



Welcome to.....

The Wonderful World of
**Competitive Synchronized
Swimming**

Table of Contents

Welcome to Competition	Pg 2
Competitive Glossary	Pg 2
Added Commitment of Competitive Level Swimming	Pg 3
Types of Meets	Pg 5
Personnel on Deck	Pg 6
Scoring	Pg 8
Conduct at Meets	Pg 10
Things to Bring	Pg 11
Reading a Meet Schedule	Pg 12
Competition Hair: How-to Guide	Pg 13
Competition Makeup: How-to Guide	Pg 17

Welcome to Competitive Synchro!!

This Handbook has been designed to help swimmers and their families navigate the world of Competitive Synchronized Swimming, as it applies to the Ravensong Waterdancers Synchronized Swimming Club. It is a supplement to our general guide 'Welcome to the Wonderful World of Synchronized Swimming', which covers Club information more generally. This handbook is geared towards everything the Competitive Swimmer and their families need to know to be successful and as stress-free as possible for Competitions.

Competitive Glossary

Provincial Stream - The level of competition for the Ravensong Waterdancers. Competitions end at the Provincial level and do NOT continue on to compete Nationally against other provinces

Meet - Another word for a competition. Official Synchro competitions are composed of both figure and routine events

Hair Gel - Unflavoured gelatin (such as Knox brand) is mixed with hot water and applied to the hair after it has been secured in a bun. This keeps hair in place and out of swimmer's faces. We have included step-by-step instructions on how-to prepare, apply and remove hair gel near the back of this handbook

Bun Cover - Decorative hair piece worn by swimmers over their hair bun during a routine competition. Generally made of a matching or coordinating fabric as the suit

Figure(s) - individual, isolated and controlled movements, that when put together form a routine. Also, performed one swimmer at a time at competitions in front of a panel of judges, that when added to routine scores comprise championship results for teams. Coaches know ahead of meets which figures their teams will need to know, so that they can prepare athletes accordingly. Athletes competing for the first year are allowed to compete one level lower than their proper age category

Figures Suit (Uniform) - A black bathing suit and white bathing cap must be worn by all swimmers competing in a Figure event. Nose clips and goggles are optional

Routine(s) - Fully choreographed sequence of figures and movements set to music; can be a team (minimum 4 swimmers maximum 10), duet (2 swimmers) or a solo (1 swimmer)

Routine Suit - A coloured suit, usually chosen and ordered by the coaches to be worn for routine competitions and watershows. The cost of this suit will be invoiced to each swimmer

Team Uniform - The official uniform that is to be worn by all swimmers while on deck, in the audience at a meet, or receiving awards; consists of the team jacket, team shirt and black 'yoga' capri pants. Coaches will inform athletes and families through email ahead of meets, if there is any variation to this standard

Added Commitment of Competitive Level Swimming

As synchronized swimming is different to other sports, in the respect that there are no "spares" or athletes "on the bench" at meets, choosing to compete at this level carries extra responsibility for both the swimmer and their families. Practice times are longer, more often, and swimmers at the Competitive level are expected to attend all practices (with particular emphasis on practices in the week leading up to a meet), with little exception. We don't want to discourage our athletes from trying other sports and activities at school, however, missed practice time must be split between commitments and the coach must approve of the scheduling.

Competitive swimmers are expected to attend ALL meets (four in the season) and Limited Competitive swimmers are expected to attend their one meet (Mable Moran). An email will be sent out ahead of each meet with the Synchro BC planned schedule so that each family may plan

accordingly. Athletes are expected to be on the pool deck, ready to warm-up (suit/uniform on, makeup/gel done if routine event) 30 minutes before their scheduled warm-up time (meets have been known to run up to one hour early). An example schedule has been added at the back of this Handbook to help families understand their layout.

All travel costs are the responsibility of each family but meet fees are part of monthly dues, including extra fees for solos or duets. The Club tries to arrange to have one dinner and/or activity for the swimmers and their families to attend during meets to further build relationships within the Club. Attendance for this is encouraged but not required.

Meet dates are all known at the beginning of the season and the Club's Social Coordinator makes arrangements with ideal hotels to obtain a group rate price. Each family is responsible to book their own rooms and we encourage families to do so as soon as possible in the year to ensure availability. We recommend booking both the Friday and Saturday nights (odd times, the Sunday as well) for each meet, as rooms can be cancelled within a few days of the meet, if needed, after the schedule has been released from Synchro BC.

