



Men's & Women's Age Group National Team Programs **2024-2025 Season Selection Process**

Water Polo Canada is announcing the selection process for the 2025 Cadet (15U), Youth & Junior National Teams towards the 2024-2025 and subsequent seasons. Plans are for the Junior National Team to be competing at the 20U Junior World Championships, and the Cadet and Youth National Teams to be competing at Cadet and Youth Pan American Championships, respectively. The dates and locations for all events are TBC / TBD.

1. PROJECTED EVENT-SPECIFIC TEAM COMPOSITION / AGE GROUPS:

- Any 15U event-specific National Team for the 2024-2025 season (such as the Teams set to compete in 2025 15U Pan American Championships -if applicable), will be composed of athletes born in 2010 or later
- Any 17U event-specific Youth National Team for the 2024-2025 season (such as the Teams set to compete in 2025 17U Pan American Championships -if applicable), will be composed of athletes born in 2008 or later
- Any 20U event-specific Junior National Team for the 2024-2025 season (such as the Teams set to compete at 2025 20U World Championships -if applicable), will be composed of athletes born in 2005 or later
- For event-specific Age Group National Teams, Water Polo Canada will announce 13 athletes and up to 3 alternates, for each of the six (or more) teams.
- The selection will categorize players based on their position.
- Exceptional athletes may be considered for an older age group.

2. NEW: AGE GROUP NATIONAL TEAMS TALENT POOLS:

WPC is launching a new method for future AGNT Selections, whereby athletes will be selected onto a Talent Pool for their age group in the 2024-2025 season, and athletes selected onto such talent pools will automatically continue to be members of said talent pools year to year until the end of their last Junior (20U) season. WPC will continue to scout and include developing athletes to this talent pool with every new season and

selection period. Teams for specific events will be selected from this talent pool each season.

The AGNTTPs will consist of any athlete eligible to represent Canada who has demonstrated the potential to earn a position on a Water Polo Canada Age Group National Team. Changes to the athlete pools may be made at the discretion of the Head Coach of each of the men's and women's teams; the process for making such changes will be overseen by the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway, subject to approval by the High Performance Director (HPD). Numbers of athletes in each AGNTTP are not finite. An athlete may be part of more than one talent pool concurrently.

There will be 3 distinct AGNTTPs for each age group:

- a Cadet (15U or 16U, depending on the year) AGNTTP
- a Youth (17/18U depending on the year) AGNTTP
- a Junior (19/20U depending on the year) AGNTTP

Active and eligible athletes from a given AGNTTP turning of age to be eligible to compete in the older Age Group will automatically be transferred to and become members of that older AGNTTP.

2.1 CADET ATHLETE TALENT POOL:

WPC is continuing with the Cadet National Team program (15U in year 1, 16U in year 2) inaugurated as a pilot in the 2023-2024 season. WPC now aims to select a broader base of athletes / talent pool for this age group, which will serve as a foundation and as a part of the selection process as these athletes move through their progression in competitive water polo and Age Group National Team programs towards the Senior National Team.

For this purpose, WPC will select an initial talent pool of up to 30 athletes per gender for the 15U age group in 2025, and will seek to provide development opportunities for both an A and a B Team (of up to 15 athletes each) in each gender, with the A Team set to compete at 2025 15U Pan American Championships (TBC), and the B Team also engaging in some appropriate development opportunity, such as a training camp or competition (TBC). WPC will share more detailed plans in relation to these projects prior to the final team selections and announcements in March 2025.

The group of up to 30 athletes per gender identified and selected as the Cadet Talent Pool in the 2024-2025 season will remain as members of the Cadet Talent Pool into the following season, and those talent pool athletes will be eligible for selection onto event specific teams in the following (2025-2026) season. Additional athletes may be added onto this Talent Pool through our usual scouting and identification process throughout the course of each season, including 2025-2026.

You may find below a more detailed explanation of how the respective Age Group National Team Talent Pools will be selected.

2.2 SELECTION OF AGNTPS & EVENT-SPECIFIC TEAMS:

- a. Selection of eligible athletes to any Age Group National Team Talent Pools (or AGNTPs) will be completed using consideration of recommendations from WPC-recognized National Development Centres, of results from the 2023-2024 season at Senior, Junior, Youth and Cadet National Team activities, as well as consideration of domestic competitions and scouting completed by the National Team Coaching staff during the 2024-2025 season. The overall AGNTPs will not be limited to a specific number of athletes and WPC may make additions throughout the course of the 2024-2025 season depending on athlete availability and is reliant on scouting by the Age Group National Team Staff.
- b. Athletes selected to the AGNTPs may be selected to participate in the training camps and competitions of the Age Group National Teams for the 2024-2025 season.
- c. Eligibility will be limited to athletes who meet the Eligibility Requirements as described in this document.
- d. The aggregate of the Cadet, Youth and Junior AGNTPs constitutes WPC's overall Podium Pathway Talent Pool.

