



# Handbook

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## **THE TEAM**

## **NYAC HISTORY**

The North York Aquatic Club (NYAC) is proud of its long swimming history. Founded in 1958 by the Lions Club, the North York Lions Swim Club was incorporated and renamed the North York Aquatic Club in 1965. Since then, the North York Aquatic Club has been offering a program of competitive swimming for youth of all ages and abilities. Recently, we have added a Waves program for pre-competitive swimmers who are interested in stroke improvement and a Triathlon Swim Program for triathletes. Currently, there are over 250 swimmers from the ages of 6 to over 60, training under several coaches.

Our first pool, the old Memorial Swimming Pool on Yonge Street, is now gone and has been replaced by the 50 meter [Douglas Snow Aquatic Centre](#) at the same location. This complex is made available to NYAC swimmers through the [City of Toronto Parks and Recreation Department](#). As well, NYAC trains at the Toronto Board of Education and university pools throughout the city.

In its continuing efforts to provide the highest level of training and opportunities for young swimmers, NYAC delivers a valuable community service in the form of a competitive swim club to the residents of the GTA. Ultimately, this provides these swimmers with the opportunity to develop into young athletes all Canadians can be proud of.

## **COACHING PHILOSOPHY**

Staff will coach their groups in addition to establishing a relationship with each athlete that will foster trust, respect and communication. The design and structure of group programs are based on a NYAC program outline for each level in the club. This outline establishes the framework for a season plan of training objectives, meet selection and group goals. Motivational tools are used to simply get the very best out of our swimmers in an environment that is both rewarding and challenging. Our goal is to develop healthy and happy people who gain both mentally and physically from their swimming experience.

## **TRAINING PHILOSOPHY**

Our Head Coach and his team of Assistant Coaches put the training program at NYAC together. Each level in the Club sticks to the club-wide basics of skill development and the training parameters for developing swimmers. Age Group swimmers do not stroke specialize early and receive a well-rounded program that includes technique, speed, power and the conditioning necessary to advance through the years. The degree of proficiency is based on the acquisition of skills and the willingness of the athlete to learn and improve at his own rate. Today's competitive environment puts enormous pressures to succeed on the athletes and coaches. The ability to cope with these pressures is tied directly to the

coach-athlete relationship and how the athlete's level of self-esteem is groomed through the years. This being understood, it is critical to leave the coaching with the coach and away from the home. Remember, the Age Group swimming career is a roller-coaster ride of success and failure, both of which are necessary. Those who can reach a level of satisfaction with each will have the passion and motivation to excel and strive for maximum potential.

## **NORTH YORK CODE OF CONDUCT**

NYAC's goal is to provide our swimmers with an environment that will enable them to achieve their competitive swimming potential. To achieve this goal, parents, swimmers, and coaches are expected to follow general rules and principles while at practice, while at meets, and while traveling. This code of conduct outlines, first, the general principles of conduct for anyone associated with NYAC. It then breaks down the individual responsibilities of swimmers, parents and coaches, and, finally, provides a more specific code of conduct associated with travel to meets away from home.

### **General Principles**

1. All people working for and with NYAC are expected to:
  - a. behave in a manner that is respectful and courteous;
  - b. refrain from the use of demeaning or belittling language;
  - c. refrain from the use of abusive or confrontational approaches to swimmers, coaches, swim officials, or parents;
  - d. bring any concerns to the attention of the pool rep, coach, or, if needed, a member of the Board in order to facilitate resolution.
2. Access to practices by anyone other than the swimmer is at the discretion of the coach.
3. The pool deck at swim meets is for swimmers and their coaches. Parents are reminded that they are not permitted on deck without proper authorization.
4. The Head Coach and his staff are responsible for group placement. Movement throughout the year may occur.
5. The best interest of the club and swimmers must come first. Swimmers will be suspended if the swimmer's/parent's conduct is deemed by the coaches and Board to be contrary to the well-being of the club and other swimmers. Working together will provide our swimmers with the team environment necessary for each swimmer to reach his or her potential.

### **Swimmer's Responsibilities**

1. Swimmers are expected to arrive at practices and meets at the times designated by their respective coaches. For a practice, this means s/he is on deck and ready to go at least 15 minutes before practice is to start.
2. Swimmers are expected to know their training schedules.
3. Swimmers are expected to arrive with all equipment present and in good

working order.

4. Swimmers are expected to know their best times for their events.
5. Swimmers are expected to be attentive to their coaches and to follow coaching directives and suggestions.
6. Swimmers are expected to display a positive and consistent work ethic.
7. Swimmers are expected to display a positive and respectful attitude, along with respectful behaviour, toward other swimmers, parents, coaches and officials.
8. Swimmers are expected to participate in fundraising activities.

### **Parent's Responsibilities**

1. Parents are expected to assist children to get to practice regularly and on time. The level of assistance varies by age of the child, from an expectation of ensuring a younger child arrives on time, to an expectation of assisting older children to organize so that they may arrive on time.
2. Parents are expected to support the coach by allowing the coach to direct the swimming technique and strategy of the child, and by supporting the coach in his or her instruction.
3. Parents are expected to support and encourage their child(ren), especially during a performance plateau or downturn.
4. Parents are expected to encourage and support healthy living through ensuring and/or encouraging appropriate nutrition, rest, and dryland activities appropriate to the age and level of the child.
5. Parents are expected to work at NYAC-sponsored swim meets, as per the level of involvement dictated in the "NYAC Member Commitments and Assessments" document.
6. Parents are expected to participate in fundraising activities, as per the level of involvement dictated in the "NYAC Member Commitments and Assessments" document.
7. Parents are expected to ensure that at least one member per family is certified to act as timekeeper, and at least one member per family is certified to act as strokes and turns judge.
8. Parents are expected to meet financial and minimum work commitments on a timely basis.

