

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA'S PREMIER WATER POLO CLUB

ROYAL 559 WATER POLO ACADEMY

Discipline | Accountability | Teamwork



2018 Preview

Quick look into 2018

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Kaitlin Hicks, 12U Girls

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Athletes of the Session

Nominated by their coaches, here are our Royal 559 Athletes of the Summer Session!

ROYAL 559
WATER POLO ACADEMY
 USAWP Club #30218

2017 YEAR IN REVIEW

Dear Royal Families,

Congratulations to our Royal 559 family on a fantastic second year which ended with memorable experiences and great performances at the 2017 Junior Olympics. Special recognition is warranted for our 12U Girls coaches Kate Hicks, McCarthy Brooks, and Noah Minton for their 6th place overall in JOs! the best final placing for any central California girls team. Performances like this bode well for our future!

Thanks to all of our parents for your investments In Royal beyond the dues you pay -- all the carpools, the team parties, dinner on the go, the positive cheering, and much, much more. The coaching, camaraderie, and life lessons that constitute participation in our club would not be possible without you.

Thanks also to our dedicated and committed Royal coaching staff. Yes they get paid a stipend, but it's minimal considering all of the hours spent on deck, in coaches meetings, and preparing for practices and tournaments. They, too, have families -- wives, husbands, sons and daughters who support them in their coaching endeavors and time spent away with their "Royal family". To them, we also send a huge thank you. We also recognize the behind the scenes administrative duties handled by coaches Drew Clute, Kate Hicks, and Matt Brooks, as well as Coach Nic Maes who helps to manage the boys side of the club. Also, we would like to thank Gweynn Archer and Deb McKinney for all the time spent coordinating hotel travel for the club, especially Junior Olympics. They have already begun planning for 2018!

Most of all, we thank our athletes. We are so proud of your dedication, coachability, and emotional fire for water polo. We know that it can sometimes be difficult to get out to practices and that setbacks and disappointments can be demoralizing. However, we see time and again examples of our athletes pulling themselves up and putting their nose to the grindstone to improve themselves as players, as teammates, and as members of our water polo community. You should all be very proud of your character and work ethic. Keep up the great work.

As we walk away from the pool deck year after year, the wins, top finishes, and other tangible successes may fade from our memories, but our experiences have lasting effects on our souls. We are what we do, and could not be more proud of the parents, coaches, and athletes who are our Royal 559 family!

2018 Preview

Summer is ending and Fall is upon us, and with it comes change. Our 6th graders are moving to middle school, 8th graders on to high school, and Seniors heading off to college. One of our goals as a club is to help prepare athletes for these transitions. We do this by preparing athletes to compete on middle school, high school, and college water polo teams. The added confidence and familiarity they will have entering these teams will help them adjust to their new surroundings. We wish all of our athletes best of luck this academic year and look forward to watching them play with their respective school and college teams.

We are very excited to announce the formation of a 10U age-group program led by Fresno State women's water polo Head Coach and 2x Olympian Natalie Benson. This is designed for athletes who will be 10 years old or younger on 1 August 2018 (the age-group determination date for JOs). Our 12U team will again be led by coaches Kate Hicks, McCarthy Brooks, and Noah Minton, and will be for athletes who will be 11 or 12 years old on 1 August 2018. Both the 10U & 12U programs will begin in Fall Session with practices at Fresno State.

During Fall Session the 14U athletes will not have regular practices, but they will be offered a series of Sunday "Futures Camps" at no charge in October and November at Fresno State. More details to follow on our website. There will be no 16U or 18U Royal activities until the high school season ends. All age-groups will be in full force beginning Winter Session, and details about those programs will be posted on our website and provided in our next newsletter.

2017 Fall Session

[Download FALL Flyer](#)

First Practice: Tue, Sep. 12th

Last Practice: Thu, Nov. 16th

[Click HERE to register!](#)

10U Boys & Girls

Tuesday & Thursday (Water Polo)

Wednesday (Conditioning)

5:45-7:45p

All Practices @ Fresno State

Session Dues: \$119

12U Boys & Girls

Tuesday & Thursday (Water Polo)

Wednesday (Conditioning)

5:45-7:45p

All Practices @ Fresno State

Session Dues: \$149

2017 "Futures Camps"

FREE 14U Camps. 3 hr Sunday camps will begin in Late October and run up to Thanksgiving. More details will be posted on the [website](#) as we get closer to the start date.

