



# WATER POLO IN AUSTRALIA



[waterpoloaustralia.com.au](http://waterpoloaustralia.com.au)

## LENGTH OF GAME

# 4 X 8

The duration of an official game of water polo is four x eight minute quarters.

Time commences at the start of each quarter and the clock is stopped throughout the game.

The game resumes once the ball is put back into play either by a player taking the appropriate throw or when the ball is touched by a player following a neutral throw.

There are two minute intervals between quarters with a three minute break at half time.

Should the scores be even at full time, a penalty shootout will commence to ascertain the result of a game.

## TEAMS, CHANGES & SUBSTITUTIONS

Each team consists of seven players (including a goal keeper), and not more than seven reserves who may be used as substitutes.

(12 Field players and 2 goalkeepers)

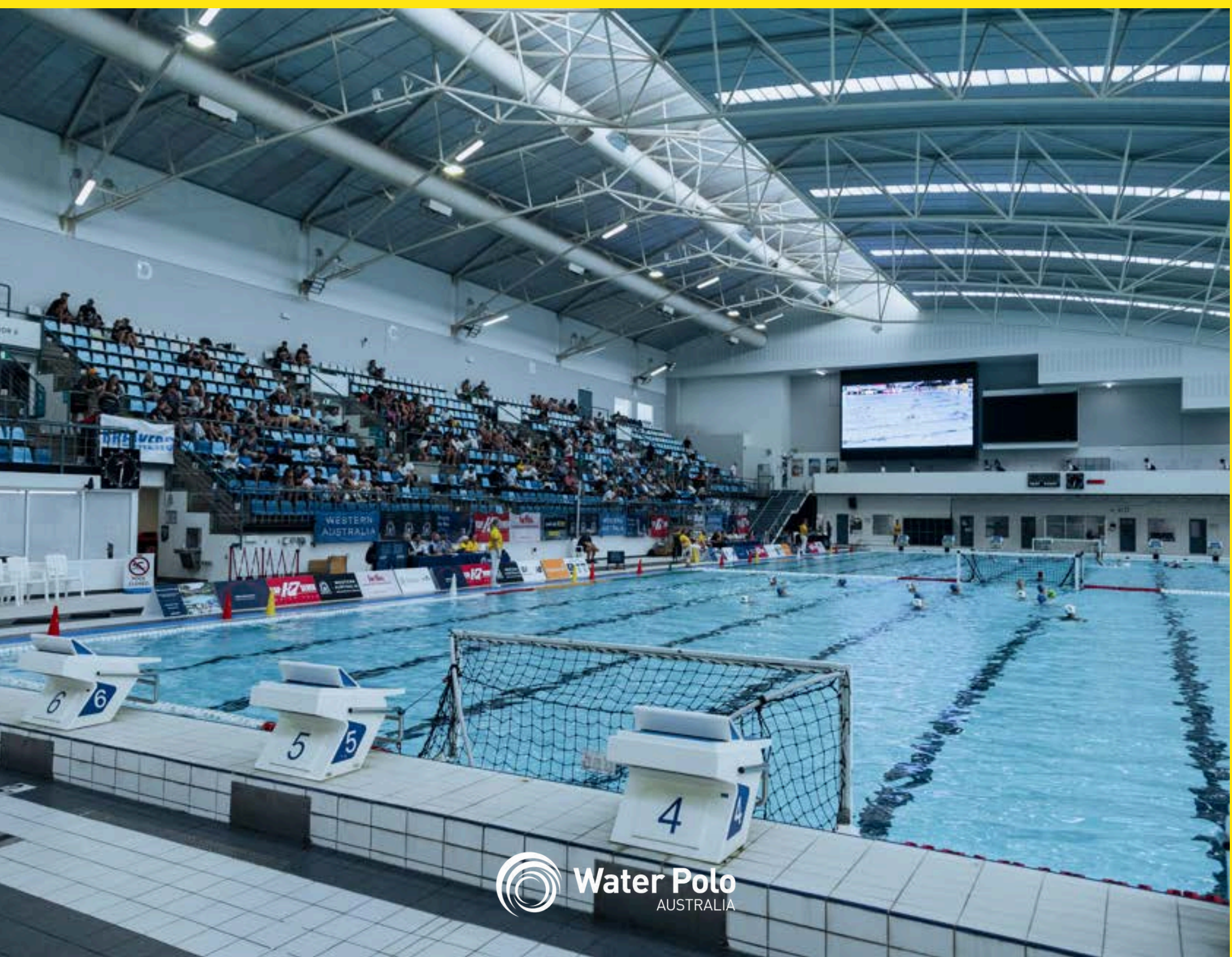
All players not in the game at the time sit on the team bench situated on the side of the pool.



At any time in the game a player may be substituted by leaving the field of play with the exception of when a referee awards a penalty.

## FIELD OF PLAY

- A water polo game is conducted in a pool that is 25.60 metres by 20 metres
- The depth of the water should not be less than 1.8m
- A red zone marks 2 metres to the goal to mark the goal area
- A yellow zone marks 6m to goal
- A white marker cone signals halfway
- A red 5m cone signals the penalty marker



## STARTING THE GAME

At the start of each quarter players take up positions on their respective goal lines about one metre apart and no closer than one metre from the goal posts and not inside the goal area.

