



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

INTRODUCTION

We are excited to report that Southern Highlands Water Polo (SHWP) had an uninterrupted full season of social competition in the pool this year. We are also thrilled to have welcomed new families into SHWP, with membership numbers increasing this year. As always, the spirit of our existing members and the dedication of our parents have been instrumental in making this season successful.

Members and parents stepped up in various capacities, from training and refereeing to coaching and lending a hand at the Tourney Cup BBQ. We need this collective effort to continue in 2023/24, not only does it strengthen our club, but it ensures our competition matches and tournaments go ahead.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to our life members and patrons. Your commitment, words of wisdom and encouragement to SHWP is deeply appreciated.

As we reflect on this successful season, we look forward to building a stronger competition in the 2023/24 season. Thank you all for your contributions and support. Here's to a bright and promising future for SHWP.

COMPETITION

Like last year, the Board made the decision to continue with the social competition in the 2022/23 season for both seniors and juniors. This was due to some of the U12 teams from Tudor house only playing half the year and our U16's playing up in the seniors.

- Fees were increased this year for both Juniors and Seniors after last years subsidised fee by SHWP to encourage participation. The State Governments \$100 'active kids' voucher was popular with 54 percent of juniors using the voucher. We note the NSW government has reduced the 'active kids' voucher to \$50 for the 2023/24 season.
- All games were played at Frensham Pool. Monday night for Seniors and Tuesday night for Juniors. Training Wednesday nights.
- We acknowledge and thank Sally Leonard for her tireless work in organising the teams for the local competition and the many tournaments our juniors of all ages enjoyed.

MEMBERSHIP

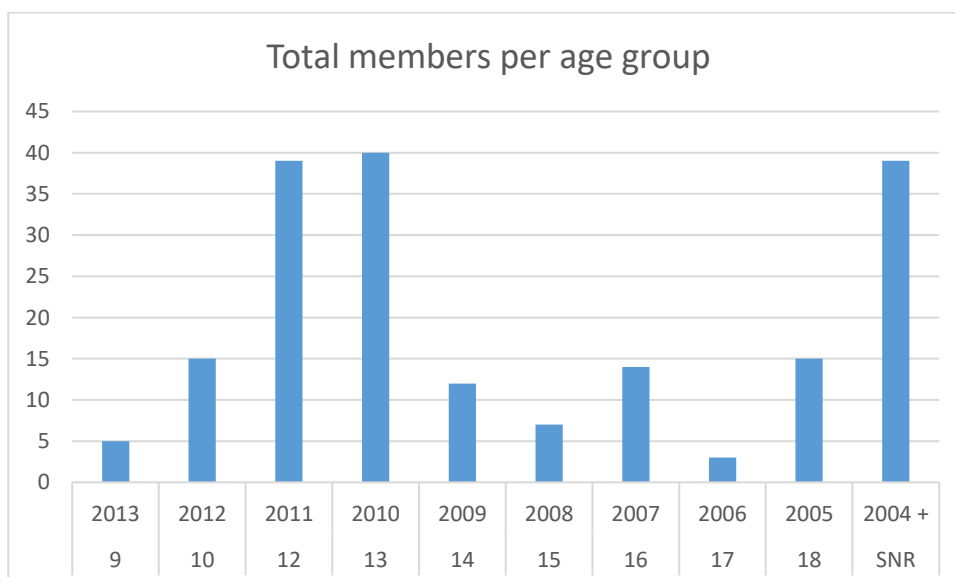
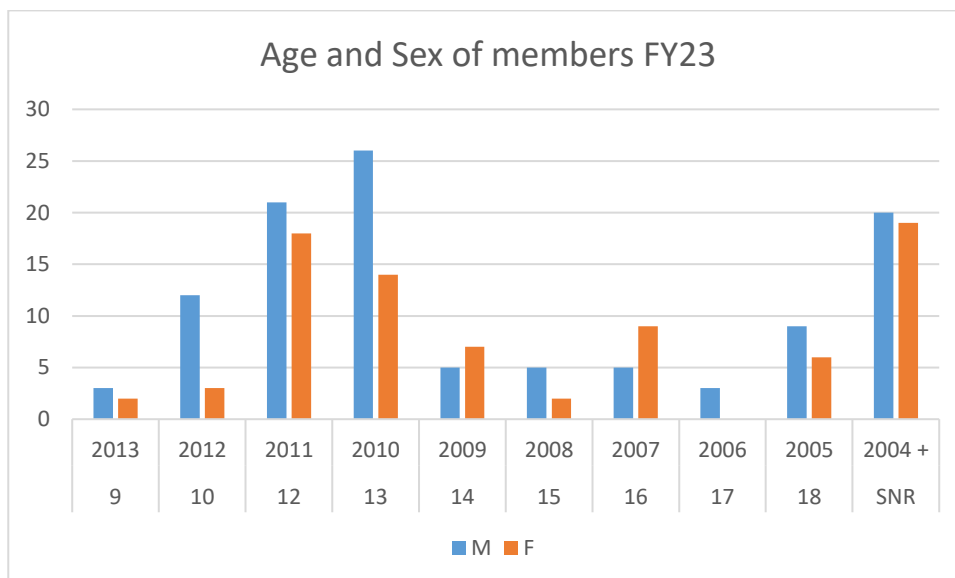
Our membership increased 28 percent from the FY22 season, with the biggest increases in the juniors. The senior numbers were boosted by the 18-year-olds. FY22 membership fees included summer training and some tournament costs.

