



N·A·N·A·I·M·O
DIAMONDS

Nanaimo Diamonds

Artistic Swimming Club

Training Meets and Competition 101

2024-2025

Training Meets & Competitions 101

As a competitive swimmer with the Nanaimo Diamonds, you will be attending one or more training meets and/or competitions over the season. Our provincial stream competitive teams typically attend two training meets in the fall and another one in the winter prior to the Provincial Qualifier (Mable Moran) and the Provincial Championship (Jean Peters) in the spring. Our Interclub Team (formerly known as Limited Competitive) typically only attends Jean Peters (May) as this is their Provincial Championship, however this year Training Meet #3 is also in Nanaimo so this is a great opportunity to participate without any additional costs. Each year, different communities across the province take turns hosting the different meets and competitions. National stream will compete in all meets as noted below, culminating in National Qualifiers in Victoria, and Jean Peters at our home pool in Nanaimo.

At each of these meets, the athletes will perform figures, elements (see definitions for more information) and their routines (team and solos/duets) are typically added to those meets that occur in the new year.

2024-2025 Schedule

The Nanaimo Diamonds will attend the following competitions in 2024-2025. Sometimes these posted dates may change. Please verify dates through the [BC Artistic Swimming Events Page](#) (then click on the competition calendar link). Coaches will be sharing competition-specific information with athletes in advance of all events..

Competition	Dates	Location	Who Attends
Training Meet #1	November 9 - 10, 2024	Canada Games Aquatic Centre (Kamloops) ROOMS booked at ACCENT INN Group Block: BC Artistic Swimming \$125/night plus tax Phone: 250-374-8877 Room Release date: October 10, 2024 5 rooms booked for coaches, NS athletes and Chaperones	PS - All Ages NS- All Ages
Training Meet #2	December 13 - 15, 2024	City Centre Aquatic Centre (Coquitlam) ROOMS BOOKED at Executive Hotel in Coquitlam	PS - All Ages NS- All Ages

		<p>405 North Road, Coquitlam \$190/room/night Booked under: Nanaimo Diamonds Artistic Swimming Club - BOOKING ID is 34891.</p> <p>SEND an email to salesmktg.coq@executivehotels.net</p> <p>ROOM CUT OFF IS OCT 15, 2024 *NOTE ROOM CANCELLATION IS 30 DAYS PRIOR*</p> <p>4 rooms booked for coaches, NS athletes and Chaperones</p>	
Pacific Coast Provincial Qualifier	January 17 - 19, 2025	<p>Surrey Sport & Leisure (Surrey) 5 rooms booked for coaches, NS athletes and Chaperones</p>	NS - All Groups
Water Show	TBD- January 2025	Nanaimo Aquatic Centre	All Groups
Training Meet #3	February 21 - 23, 2025	Nanaimo Aquatic Centre (Nanaimo)	PS - All Groups Interclub
Pacific Peaks Provincial Championships	February 21 - 23, 2025	Nanaimo Aquatic Centre (Nanaimo)	NS - All Groups
National Qualifiers	March 16 - 22, 2025	<p>Commonwealth Pool (Victoria)</p> <p>Rooms TBA</p>	NS - All Groups
Mable Moran (Provincial Qualifier)	April 11 - 13, 2025	<p>Watermania (Richmond)</p> <p>Rooms booked at Holiday Inn & Suites Riverport Richmond Group Block: BC Artistic Swimming \$199 - \$239/ room per night plus tax Phone: 604-241-1830 RESERVE EARLY!</p>	All PS Groups

Jean Peters (Provincials)	May 16 - 18, 2025	Nanaimo Aquatic Centre (Nanaimo)	Interclub PS NS
Water Show	May 31, 2025	Nanaimo Aquatic Centre (Nanaimo)	All groups

Meet Fees

In addition to monthly fees, there are fees to attend training meets and competitions. The Nanaimo Diamonds will pay BC Artistic Swimming (BCAS) for all meet fees and will bill families directly. In the past, the club has generally been able to cover these fees through fundraising activities. However, this is not always possible. Fees will be debited through the RAMP system, and the amounts will be communicated in advance.

