

OTTAWA SWIM CLUB

Team Handbook



September 2005

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General.

1.1.1 Welcome to the Ottawa Swim Club, one of the premier swimming programs in Eastern Ontario. The coaches, swimmers, and families of the club are looking forward to meeting you and working with you throughout the swimming season. The club is a year-round competitive, high performance swim organization offering instruction, training and competition to young people of all ages and abilities.

1.1.2 The Club is a privately owned, non-profit organization. It is financed primarily through membership fees, corporate sponsorship, and fundraising.

1.1.3 We are extremely proud of this organization and the contributions that it makes to the lives of young people. The club is in its infancy of operation, with many members having a long history of the sport and who have a proven record of producing successful swimmers. We hope that your swimmers will benefit from and add to the rich traditions that will be developed here at Ottawa Swim Club.

1.2 Purpose

1.2.1 The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with essential information on all aspects of the club. It will help to familiarize your family with the Ottawa Swim Club and competitive swimming in general. You will be introduced to our vision and mission statements, goals, philosophy, team policies and the basic information concerning day-to-day participation in the program. It is our hope that this handbook will help you better understand and enjoy the inner workings of the swim club and the world of competitive amateur swimming.

1.3 Vision

1.3.1 The vision of the Ottawa Swim Club is to be the number one competitive swim club in the Ottawa area for competitive, high performance swimming. Therefore, the vision is stated as follows:

To be the centre of excellence for competitive, high performance swimming in the Ottawa area.

1.4 Mission

1.4.1 In keeping with the vision statement, the mission of the Swim Club is to develop and produce competitive swimmers of the required capability and knowledge to swim at the Provincial and National Levels. Therefore, the mission statement is as follows

To produce high performance, competitive swimmers at all levels

1.4.2 To achieve the principles set out in the mission statement, the following club goals have been established:

- To forge a high-level elite program, recognized for excellence in the Ottawa area swim community;
- To help our swimmers define, set and achieve their own personal goals for their swimming;
- To help our swimmers respect, encourage and celebrate the goals and successes of their teammates;
- To teach our swimmers, through the use of goals, the life skills, of self-discipline, mutual respect, teamwork, organization, dedication, commitment and self-motivation;
- To provide members of the club with a safe, respected environment in which to learn and develop their swimming capabilities;
- To encourage parent support and participation in the success of their children.

1.5 Club Philosophy

1.5.1. In order to achieve the goals of the club, the following key elements form the overriding philosophy of the organization:

- Each swimmer will be allowed to develop at his or her own development pace;
- Each swimmer shall be given the opportunity to learn the aspects of being a member of a swim team with respect to technique, training, and competing;
- Each swimmer will be given the opportunity to train for and compete to their maximum potential;
- The emphasis will be on developing a strong competitive, high performance club at all levels with appropriate feeder system;
- The Club will ensure that the coaching is of the highest quality available;
- Each swimmer shall be taught good sportsmanship and practice team spirit;
- Full participation by the swimmers and parents is encouraged to better enable the Club to meet its goals;
- Each swimmer competes individually for his/her own success but in relays, they swim in the order to field the strongest possible team for Club points. The coach will have the final say in this matter and his decision will be based on fastest times.

2 CLUB ORGANIZATION

2.1 General

2.1.1 The Ottawa Swim Club is a non-profit organization, incorporated under the laws of the Province of Ontario. It is funded through annual swim fees, corporate sponsorship, and fund-raising. The club is led by the Head Coach, who is responsible for the swim programs and is supported by an Advisory Board of Directors, that is appointed by the membership, in accordance with the club by-laws.

2.2 Advisory Board of Directors

2.2.1 The general responsibility of the Advisory Board of Directors is to support the effective management of the club on behalf of the whole membership, in accordance with the club by-laws. Specific responsibilities of the Advisory Board of Directors are found in the club by-laws.

2.2.2 The Advisory Board of Directors will be comprised of the following minimum positions:

- a. Director, Finance (Secretary/Treasurer);
- b. Director, Operations;
- c. Director, Communications; and
- d. Director, Marketing and Sponsorship

2.2.3 When required, the Advisory Board of Directors will establish special committees to address specific tasks, such as but not limited to Swim Meet Organization, Training of Officials, Policy Development, Marketing, Fundraising, Hiring of Personnel and so forth.

