



Age Group National Training Squads Program Guidelines

Updated September 21, 2017

The Age Group National Team Program is defined by the following documents:

- Appendix E – National Team selection procedures
- Age Group National Team Program Guidelines
- Age Group Athlete Handbook
- Age Group National Team agreement

Appendix E is available on USA Synchro's website under Team USA/National Team trials. The Age Group National Team Program Guidelines, Age Group Athlete Handbook and National Team agreement is sent to all National Team trials participants for review upon registration in the National Team trials and is also available on USA Synchro's members only website under National Teams.

Age Group National Team athletes must sign the following documents:

Prior to the start of training:

- Age Group National Team agreement
- Age Group Athlete Handbook

Following the first National Team meeting usually after accepting their National Team selection:

- USA Synchro Team Policy on Social Media
- Age Group Program Guidelines Statement of Understanding



National Team Program and its Legacy

The focus of the National Team program is to perform at the highest level of competitive excellence. All National Team athletes, coaches and staff commit to being part of something bigger than themselves to represent the United States of America at the highest level in the Olympic Games, the Pan-American Games, the FINA Aquatic World Championship and any international synchronized swimming competitions.

USA Synchro's National Team Program has a long legacy of success with many incredibly talented, dedicated and strong athletes who have contributed tremendously to the Program. The National Team athletes and coaches represent the many members of USA Synchro and all of the competitive synchronized swimmers who aspire to, one day, being part of the National Team Program.

This gives National Team athletes and coaches great responsibilities. Each member of the Program must respect the achievements of those who competed before them, and will after them, by being the best ambassadors possible for the United States of America, USA Synchro, their clubs, their coaches, their families and friends with the ultimate goal of leaving a positive mark on the Program.

Team First.

Perfect attendance. Think about the Team before yourself, supporting and encouraging teammates. This includes extra/ individual routines. The priority is the group not the individuals.

Be the Best you can be – Work Hard.

Approach each practice and competition with a positive mindset. Embrace corrections and avoid complaints. As an athlete, the AG programs are the first step in a journey towards the top echelon of National Team participation. Each achievement is a stepping-stone on your journey, but there are always a higher level towards which you can reach. Don't use practice time as a platform for problems: communicate with coaching staff outside of practices to take a proactive, rather than a reactive, approach.

Trust and Be Trusted – Be Accountable.

Fully engaged and commit to the job. Trust that others are doing the same.

Positive Ambassador – Be Humble and Positive.

Respect others and their differences. Smile, be positive and support others when they are struggling. Be a good example for your community. As a National Team member, you are an ambassador of USA Synchro. Your actions and words represent this organization past and present, so think before you act!

“EXCELLENCE IS A JOURNEY NOT THE DESTINATION”

**“What doesn't challenge you,
doesn't change you”**

**“It is not the will to win
that matters, everyone
has that, it is the will to
PREPARE TO WIN that
matters.”**

USA Synchro Olympians

As a National Team athlete and a member of the Age Group National Teams, you are part of a small group of Olympic Hopefuls. If you continue on this path and make it to the Olympic Games, you will share this honor with only a few American synchronized swimmers. These 52 athletes have paved the way before you and every day you should honor their contribution by making a positive impact of your own on the National Team Program.

2016	Anita Alvarez Mariya Koroleva		Kristina Lum Elicia Marshall Tuesday Middaugh
2012	Mary Killman Mariya Koroleva		Heather Pease-Olson Kim Wurzel Bridget Finn
2008	Brooke Abel Janet Culp Kate Hooven Andrea Nott Anabelle Orme Kim Probst Jillian Penner Becky Kim	1996	Suzannah Bianco Tammy Cleland-McGregor Becky Dyroen-Lancer Emily Lesueur Heather Pease-Olson Jill Savery Nathalie Schneyder-Bartleson Heather Simmons-Carrasco Jill Sudduth Margot Thienn
2004	Alison Bartosik Tamara Crow Erin Dobratz Rebecca Jasontek Anna Kozlova Sara Lowe Lauren McFall Stephanie Nesbitt Kendra Zanutto	1992	Kristen Babb-Sprague Karen Josephson Sarah Josephson
		1988	Tracy Ruiz Karen Josephson Sarah Josephson
2000	Carrie Barton Tamara Cleland-McGregor Anna Kozlova	1984	Tracy Ruiz Candie Costie



Mariya Koroleva



Anita Alvarez



Mariya Koroleva



Mary Killman



Kate Hooven



Christina Jones



Andrea Nott



Brooke Abel



Janet Culp



Annabelle Orme



Kim Probst



Jillian Penner



Becky Kim



Alison Bartosik



Stephanie Nesbitt



Becky Jasontek



Sara Lowe



Tamara Crow



Kendra Zantotto



Anna Kozlova



Erin Dobratz



Lauren McFall



Heather Pease-Olson



Kim Wurzel



Bridget Finn



Tuesday Middaught



Anna Kozlova



Tammy McGregor



Kristina Lum



Carrie Barton



Elishia Marshall



Jill Sudduth



Heather Carrasco



Tammy McGregor



Margot Thienn



Suzannah Bianco



Jill Savery



Becky Dyroen-Lancer



Natalie Schneider



Heather Pease-Olson



Emily Lesueur



Sarah and Karen Josephon



Kristen Babb-Sprague



Tracie Ruiz



Tracie Ruiz



Candy Costie

Philosophy:

The National Team Program aims at building **Long-Term** sustained competitive excellence through every day commitment, professionalism and honesty.

