

# Claude Moore Aquatics Club

## Tiger Sharks



## Water Polo Team

## Parent/Athlete Handbook

**2009-2010**

**Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo Team  
Parent/Athlete Handbook for 2009-2010 Season**

**1. Purpose of the Handbook**

This handbook provides some critical information to help parents and athletes enjoy Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo team.

**2. Philosophy of the Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo team**

The Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo team is a coach-run United States Water Polo (USAWP) and American Water Polo (AWP) affiliated club. We provide an opportunity for all its members to experience the highest quality instruction from dedicated coaches stressing the fundamentals of the game and true sportsmanship and by doing so, prepare its athletes to be competitive at all levels. While we emphasize enjoyment of the sport, we also expect a high level of commitment and professionalism from all who are involved.

Our philosophy is to have complete integration of all players based on a solid fundamental foundation from which players can move successfully to higher levels in the sport. Each group does the same workout with adjustments based on age and ability. Strict safety and conduct guidelines, structured training, and team-oriented focus lead to an environment where people learn and grow. In this context of strong leadership and discipline, water polo builds physical fitness, character, teamwork and responsibility.

CMAC Water Polo will follow the Olympic Development Program Principles and implement them within the CMAC Water Polo's Team Principles.

**CMAC Water Polo Team Principles:**

1. Raise athletes individual college profile and guide athletes towards furthering their careers in Divisions I, II, and III or club water polo play in college
2. Provide Year Round Training for Long Term Improvement
3. Teach Respect for the Game
4. Help Nationalize the Sport of Water Polo
5. Provide opportunities to train and compete with and against the best players in the USA
6. Become an integral part of the feeder system for the National Teams
7. Provide opportunities to be seen by National Team coaches
8. Provide opportunities to compete at the ODP Championships  
Learn the American system of play

**3. United States Water Polo (USAWP)**

USA Water Polo, Inc. is a non-profit corporation organized to serve as the National governing body for the sport of water polo in the United States under the auspices of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC). The top 13 athletes in USAWP represent the United States at the Olympic Games. USA Water Polo is committed to providing its members with superior training and educational resources, as well as developmental opportunities, organized competition and secondary insurance for all athletes. As a member of USA Water Polo, you will benefit from membership in your local club, certified coaches, unparalleled Olympic training experience, world-class clinics, regional and national tournaments for all age groups, and cutting edge developments in sport science.

USA Water Polo is divided into 11 Zones. Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo is part of the Northeast Zone (NEZ), which is comprised of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

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### Membership to USAWP

All workouts and competitions are sanctioned by USAWP, and all athletes must be current members in order to practice and compete.

You may register online and receive instant verification by going to [www.usawaterpolo.org](http://www.usawaterpolo.org) and follow these steps:

1. Click on "Member Login" (on the top).
2. Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo is Club #1911 (in the Northeast Zone).
3. Register you or your athlete as a "Gold" or "Silver" Athlete. Please note the distinction between the two choices:
  - *Gold* - Eligible for all USAWP sanctioned activity, including club practices, sanctioned events, National Championship Events and all Olympic Development Programs
  - *Silver* - Eligible for club practices and sanctioned events

*Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo strongly suggests that you register you or your athlete as a "Gold" Athlete.*

### 4. American Water Polo (AWP)

The mission of American Water Polo is to provide opportunities for individuals of all ages to be involved in the sport of water polo and to provide its membership with the highest degree of customer satisfaction at an affordable price.

#### The Goals and Objectives of AWP are:

1. To offer membership benefits for individuals and families at an affordable price, including insurance coverage for competition in the sport of water polo.
2. To establish leagues throughout the country in order to offer competitive opportunities for individuals of all ages.
3. To offer education and training for coaches, administrators, and officials in the sport of water polo for a reasonable fee.
4. To help foster good citizens by promoting sportsmanship.
5. To educate athletes regarding the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse.

### Membership to AWP

Through the 2009-2010 season, CMAC WP will be competing in American Water Polo events and tournaments. All CMAC WP athletes must be current members in AWP in addition to USAWP.

