

ST. XAVIER HIGH SCHOOL WATER POLO

A Handbook for Parents and Team Members

St. Xavier fielded a water polo team in the 1970s and 1980s and won the State Championship in 1979. St X restarted water polo in the fall of 2011. Water Polo is a non-OHSAA sport governed by coaches, officials and parents. Ohio has 15 men's teams. Many teams participate in regional tournaments in Illinois, Michigan and Pennsylvania. For more information on Ohio High School water polo see <http://www.ohiowaterpolo.com>.

We hope to grow the sport in Cincinnati and the Midwest and launch new competitive schools to raise the level of play and create opportunities for student athletes to play in college. Few athletes have played water polo before high school (although we are working to change this). St. X will not make any cuts, and the coaches are willing to work with anyone who makes a commitment to the program. There is a learning curve, and experience is a valuable asset.

COACHING STAFF

Mike Roberts ('82) (513-484-2799; mrobertsnd86@gmail.com). Mike graduated from St. X in 1982 where he was a swimmer and water polo player (common for all members of the swim team in that era). Mike graduated from the University of Notre Dame and the Notre Dame Law School. Mike swam and played water polo while an undergrad and served as the assistant coach of the Men's and Women's swimming teams while in law school. Mike is a partner with the law firm of GraydonHead in Cincinnati. He lives in Hyde Park with his wife Melanie, daughter Katie, and son Liam.

Jeff Carr (513.549.6366; Jeffrey.a.carr@gmail.com). Jeff graduated from St. Charles Preparatory School (Columbus) in 1993. Jeff was Captain of the men's swimming and water polo team. He earned All-American recognition in swimming in his senior year. Jeff was a 2nd Team All-Big Ten water polo player and Captain for The Ohio State University team. He graduated with a BS in Business Administration in 1998. Jeff has continued to play and coach water polo with various clubs, including the Ohio Squirrels WPC - a highly competitive senior team that participates in USWP open and masters competitions. Jeff is also a qualified referee for Ohio High School Water Polo and continues to referee Girls water polo games as well as club tournaments for age-group and collegiate water polo. Jeff is the SVP & Chief Technology Officer of Cincinnati Bell. He lives in Blue Ash with his wife Angie, daughters Ava (7) & Madelyn (2), and son Owen (4).

John Wallace ('87) (513.289.3682; jww.45243@gmail.com). John graduated from St. X in 1987. He continued his swimming career at Case Western Reserve University. He

captained the water polo club at Case and later played club water polo at Miami University. Between college and law school, John returned to St. X as an assistant swim coach for the 1992 State and National champions. John is currently the Director of Client services for Global Cloud, a technology firm in Cincinnati. He lives in Kenwood with his wife Ellie and his son Charlie.

Our objective is to help student athletes reach their potential in the pool and outside of the pool. We hope to help develop young men of character. We will teach discipline, responsibility, dedication, teamwork, self-respect and leadership. Water polo can strengthen these qualities in each of our athletes, and we will do our best to teach these along with the game itself.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Fees: While partially subsidized by the St X Athletics Boosters and the coaches gift back of their after-tax salary, it is necessary that we also seek a Pay-to-Play fee from the students. This year the fee is \$275. This is needed to defer the costs of: pool time rent (including rent expense at St X's pool); tournament fees; and equipment – new balls and caps. If this presents a participation issue, call Mike. That won't be an obstacle. Each athlete will also need to buy a team suit, insurance, and share lodging expenses for away tournaments. Spirit wear will also be available.

Grades: All student-athletes must follow the academic and athletic rules in place by St X for the current year.

TEAMS / CAPTAINS

Prior to each game/tournament, we will designate who will participate in Varsity games, who will play JV, and who (at times) will play both. At the end of the year we will base Varsity letters on both subjective and objective items that include athletic contribution, attendance, and attitude.

Captains will be appointed by the coaches. Captains must be in good standing academically, and adhere to team rules and regulations. Any violations may result in being stripped of the honor of being a team captain. *Captains will be responsible for the following duties:* (i) actively lead the team in warm-up, warm-down, and daily stretching activity; (ii) ensuring that the team is functioning as one unit at practice, before and after, and in games, and on trips; (iii) bring issues that are potentially threatening to the team's welfare to the coaching staff; and (iv) ensuring that the entire team is ready for practices & games on-time and maintaining focus on the tasks at hand.

