



SOPAC Zone Procedures for Sanctioning and Assigning Referees for Tournaments and Events

Effective January 1, 2015

Introduction

The Sopac Zone of USA Water Polo is the largest zone in terms of membership as well as number of games played. One of the main functions of the Zone is to promote competition and grow the sport. A primary responsibility of the Zone is to oversee and organize the competition conducted within the boundaries of the Zone. This is conducted via the sanction process, which is required for all USAWP competitions. The Zone is responsible to review the sanction requests that are submitted by our clubs and evaluate them and if appropriate, approve the sanction.

The primary concern of the Zone is to promote a level of quality for our events and a range of competition for all of our athletes to compete within. Sopac is characterized by Clubs with a strong entrepreneurial spirit. Our clubs host and promote many large tournaments that cover multiple locations as well as single day events and leagues. As mentioned, the Zone sanctions more events than any other Zone within USAWP. On any given weekend, the Sopac Zone sanctions multiple tournaments and leagues of all ages. On certain weekends, the number of games held in our zone alone is larger than the Junior Olympics in a shorter time frame. The Sopac Zone's focus therefore is not necessarily to develop more competitions but rather, to better organize the competitions we have.

One of the downsides of the volume of competition is that we frequently have conflicts in those events. It is not uncommon for there to be many competing events at the same age group on any weekend. While this could be considered a detriment in forcing clubs to choose events, it also provides a level of competition among our events, which forces the hosts to improve the management and quality of the event. We also have certain weekends that are scheduled for multiple large events that tax the capacity of the Zone's resources.

The Sopac Zone currently has approximately 175 approved referees working in our Zone. Given our proximity to the Coastal and Pacific Southwest Zones, referees from those Zones often times work at Sopac Events. During certain times of the year, there are other competing events outside of USAWP including high school, community college and collegiate events. These diminish the volume of available referees who can work USAWP events. In addition, as referees are independent contractors, they also have other things going on in their lives and are not always available to work. On any given weekend, we typically have approximately 75 referees who are available to work. In the fall, we are at our lowest level of available referees due to high school, community college and collegiate conflicts. High School games do not play on Sunday so in the fall, Sundays have a higher number of available referees than on Saturday.

Once a sanction is approved, the tournament host is responsible to coordinate with the referee assignor for the Zone to request referees for their event. The host submits their schedules to the assignor who solicits the availability of the referees in our area and attempts to fulfill the request. As mentioned, there are typically many events on any weekend at multiple age categories as well as various skill levels. One of the jobs of the assignor is to attempt to match the appropriate referee skill level with the tournament's needs.

In reviewing sanction requests, the Zone balances the available capacity of our referee pool, the number of events proposed for any given weekend and the host's background and track record to decide which sanctions to approve or reject.

Objectives

The objective of this document is to present the process to request and approve sanctions as well as assign referees.

Step-by-Step Overview

The following provides a step-by-step overview of the process to sanction a game, league or tournament and obtain referees for that event.

1. Request Zone Approval for an Event

- a. Tournament hosts should submit their sanction requests by completing a "Request to Host" form found on the Zone website by December 15 for events held in the following year. The information requested includes the age group(s), date, location and number of courses. The Zone will review all available requests and evaluate those requests with the intent to approve all events that we can and adjust events as appropriate. The initial list of events will be reviewed and decided upon at the Annual Meeting in December.

- b. All Requests After December 15 will be reviewed on an “as available” basis.
- c. Once reviewed, the Zone will notify the tournament host that their event is either approved or not and if approved, direct the host to obtain a USAWP sanction. The approval is for a specific number of courses only as requested. ***A host is not allowed to increase the number of courses (e.g. size of the event) without prior approval.***

2. Submit Sanction Request to USAWP

Once the request has been approved by the Zone, the Host should submit their sanction request to USAWP. This is done online at the USAWP Website. Sanction fees vary based on how far in advance the sanction is submitted. The intent is to encourage our Hosts to plan their events as far in the future as possible. Once the sanction request is submitted, the Zone Chair will approve those sanctions that have been approved by the Zone.

3. Submit Schedule to SOPAC Zone Head Referee No later than 10 days Prior to Start of Event

- a. To obtain referees, the Host must submit their schedule to the Zone Referee Assignor no later than 10 days prior to the start of the tournament. There have been many issues and problems due to schedules coming in late or constant changes requiring multiple attempts to assign the tournament. The need to provide advance notice and minimize changes will assist in assigning the correct referees to the events and obtaining the correct number of referees in advance. The schedule needs to include the dates, locations and hours of the event as well as number of games. While the names of the teams do not need to be complete, the basic schedule should be ready for the assignor to assign the games. As mentioned, the sanction approval is for a specific size of event. The Zone assignor will not assign more games than approved on the original request.
- b. If the schedule is not to the assignor 10 days prior to the start of the event, a late fee of \$2/game will be assessed. If a Host makes last minute or multiple changes to the schedule once assigned, a change fee of \$5/change may be charged to the Host. Reasons outside of the hosts control such as pools going down will not be charged a change fee. However, voluntary changes such as allowing last minute entries that result in changes to the schedule are subject to such a fee. If a host

makes a request to increase the number of games beyond the approved number, the assignor will coordinate with the Zone in an attempt to fill such request. However, there is no guarantee that such a request can be made. If the assignor uses a referee(s) outside of our zone to fulfill the request, the host will be charged for the travel expenses of the outside referees.