2.3 Club By-Laws

2.3.1 The club by-laws provide the legal basis for the governance of the club on behalf of the membership. The by-laws are initially approved by the members and can only be amended by a majority vote at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special Meeting requested by membership.

2.4 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

2.4.1 The club will hold an AGM in the Fall of every year, in accordance with the club by-laws. The agenda of the AGM will include as a minimum, the following items:

- Annual report from each Director:
 - Finance, Operations, Communications,
- Report from the Head Coach
- Reports from Special Committees

- Amendments to By-Laws
- Election of new Officers
- Establishment of annual goals/objectives.

2.5 Club Swim Programs

2.5.1 The Ottawa Swim Club has one pre-competitive and four competitive programs available for all ages. These programs are:

Program	Description
Pre-Competitive	Primarily for new swimmers and consists of 2 sessions per week. Introduces new swimmer to competitive swimming and teaches stroke basics in preparation for Development Level I.
Development Level I	Consists of 4 sessions/week, 2 sessions pre-competitive and 2 sessions competitive. Integrates swimmer into the competitive program.
Development Level II	Consists of up to 6 sessions/week. Swimmers must be at or near Regional Standard. There is increased intensity and training level.
Junior	Consists of up to 8 sessions/week. Swimmers must be at or near Provincial Standard and capable of regimented training program. Dry land training is introduced.
Senior	Consists of up to 10 sessions/week. Swimmers are committed and dedicated to intense training levels in the pool and on dry-land, are at or near National Standard, and are learning to race.

3. COACHING

3.1 General

3.1.1 The Coaching Staff is comprised of the Head Coach and assistant coaches. All assistant coaches report directly to the Head Coach. The Head Coach is responsible for all swim programs and works directly with the Senior, Junior and Developmental programs.

3.2 Coach Responsibilities

3.2.1 The coaches' job is to develop and supervise the entire competitive swim program. The coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for youngsters that will enable them to learn the value of striving to improve oneself to be the best they can be. Therefore, the coaches must be in total control in matters affecting training and competition.

3.2.2 The coaches are responsible for placing youngsters in the appropriate swim level. This placing is normally based on the age and ability of the individual swimmer. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, he/she will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach after consultation with the parents.

3.2.3 Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with the coaching staff. Each level/group's practices are based on sound scientific principles and geared to the goals of that level/group.

3.2.4 At swim meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. It is the swimmer's responsibility to check-in with a coach before and after each race. The coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmer's performance.

3.2.5 The building of a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.

3.2.6 The coaching staff is constantly updating and improving the club program. It is both the child's and parent's responsibility to make the most out of the excellent opportunity this program provides for the individual's success in swimming.

3.2.7 The Head Coach will appoint two Team Captains (one male and one female) for the swim season. The purpose of the team captains is to provide leadership and mentoring to the younger swimmers, instill club principles and provide disciplinary oversight. Normally, the team captains are the most senior members of the club and have demonstrated the highest standard of ethics and leadership.

3.3 Annual Performance Assessments

3.3.1 Annual performance assessments on each assistant coach will be conducted before the completion of the swim year. The assessment period will normally be from 1 September to 1 August.

3.3.2 The Head Coach will prepare the performance assessments and these assessments will be based on the performance objectives he has assigned to the individual assistant coaches.

4. CLUB POLICIES

4.1 Practice Attendance

4.1.1 All swimmers are expected to attend as many practices as possible. Senior and Junior level swimmers have a minimum practice attendance rule. The coaching staff conducts practice in a highly positive atmosphere with an appropriate degree of discipline

reflective of the age and maturity of the swimmers. Although it is realized that swimming should be fun for all those who participate, everyone must understand that the ultimate goal of the coaching staff is to make all swimmers better swimmers. Regular attendance at practices is part of the discipline of swimming, and should become routine. Only through practice can a swimmer hope to reach established goals.

