



## **Press Release**

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*For immediate release*

### **SwimJamaica invited to train Antiguan swim instructors**

With 365 beaches, the island of Antigua has similar challenges to Jamaica when it comes to local persons enjoying the beautiful Caribbean sea. As in Jamaica, the majority of the population cannot swim and have little knowledge of water safety. Having seen how SwimJamaica is working to change the situation here in Jamaica, Wadadli Aquatic Racers Swim Club invited SwimJamaica to Antigua to train swim instructors.

Mrs Edith Clashing, President of Wadadli Aquatic Racers heard about SwimJamaica's desire to develop swimming whilst attending a competition at the National Stadium Pool last year. Invited to the competition by Jacky Walter (Jamaica's National Swim Coach) she was impressed with the structured approach SwimJamaica uses to teach swimming and train instructors.

"In order for our club (Wadadli Aquatic Racers Swim Club) to grow and support it's learn to swim programme, we need properly trained swim instructors. I had heard good things of the SwimJamaica programme and felt that such a certification programme would be ideal in developing our human resource." commented Mrs Clashing.

SwimJamaica's Technical Advisor, Cath Moore visited St. John's, Antigua and ran a SwimJamaica Short Course of instructor training over the last weekend in February. The 18 hour intensive course covered communication skills, basic water confidence skills along with two swimming strokes (freestyle and backstroke). The course is very interactive with skills initially being taught in the classroom then practiced by participants in the water followed by teaching children in swimming classes. The course fosters a team approach to learning as each instructor completes self reviews and peer reviews.

Mrs Moore commented, "The enthusiasm and open-minded approach of each participant who attended the course was excellent. Over the two day course there was an improvement in each person's technical skills, teaching skills and communication skills. I also saw a great improvement in the children who were in the swimming classes. I am really pleased to see these improvements and also that a club can bring a diverse range of persons together, including members of Antigua and Barbuda's Lifeguard unit and supportive parents to enable a greater number of Antiguans to learn to swim."

Mrs Clashing, who was one of the 11 persons on the course said, "When Cath agreed to come I felt such a wonderful opportunity should be shared with others outside our club especially knowing the state of swimming on the island; so we opened it up to give other Antiguans a chance to improve their teaching skills. It was a great week end and a wonderful learning experience. We were challenged, had fun in the process and it has wetted

everyone's appetite to want to complete the next training module. We look forward to partnering again with SwimJamaica.”

Wadadli Aquatic Racers gained sponsorship from Caribbean Airlines and other local companies. The course gained coverage in the local media including television and radio.

Launched in January 2005, SwimJamaica is an initiative of the Amateur Swimming Association of Jamaica (ASAJ). The vision of SwimJamaica is to develop the sport from the base by providing opportunities for every Jamaican to learn to swim through the development of high quality, progressive learn to swim programmes that are safe, fun and accessible to all.

For a student to have a positive experience and to enjoy learning/improving their swimming there needs to be a quality learn to swim programme and excellent instruction. At SwimJamaica we see it as essential to train the instructional team to a high level so as to provide strong foundations for developing swimming.

SwimJamaica operates two learn to swim programmes, one for children and another for adults. There is also a Career Development Programme which facilitates instructor training courses. Since the launch the programme has developed significantly. At present there are over 550 children in lessons taught by a staff team of 20 instructors at seven pools in Kingston and one in Discovery Bay.

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## Photographs and captions



Ten of the 11 participants on the SwimJamaica Short Course of instructor training with trainer Cath Moore (centre of back row).