



HaBaWaBa School v.04
ELEMENTARY LEVEL
KIDS 7 to 9 YEARS OLD

2nd WEBINAR
25th February 2026



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2nd WEBINAR - AGENDA

Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

- ✓ **Ratko RUDIĆ Welcome to Participants**
- ✓ **1st WEBINAR – REVIEW OF SKILLS #1, #2, #3, #4, #5**
- ✓ **PARTICIPANT COACHES' INPUT**
- ✓ **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS**
- ✓ **2nd WEBINAR - PRESENTATION OF SKILLS #6, #7, #8, #9, #10**
- ✓ **FIVE CORE PRINCIPLES TO EMBRACE AND IMPLEMENT**



Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

1st WEBINAR – REVIEW

- ✓ [Skill 1 – Kicking Freestyle \(with/without the Ball\)](#)
- ✓ [Skill 2 – Breaststroke Kick \(with/without the Ball\)](#)
- ✓ [Skill 3 – Water Polo Freestyle \(Head Up\)](#)
- ✓ [Skill 4 – Swimming with the Ball \(Dribbling\)](#)
- ✓ [Skill 5 – Water Polo Freestyle + Breaststroke Kick](#)

All videos to be presented were prepared with the participation of [Damiano SPINA](#), an 8-year-old athlete of Club Aquatico Pescara.



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Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

PARTICIPANT COACHES' INPUT

1. [Ildikó SZEDLMAYER, Age Group WP Coach – Vasas SC, HUNGARY](#)
2. [Yiannis KOINIS, Age Group WP Coach – CN Posillipo, ITALY](#)
3. [Dino CASONE, Age Group WP Coach – Muri Antichi Catania, ITALY](#)
4. [Gelly BISBA, Age Group WP Coach – Ethnicos Piraeus, GREECE](#)



RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

Q1. SWIMMING PROGRAMMING STRUCTURE

✓ DOS

- ✓ Emphasize body position and balance in all strokes
- ✓ Keep distances short (10–15m) with high quality
- ✓ Teach freestyle breathing progressively
- ✓ Develop backstroke for posture and coordination
- ✓ Introduce breaststroke kick and stroke timing
- ✓ Use combined styles to improve motor variety
- ✓ Keep learning playful and game-based
- ✓ **Correct one key technical point at a time**

✗ DON'Ts

- ✓ Avoid long conditioning sets
- ✓ Don't prioritize speed over technique
- ✓ Avoid early specialization in one stroke only
- ✓ Avoid rigid, repetitive drills without variation
- ✓ **Don't overload children with technical details**



Q1: SWIMMING PROGRAMMING STRUCTURE (CONT.)

AGE GROUP	PRIMARY FOCUS	TECHNICAL PRIORITIES	TRAINING CHARACTERISTICS
7–8 yrs.	DISCOVERY & BALANCE	✓ Body position (horizontal line) ✓ Kick from hips ✓ Relaxed breathing ✓ Backstroke posture ✓ Breaststroke timing intro	✓ 10–15m repetitions ✓ Game-based learning ✓ High variety ✓ Minimal correction (1 cue at a time) Ages 7–9: ✓ SWIMMING: 45 min, 3–4x/week ✓ WATER POLO: 45 min, 2–3x/week
9–10 yrs.	COORDINATION & RHYTHM	✓ Freestyle breathing rhythm ✓ Backstroke rotation ✓ Breaststroke glide timing ✓ Stroke continuity	✓ 15–20m repetitions ✓ Controlled pace ✓ Intro to simple medley ✓ Short technical sets
10–11 yrs.	EFFICIENCY CONSOLIDATION	✓ Catch awareness (freestyle) ✓ Streamline control ✓ Stroke efficiency ✓ Smooth transitions between strokes	✓ 20–25m technical sets ✓ Mild aerobic exposure ✓ Short MIXED STYLE sequences ✓ Quality over volume Ages 10–11: ✓ SWIMMING: 60–90 min, 3–4x/week (6–12 km/week) ✓ WATER POLO: 45 min, 3–4x/week

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

Q2. MEASURING SWIMMING PROGRESS (AGES 7–9)

CORE PRINCIPLE

- ✓ Progress = **better technique + control + confidence** (not speed/volume).

KEY PROGRESS INDICATORS

- ✓ **Body position**: hips high, head neutral; **glide 3–5m** + streamline push-off
- ✓ **Freestyle**: kick from hips, relaxed breathing; **15m continuous** with control
- ✓ **Backstroke**: stable body line + steady kick
- ✓ **Breaststroke**: timing first (**kick → glide**), visible glide phase
- ✓ **Water control**: float/roll front - back; **vertical hold 10s**
- ✓ **Functional learning (games)**: follows directions, changes direction smoothly, retrieves objects confidently.

