

# Santa Clara Aquamaids Artistic Swimming Club



Parent and Swimmer Handbook

2022/2023 Season

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# Welcome Aquamaids

This handbook has been prepared to provide parents and swimmers with information and guidelines for our club and the sport of artistic swimming. Please keep it for easy reference regarding questions that may occur throughout the season. Other key information may be posted on our website (<https://www.aquamaids.com>) or provided to you through emails.

Santa Clara Artistic Swimming Club, known as the Aquamaids, is a competitive sports club dedicated to providing superior training to swimmers from novice to Olympic levels. For all written and advertising purposes, the club will be known as the Santa Clara Artistic Swimming Club, historically known as the Santa Clara Aquamaids. This is solely for communicative purposes and the name will legally remain Santa Clara Aquamaids. Through the synthesis of individual personal and athletic goals, as well as team and club goals, our purpose is to foster a life-long love of artistic swimming and physical fitness, while nurturing such intrinsic values as teamwork, perseverance, dedication, and good sportsmanship.

The most common organizational model for swim teams in the United States is the nonprofit corporation, which allows a team to maintain tax-exempt status. As a nonprofit corporation, Aquamaids must be governed by a board of directors. The board of directors supports the club's vision, plays a governance role in the organization, and perpetuates the mission delivery of the organization. The staff and Board work with our athletes and parents to provide the best Aquamaids experience possible.

## 1. Club History and Mission

### 1.1 History of the Santa Clara Aquamaids

Wilbur Luick founded the Aquamaids Synchronized Swimming Club, now known as Artistic Swimming, in 1964. He brought our first Head Coach, Kay Vilen, to Santa Clara. Within three years, under Kay's leadership, the Aquamaids won national championships in all events. Since then, Santa Clara has won more national and international titles than any other synchronized swim club in the United States. Santa Clara has produced more Olympians than any other club and has developed many successful swimmers who compete at local, regional, national, and international competitions. Many of our swimmers have secured sports scholarships to such universities as Stanford, Ohio State, Incarnate Word, and Lindenwood.

### 1.2 Aquamaids Objectives

- a) We wish to inspire and enable our athletes to achieve excellence in the sport of Artistic Swimming and in life. We strive to continue the tradition of competitive excellence established by our founders, Wilbur Luick and Kay Vilen.
- b) This pursuit benefits not only Santa Clara, but also enhances the excellence of USA Artistic Swimming National Team Programs. When our elite athletes are successful in fulfilling their Olympic dreams, our society benefits from the inspiration that they give to us.
- c) We work to ensure that each swimmer's journey, no matter how long or short, is one that: (1) promotes, teaches, and enhances the skills and qualities needed to excel in the sport of Artistic Swimming; (2) provides opportunity for each swimmer to develop his or her maximum capability through participation in the sport; (3) develops good work habits and self-discipline; (4) fosters good sportsmanship, a sense of community, and character through participation in team sports;

- (5) develops and prepares them to represent the Santa Clara Aquamaids in all levels of competition from novice to collegiate to the Olympic Games.
- d) We seek to build a solid foundation for the sport of artistic swimming by expanding our membership who in turn will share our sport with as many other people as possible. We are committed to developing community, pre-competitive, and competitive programs to help share the values of our sport with young people.
- e) We seek to promote our sport. We feel that the more people learn about our sport the more inclined they will want to join Artistic Swimming. We are proud of our sport, and we celebrate it whenever possible.

## **2. What is Artistic Swimming?**

Artistic Swimming is a hybrid form of swimming that combines dance, gymnastics, and swimming. Athletes may perform in the solo, duet, combination team, free team, mixed duet or acrobatic routine events. The mixed duet is the most recent event and the only one in which men are permitted to compete on the world level. Artistic Swimmers perform choreographed routines in the water set to music. Their routines exhibit the strength, speed, flexibility, aerobic and anaerobic endurance required of the sport. It takes 8 to 10 years to produce a world-class Artistic Swimmer. Therefore, this is a sport that requires early specialization.

### **2.1 Components of Artistic Swimming**

#### **2.1.1 Strength and Flexibility**

The bedrock of artistic swimming is strength and flexibility. Our athletes spend considerable time acquiring this base through core exercise, tumbling, flexibility, speed swimming, etc. USA Artistic Swimming requires that they successfully complete and pass standardized Levels in order to enter commensurate levels of competition. This Level Testing is a required component of the athlete's training.

