



Vancouver Masters Synchro

Swimmers Handbook 2023-2024



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Overview

This document contains the policies and procedures that Vancouver Masters Synchro Club swimmers are expected to follow.

Club Structure, Executive Team & Important Contacts

The Vancouver Masters Synchronized Swimming Club is a member-society run by a volunteer board (Executive). Our Executive members serve one-year terms and are elected at the Annual General Meeting held each fall.

The executive team is currently:

Stefanie Dickinson, president (vmspresident@gmail.com)

Angie Rossie, treasurer (vmstreasurer@gmail.com)

Rhonda Vanderfluit, Registrar (vmsregistrar@gmail.com)

Lise Schrag, Member-at-large

Jennifer Sedman, member-at-large

Emma Simpson, member-at-large

Head Coach

Our head coach is Jordan Wuest (jnwuest@gmail.com).

Assistant coaches: Christina Demiris & Elise Fagnan

Members Blog/Website

We distribute club updates via email. Our website has a members-only section that contains a blog. Each time the blog is updated, members get an email. New updates are sent out at 4pm every day. The email is always titled "VMS Updates" and comes from a mailing list. Please ensure that you are receiving this (check your junk mail - sometimes it ends up there!) and email the president (vmspresident@gmail.com) if you are not.

Our public website is www.vanmasterssynchro.ca. There is a members section that contains the blog (though it's always emailed out so you don't need to log in to review) and there are links for resources that may be periodically updated.

VMS Calendar

VMS holds practices at up to 3 pools at varying times so we maintain a club calendar with the practice times listed. You can subscribe to this public Google calendar so that you can be kept up-to-date on the practice schedule.

Public Link:

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=vmspresident%40gmail.com&ctz=America%2FVancouver>

The public link that anyone can open and see in a web browser, without needing to subscribe. This calendar is also on our website.

Subscription Link:

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/ical/vmspresident%40gmail.com/public/basic.ics>

This link is used if you want to access the calendar from other applications (i.e. subscribe to a calendar on your phone or computer calendar).

Pools and Practice Schedule

UBC Aquatic Centre

6000 Student Union Blvd, Vancouver

Sunday mornings 10:15 - 11:30 am - this practice is for everyone - meet on deck

Closest Parking is at the North Parkade



Britannia Pool

1661 Napier St. Vancouver

Tuesdays: 8:30 pm - 10:00 pm - everyone for the first week then only select teams

Wednesdays: 8:30 pm - 10:00 pm - everyone for the first week then only select teams

The parking lot for Britannia Pool is accessible on Cotton Drive. which is off Venables Street. The pool is shown in purple on the right. We will start in the boxing room which is shown in purple to the right of the pool (up the stairs towards Commercial Drive)



Lesson Set

Lesson sets are only offered when pool space and coaching permits.

These classes are offered in 8-10 week sessions at our pool. This program is designed for swimmers who have little to no synchro experience and are looking to learn the basics of the sport. Once a week, swimmers learn figure elements and routine skills which provide the basis of the sport by working through a series of synchro skill progressions developed by Canada Artistic Swimming. Typically sessions are run October-December and January-April, with the winter/spring session ending with a competition in April.

Development Team

The development team is formed typically of previous lesson set participants who aren't experienced enough to swim with veteran competitive swimmers. This group swims once per week and prepares both a technical and/or a free routine to compete at Masters Provincials in April of each year.

Competitive Teams

The VMS competitive program includes swimmers with previous competitive synchro experience (at whatever age). Swimmers compete in one or more of the following events: Team (technical and free routines), Combo, or Trio at Regional, Provincial, National, and International levels. The level of participation is typically up to coaches and swimmers. The club typically runs 1-3 competitive teams.

Extra Routines

Extra routines (solos, duets, or mixed duets) can either be made up of swimmers already participating on a competitive team, or can be a member's primary involvement with Vancouver Masters Synchro. If club coaching availability permits, VMS will provide a coach to extra routines, although some extra routines are self-coached.

