



WELCOME TO FOOTHILL CLUB WATER POLO!

Welcome to the Foothill family! Our club represents a unique and positive environment that offers excellent training in the sport of water polo. Led by a dedicated and experienced staff, FCWP provides high-quality, year-round competition and training for young people ages 7-18 and all levels of abilities.

This handbook will help familiarize you with Foothill Club Water Polo.

THE FCWP MISSION:

The mission of Foothill Club Water Polo is to utilize the positive environment of competitive athletics to develop and foster strength of character in children, teens, and young adults. All club programs are based upon encouraging and maintaining self-discipline, teamwork, and confidence. Our athletes' ability to consistently perform to their fullest potential is the cornerstone of our success.

WHO'S AT THE HELM?

FCWP is operated by two core groups: the Board of Directors and the Staff. The Board of Directors consists entirely of volunteers who have varying degrees of involvement with club programs. The Staff consists of a Technical Director, an Associate Technical Director, several Head Coaches for each program, and a solid base of Assistant Coaches with expertise in swimming or water polo, and in some cases both. All of these individuals work together on a regular basis to help create the best environment for all of our athletes.



The Board of Directors:

The FCWP Board of Directors plots the course for all club programs and works with the staff to ensure that the resources needed for successful programs are in place. This group of volunteers enacts the policies that govern daily operations at FCWP. Each member of the Board takes on different tasks within specific areas of focus so that the greatest level of guidance and attention can be placed on all club activities. The Board supervises all finances within the club and works to ensure that the organization is fiscally responsible. This group also acts to help the club grow in desired areas such as participation and athletic achievement. The Board and FCWP's technical directors maintain FCWP's ties to the community and works with area high schools to grow the sport of water polo.

The FCWP Board meets once every month to discuss the progress and goals of all club programs. Board meetings are closed to the public but concerns can be addressed with the club President at any time.

For current Board and Staff listings, please visit the "About and Contact Us" page of our website.

CLUB COMMUNICATIONS

The club communicates with its membership primarily through emails and the website. If you do not receive any club emails a few weeks after your family has joined one of our programs, please contact the staff to make sure we have the correct address listed for your athlete(s). We use email for time sensitive communications and we want to make sure we can reach everyone when needed.

The FCWP website (www.foothillwaterpolo.com) is also a great way to stay up-to-date on the different events and happenings the club is currently involved in. On the club website you can find:

- FCWP Club Event Calendar
- Coaches' Biographies
- Registration Information & Tournament Fee Payments
- Team Records
- Special Announcements
- Team Gear Ordering Information
- Event Photographs



Our website coordinator takes a lot of time working to keep the website current with useful and exciting information. Please check it regularly to make sure that you're not missing out!

We also offer details on team events through the FCWP Newsletter.

THE ATHLETIC TRIANGLE

To have a successful athletic program, there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, athletes, and coaches. An athlete's progress depends to a great extent on this relationship. Sports psychologists and youth sports professionals call this relationship the "athletic triangle." Each person in this triangular relationship plays an essential role in the success of the athletic endeavor. Therefore, it is important for the parent, athlete, and coach to understand and fulfill their distinctive roles in this relationship in order to achieve the highest possible level of success. The coming together point for the three roles is to create an environment that allows the athlete *"to be the best they can be"*. To this end, the responsibilities for each player in the athletic triangle are presented below.

ATHLETE RESPONSIBILITIES

Each athlete is responsible for choosing to participate in the sport and for deciding what he or she desires to accomplish. The motivation *"to be the best they can be"* must start with the athlete. In general, the role of the athlete includes:

- Cooperating with the coaching staff at all times.
- Respecting their teammates, coaches, and competitors to contribute to a positive practice and team environment.
- Refraining from all abusive behavior, including verbal, physical, or emotional abuse against any person.
- Respecting all training/competition facilities and equipment. Helping to clean-up after all team activities.
- Resolving problems in a respectful manner and talking to the coach about any problems.
- Maintaining the requirements of the practice group.
- Attend all practice and competitions possible and be on-time.
- Following practice and tournament guidelines.



- Learning to take responsibility for their performance.
- Eating a well-balanced diet by maintaining proper fluid intake and following nutrition guidelines.
- Learning how to set meaningful goals and maintaining a commitment level that is consistent with their goals.
- Communicating with coach and parents.
- Having fun and becoming as good as they want to be.