- c. The Assignor will submit the referee schedule to the Host and confirm the referee availability.

4. Reimburse USAWP Referee Association for Referee Services

At the completion of the event, the assignor will submit an invoice to the Host for the referees that worked the event, any change fee and travel expenses. Payment shall be due and payable per the payment policy that has been previously developed by the Zone (Attached). Beginning in 2015, the Zone ODP Referee will be responsible for processing payments that are submitted.

5. Supplemental Rules for Large Events

As was mentioned, the Zone oftentimes sanctions multiple events on any given weekend and there are several events that are so large, they tax the capacity of the Zone. For these events, the Zone typically needs to bring in referees from outside the area. There are two weekends during the year where even bringing in referees has not allowed us to fully staff the events or required referees to work up to 15 games without a break. This impacts the quality of those events as well as is unfair to other hosts who may want to hold events. There have been discussions to not approve one or more of these events on those weekends and /or force one to move their date. The Zone has developed a guideline for Large Events to allow the events to continue and the quality that we demand maintained. The limitation has been available referees. There are referees outside of the Zone who would travel to work the events but need a guarantee that their travel expense will be paid. The following policy has been developed to accommodate the travel needs, which will allow these events to continue on their requested date. A "Large Event" is any event utilizing more than 10 courses for the event

- For every course over 10, a supplemental fee of \$250/course may be added to the Final Referee Invoice and should be budgeted by our host. This will provide the necessary expenses to be paid including hotel, car and per diem. Travelling referees will be responsible for their own travel. This Fee can be reduced if the Host provides the hotel accommodations for the travelling referee. For this arrangement, the Host shall notify the assignor with the confirmation number and the assignor will schedule the referees to their

hotel. Only actual expenses incurred for the travelling referees will be billed to the Hos.

- Schedules are Due 14 days in advance of the tournament. Due to the complexity and volume of these large events, schedules are due 14 days in advance. If the assignor does not receive the schedule by this deadline, the change fee will be assessed to the event and billed on the final invoice.

SOPAC ZONE REFEREE PAYMENT POLICY

Payment Timelines:

A tournament host, once in possession of the final invoice of all payments and fees, does have the responsibility to pay the amount due in full. The host shall have up to 21 (calendar) days to complete this action. This payment can be made by individual payments to all parties involved or paid to any 3rd party entity given the responsibility to make such individualized payment such as RefPay. It shall be the host of the tournaments responsibility to ensure the payments are received on time and in good standings. Insufficient funding, method of delivery and other delays that may occur are the responsibility of the host organization.

Penalties for Late Payment:

It shall be deemed financially negligent for any club or institution to pay for services rendered more than 21 (calendar) days after receiving an invoice for the tournament or games played. Unpaid invoices that are more than 21 days late, shall receive a revocation of all current hosting activity in the So Pac Zone. This will be until the entire invoice payments have been received and all unpaid parties named in the invoice are made whole. All invoices are due and payable within 21 days of receipt of invoice.

All invoices not paid within 21 days shall result in:

Revoking of all sanctions currently being held by that host until paid in full

A 25% penalty shall be applied for all invoices > 30 days. If unpaid after the initial 30 days, an additional 25% shall be added each month to the unpaid balance until paid in full.

Definition of late fees:

If the invoice becomes delinquent for more than 30 (calendar) days, the host institution shall receive an additional 25% invoice fee that shall be added to all referees fees and assignor fees that are not paid. For each additional 30 (calendar) days, a 25% invoice fee per time period penalty shall apply until the adjusted debt is paid in full. (Example; ref1 is owed \$100.00 for game fees, if he/she is not paid within 30 calendar days, the adjusted invoice should be for \$125.00 if this is paid within 60 days but after 30 days. If the invoice is not paid within 60 days, then the invoice shall read \$150.00 if it is paid before 90 days but after 60 days, and so on.)

Discrepancies:

There may be an occasion where there is an uncertainty about an invoice. This on its face does not stop any calendar day's activities, but it should be discussed openly and fairly for both parties (host and assignors/head referees) to agree on the amount of the invoice. There shall be up to 5 calendar days to discuss any discrepancy and 5 calendar

days to mutually agree on them or come to resolution on the situation. This would still allow 10 calendar days for payment processing and instill proper payment actions of any host institution. If at the end of the 10 calendar days of discussions, the 2 parties (host and assignors/head referees) do not agree on the invoice, then the next step is to involve the Southern Pacific Head Referee. If there is a dispute in any invoice, the undisputed portion shall be paid immediately and the disputed amount and the basis for the dispute presented to the Southern Pacific Zone Head Referee. If the dispute cannot be resolved within 14 days, the matter shall be presented to the SoPac Board whose determination shall be final. Any penalties issued by the current standing policies shall be enforced unless approval by the BOD is given. A host should not be liable for any errors committed by any required 3rd party payer (RefPay, and the like). This should be on a case by case basis.