Royal 559 Coach of the Year

Each year, Royal coaches vote for one of their colleagues to receive "Coach of the Year" honors. Coaches are evaluated based on their commitment to their team and success in the pool, as well as for being positive role models for their athletes and excellent representatives of the club. Congratulations to **Katlin Hicks** for being selected by her fellow Royal 559 coaches as our 2017 Coach of the Year!



Katlin Hicks -- Head Coach, 12U Girls

Coach Kate has led the 12U Girls program during the first two years of our existence as a club. Her teams earned 13th place at JOs in 2016 and 6th place in 2017.

"Success like this only comes from putting in the work day in and out", says Coach Hicks. "These kids come energized every day to practice and love playing water polo. They also soak everything up like a sponge. I could not ask for a better group of kids!"

The fact that coach Kate has taken players new to the game of water polo and in 8 months turn them into such competitive teams is truly amazing. She has also displayed exemplary planning and communication skills, providing an example for us all. In addition to her role as Head Coach of the 12U Girls program, coach Kate serves as a club administrator, assisting in many different aspects of the club, including leadership, planning, and billing. For all of these reasons, we are extremely pleased to award Coach Kate as Royal 559 Coach of the Year.



Junior Olympics Success

This year's JO Tournament was one for the record books! Royal 559 qualified a combined 12 teams to National Championships, making us one of the few clubs in the country to qualify more than 10 teams for National Championships. 2 x Gold Medals (16U Boys Black, 18U Girls Red), 3 x Top 20 (14U Girls Black, 16U Girls Black, 18U Girls Black), 1 x Top 10 Finish (12U Girls Black --- 6th overall in the nation). Congratulations!!!

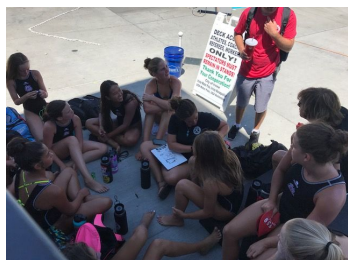
Session 1: July 22nd - July 25th @ Orange County, Ca.

- 12U Boys Black A - 10th Championship Gold Division
- 14U Boys Black A - 7th Championship Gold Division
- 14U Boys Red B - 21st Championship Gold Division
- 16U Boys Black A - 1st Championship Gold Division --- **GOLD MEDAL**
- 16U Boys Red B - 17th Championship Gold Division
- 18U Boys Black A - 10h Classic Silver Division



Session 2: July 27th - 30th @ Orange County, Ca.

- 12U Girls Black A - 6th Championship Platinum Division
- 14U Girls Black A - 17th Championship Platinum Division
- 14U Girls Red B - 14th Classic Silver Division
- 16U Girls Black A - 20th Championship Platinum Division
- 18U Girls Black A - 17th Championship Platinum Division
- 18U Girls Red B - 1st Classic Bronze Division --- **GOLD MEDAL**



Congratulations to all Royal 559 Team on a Successful 2017 Junior Olympics!

Success in the Pool

The 2017 Competitive Club Season was a **HUGE SUCCESS** for all 559ers! Below is a rundown of our major highlights in the various leagues and tournaments in which we compete throughout the season.



BOYS TEAMS

Future's League (NorCal) --- 12U A - 7th; 14U A - 6th; 16U A - 4th; 18U A - 5th

Future's League Super Final --- 12U A - 12th; 14U A - 10th; 16U A - 9th; 18U A - 18th

JO Zone Qualifiers --- 12U A - 2nd; 14U A - 1st; 14U B - 5th; 16U A - 3rd; 16U B - 4th; 18U A - 6th

GIRLS TEAMS

NorCal Premier League --- 12U A - 2nd; 14U A - 6th; 16U A - 4th; 18U A - 4th

California Cup State Finals --- 18U A - 11th; 14U A - 14th; 12U A - 5th

US Club Championships --- 14U A - 13th; 16U A - 15th; 18U A - 17th

JO Zone Qualifiers --- 12U A - 1st; 14U A - 1st; 14U B - 7th; 16U A - 1st; 18U A - 2nd

College Bound Athletes

We are very proud to announce our Class of 2017! To date, Royal 559 has sent 21 athletes to 10 different universities. Because of our ability to compete annually in the best tournaments and leagues in the nation, our athletes get the development they need to compete at the highest levels, as well as tremendous exposure to college coaches across the country. Good luck and the Royal 559 Family is SUPER proud of you!

