

Columbia Aquatics Association

Heads Navigate, Hearts Dominate



Clippers Team Handbook

Updated 8/28/09

Welcome

Welcome to the Columbia Aquatics Association (CAA). This handbook provides detailed information about the Clippers Swim Team and general information about the sport of swimming.

The Columbia Aquatics Association is a competitive and instructional swim team sponsored by the Columbia Association in Columbia Maryland. The Clippers offer a complete program for swimmers of all skill and interest levels; ages 6 to college level. The team has various Practice Groups based on a combination of ability and age. Practices are scheduled Monday through Friday afternoons and evenings, weekday and weekend mornings and Sunday evenings. Practices are held at the Columbia Swim Center and The Supreme Sports Club. Attendance requirements and mandatory meet participation vary with Practice Group placement.

Columbia has had a competitive swim team since the late 1960's. The present day Clippers began in 1987 with 30 swimmers, mostly 12 years old or younger. The number of swimmers has increased each year, as has the level of training offered. The Clippers now number over 300 swimmers.

Mission Statement

The Columbia Aquatics Association is a registered USA Swimming Club and a member of the Maryland Local Swim Committee. Our mission is to promote the sport of competitive swimming for all ages through positive motivation and the teaching of proper stroke technique. We strive to produce swimmers who are able to excel in competition at all levels from novice to national.

Vision

- CAA instills the values of respect, teamwork, confidence, and self discipline in our staff, swimmers and their families.
- CAA teaches swimmers that success is achieved through hard work and goal setting.
- CAA influences swimmers to grow as athletes and individuals who are able to contribute to their team, family, and community.
- Parents are actively involved in our team and provide a positive influence for our swimmers.
- Our staff, swimmers and their family members work together to achieve success in competitive swimming.
- Our accomplishments are a result of the strong commitment of our staff, swimmers and their families.

Goals

- To provide a safe and enjoyable learning environment for all our team members.
- To set ethical and moral standards for our staff, swimmers, and their families.
- To provide the best possible instruction at all levels within the team.
- To have swimmers develop a passion for swimming
- To have swimmers continually strive to achieve higher standards.
- To provide organized team and group activities.
- To have our staff, swimmers and their families dedicate the time required to achieve each swimmer's goals.
- To have our team recognized as a valued member of our community.

USA Swimming

CAA and its swimmers are members of USA Swimming, the national governing body for the sport of swimming in the United States. All Clipper swimmers must be registered with USA Swimming in order to attend practices, meets and team social events. All Clipper coaches must also be registered with USA Swimming and complete the required certification. The registrations are processed by the Team Administrator for each swimmer on behalf of the team.

USA Swimming formulates the rules, implements the policies and procedures, conducts the national championships, disseminates safety and sports medicine information and selects athletes to represent the United States in international competition.

USA Swimming is divided into four zones; Central, Eastern, Southern and Western. CAA is a member of the Maryland Local Swim Committee which is part of the Eastern Zone.

Maryland Swimming

Within the United States, there are fifty-nine Local Swimming Committees (LSCs). As mentioned above, CAA is a member of the Maryland LSC. Maryland Swimming, Incorporated, (MSI) is the governing body for all competitions within the state of Maryland, except Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties. Maryland Swimming sanctions, approves, observes, oversees and conducts competitive swimming events within its jurisdiction.

American Swim Coaches Association

The American Swimming Coaches Association is a professional service organization that provides education and certification for swim coaches. All our CAA Coaching Staff, with the exception of our Athlete Assistant Coaches, are members of ASCA. Each fall, many of our coaches attend clinics held by ASCA to improve their knowledge and skills and interact with other professionals for the United States swimming community.

Team Organization – CA, CAA & Parent Board

The Columbia Aquatics Association, better known as the Clippers, is a swim team program sponsored by the Columbia Association. The Columbia Association provides the facilities and staff that support the program. The CAA staff is made up of the Head Coach, Age Group Head Coach, Full and Part Time Coaches, Athlete Assistant Coaches and the Team Administrator. The team currently practices at the Swim Center and at The Supreme Sports Club. Members of CAA must either be a member of the Columbia Association or a resident of Columbia (living on CA assessed property).

The Columbia Association and the Clippers Head Coach are responsible for all decisions regarding monthly group fees/dues, coaching assignments, structure of practice groups, swimmer group assignments, meets the team attends, specific meet events for each swimmer and CA facility issues.

The Team Administrator is responsible for assisting the Coaching Staff with the day to day operations of the team. This includes managing swimmer registrations, new swimmer try outs, monthly group fees, escrow accounts, swimmer database information and meet entries, email communications, and the team website. The Team Administrator also acts as a liaison with the Coaching Staff, Parent Advisory Board, and the Columbia Association.

