



Cleveland Aqua Tigers Swim Club

2008 Parent Handbook USA Swimming

Introduction Cleveland Aqua Tigers Swim Club is a 501(C)(3) non-profit-corporation with a charitable and educational exemption. The purpose of this handbook is two-fold: to explain to new members just what the Cleveland Aqua Tigers Swim Club (CAT) is and to outline various policies that affect all swimmers, year after year. It should be read by all families so that they may become familiar with important facts and rules of the club. This handbook and other club information can be obtained from our web site www.aquatigers.org.

General Description and Objective We offer an age-group youth program for children age 5 and up, from the beginning swimmer to the most competitive and skilled swimmer. When a young person becomes a member of CAT he / she learns the values of sportsmanship and team work. Swimming provides physical, emotional and intellectual skills that will last a lifetime.

The mission of Cleveland Aqua Tigers (CAT) Swim Club is to provide the youth of our community with a USA Swimming club and to promote the sport of swimming in our area. CAT will provide a positive atmosphere for swimmers to grow to their highest potential as an athlete and as a person. We strive to develop life long skills in leadership, good sportsmanship, and values of physical fitness that will make our young people the Leaders of tomorrow.

2008 Board of Directors The government of the Cleveland Aqua Tigers (CAT) is vested in the Board of Directors as described in the by-laws of the Cleveland Aqua Tigers Swim Club. A list of current officers as well as email contact information can be obtained on the CAT web site under the contact link or at the address <http://www.aquatigers.org/contact.html>. The current officers are as follows:

President	Barry O'Neal
Vice President	Donna Bryant
Secretary	Vernice Blackaby
Treasurer	Beth Godfrey
Pool Representative	Doug and Kristin Fuller
Assistant Pool Representative	Buck Meyer
Co Fund Raising Chair	Jay Leggett
Co Fund Raising Chair	Ed Stutzman
Publicity	Rhea Joyner
Member at Large	Melissa Roberts
Member at Large	Jeff Bryant

Program Fees The total cost of the 2008 USA program is listed on the web site under the Fees link shown on the left side or at the address www.aquatigers.org/Fees.html

The fees collected by CAT are primarily used to cover coaching salaries.

Club financial records are maintained by session, and available upon request.

Group Levels Senior – Open to High school and middle school age children who have the ability to meet the following standards:

- Swim a set of 10x100 freestyle on an interval of 1:30
- Swim a set of 10x100 individual medley on an interval of 1:45

Intermediate – Open to high school, middle school, and junior school ages who have the ability to meet the following standards:

- Swim a set of 6x50 freestyle on an interval of 60 seconds or the ability to swim a set of 6x100 on an interval of 2:00
- Swim a set of 6x50 butterfly on an interval of 1:30
- Swim a set of 6x50 backstroke on an interval of 1:15 or the ability to swim a set of 6x100 backstroke on an interval of 2:30
- Swim a set of 6x50 breaststroke on an interval of 1:15 or the ability to swim a set of 6x100 breaststroke on an interval of 2:45.

Junior – Open to swimmers who are able to swim at least 25 yards freestyle with correct breathing technique and be able to swim 25 yards breaststroke or be able to swim 25 yards backstroke. The swimmer must be able to complete the 25 yards without stopping. In addition, the swimmer should be able to perform a basic freestyle turn.

Stroke Clinic – Open to swimmers, who in the coaches estimation, will be able to progress to the Junior training squad in a minimum of one month and no more than 2 months. This group takes place 2 times a week for 45 minutes. No more than 5 swimmers may participate in this group. Swimmers who are not ready for the Junior group may be selected by the coach for this group. After a month of instruction, a child from this group should gain entry to the Junior training squad provided the minimum requirements are achieved. Swimmers who are well below the standard for this group are advised to partake in private lessons.

Practices Practice times vary from session to session. All groups and session times are located on the CAT web site under the Practice link or at the address <http://www.aquatigers.org/PracticeSchedule.html>

Each swimmer should be ready to go with cap and goggles in hand before the coach assembles the practice group.

Parents are welcome to attend practice but are asked to remain seated by pool deck. Coaches must be able to give their undivided attention to the swimmers in the pool. Practice is not the time to speak with the coach. Please wait until after practice to talk to a coach.