You may register online and receive instant verification by going to [www.americanwaterpolo.org](http://www.americanwaterpolo.org) and follow these steps:

1. Move your cursor over "AWP FAQ" at the top so that the dropdown menu appears.
2. Click on "Membership" and then click on the "Membership Information" *hot linked* on the page.
3. Select the Limited Membership - you will need to provide your USAWP ID Number in order to receive this discounted rate.

### 5. Coaching Staff

Our coaching staff is the best on the East Coast. The club is run by Nick Grzeda, the current ODP NEZ Youth Head Coach, NEZ Vice-Chairman and President of the Mid-

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Atlantic Coast Water Polo League.

Assistant Head Coach Tim Porter recently returned from Northern, CA, with an 11<sup>th</sup> place finish at the 2009 Junior Olympics National Tournament for CMAC WP's 12 & Under team. In addition, Drew Zirkelbach, Tom Lewis, and Steve Velling bring the latest *learnings* and innovations from their water polo experiences to CMAC Water Polo for the 2009-2010 season.

The coaching staff consists of five coaches with high school, club, national, and/or collegiate coaching experience. CMAC WP is committed to the retention and development of our stellar coaches, which continues to be one of our strengths, and is a key to the success of our club. This highly qualified staff meets throughout the year to discuss each and every player's development; and in the summer the coaching staff meets to review CMAC WP's playing system, player evaluations, and to stay updated on coaching techniques.

The "hierarchy" of the Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo team breaks down to the following roles:

- Kim Baker is the Aquatics Coordinator and in charge of the Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo team.
- Nick Grzeda is the Head Coach of the Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo team and the Club/Team Administrator for USA Water Polo and American Water Polo.
- Tim Porter is the Assistant Head Coach in charge of the Cadet team of CMAC WP and an Assistant Coach for the Youth and Junior teams of CMAC WP.
- Drew Zirkelbach is an Assistant Coach for the Youth and Junior teams of CMAC WP.
- Tom Lewis and Steve Velling are Volunteer Coaches for the Cadet, Youth, and Junior teams of CMAC WP.

### Coaches Profiles

**Nick Grzeda, Head Coach** - Coach Nick Grzeda was the Co-founder/Head Coach of DC Water Polo, the premier Age Group (18 & Under) USA Water Polo club in Northern Virginia for five years (2003-2008) before joining the CMAC Coaching staff in June of 2008.

In addition to being the Head Coach of the Claude Moore Aquatic Club Water Polo team, Nick is currently the Vice-Chairman of the Northeast Zone Executive Committee (2008-Present) and has helped with the following NEZ Teams:

- Head Coach for the 2010 ODP Northeast Zone Men's Youth Team
- Head Coach for the 2009 ODP Northeast Zone Men's Junior Team
- Head Coach for the 2008 Northeast Zone Men's Junior Team,
- Head Coach for the 2007 Northeast Zone Men's Cadet Team,
- Assistant Coach for the 2006 Northeast Zone Men's Youth Team

Nick is also the President (2008-Present) of the Mid-Atlantic Coast Water Polo League, which is the premier high school league for prep school and clubs from Virginia, Maryland, and Washington DC.

Coach Nick Grzeda was named USA Water Polo's 2007 Developmental Coach of the Year for the Northeast Zone.

In addition to coaching water polo, Nick is currently an English teacher at Loudoun County High School (2005-Present). He teaches World Literature, Advanced Composition, Etymology, and AP English Literature.