Registration

To participate in any activities with Vancouver Masters Synchro, all swimmers must be registered with both BC Artistic Swimming and Canada Artistic Swimming. Each swimmer is assigned an amateur athlete number and VMS takes care of registering all club members (including transfers from previous club associations).

Competitions

There are competitions available for Masters at the regional, provincial, national, and international level. All competitions are optional and decisions to compete are made at the team-level based on input from team swimmers and coaches. Some athletes do not participate in any competitions and solely train with the team.

In a typical season, there are regional and provincial competitions. A wide variety of international competitions are available, depending on the team's desire to attend. An example of international competitions are FINA World Masters, held every two years, UANA Pan American Championships, US Nationals).

Swimmers are encouraged to compete at competitions but it is not a requirement to swim with the club. We ask that you provide your coach with as much information as possible as to your intentions so that they can plan for routines but we understand that life happens and work and family commitments often arise unexpectedly.

2022-2023 Competition schedule:

October 19-22, 2023: US Masters Championships (Oro Valley, Arizona)

January 19-21, 2024: Masters Provincial Qualifiers: (Surrey Sport & Leisure, Surrey)

February 23 - March 3, 2024: FINA World Masters Championships: (Doha, Qatar) - open to age 25 and up as of Dec 31, 2024

April 19-21, 2024: Masters Competitive & Recreational Provincials: (Watermania, Richmond)

May 10-12, 2024 Canadian Masters Nationals: (Location West TBA - likely Montreal)

Policies

Vancouver Masters Synchro follows all BC Artistic Swimming and Canada Artistic Swimming policies.

<https://www.bcartisticswimming.ca/about/governingdocsandpolicies.htm>

<https://artisticswimming.ca/about-canada-artistic-swimming/board-governance/bylaws-and-policies/>

You can find our policies on the members area of our website:

<https://www.vanmasterssynchro.ca/team-3>

All athletes must complete the waiver which is contained in the club registration form.

Swimmer Waiver - to be completed online (link at the end)

Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims, and Indemnity Agreement

Adapted from Ontario Artistic Swimming and approved by DLA Piper

WARNING! Please read carefully
By signing this document, you will waive certain legal rights, including the right to sue

1. This is a binding legal agreement. Clarify any questions or concerns before signing. As a participant in the sport of artistic swimming and the spectating, orientation, instruction, activities, competitions, programs, and services of British Columbia Artistic Swimming and Vancouver Masters Synchronized Swimming Club (collectively the “Activities”), the undersigned acknowledges and agrees to the terms outlined in this document.

Disclaimer

2. British Columbia Artistic Swimming, Vancouver Masters Synchronized Swimming Club, and their respective Directors, Officers, committee members, members, employees, coaches, trainers, therapists, volunteers, officials, participants, agents, sponsors, owners/operators of the facilities in which the Activities take place, and representatives (collectively the “Organization”) are not responsible for any injury, personal injury, damage, property damage, expense, loss of income, or loss of any kind suffered by a Participant during, or as a result of, the Activities, caused in any manner whatsoever including but not limited to, the negligence of the Organization.

I have read and agree to be bound by paragraphs 1 and 2

Description and Acknowledgement of Risks

3. I understand and acknowledge that
 - a. The Activities have foreseeable and unforeseeable inherent risks, hazards and dangers that no amount of care, caution, or expertise can eliminate, including without limitation, the potential for serious bodily injury, permanent disability, paralysis and loss of life;
 - b. The Organization may offer or promote online programming (such as webinars, remote conferences, workshops and online training), which may require remote or independent training outside of a sport-specific facility owned, leased, operated or otherwise controlled by the Organization (“Remote Training”), and which may have different foreseeable and unforeseeable risks than in-person programming;