Athlete Expectations

As representatives of the NDASC, all members are expected to conduct themselves appropriately in public. Members are to demonstrate a positive attitude towards the sport, the club, other teams, and treat officials, coaches, parents and swimmers with courtesy and respect at all times. No form of abuse of athletes, parents, coaches or officials will be tolerated. Members will refrain from angry outbursts, use of coarse language, rude or disorderly behaviour, and are expected to maintain self-control, behave with dignity, decorum, and respect at any club meeting, practice, competition or other club function. Athletes may not participate in any activities that are illegal (e.g. shoplifting, drinking, drugs, smoking and/or vaping) or behave in a way that puts the club or others at risk while training, competing, or at a club event or while interacting with teammates.

All athletes, parents and coaches must adhere to the [Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy](#) in addition to the [BC Safe Sport Policies](#) and [Athlete Code of Conduct](#).

Volunteering at the Meets

It takes a lot of volunteers to run a meet and BCAS will put out an online volunteer sign-up prior to each meet. Nanaimo Diamonds will share the link in all team classrooms for sign up. Parents are asked to share in the volunteer load by taking at least one shift at meets throughout the season.

A reminder: each athlete's family shall be responsible for a set number of volunteer hours, [as identified in the parent handbook](#). The club will also send out emails when volunteer opportunities arise.

Understanding Age Categories

Artistic swimmers compete in age categories but unfortunately, it is not as simple as looking at your athlete's current age. An artistic swimming season starts in September and ends in May/June and thus, spans two different calendar years. Your athlete's age for the entire season is based on their age at the end of the year in which the season ends. This is often referred to as their "synchro age." For example, if your child was born in November 2013, they are ten years old at the start of this season, they turn eleven in November and then twelve in the year in which the season ends. As such, their "synchro age" is twelve.

In terms of figures, your athlete will compete in the age category in which their "synchro age" falls. If this is their first competitive season, they will compete with other novice (aka new) swimmers in the same age category. They will be given different figures than those who are in the same age category but have competed in a previous season.

In terms of team or duet routines, the average age of the swimmers is used to determine which age category they will compete within. This means that a team can include swimmers who are older or younger than the age category of the team. For duets, they will swim in the age category of the older athlete. Limited Competitive teams (Interclub) are the exception and can be made up of athletes of all ages.

Age Categories:

- Limited Competitive (we call this Interclub)
- 10 and under
- 11 - 12 Provincial Stream
- 13 - 15 Provincial Stream
- 16 - 20 Provincial Stream
- Youth (13 - 15) National Stream
- Junior (16 - 20) National Stream
- Acro (Junior level) National Stream

Travel

Meets occur in different communities within the province, and the club's competitive teams must travel in order to attend. It is important to remember that when travelling and staying in hotels, athletes and their families are representing the Nanaimo Diamonds and behaviour must reflect the club in a positive manner. That means that athletes and parents/guardians/ chaperones are to use their manners, follow the rules and be respectful of others following the Nanaimo Diamonds' code of conduct policy. Chaperones and/or team parents will provide support to the National Stream, rather than all families travelling to every competition.

Travel Itineraries

Coaches will identify the days/times expected for travel approximately two weeks prior to a competition. The preference is for the team to travel together and thus, coaches will

communicate, in advance, about travel itineraries including any ferry bookings that may be needed. They will also provide information about what times athletes are to arrive at the pool for warm-ups, when figures and routines are scheduled and any information related to team meals, etc.

BC Ferries

Where possible, the Club will apply for BC Ferries Travel Grants. Eligible activities include provincial championships and national qualifiers/championships. The passes are for athlete travel only and are equivalent to a passenger/walk on fare.

Attire

All Nanaimo Diamonds athletes must travel in team attire. Athletes will be fitted for club jackets, black training t-shirts and pink competition t-shirts early in the season (unless they already own one) and are required to wear their pink t-shirts along with black leggings or shorts, and black running shoes for competitions. Please note that athletes cannot wear jewellery or have any nail polish on during meets or competition. Yoga jackets and shorts/pants are required for awards. Hoodies are optional, however not suitable for awards.

Hotels

A block of hotel rooms will be made available to families in advance. This information will be communicated to our members and then each family must contact the hotel in order to reserve a room in their name and with their payment information. Rooms must be booked by the cut off date in order to secure the group rate. You are welcome to make arrangements with other members to share rooms if you choose. All travel costs and arrangements (e.g. hotels and ferry reservations) are the responsibility of each family.

What to Pack

Start packing well in advance of travel time, and double-check that you have everything. There's nothing worse than showing up to the pool without your swimsuit! Swimmers need different items depending on what events are included in the training meet or competition. Everything should be labelled with the athlete's name, if possible.

