



# HELTHENHAM AQUATIC CLUB TEAM HANDBOOK



## ABOUT CAC AND ITS MISSION

The Cheltenham Aquatic Club (CAC) is a member of Middle Atlantic Swimming, the Local Swimming Committee of USA Swimming. USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. For more information on USA Swimming, please visit our website at [www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org), and click on the USA Swimming link.

CAC's vision is to provide year-round coaching, training and competition for swimmers of all ages and abilities in Cheltenham Township and surrounding communities. CAC takes pride in offering its swimmers and their families excellent training facilities, a flexible training program, and experienced coaches who, because of CAC's small size, can provide each swimmer with more individual attention than most clubs. CAC's program highlights the following:

- **Competition with oneself.** Winning ribbons, medals or trophies is not our main goal. The individual's improvement is our primary objective.
- **Sportsmanlike behavior.** Swimmers are taught to always behave like a champion, regardless of a good or a bad swim. Respect for officials, congratulations to other competitors, encouragement to teammates, determined effort and mature attitudes are examples of behaviors praised and rewarded by the CAC's coaching staff.
- **Goal setting.** Swimmers are taught to set realistic, yet challenging goals and are encouraged to track their progress through the use of log books.
- **Versatility.** Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances and strokes, thereby encouraging the swimmer to explore their potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming.

The Cheltenham Aquatic Club strives to:

**PROMOTE** the swimming experience,  
**DEVELOP** technical skills, and  
**INSPIRE** self-confidence, self-discipline and self-achievement  
in the sport of swimming and in life.

## Why Swim?

Did you know that age group swimming is one of America's largest programs of guided fitness activity for children? Age group swimming builds a strong foundation for a lifetime of good health, by teaching healthy fitness habits. Age group swimming is a favorite among parents and doctors alike because it:

- Develops high quality aerobic endurance, the most important key to physical fitness.
- Uses all the body's major muscle groups.
- Enhances a child's natural flexibility.
- Helps develop superior coordination.
- Is the most injury-free of all children's sports.
- Is a sport that will bring kids fitness and enjoyment for life.

## CAC ORGANIZATION

- Volunteers** CAC is a non-profit organization run solely by volunteers, without which CAC could not survive. Age group swimming is a great family experience where everyone is encouraged to get involved. Please refer to the section titled **RESPONSIBILITIES/PARENTS** for a list of volunteer opportunities.
- Local Sponsorship** CAC is partially sponsored by the Township of Cheltenham, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, through its Parks and Recreation Department. An annual donation of \$1,000.00 is awarded CAC in recognition of its outstanding contribution to the community.
- Private Sponsorship** Private sponsorship is also available. If you would like to be a sponsor of CAC or any of its programs, or would like to sponsor a fundraising event or make a private donation to the club, please contact one of our Board members either in person or by visiting our website at [www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org) and clicking on our e-mail address [info@swim4cac.org](mailto:info@swim4cac.org).

## CAC ADMINISTRATION

**Board of Directors** Administrative functions are overseen by the Board of Directors. The Board consists of at least three (3), but not more than thirteen (13) members.

**Term Year**  
2007-2008

**Officers**

President . . . . . Scott Stein  
Secretary/Treasurer . . . . . Andrea Stein

**General Board Members**

Eti Cukierman                      Megan O’Neill    Debbie Bernstein  
Mario Cukierman                  Margaret Pierce  
Ben Cook                            Barbara Burke

**Non-Voting Members**

Karen Wirtshafter (Head Coach)

If you are interested in serving on the Board or would like to ask a question or make a comment, please talk to a Board member personally or e-mail them at [info@swim4cac.org](mailto:info@swim4cac.org).

## Communication

**Electronic** **E-mail** is the principal means of keeping members informed of current events, therefore, regular monitoring of your e-mail is strongly recommended. Information will also be posted on the CAC **web site** ([www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org)). E-mail is also the most efficient way to contact CAC as needed. CAC’s e-mail address is [info@swim4cac.org](mailto:info@swim4cac.org).