Families are expected to have everything they need for the meet and are encouraged to use the list provided in this Handbook. Hair and makeup for Routine events are expected to be to the Club's standard look (unless families have been contacted by the team's coach with alternate instructions) and we have provided how-to's at the back of this book to ensure a uniform look with each team and uploaded a how-to video for both, on our YouTube channel.

Types Of Meets

Conference/Summit: A learning opportunity for athletes, coaches and parents that is held annually in the Fall. Workshops are offered specific to athletes, coaches and parents to further their training in the synchro world. The AGM for Synchro BC also takes place during this event.

Training: First two meets of the season; held regionally; typically in November and February. Coaches receive feedback from judges so that they may best help the swimmers prepare for the upcoming competition season. Typically one training meet will focus on figures and the other on routines, though this is variable.

Mable Moran (Provincial Qualifier): Usually held in early April each year; Competitive teams compete against other teams in our region in both figures and routine. This is the only meet that Limited Competitive and Masters Recreation teams attend.

Jean Peters (Provincials): Usually held mid-May; all regions from the province compete against each other in both figures and routine. The final meet of the year for Competitive Teams in the Provincial Stream.

BC Summer Games: Held biannually (even years); tryouts are held for individuals to make their zone's team (Vancouver Island is Zone 6) and compete against other zones in BC. Only available for those athletes 11-15 years of age.

There are many other competitions you can be involved in if you are in the National Stream, for example: Canada Winter Games, Qualifiers, Canadian Open Championships, Canadian Espoir Championships, World Cup.

Personnel on Deck

It takes many people to make a meet run! Some positions are provided by Synchro BC, others are roles that parents can take training for and others still, are positions that club parents volunteer for ahead of a meet. There is a set number of volunteer positions each club is required to fill (based on numbers of swimmers), otherwise, the club will incur penalties. An email will be sent out ahead of a meet for volunteers to sign-up. As a general rule, each family should expect to sign-up for a minimum of one shift at 2 of the 4 meets in a season. Volunteers are asked to wear black bottoms and white tops so they can be easily identified on deck and show no team preferences. Volunteers are asked to check in at the start of the warm-up session for their volunteer slot.

Meet Manager: Provided by Synchro BC. Responsible for organizing the competition, the competitors and all meet personnel.

Judges: Provided by Synchro BC. Trained panels of personnel who mark both for figures and routine events. During routine events, judges form a panel per each side of the pool.

Referees: Volunteers are able to train for this position and have it count towards the club's total volunteer requirements. Referees are in charge of the swimmers and of overseeing the smooth-running of a competition. The Head Referee (provided by Synchro BC) is in charge of all officials and deck personnel.

Assistant Referees: Volunteers are able to train for this position as well; Assembles the swimmers in order of appearance for each event.

The following are ALL volunteer positions and can be signed up for when the email goes out ahead of meets:

Announcer: Announces the swimmers/teams before their routines and announces their scores following their routines.

Assistant Scorers: Assists the Meet Manager in tallying the judges' marks to enter into the computer to display the compiled final results.

Music Personnel: Plays the music, submitted by each club, for the routine competitions at the appropriate time.

Figure Scorer: 3-4 people sitting to the side of each panel of judges at a competition. They are responsible for recording each swimmer's marks as they are awarded by the judges and called out by the referee. Calculators are provided as this can move fast, depending on the length of figure being judged.

Timers: Four people - armed with stopwatches - who time the swimmers' walk-on time, deck work and routine time.

Runners: Two people who sit near the panel of judges (one runner per panel, per side of pool). They collect the scores from the judges during the Routine portion of the meet, and deliver them to the tabulating table and the Assistant Scorer.

Videographer: One person who is provided with a video camera that films routine portions of competition.

Scoring

Figures: After each figure is completed by a swimmer, judges hold up their marks for the referee. The referee then calls out the marks to scorers who record them. The marks are totaled and divided by the number of judges (3-5) to find the average. The final figure score is the total of the averages for the four figures performed (appropriately weighted for difficulty), adjusted to make a proper percentage.

Example:

Swimmer one - Averages for each figure 4.1; 4.7; 4.8; 5.3, totalled equals 18.9 out of 40 (10 point max for each of four figures) for a final figure score of 47.25(%) (this example assumes all figures had the same difficulty rating)

If an athlete makes a mistake in their figure, or performs the wrong one, the following actions are taken; athletes in AG 13-15 and older are given an automatic '0' from all judges for that figure; all younger categories are given the option for a second attempt at the figure and receive a penalty (points docked from total for that figure - amount decided by head judge, usually 2 points). If they opt not to re-swim the figure or a penalty occurs again, the athlete is awarded zero points for that figure.

Judges are looking for control and height from athletes during this portion of competition.