4.1.2 Every swimmer should be on the pool deck ready to swim ten minutes before the scheduled starting time for practices. Late swimmers interrupt the flow of practice. Many times lane assignments are given prior to the start of practice and must be reassigned for late arrivals.

4.1.3 Every swimmer should plan to stay the entire practice. Practices are designed for the allotted time and the **last part of practice is as important as the first**. If a swimmer will be out of the water over a long period of time with an injury or illness, parents should notify the coaching staff so the coaching staff is aware of the problem.

4.1.4 Occasionally, most of a practice group may be attending a meet, in which case you will be notified of a practice change by email or through the website.

4.1.5 Parents are not allowed on deck during practice. Parents should not interrupt or talk to coaches on deck during the practice. A coach is usually available for discussion at the end of practice. If you have a question that does not require personally talking to a coach, or have information for a coach, you may bring the issue to the Coaches office.

4.2 Practice Equipment

4.2.1 All practice groups are expected to be at their designated starting places with their practice equipment ready to start practice on time. Standard equipment for all teams is a swimsuit (any make, any color), goggles (optional), swim cap (optional) and a towel. The following additional equipment is also required on a daily basis:

- **Flippers;**
- **Pull Buoy; and**
- **Paddles.**

4.3 Practice Behavior

4.3.1 Abusive language, lying, stealing, and/or vandalism are not tolerated by the club. These behaviors are directly contrary to the philosophy of this club and are detrimental enough to the group to warrant strict disciplinary action.

4.3.2 All swimmers are expected at all times to follow the verbal directions of the coaching staff. At no time will disrespectful attitudes be tolerated from any swimmer. When a coach signals that he/she is ready to explain a set or drill, a swimmer must stand up in the water and have eyes and ears open to accept directions. No talking will be allowed during explanations or announcements.

4.3.2 Failure to comply with the rules stated above can result in one of the following:

- First offense: A verbal warning.
- Second offense and later offenses: The swimmer will be benched or asked to leave practice and a discussion with parents to discuss the matter.
- Chronic offender: A parental meeting will be scheduled to discuss the concerns.

4.3.3 Swimmers may leave practice only with the coach's permission.

4.3.4 Swimmers are expected to follow the rules and regulations as posted in each practice or competition facility:

- Leave the facility as you found it. The club will tolerate no destruction or vandalism of property.

4.3.5 Swimmers are encouraged to support their teammates in practice as well as in competition. Working together as a unit for the benefit of all individuals of the group is an important part of the Ottawa Swim Club Team spirit.

4.4 Codes of Conduct

4.4.1 The codes of conduct or behaviour outlined below provide a guide of expectations for all participants in the Club, including swimmers, coaches, parents and Board members. The codes encourage a commitment to ethical and professional behaviour and reflect the underlying principles of the club. The codes apply to all practices, meets, meetings, and any other team functions. All club swimmers agree to abide by the standards of conduct in this section and any additional guidelines established from time to time by the Board of Directors or staff.

4.4.2 Swimmer's Code of Conduct. Each swimmer must resolve to conduct herself/himself with dignity as an athlete and as a citizen of the community, recognizing and accepting that he or she:

- Must accept accountability for her/his behaviour;
- Must honour her/his obligations and promises;
- Must exercise self control;
- Must be willing to be fair with others either on deck or off deck;
- Must take pride in her/his accomplishments/successes, but never at the expense of demeaning another person, group, or team;
- Must show respect at all times for other swimmers, coaches and parents;
- Must respect authority;
- Must compete in the spirit, not just the letter, of the rules of swimming and the rules of life;

- Must strive to make the community a better place through the contributions he or she makes,

