



Handbook
2010-2011

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Introduction

Dear CAT families,

Welcome one and all to the wonderful world of the Clemson Aquatic Team. You have made the conscious choice to join the premiere aquatics club in the Upstate. My name is Jon Mengerling, I am the Head Coach of CAT and would like to extend my welcome and well wishes to all new parents and families, and welcome back to all returning families. To the athletes, I encourage all of you to get ready for a fast paced season full of fun, excitement and of course fast times and hard training.

Along with the support of the CAT Board of Directors, we are here to ensure the best learning and training experience for all swimmers and parents. Swimming as a recreational activity is not a complicated sport. Competitive swimming, however, is a whole different animal. It is my job and responsibility to bring the competitive edge, technical knowledge, and motivational drive to each and every one of your athletes. In the process, the growth and development of your children, it is my hope and intention to keep each and every one of you up to date and educated on what it is to be a competitive swimming family. This will include emails, articles, clinics, and mock meets. We are a parent run organization, that is to say, we cannot function without volunteers! It is our aim to educate and encourage everyone to be as big a part of the team as they feel comfortable doing, and with all of our returning families we have plenty of knowhow and people to help your transition/learning experiences as easy as possible.

The following handbook, again put together by several of our volunteers, will list very important information and detail for you the basic inner workings of our organization. In it is also a season schedule, practice group descriptions, and much more. Please take the time to read and digest the information.

Again, welcome to CAT, I look forward to getting to know each and everyone of you during the coming year!

Sincerely,

Jon Mengerling
Head Coach

Coaching staff

Jonathan Mengering, Head Coach

Coach Jon joined CAT as Head Coach in the fall of 2007. Currently a Masters swimmer, he was an age group swimmer for 14 years and spent four years as a Division I swimmer at Clemson University. Elected Captain of the Clemson men's team in 2005-2006, Jon was on the ACC Honor Roll and graduated with a degree in Physics & Astronomy. He has served as Head Coach for Old Georgetown Swim and Dive Club in Bethesda, MD and as Assistant Coach at Rockville Montgomery Swim Club in Rockville, MD, working with all age groups and skill levels from toddlers to Masters and Olympic caliber swimmers. Jon is also an assistant swim coach with the Clemson University Swim and Dive program where he specializes in distance free and IM event training.

Phillip Jasper, Assistant Coach

Coach Phil joined CAT as Assistant Coach in Fall 2010. Phil was raised in the Suburban Washington D.C. area, Bethesda Maryland. He swam competitively growing up and most recently coached the Clemson Area Summer Swim League (CASSL) team at Clemson Swimming Pool Club. He is a junior at Clemson University majoring in Psychology.

Board Members

Chair – Ken Christensen; kenchris2@gmail.com

Vice Chair – Susan Mauro; rubino506@aol.com

Treasurer – Gina McCarty; treasurer@clemsonaquaticteam.org

Secretary – Tracy Arwood; secretary@clemsonaquaticteam.org

At-Large – Amity Buckner; michaelebuckner@yahoo.com

At-Large – Susan Cline; scline@ncees.org

At-Large – Eric/Tammy Muth; themuths@earthlink.net

At-Large – Scott/Kim Vick; kimvick@bellsouth.net

Athlete – Sara Emily McCarty; readingfish@bellsouth.net

Goals of the Program

The Purpose of CAT

- To provide an opportunity for all children eligible for membership to engage in a wholesome, lifesaving, lifetime sport and recreational activity
- To promote physical fitness and good patterns of physical development and to encourage proper conditioning, nutrition, and health habits
- To provide opportunities for social, emotional, and educational development and to encourage peer and family participation
- To promote the involvement in age-group programs and provide an opportunity for members to compete in organized swimming competitions

USA Swimming

As the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming in the United States, USA Swimming is a 300,000-member service organization that promotes the culture of swimming by creating opportunities for swimmers and coaches of all backgrounds to participate and advance in the sport through clubs, events and education. The membership is comprised of swimmers from the age group level to the Olympic Team, as well as coaches and volunteers. USA Swimming is responsible for selecting and training teams for international competition including the Olympic Games, and strives to serve the sport through its core objectives: Build the base, Promote the sport, Achieve competitive success.