The Parent Board was created to assist the team in key areas of administration and communication. This board, made up of volunteers, is responsible for managing selected team affairs such as; CAA hosted meets, team travel meets, team apparel and equipment, team publicity and community service, fundraising activities, team social activities and operational income and expenses. The board meets once a month, usually on the first Tuesday of the month at the Columbia Swim Center. The monthly meetings are announced on the team website and through email.

Practice Groups

Senior Elite

This select group of swimmers meets specific criteria as determined by the Head Coach. Each swimmer is assessed according to their individual potential and achievement. The level of commitment and individual capability of the Elite members is sustainable at levels equal to elite athletes. Swimmers willingly set long term goals at the National level and short term goals at the State and Sectional level. Practice is geared towards training swimmers for these goals. Elite swimmers achieve improvement in all four strokes, development of skills necessary to attain Sectional standards and beyond, and display mental discipline and preparedness. Members are expected to attend scheduled daily afternoon practice sessions and morning workouts as determined by the Head Coach. Elite swimmers are held to the highest standards and most rigorous training routine. As a result, Elite swimmers are the epitome of CAA swimming by demonstrating commitment and support to coaches and to teammates at all levels.

Senior

Swimmers in this group are able to perform all four competitive strokes in any competitive distance with good technique. They have mental and physical abilities to handle challenging practices positively, confidently and with a solid commitment. The Senior group is designed for those swimmers making the next step in moving to the Senior Elite group. These swimmers perform consistently within practices, possess a positive attitude, adapt their strokes to a more efficient level, and show the desire to achieve at the highest possible level. Swimmers are more focused on the consistent execution of the entire workout on a daily basis and are take responsibility for their swimming success. Dry land is an integral part of the training regimen to increase core body strength, better balance, and increase individual athletic ability. The goals of the Senior Group are to improve stroke technique, training habits, training intensity, and mental strength. Senior swimmers strive for Maryland State Championship cuts and higher.

Junior

Swimmers are able to perform freestyle repeats up to 500 yards and 100+ yards of all strokes (Fly/Back/Breast) with strong technique. Junior swimmers have endurance and technique to handle practices confidently with leadership and a strong commitment. The Junior group is the beginning of Senior level swimming. Swimmers are expected to focus on consistent execution of the entire workout on a daily basis. The Coach and swimmers meet to discuss goals and how the swimmers can best achieve those goals. Goals of the group are to improve in stroke technique, consistency of training habits and intensity, and ability to recognize and respond to coaching instruction. Junior swimmers strive to achieve Maryland Jr. All Star and Maryland State Championship cuts.

Age Group 1

Swimmers are able to perform freestyle repeats up to 400 yards and 100+ yards of all strokes (Fly/Back/Breast) with strong technique. AG 1 swimmers have endurance and technique to handle practices confidently with a strong commitment. AG 1 focuses on the transition from age group swimming to senior level swimming. Swimmers are more focused on consistent execution of the entire workout on a daily basis and the process of taking greater responsibility for their swimming success. Dry land training is an integral part of the training regimen to increase core body strength, better balance, and increase individual athletic ability. Meetings are held between swimmers and coaches to establish goals and a total approach to improved performance (i.e., nutrition, academic standards, personal responsibilities, proper sleep, etc.). AG 1 swimmers know repeat times throughout practice and consistently demonstrate leadership during practice sessions. Goals of the group are to improvement in stroke

technique, consistency of training habits and intensity, and ability to recognize and respond to coaching instruction. AG 1 swimmers strive to achieve Maryland Jr. All Star and Maryland State Championship cuts.

Age Group 2

Swimmers are able to swim up to 400 yards of continuous freestyle repeatedly and 50+ yards of all strokes (Fly/Back/Breast) with good technique. AG 2 swimmers have endurance and technique to handle practices confidently. Emphasis is on strong training and race habits while maintaining mastery in stroke technique and turns. Swimmers independently guide themselves through the each training session using the pace clock, while being introduced to more advanced interval based training. Swimmers know repeat times throughout practice and consistently demonstrate leadership during practice sessions. Goals of the group are to improvement in stroke technique, consistency of training habits and intensity, and ability to recognize and respond to coaching instruction. AG 1swimmers strive to achieve Maryland Jr. All Star and Maryland State Championship cuts.

Age Group 3

Swimmers are able to swim continuous freestyle up to 200 yards repeatedly as well as 25-50 yards of all strokes (Fly/Back/Breast) with legal technique. AG 3 swimmers have legal kicks in all strokes and endurance to handle repeats of 50, 75 and 100 yards. This group provides a smooth transition to AG 2 with an increase in training time and more independence using the pace clock to determine when to start sets, exercises, or swims. More integration of speed variation and energy management techniques that mirror race strategies are incorporated into the practice regiment. Swimmers are introduced to practices that include not only skill building and maintenance objectives, but specific training objectives which adjust through the season to meet individual and team goals of achievement.