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Lastly, Nick has been a swim coach for the following summer league, high school, and USA Swimming Teams:

- Head Coach Eagles at Exeter Summer Swim Team - ODSL (2007-Present)
- Head Coach Loudoun County High School Swim Team (2005-2009)
- Head Coach Franklin Farm Froggers Summer Swim Team - CSL (2005-2006)
- Coach York Swim Club - USA Swimming (2003-2006)
- Assistant Coach Oakton High School Swim Team (2003-2005)
- Assistant Coach Chesterbrook Summer Swim Team - NVSL (2003)
- Head Coach Sugarland Run Summer Swim Team - CSL (1996-2000)
- 8 & Under Swim Coach Herndon Commanders - USA Swimming (1996)

**Tim Porter, Assistant Head Coach** - Coach Tim Porter has over ten years of aquatics coaching experience. He has coached both swimming and water polo at the high school and club levels. He started his coaching career in San Diego coaching high school swimming and water polo at Monte Vista High School. After moving to the east coast, he was the head age group coach for Ashburn Village Swim Team and assisted at the Senior and Pre-Senior levels. A number of athletes Tim coached went on to participate in NCAA Division I Championships as well as Olympic Trials.

As an athlete Tim was a high school and collegiate All-American in Water Polo and was selected to participate as a member of the Senior National Team. He was a member of the first San Diego Shores water polo team. Coach Porter participated in and was named to all tournament teams at numerous water polo tournaments including Junior Olympics.

**Drew Zirkelbach, Assistant Coach** - Assistant Coach Drew Zirkelbach began playing water polo at the age of 14 in Lincolnshire, Illinois, for Stevenson High School, becoming a goalie quickly thereafter; not only did he play for high school but for the Northern Illinois Polo Club, which had different age groups and played year round. After his sophomore year, his head coach nominated him to go out to Colorado Springs to the US Olympic training center where they were holding training for goalies. After that, he became the Varsity goalie at his high school and was voted first team all-state and second team all-national his senior year.

Although he was recruited by many schools, Drew chose to go to Virginia Tech where their program was only club. While there, he was nominated to the all-conference team twice and the team did better than it ever had before by going to Nationals and finishing 11th. Drew currently participates with two teams in the area; Rockville and Northern Virginia, in addition to helping coach.

**Tom Lewis, Volunteer Coach** - Tom Lewis started swimming competitively with the Central Queens YMCA swim team in New York City. Then he swam for the Northfield Mount Hermon Varsity team. He played water polo for the Purdue University club team from 1976-81. He spent his college summers teaching swimming at a camp in Long Island. Tom served 6 years in the Air Force, and returned home to Long Island. There he played for the Queens College water polo club team from 1987-91.

Tom is an Aerospace Engineer, currently working for Orbital Sciences. As a member of the team that launches the Pegasus and Taurus space launch vehicles, he is responsible for the vehicle software. Tom has been living in Ashburn for the last 15 years.

**Steve Velling, Volunteer Coach** - Steve Velling started all 4 years in the goal on the Varsity team at La Salle High School, a small high school in Southern California, and named MVP his last 2 years. He then went to the University of California, Davis, where he made the team as a walk-on goalie, playing all four years on the varsity squad. Steve played in the

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Western Athletic Conference against other teams such as Fresno State, and the University of the Pacific. He also played non-conference games against powerhouse teams like Stanford and Cal Berkeley. Steve was named All-Conference in his final 3 years of playing. Steve will tell people that he learned a lot along the way, both about how to play the game, how to play as a team, and how to improve and motivate himself and others and that he's hoping to instill a love and passion for the game in young kids on the East Coast, so that water polo can become as popular as it is on the West Coast.

### 6. Club Communications

It is our sincere desire to keep each player and family well informed. We have established a system that we feel best suits CMAC Water Polo parents, players and coaching staff. When you register, we add you to our email list\* and, as needed, we send out emails to keep you updated about games, practices, tournaments, and pool situations.

All information, registration forms, teams for tournaments, directions, announcements are provided online at our team website, [www.cmaquatics.org](http://www.cmaquatics.org). Please check the web daily for announcements and updates.

CMAC WP coaches are always going to be your best source of information. If you or your athlete has questions regarding the daily schedules, general rules of the games, workout times, tournament conflicts, equipment, etc., you/he or she should try to meet with one of the coach's before or after practice.

If there are financial or registration questions, please contact Kim Baker directly.