#### **2.1.2 Figures**

Figures are a specific series of body positions, joined together by transitional movements. Each of them is clearly defined in the FINA (International Swimming Federation) Handbook. Figures are designed to test the competitive athlete's skill and knowledge of Artistic Swimming. The hours devoted to the excellence of figure execution provide the technical base for the athlete's ultimate development. Figures are performed before a panel of judges at competitions. They are judged on a 10-point scale, which is multiplied by the degree of difficulty of each figure. Subjective judging of this nature is also found in Artistic Swimming's peer sports (e.g., diving, figure skating, and gymnastics).

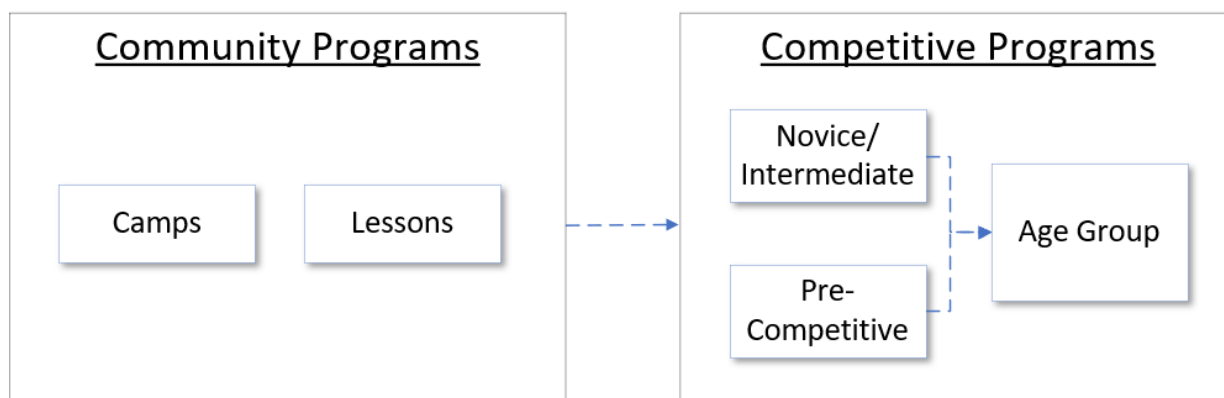
Most underwater portions of any routine are comprised of or adapted from the core of set figures. The 10-point scoring system is used from the novice to Olympic level. The average figure score for each swimmer is calculated and posted. At competitions, other than senior competitions, awards are given for figure scores in each age group. Individual scores for figures are averaged across all the team members in a routine. The figure score is combined with the routine score to achieve the final score. Once a swimmer enters the Junior or Senior track, figures are no longer performed and are replaced with technical routines. Technical routines require the swimmer to conform to certain figures or elements performed in a specific order to music.

#### **2.1.3 Routine**

A routine (or program) is the combination of strokes and figures, which is choreographed and performed

by the swimmer(s) to music. Like figures, routines are scored on a scale from 1 to 10. The scale is used at every level (i.e., from the novice to Olympic level). Panels of judges give marks for Execution, Difficulty, and Artistic Impression. The execution marks are broken down into execution of all movement and includes synchronization. Artistic impression consists of choreography, music interpretation, and presentation. Difficulty refers to every aspect of Artistic Swimming, including upright and upside down moves as well as swimming skills. The final score is a combination of these three scores with the averaged figure score added. Each is worth 50%. In Junior and Senior competitions, the combination of the technical routine score and the free routine score determines the final placement. In some competitions (e.g., World Aquatic Championships) the two programs may constitute separate entries.

### 3. SCA Artistic Swimming Programs



*If parents are unsure of the most appropriate program, our lead coaches or our Head Coach will be happy to assess their swimmer.*

#### 3.1 Community Programs

Community Programs are fee-based and do not require a volunteer commitment.

##### 3.1.1 Artistic Swimming Classes & Camps

Our classes and camps are for swimmers with little or no Artistic Swim experience who wish to learn the sport. Participants are introduced to the fundamental skills of Artistic Swimming and develop a routine throughout the program. *\*Swimmers must be comfortable in deep water.*

#### 3.2 Competitive Programs

##### 3.2.1 Pre-Competitive Program

This program targets new members and provides them with the necessary skill development to enter competition. The focus of this program is on strength and conditioning, flexibility, efficient swimming skills, and beginning Artistic Swimming skills. The coaching staff will assess mental and physical readiness for transitioning to the competitive program.

A routine costume, mandatory team outfitting, figure suit, swim equipment, and most travel expenses

are the financial responsibility of the athlete.