Age Group 4

Swimmers are able to swim 200 yards of continuous freestyle as well as 25+ yards of all strokes (Fly/Back/Breast). Swimmers are also able to use the pace clocks with some independence. The concepts of variation to speed and effort are introduced as well as some basic race strategies. All swimmers in this group are able to do legal competition turns. All swimmers in this group are expected to participate in meets.

Age Group 5

Swimmers are able to swim 100 yards of continuous freestyle and 25 yards of all strokes (Fly/Back/Breast). The pace clocks are introduced into the practices. This group focuses on the increased proficiency of all strokes and an increase in conditioning. Starts from the blocks are also a key focus as swimmers in this group regularly attend meets.

Age Group 6

Swimmers are able to swim for 50 yards of freestyle continuously and a full 25 yards of both backstroke and breaststroke. The focus in this group is on legal breaststroke and butterfly to enable the swimmers to compete legally in all four strokes. Turns, especially flip turns, are emphasized so that swimmers improve their conditioning as well as technique.

Mighty Mini

Swimmers are able to swim freestyle and backstroke for at least 25 yards and be comfortable swimming in deep water. Swimmers are introduced to breaststroke and butterfly so that they are capable of swimming all four strokes legally at meets. Starts and turns are introduced to give swimmers basic competition skills. Kicking and drills are a large part of practices to help build a strong foundation in all four competitive strokes.

Communication

Communication between the team and swimmers and parents is important. The Clippers have several ways to stay informed:

Team Website – www.clippersswim.org

Information about the team is posted on the site and is updated on a daily basis. Please check the website each day and especially before a meet.

Team & Group Email

Information regarding the team and each practice group is communicated through email. In order to receive these emails, each family must subscribe to our email system through the website. It is also a good habit to check email daily to stay informed.

Swimmer Folders

Each family has a folder in the CAA File Cabinet at the Swim Center. These folders are used to distribute team flyers, ribbons, awards, etc and should be checked regularly by the swimmer or parent.

Group Parents

Each practice group has an assigned Group Parent. The Group Parent and contact information is listed on the website. The volunteer Group Parent is responsible for distributing information to the swimmers' folders, taking swimmer meet availability, planning group social activities, and is a liaison between the practice group, team and the Parent Advisory Board.

Group Coach

The contact information for each practice group coach is listed on the website. The coaches are not to be interrupted during practice or meets. It is recommended that the coach be contacted via email with questions or to discuss a time to meet face to face.

Monthly Parent Board Meetings

These monthly meetings are open to all team parents. Various team affairs such as; CAA hosted meets, team travel meets, team apparel and equipment, team publicity and community service, fundraising activities, team social activities and operational income and expenses are discussed at the meetings. The Parent Advisory Board also serves as a liaison for team issues with the Coaching Staff and with the Columbia Association. The monthly meetings are announced on the team website and through email.

Where do I go for questions or information I can't find on the website?

Contact information is listed on our website for the following:

- Columbia Association Swim Team Fees – contact the Head Coach or the Team Administrator
- Family Escrow Accounts – contact the Team Administrator
- Group specific issues – contact the Group Parent and/or Group Coach
- Practice and Meet issues – contact the Group Parent and/or Group Coach
- Team Social Events – contact the Parent Board
- Team Fundraising Events – contact the Parent Board
- Volunteer Obligations and Opportunities – contact the Parent Board

Team Financial Information

Columbia Association Fees

Payments of the annual swim team fees are payable to the Columbia Association. There are two options for payment of these fees; 1) automatic monthly deductions (occurs on or about the 5th of each month from September through July) and 2) payment in full of the annual fees (there is a 5% discount of the annual fees if they are paid in full at the start of the season). There is also a one-time non refundable CA Team Registration Fee due at the time of registration.

If a swimmer resigns from the team at any time, written notification must be provided to the Team Administrator via email (teamadmin@clippersswim.org) or through the US Mail to the Aquatics Office at 9450 Gerwig Lane Columbia MD 21046.

The Team Administrator will notify CA and the Coaching Staff. Any swimmers who resign from the team after October 15 will be charged an Early Termination Fee of one month's swim team fees. Partial months will not be prorated. A review of Swim Team Fees and Escrow Account will be done upon notification to determine any balances owed or refunds due.

