

MCA Club Handbook

Revised August 2021

Welcome to



Swimming is
what we  do!

www.motorcityaquatics.org



*"You can't be common because the common man goes nowhere. You have to be uncommon."
Herb Brooks, Ice Hockey Coach*

Motor City Aquatics

Mission Statement

Mission:

To establish and operate a national caliber swim program that will provide athletes of all levels of ability the opportunity to achieve their highest level of swimming and personal development in order to become the best that they can be.

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Motor City Aquatics

Table of Contents

1.) Mission Statement	Page 2
2.) Our Philosophy.....	Page 4
3.) Coaching Staff	Page 5
4.) Training Group Descriptions and Requirements	Page 6
5.) Fee Structure and Membership Policies	Page 12
6.) Practice Schedules	Page 16
7.) Swim Meets	Page 17
8.)	
Parent/Athlete Code of Conduct	Page 18

Motor City Aquatics

Our Philosophy

At Motor City Aquatics (“MCA”), we believe that the development of the individual is every bit as important as the systematic development of their swimming abilities in order for all of our swimmers to attain their own highest level of achievement. Our club is intentionally sized to focus on the individual swimmer and their unique goals while simultaneously expecting and guiding each athlete to contribute positively to the team and their teammates’ pursuit of their own goals as part of that process.

At the start of the process, we begin with our White program, for our novice, younger swimmers, where we lay the groundwork for the swimmer’s overall development and enjoyment for the sport. All swimming fundamentals are established in this group and layered and re-emphasized all the way thru the national development program. In conjunction with the basics of swimming we believe that in order to truly attain all the success desired by our athletes, we nurture personal characteristics such as respect, sportsmanship, personal accountability, dedication, and embracing failure as part of the process towards success (just to name a few).

As athletes progress through our program, from White to Red, Red to Blue, and then Senior Conditioning or Seniors, endurance training grows in conjunction with age and ability. In all groups, stroke technique and proficiency are constantly emphasized, as well as advanced start and turn techniques. We also offer an optional off-shoot from the Senior group during this progression: National Development.

Once a swimmer decides to truly dedicate themselves to the pursuit of attaining their highest level of performance, where endurance and commitment levels increase, we offer the ability to join the National Development program at the appropriate age. This group requires greater and more stringent attendance levels as well as further developing levels of personal accountability. Goal setting and parent-swimmer-coach meetings occur more frequently, all with the goal of encouraging the athlete to identify, aspire, and attain their own goals and dreams.

Motor City Aquatics

Coaching Staff

- **Bill Thompson** – Head Coach
Head Group Coach: Senior Conditioning, Senior, National Development
- **Joe McBratnie** – Head Group Coach: White, Red, Blue
- **Anthony Serio** – Assistant Coach
- **Robbie Biskup** – Assistant Coach
- **Chris Wiederecht** – Assistant Coach
- **Alysse Fischer** – Assistant Coach
- **Rick Dylewski** – Assistant Coach
- **Steve Drinkert** – Assistant Coach
- **Carrie Drinkert** – Assistant Coach

Motor City Aquatics

Training Group Descriptions and Requirements

In this section you will find a basic explanation of the MCA training program. One must consider the required commitment for each program. This includes the training regimen, the coaches, your friends, and your family's ability to support the requirements of each program. Coaches, swimmers and parents all play a role in determining which program and group is most appropriate for each child. An important first step for determining the best training program is for swimmers and parents to consider the athlete's individual objectives, and how those objectives align with the programs described below. As you'll see, MCA has a place for any skill level and commitment desired.

Overview of Training Programs:

Program Goal: Provide an environment that helps each athlete reach his or her potential in the sport of swimming in a manner that is aligned with his or her personal goals.

The following is the general process for group placement. Group selection depends on the following three factors:

1. **Age:** Chronologic age is important for group placement. However, one must also consider if a child is emotionally, physically and psychologically prepared to swim and train in a particular group. Even if a swimmer is fast, he or she may not be prepared for the workload of a particular group. Social considerations must also take place so that a child does not feel out of place and/or does not experience difficulty in making friends.
2. **Background:** A child's swimming/athletic background must also be considered in order to swim in a particular group even if a child has fast times in certain events. It may be difficult for them to swim in a group where the volume (i.e., yardage) is more than they've ever experienced.
3. **Skill:** Having the proper swimming skills is necessary to swim within a given group. If a child has not mastered the general skills necessary to move up into the next group it is more difficult to progress through the next set of skills. These include general technique, drills, pacing, race strategy, etc.

