

WAAC

West Allegheny
Aqua Club
Handbook

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WAAC Mission Statement

The purpose and mission of the West Allegheny Aqua Club is to provide young swimmers with the skill, desire, attitude, and competitive spirit that will enable them to achieve great things in the pool and in their life.

WAAC Goals

To create a desire and atmosphere in which children improve their swimming skills and reach the goals they have set for themselves

To meet the desires of a wide range of athletes, from entry level to swimmers who wish to compete at the national level

To teach young swimmers how to be a valuable part of a team by supporting it and working with others to achieve a goal

To empower the young swimmer to be champions in and out of the water for a lifetime

To establish a comprehensive competitive swim program for our community

“Welcome to West Allegheny Aqua Club!”

Swimming is more than a sport- it is a way of life. Swimming is an excellent lifetime activity for health and well being. But swimming is more than just exercise. Athletes in USA Swimming programs learn about perseverance and determination, goal setting and achievement, dedication and commitment. Swimmers learn time management skills, self-discipline, courage and self-control. They learn how to win and lose with grace, and what it takes to strive for excellence. They take these skills with them into school, work and life. Each swimmer is a valuable member of the team and swimmers learn cooperation with fellow teammates and adults.

Above all, competitive swimming is fun!!

*This handbook was designed to answer some of the questions you may have about West Allegheny Aqua Club’s program. We hope you find this handbook a useful reference throughout the swim season. The WAAC website also provides current updates and important team information about the club so please check the website frequently at **HYPERLINK** "<http://www.waswim.org>" www.waswim.org . However if you have other areas of uncertainty, please feel free to call me at (724) 695-8484. Again, on behalf of our Board, I welcome you and your child and I hope the experience will be rewarding to both of you.*

Go WAAC!

*Rick Schlor
President*

WAAC BOARD

The Board governs the activities of the WAAC, and is in turn bound by the WAAC By-Laws (Appendix A). The Board is composed of eleven (11) Directors who are elected for terms of three (3) years each. Every year 3 or 4 Directors are elected at the Annual Meeting of Members. Directors are limited to two consecutive terms on the board. Please address any concerns or comments to one of the Board members.

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------|
| President: | Rick Schlor | |
| Vice-President | Debbie Kaulius | |
| Secretary: | Tracy Tokarski | |
| Treasurer: | Linda Routch | |
| Members at Large: | Drew Hanson | Lori Painter |
| | Jill Josey | Amy Thomson |
| | Dave Vollmer | Kristin Cook |

ABOUT THE COACHES

Nothing has greater influence on the quality of Children's sports than the excellence of the coaches. The West Allegheny Aqua Club staff consists of professionally trained coaches. They are certified coaches of the American Swimming Coaches Association. Each coach has received training and has experience in the physiology and psychology of adolescent development. Our Coaching staff consists of Head Coach Bob Miller, Assistant Head Coach George Winter, Assistant Coach Kim Schade, Assistant Coach Courtney Fazenbaker and our fill-in coaches as needed Missy Kehl and Carl Pietroboni.

The following is background information on each coach.

Bob Miller

Bob has been the Head Coach for WAAC since 1994. He brings to the sport over 30 years of experience both as a competitor and as a coach. He has coached 3 State Champions, 2 YMCA National Champions and numerous U.S. Swimming Zone and Jr. National Qualifiers. He has been selected as Mid-Atlantic Zone Coach once and AMS Zone Coach numerous times plus was voted AMS Coach of the year for 1992. Bob is also the Head Coach for West Allegheny High School's Varsity and Middle School swimming programs. Bob was recently recognized as the 2009 Allegheny Mountain Association's Age Group Coach of the Year.

George Winter

Started swimming in a local Learn-to-Swim program at the age of 3yrs old and has been active in competitive swimming as a swimmer and coach. He started to teach swimming when he was 12 years old and after college enlarged his family sporting goods store by adding a flume to give competitive swim lessons and also became the fifth leading seller of Speedo apparel on the east coast. He has enjoyed great success in swimming, teaching and coaching for 35 years. He swam local YMCA, AAU, USA, High school and College. He was nationally ranked in many events; distance, freestyle, fly, breast and was fifth in the 400IM. As a coach he feels blessed to work with some wonderful children and with the help of other great coaches and parents developed swimmers into local, state, and national age group champions. He also placed a graduating class of 12 swimmers into division one college swimming programs. He's been a head coach, head age group coach, private coach, volunteer coach and has helped teams grow in numbers and quality of swim stroke development.