From September to June, pre-competitive athletes train during after-school hours. The summer schedule (June through August) may differ based upon changing pool availability. **Please consult with your coach before signing up for other activities. Team sports require the commitment of the entire team.**

- Full Season Program: August through June
- 4-8 hours per week
- May attend 2 to 3 local competitions

### **3.2.2 Competitive Age Group Program**

*Age Divisions (Subject to Change at the 2022 FINA Congress).*

This program is for swimmers who are interested in the challenges of competitive Artistic Swimming. This track can ultimately lead to the Olympic level. In this program, swimmers continue to develop and improve their skills throughout the years while competing at local, regional, zone, national, and international levels. Athletes are trained individually and in groups so that they may compete as individuals in figures. If assigned to a team, they rehearse the performance of that team many hours in a season. The free team, combination team, acrobatic team, duet, mixed duet, and solo events are age-based, and an athlete's age group is determined by the calendar year of their birth. According to FINA rules, athletes fall into the following age and skill-related categories:

#### **1. Age Groups**

- 10 and under (10U)
- 11/12
- 13/15
- 16/17
- 18/19

#### **2. Junior**

The Junior category is restricted to swimmers aged 15 to 18. As a member of a Junior Team, the swimmer may become eligible for the Junior National Team that consists of 10 to 12 athletes from throughout the United States. There are many international competitions in this category, the most prestigious of which is the Junior World Competition.

#### **3. Senior**

The Senior category may include swimmers as young as 15 and has no age limit. Once a swimmer is past age 18, they may either enter 18/19 Age Group competitions or Senior competitions. All collegiate programs are senior programs.

Athletes in the competitive program are expected to commit for the entire season, as well as to the number of hours of swimming per week. The hours of training depend upon the age group and/or level of the athlete, as determined by the coaching staff. Competitive athletes train up to 6 days per week. Solo and duet routines are in addition to the team routines and require more commitment. Participation in these events is based upon competitive strategy, match ability, skill level, and overall performance, as well as athlete and family commitment. Individuals may be accepted into a competitive program through coaching evaluations that consider attendance, attitude, and adherence to the demands of their respective teams.

From August to June, competitive athletes train during after-school hours. The summer schedule may differ based on changing pool availability. ***Please consult with your coach before signing up for other activities.***

All competitive athletes may compete in a minimum of two competitions annually, with a potential of more depending upon the age and level of the swimmer. With added success and qualifications, high-level athletes may compete at competitions outside of the region, with the potential of international travel.

### **3.2.3 Novice Intermediate Program**

Our Novice Intermediate Program is for swimmers of all ages and experience levels. This program also accommodates older swimmers who cannot make the commitment to the full competitive program.

A routine costume, mandatory team outfitting, figure suit, swim equipment, and most travel expenses are the financial responsibility of the athlete.

Athletes in the Novice/Intermediate program are expected to commit for the entire competitive season, and to the number of hours of training per week. The hours of training are commensurate with the level and/or commitment level of the program and are determined by the coaching staff.

- Full Season Program: August through June
- 4-8 hours per week
- May attend 2 to 3 local competitions

From September to June, novice/intermediate athletes train during after-school hours. The summer schedule (June through August) may differ based upon changing pool availability. ***Please consult with your coach before signing up for other activities. Team sports require the commitment of the entire team.***

#### **Practice Pool Locations (Subject to Change and additions):**

- George Haines International Swim Center, 2625 Patricia Drive, Santa Clara, CA 95050
- Gunderson High School, 622 Gaundabert Lane, San Jose, CA 95136
- Los Gatos High School, 20 High School Court, Los Gatos, CA 95030
- Warburton Pool, 2250 Royal Drive, Santa Clara, CA 95050
- Prospect High School, 18900 Prospect Rd, Saratoga, CA 95070
- Del Mar High School, 1224 Del Mar Ave, San Jose, 95128
- Ohlone Middle School, 850 North 2<sup>nd</sup> St, San Jose 95112
- Bret Harte Middle School 7050 Bret Harte Drive 95125

Pool assignments are made in accordance with number demographics and program requirements.

## **3.3 Team Selection**

The purpose of team selection is to match athletes of similar skills. Eight to ten members on a team is considered ideal, but this may vary based on the numbers and skill levels in each age group. In some



instances, a team is selected whose members all train towards the same goal but may not all compete in all competitions.