- c. The Organization has a difficult task to ensure safety and it is not infallible. The Organization may be unaware of the fitness or abilities of any individual participant, may misjudge weather or environmental conditions, may give incomplete warnings or instructions, and the equipment being used might malfunction; and
 - d. The novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, which causes the disease COVID-19 (collectively “COVID-19”), has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is extremely contagious. The Organization has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, the Organization cannot guarantee that any participants will not become infected with COVID-19. Further, participating in the Activities, including any Remote Training, could increase the risk of contracting COVID-19.
4. I am participating in the Activities including any Remote Training, voluntarily. In consideration of the Organization allowing this participation, I hereby acknowledge that I am aware of the risks, dangers and hazards associated with or related to the Activities and Remote Training. The risks, dangers, and hazards include, but are not limited to:
- a. Contracting COVID-19 or any other contagious disease or illness;
 - b. Privacy breaches, hacking, technology malfunction or damage;
 - c. Executing strenuous and demanding physical techniques;
 - d. Dryland training including weights, Pilates, running, dance, bands, circus school and massage;
 - e. Vigorous physical exertion, strenuous cardiovascular workouts and rapid movements;
 - f. Exerting and stretching various muscle groups;
 - g. Dehydration and exhaustion;
 - h. Physical contact with other participants including spotters whose role is to enhance safety and learning;
 - i. Failure to act safely or within the participant’s own ability or designated areas;
 - j. Tripping hazards, loud noises, and colliding with the pool, pool bottom, walls, stands, equipment, or with other participants;
 - k. Entering the water by either diving or jumping;
 - l. Artistic swimming techniques including boosts and lifts;
 - m. Extended time underwater;
 - n. Spending extended times in chlorinated water which may lead to bacterial infections or rashes;
 - o. The failure to properly use any piece of equipment or from the mechanical failure of any piece of equipment;
 - p. Serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons and other aspects of the body or to general health and well-being, including permanent or temporary disability, or death;
 - q. Abrasions, sprains, strains, fractures, or dislocations;

- r. Concussion or other head injuries, including but not limited to, closed head injury or blunt head trauma, damage to teeth or dental work, hearing damage or ocular damage
- s. Spinal cord injuries which may result in permanent paralysis;
- t. Negligence of other persons, including other spectators, participants, or employees;
- u. Travel to and from competitive events and associated non-competitive events, which are an integral part of the Activities; and
- v. Negligence on the part of the Organization, including failure by the Organization to take reasonable steps to safeguard or protect participants from the risks, dangers and hazards associated with participation in the Activities or Remote Training.

I have read and agree to be bound by paragraphs 3 and 4

Terms

5. In consideration of the Organization allowing me to participate in the Activities, including any Remote Training, I agree:
 - a. That when I practice(s) or train(s) pursuant to a Remote Training activity, I am responsible for the Remote Training environment, including the surroundings and the location and equipment;
 - b. That my mental and physical condition is appropriate to participate in the Activities, including any Remote Training, and I assume all risks related to my mental and physical condition;
 - c. To comply with the rules and regulations for participation in the Activities;
 - d. To comply with the rules of the facility or equipment;
 - e. That if I observe an unusual significant hazard or risk, I will remove myself from participation and bring my observations to the attention a representative of the Organization immediately;
 - f. The risks associated with the Activities and Remote Training are increased when I am impaired, and I will not participate if impaired in any way;
 - g. That it is my sole responsibility to assess whether any Activities, including Remote Training, are too difficult for me. By commencing an Activity I acknowledge and accept the suitability and conditions of the Activity;
 - h. That COVID-19 is contagious in nature and I may be exposed to, or infected by, COVID-19 and such exposure may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, or death; and
 - i. That I am responsible for my choice of safety or protective equipment and the secure fitting of that equipment.