All CAT swimmers must also be members of USA Swimming. USA Swimming registration fees are included in annual CAT membership fees. USA Swimming Members enjoy a multitude of benefits:

- * Six issues of USA Swimming's award-winning Splash Magazine
- * Opportunity to qualify for and compete in USA Swimming sanctioned meets- Zones to Olympic Trials!
- * Eligibility to participate in local and national swimming camps.
- * Ability to track your times and improvement through their extensive times database
- * Excess accident and liability insurance
- * Motivational programs such as Age Group Top 10, Scholastic All-America and more

Training Groups

White Squad- Generally, swimmers in this group are ages 7-11. The **White** group will focus primarily on developing novice swimmers abilities. We will focus on stroke

mechanics and fundamentals and begin interval training. It is highly suggested that **White** group members attend any and all meets hosted by CAT to learn and develop the skills to compete successfully.

Primary coach will be Phil Jasper.

Practice Requirements - 3 times per week minimum.

Swim Times and Locations - 5-6pm or 6-7pm Monday - Friday at Fike

Equipment Requirements: kick board and fins.

Purple Squad- Generally, swimmers in this group are ages 9-13. The **Purple** group will be comprised of swimmers that have exhibited strong understanding of basic techniques and a good foundation of aerobic ability. Conditioning and more interval training appear in the **Purple** group. It is expected that **Purple** group members will attend all CAT hosted events as well as a few away meets at the coaches' suggestion.

Primary coach will be Jon Mengerling, Head Coach.

Practice Requirements - 4 times per week minimum.

6:45-8:15pm Monday - Friday at Fike.

Equipment Requirements: kick board, fins, pull buoy and paddles.

Orange Squad- Generally, swimmers in this group are ages 11-15. The **Orange** group will be those more advanced swimmers moving through middle school and beginning their high school careers. Conditioning and interval training will occur on a daily basis; the need for dedication on a weekly basis becomes much more important. It is expected that **Orange** group members will travel to most away meets as well as attend any and all meets hosted by CAT.

Primary Coach will be Jon Mengerling, Head Coach.

Practice Requirements - 5 times per week minimum.

6:45-9:00pm Monday - Friday and Saturday 10:00am-Noon at Fike.

Equipment requirements: kick board, fins, pull buoy and paddles.

Senior Squad- Generally, swimmers in this group are ages 13 & up. The **Senior** group will be those swimmers who have exhibited strong desires to improve themselves through dedication and conditioning. It will be the role of the **Senior** group to be model athletes in all manners of the phrase. Work ethic, conditioning and dedication to their group and other teammates will be paramount to being successful in the **Senior** group. It is expected that **Senior** group will attend any and all meets deemed important by the Head Coach.

Primary Coach will be Jon Mengerling, Head Coach.

Practice Requirements - 6 times per week minimum

6:45-9:00pm Monday - Friday and Saturday 10:00am-Noon at Fike, 5:15-7:00am

Tuesday and Thursday at CCRC

Equipment Requirements: kick board, fins, pull buoy, split fins, snorkel and two sets of paddles

Communication

Effective communication is important in any relationship. Our primary method of communication is by electronic methods. Please check your email and the CAT website regularly for the important CAT information. If you have concerns, they should first be addressed to the swimmer's coach. While the coaching staff is eager and concerned to address any and all issues that parents may have, we ask that these be addressed before/after (not during) scheduled training times.

CAT Tales

CAT Tales is our weekly newsletter sent via email and posted on the website under "CAT News". Be sure to read it carefully each week to stay updated on all the latest CAT news, including practice schedule changes and upcoming meet information.

Website (includes Swimmer Directory)

www.clemsonaquaticteam.org

CAT news, calendars, and meet information will be posted online. Meet signups are conducted via the CAT website. Please visit the website on a regular basis for important information.

Email

Email addresses for the coaches, board members and swimmers can be found on the CAT website by clicking on "Members". The general correspondence email address for CAT is cat@clemsonaquaticteam.org.