See below for the breakdown of membership numbers:

Participation between male and female only fluctuated slightly from FY22:

- FY22 Female 76 (46%), Male 89 (54%).
- FY23 Female 80 (42%), Male 109 (58%)

	FY22	FY23	FY23- FY22	
U/12	45	59	14	
U/14	21	52	31	
U/16	25	21	-4	
SNR	44	57	13	
Volunteers	26	17	-9	
Total	161	206	45	28%

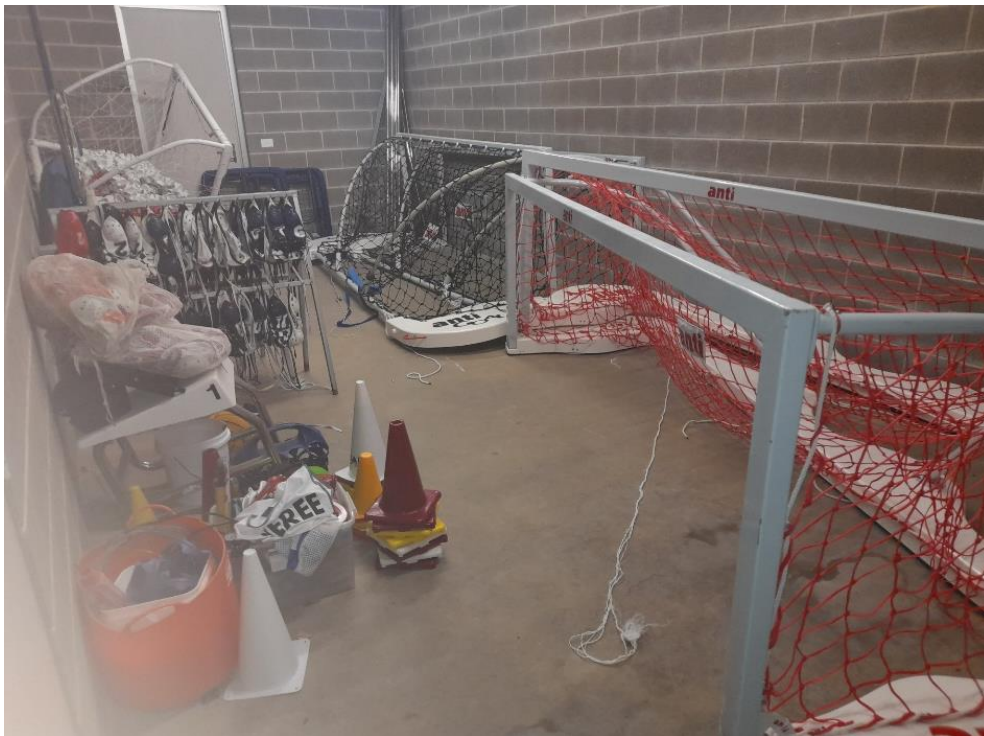


TRAINING/COACHING

Once again, Jenny Balla did a wonderful job training our Juniors and new players to SHWP. Training was conducted every Wednesday evening with training sessions focusing on skills, legwork, agility, passing, shooting, and fouling.

