



2019-2020 PARENT HANDBOOK

HEAD COACHES

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Dollard Synchro Club, hereafter referred to as “Dollard Synchro” or the “the Club”, will strive for excellence in the sport of artistic swimming by providing opportunities to foster and promote a positive environment where athletes can reach their full potential, both athletically and in the area of personal development. Our coaches evaluate the swimmers individually and support them in competing in solos, duets and team competitions ranging from local meets through to provincial and national events depending on their wishes and qualifications.

VISION STATEMENT

- To encourage the importance of Team and Club spirit and support for one another.
- To realize that every athlete has something to give and something to gain.
- To promote a high standard of coaching and training for all.
- To establish friendships - the Club is a success when all coaches and swimmers know each other by name and can appreciate each others’ accomplishments throughout the season.
- To teach good sportsmanship and develop life skills.
- To develop well-rounded athletes who desire to achieve their personal best.
- To offer opportunities for excellence for all levels of participation at both the provincial and national levels.
- To develop team and individual artistic swimming skills in a positive environment.

PROGRAMS

Dollard Synchro is proud to offer Pre-Competitive, Provincial and National Stream programs within the Club’s structure. Athletes in the Provincial Stream program compete within the province of Québec, while the National Stream program competes nationally, with the opportunity to compete internationally in some cases. The Provincial Stream program is intended for athletes who are developing their artistic swimming skills and abilities. The National Stream program is open to athletes 11 years and older.

ALTERNATE SWIMMER POLICY

NATIONAL STREAM

FINA regulations state that teams in the National Stream can compete with a maximum of 8 swimmers in the team event. In order to develop a strong National Stream program, these teams often train with up to 10 members. In addition to providing more athletes with the opportunity to train and compete at a higher level, this also prevents teams from competing with less than 8 swimmers when unforeseen circumstances arise such as illness or injury. Alternates are decided by the team’s head coach and are chosen based on the athletes’ technical and routine ability, work ethic, attendance and attitude. Alternates may vary throughout the season and can be changed from one competition to another. Being an alternate on a National Stream team is an opportunity for swimmers to gain experience training in an elite environment and further develop their skills. Alternates are provided with the same coaching and training opportunities as other National Stream swimmers and are considered extremely valuable members of the team.

PROVINCIAL STREAM

The only team in the Provincial Stream that may have a team with alternates is the Intermediate Team. We do our best to not select the same athletes to be alternate more than once per season. Alternates are selected based on work ethic, attendance, attitude and skill level. Alternates will be selected and informed no later than 1 week prior to the competition.

PRIVATE COACHING POLICY

In the National Stream program, all athletes receive individual coaching time (alone or in small groups) to help advance and improve their technical and routine skills.

In the Provincial Stream program, athletes have the option to take private lessons either alone or in small groups. The privates are scheduled on a 28 week contract based on the availability of both the swimmer and coach. The cost is based on the coach's hourly rate including fringe benefits. Privates are encouraged at the Provincial Stream level to help athletes advance in their technical abilities.

In both the National and Provincial Streams, if a private is missed due to the coach's absence or other extenuating circumstances (ex. pool closure, unplanned events resulting in loss of pool space, etc.), the private will be rescheduled for another time. If a private is missed due to an athlete's absence it is not guaranteed that it will be rescheduled. Rescheduling in this circumstance is at the coach's discretion if time and pool space permits.

For additional information, please refer to the Dollard Synchro website for the formal Withdrawal Policy.

FEES

Members of the Dollard Synchro Club must also join the Aquatic Association of Dollard-des-Ormeaux (AADD0). Accordingly, they must pay registration fees to both organizations.

In addition, participating in artistic swimming entails a number of other costs which vary according to the level of participation. Most of these are collected by the Club. Each swimmer has an individual account which itemizes their charges and payments throughout the swimming season. The major expenses are:

AADD0 registration fees are paid directly to AADD0 before registering with Dollard Synchro. These fees enable the athletes to have access to the pool.

Team fees are paid directly to Dollard Synchro Club at registration. These fees depend on the swimmer's level and are generally reviewed at the beginning of each season. Although called a team fee, all athletes must pay as these cover both the team and Club administration hours of the head coaches.

