

History of water polo



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The history of water polo is a demonstration of strength and swimming both combined in a unique way. It dates to the 19th century in England and Scotland where a common feature of the county fairs and festivals were these water sports and racing exhibitions. At the modern Olympic Games in 1900, the first ever team sport to be recognized was men's water polo. Water polo has gained a lot of popularity around the world, especially in Europe (notably in Russia, Italy, Greece, Hungary and Former Yugoslav Republic), the United States, Canada and Australia.

A Water polo team consists of seven players. The ball being used is similar to a soccer ball in size but is made up of waterproof nylon. Its rules were originally developed by William Wilson in Great Britain in the nineteenth century. The modern form though originated as a form of rugby football played with ball made up of Indian rubber in the rivers and lakes of Scotland and England. This 'water rugby' came to be later known as 'water polo'.

The early style of playing allowed holding the opposing players, wrestling and brute strength beneath the water to recover the ball. The goalie defended the goal by standing outside the playing area and jumping on any player of the opposite team trying to score by placing the ball in the deck. The 1956 Summer Olympics semi finals match between Hungary and Soviet Union is the most popular type of match amongst all the water polo games in the history. The Soviet Union was defeated by the Hungarians before the game was called off in the last minute. A men's Water Polo World Championship is organized every 2 to 4 years within FINA World Aquatic Championships since 1973. The women's water polo was made a part of this championship in the year 1986.

FINA Water Polo League, sport's first international league, was organized in 2002. The European Water Polo Championship is held every other year. Injuries occur frequently in water polo, some are minor whereas some are major. Most of the minor injurious do not require medical help and can be easily treated at home.

Sunburns and eye irritations are a few of the most common minor injurious. Eye irritation is mostly caused due to the presence of large quantity of chlorine in the pool. It can be treated by using eye drops. On the other hand facial and head injuries are the most common serious injurious that happens due to fights between the players for the possession of the ball. This often leads to broken noses and split lips. Common muscular injuries occur in the shoulder.

The water polo game encompasses features of football, soccer, hockey and basketball. The main objective of water polo is to maneuver by feet, hand or by head; a ball covered with leather into the goals that are enclosed by net which are positioned on the opposite end of the pool. There are seven players present in each of the two teams and this also allows for use of some of the rough defensive techniques.