4.4.2.1 All swimmers will adhere to all rules and regulations and will refrain from illegal and inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- a. During practices, all swimmers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that enables and promotes a learning atmosphere for everyone there. Abusive language and behavior or disrespectful acts toward teammates will not be tolerated.
- b. Appropriate behavior is to be displayed in locker rooms and the entire facility before and after practice and meets. Inappropriate behavior includes throwing items, rude remarks, physical contact and damage to the locker room area or any other area on the premises.
- c. Sportsmanlike conduct is the rule at all times. This includes showing respect for officials, competitors, teammates, coaches and the public. A swimmer is a representative of Ottawa Swim Club at all times, and his/her actions reflect on the club in and out of the pool.
- d. The possession, sale or use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, non-prescribed drugs and/or hazardous objects is prohibited at all times.
- e. Stealing is NOT permitted. No forms of vandalism or damage to any facilities or equipment used during a team function, whether at the pool or any other location, will be tolerated. Littering of any kind at practices or meets will not be excused.
- f. Club members must refrain from any offensive action, words or gestures, including obscenities, disrespectful cheers or other inappropriate forms of behavior.
- g. Club members are expected to behave in a responsible manner on transportation to and from meets. This includes avoiding excessive noise, throwing objects and disturbing the driver or other passengers.

4.4.3 Parents Code of Conduct. Each parent should pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for their child or children swimming with the club by following the codes outlined below:

- Encouragement of good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all swimmers, coaches, officials at all swim related events;

- Place the emotional and physical well-being of the child ahead of the desire to win;
- Insist that the child participate in a safe and healthy environment;
- Support coaches, officials and other club members working with your child in order to encourage an enjoyable experience for all;
- Demand a sports environment free from drugs, tobacco and alcohol and personally refrain from their use at swim events;
- Remember that swimming is for the swimmers;
- Make all efforts to ensure swimming is fun for the member;
- Advise the swimmer to treat other swimmers, coaches, parents and officials with respect.

4.4.3.1 In addition to the above, parents are reminded to follow the ‘Ten Rules by which to Parent your Swimmer’, as provided by Swim Canada:

- Provide your Swimmer with the best opportunity available;
- Support your swimmer;
- Create and maintain a positive environment at home;
- Love and accept your child unconditionally; criticize the act, not your swimmer.
- Let your child own her/his swimming. It is her/his sport, not yours.
- Make a contribution. Support the Club/Team.
- Make swimming a collaborative pursuit between swimmer, coach, and parent;
- Let the coach, coach.
- Demonstrate your value for competitive swimming excellence. Encourage your swimmer to play to win, but remember, it is just a game whereby most of the value stems from playing to win, not having won.
- Tell your swimmer, ‘to have fun’.

4.4.4 Coaches Code of Conduct. The function of a coach is to develop swimmers through the different stages by participation in an appropriate training program and competitions for their individual level. Each swimmer will be treated with respect, as the swimmers’ overall welfare is of primary consideration at all times. The coaches of the club pledge the following in the training of all swimmers:

- To recognize the tremendous influence they have on swimmers and never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character;
- To uphold the honour and dignity of the coaching profession and strive to set an example of the highest ethical and moral conduct;
- To take an active role in the prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse;
- To avoid the use of alcohol and tobacco products when in contact with or responsible for the swimmers;
- To exert influence on the swimmers and membership to enhance sportsmanship, and fair play;

- To constantly demonstrate self-control, respect for others, and professionalism on a daily basis;
- To understand and balance internal and external demands on the swimmers, to help them achieve their swimming goals;
- To treat all swimmers with respect, dignity, and equality;
- To maintain a policy of continuous improvement, for swimmers as well as coaches through increased qualifications and application of the latest coaching philosophies, techniques and principles; and
- To understand that physical contact with the swimmers should always be appropriate to the situation and only necessary for the swimmer's skill development.
- To use discipline appropriate to the situation.

4.4.4 Advisory Board of Directors Code of Conduct. Each Advisory Board member must recognize that the authority is vested in the Board when acting as Board member and not in the individual Board members. Members are expected to act in the interest of the entire Club and to make decisions that result in improved management of the club. Therefore, Board members are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the club by-laws and the following principles:

- To listen carefully to fellow Board members and other club members;
- To respect the opinions of fellow Board members;
- To respect and support any decision of the Board;
- To recognize the authority is vested in the entire Board and not individually as members;
- To be well-informed of developments that are relevant to issues that may come before the Board;
- To participate actively in Board activities and to take on meaningful tasks;
- To bring to the attention of the Board, any issue that needs to be resolved by the Board;
- To understand the needs of the membership and to communicate those needs to the Board, when required;
- To commit to the hiring of the most qualified coaching and administrative staff available, within the club's budget.
- To represent the entire membership and not special interest groups or a particular swim level;
- To consider oneself as a trustee of the organization to ensure the club is well maintained, financially sound, and improving;
- To declare any conflict of interest between one's personal life and the position held on the Board.

