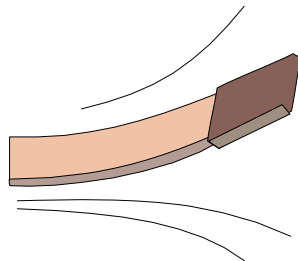
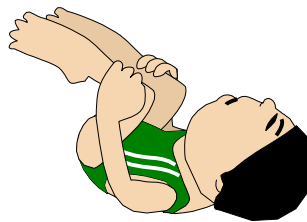


**Affiliated to South East Region Amateur Swimming Association.**



# **Albatross Diving Club of Reading Official Club Handbook 2007**

**([www.Albatross-dc.co.uk](http://www.Albatross-dc.co.uk))**



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## 1. Forward

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Diving asks a lot from a young person. Not just the obvious attributes of courage, athleticism and suppleness, but more importantly it instils self confidence and discipline. It is rare to find a young diver who has all the right qualities and balance. We can all play an important role: As parents giving the necessary support, as coaches to supply the necessary knowledge through training opportunities, and as fellow divers to encourage and bring in team spirit. Each of these elements contributes to bringing out the best in an athlete and to turn around any weaknesses into new strengths.

In this handbook it is hoped that it will give most of the information and support that you will require as a diver with Albatross Diving Club and bring out your full potential in your chosen sport of diving.



## 2. Mission Statement

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The Albatross Diving Club of Reading is dedicated to the advancement of excellence in diving and the personal fulfilment and achievement of all those involved with the sport.

This is a competitive diving club, which believes that the enjoyment of diving is primarily attained through the achievement of both personal and team goals. It is the club's aim to identify and nurture talent through the provision of a high quality programme of learning and training opportunities. The Albatross Diving Club has signed up to the 'Sport Reading Charter' which enhances these values.

The club's ethos is to promote and deliver the sport of diving:

'We exist to serve all sectors of the community through recognising local diversity and encouraging inclusion for all aspirations and levels, whether this is for recreational participation through to elite competition performance.'

The club's role is to provide the optimal environment, in terms of coaching expertise, equipment and administrative support, through which all individuals can fulfil their potential. To enable this, the club continues to seek and develop partnerships between divers, coaches, parents, sponsors, schools, local authorities, allied sports, training providers and advisors, in addition to facility providers.

The club recognises the importance of the social aspects of the club and seeks to foster a friendly, safe and convivial atmosphere at all times.



### 3. The Formation

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#### Albatross Diving Club of Reading By Anne Green Jessel Club President

Diving began competitively within the diving section of Reading Swimming Club in 1967. Divers reached County, Regional and national standard. Suzanne Smith became Reading's first national title holder and international diver.

It had always been my ambition to form a specialised individual diving club, affiliated to the now disbanded Southern Counties Amateur Swimming Association. During the 10 years with Reading Swimming Club, I was approached by "The Reading Royals Synchronised Swimming Club" to create a diving display for the International Synchronised Swimming Festival, a big event, to be held in 1977. I decided to attempt something unheard of in those days – a diving display to music. I chose Fleetwood Mac's "Albatross". It was such a success that more invitations followed and from then on "Albatross" was played whenever we appeared! I vowed that if ever there was the formation of a diving club in Reading it would be called "Albatross".

An inaugural committee was formed consisting of a Chairman: Mr David Knollys; Hon. Sec: Mr Graham w. Green; Hon. Treasurer: Mrs Pat Smith; Hon. Membership Sec: Mrs Elvira Wright; Hon. Champs. Sec: Mr John Holton and yours truly as Chief Coach.

The Presidents cup was donated by the late Mr Ben Neville, our first President. Mr Derek Seward produced the final design of the club badge in the chosen club colours of green and white.

With the stalwart support of Mr. John Anstey, baths manager; officials within the A.S.A. including the A.S.A. President 1978 the late Mr. John Zimmerman; teachers and trainees on poolside, including Jeff Pearce; the help of many parents using their talents and resources; sponsors Mr. Stan Eldon and Mr Alan Porton of the Reading Chronicle, "The Albatross Diving Club of Reading" was founded and became affiliated to Southern Counties Amateur Swimming Association in December 1978.



## 4. Code of Conduct

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As members of the club, divers, coaches and parents have specific roles and responsibilities and, these roles and responsibilities represent the basic agreement between diver, coach and parent. They are referred to as the Code of Conduct and must be adhered to at all times during Club sessions and competitions, whether this is at the Central Swimming Pool or any other venue where a competition is taking place. (Appendix 7)

The good reputation of the club rests not only on a diver's competitive success but on your behaviour and appearance when representing the club, whether this is at Central Swimming Pool, or any other venue where you may be attending for training or a competition. Be sure to set a good example that your club can be proud of you.

### Coaches

- ✍ Keep poolside discipline at all times.
- ✍ Enforce safety rules rigorously.
- ✍ Ensure all equipment is safe to use.
- ✍ Be punctual.
- ✍ Wear appropriate poolside dress.
- ✍ Ensure your divers understand what is required of them at all times.
- ✍ Do not coach divers on the board, in the water or across the pool.
- ✍ Keep divers and parents informed.