Escrow Accounts

Each family has an escrow account set up by the Team Administrator at the time of new swimmer registration. This account is used to track USA Swimming Registration fees, meet fees, travel expenses and deposits. Escrow Statements are mailed to each family every 4 to 6 weeks. Deposits to the family escrow accounts must be made by check or cash only. All checks intended for escrow accounts must be made payable to the Columbia Aquatics Association.

Columbia Aquatics Association – Operating Fees & Fundraising

The team takes in funds from two main sources: Home Meets and Fundraising. At our 3 home meets, we make profits on meet entry fees, program sales, program ads, swim pro shop sales, and concessions. At some of our meets we also have a 50/50 raffle and a Side Walk Inventory sale of team apparel.

The funds brought in through our meets and fundraising efforts are used to help with organizational and operating costs such as; Insurance and Legal fees of the Parent Board, required USA Swimming Registrations for our Meet Directors and Safety Marshalls, website fees, miscellaneous supply and copy fees, meet equipment, practice gear, meet fees due to Maryland Swimming, meet place ribbons, and various swimmer awards such as Best Time Ribbons, Go for the Gold Swim Caps, Swimmer of the Month T-shirts. Our team social events are subsidized for facility rental fees, food and drinks, and activity costs.

Clippers do not require a fundraising amount per family; however, there are several fundraising options to fit the needs of our families. These opportunities vary from season to season and can include Meet Club & Program Dedications, Magazine Sales Drive, , Family Restaurant Nights, Cookie Dough sales and Pizza sales. Check the website to learn more about these options.

Family Volunteer Obligations

Families are required to work a minimum of 3 meet sessions and a maximum of 1 team social event or activity. All 4 of the required volunteer sessions can be completed by working at a CAA Meet. At least 2 of the required 4 volunteer sessions **MUST BE** completed by the end of February.

Volunteers are needed in many areas; working CAA hosted swim meet sessions, coordinating and managing team events, coordinating and managing fundraising activities, serving as certified swimming officials at CAA hosted meets, serving as group parents and serving on the Parent Board. There are volunteer opportunities for adults and 13 & older swimmers at each of the CAA hosted meets (Oct, Feb and May). Volunteer opportunities are posted on our website and via email.

All volunteer sessions are tracked by the Team Administrator. Completed volunteer sessions are reported on each family's Escrow Account.

IF THE VOLUNTEER OBLIGATION IS NOT MET, SWIMMERS MAY NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN SWIM MEETS, PRACTICES, NOR BE GIVEN PRIORITY REGISTRATION FOR THE FOLLOWING SEASON.

Practice Guidelines & Facility Rules

Swimmers should arrive to practice 10-15 minutes early so they may change and be prepared to start on time. Important announcements may be made at the start of practice regarding meets, practice schedule changes, team and group social events, etc. Late swimmers are a major disruption to practice and distract the coaching staff and their fellow swimmers.

According to USA Swimming Guidelines, Parents and other family members are not allowed on the pool deck during practice.

Practice Equipment

Each swimmer should bring the following to each practice; practice suit (not team suit), towel, warm clothes, goggles, water bottle, group specific equipment – fins, pull buoys, paddles, snorkels, dry land apparel, and sneakers (not needed for all groups; check with your coach). **Swimmers must bring their CA Membership Card to ALL practices.**

Practice Attendance Policy

The team has no requirements regarding a minimum number of practices that each swimmer must attend each week. Each practice group coach may suggest a practice guideline for each swimmer. It is important to keep in mind that what each swimmer "puts in" at practice is what they "get out" of their training.

Practice Cancellation Policy

Practices may be periodically canceled due to Swim Meets, Weather Conditions, Facility Issues, and Coach Availability. The Columbia Association Staff will do their best to correct any issues within their control and to find substitute coaches or alternate practice locations when possible. Refunds for canceled practices will not be given. Updates on rescheduled practices are posted on our website and sent via email.

CA Facilities & Rules

It is important to understand that other Columbia Association members are also using the facilities during practices. Swimmers must behave appropriately at all times and in all facility areas; lobby, pool, and locker rooms. Swimmers must also demonstrate good sportsmanship to their coach and teammates. Swimmers traveling with the team to an away meet must also behave appropriately at all times. Swimmers who do not conduct themselves in an appropriate manner jeopardize the entire team's use of the facilities at home or at away meets. Disciplinary actions for a swimmer can include the following; discussion with coach, swimmer and parent, suspension of locker room privileges, and suspension from practice.

