Appropriate Water Polo Tactics
Atom -18U Girls
What we are doing?

- Present defensive philosophies at the senior level
- A) Every team is starting in a press and falling into a drop to take away the center forward position
- Why? FINA wants goals, easiest way to get goals is man up and counter attack
- B) minimum of two blockers per shooter shooter on every shot
- C) no shots from 3, all shots should have a high level of pressure on the shooter
- D) 2m player must be countered to 2 meters every attack
- Counter Attack
- Finish front line if possible, back line counter must be covered before a shot, push the counter deep, stick to the pattern.
6 on 5

- Look for the quick but only give if there are no doubts.
- Passing pattern to calm the offense and analyze the defense but you can look for the shot or post pass (1,4,2,5,4 or 2 back to 1).
- Hard intense faking, look at the net.
- Simple 1 position passes unless defense is jumping or completely overloaded.
- No shot off a dropped pass.
5 on 6

- No shots from the post
- Storm if there is a foul or ball hits the water
- Four blockers per shooter whenever possible
- Middle person is off ball, unless specific tactic
- Take away the short corner when blocking, funneling the ball to the goalie
- Gap the 1-2 if no lefty when there is a 5 rotation or 6 out
6 on 6

- Ball must keep moving, locking the goalie with hard fakes and lateral movement

- Vertical drives from 2 and 4

- Specific drives across to bring in second hole or break down specific zones.

- No shots with gapping defense unless covered

- Patience with pass into hole, look to break down the zone

- 1 and 5 positions must play deep

- No tempo shots unless it is a clear cross pool pass to finish

- Ball goes into hole, weak side cover
Mini or Atom Tactics

- They don’t exist
- Strong focus on skill sets at both the offensive and defensive ends of the pool
- Leg work, body position (vertical and horizontal) ball handling
- Provide drills that provide a tactical setting but do not mention the tactic focus on the skill set
- Transfer the skills into the tactics you are using in a game
Bantam Girls tactics

- Teach and learn how to do the press. Show the skill set to the individual player and then let the players see how it looks in a horseshoe.

- Individual position skills should be taught to entire group- 2MG and drive defense as well as offense.

- Teaching the skill of blocking and crashing back can be taught but should not be a focus of tactics as the goalies are not ready for this.

- Counter Attack (1 on 0, 2 on 1 etc.) should be introduced, tactics of it and the skills involved
16U Girls Tactics

- Press with front
- Static and movement blocking zones
- Minimal gapping zones, simply an introduction, too much depends on the goalie and players do not have the capacity to understand who and why do we let certain players shoot
- Players need to understand the philosophy of your defense, when and who to switch onto, who is dangerous, where are we forcing the shot and why
- Counter Attack skills and pattern should be introduced
- 6 on 6 - Basic drive, pick/block offenses, how to break down specific defensive looks
- 6 on 5 - Introduction to 4-2 set up but 3-3 should be used primarily unless you have an exceptional group with great ball handling skills
- 5 on 6 jumping and anticipating, block and attack, know your assignments
18U Girls tactics

- Perfection of the press
- Static and movement zones should be well understood and performed
- Players should have the ability to perform gapping zones with appropriate switches and understand why.
- Players should be starting to understand what to do when a defense breaks down, how to recuperate, how to force the ball to go where you don’t want it to go
- Counter pattern should be understood and executed to finish at front or back line
- 6 on 6 tactics should include drive offense, set plays, 2 hole offense, 5M shooting
- 5 on 6 tactics - Blocking assignments should be introduced, where and who you are blocking, philosophy of the 5 on 6 should be clearly presented
- 6 on 5 tactics - 4-2 tactics with rotations, or set movement should