### Divers

- ✍ Tuesday is Club Night. Regular attendance is required. All other sessions are by invitation of your coach.
- ✍ Learn and observe the poolside safety rules.
- ✍ Only be on poolside during your session, unless you have permission of a coach to be there.
- ✍ Wear an Albatross costume on Club Night and at the Gala.
- ✍ Tracksuit Tops must be worn to all competitions & club 'T' shirt if available
- ✍ Get on the board and out of the water promptly.
- ✍ If you need to leave the poolside during a session ask your coach for permission.
- ✍ Be on time. Arrive at least five minutes before your warm up time.
- ✍ For warm up, you will be expected to wear appropriate clothing which should be: Shorts, T-Shirts, Trainers (Swimsuits should preferably be worn underneath.)

The following should not be visible during warm-up:

- Long trousers of any kind
- Mobile Phones or I-pods
- Jewellery or Watches

- 📌 School Clothes
- 📌 During warm-up, the divers are expected to do as they are told and must at no time be disrespectful to, or ignore, any coach or senior diver who may be in charge of the warm-up session.
- 📌 If a diver is late or behaves badly within a warm-up, the coaches will have the option to stop the diver taking part in that diving session or further sessions if it is deemed necessary.
- 📌 There may be occasions when you are late. Providing that there is a good reason for this, it will not be a problem.

## Parents

- 📌 Ensure your child knows and follows the Code of Conduct.
- 📌 Encourage punctuality, correct dress and good behaviour.
- 📌 Children who are unwell or injured should not dive.
- 📌 Before leaving your child, always check that there is someone in charge to take responsibility for them and make sure that they have been signed in to the register. Please also ensure that you return to collect them in good time, before their session is due to end. It should not be the Club's or coach's responsibility to look after the diver once they have completed their session.
- 📌 Read the notice board regularly and check your child's paperwork and messages.
- 📌 Endeavour to support your child & the club at competitions, in particular the Club's Annual Gala held in December.
- 📌 If your child has been entered in a competition with your agreement and withdraws, it will be at the coach's discretion as to whether you will be expected to refund to the club any entry fees paid.
- 📌 This is an amateur club and depends very much on your fees. Please pay promptly.

**Coaches, the Committee and helpers are all unpaid volunteers. Please back them up and contribute whenever possible to the smooth and successful running of the club**



## 5: Equity Statement

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The Albatross Diving Club is committed to treat everyone equally within the context of his or her activity, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion, age sexual orientation or political persuasion

- The Club will ensure that equity as stated in the club rules is incorporated in all aspects of its activities and also recognises and adopts the Sport England definition of Sports Equity:

*Sports Equity is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It is about changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to everyone in society.*

- The Club is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from threat of discrimination, intimidation, harassment and abuse.
- All Club members have a responsibility to challenge discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity
- The Club will deal with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour seriously, according to the club disciplinary procedures

A full copy of the equity policy can be obtained from the secretary or downloaded from [www.albatross-dc.co.uk](http://www.albatross-dc.co.uk)



## 6. Child Protection Policy

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The club follows the ASA Child Protection Procedures as laid out in "Wave Power" ASA Child Protection Procedures.

These child protection procedures are based on the following principles:

- The child's welfare is the first consideration
- All children, regardless of age, gender, racial origin, religious belief, sexual identity and any disability have a right to enjoy sport free from all forms of abuse or sexual exploitation
- The club has a responsibility to maintain confidentiality in all cases involving child protection and poor practice in line with current legislation

A full copy of the child protection procedures can be obtained from the Club Welfare Officer

A full copy of the child protection procedures and referral forms are available as an additional appendix. This can be obtained from the Club Welfare Officer, on the club website or using the following ASA line

<http://www.sportcentric.com/vmgmt/vfilemgmt/page/filedownload/1,8202,5026-49221-84094-0-file,00.pdf>

If you have a concern your first point of contact should be the Club Welfare Officer, however there are other advice lines and relevant contact numbers which are also listed below:

Child line: 0800 1111  
NSPC Child Protection line: 0808 800 5000  
Kidscape: 020730 3300  
ASA Swimline: 0808 100 4001

Reading Local Authority Services:  
Social Services: 0118 9553601  
Out of hours Reading minicom Tel: 0118 9390700  
Police Protection Team: 0845 8505 505



## 7. Safety Rules

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Safety is *everyone's* responsibility and the following rules must follow at *all times*.