We apply **sport science** and best management practices in the daily implementation of our National Team Program in a positive environment.

We constantly consult with **sport experts** and take advantage of **international world-class expertise and connections** to update the content of the Program.

National Team Program Objectives:

- Build strong, well-rounded athletes
- Develop technical and physical abilities by age 15 (maximum flexibility, strength, speed and technical skills) so the athletes can sustain the rigor of elite synchronized swimming training
- Build independent and responsible athletes
- Develop a culture of excellence, hard work and world-class performances

Principles:

Hard work, Discipline and Positivity:

Work hard and efficiently. Create a positive environment and outline the passion for the sport of synchronized swimming which is the element bringing everybody together.

Responsibility and Accountability:

Center the project on the athletes so that they can be the driver of their performance with the support of their coaches. The coaches and staff make the support system for the athletes to achieve their best possible level.

Parents should support their athletes as they push their physical and mental boundaries. As we aim at building independent and responsible young athlete, parents should also encourage their athletes to reach out to coaches with questions/ comments instead of getting involved themselves.

Respect the athletes:

Respect the process of development and be patient. Pay attention to the athletes' progression, their individual needs and their personal and academic development. Build a strong and professional human relationship within the Team and with the staff.



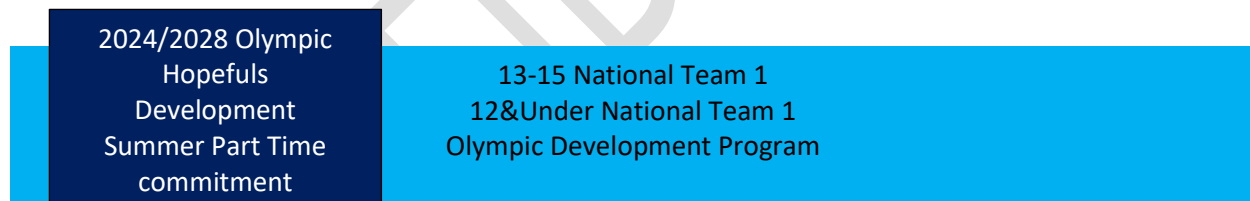
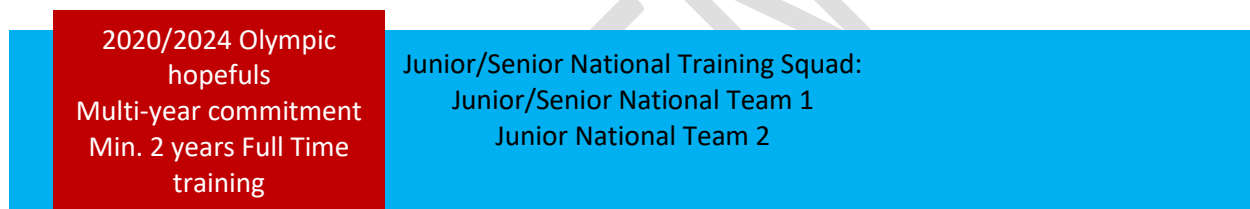
PROGRAM STRUCTURE



Age Group National Team Coaching Staff



National Team athletes





The Age Group National Teams consists of the 13-15 and 12&Under National Teams. These 13-15 and 12&Under National Teams are selected through the 13-15 and 12&Under National Team trials every year. These 13-15 and 12&Under National Teams regroup over the summer months for training and competition participation.

National Team Trials

- All selection procedures for USA Synchro's National Teams are spelled out in the Appendix E which is available on www.usasynchro.org => Team USA => National Team trials.
- Selection is done in 3 phases: Phase 1 and 2 in January and Phase 3 in April.
- Phase 1 is open to all eligible athletes. In order to be eligible, an athlete needs to be an American citizen (or in the process of becoming one), the right age for competition in that age group and have passed Grade Level 1,2 and 3 for 12&Under and Grade Level 1,2,3 and 4 for 13-15.
- During phase 1, athletes are evaluated on 4 figures (2 compulsory and 2 optional, drawn 72 hours prior to trials).
- During Phase 2, athletes are evaluated on 4 figures (2 compulsory and 2 optional, drawn 72 hours prior to trials), 10 National Skill Testing and 1 individual routine swim.
- During Phase 3, athletes are evaluated on 4 figures (2 compulsory and 2 optional, drawn 72 hours prior to trials) and 2 individual routine swims.
- Phase 1 is open to all, Phase 2 is open to up to 70 athletes, Phase 3 is open to 30 athletes. We cut down the number of athletes at Phase 2A from 70 to 30.
- Some athletes are pre-seeded into Phase 2 based on the previous year's results.
- Final results are calculated as follows: Phase 2 (60% figures, 20% routine, 20% Skills) + Phase 3 (60% Routine, 40% Figures)
- Up to 12 athletes are selected from Phase 3 trials to the 13-15 National Team and the 12&Under National Team.
- An additional 16 athletes are selected from Phase 3 trials to the 13-15 Olympic Development Program.

