

CRAA

Parent Handbook



Cedar Rapids Aquatics Association

601 2nd Ave SE
Suite 7
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401-1305

P.O. Box 10344
Cedar Rapids, IA, 52410-0344

Phone #: 319-247-CRAA (2722)
Website: www.craa.org

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Glossary

Introduction

This handbook has been designed for CRAA families as a reference source for club philosophy, structure, policy, and helpful information. CRAA is a non-profit organization established in 1982 offering a year-round swimming club for boys and girls of all ages. Affiliated with both Iowa Swimming Inc. and USA Swimming, CRAA trains its swimmers according to age, gender and ability and encourages them to compete in swim meets throughout the year.

CRAA Office

CRAA has a permanent office. The coaches and office administrator all work at this office. Additional, team board meeting and other meetings are often held at this office.

The address and phone number of the CRAA office is:

601 2nd Ave, Suite 7&8,
Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 52401-1305
(319) 247-CRAA (2722).

CRAA Vision

The CRAA vision is to empower individuals to be successful in life through excellence in swimming.

CRAA Mission Statement

The mission of the Cedar Rapids Aquatics Association is to provide our community and surrounding areas with a USA Swimming club which promotes the sport of swimming, teaching and training all levels of swimming and emphasizing individual progress with club unity. Individuals are given the opportunity to pursue their goals in the sport of swimming to whatever level they aspire and are capable of achieving.

USA Swimming

Cedar Rapids Aquatics Association, its swimmers, and its coaching staff, are members of 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.

USA Swimming 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, and Achieve competitive success. USA Swimming's mission is to administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Amateur Sports Act by providing programs and services for members, supporters, affiliates and the interested public.

As members of USA Swimming, each swimmer receives a membership card and has both liability and secondary medical insurance coverage. In addition, each household receives a copy of "Splash", the official USA Swimming magazine.

USA Swimming is the ruling body of sanctioned swimming meets in the United States. The meets are designed to protect the swimmer, provide fair and equitable conditions of competition, and promote uniformity in the sport so that no swimmer shall obtain an unfair advantage over another. Its website is www.usa-swimming.org.

Iowa Swimming, Inc.

USA Swimming is divided into 59 Local Swimming Committees (LSC's), which administer USA Swimming activities in smaller geographical areas. Iowa Swimming Inc. is the LSC that serves as the governing body of USA Swimming for the State of Iowa, with the exception of the extreme western portion of the state. Iowa Swimming, Inc. consists of group members (swim clubs), registered annually with ISI and USA Swimming and is governed by a House of Delegates made up of representatives of each Group Member (swim club) in the LSC and a Board of Directors and officers elected by the House of Delegates. The House of Delegates meets twice each year. Each swim club is represented at each meeting. In addition to serving as the local governing body for USA Swimming, ISI sanctions competitions, registers swimmers and clubs, trains and certifies officials, conducts championship meets, provides swimmer recognition and travel funds, publishes a newsletter, maintains records, and generally promotes, encourages and supports competitive swimming at all levels in the state. Most directors, officers, delegates, club officials and meet officials serve Iowa Swimming, Inc. and USA Swimming on a volunteer basis, and all persons interested in competitive swimming are encouraged to join their efforts in maintaining a strong program for swimmers in the state of Iowa. The objective and primary purpose of ISI is the education, instruction, and training of individuals to develop and improve their capabilities in the sport of swimming. ISI promotes swimming for the benefit of swimmers of all ages and abilities, in accordance with the standards, rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of FINA, USA Swimming, and ISI, and its Articles of Incorporation. Its website is www.isiswim.com.

CRAA Board of Directors

CRAA is a non-profit organization. The swim club is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, which is elected at the CRAA Annual General Meeting. The head coach is the Executive Director and a voting member of the board. The board of directors determines swim club policies, develops and approves the annual budget, determines financial policies for the club, and provides direction and leadership for the club, as laid out in the bylaws.

CRAA is constantly looking for new and exciting ways to improve the club. All parents are welcome to attend CRAA board meetings. They are held quarterly and information regarding the date, time and location can be found on the CRAA website.

CRAA Coaching and Administrative Staff

Head Coach

Bobby Kelley

Email: *coachkelley@aol.com*

Cell Phone: (319) 929-0244

The head coach and Executive Director of CRAA is Bobby Kelley. Bobby was employed by CRAA in the fall of 1997. He comes to CRAA from Topeka, Kansas where he coached the Topeka Swim Association for eight years. Bobby swam as an age group swimmer in South Carolina before competing for the University of Kansas throughout college. Bobby has coached national age-group champions and many Junior National and Olympic Trial qualifiers. The CRAA coaching philosophy comes under Bobby's direction and he is instrumental in determining the philosophy of the entire team.

Head Age Group Coach

Wendy Bielefeld

Email: *CoachWendyCRAA@gmail.com*

Cell phone: (319) 389-8618

The head age group coach is Wendy Bielefeld. She has been a Red Cross Water Safety Instructor for over 25 years, the head coach of Linn-Mar girl's high school swim team from 1992-1996, as well as, a CRAA coach since the fall of 1990. As a WSI, Wendy has taught hundreds of individuals of all ages to swim, along with supervising and helping others to do the same and continues to fulfill this mission through the CRAA Swim School. At Linn-Mar, Wendy was instrumental in beginning a formal swim team and practice for the girls, as well as facilitating the inception of a boy's team. With CRAA, Wendy has coached all ages and abilities, with primary interest and attention focused on the age group program.

Wendy strives to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment for the swimmers, while instructing each individual to grow into the "best that they can be," both as a swimmer and an individual.