*Never:*

- Wear jewellery. If you are intending on having your ears pierced, you may need to discuss when best to organize this in advance with your coach. Other body piercing of any nature are not negotiable for safety reasons. This also includes ear piercing which are made much higher above the ear lobes.
- Chew gum, eat or have fizzy drinks during warm-up or on poolside.
- Run
- Push people in, Sit or climb on railings,
- Throw chamois leathers,
- Swim across boards,
- Shout or distract other divers,
- Walk in front of divers performing back or inward dives,

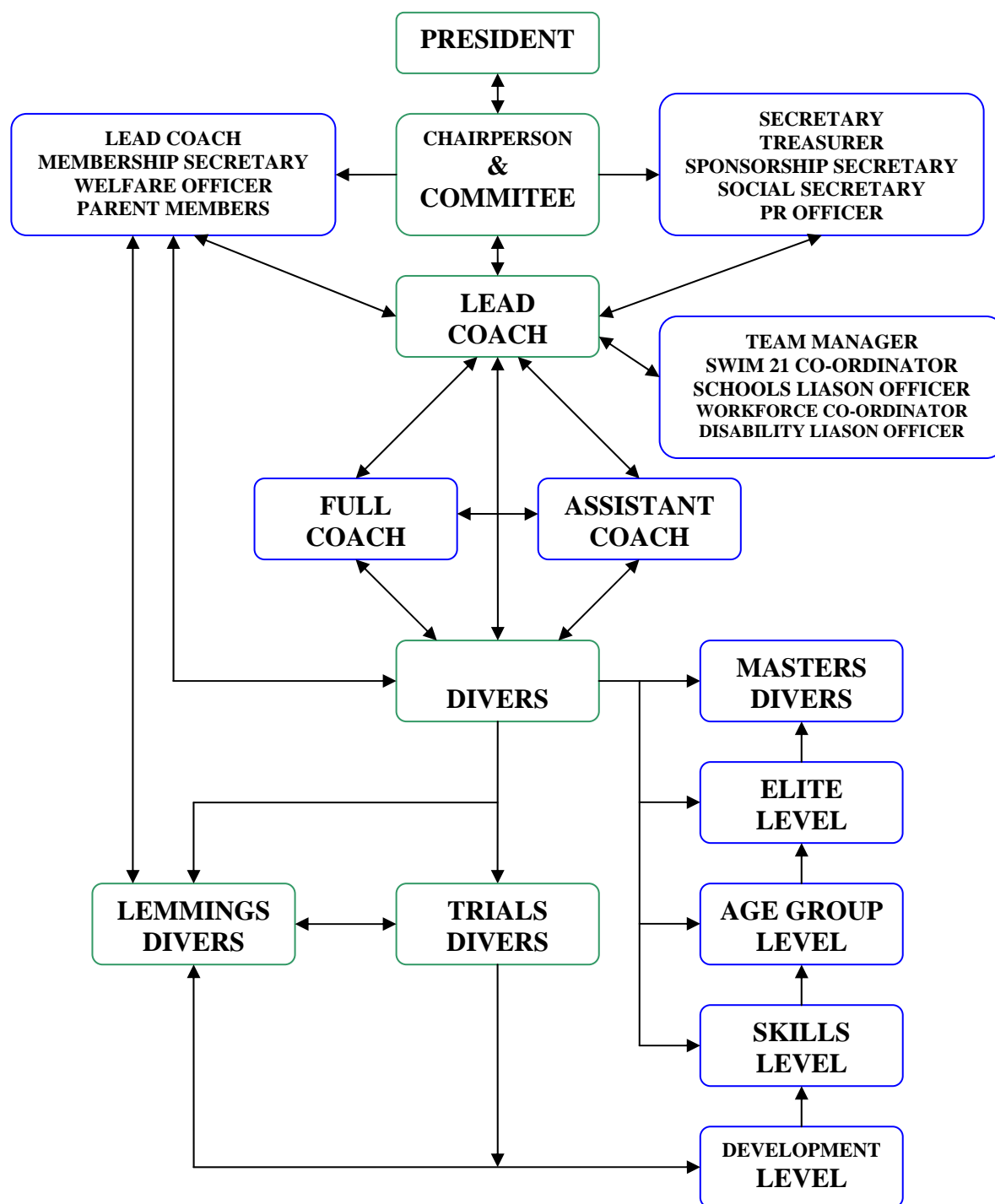
*Always:*

- Warm up and stretch prior to diving
- Tie hair back for warm-up and diving
- Check you have the attention of your coach prior to each dive.
- Always listen to your coach on poolside and return to your coach on poolside for feedback after each dive where possible
- Check it is clear under your board,
- Get out of the water after your dive as quickly as possible. Be aware of other divers waiting to dive from all boards and from poolside, making sure you swim in a straight line directly under the board from which you have just dived from back towards the poolside.
- Get out of water immediately if a pool alarm sounds and follow the instructions of a coach or a member of staff.



## 8. Club Structure

The club is jointly run by the Committee and coaches. Together they ensure the smooth running of all aspects of the club. However, they have distinctive roles and responsibilities.



- President

The president is the honorary figurehead of the club. The position is presently held by our founder and former Chief Coach, Anne Jessel.

- Committee and Sub-Committee

Key responsibilities include:

- Financial control
- Fund raising and sponsorship
- Membership register
- Registration and insurance
- Organising the annual Club Gala
- Organising the annual Inter-Club Novice Competition
- Social functions
- Administrating the “Lemmings”
- Divers Welfare
- Workforce Coordination

The Committee is nominated at each AGM. Members can be drawn from parents and adult divers. The Lead Coach also sits on the Committee. A Sub-Committee may also be formed by the Committee to deal with other issues.