2.3 ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS

Athletes must:

- i. Be a registrant in good standing with Water Polo Canada;
- ii. Participate in their local NDC (regional National Development Centre), provincially recognized program, or SNT Training Centre *
- iii. Be a member of their Provincial Team (where applicable) *
- iv. Be competing in the NCL or in the Senior NCL *
- v. Not having any outstanding fees/fines payable to Water Polo Canada, a Provincial Territorial Section or a registered club;
- vi. Be eligible to compete for Canada as per AQUA Rules;
- vii. Hold a valid passport making one eligible to compete for Canada as per AQUA and PAQ Rules (for athletes selected onto AQUA or PAQ event-specific teams)
- viii. Not be subject to a judicial or criminal investigation that may be detrimental to Water Polo Canada, at Water Polo Canada's discretion;

- ix. Have signed any WPC Athlete Agreement (as applicable / requested), which references the WPC Code of Conduct, as well as being a registrant under the Abuse Free sport program.

**= Please note: NCAA athletes and foreign athletes are exempt from these 3 specific eligibility conditions*

2.4 AUTHORITY FOR SELECTION:

Water Polo Canada's Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer (or CEO) have delegated the authority for all decision-making under this process to the High Performance Director (HPD). AGNT selections will be recommended by Head Coaches of each respective AGNT; this process will be overseen by the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway, and selections will be subject to final approval by the HPD. (See Section 3 below as well as Appendix A for more information about the selection process and factors considered.)

3. 2024-2025 SEASON SELECTION PROCESS:

Domestic Athletes (athletes residing, training and primarily competing in Canada):

Water Polo Canada will observe athletes using the following platforms, towards possible selection onto AGNTTPs and event-specific Teams:

- Targeted NCL Events (see lists of events per age group below)
- NDC coach recommendations (WPC will solicit those from approved NDCs prior to the start of scouting at NCL events for each specific age group)
- International Training & Selection Camp (Junior men's program only in the 2024-2025 season)

Water Polo Canada will seek to maintain the same scouts for all targeted weekends for any given age group, so as to provide equal opportunity to all athletes to be seen.

These will be the targeted scouting events, per age group:

3.1 Targeted NCL Events* for Scouting, per Age Group:

3.1.1 15U:

Eastern Conference:

- Markham (ON), Dec 6-8, 2024 (Sr & 16U)
- Markham (ON), Feb 7-9, 2025 (18U)

Western Conference:

- Calgary (AB), Jan 10-12, 2025 (Sr & 16U)
- Richmond (BC), Feb 21-23, 2025 (18U)

3.1.2 Youth (17U):

Eastern Conference:

- Nepean (ON), Jan 10-12, 2025 (18U)
- Markham (ON), Feb 7-9, 2025 (18U)

Western Conference:

- Calgary (AB), Dec 13-15, 2024 (18U)
- Richmond (BC), Feb 21-23, 2025 (18U)

3.1.3 Junior (20U):

As this second year of the Junior program is in continuation with the 2023-2024 season, athletes selected for the 2023-2024 season will automatically be considered part of the 2024-2025 Junior National Team Talent Pool. WPC may consider adding new athletes to this talent pool at its discretion, and will, in 2024-2025, scout for potential additions to this Talent Pool at the following NCL events*:

3.1.3.a Women:

Eastern Conference:

- Markham (ON), Dec 6-8, 2024 (Sr & 16U)
- Nepean (ON), Jan 10-12, 2025 (18U)
- Markham (ON), Feb 7-9, 2025 (18U)

Western Conference:

- Calgary (AB), Dec 13-15, 2024 (18U)
- Calgary Jan 10-12, 2025 (Sr & 16U)
- Richmond (BC), Feb 21-23, 2025 (18U)

3.1.3.b Men:

1 NCL event* and National Development Centre recommendations, prior to an International Training and Selection Camp (tentatively scheduled for January 2025 – see details below):

Eastern Conference:

- Pointe Claire (QC), Dec 13-15, 2024 (18U)

West:

- By National Development Centre Recommendations

(= subject to change, WPC will communicate any changes to these event dates, if applicable, as early as possible.)*

