

## **Marketing Water Polo-Professional Announcing/ MC Strategy**

At the outset...I think we're looking at an MC/DJ scenario, as opposed to a Play-by-Play and color commentator you'd have for radio/tv.

An event MC would be more mobile and interactive with the teams and audience. The mic would be open to players, coaches...think pro wrestling or UFC Fighting. I know that might not sound good to the typical sports fan...but with the right personality...that approach to game announcing/production could be utilized without some of the trash talk/dramatic acting nonsense.

During play, the MC would be mobile, and would intermix very limited play by play, with explanation, and general announcing. You'd want someone knowledgeable about the sport who could add some flare to the games. But not anything over the top. At the same time, the MC's mobility throughout the pool could enable fans, players, coaches, even officials to provide their input into the competition. This MC interaction will enhance the explanation aspect of the game, and add to the flare necessary to make the games even more exciting.

How many times have you sat in the stands and heard fans question a call...the MC could be the person between qtrs to have a live interview with a ref.

"You excluded #2-Joe Smith early in the last quarter...I saw coach Jensen and his bench get a little upset and question the call. Can you tell us what you saw that warranted the exclusion?"

Pre/Post/and even in game interviews with players, coaches, and fans.

"It's half-time in a tight game, and before the NYAC team head to the locker room we're gonna grab coach Malone for a quick second...Coach that missed 6on5 opportunity last quarter really upset you...any comment as you get ready for the second half?"

Even in-game interaction with the fans:

"Wow an exclusion call against Williams of Houston...he heads to the penalty box...as Providence calls time-out and some of these H-Town fans are not happy about the call....You sir, do you think the ref made a mistake there?"

Ultimately the MC is the link between the fans and the game...he's a bridge that will bring the people sitting in the seats into the competition. This enables people who are unfamiliar with the sport to engage themselves more and better understand what's going on. The MC has to know the game, has to be very outgoing, and a bit bold. What could separate the Water Polo Announcer from other sports is his/her willingness to challenge officials or coaches and their decisions. Essentially the role of the MC is to be the captain of the fans...he's on their side, and he's here to make sure they have a good time!

The production itself needs to be flashy. Music should be a big part of the game...loud and bold music. Music that accompanies the announcer. So along with an MC/Announcer, there'd be a DJ working the entire game. During certain times the DJ and the Music would be the focal point, and other times...simply providing background...but there'd be some type of music going throughout the entire event...save for actual game play.

I think coming to a pro-water polo game should be like attending an interactive concert. There'll be many who disagree...and want to see something closer to basketball or baseball. But that's not going to attract the new fan. Water Polo is different from those sports and needs to be presented for what it is...a faced paced, aggressive game, with lots of action. The announcer and game production should not only encompass that attitude but be at the forefront. Loud, brash, and entertaining will catch the fans attention and keep them coming back.

Water Polo cannot simply rely on the quality of games to attract fans. It needs to be a show. Something different, something fun, something wild. Pro Wrestling isn't even real, and it has some of the most die-hard fans of any sport in the world. I think there's a way to utilize the flare and rock-n-roll style of pro-wrestling and allow the intensity of the sport of water polo to replace the dramatic non-sense; to create a fan-friendly environment.

I've attached a very rudimentary and simple pre-game script...just to give you an idea of the style of interaction I would envision....

PWPA-Pre-Game Script:  
Texas Wranglers vs. Riverside Sharks

INTRO:

-Music overlay (PWPA Theme Song)

-MC: Pre-game intro-Situated in the stands

“Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls...it’s time to rock the pool with some exciting PWPA action. Today’s game features the undefeated and first place Texas Wranglers and their archrivals from California, the Riverside Sharks!

-MC:

Fan Interview set-up-

“The Sharks are coming into this game having lost two straight...and the fans are clamoring for a big win...”

-Add live interview with pre-selected Riverside Fan in the stands

MC:

Fan Interview set-up-

“Ok will it looks like the Shark Fans are gonna be going off tonight, but how about the Wrangler fans...let’s get a word from them...”

-Go to live interview w/ pre-selected Texas Fan in the stands.

-MC:

Pre-game line-up set up-

We're just about ready to meet the players and coaches for tonight's game...as the rest of our fans enter the pool, and the teams finish up the warm-up let's get riled up with some tunes...here's \_\_\_\_\_ w/ the new song \_\_\_\_\_.

Pre-game introductions:

MC: announce line-up for Riverside. Follow w/ Coach interview.

"Coach you've got a strong group set to play tonight led by your top scorer \_\_\_\_\_. What are your expectations from the team this evening?"

MC: Announce line up for Texas. Follow w/ Coach interview.

MC:

Game start Set-up

"This is going to be a great game folks...before we get started let me introduce you to tonight's officials. (Give name-background of refs) And as the players meet for the two-minute game prep we're going to prep everyone up with this song from \_\_\_\_\_.

MC:

Game Start.

"This place is charged up, the players are lined-up, the ref has the ball up! Lets' get it on!!!!

-game begins.-

Larry Zubrin

Occidental Water Polo