At the first meeting of a new committee a Chairperson is appointed and specific posts are delegated to members including:

- Club Secretary
- Club Treasurer
- Membership Secretary
- Sponsorship Secretary
- Social Secretary
- Lemmings administrator
- Welfare Officer

- Sub-Committee

- Swim 21 Coordinator
- Public Relations Officer
- Schools Liaison Officer
- Workforce Coordinator
- Disability Liaison Officer
- Team Manager
- Club Shop

- Parents

Parents are encouraged to get involved with the club. Without the help and support of parents the club could not operate. Any help, however small, is always very much appreciated. While some parents volunteer for the committee, others undertake ad hoc duties, such as helping at events, transport, fund raising, act as competition recorders. Many parents catch the diving bug themselves and take up diving and/or coaching.

Divers and coaches need parents to support and encourage them at the competitions, in particular at the Annual Gala held in December. The Annual Gala is the Club's premier event, where the whole club comes together to demonstrate its achievements over the past year and compete for the Club trophies.

- Coaches

The coaches' are responsible for the divers' tuition, poolside management and team selection. All coaches are CRB (Criminal Investigations Bureau) checked in compliance with the ASA and the Club Welfare Officer.

After the AGM the coaches elect a Lead Coach. The Lead Coach is responsible for all coaching related functions within the club. Specific tasks are delegated to individual coaches including

- Squads
- Grading System
- Competitions
- Induction & trials
- Education and development
- Officials

All coaches hold the Amateur Swimming Association's (ASA) Full Diving Teachers Certificate of a Level 2 minimum. Wherever possible coaches hold a RLSS life saving certificate. Some are also qualified in trampolining, gymnastics and swimming.

- Assistant Coaches

Parents and diver (14 years and over) are encouraged to help and assistant coaches with a view to taking a Level 1 qualification at the age of 16 years. Assistant coaches hold the ASA Level 1 Assistant Teachers Certificate. Assistant coaches only coach under the supervision of a minimum of a Level 2 coach.

- Squad divers

Based on merit, divers are divided up into 4 squads, Senior, Elite, Age Group, Skills, Development... The coaching staff is responsible for selection, as detailed in section 8. These divers are expected to compete at their own level.

- Trial Divers

Those divers on a Trial are "provisional" members of the club for a 3 month period. After that time, they may be moved into a squad or recommended for the Lemmings. New divers enter this squad as an induction and do not compete at competitions. They are managed by a designated lead coach

- Lemmings

Lemmings are “associate” members of the club. Their lessons are centred around school terms and they are supervised by designated coach. The supervising coach is supported by assistant coaches. They are recreational divers (although do have their own event at the Gala) and are coached to the Kellogg’s ASA award system.

#### Masters Divers

The club also has Masters (18 and over). They are supervised by dedicated coaches, and compete where possible.

### **Annual General Meeting**

The AGM is held in April, or as soon as possible thereafter. Its main functions include:

- Report on accounts
- Nomination of Committee members
- Report by Chairman
- Report by Senior Coach

For each junior diver one adult representative can be nominated to hold voting rights on their behalf at any General Meeting.

It is important that all members of the club, divers, coaches and parents make the effort to attend the AGM.

### **Constitution**

The Club has a Constitution, which sets down the rules by which the Club is managed. A copy of the Constitution is available on request from the Club Secretary.



## 9. Squads

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To encourage divers, reward dedication and to recognise achievement, divers are appointed, by the coaching team, to one of six squads:

- Masters
  - Elite Age Group (Levels 4 & 5)
  - Age Group (Level 3)
  - Skills (Level 2)
  - Development (Levels 1 & 2)
  - Springboard Program
- Why a squad system?

A squad system, based on achievement and attitude, motivates and encourages divers. It promotes a challenging environment whereby divers want to achieve and attain goals and are directly rewarded for doing so. Individuals are spurred on not only by their own success, but also from that of their peers. The system enables the talented and dedicated diver to excel, rather than limit them to mediocrity. A squad system also promotes effective coaching as coaches train divers of similar ability and attitude together. This allows for easier organisation and more individual attention to a diver's specific needs.

### Benefits & privileges of squad promotion

The promotion to a higher squad is the most tangible reward a diver can receive. Promotion is recognition by all the coaching staff of both the diver's performance and attitude. As such it comprises the core of the incentive system. Along with promotion come prestige and an increased eligibility to training sessions. This eligibility allows the diver not only to be able to increase the number of training, but also to choose longer, less crowded sessions.

- Eligibility for training

Due to the limited pool capacity, training time at Central Pool is closely managed by the Lead Coach. This is for the benefit of all divers. Having a "scrum" of 10 or more divers around a board implies no one trains effectively. As a diver starts his or her career in the Springboard program they will have access to 1/2 sessions per week. As the diver moves higher up the squad list, training will increase upon capability, talent attitude and current grades held, However all training apart from Tuesdays Club night is by the strict invitation of the diver's coach.