Jenny organised other trainers to assist with parent volunteers also helping. With the various volunteers and junior members now assisting with the set up and pack up of equipment, Jenny has advised that the storeroom requires a more organised structure. SHWP has written to Geoff Marsh, Head of Frensham College advising him that the storage area is proving inadequate for the safekeeping of our equipment. Despite the efforts of our dedicated volunteers, the equipment often ends up stored in a rather disorderly manner. Jenny has also initiated a conversation with Frensham's maintenance personnel, who believes that a straightforward solution can be implemented to address these concerns.

SHWP requested this issue be addressed before our competition commences in term 4, 2023 if possible. We advised Geoff that SHWP are more than willing to contribute to the costs associated with implementing an improved storage solution, should it be deemed reasonable. Our primary aim is to ensure the longevity and optimal condition of the equipment that SHWP own.



Once again, thank you Jenny and the team of volunteers for making SHWP training happen.

REFEREES

Craig Ford has again taken on the role of head referee. Recognising a significant gap in the availability of senior referees to oversee junior matches, Craig Ford took it upon himself to initiate a program that would address this challenge while nurturing the younger members of the club. With a vision to impart invaluable lessons early on, Craig embarked on a journey to train budding referees within the age range of 13 to 15 years old. By harnessing their youthful enthusiasm and channelling it into a deeper understanding of water polo. As a result, we have another two WPNSW accredited

referees in Hugh White and Harry Moore. We look forward to seeing many more from Craig's referee boot camp. In recognition of Craig's initiative, SHWP have nominated Craig for Water Polo Australia's volunteer of the year 2023 award.

TOURNAMENTS

A summary of the Junior tournaments SHWP entered for FY23 are listed below. To increase SHWP participation and representation in various junior tournaments the Board made the decision to include the costs of junior tournaments in the registration fee. This keeps the cost down considerably for our members and encourages juniors of all ages to test their skills against different clubs, meet new friends and have fun. A newfound enthusiasm in our juniors is evident after such events which keeps our club vibrant and exciting to be part of. Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers, parents and members that made these tournaments successful. Another special thank you to Sally Leonard for organising the teams.

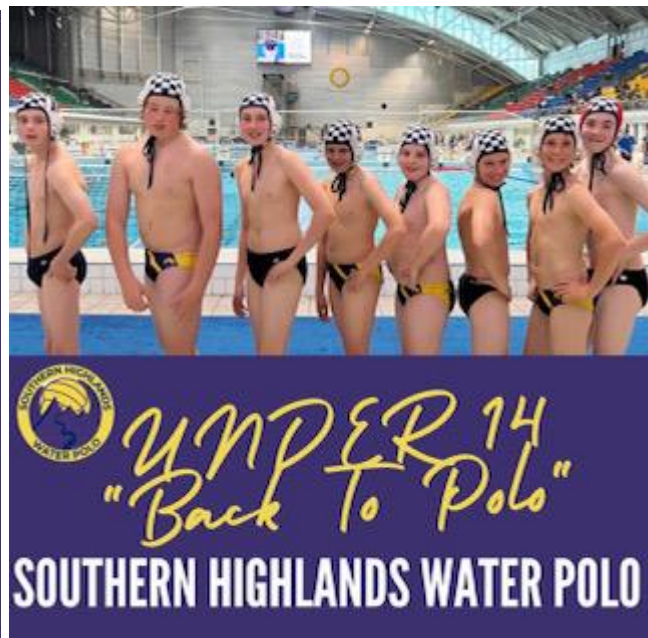
Under 14's WPNSW Back to Polo Festival Monday 26th - Wednesday 28th October 2022

Location: Sydney Olympic Park

SHWP entered two junior teams into the Back to Polo Festival for a fun filled 3 full days of under 14 junior water polo at Sydney Olympic Park

A junior girls team coached by Annie White and Hugh White and a under 14 boys team coached by Joe Zervos. They played a total of 9 games over the 3 days.

