provincial League and will be supported by the Ontario Water Polo Board of Directors.

Ontario Water Polo will be supported by a Referee In Chief:

- Doriel Terpenka, World Aquatic referee

A Resolution Committee has also been established who will aid in any disputes, appeals, or protests that may arise during the competition season. Please use the OWP dispute resolution policies.

1.1 OWP responsibilities:

The OWP Referee In Chiefs (RIC) will aid in staffing all referees for the OPL tournaments. OWP will approve all OPL tournament schedules through the RIC OWP will record all results after the event has ended.

1.2 Athlete Eligibility:

All athletes must be born between 2009-2012 to be eligible to play in the 15U League for the 2023-24 season.

1.3 Event Registration

Prior to the start of the season, clubs will request that their event be part of the 15U OPL structure. OWP will then assign the weekends for the 15U Provincial League. This will be in addition to Provincial Championships and Eastern National Championships.

If two clubs would like to host an OPL event on the same weekend, OWP will engage in an event evaluation matrix to determine which event will be part of the 15U OPL circuit.

Host Clubs must adhere to the following:

- The host club cannot limit the number of Ontario based teams that would like to enter (a deadline to enter can be proposed, however clubs cannot exclude any Ontario clubs from entry)
- The event must include separate divisions for boys and girls
- Each team must play a minimum of 4 games
- Every event must result in a final placement for each team
- Games must be a minimum of 4 x 6 minutes stop time, with a minimum of 1 timeout per game

2.1 Host Responsibilities:

The host clubs are responsible for the following:

- Registering the event on the Water Polo Canada database and ensuring all participants are registered
- Booking and payment of permits
- Collection of entry fees from attending teams
- Compensation of referees
- Set up/take down of the pool space and score tables
- Staffing the score table
- Record results and submit results to OWP

Clubs have the freedom to build the tournament schedule, charge their own entry fee, and open the event to clubs outside of the province.

2.2 Referee Compensation:

Referees will be compensated based on their qualification level. It is the host's responsibility to compensate the referees.

2.3 Event Point Allocation/Seeding For Provincials:

Each event will have the same point allocation structure:

- 1st: 6 points
- 2nd: 5 points
- 3rd: 4 points
- 4th: 3 points
- 5th: 2 points
- 6th and below: 1 point

The top point total is based on the number of Ontario teams at your event. 6 teams or more allow the first-place finish to have 6 points. 5 teams would have the first-place finish allocated 5 points, etc. For an event to qualify as a Provincial League weekend, there must either be a minimum of 4 boys' teams and/or 3 girls' teams from Ontario.

Clubs that attend 2 events during the season are eligible for Provincial Championships. There is no cap on the number of events a club can enter, however, teams will receive points for their top 3 event finishes.

2.4 Events With Out of Province Teams

Clubs will be encouraged to include teams from outside the province at their events. The point allocation will simply omit out of province teams from the overall result.

2.5 Clubs with Multiple Teams

For clubs that have multiple teams entered, the placement of the top team will be the guiding team for their other teams' point totals. For example, if a club enters two teams, the best two finishes for the club will be considered, and the second team will receive the points based on their results from the same two events.

Clubs who have multiple teams entered at invitationals will have their top-placed team receive the highest point total for seeding purposes, unless they make no roster changes for events throughout the season. Example: if Team A wins Event X and Team B (from the same club) finishes 5th, while at Event Y Team B wins and Team A finishes 5th, CLUB team 1 will receive a first-place finish for both events, CLUB team 2 will receive a 5th place finish for both events unless there were no roster changes made between the two events.

Clubs are permitted to change their rosters throughout the season, as well as for Provincial Championships/National Qualifications. For Provincial Championships, clubs must place their best team as their top seed.

The above rule is to give clubs the freedom to rotate their rosters but to keep the integrity of the results for seeding purposes.

If clubs/teams play OPL events with athletes outside of the province (that are not **primary members of an Ontario club**) during the season, the results from those events will not contribute towards their standings, however the event will count towards their minimum number of attended events.

2.6 Tie Breaking

Tie breaking will be resolved using a coin toss performed by a neutral, non-OWP member, who is monitored. Ideally, it will be performed at the WPC head office.

2.7 National Qualification

The regular season results will determine the team's seeding for Provincial Championships. Only teams who have played in the required number of tournaments, with eligible teams, will be permitted to attend Provincial Championships. The Provincial Championship schedule will be made by OWP and approved by the RIC. Provincial Championships will serve as the qualification tournament for Eastern National Championships, with the allocated number of teams qualifying for National Championships.

2.8 Team Composition for Provincial Championships **(NEW)**

Teams must be composed of athletes who are primary members of an Ontario club.

3.1.1. This section applies to clubs, teams, athletes, coaches, officials, chaperones, and other team personnel and herein will be referred to as a “participant”.

3.1.2. An incident is referred to as an event in which a participant is ejected from the game or competition venue due to any behavior deemed to be detrimental to the image of the league, OWP, and the sport of water polo (brutality, red card, and misconduct). All participants are expected to act in a manner in which reflects a positive image.

Incidents may occur before, during, or after a League match as well as any adverse comments made publicly about the league or any of its members. An incident also refers to withdrawals, forfeits, or code of conduct violations.

3.2 Incidents

Please use the Ontario Water Polo ['Disciplines and Complaints Policy'](#) for reporting minor and major incidents.

3.2.5. A brutality will carry an automatic one (1) game suspension. A second brutality within the same season will carry an automatic three (3) game suspension. A third (or more) brutality within the same season, regardless of the category, will be deemed to be a major incident.

3.2.6. A red card for misconduct will carry an automatic one (1) game suspension. Red cards apply towards the category the red card was received in. A second red card for misconduct within the same event, will carry an automatic two (2) game suspension. A third red card for misconduct within the same event, received in the same category, will carry an automatic three (3) game suspension. Game suspensions will carry into following OPL events.

3.3 Protests

The Resolution Committee shall be responsible for the handling of all protests. While reviewing a protest, any member who is perceived to have a conflict of interest with the matter at hand must be removed from the review. All decisions rendered by the Resolution Committee are final and cannot be appealed.

3.3.2. Teams may only protest a technical error. A technical error does not include a judgment call made by a referee regarding the interpretation of a rule.

3.3.3. All protests must be submitted to the Resolution Committee and the Referee In Chief (or acting RIC), up to (30) minutes following the final game time indicated on the electronic scoresheet. A fee of \$CAD100, must accompany the protest (the fee shall be refunded if the protest is successful). Protests must be in writing using Appendix F: Protest Form.

3.4 Appeals

Please use the Ontario Water Polo [Appeal Policy](#) for reporting an appeal.