Kim Schade

Kim swam for about 9 years with WAAC and West A. She has recently graduated from Duquesne Univ. and is currently working at the Dick's Sporting Goods corporate office. She was a strong swimmer - Zones - WPIALS - State qualifier when she swam. She swam a strong sprint free / backstroke for us along with being able to swim and teach any stroke. Kim is a very fun and upbeat young lady who is a solid edition to our coaching staff.

Courtney Fazenbaker

Courtney swam from 1999 to 2011, throughout high school and college. She taught swim lessons and helped coach the Montour Marlins. She swam varsity at Montour High School where she was a letterman, states qualifier and record holder. Courtney swam club at West Allegheny Aqua Club where she qualified for three Allegheny Mountain All Star Zones Teams. She received a swimming scholarship to Wheeling Jesuit University where Courtney swam for two years before transferring to Robert Morris University where she is currently studying communications, with a concentration in advertising.

COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES

The coach's job is to supervise the swim program. West Allegheny Aqua Club coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for swimmers that will enable them to learn the value of striving to improve oneself "to be the best you can be".

The coaches are responsible for placing swimmers in practice groups according to age, ability level, and commitment level. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, he/she will be placed in a more challenging group by the coach.

Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and training regimen rests with the West Allegheny Aqua Club coaching staff. Each group practice is based on sound scientific principles and is geared to the goals of that group.

At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-ups. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to offer love and understanding regardless of their child's performance.

In dual meets it is the coach's responsibility to enter a swimmer into events that they will be competing in.

In USS Meets the coaches will enter a swimmer into an event after the swimmer has committed to the swim meet.

The building of the relay team is the sole responsibility of the coach staff.

TEAM LEVELS

West Allegheny Aqua Club provides swimmers the opportunity to enter into a novice program and progress to a top elite national and high school swimming program. WAAC is divided into several team levels which are based on the swimmer's abilities and age level. At the beginning of each season, the coaches determine the level that each swimmer will enter. As your swimmer improves, the coaches may recommend that your child progress to the next level. Below provides a brief overview of each level.

Ripples Group – Introduction into the competitive sport of swimming for the swimmer in elementary grades (ages 6 & up). This program is limited to 1st year swimmers only. Session is approximately 10-11 weeks long with practice 2- 3 days a week for 1.5 hours. Emphasis is on stroke development and the team sport of swimming. Competes at the local level and within the quad meet league.

Breakers Group – Practices up to 4 times a week for 1+ hours. This group is for swimmers age 9-12 who have general skills and are working to get to the next level. Competes at the local level and within the quad meet league.

Whitewater Group – Practices up to 6 times a week for 2+ hours. This group is for swimmers age 10 & up who have strong skills and ability to handle hard workouts, plus consistent practice attendance. Competes at the local and regional levels. Most of these swimmers participate in the middle school program.

Tsunami Group – Practices up to 8 times a week for 3+ hours. This group is for the more accomplished and committed swimmers in high school grades 9-12. Competes at the local, regional, and national levels. Most of these swimmers participate in the high school program.

SWIMMERS TRAINING AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Practices are essential for training swimmers in stroke technique, form, and speed. It is important that each swimmer attend as many practices as possible in order to derive full benefits. Each training group has specific attendance requirements/recommendations appropriate for the objectives of that group. W.A.A.C. recognizes that the swimmers may also have other activities, and encourages this. However, we need to realize that the expectation level of coaches to attend practice increases as swimmers move on to higher groups.

Our Ripples Program is offered 3 days a week and at this level we recommend a minimum of 2 practices a week. The Breakers Program is offered 4 days a week and at this level we recommend a minimum of 3 practices a week. It is highly encouraged that swimmers in the Whitewater and Tsunami groups attempt to attend all scheduled practices. All practices are at the West Allegheny High School pool.