On Tuesdays and Saturdays, the pool time is divided between all 5 squads.

Under certain circumstances (preparations for a major competition) the Lead Coach may allow a diver additional diving time.

- Squad Selection

The squad system is co-coordinated by the Lead Coach and is selected by the coaching team at the first coaches meeting after the grades have been held. (Appendix 4)

As with any team based system, a diver will have to continuously earn his or her position. Divers can be both promoted and demoted.

The squad system is based on merit - attitude and achievement - *not age*.

The coaching team takes the following criteria into account when selecting the squads:

- Level of Step achieved (Appendix 4)
- General attitude, dedication & maturity
- Achievements in past three months
- Flexibility & general fitness
- Attendance
- Level of competition dived in
- Willingness to compete and learn new dives

A Springboard Squad diver is a member of the club for a trial period

A Development Squad diver should be aiming to compete at Levels 1/2.

A Skills Squad diver should be aiming to compete at Level 2

An Age Group Squad diver should be aiming to compete at Level 3

An Elite Squad diver should be aiming to compete at Level 4/5



## 10. Organisation of Competitive Diving

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F.I.N.A. is the governing body internationally body for organizing diving.

The A.S.A. is the governing body for the organization of diving at International and National level within the United Kingdom and is split into regions. With each Region responsible for organizing their own competitions and clubs can also organize their own galas. Albatross Diving Club is in the South East Region A.S.A. which includes Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Kent, East and West Sussex, Surrey and Oxfordshire.

Diving is divided into age groups; these are designated with a letter, with divers mainly only competing against other divers of the same age group, the exception to this is if a diver competes up an age group they are never allowed to go down an age group.

Age Groups are: - 8-9 year old	E
10-11 year old	D
12-13 year old	C
14-15 year old	B
16-18 year old	A

The age group at which a person dives is their age within the year from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

- **Levels of Competition.**

There are 6 types of competition these are as follows:

- Level 0

Aimed at low level “Learn to Dive” participants, encompasses A.S.A. awards, up Grade 2, level 2. Flip`n`fun competitions organized by Club/County.

- Level 1

Aimed at divers who are no longer beginners & who are aiming to develop more complex skills, up to and including A.S.A. Level 3, stage 3.

Competitions Levels:  
Skill Development  
Flip`n`fun

Organisational Level:  
Club/County/Region  
Club/County/Region

- Level 2

Aimed at divers who want to take the next step towards competitive participation. To compete at this level, divers should have passed their A.S.A. Level 3, stage 3 award.

Competitions:  
Skill Development  
Skills Finals

Organisational Level:  
Club/County/Region  
County/Region/National

Competitions are held in Bradford, Leeds, Southampton, Harrogate and many more.

- Level 3

For those divers who want or need the challenge of putting together a more comprehensive dive “list”, possibly from 2 or 3 different board heights. Also aimed as a stepping stone for those looking to perform at Elite Junior Level.

Competitions:  
Age Group Finals  
Invitational Meets

Organisational Level:  
Regional/National  
Leeds, Plymouth, Southampton,  
Luton.

- Level 4

For divers who are able to perform the FINA list of dives required for their age group to a satisfactory level. The UK’s leading Juniors dive at this level nationally, for the opportunity to be selected for the lottery funded Junior Olympic Programme and the Junior International Competition Circuit.

Competitions:  
Elite Juniors  
GB International Meets  
  
Regional Senior Championships

Organisational Level:  
National  
CAMO, Aachen, Junior European, Junior  
Worlds and more  
Regional.

- Level 5

For divers who are capable of performing the FINA senior list of dives regardless of their age group. The UK’s leading divers compete at this level Nationally, for the opportunity to be selected for lottery funded Junior Olympic Programme and the Junior International Competition Circuit. Selections are also made for the Senior Grand Prix Circuit and all major LEN & FINA events.

Competitions:  
Seniors  
GB International Meets

Organisational Level:  
National (English/British)  
FINA Grand Prix Circuit & major Len & FINA  
meetings

- Albatross Competitions.

Albatross stages two competitions in the course of a year, these are the Albatross Inter-Club Competition the standard of which is up to Level 2, this normally held on the last Saturday in June. The other gala is the Albatross Annual Christmas Gala with competitions ranging from Level 0 to Levels 3/4 and is normally held on the first Saturday in December.



## 11. Incentives

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The Club believes that a diver should be rewarded with more diving for a positive attitude, hard work, and achievement. The main mechanisms to encourage and reward divers are through the Squad System (Chapter 7) which bestows privileges and prestige to as they gain promotion, as well as the Albatross Steps (Chapter 10).