California State University, Fresno

Hannah Duggins, Megan Greenwood, Shannon Crow, Maddie Loggins, Trystyn Vuori, Maci Layne

University of California, Davis

Ally Clague, Jonah Addington

Fresno Pacific University

Hannah Gish, Stuart Mallam

California Baptist University

PJ McDonough

Pepperdine University

Kyle McKenney

California Institute of Technology

Nick Clausen



USA Water Polo ODP, NTSC's & National Teams

Royal 559 was well represented on USA Water Polo Olympic Development program and on Central Zone Teams in 2017. Athletes were selected to their respective zone teams through a tryout process, which saw them competing against some of the best athletes from all over the Central Zone. They went on to compete at the 2017 ODP Championships against other zone teams from all across the United States in Lafayette, Ca, with our Boys Youth Team winning the championship over SoPac Zone! Athletes highlighted in **RED** were then selected to attend the National Team Selection Camp for their respective age-group. Congratulations to all 559ers!



BOYS YOUTH - Kaleb Archer, **Gabriel Putnam**, Evan Belli, Anthony Tolbert

BOYS CADET - **Connor Fritsch**

BOYS DEVELOPMENT - Aiden Valdez, **Brandon Herring**, Jack Repucci, **Cameron Schwantes**, Decklin Byrd

GIRLS YOUTH - Rachel Gledhill, Morgan Polterock, Addi Williams, Brittany parent, Adriana Taylor

GIRLS CADET - Makena Waters, Tatum Scarry, Sydney Hogan, **Kendall Thomas**, **Alexis Stahl**

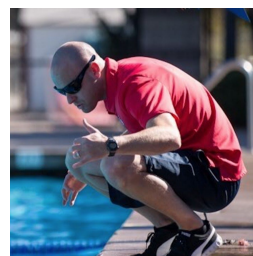
GIRLS DEVELOPMENT - Kacy Wicks, Sofia Righetti, Allison Hepner, **Sydney Gish**, **Mikayla Vierra**, Sydney Schock, Alexis Smith, Mikayla Vierra, Bria Zwaschka, Abigail Schechter, Lolo Wimbish

Royal 559 Athletes on USA, Hungary National Teams

Kendall Thomas (14U) was selected to the Women's Development National Team and participated in a number of training sessions with her national team age-group over the spring and summer. **Gabe Putnam** (16U) was again named to a USA National Team. In 2016, he represented Team USA in Hungary as a member of the Men's Cadet National Team and in 2017 he was named to the Youth National Team, helping guide Team USA to Gold in Lima, Peru at the 2017 UANA Games. **Isi Sonkoly** (18U) was selected to the Hungarian Women's Junior National Team and is currently training with Team Hungary's 17U team in Budapest. Isi was invited to stay for the 2017-18 school year in Hungary, where she will continue training with the National Team, play club water polo and attend school. Congratulations Kendall, Gabe and Isi! 559 Nation is proud of you!

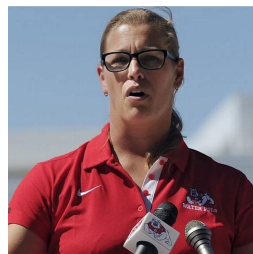


3 Royal Coaches w/ USA National Teams



DREW CLUTE was named Head Coach of the Men's Development National Team in 2017. Previously, he served as an Assistant Coach for the Cadet National

Team from 2014 through 2016, helping Team USA to a second place finish at the 2016 UANA Games.



NATALIE BENSON will once again coach with Team USA. She currently serves as Assistant Coach for both the Women's Junior and Senior National Team. She will help guide the

Junior Team this August in the 2017 Junior World Championships in Volos, Greece.



CAITLIN HASKELL is no stranger to USA Water Polo. This August, Caitlin will travel to Taipei, Taiwan and serve as an Assistant Coach to Dan Klatt (Current UCI Women's

Coach and Clovis native) on the Women's WUGs Team at the 2017 World University Games. Congratulations, Caitlin!

Where Are They Now?

Sarah Snyder, UC Santa Barbara Royal 559 class of 2016



Sarah just finished her freshman year at UC Santa Barbara. Sarah was a part of Royal's first 18U team on 2016, laying the groundwork for future Royal teams to come. Although only a freshman, Sarah played in all 29 games for the Gauchos, finishing with 35 goals scored (3rd leading goal scorer) and ended up being second on the team in earned exclusions with 27. She also excelled in the classroom, earning her

ACWPC All-Academic Honors. As a Royal 559 athlete, Sarah was a member of the U.S. Women's Cadet team, training and competing in Hungary. Sarah has two younger sisters playing with Royal - Cait (18U) and Julieanne (12U).