Club fees are paid directly to Dollard Synchro at registration. These fees also depend on the swimmer's level and are generally reviewed at the beginning of each season. These fees include the cost of Club affiliation and operating expenses.

Solo, duet and figure fees are paid directly to Dollard Synchro at registration for National Stream and at a second registration date for Provincial Stream. National stream athletes pay a fixed fee based on the average coaching rate of elite coaches. These fees are generally reviewed at the beginning of each season depending on the expected level of participation. Provincial Stream fees are paid based on the



coach's hourly rate plus fringe benefits and the number of privates given. Figure privates are mandatory in the National Stream and optional in the Provincial Stream.

Sport-Etudes fees are paid directly to Dollard Synchro at registration for the National Stream and are applicable only to athletes training during Sport-Etude hours, which are weekdays from 1:00pm – 4:30pm.

Competition fees are paid directly to Dollard Synchro at registration. The amounts paid are estimates and finalized at the end of the year based on actual costs incurred and could result in either an invoice or a refund. These costs include coaches' compensation for time at meets, coaches' and chaperones' per diems and mileage, travel fees (hotel, airfare, charter bus, etc.), competition entry fees, athlete affiliation and music fees. Costs are divided among the athletes and depend on the destination and duration of the trip. Should there be a training camp, the costs will be included in this category as well.

Food expenses are collected separately at the time of travel to include meals and snacks. Food costs per day are approximately \$30-\$40 depending on if breakfast at the hotel is included or not.

A subsidy may be given if an athlete becomes ill or injured close to a competition and non-refundable fees have been incurred. This approach also makes it fair to others in the competition sharing certain costs as the Club may subsidize a portion of these as well.

Strength fees are paid directly to Dollard Synchro at registration. These amounts are reviewed at the beginning of each year depending on the hours and number of participants. These fees go towards strength and flexibility specialists in the National Stream program, and in the Provincial Stream program at the Head Coach's discretion. Costs are divided among all the athletes participating.

For all fees above except the AADD0 registration fees, please refer to the formal Withdrawal Policy for additional information.

Other fees are paid directly to Dollard Synchro. These fees include uniform, competition routine suits and a service charge of \$15 for returned cheques (NSF cheques). Competition routine suits must be paid for before the Holiday Show or the athlete will not receive their suit.

Parental Commitment fees will be charged to families who do not fulfill the requirements of the Parental Commitment Policy for Club-hosted events. A deposit cheque in the amount of \$100 for Provincial Stream and \$250 for National Stream athletes must be provided at registration. The cheque will only be deposited in May if the parental commitment was not fulfilled. Please see the Parental Commitment Policy for additional information.

TRAINING CAMP (National Stream Athletes Only)

Due to extra activities scheduled by AADD0 during the week of March break, the allotted artistic swimming pool space is limited during this time. The training for this week has been factored into the estimation of competition fees. The total costs are divided amongst all National Stream athletes. Further details will be provided by the team head coach.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Dollard Synchro tries to be as flexible as possible in terms of payment options. However, in order to continue this, we rely on the goodwill of participants to respect deadlines. Should a deadline not be met Dollard Synchro reserves the right to suspend participation until payment is received and a \$25 late fee



will be charged. Athlete accounts must remain in good standing to be eligible to receive a subsidy at the end of the season should the Club be in a position to give them.

AADD0 fee - payable to AADD0 online through their website before registering with Dollard Synchro.

Team, Club, privates, Sport-Etude, strength - payable to Dollard Synchro by cash and/or cheque (credit card will not be accepted) at registration as follows:

Option 1:

4 payments dated as follows:

- 1st cheque: Date of registration
- 2nd cheque: November 1 or 15
- 3rd cheque: February 1 or 15
- 4th cheque: April 1 or 15
- Parental Commitment cheque*: May 1 or 15

Option 2:

8 payments dated as follows:

- 1st cheque: Date of registration
- 2nd cheque: November 1 or 15
- 3rd cheque: December 1 or 15
- 4th cheque: January 1 or 15
- 5th cheque: February 1 or 15
- 6th cheque: March 1 or 15
- 7th cheque: April 1 or 15
- 8th cheque: May 1 or 15
- Parental Commitment cheque*: May 1 or 15

*Please see Parental Commitment Policy for additional information.