Practice Guidelines

- Be ready to begin practice at the designated time. Inform the coach before practice starts if you need to be dismissed early from practice.
- Bring proper practice equipment - your coach will provide a list of the equipment appropriate to the group level. Put equipment away after practice.
- Listen attentively to the coach while receiving instructions.
- Perform technique drills and training sets correctly.
- Perform practice sets correctly and at the proper level of effort.

Disciplinary Guidelines

- The use of foul language, drugs and/or alcohol, derogatory statements towards teammates and coaches, uncooperativeness, fighting, disruption during practice, chronic complaining, or any other unsportsmanlike conduct are grounds for immediate dismissal from practice. Parents will be informed as soon as possible after practice.
- Repeated misconduct will result in the dismissal from practice for a period of one week. A conference with the athlete, parent(s), and coach will be arranged before the athlete resumes practice. The Head Coach will be notified thereafter as to the results of the conference.
- If misconduct continues, the athlete will be dismissed from practice for an indefinite period of time. A conference will be arranged with the athlete, parent(s), and the Head Coach. The Head Coach/ Technical Director will decide the outcome.



COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

The coaches are aquatic professionals and serve as positive role models. The job of the coach is to provide a program for children that will enable all athletes in their charge *"to be the best they can be."* The coaching staff is responsible for:

- Designing a training program that is appropriate and conducive to the level of every athlete. Each group's practices and objectives are based on sound training principles and are geared to the specific goals of that group.
- Determining the competition schedule and the objectives for each competition.
- Conducting and supervising warm-up procedures for the team.
- Assisting the athlete in setting realistic goals and guiding the athlete towards their goals.
- Evaluating and analyzing practices and competitive performances, and providing necessary instruction and feedback to enhance performance.
- Communicating with the athletes and parents by educating and listening.
- Determining the rules of conduct and disciplinary matters. In all areas of athlete conduct and discipline, at practices and competitions, the coach is the final authority. If an issue arises during practice or tournaments, please wait until the practice or tournament is over to discuss with the coach. If there is no resolution, please bring the matter to the Assistant Technical Director. If there is still no resolution, please bring the matter to the Technical Director and to the President of the Board. This is the chain of command. No Exceptions.
- Determining practice group objectives and selection criteria and placing athletes in training groups appropriate to their age and ability.
- Updating and improving the FCWP program.



Meeting with Athletes & Parents

The coaching staff is available to meet with any athlete and/or their parents to discuss questions about that athlete's training. Each coach has reasons behind the training regimen within their group(s); they are on hand to share that information upon request. Coaches can be contacted in advance and meetings can be scheduled at mutually convenient times. During practices the coaches are unavailable to speak about their program or athlete(s).

Training & Competing

The coaching staff makes a commitment to staying abreast of new training techniques, drills, strategies, etc., and is dedicated to incorporating new knowledge into daily practices. FCWP works to provide technical training for all coaches in this regard so that cutting edge concepts about their sport can be presented to our athletes.

All coaches are responsible for planning their practice and competition schedule based on what will be of the greatest long term benefit for all athletes. Each day of practice and every competition fits into an overarching goal of athletic development. The coach may create a challenging training schedule in order to achieve specific ultimate goals. Trust the coaches' best interest in mind with every decision.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Competitive athletic programs like Foothill Club Water Polo provide many benefits to young athletes including self-discipline, good sportsmanship, time management skills, and good health. Practice enables participants to be challenged within a safe environment, while competition allows athletes to experience success and to learn how to treat success and failure as two sides of the same coin. As a parent, your role is to provide a stable, loving and supportive environment within which your child can feel that both his/her successes and failures are simply steps along the road to goal achievement. This positive environment will encourage your child to continue his/her participation in athletics. They need to know that your support is unconditional. Show your interest by ensuring your child's attendance at practices, by coming to competitions, by volunteering to help at home events, and by participating in fundraising and other key parent roles.