4.4.4.1 Board members are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical, respectful and moral manner at all times. As such, members of the Board will not:

- Be critical in or outside the Board meeting, of fellow board members or their opinions;
- Use the board for personal advantage or advantage for friends and relatives;
- Discuss confidential matters of the Board outside the Board meeting with non-board members of the club;
- Promise to vote in a particular way prior to a Board meeting;
- Interfere with the duties of the Head Coach and his/her staff at any time.

4.4.5 Violations of any of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which could include removal from the club.

5. *SWIM MEET INFORMATION*

5.1 Classification of Meets

5.1.1 Classified Age-Group Meets – there are six general age groups in Canadian Swimming: 10 & under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-17, 15 & over and senior. The senior age group includes any age Swim Canada-registered swimmer who has achieved the prescribed qualifying time for the events. Age on the first day of the meet will govern the swimmer's age for the entire meet.

5.1.2 Within each age group, there are different regional classifications (E, D, C, B, A, provincial and national). Time standards for each classification are established and published each year by Swim Ontario and Swimming Canada. In order to swim in a certain classification, a swimmer must have achieved the qualifying time for that particular classification. This permits fair yet challenging competition on all levels.

5.1.3 Dual Meets – Occasionally, Ottawa Swim Club will compete with one other team in a dual meet. These meets help promote team unity but usually limit the number of events a swimmer may enter.

5.1.4 Eastern Ontario Championships – All registered swimmers of Swim Ontario that meet the qualifying criteria may compete in the winter and summer championships.

5.1.5 Eastern Canadian Championships – One of the higher levels of achievement club swimmers strive for is participation in the Eastern Canadian Championships. Swimmers meeting qualifying time standards for this meet travel to different locations throughout Eastern Canada to compete against the best swimmers in the eastern part of the Country.

5.1.6 Club Nationals, National Age Group Team Championship. Standards set by Swim Canada for all Age groups. Brings all Canadian teams together for a national club championship.

5.1.7 Swim Canada National Championships (Senior Nationals) – Other than the Olympic Trials and the World Championship Trials (which are held once every four years), the highest level of competition for our swimmers is the Swim Canada National Championships. As with Eastern Canadians, swimmers meeting the national time standards travel to various cities in the Country to compete against Canada's best swimmers.

5.2 Meet Schedule

5.2.1 The season's meet schedule is distributed to each swimmer and family. It is also posted on the website.

5.2.2 The meet schedule has been established to allow each swimmer to compete in approximately one meet per month. We do not schedule any meets unless we feel it is important to participate.

5.2.3 On an average, all team members should compete once every four weeks. The meet schedule is established with this philosophy in mind.

5.2.4 There are sanctioned meets in our area that the team does not choose to attend. Swimmers may swim in these meets with the approval of the club coaching staff.

5.2.5 The club coaching staff reserves the right to advise swimmers as to the events in which each swimmer should be entered.

5.3 How to Enter Meets

5.3.1 Meet information packets will be handed out in advance up to a month prior to the date of the meet. If the meet is in your classification, read all the information carefully. Note the date the sign-up is due. It is usually a couple weeks before the date of the meet. ***No late entries will be accepted.***

5.3.2 If you intend to attend the meet, list the events you wish to swim on a meet entry form.

5.3.3 The swimmer's best time must equal or better the qualifying time in order to enter a particular event.

5.3.4 If you have any questions about whether to enter a meet or which events to enter, always discuss this with your coach.

5.3.5 Coaches may discuss with swimmers before sign-up to advise them as to the best events for them to swim. After completing the entries the coach will post the entry worksheets at the pool. It is the parent's responsibility to verify the meet entry to make sure they are the correct events for your swimmer.

