

SANNP

SOUTH AFRICA WATER POLO



WINTER SERIES 2025

SAWP Newsletter
July 2025

Subject:

Everything you need to know about the 2025 SAWP Winter Series

With less than a month to go before the inaugural South Africa Water Polo Winter Series, there is a great deal of excitement in the air. We can't wait to welcome you to Nelson Mandela Bay for this spectacular event.

What this tournament signals is that the future is bright for the sport we love, both in terms of high performance and inclusivity pathways. This is core to our mission at SAWP. This competition is for players from all regions and demographics. Player development, both at the highly competitive and grassroots levels, will no longer be neglected in South Africa. We are ready for Action, driven by Passion and powered by Purpose. Thank you for being a part of this watershed moment in water polo.

All your questions answered

In this newsletter, we will guide you on all the important information you need to know about the SAWP Winter Series.

PART 1 : LET THE GAMES BEGIN!**1. Time and Place**

Place: Newton Park indoor swimming pool in Gqeberha

Starts: Friday, 8th of August

Ends: Sunday, 10th of August

2. The SAWP Winter Series format

The SAWP Winter Series is South Africa's first national franchise competition for water polo. It brings together the top 112 men's and women's players in South Africa for an elite, franchise format tournament, designed to foster high-performance competition, coaching development, and community upliftment. The level of talent in and around the pool is unmatched, from Olympians and World Champions to national and international coaches and referees. Matches are governed by World Aquatics rules with SAWP-specific additions.

3. Teams & Players

- 4 Men's Franchise Teams (14 players each)
- 4 Women's Franchise Teams (14 players each)
- Players were selected via a draft system to ensure balanced competition from all major regions

4. Game Rules:

Game format

- World Aquatics rules apply, with SAWP-specific tournament rules enforced
- 25-meter pool
- Maximum 14 players per team (2 goalkeepers included)
- All team members are team-tied
- 4 x 8-minute stop-start chukkas
- Every player must receive at least 8 minutes (one full chukka) per match, which may be accumulated across multiple chukkas.
- 28-second shot clock, 18-second reset
- Breaks: 3 minutes (Q1–Q2 & Q3–Q4), 5 minute halftime
- 2 time-outs per team per match
- Coaches are responsible for ensuring meaningful playing time for all

Caps

- Game 1: The team captain wears the distinctive MVP cap
- Game 2 onwards: Most valuable player (MVP) from the last game wears the cap

Points

- Win in regular time: **2 points**
- Draw in regular time: **1 point**
- Loss by 2 goals or fewer: **1 point**
- Loss by 3 or more goals: **0 points**
- **Bonus point** for winning the penalty shootout (see below)

Penalty Shootout Rules

- **EVERY** game will conclude in a penalty shootout in a **best-of-five format** (regardless of the score at the end of regulation time)
- Still tied → **Sudden death** using the same five shooters
- **Rotation System:**
 - Game 1: Any 5 players (every team selects 5 penalty takers for game 1)
 - Game 2: 5 different players (every team selects 5 different penalty takers for game 2)
 - Game 3: Remaining 4 players, including goalkeepers, plus one of the penalty takers from game 1 and game 2
 - The final and 3rd/4th place will not have **planned** penalty shootouts unless the scores are tied at the end of regulation time. In this case, a normal best-of-five format will be played
 - No player may repeat in a penalty shootout until all 14 have participated in the first 3 games

Substitution Rules

Flying substitutions are allowed only if:

- In the designated subzone
- A visible high-five is made
- Player exits via the goal line (not subzone)
- From the exclusion box: no high-five needed
- **Illegal substitution** = 5m penalty

Match Resolution & Tie-Breakers

- Every match must produce a winner.
- Ranking Tie-Breakers:
 - **2 teams tied:** Head-to-head → Goal diff → Shootout result → Goals scored → Cards → Coin toss
 - **3 teams tied:** Goal diff → Shootout → Goals scored → Cards → Coin toss
 - **4 teams tied:** Goal diff among tied → Head-to-head → Goals scored → Cards → Coin toss