Cell Phone

Head Coach Jon Mengering can be reached at 864-986-8014. Assistant Coach Phil Jasper can be reached at 240-506-3794.

Fees

Characteristic of any business, CAT expenses begin the first day of every month. A positive cash flow is required to assure payroll requirements and various other expenditures. It is, therefore, imperative that all swimmer fees are paid on time. Fees are due on the 1st day of each month. If fees are not paid on time, swimmers will not be allowed to practice. Additionally, late fees will be assessed on the 20th of the month.

Invoices can be viewed at anytime on CAT's website and will be emailed near the first of each month. You can sign up for auto pay via the website or pay by check or cash each month, if you prefer.

There are 3 general types of fees:

1. Annual Membership Fees

2. Tuition/Training Fees
3. Meet Fees

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE: \$110 (\$44 for Master’s). This fee is collected upon registering for the team. The Membership Fee includes required membership in USA Swimming (Master’s Swimmers must register individually with USMS), a team t-shirt, cap, and a one-year subscription to SPLASH magazine (only USA-S Members receive magazine). The Membership Fee after April 1, 2011 is \$68 (\$44 for Master’s swimmers). **Membership fee is non-refundable.**

NOTES: Membership fee for each additional swimmer from the same family is \$80 (\$14 for Master’s). Additional swimmer membership fee after April 1, 2011 is \$57 (\$14 for Master’s).

Swimmers that qualify for the free or reduced school lunch program may be eligible for some fee reduction. Please consult Gina McCarty, CAT treasurer, to see if you qualify for a membership fee credit. A copy of the school lunch qualification letter or a signed affidavit must be given to the treasurer to receive this credit.

TUITION FEE: Swim fees are non-refundable. A 10% discount is applied for all swim fees paid by families with more than one swimmer. Athletes participating in monthly tuition plans are financially obligated for the full month’s tuition if athlete participates in at least one practice and/or meet during the month.

Squads	White & Masters	Purple	Orange	Senior
Monthly	\$75	\$110	\$120	\$130
Annually**	\$770	\$1155	\$1265	\$1375

**Paid in September

College students who desire to train with the Master’s squad pay reduced fees of \$37.50/month or \$385/yr. Membership fee must be paid in addition to swim fees. College students with significant swimming experience who desire to train with the Senior squad pay reduced fees of \$65/month or \$688/yr. Membership fee must be paid in addition to swim fees.

USA-S or USMS registered athletes from other teams who wish to train with CAT while in the Clemson area temporarily, may train a maximum of 15 days/year without joining CAT and paying swim fees.

Visiting or Temporary Swimmers not registered with either USA-S or USMS must provide proof of registration with either organization prior to swimming with CAT.

Meet entry fees and any swimmer/parent travel cost associated with attending meets is the sole responsibility of the swimmer and their family.

If you have any questions about fees, please contact Gina McCarty at treasurer@clemsonaquaticteam.org.

Drop Off, Pick Up and Parking

Clemson University and Fike have asked that CAT swimmers enter and exit the pool via the back deck rather than through Fike's front doors. Drop off and pick up your child at the end of Service Road (off of Ft. Hill Road). CAT does not have permission to park at this area for any amount of time.

If you need to park and want to avoid receiving a parking ticket, you need a Clemson University parking pass of some kind to park at Fike. Parking fees are paid directly to Parking Services and Fike does not receive any of the payment. The parking spots behind Fike on Service Road (red lines) are for service parking only. You will likely be ticketed if you leave your car unattended in this area.

Parking fees for Community Members, Alumni, Family Members, and others that do not have a Faculty/Staff or Student parking permit: *\$67 Annual / \$33.50 Six Months*

Questions regarding parking fees can be forwarded to: Parking Services, Janice Shook at (864) 656-2270 (864) 656-2270 or Parksrv@clemsun.edu.

Responsibilities

Swimmer Responsibilities

CAT has a team-oriented program designed to teach swimmers of all ages how to improve their swimming techniques. It also teaches the importance of good teamwork and cooperation. Swimmers are expected to follow basic good conduct policies, including:

- Swimmer should attend practices regularly. Each training group has a required number of practices associated with it, these requirements need to be met as often as possible for best results in the athletes training regime. You should be at practice and ready to begin ten minutes early.
- Bring all necessary equipment (i.e., goggles, flippers, etc.) to practice unless instructed otherwise by the coach.
- If a swimmer misses a practice, he/she should notify the coach with an

acceptable excuse.