5.3.6 Attach a check for the full amount due and staple to the entry form and return it to your coach or team administrator. A complete form with meet dues and surcharges will be provided.

5.3.7 Occasionally, a swimmer will forget to enter an event in a meet that he/she should swim. If space is available and the Meet Director is willing, a late entry may be permitted. The fee is usually double the normal entry fee and sometimes must be paid on the deck by the swimmer to the clerk of course.

5.4 Behavior at the Swim Meets

5.4.1 Whenever and wherever an Ottawa Swim Club swimmer wears any item of the team uniform, the individual should remember that his/her actions and words reflect on the team they represent and they should behave accordingly. Let your actions reflect the pride you have in the Ottawa Swim Club organization.

5.4.2 As a matter of courtesy to the officials and meet hosts, parents must stay off the deck and competition venue unless they are competing or servicing in an official capacity.

5.4.3 Any questions that swimmers or parents may have concerning meet results, an officiating call or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the coaching staff. If appropriate, the coach will pursue the matter through the proper channels.

5.4.4 As a matter of pride, leave the swim area in a neat and clean condition at the conclusion of the meet.

5.4.5 Club members are never to scratch or late enter an event without first consulting one of the coaches.

5.4.5 In a meet with preliminaries and finals, it is expected that any club member, who qualifies to swim in the finals, will do so.

5.5 Receiving Awards in Public

5.5.1 Whenever there is a system of presenting awards at a meet, it is customary for swimmers to be prompt and to cooperate fully with dignity and respect at the presentation. If a swimmer owns a full club uniform, it should be worn when accepting an award. It is also customary for our swimmers to be polite and modestly thankful for any awards they receive. It is appropriate to congratulate other swimmers and to receive like congratulations with poise and a “thank you.” Good sportsmanship is essential.

5.5.2 If photos are being taken, we ask the swimmers to remain until the shooting is complete, being sure to cooperate with the photographer. Don’t ham it up! The picture may be special to someone else. The image you present is a reflection of the team.

5.6 Out of Town Meets

5.6.1 Trips to meets in other cities become an important aspect of a swimmer's career while advancing through your swimming career. The Club has established the following policies for the safety of the swimmer and peace-of-mind of his/her parents:

5.6.2 The Club is responsible for arranging transportation and lodging to away meets. With the exception of All-star or tour team competitions.

5.6.3 Parents are encouraged to attend out-of-town meets. Chaperoning will be set by the club. These trips can be great fun for parents and swimmers alike and are rare opportunities to participate in a special way in each young swimmer's career.

5.6.4 A coach has too many responsibilities to the team as a whole to accept responsibility for an individual swimmer. Therefore, do not ask a coach to provide transportation.

6 PARENTAL COMMITMENT

6.1 General

6.1.1 When you register your swimmer with the club, you are making a commitment of your time and finances.

6.1.2 Since the club is self-supporting, club revenue comes from registration and payment of dues, meet income, fundraising and sponsorship. All officers/positions with the club are unpaid volunteers except for the coaches. The club requires a large number of volunteers to run the program. If you are interested in becoming involved please contact the Head Coach.

6.1.3 Registering with the swim club commits you to paying the full registration fee in a timely manner as described in the payment schedule. Should your swimmer not attend practice or stop swimming, you are still committed to paying the full cost of their program. Only in case of a valid medical excuse from your doctor will your fee be adjusted. A payment schedule is offered. Past due balances will not be tolerated. Your fees will include your swim Ontario fee.

6.1.4 As a member of Eastern Ontario Swim Association we are committed to volunteer at the summer championships. The number of volunteer spots is based on entry compliments. Various jobs are available at the meet and a notice will be out well before the meet date.

6.1.5 Normally, fund raising will be accomplished through corporate sponsorship, government grants and team functions involving the swimmers. However, there may be a requirement to involve parents with fund raising. In this situation, the fund raising

commitment will be determined by the group placement of your swimmer. If you have more than one swimmer, the fund raising commitment will be based on the level of the highest swimmer.