The junior water polo tournament showcased an impressive display of young aquatic talent. Teams exhibited remarkable teamwork, strategic prowess, and unwavering determination in the pool.



Under 12's Tourney Shield 8th and 9th October 2022

Location: Frensham Mittagong

SHWP entered 3 teams into our local Under 12 Tourney Shield Festival. A total of 30 junior players from the Southern Highlands. We had a range of players with varying abilities participating, from beginners to the more experienced juniors. The tournament not only provided a platform for these rising stars to shine, but also emphasised the importance of sportsmanship and camaraderie. Our junior teams were all coached and managed by older SHWP juniors and parent volunteers.



Under 12's Waterpooloza Canberra 19th and 20th November 2022

SHWP entered 1 mixed Under 12 team into the Canberra Academy junior Water polo event. The Junior Water Polo Development Tournament held in Canberra was a resounding success. The event brought together junior water polo teams from various regions, fostering healthy competition and skill development. Out of 24 teams in the competition our SHWP team made it into the grand-final, coming away with the silver after playing Balmain in a tough nail biting final.

A big thanks to Oscar Leonard and Torah Wooderson for being wonderful coaches and role models.



Bush to Bay Cronulla 17th and 18th December 2022

SHWP entered 1 x Mixed Team of Under 14 players from the Southern Highlands.

The tournament featured intense matches where participants demonstrated exceptional teamwork, strategic thinking, and remarkable aquatic skills. Players exchanged experiences and forged new friendships, highlighting the positive social aspect of water polo. The supportive atmosphere encouraged our SHWP players to push their limits. We were very excited that our SHWP team came home with the silver medal and had a memorable experience.



Under 12 The Big Orange

10/11/12 Match 2023

SHWP entered 3 teams into The Big Orange Water Polo festival. This was the largest number of teams SHWP has entered in this tournament. Each team consisting of 10 players, so the Southern Highlands was well represented with 30 players in total.

What truly set this tournament apart was its emphasis on development. Coaches and organisers played a crucial role in fostering a learning environment. Two of our juniors, Hugh White and Harry Moore were the nominated SHWP referees for the tournament and their hard work paid off, obtaining their WPNSW referee accreditation. Well done boys.

Our Highland Bears team went through the competition undefeated and played Sydney Uni in the Grand-final. The boys came home with the silver medal. What a fantastic effort, well done Bears.



SENIOR SOCIAL COMPETITION

The senior's competition in 2022-23 was a social competition to allow some of younger members to play with the more experienced and hardened water polo veterans. The team list below highlights the various ages now playing in the senior's competition. I want to thank all the senior players for their support and guidance of the younger players.

Mostly, the games were played in a good spirit with no rough play reported. We had one incident of verbal misconduct that was dealt with by the SHWP Board. Apart from that one incident, it was a successful competition.

Team	Average age	M	F
Dolphins	46	8	1
Live wire	16	4	6
Sea Wolves	16	7	2
Sharks	50	8	5
Whales	18	5	5
Wipeout	22	5	5
Average	28	6	4

I would also like to give a special thank you to our senior players who step up to help referee, Alan Balla, Stephen Dunn, Chris Canute and Daniel Barnes. Thanks to Chelsea Flood and Greg Bowyer for also assisting with table duty.

Table duty amongst the seniors was a bit lacklustre this year with the same players helping each week. In the 2023-24 season the team captains will need to step up to ensure their team does their allocation of table duty.

END OF YEAR POOL PARTY

SHWP organised an end of year celebration at the Bowal pool for all members and parents. The weather surprised us with some sunshine which enticed people into the pool for some fun. SHWP provided a sausage sizzle, vegetarian options, snacks, and drinks. All SHWP members were presented with a certificate of appreciation, a drink bottle and SHWP swim cap. Thank you to all the members and parents that attended, SHWP appreciates your support of the club.

Also, a big thank you to Vivienne Krassoi and Amelia Blackshaw for organising and contributing to the event with your kind donation of treats and snacks.