## **Coach's Responsibilities**

(adapted from National Association for Sport and Physical Education, July 2001, an association of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance)

Coaches are expected to serve as role models to swimmers, both in terms of swimming technique and strategy, and in terms of behavioural expectations in and out of the water.

Coaches are expected to ensure that the health, well-being and development of the swimmer takes precedence over wins and losses.

Coaches are expected to provide a physically and emotionally safe environment for practices and competition.

Coaches are expected to maintain a professional demeanour in their relationships with swimmers, officials, colleagues, and parents.

Coaches are expected to follow safe training and conditioning techniques.

Coaches are expected to demonstrate an understanding of growth and developmental stages of their swimmers.

Coaches are expected to encourage success for the swimmer in and out of the pool, including encouraging continued commitment to academic achievement.

Coaches are expected to remember that competition should be healthy and enjoyable for all.

## **Travel Code of Conduct**

Swimmers, coaches, chaperones, and parents traveling with the North York Aquatic Club represent themselves, NYAC, the sport of swimming, and their community when traveling to swim meets/events. The North York Aquatic Club wants to project an image that makes all of us proud of our sport and our swimmers. Therefore, all individuals representing or traveling on behalf of NYAC will abide by the following Code of Conduct.

This Code is in effect from the point of departure until returning home. Anyone signing the Code of Conduct agrees that s/he will abide by it while representing NYAC.

Infractions of the Code of Conduct may result in that swimmer's family having to assume the full cost of the trip, plus return fare, if the swimmer is sent home early

in consultation with the parent.

Swimmers may not drink or carry alcoholic beverages or use drugs other than those prescribed to them by a physician. Such drugs must be reported to the coaching and/or managerial staff. However, proper administration of medications will be the swimmer's responsibility.

No swimmer is permitted to smoke or chew tobacco.

Appropriate behaviour is mandatory on team trips. When the coaches and chaperones, or accompanying staff, deem behaviour unacceptable, the swimmer will be scratched from the competition and sent home at his/her own expense in consultation with the parent. In extreme cases, outright dismissal from the Club will result. Examples of inappropriate behaviour include: promiscuity, failure to comply with the stated rules and/or curfews as set out by the coaches and chaperones, and any behaviour in violation of the Criminal Code of Canada.

Responsible, orderly, and reasonably quiet behaviour is expected of swimmers at all times including while traveling on rented or public transportation, when on the pool deck, and when in restaurants and all other public areas.

Hotel etiquette of the highest calibre is mandatory. Because hotels are resting places for all guests, the following behaviour is not acceptable:

- running up and down hallways
- constant room to room telephoning
- playing loud music or television
- fist fights and any kind of roughhousing behaviour
- prank phone calls to anyone in the hotel
- pranks of any nature that may result in damage to property or injury to self or any others, including other team members.

Male and female swimmers must, at no time, be in each other's rooms with the doors closed. Athletes from other teams are not allowed in swimmers' hotel rooms unless explicit approval has been given by supervisory staff (coach and/or chaperone).

All team members are expected to respect each individual's needs for rest/study times, which will vary from trip to trip. Teenaged athletes may be left alone in their hotel room at the discretion of the manager and coaches for reasons of minor illness or disciplinary action. Curfews, as determined by the staff, are set to ensure proper rest for the swimmers. These must be adhered to at all times. Failure to comply may result in that swimmer being scratched from competition or, in more severe cases, sent home at his/her expense in consultation with the parent.

When being billeted, athletes must be on their best behaviour at all times.

Conditions will not always be ideal, but unreasonable behaviour will not be tolerated. Swimmers should consider that it is their responsibility to report behaviour that does not adhere to the Code of Conduct to coaches or chaperones.

All of the above conditions also apply to the last night of the trip. There may be occasions when the entire team will enjoy an outing, a movie or dinner on the last night. Return to the hotel must be orderly and quiet. All rules/curfews set out by the coaches and chaperones will be followed.

For swimmers of legal drinking age, NYAC recognizes that the conditions described above may infringe on some of your legal rights and may limit the freedom you usually enjoy. However, for the sake of unity within the team, your cooperation is required and expected.

On occasion, members of NYAC will travel to swim meets outside of the GTA using private bus transportation. As well, when the number of swimmers is limited and doesn't warrant a bus, NYAC may choose alternate means of transport. This may include a multi-passenger van driven by one of the coaches or chaperones, or a personal vehicle driven by designated parents. The Code of Conduct applies to all forms of transportation. NYAC reserves the right to designate who travels on the bus when a bus is used. Normally, team meets will entail that swimmers 11 and over must travel with the team.

Infractions will be dealt with on an individual basis, and action may be taken immediately or after return to Toronto. The penalties may include immediate return home at the swimmer's expense, in consultation with the parent, or, for NYAC-supported travel, a reimbursement to NYAC by the swimmer.

## NYAC MEMBER COMMITMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

**\* The following information is subject to change. Dollar values and session commitment requirements change from year to year \***

NYAC runs meets in order to give our swimmers and others the opportunity to compete and show the results for all their long hours of training. Hosting our own meets often allows us to have the entire club attend the meet, which results in a great team building experience. These, however, are not the only reasons for hosting meets.

Membership fees cover a small portion of NYAC's operating budget. Running meets, and other fundraisers such as cookie dough sales and Swim-a-thon, raises the remainder. We depend heavily on these items to balance our budget and for this reason we set member commitments and assessments.

### **COMMITMENTS:**

There is one commitment activity – meet officiating. Not fulfilling the requirements in this area will result in an immediate non-participation penalty charged to the member.

