



HAAC

HOPEWELL AREA
AQUA CLUB

Swimming 101:
Parents Guide to
Competitive Swimming

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HOPEWELL AREA AQUA CLUB

PARENT GUIDE TO COMPETITIVE SWIMMING

The Hopewell Area Aqua Club (HAAC) wishes to welcome you and your child(ren) into the exciting and interesting sport of competitive swimming. This guide is designed to make your swimming experience and the meets you attend more understandable, more interesting, more fun and more rewarding. We hope it will explain the more common terms that you will want to know as you attend meets, but it is in no way comprehensive.

The rewards of hard work, friendship, and traveling are all available to your child as a member of HAAC. Take advantage of them to build your child's self-confidence and to speed his/her maturation.

I. MISSION STATEMENT OF THE HOPEWELL AREA AQUA CLUB

To develop the character traits, technical skills and desire necessary for maximum realization of each individual's potential.

II. EXECUTIVE BOARD

The Executive Board consists of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers are elected to the board every year except Treasurer which is a two year term. The past President also serves on the board and casts a vote in event of a tie.

Current board members are:

President:	Erin Marcum
Vice President:	Mike Leonard
Secretary:	Michael Murray
Treasurer:	Zach Economos
Past President	

Contact the Executive Board at haacswim@yahoo.com

1) Additional Board Chairs

There are several areas that HAAC needs your help. Listed below are several areas where there is a chair as well as a committee. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for any of these committees. If you are interested in serving, contact any Executive Board Member.

- ✈ Meet Director
- ✈ AMS Registrar
- ✈ Dual Registrar
- ✈ Club Registrar
- ✈ Awards/Gifts
- ✈ Banquet coordinator
- ✈ Coordinator Website
- ✈ Concession Coordinator
- ✈ Volunteer Coordinator
- ✈ Apparel Coordinator
- ✈ Team Photographer

III. COACHES

- ✈ Head Coach: Dave Drake
- ✈ Assistant Coach: Mark Elder
- ✈ Part-Time Assistant Coach: Olivia Twomey
- ✈ Part-Time Assistant Coach: Marissa Buffalini
- ✈ Part-Time Assistant Coach: Miranda Lapson

Please contact coaches directly at haaccoaches@yahoo.com

1) What a Parent can expect From a Coach

The Coach should possess a professional attitude, knowledge of the skills used in competitive swimming and the ability to teach them, and a genuine enjoyment in working with children of various ages. The Coach should also be fair, giving each swimmer an equal opportunity (not equal time) to excel at the level of his/her capabilities and praise them for a job well done. Good coaches have a desire to win but not at all cost. The Coach will provide a positive example on how to be a good loser and a humble winner.

Each age requires different supervision. As swimmers mature they become less dependent upon parents and receive more of the motivation from within themselves, their peers and their Coach. A good coach will know the best way to motivate your swimmer to excel in the sport of competitive swimming, how to deal with disappointments and how to overcome obstacles in to achieve goals. Coaches will deal with personality conflicts, if necessary, among athletes. Coaches will provide positive support to all athletes within the club. Coaches will deal with any concerns from parents in a private manner. Coaches will do their best to ensure swimmers have a good experience.

IV. CLUB GOALS

1. To provide opportunities for social and emotional development.
2. To furnish a wholesome and worthwhile physical and recreational outlet.
3. To provide an opportunity to learn sportsmanship and make swimmers aware of team cooperation.
4. To provide an educational opportunity.
5. To provide an opportunity to learn good health habits and self-discipline.
6. To provide training and competition to all swimmers who desire it.
7. To develop the knowledge of swimming and stroke mechanics as they relate to competitive swimming.
8. To provide a wide base of experience to swimmers.
9. To inspire the less proficient swimmer to self-improvement.
10. To provide an understanding of athlete, coach and spectator responsibility.
11. To develop coordination and confidence through individual achievement.
12. To develop a sense of pride towards the team and its members.

