



Ames Cyclone Aquatic Club

Meet Information Guide

2016-2017 Short Course Season



ACAC MEET INFORMATION GUIDE



Introduction

As a non-profit, volunteer organization, the ACAC relies on the efforts of its members for nearly all activities and fundraising. Being a small club, it is even more important that all families participate in some way with the various activities and fundraisers. One of the activities that we require all families to participate in is the running of swim meets.

Swim Meets are essential for the club. They are an opportunity for your children to compete, learn sportsmanship, and make friends. They are also one of the primary fundraising activities the club does each year.

Our Meets

This year the club will run the following meets during the short course season:

- **Autumn Opener** - 25-yard meet, Ames Municipal pool, October 14-16, 2016
- **Holiday Challenge** – 25-yard meet, Ft. Dodge High School, December 2-4, 2016

Family Participation

There are many jobs that are required by USA Swimming for a meet to run. In addition, when we have told Iowa Swimming (ISI) that we will run a meet, we have to do so. Unfortunately, if families are unable or unwilling to volunteer, then this makes running a meet very difficult. If this occurs, then we may have to assess a fine for each session a family falls short of their required commitment. While we have had to do this in the past, it has been very limited. If everyone steps up and can do their part, we don't have to do this. We usually have excellent participation in our meets and want to continue this. It is a good idea to not schedule much else the weekend of a meet we host.

This season the club is putting a new policy into effect. Each family is required to work three (3) jobs during the short course season. You can fill your requirement any way you wish (e.g., all at one meet if you wish). We encourage families to work more if they can to help the club and provide these great opportunities for our kids to swim.



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Swim Meet Jobs

There is a large amount of jobs that need to be done for a meet to run successfully, usually numbering in the hundreds, and that is only the days the meet is running. The organization leading up to it requires much work also. The club has a meet committee headed up by the meet director. The areas are typically broken down into: 1) General job volunteers, 2) Officials, 3) Concessions, 4) Hospitality, 5) Entries, and 6) Running pool equipment. As you read through this guide, if you are interested in getting more involved, please contact the meet director.

For each meet, we will communicate the number of jobs we need each family to work. We routinely try and get volunteers from the community to help out, but the brunt of the work is on the club's families. We generally need all the help we can get. You will typically be asked to volunteer 2-3 sessions, with each session running about 3-4 hours. These may be shorter or longer depending on the meet, number of swimmers and other factors.

Below is a list of typical swim meet jobs with brief descriptions. Any jobs marked with an asterisk (*) are good for new families:

- **Announcer** - Announces swimmers in all heats as well as event winners.
- **Awards*** - Sort and label awards during a session and hand out heat winner awards. This is a good job for new families.
- **Program Sales*** - Staff a table and sell meet programs to spectators, check-in meet volunteers, and provide general information. This is a good job for new families.
- **Clerk of Course** – “Stage” younger swimmers by making sure they are at the starting blocks prior to their races.
- **Head Timer** - Supervise all lane timers during a session. Also, keep backup stopwatches during heats. This job requires an experienced swim meet person.
- **Hospitality** - Run the hospitality room during a session. This room has food and refreshments for coaches and officials throughout a meet. Responsible for making sure food and drinks are ready and also check around the pool periodically during a session to see if officials and other volunteers need anything.
- **Meet Marshal*** - Actively monitor warm-ups and maintain order and safety in the swimming venue. Makes sure spectators are in viewing locations and keeps paths clear in case of emergency. This is a good job for new families.
- **Runner*** - Collect result sheets from timers and bring them to the timing table. Post final event results for spectators, and bring disqualifications from officials to the referee. This is a good job for new families.
- **Timer*** - Record swimmer's results in a specified lane using a stop watch. You will do this for an entire session. A very good job to do during a session your child is swimming as you are on the deck of the pool. This is a good job for new families.