Good behavior and following the rules helps to create a safe environment for everyone. Practice is not a time for fooling around, running on the pool deck, or being loud and disruptive in the locker rooms. The guidelines listed below should be followed at each practice:

- Swimmers may not enter the pool area unless a coach is on deck
- Once practice begins, swimmers may not leave the pool deck unless given permission by the coach
- Swimmers must participate in any cleanup of personal and team equipment
- Swimmers must behave appropriately in the locker rooms before and after practice

Swim Meet Basics

Parents and swimmers should understand that our team is a competitive team not a recreational club and as such the Clippers strive for the growth and development of each swimmer and for preparing each swimmer for participation in USA Swimming sanctioned meets. Swim meets are an excellent opportunity for swimmers and coaches to evaluate progress. In most meets swimmers are competing to improve times, achieve higher time standards and refine swimming skills. The emphasis during meets is on individual improvement. Winning is not always the primary objective, the focus is on the swimmers' improvement of time and skills.

Signing up for a Swim Meet

Most meets will take place in the state of Maryland and are sanctioned by Maryland Swimming. The Clippers Meet schedule is available on our website. Meet Notices for each meet will be posted on the Maryland Swimming website – www.mdswim.org and linked on our website as well. The procedures for signing up for a meet are outlined below. **It is inappropriate for individuals to enter meets on their own or call the meet director of the hosting team. In addition, parents may not deck enter swimmers.**

- Group Parents email their groups requesting swimmer availability for each meet. This email notification usually occurs once the meet notice has been posted.
- The Group Parent provides the swimmer availability to the group coach who determines events for each swimmer
- The Head Coach determines all relays based on swimmer availability
- Preliminary meet entries are posted on our website and announced via email. Changes to any information should go directly to the Head Coach.
- Final Meet Entries are sent to the host team and at this time no changes or refunds of meet entries can be made
- Fees to enter each meet are tracked through each family's Escrow account

Swim Meet Procedures

Warm Ups - Arrive at the meet at least 15 minutes before the beginning of the warm up session. This gives your swimmer time to find the team, change, and get settled before warm-ups. Directions to all meets can be found in the Meet Notice. A member of the coaching staff will conduct warm ups. Team members are required to warm up with the team. Exceptions may be made if the swimmer has made prior arrangements with the coach. Swimmers and parents must understand that warm up is an essential part of a successful performance.

Meet Attire & Equipment - All CAA swimmers will wear team apparel to the meet; a team suit, swim cap, t-shirt, shorts, etc. In addition, all swimmers will have goggles (2 pair), extra suit, two towels, deck sandals, water bottle, light healthy snacks, and folding chair to sit on deck. Swimmers may bring activities for something to do between events. However these activities should not distract the swimmer and cause them to miss their events. Swimmers are encouraged to cheer for their teammates. Coaches are not responsible for any items that a swimmer brings to a meet. All items should be kept within the seating area of the swimmer and most often in their swim bag.

Racing - Swimmers are responsible to get lined up at the appropriate time and in the proper lane. Younger swimmers with the help of a coach or parent can write event, heat and lane numbers on their hands to assist them. These can be found in the meet heat sheets for sale at all meets. After swimming an event, swimmers are to go immediately to a coach for feedback. Swimmers must also check in with a coach before leaving a meet. At most meets, swimmers are on deck with the coaches and in this case parents must sit in the stands. At meets where there is not enough room on the pool deck for swimmers, parent and swimmers are seated in a large area such as a gym. There is a specific area for swimmers to be "seeded" for their events.

Parents - In accordance with Maryland swimming regulations and USA Swimming Guidelines, **parents are not permitted on deck at anytime** unless working in an official capacity or volunteering. If this policy is violated, the meet referee may remove the swimmer and/or team from the meet.

Travel Meets

For more competitive meets the team may travel as a group. Expectations and procedures may be different for team travel meets and are set by the coaching staff. All swimmers must have completed a medical release form and a signed code of conduct form to travel with the team.

Motivational Time Standards

Knowledge of USA Swimming Age Group Time Standards ("B" Times to "AAAA" Times) helps swimmers and their families chart progress and realize personal goals. Meeting these time standards also allows swimmers to participate in certain meets. The Time Standards can be found on our website at the Behind the Blocks link.

Swimmer Awards & Recognition

Best Time Ribbons - awarded by the team to any swimmer who improves his or her time in any event at a USA Swimming sanctioned meet.

Swimmers of the month- awarded by the team monthly to the swimmer or swimmers in each group. The coach decides the recipients of this award. A swimmer may win more than once. Recipients will receive a T-shirt and their names will be posted on the website.

All Around All Star Award - awarded by the team to those swimmers who push themselves beyond their perceived limits. Swimmers must earn an official time at a USA Swimming sanctioned meet in all required events to receive a plaque. Parents or swimmers must submit the AAASA Form by May 1st in order to receive the plaque at the Spring Awards Ceremony. The form can be found on our website at the Behind the Blocks link.

Go for the Gold - a system of colored swim caps awarded as swimmers achieve specific times in USA Swimming sanctioned meets as listed on the charts.

