



**2023/24**

**PARENT**

**HANDBOOK**

## **CLUB OPERATIONS AND RESPOSIBILITIES**

### **Administration**

All activities of the Alberta Marlin Aquatic Club will be administered according to the philosophy and objectives of the club while operating in accordance with its by-laws and policies. These by-laws and policies are continually reviewed and updated by the Board of Directors who are members of AMAC that are voted into position by the membership.

### **Registration**

AMAC will arrange for the registration of all swimmers with both Swim Alberta and Swim Canada. The fees to register the swimmers are included in AMAC's registration fees.

### **Training**

AMAC will provide the training schedule and facilities, secure the services of qualified coaches, and ensure that the most relevant and effective programs are being delivered to each swimmer.

### **Team Equipment**

AMAC will provide one team swim cap to each swimmer at the start of each swim season. If another team cap is required, please contact the Head Coach. All swimsuits, bags, kickboards, etc. are available at many different retailers. AMAC will provide a yearly discount code to all members for Team Aquatic Supplies where all equipment can be purchased. AMAC will setup a team store twice per season where team hoodies, sweats, swimsuits, etc. can be purchased. AMAC will provide one team t-shirt each season to each swimmer. The swimmers are encouraged to wear these shirts at all meets and to also purchase a swimsuit with the team colours/logo on it.

Team Aquatic Supply discount code: ALB398

Ly-Sports discount code: AMAC2023

### **Swim Meets**

The Head Coach will select multiple swim meets for the swimmers to attend each season. Not all swimmers will attend every meet as the Head Coach will select the best meet to attend based on age groups. There are meets throughout the season that require qualifying times, the Head Coach will notify families if you swimmer qualifies. AMAC will look after all the details for these meets including meet fees and coaches travel arrangements.

### **Recognition and Awards**

AMAC continually recognizes swimmer improvement and accomplishments for all swimmers right from Mini Marlins to Senior National swimmers. AMAC maintains a current list of club records that are available on the AMAC website. Each year, AMAC hosts a team awards night where swimmers are recognized for numerous things like most improved, fastest fly and most team spirit. This is a fun evening where swimmers and parents get together to recognize our swimmers, have some food, a few laughs and wind down after an amazing swim season.

### **Annual General Meeting**

General meetings are open to all AMAC parents, and every family is encouraged to attend. The AGMs are held to review finances, establish/change club policies and elect the Board of Directors. These meetings allow the membership to have input into the current and future direction of AMAC.

### **Board Meetings**

Board meetings are held monthly, 10 times per year. These monthly meetings are to discuss day to day operations of AMAC and to review any new business. All members are encouraged to attend these meetings but there are times where members will be asked to step out if the Board must discuss or review sensitive interpersonal issues. Meeting minutes and dates will be posted on the club's website.

## **AMAC Website**

The AMAC website is [www.marlin.ab.ca](http://www.marlin.ab.ca) and is the best place to go to find club information. You will be able to access your fundraising account, documents, and the team calendar. Under the Events Tab you will find upcoming swim meets, bingos and casinos. When you click on the event, it will take you to the information for the event and let you sign up to volunteer for a position. Each family has a minimum requirement for volunteering at these events, more information regarding this will be provided via email to all families. If you require assistance with the website, please contact the Head Coach or a Board Member and they will be happy to assist.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COACHING STAFF**

### **Coaching Staff**

Head Coach: Jordan Harper – [headcoach@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:headcoach@marlin.ab.ca)

\*All coaches can be contacted through the club office at 403-580-2622

### **Board of Directors**

President: Mike MacPhail – [president@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:president@marlin.ab.ca)

Vice-President: Michelle Brunet – [vicepresident@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:vicepresident@marlin.ab.ca)

Treasurer: Rob Symmonds – [treasurer@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:treasurer@marlin.ab.ca)

Secretary: Jody Hobson – [secretary@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:secretary@marlin.ab.ca)

Meet Director: Traci Anderson – [meet\\_director@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:meet_director@marlin.ab.ca)

Communications Director: Jonelle Seeley – [communications@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:communications@marlin.ab.ca)

Director at Large: Ashley Holden – [memberatlarge@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:memberatlarge@marlin.ab.ca)

### **Fundraising/Swim Meets/Bingo(Casino)**

Fundraising (CO-OP Cards): Michelle Brunet – [vicepresident@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:vicepresident@marlin.ab.ca)