Routines: Judges are divided so that there is a panel on each side of the length of the pool, with at least one judge from each of the following criteria on each side: Execution, Difficulty and Artistic Impression. Each criteria score is totaled from judges, then averaged. For athletes in the 13-15 category and higher, Execution and Difficulty each count for 30% of the final mark and Artistic Impression rounds out the total, counting for 40%. For athletes in younger categories, the breakdown is 40% for each Execution and Artistic Impression and 20% for Difficulty. Applicable

penalties and deductions shall be subtracted to obtain the final Routine Adjusted Score.

Execution - Perfection of swimming strokes, propulsion techniques, figures, patterns and transitions. Synchronicity of team members and/or to music.

Difficulty - Height of movements above the water, complexity and multiplicity of movements, strength required, length of time movements require and complexity of synchronization.

Artistic Impression - Choreography; variety and creativity of movements, transitions, fluidity, patterns and pool usage; use of movement to interpret the music, it's dynamics and rhythms; poise with which routine is presented, ability to communicate through the choreography and seeming effortlessness of performance.

Championship: Determines overall rankings at a sanctioned event. Championship score is calculated on the basis of 50% Routine score and 50% Figure score for ages categories 13+ and 40% Routine score, 60% Figure score for 12 and unders (average of all swimmers on the team).

Conduct at Meets

Swimmers, on deck 30 minutes before their scheduled pool warm-up time, are expected to be 100% ready to start and have everything they need with them, so that there is no need to run back and forth to the stands.

Swimmers on deck, as well as parents in the stands, are asked to be mindful of their belongings and keep them orderly to avoid tripping hazards and share the space.

While cheering for our club and your athlete can provide a positive environment, please be aware of your location. The loud cheering, and even talking, can be bothersome to judges on deck and families that may be filming their athletes (as we appreciate this in return while filming ours!) Another common courtesy extended, especially during Routines, is to refrain from entering or leaving the viewing area during a performance.

To promote camaraderie and help with team spirit amongst swimmers, all athletes are asked to be sure to attend each of the other teams' routines (this does NOT apply to figures - routines only). The Club will decide, during the meet, whether or not to stay for awards - factors such as meet location and travel times will be considered.

If any questions/issues arise while at a meet, all Club members are encouraged to seek out a Coach, Executive member or their Team Parent to get things sorted. This tends to work well to prevent multiple club members reaching out to Synchro BC personnel with, potentially, the same problem. Feel free to contact someone right away or email the Club after the meet, at your discretion as to what is appropriate in each case.

Things to Bring

Paperwork; some suggestions, as you may require - maps, meet schedule, printed confirmation of bookings (hotel, ferry).

Optional suggestions for those in the stands: stadium seat/foam cushion, portable cooler/plug-in bag, layered clothing (can be hot)

Makeup - wipes, waterproof mascara, eyeliner, lipstick/liner, blush, concealer/foundation as required

Hair items - brush, bobby pins, elastics, water spray bottle, vaseline (optional), hairnet (optional), gelatin, bowl & brush, kettle and hair dryer (optional)

Bun cover(s)

White swim cap (spare is a good idea)

Team swim cap

Two towels

Black figures suit

Team and/or duet/solo suit(s)

Nose clips (2 - one for backup)

Goggles

Deck shoes (optional)

Team uniform - black yoga capris, team shirt and jacket

Yoga mat

Shampoo and Conditioner

Water bottle & snacks - please have in your swimmer's bag on deck with them

You will also need to pack all your 'normal' clothes and toiletries for the duration of your trip!

Before heading out to a meet, be sure athletes:

Remove all jewelry

Remove all nail polish (fingers and toes)

Get a good night's sleep!