V. CODES OF CONDUCT

1) Swimmers Code of Conduct

1. Any swimmer who is known to use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco is subject to suspension from the team.
2. Never interfere with the progress of another swimmer, during practice or otherwise.
3. At all club functions, whether practice, meets, or social gatherings, we expect each swimmer to behave in such a way that their actions reflect positively on the team.
4. All members of the club, whether parents or swimmers, continue to protect and improve the excellent reputation the club has throughout the state and country.
5. The use of any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in or near locker rooms, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected is prohibited

2) **Parent Code of Conduct**

1. Encourage your swimmer but not at the expense of their teammates or members of other teams.
2. Do Not Interfere with the swimmers at meets or workouts by offering advice on strokes etc. As a parent, do not do the coaching, this is the coach's responsibility.
3. Contact the coach or club officer when questions concerning your swimmer(s) arise in regard to meets, workouts, swimmer's ability, etc. Contact the coach and NOT another parent to discuss such matters.
4. You will be asked to help in various capacities at the meets we host and possibly at out of town meets that you attend. It is vital that you be prepared to volunteer your time.
5. Be responsible for the prompt payment of all fees associated with being a member of the Club.
6. Participate in the all fundraisers done by the club.
7. Get swimmer(s) to practices and meets consistently and on time.

VI. CLUB POLICIES

1) **Eligibility**

Any youth at least 6 years of age who has passed the required entrance skills assessment is eligible to join HAAC. Assessment of swimmers and final determination will be the responsibility of the Coach. Coach has final say on placement or acceptance into the club.

Prospective swimmers will be asked to meet the following required skills:

1. Ability to swim two (2) lengths of the pool or 50 yds.
2. Swim one length of the pool on their back.
3. Submerge underwater comfortably
4. Willingness to follow directions

2) **Volunteer Policy**

HAAC is a non-profit organization operated entirely by volunteers. To ensure the continued success of HAAC, each family is required to provide at least seven (7) volunteers for the season (6 plus 1 concession stand). It can take up to 30-35 people to run a successful meet, so everyone needs to be willing to serve as a volunteer in some capacity.

The Volunteer Coordinator will provide a list of jobs (i.e. timer, concessions, clean-up, etc.) required to make each meet successful. Volunteers will have an opportunity to choose which job they wish to do on a first come first served basis

We do understand that sometimes difficult circumstances can arise that might prevent/hinder having a volunteer from your family help at a meet. We want to work with all families if/when these circumstances arise, so communicating with the Volunteer Coordinator when special needs arise is extremely important.

3) HAAC Bully Policy

Bullying or Cyber-Bullying by any member of HAAC, regardless of when or where it happens, is strictly prohibited. Our club has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying and disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including expulsion from the team.

Here are a few examples of unacceptable bullying behavior within our club:

- Negatively commenting on a teammate's body (i.e. calling someone "fat")
- Telling a teammate nobody likes him/her
- Telling a teammate that he/she is a bad swimmer or disparaging them for not making a "time"
- Excluding a teammate or embarrassing /humiliating a teammate in front of others
- Sending threatening or insulting emails, texts messages, or voicemails.
- Sending private or inappropriate messages, photos or videos
- Spreading rumors by posting messages on social networking sites or applications.
- Using a false email account or masked phone number or pretending to be someone else to send abusive or harassing messages. Having a message sent to another swimmer by someone else on your behalf is still considered bullying.

All swimmers should treat their teammates like they would like to be treated. A good rule of thumb is to ask yourself – "How would my parents and my coach feel about my behavior? Would they be proud?"

Here are some things you can do if you are being bullied or witness another person being bullied:

- Do not respond to the bully's requests or remarks and let the bully know that you would like the behavior to stop.
- Let an adult (coach/Parent) know about the situation.
- If the bullying is cyber-bullying, do not reply to the messages and keep a record that can be shared with an adult (coach/parent).
- If you receive an inappropriate image or text about someone else, do not forward it. You could be assisting a bully or breaking the law.
- You are responsible for messages sent from your devices/accounts. Be sure not to share your passwords with friends.

VII. WHAT PARENTS CAN EXPECT

1) Fundraising

Fundraising is mandatory for each swimmer participating in HAAC Information and directions on the fundraisers will be placed in each swimmer's file at the appropriate time.

Cost is \$75 per half - \$150.00 per family

2) Banquet

At the end of the season, HAAC holds an annual banquet. At this banquet, each swimmer is recognized, and prizes and awards will be disseminated. Information will be in each swimmer's file as the event approaches.

