

Monday 27 October 2025

Council extends legacy agreement with Water Polo NSW

The City of Ryde will continue to play a vital role in developing and promoting the sport of water polo after extending its legacy agreement with Water Polo NSW.

Under the extended five-year agreement, the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre (RALC) will remain the home base for Water Polo NSW to conduct games and training, providing a long-lasting and significant legacy from the 2000 Sydney Olympics for the sport in NSW.

The new deed of variation was agreed to and signed by Lisa May, President Water Polo NSW, and City of Ryde CEO Wayne Rylands in September and comes into effect from 1 January 2026.

The original agreement was enacted 25 years ago at the conclusion of the Sydney Games when the then brand new RALC was used as the primary water polo venue for both men's and women's matches.

The Australian women's team played six matches at the packed venue as it splashed towards eventual Gold Medal glory, while the men's quarterfinalists also featured in two sell-out clashes.

City of Ryde Mayor Trenton Brown said the extension of the agreement was a wonderful outcome for both Council and the sport of water polo.

"I'm delighted that this agreement with Water Polo NSW cements RALC as the premier water polo destination within the state," he said.

"Like many other residents, I can recall the excitement around having a major Olympic sport played in our backyard, which was magnified by our fantastic team taking out Gold in the inaugural women's competition.

"Since then, I have watched the international progress of both the Water Polo Australia Ord Minnett Aussie Stingers and Ord Minnett Aussie Sharks with keen interest and am thrilled that we are continuing the remarkable legacy that began in Ryde 25 years ago."

Water Polo NSW President Lisa May said the agreement extension highlighted the enduring partnership between the organisation and the City of Ryde.

"Water Polo NSW is immensely proud to continue our long-standing partnership with the City of Ryde and to call the RALC our home," Ms May said.

"This venue has not only hosted some of the most memorable moments in Australian sporting history but continues to nurture the next generation of athletes who are inspired by that legacy every time they dive into the pool.

“We are grateful for Council’s ongoing commitment to our sport and look forward to working together to grow water polo across the state for years to come.”

Water Polo NSW Chief Executive Officer Lucy Warhurst said the agreement renewal would help strengthen the sport’s presence and participation base across the state.

“This renewed partnership with the City of Ryde is about more than pool time — it’s about providing opportunities for young athletes to dream big and take their first steps in a world-class environment,” she said.

“Having a permanent home at the RALC allows us to deliver programs that reach from grassroots to elite levels for not just players but for coaches, referees and officials, ensuring the Olympic legacy continues to flow strongly through our sport.

“We thank Council for their ongoing support and shared vision for a connected inclusive water polo community that champions excellence and inspires future generations.”

The signing of the new agreement was celebrated during a ceremony at the RALC on Monday 27 October.

The City of Ryde was represented by Mayor Brown and CEO Mr Rylands. Water Polo NSW was represented by Director Shaun Clyne and CEO Lucy Warhurst, and Ryde Water Polo Club President Megan Croake.

Also attending was Ryde local Yvette Higgins, the Sydney 2000 Olympic Water Polo gold medallist who scored the winning goal in the final against the USA, Keesja Gofers, 2016 Rio, 2020(1) Tokyo and 2024 Paris Olympian and silver medallist for the Ord Minnett Aussie Stingers, and Nathan Power, 2020(1) Tokyo and 2024 Paris Olympian and current Ord Minnett Aussie Sharks captain.

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