



Swim-A-Thon® Parent Handbook

Introduction

The goal of this Parent handbook is to provide information and resources for swimmers and parents to hold a successful Swim-a-Thon. The event is not only an excellent fundraiser, but also an opportunity for the team to combine swimming with a social event. Additionally, the Swim-a-Thon has an added benefit to boost team spirit and increase community awareness of the team.

What Is Swim-A-Thon®?

Swim-a-Thon is a fundraiser in which participants earn money for the team by swimming lengths of the pool. Swimmers have a two-hour period to swim a maximum of 200 lengths. Participants get pledges from businesses, family, neighbors, etc. prior to swimming. Some choose to get pledges and money prior to swimming (*which is much easier*) while others get pledges per length and collect the money following the Swim-a-Thon. Swim-a-Thon is the only pledge-for-length swimming program recognized by USA Swimming.

How it Works

Objective – raise money for the club. This money will be used to assist in pool rental costs, our largest expense and training materials. The goal for 2014 is **\$10,000**.

Pledge Materials

- a. Once the club receives the USA Swimming pledge envelopes, they will be distributed to the swimmers. There is 1 packet per Swimmer.
- b. Each packet contains 1) a pledge sheet, and 2) a tax-deductible tear-off receipt sheet.
- c. An informational meeting will be held to kickoff the event. Parent volunteers will be required to make this event as successful as possible.

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How it Works (cont'd)

Pledging

- a. It is the responsibility of **EVERY** swimmer to obtain pledges for this event.
- b. **NEW FOR THIS YEAR** – CAC has enrolled in **TUMoney**, a method that allows donors to directly donate to the swimmer from our very own team website.
- c. The pledges are typically a flat fee. Obtaining a flat pledge is generally easier since:
 - a. The swimmer needs to approach the sponsor once.
 - b. The money can be collected ahead of the Swim-a-Thon®.
 - c. Allows the use of **TUMoney**, the incredibly easy payment method through our website.
- d. Alternatively, (if not using the website) donors can pledge per length and the swimmer collects the donation amount after the event. Note the maximum a swimmer will swim is 200 lengths.
- e. **NOTE** - ALL checks are payable to the team “Connecticut Aquatic Club”

Sport of Fundraising

- a. Swimmers will be grouped into teams that represent all age groups.
- b. Captains chosen by the Coaching Staff will lead the fundraising teams.
- c. Parent advisors will also be selected to each team to assist in the fundraising effort.
- d. The website event fundraising will keep track of our progress. A pledge achievement chart will also be posted on deck to track our progress.

Business Sponsorship

- a. Obtain support from local businesses to sponsor your swimmer, especially those you frequent (e.g. doctors, dentists, orthodontists).
- b. If you obtained the pledge, your swimmer will essentially “own” that contributor going forward. In return (with permission), the business name will be proudly displayed on the team website.
- c. A list of all contributors and the associated swimmer will be maintained and provided to the team.
- d. Many businesses match pledges to non-profit organizations. Please explain to your business donor that we are in the process of renewing our non-profit 501c(3) status and this will be completed prior to year’s end.
- e. To assist in obtaining pledges and maintaining a contact list of the donors, supplementary forms will be made available for use when requesting business donations.

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Day of Swim-A-Thon – Jun 14th, 2014

- a. A breakfast will be held for parents and swimmers after the swim. Volunteers will be needed to setup, prepare, and cleanup.
- b. Lap counters (also spoken *volunteers*) to keep track of the swimmers in each lane.
- c. Photographer(s) needed to capture the event.
- d. Signup e-mail will be sent out at a later date, closer to the event.

How We Can Be Successful

The one trait of a successful Swim-a-Thon® is PLANNING. CAC requires the following Swim-a-Thon® committee positions be filled:

- a. Chairperson
- b. Sponsorship
- c. Promotion / Marketing
- d. Swim-a-Thon® day Volunteers
 - 1) Lap Counters / Attendance
 - 2) Photography
 - 3) Food
- e. Prizes

Involvement is the main ingredient of a successful Swim-a-Thon®. This must come from everyone. Coaches, parents, swimmers and others are encouraged to participate.

Parents can add support by helping their children develop lists of prospective contributors from neighbors and family to local businesses. Parent participation and enthusiasm is KEY!! The ultimate GOAL is to NOT contribute our own money. Instead, we need to continue to grow a commercial market base that we can tap into for this yearly event and provide stability.

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Incentives / Awards

Every participant receives a certificate of participation and recognition for completing 100 or 200 lengths.

For every individual participant who earns \$300 or more there is also a tiered award system. The awards tier is:

| | |
|--------------|------------------------|
| \$300-499.99 | Swim-a-Thon Swim Cap |
| \$500-749.99 | Swim-a-Thon T-Shirt |
| \$750-999.99 | Swim-a-Thon Hoodie |
| \$1000.00 + | Swim-a-Thon Duffle Bag |

All businesses will be recognized with a USA Swimming Contribution Certificate.

Team awards will be given to:

- a. Those swimmers whose team raises the most money and
- b. A portion of the top individual fundraiser

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Approximate Swim-a-Thon® Planning Timeline

| ACTIVITY | Rough TIMELINE | COMMENTS |
|---|--|---|
| Send signed contract to USA swimming | Jan 31, 2014 | USA Swimming sends materials within 2 weeks of signed contract |
| USA Swimming pledge materials distributed to all swimmers | Apr 2014 | |
| Implement campaign and Pledge period | Apr 2014 | |
| Confirm volunteers for Swim-A-Thon® | May 14, 2014 | Verify preparations in progress, including breakfast |
| Swim-a-Thon\ date | Jun 14, 2014 | |
| Collect pledges | Apr 16 – Jun 28, 2014 | Immediately following the Swim-a- Thon® for 10-14 days |
| Thank you letters to Sponsors | Jun 28, 2014 | Form will be provided |
| Fulfillment of contract to USA Swimming | Jul 15, 2014 | Payment due NLT 60 days after Swim-a-Thon\ is held. Awards sent within 3 weeks once payment received. |
| Distribute Sponsor Recognition awards | Jul 30, 2014 | From USA Swimming |
| Awards ceremony | Within 3 months after the date of Swim-a-Thon® | Awards Banquet |
| Evaluation and goals for next year's Swim-a-Thon\ | Within 3 months after the date of Swim-a-Thon® | Interim debrief immediately following Swim-a-Thon®. |