3) AWARDS

Dedicated Swimmer Award: Awarded to each swimmer who attends and competes at every scheduled dual meet during the season.

High Point Award: The male and female swimmer earning the most individual points throughout the entire season is awarded the high point award.

Time Improvement Award: As follows

- 🏆 All eligible swimmers¹ can earn an award based on:
 - 🏆 Gender
 - 🏆 Age
 - 🏆 Stroke
 - 🏆 Distance
 - 🏆 Time (“B” earns Bronze, “BB” earns Silver, “A” or Faster earns Gold)
- 🏆 Time Standards based on:
 - 🏆 United States Swimming 2017-2020 National Age Group² Motivational Times for ages 9-18 SCY
 - 🏆 2017-2020 Allegheny Mountain Swimming 8&U³ Time Standards – SCY
 - 🏆 Example: Jethro (M,8) Personal Best Times at the end of the season⁴ are:

🏆 25 Yard Freestyle	17.84	Silver Award
🏆 25 Yard Butterfly	31.59	No Award
🏆 25 Yard Breast	34.59	No Award
🏆 25 Yard Back	31.25	No Award
🏆 50 Yard Freestyle	45.99	Bronze Award
🏆 100 Yard Individual Medley	1:28.01	Gold Award

Therefore Jethro would earn one each Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards at the banquet. For additional information/questions please email haacswim@yahoo.com

4) Practice

Practices are held at the Hopewell Memorial Junior High Pool Monday through Thursday during the season (September through March). Practice times are as follows:

🏆 Great Whites (Advanced/Senior)	5:00pm – 6:30pm
🏆 Tiger Sharks (Intermediate II)	5:00pm – 6:00pm
🏆 Hammerhead Sharks (Intermediate I)	6:30pm – 7:30pm
🏆 Bull Sharks (Beginner II)	6:45pm – 7:30pm
🏆 Mako Sharks (Beginner I)	6:00pm – 6:45pm

Friday Practice Schedule- Great White, Tiger, and Hammerhead ONLY – 5:00pm – 6:30 pm

We encourage all swimmers to attend every practice possible. The coach will determine the length of time each swimmer practices based on individual skill levels.

¹ “eligible swimmer” is any paid swimmer who is not classified as “Varsity”

² Age as of October 1, 2018

³ 8&U refers to all swimmers under the age of 8 as of October 1, 2018

⁴ End of the season is defined as after the WCPSL CHAMPS MEET

5) Team Website/Communication

HAAC has a club website www.haacattack.org which provides a great deal of information relating to the club. Monthly calendars show the practice schedule for each month along with other important information such as upcoming meets, registration information, time standards, meet results, helpful tips for parents, upcoming team events, etc. It is highly encouraged that you visit this site on a regular basis to stay up-to-date on club happenings.

Emails will occasionally be sent out regarding important information so it is very important that you provide to the team an email address **that you use on a regular basis**.

6) What are the Fees?

There are several types of fees associated with the swim team. The following will explain each fee.

1. Full Season non-varsity swimmers **MUST** pay the annual fees associated with joining HAAC. For the 2018-19 annual registration year the fee is as follows:
 - a. \$250 for the first swimmer in a family; discount calculated at checkout per the number of swimmers registered.
 - b. \$150 per half season for the first swimmer in a family; discount calculated at checkout per the number swimmers registered.
 - c. If you are a **NEW** swimmer we offer the one time discount rate of \$150 first half and \$100 second half.
2. Hopewell High School Varsity swimmer's registration fee is \$60.
3. AMS Swimming fee for 2018-19 is \$200 (this includes \$79 USA Swimming registration fee)
4. Team suits are ordered/purchased at the registration in September. There is no obligation to purchase a suit. If you do order a team suit, it **MUST** be paid for at the time you order the suit. For 2018-19 HAAC will contribute up to \$15 towards the purchase of **ONE** female team suit and \$10 towards **ONE** male team suit regardless of the number of swimmers in a family.
5. If swimming AMS your swimmers will be attending meets and there are fees associated with the events a swimmer participates in. These fees are paid in advance of the meet by our AMS Coordinator. You will be billed by the AMS Coordinator for any fees associated with meets that your swimmer may have attended. If a swimmer signs up to attend a meet and later is not able to attend for whatever reason, those fees will still be billed to the parents. Swim fees are not refunded because they are paid well in advance of the meets.

