

# AquaStarz



DAVIS

2010 HANDBOOK



# Table of Contents

Our Mission	1
Note from the Board	2
Background and General Information About AquaStarz	3
Coach/Lifeguard Responsibilities	4
Swimmer Responsibilities	5
Parent Responsibilities	6
AquaStarz E- mail List Protocol	7
Events That Need Parent Volunteers	8
Meet Volunteers	9
VFCAL Synchronized Swimming Meets Information	10
VFCAL 2010 Schedule	11
Directions to VFCAL Swimming Meets	12
The Equipment	13
The Hair	14
Fess and Fundraising	15
The August Show	16
2010 AquaStarz Spring Calendar	17, 18, 19 & 20



# OUR MISSION

To produce high caliber, goal oriented young people through a synchronized swimming curriculum that emphasizes the development of technical, physical and mental ability, creative movement and cooperative functioning as a team member.

## **A NOTE FROM THE AQUASTARZ BOARD**

### FROM THE AQUASTARZ BOARD

Welcome to the AquaStarz Synchronized Swimming Team! The AquaStarz Parent Board is a group of five swimmers' parents elected each year at the team's end-of-season party to lead the team for the following year. We are honored to be part of the AquaStarz family and proud to serve on the parent board. It is our job to secure coaches and pool space, set the fee structure, maintain the team's membership in both local and national synchronized swim leagues, and to ensure the smooth operation of the team. The parent board is also here to answer any questions and provide guidance for the season. We want your input! If you ever have any questions, ideas or concerns, please feel free to contact any of the board members. Your ideas and concerns are important to us!

AquaStarz is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our Bylaws are posted on this website [www.AquaStarz.org](http://www.AquaStarz.org).

We are excited to have you as a member of our team and look forward to getting to know you all!

President – Cyndi Hughes  
Vice-President – Heidi Holmblad  
Treasurer – Jeri Hollander  
Secretary – Debbie Eernisse  
Member-at-Large – Jeni Veale

## **AQUASTARZ HISTORY AND TEAM BACKGROUND**

AquaStarz Synchronized Swimming was founded in 1999 by Rose Cholewinski at Davis Athletic Club. During the summer months, a small group of swimmers learned the basics of synchronized swimming and performed an annual show that was the highlight of the season. In those early years, Rose served as team coach, choreographer, activities planner, show coordinator and emcee. As our girls grew in both height and ability, they outgrew the Davis Athletic Club's pool, which necessitated us to look into use of the Davis City Pools. At that point, in 2005, a group of dedicated parents formed the non-profit organization, the AquaStarz Synchronized Swimming Team. A parent board was formed to run the business side of the team, a head coach was hired, and the team became affiliated nationally with USA Synchro and locally with Valley-Foothill Competitive Aquatic League (VFCAL). Our membership in VFCAL allowed our team members to begin to compete with other synchronized swim teams in the greater Sacramento area.

Currently, our team consists of swimmers at the Novice and Intermediate levels. Swimmers start at the Novice level and qualify for Intermediate level based on their placement in the top eight swimmers in their age group at the annual VFCAL championships in mid-July.

Meredith Fleener is returning for her second year as head coach of AquaStarz. She coaches our Intermediate and Novice swimmers, choreographs most of our routines, attends meets, and oversees the technical aspects of the team. She has a strong background in synchronized swimming and still swims with the Sac Synchro Masters team. We are fortunate to have Meredith lead our team and value her greatly!