Coaches Award - this coveted award is given by the team to one swimmer in each group at the Awards Picnic. This is awarded to the swimmer who demonstrates leadership, team spirit, and is representative of a role model to others in the group.

Most Improved Swimmer - awarded to a swimmer or swimmers in each group at the Awards Picnic. This is awarded to the swimmer who desires to improve performance, makes a commitment to working hard and pushes beyond their comfort zone.

Unsung Hero Award - awarded to a swimmer or swimmers in each group at the Awards Picnic. These swimmers are the glue of the team by coming to practice and working their hardest each and every day. These swimmers inspire their teammates and coaches to continue doing their best.

Individual Responsibilities

The Coach-Parent-Swimmer Triangle

A strong relationship among the swimmer, coach and parent produces the best results both in terms of swimming development and overall maturity. This relationship forms a triangle in which each party anchors a corner of that triangle. The triangle collapses when one of the parties fails to fulfill his/her responsibility, or when one party attempts, usually with good intentions, to take over the responsibility of the other party.

Responsibilities of the Coach

The primary role of the coach is to develop and implement a training plan that allows each athlete to reach his or her stated goals. It is the coaches' responsibility to educate a swimmer and provide constructive criticism of their performance. The coach recommends the events the swimmer should enter at each meet. The coach is responsible for any last minute instruction before an event is responsible for all post-performance analysis.

Responsibilities of the Swimmer

The primary role of the swimmer is to determine what their personal swimming goals are, and work towards those goals. Swimmers should arrive early to practice and meets prepared to work hard and swim well. Swimmers must follow the rules as determined by the coaches and as posted by each facility. Swimmers also provide support and encouragement to their teammates at practices and meets. Swimmers should approach their coach with any concerns or issues they have regarding their training and meet performance.

Responsibilities Shared by the Parent(s) and Swimmers

Together the swimmer and parent should stay informed regarding all team activities by consistently checking the team website (www.clippersswim.org), their email and swimmer folders.

Responsibilities of the Parent(s)

The primary role of the parent is to supply love, recognition, and the encouragement necessary to help a young athlete feel good about their swimming. It is not the parent's role to coach the child. If your child is receiving criticism from you and the coach, no one is there to give them the encouragement and support, which is important in the development of a young athlete. Parents should provide a caring environment for each swimmer which encourages the swimmer to feel good about their interest in swimming. Parents can show their support by ensuring each swimmer arrives to practice and meets on time. Parents also show their support by volunteering at team hosted meets and participating in team activities. Parents like their swimmers should show good sportsmanship at all times towards coaches, officials, and swimmers. Any concerns or questions about a swimmers progress and performance or with the program should be brought directly to the coach.

Parent FAQs

Our child has just joined the team and their times are worse than when they started.

When an athlete first joins the team and starts practicing, it is possible for them to swim worse instead of better. This phenomenon is due to the emphasis placed on stroke technique. It takes a great deal of the swimmer's attention to master these skills. These new techniques and habits are the basis for later improvement.

My child is working very hard in practice but their times are getting worse.

As training periods in higher level groups, more stress is placed upon the swimmer's muscles. The muscles break down under the demand of additional work, which explains an initial lack of improvement. As the need for improvement is realized, the muscles gradually strengthen and the athlete's performance greatly improves. Furthermore, skill techniques are continually evolving and faster techniques are continually being developed.

My swimmer's times have not gone down for a long time.

Plateaus occur at one time or another in every swimmer's career. Plateaus can happen in competition and in training; a plateau signifies that the swimmer has mastered lower order skills. It is important to explain to the athlete that plateaus occur in all fields of physical learning. The more successful athletes are those who work through these momentary delays in improvement and go on to achieve greater performance and approach their personal potential.

My child's times vary a lot from meet to meet.

10 & Unders are the most inconsistent swimmers, and this can be frustrating for a parent, coach, and swimmer alike. Please be patient and permit these children to learn to love the sport first and then work on their consistency.

My child is not competitive enough to win races.

Slow development of competitive drive at an early age is normal and perhaps more desirable than forced early development. It is important that everyone learns to compete and develop some competitive spirit. It is also important for children to learn to adapt to a reasonable amount of emotional stress. The small disappointments they learn to handle as children prepare them for the larger ones they are certain to experience as adults.

My child is losing his/her enthusiasm.

A parent's attitude and actions often shape their children's attitude and actions. Be enthusiastic about taking your child to practice and meets, fundraising events, and meetings. Do not look at these functions as annoying chores. Do not force your child to swim. Be sure that your child swims because they want to. Everyone tends to resist anything they feel they have to do. Self-motivation is the stimulus of all successful swimmers.

I don't agree with the coaches.

