



Water Polo WA Awards Criteria

Criteria for 2025/2026

Overview

The purpose of the WA Water Polo Awards is for Water Polo WA (WPWA) to recognise and reward the contribution of people across various roles and levels of our Sport. In recognition of water polo performances and contributions to the sport, WPWA will acknowledge specified awards annually.

Nominees must be a member of Water Polo WA through an affiliated Club or Association. The nomination process is open until the 11 March 2026 and winners will be announced to the water polo community at the Awards Night on 1 April 2026.

Categories of awards

The Awards open to nominations are indicated below. Awards are determined based on community nominations and a decision as to finalists and winners by the relevant advisory group, sub-committee or the WPWA Board as indicated.

AWARD	SUMMARY	SELECTION PANEL
Senior player of the year	This award celebrates the high performance of our senior athletes.	HPC to decide finalists and winner from the community nominations
Country Player of the Year	This award celebrates the high performance of our senior athletes within our Regional Clubs.	RAG to decide finalists and winner from the community nominations

Gary Payne Junior Referee Encouragement Award	This award is presented to a junior referee (Community accreditation) who shows dedication and continued development throughout the season.	OAG to decide finalist and winner based on selection criteria
Liz Burman Referee of the Year	This is awarded to the referee who has attained a high level of excellence in officiating and a significant contribution to our sport throughout the season.	Selection panel to decide winner based on selection criteria
Young Achiever of the Year - Performance or Community	This is open to individuals to celebrate the outstanding performance of a junior member who performs at a high level either in the pool or in the club environment (or both). (Youth to 21 years)	HPC to decide finalists and winner from the community nominations
Team of the Year	This award celebrates the high performance of our best performing team in a State League, or State or WPA sanctioned Championship.	HPC to decide finalists and winner from the community nominations
Integrity Tyres Volunteer of the Year	This is celebrating the fantastic contribution of our club volunteers and their contribution within their club, Association or Water Polo WA.	Board to decide finalists and winner from the community nominations
Coach of the year	This award is given to recognise the contributions of our coaches. Further details are below.	HPC to decide finalists and winner from the community nominations
Club of the Year – Metro	This is awarded to the metropolitan club that has made significant contributions to the sport during the season. Further details are below.	Board to decide finalists and winner from the community nominations
Association of the Year – Country	This is awarded to the country club or Association that has made significant contributions to the sport during the season. Further details are below.	Board to decide finalist and winner from the community nominations

The following awards will be announced or acknowledged at the awards ceremony event.

Tom Hoad Medal	Men's PWL Grand Final MVP	Grand Final coaches
Andrew Meloncelli Medal (PWL)	Women's PWL Grand Final MVP	Grand Final coaches
PWL Best and Fairest Female and Male	Fairest and Best throughout the PWL season	Cumulative total of votes as voted by referees at each Round
Country Championships Best and Fairest Female and Male	Fairest and Best as determined at Country Championships	Best and Fairest at Country Championships

Community Nominated Award Criteria

The community can nominate members for the following awards based on the 2025/2026 Season. The nominees must be active registered members of Water Polo WA. The relevant committee will assess all nominations as set out above.

Nominations should address the following criteria for the Award:

Senior Player of the Year

This award celebrates the high performance of senior athletes within our Clubs.

The criteria includes:

- Consistently high level of play throughout the season
- Makes a positive impact in matches (both statistically and tactically)
- Regular attendance at training sessions and matches
- Supports teammates during games and training
- Displays respect towards teammates, opponents, referees and officials

Country Player of the Year

This award celebrates the high performance of senior athletes within our country Clubs and Associations.

The criteria includes:

- Consistently high level of play throughout the season
- Makes a positive impact in matches (both statistically and tactically)
- Regular attendance at training sessions and matches
- Supports teammates during games and training
- Displays respect towards teammates, opponents, referees and officials

Young Achiever of the Year – Community or Performance

This award recognises a young athlete (youth – 21 years) who has achieved excellence outside of the competition arena, through giving back to the sport as a coach, referee or in other ways, community service or a young athlete who has excelled in their water polo performances during the 2025/2026 season in WPWA competition, National State Championships, AWL or World Championships.

Community Criteria

- Regular attendance at training, games and club activities
- Willingness to represent the club across multiple teams, carnivals or events when required
- Demonstrates pride in the club and respect for its values
- Actively supports teammates on and off the pool deck
- Assists with club activities such as set-up, pack-down, BBQs, events or fundraisers (where age-appropriate)

OR

Performance Criteria

- Consistently high level of play throughout the season at all levels of competition
- Makes a positive impact in matches (both statistically and tactically)
- Regular attendance at training sessions and matches
- Supports teammates during games and training
- Displays respect towards teammates, opponents, referees and officials

Team of the Year

The Team of the Year is awarded to the water polo team that has displayed an outstanding level of achievement through determination, teamwork, skill and hard work.

The criteria includes:

- Strong competition results within league, championship or sanctioned competitions
- Demonstrated improvement and development over the season
- Evident teamwork and cohesion in and out of the pool
- Positive communication and support between players

Volunteer of the Year

This award acknowledges an individual who displays an outstanding level of volunteer commitment and giving of their time contributing to the advancement of our sport in Western Australia.

The criteria includes:

- Contribution at club or Association level or WPWA level.
- Contribution to the sport participation and vibrancy of the sport.
- Alignment with the Water Polo WA values.
- Assists with supporting integrity, fairness and creating a safe, inclusive environment for all ages and backgrounds involved in the sport.

Coach of the Year

This award is presented to a coach who has demonstrated an ability to coach at a high level across a range of ages and abilities.

The award will focus on:

- Coaches that made a significant contribution to the club or State program both during competition and outside of the pool.
- Focuses on improving community sport through striving to lead through empowerment and development of players and the community.
- Focus on fairness, participation, integrity and making Water Polo safe and inclusive for all levels.

Club of the Year – Metro

The Club of the Year is awarded to the Metro Club that has displayed an outstanding level of engagement within the community across multiple levels.

The following criteria will be considered to be nominated for the award:

- Club advances the community and growth of the sport.
- Strategic partnerships
- Club Governance
- Participation and inclusion.
- Club Culture.

Association of the Year – Country

The Association of the Year is awarded to the country water polo Association that has displayed an outstanding level of engagement within the community across multiple levels.

The following criteria will be considered to be nominated for the award:

- Club advances the community and growth of the sport.
- Strategic partnerships
- Club Governance
- Participation and inclusion.
- Club Culture.

Advisory Groups / Sub-Committees

HPC – High-Performance Committee

OAG – Officials Advisory Group

RAG – Regional (Country) Advisory Group