Milk for Marlins: Jody Hobson – [secretary@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:secretary@marlin.ab.ca)

Bingo/Casino: Nicole Kochie-Watts – [bingo\\_coordinator@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:bingo_coordinator@marlin.ab.ca)

Meet Manager: Scott Berg – [meets@marlin.ab.ca](mailto:meets@marlin.ab.ca)

## **Parent Responsibilities**

### **Get Your Child There on Time**

As in all sports there are many events that your child must attend, practices, team meetings, competitions, special events, team trips, etc. The coach wants your child to enjoy the experiences of swimming as much as possible. The coach also has a responsibility to look after the team. Start times are very important to get the most out of our pool time, ensure arrival commitments are made and events generally go as planned. If your swimmer is going to be late or miss practice, please try to let the coach know.

### **Become Involved**

It's very important that you get involved in some aspect of the Club. The easiest position is to sign up to be an official at the first swim meet. You get to enjoy the competition, meet other parents, and watch your child participate. Officiating can be fun, and you can progress through the levels at a similar rate as your child. Very few other sports provide this opportunity.

### **Be Enthusiastic and Supportive**

Remember that your child is the swimmer. Children need to establish their own goals and make their own progress towards them. Be careful not to impose your own standards and goals. Do not overburden your child with winning or achieving best times. The most important part of your child's swimming experience is that he learns about him/herself while enjoying the sport. This healthy environment encourages learning and fun, which will develop a positive self-image within your child.

### **Are You a Pressure Parent?**

The following survey has been taken from the Amateur Swimming Association of Great Britain. If you answer yes to one or more of these questions, you may be in danger of pressuring your child. It is important to remember that the parents' role is critical and should be always supportive to ensure a positive experience for your child.

- Do you want your child to win more than he/she does?
- Do you show your disappointment if he/she has a poor result?
- Do you feel that you have to "psyche" your child up before a competition?
- Do you feel that your child can enjoy the sport only if he/she wins?

- Do you conduct “postmortems” immediately after a competition?
- Do you feel that you must force your child to go to training or competitions thinking that you could do better?
- Do you find yourself disliking your child’s opponents?

## **FEES, FUNDRAISING AND COMMITMENTS**

### **Membership Fees**

For complete membership fee information please refer to your registration package. This can be found under the registration forms tab on our website.

### **AMAC Post Secondary Fee Policy**

Swimmers attending the Medicine Hat College after swimming with AMAC in high school can continue to swim with AMAC and will be charged the following rates:

- Regular Fees.
- Fundraising prorated at 50% of the annual commitment.

Swimmers returning to AMAC in April/May after attending a post-secondary institution outside of Medicine Hat can swim with AMAC and will be charged the following rates:

- Fees prorated at 30% of the annual fees.
- Fundraising prorated at 30% of the annual commitment.

Swimmers moving to Medicine Hat to attend Medicine Hat College can swim with AMAC and will be charged the following rates:

- Fees prorated at 70% of the annual fees.
- Fundraising prorated at 70% of the annual commitment.

### **Family Commitments**

**Bingo** – We have approximately 12 bingos per year at the Top Hat Bingo Association. All families are required to work a minimum of 1 bingo per bingo session (July – December & January –June). Families will have to work 3 bingos per year if AMAC is not assigned a casino for the year. A two-week sign-up period will be given at the start of each session. After that date has lapsed families will be scheduled in a date and time. Failure to work a bingo will result in your bond cheque being cashed. You may also include your name on a paid volunteer list to fill additional spots.

**Casino** - Dates TBD - All families are required to work if there is a casino scheduled.

**Hosted Meets** - We have three hosted swim meets that each family is required to provide a minimum of one volunteer per session. Failure to provide a volunteer will result in your bond cheque being cashed. We encourage all families to volunteer as it is a great way to learn and be involved in your child's sport up close.

**Officiating and Education** – Hosted swim meets are our most significant source of revenue and are part of AMAC's contribution to the swimming community. We cannot host swim meets without officials! Notification will be sent out for officiating courses being offered throughout the season.

**AMAC Board of Directors** – The BOD sets the direction for the club and the different positions vary in terms of duties. AMAC board is comprised of members that volunteer their time to ensure the best possible experience for both swimmers and families. Elections occur in the spring and AMAC needs as many families as possible to help to keep everything running smoothly. If you are interested in being a board member, please contact one of the current board members and more information can be provided.