- Rewards

The Club has an extensive reward system including:

- Squad promotion
- Albatross Steps (Appendix 4)
- Diver of the month, (selected by the coaching team)
- President's Cup, for dedication (selected by coaching team)
- Chris Barker Trophy, for diving excellence (selected by coaching team)
- Keith Meek Trophy, this can be awarded to any club member, coach or parent, who the coaches and committee feel has made a major contribution to the club over the past year.
- Best newcomer, boy and from the pervious year's intake (selected by coaching team)

- Discipline

Misconduct may result in the loss of diving time, suspension and squad demotion. Continuing flagrant misbehaviour could ultimately result in expulsion from the club. Any sanctions are determined by the coaching team. Misconduct includes:

Breaking safety rules

Showing disrespect to other members of the club, officials, and pool staff.

Poor time keeping

Inadequate warm up

Not wearing club costume on club night

Any other behaviour deemed as unacceptable by the coaching team.

(See Appendix 8)



## **12. Albatross Grading System.**

### **(Stepping Stones)**

The Albatross Coaching Team introduced a grading system called Stepping Stones (Appendix 4) and is loosely based around the A.S.A. Learn to Dive Programme and the requirements for A.S.A. Level 2 Nationals. The Steps range from Step 1 to Step 13. Steps 1 to 6 cover the moves required for a Level 1 Competition, Steps 7 to 10 cover Level 2 requirements, while steps 11 covers Level 3 requirements for Nationals competition on the 1 metre board, Step 12 covers nationals on the 3 metre board, and Step 13 covers the high boards. Steps 11 to 13 will have to be retaken when a diver moves up an age group. The steps are taken at regular intervals.

The steps cover progressions, line ups, jumps and dives. They have been designed to ensure that divers work hard at their core skills and essential mechanics. Each Steps jumps and line ups lead onto the dives that will required for later Steps.

Divers are judged by a panel of 3 coaches. Divers must achieve an overall average of 4.5. All moves are without tariff. Successful divers will receive a certificate signed by the Lead Coach.

Divers should be aware that:

Springboard moves must be standing with an armswing or with a run & hurdle.

Firmboard moves will be specified with or without armswing

All feet first dives must enter the water with the arms at the side, but for jumps they can be up or down (but in control).



## 13. Club Kit

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Divers **must** wear an Albatross costume on Club Night (Tuesdays) and at the Annual Gala for the diving display. Divers may choose to wear another costume of their choice for competitions. In addition, an Albatross shirt and/or tracksuit must be worn to all competitions.

However, tracksuits must be worn for:

- Parades
- Medal ceremonies T
- Team photos

Shorts, t-shirts, trainers and socks are required for warm-ups.

The club recommends that divers purchase the following kit:

- an Albatross costume
- an Albatross 'T' shirt
- an Albatross tracksuit
- an Albatross kit bag
- a Chamois leather

Kit can be purchased from the Club Shop, which is open on the balcony on Club Nights.

Divers who have particular problems with their kit (e.g. none of their size in stock) should discuss the problem with their coach prior to diving.



## 14. Fit to dive

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- Warm up

It is essential that we 'warm up' prior to any strenuous exercise to prepare both the body and mind and to reduce the risk of injury. A diver's 'warm up' will typically contain at least 5 to 6 sessions:

- A pulse raiser to warm up the body & increase blood circulation to all extremities of the body
- Mobilisation of the joints
- Stretching and flexibility exercises
- Strength exercises
- Diving drills and specific diving movements
- Proprio-receptive skills to improve balance & co-ordination

- Pulse raiser & Mobilisation:

Warming up is initially achieved through raising the activity of the heart through dynamic 'whole body' stretching or jogging. This increases blood flow throughout the body, pumping blood and oxygen deep into the muscles, preparing them for the short explosive movements required to gain the height & momentum needed in diving. Joint mobilisation and stretching before a training session will also 'lubricate' the joints and surrounding tissue thereby preparing them for action, & will help reduce the likelihood of injury.

- Stretching & Flexibility:

Flexibility is only gained through a regular stretching programme creating more aesthetically pleasing body shapes whilst also facilitating a more effective spin during somersaulting. Stretching forms the central part of a divers' training. Without regular stretching a diver will not reach their full potential. Stretching will:

- enhance physical fitness,
- increase range of movement,
- optimise learning, practice and performance of skilled moves,
- increase physical and mental relaxation,
- promote body awareness,
- reduce risk of joint sprain, or muscle strain,
- reduce muscular soreness, and
- Reduce muscular tension.

Developing flexibility through a stretching programme will decrease the likelihood of tiny muscle tears deep within the muscle itself which can be associated with particularly intense training sessions. This is called delayed onset muscle soreness or DOMS & will be experienced from time to time as the muscles are taken through new ranges of movements or if training has been particularly intense. Divers will notice an increase in muscle soreness when they begin to perform new dives or when they are moving their dive onto a higher board which may require greater power and strength on both takeoff and for entry.

DOMS is a common experience for any athlete and not always preventable. In fact without experiencing a little DOMS the muscles are not going to gain the strength & power which is needed to support the body's movements. The minute tears deep within the muscle tissue which is created by muscle activity forms part of the body's mechanism for strengthening muscles, and is therefore in some ways a necessity for progress. You should never suffer pain during or straight after a training session though & should you have any concerns at all, you should always discuss these with your coach. Any minor muscle discomfort which appears a few hours after training should subside after two or three days. If you have had a particularly intense training session, stretching gently after your training session can sometimes help minimise some of the soreness. Alternatively a short cool down/ play session in the pool can help in these situations.

