

Sutton & Cheam Swimming Club Water Polo Teaching Plan



Introduction

The following is Sutton & Cheam Swimming Club's outline plan for teaching water polo within the club.

The plan is loosely based on particular age groups to bring it in line with the Long Term Athletic Development (LTAD) framework for water polo. In general, the plan is fluid and players will normally advance through the scheme by ability.

Logistically, due to the numbers of players in each age group, girls and boys of all age groups will normally train together. This has the advantage of allowing the younger players to be mentored by the older. This enhances the skill acquisition of the younger players.

It should also be noted that girls and boys are able to compete together in mixed teams until aged 15.

"Mini-Polo" FUNdamentals Age 8-11

The club normally introduces water polo to swimmers of about 8 or 9 years of age in the form of "mini-polo"; the only criteria being the ability to swim confidently.

Mini-polo is a smaller, more basic game than Water Polo itself and has been introduced to teach young players of any age up to about eleven years old the basics of the full game.

It is also a great multi-skill activity which teaches the fundamentals of aquatics and sport as a whole, in line with Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD).

The best thing about mini-polo is its wide adaptability! You can take any size of pool, whether deep or shallow, any number of young boys and girls, of different ages; ability and size and modify the game to suit requirements. It's as simple as that...there really aren't any rules to use if you don't want.

NO RULES??

In fact, the fewer the rules imposed on the players, the easier it is for them to learn and, more importantly, the more fun it is!

Although official equipment is available, it's not necessary - to get started, all we need is a ball and a pool!

At the early stages of the teaching plan, concentration is on the players rather than on team progress and emphasis is therefore more on participation, having fun in the water and playing simple games. However, we also focus on the equipment, the basic techniques and the essential ball skills with 'fun' drills to maintain the interest of the players.



During this stage, players are progressively moved on to more advanced skills as they:

- Are able to swim more confidently
- Are at home in the deep end of the pool
- Can perform egg beater leg kick and
- Have some basic ball handling

Familiarisation with the Equipment

- Balls
- Costumes
- Caps
- Goals
- Pitch size
- Pitch markings
- Use of log books

Basic skills without the ball

- Swimming training for stamina
- Swimming training for speed
- Leg work (egg-beater)
- Swimming strokes
 - Head up front crawl
 - Water polo head up backstroke
 - Breaststroke
 - Side-stroke
- Focus on body position, legs, arms
- Stop and Go! – Starting, stopping, turning without the ball
- Changing direction
- Zig-zag (attack and defence)
- Change strokes
- Sideways movement
- Jumping forwards, backwards, sideways, upwards
- Jump half turn

Basic skills with the ball

- Swimming with the ball – head up from crawl; head still over the ball
- Passing to partner while swimming
- Picking up the ball from underneath
- Starting, stopping, turning with the ball
- Passing wet and dry
- Passing long and short
- Passing to front, left and right
- Catching from front, left and right
- Catch and pass in one motion

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- Position in water – hips up
- 'Walking' the ball
- Dummying
- Simple shooting – no defender
- Straight shot and lob
- Goalkeeping
- 1 v Goalkeeper attack
- 1 v Goalkeeper attack –receive pass from left and right and shoot
- 2 v 1 attack on goal
- Basic extra man attack and defence

Introduction to competition

Basic rules of the game

- Organisation and duration of competitions
- One hand
- Standing on the bottom
- Adaptation of rule for mini polo
- Ball under
- Holding
- Sinking
- Pulling back
- Rules relating to pitch markings
- Entering the water
- Game organisation
- Refereeing

Basic game tactics

- All play all positions
- Basic rules of the game
- Basic attacking play
- Finding space in attack
- Awareness of teammates
- Shape – not crowding the 'pit'
- Basic defensive play
- Simple press defence
- Goalside marking
- Covering
- Blocking in front
- Counter attacking

Competition

- Possession games as an introduction to competition
- 'Conditioned' competition – small sided games
- Basic competition
- Under 12 WWPL and LWPL mini polo



Age 12-13

Continue swim training for fitness, stamina and speed
Introduce T20 for fitness evaluation
Greater emphasis on 'team' play
Gradual introduction of individual team member responsibilities

Skill Development

Concentration continues on the above skills development as these are basic to the game plus:

- 'Spider'
- Goalkeeping
- Protecting the ball
- Introducing contact
- Shooting – range of shots (back shots, push, tip, etc)
- Shooting from pass

More advanced tactical skills and positional play

- Water discipline
- Narrowing down positional play to 1 or 2 positions
- Setting the arc
- Passing lanes
- 'Pit' play
- 'Pit' defence
- Man up
- Man down

Goalkeeping

- Positioning
- Distribution
- Post to post mobility

Competition

- Rules
- Ordinary and major fouls
- Player substitution
- Entry into the water – during play, substitution, after goal

- Under 14 competitions WWPL and LWPL
- ASA Academy National Club competition
- Regional Training Academy
- National Training Academy

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Age 14-15

This stage concentrates not only on player development but also on team development; what it means to work as part of a team and being a team member

Lots more of the above – can't have enough of it – plus:

- Specific positions introduced and developed e.g. left side, right side, goalkeeper
- Positional play around the arc
- Role of C/F ('Pit player'), point, wings, drivers
- Role of the 'Pit defender'
- Marking line of ball and front marking
- Stealing and intercepting the ball
- Counter attacking
- Rotational attack
- Press defence
- Beating the press- driving past defender
- 'Dropping'
- Picks and screens
- 'Switching'
- Managing the 30 second possession clock
- Specific positions for set plays and man-ups
- Protecting the ball
- 'Foul'/'No foul'
- Role of the goalkeeper in organising defence
- Role of the goalkeeper in organising man down defence

Competition

- Identification of team strengths, weaknesses
- Identification of opposition strengths, weaknesses
- Adaptation of tactics during game play

Rules

- Possession clock
- Specific rules for goalkeepers
- Responsibilities of match officials
- Role of the table
- Time-outs
- Rules relating to coach and team positions on poolside

- Under 16 competitions WWPL and LWPL
- ASA Youth National Club competition
- Youth Regional Training Academy
- Youth National Training Academy

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Age 16-17

Refine skills

Competition

- Integration with senior players
- Under 18 competitions WWPL and LWPL
- ASA Junior National Club Competition
- Junior Regional Training Academy
- Junior National Training Academy