**Committee/Fundraising Coordinators** – The head of each specific committee/fundraising event approved by the BOD (such as bingo, corporate fundraising). These coordinators work directly with specific board members and help with different things throughout the year. If you would like to help but you're not quite ready to become a board member, this is a great way to get involved in your club.

### **Fundraising Commitments**

- The club will offer numerous fundraising projects throughout the year in which all AMAC competitive swimmers/families are encouraged to participate. Participation in fundraising activities by all member families is mandatory to meet the operating expenses of our club. All funds raised over the minimum requirement will be divided 90% to the family account and 10% to the club. The funds will be credited to each family for next season's Registration Fees.

- Families choosing not to fundraise will have their post-dated fundraising commitment cheques cashed or receive an invoice that must be paid within 21 days of issue.
- All monies fundraised through swim-a-thon go 100% to AMAC as per Swim Alberta and Revenue Canada

### **Fee Payment**

- Fees are due as per the dates outlined on the Registration Fees Schedule.
- Swimmers of any families whose accounts are in arrears past 21 days are ineligible to attend competitions or camps.

## **SWIM MEETS**

Competition is the foundation of competitive swimming. Swim meets serve as a measuring stick of the improvements our swimmers have made. Each swim meet offers the opportunity to improve upon your best and achieve new goals.

**Swim meets for each group will be listed under the Events Tab on our website.**

**Meet Fees for your swimmer's group are included in the Registration Package, except for the following meets for the 2023/24 season:**

- **Age Group Nationals / Westerns / Olympic Trials – possible partial subsidy of coaches' expenses.**

### **Meet Levels**

#### Invitational Meets

- Open to all levels of swimmers.
- Generally, 2-3 days in length.
- Number of events depends on the meet, generally between 6 and 10.

#### Qualifying Meets

- Open to swimmers who have achieved a specific time standard.
- Such competitions include Alberta Trials, Alberta Age Group Provincials, Alberta Senior Provincials, Western Canadian Championships, Age Group Nationals, Canadian Open or Trials.
- Meets may range from 2-7 days in length.
- Qualifying standards for all such competitions are included in this handbook.



## **AMAC Hosted Meets**

- Please visit AMAC's web page for the most up to date information regarding our home meets.

AMAC expects that all swimmers will attend the meets as outlined in the Meet Schedule. If your swimmer is unable to attend a meet it is **your responsibility to decline the meet on the website. This must be done prior to the defined deadline, or a fee of \$50.00 will be applied to your Family Account. Please be sure to speak with your coach prior to declining a meet.**

## **WHAT TO WATCH AT A SWIM MEET**

**The Racing Course** – The length of a short course racing pool is 25 meters, and a long course racing pool is 50 meters.

**The Meet** – Meet formats and events are specific to the individual competition. Some competitions are run with timed finals and some competitions are run as heats and finals. Swim meets may have qualifying standards or may be open to all swimmers.

**Freestyle Events** – In the freestyle, the competitor may swim any stroke he or she wishes. The usual stroke used is the front crawl. The alternate overhand motion of the arms characterizes this stroke. The freestyle is swum over 50, 100, 200, 400, 800 and 1500-meter distances.

**Backstroke Events** – In the backstroke, the swimmer must stay on his or her back at all times, excluding the turns. The stroke is an alternating motion of the arms. At each turn a swimmer must touch the wall with some part of the body. Swimmers must surface within 15 meters after the start and each turn. Backstroke race distances are 50, 100 and 200 meters.

**Breaststroke Events** – Breaststroke is the only event that does not involve the arms recovering over the surface of the water and utilizes the whip kick. At each turn a swimmer must touch with both hands at the same time and may complete one underwater pullout before surfacing. Breaststroke races are distances of 50, 100 and 200 meters.

**Butterfly Events** – The butterfly features the simultaneous overhead stroke of the arms combined with the dolphin kick. The dolphin kick features both legs moving up and down together. Swimmers must surface within 15 meters after the start of each turn. Butterfly races are swum in 50, 100 and 200-meter distances.

**Individual Medley** – Considered the decathlon of swimming. The individual medley commonly referred to as the “IM” features all four competitive strokes. In the IM, the swimmer completes one-quarter of the race distance in each of the four strokes, the order is fly, back, breast and free. The IM is swum in 200 and 400-meter distances.