Swimmers should be on deck with all necessary equipment five (5) minutes prior to the start of practice. **For their protection, they should arrive no earlier than 15 minutes prior to practice and should be picked up no later than 15 minutes after practice. If for some reason a coach is not present, please do not leave swimmers unattended. This is for your**

child's protection. Swimmers must be escorted into the swimming area, not dropped off at the front door of the building. Your child should wait inside the doors for pick up after practice.

Swimmers should stay for the entire practice. Often the last few minutes of practice are the most important part. **If an early dismissal is necessary, please send a note.**

Whenever possible, please inform the coach of an illness or injury that will keep your child from swimming. This is especially important if the illness or injury will affect a meet.

West Allegheny High School is very generous in allowing us the use of these facilities for our practices and meets. We need to keep in mind that we are guests here. There is to be no running, throwing objects, pushing, etc. in the hall, locker rooms, or on the pool deck. Do not wander about the school or play around the phone located in the hall. Any damage to school property may result in the swimmer being asked to leave the team.

SWIMMER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Any swimmer known to use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco is subject to suspension from the team.

Never interfere with the progress of another swimmer during practice or otherwise.

At all club functions, (meets, practices, or social events), we expect each swimmer to behave in such a way that reflects positively on the team.

Each swimmer is expected and required to support and respect their fellow team members and practice good sportsmanship.

PRACTICE/TRAINING: PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

To have a successful program, there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress your child makes depends to a great extent on this triangle relationship.

The Coach is the Coach! When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim or train, it causes confusion. If you have a problem, concern, or complaint, please contact the coach.

The Best Kind of Parent - The coach's job is to motivate and constructively criticize the swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply love, recognition and encouragement that in turn gives your child the confidence to perform well.

Ten and Under - These are the most inconsistent swimmers and this can be frustration for parents, coaches and swimmers. Be patient and permit them to learn to love the sport.

Fuel for their tanks - Parents should contribute to the education of and provision for proper nutrition and eating habits.

Parents are not allowed on the pool deck during practice at the High School unless it is an emergency or they have been asked to help time swimmers.

Parents are allowed to observe practice from the observation area. Please do not try to communicate with any swimmer during practice, as this can be distracting for the swimmer as well as the team and staff. Also, please keep in mind that the same rules regarding running in the halls and respect to school property also apply to all family members present. Please remember that all schools are smoke-free environments. Any damage to school property may result in financial liability for the parents.

COMMUNICATION

Website

Our primary means of communication between the board, coaching staff, and swimmers this year will be the website, HYPERLINK "http://www.waswim.org" www.waswim.org. Please check the site frequently for updates and important team information. We will try to post changes in practices, especially cancellations, daily.

Club Bulletin Board Area

Located upstairs in the viewing area for the pool, is the Club's Bulletin Board area. Please check this area regularly to stay informed. Posted on the bulletin board or located on the table under the bulletin board will be the following:

Invitations to US/AMS Meets – Year Round
Job Sign Ups for home meets hosted by WAAC
Food Donation Lists for home meets hosted by WAAC
General Information regarding Club Issues
Meet Entry Report for meets attended by our club
Fundraising Information
Apparel Information and Order Forms
Board and Membership Meeting Minutes

The red box is located by the bulletin board and this is for monthly registration payments, meet fees, and any communication you need to have with the treasurer.

Talking to the Coaches

If you have concerns about your swimmer, questions regarding swimmer's events or times, the coaches are there to assist you. When contacting the coaches, the best time to speak with them is after practice. Should you not be able to do this or if you may require more time, please set something up after practices with the coaches. Sending a note with your concerns or questions to

the coach is also a good way to communicate or you can email Coach Bob Miller at HYPERLINK "mailto:coachmiller@zoonimternet.net" coachmiller@zoonimternet.net Please save phone calls to the coach's home for urgent matters that cannot be handled otherwise.

Electronic Mail

Our club also communicates club news via email; therefore we would like an email address that you check frequently at registration. Please check it daily for information on practice cancellation, USS/AMS meet invitation postings, warm up times and directions to meets, etc.