Assistant Coaches

Bobby and Wendy are supported by a number of assistant coaches, all of who are required to be members of USA Swimming, Red Cross certified, First Aid and CPR certified, and trained in water safety and prevention. CRAA holds these requirements as a top priority. Under the direction of Bobby and Wendy, the assistant coaching staff ably provides instruction, opportunity, and direction to swimmers in a safe and nurturing learning environment.

Kean Drake
Karin (KJ) Ford
Kari Podhajsky
Brian Ruffles
Brooke Scarborough

Office Manager

Judy Hackney

Email: j_ney@msn.com

Office Phone: (319) 247-2722 (CRAA)

The CRAA office manager is Judy Hackney. She administers policies and procedures that have been set by the CRAA Board of Directors. Judy is in charge of all the team registration and billing, to include tracking CRAA registrations and USA registrations, monthly billing, meet fees, equipment and team clothing purchases, fair share, work sessions and scholarships. Because the CRAA coaching staff does not have access to individual accounts, please contact Judy Hackney if you have specific questions concerning any aspect of your account. She will be happy to answer your questions.

Coaches, Parents, and Swimmers Responsibilities

Coaches

The goal of the CRAA coaching staff is to provide each individual with guidance and instruction to maximize their results with the time and effort invested while providing a positive swimming experience helping each to “be the best they can be”. CRAA coaches strive to be good role models, leaders and listeners. The coaching staff is constantly updating and improving the CRAA program.

Coaches Responsibilities

1. **Instruct** the swimmers the four competitive strokes, starts and turns
2. **Encourage** swimmers to do their best in and out of the pool
3. **Demonstrate** respect, good sportsmanship, leadership, and citizenship to all swimmers, parents and the community
4. **Develop** swimmers’ skills and endurance for competitions as well as for greater challenges at practice
5. **Motivate** swimmers to reach goals and to aspire to higher goals

Parents

As a vital part of every child’s life, parents are the central figures in the growth and development of their children. Parents are the primary example after which children pattern their own behavior and beliefs.

Parents Responsibilities:

1. **Provide** a stable, loving and supportive environment regardless of performance and achievement level
 - This positive environment will encourage your child to be successful.
2. **Encourage** good diet and sleeping habits
3. **Demonstrate** good sportsmanship at all times toward coaches, officials, opponents and teammates
4. **Volunteer**
 - It is important to our sport. Unlike most sports where the “coach does everything”, participation in swim team is a family effort. It takes everyone’s help to ensure CRAA runs smoothly. Familiarize yourself with the terms and conditions for participation on CRAA, and with the volunteer positions available. Please serve with enthusiasm and willingness to help CRAA realize our goals! If everyone does his or her part, it makes everyone’s part easier!

Swimmers

CRAA swimmers strive to be positive team members in and out of the pool. Most importantly, swimmers should always remember that they represent CRAA. Their words and actions reflect not only on themselves but also on their teammates, parents, coaches, and the CRAA club. With the guidance of coaches and parents, swimmers are expected to demonstrate positive values in and out of the pool.

Swimmers Responsibilities:

1. **Respect** your coaches, your teammates, the pool facilities and equipment, as well as, yourself and your abilities
2. **Develop** and maintain the essential qualities of good sportsmanship both within the team structure and while representing CRAA at meets
3. **Be responsible** for your actions, words and swimming
 - Attend practice regularly. Be on time. Be prepared by remembering all equipment.
4. **Swim** with pride
 - Give an effort in which you can be proud. Maintain an attitude of which you can be proud. Develop team pride by encouraging teammates to do the same.
5. **Maintain** a safety first attitude which includes refraining from doing anything that might cause injury to yourself and others
 - Report any unsafe actions taken by others to the coaches.

Swim Seasons

CRAA has two seasons: Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer. The Fall/Winter season begins in September and concludes in February and March, with the Junior I, Junior II, Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Senior practice groups all starting within the month of September, and the Junior Rookies starting in October. Competitions are short course yards meets, which are held in a 25-yard pool and all events are measured in yards. The season concludes with championship meets which include Regionals, Short Course State Championships, and Sectionals. This is the last week of February for swimmers 12 and younger and the second week in March for swimmers 13 and older.

The Spring/Summer season begins in late March or early April and concludes in July and August, with the Junior I, Junior II, Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Senior practice groups all starting within the month of April and the Junior Rookies starting in May. Competitions during the spring/summer season include long course meters meets as well as short course yard meets. The long course meets are held in a 50-meter pool, and all events are measured in meters. The culmination of the spring/summer season is a series of championship meets which include Regionals, Long Course State Championships, Sectionals, and Age Group Zones.

Practice Groups

Junior Rookies

The Junior Rookies practice group is for swimmers who are ages five to ten years old and are able to swim 25 yards Freestyle and Backstroke. The Junior Rookies practice group is divided into sub-groups for some of its practices. The sub-groups allow the coaches to concentrate their instruction more effectively to each individual in the group. The sub-groups have practices scheduled a couple times per week, and the sub-groups come together at least once a week for a combined practice. At other practices, the entire Junior Rookies practice group will practice together. Swimmers in this group have no or limited competitive swimming experience. Swimmers will receive maximum amounts of technique work presented with fun and a feeling of accomplishment. Goals for this group are to continue to improve Freestyle and Backstroke technique and develop correct technique for Breaststroke and Butterfly, improve starting techniques, and introduce turns.

Junior I

The Junior I practice group is for swimmers who are ages six to ten years old and are able to perform all four competitive strokes, starts and turns. Similar to the Junior Rookies practice group, Junior I practices are often divided into subgroups. The sub-groups have practices scheduled a couple times per week, and the sub-groups come together at least once a week for a combined practice. Five practices are typically offered during the summer and four during the fall, winter, and spring. Swimmers in this practice group generally attend three to four practices, depending on the season. The focus for this group is improving stroke technique and competitive skills and having fun in the water. Swimmers in this group are challenged to perform the strokes and swimming skills more correctly and efficiently.

