

## El Paso Aqua Posse

### Weight Program Application

If you would like to participate in EPAP's weight training program, please complete this form and return to Coach LeAnn or Coach Jack. You can also email it to Coach LeAnn at [e.leann.carr@gmail.com](mailto:e.leann.carr@gmail.com)

#### **Background:**

The question of "should swimmers lift weights before college?" has been around for years. And like republicans and democrats, there are polar opposite camps. After much study, review, and following other programs, we have chosen to provide a weights program for our high school athletes. Keenan Robinson, Strength and Conditioning Coach for USA Swimming National Team, has presented at several National Conventions attended by Coach LeAnn. When coaches ask him about lifting for high school swimmers, this is the reply:

"How do you feel about sending your best swimmers to college without ever lifting weights? They know nothing about lifting. They get to college and are sent to the weight room with a strength and conditioning coach that works primarily with men's football and basketball. Are you scared yet? You should be. There is a better than even chance that athlete is going to end up injured, perhaps seriously injured. High school swimmers should lift, not to get huge muscles or even to build tons of strength, but to learn the basics. Coaches should be in the weight room with their swimmers making certain the exercises are what is needed and helpful for swimming, and to make sure the swimmers are learning good lifting technique."

- Keenan Robinson

Coach LeAnn is a personal trainer in her "other Job" and has a MS in Kinesiology. She researches and prepares EPAP's lifting program. Coach Jack also has extensive lifting experience and helps coach the lifting sessions.

EPAP has experimented with a lifting program using the weight room at Cathedral HS over the past year or so. It has gone very well and we are now ready to make it available to more of our swimmers.

#### **Current Program:**

We lift 2 days a week, usually Tuesday and Saturday. Each workout consists of one of 3 different "big lifts:" barbell squat, power cleans or dead lifts. These are "big" not because of total weight moved, but because they use many muscles at the same time and require much learning and technique. After the big lift, programming is specific to the time of the season and covers the whole body using dumbbells, kettle bells, bands, pull up bars, land mines, glut/ham raise machines, blast straps, stability balls, ab wheels, medicine balls, ropes, foam rollers and lacrosse balls. As other equipment becomes available, we program in different things. The program is varied and challenging.

You will get sore. Guaranteed. Soreness is not a sign of injury; it is a sign the body is working to get stronger. One of the things college coaches complain most about in freshmen athletes is that they don't know how to swim "sore." By giving our swimmers the chance to experience the soreness caused from lifting (it is different than soreness from swimming), we are preparing them for future challenges.

The big lifts are focused on power and speed; things the swimmer needs to get off the blocks fast and to get out of a turn powerfully. The other programming is more general and addresses everything including general shoulder health, ankle flexibility, balancing out pectoral muscles and core training.

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**Safety and Risks:**

Any athletic endeavor has risks of injury and weight lifting is no different. To date, we have had zero injuries. Coaches are careful in presentation of lifts and watching athletes for proper technique. Spotting is provided where appropriate.

**Criteria to Be in the Program:**

**Age/Grade** – 14 or older and at least a freshman in high school

**Strength** – Coaches will determine if weight training is right for you. Not every athlete is ready to start lifting. Coaches will carefully review each application to make certain lifting is right for that athlete

**Attendance** – Consistent attendance is crucial. Swimmers are learning as much or more than they are working out. Missing a session means missing a lesson. Everyone has something come up once in a while, but missing several sessions will be grounds for removal from the weights program.

**Outside trainers and workouts** – If you are lifting with us, we do not want you lifting with another trainer or doing another program. Our program is closely tied to our swim program and meet schedule. And like swim technique, not all coaches teach the same. We want to eliminate confusion about technique and prevent injury to the athlete.

**Behavior** – The weight room is a dangerous place with lots of heavy, sharp objects. There is zero tolerance for horseplay, joking around, even negligence. If you are partnering someone, you must give them 100% of your attention as they are relying on you for their safety. A single infraction will result in immediate removal from the program.

**Cost:**

Free!! As of right now, we are not paying to use the Cathedral weight room, so there is no cost for weights. When Cathedral does a fundraiser, EPAP families might consider participating.

**Frequently Asked Questions about lifting weights:**

1. From girls, “Will I get big? I don’t want to be big.” No, you will not get big. Our program is geared to supplement swimming, not make our swimmers into body builders or powerlifters.
2. From boys, “Can I go heavier? I know I can do more.” No, probably not. We want to save something for your college lifting, and if you put on a ton of muscle, it will be like swimming with a backpack full of bricks.
3. From parents, “Will this stunt their growth?” No, the Academy of Pediatrics recommends light weight lifting for sport specific movements as early as age 11. We are waiting until high school simply because we want them mature enough to be thoughtful and careful in the weight room.
4. From parents, “Will they get hurt?” We certainly hope not and will do everything we can to prevent injury. Coach LeAnn has not yet had a client or athlete injured in the weight room. They get sore, but not injured. However, there is a risk to weight lifting and if you do not want your swimmer to participate, there will be no judgment against you or the athlete.
5. From athletes, “Can I wear gloves? My hands hurt” No gloves. Grip strength is better developed without gloves. There is a direct correlation with grip strength (hands and forearms) and the ability to “feel” the water. This is a skill we want highly developed.
6. From families, “How will I know if I’ve been accepted to the program?” You will receive an email from Coach LeAnn welcoming you to the program. If you are not ready, your coach: Jack or LeAnn will tell you in person why they think weights are not the best option at this time.

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**How to Apply:**

Complete the information below, sign the application and return this page to Coach LeAnn, Coach Jack or Coach Luis

Name (first and last) \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade (current school year) \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to adhere to all rules written and verbal as expressed in the weight room and give 100% of my attention when in the weight room. I understand I can be removed from the weights program for a single infraction.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I agree that my athlete will follow the rules written and verbal as expressed in the weight room and that failure to do so will result in my athlete being removed from the weight program for a single infraction. In the event of accident or injury, I agree to indemnify and hold blameless, Cathedral HS, El Paso Aqua Posse and all Coaches working in the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date