National Team requirements:

- Athletes are selected to the National Team for that summer only (unless otherwise stated in the selection procedures (for example, Junior National Training Squad).
- Athletes who accept their selection to the National Team must sign the annual National Team agreement and Athlete Handbook.
- Athletes have one week after the completion of trials to accept their selection. After that, their spot will be allocated to the next ranked athlete.
- The 13-15 and 12&Under National Team athletes train between May and August during National Team training camps and participate in one or two international competitions selected by the High Performance Director and the National Team Coaching Staff.
- There is a financial contribution to be paid by athletes selected to the 13-15 and 12&Under National Teams.



USA Synchro promotes regular and consistent progress through a realistic training and competitive strategy taking into consideration the training regimen and performance of its competitors and the culture, experiences and existing limitations of its National Team athletes.

USA Synchro's goal is to progress in the rankings through a slow process which recognizes the strengths, abilities, experience and limitations of our athletes, the resources of our organization and the necessity to respect the international politics of a judge sport. Generally, a team can only progress one ranking per year.

The HPD and coaches analyze the competitors and the composition of the US National Teams regularly. Based on this, the HPD and coaches discuss various strategies (short term = season and long term = quad) and determine the long-term strategy to follow to achieve the common goal.

Our strategy must take into consideration the following elements to be realistic:

- Number of athletes, their age, maturity and development
- Athletes' strengths and weaknesses
- Athletes' culture and background
- Competitors and international competitive scene
- International competitive calendar and competition locations
- USA Synchro budget and resources
- Training available to the athletes (full time or part time)
- Number and qualification of the coaches

Through its Age Group National Teams, USA Synchro recognized the need for long-term development of its athletes through a clear athlete performance pathway and aims at developing athletes with solid fundamental skills (technical, physical and psychological skills).

There are several objectives for the Age Group National Teams:

- Introduce the athletes to the National Team program and its standards,
- Provide the athletes with exposure to international competitions and standards,
- Provide them with the opportunity to train and compete with athletes from other clubs and with the best athletes from across the country,
- Provide a different coaching experience and training environment to foster faster progression,
- Develop excitement about the National Team program and a prospective career in Synchronized Swimming.

USA Synchro's objective is to swim in all events (solo, duet, mixed duet, team and combo) whenever possible with each National Team. The goal is to build the best athletes and provide opportunities to an increased number of athletes and coaches.



The description of the training organization in this manual applies the training of the 13-15 and 12&Under National Teams. **Note that these are guidelines which may vary a little each year depending on the international competition schedule.**

Calendar:

The HPD and National Team Coaching Staff set the National Team training calendar based on the international competitive calendar before the start of the season. This means defining training camp dates and time off based on international competition dates, working backwards from the main competition dates.

Once set, the National Team calendar is posted on USA Synchro website and communicated to all clubs and coaches.

Typically, the 13-15 National Team participates in the Comen Cup in Europe at the end of July and the 12&Under National Team participates in the UANA Championships the second part of August.

Annual training schedule:

The following annual periodization is a training recommendation for each club to follow in preparation for the summer National Team training. This periodization enables the athletes to be prepared for the requirements and intensity of the National Team training.

Each year is divided in 3 training blocks as follows (this may change based on the competitive schedule). The planning is done based on the main competition and the organization is planned backwards from the main competition with training blocks of 3-4 months.

Block 1: August to December – Strength, Conditioning, Technical Development and choreographies

- ⇒ Develop strength & conditioning, overall flexibility, speed swimming, stroke technique and endurance
- ⇒ Prepare for Grade Testing if applicable
- ⇒ Create new routine choreographies
- ⇒ Improve synchronized swimming techniques especially sculling technique, spins, barracuda
- ⇒ Start basic acrobatic work, teaching correct base technique for basket and developing jumper's correct jumping technique (no tricks just jumping and timing skills)
- ⇒ Start synchro endurance work with individual run-throughs
- ⇒ For routine, focus on lap cleaning and high repetitions volume of lap by lap, from October to December
- ⇒ Evaluate routines in December with local coaches and judges. Changes may be made to the choreography as needed following their feedback

Block 2: January to March/April – Maintain Strength & Conditioning, Figures, Routine endurance work

- ⇒ Maintain level of strength and flexibility (increase difficulty through more repetitions or added resistance)
- ⇒ Continue technical development especially height and longer vertical holds, focus on barracuda height and explosive power

- ⇒ Advance work on lifts focusing on height and explosive power for base and start including tricks for the flyer in a progressive way
- ⇒ Develop routine physical training through specific endurance interval training sets (January)
- ⇒ Progress overall training of routine through daily lap by lap and run-throughs (February & March)
- ⇒ Focus on daily figure training with big parts or all the way through
- ⇒ Final stages of work on routine with very specific corrections and video review (End of March/early April)
- ⇒ Lap repetitions and run-throughs at highest intensity (End of March/April)

The next block is either to prepare for National Team (13-15 National Team) or to prepare for Junior Olympics and then National Team (12&Under National Team).