Motor City Aquatics

Training Group Descriptions and Requirements

MCA Training Groups:

MCA training groups are designed to focus primarily on a swimmer's competitive objectives. This progression is outlined briefly as follows. It is important to remember that anything introduced in a previous group will be carried forward and expanded upon at the next level.

While the training groups specified below reflect our standard practice, MCA reserves the right to modify the training group structure based on the availability of pools and public health requirements.

White Group: (Age guideline – 8 years old and under)

In the White training group, swimmers will learn to enjoy the water and belong to a team. This is the beginning level for those getting started in the sport and those who enjoy the sport and desire to get more involved in competitive swimming. The swimmers will learn each of the four competitive strokes, starts and turns. Technique will be highly emphasized so that these young swimmers build the necessary foundation for competitive swimming in a non-competitive and positive environment that will serve them well throughout their swim careers should they choose to focus on swimming as they develop into young-adults.

Prerequisite: Swimmers must be able to swim a 25 yard freestyle (face in the water) and a 25 yard backstroke at a minimum to be ready for the white group.

Commitment: In the White training group the swimmers may start off with two sessions per week (one is allowable but two is recommended) and then advance to three or four sessions as they progress. Swim meet attendance is an option that some of the more advanced White group swimmers will pursue.

Red Group: (Age guideline – 8 to 11 years old)

In the Red training group, athletes are preparing to compete in the District and Junior Olympic level meets. Much of the focus of the Red training group will be on learning proper stroke technique for all four strokes, starts and turns, and development of a basic level of endurance.

Prerequisite: Swimmers must be able to swim a 50 yard freestyle, a 25 yard backstroke, and either a legal 25 breaststroke or a 25 yard butterfly at a minimum to be ready for the red group.

Commitment: In the Red training group, athletes may start off with two or three practices per week and then progress to three or four practices per week. Also, meet attendance is highly encouraged and becomes an expectation for this group.

Blue Group: (Age guideline – 10 to 13 years old)

Motor City Aquatics

Training Group Descriptions and Requirements

In the Blue training group, athletes are preparing to compete at the District, Junior Olympic, and State level meets. Swimming technique is expanded. Athletes are expected to have learned all four racing strokes, and will focus on both technique and training with a higher level of endurance. Age appropriate Dry-Land Training is also introduced into this group.

This group is designed to be flexible and it works well for athletes who are dedicated to the sport of swimming but also involved in other activities and interests that prevent them from maintaining weekly minimum practice requirements or a year-round swimming focus provided that individual goals are practically aligned with actual attendance.

Prerequisite: The minimum age for consideration in the Blue group is 9-years of age. All swimmers must be able to swim a 100 yard freestyle, a 50 yard backstroke, 100 yard individual medley, and either a 50 yard breaststroke or a 50 yard butterfly to be ready for the blue group.

Commitment: As the athlete progresses they should be practicing three to five times per week depending on the goals of the individual athlete and other commitments. Athletes also should attend team meets as designated by the head coach, and swim a variety of events at those meets with guidance from the coaches.

Senior Conditioning Group: (Age guideline – 13 years and up*)

In the Senior Conditioning training group, athletes will focus on both technique and endurance training. Dry-Land Training is also incorporated into the Senior Conditioning training plan.

This group is designed to be flexible and works well for athletes who are involved in other activities and interests. This flexibility will allow the grouping of Senior Conditioning athletes with athletes in other groups who are at the same or similar training level or who share the same or similar level of commitment in order to provide a cohesive training atmosphere.

Commitment: Attendance is not mandatory, but the athletes in this group should understand the correlation of practice attendance and individual progress as an athlete.