*\*To ensure the privacy of all our players/parents, each member's e-mail address will be "Blind Copied" (Bcc'd).*

### 7. Registration

To register for the Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo team, please contact Kim Baker, at 571-258-3600 ext. 2545, or [Kim.Baker@loudoun.gov](mailto:Kim.Baker@loudoun.gov) at your convenience.

A participant/player may come to two (2) CMAC Water Polo practices on a trial basis only if the participant/player has never experienced a CMAC Water Polo practice in the past. The two (2) trial practices must be attended within the same week; otherwise the one (1) practice attended will be considered the entire trial practice period for that participant/player. After participating in the practices this participant/player may not participate in any further practices and/or tournaments unless all necessary paperwork has been completed including, registration with USAWP and AWP, and all required fees have been paid to CMAC.

### 8. Team Apparel

Claude Moore Aquatics Club has formed a close working relationship with *Sport Fair*\*. All players are required to purchase a team suit.

Claude Moore Aquatics Club T-shirts and swim caps are included in the cost of registration - please see Kim Baker for these items.

\*Please note that CMAC Water Polo is not responsible for any orders that take place with *Sport Fair*. You may contact Sport Fair with the contact information posted on their website, [www.sportfairusa.com](http://www.sportfairusa.com).

## 9. Group Placement

The coaching staff spends a large percentage of its time determining the most appropriate placement for each athlete's development. Initial group assignments will be made by the coaching staff based primarily on age, ability and school grade.

Players are then evaluated every practice. Any movement between groups will be decided solely by the coaching staff. Criteria include, but are not limited to, daily performance, attendance at workout, tournaments and impact sessions, commitment, promptness and attentiveness at workouts. Group placements are subject to change at the agreement of the Aquatics Coordinator, Head Coach, in addition to the parent(s) and athlete.

1. **H2O Ball** - This program is no longer truly affiliated with Claude Moore Aquatics Club and is now a class offered at Claude Moore Recreation Center, however, it is a great starting point for those players who wish to learn the sport of water polo gradually. It consists of ten 40-minute practices designed to introduce athletes to the basic skills of water polo with an emphasis on fun and participation and aims to introduce *pre-Cadet* players to the sport of water polo by providing an enjoyable and challenging interactive game, which will encourage them to pursue the sport and go on to play water polo.

H2O Ball has been developed and designed for Grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 boys and girls (8-12 years old). H2O Ball is played in the shallow end of the competition pool so strong swimming skills are not necessary. This makes H2O Ball accessible for all athletes. Through participation in H2O Ball, skills that are required for water polo can be learned with greater ease, as well as the development of water confidence and water skills in a team environment.

2. **Cadet Team** - The CMAC Water Polo Cadet Team is for those individuals new to the sport of water polo, but have the necessary swimming skills and ease in the water to compete on this team. This group practices three days a week for an hour and is strictly for athletes (both boys and girls) ages 12 and younger. It is run by Assistant Head Coach, Tim Porter.
3. **Youth and Junior Teams** - These two teams are made up of athletes (both boys and girls) ages 12-18 years old (in some cases, athletes under the age of 12 may be invited to practice in this group). In order to ensure that all members gain the most from practice and games, playing groups will be divided by different areas of the pool by age, experience, and ability. This group practices three days a week for two hours and is run by Head Coach Nick Grzeda.

## 10. Competitions

1. **Levels** - Competitions vary based on the age of the athlete throughout the year in addition to the year that they are in school. In general, the high school aged athletes will compete in the Mid-Atlantic Coast Water Polo League for the fall, the NEZ Spring League (USAWP) and AWP Main Line League in the spring, and various USAWP and AWP tournaments in the summer months. Tournaments are available for the winter months for those high school athletes whose involvement with high school swimming does not conflict.

The 12 & Under and 14/15 & Under age groups will compete in the Mid-Atlantic Coast Water Polo League, USAWP and AWP tournaments in the fall, the NEZ Winter and Spring Leagues (USAWP), AWP Main Line in the spring and various USAWP and AWP tournaments in the summer months.