This is the half way point in the season and it is critical that the athletes at this point get a one-week break after the 13-15 National Championships. There will be no long break for the athletes until the end of their season.

Block 3: April to July/August – Prepare for Junior Olympics or National Team

- ⇒ Maintain level of strength and flexibility (increase difficulty through more repetitions or added resistance)
- ⇒ Continue technical development especially height and longer vertical holds, focus on barracuda height and explosive power
- ⇒ Learn National Team Routines
- ⇒ Develop routine physical training through specific endurance interval training sets (May-June)
- ⇒ Focus on daily figure training with big parts or all the way through

Time off must be given to the athletes after the end of the season for 2 to 3 weeks. Athletes should also receive time off for Thanks Giving and at least one week off during the Christmas holidays.

Prior to the start of National Team training

The athletes must learn the Team and Free Combination routines (if applicable) through videos prior to the start of the training camps in May/June. The athletes must submit videos of their figures and the National Team routine run through each week in May and June. Throughout the season, the athletes must follow the strength, flexibility and sculling training recommended by the National Team Coaching Staff.

The athletes must notify the National Team Head Coach of all injuries or severe illnesses within a week of the incident (even throughout the year) and we encourage their physician needs to share medical files with the National Team Physician or Physiotherapist if applicable. National Team coaches must be informed of the course of treatment or prognosis as well as the rehabilitation plan. We encourage a proactive approach with proper strengthening/rehab/PT as opposed to a reactive approach.

If the athletes do not comply with the National Team requirements listed above, they may ultimately be removed from the team at the discretion of the High Performance Director and be replaced by another athlete.

Weekly and daily schedule:

The Head Coach is responsible for sending the training camp schedule to all athletes, coaches, club coaches and parents prior to the start of each camp. The training camp schedule includes the objectives for the camp and a detailed training schedule for each day.

The Head Coach communicates to the assistant coaches, support staff and athletes the goals and training plan for the week through weekly and daily briefing and debriefing.

Training camps hours:

A typical training camp for the National Team follows these guidelines:

- 1 hour land warm up and synchro specific exercises
- 3 hours of speed swimming, synchro lap, technical work and figure work
- 1 hour of land drill, yoga, flexibility or relaxation
- 3 hours of routines

Presentations on nutrition or mental preparation may be added or replace a land session. Athletes have a day off every 3 or 4 days or 1.5 day off within a week. Special team bonding activities may be organized on these day off.

Athletes need 8 to 10 hours sleep every day and training is organized to accommodate this requirement.

Daily schedule example:

6.30am	Breakfast
7-8am	Land warm up
8-11am	Speed Swimming, Synchro laps, technical work, Figures
11-1pm	Lunch Break
1-4pm	Routines
5.30pm	Dinner
6.30-7.30pm	Land drill
9pm	Bedtime



Choreography:

The HPD and the Head Coach for each team discuss the choreography strategy for each routine. They identify the strengths and weaknesses of the team and its members and the strengths and weaknesses of our international competitor. Each routine has a specific strategy with a clear emphasis. Often this research and discussion process is done through observation of previous year and team.

In general, for the 13-15 and 12&Under National Team, the HPD and Head Coach selects an existing choreography for the Team and Free Combination. Whenever possible, they try to select a routine that has not been swum by any teams in age category that season. They also try to select a routine from a higher age division to ensure there is enough difficulty in that routine.

For solo and duets, the HPD and Head Coach either chose a club routine or will select a National Team routine to be learnt prior to the start of the National Team training.

For all routines, the National Team Head Coach will make changes to the routine as she deems necessary to match the international standards even if this is originally a club routine.

Training organization:

The Head Coach manages the daily implementation of the National Team program during the summer training camps and competition. The Head Coach works collaboratively with the other coaches and allocates specific tasks to each coach to split the workload evenly and ensure each member of the coaching staff is responsible for some part of the program. For example, one coach is in charge of land warm up, one in charge of water warm-up, one for land drill, one for technical warm-up, one for lift, one for patterns, one for video upload and analysis, etc.

During the training, to ensure maximum efficiency, the Head Coach gives the following directions:

- Coach in charge of the music
- Where every coach should watch practice from (side, end)
- Focus for every coach – synchronization, lifts, patterns, energy
- Order for speaking to the athletes

Any changes to the daily schedule is communicated to the coaching staff by Head Coach at the beginning of the day. Clear communication and organization is paramount to the success of the National Team.

Videos

The coaches video the progression of the routines every week and share the videos with the HPD and judges for feedback on their progression. Videos are uploaded on the National Team google drive by the coaches to keep track of the team's progress and keep annual record for future comparison.

Competition simulation:

The Head Coach organizes several competition simulations throughout the summer training to prepare and test the athletes. The competition simulation mirrors the competition. This means the team/duet performs the same warm up, routine review and music training as they would do at the competition. The athletes swim with their competition suits and their hair and make-up if time allows. Several

competition simulations are to be done to try different scenarios of draws, waiting times and give a chance for several alternates to swim.

