



PRIOR LAKE/SHAKOPEE

SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING

2026 TEAM HANDBOOK

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I. WHAT IS SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING

Synchronized swimming is an exciting and rewarding sport. As in any athletic endeavor, it takes a great deal of commitment and discipline. Synchronized swimming combines the endurance and strength of swimming along with the grace and flexibility of gymnastics. It is very demanding; not only is there practice in the pool, but many hours of learning and rehearsing routines out of the water as well. The poem below is a perfect description of this often misunderstood sport.

To reach our goals, both individual and team goals, we must have a common foundation of understanding; therefore, this packet of information and policies will be the base for an enjoyable and successful season.

To illustrate Synchronized Swimming, imagine...

- a gymnast performing underwater
- a 6 minute miler running without breathing
- an ice skater perfecting figure movements in an unstable medium
- a dancers artistic flair in choreographing routines
- a water polo players power and strength needed to extend out of the water
- a long distance swimmers lung capacity developed for endurance

Add to that a combination of grace, fluidity and synchronization of an entire team and you have just imagined..... SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING!

II. THE COACHING PHILOSOPHY

It is the belief of the coaches and Prior Lake High School that any co-curricular activity is an important aspect of the greater school-based learning experience. We will strive to teach not only synchronized swimming skills, but life skills as well. Cooperation, teamwork, coping skills, dedication, leadership, and commitment are some of these important life skills. It is believed that attendance, punctuality, and preparedness will help to create responsibility and discipline in a young person. Synchronized swimming is an ideal opportunity to learn cooperation and teamwork because its definition requires it. When swimmers work together, they are rewarded by performing a unique and beautiful artistic expression.

III. TEAM POLICIES

A. TEAM SELECTION: Any student who wishes to participate on the Prior Lake Synchronized Swim Team is invited to do so. There will not be any "try-outs" or cuts, provided that the individual can swim at least two lengths of the pool and is committed and willing to concentrate her energies in this sport. Due to the tremendous amount of time it requires,

you must give 100% effort to be at every practice, work hard while you are there, and devote time outside of practice daily to drill your routines. If you can fulfill this duty, we have no choice but to be successful!

B. PRACTICES: We will practice every day, Monday through Saturday at the Hidden Oaks Middle School Pool. Specific practice times will be announced on the first day. ***All swimmers are expected to be on time. Tardiness will not be tolerated and consequences will exist for those who are late and/or unprepared!***

1. ATTENDANCE: **IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU ATTEND PRACTICE EVERY DAY!** During practice Synchro must be your priority – appointments, work, and other activities, including social events and activities are not excuses for missing practice! Unless you are absent for a school-related activity, it will be considered an unexcused absence and may prevent you from keeping your place on the team/routines. Please schedule make-up work at school, doctor and dentist appointments, etc. before school, during Laker Time, open period, or during lunch. Please notify the coaches of any known absences ASAP. If ill, please call Coach Keri. **If practice is missed the day before a meet, the athlete will not be permitted to compete in the next day's competition.** (some exceptions may apply, at the discretion of the head coach). *If you are gone for an extended period of time you may be replaced on your routine(s).*

2. BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS: Expectations for synchronized swimmers include:

- treat all teammates and coaches with respect
- be on time and prepared every day
- display a positive attitude
- work hard on continuing to improve oneself
- listen to and accept the constructive criticism given by coaches and teammates
- be supportive and helpful to others

Inappropriate behaviors such as insubordination and other disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated. Consequences for such behavior violations may result in one or more of the following: removal from practice, coach/parent/administrator/athlete conference, and/or permanent dismissal from the team.

B. MEETS: You are expected to attend every meet (please see the meet schedule for specific meet dates). If you miss a meet, you could be disqualified from earning a letter and may also be dropped from and replaced in your routine(s). The consequences of missing a meet will be left up to the discretion of the coach. We need everyone at meets in order to be successful. These are also special times to measure our

progress, for special concentration, dedication, and learning. Each individual plays an important contributing role.