Swimmers who report to practice ill or are unable to swim for any reason known to the coach, may not leave the pool deck until the parent arrives. A child should not report to practice on day one of a cold or days 1 and 2 of the flu.

Practice Attendance Practice attendance is critical to the success of our team. Senior swimmers should strive to attend 5 practices per week. Intermediate & Juniors are recommended to attend (4) practices per week. Saturday practice for both the Senior and Intermediate group is by Coach's invitation only.

Practice Arrival / Departure It is very important that each child be at practice and on time. The stated times are when practice begins. Swimmers should be ready for practice 10 minutes before the stated practice time. The coaches will use the first few minutes of practice as a group to assembly for announcements, pep talks, stroke instruction, etc. and all swimmers need to be present to benefit from this time. The first part of practice is also used for stretching and warm-ups, which are necessary to prevent injury.

Parents, or guardians, should arrive to pick up swimmers 10 minutes before the practice completion time. Swimmers should be picked up from the pool as soon as their practices are complete. The coaches will not be available to supervise swimmers who are not involved in the current practice.

Any swimmer that is at the pool before or after his / her practice time will be required to remain seated at pool side. This is extremely important in order to ensure the safety of our children. Our coaches cannot safely supervise a work out and monitor the activities of children that are not in the pool. This means that swimmers will not be at liberty to wander around the building or property.

Please make sure that your swimmer is aware that this rule will be strictly enforced. Parents can help by being punctual both in delivering and retrieving your swimmers.

Practice Equipment Swimmers should bring cap, goggles, and towels to all practices. Parents should help younger swimmers adjust their goggles before practice. Coaches will not be available to provide this attention to each swimmer.

Swimmers should have a separate swimsuit for practices. Since the chlorine is really tough on suits your team suit should be reserved for meets. A practice suit can be an old team suit or any other racing style suit.

Swim caps are recommended especially for swimmers with long hair. The cap will help protect the hair from the chlorine and it will also keep the hair out of the swimmers face and eyes. If a cap is not worn, long hair should be firmly secured by some other means.

Swim fins are required for fall and winter season swimming. Kickboards are provided by the club when required for practice sessions. Hand paddles and pull buoys are not required, but more advanced swimmers may benefit from purchasing and bringing this type training gear.

General Code of Conduct

Swimmers are expected to follow pool rules at all times. The club has an obligation to act as guests while at the pool (both swimmers and parents). Every member of the club needs to do everything possible to respect this privilege. Any damages to property may result in financial liability of the swimmers parents. Any damage may also result in the swimmer being asked to leave the team permanently.

The coach should be informed in advance, if possible, of an illness or injury that will result in missed practices or meets.

Children not participating in swim practice or competitions must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Running, pushing, or horse play on the deck area or locker rooms are not permitted.

Swimmers who are waiting for transportation should always wait inside the swim area until that transportation arrives.

Persons who seem out of place or unfamiliar and activities of an unsafe, unusual nature should be reported immediately to the pool rep or coaching staff.

Practice Conduct for Swimmers

Swimmers are expected to follow instructions from the coaching staff. Disrespect or inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. While on deck, coaches are in charge of discipline.

Age appropriate disciplinary actions may include time-outs from practice, removal from practice, additional dry land exercises or additional laps. In the case of a severe or persistent behavior problem the coaches will confer with the CAT Board to determine the appropriate course of action.

Any swimmer, who practices behavior that the coach feels is contrary to standard behavioral norms, will receive a verbal warning from the coach. If the swimmer persists with this behavior or any other that is not conforming to the normal standards after the verbal warning, will be asked by the coach to leave the pool. The respective swimmer's parents will be called to pick up their child, and the coach will report the incident(s) to the Board, who in conjunction with the coach will take the necessary action in this regard.

Abusive language, lying, stealing, vandalism, and physical violence are not acceptable. Additionally, any behaviors which compromise the safety of the other swimmers or which impair the ability of other swimmers to practice will not be tolerated. These behaviors are detrimental enough to warrant strict disciplinary action and will be brought before the CAT Board to determine the appropriate course of action.

Swimmers will be expected to stay with their practice group for the duration of the practice. If a swimmer needs to leave the group for any reason he / she must get permission from the coach.

Any swimmer that is at the pool but not involved in a practice should be sitting at pool side.

Swimmers are encouraged to support their teammates at practice as well as in competition.