The team selection process begins in August with assessments of all swimmers by the coaching staff. Teams are formed based on the criteria listed below:

- Artistic swimming ability (i.e., figure ability, routine skills, clarity, height, ability to count, flexibility)
- Swimming ability (i.e., strength, speed, power, endurance)
- Attitude and commitment. To be a part of a team, the swimmer must commit to the team for the entire the season.
- Attendance. To be placed on a team and continue to be a part of that team you must have regular attendance, and no unexcused absences.
- Match-ability. Swimmers within a team will have complementary physical traits.
- Age (for age 10+, athlete must be able to room with other athletes when traveling. Parents do not room with athletes)

### **3.4 Extra Routine Selection**

Participation by swimmers in any extra routines (highlight team, combination team, mixed duet, duet and solo) is solely on the recommendation and at the discretion of coaches. Coaches' decisions are based upon:

- Skill level
- Discipline
- Potential ability
- Match-ability
- Coachability
- Pool, coach, and swimmer availability (extra time will be required)
- Parent support
- Good attendance
- Competitive Strategy

## **4. Artistic Swimming Training Components**

### **4.1 Land drill**

Land drilling is an important supplement to practicing in the water. It is done on land, as the name suggests, and helps the athlete learn counts and patterns, and clarify positions by performing movements on land that they would ordinarily execute in the water. This can be done with or without music.

### **4.2 Conditioning and Flexibility**

Much of the conditioning takes place in the water, the goal being to develop maximum strength, speed, power, and flexibility. Because artistic swimmers must first be excellent swimmers, a great deal of attention is paid to basic swimming strokes, swimming drills, aerobics sets, and sprints. During the workout, athletes will also focus on artistic swimming skills; eggbeater, sculling, and ballet leg laps are a

normal part of the daily routine. As the swimmer gains skill and maturity, weight belts may be used in the water to increase strength.

Strength and conditioning training also take place outside of the pool. All competitive athletes will participate in dry land conditioning and flexibility training. This is more extensive at the beginning of the season but continues throughout the year. Dry land exercises include exercises derived from Pilates, yoga, and plyometrics, and are designed to develop arm, leg, and core strength, and to help prevent injuries. Your individual coach will request the specific equipment required for dry land exercises.

## **CELL PHONES MUST PUT AWAY DURING DRY-LAND CONDITIONING AND LAND DRILLS.**

### **4.3 Nutrition**

Nutrition is an important part of an artistic swimmer's development and training. Food is fuel for the body, and it is important that each athlete receives the proper nutrition. Young athletes need more than practice to succeed in their sport. They need a proper diet that keeps them energized and able to perform at their best throughout training and during competition. Here are some suggestions for athletes:

- Eat something at least one hour before training, and within 30 minutes after training.
- Increase intake during training and decrease intake during breaks from competition.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after exercising.
- During long practices, keep healthy snacks on the side of the pool.
- There will be designated break times every four hours.

### **4.4 Mental Preparation**

Mental preparation is a vital component of any competitive sport. Throughout the season we will do team-building activities to help foster trust amongst the athletes.

## **5. Club Organization**

The Head Coach, Chief Operating Officer, and the Board of Directors, in their separate areas of authority, work together to achieve the goals of the organization.

### **5.1 Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors (or BOD) is a group of volunteers that governs the Santa Clara Aquamaids. Members of the BOD are elected by the club membership and hold 3-year terms. Advisory BOD members may be appointed by the Board. The BOD meets monthly or as needed with the Head Coach and COO throughout the year to guide, support, and oversee the mission delivery for the Aquamaids.

### **5.2 Head Coach**

The Head coach, reports to the Board of Directors. The leadership and direction of the swim program fall under the authority of the head coach. The Head Coach manages the coaches and designs the swim

program. The coaches play the most important role in the achievements of the athletes. Aquamaids, unlike most artistic swimming clubs in the United States, employs a staff of professional versus volunteer coaches. They possess the technical and professional background necessary for the proper development of athletes. Their goal is to serve as motivators, teachers, and role models. They are committed to performing all tasks with honesty, integrity, and enthusiasm.

### 5.3 Chief Operating Officer

The COO reports to the Board of Directors. All matters that deal with the business operations of the club fall under the authority of the Chief Operating Officer.

One primary function of Business Operations is to develop, support and drive fundraising and provide support staff for the Organization and its Programs and Property. Additional functions include, but are not limited to: Accounting, Gaming/Business Compliance and Licensing, Human Resources, Facilities, Permitting, Compliance, and training and supporting SCA Volunteer Membership.

The Head Coach and COO have a collaborative partnership to ensure the Organization adheres to best practices and operates with cohesiveness in order to achieve its strategic goals and mission.

