

# North Idaho Water Polo Club Handbook

## Welcome

Welcome to the North Idaho Water Polo Club! We are excited to have you join our team. Along with the opportunities and excitement of being part of our water polo community come expectations and responsibilities. This Handbook will give you a background on our Club along with explanations as to what the expectations are of our players, parents and coaches and their respective responsibilities. We are representatives of not only our Club and are expected to act accordingly at all times. As a first step, we ask that all new players and their parents review this Handbook to familiarize themselves with those expectations and responsibilities. If you have further questions beyond this handbook, our coaches and staff will be happy to discuss them with you.

## History

Serving as a fixture in the Idaho Water Polo community, the North Idaho Water Polo (NIWP) club strives to be one of the best clubs in the Pacific Northwest. Offering teams for all ages and abilities our coaches strive to develop strong competitive athletes through progressive skill development and conditioning. Some highlights of the program over the last several years.

- 2011 – High School/Masters Water Polo Class started at the Kroc
- 2012-2013 -- Coeur d'Alene High School Water Polo program initiated as a sport, supported by the Kroc. The CHS Water Polo team (consisting of just 11 players total) participates in the Idaho State Water Polo championships and wins the game in overtime to become the Idaho State Water Polo Champions.
- 2013-2016 – The CHS Water Polo team continues to grow, with 25 players on the team in 2016. The team continues to improve and wins the Idaho State Championship four years in a row.
- 2017 – The Kroc introduces a Junior Water Polo class to give younger students a chance to learn and play the sport.
- 2017-2018 – The Kroc works with the Water Polo Club to fully integrate with the Kroc Center itself, providing more opportunities to play and grow the sport within the greater Coeur d'Alene area. The club is renamed the Kroc CDA Water Polo Club.
- 2017 – The Kroc CDA program continues to grow, with 35 high school players and 10 Junior Water Polo players.
- 2022 – The Kroc CDA Club continues its successful run of championships, winning the Idaho State Championship for 9 years in a row.
- 2018-2022 – Our Junior/Development Polo program continues to grow and now has over 30 participants. In order to help focus on the skills and abilities of our younger players, the Junior program was divided into a Junior team for beginner players ages 7-11 and a Development team for ages 10-14 plus new high school players who want to learn the basics before moving on to our High School team.

- 2023/2024 – Growth of the program allows the club to become independent and North Idaho Water Polo club is formed in the winter of 2023/2024. The club continues to partner with the Kroc Center and its practices are based there.

Many of our high school players have gone on to play at the college level, with many players joining collegiate club teams, including the University of Idaho, the University of Washington, TCU, BYU, Sierra, Chapman, Biola and players joining Division II and III water polo programs (Fresno Pacific, Austin College). Other players have also gone on to coach college teams.

## **Team Levels and Practices**

What to expect during a normal practice for each level of players.

- High School (ages 13-18): The North Idaho High School Water Polo Club offers year-round play with a scheduled High School season from November through February. Players will learn and perfect skills, speed, and endurance in the water through a variety of training techniques. Players will gain playing experience in tournaments and inter-squad games throughout the season. Depending on the number of players participating, players will be placed on Varsity or Junior Varsity teams per coaches' decisions. Varsity/JV decisions will be based on attributes such as attendance, attitude and skill levels with a goal of putting together a strong, cohesive and competitive team. Coaches will determine tournament teams. Additional season and tournament fees may apply. *Required Skills: Comfortably tread in deep water and ability to swim 200 yards nonstop.*

Note: Players of college age can attend NIWP high school practices. The club has found their participation helpful to build player's skills and abilities. Given college players higher levels of skills and size, they are expected to show extra care and consideration when playing against others of lesser ability. Failure to do so will cause them to be removed from participating in the high school practices.