Junior II

The Junior II practice group is for swimmers who are ages eight to ten years old. Additionally, these swimmers should be able to perform all four competitive strokes, starts and turns more effectively than swimmers who practice with the Junior I practice group. Swimmers in this group should be capable of handling longer workouts than swimmers in the Junior I practice group. Eight practices are typically offered during the summer and six during the fall, winter, and spring. Swimmers in this practice group generally attend four to seven practices, depending on the season. Practices for this group focus on perfecting skills and technique and introduce endurance training while having fun learning to race.

Bronze

The Bronze practice group is for swimmers who are age eleven to thirteen years old. Swimmers in this group must be able to swim 50 yards of both Freestyle and Backstroke, and a minimum of 25 yards of Breaststroke and Butterfly. Bronze group swimmers will receive continued instruction in technique work in the four strokes, starts and turns, as well as developing an aerobic base and learning to race. Eight practices are typically offered during the summer and six during the fall, winter, and spring. Swimmers in this practice group generally attend three to seven practices, depending on the season.

Silver

The Silver practice group is for swimmers who are ages eleven and twelve and who have swam at least one 9-10 age group state times (Q times). Eight practices are typically offered during the summer and six during the fall, winter, and spring. Swimmers in this practice group generally attend four to seven practices, depending on the season. As these swimmers are proficient in the four strokes, practices for this group will continue to reinforce stroke technique while training to prepare the swimmers to compete at longer distances.

Gold and Senior

The Gold practice group and Senior practice group is for swimmers who are thirteen years of age and older. Swimmers practicing with these groups should know how to perform the competitive strokes, starts and turns. Additionally, these swimmers should be able to handle the practices that other Gold and Senior swimmers are doing.

Practices

At all levels, practice sessions develop important athletic, personal and social skills. CRAA practices are not mandatory; however, swimmers are encouraged to attend regularly. Regular, consistent attendance is essential to build the abilities of the swimmer, enhance the coach-swimmer relationship, and strengthen the unity of the team as a whole.

Practice times are based on pool availability within the Cedar Rapids area. The coaching staff and board recognize that not all practice times are ideal for each member. The coaching staff strives to develop a practice schedule that maximizes the club's resources.

Practice Schedule

Practice schedule times are set for each training group at the beginning of each swim season, and are available on the CRAA website. (www.CRAA.org) A practice schedule covering four to six weeks at a time is published, is updated weekly and is emailed out to all CRAA families as well as appears on the website. Updates and revisions will be necessary, especially during inclement weather and the holidays. Every effort is made to notify families of changes in the practice schedule via email, and/or by coach announcement at a previous practice.

A CRAA directory is available each season, which may be helpful in finding carpool opportunities.

Inclement Weather Policy

Occasionally, swim practice may be cancelled due to inclement weather conditions. CRAA will send out a mass email to announce the cancellation of any practice. On Cedar Rapids School District Weather Related Early Dismissal Days, CRAA will not have practices at Washington or Jefferson High Schools. If Cedar Rapids schools close in the AM, an email announcement will be issued by CRAA prior to 2:00 pm either confirming that practices at Jefferson or Washington High Schools will be cancelled or will be run as regularly scheduled. All Gold and Senior Practices scheduled for Coe College will be run unless the college loses power. For Sunday evening practices, practice will run as scheduled unless CRAA sends out an email by 2:00 PM on that day to cancel practice. Parents may also call Coach Wendy @ 389-8618 or Coach Bobby @ 929-0244 to find out if practices are cancelled.

Facilities

CRAA is fortunate to use a number of practice facilities in the Cedar Rapids area. Please remember that we are but a few of the many users of these facilities and we will take pride in setting a positive example through our behavior at each facility.

Coe College

1220 First Avenue NE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402
(319) 399-8500

Washington High School

2205 Forest Dr SE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403
(319) 558-2161

Jefferson High School

1243 20th St SW
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404
(319) 558-2435

What to Bring to Practice

Rookies -	suit, goggles, cap, towel, water bottle
Junior I -	suit, goggles, cap, towel, water bottle, Optimus training fins
Junior II -	suit, goggles, cap, towel, water bottle, Optimus training fins, Finis center mount snorkel, (A nose plug is beneficial as the majority of swimmers find it easier to use the snorkel when wearing a nose plug).
Bronze -	suit, goggles, cap, towel, water bottle, Optimus training fins, Finis center mount snorkel, (A nose plug is beneficial as the majority of swimmers find it easier to use the snorkel when wearing a nose plug).
Silver -	suit, goggles, cap, towel, water bottle, Zoomer II fins, Finis center mount snorkel, (A nose plug is beneficial as the majority of swimmers find it easier to use the snorkel when wearing a nose plug).
Gold -	suit, goggles, cap, towel, running shoes, water bottle, Zoomer II fins, Finis center mount snorkel, paddles, kick boards, equipment bag
Senior -	suit, goggles, cap, towel, running shoes, water bottle, Zoomer II fins, Finis center mount snorkel, paddles, kick boards, equipment bag

Swimmers are encouraged to bring their own water bottle to practice to stay hydrated during practice. Swimmers are discouraged from sharing the contents of their water bottles. Swimmers are not required to wear caps during practice, but may if they so choose. Fins and snorkel are optional equipment, and if your swimmer chooses to use these items, please purchase the exact named items listed above.

CRAA recommends that all swimmers carry an extra cap, suit, and pair of goggles, just in case. Coaches do not carry extra items to loan for practice and the facilities do not regularly have extras to loan. Clearly label all items. Swimmers should bring their bags, clothes, etc. onto the pool deck with them. CRAA is not responsible for items lost or left in the stands or locker rooms during or after practice.