### **Meets**

Volunteers from the host club are necessary to help officiate, make and serve food, and to perform administrative tasks in order to run an effective swim meet. A session refers to a section of the meet that is approximately four or five hours long. The following is the schedule of NYAC hosted meets and required **commitments for all families of swimmers** for the 2007-2008 season:

Youth Cup/Mega City	6 sessions	December
Spring Nationals	2 sessions	March
	[Youth, Nat'l Dev. And National Groups]	
	(1 prelim + 1 final)	
NYAC Performance Meet	3 sessions	May
Mayor's Cup	2 sessions	June

**NON-PARTICIPATION PENALTY: \$50 per session missed**

### **ASSESSMENTS:**

**Points Participation \$250 (\$100 for Intro Level and Junior)\***

This programme is intended to encourage participation in the various activities required to run a club of NYAC's size. A variety of opportunities that offer members the opportunity to earn back this assessment are outlined on the website.

### **Fundraising \$300 (\$150 for Intro Level)**

**There are many fundraising opportunities to earn back this assessment. Any monies raised over and above the assessment will be split with the club on a 50/50 basis and credited towards the following year's fees.**

This is a per family assessment based on the highest group level of swimmer in the family.

### **Swim-a-thon \$100 per family**

Each family is required to raise a minimum of \$100 for the annual Swim-a-thon. Most clubs in Ontario participate in Swim-a-thon in the spring as a way of support for the sport of swimming and as a method of financial support for the club.

**For further information about member commitments and assessments, please refer to the NYAC website <http://www.nyac.on.ca/>**

## **THE COACHES**

# **COACHES' PROFILES**

## **NYAC Head Coach**

Murray Drudge

Murray is now in his 12th season with NYAC. Coaching since 1978, he is considered one of the best club coaches in Canada. Murray's swimmers have represented Canada at the National and Junior National level. Murray has received the Ontario High performance coach of the year award for 2006 based on Julia Wilkinson's amazing performance at the Summer Nationals and her Silver medal with the women 4x100 Freestyle relay at the 2006 Pan Pacific championships in Victoria. He is also recognized for his early work in preparing her for the 2008 Summer Olympics.

## **Coaching staff (2008-2009)**

John Calnan

Sabrina Ng

Steve Downs

John MacLeod

Sarah Chan

Laura Watts

Rebecca Suen

Adam Johnston

Erika Moran

Suzy Simonetti

Katy Perry

# **THE TRAINING**

## TRAINING GROUPS

Following is a description of each training group. Members should be reminded that the criteria for move ups include ability to train in that group, attendance, skill acquisition, performance at meets and most importantly the coaches' judgment on what is the best program for that athlete to continue to excel.

### WAVES

Teach skills through NYAC drills  
(Introduction to competitive swimming)

### AGE-INTRO

Develop love of sport - Instill sense of pride through accomplishment. (Provincial A B C times)

### PROVINCIAL 2

Non Central Region swimmers - for experienced athletes above the training level of Age level programs

### YOUTH

Top 11-under prospects from Intro\Age  
Develop commitment and dedication to swimming objectives

### PROVINCIAL 1

Selected athletes currently at Central Region level  
Highly dedicated and committed to program.  
Learn to train - Learn to race !

### NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Selected athletes currently at Junior Provincial level  
Top prospects to train for the National Group

### NATIONAL GROUP

Selected athletes currently at Eastern \ Age group National level  
Top prospects for National level performance

### TRIATHLON SWIM PROGRAM

[This program](#) is designed for experienced tri-athletes as well as aspiring tri-athletes who desire swimming in a Long Course training environment with an experienced coach who is knowledgeable in the finer aspects of distance swimming as it pertains to adult tri-athletics. Practice sessions are either 3x or 2x per week.

## **GROUP PLACEMENT**

### **Performance**

Swimmers are grouped by ability and consideration of the athlete's age (see club model).

### **Ability to Train**

The swimmers must demonstrate that he or she will be able to handle the training load of the new group. Ability to meet the group standard is important for the self-image and confidence of the swimmer. If there is any doubt, the swimmer will be placed in a lower group with the opportunity to move up.

### **Attendance**

Swimming requires commitment to practice schedules and meet participation. As a swimmer moves up the competitive ladder, there are more practices of longer duration. If a swimmer does not attend practice on a regular basis, he or she is less able to improve performance.

### **Attitude**

While swimming performance is expected to improve over the long run, in the short run, there will be ups and downs. As the swimmer moves up the competitive ladder, he or she must be able to handle the stresses of intense training and competition and also balance swimming with other aspects of life (school and extracurricular activities)

### **Techniques**

As the swimmer progresses, it is expected that he or she will be prepared to work on and master the finer points of stroke techniques, starts, turns and race strategy.

### **Movement**

Movement from one group to another is at the discretion of the Coach and is based on meeting the criteria listed above for the next group. In other words, it is a combination of age, performance, ability to train, attendance, attitude and technique: not age or performance alone. Most changes are made at the end of the season (July), but there may be changes made at Christmas and after the short course season (March).

# **SWIM MEET INFORMATION**

## **GENERAL**

Meets are run by individual swim clubs, either on their own or in collaboration with other clubs in the area. All meets are run by volunteers, and are entirely dependent on parents, families, and friends to fill all positions in the meet. NYAC, and all other clubs who run meets, set mandatory swim meet participation requirements for swim families. Failure to fill all positions will result in removal of the approval from Swim Ontario and/or Swim Canada, to run the meet and, hence, mean that the swimmers will not be able to swim. This is true of all meets at all levels of competition. NYAC requirements are noted in your registration package. Continued training in how to run the many positions at a swim meet, beyond the required positions set by NYAC, are encouraged and supported by ongoing training provided by NYAC and Swim Ontario. Please note that parents are welcomed to volunteer at any meet run by any club. Though other clubs cannot require your participation the way that NYAC does, they often could use your help, and in turn help improve skills essential for running NYAC meets. Making yourself available on the day of the meet, or before if there is a contact name, is always appreciated.