There is a printable checklist at the back of this package for your convenience! Here's what to pack:

Training Meets with Figures (no routine):

- Black Swimsuit – Find a basic black swimsuit that is durable and fits properly for figures. Polyester suits are more likely to last longer especially if they are rinsed with cold water and hung to dry after each use. Suit should be snug when trying on as it will relax in the water after a few uses.
- Swim Caps - At least one plain white (required for figures) and one pink Nanaimo Diamonds cap, but having extras is always a good idea in case one rips. Black caps are required for training

- Black fitted shorts - It can be hot on the pool deck.
- Nose plugs - athletes should bring at least three nose plugs to every training meet and/or competition.
- Goggles - each athlete should be properly fitted for goggles and have at least two pairs in their swim bag.
- Running Shoes - clean running shoes with socks
- Deck Shoes - clean flip flops or slip on shoes
- Water bottle - It's always important to stay hydrated! Please bring a filled water bottle.
- Snacks - swimming makes athletes hungry! It is helpful to have a few quick and easy to eat snacks packed like granola or protein bars, fruit, string cheese, crackers, ham, honey etc.
- Swim Parka or warm clothes - there is often lots of waiting in between in-water times and it is important to stay warm so that muscles don't become stiff so ensure that your athlete(s) have something warm to wear. Zip up items are better than having to pull over the head.
- Towels - a couple towels are also helpful and if space is limited try looking for quick dry towels as they tend to be smaller and take up less space.
- Personal Items - these may include things like medications, feminine hygiene products, deodorant, tooth brush, shampoo & conditioner, etc.
- Yoga Mat - athletes will do dryland activation and stretching prior to in-water warm up and pool decks are often wet and slippery so use of a yoga mat is helpful.

Training Meets or Competition with Figures and Routines:

Pack everything for figures AND the following:

- Competition suit with accessories - Ensure your competition suit with bun cover (if applicable) is packed, along with any duet or solo routine suits. It is recommended that each set is put in a plastic ziplock bag so they are easier to find and kept together.
- Makeup - all athletes are required to wear makeup when performing routines at competition so that the judges are better able to see their faces and smiles! Black waterproof mascara and eyeliner are essential for each athlete while coaches will

often either purchase matching lipstick and eye shadows for athletes or will provide a colour palette for you to purchase. If sharing any makeup, coaches will use disposable applicators to prevent cross contamination.

- Hair gelling - traditional hair gel does not last in the water and thus, artistic swimmers use Knox gelatin instead. Each athlete will need the following:
 - brush;
 - Comb (fine tooth);
 - large hair elastics;
 - small hair elastics;
 - hair pins/ bobby pins;
 - hair nets;
 - cheap aerosol hairspray;
 - hair donut (for those with thin or short hair);
 - Vaseline stick;
 - Small gelling towel;
 - 5-6 packages Knox gelatin, a small mixing bowl, wide paint or hair brush (like what salons use for dying hair). You can either bring a small kettle to make the gel on site, or you can make it ahead of time and let it set in an ice cube tray. If doing the latter, a small crockpot is a great way to melt the gelatin cubes on site.

Overnight Necessities

- Pyjamas
- Underwear and bras
- Changes of clothes for team dinners or other activities away from pool
- Personal toiletries

Important Note

We highly encourage parents/guardians to talk to their athlete(s) about keeping their belongings organised and contained on the pool deck. It is important that they put all unused items back in their backpacks and keep them zipped. There are a lot of athletes and belongings can easily get mistakenly picked up when they are left laying around.

Hair Gel

For competitions, artistic swimmers gel their hair so it remains secure throughout their routines. Generally hair is gelled for team, duet and solo routines, however is not usually required for figures. It is helpful to make the gel pucks in advance. These can be quickly melted in the microwave (about 40 seconds) or in a small crock pot.

Recipe for 1 Gel Puck

- Mix three packages of Knox gelatin powder with 1/3 cup of boiling water (not more than 1/3 cup water or gel will be too thin).
- Whisk

- Sieve into container (critical for smooth consistency)
- Scrape all the foam and bubbles with a spoon
- Let solidify
- Store in the fridge – pack all the pucks in a Ziploc bag

Competition Etiquette

BC ARTISTIC SWIMMING

Competition Etiquette

What is respectful behaviour?
Treating others as you would like to be treated, starting with basic consideration of and for other people. As role models for athletes and their parents, coaches should lead by example and consistently model respectful behaviour.