**Telephone** Messages can be left at 215-572-5827 but e-mail is the preferred means of communication.

**Illness and Injury** Whenever possible, the coach should be informed in advance of an illness or injury. If your swimmer will be out of the water over a long period of time with an injury or illness, please notify CAC either by e-mail [info@swim4cac.org](mailto:info@swim4cac.org), or by leaving a message at 215-572-5827

## CALENDAR YEAR

Age group swimming is a year-round sport. The goal of CAC's Board of Directors and coaches is to provide its swimmers with the opportunity to train throughout the entire year. A typical swim year would run as follows:

### *Fall/Winter*

#### September thru March

The team practices at the Cheltenham High School located at 500 Rices Mill Road, Wyncote. Practice times are Monday thru Thursday, 5:45 – 6:45 PM for Bronze & Silver groups and 5:45-7:45 PM for Gold & Elite groups; Fridays 5:30 – 6:45 PM. High school swimmers may arrange to swim in pre or post high school swim season sessions. Swimmers will have the opportunity to swim USA Swimming short course meets one to two times per month.

### *Spring*

#### Spring Stroke & Turn Clinic

A stroke and turn clinic is offered during the Spring of each season at Cheltenham High School. Swimmers will have the opportunity to swim long and short course meets as available. Registration information and fees will be provided in advance.

### *Summer*

#### June and July

A summer program is offered Arcadia University. Swimmers will have the opportunity to swim both long and short course meets as available.

### *Exception*

#### *Dates*

Whenever the high school holds a school program in the evening (such as plays, concerts, etc.) CAC is unable to utilize the pool facility. These exception dates will be posted on the web site ([www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org)).

## Pool Closings

### *Weather Related*

Due to severe weather conditions (snow being one of the more common situations) the Cheltenham School District may announce an early closing of the schools. Cancellation of school classes and/or after-school activities also results in the closing of the pool. Notification to swimmers and families will be made in the following way:

- KWY radio announcement. The school closing number is **306**.
- The Cheltenham School District also makes announcements via
  - cable Channel 42
  - website [www.cheltenham.org](http://www.cheltenham.org)
  - information phone (215) 886-2424.
- The club will email all families that have supplied an email address.
- The CAC website will have updates posted as we receive current information.

### *Pool Related*

It is possible that mechanical difficulties or other operation-related (i.e., breakdown of pool heater, imbalance of pool chemicals, etc.) matters may cause the pool to be closed. You would be notified by email and an announcement would also be posted on the team website ([www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org))

# COACHING STAFF

## Head swim coach:

*Karen Wirtshafter* ..... 11<sup>th</sup> year coaching at CAC; varsity swimmer at LaSalle College.

## Assistant Swim Coaches:

The coaches' job is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. The CAC coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for youngsters that will be challenging, motivating and fun. Therefore, the coaches must be in total control in matters affecting training. Coaches' responsibilities are as follows:

**Placing youngsters in practice groups.** This is based on the age and ability level of each individual. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, he/she will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach.

**Providing instruction on stroke techniques and developing the training regimen.** Each group's practices are based on sound scientific principles and are geared to the specific goals of that group.

**Assisting parents and swimmers with meet/event selection.** The coaching staff is available to help the parents and swimmer decide which events and meets a swimmer will compete in.

**Conducting and supervising warm-up procedures for the team at meets.** After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmers' performance.

**Building relay teams.** When possible, coaches will have the sole responsibility of selecting swimmers for participation in a relay.

## TEAM PRACTICE

**Consistency** is the key to any swimmer achieving his/her goals, i.e., consistency in the practice schedule and the individual practice session. As a general rule, the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success.

### Practice Schedule

The coaching staff recommends the following practice schedule:

- Younger swimmers, ages 8 and younger are encouraged to attend 2-3 practices per week.
- Older swimmers, ages 9 and above are encouraged to attend 3-5 practices per week.