- Masters (ages 19+): The Water Polo Masters team consists of men and women with varied experience. Some members have played at collegiate and national levels, while others are just starting. Regardless of your experience, you can expect to be challenged while being equipped with the tools necessary for growth within the sport. Players will have the opportunity to play in some tournaments throughout the year. High school students can also participate in the Masters practices, games and tournaments. *Required Skills: Comfortably tread in deep water and ability to swim 200 yards nonstop.*

## **North Idaho Water Polo Safety**

The safety of our players is of the utmost concern of the parents, coaches and Board of Directors of NIWP. In consideration of this, the club has instituted the following procedures to help ensure the safety of our players both in the pool and during trips to various tournaments and other events:

- 1) All coaches will be required to be certified as a USAWP coach. In order to be a USAWP certified coach, individuals must go through a number of processes, including:
  - a. A background check, including background check for any felonies and misdemeanors involving drugs, alcohol, misbehavior involving minors, destruction of property, harm or violence towards others and a number of other potential offenses.
  - b. Certification in First Aid/CPR
  - c. Certification in SafeSport (prevention of sexual, emotional and physical misconduct as well as bullying, hazing and harassment).
  - d. Knowledge of USAWP's head injuries protocol
- 2) Coaches will also be vetted by a NIWP Safety Committee of parents and coach(es) prior to hiring.
- 3) Any safety concerns (including physical, mental or behavioral) involving players or coaches should be forwarded to the Head Coach or any member of the Safety Committee for further review. The club will follow the USAWP BASS (Bokrim Athlete Safety System) program to assure that our athletes remain safe from any sexual related abuse while under the care of our club.
- 4) Players who have a concern for their safety (or the safety of others) should talk to a coach or parent and discuss their concern.

## **Tournament Teams**

Tournament teams will be selected by the coaching staff. Considerations for players will include the type and competitive level of the tournament, player's abilities in the water, experience, participation at practices and attitude towards other team members.

The North Idaho Water Polo Club participates in a number of tournaments and games throughout the year. These include high school only, college and masters tournaments. Single games may include home and away games during a morning, afternoon or evening. Team members are expected to arrive (either on Kroc vans or with a parent) 30-60 minutes before game time. The game will include a warm-up period, game strategy discussion and the game itself, which usually takes about 1 hour. Following the game, players can shower and change before loading back onto the vans. The team will often stop for a meal before heading back to The Kroc.

Tournaments will normally include staying overnight at a motel or hotel. All minors must stay under the supervision of team coaches and chaperones at all times (no leaving the hotel at any

time without express approval from the head coach). Minor age players must also stay at the tournament site at all times unless given express permission by the head coach. Any minor found leaving the tournament or hotel without permission will face repercussions including not being able to participate in future games to being sent home at parent's cost. Players must also follow team behavior rules as described below at all times when on representing the North Idaho Water Polo Club.

## **Club Communication**

The club uses a number of methods to communicate to players and parents. Communications include updates on practice times, game and tournament information, other opportunities to play water polo, team social events, fundraising and other club activities.

Email: The primary means of communication is a weekly email that is sent out to all parents and students who have forwarded their email address to the head coach (contact Mark Collingham at [mcollingham@gmail.com](mailto:mcollingham@gmail.com)).

Texting/Team Information/Team Pictures: A texting app called "TeamSnap" is used to send out quick, short reminders and updates (e.g. Practice schedule changes). We recommend all players join Teamsnap to always have the latest information on practices/tournaments/etc. You can join the North Idaho Water Polo Club group on TeamSnap by sending your name, email and phone number to the head coach. Parents are strongly encouraged to join TeamSnap so they can also get all updates. Participants must be current players or parents/guardians of players.

A note to players and parents/guardians/chaperones: NIWP has a policy of prohibiting private communications from adults to minors (i.e. private communication via texts, Snapchat, Instagram or other messaging and email services solely between the adult and minor). Any communications that are necessary must be copied to a parent or another coach to assure all communications of this type are appropriate and transparent. This includes communication between adult players (ages 18+) and minor players.