Respect
Represent your club and Synchro BC with respect.
Participants and spectators are to be respectful of one another and the facility.

Athletes
Unless competing, watch from designated athlete or spectator spaces.
Cheer on your teammates within reason and from designated cheering sections. Be respectful if you are behind or near the judges.
Landrill and activate away from pedestrian walkways or congested areas.

Coaches
Only certified/registered coaches may be on deck, video figures and coach during warm ups.
Be respectful of shared pool and deck space during warm ups – avoid impeding others or monopolizing space for your benefit.
Take turns practicing walk-ons.

Parents
Parents are not permitted in the competition zone unless they are designated volunteers registered with the volunteer table.
Parents volunteering on deck may not interact with athletes and coaches or take photos/video.
No flash photography during figures or routines.

Accountability
It is everyone's responsibility to ensure events and competitions are fair, safe and cooperative environments.
Coaches are expected to always lead by example and ensure their athletes, peers and spectators respect these courtesies.
All participants should address indiscretions in a calm and professional manner or report issues to Synchro BC.

Facilities
Follow pool/facility rules.
Gelling and make-up must be done in designated areas.
If food is permitted on deck, consume it away from the water and use designated waste receptacles.
Remain seated or stand still during routine events.

Equipment
Equipment and bags should be contained in designated areas, not in spectator space.
Roll up yoga mats when not in use.
Do not hang wet towels and suits.

Warming Up
Warm up lanes are for lap swimming only.
Designated warm up times in the competition pool are for routine execution only.
Be respectful of others in the shared, and often congested pool space.
Remember – everyone is trying to maximize the limited time and space available.

Competition Zone
Athletes, coaches, officials and competition volunteers are the only people allowed in the competition zone.
Only athletes and coaches competing in the current event cluster are permitted in the competition zone.
Once their duties are complete, volunteers must return to the designated spectator space.
During routine events, everyone in the competition zone must remain seated or stand still.

TRUE SPORT LIVES HERE

RESPECT IN SPORT

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. Are parents allowed on deck with their swimmer(s) at competitions?

A. Parents are NOT allowed on deck for any reason unless they have signed up for a volunteer role that requires them to come on deck. You may not interact with your athlete even if you are volunteering.

Q. Why do artistic swimmers have to wear a black bathing suit and white cap when performing figures?

A. Artistic swimmers are required to wear this uniform when competing figures in order to reduce bias and favouritism as much as possible.

Q. *How does my swimmer know what order to follow for performing figures?*

A. Each athlete will be given a number and each number will be called out prior to the swimmer presenting before the judges. It is extremely important that swimmers listen very carefully to the number being called and raise their hand in the event that it is not their number. Club's can be fined if a swimmer competes under the wrong number.

Q. *Can artistic swimmers wear goggles in competition?*

A. No, goggles are not allowed in routine competition but can be worn when competing figures. Performing routines is largely artistic and the eyes are an integral part of connecting with the judges.

Q. *What is the best swimsuit to purchase?*

A. It is best to purchase a snug fitting suit that is 100% polyester as this will tolerate the repetitive exposure to chlorine best. Suits tend to relax with each wear so starting snug is important. A black suit is required so if you are wanting to purchase a single suit for the season, it should be all black (a small logo is permissible).

Q. *Where can I purchase good quality swimsuits, goggles and nose clips?*

A. The Swim Store in the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre carries all these items and can help to ensure your swimmer is properly fitted. The Nanaimo Diamonds also have a "Shark Card" that families can use in order to receive a discount on full price items. There are also numerous online stores that also carry these items.

Q. *My athlete has an injury and requires their affected limb to be taped. Is this permitted?*

A. Yes, but the athlete must provide a current medical note explaining that the tape is necessary and this must be approved prior to the start of competition.

Q. *I have friends/family that live in the city where we are travelling, do I have to stay at the hotel with the team?*

A. No, although staying with the team is highly encouraged. This is an excellent opportunity for team building. The bonding which athletes experience at competition helps solidify friendships and team dynamics. We recommend sharing accommodation with other

families to reduce cost. Should you choose to stay off-site, you are encouraged to attend any team social functions.