PRACTICES / GAMES

Practice will begin no later than July 15. Between July 15 and September 15 we will, when possible, practice outside (either Evendale Recreation Center or Montgomery Swim & Tennis Club). After September 15 and when weather otherwise prevents outdoor polo, we will train indoors at either St X; U.C.; XU; or Walnut Hills.

In July and August 2013, we will follow the following practice schedule:

- Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday: 8:15– 10:00pm (MSTC); and
- Saturday 8:00 – 10:00 am (MSTC).

After Labor Day, our schedule will be varied. Plan on 2 additional weeks at MSTC at a time immediately after school (athletes will need to find their own transportation): 4:15 – 6:00 pm. And the final 4 weeks of the program (September 15 – October 15) we will likely share mornings with swimming teams at St X (6:00 – 7:30 am).

We will participate in the following tournaments and games:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Team(s)</u>
August 16-17	Napoleon, Ohio High School	All
August 23-24	Milford High School	All
August 30-31	Mason High School Tournament	All
Sept. 7-8	Worthington High School Ohio Cup	All
Sept. 10	@ Milford	
Sept. 13-14	Toledo St Francis Tournament	All
Sept. 17	@ Mason	
Sept. 20-21	Princeton High School	All
Sept. 24	@ Princeton	
Sept. 28	Upper Arlington / St Charles	UA (V) / St C (JV)
Oct. 1	@ Sycamore	All
Oct. 4-5	Milford	All

Oct. 9	@ Upper Arlington	V
Oct. 11-12	Toledo St Francis	JV
Oct. 18-19	South Regionals – Mason, Ohio	V
Oct. 25-26	State Championship – Mason, Ohio	V

TRAVEL

We will compete in several out of town tournaments. Athletes (2-4 per room) that choose to stay in a team hotel are responsible for paying a hotel fee each weekend. This fee covers the price of the athlete's rooms. **ATHLETES ARE EXPECTED TO CONDUCT THEMSELVES IN A MANNER REFLECTING THEIR REPRESENTATION OF ST XAVIER HIGH SCHOOL AND ITS VALUES WHILE WE ARE TRAVELING.** Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the team or more. Parents traveling with the teams are responsible for making their own reservations and payment arrangements. Athletes may choose to stay with their parents during an overnight trip.

END OF SEASON

We will conclude the formal part of our season with a Team banquet at the school cafeteria. Awards, as appropriate, will be presented to deserving athletes.

SPIRITWEAR

We will work with a parent volunteer to secure team spiritwear.

PAST AWARD WINNERS

Second Team All-State

Cameron Young - 2012

Ohio All-State Honorable Mention

Chris Hayes – 2011

Jake Wetserkamp – 2012

Most valuable

Chris Hayes, 2011

Cameron Young, 2012

Doc C Award

Ben Hopper, 2012

Summary of the Rules of Water Polo

The objective of water polo is to throw or swim the ball into position to score a goal on your opponent while defending against it doing the same. A team consists of 6 field players and a goalie.

Hands, Feet, and Goals:

Field players may only use one hand (at a time) to handle the ball. The goalie may use both. No one may strike the ball with a closed fist.

Field players may not rest or push off of the bottom or sides of the pool (when doing so creates advantage or affects play). Away from the action, a player may rest a foot on the bottom of a shallow pool. Feet may not make contact with the bottom when passing, shooting, defending, or blocking the ball. The goalie may use the bottom of the pool.

In an all deep pool, the goals measure the same height and length (4' x 8'). In a deep/shallow pool, the shallow end goal is heightened to offset the goalie's ability to stand.

Time:

A game consists of four 7-minute periods. Teams will typically alternate ends of the pool in each period. There is a 2 minute break after the 1st and 3rd periods and a 5-minute break at half time. Each team is allowed three time-outs.

Play begins with a "swim off" to a ball dropped by the referee at midpool. With each score, play resumes with the team that was scored upon taking possession of the ball at midpool.

