



Ravensong Waterdancers

Program Policy

Objective: To ensure the club provides appropriate levels of training programs, focusing on the TEAM attribute of the artistic swimming sport first and foremost, and supporting the individual growth of each athlete, while adhering to our club mandate: to provide an energized artistic swimming experience for all athletes in a fun, safe and inclusive environment.

Procedure:

1. **Registration:** Athletes are required to be registered with BC Artistic Swimming in their respective program category, as determined by the Coaching staff, in conference with the athlete's parent(s)/guardian(s). The club Registrar (typically the Head Coach), is responsible for online registration, after athlete documents have been submitted to the Club and Registration fee paid in full. The Treasurer will verify payment of the Registration Fee. Registration deadline is set by BC Artistic Swimming each year.
2. **Levels of Programming:** The Club offers training up to the Provincial level of competition within the province of British Columbia. Age categories are outlined in BCAS' membership package.
 - a. ***AquaGo!***: 6 levels to work through and learn basic Artistic Swimming skills; offered to athletes a suggested minimum of 7 years old and/or having successfully passed Swim Level 5 (an assessment can be arranged, if warranted). No official Meets are attended.
 - b. ***Limited Competitive:*** For athletes in at least their second year, who wish to further their skills and experience, as a transition to the Competitive program. Typically there is One (1) or Two (2) official Meets attended.
 - c. ***Competitive:*** For athletes (age 20 and under) wanting to commit to a higher level of training and performance at the Provincial Stream level (our club does not currently offer training at the National level). Multiple training and competitive Meets, are attended
 - d. ***Masters:*** For adults aged 21+ the Club offers a Recreational program, with the option to compete at one Meet in the season.
3. **Code of Conduct:** All athletes, parents and coaches are expected to review, sign and adhere to their respective *Code of Conduct*, otherwise the consequences, as indicated within the codes, may apply.

4. **Injury and Illness:** While athletes are encouraged to work with their coach to continue attending modified practices through some injuries and illnesses, those exhibiting fever, chills, cough, loss of smell/taste or difficulty breathing are asked to refrain from attending practice and complete the BC Self Assessment online and following guidelines there. If an athlete has the following symptoms for less than 24 hrs; sore throat, loss of appetite, extreme fatigue, headache, body aches, nausea/vomiting or diarrhea, they should initially stay home from practice. If those symptoms persist for more than 24hrs they are asked to continue to refrain from attending practice and complete the BC Self Assessment online and follow the guidelines there. *See Financial Policy for effects on payments*

5. **Team Configurations:** All Club members are expected to swim on a team. Teams are created by the coaching staff, based on a combination of enrollment, skill level, age, experience, commitment level, available pool time and availability of hired coaches. Minimum and maximum number of team members are outlined by BC Artistic Swimming in the Technical Guide at the outset of each season.

Athletes, in at least their second year of the Competitive Program, may be able to participate in an extra routine (duet or solo) as well as their team routine. The number of extra routines is determined by pool time and available coaching staff. Parent approval is required by the Club, as there is additional practice time, monthly dues and fundraising required. Final approval is required by the Head Coach.

If the minimum number of athletes of acceptable skill level, experience and age range (as outlined by BC Artistic Swimming) cannot be met to form a team, athlete(s) may be allowed to participate in a solo, duet (or trio, if not in the Competitive program) without being on a team, at the approval of the Head Coach.

6. **Training:** Practices for the season typically begin mid-September for the Competitive program and early October for all other programs. The Club takes breaks for Winter and Spring that correlate to the School District 69 school calendar. The season wraps by the end of April for all programs, except the Competitive program, which wraps up after the final Meet of the season (typically mid-late May).

- a. Typically, AquaGo! teams are booked for two (2) - 1hour practices (pool only) on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- b. Typically, Limited Competitive teams are booked for two (2) 1.5hour practices (pool only) on Tuesdays and Thursdays with one (1) 2 hour practice (1hour dryland, 1hour pool) on Sunday per month.
- c. Typically, Masters teams are booked for two (2) 1hour practices (pool only) on Tuesdays and Thursdays with the option to add one 1-hour practices (pool only) on Sundays.
- d. Typically, Competitive Teams are booked for two (2) 2.5hours practices (1hour dryland, 1.5hours pool) on Tuesdays and Thursdays and 2hours on Sundays (pool only) each week (no Sunday practices on the same weekend as a meet)
 - Dryland time is directed by the coach and to be spent working on cardio, strength, flexibility, routine drilling and team building.
 - Extra Routines are typically booked for one (1) 1hour practice (pool only) on Sundays

7. Coaches: Each level will be provided with an appropriately certified coach, as outlined by BC Artistic Swimming. Coaches are required by BC Artistic Swimming to register themselves online and pay any/all fees (to be reimbursed by the Club). All coaches are expected to adhere to the Coach *Code of Conduct* and fulfill their roles as stated in the *Outline of Coach Duties* document.