The above schedule is recommended, however other options can be discussed with the Treasurer at registration day. Should you need to request a post-dated cheque not be deposited on a certain date, please advise Brigitte Desrosiers, Treasurer, by e-mail at dollardsynchrotreasurer@outlook.com a few days before and she will hold the cheque. If not given a few days' notice, there is no guarantee that the cheque will be held.

All post-dated cheques must be received by the Club by October 15th or the athlete will not be permitted on deck and a late fee of \$25 will be charged.

FUNDRAISING

In order to help athletes meet the costs of participating in their sport, fundraising activities such as bag packing, fruit drives, Fundschrift, etc. may be undertaken. Teams are permitted to have fundraisers supporting their team only, the activity must be approved by the Board beforehand. It must be stressed that these campaigns require the participation of volunteer parents who agree to undertake and organize the activity. The team coaches cannot be expected to organize and participate in such activities. Participation in these efforts is not mandatory, however, please note that athletes who do not participate in these fundraising activities will not benefit from the funds raised. Experience has shown us that active participation by many athletes can have a significant impact on reducing overall artistic swimming costs therefore, we strongly urge your support.

Funds raised are tracked throughout the season and credited to the athlete's account at the end of the year. This results in a reduction of the invoice at the end of the year or will be part of the refund given. No exceptions will be made.

EVENT HOSTING

Dollard Synchro is a volunteer organization and depends on the enthusiastic participation of the athletes and their families for its success.



Although certain activities will be coordinated by the Club's executive, most will be carried out by a larger group of parents. Parents are expected to help ensure that various activities undertaken by the Club, such as fundraising and organization of competitions, are successful and to ensure that they do not put too heavy a burden on a small group of parents.

Furthermore, we cannot insist enough on the importance of your presence at competitions and demonstrations to encourage your child. If our Club hosts a meet every family will be required to volunteer one family member. A fee will be charged to families who cannot volunteer their time at a meet and do not contribute the food items required for the competition hosted. Please refer to the Parental Commitment Policy for further information.

Please note that hosting a competition helps reduce competition fees. A competition at Dollard will cost the athlete approximately \$100 versus \$500 for the same competition in Quebec City. It is also a source of fundraising for the Club. Without parents' contributions of food for officials and time to ensure the meet runs smoothly, we would not be able to host a competition, which will directly impact the competition fees.

COMMUNICATION

The Club's Head Coach is responsible for communication with parents, athletes, the Board of Directors, and the coaching staff at large. Any e-mail sent after 1:00pm on Thursday may not receive a response until the following Monday. The delay also may be longer upon returning from competitions. Please contact your child's team head coach via e-mail for any questions or concerns. Some issues may not be able to be resolved through e-mail and may require a face-to-face meeting. Should this be necessary, please schedule a meeting with your child's coach via e-mail. Should concerns persist, the club head coach of your child's level or the Executive Board of Directors can be contacted.

National Stream: Laura Swift ddo.headcoach@gmail.com

Provincial Stream: Christiane Callary christianecallary@hotmail.com

Executive Board of Directors: dollardsynchro.info@gmail.com

TRAVEL

When a meet takes place in the Greater Montreal area, each athlete arranges their transportation and must arrive at the meet at the required time. Car-pooling can be arranged. Please note that athletes and parents are expected to treat local competitions with the same professionalism and respect as away competitions. Training and competition schedules that require an athlete to miss school or social activities are considered of equal importance during local competitions.

When a competition takes place out of town, the Club makes the travel and accommodation arrangements for the swimmers, chaperones and coaches with the costs divided evenly among all athletes. When travel to a sleepaway competition is by car and the chaperone(s) and/or coach(es) cannot accommodate transporting the entire team, additional parent driver(s) will be asked to help and *may* be reimbursed for mileage. Mileage reimbursement must be discussed with the Travel Coordinator *prior* to the trip to ensure reimbursement, and mileage for the trip is determined by the Club.