### **Meet Schedule**

The latest meet schedule is posted on the NYAC website. It lists all of the meets that NYAC will attend, including qualifying times. Swimmers who meet the qualifying standards for the meet and have the coach's approval, will compete in the meet. Swimmers who cannot attend a particular meet must inform the coach as soon as possible. There is a fee for each entry. Late cancellation or no-show for an event or meet will result in the club, and therefore the swimmer, still having to pay the charge for all events that were not withdrawn before the meet-designated withdrawal deadline.

### **Meet Entries**

The coach will determine the events that a swimmer will swim. This includes strokes, distances, and number of events (up to the maximum allowable for the individual meet).

### **Classification of Meets**

Age group meets are open to swimmers aged 17 and under. Some are classified as open, meaning there are no time pre-requisites for entry. Others have pre-requisite times, generally based on time standards set by Swim Ontario and/or Swim Canada. Time standards are listed as E, D, C, B, A, PROVINCIAL, SENIOR PROVINCIAL, AGE GROUP NATIONAL, EASTERN/WESTERN NATIONAL and SENIOR NATIONAL. The meet can require pre-requisite times

be met for particular events, or for the whole meet. Only swimmers who meet, or are faster than, the pre-requisite time may swim in the event and/or meet. Some meets have de-qualifying times, as well, wherein swimmers faster than a particular time cannot enter the event and/or meet.

Central Region Championships: Age group swimmers who swim a C time or better in short course, or a B time or better in long course, may swim in the Central Region championships.

Provincial Championships: Age group swimmers who swim a provincial time or better may swim in the Provincial championships.

Senior Provincial Championships: Age group swimmers who swim a senior provincial time or better may swim in the Senior Provincial championships.

Age Group National Championships: Age group swimmers who swim a single age group national time or better may swim in the Age Group National championships.

Eastern/Western Championships: Age group swimmers who swim an Eastern/Western qualifying time or better may swim in the Eastern/Western championships.

Senior National Championships: Any swimmer, who swims a senior national time or better may swim in the Senior National championships.

### **What to Bring to a Meet**

Competition suit  
Competition cap  
NYAC T-shirt  
Sweatshirt, or tracksuit (mandatory for the national group and provincial qualifiers)  
Towel  
Water  
Nutritious snacks  
Sunscreen, sun hat, and sunglasses if the meet is outdoors

### **Meet Protocol – when to arrive, where to sit**

Arrive 15 minutes ahead of the meet warm-up time. The coach will inform you as to when that is. Please note that different age groups may have different warm-up times.

Swimmers will sit with coaches and team members at a designated area by the pool. Parents may not sit with the team, but may sit in designated viewing areas

at the individual venues. Though touching base with a swimmer during the meet may occur, parents are encouraged to support their swimmer(s) and the other swimmers on the team from the viewing area, and are to refrain from coaching or otherwise instructing the swimmer on swim technique or strategy. Please see the section on parent involvement in this handbook.

### **Common swim meet pool locations**

Etobicoke Olympium  
590 Rathburn Road  
Etobicoke, Ontario

University of Toronto  
55 Harbord Street  
Toronto, Ontario

Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre (Brantford Aquatic Club)  
254 North Park Street  
Brantford, Ontario

Douglas Snow Aquatic Centre  
5100 Yonge Street  
North York, Ontario

COBRA  
247 McMurphy South,  
Brampton, Ontario

Nepean Sportsplex  
1701 Woodroffe Avenue  
Nepean, Ontario

Dorado  
Mayfield Recreation Complex  
12087 Bramalea Road  
Caledon Ontario

London  
1045 Wonderland Rd. N.  
London, Ontario

## **MEET TERMINOLOGY**

For those new to the sport, swimming, like tennis, gymnastics and hockey, has its own jargon. We will try to provide definitions and explanations for the most commonly used terms.

Short Course: This refers to competitions that take place in 25-metre pools. The short course season runs from September until the Short Course provincial Championships in early March. You will notice that during short course season, swim meets are held at a number of small pools (Oakville, Richmond Hill, Whitby, Uxbridge), as well as some large pools (Etobicoke). The reason we do not use the high school practice pools for swim meets is because they are not 25 metres in length.

Long Course: This refers to competitions that take place in 50-meter pools. This season runs from March to September. During long course season, meets are limited to 50-meter pools (Etobicoke, U. of T., and Douglas Snow). The times standards during long course season are slower than for the same stroke during short course season, because there are fewer turns in the long course season.

Double-ended: This refers to competitions that start at both ends of the pool. During short course season, at larger pools like the Olympium, the pool is divided in two tanks by a bulkhead. The boys and girls swim concurrently at opposite ends of the pool. Each has their own set of officials running their portion of the meet. During long course season, the same system is used with each end having its own set of officials. However, the boys and girls take turns swimming. When the girls are about halfway down the pool on their last length, the starter in the boys end will start the next heat. This type of system requires incredible coordination and communication, but ensures that there are very few wasted seconds during the meet. To run an effective, double-ended meet requires a minimum of 100 officials for each four-hour session.

Heats: Since all the swimmers entered in a race cannot swim at the same time, they are put into heats of 6 or 8 swimmers, depending on the number of lanes in the pool. The heats are arranged so that swimmers of comparable ability are swimming together.

Timed Finals: Many meets are run as timed finals, which means that the heat time is the final time. Order of finish is determined by ranking the times for all the heats from fastest to slowest.

Finals: In other meets, the heats are used as qualifiers to make the finals. The 8 (or 6) swimmers with the fastest times make the A finals; the next 8 (or 6) make the consolations (B finals), and two are named as alternates in case one or more swimmers are scratched from the finals or consoles.

Seeding: Each heat in a meet is seeded. This means that swimmers are assigned to their lanes according to their entry time. When there are eight lanes, the fastest swimmer in each heat is in Lane 4, the next fastest in Lane 5, next in Lane 3, Lane 6, Lane 2, Lane 7, Lane 1 and Lane 8. Using the seeding technique, no swimmer is further away than half a pool width from the most competitive swimmer.