Coach to athlete ratio shall not exceed 1:10 for AquaGo!, Limited Competitive training sessions. Competitive Teams and Masters shall not exceed 1:10 ratio for Sunday (routine) practices or 1:20 for Tuesday/Thursday training sessions. Two Coaches must be present at all practices, or a suitable alternative (See *'Rule of Two. BCAS documents*)

When unavailable for a scheduled shift, it is the responsibility of the Coach to find a suitable replacement, inform the Head Coach, as well as inform the team as soon as possible. Substitute coaches must be registered with BCAS, and are only required to be certified to coach at a Recreational level, even if substituting for a Competitive Coach. A practice outline should be provided to the substitute when possible.

8. Personal Equipment: All athletes are expected to have one (1) Club swim cap (expected to be worn at practices), goggles, a minimum of two (2) nose clips and an athletic style swimsuit for practices. Coaches may suggest athletes bring a yoga mat for dry or wet practices.

Competitions: All athletes that attend a sanctioned Meet (organized by BC Artistic Swimming) will be expected to also have one (1) white swim cap and one (1) plain black competitive suit (no loose ties or colours - aside from a small logo) for figure events.

- Competitive Team members will be required to have a club uniform, including shirt, jacket and black capri-length leggings. Teams that only compete at one event in the season (Limited Competitive and Masters) may have their coach decide not to make this a requirement of the team.
- Routine suits (team, solo and duet) are decided upon by coaches, with input from athletes and their families.

See Financial Policy for Club supplied equipment and replacement costs.

9. Skill Testing: The Club performs Time Trials at the beginning and end of each season to track skill improvement of athletes over time. All levels participate, with AquaGo! athletes having a modified version of skills, as dictated by Coaches. Awards are given at the April Club social event based on who has *improved most* from the end of the previous season (when available). AquaGo! Athletes also participate in their own program working through 6 levels, each with a report card and new swim cap to collect.

Athletes in the Competitive program may be required by BC Artistic Swimming to participate in various skill testing events, such as LTADS, throughout a given season. Details will be outlined in the BC Artistic Swimming Membership Guide and Technical Manuals at the start of each season. Results are not rewarded, but information is gathered for use in provincial and national athlete development and programming.

10. Watershows: The Club offers two Watershows per synchro season (December and April) as part of the program, when possible. These are free for the public, family and friends to attend and a great way for athletes to showcase their skills learned to date and gain experience with performance. Generally, a Club social follows the watershow for athletes and families only.

11. Meets: Athletes in most levels of training will have an opportunity to attend a Meet at least once per season, either a Meet hosted by BC Artistic Swimming or a Fun Meet. Competing athletes are expected to ARRIVE at the event location IN UNIFORM.

- Competitive Teams - athletes typically participate in three to five (3-5) Meets per synchro season, which can include Training Meets (for figures and team routine) as well as the Provincial Qualifier Mable Moran Meet (typically in April) and Provincials' Jean Peters Meet (typically in May). Athletes MUST attend Qualifiers to attend Provincials.
- Limited Competitive Teams - athletes typically participate in one (1) or two (2) Meets per synchro season, as designated by BC Artistic Swimming.
- Masters - athletes in the Masters program have the option of participating in one (1) Meet per synchro season, as designated by BC Artistic Swimming (figures only, or figures and team routine performed).
- Fun Meets: Though primarily targeted for athletes in the AquaGo! program, any athlete may participate in one (1) Fun Meet, if offered, per synchro season. This will typically be a Watershow format for team routines to be performed and is not an officially sanctioned event by BC Artistic Swimming. Coaches will discuss with families if the majority would like to participate, if the opportunity arises or if a club member would like to plan one (BCAS must be made aware of, and approve, of any events for insurance purposes).
- Meet Volunteering: BC Artistic Swimming expects the Club to provide volunteers for each meet for which the Club is registered. Typically the requirement is half the number of registered participants (i.e. 10 athletes are registered to participate, a minimum of 5 volunteers would be expected). The Club expects one person per Competitive athlete registered to volunteer for a minimum of one (1) shift at two (2) of the Meets per synchro season. Limited Competitive and Master teams are expected to have one volunteer per registered athlete for a minimum of one (1) shift at their designated Meet.

12. Supplemental Programming available outside the Club: The Head Coach or Club President will direct interested and eligible participants to the correct organization for more information. These can include, but are not limited to, BC Summer Games, Ignite Program, and Training Camps offered. These programs include practices and Meets that are outside of the Club provided programs, as such, there are extra costs in order to participate.

Families are also able to arrange one-on-one training (at their own expense for Coach and pool cost and a guardian will be required to be present - See 'Rule of Two' BCAS document) with coaches, as available, to supplement programming provided by the Club.