- Swimmers should not leave the pool area without notifying a coach.
- If a swimmer is not able to participate in a swim meet, he/she should inform the coach as far in advance as possible.
- Swimmers are responsible to be on time for warm-ups and each event in which they participate. 'On time' means 10-15 minutes early from the posted warm up times in the meet information. The coach will always reinforce this point at meets.
- Swimmers will refrain from using drugs, tobacco and alcohol or related products at all times.
- Swimmers will be respectful of each other and communicate accordingly.
- Swimmers will exhibit good sportsmanship for their team and opponents at all times.

Coaches Responsibilities

The coaches' job is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. The Clemson Aquatic Team coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for young swimmers that will teach them life skills that go above and beyond the pool, condition and refine all incoming athletes to reach the pinnacle of their abilities and compete successfully at the highest level.

- Place swimmers in practice groups/squads appropriate for their age and technical skills.
- Take responsibility for stroke instruction and training regimen.
- Assign events for all swimmers for each meet.
- At meets, coaches will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will provide constructive criticism regarding the swimmer's performance.
- The building of a relay team.

Parent/Family Responsibilities

The success of the CAT program is largely due to the support of our parent volunteers. We will continue to need your support in every aspect of this organization for that success to continue.

Each family is **required to provide workers for 50 person/hours during the swim meet season** (each swim meet day usually provides a 6-12 hour credit per person working).

A \$7.50/hour surcharge will be assessed to each family that does not complete its required hours by the end of the swim meet season (June 12, 2010). Member family work commitments will be prorated for members who register after January 31, 2011 or

based on the date your child stops swimming with CAT for the 2010-2011 season.

We are very excited about our volunteer program this year. There are many different ways to become involved at CAT. Volunteering is still a great way to have fun, make new friends, and be involved in your child's activities.

10 Commandments for Swimming Parents

by Rose Snyder, Managing Director Coaching Division, USOC
Former Director of Club Services, USA Swimming
(adapted from Ed Clendaniel's 10 Commandments for Little League Parents)

I. Thou shalt not impose thy ambitions on thy child.

Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push him based on what you think he should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do his personal best and benefit from the process of competitive swimming.

II. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what.

There is only one question to ask your child after a practice or a competition - "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

III. Thou shalt not coach thy child.

You are involved in one of the few youth sports programs that offers professional coaching. Do not undermine the professional coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to provide love and support. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. Never pay your child for a performance. This will only serve to confuse your child concerning the reasons to strive for excellence and weaken the swimmer/coach bond.

IV. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet.

You should be encouraging and never criticize your child or the coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made. Remember "yelling at" is not the same as "cheering for".

V. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears.

New experiences can be stressful situations. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event or meet if your child was not ready. Remember your job is to love and support your child through all of the swimming experience.

VI. Thou shalt not criticize the officials.

Please don't criticize those who are doing the best they can in purely voluntary positions.

VII. Honor thy child's coach.

The bond between coach and swimmer is special. It contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child.

VIII. Thou shalt be loyal and supportive of thy team.

It is not wise for parents to take swimmers and to jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer in another team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team find that it can be a difficult emotional experience. Often swimmers who do switch teams don't do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

IX. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning.

Most successful swimmers have learned to focus on the process and not the outcome. Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else did it too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. Does this make me a failure? No, in fact I am very proud of that swim." What a tremendous outlook to carry on through life.

X. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian.

There are approximately 250,000 athletes in USA Swimming. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are about .0002%.

Swim Meets

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. Individual Medley (IM) is an event where swimmers swim each of the 4 strokes.

Swim Seasons

The swim year is divided into two seasons. The winter or “short course” season runs from mid-September to mid-March. Short course meets are held in a 25-yard pool. The summer or “long course” season runs from early April to mid-August. Long course meets are held in 50-meter pools.