Parents at Practice

Practice is time for swimmers and coaches to concentrate on improving the swimmers' abilities in the water, developing a strong coach-swimmer relationship, and fostering cooperation and unity within the group. It is important that parents allow this development to occur with limited interruption. Therefore, CRAA requires that parents remain off the pool deck and talk to their children or the coaches during practice only when necessary. It is an insurance requirement that only staff members and swimmers attending practice be on the pool deck during practices. The coaches respect parents' interest in their children's activities and invite them to observe practice from the bleachers or in a designated area. Parents are always welcome to ask questions of coaches before or after practice, as well as contact through email or phone.

Swim Meets

Swim meets are a fun and exciting opportunity for swimmers to measure progress, experience the thrill of competition, and strive for individual and team accomplishments. They provide a break in the practice routine as well as focal points for practice efforts. All swimmers are encouraged to compete in meets. Meets are offered approximately two to three times per month for most swimmers. Meet information, dates, and locations, are listed on the CRAA website.

Competition for the Junior Rookies, Junior I, Junior II, Bronze, and Silver, practice groups generally includes a series of CRAA mini meets during the Fall/Winter Season and multiple invitational swim meets within the state of Iowa. During the summer, swimmers may participate in four city league dual meets along with city championship meet, along with multiple invitational swim meets within the state of Iowa. Competitive opportunities are offered two to four times per month, with the Fall/Winter competitive season beginning in October, and the Spring/Summer competitive season beginning in May. Please refer to the CRAA website for a listing of swim meets along with recommendations for attending meets by age group. Swimmers are encouraged to attend meets throughout the season from the CRAA meet schedule. Not all meets are appropriate for all swimmers. Please consult with the coaches of you have questions about meet attendance.

Age Group Designations

In USA swimming, swimmers compete according to their ages. USA Swimming age groups are divided as follows: 8 & Under, 10 & Under or 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, Senior. Age groups are further divided into boys and girls. For USA Swimming meets, swimmers compete in their age as of the first day of the meet.

Time Standards

Within each age group there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. All swimmers begin as “B” swimmers. As they improve, they advance from “B”, “BB”, “A”, “AA”, “AAA”, and ultimately “AAAA”. United States Swimming publishes the times required for each ability level. These standards are based on a national average of performances with the goal of allowing swimmers to be grouped in competition with swimmers of the same general skill level. The motivational time standards are listed on the USA Swimming website and are revised every four years. A swimmer may be in a different class in each stroke. For example, a swimmer may have a “B” time in the 50 Backstroke, and an “AA” time in the 100 Breaststroke.

CRAA participates in multiple levels and types of meets: Open, Q+, Q-, and other invitational meets. Most meets that CRAA attends are designated as **Open Meets** meaning that all swimmers may compete, regardless of entry times. Iowa Swimming Inc. has developed a qualifying time for the Iowa State Championship Meets that are held in February and March and in early August. This qualifying time has been named the “Q” time, which is the minimum entry time in order to compete at these meets. Some invitational meets held in Iowa that CRAA participates require swimmers to have at least one Q time in order to participate. These meets are known as **Q+ Meets**. Other invitational meets prohibit anyone from competing in an event in which they have a Q time. These meets are known as **Q- Meets**. CRAA also attend some meets that set their own minimum time to compete. In order to swim in those meets, the swimmer must have achieved the qualifying time for each particular event they enter. The requirements of each individual meet will be listed in the meet information section of the CRAA website.

Entering Meets

Meet information is available on the CRAA web site. This information includes the name, location, dates, times, eligibility requirements, and event order of the meet. Usually, all meets for the season are listed on the website at the beginning of the season. Occasionally a meet is added to the list. Every effort is made to distribute meet information at least two weeks before it is due. Sometimes, however, this is not possible and the turn-around time is shorter. Please pay careful attention to the deadlines for entering each meet. Retain the meet information for reference at the time of the meet.

Parents should let the coaches know in advance of the entry deadline which meets and days that their swimmer(s) will be able to attend. This can be done by entering through the CRAA website on the meet schedule page or by sending an email to the CRAA coach. Parents may either request specific events or have the coaches select the swimmer's events. Make sure to indicate which days swimmers will be at meets.

Note: Coaches reserve the right to change and add events for swimmers. A list of CRAA swimmers' event entries will be distributed via email and posted on the CRAA web site prior to the meet. The CRAA coaching staff may enter relays on the day of the meet if there are enough swimmers to fill a relay. Coaches utilize swimmers' entry times to determine relay assignments. Please let the coaches know if your swimmer isn't willing to stay for a relay.

Meet Fees

Swimmers pay for meet entries including a surcharge to CRAA. Once meet entries are sent in these fees become non-refundable. The meet entry fees are usually assessed based on the number of events you swim. They vary by meet, and will be automatically added to your account. Typical charges are listed on the CRAA website in the registration and contract section.

There are no fees charged for competing in the CRAA mini meets held during the fall/winter season and the city league meets during the spring/summer season.

Invitational swim meets have a Splash fee of \$3.00 per swimmer plus a fee for each event entered. A typical charge for individual events is \$2.50 per event and \$5.00 per relays. CRAA also adds a \$1.00 surcharge fee for each event entered for all out of town meets to help cover coaches' costs.

Families will be billed for any meet fees incurred. These charges will be listed in with your monthly bill and payable with your practice dues and any other charges acquired within that month.