3.1.3.c Junior (20U) Men's 2025 International Training & Selection Camp :

With the goal of ensuring some programming continuity and further progression beyond a simple competitive event per season, WPC is aiming to provide additional team preparation and training opportunities for its AGNTs throughout the course of each season (WPC will soon release more information about such plans). As part of this process, WPC is aiming to provide an additional training camp opportunity (domestic or international) to athletes selected in this age group in the early months of 2025 (to be confirmed and announced soon). The invitation to such a Camp would extend to athletes selected onto the Junior men's program in the 2023-2024 season (now part of the 2024-2025 Junior AGNTTP), with possible additional invitations to eligible AGNT participants, and / or additional athletes added to the Junior AGNTTP via scouting at NCL events or other, as described in process above).

Invited Junior men's AGNTTP athletes will be required to participate in such a training camp in 2025 (tbc) in order to be eligible for selection onto the 2025 Junior (20U) Men's World Championships Team.

This training camp and development opportunity will also be used as further scouting and assessment opportunity, for participating athletes, towards future event-specific team selections, beyond (or outside of) the 2025 Junior World Championships.

3.2 Exceptions:

Athletes may be selected to AGNT programs and AGNTTPs outside of the process described above in exceptional circumstances, including (but not limited to) the following:

- NCAA Athletes: For athletes in the NCAA, a Water Polo Canada representative will be actively scouting through video feeds and game reports.
- Professional Athletes: Water Polo Canada will be actively scouting athletes competing for professional clubs through video feeds and livestreams.
- Senior National Team Training Centre Athletes: If there is a direct conflict due to commitments of the Senior National Team, SNT Training Centre athletes may be selected independently of scouting events.
- High school students outside of Canada: Canadian athletes located internationally and demonstrating a high potential may be scouted through video feeds and livestreams.

4. TIMELINE

- b. Every program year (November - August), WPC will attempt to respect the following AGNTTP timeline and administrative cycle:
 - i. **By October 31.** Water Polo Canada will announce the AGNT selection process for the ensuing season.
 - ii. **By March 1 of the following year,** Water Polo Canada will announce event-specific team programming and maximum program costs (for summer events)
 - iii. **By March 15,** Water Polo Canada will inform all athletes selected onto AGNTTPs and issue invitation letters to selected athletes for specific (summer) event teams, and the final roster for each team will be released upon athletes accepting their positions.
 - iv. **By September 15,** Water Polo Canada will announce event-specific team programming and maximum program costs (for winter events)
 - v. **BY October 1,** Water Polo Canada will issue invitation letters to selected athletes for specific (winter) event teams, if applicable, and the final roster for each team will be released upon athletes accepting their positions.
 - vi. **Ongoing** Updates to the AGNTTPs.

5. LANGUAGE

Where there is a difference in interpretation between the French and English versions of this document, the English version shall prevail.

6. AMENDMENTS AND UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

- a. Changes to this Selection Process will only take place with the approval of Water Polo Canada's Chief Executive Officer, to be added as an addendum if approved.

- b. In the event of unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of Water Polo Canada that prevents the fair implementation of this Selection Process as written, the HPD will provide their recommendation to the Water Polo Canada CEO who shall have the full discretion to resolve the matter as they see fit, taking into account factors and circumstances that they deem relevant.

Should you have any questions, please reach out to WPC's Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway Mr. Andrew Muir at: ahmuir@waterpolo.ca

APPENDIX A- SELECTION FACTORS

1- SELECTION OF ATHLETES ONTO AGE GROUP NATIONAL TEAM TALENT POOLS

The AGNTTPs will consist of any athlete eligible to represent Canada who has demonstrated the potential to earn a position on a Water Polo Canada Age Group National Team. Changes to the athlete pools may be made at the discretion of the Head Coach of each of the men's and women's teams; the process for making such changes will be overseen by the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway, subject to approval by the HP Director. Numbers of athletes in each AGNTTP are not finite. An athlete may be part of more than one talent pool concurrently.

There will be 3 distinct AGNTTPs for each age group:

- a Cadet (15U/16U) AGNTTP
- a Youth (17/18U) AGNTTP
- a Junior (19/20U) AGNTTP

Active and eligible athletes from a given AGNTTP turning of age to be eligible to compete in the older Age Group will, at that time, automatically be transferred to and become members of that older AGNTTP.