Q. *Will my swimmer and I have time to visit friends/family, and do a little sightseeing while we are away at competition?*

A. It depends. Competition weekends tend to run on a tight schedule. Athletes are expected to be at the pool, in the stands, for all events which include other Diamonds swimmers. The Diamonds are infamous for their cheer section! Between meal breaks, warm up sessions, travel to and from accommodation, gelling time and makeup applications, as well as team events, there isn't much time left in the day for social outings. Competition weekends are fun-packed and it is also important to build in some down time. Coaches send out a detailed schedule prior to competition which allows each family to plan their day accordingly.

Q. *When will I get a schedule for each competition?*

A. A draft schedule is available to coaching staff prior to competition. Coaches examine the schedule and determine when athletes of different age categories need to travel to and from the pool. A detailed schedule, with team, duet, solo and figure events, as well as team building events, and travel times, is sent out approximately one week prior to competition by the coaching team.

Q. *What is an unofficial score?*

A. At competitions, announcers will often call out unofficial scores but mistakes and miscalculations do happen so that score is not "official." The posted scores are final scores and are considered official. Unofficial scores should not be shared with athletes.

Q. *How do I get the gelatin out of my swimmer's hair?*

A. The majority of the gelatin will come out with a good wash with shampoo and conditioner; however, there can be some residual gelatin in places. The longer the hair is soaked in warm to hot water, the more likely it will be to come out. Pineapple juice can also be helpful as it contains enzymes that help break down the gelatin.

Artistic Swimming Terms

BCAS - British Columbia Artistic Swimming, our governing body.

CAS - Canadian Artistic Swimming, is the governing body of all provincial organisations.

Figures - a term that is used to describe the different technical movements that artistic swimmer's practice and compete with. Age categories are assigned specific figures and at training meets and competitions, artistic swimmers present themselves in front of a judging panel and are tested on their ability to execute these moves.

Routine Score- when a routine is performed, a panel of judges scores the performance on different elements such as execution, artistic impression and difficulty.

Championship Score- the total score when the routine score and figure scores are combined.

"Synchro Age" - your swimmer's age at the end of the year in which the season ends. This is the age that is used to determine what age category they will compete in.

Penalty - a deduction to a score when a swimmer, duet or team performs a figure or routine that is not complete or violates a rule.

Deckwork - the set of movements that the athletes perform on the pool deck prior to diving in.

Eggbeater - artistic swimmers move each of their legs in a circular motion in order to keep their body high in the water while keeping the arms free.

Highlight - when a swimmer (or more) is lifted above the surface of the water by another swimmer or swimmers.

Sculling - a specific repetitive movement of the hands that help to either propel, balance or support the body in the water. There are several different types of sculls such as support scull, propeller, paddle, head first, etc.

Routine - a choreographed set of movements including strokes, figures and highlights set to music

Free Routine - a routine that does not have to contain any specific requirements.

Technical Routine - a routine that must contain specific required elements as part of the choreography.

Appendix A

Packing Checklist

Training Meet with Figures

- Black Swimsuit
- White Swim Caps (2)
- Pink Nanaimo Diamonds cap (for warm up)
- Black fitted shorts (for on deck warm up)
- Nose Clips (3)
- Goggles (2)
- Towels (2-3)
- Parka or something warm
- Running Shoes (with socks)
- Flip flops or slip on shoes
- Water Bottle (filled)
- Snacks
- Yoga Mat
- Personal Items (medications, feminine hygiene products, deodorant, tooth brush, shampoo & conditioner, etc).

If routine is also being performed

- Competition Suit with bun cover, if applicable (in a ziplock bag)
- Solo/duet suit with bun cover, if applicable (in separate ziplock bag)
- Make up kit
 - Waterproof Mascara
 - Waterproof Eyeliner
 - Eye shadow (if asked to purchase)
 - Lipstick (if asked to purchase)
- Hair Gelling Kit
 - Hair Brush and Comb
 - Large Hair Elastics
 - Small Hair Elastics
 - Hair Pins
 - Bobby Pins
 - Small gelling towel
 - Hair Donut (if hair is thin or short)
 - Cheap Aerosol Hairspray
 - Hair net
 - Vaseline stick
 - 5-6 packages of Knox Gelatin (per gelling)
 - Small bowl for mixing
 - Wide paint or hair dyeing brush
 - Kettle or Mini Crockpot (if making gel pucks in advance)