7) Team Attire

Practice

For practice swimmers should have a suit, one to two towels, a swim cap, goggles and possibly a water bottle.

Goggles are required and swimmers will be responsible for bringing their own goggles to practice and meets. Do not rely on coaches having extra goggles for your swimmer to “borrow” for practice and meets. Any swimmer who has long hair (below the ears) should always wear a swim cap in the pool. (See Equipment List)

Meets

The official team suit can be ordered/purchased at the start of the season. These suits should be worn for meets only so they will last for the entire season. Chlorine/Bromine is hard on suits so we would encourage swimmers to have a separate suit that they can wear for practice purposes. We would encourage all swimmers to have a team suit, but it is not required. (See Equipment List)

Swim Caps are designed to protect a swimmer’s hair and reduce drag. It is strongly encouraged that all swimmers wear a swim cap for meets. Any swimmer who has long hair (below the ears) should always wear a swim cap in the pool at practice. (See Equipment List)

Swimmers are required to wear goggles to help cut down on eye irritation. Sweatshirts and pants, socks, sleeping bag, camp chairs, beach towels, sandals and a water bottle are important items to have when you attend swim meets. It is important that the swimmer keeps warm between events in order to perform at their best during each race.

Check before leaving for home from practice and swim meets to make sure that you have everything. Be sure to mark your swimmer’s name on all their belongings they bring to the pool.

8) Comfort for Everyone at Swim Meets

To make competitive meets as pleasant as possible parents should consider their own comfort as well as that of their swimmers. At indoor meets, remember it is usually hot and humid in the pool area. Dress in layers or lightweight clothes. Informality is the rule.

Age group swimmers are remarkably well behaved considering the waiting such meets entail. This is a good time to teach your child card games. Supply books, games, playing cards, etc. to help pass the time. Take things that do not require too much physical exertion as they are to rest when not competing in their events.

Have your swimmers arrive at the meet at least 15-20 minutes before the designated warm-up period. They should have their team suits and swim caps on and be ready to get in the pool. The Coach will announce such information at workouts before the meets and meet information will be posted on the team website. Be sure your swimmer is kept warm during waiting periods between events. Socks, shoes, warm-up suits or pants and jackets are supplies you want to have at each meet.

Following each swim workout and shower, swimmers should dry their ears thoroughly to help combat the problem referred to as “swimmers ear”. There are products you can purchase from sporting goods stores or pharmacies.

9) How to be a good Swim Parent

1. Keeping the child in good health and on a decent training schedule. See that the swimmer gets plenty of rest. Do not expect him/her to do well if he/she has been sick, up late the night before a meet, or has done some other kind of hard physical labor, chores, etc.
2. Show respect to all athletes, coaches and parents.
3. As a parent, **do not** do the coaching, leave it to the coach. A disappointed swimmer needs parental consolation NOT parental reprimand. Just expect your swimmer to do their best.
4. At a meet, please keep in mind that the coach is busy supervising the children, taking splits, advising the upcoming swimmers, congratulating, consoling, and explaining to those who just swam. Swimmers are the main priority of the coach at swim meets. Parental concerns will be addressed when the swim meet is not in progress.
5. There is more to swimming than getting wet! This is a time to teach your child good sportsmanship, patience, the necessity to obey rules, the responsibility to a group, and the value of hard work. If you value winning a race for your child more than any of the above qualities, you are selling your child and age group swimming short. There are things to be learned from losing as well as winning. To young children, especially, it will take guidance to teach them how to handle both situations.
6. Keep a record of your swimmer’s times and teach them to seek to better their own times, not seek to win by beating someone else. Over a period of years this process pays better dividends than just aiming to be first.
7. SUPPORT! SUPPORT! SUPPORT!