Fouls:

There are many "fouls" in water polo. They are an important element of the strategy. Much of the team's effort will often go into inducing its opponents to commit fouls.

There are two types of fouls: ordinary (minor) fouls (which are designated by a single whistle and account for approximately 80% of the whistles during the game) and major (exclusion) fouls, which are designated by two toots on the whistle. The fouls/whistles don't typically equate to a stop in the action. Many times they indicate need for seamless reaction. The best players anticipate the whistle and/or react to it without delay.

With each foul/infraction, one or both referees will blow their whistle and point their arm in the direction of the ball (e.g., if a defensive player commits an infraction, the whistle will blow and the referee will point in the direction that the offensive team was proceeding). The referee's

rule interpretations and vision skills “vary,” so players must adjust to the subtleties and idiosyncrasies of various officials.

Fouls may result in loss-of-possession giving the opponent a free-throw (the ball and a reasonable time to pass, pop the ball to oneself, dribble-swim with-it) or a foul may result in a player ejection or penalty shot.

For a free-throw, the ball must be touched by a second player on the same team before a shot can be taken on the goal, unless the foul occurs outside the 5-meter line, in which case the person with the free throw may take an immediate shot. In general, a defensive foul is not called if calling it would negate an offensive advantage.

Loss of possession fouls include:

- touching the ball with two hands
- pushing off the pool bottom, wall or another player to gain an advantage
- taking or having a held-ball forced underwater
- off sides (offensive player inside the 2-meter line ahead of or without the ball);
- swimming over a player.

When a foul is called, the ball may be put in play at the point of foul, or at any point farther away from the goal being attacked, by the nearest offensive player.

Defensive players **must not** touch the ball before it is put into play and must be aware that the ball may be shot after a free-throw outside the 5-meter line.

Ejections (20 seconds of game time) are assessed for

- fouling an offensive player from behind (determined in relationship to the goal being attacked);
- interference with a free-throw;
- field player blocking with two hands outside of the 5-meter area;
- unsportsmanlike conduct; and
- illegal entry (an ejected player must re-enter from the ejection area at the referee's signal without using the wall or bottom).

A player with 3 20-second ejections is expelled from the game.

Game Misconduct (or Brutality) – A brutality is called when a player kicks or strikes (or attempts to kick or strike) an opponent or official with malicious intent. A player can also be excluded for Misconduct for disrespect to other players, the referees or acting in a behavior that disrespects the game. The player who is charged with a brutality is excluded for the rest of the game.

A 5-meter penalty shot (one-on-one vs. the goalie) is awarded when:

- a shooter facing the goal inside the 5-meter area is fouled from behind and the referee feels that the foul took away a goal or scoring opportunity; or
- if a shot is illegally prevented (off the bottom, field player blocking with two hands inside of the 5-meter area, or the goalie taking the ball away by bringing the ball underwater.)

The coach may select any player to take the penalty shot.

Shot Clock / Man Up Time

There is a 35 second shot clock and ejections (leading to man up situations) that last 20 seconds. The shot clock:

- starts when a player takes possession of the ball at the beginning of the period;
- stops on every whistle;
- restarts when the ball is put into play; and
- is reset for a change of possession, a shot, a goal, an exclusion foul, penalty foul, neutral throw, and a goal throw. It is not reset for a timeout.

When the shot clock is “under 10” we will look to get a shot. When the shot clock is “under 5,” we’ll take only a good, high percentage shot. Otherwise, like hockey, we’ll “dump” the ball (throw is to an open area) deep into the other team’s defensive zone and retreat to our goal and play defense.

2 and 5 meter Lines

Cones or other markers on the pool deck will mark the goal line, the 2 meter line, and the 5 meter line. A ball that travels beyond the end line is out. An offensive player cannot enter the area between the goal line and 2 meter line unless the ball is also in that. A goalie who comes out of the goal beyond the 5 meter line may not stand or use 2 hands.

Informative links regarding water polo are: USA Water Polo <http://www.usawaterpolo.com>; Water Polo Planet <http://www.waterpoloplanet.com>; “A Spectator’s Guide to Water Polo” <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam/guide/home.html>