Disciplinary Procedures

- **Red Card – Misconduct:** No automatic suspension
- **Red Card – Violence:** Min 1-match suspension pending hearing
- **Hearing Panel:** Duncan Woods, Siegfried Lokotsch, Claudia Charles
- **No external media** may be used as evidence. Committee decisions are final

5. Prizes

Team Awards (Men & Women):

- **1st Place:** R3,000 per player/coach = R51,000 / team
- **2nd Place:** R2,000 per participant = R34,000 / team
- **3rd Place:** R1,000 per participant = R17,000 / team
- **Individual Award (“Last Pass”):** R5,000 to the men & women players with the most goal-assisting passes. We celebrate teamwork, vision, and selfless play
- **Engraved premium medals** for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places

6. Coaches & Referees

- **Head / Assistant Coaches:** The top 16 SAWP-registered coaches are paired and assigned to the 8 teams
- **Shadow Coaches:** An additional 8 shadow coaches are assigned to the teams for development and mentorship
- **Referees:** Appointed by the SAWP Referees Committee, they include experienced referees and a group of shadow referees for evaluation and training
- **Professional conduct:**
 - Dress Code: Professional attire (no shorts) closed shoes
 - The head coach may stand; others must be seated
 - No foul language or blasphemy
 - Stay within technical area boundaries
 - Red Card = 1 match suspension

7. Development

A 90-minute youth clinic will be hosted during the tournament, facilitated by selected coaches and players, on Saturday, 9 August, at 13:00–14:30.

PART 2 : LOGISTICS

Fixtures & Programme

Friday, 8 August 2025 – Arrival & Opening Night

- **08:00 to 13:30** – Player arrivals at Garden Court Hotel (airport transfers included)
- **14:00** – Teams transfer to pool
- **15:30** – Opening Ceremony

Friday Match Schedule:

- **16:00** – Rhinos Men vs Buffaloes Men
- **17:15** – Rhinos Women vs Buffaloes Women
- **18:30** – Elephants Men vs Lions Men
- **19:45** – Elephants Women vs Lions Women

Friday Dinner:

After their final match, players receive vouchers and dine at the pool venue

Saturday, 9 August 2025 – Round Robin & Cocktail Function

Saturday Early Morning:

- Players will have an early rise and be transported to the pool from the Garden Court Hotel via shuttle.

Saturday Morning Match Schedule:

- **08:00** – Buffaloes Men vs Elephants Men
- **09:15** – Buffaloes Women vs Elephants Women
- **10:30** – Rhinos Men vs Lions Men
- **11:45** – Rhinos Women vs Lions Women

Saturday Development Clinic:

- **13:00 to 14:30** – 90-minute youth session

Saturday Afternoon Match Schedule:

- **15:00** – Buffaloes Men vs Lions Men
- **16:15** – Buffaloes Women vs Lions Women
- **17:30** – Elephants Men vs Rhinos Men
- **18:45** – Elephants Women vs Rhinos Women

Saturday Evening Cocktail Function:

- **20:00 to 22:00** – at The Coachman Restaurant
- All players, coaches, referees, and SAWP administrators are invited for an evening of

networking, dinner, and light formalities

- The Coachman is located just 500 meters from the Garden Court Hotel
- All players will return to the hotel after the final match and walk together to the function

Sunday, 10 August 2025 – Finals Day & Departures

Sunday Early Morning:

- **06:30** – Hotel checkout and transfer to pool
- Players must bring all luggage. Secure team tents provided

Sunday Match Schedule:

- **08:00** – Women’s Bronze Medal Match
- **09:15** – Men’s Bronze Medal Match
- **10:30** – Women’s Final
- **11:45** – Men’s Final
- **13:00** – Medal Ceremony

All players will be transferred directly to the airport from the venue

PART 3 : LOGISTICAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Who is booking everyone’s flights?