Attendance records will be kept and will be a factor in determining meet line-ups.

Practice Conduct for Parents

Parents are welcome and encouraged to stay and observe practices but we request that you follow a few general guidelines.

Parents may not communicate with the coach or their child under any circumstances during the course of a workout. In an emergency, the coach should be spoken to if the pool rep is not on the pool deck. Please wait until a break or until after practice to talk to a coach.

Please be considerate and keep conversations at a low volume level when on pool deck. Do not try to communicate with any swimmer in the pool. This is not only distracting to the swimmer, but can also be distracting to the entire team as well as the coach.

Leave the coaching to the Coaches! Our staff has been selected for their training and experience in competitive swimming and they will be able to give your swimmers the best possible coaching. Again, if you have a concern about something your swimmer is or is not doing then feel free to discuss it with the coach (after practice).

Have reasonable expectations! Although there is some stroke instruction during practice, especially for the younger swimmers, swim practice is not a replacement for swim lessons. A beginning swimmer may still benefit from some private or group lessons if he / she is having difficulty with a particular stroke. If you want to see further development in your swimmers skill, talk to the head coach about swim lesson possibilities.

Be willing to pitch in when asked. There are often times during practice when a coach or board member can use some help getting something moved, sorted, written, filed etc. Your help is always appreciated.

Communication with the Team (General) The Family File is the primary method that the team uses for relaying information to the family. Each family will have a folder in the Family file box and swimmers should remember to check their file each day. Ribbons, flyers, maps to swim meets, newsletters are all distributed via these files. You can also use the family file to return information or forms to the CAT coaches or board.

Please be sure that your swimmer knows to check this file. It will help keep coaches and board members from having to make dozens of phone calls. Please be prompt in responding to flyers and registrations. We give you deadlines so that the team can meet USA Swimming deadlines for registrations.

As the season progresses, you may have questions for either the coaches or for the CAT board. Any issues / problems / or complaints can be submitted on our website from the contact tab or at the address <http://www.aquatigers.org/contact.html>. Please use the Cleveland Aqua Tigers link under Swimmer Inquiry. It will then be forwarded to the appropriate individual(s) and someone will respond as quickly as possible. We rely on e-mail to communicate time critical information; please make certain you provide your e-mail address to the pool representative.

Communication with the Coaches If you would like to speak to a coach, we ask that you please wait until a time when the coach is not on deck supervising swimmers. Since the coaches might have a limited amount of time available after morning practice he or she may ask to set up a time for you to meet or talk by phone. Coach Tom can be reached at 423-478-8969 or an email to tomfraenkel@att.net.

Suits/Caps/Apparel Just as any other team sport requires a uniform for identification and team unity, we require a team suit and team cap in competition. The team suit and cap are required at all meets to avoid disqualification.

It is not necessary to order suits from CAT. Any solid royal blue race style suit is acceptable. Swim trunks are not acceptable for boys. It must be either the racer style suit or jammers. Suits for the girls should be one piece. The team cap is also required.

Swimmers (not necessarily males) are required to wear the CAT cap, silicone or latex with the CAT name on it while participating in all USA meets. School caps are not acceptable. The latex cap is the standard competition style swim cap. It is less expensive and will last a full season if it is properly stored. The silicone cap is more expensive and tends to last longer. Many swimmers find the silicone cap to be more comfortable as it doesn't pull the hair quite as much as the latex cap. The choice is really just a matter of personal preference.

Suits, caps, T-shirts, and goggles can be ordered during registration. Note that while you may be able to order these items at a later date, there is no guarantee that they will be available in time for the first few meets. Your best bet is to order early and go ahead and purchase everything you think you'll need for the season.

Affiliation Our year round program is affiliated with USA Swimming. USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. They administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Amateur Sports Act. More information on USA Swimming can be found at www.usaswimming.org. A link to this site can be found on the CAT web site.

Insurance It is required of all CAT swimmers that they have a current USA Swimming Registration. This not only supports swimming throughout the country, it also provides very important accident and medical insurance for every swimmer and every club. Each swimmer is covered at any organized practice of CAT and every competition that is USS sanctioned. A completed USA Swimming Registration Form and registration fee are required before a swimmer can attend practice.

Competition and Meets A schedule of meets is posted on the web site or at the address <http://www.aquatigers.org/meetschedule.html>. A swimmer must be current on their monthly swimming fees in order to be submitted for a scheduled swim meet.