6.1.6 Any assistance that the parents can provide to support club fund raising would be greatly appreciated.

6.1.7 The Club offers all levels of competitive swimming. The determination of what group your swimmer(s) is placed in, is determined by the Head Coach on recommendations by the assistant coaches. The swimmers are grouped by their ability to perform the practice, their fitness level and their age. Parents may discuss their swimmer(s) group level at any time with the Head coach. At some point during the season, a coach may approach you regarding moving your swimmer up a level. Swimmers who move up a level during the season will have the higher-level dues rate pro-rated.

6.2 Parent-Swimmer-Coach Cooperation

6.2.1 To have a successful program, there must be complete understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers and coaches. The progress that the swimmer makes depends to a great extent on this triangular relationship. It is amazing how much a swimmer can progress in one session; however, there will be some ups and downs. It is with this in mind that parents are asked to consider the following section carefully.

6.3 Parent Guidelines

6.3.1 Parents have done a great deal to raise their child. They create the positive environment in which the child is growing up. The child is a product of the parents' values, the structure that the parents have provided and the model or example set by the parents. Human nature, however, is such that a person loses some ability to remain detached and objective in matters concerning his/her children. The coaching staff's experience has found that the following guidelines will help you keep the swimmer's development in the proper perspective:

- a. Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to the various methods of presenting skills. Some swimmers obviously take more time to learn. This requires more patience on the part of the parents and the coaches.
- b. Plateaus can occur at one time or another in every swimmer's career. Plateaus can be in both competition and training. A plateau signifies the swimmer has mastered lower-ordered skills, but they are not yet sufficiently automatic to leave the attention free to attack newer, higher-order skills. It is important to explain to the athlete that plateaus can occur in all fields of physical learning. The more successful athletes are those who work through this passing delay in

improvement and go on to achieve greater performance, approaching their personal potential.

- c. Younger swimmers are the most inconsistent swimmers; this can be frustrating for the parent, coach and swimmer alike. We must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport.
- d. Parents must realize that slow development of competitive drive at an early age is normal and perhaps more desirable than forced early development. It is important that everyone learn to compete and develop some competitive spirit. It is also important for children to learn to adapt at reasonable levels of emotional stress. The small disappointments they must learn to handle as youngsters prepare them for the larger ones they are certain to experience as adults.
- e. It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent and coach's job to supply recognition and encouragement to help the young athletes feel good about themselves.
- f. Parents' attitudes often dictate those of their children. A child might not be consciously aware of what is taking place while subconsciously absorbing powerful messages about their parent's desires. For example, be enthusiastic about taking your child to meets and practice, fund raising projects and meetings – don't look at these functions as chores.
- g. If parents can offer insight on their child that will enable that child's coach to work more effectively with that child, please be sure to contact that coach.
- h. If you have any questions about your child's training or team policies, contact your child's coach directly. Criticizing the coach in front of the child undermines the coach's authority and breaks the swimmer-coach support necessary for maximum success.
- i. No parent should behave in such a way as to bring discredit to the child, the team or competitive swimming. Any disagreement with a meet official should be brought to the attention of the coach and handled by the coach.
- j. Be sure your child swims because he/she wants to. People tend to resist anything they "have to do." Self-motivation is the stimulus of all successful swimmers.
- k. The communication between the coach and the swimmer is very important. A two-way relationship must exist daily at practice. It is imperative that the coach has the swimmer's full attention at these times. It is for that reason that we ask parents to watch practice only from gallery or stands of the venue your child is participating and do not participate in any coaching in any manner.

6.3.2 In general, it is best for parents to refrain from making stroke corrections or trying to coach their swimmer. When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim, it causes considerable, and often times, insurmountable confusion as to who the swimmer should listen to and respect. If you differ with something, please discuss privately with the coach.

6.3.3 Remember that the attitude and behavior of the parents in regard to their outlook on the sport has an important effect on the child. In swimming, as in life, nobody can “win” or succeed all the time – there will always be disappointment. Every youngster can gain from his or her experience whether or not on striving to do better next time. The secret is not only to produce great swimmers, but also to produce great young people to swim.

7 COMMUNICATIONS

7.1 General

7.1.1 An important link of the swimmer, coach, parent triangle is the parent-coach communication line. Parents are kept informed of club activities through email and the club website.

