

Outcomes Sought for u9-u10's

At this age, coaching focus must be on the very basic elements of waterpolo. The fundamentals need to be taught in such a way that the players learn the basics, without necessarily doing repeat drills for long periods. All games at this level should still be Flippa ball /Splash Polo.

At the end of the u10 phase players should be able to:

- Tread water
- Swim effectively
- Catch and pass a junior size ball (not necessarily catch with 1 hand)
- Swim with / dribble the ball
- Pick the ball up correctly off the water
- Begin to understand the benefits of using a teammate in space

Drills that should be used to achieve these aims include:

- Zig-Zag and Stop Start swimming (See also GS Page 1)
- Treading water and sculling (GS Page 1&2)
- Catch and Pass (SP Lesson 1&2)
- Dribbling (GS Page 3)
- Picking up the Ball (GS Page 3)
- Changing Direction (GS Page 3)
- Using teammates (SP lesson 6)

KEY

General Skills = GS
Splash Polo = SP
Coaching Manual Level 2 = CM2
Coaching Manual Level 3 = CM3

Outcomes Sought for u11-u12's.

At this age players are required to master the fundamentals of the game. Drills are not to be repeated for long periods, with a high proportion of game type situations used in the learning process. For the u11's games should still be Flippa ball/ Splash polo. At the u12 level the players can begin to be extended to full polo in a 25 meter pool.

At the end of the u12 phase the players should be able to:

- Swim strongly
- Tread water strongly
- Catch and pass (a junior size ball) with one hand accurately over short distances
- Be able to pick the ball up off the water cleanly
- Pass on the water 12m
- Swim head up
- Dribble the ball while swimming in a zig zag
- Position their body correctly in the water (hovercraft)

U12's moving to u13's must have knowledge of (but will not be expected to have mastered) the skills of:

- Defending 1 on 1
- Fouling and Earning the Foul correctly
- Tight marking in the lanes
- Have begun to shoot correctly
- Ball side swimming
- Fetch and Carry up the right hand side of the pool
- Understand the mechanics of a cross-pass goal
- Be able to incorporate a breaststroke kick into their treading water

Heavy emphasis should be placed at this age on passing and catching drills. The following should be used in achieving the expected outcomes.

- Various Swimming Drills
- Treading water and sculling (GS Page 1&2)
- Dribbling (GS Page 3)
- Picking up the Ball (GS Page 3)
- **Catch and Pass (SP Lesson 1,2&5; GS Pages 4,5&6)**
- Right side pool use (SP Lessons 7&10; GS Page 15)
- Press Defense and 1-on-1 Marking (GS Pages 8,9 and 12)
- Shooting and Cross Pass shooting (SP Lessons 3,4,6,8&9; GS Page 7)
- Offensive driving/Ball side swimming (GS Page 11 – Objective 2)

KEY

General Skills = GS
Splash Polo = SP
Coaching Manual Level 2 = CM2
Coaching Manual Level 3 = CM3

Outcomes Sought for u13's

Before moving on these players are required to have mastered the skills of catching and passing over short and medium distances. Drills can begin to be extended over longer periods and not all practices need to end with the players part-taking in a game. At this age players should now be playing proper polo albeit in a 25 meter pool. Players can also begin swimming training as a part of their fitness for the game.

At the end of the u13 period the players must have

- Mastered catching and passing over a short distance (2m - 6m with a junior size ball)
- Be able to use breaststroke legs and eggbeater kick interchangeably
- Be able to pass over a distance of 15m
- Fouling and Earning the Foul correctly
- Defend effectively 1 on 1
- Mastered the skill of tight lane marking
- Passing and catching under pressure
- Understand the basics of shot blocking
- Set up the D/Arc, and understand the importance of a correct set-play formation
- Shoot and hit numbers on the shooting boards
- Ball side swimming
- Fetch and Carry up the right hand side of the pool

KEY

General Skills = GS

Splash Polo = SP

Coaching Manual Level 2 = CM2

Coaching Manual Level 3 = CM3

At this age players should also have knowledge of/be able to (but not have mastered):

- 3-3 Man-up
- Passing with their weak hand
- Ladder drop on defense
- Ladder pass up the pool quickly
- Begin to understand Zone defense
- Begin to understand the importance of physicality at change of possession

The following should be used in achieving the expected outcomes:

- Various Swimming Drills
- Treading water and sculling (GS Page 1&2)
- Dribbling (GS Page 3)
- Picking up the Ball (GS Page 3)
- **Catch and Pass (SP Lesson 1,2&5; GS Pages 4,5&6 Esp under pressure; CM2 Pages 45-48)**
- Right side pool use (SP Lessons 7&10; GS Page 15; CM2 Pages 4-7)
- Press Defense (GS Pages 8,9 and 12; CM2 Page 53-55&59-60)
- Individual defending and Shot Blocking (GS Pages 8&9; CM2 Pages 62-75)
- Shooting and Cross Pass shooting (SP Lessons 3,4,6,8&9; GS Page 7; CM2 Pages 49-52)
- Offensive driving/Ball side swimming (GS Page 11 – Objective 2; CM2 Pages 23&33-44)
- Set Play Attack (GS Page 10; CM2 Pages 20-26)
- Fouling and earning the foul correctly
- Zone Defense (GS Pages 13&14; CM2 Page 53&60)
- Ladder and Split Defense
- Change of Possession/ Transition Counter attack (CM2 Pages 4-7)
- 3-3 Man-up (GS Page 16; CM2 Pages 82-86)

Outcomes sought for u14's

Before moving on these players are required to have mastered the skills of shot-blocking, shooting from 5-7m, catching with their weak hand and Counter attack correctly. At this age players should be exposed to playing in a 30 meter pool, and should begin playing with a full size water polo ball.

