

Tamar Canoe Club Canoe Polo - Handout.

(Derived from Victorian Canoe Polo document. Thanks for permission to use.)

Launceston Aquatic Centre, Windmill Hill, Launceston
Wednesday nights (Autumn/Winter).

Further info: <http://tamar.canoe.org.au/canoe-polo/> or Facebook – Tamar Canoe Club, Tasmania

This is intended as a short guide to give people an idea of what Canoe Polo is about. Any questions at all, please contact us via the above details.

Game Overview:

The polo field is typically 25 meters long, and about the width of an 8 lane pool. The goals are in the middle at either end, and are 1 meter high, 1.5 meters across, and suspended 2 meters above the water. There is a referee on both sides of the pool.

Each game of polo goes for 20 minutes, consisting of two halves of 10 minutes each with teams changing ends at ½ time and one minutes break between halves and 4 minutes between games. The first game starts at 7:15pm, with 6 games per night. Teams may have up to 8 players, with 5 players from each team being on the field at any one time.

At the start of each ½ both teams line up on their respective goal lines. The referee will blow a short blast on the whistle to indicate the start of the game, and a player from each team will sprint for the ball which the referee will (hopefully) by then have thrown into the middle (also hopefully) of the field. Teams then try to stick the ball in the back of the net belonging to the other team.. simple eh? The other team will try to stop them by boat tackling, hand tackling, blocking passes and possibly even tickling when the ref isn't watching.

The team that scores the most goals, wins. Told you it was simple.

Equipment

Players are encouraged to be ready to get on the water at the end of the game prior to their own to select gear and warm up. Players using hire gear whom are not playing, not about to play, or who have just played are requested to make their gear available to those players about to play. After your game has finished please leave the pool playing field immediately to get the next game's players on the water, shake hands and congratulate teammates/opposition off the water. If you have your own gear, then I'm happy for you to use the practice area after 8pm (have fun, try stuff and don't be afraid to ask questions).

Playing equipment consists of helmet with face guard, Personal Flotation Device (PFD), spray deck, paddle and kayak. Please ensure that the helmet fits snugly with the face mask covering the chin. Boats should fit you in a way best described as comfortably snug, bordering on uncomfortably snug. You get used to it.

When you have finished with your gear, please put it away properly. There are cages where the gear is stored, photos show how it should be packed away.

First time Paddlers:

New paddlers will be taken through their first wet exit prior to their first game. For those not familiar with the term, it refers to getting out of the boat while upside down, and isn't nearly as scary as it sounds. Every person I've taken through this wondered afterwards what on earth they were so worried about. At least your first capsize will be in a warm pool, not a cold river.

Duty:

Please check the draw to see when your team is responsible for setup, packup, Refing or scoring and timekeeping. I've tried to keep it pretty even. Not sure what to do? Please ask. There have been no reported incidents of any of our players biting.

Set up/Pack up: The instructions for Set Up and Pack Up are on the noticeboard. If your team is rostered on for setup, please ensure you are there by 7:00.

Refing: If your team is rostered on for Refing, it means you're team is required to either Referee, or provide a referee. If you are not confident about Refing, ask one of the more experienced players to help you. Please treat the referee's, including those learning to ref, with respect. Without them, we have no sport.

Polo Rules:

This is a very short overview of the rules. For more details, read pages 40 to 56 of the ICF rules available via <http://tamar.canoe.org.au/canoe-polo/>. Click on the section 'Rules' and there are a bunch of links. A picture of the various signals is also included, so hopefully you'll understand why the ref sometimes resembles a teapot shortly before the 'tip me over, pour me out moment'.

Hacking/Dangerous use of paddle: Any contact between your paddle and another player or their equipment (including their boat) is illegal. This includes reaching for the ball across another player's boat, reaching for a ball with your paddle where someone else is reaching with their hands, or blocking a pass or shot within arm's reach. This means leaving a healthy safety margin between your paddle and the other players. Basically, if they could reach out and touch your paddle, your paddle is too close. Please remember your paddle has two ends and you are responsible for where both of them are.

Illegal Tackle/Goalie/upside down players: A player may only be tackled when in control of the ball. An illegal boat tackle is one made at 90 degrees to the opposition players boat, or involves contact to the players body or splash deck, or is considered by the referee to just be plain dangerous. Players who are up are upside down cannot be tackled. The goalie cannot be tackled, or have another player tackled into them.

Boundary: Think of the boundary as a wall, when the ball hits it, its considered to be out. The boundary is based on the position of the ball not the player. If the ball goes over the back line/goal line off the defensive team, the attacking team throw the ball in from the corner.

Obstruction/Holding: If you are trying to actively stop someone from going somewhere, and you're not going for the ball, you are probably shepherding, especially if they are going for the ball. In other words, you can't stop someone else from getting to the ball so your team-mate can pick it up, and you can't actively stop someone from trying to get back to their own defensive line. Also, you can't take a paddle stroke using the nose of your opponent's boat to push yourself off; it's really obvious too!

Push Tackling a player: Players can be tackled when in control of the ball. Control of the ball means within arm's reach and on the water, being held, or balanced on the paddle. Hand tackles are permitted in A grade only, and only when it is safe to do so, ie the tackled player is not going to land on a kayak or pool wall.

Free Shot vs Free throw: A free shot penalty applies for any foul against a player. A free throw (ie, not goal shot) applies for all other fouls, for example boundary line. Look for the referees signal.

Restart of play after a goal is scored: When a goal is scored, all players return to their own side of the centre line, and the team that was scored against brings the ball up to the middle. The game is started with a free throw after the refs whistle. In A grade, to reduce delaying tactics, the game can be restarted with two opposition players in the defending half, by signalling the ref by holding the ball aloft, when stationary on the centreline and waiting for the restart whistle. Defending players cannot take part in play until they have returned to their defensive half.

A Note re Unscheduled Swims: Should someone capsize and swim, play will not be halted unless that player is in danger. A substitute player may not be fielded until all of that players equipment is removed from the field, and there is a break in play. If the capsized player can return themselves and all their gear behind the goal line the substitute player may take the field at any time.

The Signals:



House Rules:

Broken? It's sporting equipment and gets a lot of wear and tear, so we expect it to break. Tell us so we can fix or replace it.

Please don't bounce balls on the harsh surfaces – it makes the balls sad.

Please put polo gear away once you have finished with it. Please don't just leave it lying around so that I have to pick up after you - it makes me sad.

What Next? There's heaps of stuff going on

Training:

You always get better if you do as a team!

Tasmanian State Championship:

Normally played October. Competition is a one day club based polo comps. These competitions are heap of fun, and always have a good social atmosphere.

Launceston Comp:

Autumn and Spring seasons.

These are the main competition seasons in the local comp, and run for 10 to 12 weeks, Wednesday (A and B grades) nights.

Autumn season normally runs from April until June and the Spring season from July until October. If you would like to play in these comps, and don't have a team, please contact me as I always have teams looking for players.

State Teams:

Tasmania currently doesn't have any state teams, but If you are really keen and prepared to put in some hard work, a state squad may be put together. The National championships take place over Easter. Come and talk to us for more details if you are interested.