**Relays** – Relays are made up of four swimmers competing as a team in freestyle or medley. Freestyle relays may be 200, 400 and 800 meters and medley relays are 200 and 400 meters. The order of the medley relay is back, breast, fly and free.

**Starts and Turns** – On the start, the swimmers are whistled onto the blocks by the referee; the starter then commands, “take your marks.” The swimmers must be still in their starting position at the front of the blocks. The race starts with an electronic tone and light flash.

Quick turns are essential to a good race. In all events the swimmer must touch the wall, but in the freestyle and backstroke the swimmer does a flip turn as he or she reaches the wall, touching only with the feet. In breaststroke & butterfly the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands before executing the turn.

**DQ's** - A swimmer may be disqualified in a race if they do not comply with the rules and stroke requirements for the event they are swimming. Most DQ's occur for technical infractions around the starts and turns. When a swimmer is DQ'd, their result is forfeited.

## OFFICIATING

Swimming is a sport, which relies upon volunteers for the efficient operation of its competitions. Even at the Olympics, the officials are volunteers who have learned by training and experience, beginning at the local clubs. We know that not every swimmer will become an Olympian, nor will every parent volunteer move up the ranks to become a Master Official. Nevertheless, we rely heavily upon parent volunteers to run our swim meets. **IT IS AN EXPECTATION OF THE CLUB THAT ALL PARENTS/FAMILIES WILL ASSIST WITH OFFICIATING AT ALL CLUB SPONSORED MEETS.**

- Each family in AMAC is encouraged to have at least one parent become a qualified Level 1 official at the first available official's clinic.
- Each family in AMAC is asked to have at least one parent take at least one officiating clinic per year.

Officiating is a great way to meet other parents within the Club and to begin to learn the rules of competitive swimming. It is also a great way to have a front and center view of the competition, and to interact with the swimmers.

The Officials Chair has the responsibility to find all the officials needed for every session of every meet that AMAC hosts. The Officials Chair will either contact each family in advance or set up a date at which they can sign up, in advance of the scheduled meets.

Swim Canada has established rules governing which officials are required for sanctioned meets. No one can be put into an officiating position for which he/she is not trained. This means that everyone starts out as a timer, which is the only position that can be filled by untrained volunteers. For each of the other positions, such as Place Judge, Marshall, Head Lane Timer, Judge of Stroke and Turn, Clerk of Course, Chief Judge Electronics, Electronics Operator, Starter, etc., there is a short training clinic followed by supervised experience (usually working two sessions of a meet, at the position trained for, under the supervision of someone who is qualified at that position.) Officials' clinics (usually one to two hours in length) will be offered throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to take these clinics, and to become more experienced officials.

Officials are required to wear approved attire at meets which are white shirts and black pants/skirt. The swim decks are wet and slippery, and outdoor shoes are prohibited for health reasons. Rubber soled deck shoes or sandals are recommended.

## **PACKING FOR A SWIM MEET**

### **Pack Light**

- Swimmers should only pack what they can carry themselves, and what they can look after and remember to bring home. Swimmers spend most of their time at the pool, and most of that time in their bathing suits, so multiple changes of outer clothes are an unnecessary waste of precious packing space. Personal toilet articles, medications, etc. should be packed in spill and break proof containers. A good idea is to have the swimmer do his/her packing – they are more likely to remember what to bring home if they packed it themselves. Please ensure when packing for air travel meets, that you are familiar with carry on guidelines.
- Swim bags should contain swimsuits (both practice and meet suits), goggles (2), swim caps (2), towels, deck clothes, footwear, water bottle and meet information sheet.

### **Label Everything**

- Use indelible marker to label everything! When there are numerous swimmers at a meet, each wearing AMAC T-shirts and shorts, it is easy to get things lost and mixed up. If you have your swimmers name on everything, the likelihood of losing it is reduced.

### **No Valuables**

- Locks are not always available at pools. It is a good idea not to send anything that has significant monetary or personal value. The chaperones are not responsible for watching swimmers' personal effects.

### **Spending Money**

- The meet information sheet will outline which meals swimmers are responsible for at competitions. If you want the chaperone to look after your swimmer's cash, put the money in a labeled envelope and write the total amount on the envelope.

### **Nutrition**

- Swimmers can only perform if they are well hydrated and well fed. Always bring a water bottle in addition to any sports drinks. Pack snacks that your swimmer is used to eating and have used before practice on a regular basis. Do not try new foods/beverages for the first time at a meet. Watch for nutrition information handed out throughout the season.