Synchronized swimming meets tend to last 2 – 3 hours depending on the size of the schools competing. All swimmers are expected to stay until the meet is over and be on deck for the announcement of the results. This is important for team support, unity, and respect for others. All swimmers must ride the bus to all away meets. Swimmers may not drive themselves or with friends. If this is impossible, the swimmer's parent/guardian must obtain permission from Coach Keri **prior to** the meet. *Unless there is an emergency, swimmers will not go home with parents unless a coach has been notified before the meet begins.*

In addition to regular season meets, swimmers will participate in the Section 4A Meet on Thursday, May 14th (figures) at Hidden Oaks and Saturday, May 16th (Routines) at Osseo/Maple Grove/Park Center The top four places in each event will continue on to the Minnesota State Synchronized Swimming Invitational on May 21 and 22 at the U of M. *Please note that State occurs on school days; swimmers will be missing school all day these two days (whether they are competing or supporting others). This is also Memorial Day weekend. Please postpone weekend plans until Saturday morning.* At the conclusion of the meet Friday evening, the Awards Ceremony is a wonderful time to enjoy the accomplishments of the season. All swimmers are expected to stay until all the awards have concluded and are expected to ride the bus home with the team.

IV. COMMUNICATION

Open communication between coaches, parents and athletes is crucial for a team to function efficiently. Please contact the coaches if there's any questions, concerns, or information that should be shared.

Coach: Keri Kuboushek
Phones: 612-308-4169
Email: kkuboushek@plsas.org

Coach: Kelly Tomas
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V. AWARDS POLICIES

- A. LETTERING: The following are guidelines to earn a Prior Lake Varsity Letter in Synchronized Swimming.
- i. Compete in all conference meets
 - ii. Adhere to the MSHSL guidelines for remaining chemical free
 - iii. Have excellent attendance

- iv. Display a positive attitude, outstanding commitment, dedication, and good sportsmanship.

Plus earn one of the following:

- Qualifying to compete in the State Meet (placing top 4 at sections) in at least one routine.
- Placing top 7 at Sections in the figure competition.
- Earn All Conference recognition

Ultimately, however, the coaches discretion will be used to determine athletes earning a varsity letter.

- B. ALL CONFERENCE: The Metro West Conference awards All Conference honors based on performance in Conference meets where swimmers perform at the varsity level. Those earning All Conference recognition will be announced at the Banquet at the end of the season.
- C. MOST VALUABLE, MOST IMPROVED, MOST DEDICATED and THE DAGGIT AWARD: These awards are voted on by each team member and the coaches (with the exception of the Daggit Award, this is an award the coaches vote on only). These awards are also given at the Banquet.
- D. CAPTAINS: These are also voted on by the team and coaches and announced at the Banquet for the following year.
- E. ROOKIE OF THE YEAR/CAPTAINS AWARD: Each year the captains will honor a Rookie of The Year award to one first year swimmer. This award is voted on by the team.

VI. ELIGIBILITY

Prior Lake High School requires that all athletes be properly registered and attend school and classes regularly. Please contact the PLHS Activities Office or visit their website for questions and to register. The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) also requires that every athlete must have a valid physical exam. Students will not be permitted to swim until all components of registration are complete.

Your athlete is a STUDENT athlete, therefore academics always come first. PLHS student athletes should maintain passing grades and not have attendance problems in any classes to remain on the team. Swimmers grades and attendance will be monitored throughout the season. Academics should always be the priority over athletics!

Please make a special note of the MSHSL guidelines and the PLSAS Board Policy for alcohol, drug, and tobacco use. Due to the unique nature of synchronized swimming, if an athlete chooses to use and undergo the MSHSL and PLSAS consequences, she will miss a great deal of practice and routine work; therefore her choice would most likely cause her to be replaced on her routine(s)

and could include being dismissed for the season. Athletes should think about how their choices will not only hinder their personal progress, but also affect their team members as well.

VII. EQUIPMENT

All swimmers will be provided with:

- A white cap (to be worn at meets only)
- A nose clip
- A set of team warm-ups (jacket and pants)

Swimmers will be held responsible for all equipment issued to them. Team warm-ups must be returned at the end of the season. Swimmers will pay for any lost or damaged equipment.

All swimmers must provide their own:

- practice suits
- cap(s) (additional white cap available from Keri for \$4)
- goggles
- school purchased lock
- additional nose clips (available from Keri for \$3 each)
- a black one-piece swim suit for competition
- routine suits and matching headpieces (we do have a suit library for kids to choose from as well and these are free to use)