Motor City Aquatics

Training Group Descriptions and Requirements

Senior Group: (13 years and up*)

In the Senior training group, athletes are preparing to compete at the State, Zone, Sectional, and National level. Additional training is expected of Senior athletes with an emphasis on endurance and further refinement of racing and stroke technique. Increased emphasis is placed on Individual goal-sheets and parent/coach/athlete conferences are included in this program. Dry-Land Training is expanded.

This group is designed to be flexible and it works well for swimmers who are dedicated to the sport of swimming but also involved in other activities and interests that prevent them from maintaining weekly minimum practice requirements or a year-round commitment to swimming provided that individual goals are practically aligned with actual attendance. MCA is a high-school compatible swim program and this group is designed to work with swimmers who also participate in their high-school program.

Commitment: Attendance is not mandatory, however athletes in the Senior training group should commit to a minimum of five practices per week depending on the goals of the individual athlete and other commitments. Athletes should also attend team meets as designated by the head coach, and swim a variety of events at those meets with guidance from the coaches.

National Development Group: (13 years and up*)

In the National Development training group, athletes are preparing to compete at and/or are competing at the State, Zone, Sectional, Junior National, Senior National, and International level. A key requirement to participation in this training group is commitment. Commitment, defined as a combination of factors including attendance, attitude, desire and team building, is considered an end unto itself and not just a means to an end called “*performance*” (although that will be a by-product of commitment).

Commitment: National Development athletes will be required to attend a minimum of 90% of all practices and 100% of all key-practices outlined by the coach. Excused absences below the minimum weekly requirements are acceptable provided they are pre-approved by the head coach or head group coach. If an athlete is participating in Sectional, National, and or International meets, then 100% attendance is required (as defined by the coach’s weekly training program) including Dry-Land Training.

Practice requirements at certain times in the season will include “doubles” on mornings and evenings when school is in session in addition to the weekends and time periods when the athlete is not in school (holidays and summer vacation). These requirements allow the grouping of athletes with others who share the same level of commitment in order to provide a competitive, positive, and synergetic training atmosphere to assist the athletes in reaching their individual potential and highest level in the sport.

Motor City Aquatics

Training Group Descriptions and Requirements

The National Development training group requires a year round commitment, including spring and summer sessions. Attendance requirements can be satisfied through participation in an approved high-school program and unlimited MCA practice participation is encouraged and welcomed during an athlete's high-school season if practical. National Development athletes are required to participate as assistant "in-water" coaches at swim technique clinics for the younger MCA practice groups. Athletes are also expected to attend team meets as designated by the head coach or head group coach, and swim a variety of events at meets as determined by the coaches.

*Age guidelines for Senior Conditioning, Senior and National Development group are typically based on the age of the swimmer at the subsequent short-course state-championship meet in March.

Motor City Aquatics

Training Group Descriptions and Requirements

Decisions on selecting the proper training program for new swimmers:

Coaches must evaluate each child for group placement.

Initial group placement is age based. It is also important to consider the child's swimming background and skill level. In some cases a swimmers background and skill level might supersede an age-based group program.

Parents and swimmers should determine what their short and long term goals are and with the coach's assistance determine if the coach's group placement fits the swimmer's goals.

Based on the selected training program and group, parents must be committed to assist their swimmer to meet the group-specific goals as listed above.

Decisions on moving a swimmer from one group to the next:

Coaches will evaluate each athlete's training progression using criteria based upon age, skill, and background (see previous explanation).

Coaches will offer their opinion regarding group and program changes.

Athletes and parents must discuss potential group and program changes with the coaching staff (head coach and/or head group coach).

Parents cannot move their child to another group without the consent of either the head coach or head group coach.

Athletes who are registered "up" a group by their parents without approval from the coaching staff will be approved only for the group in which they finished the prior season.