### Practice Session

The following guidelines will help parents keep their child's development in the proper perspective and help them reach his/her full potential as an athlete.

A swimmer has a responsibility to the team, the coaches, his/her parents, and most importantly to themselves. Swimmers need to prepare themselves for a 100% effort each time they come to practice. Swimmer's responsibilities are as follows:

- 1) Swimmers will be required to bring specified training accessories (i.e., goggles, swim caps, towel, etc.) to practice. It is the swimmer's responsibility to make sure these items are properly adjusted and that spares are readily available.
- 2) Swimmers will be required to adhere to the **Swimmer's Code of Conduct** as outlined below.

## Swimmer's Code of Conduct

- Swimmers should never interfere with the progress of another swimmer during practice or otherwise. Abusive language and behavior or disrespectful acts toward teammates will not be tolerated.
- 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.
- 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.
- The possession, sale or use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, non-prescribed drugs and/or hazardous objects is prohibited at all times.
- All members of CAC, whether parents or swimmers, should protect and improve the excellent reputation of the club.
- While in Cheltenham High School pool and locker room areas, swimmers are accountable to the coaching staff:
  - a. During practice sessions, swimmers are never to leave the pool area without a coach's permission.
  - b. Youngsters are required to stay until the end of practice when practical. For the safety of our younger swimmers, a parent or older sibling must arrive at practice before any swimmer under the age of 13 will be allowed to leave early.
  - c. Appropriate behavior is to be displayed in locker rooms and the entire facility before, during 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.
  - d. Swimmers should not walk through the gym area as a short-cut to the locker rooms.

\*\*\* Non-compliance with the **Swimmer's Code of Conduct** will result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate expulsion as determined by the Head Coach and CAC Board of Directors.

***Parents -- THE COACH IS THE COACH.*** A parent's job is to supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to make your child work harder in practice, which in turn gives him/her the confidence to perform well in competition.

- 1) Parents are to make every effort to have their swimmer at practice on time. Swimmers should arrive on the school grounds no earlier than 15 minutes prior to their practice time and be picked up no later than 15 minutes after their practice is over.
- 2) Swimmers are to enter the building and go directly to the pool area. A swimmer found in any other part of the building could damage CAC's relationship with the High School.
- 3) Parents are **NOT** allowed on the pool deck during practice unless it is an emergency.
- 4) Parents are permitted to observe practice from the observation area. Please be considerate and keep conversations at a low volume level. Do not try to communicate with any swimmer from the observation area. This is not only distracting to the swimmer, but can also be distracting to the entire team as well.
- 5) Any damage to school property may result in financial liability of the swimmer's parents. Any damage may also result in the swimmer being asked to leave the team permanently.

6) Parents are to register their child for a meet on or before the posted meet deadline date. The coaching staff will always be available to assist parents with meet and event selection.

7) Stay informed; check your e-mail and the CAC website regularly, and read any fliers that come home.

8) Make sure all financial obligations are settled when due. Meets fees, equipment and/or clothing purchases are to be paid in full as they occur. Outstanding fees may prevent a swimmer from participation in future meets or practices.

9) Volunteer: **We are an organization that is run by parent volunteers. Your time and energy help build and improve our club and allow us offer greater opportunities for your child. Please check below to let us know which of the club's volunteer needs you will be helping with.**

1. Photographer (submit pictures taken at meets, practices, special events, etc.)
2. Announcements: Post flyers of upcoming meets and meet deadlines
3. Banquet (decorations, set-up, ordering supplies, etc.)
4. Clothing & equipment orders and sales: T-shirts, sweatshirts, goggles, swim caps
5. Picture night (contact photographer, handle order forms, help organize swimmers)
6. Fundraising: Swim-A-Thon; food sales; other

### ***Talking to a Coach***

Always discuss matters first with your child's primary coach. Coaches will be available after practice once a week to answer questions, provide information, etc. The day and time will be posted on our website [www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org) at the beginning of each season. You can also e-mail your coach at [info@swim4cac.org](mailto:info@swim4cac.org)

## SWIM MEETS

### *Meet Schedule*

Each season's meet schedule is distributed at the start of the season or can be found on the CAC website [www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org) or through the Mid-Atlantic website [www.maswim.org](http://www.maswim.org). Occasionally, additional meets may be identified and announced either through our website or by the coaches.