Directory

You will be given a membership directory of those families who gave permission to publish their e-mail address and phone numbers. The directory includes the child's name and group that they are in. This may be helpful if you are looking for a particular parent of one of the swimmers or the e-mail or phone number of one of the Board Members.

FUNDRAISING

Group Fundraising

Periodically, the club will have group fundraising activities depending on any donations we may get for a raffle or if we are trying to purchase a costly item, e.g. new timing equipment. We do expect families to participate.

Scrip

WAAC families can purchase gift certificates for various retailers, restaurants, hotels, airlines and services through a program we have with Great Lakes Scrip. Each SCRIP purchase earns credits for your personal account. For a detailed list of participating retailers, check their website at HYPERLINK "http://www.glscrip.com" www.glscrip.com . For more information and to submit your orders, Debbie Kaulius is available at the high school pool area during Wednesday evening practice. Gift cards ordered are usually received the following week.

Meets

Our hosted meets are our biggest team fundraisers so it is vital that we have participation from all of our member families!

PARENTAL MEET PARTICIPATION

It is crucial to have each parent's support at home and away meets. At some away meets especially if they are an AMS sponsored meet, we will be required to have volunteers to help in

some capacity. An e-mail usually will be sent with who is needed. Without your help we will not be able to host swim meets, which make up a large amount of our annual budget. Every family of the Tsunami, Whitewaters, Breakers and Ripples group are expected to participate at the home meets. Families of the Ripples group are encouraged to participate at the home USA swim meets and must participate at the developmental quad meets.

Work Commitments

Tsunami, Whitewaters, and Breakers parents (or child 7th grade and older if parent is not available) are required to work at least 2 sessions of the 4 session US/AMS Swim Meets hosted by WAAC. The Ripples are required to work 1 US/AMS Swim Meet and 1 Quad Meet. These sessions can be any combination of sessions e.g. morning and afternoon of the same day or a morning/morning of two different days or afternoon/afternoon of two different days. We host two AMS/US Meets per Fall/Winter season; therefore the total work commitment for the season is **4 sessions**. The exception to this is if you are an official; your commitment is 1 session each meet for a total of **2 sessions** (this is outside of your responsibility as an official.

At each meet, the Meet Director will check in all volunteers so make sure that you are accounted for so you get credit for participating. This will be our record that you fulfilled your member requirement. It is **YOUR responsibility** to make sure that you have signed in properly. **IF YOU DO NOT FULFILL YOUR MEET PARTICIPATION RESPONSIBILITY, YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE YOUR \$150.00 DEPOSIT BACK.** We are more interested in getting everyone to help at the meet than receiving your money.

Meet Assignments

Over the years, WAAC has developed a well-deserved reputation for conducting excellent meets. When we host meet, the swimmers' needs are always the number one priority. The key objectives are efficiency and hospitality. Our club is proud of this reputation and makes every effort to insure that all meets are well-staffed, run on schedule and that our visitors enjoy themselves. The responsibility for hosting meets is shared equally by parents from all group levels.

There is a variety of assignments that parents may choose from. Some tasks require formal training; other tasks need someone with experience, while others just need an explanation.

No/some experience required:

Timers – 12 timers (2 for each lane) and 1 head timer for each session. Using a stopwatch provided by the team, the timer starts the watch using the strobe light of the starting machine as the starting signal and stops the watch when any part of the swimmer touches the wall. Swimmers' times are recorded on forms that are on a clipboard for your lane assignment. The head timer will have started a backup watch at the beginning of the race and helps any timer whose stopwatch didn't start correctly. An experienced head timer will coordinate all timers.

Runners – 2 people per session to collect time forms from the timers and take them to the person running the computer. The runner will also take event results to the awards table. They will also pass out water to the coaches, officials, and volunteers on pool deck.

Marshals – 2 per session. Shall wear identifying attire (neon orange vests) and enforce warm-up procedures and maintain order in the swimming venue. The Marshal shall have full authority to warn or order to cease and desist, and, with the concurrence of the referee, to remove, or have removed from the swimming venue anyone behaving in an unsafe manner or using profane or abusive language, or whose actions are disrupting the orderly conduct of the meet.

Awards Table – need 2 people to label the awards and prepare the sheet for the swimmers to sign off that they received their award. The awards table is also responsible for posting the event results sheet out in the hallway for anyone to view.