10) Records

HAAC maintains both Dual Meet and AMS Meet records. We encourage you to show your swimmers the current records for their age group to encourage them to swim their best. AMS Records can be accessed by logging into haacattack.org. Dual Meet records can be found below:

[Dual Meet Records](#)

11) Recommended Equipment List

From experience the HAAC Board recommends swimmers have the following equipment:

- ☞ Two Pairs of Goggles (See below...DO NOT use goggles from Target/Walmart etc... They are prone to leaks and are not designed for training/competition)
- ☞ Two to Three Training/Practice Suits
- ☞ Two to Three Swim Caps (Females should ALWAYS wear a cap)
- ☞ One Swim Bag
- ☞ Snorkel/Fins as required by group placement

Recommended Equipment List

Speedo Goggles (Adult Size).....	https://tinyurl.com/y84zpmtY
MP Goggles (Adult Size).....	https://tinyurl.com/y71y43of
Arena Goggles (Adult Size).....	https://tinyurl.com/y7h8smyo
Speedo Goggles (Jr. Size).....	https://tinyurl.com/ycuxqsrG
TYR Bungee Kit for Goggles	https://tinyurl.com/y8zbqgsx
TYR Silicone Swim Caps	https://tinyurl.com/y8dzw6r3
Long/Thick Hair Swim Cap.....	https://tinyurl.com/y95jw3x7
TYR Snorkel.....	https://tinyurl.com/yamzHQ77
TYR Crossblade Fins.....	https://tinyurl.com/yams8otz
TYR Mesh Swim Bag.....	https://tinyurl.com/yavg6dt2
Speedo Swim Bag	https://tinyurl.com/ycfjvzxc

Practice Swim Suits Recommended Brands

- ✦ TYR
- ✦ Arena
- ✦ Speedo
- ✦ MP Michael Phelps
- ✦ Aqua Sphere

Practice Swim Suits Recommended Sites

- ✦ Amazon.com
- ✦ Swimoutlet.com
- ✦ dolfinswimwear.com
- ✦ TYR.com
- ✦ Speedousa.com

VIII. SWIM MEETS

1) Classes of Meets/Competition

1. Dual Meets

The main goal of the Hopewell Area Aqua Club is to have ALL swimmers compete with other teams in a dual meet. Events at these meets are at no cost to the swimmer.

The following are the age divisions of competition: 6U (6&U), 8U (7&8), 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-18.

W.C.P.S.L. Championships (CHAMPS)-Held at the end of the season could include as many as 12-14 swim clubs competing for ribbons and medals. Swimmers MUST compete in four (4) swim meets with the club to be eligible for CHAMPS. The 2019 CHAMPS hosted by HAAC will be at Steubenville High School in Steubenville, Ohio on March 30, 2019.

2. AMS Meets

These meets occasionally have some type of qualification time standard(s) that a swimmer must meet in order to enter. Swimmers are always encouraged to swim an AMS meets; however, a dual meet should be attended if one is scheduled. Information on AMS meets as well as registration information is made available on the bulletin board in the observation area. AMS meets are offered at a cost to the swimmer of \$5 an event. If there are enough swimmers registered, the Hopewell Area Aqua Club will pay for any relay team. According to AMS, "Warm-up procedures are in accordance with AMS guidelines. Each competing club's coach must register with the Meet Director before the club may warm up and must provide proof of current certification upon request. Clubs bringing more than five (5) swimmers must have a coach on deck during warmups. Any club with five (5) or fewer swimmers attending the meet must have a contact person sign in. Coaches and contact persons must sign in on separate forms at the heat sheet table prior to warm-ups. Swimmers may not begin warm-ups until their coach and/or contact person is registered. In addition, effective May 15, 2004 USA Swimming requires ALL swimmers to be under the supervision of a coach during warm-ups, competition, and cool-down. It is the club/swimmers responsibility to make these arrangements. The Meet Director and/or Referee can assist." After receiving clarification from AMS on this information, the Hopewell Area Aqua Club will provide a Coach for AMS if six (6) swimmers are signed up to attend. If a Coach is not in attendance, then a contact person (parent) must sign in and report to the Meet Director and/or Referee so that swimmers can be assigned to a coach for warm ups.

3. Events and Relays

An event is a race with a designated stroke and distance. For each such stroke a separate event is held for boys and girls in each age bracket.

