

Club Members Development Framework Outline

Water Polo at Atlantis is structured to ensure we have development opportunities for club members across all age groups. The basis of our development framework incorporates six focus areas: Fundamental, Foundation, Competitive Foundation, Competition, Performance and Water Polo for Life. Each of the six focus areas falls into one of the following categories: Participation, Development or High Performance.

Participation (Flippaball/Mini Polo/Neptune)

Fundamental Movement Skills

This phase is for club members aged 5 to 10. The club members are in Junior School education, growing rapidly. The main objective should be the overall development of the club members physical capabilities and fundamental movement skills. The key points of this phase are:

- Participation in as much sport (all sport) as possible
- Speed, power and endurance are developed using FUN games
- Introduction to the simple rules and ethics of Water Polo
- Training programs, based on the school year, are structured, planned and monitored but not periodised
- Club members are engaged encouraged and most importantly, retained in the sport
- The club members are at a beginner level of Water Polo
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Development (Mini Polo/Neptune/Under 12/Under 14)

Foundation

This phase is appropriate for club members aged 10 to 13. The club members are entering the growth spurt age range and in Intermediate (Year 7 and 8) years of education. The main objective should be to learn all fundamental Water Polo skills. The key points of this phase are:

- Develop fundamental movement skills
- Learn general overall Water Polo skills
- Continue to develop endurance with game based activities (small sided games etc)
- Continue to develop speed with specific activities during the warm-up, such as agility, quickness and change of direction
- Develop knowledge of warm-up, cool down, stretching, hydration, nutrition, recovery and focusing

Competition Foundation (Under 14 – Under 16)

This phase is appropriate for club members aged 13 to 15. The club members are still in the growth spurt age range and in Years 9 –11. The main objective should be the overall development of the club members physical capacities and fundamental movement skills. The key points of this phase are:

- Develop speed and Water Polo-specific skills
- Develop knowledge of how and when to stretch, educate on nutrition and hydration, mental preparation, how and why train when we do
- Establish pre-competition, competition and post-competition routines
- Training is including multiple codes, game and constraint based learning. Training should be innovative and always related to game situation
- Special emphasis is also required for flexibility training due to the sudden growth of bones, tendons, ligaments and muscles
- Club members are engaged encouraged and most importantly retained in Water Polo.
- Club members are in the Intermediate phase of their learning

Competition (Under 16 – Under 18)

This phase is appropriate for club members aged 15 to 17. The club members should be at the end of their growth spurt phase and are in school Years 11–13. The main objective should be to optimise fitness preparation, Water Polo/event specific skills and performance. The key points of this phase are:

- Points stated in the competition foundation plus:
 - Ø Emphasis on tactical knowledge
 - Ø Periodisation using Macro (Season long plan), Meso (Phase planning – preseason tapers etc) and Micro (session by session).
 - Ø Learn to perform these Water Polo-specific skills under a variety of competitive conditions during training
 - Ø Fitness programs, recovery programs, psychological preparation and technical development, are now individually tailored to the athlete's needs
 - Ø Beginning performance analysis
 - Ø Individual game prep
 - Ø Club members are entering the advanced phase of their learning

High Performance (17+)

This phase is appropriate for club members aged 17+. The club members should have entered into the growth plateau phase. It could be that we have club members who are from other year levels and ages in this category – so their schedule must be managed case by case BUT NOT moving away from their physical development age. The main objective should be to maximise fitness preparation and Water Polo/event specific skills as well as performance. The key points of this phase are:

- All of the club members physical, technical, tactical, mental, personal and lifestyle capacities are now fully established, and the focus of training has shifted to the maximization of performance (must be adapted for younger athletes who are classed as high performance to match maturity)
- Club members train to peak for major competitions
- Training is characterised by high-intensity and relatively high volume but STILL game based learning
- Water Polo can become a profession
- Training is focused to one code, game and constraint based learning. Training should be innovative and always related to game situation.

Water Polo for Life – Everyone!

Participation, Development and High Performance

Post school aged years our main objective should be to retain club members in either participation/competition or high performance, for coaching and/or officiating in club or university Water Polo.