## **COACH/LIFEGUARD RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Supervise the safe, efficient and effective operation of the pool facilities during the workouts and meets.
- Operate under the rules of the Valley-Foothill Competitive Aquatic League (VFCAL) and Davis AquaStarz.
- Coach and instruct participants on techniques and skills needed to compete in VFCAL meets and perform in the shows.
- Maintain a positive atmosphere at practice that is conducive to a good instructional program.
- Organize and direct team practices. Maintain discipline and control of the team members during practice sessions, meets and shows.
- Develop positive attitudes and motivate team members through team meetings, goal setting and individual swimmer counseling.
- Prepare entries for VFCAL league meets and championships, determine who will swim in routines and figure competitions. The head coach has the final decision on who will swim in routines.
- Prepare all swimmers for the annual show. The head coach will ensure that each swimmer has a minimum of one routine to swim in the show, in addition to the finale.
- Determine who will be trained to swim in each routine. This will be based on the ability of each swimmer, not age or number of years in synchronized swimming. Coaches have the option moving swimmers in and out of routines, based on ability and practice attendance.
- Determine swimmers level using the STAR curriculum.
- Attempt to resolve swimmer and/or parental concerns on an individual basis. Any unresolved conflicts should be directed to the AquaStarz board. The issue will be addressed at the monthly board meeting and a written response will be sent to the parents.
- Supervise the proper use of all swim equipment used in practices and meets.
- Perform first aid if necessary.

I agree with the responsibilities listed above.

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Signature

Date

## **SWIMMER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Follow the “Rules of the Pool” at our pools and at the pools we visit for meets:
  - Walk on deck – no running.
  - No rough play or profanity allowed.
  - Do not enter the pool without a coach or lifeguard at poolside.
  - No swimmers are permitted on the diving boards.
  - No glass bottles, jars, mugs, etc. on the pool deck.
- Establish goals and actively train to achieve them.
- Work together with your teammates.
- Show up at practice on time and with a positive attitude.
- Once routine practices begin in May, make every effort to attend practices regularly. (See commitment form.) Successful routine practices rely on the presence of all routine participants. If you must miss a practice, be sure to let your coach and your routine partners know ahead of time. Some practices are mandatory for participation in routines for championships and the fall show. See VFCAL Synchronized Meets and Show section below for mandatory dates.
- Show respect for all coaches and lifeguards.
- Be prepared for challenges and changes. Coaches will determine who will be in each routine, based on the abilities of the swimmers, not age or number of years in synchronized swimming. If you have a concern, please try to speak to your coach about it.
- Keep your ears above water when coaches are giving directions. Coaching many girls in the water is challenging due to the noise level of splashing water and all swimmers need to be extra good listeners.
- The consequences for talking back to coaches or not following directions will be as follows:
  1. A verbal reminder will be given.
  2. If needed, the swimmer will be asked to get out of the water for a short period of time to regain a positive attitude.
  3. Swimmer will be asked to get out of the water for the remainder of the practice and parents will be contacted.

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Signature

Date

## **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Make sure your swimmer has goggles, a swim cap, nose plug, towel and WARM CLOTHES to all practices – sometimes the swimmers need to get out of the water during practices (dry land practice) and when wet, it can be chilly, especially in the evening.
- Please be on time when picking up and dropping off your children from practice. Coaches sometimes need to leave the pool directly after one practice to get to the next practice at another pool on time.
- Try to be a positive role model for your child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all swimmers, coaches and officials at every practice and meet.
- For insurance purposes, parents not possessing a USA Synchro booster membership must sit or stand along the back fence at Civic Pool and should stay behind the gated area at Community Pool at all times. During practice, all parents, even those holding booster membership, should stay out of the immediate pool vicinity.
- On deck photography and videotaping is allowed only with the coach's permission.
- Please refrain from talking to children or coaches during practices unless the coach approaches you first.
- Decisions regarding who shall participate in routines at both the competitions and in the annual show are at the sole discretion of the coaching staff, and will be determined by ability and attendance. Be prepared for many changes to be made during the season. Swimmers advance at different rates and enter the program with different abilities and at different times. This may necessitate changes in who is asked to be in particular routines.
- Please address any concerns to the coach only after practice has finished and the swimmers have left the area. Issues should never be discussed while the swimmers are present. Issues should be taken up directly with the coach, not through the Board of Directors nor via email or any other form of communication to all team families. If you need to talk at length to the coach, please make an appointment with her.
- Any unresolved conflicts should be directed to the AquaStarz board. The issue will be addressed at the monthly board meeting and a written response will be sent to the parents.
- Please read and respond to e-mailed and printed information promptly. Most of the team's information is sent via e-mail. We currently do not have enough parent volunteers to individually call people or distribute all information in print so if you don't read e-mail (our main source of communication) please find a buddy who would be willing to get the information to you.