Tapering:

The Head Coach maintains the training intensity and the fighting spirit of the athletes as they prepare for the competition, but reduces the training volume one week closer to the competition. During the final training camp, the athletes are allowed more time to relax and sleep to counteract the increased stress level and distractions of the competition.

Warm up/Cool Down:

Each morning, practice starts with land warm-up. The land warm-up includes cardio exercises to warm up the body, muscles and joints activation, core activation and injury prevention exercises. The athletes learn the land warm-up routine and then lead it while the coaches moderate and correct them. The Head Coach or designee develop the land warm up routine with the HPD and teach it to the athletes on the first day of National Team training.

Athletes must cool down immediately after a routine run-through. The cool down consists of a minimum of 200 to 300 meters and should be good pace to ensure the elimination of lactic acid. The coaches may sometimes give a cool down set to the athletes after a really difficult training set or run-through to ensure the best recovery possible.

Athletes must also cool down at the end of their second practice during training camps. This cool down includes some swimming to loosen up the muscles and relax and some stretching to loosen up the muscles and address certain body tension and tightness.

Note that this is not a flexibility session, but a recovery stretching session with specific exercises. The Head Coach or designee defines a set of short stretching exercises to make up the cool down routine and teach it to the athletes on the first day of National Team training.

Competition training and schedule:

The training at the competition mirrors (whenever possible) the training during the summer training camps (no volume increase). The Head Coach communicates to the athletes the general schedule for the whole competition after arriving at the competition site and then will provide a daily schedule to the athletes at least the day before.

During the travel day, the Head Coach will always try to include some swimming and light synchro or land drill and stretching (if pool time is not available) to alleviate any jet-lag and circulation issues from flying and travelling.

During the competition training, the Team takes advantage of all training with music prior to the competition unless the hours are really inappropriate or over the usual volume of training. The training with music is usually very intense: all routine training is packed into a 15 to 20 minutes allocation of music. The athletes should expect to swim big portions and multiple run-throughs in a short period of time.

Athletes should also expect to be sharing the pool with many athletes and other teams. The environment is usually very crowded and loud making it quite overwhelming for any newcomers, it may also be quite different than what they are used to at home. It is key that the athletes pay great attention to their coaches' and make eye contact throughout the training to ensure everybody is on the same page throughout these intense training sessions.

Time off:

As a general guideline, the HPD recommends regular time off during the season to avoid burn out and ensure the athletes spend quality time with their families: Thanks Giving break (4-5 days), Christmas break (1 week), April after 13-15 National Championships (1 week) and 2-3 weeks over the summertime. Athletes should also be given time off after each competition (1 or 2 days) and some weekends.

During the National Team training camps, the Head Coach, at their discretion, may also decide to allocate more time off to the athletes based on their level of exhaustion, their age, their ability to recover... The Head Coach, in consultation, with the assistant coaches, the support staff and the HPD may decide to reduce the recommended time off as long as there is a valid rationale which has been discussed with the above-mentioned people first.



ROUTINE SELECTION



In general, all members of the teams are considered for team selection and selection to solos and duets or Duet squad. Sometimes, athletes may be selected to solo and duet squads based on results from previous years and in order to learn routine prior to the summer training. However, this selection may change depending on the results at National Team trials and National Championships.

Team Selection:

The National Team Coaching Staff considers all members of the team for selection in the team routine. The initial way of determining an athlete position on the team is through the National Team trials results or placement at Junior Olympics figures for the 12&Under.

Ultimate placement in pattern is at the discretion of the National Team Coaching Staff with approval by the High Performance Director and is based on day-to-day performance, commitment and hard work, routine skills, figures level and many other factors.

Role of alternates and rotation in routine:

The alternates are full members of the team. They are treated like any other member of the team and perform all elements of the training including all laps and swim-throughs.

The alternates rotate in pattern from the beginning of the training camps (it can be one alternate in pattern each day and switch the next day). The alternates must swim close to the pattern or behind the pattern so they can be corrected by the coaches or see themselves on the video.

The alternates when not in pattern do not receive as many corrections as the athletes in patterns. The Assistant Coach corrects the alternates when not in patterns whenever possible. The alternates must make sure that they pay attention to changes and training guidelines while not in patterns to avoid any waste of time later on as there is always a chance they may be called upon to swim at the last minute.

Ideally, and no later than a week before the competition, the athletes should know who is swimming which routine. However, this can always change based on circumstances at the competition (injuries/illnesses, stress, figure placement). Just like in any other team sports, the coaches have the right to switch an athlete out of pattern the day before the competition and up to 2 hours prior to the competition in case of an emergency. Coaches are responsible to communicate to the athletes that they may be switched at the last minute. During the competition, the alternates may be asked to video the training and assist with last minute needs from the coaches.

Small routine selections:

The coaches consider all athletes on the team for selections in solo and duet routines. Coaches will consider figure placement, routine placement in the US, consistency and commitment in training, ability to swim multiple routines, level of endurance, routine choreography, international requirements. Final decision is made by the coaching staff with approval from the High Performance Director.