Motor City Aquatics

Fee Structure and Membership Policies

Fall/Winter Short-Course (September through March)

Group	Max. Practices Offered Per Week	Monthly Dues Sept. – Feb.	Monthly Dues March
White	3	\$125.00	\$125.00
Red	4	\$175.00	\$175.00
Blue	4 – 5	\$195.00	\$195.00
Senior Conditioning	6 – 7	\$215.00	\$215.00
Senior	7 – 9	\$265.00	\$265.00
National Development	7 – 9	\$200.00	\$200.00

Spring/Summer Long-Course (April through August)

Group	Max. Practices Offered Per Week	Monthly Dues April	Monthly Dues May	Monthly Dues June and July	Monthly Dues August
White	3	\$125.00	\$125.00	\$125.00	N/A
Red	4	\$175.00	\$175.00	\$175.00	N/A
Blue	4 – 5	\$195.00	\$195.00	\$195.00	\$97.50
Senior Conditioning	6 – 7	\$215.00	\$215.00	\$215.00	\$215.00
Senior	7 – 9	\$265.00	\$265.00	\$265.00	\$132.50
National Development	7 – 9	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00

While the fee structure specified above reflects our standard practice, MCA reserves the right to modify the fee structure based on the availability of pools and public health requirements.

Motor City Aquatics

Fee Structure and Membership Policies

Notes:

The National Development program is a year-round commitment requiring MCA head coach approval and participation in all sessions (fall/winter and spring/summer). Once approved for the National Development program, the swimmer must maintain 90% attendance and other requirements as communicated by the MCA head coach in order to remain in this program. Attendance requirements can be satisfied through participation in a high school program, and unlimited MCA participation is welcomed during the high school season if practical.

Monthly dues for all swimmers are charged at the beginning of each month. Notice of account suspensions or dormancy must be provided to the club registrar at jrhiii72@gmail.com on or before the 25th of the month for the following month. Such requests will be honored on a calendar-month basis if timely notice is provided as specified above. Otherwise, monthly dues will be charged at the beginning of the month, and no pro-rations will be made.

MCA typically ceases training at the end of the short course season in March and long course season in August. The monthly dues specified above account for these training breaks.

Additional Fees, Volunteer Pledges, and Policies

- 1) **Annual Registration Fee:** \$125 annual registration fee per swimmer. This fee is non-refundable but includes a voluntary \$25 fee for our annual coaches' gift. Note: Founding MCA members (before 2013) are exempt from this fee and anyone wishing to opt out of the coaches' gift must do so by sending an email to mcaregistrar248@gmail.com within 24 hours of submitting an application for registration.
- 2) **USA Swimming Fee:** \$82 USA Swimming athlete registration fee (transfers directly to USA Swimming).
- 3) **Swim Meet Participation Fees:** These fees are used to offset MCA coaching expenses and are in addition to all fees charged by the host club for attendance, individual events and facilities fees, if any.
 - \$10 per local meet;
 - \$25 per travel meet (such as Indy and States); and
 - \$50 per national meet (such as Zones, Sectionals and Jr. Nationals).
- 4) **Three-Month Active Membership Minimum:** All members registering before January for a spot on MCA's Fall/Winter Short-Course season roster are required to be active (and pay dues) for at least three-months, of their choosing, during the season between September through March (inclusive). New members who register before January 1 will be charged three-months' dues during registration, and their accounts will hold a credit until three months of active membership have expired.

Motor City Aquatics

Fee Structure and Membership Policies

Returning members in good-standing (financial and volunteerism) will continue to be charged based on their declared monthly activity as in previous months but are still required to fulfill the three-month minimum during the short-course season to maintain their good-standing status.