Release of Liability and Disclaimer

6. In consideration of the Organization allowing me to participate, I agree:
 - a. That the sole responsibility for my safety remains with me;

- b. To ASSUME all risks arising out of, associated with or related to the participation;
- c. That I am not relying on any oral or written statements made by the Organization or its agents, whether in a brochure or advertisement or in individual conversations, to agree to participate in the Activities;
- d. To WAIVE any and all claims that I may have now or in the future against the Organization;
- e. To freely ACCEPT AND FULLY ASSUME all such risks and possibility of personal injury, death, property damage, expense and related loss, including loss of income, resulting from my participation in the Activities;
- f. To FOREVER RELEASE AND INDEMNIFY the Organization from any and all liability for any and all claims, demands, actions, damages (including direct, indirect, special and/or consequential), losses, actions, judgments, and costs (including legal fees) (collectively, the "Claims") which I have or may have in the future, that might arise out of, result from, or relate to my participation in the Activities, including my decision to participate in the Activities, even though such Claims may have been caused by any manner whatsoever, including but not limited to, the negligence, gross negligence, negligent rescue, omissions, carelessness, breach of contract and/or breach of any statutory duty of care of the Organization;
- g. To FOREVER RELEASE AND INDEMNIFY the Organization from any action related to exposure to or infection by COVID-19 as a result of, or from, any action, omission or negligence of myself or others, including but not limited to the Organization;
- h. That the Organization is not responsible or liable for any damage to my vehicle, property, or equipment that may occur as a result of the Activities;
- i. That negligence includes failure on the part of the Organization to take reasonable steps to safeguard or protect me from the risks, dangers and hazards associated with the Activities; and
- j. This release, waiver and indemnity is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by law of the Province of British Columbia and if any portion thereof is held invalid, the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

Jurisdiction

- 7. I agree that in the event that I file a lawsuit against the Organization, I will do so solely in the Province of British Columbia and further agree that the substantive law of the Province of British Columbia will apply without regard to conflict of law rules.

I have read and agree to be bound by paragraphs 5-7.

Acknowledgement

- 8. I acknowledge that I have read and understand this agreement, that I have executed this agreement voluntarily, and that this agreement is to be binding upon myself, my heirs,

spouse, children, parents, guardians, next of kin, executors, administrators and legal or personal representatives. I further acknowledge by signing this agreement I have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against the Organization on the basis of any claims from which I have released herein.

To be completed electronically through the VMS Swimmer Registration form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeZ5Kd9kv2E5Xsa7uMQqiCg9QZRz5FLjjKbGGAvZIXnhcKwmg/viewform?usp=sf_link

Financial Policies

Revised September 2023

We will be going back to our previous fee structure that was in place before it was adjusted for the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, like previous years, swimmers commit to a 'trimester' (September-December, January-April or May, and June-August, if applicable). Once registration is confirmed, swimmers are expected to pay their dues to the club unless extreme circumstances occurred that were approved by the executive.

We have drafted two payment schedules to allow for more flexibility. Fees will be collected up front after the registration for the trimester.

- 1) Lump Sum - this amount covers you for the training period (typically 2-3 months). Non-refundable, but this is the most cost-effective manner of paying
- 2) Monthly - this amount is month-to-month. It is non-refundable but you can drop out with no financial ramifications. This option is more expensive than lump sum as it puts the club at some risk of absorbing costs of dropped swimmers.

VMS aims to keep our fees as close to our costs each year as possible. As a result it takes the treasurer a while to set the fees as we calculate it based on the number of confirmed swimmers for each trimester. Typically fees for swimmers are pooled, meaning it doesn't matter the size of the team you are on, you pay the same fee as all full-time swimmers (pool rental + coaching hours / number of swimmers). If you swim an extra routine, you pay for the cost of the coach and pool time (if you're the only ones using the pool time).

VMS accepts payments for fees by cheque (payable to "Vancouver Masters Synchro") or by e-transfer (vmstreasurer@gmail.com). We add \$1 to your invoice to cover the extra banking fees (we get charged per transaction, so we can pool cheque deposits, but not e-transfers). Please make the password Templeton!