1.1 Factors considered for selection:

Factors that will be considered in assembling the different athlete talent pools include:

- i.** Previous and current performance in domestic and international competition;
- ii.** Present and projected development and / or improvement;
- iii.** Technical Ability;
- iv.** Tactical Ability;
- v.** Physical Ability;
- vi.** Intangible qualities including but not exclusive to: composure, attitude, work ethic, peer influence, leadership skills, team dynamics, travel mentality, coachability, performance under pressure;
- vii.** Demonstrated ability to play within a team environment, including contribute to and enhance team performance.
- viii.** Ranking in depth chart (by position)

- ix. Compliance with WPC Athlete Agreement (if / as applicable / required) and Code of Conduct

The above factors are not weighted, are not listed in an order of importance and may be revised from time to time.

Documents such as Water Polo Canada's internal depth charts, and team evaluations may be considered to support the selection of the AGNTP.

2. DISMISSAL FROM THE AGE GROUP NATIONAL TEAM TALENT POOL

In collaboration with the Senior Manager of Leagues and Pathway, the HPD and the CEO may remove an athlete from the SNTP. Reasons for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- i. Violation of the Water Polo Canada Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure (found at: <https://waterpolo.ca/content/policies-and-bylaws>)
- ii. Violation of Team rules
- iii. Failure to adhere to the anti-doping rules or requirements of any anti-doping organization with authority over the athlete
- iv. Exhibiting any conduct that is detrimental to the image of Water Polo or the National Team Programs;
- v. Voluntary withdrawal/retirement
- vi. Committing fraudulent misrepresentation
- vii. Failure to uphold the Water Polo Canada Athlete Agreement (as applicable).

3. SELECTION TO EVENT-SPECIFIC AGE GROUP NATIONAL TEAMS, FOR TRAINING CAMPS AND COMPETITIONS

Once the AGNTPs have been established, final rosters will be selected for specific competitions or events up to the conclusion of the season. While some objective criteria may be used to select teams, the primary selection criteria will be subjective. The following factors will be considered along with any other factors which, in the sole discretion of the relevant National Team Head Coaches, are deemed relevant.

The subjective elements involved in team selection will include, but are not limited to:

- i. Positional requirements (both starters and reserves);
- ii. Competition requirements (i.e. opponents, location, etc.);

- iii. Team dynamics;
- iv. Attitude;
- v. Leadership ability & contribution to the overall team chemistry;
- vi. Long-term potential to support pursuit of WPC's international performance objectives;
- vii. Other such considerations

Furthermore and more specifically, in selecting athletes for final event rosters, the Age Group National Team Head Coach will consider elements in the following areas:

- the dynamics of the team as a whole and how the candidates for selection fit into this dynamic
- individual and team-play characteristics of the candidates for selection
- WPC's objectives for the LA 2028 Olympic Games and beyond
- Personal attributes examples:
 - Demonstrated commitment to playing international water polo for Canada.
 - Demonstrated positive attitudes towards the sport, the National Team, and WPC.
 - Demonstrated commitment to travel, training sessions, competitions, and any activities, commitments and functions related to the National Team.
 - Demonstrated cooperative and team-oriented attitudes.
 - Demonstrated positive attitude including coachability, desire to improve personal skills, and desire to contribute to team objectives.
 - Demonstrated self-motivation, confidence, determination and goal-oriented nature.
 - Demonstrated resilience as well as flexibility and adaptability to change.
- Sport Specific Examples:
 - Demonstrated athletic ability, including size, speed, quickness, agility and strength.
 - Demonstrated water polo and position-specific skills
 - Demonstrated field of play decision-making abilities.
 - Demonstrated aggressive and assertive play.
- Team Play Examples:
 - Demonstrated ability and willingness to work effectively and cooperate within the team environment.
 - Demonstrated ability to play within a team environment, including the ability to contribute to and enhance team performance.
 - Demonstrated ability to contribute to overall team cohesiveness and to communicate effectively with coaching staff and other players both on and off the field of play.

- Demonstrated ability and willingness to implement the coaching staff's game plan.
- Demonstrated ability to contribute to the team setting, both on and off the field of play, by attaining the performance standards and expectations established and communicated to the athletes by the National Team coaching staff.

The evaluation of these elements will be an ongoing process from the identification of any athlete onto an AGNTTP up to the selection date for the event-specific Age Group National Team towards a given training camp or competition.

The above factors are not weighted, are not listed in an order of importance and may be revised from time to time to ensure short-term and long-term success in international competition for Canada.

It is the responsibility of the Head Coaches to select the best possible team for each individual competition or event, in accordance with program priorities and objectives. To fulfill this responsibility, the Head Coaches will have a high degree of discretion and flexibility.