The staff recognizes a dedication to practice and reliability of the swimmer. The coaching staff must try to balance participation with the best line up for the team's benefit in relays as individual events are personal based upon preference, skill, and specialty.

A list of swimming days and events will be posted on the CAT website a couple of weeks before the scheduled meet dates. The assignment of swimmers to various events is the responsibility of the coach. To be able to compete in an event, the swimmer must be able to complete the stroke legally. Incorrect execution of a stroke results in disqualification. The coach will work directly with the parents on which days the swimmer will be attending so the appropriate events can be determined.

Meet Attendance Meet attendance is crucial. Please review the CAT Meet schedule on the website for the full list of meets the team plans to attend. If you are unable to attend a specific meet, please notify the coaching staff as soon as possible.

Meet Entry Procedure Parents must communicate with the coach as to whether their child is available to swim in a meet by the cutoff date. Swimmers who have not replied by this date will not be entered in respective meet.

Coach will decide on the events that the swimmer should swim and these events will be passed on to the meet entry clerk.

A supplementary entry will be sent to parents and swimmers with a deadline for scrutiny. Any queries need to be taken up with coach before deadline for entry submission for the meet.

Away Meets Maps to away meets are usually put into the family folder one or two day's before the meet. Maps to most away pools can be found from a link at the CAT web site.

We attempt to carpool to meets to assure all swimmers have transportation – please support carpooling activity when possible.

Meet Procedures Swimmers should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to their warm up start time. Swimmers should wear team suits and caps. They should also make sure they have their goggles (a spare pair is also nice to have on hand)

Swimmers should report to the coach immediately upon arrival at the meet. Swimmers are expected to swim in all events entered unless the coach has scratched the swimmer for a specific reason. All warm ups are compulsory. Swimmers are requested to report to the coach before an event, and immediately after his / her event, perform the standard cool down. Thereafter the swimmer is required to report to the coach for discussion of his / her competitive swim.

Swimmers belongings should be placed in the area provided. CAT swimmers should stay in the designated area so the coaches can find you.

Swimmers should be aware of what events they are swimming. Heat sheets can be obtained at the meet which lists every event for the entire meet by day, stroke, and age group. The heat sheets usually range from \$5.00 - \$10.00. Some parents will go into together and share a heat sheet. Events will go on with or without the swimmers that are entered in them. If a swimmer is late to the starting block, they will likely find the event has started without them.

Conduct at Meets CAT swimmers are expected to display sportsmanlike conduct during all meets. Directions of coaches, officials, and parent volunteers are to be followed.

Swimmers and parents should follow all rules of the host team and host pool. CAT swimmers should be supportive of their teammates' efforts. Show good team spirit by cheering for teammates. Older swimmers should set good examples for younger swimmers.

Parents should be supportive of swimmers and coaches at the meets and should be respectful of the competition. The coaches spend a lot of time deciding the events for each swimmer.

CAT parents are expected to display sportsmanlike conduct during all meets.

Meet Essentials Sleeping bag / pillow for the swimmer to rest and relax between meets. Folding chair for the parents. Limited bleacher seating is available at the pool to watch events. Parents usually rotate out after their swimmer completes a race.

Small cooler with sports drink and water.

Light healthy snacks, granola bars, crackers, fruit, bagels etc.

Sharpie marker, highlighter, and pen

Money for heat sheet and concessions

2-3 towels are suggested for drying off during the meet and for a dry towel at the end of the meet.

Hoodie sweatshirt / pants to stay warm between events. We usually stay in a gymnasium at meets and walk back and forth to the pool area. This environment can be much cooler than pool deck.

Deck shoes or flip flops.

A quiet activity, games, books, cards etc for relaxing between events. Please remember any electronic games, iPods, MP3 players, or portable DVD players are YOUR responsibly.

Finances It takes money to run a swim team, and the Cleveland Aqua Tigers Swim Club operates on funds from a variety of sources. Income is derived from swim fees, corporate sponsors, and fund raisers. Expenses include coach's salaries, USA Swimming dues, training, equipment, and awards.

Fund Raising / Resource Development The CAT Board is striving to maintain reasonable swim fees while maintaining a quality program. Swim fees cover only a portion of the expenses incurred throughout the year. Your support in our fund raising activities is essential.