Guidelines for Parents

Parents are welcome to remain and watch the practice session. However, please observe practices from the bleachers and keep in mind the following:

- The practice session is a learning situation and the athlete needs to be able to concentrate.
- Please stay clear of the immediate practice area and do not talk to your child during practice.
- Coaches have a plan for every practice and may emphasize some aspects to the exclusion of others.
- Leave the coaching to the coach. Avoid analyzing your child's practice performance or instructing your child.
- When a coach is in the process of handling practice, please do not interfere. If you wish to speak to the coach, please contact them before or after practice, or via email or telephone.
- Please have your child at practice on time (or earlier) and pick them up 10-15 minutes after the conclusion of practice. However, for the athlete's safety, children should not be dropped off before the arrival of a coach. Talk to the coach in advance about any circumstances that may cause your athlete to be late to practice.

Child Supervision Before Workouts

The coaches are not babysitters; they are professionals hired by FCWP to provide all athletes with proper workouts. As such, the coaching staff cannot supervise athletes on deck outside of workout times. If you bring your children to the pool early, please remain with them until their practice begins to help maintain a safe environment. If you need to drop your children off at the pool earlier than their scheduled workout time and cannot remain at the facility with them, please remind them that proper and calm behavior is required. In addition, please make an effort to have your children picked up soon after practices end so as to minimize the chances of an accident or unsafe situation occurring. FCWP cannot be held responsible for any accidents or incidents that may occur outside of practices.



Competition Guidelines for Parents

- Please have your child on time for warm-up and any team meeting.
- Leave the coaching to the coach. Offer love and understanding regardless of your child's performance.
- Please try to attend all tournaments on the schedule. Notify the coach if your child is unable to attend a tournament.
- Talk to your coach if you have any questions about the tournament schedule.
- Parents must not talk or interact with the officials at any time during a tournament. If confused by an official's call, please speak with your child's coach after the game.

Resolving Problems with the Coach

One of the traditional team communication gaps is that some parents feel more comfortable discussing their disagreements over coaching philosophy with other parents rather than taking them directly to the coach. Not only is the problem never resolved that way, but often results in new problems being created.

Listed below are some guidelines for a parent raising some difficult issues with a coach:

- Keep in mind that the coach is committed to this sport and has your child's best interest in mind. If you trust that the coach's goals match yours, even though his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy a good rapport and a constructive dialogue.
- Remember that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team or a training group that can range in size from 10-30 members. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group, but the long-term benefits of the entire group compensate for an occasional short-term inconvenience.
- If your child plays for an assistant coach, always discuss the matter first with that coach, following the same guidelines noted above. If the assistant coach cannot satisfactorily resolve your concern ask the head coach to join the dialogue as a third party.
- If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach.
- When contacting the coaches, please be considerate. The best way to speak with the coaches is to arrange to meet them after practice. Sending a note to the coach with your player is also a good way to get information to them.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FCWP WATER POLO

Water polo is a team sport. Each participant must rely on the commitment of his/her teammates and coaches in order to gain opportunities to improve. Lack of commitment among the team limits what practices can accomplish and also makes competitions difficult. When you are unable to make a practice or tournament, be sure to let your coach know ahead of time. If transportation is ever an issue, talk to your coach about which of your teammates will be attending the tournament; there is almost always someone willing to give rides when requested. Coaches are not allowed to give athletes rides to practices or tournaments.

The coaching staff understands that occasional scheduling conflicts may occur, but also expects each athlete to make a commitment to keeping those conflicts to a minimum through proper planning and time prioritization. When conflicts do arise, be sure to show your respect for your team by communicating. Don't wait until the last minute!

Playing Groups and Team Placement

Some athletes like the extra challenge of playing in an age group above their own. They feel that this gives them added opportunities to learn new skills and to compete with more talented players. If you feel that you are ready to play in an older age group, talk to your coach. Parents MUST not enroll their athlete in any other age group than the one they are age appropriate for without FIRST speaking to their coach. The coach will then decide if he feels your child is ready to play up. Once the coach has made the decision, they will communicate that to the Club Administrator and they will make the change in registration system. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Generally speaking, athletes will not be moved up to an older age group without first demonstrating that the younger group is not competitive or challenging enough. As a result, some moves may take place a few weeks into a season rather than at the beginning, thus allowing each coach to make an accurate assessment of what would be in each athlete's best interest.

Remember that, in an effort to learn new physical skills, some athletes forget that mental skills are just as important. Such athletes want to play with the older players because it seems cooler or tougher. Yet often times such desires leave out the importance of learning how to be a team leader and how to help other athletes. Before asking if you can move up a group, ask yourself if it would be a change strictly for your benefit or for your



team's as well. Also, playing up may limit your athlete's playing time. Playing time is never guaranteed for any of FCWP's athletes.