Place Judge - 4 people per session. Sits at the finishing end of the pool and marks who finishes in what place.

Concessions – 4-6 people per session to coordinate food and drink donations and to run the concession stand during the session. Usually they will also sell the heat sheets. A concessions coordinator will oversee all volunteers.

Setup and cleanup – as many parents as possible are needed to prepare the pool for the races. This requires 2-3 hours of setup the preceding Friday evening, and another 1-2 hours the morning of the meet. It's nice to have a separate group of to break everything down and clean up after the meet.

Miscellaneous – may need people to sell raffle tickets, relieve timers, pass out water to officials and workers on the pool deck, etc.

Experience required:

Meet Director - The overseer who makes sure all jobs are filled and that things run as smoothly as possible. Must be willing to approach people at the meet to help fill jobs at the last minute. This would be a person who knows many of the faces around the pool, and has often been a season-long position. The Meet Director needs to be familiar with all the positions, the potential problems, and be able to draft helpers and give rapid on-the-job training.

Daktronics Operator – 1 person per session. Operates the electronic timing system during the meet.

- 3) Computer Operator – 1 person per session. Uses Meet Manager (swimming software that we use) to input results, make sure results are correct, determine order of finish, and generate meet related reports and labels.

Formal training/certification required:

Starters – calls the swimmers up for their events, combining events when possible to expedite the meet. Starts each event. Judges false starts.

Referees – designated officials responsible for all decisions and rule interpretations.

Stroke and turn judge – 6 required per meet to ensure swimmers' strokes are in accordance with AMS rules. Communicate disqualifications to referee.

USA/AMS (UNITED STATES SWIMMING/ALLEGHENY MOUNTAIN SWIMMING) MEETS

West Allegheny Aqua Club is a member of Allegheny Mountain swimming (AMS) which is one of fifty-nine (59) Local Swimming Committees (LSC) in USA Swimming. Each LSC is responsible for administering USA Swimming activities in a defined geographical area and has its own set of bylaws under which it operates. Swimmers in all groups must be registered as a USA Swimming member and are strongly recommended to participate in USA/AMS meets. These meets give the swimmer incentive and motivation to improve their times and reach goals that they have set for themselves. Most swimmers want to compete because it is fun. We suggest you talk to parents of current members for a better idea of what to expect. Once you have identified the appropriate meets you are willing to have your child participate in, the coaches will choose the events that your child will swim.

Depending on the age group classification, a meet may have seven event types; five individual and two relay. Individual: freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and individual medley (IM). The two relays are freestyle and medley. The distances of the events are dependent upon the age group. Swimmers compete within seven different age groups, each separated by gender: They are as follows:

8 and under

10 and under

11-12

13-14

15 - 16

17-18

Seniors

Not all age groups are offered at each meet. For example: Some USA meets may be for 8 and under only; these are referred to as **Mini Meets**. The swimmers age on the first day of the meet governs the swimmers age for the entire meet.

Within each age group there are different levels of achievement. These are as follows:

B

BB

A

AA

AAA

AAAA (Highest Level)

Each level has a time standard that a swimmer must meet (see Appendix A). All swimmers begin at “B” level and move up as they meet the time standard. There are time standards for different pools that the swimmer may swim in competitions. Competition pools may be short course (25 yards or 25 meters), or long course (50 meters). USA Swimming maintains records for 25 yard, 25 meter and 50 meter pools. WAAC usually swims in meets that are short course yards in the regular season and long course meters in the summer season. As the swimmer improves his/her swim times, they will advance to the next level of competition. This permits fair yet challenging competition at all levels. In some cases a swimmer may be at a different level for each stroke.

