



WILMINGTON AQUATIC CLUB WAC BACKERS NEW PARENTS PACKET

Welcome to club swimming with Wilmington Aquatic Club. As the parent run organization supporting WAC, we wanted to introduce ourselves and give you some helpful information as you start your journey into club swimming.

Club swim meets are different from summer dual meets that you may have participated in previously. Most importantly, due to USA Swimming rules, only coaches, certified officials and volunteers are permitted on the pool deck during the meet. Additionally, only swimmers are permitted in the locker room due to Safe Sport guidelines. This information packet will hopefully ease some anxiety that both parents and swimmers may have before the first swim meet. As a parent, your main job is to get your swimmer to the pool on time with a properly packed swim bag, and to support your swimmer with a positive attitude.

SIGNING UP FOR A MEET

The swim meet calendar will be located on the team's website (currently TeamUnify). You will need to go in and declare your swimmer's intention to attend a meet. We recommend that you allow the coaches to select your swimmer's events, and put any comment's in the note section that may assist the coach in the selection of events (i.e., "Susie really would like to swim butterfly this meet"; or "John is trying to get a cut in his 200 IM for Silvers"). The coaches know better than the parents which strokes the swimmers can swim legally, and which events the swimmers should be focusing on at a particular meet. The coaches will want each swimmer to swim every event at least once, if not multiple times through out the season. There will be deadlines to register for a meet. These deadlines are likely months before the meet. You will receive email reminders about impending deadlines, but it is best to declare your swimmer's intention as early as possible to attend a meet. If you miss a deadline, please email a coach as soon as possible. If possible, the coaches will attempt to get you into the meet, but that depends on the amount of meet entries, the host of the meet, and how close we are to the meet date.

The meet announcement (located on the event page on the team website) is your first source of any information concerning the meet. It will have the location of the meet, the preliminary start time, warm ups and the order of the events. Please note that things like start time and warm ups may be changed. The week of the event, be on the lookout for an email from the coaches with updated information about the meet. In addition to any changes about the schedule, this usually contains a timeline about the meet, facility information, parking information, whether your swimmer needs to bring a chair to the meet, etc. This will tell you when you are expected to be at the pool. If your child needs time to get their swim suit on, you may want to arrive earlier.

WHAT TO BRING FOR YOUR SWIMMER

A properly packed swim bag is key to survival at a swim meet. Many of the pools we go to do not have a snack bar, and the session may last multiple hours. Your children may not be able to come and sit with you in the stands. Keeping them warm, hydrated, feed, and entertained, goes a long way to making your swimmer (any you) happy.

The basics for the swim bag would include:

- Team suit – many swimmers keep a back-up suit in their bag too
- Googles – and a spare pair
- Team cap
- Two towels
- Refillable water bottle
- Water proof shoes/flip flops
- Sweatshirt / parka / boathouse / robe – something to keep your swimmer warm
- Team t-shirt
- Activities to keep busy – card games, books, cheap headphones. Remember, you are on a pool deck. Anything you take will get wet, and likely get lost.
- Healthy snacks – granola and protein bars, sandwiches, fruit, pretzels, yogurt, trail mix, Vitamin Water, fruit snacks.

WHAT TO BRING FOR YOURSELF

Yes, you have now committed to a multiday event to watch a grand total of four minutes of your swimmer's events. You are going to want to pack a bag to keep yourself occupied. You have at least an hour of warm-ups to sit through before the meet even starts. The best way, of course, to make the meet go fast is to volunteer. But if you find yourself sitting in the stands, you will want to have a make sure you bring the following:

- Multiple layers of clothing – it's likely very hot in the stands but freezing outside.
- Highlighter – If the meet is printing heat sheets, you can highlight your child's name to make it easier to see when your swimmer is swimming. If not, you are likely going to want to purchase a subscription to MeetMobile or find out where they are posting the results of the meet. Remember, the times displayed on the scoreboard are not official.
- Bleacher seat or cushion – sorry to say that the bleachers are not very comfortable. This is a great gift idea if you don't have one.
- A book, magazine, small electronic reader, or something to pass the time.
- A camera/ phone to take pictures or records your swimmer – but please use proper etiquette when doing so and remember that there are other parents that want to see their swimmers also. In addition, there is no flash photograph permitted at the start of the meet.
- Cash / Venmo – check to see if there is admission fee or a concession stand and whether it accepts cash or whether you have to pay ahead.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT THE MEET

There will be a dedicated area / locker room where the swimmers will go to the pool. If you are volunteering, you will find the volunteer table to sign in. If there is admission fee, you will find the table to pay admission head to the stands.

I may be biased, but I do believe that swim parents are some of the friendliest parents around – so if you have a question, just ask! Usually the host club has people to help out, but if not, there should be plenty of experienced parents that are more than willing to point you in the right direction.

Your child will have warmup to start the meet. For the most part, your swimmer may stay on deck for the meet. There may be an occasion at a meet where your swimmer may come up after warmup or at some point during the meet. However, once the meet starts, your swimmers should stay on deck so that they don't miss their events. It's very easy to get distracted in the stands and lose track of event numbers, and the coaches and parent volunteers cannot spend time tracking down swimmers in the stands.

Events alternate between girls and boys and are numbered. Almost all events have multiple heats. You can find your swimmer in his/her event, in one of the heats and then look for the lane they will be swimming in. The coaches are there to make sure that your swimmer gets to the correct lane at the right time. After your swimmer swims, your swimmer should see his/her coach to get feedback about his /her race.

When your child is done swimming for the day, you can meet them back at the other side of the locker room and support the terrific job they did that day. Remember, not all kids will drop times every time they swim. Not every child will be able to legally perform every stroke the first time he/she swims it in a meet. Be supportive, and let the coaches do their jobs. If you have a question about your child's progress, feel free to reach out to the coach. But make sure your swimmer knows that they were a rock star today. That's what is going to bring him/her back tomorrow with a smile on his face.

CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS/ QUALIFYING TIME MEETS

There are certain meets, such as Championship Meets, that require qualifying times in order for your swimmer to participate. You can find Championship Qualifying times posted on Mid-Atlantic website. If your swimmer has qualifying times, you will be able to register them for that meet on the team website. If you do not have qualifying times for a championship meet, we try to offer a different meet to your swimmer so they have an opportunity to swim. Any questions about meet or meet entries should be directed to the coaches.

MANDATORY VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

WAC Backers is a parent run organization that relies up volunteers to support our swimmers and swim team. As such, each family is required to meet volunteer requirements for both our short course (September – March) and long course (April – July) season. We have implemented a new Volunteer Point System for the Short Course Season. Each family with up to two swimmers is required to earn 100 volunteer credits. For families with more than two swimmers, you will be required to earn an additional 20 points per swimmer. A portion of the points earned must be earned through a meet that WAC is hosting (you will be required to work at least one WAC hosted meet).

These hours can be by performing various duties throughout the year: timing, becoming an official; helping at an event; being a part of WAC Backers; and other roles that we have for the organization. Different jobs earn different point values. The WAC Volunteer Program can be found on our website. As we start hosting meets this year, volunteers are going to be crucial to the success of those meets. If there is ever a question as to how you can volunteer, please reach out to Coach Lindsay or the WAC Backers president.

OFFICIALS

WAC is always in need of individuals looking to become certified officials. These positions require a USA Non-Athlete swimming membership, background check and training. It is a great way to meet your volunteer requirements while having a front row to all the action. New officials will receive a white official polo from WAC. If interested, please reach out to Susan Hauske at sushauske@gmail.com.

QUESTIONS?

Never be ashamed or scared to ask questions. Other parents are great resources and all remember the anxiety of our first season. Feel free to email the coaches or the WAC Backer president at wacbackers2011@gmail.com if you have any questions or concerns. Open lines of communications are crucial in meeting our goals.