Sometimes, athletes may be selected to solo and duet squads based on results from previous years with the objective to learn the routine prior to the summer training. However, this selection may change depending on the results at National Team trials and National Championships and the above mentioned criteria. This selection is at the discretion of the coaching staff with approval from the High Performance Director.

Team Captain:

All team members may be team captain.

Athletes who are interested in being team captain should submit a one-page statement explaining why they would like to be team captain.

All team members will vote to elect their team captain. Coaches also vote to elect the team captain. The athletes' vote count for 1 and the coaches' vote count for two.

The athlete with the most votes will be named Team Captain.



ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES



Synchro Coaches:

High Performance Director – The HPD is responsible for the long-term strategy of the National Team program. The HPD defines the objectives and program guidelines for each team and ensure that all National Team coaches implement it effectively. The HPD evaluates the coaches regularly and monitors the progress of the National Team athletes and routines through regular visits and assessment protocols.

Head Coach (13-15 or 12&Under) – The Head Coach is responsible for the day to day implementation of the National Team program as defined by the High Performance Director and the National Team program guidelines. This includes, amongst other duties, the organization of the training and competitions and the management of the coaching staff.

Assistant Coach (13-15 or 12&Under) – The Assistant Coach assists the Head Coach with the day to day implementation of the National Team program as defined by the High Performance Director and the National Team program guidelines. The Assistant Coach performs duties assigned by the Head Coach. The Assistant Coaches are given specific areas of responsibilities by the Head Coach.

High Performance Coordinator – The High Performance Coordinator is responsible for all Team Manager duties related to outfitting, booking travel to competitions, organizing training camps, collecting and updating all athletes paperwork, organizing visas, Medex insurance and USOC travel form and meet entry forms. The High Performance Coordinator also updates the National Team page on USA Synchro's website, collect athletes' media information and pictures.

Local Team Support or Team Manager – The Local Team Support or Team Manager is responsible for day-to-day assistance to the athletes and coaches during the training camps. This includes chaperoning the athletes after hours, managing meals, emergencies, sickness and injuries and be available as a psychological support for those who may be homesick.

Support and Medical staff:

During the training camps, there may be additional staff hired to assist with specific areas of training.

Speed Swimming Coach – The Speed Swimming Coach works to improve swimming technique, strokes, endurance and synchro specific swimming skills. The Head Coach communicates the objectives of the training to the Speed Swimming coach who prepares a training plan accordingly.

Strength & Conditioning Coach – The S&C coach works to improve the athletes' general strength, reduces any imbalances and prevent injuries. The Head Coach communicates the objectives of the season to the Strength & Conditioning Coach who prepares a training plan accordingly.

Synchro Land and Flex - The specific synchro land is led by the Head Coach or designee. The objectives of the specific synchro land is to develop core strength, isometric muscle endurance, sport specific flexibility and work on figures.

Physiotherapist – The Physiotherapist is the lead medical person. They provide athletic training and injury rehabilitation services to the athletes throughout the training camps. They provide regular updates and recommendations on training adjustments to the coaches.

Physician – USA Synchro always partners with a local physician to address sickness and injuries as they arise during the training camps.

Mental coach – A Mental Coach may attend some of the training camps to moderate presentations on mental training for performance (Managing stress, visualization techniques, communication, breathing techniques, dealing with changes at the competition, etc.)

Nutritionist – A nutritionist may attend some of the training camps to moderate nutrition presentations to the athletes.

Athletes:

Each team define several roles within the team in collaboration with the coaches.

Team Captain:

The Team Captain serves as liaison between the athletes and the coaches.

The Team Captain's responsibilities are:

- Remind teammates about commitments and changes in schedules and effectively communicate information between the coaching staff and members of the Team.
- Be open and available to listen to concerns of team members and assist in resolving conflicts.
- Keep the locker room talk productive and motivating and be aware of possible cases of bullying. Report all inappropriate behaviors to the Head Coach.
- Keep the practice environment productive, energetic and efficient. Inform coaching staff of concerns which could have a negative impact on the team.
- Understand the program and the training system of the Head Coach. Be able to effectively communicate and explain that message to the rest of the team.
- Keep athletes focused during the competition. Identify distracted behavior and assist in refocusing them on performance.

Other team roles:

Apparel – coordinates apparel for each day of competition, training camps and Team activities.

Sound Equipment – Assist the coaches in packing and storing the sound equipment. During training camps, designate additional athletes to help assist with the packing and carrying of the equipment.

Patterns – Know all patterns and who rotates with whom. Keep a written copy of the pattern for the routine.

Counts – Know all counts for each routine. Available to assist teammates with counts.



Physical evaluation/ measurements

Athlete's physical and technical skills are evaluated at National Team trials through the National Skill Testing. National Team coaches may decide to evaluate the athletes through the National Skill testing during the Summer training camps to ensure that the athletes have kept up their physical and technical training during the season.