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Officials

Officials are the people you see walking around on deck typically wearing navy shorts or pants and white shirts. Officials are responsible for making sure sessions are run according to USA Swimming rules. Like all other jobs for a meet, officials are volunteers, usually parents. There are several different officiating positions one can work to become:

- **Referee** - Responsible for all aspects of a session as it is running. There has to be at least one deck referee who whistles off all races and makes sure all other volunteers responsible for races and times are doing what they should. Referees are also responsible for verifying every disqualification observed during a session. At some meets there may be more than one referee during a session, such as an Administrative Referee and a Meet Referee.
- **Starter** - Responsible for making sure swimmers start a race correctly. Also responsible for marking down the order of finish for a race for backup. The starter is typically next to the referee and has a microphone used to start races.
- **Stroke & Turn Judge** - These are the officials you see standing at the ends of the pool and sometimes walking up and down the sides. S&T judges are responsible for making sure swimmers are performing all strokes under USA Swimming rules. When an S&T judge sees an infraction, they raise their hand in the air and the procedure for a "DQ" begins.
- **Admin Official** – These people are responsible for running the computer and timing equipment. Each race of a meet has to be recorded and verified properly to be accepted by USA Swimming. While this sounds complicated, there are well-established procedures, software, and equipment to make this happen.

When becoming an official, you start off training as an S&T official and can work up (over time) to become a starter and referee. Each level requires taking an online test and "apprenticing" with experienced officials at a set number of sessions and meets. To become an S&T official, you must first take a class. While officiating is a lot of work and not for everyone, it can be fun and makes running meets possible.

Signing up for Jobs

We use an online system to post swim meet jobs and allow people to sign up. You will receive an email typically 2-4 weeks before a meet explaining the specific details for a particular meet. We suggest signing up early to get the sessions and jobs you want.



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Meet Tips for Swimmers

- Don't bring junk food. You have limited time to eat during a session, so it is important to eat healthy. Granola, fruit, and popcorn are examples of swimmer friendly foods.
- A sweat suit, pajama pants, and fleece are good examples of clothing to wear between races. Temperatures will vary on pool decks. Sometimes you'll be comfortable walking around in just your suit, other times you need more. Don't walk around in a wet towel, this cools your body and can take away energy you'll need.
- Make sure you know your events, heats, and lanes. Most swimmers write this on their legs or arms with a sharpie. Don't worry it will come off. If you are unsure how to do this, find an experienced parent or swimmer that can show you.
- Warm-up and cool-down as your coach instructs. Sessions take hours to complete. You may have long periods of time between races. Not warming up and cooling down correctly can really affect your performance.
- **Have Fun!** Remember, this is the reason you have been practicing. Being at a meet is not just about swimming fast times. It is being with your team and most importantly having fun. You will not cut time in every event at every meet, but you can always have fun.

Meet Tips for Parents

- Be positive. Through the course of a season or even a session, your swimmer will experience highs and lows. It is important to be positive. Help them to see that a season is a progression of improvement and that one race, session, or meet does not define how well they are doing.
- Pack a little more food than you think. Even though they are not necessarily swimming long distances in a particular session, they will need lots of energy for their races.
- Keep sports drinks and candy to a minimum. As a parent you will want to reward your swimmer for doing well. Don't do this with sugary foods. While it may provide a temporary boost, the crash it will cause (especially at the end of a session), will not help your swimmer.
- Buy a bleacher seat. Sit on a concrete or metal bleacher for 4-5 hours and you'll know why.
- Suits should be tight. If a suit fits loosely, even though it may be more comfortable, it will drag in the water and slow your swimmer down. Generally, you want the suit to be as tight as possible. It will loosen up some when it gets wet. A good test is pulling



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up on the shoulder straps of a suit when it is dry and on your swimmer, you should only be able to raise it about 1.5 - 2 inches.

- Pool decks are not the cleanest places. Things will get dirty and wet. Clothes, shoes, electronics, and kids are not the best combination to keep things clean and dry. For example, sending your swimmer with their brand new pair of shoes or boots is asking for them to get ruined.
- Send an extra towel. Swimmers use them all the time. Send 2 - 3 per session.
- Trust the coaches. It is easy to get stressed for many reasons. For example, you may feel your swimmer is not at the blocks when they should be. Trust that the coaches have a plan and know what they are doing. If they have to take time out to handle your concerns, then another swimmer may not be getting the attention they need at that point in time.
- Ask questions. This was new to all of us at one time or another. Experienced parents and swimmers are more than willing to help newer ones learn the ropes. Please ask for help. Meets should not be stressful for you either.

While meets are a lot of work, they are a lot of fun for the parents as well as the swimmers. We certainly appreciate all the efforts of our families. At any time if you have any concerns or questions, do not hesitate to contact the meet director.