FINANCES

The BDCU Alliance Bank transitioned over to the Bendigo Bank requiring new set up details for all SHWP account signatories. SHWP account details remain the same, however the online platform is now through Bendigo Bank which has a more comprehensive authorisation process, providing improved security for the SHWP account. Account signatories are Craig Moore, Greg Puchert and Vivienne Krassoi.

We thank our Patron Carl Phillips for facilitating the NSW Water Polo Youth Advancement Trust Grant of \$13,500 for SHWP. Carl has a long history with Universities Water Polo as a past treasurer and executive member. Carl's prominence within this water polo organisation and the relationships he has developed over many years, has been financially rewarding for SHWP.

Other income for FY23 included sponsorship funds of \$3500 and the Tourney cup BBQ funds of \$3,074.

The use of the WPNSW 'get involved' fee for junior registration saved SHWP \$9,895 in capitation fees. Unfortunately, WPNSW are stopping the use of this registration option in FY24.

All these additional funds enable SHWP to give back to their members through reduced fees and provide junior development opportunities such as training and tournaments. The SHWP Board has worked hard to improve our balance sheet in anticipation of increased WPNSW capitation fees in FY24. These funds will assist SHWP to look at other programs such as Flippaball for juniors aged 7-10 and hosting a Senior Tournament at Frensham.

Our accounts auditor Ken Clifton of Clifton Accountants is retiring. Ken has recommended Peter Hassos for Aura Partners as a suitable replacement. This will be put forward at the AGM.

Greg and Vanessa Puchert once again, have been brilliant in finalising the SHWP accounts for the auditor. Thank you very much for your assistance. I hope you can both stay on for another year, as I don't know what I would do without you.

SPONSORSHIP AND SUPPORT

Sally Leonard has been instrumental in obtaining additional sponsors to promote SHWP with 'T' shirts for all FY24 registrations. Our wonderful sponsors are all listed on the back of the shirts.



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BAR & BILL

Henk's
BY HENDRIKS

THE PALMS
GOLF STUDIO

BOTTLES OF AUSTRALIA

We are always looking for additional support so please contact us if you know of any opportunity to assist our Club through financial or service support.

WSC COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES STRATEGY

I also want to take the opportunity to mention the Wingecarribee Shire Council Community and Recreational Facilities Strategy that was presented at the 21 June Ordinary Council Meeting 2023. Even though this occurred outside of the FY23 water polo year, it is still very relevant at the time of writing.

Our Patron Miles Lochhead has been instrumental in writing the submission to Council on the behalf of SHWP. Miles is also on the Council Reference Panel in relation to the strategy, keeping SHWP at the top of the agenda. The SHWP submission is available for all to read on the SHWP website.

<https://www.revolutionise.com.au/shwpolo/home/>

To gain NSW state government support Miles Lochhead, Tony Springett and myself met with the Member for Wollondilly Ms Judy Hannan at the Mittagong pool site in August. Judy is very supportive of the SHWP submission and of water polo in general, with her own family members being water polo representatives. Judy has represented SHWP concerns with both Mr Viv May, WSC Administrator and Mr Stephen Jones, Member for Whitlam, in subsequent meetings. We now wait on the Councils final report to be presented to Council on 18 October 2024. We will keep our members informed of any developments.




IN CONCLUSION

This past year has undoubtedly been a resounding success for SHWP, and it serves as a solid foundation upon which we can build even more strongly in the future. This achievement owes much to the unwavering dedication and expertise of our hard-working Board members, devoted club members, loyal life members, and generous patrons. We extend our thanks to those who consistently step up and offer their support to the club, including Miles Lochhead, Greg Puchert, Vaneesa Puchert, Jenny Balla, Alan Balla, Craig Ford, and Tony Springett whose invaluable contributions have been much appreciated by the Board.

Equally deserving of our gratitude are the tireless volunteers, comprised of both parents and players, who consistently bring their smiles and willingness to lend a hand at the pool. Your contributions are the backbone of our club, and we cannot express our appreciation enough.

Here's to many more great years for SHWP!

From the Deep End

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig Moore", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Craig Moore

President 2023