- 5) **Meet Volunteer Requirement:** Each family participating in the Fall/Winter SC season is required to volunteer their time in support of two meet-sessions between all MCA hosted swim meets regardless of whether their swimmers participate in any of these meets and regardless of their swimmers' status (active or not) at the time of the meet, their swimmers' participation in the hosted meet and how many months their swimmers were active with MCA during the Fall/Winter SC season. **It is likely MCA will host a meet during the short course season and will communicate those dates to membership as soon as they are approved by Michigan Swimming.** Hosting meets is a vital part of our contribution to the swimming community and it also offsets operational costs resulting in lower monthly dues for our members. **If a member does not satisfy their meet volunteer requirements, MCA will assess a fee of \$150 per missed session.** Notwithstanding the foregoing, the MCA Board reserves the right to modify this fee in an amount that is proportional to the annual reduction in monthly dues each member receives from revenue raised through hosting meets. If this is a repeat issue, then it will become grounds for a Code of Conduct violation review by the Board.
- 6) **Membership Application & Refund Policy:** Applications for new membership will be processed upon registration and all applicable fees will be charged at that time. Membership status is pending until all placements have been reviewed and approved by the MCA coaching staff and all waiver, code of conduct, concussion awareness and athlete protection forms are signed and returned to the club by email to jrhhii72@gmail.com. No refunds will be offered after your application is approved and registration is complete. However, MCA reserves the right to limit membership based on the requirements of its existing members, availability of pools and public health requirements and will refund 100% of the initial fees charged at the time of registration in the event that an application is not accepted due to space limitations or other reasons. If an applicant decides to withdraw his or her membership application during the processing period, then the registration fee and first month's dues will not be eligible for a refund. No refunds on any fees will be offered after registration is processed and confirmed including charges beyond the registration fee and first month's dues (if any).
- 7) **Minimum Seasonal Activity:** MCA's membership dues are designed to be flexible in order to work around other activities and athletics. However, there is a minimum requirement of three monthly active sessions for the Fall/Winter training block in order to maintain a reserved spot on the roster during that period.
- 8) **Payment Processing Fees:** MCA's regular monthly billings occur on the first of each month and are automatically debited to the payment method established and maintained by its members. All processing fees are included in each members' monthly dues for the first "regular" transaction. Additional transactions due to failed payments resulting from out of date credit card or checking information will be subject to a \$25 processing fee. Members are responsible for maintaining their payment information. Additionally, a billing preview will be emailed at least two-days in advance of

Motor City Aquatics

Fee Structure and Membership Policies

the automated billing event. Each member is responsible to review this information and must notify the club treasurer by email at jrhiii72@gmail.com before the first of the month with any required changes. Additional transactions resulting from a failure to notify the treasurer of a change in account status (inactivity) on or before the 25th of the month for the upcoming month will be subject to an additional \$25 processing fee.

- 9) **Social Media:** Motor City Aquatics is proud to communicate athlete achievements. Motor City Aquatics' athletes are often featured and celebrated on the website and official social media accounts. Your child's name and photograph may be shared to showcase his or her achievements and/or participation in club events/activities. If you wish your child not be highlighted, please email motorcityaquaticswebmaster@gmail.com. Motor City Aquatics reserves the right to publish team photos and group photos from team events even if you've opted out. If you do not want your swimmer to be posted, even in a group/team photo, they should not participate in the picture when it is being photographed.
- 10) **Registration Waiver, Code of Conduct, Concussion Awareness and MAAPP Forms:** Parents and athletes must provide signed copies of the 2020-21 Registration Waiver, MCA Code of Conduct, Michigan Concussion Form and Acknowledgement of Receipt of Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy for each registered swimmer to complete registration and participate in their first MCA practice for the season. These forms are included in the club's on-line registration materials and available on our web-site. No registration will be complete unless and until MCA has received signed copies of these 3 documents. Signed copies can be sent by email to the club registrar at jrhiii72@gmail.com jrhiii72@gmail.com
- 11) **Athlete Protection Training:** As a condition of membership both with Motor City Aquatics and USA Swimming, all athlete members age 18 and older must complete Athlete Protection Training ("APT") on or before the athlete's 18th birthday and must update their certification every twelve (12) months so long as they continue to swim with MCA. Swimmers without proof of training will not be able to participate in club practices or sanctioned swim meets. The training can be found at <https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/safe-sport/apt>. Please note that APT is linked to an athlete's USA Swimming registration account and should update APT certification status in DECK PASS within 24 hours. Swimmers must complete all three APT modules including the course evaluation questions at the end of each module and receive a "DONE" in each for their certification to be complete. Athletes will receive a congratulatory email when they are certified. If a swimmer completes the training but does not receive a confirmation email, the most likely reason is that he or she did not answer the course evaluation questions and will need to log back into the system and answer the questions to receive the confirmation email.

Motor City Aquatics

Practice Schedules

Practice schedules vary slightly from week to week, depending on training goals, meet schedules, and pool availability. Please note that this is only a guideline and subject to change based on actual availability during the season. Please refer to our website for a complete list of practice pools and locations that may be used by MCA throughout the year.