Many of the catching and passing drills will need to be repeated at this level as the ball size increases and players will have to get used to the bigger size.

At the end of the u14 period the players must have/be able to:

- Perform quick transitions on change of possession
- Counter attack correctly to 2m (ball up the right hand side of the pool)
- Catch with their weak hand
- Mastered the ability to ladder drop on defense
- Perform a zone defense (static)
- Block shots effectively
- Move the ball around the D/Arc quickly
- Play 3-3 Man-up and Man-down

KEY

General Skills = GS
Splash Polo = SP
Coaching Manual Level 2 = CM2
Coaching Manual Level 3 = CM3

At this stage players are expected to have knowledge of /be able to (but not have mastered):

- M-Zone defense
- 4-2 Man up and Man-down
- Ball side driving from the D/Arc
- Screen a team mate from either the wing or top positions
- Shoot using a t-shot or push shot

The following should be used in achieving the expected outcomes. **NB**, players will have recently moved to playing with a full size ball, and thus extra time needs to be spent on Passing, catching and ball familiarisation.

- **Catch and Pass (SP Lesson 1,2&5; GS Pages 4,5&6 Esp under pressure; CM2 Pages 45-48) Performing the drills with their weak hand too.**
- Change of Possession/ Transition Counter attack (CM2 Pages 4-19; CM3 Pages 2-12)
- Individual defending and Shot Blocking (GS Pages 8&9; CM2 Pages 62-75)
- Zone Defense (GS Pages 13&14; CM2 Page 53&60)
- Ladder Drop and Split defense (CM2 Page 61)
- M-Zone Defense (CM3 Pages 52-54,57&58)
- 3-3 Man-up (GS Page 16; CM2 Pages 82-86)
- 3-3 Man-down (CM2 Pages 92-96)
- 4-2 Man up (GS Pages 15&16; CM2 76-82, 84-86)
- 4-2 Man Down (GS Page 16; CM2 87-92)
- Individual Offense using Ball side driving, and screens (CM3 Pages 13-35)
- T-shot or Push shot

Outcomes Sought for u15's

Before moving on these players are required to have mastered the skills of Counter attack (including the transition on change of possession), perform screens on set play attack, play 4-2 man up. At this level, there needs to be a major emphasis on

At the end of the u15 period the players must have/be able to:

- Perform quick transitions on change of possession
- Counter attack and Counter defense
- Mastered the ability to perform a zone on defense (static and rush)
- Know how to M-zone
- Use post variations for 4-2 Man-up
- Defend 4-2 Man-down
- Play 3-3 Man-up and man-down
- Ball side driving from the D/Arc
- Screen from any position on set play attack
- Perform a Pick
- Shoot whilst swimming using a t-shot or push shot

At this stage players are expected to have knowledge of /be able to (but not have mastered):

- Wing Drop
- Double Drop defense
- Screen anywhere in the pool (Impromptu picks)
- Perform a back shot

The following should be used in achieving the expected outcomes:

- 4-2 Man-up (CM3 Pages 68-84)
- 4-2 Man-Down (CM3 Pages 85-91)
- 3-3 Man-Up (CM2 (Pages 82-86)
- 3-3 Man Down (CM2 Pages 92-96)
- Counter Attack and Defense (CM2 Pages 2-11; CM3 Pages 50-51)
- Zone Defense (static and rush) (CM3 Pages 52-57)
- M-Zone (CM3 Page 58 Defense D)
- Wing Drop (CM3 Page 59 Defense E)
- Double Drop Defense
- Mid pool picks and screens (CM3 Pages 30-35)
- Shot variations (backshot, pushshot, T-shot)

KEY

General Skills = GS
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Outcomes sought for u17 - u19's

This age group is difficult because there may be big difference in boys sizes when they join this group as u16's and are included in the u19 age-group. The u16 level should be seen as an opportunity for weaker players to go back and re-learn and practice the skills they are weak at, and for stronger players to develop through exposure to a higher level of the game. There should be heavy emphasis on the basics like catching, passing, shooting and body position, before players should be allowed to move on to the more technical aspects of gameplay.

At the end of the u19 period the players must have learned/be able to

- Effectively perform any of the 5 defenses (Tight mark, Ladder/Split drop, Zone [static, rush, and M], Wing Drop and Double Drop.
- Effectively break Zone Defenses, and be able to use any number of attacking strategies (Conventional Centre Forward/ Double Centre/ Counter Attack/ Rotational CF/Driving Game/Overloaded Left side/Wide Halves).
- Pick and screen anywhere in the pool, and convert that advantage
- Move effectively in and out of 3-3 and 4-2 man up
- Shoot with a variety of shots
- Pass at least 25m accurately

Drills that should now begin to be used would be Game play situations. I.e Practicing offense against various defenses. Ensuring that players know how when to drive against a drop, and where the ball should be moved to. At this point players should be able to get into a routine as to what is going to happen when an opposing team plays a certain style against them. The idea is for the reaction to that defense to become automatic for any player in the team, with each player knowing and being able to fulfill their role. In a similar way, defense needs to be practiced as a team. Scrimmage and half pool games should be used to practice the various defensive strategies to allow players to get used to their role in the teams' defense.

A great deal of Man-down and Man-up should be played. Missed Shots into Counter Attack, and Kickout scrimmage games (CM2 page 86) should be used to allow players to become more aware of the options open to them during 5 on 6 and 6 on 5 play.

Special Plays (CM3 Pages 92-103) can be taught if the players' skill levels and knowledge base are high enough to allow them to understand and perform the plays effectively.

KEY

General Skills = GS
Splash Polo = SP
Coaching Manual Level 2 = CM2
Coaching Manual Level 3 = CM3

Outcomes for Specialist Positions

Goal Keepers

Centre Forwards

Centre Backs