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Signature

Date

*All constructive suggestions for improving the AquaStarz program are welcome. If you find yourself becoming defensive or emotional about an issue, please bring it up at a later, calmer time. Or, if the issue must be resolved immediately despite your agitation, please wait for at least two coaches, two board members or one of each to be present.*

*Remember: all Board members are volunteers and the AquaStarz coaches are involved in the program because of their love for synchronized swimming and the team. Communication challenges are difficult to overcome; the AquaStarz coaches and Board of Directors will continue to try to meet those challenges to the best of their abilities. By working together with positive attitudes we can have an outstanding team!*

## **AQUASTARZ E-MAIL LIST PROTOCOL**

The AquaStarz list is intended for general announcements and coordination related to the team. It is open to all team members, parents, and coaches and is a moderated list which means that all messages must be approved by the moderator. This is not intended as a means of censorship but as a way to maintain relevance to all members. The moderator will reject messages not intended for a majority of the team or that are considered inappropriate. Please take a look at the To: and CC: on your replies to list messages making sure that you aren't sending to more recipients than necessary.

## **EVENTS THAT NEED PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

- **Regional Meets** – Our regional meets are on Wednesday evenings (see schedule). Each team must supply about 10 volunteers at each meet in order to fill all of the necessary jobs (see below for descriptions).
- **Championship Meet** – VFCAL championships will be held on July 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> this year. We will need volunteers to work all of the meet positions plus some additional volunteers will be needed as well. Every parent whose child attends the meet should plan on working this weekend in some capacity.
- **AquaShow** – Our annual show is held on the weekend of August 27 and 28 . This is a big event for the team. The swimmers can show off all of their hard work. Costumes need to be made. Decorations and programs created. Tickets sold and raffle prizes collected. We need set up and clean up help, stagehands and numerous other assignments need to be filled. If every family helps, it should go off without a hitch.
- **Mock Meet** – At our June 5 practice, we will hold a “mock meet.” The practice will be run just like one of our dual meets except only AquaStarz swimmers will be present. Girls will get a chance to see exactly how meets are run before the first dual meet and will be able to learn how judging works and get immediate feedback on their figures. In addition, our judges and other meet volunteers will get a chance to practice. We would like all parents who have children even considering competing to attend the mock meet to learn more about how meets run.
- **Saturday Videotaping** – Beginning on May 22, we would like two parents to volunteer at each Saturday practice to videotape routines. One of the greatest challenges in synchronized swimming is getting the routines actually synchronized! Since there are no mirrors out at the swimming pool, we have found the best way for the swimmers to get feedback on their routines is to watch videotapes.
- **Practice Set Up and Take Down** – Help set up or put away the sound system before and after practice. Also removing and replacing lane lines and pool covers.

## **MEET VOLUNTEERS**

Because our team is so small, it is sometimes a challenge to fill all of the meet volunteer positions and we would really appreciate everyone's willingness to take on a job. Training will be provided for all positions.

- **JUDGES** – This is a great way to get involved in synchro. To be a judge you need to attend a judge's clinic in Sacramento on June 1, 2008. After this initial training, we will hold a "Mock Meet" where you can practice judging and get feedback from experienced judges. You need to judge at least two Wednesday night meets before being able to judge the championships. Judges will first judge at the novice level only, for both figures and routines.
- **MEET COORDINATOR** – The meet coordinator's job is to make sure our team has enough volunteers at each meet. Jeni Veale has volunteered to be our Meet Coordinator again this year and would be a great person to talk to if you have any questions about any of the meet volunteer jobs.
- **READERS** – Readers sit at the end of each station. One reader per meet is needed to confirm the swimmer's identity and figure. The reader also reads the judges' scores out loud for the recorder.
- **RECORDER** – This job requires at least 2 parents per meet to record the scores on the score sheets. The scores are then tabulated and given to the runner. Recorders sit at the end of the pool with the Reader.
- **RUNNER** – This job can be filled with an adult or child (at least 8 years old). Runners walk around the deck, picking up the score sheets from the Recorders and delivering them to the score table.
- **COMPUTER OPERATOR & SCORERS** – These volunteers work together to enter scores into the computer so they can be tallied. The totals from the scores will determine who places where as well as supplying the scores to each team. These points are kept on a score sheet as a running record of the meet.