At Water Polo Games and Tournaments

Much of water polo is played in tournaments, due in large part to pool space being difficult to secure. As a result, teams frequently play up to 3 or 4 games in one day. When attending such a tournament, the most important thing to do is stay comfortable and hydrated. If it's cold outside, make sure you stay warm. If it's hot outside, stay in the shade. Not taking care of yourself will cause you to not play up to your fullest potential and also cause you to not enjoy the day as much as you could.

Tournament Expectations and Tips:

- Get plenty of sleep the night before competitions. As an athlete, one of your main priorities has to be taking care of yourself and putting yourself in the best position to learn and improve. On four hours of sleep, not many of us can be in top form!
- Always arrive at least one hour prior to the start of your first scheduled game. This allows you time to stretch, warm-up, and meet with your team to discuss strategy.
- Never leave the pool before checking with your coach about your next game time. Many tournaments follow schedules that fluctuate based on game results; whether you win or lose frequently affects the time of your next game.
- Drink plenty of water and eat healthy snacks. Avoid ingesting lots of sugar, it will zap your energy. Keep in mind that you might play games less than an hour apart; light snacks are always better than greasy, heavy meals like pizza or hot dogs.
- Bring warm clothes. Even in the summertime it can be quite cold on the pool deck, especially in the mornings. Never underestimate the weather! Keep in mind that water polo is played rain or shine. Games and practices are only cancelled if there is active lightning.
- Bring extra towels. Nothing is more disheartening on a cold game day than having a wet towel. Remember, health is your top priority!
- If you have to leave a tournament early, always inform your coach. If numbers are tight your absence may affect everyone's ability to compete, in which case everyone deserves to know whether or not they will have further chances to play.



Tournament/Competition Checklist:

- Team Suit & Goggles (if desired for warm-up)
- Team Caps, Dark and White to Match Game Caps
- Lots of Water
- Light Snacks Such as Fruit, Crackers, Energy Bars
- Extra Towels
- Nail Clippers
- Sunblock
- Warm Clothes

REGISTRATION POLICY/MEMBERSHIP FEES

Registration with FCWP is not transferable from one athlete to another. When an athlete registers for a particular program, fees are assessed at that time based on the group/team placement made by the coaching staff.

USAWP

FCWP does not have an annual membership fee. All water polo players are expected to register individually with USA Water Polo via online registration and to have a current membership with USAWP throughout the full season they register for. NO PLAYER MAY BE IN THE POOL WITHOUT A CURRENT USAWP MEMBERSHIP. Here is the link to sign up for USAWP

<https://webpoint.usawaterpolo.com/wp/memberships/join.asp>

Payment of Fees/Dues

Session fees are paid according to the session. Sessions are Fall (September – November), Winter (December – February), Spring (February – May), Summer (May – July), Junior Olympics (Last week of July through first week of August). All fees must be received prior to participating in any workout. Session fees can vary so please refer to the online registration system for the most current fee. Most sessions are 10U - \$216.00, 12U B/G - \$416.00, 14U B/G, 16U B/G, 18U B/G – all \$466.00.

Fees are discounted for families with two or more athletes in the same session. Sibling discounts are \$25.00 for 2nd athlete, 3rd athlete, etc. Please email bookkeeper@foothillwaterpolo.com to receive your discount after you have signed up for the session. A \$25.00 credit will be put on your account to use for future tournament fees.



Refunds and Prorating

There are no refunds for program fees paid after the first two weeks of the session. In the event that a refund is requested during such a time, \$60 of the total program fee is non-refundable. Refunds requested later than three weeks into the season cannot be granted. In the event that an athlete must be out of the pool for four consecutive weeks or longer due to medical reasons, a credit for time lost may be given toward future dues. If an athlete joins the program after the middle of the session, fees are pro-rated on a half-session basis.

Donations

Founded in 2005, FCWP is a 501(C)3 non-profit organization that is financed and supported by the families of FCWP members. *The club's federal tax id # is 27-2517140 if you are interested in making a donation.*

Thank you for taking the time to review this important information about FCWP! We appreciate your participation in the club and hope that we can be of service to you and your family for many years to come!