The meet schedule is provided at the beginning of the season by Coach Bob. The schedule will identify the type of USA/AMS meet (Mini, B/BB, etc.). Parents or swimmers are responsible for identifying the meets and the number of splashes they want to enter. The coaches will determine what events will be swum. Make sure to pay the meet entry fees prior to the registration dates set for the meet. Meet fees vary so check the invitation for all required fees. Your meet entry will not be processed until you have paid your meet entry fees. Either place a check in the red box identifying on the check for what meet the fee is for or if you pay with cash, mark an envelope with your swimmer’s name and the meet that the fee is for. You can also send it to the Club’s mailing address: WAAC P.O. Box 738 Imperial, PA 15126

Once the meet invitation is sent, it will be posted on the Club bulletin board in the spectator area at the pool. The meet invitation includes the qualification times required to enter and other pertinent information for the meet. You can also access meet invitations on the web at HYPERLINK "http://www.amswim.org" www.amswim.org by clicking on the Meets link.

How to Prepare for a USA/AMS Swim Meet

Once your swimmer is entered in a USS meet, you can get the directions to the hosting club from the meet invitation that is posted on the Club Bulletin Board.

Swim meets are usually 2-3 days. Some meets start on Friday evening. On Saturday and Sunday, most meets will have a morning session for 2 age groups and an afternoon session for 2 other age groups. Some meets including the championship meets will have evening finals. Punctuality and patience are the two most important requirements for the meets to work well. Swimmers will swim between 2-4 races, spread throughout the day, thus resulting in LOTS of free time! Families will usually bring tents, chairs, sleeping bags, etc. and “camp-out” for the day at away meets.

Here is what you should be prepared to take to a USA swim meet:

Chairs, Sleeping Bag or Quilt (to put on Gym Floor or holding area to sit on)

Games, cards for children to play while waiting for swimming events.

Snacks and drinks if desired (hosting clubs sell refreshments and food)

2 Sets of Clothes for swimmer (usually sweats for warmth)

2 - 3 Towels

Team Suit and Team Cap

Goggles (2 pairs)

Ink Pen or Marker for writing swimmers' events on arm or leg

Get to the meet on time for warm - ups. Warm-up Times for WAAC are sent out by e-mail and are also usually posted on our website. Usually the coaches like you to be there about 15-20 minutes prior to the scheduled warm-up time in order to stretch. At the meet, there will be a table set up where you can buy a Heat Sheet. The heat sheet lists all the events and the swimmers participating in each event. Set up your resting space. Get swimmers ready for warm-ups and have them report to their coaches on the pool deck. Only swimmers are allowed on the pool deck.

After warm-ups, most parents list their swimmers event numbers (found in the Heat Sheet) on their hand, arm, or thigh with an ink pen or marker so that he/she will know what event they are to swim.

It is you and your child's responsibility to get to the seeding area or pool deck on time for their event. With the new, younger swimmers, a lot of help is offered at these meets to make sure they are where they are supposed to be.

Official times and results are usually posted at the meets. Please record your own swimmers official times from this list and keep track of it. These times are used the next time you enter your swimmer in a USA Meet.

Please ask questions of other parents regarding these meets. It is not as confusing or difficult as it first seems and other parents that have been through it will be glad to help.

DEVELOPMENTAL MEETS

West Allegheny Aqua Club also has developmental (quad, tri or dual meets) with Chartiers Valley, South Fayette, and Moon swim clubs or other local clubs. These meets provide a great opportunity for new swimmers to have a taste of competition in a simpler format than AMS (Allegheny Mountain Swimming) meets. Typically these meets are for "BB" and slower swimmers. Swimmers at other levels would be at the discretion of the coaching staff.

What to Bring to a Developmental Meet

Team Suit Team Cap

Goggles (2 Pairs)

Towels (2)

Warm Up Suit or Sweats (For Warmth)

Extra change of clothes

Ink Pen or Marker for writing swimmer's events on arm or leg

Snacks and Water (if you don't want to purchase them)

COMPETITION PHILOSOPHY

W.A.A.C. coaching staff does not see the first place person as the only winner. We would rather look to see who behaves like a winner. There are certain characteristics of a winner, and every swimmer, no matter where they place has the opportunity to emulate those characteristics such as concentration, listening skills, and working toward their goals.

In competition, the important measure is not who collected the most medals, or even who improved the most seconds. The real critical measure is who learned the most from the competitive experience. Swimmers quickly forget the medals and material benefits. They will, however, remember the development of interpersonal skills, discipline, listening skills, time management, goal setting, and enhanced self-image.