## **VFCAL SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING MEETS**

AquaStarz swimmers have the opportunity to compete with other swimmers in the Valley Foothill Competitive Aquatic League (VFCAL) meets in the Sacramento area. This is not mandatory but most of the swimmers who compete, love the experience. League meets are held in Sacramento or Davis on Wednesday evenings in June and July (see schedule) and Championships are held on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of July. All swimmers who are able to perform figures according to minimum standards set by the coach can compete with the coach's permission. Swimmers must attend at least two Wednesday night meets in order to be eligible to compete in the Championships in July. Our coach would like to know as soon as possible who will be participating in the meets so that she can do planning for routines. Swimmers who think they might be interested in competing should plan to attend our "mock meet" during practice on June 5. Novice level swimmers perform each of the following four figures at meets: Ballet Leg, Kip, Front Walkover and Tower. The four figures are performed at stations in the pool and the girls are judged on the accuracy of the figure (Scale of 0 to 10 with 10 being a perfect Olympic-level execution). Typical scores at local meets range from 3 to 6. The elements and figures are also put into a routine that is performed to music. Our league rules indicate that routines cannot be practiced before May 1 so there is a lot of work to be done between May 1 and July 15. Some swimmers perform these routines on the Wednesday evening meets but mainly they are preparing for the Championship weekend that is held mid-July. Because it is critical for all girls in a given routine to be present at the practices leading up to championships, the following practices are mandatory for swimmers planning to compete at championships: July 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15.

### **What to Bring to Wednesday Night Meets**

Black team suit  
Plain white swim Cap  
Goggles  
Nose plug(s)  
2 to 3 towels  
Warm clothing  
Portable chairs  
Snacks/drinks – food is usually available for purchase from other teams  
Easy-Up tent for rain or sun protection (optional)

### **What to Bring to Championship Meet**

Above items  
Gel Kit for hair  
Make up  
Routine suits and headpieces (labeled with swimmer's name)  
Books, games etc. for downtime  
Anything to keep you cool – it can be very hot!

# 2010 VFCAL

## Synchronized Swimming Schedule

**June 9** Auburn @ Sunrise  
Cordova @ Fulton-El Camino  
Davis - BYE  
11-14 & 15-18 Intermediates = Solos/Duets  
8/Un Novice = Kip & ballet leg, left  
9/Up Novice = Ballet leg, left; Kip; Tower; and Front Walkover  
Intermediates = Group 1

**June 16** Cordova @ Auburn  
Sunrise @ Davis  
Fulton-El Camino - BYE  
13-18 Novice = Solos/Duets  
8/Un Novice = Tower & Kip  
9/Up Novice = Kip; Tower; Front Walkover; and Barracuda  
Intermediates = Group 2

**June 23** Sunrise @ Cordova  
Fulton-El Camino @ Davis  
Auburn - BYE  
12/Un = Solos/Duets  
8/Un Novice = Tower & Walkover, front  
9/Up Novice = Tower; Front Walkover; Barracuda; and Ballet leg, right  
Intermediates = Group 1

**June 30** Davis @ Auburn  
Fulton-El Camino @ Sunrise  
Cordova - BYE  
TRIOS  
8/Un Novice = Walkover, front & Ballet leg, right  
9/Up Novice = Front Walkover; Barracuda; Ballet leg, right; and Kip  
Intermediates = Group 2