For more about Sarah and the UC Santa Barbara Gauchos, visit their website: UCSB Water Polo

Thomas Vandiver, UC Irvine Royal 559 class of 2016



Thomas is entering his sophomore year for the Anteaters. A Psychology major, Thomas scored 3 goals his Freshman season on a loaded UCI team.

"My freshman year was rough. There were a lot of talented guys in the pool and you had to bring it every day in practice to compete."

Thomas earned CWPA (Collegiate Water Polo Association) All-Academic distinction, as well as being listed as a GGC (Golden Coast Conference) All-Academic honoree. Thomas has a younger sister, Claire, who plays on the 16U team. As a member of Royal's 2016 18U Boys, Thomas helped guide his team to a second place finish in the Gold Division.

For more about Thomas and the UC Irvine Anteaters, visit their website: UC Irvine Water Polo



Bulldog Water Polo is Back!

After a 20+ year hiatus, women's water polo is back at Fresno State. Led by 2x Olympian Natalie Benson and Clovis native Caitlin Haskell, the Bulldogs are geared up and ready to open the 2018 collegiate season this Spring as the Golden Coast Conference's newest members. Make sure you mark your calendars and come support your Bulldogs this Spring - **their roster will have SIX Royal 559 alumni on the roster!**

Be sure to keep up with all the latest news on Fresno State Women's Water Polo:

[Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Website](#)

Want to help support your Bulldogs? Join the Water Dogs Boosters! Download the [Water Dogs Information Flyer](#) for more details and find out ways to help your Bulldogs get off to a successful season.

GO DOGS!

Royal 559 Athletes of the Session

Congratulations to our Royal 559 Players of the Summer Quarter. These athletes were chosen by their coaches for demonstrating excellent sportsmanship, teamwork and dedication. Congratulations to the following athletes for being named Royal 559 Athletes of the Session!

Dylan Hemiadan --- 14U Boys



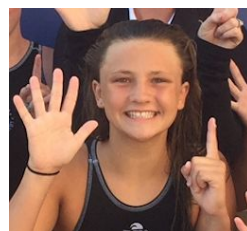
Dylan is one of the most versatile players on the 14U boys team. Coach Pickford is quick to also point out that Dylan's best feature is his attitude and work ethic. He came to each practice ready to work hard and learn new skills. In the face of adversity, he would build up and motivate his teammates. Dylan was always a good teammate and an extremely coachable player. Keep up the good work, Dylan!

Hannah Kharzai --- 18U Girls



Hannah was one of the core anchors on the 18U Girls Red team this summer. She helped guide them to a Gold Medal in the Bronze Division. She is an extremely dedicated athlete, both in and out of the pool. She competed at USCC and did extremely well, competing against top club in the country. Hannah is a natural leader with an unmatched work ethic. Coach Luna and Clute are extremely proud to name Hannah the athlete of the quarter!

Julianne Snyder --- 12U Girls



Julianne Snyder helped guide the 12U girls team to a 6th place finish at this year's Junior Olympics, leading the team in goals, steals and tenacity. Coach Kate says that Julianne is fiercely competitive and dedicated to never giving up, no matter the odds. There is no doubt that she is bound for greatness and we are so proud to have our club along for the ride.

Sofia Righetti --- 14U Girls



This summer, Sofia emerged as one of the best 2m defenders in the Central California Zone, according to Coach Brooks. She also became an outside shooting threat and improved her 2m offense, as well. Her improvement is attributed to her coachability and dedication to attending practices and competitions during the winter and spring sessions, commuting from her hometown of Kingsburg.

Matt Ross --- 16U Boys



Matt has great dedication and commitment to working hard. He had perfect attendance this summer even though he commutes from Hanford. This has contributed to his growth into a contributing member of the 16u A team. Matt brings a great attitude and high energy every day that make it a blast to watch him play.

Lexi Stahl --- 16U Girls



According to Coach Lee, Lexi is one of the hardest working athletes in the 16U group. Day in and day out, Lexi exemplified

what it meant to be a "teammate". She showed up on time, worked hard and is extremely coachable. Her dedication to her development by playing club water polo year-around has helped take her game to the next level. Not only did she dedicate to Royal, she also played for Cadet Central Zone ODP Team and successfully made it to NTSC. Coach Lee is proud to nominate Lexi - Congratulations!

Luke Zetz --- 12U Boys



Luke joined the 12U boys group with little water polo experience. However, since then he

improved tremendously by showing up on time to practice and working hard. After practices, he asks his coaches what he can do to improve and get better - something he did throughout the course of the season. Great job Luke! Keep it up!