## Stretching Guidelines

- Always warm up generally first.
- Develop a positive mental attitude.
- Isolate the muscle group to be stretched.
- Move slowly and smoothly into the stretch to avoid stretch reflex. \*
- Use proper mechanics and strive for correct alignment.
- Breathe normally and freely, but breathe out when moving deeper into a stretch.
- Hold the stretch for at least 30 seconds and then relax.
- Concentrate and feel the stretch.
- Anticipate and communicate when stretching with a partner.
- Come out of each stretch as carefully as you went into it.

NB. Avoid bouncing actions when stretching. This causes the muscle to resist, similar to when a car seat belt is pulled too quickly. As a result bouncing can cause unnecessary muscle soreness.

For divers struggling to reach the flexibility required, a strict stretching & flexibility programme will be encouraged and your coach will set a more specific programme tailored to your needs. PNF stretching is a well used and more intense way of stretching muscle groups and is most often used by athletes. Your coach can show you how to utilise this method effectively.

- **Strength:**

Strength specific exercises are built into the diving programme to enable the diver to perform and hold specific movements whilst in the air, in addition to providing the necessary explosive strength and power required on the board during take off.

Much of the strength programme is built around the improvement of core strength, to stabilise and support the spine during the dive and on impact with the water. Contrary to belief 'core' strength is not just about having strong abdominal and back muscles. Core strength is all about developing the minute muscles which lie deep within the body surrounding & supporting the spinal column. They are the small muscles lying between and around the vertebrae which are constantly making tiny adjustments as we move. These are best developed by using a stability ball or similar proprio-receptive exercises which your coach will encourage.

The use of ‘simulation’ exercises or diving drills prior to training ensures that both the muscles and mind are prepared. Through practising these drills, muscle memory, balance, body awareness and co-ordination are all improved and in time these will train the body to start reacting naturally whilst performing a diving movement. Shapes and the correct line up procedures from somersaulting will soon become ‘second nature’.

- **Commitment**

Divers are expected to complete a 20 to 30 minutes warm up and stretching programme before every session and should aim to arrive 15 minutes before their designated warm up time to carry out some gentle stretching on the balcony before their coached ‘warm up’ session which may include more specific gymnastic type movements and drills under supervision. These 15 minutes of gentle preparation will help focus them for training both in the gym and in the water.

Divers who arrive late for warm up will be required to ‘prepare’ during their allocated water time if necessary. Divers who experience *exceptional* problems making the designated warm up time will need to discuss this with their coach in advance. The warm up is an essential element of training which will not only help prevent injuries but also forms the fundamental building blocks for their overall development.

Dry land exercises should ideally form 40-60% of your child’s training needs. The club cannot offer all the required training in a coached environment, so your child must carry out a regular effective training programme at home too. The club will provide a standard training programme to use, whilst your coach will provide you with a more specific programme or additional exercises to concentrate on from time to time as part of your own individual training needs. In terms of home exercises, it is far better to do a little each day, say 20 minutes rather than 2 long sessions per week. It may also be helpful to do this at the same time each day, to have a designated day off and to keep a chart or diary to monitor progress and achievement. At the back of this handbook you will find a diary chart which you may find fun & useful for recording your progress & achievements generally. An essential skills list is also provided for both home use and in preparation for training sessions. (Appendix 1)

- **Nutrition for sport**

Diving requires medium aerobic strength coupled with a huge amount of explosive muscle strength (anaerobic strength). As with any other sport it is essential that divers eat well, covering the main food groups, to enable them to train and perform to their best ability. This will in turn help them reach their full potential.

It is easiest to teach your child in terms of the “**Go, Glow and Grow**” food types to ensure that they are receiving the correct food balance for their lifestyle. It is also important to eat the right foods prior to competing, so we encourage all parents to help their children understand how eating the right food will help improve performance and stamina. More information on nutrition can be found on the following websites:

- <http://www.albatross-dc.co.uk>
- [www.nutritionexplorations.org](http://www.nutritionexplorations.org)
- [http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay\\_healthy/food/sports.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/sports.html)

- **Illness**

If your child has an illness, injury or long term medical condition you must inform their coach of its nature and any action that should be taken in the event of an acute exacerbation/attack. If you are concerned with any illness or injury remember: ***“if in doubt check it out”*** as training through an injury or illness may mean in the long run the diver taking more time off than they would have had to if they had rested earlier. Common ailments that should be notified include:

- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Epilepsy
- Knee problems
- Foot problems
- Ear, nose & throat ailments
- Colds / Flu’

- **Allied Sports**

Generally, any sport which promotes physical fitness, mental concentration, body awareness, co-ordination and agility are good for diving. However, two sports - trampolining and gymnastics, are particularly beneficial.