A referee will blow the whistle to start the game and then release a ball into play at halfway or centre of the pool if available.

Players pass the ball to their teammates by throwing with one hand. They can swim with the ball or tread water while in possession.



## TIME OUTS

Each team may request two timeouts in any game providing they have possession of the ball.

A timeout is one minute in duration and may be requested at any time and the game is immediately stopped.

The players may assume their attacking positions after 45 seconds. play resumes after one minute.



## SCORING A GOAL

Two goals are needed in order to play water polo. These can either be put on the side of the pool, or in the pool using floaters.

A goal is scored when the entire ball passes full over the goal line, between the goal posts and underneath the cross bar.

A goal may be scored from anywhere within the field of play. A goalkeeper cannot use two hands on the ball outside the 6 metre line but can swim the ball up the pool as a normal field player, and can shoot a goal.

A goal may be scored by any part of the body except a clenched fist.

The team with the most goals at the end of the game wins.

## FOULS & FREE THROWS

There are several different types of fouls which the referee will not permit including; ordinary fouls, exclusion fouls, penalty fouls, and personal fouls.

This can be for pulling, holding, sinking or impeding an opponent in the water.

Major fouls are rewarded with an ejection or penalty against a defender, or Turn over against an attacking player.

In the event of a foul the referee may award a free throw or penalty throw.



## PLAYING POSITIONS

### GOAL KEEPER (GK)

The goalkeeper defends the team's goal and stops the opposition from scoring. The goalkeeper often has great reflexes and agility and positions themselves defensively but also in offensive attack too.

### CENTRE FORWARD (CF)

The centre forward position is usually the team's primary scorer. They position themselves at the 2m line in front of the opposition team's goal, using their strength and skill to get past defenders and score a goal.

### CENTRE BACK (CB)

A centre back defends the Centre Forward and prevents them from scoring, often deliberately committing ordinary fouls.

### DRIVERS

Drivers are constantly creating movement by driving down to the goal post and rotating around, or creating screens in order to free teammates of their defenders. Their proximity to the goal and their position relative to the CF make them invaluable components for scoring goals.

### UTILITY

Utility players are comfortable playing all positions. The utility players are the strongest players in the team, who swap places with other players whenever there is an opportunity to score. Utility players are most effective when they drive in and play CF and quickly score against a defender.

## **SKILLS FOR PLAYING WATER POLO**

### **SWIMMING**

Strong swimming skills including freestyle to get up and down the pool quickly, and the egg beater kick to stay above the water.

### **PASSING & BALL HANDLING**

Passing to players is the most efficient way to move the ball across the pool and open up multiple passages to score a goal. Ball handling skills will help with control with the ball whilst on offense.

### **LOBBING**

Lob passing is effective for passing the ball across a long distance or to create an opportunity where less defenders are stopping your team from scoring a goal.

### **TREADING WATER**

Treading water helps stay above the water and in the game, an egg beater kick is critical to assist with defending and attacking in the game of water polo.

### **SHOOTING**

Shooting techniques such as wrist shots, skip shots and lob shots can help a player score a goal.

### **DEFENDING**

Blocking shots, stealing the ball and disrupting the offense is helpful when defending an attacking player.

## **TIPS & TACTICS**

### **1-1 DEFENSE**

Strong swimming skills including freestyle to get up and down the pool quickly, and the egg beater kick to stay above the water.

### **ZONE DEFENSE**

Players defend a specific area of the pool rather than an opponent, creating a defensive wall and making it difficult to score.

### **COUNTER ATTACK**

A counter attack means quickly transitioning from defense to offense to catch the opposition team off guard. This involves swimming quickly before the other team can regroup and play defense.

### **SET PLAYS**

Pre-planned offensive strategies that help create scoring opportunities. These can involve different movements or passes or position to create an open shot on goal.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Effective communication skills help coordinate plays with other team mates on both offense and defense and assist with making quick decisions.

## UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT

### CAPS

A Water Polo cap is used to protect the players heads and ears, and to identify them. The Home team wears Light Caps and starts to the left end of the pool when looking from the official table

Both goalkeepers wear red caps, numbered "1", and substitute goalies caps are numbered "13". Caps are fitted with ear protectors.

### MOUTHGUARDS

Most players wear mouthguards to avoid damage to teeth from accidental elbows or kicks.

### SWIMWEAR

Water Polo players wear swim trunks, swim suits or one-piece swimsuits designed for Water Polo. These allow for freedom of movement while minimising resistance from the water.

## OFFICIATING

### REFEREES

There are 2 referees who walk along the sides of the pool. They have specific areas that they watch to award fouls. They blow their whistle and indicate with their arms the direction of the foul awarded. referees are encouraged to work together during the game.

### TABLE OFFICIALS

There should be a timekeeper and a secretary as a minimum on the table to keep accurate records of the score and fouls awarded.



## EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Water Polo Australia offer courses for people looking to officiate the game of water polo via The Learning Pool.