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2. **Age Groupings** - These vary throughout the year depending on which association is sponsoring the games/tournament.
  1. **USAWP** - USA Water Polo guidelines are based on the age you are on Dec, 31st. (18s = born in '91 & '92, 16s = '93 & '94, 14s = '95 & '96, 12s = '97 & younger for 2009). The "year born" is adhered to for all USAWP tournaments and championships.
  2. **Olympic Development Program (ODP)** - USAWP divides the age groups for ODP as Junior for those born in 1992-1994 and Youth is for those born in 1995 and younger.
  3. **AWP** - AWP guidelines are based on the age you are by the last day of competition (if an athlete is 16 on the Sunday of a weekend tournament, then the athlete is considered 16 on Saturday of that same tournament). AWP games and tournaments are divided by 12 & Unders, 15 & Unders, and 18 & Unders.

### **11. Practice Schedule**

The team practice schedule is on the CMAC Water Polo website, [www.cmaquatics.org](http://www.cmaquatics.org); any updates to the practice schedule will be e-mailed out when they occur.

### **12. Games/Tournament Schedule**

The team games/tournament schedule is on the CMAC Water Polo website, [www.cmaquatics.org](http://www.cmaquatics.org); any updates to the games/tournament schedule will be e-mailed out when they occur.

### **13. Tournament Trips**

1. **General Information** - On occasion CMAC Water Polo will travel together to away tournaments. They are by invitation only. The coaching staff selects the players. In general, the following criteria have been established to determine how players will be selected.
  1. Game Sense
  2. Execution
  3. Coachability and Attitude
  4. Swim Speed
  5. Position
  6. Age and Participation in the program (Attendance at practices)
2. **Rules** - All of the normal rules of conduct apply on tournament trips, as they do any other time. Each CMAC Water Polo player and parent have signed the Code of Conduct and this will be enforced should any breaking of the rules occur.

### **14. Tournament Dues**

All players who participate in any games or tournaments for Claude Moore Aquatics Club are expected to pay dues prior to the start of the tournament. These dues will be determined by the Aquatics Coordinator and/or the CMAC Advisory Board Water Polo Committee and be published prior to the date of the tournament.

All "away" games/tournaments will have dues assigned and they will need to be paid to the Claude Moore Aquatics Club Advisory Board - you can give your dues to the CMAC Water Polo Head Coach or any CMAC Advisory Board Water Polo Committee member at any practice leading up to the games and/or tournament.

## 15. Club Hopping

Club hopping is discouraged by USA Water Polo in order to prevent all-star teams from being formed for local and/or national tournaments. CMAC Water Polo expects and encourages their players to support their club by participating in CMAC Water Polo's full schedule of practices and tournaments.

CMAC Water Polo offers the highest level of coaching with full practice and game schedules. CMAC Water Polo is a highly competitive club and will no longer lend or borrow players from other water polo clubs and/or teams for National Tournaments such as Speedo Cup or Junior Olympics.

### **Exception**

The only exception is when the CMAC Water Polo team does not field a team for a National Tournament Qualifying Tournament (i.e. Speedo Cup or Junior Olympics). These players will be released upon their request if invited to participate on another team for a National Tournament Qualifier, **but only if this National Tournament does not conflict with a tournament on CMAC Water Polo's schedule.**