## 6. Club Administration

### 6.1 Registration

Registration occurs at the beginning of the Artistic Swimming season in August. Members must complete the registration packet, which includes:

- Participant agreement/waiver
- Membership to USA Artistic Swimming
- Emergency medical release form
- Photo release form
- Acknowledgement of this document that you have read, understand, and accept terms and condition of this document; as well fees/dues and volunteer requirements.

Santa Clara Aquamaids ***does not permit*** participation in any artistic swim activity without completed registration.

### 6.2 Volunteer Requirements

#### 6.2.1 Fundraising

Santa Clara Aquamaids relies on revenue from Aquamaids Bingo, which operates year-round, as the primary fundraising activity. All members are required to support Aquamaids Bingo by volunteering at the Bingo Café in order to remain in good standing.

Member families must complete an allotted number of 4-hour shifts as a food server at the café

throughout the year. Bingo café shift scheduled are published quarterly, beginning in October (Oct-Dec, Jan-Mar, Apr-Jun, Jul-Sep). The number of shifts is based on the enrolled membership, but members with a single swimmer can expect to complete 4-8 shifts throughout the year. Every effort is made to accommodate members' availability while supporting operational needs.

Members may use a family, friend, or booster to work required volunteer shifts, but the family, friend or booster MUST be: (1) age 18 or older, and (2) approved by the Operations Manager or Volunteer Coordinator in advance. Aquamaids Organization reserves the right to refuse or revoke a family, friend, or booster at any time. All arrangements between a booster and member are the responsibility of the member and will not be arranged or enforced by the Santa Clara Aquamaids Organization.

When members do not show up for their scheduled café shift, it negatively impacts the entire café staff and other volunteers working that night and can impact the café's ability to serve the bingo patrons.

- If a member does not show up for either a bingo café shift, they will be scheduled for an additional/make-up shift on the next published shift schedule.
- If the member misses a second shift, the board of directors and head coach will be notified.
- If the member misses a third shift, their swimmer will be temporarily removed from practice/training until the matter is evaluated and or resolved.
- It is the member's responsibility to check their volunteer commitments and stay up to date on those commitments.

### **6.2.2 Swim Program Volunteering**

Member volunteer support is essential for the Santa Clara Aquamaids to provide the highest quality swim programming for our athletes. All members are asked to commit to at least 25 hours of swim program volunteering each year. Most parents enjoy being an integral part of their athlete's activities. These volunteer activities provide a "ring side seat" and underscore their interest in their athlete's chosen sport.

## **6.3 Ancillary Expenses**

Members may incur out-of-pocket expenses as part of their athlete's participation in the program. Example expenses may include, but are not limited to the below:

- Required Outfitting (e.g., team sweats, swim attire, etc.)
- Swim supplies (nose clips, goggles, practice suits etc.) and food at competitions
- Personal competition suits for solo, duet, trio etc.
- Members may be asked to contribute to international travel for club option meets
- Extras for USA Artistic Swim and International travel
- Lodging & food expenses

The club retains the right to change the policy on financial contribution by the club or the members based on the financial position and obligations of the club.

## **6.4 Membership Dues**

Members sign up for a 1-year membership (September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 to August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023) where the membership fees are paid over 10 months on the first of the month (September with the registration, October, November, December, January, February, March, April, May, June).

Program	Monthly Membership Fees
Novice / Intermediate	\$300
Mini-maids	\$250
Pre-comp	\$350
10 and under	\$400
11-12	\$450
13-15	\$450
Juniors	\$450

*Families with multiple swimmers get 12.5% discount of the total membership dues per swimmer.*

The deadline for registration is September 19, 2022.

Members joining later than October will need to pay from the month they join independent of the date of the month. For example, if they join on November 15<sup>th</sup>, they will need to pay November membership dues when registering and each due until the end of the season.

Aquamaid's policy for following up on lapse in paying membership dues is as follows:

1 <sup>st</sup> of the month	Membership dues are due	Invoice automatically sent via email
7 <sup>th</sup> of the month	First attempt to contact	Reminder to pay via email is sent out
15 <sup>th</sup> of the month	Second attempt to contact	Late fee \$50 added and participation is suspended until dues are paid
2 <sup>nd</sup> month	Full participation is not possible	The member will be contacted by the Head coach of Aquamaids via a phone call. If no response, decision of suspension will be sent by email.

## 6.5 Pausing or Terminating Membership

### 6.5.1 Leave Policy

If a swimmer needs to take an extended leave due to a medical condition, the member needs to inform the direct coach **and** the head coach by completing this [form](#).

During all the *full* months that the swimmer is on leave, the membership dues will be put on hold. However, the volunteer commitments will be running uninterrupted.

