

Common Questions asked about *Santa Clara Aquamaids*

1. Why Synchro?

- Synchronized swimming promotes good sportsmanship through the wholesome spirit of competition and teamwork.
- **TEAMWORK:** One of the most important aspects of synchronized swimming is the fact that it is a team sport. Each swimmer's success depends on his/her teammates. Together, athletes work hard, enjoy their successes, and learn from their disappointments.
- Synchronized swimming builds self-confidence and poise.
- Synchronized swimmers and their families are part of a "community of families" who desire involvement in their children's academic and extracurricular activities.
- The Santa Clara Aquamaids Synchronized Swimming Club is proud of its ongoing contribution to the growth and development of hundreds of healthy vibrant youth and adults.

2. How many swimmers are in the club and what are their ages? The Club's membership fluctuates – in the past 5 years; it's run anywhere from 53 – 80+ swimmers; ranging in age from 7 - 30.

3. At what age did most of the Aquamaids join? Average age to join is 8 – 10 years.

4. Is this a competitive or recreational club? SCA is a competitive synchronized swimming club that competes in the Pacific and Central California Associations. There are 7 other clubs in this group. They are Sacramento, San Francisco, Walnut Creek, Cypress, Redwood Empire, Angelfish and Norcal. There are over 200 registered clubs across the United States.

In addition, SCA has recently started a recreational Novice and Intermediate Program in Los Gatos to provide swimmers a bridge between the beginner FFF program and the main competitive program.

5. What is the Novice/Intermediate Program? The Los Gatos Novice/Intermediate Program allows beginning swimmers to continue to develop their synchronized swimming skills and compete in local competitions, preparing them for the SCA competitive program.

6. How are the swimmers grouped? Synchro age is determined by birth year. Swimmers are divided by age groups: 10 & under, 11-12, 13-15, Junior (15-18), Senior (15+). Swimmers are grouped into teams within the age groups based on ability. A team is made up of 4 – 8 swimmers (8 is preferred). "Extra" routines (solo,

duet, trio) are awarded at the coaches' discretion. Factors considered include skill-level and commitment.

7. **Where do the swimmers compete?** Local meets are typically held in San Francisco, Sacramento, Los Gatos, Walnut Creek, Seaside, Salinas, Santa Clara, and Southern California. As the swimmers get older and improve, they may qualify to compete outside of California, and eventually may have the opportunity to compete abroad.
8. **How much does it cost?** Each SCA family is obligated to participate in our Bingo Fundraiser Obligation Plan. Most families elect to pay monthly dues and to volunteer approximately one night per week at the Aquamaids Bingo Hall located in Santa Clara. Bingo is our primary fundraiser and its profits finance the majority of club expenses.

Swimming in the Los Gatos Novice/Intermediate Program costs \$250 per month plus an additional \$200 yearly fee that covers U.S. Synchro registration, meet entries, and coaches per diem for meets. There is no bingo requirement for this program.

9. **Are there additional volunteer requirements beyond Bingo?** Yes! SCA depends on the involvement of parents in exhibitions and shows, hosting meets, recruitment events, and other activities.

Los Gatos Program parents have only a few volunteer requirements at local competitions.

10. **What kind of equipment is required?** SCA and Los Gatos Program swimmers bring their own goggles, caps, suits and usually nose-clips to every practice. SCA items, competition suits, and black figures suit are to be worn only at meets, recruiting events, and shows so that they stay tidy in appearance.

11. **What other optional equipment may be purchased?**

- a. SCA black Parka
- b. Red swim caps
- c. Nose Clips

12. **How often do the different groups practice?** SCA practice times are commensurate with age and skill level. Whereas the younger groups (10&U, 11-12) practice 3-6 days per week, for approx 2 – 3 hours per day, older age groups (13-15, Juniors, Seniors) practice 5-6 days per week, for 3 to 4 hours per day. Additional sport-related activities that enhance each swimmer's strength, grace, and flexibility (gymnastics, dance, pilates, stretching, and strength training) are incorporated into practice times. The Aquamaids **practice year round**, rain or shine! We have a short break (about 10 days) during the December holidays and 2 – 4 weeks of vacation in the summer.

Swimmers in the Los Gatos Novice/Intermediate Program practice 2-3 days a week for 2-3 hours each day. Practices last from September through June only.

Our successes: The Santa Clara Aquamaids Synchronized Swimming Club is the most decorated club in the history of synchronized swimming. We have won more national and international titles than any other U.S. club! We placed four swimmers on the 1996 Olympic Team. Seven of 2000 Olympians were Aquamaids. The 2004 Olympic team included seven Aquamaids and in 2008, four out of the nine Olympians were Aquamaids! We are very proud of our athletes, and hope that new swimmers will choose to continue the rich legacy of the club.