Reading A Meet Schedule

Saturday, April 14, 2018						
Time	Event	Stream	Time	Panel	# of Entries	
7:00 - 8:00						
7:45 - 8:00						
8:00 - 8:20						
8:25 - 10:10	#1 Figures: AG 13-15	Provincial Stream	105min	1&2	53	
8:25 - 9:45	#2 Figures: AG 16-18	Provincial Stream	80min	3	16	
10:10 - 10:25						
10:30 - 11:00	#3 Figures: Rec Masters Beginner	Recreational Masters	20min	1&2	9	
10:30 - 11:00	#4 Figures: Rec Masters Intermediate	Recreational Masters	20min	3	3	
11:00 - 11:20						
11:25 - 12:30	#5 Figures: AG 11-12	Provincial Stream	65min	1&2	41	
11:25 - 11:45	#6 Figures: Adaptive <i>followed by</i>	Provincial Stream	20min	3	2	
11:45 - 12:05	#7 Figures: Rec Adaptive	Recreational Stream	20min	3	2	
12:30 - 1:30						
12:45 - 1:30						
1:10 - 1:30						
1:35 - 1:50	#8 Figures: Rec Beginner <i>followed by</i>	Recreational Stream	15min	1&2	8	
1:50 - 2:50	#9 Figures: Rec Intermediate	Recreational Stream	60 min	1&2	35	
1:35 - 3:15	#10 Figures: AG 10&under	Provincial Stream	100min	3	35	
3:15 - 3:45						
3:50 - 4:05	#11 Team: Masters Tech	Competitive Masters	15min	40min	5	
4:05 - 4:15	#12 Team: Rec Masters	Recreational Masters	10min		2	
4:15 - 4:20	#13 Duet: Rec Adaptive	Recreational Stream	5min		1	
4:20 - 4:30	#14 Solo: Adaptive	Provincial Stream	10min		2	
4:30 - 4:40						
4:45 - 5:15						
4:45 - 5:15						
5:30 - 6:30						
5:20 - 5:30	#15 Solo: Masters Tech	Competitive Masters	10min	65min	3	
5:30 - 5:50	#16 Duet: Masters Tech	Competitive Masters	20min		5	
5:50 - 6:20	#17 Team: Rec	Recreational Stream	30min		7	
6:20 - 6:25	#18 Combo	Provincial Stream	5min		1	
6:25 - 6:35						
6:35 - 7:15						
7:15 - 9:15						

Red - meet date

Yellow - the first 'Time' column is the estimated start and finish for each event with the second 'time' column totalling the estimated run time. Under 'Stream' you want to look for 'Provincial Stream' for the Competitive team and 'Recreational Stream' for the Senior Rec team. Under 'Event' is where you can find Figure and Routine categories. 'Panel' is for Figures events only and lets you know which panel (tables in the panel areas will have signage) the figures will be performed at. '# of Entries' lets you know how many other competitors are registered for this event.

Green - in this green oval, you can see one set of events - all these events share one, in-pool, warm-up time. This example warm-up starts at 1:10pm - swimmers in any of the 3 events listed should have been ready to go, on deck with their coach, at 12:40 (half an hour earlier) to do dryland warm-up (stretching, land drilling etc)

Purple - highlighted to show that Awards are listed in the 'Event' category and indicates which Awards will be handed out at that time.

Competition Hair: How-to Guide

(more detailed video on our YouTube channel)

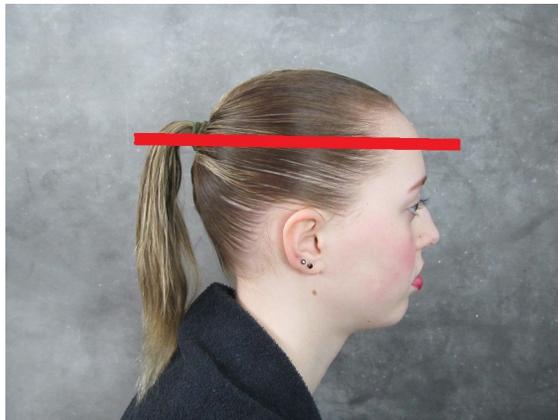
Hair is gelled to keep it out of swimmers' faces and off their neck during performances, for a clean, uniform look.

Supplies required:

- Unflavoured Gelatin
- Boiling Water
- Bowl and Brush
- Elastics
- Bobby Pins/Hair Pins
- Water Spray Bottle
- Hairbrush/comb
- Towel
- Bun Cover
- Vaseline (optional)
- Hairnet (optional)
- Hair Dryer (optional)

Step-by-Step:

- Drape the towel over the swimmer's shoulders
- Brush/comb damp hair back, smoothing away from the face, and secure into a ponytail out the back of the head, opposite the forehead. This is the standard positioning for a synchro bun.



- Use bobby pins to secure ponytail into a bun. You want the bun to be wider and flatter, like a cinnamon bun. You can divide the ponytail into braids to better control thicker hair and wrap them in opposite directions to make the shape easier. For thin/fine hair you can add a hair donut/filler to add volume to the finished bun.



