



Match Regulations

ZEPTA Water Polo Tournament 2026

56th international ZEPTA Water Polo Tournament • 22 & 23 August 2026 • Ter Apel

All matches are played in accordance with the rules of the KNZB (Royal Dutch Swimming Federation), as they apply to the Dutch water polo competition in the **2026–2027** season. In all cases not covered by these rules, the head referee and/or the match officials will decide.

Important: the team listed first on the match schedule wears **white caps** and is responsible for bringing the **match ball**. No match ball? Then the white team loses **5–0** — the same as a no-show. The white team is also required to provide the **jury (table officials)** for the following match. Teams report to the announcer's desk before their match.

Playing times

All teams except the Eredivisie

- Two periods of **6 minutes gross playing time** (running clock) are played, with a one-minute break between periods.
- Each match is scheduled within a **15-minute** time slot.
- All matches are timed centrally via a central timing system.
- The 28-second shot clock rule does **not** apply.

Eredivisie

- Two periods of **8 minutes net (effective) playing time** are played, with a one-minute break between periods.
- Each match is scheduled within a **30-minute** time slot.
- The 28-second shot clock rule **does** apply.
- There are **no** time-outs.

Competition format

- The tournament is played in a **pool (group) format**, divided by category and level.
- All information — the match schedule, standings and the referee schedule — is available in the **tournament app** at play.waterpolotournament.com.
- The team listed first wears **white caps**, brings the **match ball** and provides the **jury** for the following match.
- Teams report to the announcer's desk before their match.

Points

Result	Points
Win	3 points
Draw	1 point
Loss	0 points

Final ranking

The team with the most points wins the pool. If teams are tied on points, the ranking is determined as follows:

1. The **goal difference** (goals scored minus goals conceded).
2. The result of the **head-to-head match** between the tied teams.
3. The **goal difference in the head-to-head matches** (when three or more teams are tied).
4. The highest number of **goals scored** across all pool matches.
5. If all of the above criteria are equal, the match officials will decide by **drawing lots**.

No-show

- If a team fails to show up, a **5–0 win** is awarded to the opponents.
- A team that is not present within **3 minutes** of the scheduled start time is considered a no-show; the score is likewise recorded as 5–0 to the opponents.
- If the white team brings **no match ball**, the same sanction applies: a **5–0 loss**.
- If neither team shows up, the result is recorded as **0–0**. The match is not replayed.

Exclusions and disciplinary matters

Temporary exclusions

- After a **U18**, the excluded player or a substitute may re-enter the water after **18 seconds of gross playing time** (for the Eredivisie: 18 seconds of net playing time).
- After a **UMV** (exclusion with substitution), the substitute may re-enter the water after **28 seconds of gross playing time** (for the Eredivisie: 28 seconds of net playing time).

Permanent exclusions

- After a **UMV-4**, **no substitute** may enter the water for the remainder of the match.
- All UMV and UMV-4 cases are reported to the **head referee and the tournament management**, who will jointly decide on the consequences for the remainder of the tournament.
- Very serious offences are reported to the **KNZB**.