Athlete's Individual meetings

The Head Coach must organize regular formal individual meetings with the athletes to discuss their progress. The meeting includes the Athlete, Head Coach and Assistant Coach:

- At the beginning of the camp – Set goals
- At the end of the competition – evaluate goals and provide feedback on the experience

Following the meeting, a copy of the meeting is kept in a National Team google drive.

Attendance/Injury/illness

The Head Coach keeps track of training attendance each day and all injuries/illnesses. The Head Coach or designee fills out a report for each injury/illness and tracks the impact on training. A report is filled for all injury/illnesses and emailed to the HPD, athlete and parent if the athlete is under age and uploaded on the Team google drive.

Athletes must attend all practices and be present for the start of practice. If an athlete is sick, she must report to practice unless the Head Coach has agreed otherwise.

Athlete's Wellness

Athletes must establish and maintain healthy behaviors to enable them to meet the high demands of being an elite athlete at the highest level of competition. Proper eating/exercise habits and adequate rest are vital elements of maintaining overall wellness. Athletes are encouraged to follow these guidelines prior to attending National Team training and in between training camps.

The use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol is not prohibited for under age athletes and not recommended for the others.

Electronic records

All files (documents and videos) are kept in an electronic format in the National Team google drive. Access to the drive is limited to the National Team Coaching Staff.

EQUIPMENT



As a member of National Team Program, you will receive the following items of equipment and apparel.

All items of equipment marked with an asterisk remain the property of the National Team Program and must be returned in the same state as it was given to you. If you fail to return any item (including those lost or stolen) you will be required to pay the current replacement cost of the item.

You are expected to maintain all equipment clean and presentable. National Team apparel is NOT to be altered in any way (cutting t-shirts, etc.). If equipment is not maintained in proper order, then the athlete will be responsible for the cost to replace it.

PROVIDED:

- Official Team Uniform (Team track suits)*
- Other official team uniform (t-shirts, polo, tank, shorts, shoes etc.)
- Backpack
- Competition practice suits and swim caps
- Competition suits and headpieces*
- Elastic stretching bands*

The equipment listed above is provided for use by current members of the National Team Program ONLY. Allowing non-members to use or wear these items is strictly prohibited. You also are not allowed to wear your National Team equipment outside of training, competition and official Team activities.

Keep in mind that what you do while wearing your National Team apparel reflects positively OR negatively on your entire team, coaching staff, USA Synchro, Team USA and your country.

National Team athletes and coaches do not wear National Team apparel when travelling to international competitions. We try to attract little attention to the Team for safety and privacy reasons.

You may exchange your National Team apparel (except those items with an * which are to be returned to USA Synchro) only at the end of the last competition.

NOT PROVIDED:

- Goggles
- Nose Clips
- Everyday training equipment
- Hair Gelling Items/Make-Up
- Black suit & white cap for Figures
- Team Parkas (Optional) – You may order a National Team Parka for approximately \$130.



Communication lines:

The HPD is responsible for long term strategy, relationship with the judges and major decisions such as selections, competition strategy, long term goals.

The Head Coach is responsible for the daily implementation of the National Team Program.

Any questions from the athletes and/or parents must be directed to the Head Coach for concern related to the implementation of the program and to the HPD for questions related to the long-term strategy.

If unsure, questions should be directed to the Head Coach.

Communication with athletes, parents and club coaches:

The Head Coach is the main point of contact for all 13-15 and 12&Under athletes. The National Team coaches communicate directly with the athletes.

Athletes are encouraged to discuss all matters with the coaches. The Head Coach and HPD are available to the parents and club coaches. However, the philosophy of the program is to build strong independent athletes and in order to achieve this, we must ensure that the athletes are able to communicate and express their concerns directly with the coaches. Parents of underage athletes will always be copied in all communications. The Head Coach is also available to the parents for brief discussion outside of training hours.

All training sessions are opened to the public and parents are allowed to come observe practice from time to time. However, we asked that all spectators respect the training process and do not interrupt the coaches and/or athletes during a practice. In addition, competition simulations will be organized during the training camps so that the athletes can present their routines to friends and family.

Athletes' club coaches are allowed to visit the National Team training at any time. Coaches visiting from out of town should give notice to the Head Coach so that the Head Coach can plan on working with the club coach and to showcase the routines.

Team bonding/ social events:

The Local Team Support or Team Manager may organize team bonding events. These events are compulsory for all Team Members and Coaches.

Complaints:

When an athlete has a complaint, the athlete needs to discuss it with the Head Coach in person. The Head Coach should always document in writing each complaint after a meeting with an athlete and share the information with the HPD. If the complaint is not resolved by discussing with the Head Coach, the athlete can share the complaint with the HPD.

Athletes can also reach out to their Athlete Representatives for any questions or concerns.

Athlete or parent can also file a written complaint as per USA Synchro's rules. Details for the rules are available on usasynchro.org. The written complaint must be sent to the Executive Director or President.

Sanctions/ disciplinary actions:

In some instances, the HPD and Head Coach may have to discipline an athlete. This can be done by the coaching staff for minor offenses or by the HPD and National Team Committee Review Subcommittee for more severe or repeat offenses.