SIMPLE RATING SCALE

- ✓ Developing → Consistent → Controlled & Confident

Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

SKILLS 6-7-8-9-10

- ✓ Skill 6 – Water Polo Backstroke + Breaststroke Kick
- ✓ Skill 7 – Breaststroke Kick on Back with a Ball in Hand
- ✓ Skill 8 – Eggbeater Kick (Horizontal & Vertical)
- ✓ Skill 9 – Learning the Basic Vertical Position with the ball
- ✓ Skill 10 – Passing the Ball on Water while in Vertical Position

Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 6 – Water Polo Backstroke + Breaststroke Kick

Objective:

- ☐ Move backward efficiently while keeping vision on the play and maintaining strong body position.

Description:

- ☐ Perform a seated or slightly inclined backstroke with shoulders above the surface.
- ☐ Arm strokes are short, fast, and wide, while the breaststroke kick provides propulsion and stability.
- ☐ Legs drive the body forward as arms recover just under the surface.
- ☐ Maintain a steady rhythm between arm strokes and kicks to stay balanced and high in the water.
- ☐ This movement helps players retreat while staying aware of the ball and teammates.

Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 6 – Water Polo Backstroke + Breaststroke Kick

Drills:

1. [One Kick per Stroke](#): Backstroke with one breaststroke kick for each arm stroke; focus on coordination.
2. [Alternate Kick Timing](#): One kick every two arm strokes; maintain rhythm on both sides.
3. [Height Challenge](#): Backstroke with breaststroke kick, lifting shoulders and arms as high as possible on each cycle.
4. [Transition Drill](#): Alternate 3 m head-up freestyle + breaststroke kick, then 3 m backstroke + breaststroke kick; switch on whistle.
5. [Double Arm Variation](#): Perform backstroke using both arms simultaneously with one breaststroke kick; maintain vertical posture.



Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 7 – Breaststroke Kick on Back with a Ball in Hand

Objective:

- ☐ Move backward while maintaining balance, ball control, and readiness to pass from a back-floating position.

Description:

- ☐ The player lies on the back with the throwing arm extended, holding the ball on the palm with fingers spread and wrist stable.
- ☐ The supporting arm performs light sculling near the surface for balance.
- ☐ Legs execute a wide, rhythmic breaststroke kick, propelling the body backward while keeping the face above water.
- ☐ The drill develops control, coordination, and the ability to transition smoothly to the vertical throwing position..





Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 7 – Breaststroke Kick on Back with a Ball in Hand

Drills:

1. [Two-Hand Hold](#): On back, hold ball with both hands extended backward; perform steady breaststroke kicks.
2. [One-Hand Hold](#): Same, with ball on throwing hand and other arm by side; maintain straight line.
3. [Scull Support](#): Ball on palm of throwing hand; scull gently with support arm to control balance.
4. [Transition Drill](#): On whistle, change from back float to vertical throwing position while keeping control of ball.
5. [One-Arm Transition Drill](#): Hold the ball in one hand in a backstroke position and move backward using breaststroke kicks with opposite-arm sculling. On the whistle, transition quickly to a vertical position and advance slightly using breaststroke kicks.





Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 8 – Eggbeater Kick (Horizontal & Vertical)

Objective:

- ☐ Maintain vertical and horizontal stability while generating continuous lift through alternating breaststroke-type leg movements.

Description:

- ☐ The eggbeater is a continuous, alternating circular kick, providing balance and support without forward motion.
- ☐ Each leg moves independently in a small outward–inward circle, knees bent near the surface, and feet turned out (dorsiflexed).
- ☐ The power comes from hip rotation and inner-thigh engagement, not from the ankles.
- ☐ In horizontal drills, the player moves forward slowly, combining eggbeater motion with light sculling; in vertical drills, they keep shoulders high and steady. Smooth rhythm and control are more important than height.



Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 8 – Eggbeater Kick (Horizontal & Vertical)

Drills:

1. [Horizontal Eggbeater Kicking with Ball](#): Move forward in prone (face-down) position using a horizontal eggbeater kick, while holding the ball with straight arms extended in front of the shoulders.
2. [Semi-Vertical Eggbeater Kicking without Ball](#): Move forward in a semi-vertical position using a continuous eggbeater kick, with straight arms slightly extended in front of the shoulders. Perform small right-to-left sculling movements to support body balance and stability.
3. [Combo Kick with Ball](#): In a prone position, advance using a horizontal eggbeater kick while holding the ball, then switch to two complete breaststroke kicks. Repeat the sequence continuously.
4. [Push the ball under & Rise](#): Push the ball underwater, then use a strong eggbeater kick to rise vertically until the shoulders emerge above the surface.
5. [Horizontal-to-Vertical Eggbeater with Ball](#): Start in a prone position holding the ball, then transition smoothly into a vertical position using a continuous eggbeater kick.



Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 9 – Learning the Basic Vertical Position with the ball

Objective:

- ☐ Develop a stable vertical body position with the ball held ready to pass or shoot while maintaining balance and control.

Description:

- ☐ From a strong eggbeater base, the player raises the throwing arm behind the head with the elbow above the ear and the ball higher than the head.
- ☐ The opposite leg is forward to stabilize the body and generate balance.
- ☐ The supporting hand sculls lightly in front to maintain height.
- ☐ Eyes stay forward, hips under shoulders, and body upright throughout.
- ☐ This position forms the foundation for passing, shooting, and faking actions in water polo.



Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 9 – Learning the Basic Vertical Position with the ball

Drills:

1. [Basic Position Hold with Eggbeater](#): From a vertical position, use an eggbeater kick to lift high and raise the ball into basic position (elbow high, forearm vertical). Hold for 5'' with hips up and eyes forward, then lower and repeat 6–8 times.
2. [Basic Position Hold Turning Around](#): In basic position, move left, right, forward, or backward on the coach's signal without losing height.
3. [Basic Position alternating Eggbeater with Breaststroke kick](#): Assume basic position holding the ball and alternate eggbeater with breaststroke kick
4. [Basic Position without Supporting Arm](#): From a vertical position, use an eggbeater kick to lift high and raise the ball into basic position without the support of the opposing arm.
5. [Basic Position to Dribbling Forward](#): From a vertical position, begin dribbling forward; on the coach's signal, stop and immediately assume the basic position. Repeat the sequence continuously.



Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 10 – Passing the Ball on Water while in Vertical Position

Objective:

- ☐ Develop control, accuracy, and timing for short passes that travel smoothly across the water surface.

Description:

- ☐ From the basic throwing position, the player makes a curved arm motion to guide the ball toward a teammate's supporting hand on the surface.
- ☐ The release is smooth, with a gentle wrist action that avoids bouncing or splashing.
- ☐ The opposite leg stays forward to stabilize the body while eggbeatering continuously.
- ☐ The receiver absorbs the ball softly, guiding it to rest in front of them before lifting or returning the pass.



Kids 7-8-9 years old - Elementary Level

Skill 10 – Passing the Ball on Water while in Vertical Position

Drills:

1. [Basic Position with Ball – Pass to Dominant Hand:](#) Hold the basic position with the ball for 5 seconds, then pass on the water to a teammate's dominant hand. Slide the hand under the ball and lift it into the basic throwing position. Perform 10–12 repetitions.
2. [Basic Position with Ball – Pass to Non-Dominant Hand:](#) Hold the basic position with the ball for 5 seconds, then pass on the water to a teammate's non-dominant hand. Slide the hand under the ball, transfer it to the dominant hand, and lift it into the basic throwing position. Perform 10–12 repetitions.
3. [Deck-to-Water Passing:](#) One player on the deck and one in the water exchange wet passes. The player in the water indicates the preferred receiving hand/spot.
4. [Dribble-Stop-and-Pass:](#) Dribble forward. On the signal, stop in a vertical position and deliver a wet pass to a teammate's front hand.
5. [Lead Pass Drill:](#) Lift the ball, count to 5 seconds, then lead the pass 2–3 m ahead toward a teammate's head, emphasizing the ball's bounce on the water. The receiver swims onto the ball, repeats, and continues the drill.

FIVE CORE PRINCIPLES TO EMBRACE AND IMPLEMENT

1. **JOY AND PARTICIPATION COME BEFORE RESULTS:** The primary objective is enjoyment, inclusion, and positive engagement in the game.
2. **EVERY CHILD DEVELOPS AT A UNIQUE PACE:** Individual growth must be respected, supported, and encouraged without comparison.
3. **EDUCATION GOES BEYOND TECHNIQUE:** Through storytelling, example, and guidance, the coach transmits values as well as skills.
4. **LEARNING HAPPENS THROUGH PLAY:** Active involvement, frequent contact with the ball, and game-based experiences are essential for development.
5. **FAIR PLAY SHAPES LASTING MEMORIES:** Clear rules, mutual respect, and positive emotions create meaningful experiences that inspire long-term love for sport.



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