## **Coaching Staff**

- Mark Collingham: School - WSU (B.S. & M.S. in Chem. Eng.) Worked for a number of firms in the Circuit Board and Hybrid Circuits Manufacturing Industry as a Senior Chemical Engineer and Operations Manager. Swimming/Water Polo Background: Tri-Cities Channel Cats Swim Team (1972-1980), WSU Swim Team, Div. 1 (1980-1981), WSU Water Polo Club (1980-1986), Player/Coach for Milwaukee Water Polo (1987-1993), Player/Coach for Old Pueblo Water Polo (1993-2011), Head Coach for U. of Arizona Water Polo Club (1994-1995), Head Coach for CHS, Kroc CDA & North Idaho Water Polo Club (2011-present).
- Peter Neirinckx: School: MIT; Swimming/Water Polo Background: MIT Water Polo (1986-1989), Boston Metro Polo Club (1990-2011), Asst. Coach for MIT Water Polo, Head Coach for Wellesley College Water Polo Club (2008). Coach for CHS, Kroc CDA & North Idaho Water Polo Club (2013-present).

- Katelyn Smith: School: San Diego State University BA in International Business, NYU BS in Nursing. Professional: Registered Nurse in the Emergency Dept. at Kootenai Health. Swimming/Water Polo: Chehalem Water Polo and Swim Team 1994-1999, Newberg High School Water Polo and Swim Team 1999-2002, San Diego State Water Polo Div. 1 2002-2003, OMBAC Masters Water Polo 2007-2008, 2011-2014, NYU Club Water Polo 2009-2011, Kroc CDA Water Polo Club (2017-present).
- Doug Keese: 1998-current-L.A.Co.F.D Ocean Lifeguard 2001-current, Jr. Lifeguard Instructor (L.A.Co.F.D.). Swimming/Water Polo: 1983-1990, SPPY Swim Team 1990-1994, PVPHS Swim/Water Polo Teams 1994, U. of Redlands Water Polo 1996, JKC Aquatics Director 1997-1999, Miraleste Swim/Water Polo Coach 2017-current. (Volunteer Assistant Coach), Asst. Coach Kroc CDA Water Polo Club (2016-present).
- Israel Morrow: School - CSU San Bernardino (B.A. History), Ohio University (M.S. Athletic Administration) Swimming/Water Polo: Canyon Lake Aquatics Team (1986), Riverside Aquatics Association (1986-1990), Elsinore High School Swim Team (1989-1992), Mt. San Antonio College Water Polo (1992-93)/Swim (1993), Silverwood SRA State Lifeguard Water Polo Club (1992-93), Extreme Aquatics Assistant Coach (2000), Lake Elsinore Lakeside High School Swim Team and Water Polo Head Coach (2013-2021), Kroc CDA Water Polo Club (2023-Present)

## **North Idaho Water Polo Parents Club**

North Idaho Water Polo plans to have a Parents Committee to help the water polo club grow and give further opportunities to its athletes, both in the water and externally. Activities of the Parents Committee include assisting with road trips and tournaments, including chaperones, van drivers and setting up meals, hotels, etc for tournaments; providing social events for student players such as team dinners and other activities (pool parties, roller skating, movie nights, etc); fundraising to help offset club costs and provide additional opportunities for club members to play; help provide team gear such as t-shirts, team uniforms, swimsuits, etc. Other Parents Committee activities may be added going forward. All parents who would like to help work with our players must complete the volunteer process and become Kroc volunteers. Please contact Mark Collingham for details on the volunteer process.

## **Volunteer Work**

Volunteer help is crucial for the success of our program. Without our great volunteers, our program would be greatly diminished and we may even not have a club at all. All parents and athletes are expected to volunteer for the club during the year. Parents should plan on volunteering for a minimum of 10 hours/year. Many of our parents go far beyond this and help out at numerous events throughout the year. Volunteer work can include the following: Driving players to tournaments, assisting with meals at tournaments, participating on the Board of Directors (e.g. President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer), helping as one of the team directors (e.g. Social Director, Purchasing Director, Marketing/Recruiting Director, Fundraising Director) and helping out with various needs and activities throughout the year. If you are unsure how to help, please contact Coach Collingham or one of the directors or Volunteer Coordinator. Parents may

also elect to pay a fee in lieu of volunteering. The fee is \$25/hour for any volunteering hours less than 10 hours/year. For families who participate in the NIWP program less than 6 months/year, volunteer work will be prorated to 1 hour/month. Parents can update their volunteer hours or pay their fee on the NIWP website.