Attending Meets: What to Bring

Swimmers should be prepared with the following items at a swim meet:

- Suits (more than 1)
- CRAA caps (more than 1)
- Goggles (more than 1 pair)
- at least 2 towels
- Team shirt, sweats, jacket, parka, shoes, socks, or other cover up clothing
- money (for program, snacks)
- Healthy snacks
- water bottle
- chairs or blanket, depending on meet location
- something to do during wait time (book, hand held games, deck of cards, etc.)

Parents might want to consider bringing these useful items:

- A Ziploc bag with cough drops, Band-Aids, nail clippers, Neosporin, Advil (for the adults).
- A Ziploc bag with playing cards, and other portable games to keep non-swimming siblings busy.
- A spare pair of goggles for emergencies.
- Money for a program/heat sheet.
- A set of highlighters for highlighting our team's swimmers in each event.
- A Sharpie for immediately marking new purchases, and writing events, heats, and lane assignments on your swimmers.
- A camera and extra batteries.
- Chargers for phones, game boys, or mp3 players.
- Stadium seats, chairs, or bleacher blankets, depending on meet location
- Team shirt (See information below.)
- Plenty of items to stay entertained during the long meets (books, knitting, etc.)

Arrival

Plan to arrive at the meet location at least 15 minutes before the designated warm-up time unless otherwise specified by coaches. This gives you time to find a parking space and lets your swimmer find their team, get changed, and be ready on deck when warm-ups start. If this is their first meet, it is

especially important to arrive early so they can get acclimated without the stress of also being late. They should change into their suits and report to their coach prior to the start of warm-ups.

The coaches and the parent board encourage parents to sit together. The swimmers always appreciate seeing a large group of cheering parents. CRAA encourages parents to wear the same color shirt at meets to make it easier to find other CRAA parents in the stands. Colored team shirts are available to parents through the team spirit committee. Please wear green shirts on Saturday meets and blue shirts on Sunday meets. Our goal is to stand out at these meets and show our strong support for CRAA and our swimmers!

Behavior

Swim meets are an opportunity to display not only athletic ability but also team pride and sportsmanship. Parents and swimmers should always be mindful that they are representing the CRAA swim club and should act accordingly. Swimmers are encouraged to cheer for their teammates. If a swimmer must leave before the end of a meet, he or she should notify one of the coaches as soon as possible.

Clerk of Course

Some meets will offer a clerk of course to help organize 12 & under swimmers for the events. The clerk of course will line up the swimmers prior to their event and then escort them to the starting block at the appropriate time. Most meets, however, do not have a clerk of course set up at the meet and swimmers will be responsible to get to their heat and lane on their own. Swimmers need to stay attentive to what event is being called to the clerk of course or the blocks. If a swimmer misses an event, he or she will be marked as a “no show”. If there is an empty lane in an upcoming heat of the missed event, the swimmer may have the opportunity to be re-entered.

Checking with Coaches

Swimmers should talk to their coaches *before and after* each swim. Before going to the clerk of course or lining up behind the blocks swimmers should take the time to visit with their coach. After each race, the first place the swimmer should go is to visit with their coach. Coaches give final reminders and encouragement before the event, and they offer praise and a constructive review afterward. Parents, PLEASE do not coach your swimmers. It is confusing and disruptive to the work that the coaches and swimmers are doing.

Results and Awards

Results are usually posted in a designated area at each meet. Parents and swimmers may obtain official times and places from these results. The kind of awards (medals, ribbons, and plaques) and the number of awards given at each meet are determined by the host team and are described in the meet information packet on the CRAA website. Some meets recognize high-point achievers for boys and girls in each age group. Team trophies are given primarily at championship meets. All awards are given to coaches at the end of the meet and are distributed at practice or in swimmers folders. (See Communications section of the handbook.)

Snacks

Healthy snacks and beverages (water, sports drinks) are good for swimmers to have during meets. Although many meets have concessions, the choices are not always good choices for the competitors. Bringing your own food will assure that your swimmer will be able to eat foods that are not only healthy, but that they like and can tolerate. Some facilities do not allow food or drink on deck so please be respectful of policies at the various pools. All trash in the team area should be properly disposed of before swimmers leave the meet.

Accommodations for Travel Meets

CRAA will usually reserve a block of rooms for multiple-day meets that are held away from Cedar Rapids. The team hotel information can be obtained by contacting Ruth at R&R Travel at (800) 373-1235. Participants are not required to stay at that particular hotel, or stay at all, but group planning promotes camaraderie among parents and swimmers. Carpooling and sharing rooms also saves on costs.

Team Travel Meets

Team travel meets are sometimes offered for 13 and older swimmers. These are designated on the meet schedule. "Team travel" means that swimmers travel, share rooms and eat with their teammates under the supervision of parent chaperones and coaches. In this setting they have the opportunity to work with teammates in making decisions about food, use of money, use of free time, solving problems, dealing with conflict, further developing positive character traits. During such trips, swimmers must abide by specific conduct guidelines, and coaches, with the assistance of parent chaperones, have complete authority. Team travel meets are chosen for their competitive offerings and are most valuable for swimmers who already make a strong commitment to swimming and their teammates.

Swim Equipment and Apparel

Splash Multisport is the CRAA equipment dealer. CRAA members may access the Splash Multisport web site by clicking their logo on the left side of our website or by going directly to www.splashmulti.com.

Splash Multisport personnel can assist you in ordering the CRAA suit, fins, snorkel, and other equipment needed for your swimmer's practice group. In addition, coaches have youth goggles and CRAA caps for sale. Coaches will distribute these items to swimmers when requested and the cost will be billed to each swimmer's account. (Coaches cannot accept cash payments due to club policy.) The CRAA spirit committee offers CRAA shirts for parents to wear during meets in order to show unified support, and to help locate other CRAA parents easily during crowded swim meets.