**July 7** Davis @ Cordova  
Auburn @ Fulton-El Camino  
Sunrise - BYE  
TEAMS  
8/Un Novice = Kip & Walkover, front  
9/Up Novice = Barracuda; Ballet leg, left; Kip; and Tower  
Intermediates = Group 1

**July 14** **BYE**

**July 17 & 18** VFCAL Champs @ Davis  
Intermediate = Group 2  
Novice = Ballet leg, right; Kip; Tower; and Front Walkover

## **Directions to Meets:**

**Fulton-El Camino** – Cottage Pool – 3097 Cottage Way, Sacramento

### **Directions to Meets:**

**Fulton-El Camino** – Cottage Pool – 3097 Cottage Way, Sacramento

Take I-80 to Sacramento (continue toward Arden Fair). Exit on El Camino and go right. Continue on El Camino to Fulton and turn right. Continue on Fulton to Cottage Way and turn left. Continue to 3097 Cottage Way.

**Sunrise** – Rusch Community Center – 7801 Auburn Blvd., Citrus Heights

Take I-80 to Sacramento towards Reno. Exit on Antelope Rd (Exit 100) toward Citrus Heights. Turn left onto Auburn Blvd. Continue to 7801 Auburn Blvd.

**Cordova** – Cordova Community Pool – 2197 Chase Drive – Rancho Cordova. Take I-80 East to Sacramento. Go US-50 East toward South Lake Tahoe. Exit Mather Field. Turn left onto Mather Field Rd. Turn right onto Folsom. Turn left onto Coloma. Turn left onto Chase Drive. Pool is on the right at the bottom of the hill. Turn right into the parking lot.

**Auburn** – Take I-80 East toward Sacramento and exit toward Reno. At Auburn, take Maple Street exit and take the right fork to Old Town Auburn and merge onto Lincoln Way. Turn right at Sacramento Street and then right at Brewery Lane. Turn right at Racetrack Street and left at Recreation Drive. Pool is at 123 Recreation Drive in Auburn.

## THE EQUIPMENT

**NOSEPLUGS** – Worn at all times. During competitions, especially routines, it is necessary to have at least 2 to 3 nose plugs – one on your nose and one or two clipped to the top of your suit. They do fall off! We have them for sale at practices usually for \$3.00 in the blue box.

**GOGGLES** – These can be worn for practices but not for competitions or shows.

**SWIM CAP** – A white swim cap is necessary for figure competitions. They are not worn during routines. Any swim cap is fine for practices.

**SWIM SUITS** – Our team suit is a simple black tank suit. You can purchase any brand you would like. All swimsuits and caps should have the swimmer's name written on the tag – 18 suits in a locker room all look the same!

**COSTUMES** – Special costumes are generally worn for routine competitions for the Championship meet and for the September show. The parents of the swimmers in a particular routine are responsible for costume planning, along with input from the coach. Typically, swimsuits are purchased and then sequins are either sewn or glued on the suits. Alternatively, a simple applique can be made which can be attached to the black team suit. Routine costumes can be as elaborate or as simple as the parents of swimmers in a given routine decide together to make them. Suits should be **labeled** and brought on labeled hangers to the competitions and show.

- **HEADPIECES** - Made from a 2 to 3 inch by 13 inch piece of plastic cross-stitching type mesh (purchased at craft stores) that is either stapled or glued together and fits over the swimmer's bun and attached with bobby pins. They can be covered with anything that is waterproof – sequins, beads, etc. as long as they are secured well. It is a great chance to be creative.
- **MAKE-UP** - Make-up for shows is usually applied by just a few parents in the dressing room before the show. For our younger swimmers, just a little is needed.

## THE HAIR

Synchronized Swimmers are unique in that their hair must be put in a high bun and coated with gel (Knox Gelatin) when they are competing at the Championships and in the show. This is not necessary for Wednesday league meets where a white swim cap is worn.