In a race where there are more competitors entered in an event than there are lanes available there are separate heats. Heats continue until every entrant has swum that event. Awards are based on specific times. One can win a heat and still not place in the final awards. A relay race is one in which four (4) different swimmers, belonging to the same club swim a designated leg and stroke. The combined time of the four legs is used to assign place. In some relays, all four swimmers swim the same stroke, however, in the medley relay each of the four participants swim one fourth of the distance with a different stroke in the following order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Freestyle.

4. Scratches and Disqualification

A scratch is when a swimmer decides not to compete in the event he/she is entered in. The decision to scratch a swimmer(s) from an event will be made by the coach. There are time limits for scratching at some meets. **FEES WILL BE ASSESSED TO THE SWIMMER FOR ANY SCRATCHED EVENTS AT AMS MEETS.**

Disqualifications can be made only by the officials during the race. Most disqualifications are for improper strokes. When this occurs, the officials notify the coach in writing after the meet. Disqualifications are not made to penalize a swimmer but to help them improve.

5. Officials of the Swim Meet:

- A. Meet Director – the person in charge of the administrative details of running a meet.
- B. Meet Marshall – enforcer of all safety precautions in the pool/locker area with authority to remove swimmers from the meet.
- C. Referee – person in charge of all officials and who enforces all rules and decides all questions about actual conduct of the meet. The referee also decides any point where opinions of the judges differ.
- D. Starter – person who starts each race. The Starter has control of the swimmers from the time they are assigned to their proper lane by the Clerk of Course until the gun is fired or the horn is sounded.
- E. Administrative Official – The “Administrative Official” is one who reports directly to the Referee (or Administrative Referee) and may supervise/direct the following positions on the “dry” side of the meet (see Rule 102.14): Entry and Registration Personnel, Clerk of Course, Timing System Operator, Scoring Personnel, Timing Judge, Meet Management Software (Hy-tek, Touchpad, etc.) Operator.
- F. Judges
 - a. Relay Take Off Judge – a relay is disqualified if the swimmer leaves the starting block before the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool.
 - b. End Judges – record the order of finish of all swimmers.
 - c. Stroke and Turn Judges – observes the swimmers from the side lines/ends of the pool to ensure the rules relating to the mechanics of each stroke are being followed and to ensure the starts, turns and finishes comply with the rules applicable to each stroke.

- G. Timers – people who use a stopwatch to record a swimmer’s time for each event. There are typically two timers per lane plus a designated Head Timer. Parents attending a home or out-of-town meet will be asked to volunteer as timers for the meet. Each team attending is expected to provide help with timing responsibilities for meets.

IX. SWIMMER NUTRITION

1) To Eat or not to Eat

Each parent faces the problem of food. Just what should a swimmer eat before and during the meet? You will soon find out if your swimmer develops a nervous stomach under the pressure of a meet. The night before a meet, try to get a substantial meal high in carbohydrates. This also applies to breakfast and lunch if they do not swim until later in the afternoon. Dairy products should be limited to approximately 3 hours before the start of the competition as they are harder to digest and could possibly cause problems for a swimmer during competition.

Suggested menus for meals the night before a meet are lasagna, spaghetti, greaseless pizza. For breakfast you should choose from juice, fruit, pancakes with syrup, English muffin with jelly, raisin bran with low-fat milk, bran muffins, hot cocoa, bagels, or raisins.

Lunch should be eaten in small amounts during the meet and may include any of the following: peanut butter or turkey sandwich on whole wheat bread, low-fat fruited yogurt, orange juice, plain baked potato, chili, chocolate milk shake, vegetable soup, applesauce, raw vegetables, dried fruits, granola bars, oatmeal-raisin cookies, pretzels, apple juice, mozzarella string cheese, or blueberry muffin and water.

Certain foods give your child a psychological boost and therefore do not be too condemning. Use trial and error if necessary. Try to avoid sweets. Make sure, especially on a hot day, that your child drinks enough liquids (water and juice, NOT soda pop or carbonated drinks including carbonated sports drinks), gets enough rest. The younger children require more of your attention in these matters and may even need to be reminded to go to the bathroom before any events.

Bring along some foods for yourself in case you do not want to leave the area to find a restaurant. Most clubs provide concession stands at meets. Many families bring coolers with food/drinks to meets. CAUTION: Please do not bring or send any glass items to the meets.