## 16. Athletes' Rules of Conduct

1. **Sportsmanship** - Water polo is a tough and competitive sport. Therefore, good sportsmanship is an essential part of the game. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated; i.e., the use of foul language, hitting, biting, or any other physical contact not part of the normal game plays. Any unsportsmanlike conduct may result in expulsion from the workout or the game. On away trips, unsportsmanlike conduct may result in the player being sent home at their parents' expense. All parents agree that a player may be sent home at the coach's discretion and at the parents' expense for violating the rules of conduct.
2. **Focus and Dedication** - CMAC Water Polo is not a babysitting service. Players who do not come to learn the game of water polo and work hard will be asked to leave the pool and watch the remainder of practice from the pool deck. Use of cell phones is not permitted during practices or games. Repeated inattention to the coaches, talking back to the coaches, or simply not engaging in practice will not be tolerated and may result in expulsion from the team.
3. **Attendance** - Be at practice on time! This means be on the deck 10 minutes prior to the start of practice, in your suit and showered! With a limited number of practices per week it is important that we utilize our time in the water effectively. All players on the Junior and Senior teams need to attend ALL three practices per week to be considered for tournament rosters.
4. **Communicate with your Coach** - If you are not going to a game or tournament, please inform Head Coach, Nick Grzeda, at least one week in advance, unless there is an emergency. This will give the coach time to adjust the line-up, if necessary. All game schedules are on the website and are updated on a regular basis. Nick's e-mail address is [nick@cmaquatics.org](mailto:nick@cmaquatics.org) or you may reach him by phone at (703) 625-7655 if necessary.
5. **Sign Code of Conduct** - All players must sign the CMAC Water Polo team Athlete Code of Conduct. Any violation(s) of the signed Athlete Code of Conduct may lead to the cancellation of membership from the CMAC Water Polo Team. This decision is at the sole discretion of the Claude Moore Aquatics Club Aquatics Coordinator. A meeting will be scheduled to discuss any violation(s) of Athletes Code of Conduct. This meeting shall be a closed door meeting attended only by the Aquatics Coordinator; the Head

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Coach; any coach(s) present at the violation(s)'s occurrence; parents of the athlete and athlete. In all cases refunds will be at the discretion of the CMAC Aquatics Coordinator, Kim Baker.

6. **Pool Deck Safety** - While water polo is a tough sport, the majority of the injuries to our athletes occur on the pool deck or outside of the pool area. Pool deck rules are for your safety. Disobeying the following rules will not be tolerated and will result in expulsion from practice.
  1. No diving into the pool. All water polo players will jump into the pool feet first.
  2. No running on the pool deck.
  3. No throwing water polo balls on the deck against the ground or the walls.
  4. No *horseplay* on the deck.
  5. No foul language.
7. **Let the Coaches Coach** - While the coach is talking, you are to remain quiet and attentive. Do not leave a team meeting until the coach tells you it is okay to do so. Coaches want you to communicate with them and give your input, but wait until you are asked for your comments. Do not coach from the water - EVER. That is why we have coaches.
8. **Do NOT question the referees** - The referees are only human. At times they will make mistakes. NEVER argue with their decisions or show dissent for their rulings. Leave it to the coach to talk to the referees.
9. **Welcome new members into the club** - Make new players feel welcome at CMAC Water Polo. Introduce yourself and be social!

**17. Parents' Code of Conduct**

1. **Sign the Code of Conduct** - Similar to the athletes of the Claude Moore Aquatics Club Water Polo Team, parents are held to standards regarding behavior as well. All parents of athletes of CMAC Water Polo will be required to sign the Parent's Code of Conduct.
2. **Practice Etiquette** - Parents will refrain from talking to coaches during practice and will only be permitted to sit on the bleachers on nearest to the entrance/exit of the competition pool under the Claude Moore Aquatics Club Bulletin Board. If you wish to speak to a coach, you may do so prior to the start or at the end of any practice - they will always be available for you during these times!
3. **Roles** - Sticking to one's role during workouts or games works best for all those involved. Please allow the coaches to coach, the players to play, and the referees to referee. We ask parents to cheer for everyone on the team and to refrain from offering coaching, playing or refereeing advice during the course of games/tournaments. Parents should stay in the spectators' area during the games and not interact with the players until the game and the post game meeting is finished.
4. **Concerns** - If you have any questions and/or concerns regarding your athlete(s), we want you to speak directly to the coach with whom your athlete(s) primarily is coached by. This pertains to practices and tournaments. All CMAC Water Polo coaches welcome discussion concerning your athlete(s), however, if your concern is not resolved with the coach that you speak to, please contact CMAC Water Polo's Head Coach, Nick Grzeda. Again, if your concern is not resolved after speaking with the Head Coach, please see Kim Baker, Claude Moore Aquatics Club's Aquatics Coordinator.