Description of offenses and applicable sanctions:

1. Offense level 1 - these includes minimal offenses such as stopping in a training set, refusing to perform the training requirements requested by the coaches (stopping in a figure or routine run through), poor attitude and disrespect (rolling eyes, talking back to the coaches).

The consequences for the level 1 offenses are defined by the Coaches as needed. Example of possible sanctions applied to the whole team (not just the offender):

- 50 meters double ballet leg
- 2 run-throughs

2. Offense level 2 – these includes ongoing tardiness, repeat level 1 offenses (following multiple warnings), inappropriate social media and publicity communication, loss or destruction of equipment (competition suits, sound equipment).

The consequences for level 2 offenses are defined by the Coaches and the High Performance Director.

Example of possible consequences are:

- Warning letter to athletes/parents
- Monetary fine (for lost or damaged equipment)
- 3-day suspension
- Temporarily moved to alternate position
- Community hours
- Counseling

3. Offense level 3 – these includes repeat offense level 1 and 2 (following multiple warnings), missed practices without notice, violations of USA Synchro Code of Conduct, USADA violations (failed testing), not respecting curfew times without notice to the HPD or coaches, Drug and/or Alcohol consumption or abuse.

The consequences for level 3 offenses are defined by the Coaches, the High Performance Director and an Athlete Representative. Example of possible consequences are:

- Removal from small routines
- Prolonged suspension from the training and competing
- Removal from the National Training Center and/or squad
- Removal from training camp and/or competition and send home

These are examples only. Some offenses may not be listed here. Sanctions will be decided by the Head Coach, HPD and an Athlete Representative.



USA Synchro is committed to the safety, health and well-being of its athletes and to implementing and maintaining a training environment free of abuse and/or harassment of any kind. To that end, the organization's Code and By-Laws follow the requirements of the Ted Stevens Act, the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and the Center for SafeSport.

But most importantly, USA Synchro holds all of its Board Members, employees, contractors, national level coaches, affiliates, and members to the highest standards and does not accept the existence, development and/or promotion of training environments that could lead to abuse or harassment of any kind, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

It is very important for USA Synchro to keep an environment where participants feel comfortable reporting an action that may not feel right. We do not support an abusive and close culture that leads to abuse, harassment and bullying. We believe that abuse can be controlled and prevented not only with clear compliance and monitoring processes but also through improved education, awareness and transparency at all levels and USA Synchro is committed to being pro-active in this area.

Any report of emotional, physical and sexual misconduct can be made to any of the following people or organization listed below:

USA Synchro:

Linda Loehndorf - President: Email: loehndorf@charter.net, Phone: [262-389-0480](tel:262-389-0480)
Ginny Jasontek - VP Olympic International, Email: ginsynch@gmail.com, Phone: [513-403-5886](tel:513-403-5886)
Myriam Glez - High Performance Director - Email: myriam@usasynchro.org, Phone: [917-565-3854](tel:917-565-3854)
Lolli Montico - Head Coach - Email: lolli@usasynchro.org, Phone: [925-888-9313](tel:925-888-9313)
Shari Darst - Education Director - Email: shari@usasynchro.org, Phone: [303-619-1011](tel:303-619-1011)
Megan Hansley - Athlete Rep - Email: meganwhansley@gmail.com, Phone: [203-524-5505](tel:203-524-5505)
Mariya Koroleva - Athlete Rep - Email: mariyakoroleva@alumni.stanford.edu, Phone: [925-286-4986](tel:925-286-4986)
Olivia Morgan - Athlete Rep - Email: olivialeemorgan@gmail.com, Phone: [925-297-7742](tel:925-297-7742)

Please note that USA Synchro Athlete Safety Policy (Appendix Q) is available on USA Synchro's website at www.usasynchro.org/resources/rulebook.

USA Synchro

[1 Olympic Plaza](#)
[Colorado Spring, CO 80909](#)
Phone: [719-866-2219](tel:719-866-2219)
Website: www.usasynchro.org

SafeSport:

The Center for SafeSport educate coaches, volunteers, officials, athletes, parents. The center also receives all complaints for sexual misconduct and investigates them independently of USA Synchro. You can find more information on their website at www.safesport.org.
All contact information is available below.

Center for SafeSport

[1385 S. Colorado Blvd](#)
[Suite A-706](#)
Denver, CO 80222
Phone: [720-531-0344](tel:720-531-0344) (main)
Phone: [720-531-0340](tel:720-531-0340) (report a concern)
Phone: [866-200-0796](tel:866-200-0796) (24/7 crisis line)
Website: www.safesport.org

USADA:

The US Anti-doping agency educates athletes, coaches, volunteers, parents about anti-doping and test the elite athletes who are registered in the RTP. You can find more information on their website at www.usada.org.

USADA

[5555 Tech Center Drive, Suite 200,](#)

[Colorado Springs, CO., 80919](#)

Phone: [719-785-2000](tel:719-785-2000) (Main)

Phone: [866-601-2632](tel:866-601-2632)

Our contact at USADA is Adrian Jones and his email address is: ajones@usada.org.

Website: www.usada.org

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USA Synchronized Swimming
1 Olympic Plaza
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Usasynchro.org