If you have any questions about your child's training, or team policies, contact your swimmer's coach (before or after practice and not during practice). Criticizing the coach in front of a young swimmer, or other parents, undermines the coach's authority with the swimmers, and reduces the coach's ability to motivate and properly train the swimmers.

My child should not have been disqualified in a race.

It is the coach's responsibility to confer with officials if there is a concern about disqualification or any other official decision. No parent or swimmer should approach an official or behave in such a way as to discredit the child, the team or competitive swimming. Any disagreement with a meet official should be brought to the attention of the coach and will be handled by the coach.

My child should be able to beat that other swimmer.

Avoid matching your child against their nearest competitors or their peers. This merely creates vendettas within the team and the swimming community. Close competition provides two great services for the athlete - it brings out the best in them and shows where improvement is needed.

Glossary of Terms

Age Group	Swimmers complete in age groups of 8 & under, 9-10 (or 10&under), 11-12, 13-14, 15-18.
Age Groupers	12 & Under swimmers.
Age Up	When a swimmer changes age groups. Unlike summer meets swimmers use the first day of the meet as the age up date. A swimmer may be in the 9-10 age group one meet and 11-12 the next.
ASCA	American Swimming Coaches Association
Ascending Set	Training set where repeat times get progressively slower each time the set is swum.
Broken Swims	Interval training where a race is broken into swims with a specific rest interval between each segment. This allows the swimmer to swim at race speed. These swims are motivational for the swimmer and give a coach an idea of a swimmer's potential.
CAA	Columbia Aquatics Association – Our official team name and club code.
CAA Locked Box	Located at the end of the check in counter at the Swim Center. Can be used to drop off payments and forms.
Carbohydrate	Primary source of energy used by athletes in workouts and meets. Foods such as cereals, fruits, breads, pasta and vegetables are excellent sources of carbohydrates.
Circle Swimming	Swimmers stay to the right of the black line when swimming in a lane effectively swimming up and back in a circle. This allows more swimmers in a lane.
Coaches Safety Curriculum	United States Swimming requires all coach members to hold a valid and current card in First Aid, CPR and Safety Training for swimming coaches.
Consolation	Consolation finals are the competition for the fastest swimmers who did not qualify for the finals.
Cut	Time standard qualifying time necessary to attend a particular meet or event.
Deck Seeding	A procedure of assigning swimmers to proper lanes and heats immediately before each event by the clerk-of-course or by the referee on deck.
Descending Set	Training set where repeat times get progressively faster each time the set is swum.
Distance Events	Events of 500 yards or longer.
DQ	A disqualification. The swimmer did something that is deemed illegal by USA swimming rules.
Drag Suit	A second loose-fitting suit worn by swimmers in workout and during warm-ups to add weight and resistance to the water. The concept is similar to a batter swinging with two or three bats while on deck.
Drill	An exercise used to improve the technique and efficiency of a stroke.
Dryland Training	Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimmer performance. This usually includes stretching, calisthenics or weightlifting program.
Eastern Zone	LSCs including Adirondack, Allegheny Mountain, Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Metropolitan, Middle Atlantic, New England, New Jersey, Niagara, Potomac Valley and Virginia.
False Start –	Movement before the start. A swimmer who false starts is disqualified from the event.
Fat	The second source of energy used by athletes. It takes up to 20-30 minutes of activity to tap into this source.
Finals	The session of a meet where qualifying rounds were held previously to determine the finalists (6 to 16 depending on the pool size and whether there are consolation finals). The finalists compete to determine the winner.
Finish	The final phase of the race or touching the wall at the end of the race.
Goal	A specific time or achievement a swimmer sets and strives for. Goals can be short or long term.
Heats	An event is divided into heats when there are too many swimmers to swim at one time. The slowest swimmers are in the first heat(s) and the fastest swimmers in the last heat(s).
Interval	The measure of time in which the swimmer has to complete a repeat, and rest, before going again.
Interval Training	Involves completing a specific number of repeats at a specified speed with a specified rest period between swims. There are four variables to consider 1) Number of repeats 2) Distance of each repeat 3) Average speed of the repeat and 4) Rest interval between repeats
Legal	A race or stroke swum according to the current USA Swimming rules.
Long Course	Meets held in 50meter pools. Usually held during the summer months.
Long Course	A pool 50 meters in length. World records may only be set in long course meters. The Olympics and most international meets are long course.
LSC	Local swimming Committee which is the governing body at the local level. CAA belongs to the Maryland LSC.