## **Fundraising**

Students should also plan on helping the team. Primarily, this will be done through our various fundraising activities (Eggbeater-athon, finding sponsors, etc). Fundraising is critical to the success of our team as travel can be expensive and some families may not be able to attend without the proceeds from our fundraising activities. Additional opportunities to help the team include the annual Red Kettles event, assisting the Kroc with volunteer efforts, etc. All players are expected to raise at least \$200 in the annual Eggbeater-athon and to participate in other fundraisers. Understanding that families and player's time is important, the club does not expect to have more than one or two significant fundraisers throughout the course of a year. Smaller fundraisers may occasionally occur (such as fundraising dinner at a local restaurant). Families may also elect to donate a check for \$200 if they choose or are unable to participate in the fundraising activities.

# **North Idaho Water Polo Club Code of Conduct**

## **Participation is a Privilege**

Membership in North Idaho Water Polo and its associated events are a privilege. Parents, athletes, and volunteers of North Idaho Water Polo act as representatives of our sport and organization. Parents, athletes, and volunteers are expected to adhere to the highest standards of conduct and to comply with all rules and North Idaho Water Polo. Violations may result in disciplinary action, which may include temporary or permanent removal from participation in North Idaho Water Polo Club activities.

**North Idaho Water Polo recognizes the value and special significance of participating in tournaments. There are many benefits to travel including:**

- Gaining experience through participation in a higher level of competition
- Building team camaraderie
- Seeing and playing against different styles of play
- Showcasing our club and athletes to the outside water polo communities

As representatives of the North Idaho Water Polo Club we have adopted guidelines that all athletes must follow during all club activities. Coaches also must adhere to the club's USAWP BASS (Bokrim Athlete Safety System) requirements regarding keeping all players safe from any physical or sexual abuse.

## **Team Behavior Rules**

At the coach's discretion, athletes may be sent home at parents' additional expense if they violate serious behavior rules such as but not limited to: Drugs, alcohol, illegal activities, tobacco or vaping products, fighting, unsafe behavior, intimidation or bullying of any player, coach or volunteer or having members of the opposite sex in their room at any time. Use of language and/or behavior of a sexual nature, suggesting violence and/or social intimidation of a teammate, coach, or Kroc representative is also strictly forbidden.

## **Coach, Volunteer and Athlete Expectations**

- The North Idaho Water Polo club considers athlete safety the top priority when athletes are traveling.
- We will treat all members of our team and all other teams, including coaches, parents, officials, volunteers and other athletes with respect and dignity, displaying good sportsmanship at all times.
- Profanity is not allowed at any time, including games.

- Athletes must help set up and tear down the pool for all practices. Do not leave the pool area until the pool is reset after practice without a coach's approval.
- Athletes are expected to use and respond to team approved methods of communications, including the "Teamsnap" app, the CDA Water Polo Facebook page and email, subject to parental approval. Not responding (e.g. not indicating whether a player will attend an event, submitting any required fees or paperwork) to requests may cause the player to lose the privilege of participating in an event. All communications between coaches and volunteers to/from students using these media must be directly related to approved North Idaho Water Polo club activities only.
- Athletes are to act responsibly at all times in any public places.
- No player may go anywhere alone or leave the hotel without the express permission of the head coach.
- Hotel rooms must be kept neat and organized. Any spills or messes must be cleaned up immediately. All trash and food must be in proper receptacles when leaving.
- We are guests of the hotel. Footwear and proper attire should be worn in the public areas of the hotel. Our reputation for future stays by NIWP is on the line.
- No single adult coach, volunteer or parent shall be in a closed room with a single student/player during any North Idaho Water Polo club activity or trip (a parent/guardian with their own athlete is exempted).
- Athletes are to be punctual and strictly follow all curfews and quiet hours.
- Any problems must be communicated to the Coach immediately.
- Further coach, parent, volunteer and athlete requirements may be instituted at a later date as needed.