Athletes and their parents are informed as soon as possible of the travel arrangements. Athletes must travel with the Club because it encourages team spirit and simplifies arrangements. Exceptions can be made based on particular circumstances and are considered on a case-by-case basis. In these cases the coach must be advised as soon as possible, and the swimmer must arrive at the location of the meet at



the required time. In addition, alternative team travel arrangements may be made based on the age and level of individual teams and will be addressed as needed.

It is a Club rule that all athletes are required to stay in rooms with their fellow team members when they travel to out of town meets. The team rooms are closely supervised by chaperones. Athletes will only be permitted to sleep in their parents' hotel room if the athlete provides a doctor's note indicating that he/she is suffering from a serious medical condition that requires special attention.

A list of items that should be brought on trips will be provided. It is also necessary to bring adequate money for miscellaneous expenses, such as competition memorabilia that are not covered by competition and food fees. Finally, athletes will be informed beforehand whether specific travel outfits are recommended. Usually the athletes are required to travel in the Club tracksuit.

If an athlete is injured, suffering from an illness, etc. during the trip, the parent will receive a phone call from the chaperone to bring the parent up to date on the issue at hand.

For further information, please feel free to communicate with the member of the Board of Directors responsible for arranging travel.

AIR MILES

All athletes must travel together as part of a supervised group. Air Miles/rewards points will be permitted if several criteria are met:

- The parent must be prepared to do all of the booking arrangements for the athlete.
- The travel coordinator must be notified very early in the season that the athlete will not be booking with the group.
- The athlete must be booked on the same flight as the rest of the team to ensure her/his safety and allow her/his to participate in all team activities and preparations.
- If the teams do not get a group rate because a number of athletes have chosen to fly on reward programs, those doing so must be willing to split the cost of the extra charges.

The Board member in charge of travel will e-mail the flight number and details concerning rates as soon as possible so that those flying on rewards can make decisions. Competition fees will be collected as usual. Any excess will be reimbursed at year end.

CHAPERONES

The Club sends at least one parent to accompany each team traveling to meets. The role of these chaperones is to take care of certain support tasks such as arrangements with the hotel, meals, local transportation and to monitor the athletes while away from the pool, thereby permitting the coaches to concentrate on the competition and on coaching.

All parent chaperones are female as our teams consist of mainly female athletes. Parents interested in acting as chaperones are invited to speak with their respective coach. It is important that the parent displays that her intentions are to help the coach, the team and the Club. The coach has numerous responsibilities to attend to at the pool, so she greatly appreciates a chaperone who will respect her plan for the athletes and who will alleviate many of the responsibilities outside of the pool environment. All parents are encouraged to chaperone. Please note that Members of the Board of Directors will have priority due to the fact that they volunteer their time to help the Club on numerous occasions throughout the season.



Since the primary role of the chaperone is to support the athletes and coaches, although timing often permits, it cannot be guaranteed that the chaperone will be able to watch all of her child's competition events.

The chaperone's room is for the chaperone and athletes (as needed) only. Spouses, other children, family, friends, etc. are not permitted to stay in the chaperone's room.

In the case where multiple teams are competing at the same event, one chaperone per team must accompany the athletes in order to assure proper supervision and support. U10 and U12 teams will have up to 2 chaperones per team, teams 13+ will have 1 chaperone per team. If it is agreed to send more than 2 chaperones for 12 & under or more than 1 chaperone for 13 & up, reimbursement for per diems, travel, accommodation, etc. will be split between that team's chaperones.

Chaperones for week-long competitions must be chosen by the end of November of the competition season. Teams that do not have a confirmed chaperone for week-long competitions by the deadline date may incur extra fees in order to hire a chaperone or extra coach, may not be permitted to attend that particular competition or are subject to other possible consequences as determined by the Board of Directors.