Our practice schedules are posted on our website under the “Calendar” tab. Any changes to a practice time and/or location made after the schedule has been posted for a particular day will be noted with “CHANGE”. For the most up-to-date practice information, always call the MCA Hotline at (248) 593-8607. We encourage calling the hotline not only during inclement weather but also on a regular basis, as a pool scheduled for practice may become unavailable the same day due to maintenance or other issues. While we make every effort to update the website as quickly as possible, we are often in locations and/or at times that do not make this practical. Again, the most current information will be on the MCA Hotline.

MCA Hotline (248) 593-8607

We encourage you to sync the MCA group calendars with your smart phone or tablet using Google Calendar or iCal! When a practice change is made to the website, the change will automatically appear on your device. When syncing, you **MUST** sync your swimmer’s group and the meets/team events calendar. Specific instructions can be found on our team website under the “Calendar” tab.

If you need any assistance, please contact our webmaster at motorcityaquaticswebmaster@gmail.com.

Motor City Aquatics

Swim Meets

Hosted Meet and Volunteer Requirements: During the 2020-21 Short Course Season, it is likely MCA will host a meet and will communicate those dates to membership as soon as they are approved by Michigan Swimming. As noted in the Fee Structure and Membership Policies, all families participating at any point during the 2020-21 short- and/or long-course season is required to volunteer their time in support of two meet-sessions, regardless of their swimmers' status (active or not) at the time of the meet, their swimmers' participation in the hosted meet and how many months their swimmers were active with MCA during the Fall/Winter SC season.

Schedule: The meets the team will attend are posted on our website under the "Events" tab.

Qualifying Times: MCA values integrity and will scratch entries for any event in which a swimmer has not achieved the time cut required by the meet entry rules. This only applies to meets with an "honor system" entry requirement. These meets do not require a proof of time to enter but often impose a fine if the time standard is not achieved during the meet and a previous proof of entry time is not supplied.

Meet Attendance Guidelines: National Development swimmers are expected to attend all team meets. Senior, Senior Conditioning and Blue swimmers should attend one or two A/B/C general meets and any A/B and above meets for which they have achieved qualifying times (such as Indy). All swimmers are expected to attend the highest level year-end championship meet for which they have qualified (such as the 8 and Under Mini Meet, Districts, Junior Olympics, States, Zones, Sectionals or Junior Nationals).

Practice Policy during Meet Weekends: Practices are normally not scheduled during team meet weekends. There are exceptions to this general rule based on coach availability.

Motor City Aquatics

Parent / Athlete Code of Conduct

I, _____ (parent / guardian), and

I, _____ (athlete - 12 & over only)

recognize that as a member of Motor City Aquatics (MCA) we are part of a team and organization that believes teamwork, integrity, respect, organizational volunteerism, and good sportsmanship are more important than winning. By signing this code of conduct, we agree to conduct our behavior, teamwork, and sportsmanship in a manner that is consistent with MCA's philosophy and we also agree to uphold the club's financial, volunteering, and fundraising policies.

I, parent, promise to set the right example for our children and we all promise to show respect and common courtesies at all times to the team members, coaches, competitors, officials, parents, and for all the facilities and other property used during practice and/or competition.

We promise to demonstrate good sportsmanship during all practices, competitions and team activities.

We will be an active participant in fundraising events and team activities, including volunteering to work at all meets hosted by Motor City Aquatics regardless of whether your athlete is participating in the meet.

If I/we have a concern or problem, I/we will address it with the appropriate coach first. If an issue cannot be resolved directly with the coach, then I/we agree to address it directly with the MCA Board of Directors and MCA's head coach.

I, parent, will insist at all times that my child refrain from using alcohol, tobacco, drugs, other prohibited substances, violence, defamatory or foul language, inappropriate conduct or any other behavior deemed dishonest, discourteous, offensive or disrespectful to others.

We agree that if I/we violate any of these rules, I/we will be subject to disciplinary action determined by the coaches the MCA Board of Directors, which may include expulsion from the team.

Please sign and return this form to jrhiii72@gmail.com

I/We have read and understood MCA's Code of Conduct and operation philosophy before I/we signed this document and I/we agree to abide by the rules stated therein.

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

Athlete (12&Over) Signature

Date