A typical season has the following costs:

Annual club fee (ranges depending on size of club) of \$120-150 per swimmer. This fee covers our club overhead (website, BCAS club and coaching registration and SOCAN fees, head coach contract, equipment improvement fee, sunshine fund contributions, and banking fees)

BC Artistic Swimming Registration (typically \$123 per competitive swimmer). This fee is passed on directly from BCAS and covers your Synchro Canada and BCAS registration.

Training and Coaching fees. This ranges depending on the number of coaches and swimmers VMS has at a given time but typically is about \$100-150/month. Typically we give an estimate of the training and coaching fees at the beginning of the trimester and then invoice at the end of the trimester.

Competition fees. This is included in the fees invoice in April/June and includes team registration and additional coaching hours for time spent at competitions. Depending on the competition this may be \$75-100 per competition.

Team expenses. This expense is not run through the club as each team decides their budget for a competition suit and/or makeup. There is a huge variety in Masters - some teams decide on a custom suit that can range in cost from \$60-200 per suit and others reuse suits (or swim with black suits with a sequin ribbon accent sewn on).

FEES

BC Artistic Swimming's Membership Fees are listed below.

2023-2024 REGISTRATION FEES CLUBS	CAS	BCAS	TOTAL FEE
Competitive Club (includes SOCAN fees)	\$120.00	\$287.50	\$407.50
Recreational Club (includes SOCAN fees)	\$66.00	\$127.50	\$193.50
ATHLETES			
ST – Short Term Recreational	\$3.00	\$2.00	\$5.00
AG – AquaGo!	\$10.00	\$26.00	\$36.00
Recreation, including Adaptive	\$10.00	\$26.00	\$36.00
Recreation Masters	\$10.00	\$26.00	\$36.00
Limited Competitive, including Adaptive	\$34.00	\$19.00	\$53.00
Competitive – Provincial Stream	\$56.00	\$89.00	\$145.00
Competitive – National Stream	\$56.00	\$89.00	\$145.00
Competitive – Provincial Stream Adaptive	\$34.00	\$89.00	\$123.00
Competitive Masters	\$34.00	\$89.00	\$123.00
University	-	\$10.00	\$10.00

2023-2024 MEET FEES			
	Provincial Stream Limited Competitive	National Stream	Masters
Athlete Competition Fee	\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
Events			
Figures and Elements	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00
Skills – LTAD or Basic	\$30.00	\$30.00	-
Routines Fees			
Solo Tech – Land	-	\$45.00	\$35.00
Solo Free	\$35.00	\$45.00	\$35.00
Duet Tech	-	\$50.00	\$40.00
Duet Free	\$40.00	\$50.00	\$40.00
Mixed Ability Duet	\$40.00	\$50.00	\$40.00
Trio Tech	-	-	\$45.00
Trio Free	-	-	\$45.00
Team Tech	-	\$110.00	\$95.00
Team Free	\$100.00	\$110.00	\$95.00
Mixed Ability Team	\$40.00	\$110.00	\$95.00
Combo	-	\$115.00	\$85.00

(NEW) Athlete Competition Fee

BC Artistic Swimming has adopted a new Athlete Competition Fee that will be charged to each athlete participating in BCAS competitions - training meets, provincial qualifiers, and provincial championships. This is a relatively standard rate that is already charged in other provinces and by Canada Artistic Swimming to support effective meet operations such as facility and staging rentals, officials and staff travel, hospitality, and other costs associated with hosting meets.

Fines for Late Competition Entry Fees

A late entry fee of \$100.00 will be levied for entries received after the published deadline. No entries will be accepted after the figure draw has been sent out.

Withdrawals from Competitions

NO reimbursement of entry fees will be given should an athlete withdraw after the registration deadline.