CHAPERONES' DUTIES:

- Provide the Travel Coordinator proof of valid AADD0 background check.
- The chaperone is responsible for check-in, check-out and any other business dealing with the hotel. The hotel bill should be paid the night before departure to avoid problems.
- The chaperone is responsible for looking after the athletes at all times including supervision on the airplane and/or bus as well as at the hotel and at restaurants. Parents must leave supervision duties to the chaperones and give the athletes space to come together as a team. The coach is responsible for the athletes when they are at the pool. Chaperones should be close by in case of an emergency.
- The chaperone will monitor the athletes' rooms at curfew and a few times after to ensure that everyone is in their room.
- The chaperone keeps an extra set of keys for the athletes.
- The chaperone supervises trips between the hotel and the pool.
- The chaperone is available to go out and get whatever might be needed at the pool, whether that be food for the swimmers or coaches, medicine, etc.
- The chaperone will organize the settling of accounts with swimmers concerning monies owed for food (i.e. the chaperone collects money to be used for food purchases).
- The chaperone will accompany athletes to the hospital if medical care is needed and will communicate with parents in the case of an injury or illness that requires medical attention. The chaperone will also collect Medicare cards (physical card or photocopy) prior to the trip.
- The chaperone takes headcounts while the athletes are in transit.
- The chaperone lets the athletes know that they must inform her if they are leaving the room even if it is to go down the hall or make a phone call.
- The chaperone checks the rooms in the morning 15 minutes before departure.
- The chaperone is responsible for the airplane tickets.
- Chaperones ensure that the bus, plane and hotel are kept clean.
- Chaperones are allocated a \$30 per diem per day or a \$40 per diem per day when breakfast is not included at the hotel, in order to offset expenses for their own meals and/or snacks.
- Should a chaperone need to pay for unforeseen emergencies or incidentals, a reimbursement upon return from the competition will be provided. Receipts and an expense report must be submitted to the treasurer.

- At the pool the chaperone stays off the deck and does not interfere. They should stay where coaches can find them.
- The chaperone should give the coach space when it is a team meeting, land drill session or anything to do with the artistic swimming end of things.
- Chaperones should support the coach's decision regarding time spent with parents, family and friends which may be scheduled at the discretion of the coach and in line with the age and level of the athlete.

CHAPERONE POLICE BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY

All chaperones will need to have a police background check for away competitions. Only parents with completed background checks will be permitted to chaperone.

The police background checks are performed by AADD0 through the City of Dollard-des-Ormeaux and the SPVM and are valid for 5 years. As the background check process takes a minimum of 10 weeks and an AADD0 representative needs to witness the signing of the document, during the Dollard Synchro registration dates all interested parents need to:

- Fill out the necessary paperwork and sign the document *in person* with the AADD0 representative.
- Bring 2 pieces of photo ID such as a driver's license, Medicare card or passport.

CODE OF CONDUCT

ATHLETES

A sporting club's reputation is primarily that of its members. Every athlete is therefore an important promoter of their Club. As a member of the Club, every athlete must agree to always offer their best in the respect of their peers, coaches, the officials and the rules of the sport. More specifically, athletes must:

- Attend practices on time and inform the coaches beforehand of any expected absence or lateness.
- Respect teammates, coaches, officials and rules of the Club/sport.
- Participate in all competitions, demonstrations and pre-swims for which they are selected, unless they are seriously ill or injured.
- Demonstrate a will to improve by performing their training seriously.
- Represent the Club and the team in a positive manner, including through the use of electronic devices and social media platforms
- Refrain from smoking, vaping and using any illegal or banned substances in sport.

Participating in sports is one of the best training schools for personal development, and it is in this light that athletes must commit themselves to follow these rules. If an athlete breaks the code of conduct, they may be asked to leave the practice until they are ready to follow the rules. In this situation, the athlete's parent(s) will be informed of the incident and a meeting with the athlete, coach and parent may be arranged.

All athletes must understand that the Club does not tolerate smoking, vaping or the use of any banned or illegal substances. If we suspect that this rule has been broken we will contact the parent immediately. An athlete that is caught using a banned substance puts themselves and the entire Club at risk. The athlete will be expelled from the sport for a period of time and the Club will not be allowed to enter competitions in the year following the incident. Please advise your coaches of any medications you are required to take. A doctor's note explaining the medication will be required when attending competition.

For a list of banned substances (as well as allowed substances), please refer to the cces.ca website (Canadian Council for Ethics in Sport).