Maryland Swimming	LSC whose boundaries include all of Maryland except Prince Georges and Montgomery County.
Meet Notice	Information provided by the host team detailing the particulars of their meet. Can be found on the Maryland swimming web site (www.mdswim.org).
Mini-Meet	A meet for swimmers ten years old and under only.
Negative Split	Swimming the second half of the race equal to or faster than the first half.
Official	A pool deck judge, at sanctioned competitions, who observes swims for compliance with USA Swimming rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, timers, and referees.
Pace	The time a swimmers holds for each segment of a race.
Prelims	The qualifying round of heats held for each event to determine finalists.
Proof of Time	A requirement at some meets (usually AA and above) to insure that all swimmers have legally met the time standards for that meet.
Psyche Sheet	A ranking by seeding times of all the swimmers entered in each race of a meet sometimes used at meets in place of a heat sheet.
Pull Buoy	Styrofoam devices put between the legs of a swimmer to isolate the use of arms and keep the legs afloat in pulling exercises.
Pyramid Seeding	A system of seeding where the fastest swimmer has the middle lane of the last heat, the next fastest has the middle lane of the next to last heat, and the third fastest swimmer has the middle lane of the third fastest heat. This system of seeding is used at trials and finals meets and is only used for the three fastest heats.
Qualifying Time	A standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event. Swimmers may have to be faster or slower than a qualifying time, depending on the meet.
Recovery	Swimming at sub-maximum speeds to allow the swimmer to recover back to pre-race heart rates and lactate levels more quickly. This is used as active recovery between hard repeats as well as races at a meet.
Referee	The USA Swimming official who has the authority over all other officials at a meet. The Referee makes all final decisions and sees that the meet is run efficiently, fairly and safely.
Repeat	The actual distance used in a set. For example a 10 x 50 (ten times fifty), the 50 would be the repeat distance and 10 would be the number of times the 50 is repeated. Sometimes a repeat time to hold is given.
Scratch	To withdraw from an event or a competition.
Seed Area	A designated area swimmers line up before races.
Seed Times	The time a swimmer uses to enter a meet. This time, written on an entry form, determines a swimmer's heat and lane in an event.
Session	Part of a swim meet. May not be longer than 4 hours excluding warm ups. Usually divided by age.
Set	A specific segment of practice; an example is 10 x 100.
Short Course	Meets held in 25 yard or 25 meter pools.
Split	A per lap (or length) time recorded by coaches for a swimmer. Splits are used to teach the concept of pacing. A swimmer's time for a 100 yard event is broken down into 25 yard splits.
Starter	The USA Swimming official at a meet who is responsible for starting each heat and calling the next heat to the blocks.
Streamline	The position used to gain maximum distance during a start and/or push off from the wall. The swimmer's body is as tight as it can be forming a pencil-like position with the hands forming the point.
Stroke Judge	A certified USA Swimming official who observes swims to insure that they are in compliance with USA Swimming rules.
Taper	The resting process in training. Prior to major competition training is tapered off to allow the swimmers to compete in a rested state sometimes referred to as super-compensation. When rested properly a swimmer will usually achieve lifetime best times.
Time Standards	Certain qualifying times which have been set up by USA Swimming for all events in all levels of meets to ensure that all competitors are of reasonably the same ability in the respective meets. The swimmer's goal should be improving their times, starting from a "B" time standard to a National time standard.
Time Trials	An event or series of events where swimmers may achieve or better a required time standard. Time Trials are sometimes conducted after regular swimming sessions to try and achieve a valid qualifying time.
Timed Finals	Swim meets where there are no preliminaries. The final places for each event are determined by the times performed in the heats.
Touch Pad	The part of an electronic timing system that rests in the water at the end of each lane. Swimmer's times are recorded when they touch the pad.

Trials and Finals Meets	Meets in which all swimmers must compete in a preliminary session. The fastest swimmers then return for the finals and consolations heats.
USA Swimming	The national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. Their website is www.usaswimming.org .
USA Swimming ID	The number given to a swimmer when they join USA Swimming which is required for all meet entries. No two swimmers can have the same number.
Warm Down	Low intensity swimming used by swimmers prior to a main practice set or race to get muscles loose and warm. Warm up gradually increases heart rate, respiration, and helps to prevent injury
Warm-Up	Used by the swimmer, prior to the main workout set or race, to get muscles loose and warm prior to competing.

2008-2009 Coaching Staff

Head Coach – Jeff Scrivener

Age Group Head Coach – Elyse Gibson

Team Administrator – Susan McDonald

Group Coaches

Andrew Clegg

Sam Daugherty

Jody Frey

Mark Mazzarella

Dan McGrain

Caitlin McGing

Curtis Patton

Athlete Assistant Coaches

Lizzi Carpenter

Kelsey Smith

Substitute Coaches

Maureen O'Donnell

Kelly Rende

2008-2009 Parent Board

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Administrative – Nancy Smith

Communications – Diane Goodridge

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