### *Attendance*

The meet schedule has been established with the *hope* that swimmers will attend as many meets as possible at their classification level.

- **It is strongly encouraged but not mandatory to swim in meets in the Bronze & Silver groups.**
- Swimmers have the option of entering one, two or all three days of a two or three day meet.
- Carpooling is possible with sufficient notice.

### *Log Books*

One of the best ways a swimmer improves is to become aware of his/her times and splits in every event. Each CAC swimmer should keep a record of their competition times from meet to meet. Keeping a logbook at home will keep the swimmer aware of times and goals, as well as facilitate signing-up for the meets.

## How to Sign Up for a Swim Meet

Meet information is available from the CAC website [www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org) under Meets. Just click on information and print out the forms for a particular meet. You can also obtain the forms from the Mid-Atlantic website [www.maswim.org](http://www.maswim.org); click on MA/MEET INFO/RESULTS.

- 1) Complete the **CAC meet registration form** (available on the team website) **by the due date** indicating the following:
  - Your name
  - Meet name & date
  - Meet event number and description of event  
(i.e., #14 female 50yd backstroke).
- 2) Place the proper meet registration fee and completed meet forms in an envelope with your swimmer's name on it, marked "MEET REGISTRATION", and give it to your child's coach. **If payment is not included with the registration form, your child can not be registered for the meet.**
- 3) Deadlines for meet registration **WILL BE** observed. These dates are established by the facility running the meet and we must insure that our team entries arrive per their deadlines. It is possible that the most popular meets will fill up and they may not accept even timely entries. This is due to the fact that USS and Mid-Atlantic Swimming have established a four hour rule that meets should not go over in total time. Therefore, the total number of swimmers allowed to register may sometimes be limited.
- 4) You may register for meets by emailing your completed registration form to: [meetreg@swim4cac.org](mailto:meetreg@swim4cac.org) **ONLY if you have escrowed money in advance at registration.**

**Cancellation** If your child registered for a meet and is unable to attend due to illness or injury, please call and/or e-mail your coach ([info@swim4cac.org](mailto:info@swim4cac.org)) immediately as this may affect the coaching schedule for the meet.

## **What Do I Do When I Get to a Swim Meet?**

- 1) Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up begins.
- 2) Go to the locker room and change. All CAC swimmers are encouraged wear a team swim cap and team swim suit. Wearing the team uniform promotes team unity and pride.
- 3) Before going up to the stands, parents should remind their swimmer what events he/she is swimming. You might write this on your swimmer's hand in ink after checking the "heat sheets"/program which is on sale in the lobby of each pool facility.
- 4) Swimmers should join their coach and team members on the pool deck.
- 5) Parents are NOT permitted on the pool deck during swim meets.
- 6) At the end of each race, the swimmer should ask the lane timers for the stop watch time. Swimmers are then asked to come immediately to the coaching staff. This gives the coaches an opportunity to discuss the race with each swimmer and add positive comments concerning splits, stroke technique and race strategy.
- 7) Good sportsmanship dictates polite behavior towards all officials, coaches and members of opposing teams.
- 8) Whenever and wherever a Cheltenham Aquatic Club swimmer wears any item of the team uniform or is registered as a CAC swimmer, 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 CAC organization.
- 9) All questions 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.
- 10) As a matter of pride, leave the CAC team area in a neat and clean condition at the conclusion of the meet.