### SYNCHRO "Gel" Kit Contents

- Unflavored Knox gelatin: 4 to 6 packets. Mix ratio – 2-3 packets, minimum to ½ cup hot water.
- Paper (disposable) hot cup: to mix gel in.
- Plastic spoons.
- Pastry brush: 1" size or disposable paintbrushes.
- Brush: to put hair up in ponytail.
- Fine-tooth comb.
- Hair donut to form bun. Can be purchased at any beauty supply store.
- Hairnets.
- Hairpins.
- Bobby Pins: (small size) to pin on headpieces. Need at least 1 pack per routine.
- Rubber bands: an assortment of sizes.
- Vaseline.
- Washcloth and old towel or sheet.
- Thermos for hot water.
- Makeup: Lipsticks, eye shadows, eyebrow pencils, blush. (One of the judging components for Artistic Impression is manner of presentation. When the girls are wearing makeup, just like in the theater, their smiles and expressions are more pronounced.
- Mirror.
- Nail polish remover.
- Shampoo / conditioner (optional), to be used by the swimmers to get the "Gel" out. Hair must be washed with warm water to get the gel out.

WARNING: Gelatin will clog plumbing. DO NOT pour any down the drain!

## **FEES AND FUNDRAISING**

**Monthly Payments:** Please hand your monthly fees to the treasurer the first practice of each month. Alternatively you can send your check to: Jeri Hollander, AquaStarz treasurer, at 735 Bianco Ct., Davis, CA 95616. Do not hand the payment to the coach, a swimmer or anyone other than the treasurer.

**USA Synchro Membership Fees:** All swimmers must be current members of our national organization, USA Synchro. Full-year membership for swimmers is \$45 (October 1 to September 30). Adult booster membership for parents is \$30 and recommended but not required. Only adults holding USA synchro memberships are allowed on-deck due to the requirements of our liability insurance. All USA Synchro members qualify for sports injury insurance if the injury occurs during a supervised practice or competition, and also receive a subscription to the online USA Synchro magazine. Additional detailed information regarding membership and insurance benefits is available on the USA Synchro website [www.usasynchro.org](http://www.usasynchro.org).

**Reimbursements:** If you purchase something for the team that has been approved by the board you need to fill out a reimbursement form (located on our website). Mail the form with receipts to Jeri Hollander 735 Bianco Ct., Davis, CA 95616.

**Fundraising:** We like to look at our fundraisers as an opportunity for the team to bond and feel part of its financial success. Our AquaStarz families have been great support in the past. Our main fundraisers this year will be our annual show with refreshments and raffle.

**Additional Costs:** Any swimsuit can be worn at practices but each swimmer will need to have a plain black tank swimsuit (any brand) for competition and for the show. Goggles and nose plugs (available for purchase at the pool for \$3 each) are also needed for both practices and meets. A plain white swim cap is also required for participation at meets. Routine costumes and headpieces also need to be purchased and/or made for each routine your swimmer will be in. Costume costs vary widely from about \$30 to as much as \$80.

## **THE SHOW**

The AquaStarz season always ends in our annual show. This is a major event for the swimmers and their opportunity to show their friends, family and community what they have worked so hard to achieve. It is important that the girls attend rehearsals and have memorized their routines. Each girl will be involved in at least one routine and the finale. This year our shows will be on August 27 & 28. Because it is critical to the success of a routine, all girls in a particular routine must be present at practice, the following practices are mandatory for swimmers planning to participate in the show: August 23 and 26.

The AquaShow is our major fundraiser and we need help from every family to make it a success. Each girl will be responsible for selling at least 10 tickets and we also ask each family to donate refreshments for our concession stand and/or raffle items for our raffle baskets. Community/corporate donations can be collected. Be creative in raffle items – babysitting coupons have been popular in past years. We will have volunteer sign-up sheets with descriptions of each job available after the July championship meet. Your swimmer is truly proud of their parent's efforts toward their team's success. AquaStarz parents have always been the greatest!

**Have a great season!**