EX: This notation is used for a swimmer who is swimming exhibition only. They're not qualified for the meet because their times are too fast. They will be placed in the fastest heat, but are not eligible to win an award.

DNF: This notation is used to indicate Did Not Finish, meaning that the swimmer did not complete his event.

DQ: This notation is used for a swimmer who has been disqualified for some infraction of the rules. They are not eligible to win an award and their time is not official because of disqualification.

JD: This notation is used for a judge's decision. This happens when the place judge's list of finishing order does not match the times. This usually happens when the times are within hundreds of seconds of each other. The Chief Place Judge follows a standard procedure for determining time and place.

MT: This notation is used for manual time. In some of the larger pools, there are electronic time pads at the end of each lane, in addition to three timers. The Chief Place Judge compares the electronic time to the manual time. If the time is obviously incorrect because of a light touch on the time pad (i.e. the clock doesn't stop when the swimmer finishes) or malfunctioning electronics, the manual time replaces the electronic time.

NS: This notation is used to indicate No Show, meaning that the swimmer did not show up to swim a race in which he was entered.

PB: This notation is used to indicate the swimmer's personal best time.

Qualifying Times: Some swim meets have qualifying times that have to be met in order to participate. For example, to compete at the Provincial Championships, swimmers have to have provincial times. Other meets have maximum qualifying times. For example, those with provincial times in a stroke cannot swim that stroke at "B" meets.

TAG Rankings: The best 50 swims for each age group for each Olympic event are ranked from all swims in Canada. These rankings appear monthly in Swim Magazine and online.

## Official's Shirts

In an effort to maintain a high level of professionalism at NYAC-hosted swim meets, all officials are requested to wear a white, collared t-shirt (golf shirt) with the NYAC logo embroidered on it.

The golf shirts are available from Swim and Sports at a cost of approximately \$30 (which includes embroidery). They are available in female sizes x-small to x-large and male sizes small to 2XXL. Alternatively, parents may bring their preferred brand of shirt to Swim & Sports for embroidery of the NYAC logo at a cost of \$5.00 keeping in mind that the shirt must be a white, collared t-shirt (golf shirt) and that the parent would be responsible for delivery and pick-up of their shirt to/from Swim & Sports.

## OFFICIATING AT A SWIM MEET

*Did you know it takes more people to officiate a swim meet than it does for hockey, football, baseball or most other sports?*

*Yup, that's right. It takes about 60 people to run one of our meets sessions alone!!*

*How can that be? What are the jobs? What can I do to help? Well, I'm glad you asked.*

*Here's a list of jobs and brief descriptions, originally and graciously provided by the ERNESTOWN BARRUCUDAS SWIM CLUB*

Timers: Probably the best job - you get a great seat at the end of the pool so you never miss a race and all you have to do is start and stop a watch.

Chief Timer + Assistant: Well, someone has to watch all those timers. You stand behind the timers and make sure they are all paying attention to the start of the race, and help them if they run into any problems

Stroke and Turn Judges: Your job is to make sure that the races are fair - no swimmer should gain an advantage from an illegal stroke. Yeah, that means you might have to be the bad guy and DQ a swimmer, but it is all for the best.

Clerk of Course + Assistant: You know those cards that are handed out to swimmers that tell them what lane to swim in (you'll usually see your swimmer eating it, bending it, folding it!) Well, this is the person who coordinates all those cards before handing them out and is probably the last person to see them in pristine condition.

Marshals: Your job is to control the flow of swimmers as they are waiting to swim. You need a good voice to call out the swimmers' names and give them their cards. Then send them on to the blocks for their race.

Safety Marshals: Your job is to control the warm-up - this is when almost every swimmer is in the pool and it can get quite chaotic. Note, there are lifeguards watching the pool activity - your job is to watch the deck activity, and make sure the lanes are being used correctly. However, you need to be punctual for this job because the warm up cannot start until you are on deck with the orange vests on! Coaches and swimmers are anxious to start the warm up. You don't want them to be waiting!!

Chief Finish Judge + Assistant: After the race, the cards are brought to you to calculate the final time (which requires you read that water soaked time card.)

Recorder/Scorers: A fancy name for the computer operator. You put the data into the meet manager program, and print out the results + awards.

Electronics: An overseer for the recorder/scorer. He inputs all the electronic meet entries and ensures that all the touch pads and plungers function properly during a swim meet.

A bunch of runners: Usually we get brothers and sisters to help out. Someone has to bring those cards to the officials in the back room, or hand out the heat winner awards, etc.

Starter: If you like people to listen to you, this is the job for you. When you say "go", people jump!! (Well, actually, you say 'Take your marks' and then activate the "beep", and only the swimmers on the blocks should jump!)

Referee: Have you mastered all the above jobs and looking for more of a challenge? Then this is the job for you. You also have control over the pace of the meet.

Meet Manager: This is the one in charge of it all. Really. Not only on the day of the meet, but you do all the planning and coordinating leading up to the meet. We all love the meet manager, cause they do a lot of the work so our kids can swim.

*Of course there are a lot of other jobs during the day of the meet - someone needs to help with set-up and clean-up. Plus there is the canteen and other helpers. The list goes on!*

*So next time you are at a meet, think of all those people that are helping those swimmers get their chance to improve their times!*

*Want more information? Contact your Pool Rep.*

*Looking for a way to earn back your volunteer hours?*

*Looking for a great seat at a swim meet?*

*Here is your opportunity to do both - Why not try Officiating?*

*Not convinced this is for you? How about we sweeten the pot!*

*In addition to a great seat - all officials get free refreshments and lunch or dinner!!*

## **Code of Ethics for Volunteers at Swim Meets**

*Extracts from "Level 1 Swimming Officials Clinic" approved by National Officials Committee, January 2002*

The following suggestions address the problems that arise most often at swim meets. It is hoped that by observing them you will become a better official and swim meets will run more efficiently.