7.1.2 If any questions or problems should arise, the lines of communication between the coaches and parents will always be open. Feel free to call the Head Coach about problems or suggestions concerning your child. It is very important that you let us know if there is anything we can do to aid your swimmer in his/her full enjoyment of the sport and to meeting his/her maximum potential.

7.2 Forms of Communication

7.2.1 The main methods of communication and information dissemination within the club are as follows:

- a. *Club Web-site* – Information on Club activities, registration, coaches, contacts, meetings, etc. (www.ottawaswimclub.ca)
- b. *E-mail* – The club will notify all members through personal e-mail addresses. Furthermore, any issue or concern can be raised by contacting the club through the following e-mail site: info@ottawaswimclub.ca .
- c. *Team Roster* – A complete roster is issued following completion of registrations each year. It lists each swimmer’s name, parent’s names, address, phone number, date of birth and level in addition to listings of all board members, staff and standing committee chairpersons.

- d. *Parent Meetings* – Parent meetings will be held at a location generally at the pool where your child trains as appropriate to discuss concerns, ideas and suggestions for the program.
- e. *Team Captains* – Each swim season, the Head Coach will appoint two team captains (one male and one female). The Team Captains will be used by the Head Coach for various duties including communication. The Team Captains also provide a means for swimmers to raise issues for discussion with the Head Coach.

7.2 How to Contact the Club

7.3.1 The club can be contacted by the following means:

By E-mail: info@ottawaswimclub.ca

By telephone: (613) 834-3426

By mail: Ottawa Swim Club
6359 St Louis Drive
Orléans ON
K1C 2X9

8 GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS

Age group swim meet – all Swim Ontario registered swimmers, who have met the qualifying time standard for a specific event(s) are eligible to participate in their age category. Age on the first day of competition shall govern the entire meet.

Deck seeding – a procedure of assigning swimmers to proper lanes and heats immediately before each event at the ready bench at the meet.

Finals – the session of a meet where qualifying rounds were held previously to determine the finalists. The finalists compete to determine the winner.

Heat Sheet – the listing of swimmers participating in a meet. Items are listed by event and by heat.

Long Course – a type of competitive pool which measures 50 meters in length. The standard size for all international competition and all world record swimming is the 50-meter course. Typically meets in these pools are conducted from the end of March through August.

Eastern Ontario Swim association – the regional area in which the Ottawa Swim Club competes.

OTTSC – abbreviation for the Ottawa Swim Club.

OSSC – abbreviation for the Ottaws Sports Science Centre.

Prelims – in certain meets, the qualifying rounds held for each event to determine the finalists.

Proof of time – a requirement at some meets (usually “A” and above) to make certain that all swimmers have legally met the time standards for that meet.

Psyche sheet – a ranking by seeding times for all the swimmers entered in each race of a meet, sometimes used at meets in place of heat sheets.

Seeding times – the time a swimmer uses to enter a meet. This time, which is located in the heat sheet, determines one’s position and lane in the particular event.

Senior swim meet – all Swim Ontario registered swimmers who have met the qualifying time standard for a specific event(s) are eligible to complete.

Short Course – a type of competitive pool which measures 25 meters in length. Typically meets are conducted in these pools from October to March.

Split – a per lap time that coaches often record for teaching the concept of pacing, for instance, a swimmer’s time for each 25 meter leg of a 100 yard event in his/her split.

Swim-a-Thon – a swim to raise funds in which each team member solicits pledges per length for a maximum of 200 lengths or 2 hour time period. A portion of the proceeds goes to the Swim Ontario and the rest to the team.

“Swim News” – a monthly magazine with articles and stories about competitive swimming as well as some regional and all national meet results.

Time standards – certain qualifying times which have been set up annually by the Provincial and National governing bodies for all events in all levels of meets to insure that all competitors are of reasonably the same ability in their respective meets. The swimmer’s goals should be betterment of his/her time.

Touch pad – the part of an electronic timing system that rests in the water at the finishing end of each lane. Swimmer’s times are electronically recorded when the pad is touched.