Financial

Swimming Dues

There are many costs involved in operating the swim team. Much, but not all of the cost is covered by swimming dues. CRAA dues are based on pool time and pool facilities, coaching fees, and administrative costs. The CRAA Board of Directors sets dues for all sessions. Swimming dues for the current CRAA Season are listed on the CRAA website: www.craa.org under the registration and contract section. Dues may be paid in full at the beginning of each season or by following the installment schedule. They are non-refundable, except in cases of debilitating injury or illness, and are not tax deductible. Financial assistance is available for families needing help in paying swim team program fees. To receive this assistance contact Judy Hackney.

Meet Entry Fees

Swimmers pay for meet entries including a surcharge to CRAA. Once meet entries are sent in these fees become non-refundable. The meet entry fees are usually assessed based on the number of events you swim. They vary by meet, and will be automatically added to your account. Typical charges are listed on the CRAA website in the registration and contract section.

USA Swimming Membership Fees

USA Swimming charges an annual membership fee to each CRAA swimmer. More information on this fee can be obtained from the USA Swimming website.

Fair Share

CRAA generates revenues through many sources: dues, profits from hosting invitational meets and swimming lessons, and by holding fund raising activities. CRAA sponsored fund raisers offset the club's expenses, which in turn, helps keep the dues as low as possible. Fair Share is a component of CRAA's fund raising program. A fund raising expectation is set for each swimmer for each season, up to a family maximum. If you raise more than your annual commitment, that's great and the club thanks you for your help! If you don't raise enough through your Fair Share activities to cover your commitment, or you chose to not participate, your Fair Share commitment balance is simply added to your account and paid along with your dues, meet expense, etc. The commitment amounts and fundraising activities can be found at: http://www.craa.org/files/CRAA_2008-2009_Swimming_Rates2.pdf.

Communication

Communication is vital to any organization and it must be a two-way street. Coaches will make every effort to convey information to swimmers and their parents. Likewise, team members and their parents need to communicate with coaches in order to avoid misunderstandings and to inform them of things that may affect a swimmer's training and competition. The responsibility for maintaining effective communication rests with all parties. CRAA uses a variety of methods to establish and maintain communication between coaches, parents and swimmers.

CRAA website

www.craa.org

This site is updated regularly and contains general information about the club, team registration and contract information, as well as the ability to register, meet information, practice schedules, links to ISI Swimming, USA Swimming, SplashMultisport, and other information and updates.

E-Mail

Virtually all of CRAA news is published and sent via email. The practice schedule, upcoming meets, communications to specific to practice groups, practice changes, inclement weather notices, meet entries, reminders, and last-minute information is usually sent to families via e-mail. Be sure to check your email regularly for updates, revisions, and pertinent information for you and your swimmers.

File Cabinet/Folders

Located behind the door at the diving end stairs of Coe College, family folders are kept in a file box where ribbons and other hard copy materials are distributed, such as picture envelopes and pictures.

Bulletin Board

Located at Jefferson High School, CRAA has a swim team bulletin board on which team information will be posted. Please check the boards regularly.

Parent meetings

Occasionally, parents meetings are held. These allow coaches to convey group-specific information to parents and swimmers. These meetings are an opportunity to educate parents in various aspects of competitive swimming and the CRAA club.

Additional Programs

Cedar River Waves

During the summer, the City of Cedar Rapids Parks and Recreation Department hosts a competitive swim league featuring friendly competition between neighborhood pools. Competition is broken into age groups: 6 and under, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-17, for both boys and girls. Events include 25-yard swims of each stroke for 10 and under swimmers; 50-yard swims of each stroke for 11 and over swimmers; 100 IM, and relays. Four weekly swim meets and an All-City meet highlight the season. Meets take place on Tuesday mornings or evenings in pools in the Cedar Rapids area. CRAA sponsors a team of swimmers for this summer league called the Cedar River Waves. CRAA swimmers who participate in the Waves continue to practice with their assigned practice group. There are no added practices for those who swim on the Waves team. Registration is separate from CRAA registration procedures and participants receive a Cedar River Waves cap and t-shirt. Swimmers who register for the Waves must be currently registered with CRAA for the spring/summer season.

More information is available on the Cedar River Waves website (www.crwaves.org) which can be accessed through the link on the CRAA website. All CRAA swimmers are encouraged to join.

CRAA Swim Lessons

CRAA offers group and private swimming lessons in the spring and summer of each year at the Coe College facility. These lessons are designed for the beginner swimmer ages 4 -12 and include instruction for first-time swimmers up to those who are capable of swimming freestyle and backstroke. Students are grouped according to ability. Lessons include: Orientation to the Facility and Water, Blowing Bubbles, Streamlining, Floating on Stomach and Back, Flutter Kicking on Stomach and Back, Freestyle Swimming with Rotary Breathing, Backstroke Swimming, Breaststroke Arm stroke, Dolphin Kicking, Breaststroke Kicking, Jumping in Shallow and Deep Water, Front and Back Starts, and Open Turns. The student to teacher ratio is 3 to 1 for group lessons and 1 to 1 for private lessons. Classes fill quickly, so register early by following the link on the website www.craa.org. Registration for the spring lessons are available at the CRAA website in late January and for the summer lessons in late March.

Volunteering at the Meets

Home Invitational swim meets are run completely by CRAA parents. There are numerous jobs to be filled at meets and working at the meet is a great way to stay busy between your child's events. It also gets parents involved in the achievements of all team members and builds relationships with other parents in the swimming community. Working the meet sets a positive example of participation for the swimmers.