To return to practice, the swimmer will need to be evaluated by a doctor and/or physical therapist. The physical therapist and the coach will devise a training program for the swimmers' return to ensure that the swimmer builds up their ability before returning to full practice.

### 6.5.2 Cancellation policy

Artistic swimming is a team sport, and any swimmer leaving during the year will have an impact on the team. We understand things happen during the year and that some members need to leave the club, but in order to minimize the impact to the team, we require a one-month notice for leaving the club for any cancellations after October. The one-month notice is waived at end-of-season (June-August). Cancellation of membership will take effect at the end of the following month.

The process for leaving the club is:

1. Inform the swimmer's coach of your intention to leave
2. Fill in this [form](#) (mandatory, it is not enough to talk to the coach)
3. Have a conversation with the head coach and the board (if the board requests). The head coach and board will contact you after the form in Step 2 is filled in.

## 7. Athlete Code of Conduct and Commitment

### 7.1 Athlete Code of Conduct and Responsibilities

- Obey the rules of all facilities where you train or compete.
- Arrive to practice 5-10 minutes before start time, properly attired for the activity of the day. (i.e., dry land clothes or swimsuit). Have all equipment prepared.
- Attendance and participation at all practices are mandatory. Holidays and breaks will be outlined as early as possible in the swim season and only those days specified will be allowable holiday times for team members. Special events may receive special consideration from the coach, but absences must be approved prior to the occasion by that coach. The coach reserves the right to make roster changes as necessary based on attendance and participation.
- Notify your coach in advance if you will be delayed or absent for any practices and/or trainings. This must be done by phone call by the athlete and put in writing by the parent and is required for all absences. Any other form of communication will result in an unexcused absence. Report illness or injury as soon as possible. Injuries occurred during practice or outside of practice which required medical attention need to be reported [here](#). Unless swimmers have a fever or are physically incapacitated, they are expected to be on deck or in the pool during practice.
- Team commitment is for the entire year. A lack of commitment is not part of the Aquamaid culture.
- Respect and cooperate with your coach, teammates, parents, competitors, judges, consultants, and officials.
- Work hard for your own improvement and for the improvement of your team.
- Accept all assignments with a positive attitude.
- Treat all your fellow athletes and competitors as you would like to be treated.
- Horseplay and rough-housing, no matter how innocent, are not permitted.
- BULLYING is not tolerated.
- Respect the property of others.
- Use appropriate language, and display a respectful attitude toward any club member, competitor, official, or spectator.
- Banned substances, alcohol, and illegal drugs are strictly prohibited.
- When at competitions, abide by the rules of conduct of United States Artistic Swimming. Show respect for the competition facilities and for volunteer workers. Never argue with the judges or question officials' decisions. Let your coach ask any necessary questions.
- Display good sportsmanship at all times. Cheer all performances and treat other athletes, parents, judges, officials, and coaches with courtesy and respect.
- Attend practices, competitions, and extra training as scheduled by the Aquamaids coaches.
- Behave as a goodwill ambassador for the Aquamaids whenever participating in competition or representing the club.
- Adhere to all Aquamaids protocols.
- Show up to practice with a positive attitude. Your attitude affects the atmosphere and productivity of

trainings.

## **7.2 Athlete Code of Conduct at Competition**

- Competitions require special concentration from both swimmers and coaches. It is expected that swimmers rest as much as possible in the week prior to the competition as there is little time for relaxation during a meet.
- The coaching staff is responsible for the athletes during the hours of the competition. Coaches' instructions are the final word. Swimmers are to stay in groups during the competition. They are not to leave the hotel or the pool without permission from the coach or the team mom.
- The coach will determine the dress code to and from competition, during competition, and during athlete activities. Athletes' hair should be pulled back or combed and presented neatly during all aspects of the competition. Jeans are not allowed at any time during competition.
- Swimmers must treat the pool and the hotel/accommodations with respect. They must remember at all times that their behavior reflects on the club and on the sport of synchronized swimming.
- Drugs, alcohol and smoking are expressly forbidden.
- Cell phones are not allowed on the pool deck during competition. The coach may confiscate cell phones if cell phone privileges are abused. All athletes must respect and help team mom. Team moms and coaches will work together to enable optimal competition environments.
- Respect all officials, teammates, competing athletes, coaches and parents.
- Cheer your competitors as well your teammates.

## **7.3 Swimmer Disciplinary Policy**

Minor discipline concerns refer to basic behavior issues encountered in daily training. This would include talking back to coaches, disregarding pool rules, horseplay or other minor infractions.