## **Team Activities**

- The head coach and assistants will determine all water polo and non-water polo activities during the trip.
- Parents and athletes should remember that team activities take priority over any personal agendas.
- Water polo trips are not vacations. Having fun is a part of all trips but water polo is the purpose of North Idaho Water Polo club trips.
- Athletes should wear appropriate attire at any team activity such as games, flights, rides, restaurants and other activities.

## **Lodging**

- If athletes are sharing rooms, and someone leaves early, that person is still responsible for his/her share of the total cost of the room.
- Team meetings should be in a common area of the hotel whenever possible.



## Preparation

Water polo is a demanding sport. Be prepared to do your best at every game. Below are further expectations of the team:

- Come to each game mentally and physically prepared to do your best.
- Arrive prior to the prescribed time to allow for all warm-up activities. All athletes must be on deck in their suits and any other needed gear prior to the beginning of practice or will be considered tardy.
- Notify the coach via email or text if you cannot attend a practice that has not been previously excused using the “Teamsnap” app.
- Arrive at games well rested. Avoid late nights or spend-the-night parties on the night before a game or tournament. Many water polo games have been "forfeited" the night before the match. Fatigue, as a result of too little sleep, raises the risk of injury.
- Build up body fluids before the game. Start drinking additional water and or sports drinks the day before the game, and try to take in as much proper fluid as possible up to and during game time.
- Eat sensibly, especially on the day of a game. For instance, heavy meals, excess sugar or carbonated drinks before a game will shorten a player's stamina.
- A pre-game warm-up to get an abundant flow of blood to the muscles is important to help maximize game ability and to also minimize the chance for injury. A short swim set followed by passing and light shooting helps to accomplish this goal and will be done as a team whenever possible. A post game warm down is also helpful to eliminate lactic acid from your muscles so you will not be as sore for your next game.
- Treat minor injuries promptly and properly. Let your coaches know of any injuries immediately.
- **Let your coach know before practice or a game of any condition that might affect your ability to play.** Seek early medical help for physical problems that persist.

# **The North Idaho Water Polo Code of Conduct & Discipline Policy**

In order to facilitate positive life experiences while participating in North Idaho Water Polo club events and practices, mutual respect between members, guests, and Kroc facility staff is required at all times. Failure to observe these policies will result in disciplinary action and/or termination of membership privileges. Salvation Army/Kroc staff have the right to refuse service to anyone deemed disruptive or abusive.

- Children under the age of 11 must be accompanied in The Kroc Center (by a parent/guardian or a coach if at a practice).
- Refrain from the use of foul language, abusive actions, and inappropriate behavior.
- Lost membership cards must be reported and replaced within 30 days. There is a small fee to replace a membership card.
- No one under the age of 13 is allowed in the Fitness Area unless participating in a Kroc Center program or class. Members 13–15 may use the Fitness Area after successfully passing the Smart Start for Teens program.
- Players should change only in the locker rooms immediately outside the pool area. Cabanas are for the use of adult patrons of the Kroc only.
- Shirt and shoes must be worn in all areas outside of pools and sun deck. No swimwear or wet clothing is allowed outside of aquatic areas. Proper workout attire is required in the fitness area (no street shoes or jeans.) Any clothing, including logos or messages on apparel, must be acceptable in a family setting.
- Bicycles, roller blades, skateboards, scooters or pets (excluding service animals) will not be allowed inside the facility.
- Alcohol and /or drugs are not allowed anywhere on the premises.
- Smoking and /or use of any type of vaping products are prohibited in the facility or on facility grounds.
- Weapons of any kind are not permitted on the premises.
- With exceptions to special dietary restrictions, outside food is not allowed at The Salvation Army Kroc Center unless expressly approved by Kroc staff.
- The Kroc Center reserves the right to terminate membership in response to any immoral or illegal activity by a member.



