

## WELCOME

We are pleased to welcome all of our new swimmers, and we welcome back all those who have helped make the Hopewell Area Aqua Club (HAAC) a strong team. We strive to make our team safe, organized, well- coached, and fun for all swimmers regardless of ability. Our goal is to have a great season for all of our swimmers and families.

Be sure to check out our website at [www.haacattack.org](http://www.haacattack.org). You will find this manual, information about HAAC meets and coming events.

Lastly, thanks in advance to all our volunteers; the HAAC Attack could not exist without you!



## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this handbook is two-fold: to explain to new members what the Hopewell Area Aqua Club is and to outline various policies that affect all swimmers, year after year. It should be read by all families so that they may become familiar with important facts and rules of the club.

## **GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVE**

The Hopewell Area Aqua Club works to develop a child from the beginning swimmer to a competitive and skilled swimmer.

When a young person becomes a member of the Hopewell Area Aqua Club he/she learns the values of sportsmanship and team work. Swimming, through the Hopewell Area Aqua Club, provides physical, emotional and intellectual skills that will last a lifetime.

### **The mission of the Hopewell Area Aqua Club is:**

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

## **COACHING STAFF**

Nothing has a greater influence on the quality of children's sports than the excellence of the coach. The Hopewell Area Aqua Club staff consists of professionally trained coaches. Our coaching staff provides the assurances that the time your children spend in swimming will be quality time.

Head Coach: Dave Drake

Asst. Coach: Olivia Twomey

Asst. Coach: Mark Elder

Asst. Coach: Marissa Buffalini

## **SWIMMERS TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES**

As a swimmer's level of swimming ability increases so does his/her responsibility. As swimmers improve, this is a deep commitment that requires great effort on all parts. A swimmer has responsibilities to the team, the coach, his/her parents, and most importantly to themselves. Swimmers need to prepare themselves for a 100% effort each time they come to practice.

## **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.

**PARENTS YOUR ATHLETE NEEDS YOU.** In order to have a successful program there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress your youngster makes depends to a great extent on this triangular relationship. It is with this in mind that we ask you to consider this section as you join the Hopewell Area Aqua Club and reacquaint yourself with this section if you are a returning Hopewell Area Aqua Club parent.

You have done a great deal to raise your child. You create the environment in which they are growing up. Your child is a product of your values, the structure you have provided, and the model you have been. Human nature, however, is such that a parent loses some of his/her ability to remain detached and objective in matters concerning his/her children's athletics. The following guidelines will help you keep your child's development in the proper perspective and help your child reach his/her full potential as an athlete.

**The coach is the Coach!** We want your swimmer to relate to his or her coach as soon as possible concerning swimming matters. This relationship between coach and swimmer produces best results. When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim or train, it causes considerable, and oftentimes insurmountable, confusion as to whom the swimmer should listen to. If you have a problem, concern, or complaint, please contact the coach.

The coach's job is to motivate and constructively criticize the swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to make the child work harder in practice, which in turn gives him/her the confidence to perform well in competition.

**Ten and Unders:** Ten and Unders are the most inconsistent swimmers and this can be frustrating for parents, coaches, and the swimmer alike! Parents and coaches must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport. When a young swimmer first joins HAAC, there may be a brief period in which he/she appears to slow down. This is a result of the added concentration on stroke technique, but this will soon lead to much faster swims for the individual.

Even the very best swimmer will have meets where they do not do their best times. These "plateaus" are a normal part of swimming. Over the course of a season times should improve. Please be supportive of these "poor" meets. The older swimmers may have only two or three meets a year for which they will be rested and tapered.

**PROBLEMS WITH THE COACH?** One of the traditional swim team communication gaps is that some parents seem to feel more comfortable in discussing their disagreements over coaching philosophy with other parents rather than taking them directly to the coach. Not only is the problem never resolved that way, but in fact this approach often results in new problems being

created. Listed below are some guidelines for a parent raising some difficult issues with a coach:

1. Try to keep foremost in your mind that you and the coach have the best interests of your child at heart. If you trust that the coach's goals match yours, even though his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy good rapport and a constructive dialogue.
2. Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team or a training group that can range in size from 20- 100 members. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group, but in the long run the benefits of membership in the group compensate for occasional short term inconvenience.
3. If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach. He/she is the only one who can resolve the problem.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Following are ways that HAAC hopes to continue communication between swimmer and club:

**Texts/Emails** – HAAC will send out reminders using both text and email. The Coaches and Board Members are able to answer any questions/concerns that parents have utilizing email.

**Swimmer File** – Most written communication will be put in a file folder on deck that has your swimmer's name on it. It is the swimmer's responsibility to check their folder daily.

**Parent Meetings** – Several times a year, HAAC will hold parent meetings. Every parent is encouraged to attend. Information on these meetings will be disseminated through the use of the Swimmer File.

## **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

President: Kirsten Gregory

Vice President: Erin Marcum

Secretary: Mike Zilian

Treasurer: Courtney Bibbee

The administrative functions of the club are overseen by the Executive Board. The executive board consists of four parents elected for one year terms. The elections for board positions are held annually in March.

### **Mission Statement:**

With the main focus of the club always on the swimmer, the Executive Board of Directors exists to ensure the continuation and excellence of the Hopewell Area Aqua Club by:

- Providing necessary business functions
- Assisting and supporting the coaching staff
- Communicating ... Communicating ... Communicating

### **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 Publicity / Historian Safety Coordinator Swim Point
- Coordinator Website
- Ways & Means Concession Volunteer Coordinator Merchandise
- Team Photographer

### **TEAM UNIFORM**

The Team Uniform consists of a team bathing suit and girls are required to wear a team bathing cap. This cap is to be Blue, Gold, Yellow or the HAAC Cap. The HAAC Cap can be purchased through the team; however all other caps need only be specific in color not in brand.

Each member is required to wear a team uniform at all swim meet competitions; either Dual or AMS.

## COMPETITIVE STROKES

The four competitive strokes are (1) Freestyle, (2) Backstroke, (3) Breaststroke, and (4) Butterfly. Events are held in all of the competitive strokes at varying distances depending on the age-group of the swimmer. In addition, there is a combination of the strokes swum by one swimmer called the Individual Medley. Other swimming events include relays, which are a group of four swimmers who either all swim Freestyle (Freestyle Relay) or each swim one of the competitive strokes in the order of Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle (Medley Relay).

## TYPES OF SWIM MEETS

**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.

**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 warm-ups. 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 warm-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.

W.C.P.S.L. Championships-Held at the end of the season could include as many as 12- 14 swim clubs competing for ribbons and medals.

## **AWARDS**

Swimmers are able to earn the following awards:

**Betterment Point Awards:** Swimmers have a base time. Each time they improve their time at a Dual Meet, they are awarded a betterment point. Award Guidelines will be provided to the swimmers and will fall under the following categories:

- Participation Award
- Bronze Award
- Silver Award
- Gold Award

**Dedicated Swimmer Awards:** Swimmers that attend and participate in every scheduled Dual Meet will earn this award.

**High Point Award:** This award is given to the swimmer that accumulates the most points throughout the season in Dual Meets.

**Three or Six Year Jackets:** When a swimmer reaches the third or sixth full year of swimming, a jacket will be awarded at the banquet held at the end of the season.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Fundraising is mandatory for each swimmer participating in HAAC. Swimmers are offered the opportunity for a buyout if they are not interested in doing the actual fundraiser. Information and directions on the fundraisers will be placed in each swimmer's file at the appropriate time.

## **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.

The Hopewell Area Aqua Club Executive Board reserves the right to change and update any area of this handbook as it deems necessary.