## **What Should I Bring to a Swim Meet?**

- 1) Two pair of goggles are highly recommended. Sooner or later an older pair of goggles is bound to break and having a back-up pair definitely prevents much stress and aggravation.
- 2) One or two large towels helps keep the swimmers dry and offers something to sit on.
- 3) Food and drink. Most meets generally offer a variety of food that can be purchased, although you might want to bring some additional favorite food and drinks for your son or daughter. Small coolers can be left with either the parents or taken by the swimmer onto the pool deck. Swimmers should not eat for at least thirty minutes before their event(s).
- 4) Swimmers leaving the pool deck area should always notify one of the coaches before doing so. They should wear footwear of some type since many facilities do not allow walking around the buildings barefoot.
- 5) Playing cards, books, portable music players (with headsets), Gameboys, etc. This allows them to pass the time. Please do not leave valuables in the open while swimming. Keep them packed away in your swim bags.
- 6) Usually, lockers are available. Locks are optional and must be supplied by the swimmer.

## Types of Meets

**MINI-Meet:** A mini-meet is designed for swimmers ages 8 and younger. Approximately one meet per month is offered with Mini Championships closing out the season.

**A/BB/C Meet:** Are meets designed for any swimmer age 9 and above.

**‘A’ Meet / Elite Meet or ‘A/BB’ Meet:** A meet designed for swimmers ages 9 and above who have met the US Swimming ‘A’ or ‘BB’ time standard. Time standards can be obtained by logging onto the Mid-Atlantic website, [www.maswim.org](http://www.maswim.org).

**Junior Olympic (JO) Meet:** A championship meet designed for swimmers age 9 and over that have achieved a JO time or above on the specific stroke for which they are entering the meet. You can only swim in those events for which a JO time has been achieved.

**“Zones”:** The Fall/Winter Zone team is selected based on time and is limited to 2 swimmers per event from the entire Middle Atlantic Region. The Summer Eastern Zone meet is based on time standards.

## Meet Awards

Coaches are responsible for picking up any awards (ribbons, medals, trophies) earned during a swim competition. These awards will be distributed to the respective swimmers at the Cheltenham pool the following week. Occasionally, awards are not available immediately after the meet and will be mailed to the team. Upon receipt, awards will be distributed to the swimmers.

## Team Recognition

### Personal Best Certificates

A swimmer will establish a benchmark whenever they swim a specific event for the first time in a swim meet. Thereafter, whenever a swimmer better their time in that event recognition will be awarded to the swimmer in the form of a Personal Best Certificate. This certificate, recognizes the date, event and times earned. These certificates will be awarded at the team banquet to all swimmers having earned them.

### Patch Program

Our "Patch" program recognizes achievement of ‘BB’, ‘A’ and above times in each stroke. Patches are distributed at the Awards Banquet at the end of the winter season.

### USA Swimming Time Standards

USS has established a table of time standards that is applicable to swimmers age 9 and older. A copy of the chart is posted on the USA Swimming website. You can easily get there from our website [www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org) or the Mid-Atlantic website [www.maswim.org](http://www.maswim.org); click on USA Swimming.

## REGISTRATION AND FEES

**Club Fees** The current club fees vary by group. Please check the website for the most current information.

**Swimming Groups:** **Bronze:** Our Bronze Mini group is our entry level program for swimmers 8 and under. Emphasis is on stroke mechanics, starts and turns. Participation in meets is not required but is strongly encouraged.

**Silver:** Our Silver group is our program for a new competitive swimmer or for an experienced swimmer seeking stroke improvement and conditioning. Emphasis is on stroke mechanics, starts and turns. Participation in meets is not required but is encouraged.

**Gold:** Our Gold group is for the competitive swimmer who is proficient in all four competitive strokes. This program focuses on refining strokes and providing more endurance work. Participation in meets is required. Swimmers must attend and participate fully in practice 2-3 times per week and swim in at least 3 meets per year.