**Trampolining** is especially useful in teaching correct armswing, balance, good shapes and spatial awareness. Trampolines are helpful in learning new dives, from the very basic to complex dives. Spotting rigs (harness controlled by coach) can be used to teach dives without the fear of something 'going wrong'. They are also very good at helping the diver to 'spot' (to see key points throughout the dive, so they know when to 'come out'). ***However, trampolines must only be used under the instruction of a qualified trampoline coach.***

**Gymnastics**, especially floor work, are very beneficial in teaching the diver speed and promoting strength and agility. Many of the basic movements and shapes can be practised more effectively in the gym than in the diving pit. Most world class divers spend over 50% of their training on dry land.

**Special training aids**

At times divers will be required to train away from Central Pool, in order to access specialist equipment, for instance:

- Trampoline with twisting and somersaulting belts
- Bubble machine
- Dry boards



## 15. The Diving Competition Explained.

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- **The Dives**

### Spring board Dives

Group 1 Forward	Diver facing forward and rotating forwards
Group 2 Back	Diver facing back to water and rotating backwards
Group 3 Reverse	Diver facing forward and rotating backwards towards the board
Group 4 Inward	Diver facing back to water and rotating towards the board
Group 5 Twist	Dive from any of the above, but at the same time twisting the body about a longitudinal axis.

### Platform Dives

Group 6 Armstand	Diver on hands facing the board, with back to the water and rotating over to somersault forwards, or cutting through hands to rotate in a reverse direction. Alternatively, a diver on their hands, facing the water with their back to the board and rotating backwards.
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Most dives in group 1 to 4 and 6 can be performed in any one of three positions:

Straight	:-Body and legs straight with no bending at the hips
Piked	:-Body bent at the hips, legs straight with no bend at the knees
Tuck	:-Body bunched up close to knees, bent at hips and knees, elbows in with hands clasping shins.

There is one more position which is known as Free. This position is used with the twist and means the diver can perform the dive in any position they like.

- **The Contest**

A diving competition is conducted by a referee, 5 judges, 2 recorders and an announcer. After each dive, the referee signals to the judges to display their scores.

The points scored can range from zero to 10. The judge will consider the posture, take off, flight and entry of the dive and will score having looked at the dive as whole. Judges do not take the difficulty of the dive into consideration. In International Competitions, 7 judges are used.

The recorders copy down the scores, this is done onto a dive sheet that has been previously filled in by the diver with the dives that they will be performing and the order in which they will be done and deduct the highest and lowest mark and add together the remaining three marks. This is then multiplied by the tariff (degree of difficulty) for that dive to give the score for the dive.

All dives are given a tariff; these can range from 1.0 upwards

Competitors may use any dive they wish providing it meets the requirements of the competition and is from a conventional take off position and they use an exact number of half somersaults and half twists. It must also be the dive that is written on their dive sheet and announced.

- **Tariffs**

Each dive is afforded a degree of difficulty, or tariff using a standard formula. This ranges from 1.0, which is the easiest, up to 4.0 or more for the most complicated dive. (Appendix 3)

This means that the diver, who can competently perform a higher tariff dive, can often have the advantage over the one with easier dives. However, this is only the case if the diver performs the more difficult dive well.

- **Awards**

The five judges will award marks for a dive as follows:-

0	= Failed Dive
0.5 – 2.0	= Unsatisfactory
2.5 – 4.5	= Deficient
5.0 – 6.0	= Satisfactory
6.5 – 8.0	= Good
8.5 – 10	= Very Good



## 16. Session times

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Diving times are as follows below

Tuesday and Saturday diving days are open to all club divers at specific squad times

Monday, Thursday and Sunday diving is strictly by invitation only

<b>Week Day</b>	<b>Warm-Up Time</b>	<b>Diving Time</b>
Monday	17.00-17.30	17.30-19.00
Tuesday	17.30-18.00	18.00-19.00
Tuesday	18.15-19.00	19.00-20.00
Tuesday	19.15-20.00	20.00-21.00
Thursday	17.00-17.30	17.30-18.45
Saturday	09.45-10.30	10.30-11.30
Saturday	10.45-11.30	11.30-12.30
Saturday	12.30-12.45	12.45-13.30
Sunday	17.45-18.30	18.30-20.15

(The above times are subject to change, please ask your coach if in doubt)

It is important that all divers arrive at the start of warm-up times

Divers may also have the opportunity and be invited to:

- Extra Weekly Training Sessions
- Trampoline & Rig work Sessions
- Diving & dry land camps held at other pool locations
- Long Term Athlete Development days (LTAD)

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**Don't forget to fill out the enclosed forms and hand them back to the Membership Secretary as soon as possible.**

**The forms we will need back are:**

**Appendix 7: Medication Document**

**Appendix 8: Code of Conduct**

**Appendix 9: Membership Form**





**Affiliated to South East Region Amateur Swimming Association.**

**Sponsored by:**



**With Thanks  
Albatross Diving Club of Reading**

**([www.Albatross-dc.co.uk](http://www.Albatross-dc.co.uk))**

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