Have a positive attitude when you go to a swim meet to work. If you don't, it is the swimmer who will suffer.

Be at the pool and ready to work at least 1 hour before the session is to begin.

Report promptly to the officials' area and sign in (this lets the referee know that you have arrived). Stay in that area. It is very frustrating to have a list of people checked off and to find they have disappeared when the meet is ready to begin.

Accept an assignment to officiate at the meet only if you intend to honor that commitment. If for any reason you are unable to attend, courtesy demands that you let the person in charge of officials know as soon as possible. Never simply be a "no show". The swimmers suffer from your negligence.

Accept the assignment you have been given at a meet. The meet officials chairperson or referee has placed you there for a reason (also keep in mind it never hurts a senior or master official to time a session or be a clerk-of-course. you would be surprised at how "rusty" you have become in the interim). If you find yourself doing the same job for several sessions a word to the meet officials chairperson can usually alter that situation.

Ensure you know who is in charge of your area of assignment. Check with him regarding any rules you may be unsure of, or ask him/her any questions you have about your duties before the meet starts.

The Referee will take charge of his officials immediately before they go on deck. He will give you his instructions as to the way in which he intends to run the meet. At times a briefing of duties will be delegated to other Senior Officials (i.e. Chief Timekeeper). Listen to what he says, for he will be in charge until the session ends. Often new rules may be explained at these briefings.

When you arrive on deck at your assigned station for the session, don't leave your post unless you have informed the chief timekeeper. Also be in the right position to do your job properly.

In many cases you will be officiating at a meet where your child will be competing. It is a great temptation to leave the pool deck when your swimmer is

done. If you have agreed to work a session, it is your responsibility to work the complete session unless you find yourself a replacement.

Be impartial. Be careful not to use your position to the advantage or detriment of any swimmer or team. As an official, coaching or cheering should not be done. Officials should be an unobtrusive and inconspicuous as possible.

Do not be overly “official” in your authority, particularly as it applies to stroke and turn judging and refereeing. Assume your responsibility in a manner, which earns the support of the swimmers, coaches, parents, and spectators. Keep in mind swim meets are held for swimmers and you as an official are there to assist them by providing adequate technical supervision for the meet. You must act in such a manner as to ensure that no swimmer gains an unfair advantage over another.

Also remember inattentive or inefficient officiating is unfair to the swimmer. You are there to serve in the best interests of each participant.

A commitment to this philosophy leads to a personal assessment of one’s capability to perform well on deck in the assigned role. A willingness to consult with others and to continually study the current working rules is essential.

Remember at any session the referee’s decision is final. Do not take offence if your decision is overturned.

Do not lecture a coach or debate disqualifications with a swimmer while working the deck.

Remain cool and professional at all times. Refer any problems that may come your way to the referee.

Be fair to all competitors, your own children and opponents alike. Being continually fair, you may time or place your own children if they are in your lane.

Keep seated as much as possible. When you move around you are interrupting the view of the other timekeepers, of the starter, referee, or chief timekeeper.

Be friendly to the swimmers but don’t distract them if they are preparing mentally for a race.

Know the rules thoroughly (as they apply to your assigned position). It is a good idea to glance over pertinent rules and sections in the rulebook prior to the session.

# **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

## **GENERAL**

When you register your swimmer with NYAC, you are making a commitment of not only your finances, but also your time. There are many roles for parents to play in addition to swim meet commitments. These roles include: pool rep, video, photos, yearbook, social events, banquet, fundraising, swim-a-thon, cookie dough, Loblaws, meet food, meet management, website, meet office, golf tournament. Talk to your coach or pool rep for more information. The role of the Pool Rep is critical and is described in more detail below.

## **POOL REP**

Pool reps are parent representatives who perform an essential communication role within the club. They play a positive and supportive role model for parents.

Pool reps can be approached with general questions about your particular group. However, if you have a specific concern about your child, you should contact your child's coach directly.

Pool reps and/or coaches distribute newsletter to either the parent or the swimmer. These newsletters contain important information about the club such as upcoming meets, social events, changes to schedules when necessary, and updates from each group's coach. Other information from the club such as details regarding pool changes, fundraising/swim-a-thon events may be passed on through visits to the pool, telephoning and email.

It is the pool rep's responsibility to organize the volunteer commitment sessions for the families in their group. Each family is responsible for working sessions at NYAC hosted meets over the course of the year. The pool reps will coordinate the session sign-up with the parents and report back to the meet management team.

Another important role that the pool reps serve is to help direct parents with questions and concerns to the appropriate people in the club. The pool reps are a positive link between the parents and the club, to the extent of providing information about how the club functions and what the club's philosophy is. With the help of the coach and families in their group, the pool reps may plan social functions for his or her groups. Pool reps may also coordinate breakfast for the club at NYAC social events such as the Red, Black and White meets.

Becoming a pool rep provides a window of opportunity to get involved in the club. It is a wonderful way to learn about competitive swimming and the club. It provides an opportunity to interact with the coaching staff, board and families of NYAC.

## **NYAC EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS**

### Be prompt for practice and meets

Please arrive 15 minutes prior to the designated start time of the practice or warm-up for a meet. This allows your swimmer to get ready and to hear any announcements prior to the beginning of practice or warm-up.

### Let swimming be your swimmer's activity; let parenting be yours

Parents should try to make every effort to allow their child's swimming to be the child's activity. Sometimes, parents try to live through their child's success and misplace it as their own. The parenting role should be to teach children humility in victory, dignity in defeat, and strength in character. As well, the parent should provide encouragement through disappointment.

Parents also provide transportation to practice and meets, ensure the swimmer gets plenty of rest, provide healthy and well-balanced meals, and provide the equipment needed to practice and compete.