Major discipline concerns refer to actions that may pose a danger to the individual swimmer and/or those around her or him. Minor infractions that have become ongoing problems, as well as behavior that is obstructive to the training program, are also considered major discipline concerns. Examples of major discipline concerns include, but are not limited to: consistently disregarding instructions from a coach, infractions of traveling rules, bullying or intimidation of other swimmers, frequent absences, and consistent negative talk that causes team disruption (concerns should follow lines of communication).

### **7.3.1 Disciplinary Procedure**

In the case of minor infractions, the lowest level of discipline generally will be applied first. It will be escalated if these behaviors do not change. A higher level of discipline may be applied immediately if the infraction is a major one.

### **7.3.2 Ladder of Disciplinary Procedures**

1. Coach talks with the swimmer to arrive at a mutual agreement of appropriate behavior. In private, the coach will give the swimmer specific examples of the offending behavior.
2. Coach gives an official reprimand that will be documented and reported to the Head Coach.
3. Swimmer is required to leave the pool for the remainder of the practice. The parents will be called to pick up the swimmer. The Head Coach will be informed, and the action will be documented.

4. Swimmer is suspended for a set number of practices, as determined by the Head Coach and the immediate coach. The action may also include removal from previously assigned routines.
5. Swimmer is suspended indefinitely from practice. Parents will be required to meet with the coach and the Head Coach to resolve the problem before the swimmer may return to training.
6. Swimmer is suspended from a competition. If the infraction occurs during an out- of-town competition, the swimmer will be sent home at the expense of the parents.
7. Swimmer is expelled from the club.

### **7.3.3 Appeal procedure**

Parents may not address disciplinary concerns with the coach during scheduled practice times. Parents must set up a meeting with the coach outside of practice times to discuss consequences of the athlete's actions. To appeal a disciplinary decision made by the coach, parents must file an appeal according to the following procedures:

1. Submit a written letter of appeal to the Head Coach.
2. The Head Coach will arrange a meeting between the parents
3. The appeal panel will review the situation and arrive at an appropriate decision

## **8. Coaches Code of Conduct and Responsibilities**

### **8.1 Coach Code of Conduct**

Every Coach is expected to do the following:

- Arrive on time
- Limit cell phone usage during practice to Aquamaids business ONLY
- Provide a weekly schedule to parents and swimmers by email group
- Meet with parents and swimmers when needed
- Clearly define goals to swimmers
- Adhere to schedules
- Ensure each individual athlete has the **opportunity** for focused figure time each week. Scheduled extra figure time will be commensurate with the periodization plan for each program
- Ensure each individual the opportunity for focused figure time appropriate with demands of the overall periodization needs of the program
- Provide a positive learning environment for all swimmers
- Be committed to continuous professional development, and upgrade skills when opportunities arise
- Respect competitive differences
- Strive to encourage the best within the capabilities and ambitions of the athlete
- Communicate any problems to the Head Coach
- Show up to practice with a positive attitude. Your attitude affects the atmosphere and productivity of trainings.

### **8.2 Coach Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the coach are in accordance with coaching assignments and will include some or



all of the following:

- Physical training and conditioning
- Teaching basic and advanced skills
- Teaching and coaching figures
- Music selection and preparation
- Planning and implementing training
- Team and extra-routine selection
- Designing choreography and developing routines
- Giving feedback
- Revising routines as indicated
- Competition preparation
- Attending competitions
- Traveling with team for out of town meets
- Preparing practices and ensuring a substitute for any absences
- Setting goals
- Acting as liaison between judges and swimmers
- Knowing the policy/procedure/protocols for coaches
- Safety and First Aid of all athletes

### **8.3 Role of the Head Coach**

This individual must have substantial experience within the Artistic swimming community, and preferably within SCA. The Head Coach will:

- Provide leadership to the coaching staff through strategic planning for the season. This includes, but is not limited to, music selection, routine determination, team selections, assistance with choreography and figures.
- Hold monthly coaches' meetings.
- Consult with and present recommendations to the Board of Directors.
- Be the second line of contact for swimmers, coaches and parents with unresolved issues. The first line is the swimmer/parent's team coach (see 11.0 Communication below).

### **8.4 Obligation of the Head Coach**

The obligations of the Head Coach include:

- Encourage and develop coach education beyond day-to-day training.
- Attend competitions when possible. Review results of all competitions.
- Serve as the main representative for the Santa Clara Aquamaids Program.
- Review and assist with team plans at season start, and periodically during the season.
- Attend annual meetings with the membership, and monthly meeting of the Executive Board to submit Head Coach's Report.
- Attend Aquatics Convention.
- Plan and participate in Exhibitions and Water Shows.
- Assist and/or provide advice to USA Artistic Swim.
- Safety and First Aid of all athletes and coaches during programs and competitions.