Warm ups

Warm ups are an imperative part of any athletic event. CAT swimmers are expected to arrive on time for meet warm ups as they are a vital part of the swim meet. A group-appropriate warm up will be assigned to each swimmer before the meet starts and it is the responsibility of the swimmer to make sure the warm up is completed in a safe and timely manner.

What to bring

Goggles (always a good idea to bring an extra pair)

Towels

Chair

Swimsuits (yes plural, you never know)

Dry warm clothes

Snacks (fruit, granola bars, bagels, muffins, cereal, etc. NO CANDY)

Water/Gatorade – NO SOFT DRINKS OR ENERGY DRINKS (i.e. Red Bull, etc.)

CAT Hosted Meets

CAT will host the following meets during the 2010-2011 season:

CAT vs. ASC Dual Meet --September 18, 2010

2010 Clemson Classic--November 12-14, 2010

2011 Tiger Invitational--January 14-16, 2011

2011 Palmetto Spring Championships--March 18-20, 2011

17th Annual Death Valley Open Water Swim Meet--June 11, 2011

These meets are a great opportunity to show our pride for CAT and the Upstate, an excellent way to earn income to support CAT, and a wonderful time to introduce new swimmers and parents to the competitive spirit of swimming in a familiar environment.

Swim Meet Jobs

Listed below are descriptions of the jobs you can sign up to perform at our CAT swim meets. Job signups will be available on the website. The time commitment associated with each job will be indicated on the event/job signup list.

Set up crew—Help carry in supplies and set up all tables, chairs, merchandise, food, signs and equipment on the morning before a meet. We use hand trucks so it involves more walking than lifting.

Timers--We need 8 pairs of timers (a total of 16) plus one head timer for each of our five sessions. At each lane, each timer will use stopwatches that start themselves with a strobe light signal, pushing a button to stop it at the end of a race. One timer will also push a plunger button at the end of each swim and the other will write down the stopwatch times. No experience necessary--training will be provided before each session. Children 10 and older may serve as timers if paired with adult partners. You'll receive free refreshments and you'll have the best seats in the house!

Head timer--Has two watches at the beginning of each heat as a backup if the lane timer's stopwatch malfunctions and hands a running watch to any lane timer who needs one.

Relief timers/locker room monitors—These folks give lane timers a short break if needed. They also check on the locker rooms every hour to keep them stocked and to be sure we are well-behaved guests at Fike. We need one male and one female for this job.

Safety Marshall – The Safety Marshall checks the pool and facility for obvious safety hazards before opening the pool for each warmup session. Monitors the venue and is a point of contact for coaches with safety questions during the meet. Helps keep parents and other unapproved adults off the deck.

Clerk of Course/Assistant Clerk of Course--Two people run the clerk of course table on the pool deck before each session to allow swimmers and coaches to make last-minute deck entries and changes. This involves some paperwork, handling money, and coordinating with the timing system crew. We stop accepting deck entries 30 minutes before the session starts, but will keep the table open as an information desk throughout the meet.

Awards--Using the printed event results, these folks label ribbons and distribute the awards to each participating team (placing them in bags for the coaches to pick up at the end of the meet).

Runner--At least two runners are needed per session to assist the Meet Director and

Clerk of Course by posting results on the walls in the lobby, running errands, and delivering drinks and snacks to the officials and timers on deck.

Sales--Sell heat sheets, meet shirts, and other items at the Sales tables in the lobby.

Officials – CAT encourages parents to learn more about swimming by becoming officials. Training classes are held each year, and all meets need officials. Official's travel costs are a tax-deductible charitable donation and you get free food/drinks at the meets.

Concessions & Hospitality--Assist in operating the concessions tables in the lobby where we sell food and drink items to the swimmers and their families. Also, we maintain the hospitality room upstairs where we serve snacks, drinks, and meals to all coaches, officials, and lifeguards. This job usually includes going to restaurants to pick up donated meals, so two or three volunteers are needed per session.

Timing system operators – Like working with computers and want a front row seat for all the action? This is the job for you. Set up, load and operate the Colorado Timing System and Meet Manager software. This requires specialized training but is not inherently difficult.