### Talking with your child after a poor performance

Sometimes it is hard to know what to say to your child after a disappointing performance. When children know they did not swim well, they don't want to hear, "You swam great!" And, when they have had a poor race they don't want to be told, "It's really not important." At the moment, it is important to them, and they should be permitted the dignity of their unhappiness. Although parents mean well, remarks like these sound superficial and lack sincerity. Children can detect phony comments, and they resent them. When parents are insincere or provide false praise, children learn to place less value on their words and later may be unable to get full satisfaction from deserved praise. Sometimes, it helps to simply state the fact, "That was a tough race." Or, you could let your swimmer know that you understand how they are feeling with, "I can see you're frustrated with how you raced." Often, you just need to give your child some space to deal with their unhappiness. Mostly, they will take their cues from you, especially if you help them refocus on the next race, and put the disappointing one behind. In short, praise generously and criticize sparingly, but do so with sincerity rather than through false words of praise.

### Become an active parent volunteer

As was noted earlier when discussing swim meets, parents are critical to our ability to run meets. Parents should make every effort to get involved. This can also include involvement in committees, in practice if requested by the coach, or involvement on the Board through the electoral process.

## Keys to a Successful Relationship with a Coach

Keep in mind that you both have similar goals for your child

Discuss your goals with your child's coach

Talk to your coach first when a concern arises

Don't spread your anger to other parents

Try to remain objective

Deflect other parents' concerns

Develop a friendly relationship with the coach

Let your child's coach know that you appreciate his or her efforts

Remain positive

## Having a Problem with a Coach?

There may be times where you disagree with the coach, or feel that something else should be tried or recommended. It is important to approach the coach directly with your concerns. Never discuss this with the swimmer. Avoid discussing this with other parents. Any disagreements should be dealt with, first, by direct dialogue with the coach in question. This often will resolve whatever concerns may be present, or may answer what questions you have. As well, it provides the coach with an opportunity to respond to any concerns or allegations that refer directly to him or her. Discussing concerns with others without first giving an opportunity for the coach to respond, is unfair to the coach and sets up a dynamic of distrust between coaches, parents and swimmers. This same behaviour is expected of NYAC coaches; they are to approach you directly with any concerns or questions they have pertaining to you, rather than discuss them with swimmers or other parents. You, too, have the right to respond individually.

If you continue to have concerns after speaking with the coach, you have the right to request a meeting with the Head Development Coach, or Head Coach. You may also request a meeting with the communications representative or the President of NYAC, if you have a concern that you feel is not being addressed by the Club as a whole.

## **Parenting Pitfalls to Avoid**

### The Pressure Parent

This type of parent constantly talks about swimming. They take their child running at 5 a.m. on the only day the child has off from practice. No matter what the child achieves, it is never enough. They are easy to find because they are usually the ones saying, “I never put pressure on my child!” Swimmers of pressure parents tend to have less fun, don’t want to go to practice at times, are afraid of both failure and success – if they fail, they get yelled at, but if they succeed, then more is expected out of them by the parent. While every parent at one time or another sends messages to their children that could be received as pressure, it is the parent who constantly causes undue stress to their child when it comes to swimming. These parents tend to make the atmosphere tense and uncomfortable for the people around them. Others want to say something, but usually don’t.

To avoid becoming a pressure parent:

- Let your child enjoy his/her activity
- Remember that while you are paying for the sport, it is your child’s sport;
- Try to let your child experience failure so that he/she may learn better how to build success
- Communicate with your child and don’t let a swim determine if they are a good or bad kid
- Try not to compare your child to anyone else since swimmers all develop differently
- Enjoy your child’s efforts even if they aren’t what you expected
- Talk to your child about what he/she thought about his/her swim
- Try to never punish your child by using swimming for leverage
- Give your child some space so he/she gains ownership of his/her sport
- Separate swimming as an activity that is part of your child’s life – not his/her whole life

### The “Living Vicariously Through my Child” Parent

Have you ever seen those parents at swim meets that proudly puff out their chests with gold medals pinned to their shirt? How about the parent who thinks that he/she is more important to the team just because his/her child is a faster swimmer? Every team has a few of these types of parents. It is easy to get caught up into your child’s successes. Also, the opposite happens. Sometimes parents walk around the pool at a meet with their heads hung low, like they just lost the biggest race of their lives! It is as if the success or failure of the child is a direct reflection of the parent’s worth.

To avoid becoming one of these parents:

- Separate yourself from the end result of your child's swim "Good for you!" "You did it!", or "We are proud of you no matter how fast you swim".
- Avoid boasting about your child. Focus on encouraging others on the team
- Actively cheer for others just as loud as you would for your own child
- Teach your children good sportsmanship by being their best example
- Let your child accept the rewards and the defeats. Teaching children responsibility is the only way to get them to truly be the best they are capable of being.
- Avoid thinking that just because your child is now one of the faster children, you are more important to the team than any other family with children who are not as fast
- Try to be excited for your child, not for yourself
- Let your child set his/her own goals, not your goals for your child. The only expectation you should have is that your child enjoys the experience of competitive swimming

### The "I'm Not THAT Kind of Parent" Parent

Have you ever noticed that with some parents, no matter how hard you try to explain things to them, they give you a stock answer: "I'm not that kind of parent." These parents worry about their child never getting enough attention. They call coaches for lengthy conversations on subjects ranging from biomechanics of swimming to their child not being able to swim today because of a hangnail. They never take the blame for any problem on the team, but are usually up in the stands stirring the pot of dissension. They pressure their kids into being something they're not, always threaten to leave the team if things don't change, are usually never found when it is time to help out at swim meets, never fund raise, and will tell you what you want to hear and then tell someone else the complete opposite. While this may be a little exaggerated, a lot of these things actually do occur by parents who will be the first to tell you "they're not that kind of parent."