Good sportsmanship behavior is of equal importance. This includes congratulations to other competitors and encouragement to all teammates.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

As a parent of a swimmer and a member of West Allegheny Aqua Club/Allegheny Mountain Swimming Inc., I will abide by the following guidelines:

Participation by my child in swimming is voluntary. Participation in meets and events shall not be forced and suggested only when in the best interest of the child.

I will support the values of discipline, loyalty, commitment, hard work and teamwork during practice and meets and other swimming events and in my dealing with all coaches, parents swimmers, board members and officials.

I will demonstrate good sportsmanship by maintaining control and conduction myself in a manner that earns the respect of my child, other swimmers, parents, officials and coaches at all practices and meets. As a parent, I understand that criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials, any participating swimmer and/or parent of a swimmer is un-sportsman like and will not be permitted or tolerated.

I will discuss any concerns or take suggestions to a member of the coaching staff. I will not coach or instruct the team or any swimmer at a practice or meets (from stand or any other area), interfere with coaches on the pool deck as they work. I will not unduly burden coaches or board members by directing excessive telephone calls or emails to them.

I understand that officials who judge meets are volunteers who have the best interest of all swimmers in mind. I may not agree with calls or decisions by officials during swim meets and other competitions and if so, I will direct questions or concerns made by meet officials to a member of our coaching staff.

Know my role:

Swimmers – Swim
Coaches – Coach
Officials – Officiate

Parents – Parent and Praise swimmers for hard work.

Sanctions: Should I conduct myself in such a way that brings discredit or discord to AMS Swimming, Inc. or USA Swimming, I voluntarily subject myself to disciplinary action. AMS maintains the right to terminate any membership with/without cause in the interest of our vision, mission and objectives.

This Parents Code of Conduct was adopted by Allegheny Mountain swimming.

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR PARENTS

Thou shalt not impose your ambitions on thy child - Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is that every person can strive to do his or her personal best.

Thou shalt be supportive no matter what - There is only one question to ask your child, "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

Thou shalt not coach your child - You have taken your child to a professional coach; do not undermine that coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to support, love, and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. This is not your area. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent that swimmer/coach bond from forming.

Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet - If you are going to show up at a swimming meet, you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coach.

Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears - A first swimming meet, 500 free or 200IM can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child were not ready to compete in it.

Thou shalt not criticize the officials - If you do not have the time or the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can.

Honor thy child's coach - The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child; it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.

Thou shalt not jump from team to team - The water isn't necessarily bluer at the other team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long, long time by teammates they leave behind. Often times swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

Thy child shalt have goals besides winning - Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, “My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else also did it too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. This does not make me a failure, in fact, I am very proud of that swim.”

Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian - There are 225,000 athletes in United States Swimming. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child’s odds of becoming an Olympian are 1 in about 4,300. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask your coach why he coaches. Chances are, he was not an Olympian, but still got enough out of swimming that he wants to pass that love for the sport on to others. Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship, it builds self-esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they may have won. Swimming builds good people and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS

AMS - Allegheny Mountain Swimming.

Block - The starting platform.

Cap - A latex or Lycra swim cap used during a race or practice to cut down resistance and to protect swimmer’s hair from the effects of chlorine.

Circle Seeding - This is the seeding system used in prelims where the final three heats of an event are arranged so that the three fastest swimmers occupy the middle or fastest lane in their heat; the next three fastest swimmers occupy the next fastest lane, etc.

Circle Swimming - Performed by staying to the right of the black line when swimming in a lane to enable more swimmers to swim in each lane.

Competition Suit - A team racing suit may be required for competition. This suit is often a smaller size than the practice suit to reduce resistance. The material is usually lycra.

Course - Designated distance over which the competition is conducted. Long course~50 meters. Short course=25 yards.

Cut - Slang for qualifying time. A time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.

Deck Seeded Event - An event where all entries are due prior to first day of meet and swimmers must declare availability to swim prior to scratch deadlines.

DQ - Disqualified. This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind; e.g.

freestyle kick in butterfly. A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive awards, nor can the time be used as an official time.

Drill – An exercise involving a portion or part of a stroke, used to improve technique.

Dryland Training - Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance, usually includes stretching, calisthenics and/or weight training.