## **9. Parents Code of Ethics and Responsibilities**

### **9.1 Parents Code of Ethics**

Parents will:

- Remember that skill and ability enhance self-esteem.
- Encourage their child's effort to develop the skills of Artistic Swimming.
- Encourage their child to play by the rules and to respect coaches and other swimmers.
- Respect valuable coaching time by discussing concerns with the coach outside of practice time.
- Teach their child that honest effort is as important as victory so that the results of each event are accepted without undue disappointment.
- Turn defeat into victory by helping the athlete work toward skill improvement and good sportsmanship.
- Remember that young people learn best by example. Show appreciation for performances by all competitors and teams.
- Recognize the value and importance of coaches, officials, volunteer board members and others who give up their time to support our athletes and the sport of Artistic Swimming.
- Refrain from criticizing staff and other parents in front of the athletes and seek answers to concerns through the proper communication lines.

### **9.2 Parents' Responsibilities**

- Ensure that the swimmer attends all practices and competitions until the end of the competitive.
- Let the coach know in advance of any absence in writing.
- Ensure that the swimmer is on time for all practices and competitions. If they will be late, a phone call is required.
- Ensure that the swimmer has the necessary equipment for practices and competitions.
- Arrange family schedules to allow swimmers to manage their homework and their sport so that there is both leisure time and time for rest.
- Maintain the commitment to club fundraiser and/or donations.
- Ensure that the family's volunteer hours and obligations are met.
- Recognize and respect the authority of the coaches. Parents are not permitted to be on deck during practices or competitions. A parent may only be allowed on deck if he/she is in working capacity.
- Allow swimmers to focus and prepare with their teams by not distracting them.
- Respect the fact that it is the role of the coach to inform swimmers of scores and to announce schedules.
- Get permission from coach on "shout-outs," publicity, and any social media involving the club, it's athletes, families, or members.
- Get permission from coach on all published pictures and videos.

## **10. Lines of Communication – Swimmer/Coach and**

# Parent/Coach

## 10.1 General Communications

- **Aquamaid's public website** provides general information about the club to members and the public. A periodic newsletter containing updates and important information from the coaches, operations, and/or the Board of Directors, is sent via email to all active members.
- Forms, administrative information and procedures, events, volunteer sign-ups, and member account information are hosted on the **Aquamaid's TeamUnify site**.
- The coaches and/or the Board of Directors may call **meetings** throughout the season as needed to convey important information to the members. Additionally, the **Back-to-Swim meeting** is held at the start of each swim season, and the **Aquamaid's General Meeting (AGM)** wherein the BOD and head coach provide a club update and members vote for BOD candidates is held in January.

## 10.2 Protocol for Addressing Concerns within the Swim Program

Problems and concerns are more easily resolved by following the proper protocol:

1. If an individual (athlete or parent) has a concern about anything that is swim program related, s/he is strongly encouraged to discuss the issue with the swimmer's immediate coach. \*
2. If the issue/concern is unresolved, the individual should contact the Lead Coach of that program. Any issue that reaches the level of the Lead Coach must be shared with the Head Coach. \*
3. If the issue/concern remains unresolved, that individual will contact the Head Coach. The Head Coach will arrange an opportunity to discuss the issue/concern either by phone or in person. The Head Coach will then take the appropriate action as he/she sees fit to resolve this issue/concern.
4. If the Head Coach is unable to resolve the issue/concern, it is then referred to the BOD for resolution.

*\*If the issue/concern is deemed to be too sensitive for direct contact with the immediate coach, the individual may go directly to the Head Coach.*

Retaliation for voicing a concern or issue will not be tolerated. Issues/concerns are **not** to be addressed with Swim Program Assistants/In the Water Assistants. They should be referred to the Lead Coach of the team.

Members are invited to contact the Head Coach with any suggestions that deal with the swim program by either calling or emailing. Any issues that do not concern the swim program are to be directed to the appropriate Staff Member.

## 10.3 Protocol for addressing concerns with the Operations

Problems and concerns are more easily resolved by following the proper protocol:

1. If an individual (athlete or parent) has a concern about anything related to Operations, she/he is strongly encouraged to discuss the issue with the operation's management team (kitchen, volunteer, or gaming managers).
2. If the issue/concern is unresolved, the individual should contact the COO.

3. If the COO is unable to resolve the issue/concern, it is then referred to the BOD for resolution.

Retaliation for voicing a concern or issue will not be tolerated.