Volunteer Policy

VMS is run entirely by volunteer executives. In order to facilitate this effort we ask that all swimmers support the club through volunteer hours. This can be at the team, club or synchro BC level. VMS as a club is required to provide volunteers to BC Artistic Swimming at any competitions that we compete in so that is the primary way to provide volunteer hours (and family and friends can provide volunteer hours on behalf of a VMS swimmers to fulfill the requirement), but however a swimmer contributes is welcome.

Full-time Competitive: 5 hours of volunteer hours over a season

Part-time Competitive: 5 hours of volunteer hours over a season

Development Team: 2 hours of volunteer hours over a season (or 1 shift at the competition)

Alternates (non competing swimmers who train with the club): 2.5 hours of volunteer hours over a season.

If a swimmer does not fulfill their volunteer commitment, their final invoice will include the hours unfulfilled x \$20. (i.e. a full-time competitive swimmer volunteered only 2 hours, they would see \$60 added to their final bill (\$20 x 3 hours).

Eligible volunteer hours can be a wide variety of things. Some examples include:

- Being a member of the Executive (you automatically receive your full 5 hours)
- Driving the sound system (1 hour /pickup+drop off)
- Organizing/purchasing/creating team makeup or suits
- Editing team music
- Volunteering at a meet

Any of these jobs can be completed by the swimmer, or someone working on a swimmer's behalf (i.e. a spouse, friend or parent can volunteer at a competition and it counts for swimmer).

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSety59gSa2UpL6X7Qm5eDV6Y9RZA2s6D5LSTx05jfYUow1f_A/viewform?usp=sf_link is the form where we track the volunteer hours. Swimmers self-submit.

Rules for COVID19

Although Provincial COVID-19 restrictions are no longer in place, Vancouver Masters Synchro will follow all Provincial Health orders if they are reinstated. We encourage all athletes to be fully vaccinated.

As always, athletes must not come to practice if they are sick. Please contact Rhonda Vanderfluit (VMS COVID Safety Manager) at vms.covid19@gmail.com if you are sick to get advice on when you are safe to return to practice.

Uniform and Equipment Requirements

Practice Equipment

Swimmers should have the following equipment:

- Practice swim suit
- Bathing cap
- Goggles,
- Two or more noseplugs
- A water bottle

Competition Equipment

For competitions, swimmers are required to have the following:

- If competing in technical routines, a non-yellowed white cap
- If competing in technical routines, a Black suit (not faded or marked)
- Team, duet, and/or solo swimsuits plus bun cover
- Black shorts/bottoms for pool deck
- VMS branded top (t-shirts or tanks available)
- Gelatin, hair pins, bobby pins, if swimming with free routine gelled hair
- Required makeup

Optional competition equipment

- VMS-branded team swimsuits
- Yoga mat, stretching aids
- Running shoes

Team Aquatics Discount

Vancouver Masters gets a 25% team ordering discount at Team Aquatics Supplies. We typically do 1-2 group orders per year but occasionally more if club demand warrants it. To take advantage of this discount, orders must go through the team managers (vmstreasurer@gmail.com or vmsregistrar@gmail.com).

You can review their website online (<https://team-aquatic.com/>) and provide the product name, description, and colour/size. VMS will pay for the order and then invoice swimmers directly.

Fundraising

To keep the fees as low as possible, VMS does periodic fundraising. We typically host two Trivia nights per year and swimmers are expected to attend/invite guests to these events.

In addition, the club has a FlipGive team. This is a fundraising platform where you can buy gift cards online for yourself or as gifts and then a cash-back of between 1-20% is applied to the club's account. This account is used to defray regular training costs like coaching and pool rentals.

To join, create a flipgive account (website or app available) and join Vancouver Masters Synchro Club (team code: 4RH6N7). Read the Flipgive help article about joining a team [here](#). There is a huge variety of gift cards available (Amazon, Walmart, Sport Chek, Home Depot, Indigo, Esso, Starbucks, Safeway, Real Canadian Superstore, and Sephora are some of the brands participating).

If you have any fundraising ideas or want to spearhead any initiatives please reach out! The executive wants to hear from you!