COACHES

A sporting club's reputation is shaped by its coaches. As a coach of the Club, every coach must agree to always offer their best in the respect of their peers, athletes, the officials and the rules of the sport. More specifically, coaches must:

- Attend practices and private sessions on time and find a substitute for any class that is missed. Coaches should arrive ten minutes before the start of a practice. The coach and the team may take time off for holidays, to taper for a meet, to recover from a meet, etc.
- Conduct safe, structured and motivating lessons. Arrive prepared with a lesson plan and goals for the day.
- Help with equipment or delegate the tasks – flags, sound system, chairs, tape decks, etc.
- Dress in a professional manner and display a professional self-image.
- Set a positive example. Try to instill positive values and life lessons.
- Make a point of getting to know every athlete and parent – their goals and aspirations.
- Give positive feedback and corrections to the athletes so that they can learn and improve.
- Reinforce the Club and AADDO's rules by explaining them to the athletes at the start of the season and following through with the consequences that have been suggested by the Club.
- Deal with problems that may arise (in conjunction with the Head Coach if necessary).
- Check email regularly and pass on all notices that are left in the coach's box to be sent home with the athletes.
- Respond to email in a timely manner (i.e. within 24 hours except on weekends).
- Make every athlete feel good about their achievements and reward hard work, dedication, punctuality, etc.
- Arrive at meets prepared – binder, schedule, banger (when permitted), flag, music player, doubles of CDs, amateur cards, video camera, Dollard clothing, etc.
- Attend all competitions and/or inform the Club of any competitions that will be missed at the start of the season so that arrangements can be made.
- Make sure the athletes learn the appropriate competition requirements, follow music time limits, respect Artistic swimming Quebec and Artistic swimming Canada rules, etc.
- Respect judges, officials and the rules of the sport.
- Follow the athlete's group and individual progress and keep records of this type of information – attendance, time trials, flex tests, simulation and competition results, etc.
- Represent the Club and the team in a positive manner, including through the use of electronic devices and social media platforms.

PARENTS

Parents/Guardians of an athlete of the Club are vital in building a positive environment and relationship with and for the coach and athlete. The Club has established the following guidelines to help reach these goals:

- Parents are urged to attend the club's annual AGM and team meeting at the beginning of the season in order to obtain important information. They should introduce themselves to the coaching staff to help build positive relationships.
- Parents must pay all fees within the specified deadlines and keep their account in good standing to allow the Club to run smoothly.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to attend all club shows and their child's competitions in order to offer support and become involved in team spirit.

- Parents are not permitted on the pool deck at any time. Should a parent wish to attend a practice they must contact their child's coach in order to arrange the most appropriate time. They must then watch from the stands and abide by all AADDO pool rules.
- While it can be rewarding to watch your child practice and improve it is important to remember how your presence can affect your child, the coach and the entire team. Therefore, parents should not attend practice on a regular basis. A parent's role is to provide support and encouragement. Despite the best of intentions, attending a practice can lead to "sideline coaching" which can confuse and stress your child. Your presence can also inhibit your child from becoming fully immersed in their practice as their focus naturally shifts towards winning your approval and could distract the coach away from their responsibilities.
- Coaches need to be appreciated and supported. Trust their efforts and abilities as their intentions are always in the best interest of the athletes.
- Should a parent have any concerns they should first contact their team coach by email. All emails will receive a response within 24 hours, except on weekends. Should concerns persist the parent can contact the Club's head coach of their child's level. The club's executive board can also be contacted as needed.
- Provide your athlete with positive support. Encourage them in the development of their abilities by focusing on the positive aspects of their practice or performance to help build their confidence.
- If your athlete has an upsetting practice or competition, try to listen and empathize with them, as they need your support. All sports are faced with obstacles. Athletes and coaches will learn from their mistakes and grow stronger from their experiences.
- Notification of any absences or tardiness from practice should be sent by email to the athlete's coach.
- At competitions it is important that parents respect the coach's and chaperone's responsibilities.
- At competitions the team will usually eat together, train together and share accommodations at away meets. Parents must encourage athletes to follow competition schedules set forth by their coach. Having athletes follow the team schedule helps to promote bonding, leading to a stronger team unit and assures that athletes are on time.
- At competitions time spent with parents, family and friends may be scheduled at the discretion of the coach and in line with the age and level of the athlete.
- Parents are asked to attend the length of competitions, as outlined in individual schedules, to help instill a philosophy of support and encouragement for the entire club.
- Respect the Club and the team values, including through the use of electronic devices and social media platforms.