- At this point there are 2 extra steps that are optional - you can cover the bun with a hairnet to help keep it under control and you can lightly apply vaseline along the hairline anywhere the swimmer finds the gelatin pulls the tiny hairs as it dries (usually at the back of the head)



- Prepare your gelatin: this 'recipe' is the bare minimum amount to make per swimmer. Multiply, as needed, to make a larger batch. It is better to have extra than to not have enough!
 - 2 tbsp unflavoured gelatin (2 pkgs Knox)
 - Mix in 2 tbsp BOILING water and stir to remove all lumps
 - Mix in 2 tbsp more of BOILING water and stir gently to avoid bubbles.
 - Let gelatin sit for a minimum of 5 minutes to cool and set up to a more syrupy consistency. This is a great time to apply blush (this is the one makeup item that should be applied before gelatin!)
- Begin applying the gelatin mixture in front, on top, first and have your athlete use the towel to wipe any drips. You'll want to work quickly and try to complete one full section before moving on to the next so that you don't have to go back over any spots (this can make it lumpy). Remember you want it nice and glassy looking! If the mixture starts to thicken too much, you can add more water, but DO NOT add more gelatin if it seems too thin! Let it sit longer and it will thicken on its own.



- Once the full head is done, use the last bit of gelatin on the bun (just in case the bun cover comes off!) and then wash the brush in HOT water. Let the hair sit for at least 10 minutes before pinning the bun cover over the bun.
- Dry time can be sped up with the use of a hair dryer (this works well in between multiple pool times as well)
- If your swimmer is in more than one routine in a day, it is recommended to simply pin the second cover directly over the first one, instead of taking the first one out.



- After the meet, it is recommended to wash the gelatin out as soon as possible (the longer it sets, the firmer it gets and the more difficult it is to get out)
 - Start by trying to remove as many bobby pins and elastics as possible
 - Run head under the hottest water possible for a few minutes
 - Massage shampoo into hair, let soak in for a minute and then massage through
 - Rinse well with hottest water possible.
 - Repeat as necessary, removing bobby pins and elastics as they are loosened from the gelatin.

Please respect the facilities that host us and be aware of your bobby pins and elastics - you DO NOT want to let them going down the drain. If you take a dip in the hot tub, please, refrain from dipping your gelled hair in and/or removing your bun while relaxing.

Competition Makeup: How To Guide

(more detailed video on our YouTube channel)

Makeup is worn during routine competitions so that judges are able to see the swimmer's faces from across the pool. This helps with their Artistic Impression scores (not for the makeup itself, but with allowing the judges to see expressions made by swimmers)

Supplies Needed: Makeup wipes/remover
Blush (pink tones work well)
Blush brush (if using powder blush)
Mascara - Black, waterproof
Eyeliner (and brush, if needed) - Black, waterproof
Lipstick

Optional: Lip liner
Cover up
Foundation
Brow powder/pencil

- Start with blush - it is recommended to apply blush BEFORE your hair gets gelled so that the gel around the hairline doesn't interfere with any blush that is extended up. The majority of the colour should be focused on the apples of the cheek and swept up the cheekbone



- Next, we recommend moving onto eyes, as this is the last thing that needs to be done aside from lips, which we tend to leave until right

before time to perform. Always do eyeliner first and then mascara, as the mascara can make lashes hard to work around.

- You want to line the entire upper lid, right from the inside corner (VERY thin) all the way to the outer corner (building up thickness by the high point of the arch and continuing it down). You can use short strokes to “connect the dots”. You do NOT need a THICK line - we just want to thicken up the lash line. Step back and check for symmetry between both eyes - adjust as necessary



- Mascara is applied to both top and bottom lashes - apply heavily on the top lashes and just lightly touch the bottom lashes. It can be very helpful to have the athlete look down while applying the mascara to top lashes as this helps prevent transfer of product onto the eyelid, and look up to touch bottom lashes.



- Lipstick is the last required step! The team should have decided on a lipstick colour and either have each athlete purchase their own, or

have teams purchase one lipstick and divide into smaller containers for each swimmer.

- The idea is to fill in the athlete's lips with the colour. You are welcome to use a matching lip liner to outline the lips and then fill them in with the colour. Liner can help keep a nice, clean edge. Be sure to get colour in the corners of your mouth too - this completes a nice shape for all the expressions!



Optional Steps:

These are suggestions that athletes may like to use to further help their look for performance, but are NOT required by our Club.

- Eyebrows can be filled in for athletes who may not have prominent brows naturally. This can make a big difference in seeing expressions that involve raised, furrowed or various other brow shapes used for emoting.
- Follow the natural shape of the brow and start in the middle, tapering to the outer edge by the temple. Then, work your way from the middle towards the nose. Use short strokes (whether using a pencil or powder) that mimic the direction of hair growth for the best results.



- Finally, if your athlete has any blemishes, red spots or dark circles they would like to cover, it is best to use a cream cover-up. Simply dab the product on the area that needs to be covered with a brush or pad of a finger and blend the edges into the skin with more light dabbing.