All flights are being booked by Helga Wenning from Travel Counsellors and is handling the full travel itinerary for players, coaches, referees, and officials (telephone: 082 928 6247, email: helga.wenning@travelcounsellors.co.za).

2. When are players flying in?

All players, coaches, referees, and committee members are flying in on Friday morning, 8 August, arriving at various times.

3. How does accommodation work?

Everyone will be staying together at the Garden Court Hotel on the beachfront.

- 3 minutes from the airport
- 10–15 minutes from the pool
- Shared accommodation by teams
- Stay includes 2 nights (Friday & Saturday)

4. How does everyone get to and from the airport?

Shuttle services will be waiting at the airport on Friday to take everyone to the hotel. No need to rent a car.

5. How does everyone get to and from the pool?

Daily shuttles will take players from the hotel to the pool and back:

- Before and after games
- On Sunday, everyone will check out and take their bags to the pool. Bag security provided
- After the medal ceremony, shuttles will take players back to the airport

6. What meals are provided?

Meals are fully covered from Friday lunch to Sunday:

- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner for all players, coaches, referees, and committee members
- Friday dinner: via meal vouchers
- Saturday night: Cocktail function at The Coachman Restaurant (500m from hotel)
- Sunday: Light meal provided before airport transfers

7. Will there be food at the venue?

Yes! There will be a:

- Coffee truck
- Pancake truck
- Catering tent with burgers, wraps, sosaties, chicken (highly rated!)
- Pending the liquor license, a formal drinks tent offering a range of beverages
- Jumping castles and family-friendly food options for spectators

8. What are the kit handout details?

- Kit will be distributed by the provinces before the event, on or before 28 July (to be handled by the regional committee for each city: CPT, JHB, DBN)
- Regional coordinators will reach out to all players to share details.
- Each player will receive a branded box with:
 - 3 shirts + 3 shorts
 - 1 SAWP Polo costume
- Team colours will differ by franchise

9. Will practical info be shared on an app?

All updates and streaming will run via the **It's Happening App** and **YouTube**:

- Fixtures, scores, and live updates
- Streaming of all matches (<https://www.youtube.com/@itshappening.africa>)

10. What kind of vibe can we expect from the event?

- Expect electric energy, music & live commentary
- Algoa FM live on-site
- Family vibe with food, drinks & entertainment
- Community spirit, with underprivileged children getting free franchise shirts & meals

11. Do players check out before the pool on Sunday?

Yes. Players check out early on Sunday. Bring your bags to the pool's security tents.

12. How will everyone know where to go at the pool?

- There will be clear signage & team tents
- Coaches will guide players to their team areas, warm-up zones & changerooms

13. Who are our generous sponsors?

A massive thank you to **Jendamark Automation** and **NMB Water Polo**, both led by water polo enthusiast **Siegfried Lokotsch**, who are hosting and subsidising this very special event, including generously sponsoring the accommodation, transfers, pool hire, referees and the Saturday dinner for the tournament. Thank you!

Follow all the action here:

- <https://www.youtube.com/@itshappening.africa>
- <https://www.facebook.com/southafricawaterpolo>
- <https://www.instagram.com/rsawaterpolo>

For the love of polo. Let's go!

SAWP Founding Committee: Performance Portfolio

For further enquiries:

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PROGRAMME OF EVENTS AND TEAM LISTS

Friday, 8 August			
16:00	Men	Rhinos	Buffaloes
17:15	Women	Rhinos	Buffaloes
18:30	Men	Elephants	Lions
19:45	Women	Elephants	Lions

Saturday, 9 August			
08:00	Men	Buffaloes	Elephants
09:15	Women	Buffaloes	Elephants
10:30	Men	Rhinos	Lions
11:45	Women	Rhinos	Lions
13:00	SAWP Development Clinic		
15:00	Men	Buffaloes	Lions
16:15	Women	Buffaloes	Lions
17:30	Men	Elephants	Rhinos
18:45	Women	Elephants	Rhinos

