

Water polo

ALL-TIME EVENT MEDALS

HUNGARY	8	3	3	14
USA	1	4	5	10
SERBIA	3	5	1	9
USSR	2	2	4	8



The Oregonian SAT., AUG. 16, 2008 | 9TH OF 17

TODAY'S TV HIGHLIGHTS

+> 10 a.m.: Men's basketball: USA vs. Spain;

men's water polo: USA vs. Croatia;

track & field; women's 3m diving; beach volleyball; rowing: various finals; cycling: various track finals; badminton: women's singles gold-medal match; trampoline (live), NBC

+> 2 p.m.: Boxing: flyweight and middleweight (taped), CNBC

+> 6 p.m.: Men's volleyball (taped), Telemundo

+> 7:30 p.m.: Track & field: women's marathon, men's 100m final; swimming: various finals (live), NBC

+> 9 p.m.: Beach volleyball: women's quarterfinals; weightlifting: women's super heavyweight (taped), CNBC

+> 11 p.m.: Tennis: men's singles and women's gold-medal matches; women's beach volleyball quarterfinals; cycling: various track finals; women's team handball: Russia vs. Germany (live), USA Network

THE GEAR

Water polo involves plenty of competitive contact. Athletes wear swim caps of matching colors with numbers on them for identification.

The caps are equipped with protective cups that guard competitor's ears from contact and water but still allow them to hear teammates, referees and coaches.



THE OBJECT

Water polo is a water sport in which teams of seven swim and try to pass a ball down a pool and score goals. The sport has a shot clock similar to basketball. Teams have 30 seconds on change of possession to shoot the ball. Athletes can use any part of their body to make a shot on goal but may not punch the ball while shooting. Women play in an eight-team tournament, men compete in a 12-team one.

GLOSSARY

Ball under: When a player holds the ball underwater when being engaged by an opponent. The penalty results in a change of possession.

Eggbeater: The type of leg kick athletes use to elevate above the water.

Re-entry area: The position near the goals where players enter and exit the pool when substituting.

THE BALL

An Olympic water polo ball is slightly larger than a volleyball and weighs a little less than a pound. Women compete with a slightly smaller ball that's about eight inches in diameter. It's usually yellow so it contrasts with the water and swimming caps.



THE POOL

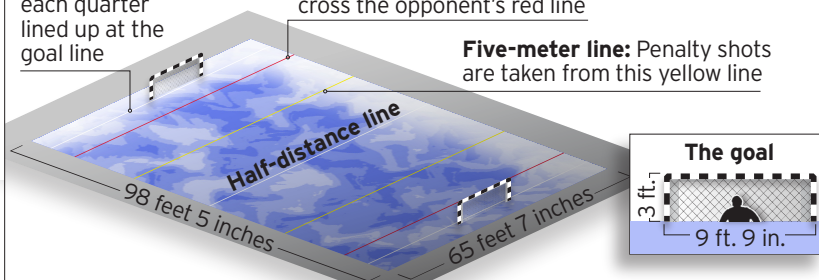
The water in the pool is deep enough that athletes must tread water at all times (at least 5 feet 11 inches, though 6 feet 6 inches is preferred). It's temperature regulated to between 77 and 82 degrees. The goal sits 5 feet 5 inches in from the edge of the pool. Women play in a slightly smaller pool that measures 82 feet by 55 feet 9 inches, but includes the same line markings. Two referees keep an eye on the action from the pool's longer edges.

Goal line:

Athletes start each quarter lined up at the goal line

Two-meter line: Only offensive players with the ball are allowed to cross the opponent's red line

Five-meter line: Penalty shots are taken from this yellow line



ONE TO WATCH

Serbia's **Aleksandar Sapic** helped team to World League title in June

U.S. HOPEFUL

Merrill Moses helped the U.S. team qualify for Beijing as the goalkeeper