**Elite:** Our Elite group is for the serious year round competitive swimmer, seeking to achieve maximum potential at local, regional and national levels. Swimmers should have at least “BB” times in 3 of their strokes in their age group. Swimmers must attend practice 4 nights (13 and over) or 3 nights (12 and under) per week and attend at least 6 meets per year.

**\*\* COACHES WILL DETERMINE THE GROUP LEVEL OF YOUR SWIMMER.**

**USA Swimming Fee** \$57.00

All swimmers must be members of United States Swimming. USA Swimming fees are collected at the time of registration. Included in your \$57.00 membership fee is insurance coverage and a one-year subscription to the monthly Splash magazine. If you wish to learn more about what else is covered by this \$55.00 fee, please visit our website at [www.swim4cac.org](http://www.swim4cac.org), and click on the USA Swimming link.

**Meet Entry Fees**

8 & under Mini Meets	\$4.00 per event, up to 5 individual events
9 & over	\$4.00 per event. up to 5 individual events per day

Relay fees are paid by CAC

### **Fundraising Fee**

All families are strongly encouraged to raise at least \$50.00 through the team Swim-a-thon, food sales, or other fundraising opportunities provided by the club. This money is used to purchase new equipment, subsidize costs of the team banquet, etc.

**Returned Check Fee** There is a \$10 bank fee added for any checks returned by the bank.

**Refund Policy** The fee for becoming a member of the Cheltenham Aquatic Club is for the specific season (e.g. winter, spring) regardless of any scheduled or unscheduled pool closings due to unforeseen circumstances. Requests for refunds made during the first two weeks must be submitted in writing to CAC, whereon 90% of the fee will be returned, minus any sums of money paid out by the team on the individual's behalf (e.g. t-shirts, membership in USA Swimming). A request for a medical reason must be submitted in writing to CAC along with a note from the physician. Upon approval by the Board, a prorated refund, less the fees noted

above will be refunded. **Refunds will NOT be made after the second week** that the pool opens for the season, except for those swimmers with medical reasons.

Swimmers wishing to join CAC after the posted deadline date, should e-mail CAC at [info@swim4cac.org](mailto:info@swim4cac.org), or call 215-572-5827. Please leave a message and a Board member will return your call promptly.

**Privacy / Photo Policy** CAC will not release any information about families or swimmers to any other parties other than USA Swimming. Parent names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses will be provided to other club members as part of the CAC family directory unless notified otherwise. CAC may occasionally post pictures of swimmers on its website (the swimmer will not be identified in the picture) unless notified otherwise.

**Parent / Guardian Authorization Release and Agreement:**

1. I hereby authorize the staff of the Cheltenham Aquatic Club to act for me according to their best judgment in any emergency requiring medical attention. I hereby waive and release USA Swimming and the Cheltenham Aquatic Club coaches and Board of Directors from any and all liability for any injuries or illnesses incurred while with the Cheltenham Aquatic Club. I have no knowledge of any physical impairment that would be affected by my child's participation in the Cheltenham Aquatic Club's swim program.
2. I agree to pay all team fees, USS fees, and meet entry fees in accordance with this application and the Cheltenham Aquatic Club handbook. There is a \$10 bank fee for any returned check. I further understand that a swimmer's membership may be suspended or terminated by CAC if all fees are not paid when due or if the swimmer violates the Swimmers' Codes of Conduct.
3. I have read and fully understand the refund policy and Privacy/Photo policy as described above.

DEAR PARENTS AND SWIMMERS,

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN BY THE END OF THE FIRST WEEK OF PRACTICE.**

THANKS!

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I have read the Cheltenham Aquatic Club Code of Conduct and understand the behavior that is expected of me.

Swimmer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Swimmer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Cheltenham Aquatic Club Code of Conduct and understand the standard of behavior that is expected of both swimmer(s) and parents.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_