To avoid becoming one of these parents:

- Try to avoid hanging around and dwelling on concerns that just can't be fixed
- Try to support any and all decisions made by the directors of the team. You may not always agree with what is done, but once a final decision is made you have two choices: support it in a positive way, or deal with it.
- Reinforce to your friends who are parents on the team to become actively involved in a positive way and not focus unneeded energy on the trivial things in the program

- If you feel someone is complaining too much, talk to them about it and encourage open and free discussion with someone who can help him or her deal with whatever is bothering him or her

### The Passive-Aggressive Parent

This is the parent that scares the coaches and parents the most. It is the parent who can really do harm to a positive program. The passive-aggressive parent is the parent who doesn't present his or her concerns directly to the coach, but rather lets problems fester. Usually, this person goes from person to person airing complaints that should be directed toward the coach.

To avoid becoming a passive-aggressive parent:

- Bring your concerns directly to the coach, or to whomever it is that you are feeling the need to complain about.

### The Invisible Parent

This is the parent who takes no interest in the swimming of the child, contributes nothing to the club, and is generally unknown to swimmers, parents and coaches.

To avoid becoming an invisible parent:

- Do show an interest in your child's swimming, even if just to ask the child how things went and to discuss whatever he or she would like to discuss.
- Participate in the ongoing activities of the club

### The Coach Parent

Have you seen this parent? Just scan the crowd at a swim meet. This is the parent huddled with his/her child and giving specific swimming or race instructions. This parent often carries a stopwatch and times races, both in competition and practice. He or she constantly offers criticism and advice to his or her child, often contrary to the direction of the coach. It is confusing to the child and detrimental to the development of the swimmer.

To avoid becoming a coach parent:

- Get into the habit of having your child talk to his or her coach before and after each swim
- Avoid commenting on technical things like stroke corrections, breathing patterns, race strategies, goal times, starts, turns, etc. If you have a specific concern, address it to the coach, not the swimmer

- Let your child be the one to educate you as he/she learns. It makes it a lot more fun. After all, they are doing it every day, while chances are you are not. So, who is the expert?
- Always ask your child, “What did your coach say?” Not, “You should have had a better turn.”
- Never give race instructions to your child. That has already been done
- Let your child tell you about his or her goals. Don’t tell them what you expect from a performance standpoint
- Let your child keep track of his/her best times. Ownership is vitally important
- Try to avoid “pump up” speeches. If they’ve already talked to the coach, then they’ve already gotten one
- Never disagree with a coaching decision or question why a coach has done something, in front of your child. Talk to the coach personally for any concerns or questions
- Provide support for your child
- Avoid critiquing your child’s swim. The coach is the only figure that can accurately critique your child’s races and workouts. After all, the coach is much more objective when it comes to your child.

### The “Coach’s Dream” Parent

Common qualities that good, supportive parents share in competitive swimming are:

- Finds out what needs the program has and then gets involved with assisting with those needs
- Allows the child to get the most out of the experience
- Speaks positively of the program to others outside of swimming
- Helps out at team hosted functions
- Allows the coach to coach and is supportive
- Steps away from negative conversations that are not addressed directly to the people about who the conversation centred
- Compliments other swimmers
- Has fun. The sport is a social opportunity as much for parents as it is for kids

### What Type of Parent Are You?

Perhaps while reading about these different types of parents, you had particular parents in mind for particular types of parents. But to be honest, don’t you agree that there is probably a little of these people in all of us? The key is to be aware of how involved or over-involved you may be, and adjust your approach accordingly in order to ensure that swimming is always a positive and rewarding experience for children.

## Resources

### Governing Organizations



[FINA](http://www.fina.org) (www.fina.org)

official site of the international governing body of swimming, diving, water polo, synchronized swimming and open water swimming



[Swimming Canada](http://www.swimming.ca) (www.swimming.ca)

official site for the national governing body of swimming in Canada

[RSS](#) [News Feeds](#)



[Swim Ontario](http://www.swimontario.com) (www.swimontario.com)

official site for the governing body of swimming in Ontario



[Triathlon Canada](http://www.triathloncanada.com) (www.triathloncanada.com)

official site of the national governing body for triathlon and duathlon in Canada, with race reports, athletes photos, and national team information packets

### Swim News



[Power Rankings](http://www.swimming.ca/swimming/index_e.aspx?DetailID=636) (www.swimming.ca/swimming/index\_e.aspx?DetailID=636)



[Swim Ontario News and Events](http://www.swimming.com/nav_home/news_events.php)

(www.swimming.com/nav\_home/news\_events.php)

for local, national and international news items



[Swimming World](http://www.swimmingworldmagazine.com) (www.swimmingworldmagazine.com)

a global swim news site with up-to-date info, interviews and results

[RSS](#) [News Feeds](#)



[SwimNews.com](http://www.swimnews.com) (www.swimnews.com)  
for daily news, information and meet results to keep the swimming community informed

[RSS News Feeds](#)

## Training Resources



[Coaching Association of Canada](http://www.coach.ca) (www.coach.ca)  
for information about the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to ensure effective coaching leadership for Canadian athletes



[The Canadian Sport Centre Ontario \(CSC Ontario\)](http://www.csontario.ca) (www.csontario.ca) for information about programs and services to high performance athletes and coaches to enhance their ability to achieve international podium performances



[Swim Ontario Coaching Resources](http://www.swimontario.com/nav_coaches/articles/articles_psychgeneral_list.php) (www.swimontario.com/nav\_coaches/articles/articles\_psychgeneral\_list.php) for articles on mental preparation



[NYAC Coaches' Corner](http://www.csa.org/nyac/nyaccoachescorner.htm) (www.csa.org/nyac/nyaccoachescorner.htm) for information in pursuit of excellence in swimming performance at all competitive levels



[NYAC Triathlon Swim Program](http://www.csa.org/nyac/nyactriathlonswimprogram.htm) (www.csa.org/nyac/nyactriathlonswimprogram.htm) for information about NYAC's competitive training program designed for the adult triathlon swimmer