CRAA Work Credit Requirements

There are a number of activities required to help run the club and effectively host swim meets, which are a means of both gauging swimmers' abilities and raising funds for the club. By contract, CRAA families are required to complete a certain number of work credits per season or may choose to be billed for the unworked sessions. The total number of work sessions required is divided equally and allocated to each active CRAA family, therefore the number will change based upon the number of CRAA families and the number of CRAA hosted swim meets and the number of swim meets where we are required to provide workers. While CRAA encourages all families to help out at meets, a family's requirement is only for the family's highest-level swimmer. Contractual details, including the work credit fees and the work credit requirements per family, can be found at: http://www.craa.org/Registration_and_Contract.html.

CRAA Work Opportunities

Jobs fall into one of three categories: working at a meet; working to support a meet (meet programs, concession prep, meet entries etc.); and working to enhance the club (website design & maintenance, club apparel design, ordering and distribution). These activities have historically been divided into work sessions that are allocated to members by the volunteer coordinator. A work session corresponds to a swim session during a swim meet, which is typically structured into a morning swim session and an afternoon swim session. The activity (work) to be done during the swim session is defined by the volunteer coordinator and is described at the CRAA web site at: <http://www.craa.org>.

Time Period to Complete Work Credits

The volunteer commitment is required to be met within the club financial year, which starts the first of September and ends on the 31st of August. Families can receive credit for sessions worked greater than the required commitment during the fall/winter season. This credit may be applied to the following spring/summer contracted commitment. Families that do not meet the fall/winter season requirements can carry over that commitment to the summer season. In other words, if you didn't have a chance to earn all your sessions during the fall/winter season, you can make up those sessions during the spring/summer season.

Tracking Work Credits

The CRAA office manager, Judy Hackney, tracks each family's work session balance and bills for shortfalls at the end of the fall/winter season and at the end of the spring/summer season. A family can carry over the bill into the spring/summer season if they plan to work enough sessions to cover their fall/winter shortfall and their spring/summer commitment. Credits cannot be carried over to the following fall/winter session. The rates for sessions not worked can be found on the registration and contract page. Account balances can be check by calling or sending an email to Judy Hackney at the CRAA office.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Meet Director – Responsible for preparation and running of 4 CRAA hosted swim meets per year, including securing facilities, securing vendor, completing each step of the meet invite and sanction request including posting and sending to visiting teams, purchasing awards, ribbons, medals, trophies, coordinating concessions and hospitality needs, establishing volunteer needs and sending this list to the volunteer coordinator, recruiting workers for jobs that have not been filled, coordinating effort for printing programs, purchasing and ordering additional equipment and supplies, coordinating meet t-shirt and bag tags, soliciting officials, working with office manager to get change for concession, programs, and t-shirt sales, checking in workers, submitting worker sheet to volunteer coordinator, participating in set-up and take down of swim meet, attending all sessions of swim meet, addressing issues as they arise during meet, submitting meet director report, and financial report to ISI, and drafting meet bid information for the club.

Officials – (includes starter, referee, and stroke and turn judges) Conducts the meet and addresses rule infractions. Training is necessary (through USA Swimming and CRAA). There is always a demand for these volunteers. Training is technical, but not lengthy or difficult. There is an opportunity to be certified to national levels enabling the official to work national and international meets.

Safety Marshall - Monitors the pool deck, especially, but not only, during warm-up periods to make sure that safety rules are being followed.

Head Timer – Organizes the timers and acts as a backup timer in case a timer's watch malfunctions.

Timer - Times each heat in a specific lane using stopwatches that are provided by the host team. This job is very easy and keeps you right next to the action. No prior experience is necessary.

Hospitality attendee - Provide drinks to other meet workers and act as host/hostess in the hospitality room where coaches and officials go to relax and have a snack.

Concessions attendee – Sells snack items to swimmers and family members attending the meet.

Concessions runner – Helps stock concessions items; may be required to drive to the store to purchase sold-out items.

Clean up after session – Responsible for cleaning trash off of pool deck and out of stands after the session is completed.

Program/T-Shirt sale - Sells t-shirts and programs to anyone attending the meet.

Run Meet Program - Inputs data during meets (times, relay names, etc.) and generates results from the system. Training on specific meet manager software is needed.

Announcer – Announces the swimmers swimming in each event and the results of each event over the speaker system.

Runner – Takes pages from timers to computer operator after several heats of swimming.

Awards/Postings - Places computer-generated labels on ribbons and other awards for swimmers; posts results lists.

Clerk or Course - Organizes swimmers into proper heats, gives them cards if necessary, and escorts them to starting area behind blocks.

Room Monitor – Monitors the hallways and bathrooms to ensure that safety and other rules are being followed.

Meet Set-up – Sets up chairs, tables, bleachers, garbage cans, timing system, and other equipment necessary prior to the start of a meet.

Meet Take Down – Responsible for returning the facility to its original condition, including cleaning up, emptying trash cans, cleaning bathrooms, some heavy lifting, and moving chairs, tables and bleachers.

Print Meet Program – Collects program entries, ads, time standards, and compiles and prints the meet program.

Meet Entries – Collects meet entries from participating teams, enters them into the meet computer and provides the final list for the meet program.

Volunteer Coordinator – Responsible for placing family members into positions to be worked for CRAA home meets. This includes understanding the volunteer jobs, describing these to new members, and helping to suggest good fits.

Lead Hospitality – Prior to the meet, plans meals, shops for ingredients and supplies, preps food, cooks, cleans the hospitality room, and carries in and sets up food and drinks. During the meet, restocks and tidies up. After the meet, takes care of leftover food and drink items, cleans the room.

Lead Concessions - Plans and sets up items to be sold in the concessions area including recruiting donations from CRAA families, purchasing items that weren't donated, keeping item inventory, and cooking or baking any necessary items; cleans the concessions room before the meet, carries in and sets up food and drinks; restocks, tidies up, manages the concessions attendees, monitors the money during meets; takes care of leftover food and drink items, and clean up the room after the meet.