Sunday, 10 August			
08:00	Women	Bronze Medal	3 rd vs 4 th on points
09:15	Men	Bronze Medal	3 rd vs 4 th on points
10:30	Women	Gold Medal	1 st vs 2 nd on points
11:45	Men	Gold Medal	1 st vs 2 nd on points
13:00	Medal Ceremony		



Rhinos		
1	Nathan Jacob	Meegan Zomero
13	Michael Swart	Jessica Muirhead
2	Richard Skeeles	Kayden Glasgow
3	Cameron Sugden	Emma Catto
4	Christopher Sophocleous	Lucy Nagel
5	Rolan Swanevelde	Elizabeth Horn
6	Rourke Fisher	Keirah Van De Loosdrecht
7	Jarred Scruby	Skye Murray
8	Mark Mansvelt	Rylee Rogers
9	Stefan Polderman	Kelly Seymour
10	Warwick Field	Hannah Calvert (C)
11	Sam Hanssen (V-C)	Jessica Brown
12	Jonathan Swanepoel (C)	Lucy Miszewski (V-C)
14	Ryan Venter	Emily de Witt
HC	Luke Manthe	Delaine Mentoor
AC	Ridge Snelling	Alex Hawkins
SC	Seth Harty	Gabrielle Stewart

Buffaloes		
1	Themba Mthembu	Hannah Verrier (C)
13	Jacques Du Toit	Sian Lester
2	Devon Card (C)	Olivia Attwell
3	Blake Brown	Charlotte Wiltshire
4	Caleb Levey	Jennifer Everett
5	Troy Rees-Jones	Jade Jarvis
6	Kelly Geldenhuys	Tara Hastings
7	Andrew Botha	Emma Thornton (V-C)
8	Ben Bigara	Tayla Kreymborg
9	Tayne Beswick	Alexa De Villiers
10	Joshua Faber (V-C)	Sasha De La Rey
11	Christian Horne	Jamie Lacey
12	Ben Reiback	Justine Fuller
14	Matthew Fenn	Gina Lindhorst
HC	Vaughn Marlow	Nicola Plasket
AC	Chad Gabriels	Rachel King
SC	Taye Colesky	Kieraan Meyer

Elephants		
1	Jack Woodburn	Meghan Maartens (V-C)
13	Elliot Springate	Jorja Wilmot
2	Chad Roman (V-C)	Tyra Penney
3	Meyer Malherbe	Jessica McCamlie
4	Cameron Laurenson	Leila Broomhall
5	Alexander Kelbrick	Jenna Blaauw
6	Ross Van Breda	Cadha Mosehla
7	Marc Smith	Charlotte Van Bochove
8	Matthew Hayes	Emily van Heerden
9	Adam Brown	Caitlyn Gemmill
10	Joshua De Villiers	Nicola Macleod (C)
11	Matthew Naser (C)	Catherine Mentz
12	Alex De La Rey	Amy Van Breda
14	Benn Jorgensen	Malika Ameerodien
HC	Dean Rimmer	Ismaeel Essa
AC	Kyle Kumm	Wade Marshall
SC	Pranav Inderjeeth	Tyrell Lottering

Lions		
1	Josh Carr	Kate Swainston Harrison
13	Guy Hart	Madison Beetge
2	Jordan Maehler	Samantha Van Hille
3	Niall Wheeler (C)	Jordan Catto
4	Ross Van Schoor	Leah Goodman
5	Arkin Marais	Maxine Langenhoff
6	Jason Fisher	Alexis Fourie
7	Zack Cicero	Kendell De Beer (V-C)
8	Ross Stuart	Georgina Strachan
9	Adrian Truter	Ruby Versfeld (C)
10	Noah Reiback	Inez Letschert
11	Janco Rademeyer (V-C)	Michaela Blaine
12	Roan Wessels	Olivia Figaji
14	Thomas Wiltshire	Gabriella Grobbelaar
HC	Nicholas Rodda	Kelsey Thomson
AC	Tameem Rawat	Seko Zondani
SC	Sipheshile Phillip	Ronan Perring