Email [info@waterpoloaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@waterpoloaustralia.com.au) for more information.

## COACHING

- There are a range of coaching opportunities in the sport of water polo.
- All opportunities have the athlete at the centre of coaching learning and development.
- Whether you are coaching athletes at club level or at a high performance level, coaches are encouraged to develop water polo athletes in the 4 c's: competence, confidence, connection and character



## EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Water Polo Australia have opportunities for anyone interested in embarking on a coaching journey, through face to face workshops, online programs and resources and state based workshops.

## ASPIRATIONS IN THE SPORT

The Ord Minnett Aussie Stingers (Women's Team) and Ord Minnett Aussie Sharks (Men's Team) compete at the Olympics every four years and represent Australia at the world championships. There are also world championships for under 16s, 18s and 20s.

The Australian water polo league (January - April) provides important competition opportunities for national squad members and the next generation of Australian water polo talent.

It is a national competition, featuring teams from four states across Australia and international players often join teams competing in the League to create a high quality competition.

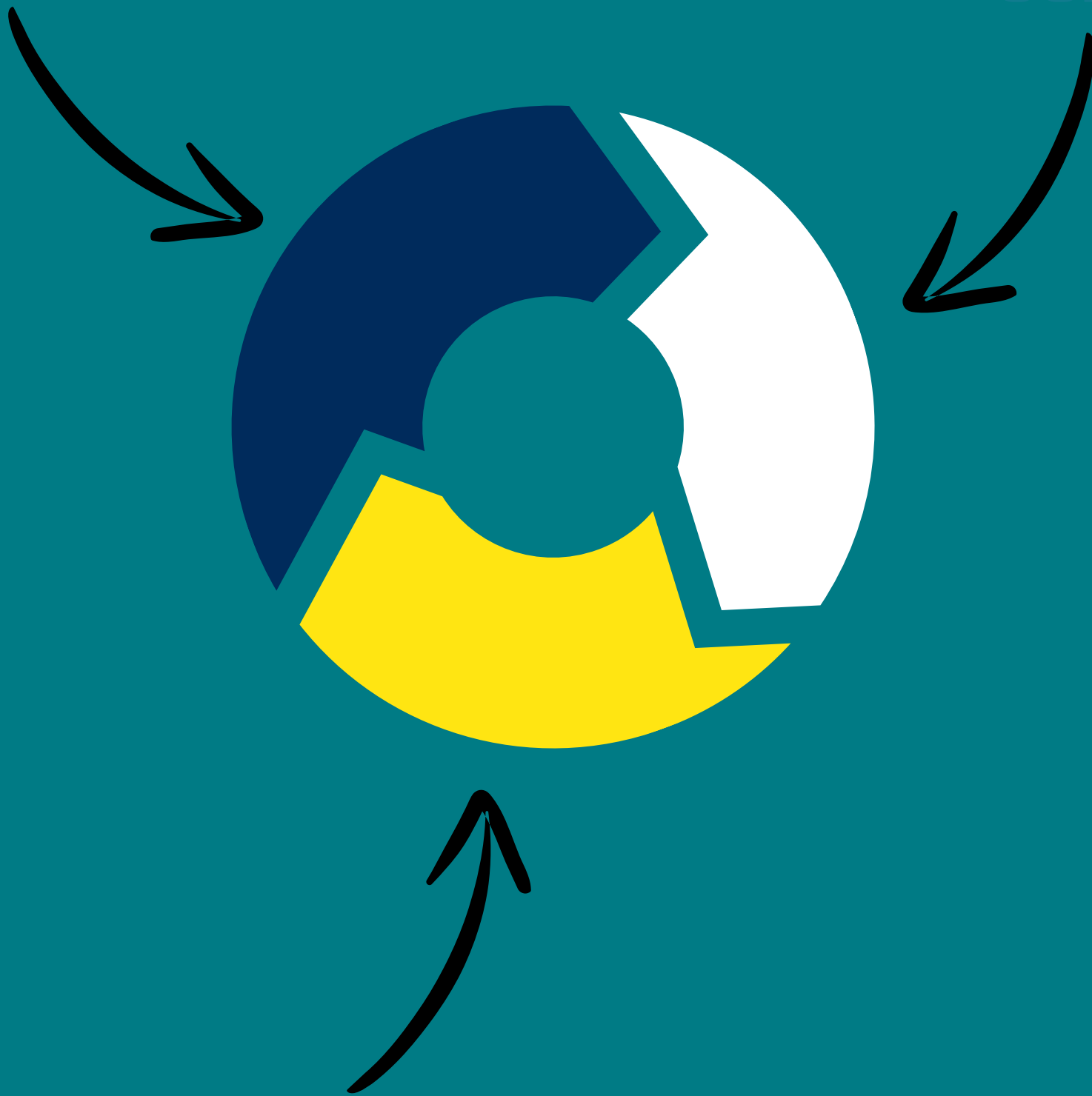




## START YOUR WATER POLO JOURNEY

**PLAY**

**COACH**



**OFFICIATE**

**GET INVOLVED TODAY**

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