Website Design/ Maintenance – Designs and maintains the CRAA website. Inputs changes received from the board and coaches.

Team Apparel - Responsible for design, advertising, order taking, order placing, pick up, and distribution of team t-shirts, sweatshirts, caps, bag tags, waves t-shirts, waves caps, and various other apparel throughout the year. Also serves as a liaison between Splash Multisport and CRAA.

Additional Informational Links

The Internet is a great resource for swimmers. CRAA's main page has links to USA Swimming and Iowa Swimming Inc. Both of those sites are full of useful information. There are other great sites as well. Swimming World Magazine has a website filled with not only the magazines content but many other interesting features as well. Through Swimming World CRAA has arranged a team partnership. A Swimming World Icon is on the CRAA website in which families will be able to subscribe to Swimming World and receive access to all the content on the website, and CRAA will receive a fundraising commission from Swimming World. Other helpful websites include:

www.swimmingworld.com
<http://swimming.about.com>
www.USASwimming.org
www.isiswim.org
www.splashmulti.com

Glossary

Age Group Swimming – Program through which USA Swimming provides fair and open competition for its younger members. It is designed to encourage maximum participation, provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning, and develop a rich base of swimming talent. Nationally recognized age groups are: 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, and 17-18. Local events may also include 8 and under.

Block – The starting platform.

Bulkhead – A wall constructed to divide a pool into different courses, such as a 50-meter pool into two 25-yard courses.

Circle Swimming – Performed by staying to the correct side of the black line when swimming in a lane to enable maximum use of pool space.

Coach – a person who trains and teaches athletes in the sport of swimming and is accredited by USA Swimming.

Code of Conduct – An agreement signed by a swimmer prior to travel or participation stating that the swimmer will abide by certain behavioral guidelines.

Cut – Slang term for qualifying time. It is a time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.

Distance – Term used to refer to events 400 meters/500 yards and longer.

DQ or Disqualification – Occurs when an official observes a rule violation by the swimmer. A disqualified swimmer cannot receive awards or use the result as an official time.

Drill – An exercise involving isolation of a portion or part of a stroke, used to improve technique.

Dry Land Training – Training done out of the water. Aids and enhances swimming performance. Usually includes stretching, weight training, and/or calisthenics.

Entry Form – Form on which a swimmer enrolls in a competition. Usually includes USA Swimming number, age, sex, event number, and seed time.

False Start – Occurs when a swimmer is moving at the starting signal. In USA Swimming, one false start will generally result in disqualification.

Final – The championship heat of an event in which the top swimmers from the preliminaries compete.

Finish – The final phase of the race: the touch at the end of the race.

Flags – Pennants strung across the pool 5 yards or meters from the end of the pool. They enable backstrokers to execute a turn more efficiently by counting their strokes from the flags to the wall.

Goal – A specific time achievement a swimmer sets and strives for. Can be short or long-term.

Gutter – The area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows during a race and recirculates through the filtration system.

I.M. – Short for Individual Medley, an event in which one swimmer swims equal distances of each stroke in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle.

Lap Counter – A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a race 500 yards or longer. Also, it is the person who stands at the opposite end from the start and uses the plastic display number to count laps for the swimmer.

Long Course – A 50-meter pool. USA Swimming conducts most summer swimming in long course.

Meet – Competition designed to be a learning experience. By implementing what has been learned in practice, swimmers test themselves against the clock to mark improvement.

Middle Distance – Term used to refer to events of 200 yards/meters to 500 yards/400 meters in length.

National Age Group Top 16 Reportable Times – Time standards set for both short and long course based on previous year's achievements. Times meeting these standards are compiled to make a national list of the fastest age group swimmers each year.

Negative Split – Swimming the second half of the race faster than the first half.

Official – A USA Swimming certified judge on the deck of the pool at a sanctioned competition who observes for infractions of USA Swimming rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, timers, and referees.

Pace Clock – Large clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice. May also be digital.

Preliminaries (Prelims) – Races in which swimmers compete to qualify for the finals in the events.

Q+ Meet – Meets in which you need a qualifying time for at least one event in order to enter the meet.

Q time – Slang for qualifying time; a time standard necessary to enter a particular meet or event.

Relay – An event in which four swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

Scratch – To withdraw from an event in a competition. There may be time limits for scratching from an event without penalty.

Senior Swimming – The program through which USA Swimming provides fair and open competition in National Swimming Championships. It is designed to afford maximum opportunity for participation,

provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning, and develop a pool of talented athletes for Internal Competition. There are no age restrictions on Senior Competition.

Short Course – A pool 25 yards or meters long. USA Swimming conducts most of its winter competition in short course yards.

Split – A swimmer's intermediate time within a race. Splits are registered every 50 yards or meters and are used to determine if a swimmer is on pace. Under certain conditions, splits may be used as official times. In a relay, the time for one of the four individuals.

Streamline – The position used to gain maximum distance during a start and/or push-off from the wall in which the swimmer's body is as tight as it can be.

Taper – The final preparation phase of a season. Prior to major competition, an older, more experienced swimmer will ease yardage and allow the body to recover. Often during taper, swimmers will shave his/her entire body to reduce resistance, aid in the dissipation of lactic acid, and heighten sensation in the water.

Time Trial – A time-only swim, which is not part of a regular meet event.

Touch Pad – A large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer's touch is registered and automatically sent to the timing system.

USA Swimming – USA Swimming, Inc. The national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States.

Warm Up – Low intensity swimming used by a swimmer prior to a main practice set or race to get muscles loose and warm and gradually increase heart rate and respiration.