Dual Meet - Team verses another team in swimming meet.

False Start - Occurs when a swimmer is moving before the start gun is sounded. In US Swimming, one false start will result in disqualification.

Fins - Flippers that are worn on the feet and used for stroke technique and speed assisted training.

Flags - Backstroke flags placed 5 yards (Short Course) or 5 meters (Long Course) from the end of the pool. The flags enable swimmers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently when swimming the backstroke.

Goal - A specific time achievement a swimmer sets and strives for. It can be a long or short-term goal.

Goggles - Lenses worn by swimmers during practice and competition to enhance vision and protect their eyes from the effects of chemicals in the water.

Heats - A division of an event in which there are too many swimmers to compete at one time.

I. M. (Individual Stroke Medley) - Slang for Individual Medley. An event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle.

Kickboard - Device usually made of plastic or Styrofoam, used to isolate the kick portion of a stroke.

Long Course - A pool 50 meters in length. USA Swimming conducts most of its summer competition in long course pools.

LSC (Local Swimming Committee) – The governing body for swimming at the local level. There are 59 LSC's in the country. W.A.A.C. is a member of Allegheny Mountain Swimming.

Meet: Competition designed to be a learning experience. By implementing what has been learned in practice, the swimmer tests himself against the clock to see how he is improving.

Official - A judge on the deck of the pool at a sanctioned competition who enforces U.S.

Swimming rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, timers and referees.

Pace Clock - Large clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice; may also be digital.

P.B. - Personal Best Time

Practice Suits - Suits worn by a swimmer during practice sessions. They are generally made of nylon, lycra or stretch nylon. These suits are loose fitting, and many swimmers train wearing several suits for the purpose of creating drag.

Pull Buoy - Usually made of Styrofoam. This device is placed between the legs to isolate the use of the arms. The pull buoy is used to strengthen the arms and is sometimes used for stroke work.

Referee - Has overall authority and control of the competition. He ensures that all the rules are followed, assigns and instructs all officials, and decides all questions relating to the conduct of the meet.

Relay - An event in which 4 swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

Seeding - The process by which a swimmer is assigned a certain lane and heat in an event. Competitors are assigned to lanes based on their seed times as follows:

6 lane pool - lanes numbered 3,4,2,5,1,6 (with the fastest time in lane 3)

8 lane pool - lanes 4,5,3,6,2,7,1,8 (with the fastest time in lane 4)

Short Course - A pool 25 yards or 25 meters in length. USA Swimming conducts most of its winter competition in short course yards.

Split - A time recorded from the official start to the completion of an initial distance within a longer event. Also, the time for one of the four individuals in a relay. Under certain conditions, splits may also be used as official time. For example, the lead off swim in a relay, or the lead off portion of an event.

Starter - Assumes control of the swimmers from the Referee. He directs them to “take your mark,” and sees that no swimmer is in motion prior to giving the start signal.

Streamline - The position used by swimmers when starting or pushing off the walls designed to reduce water resistance.

Stroke Judges - Observe the swimmers from both sides of the pool, walking abreast of the swimmers to ensure that the rules relating to each stroke are being followed. The positions of Stroke Judge and Turn Judge may be combined into one position called the Stroke and Turn

Judge.

Sweats - Some type of warm-up or sweat suit worn at meets, to and from practices during cold weather.

Taper - A carefully planned program that involves getting a swimmer's body and mind into top or peak performance levels before a major competition.

Team Uniform - A team uniform is usually made up of one or more of the following: suit, cap, T-shirt, sweatshirt, or parka. Each club has a uniform which is usually a requirement and unique to the team.

Timers - Operate timing devices (watches or automatic timing systems) and record the time for the swimmer in their lane.

Touch Pad - A large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer's finish is registered and sent electronically to the timing system.

Towel - A thick, large beach towel is usually preferred by swimmers. A minimum of two towels is recommended for meets.

Turn Judges - Observes the swimmers from each end of the pool and ensures that the turns and finishes comply with the rules applicable to each stroke.

USA Swimming - The national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States.

Warm Down - Low intensity swimming used by swimmers after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

Warm Up - 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.

Notes: