



**2008-2009**

**SWIMMER / PARENT  
HANDBOOK**



**Mission:**

Our mission is to provide swimmers of all abilities the opportunity to reach their fullest potential as both swimmers and individuals in a positive, confidence-building environment. We believe that age-group competitive swimming offers a wonderful opportunity to learn the values of sportsmanship, dedication, commitment, responsibility, and hard work. The Aqualion family, directed by professional coaches with parental support, provides a fun atmosphere that allows for an exciting, wholesome, constructive environment for character development and competitive achievement in a healthful sport that offers lifelong enjoyment.

**Message from the Head Coach:**

Welcome everyone to another exciting season of Aqualion swimming. I'm really looking forward to working with the children to help them be the best swimmers they can be. Through hard work both individually and as a team, we will be successful. But, even more important, I hope that each child who is involved in SCAY swimming learns from the four core values of the YMCA: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. I am most proud of our swim team members when they are good teammates and good sportspeople, as well as doing their best as swimmers.

Should you have questions throughout the season, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at [spower@scaymca.org](mailto:spower@scaymca.org) or by phone at the YMCA at 237-7717.

*Steve*

Steve Power  
Head Coach



**Message from the SCAY Parent Organization President:**

Well, here we go! Another season begins with many activities ahead of us. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome the new swim team members and to welcome back the returning swimmers and all their families. Without the support of the fantastic Aqualions Swim Team Family, this program could not work.

Swimming is an exciting sport but also one which takes a lot of dedication from both the swimmers and the families. Whether it's carpooling to practice every day, working at the swim meets, or helping to make one of our great social activities happen, it all happens because of you. We work hard but we have a lot of fun and I think you will find the SCAY Aqualions family to be worth the investment!

I encourage you to look over these materials and should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Coach Steve Power, me, or any of the Board members with any questions.

Thanks!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy".

Cathy Dufour  
SCAY Parent Organization President  
csdufour@gmail.com

**Board members:**

Cathy Dufour, President, csdufour@gmail.com  
Steve Power, Head Coach, spower@scaymca.org  
Russ Schrock, Treasurer, rosjmsva@comcast.net  
Jo Bevilacqua, jmb@chem.psu.edu  
Terry Cummins, terrypsu@yahoo.com  
Heather Jordan, dr.heather.jordan@gmail.com  
Jenny Koberna, jkoberna@stompit.net  
Sharon Hammes-Schiffer, shs@chem.psu.edu  
Ken Hillsley, klh124@psu.edu  
Lisa Lawrence, ell685stone@aol.com  
Cory Miller, kingofthesewers@msn.com  
Rayne Sperling, rsd7@psu.edu  
Dave Smith, dave4golf@adelphia.net

## **Affiliations:**

The State College Area YMCA is affiliated with YMCA National, which establishes rules and regulations for the conduct of YMCA competitions. SCAY is also USA-Swimming affiliated. Participation in USA-Swimming is optional and requires additional registration fees.

## **Swimming Seasons:**

The Aquatics swimming program is broken into three “seasons”:

Fall/Winter	Mid-September - Late March
Spring	Late April - Early June
Summer	Early June - Early August

A one-week introductory clinic for swimmers new to SCAY takes place at the beginning of the Fall/Winter season. New swimmers are welcome at any time throughout the season(s).

## **Swimming levels:**

Children are slotted into practice groups based upon their skill level and age. Each fall, a clinic is held to assess the skill levels of swimmers new to SCAY for the Fall/Winter season. Assignments for mid-season, spring & summer seasons will be based on the coaches’ evaluation of skill at that time. The groups and “typical” age levels are:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Competitive Skill</b>	<b>Approx. Ages</b>
Cubs/Pride	Basic Skill Introduction	Ages 5-9
D1,D2,D3	Refinement Stage	Ages 9-14
Junior/Senior	Specificity, Endurance	Ages 14-18

In addition, mid-season adjustments to group assignments (fall/winter season) may be made as some of the junior/senior swimmers begin practicing with the High School team.

## **Team Wear:**

Team wear for swimmers is coordinated through the parent volunteers. Each swimmer is required to wear a SCAY team suit and cap (girls) for all swim meets. Additional SCAY logo team wear is available for parents & swimmers to purchase including sweat suits, tee shirts, carrying bags, etc. Other items such as goggles are available for purchase as well. Information on the specific items available and associated prices will be provided early in the fall season. Please contact Jo Bevilacqua (jmb@chem.psu.edu) for team wear.

## Fees:

The fee for the Aqualions program supports the general operating expenses of the program including the salaries of the coaching staff who provide your child(ren) with the personalized attention that is the basis of the program. The fees for each season differ. Please check the website: [www.aqualions.org](http://www.aqualions.org) for the most updated information for each season. Payment can either be made by full payment or by four equal payments via electronic funds transfer or automatic credit card charge. Financial assistance is also available for those who qualify. Further details are available from the YMCA. The fees for the Fall/Winter 2008/09 season are:

Cubs	\$305	D1	\$350	JR	\$495
Pride	\$320	D2	\$385	SR	\$400
		D3	\$440		

In addition, each swimmer in Aqualions must also be a member of the State College Area YMCA. Youth, individual, and family memberships are available with a variety of payment terms. For further details on the benefits of becoming a member of the YMCA, see the full YMCA brochure available at the YMCA, 677 Whitehall Road, State College, the website at [www.scaymca.org](http://www.scaymca.org) or by calling 237-7717.

## Practice Schedule:

The practice schedule for fall/winter season 2008/2009 is listed below. Check emails and the Aqualions website ([www.aqualions.org](http://www.aqualions.org)) for updates:

Group	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday All-Team	Saturday
Cubs	4:25-4:55		4:25-4:55		5:30-6:15	
Pride	4:55-5:40		4:55-5:40		5:30-6:15	
D1	5:40-6:40	4:00-5:00	5:40-6:40	4:00-5:00	5:00-6:15	11:00-noon
D2	5:40-6:55	5:00-6:15	5:40-6:55	5:00-6:15	5:00-6:15	11:00-noon
D3	6:40-8:10	7:00-8:30	6:40-8:10	7:00-8:30	5:00-6:15	11:00-noon
JR/SR	3:40-5:40	3:40-5:40	3:40-5:40	3:40-5:40	3:40-5:00	9:00-11:00 a.m.
JR/SR A.M. Dryland	6:00-7:15		6:00-7:15		6:00-7:15	

All practices listed are p.m. unless otherwise noted.

## **Keystone YMCA Swim League (KYSL):**

SCAY is a participant in the Keystone YMCA Swim League that provides opportunities for competitive meets against other league teams. Dual meets are typically held on Saturday mornings throughout the Fall/Winter season beginning in December and running through February. A league championship is held in February with all teams competing. The meet schedule will be distributed and posted as soon as available on the website: [www.aqualions.org](http://www.aqualions.org). This site also contains important information such as volunteer opportunities for parents and driving directions to the sites.

## **District & State Competitions:**

We are also a member team of the Western Pennsylvania District that establishes time standards for involvement of swimmers in Districts. Swimmers qualify for the PA East-West Championships (States) based on performance at Districts. SCAY and the Bellefonte Family YMCA host States each year. As with all meets, coaches will determine the line-up of swimmers based upon meeting the minimum district swimming time for each age group, as well as maximizing the team's swimmers in their best events. The district championship normally follows the league championship by approximately two weeks (mid-March). Information on District qualifying times will be provided during the season.

## **Winter & Summer Nationals:**

In addition to the state championships, swimmers may qualify to participate in Winter or Summer Nationals. Minimum national times in each event are established annually and swimmers must meet or better these times in order to compete. These competitions are not dependent upon the results of the district or state meets. Information on National qualifying times is available on the website: [www.aqualions.org](http://www.aqualions.org) and also will be provided during the season.

## **Additional Meets:**

Non-league meets are held throughout the year for differing age groups and at a variety of sites. These can be either YMCA events or USA Swimming events. We will keep you informed as meet information becomes available throughout the year. In the case where a large number of swimmers are attending the event, coaches will also assist in the coordination and registration for the meet. A nominal fee is charged for these events (approximately \$3 per event). Instructions will be provided on the registration process including fee submittal.

## **Team Conduct:**

The Aqualion family prides itself on having an excellent reputation of team conduct and pride both at meets and at practices. We are often "guests" at facilities and each individual's actions are a reflection on the SCAY Aqualions team. Swimmers and family members should always conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the high standards that comprise the Aqualions program.

## Communications:

We use a variety of methods to try to make sure swimmers and their families receive information about what's going on. These include:

- **E-mail notifications:** e-mails are sent frequently to update on a variety of topics including meets, practice, and other special events. Please check your e-mail often (daily) as this is our primary means of communication to such a large group and allows us to save costs and update everyone in a timely fashion.
- **Swimmer mailboxes:** each family is given a folder (mailbox) that is kept in the filing cabinet in the main lobby (near the bulletin board) at the YMCA. This is used for items which can't be sent via e-mail such as notes specific to your family or swimmer.
- **The SCAY website:** [www.aqualions.org](http://www.aqualions.org) posts all written communications, meet schedules, practice schedule changes, swimmer event times, as well as a copy of all e-mails sent by the coach or parent group representatives. If your e-mail isn't working, just check the website for updates!
- **SCAY Aqualions bulletin board:** located near the vending machines at the YMCA, it provides both general and specific information on meet operations such as volunteer sign-ups.
- **Aqualions hotline:** 235-SCAY (235-7229) is the number you can call to hear a recorded message concerning the status of any updates to practice schedules, cancellation of meets, etc. We encourage you to check the hotline frequently for any updates.

If we don't cover it somewhere else though, please don't hesitate to ask one of the coaches or Board members for further information.

## Volunteer Opportunities:

The activities of the SCAY Aqualions couldn't happen without lots of help from volunteers, so all families are expected to volunteer at most events. Further information will be provided on a regular basis about the needs for meet or event volunteers. It's essential that all families get involved and help continue this successful venture. A variety of positions exist for all types of volunteers both at swim meets and outside of the meets. If you aren't sure how best to volunteer, please ask and we can help you find a way to support our child(ren) and team.

We need volunteers for the following types of jobs (please note the numbers needed after each position). Instruction is available for all people new to the swim meet format.

**For ALL MEETS:**

**Card Distribution** - Distributes heat cards to swimmers before each event. ***Need two(2) people throughout the meet.*** This is a great way to get to know our swimmers.

**Seeding/Seating** - Makes sure all swimmers are in the correct seeding order for each heat. Maintains order behind starting area. ***Need two for each half of the meet ~ total of 4.*** This, too, is a great way to get to know our swimmers.

**Timers** - Clock times of swimmers during heats, log times on heat cards. Timers stand at starting blocks and follow directions of the Starter. Stop watches are provided. ***Need six for each half of the meet ~ total of 12.*** Great position for newcomers.

**Additional needs for HOME MEETS:**

**Concessions** - helps in sale of food products to general public during home meets only. ***THREE Shifts: Set-up/Mid-Meet/Clean-up ~ We need five volunteers for each shift ~ total of 15.***

**Scorekeeper** - Tallies incoming heat cards and scores. Currently done both by hand and on the computer. ***Need one for each half of the meet ~ total of 2.***

**Averager** - Will average times as they come in. Usually there are 2 from each team per half. Will also read times to scorer to assist with entering times into computer.

**Stroke & Turn Judge** - Judges the swimmers for stroke and placement of all body parts during each heat. The Stroke & Turn Judge watches three lanes and is located poolside during the meets. You **MUST** be trained/certified to be a YMCA official. A certification class will be available. ***Need two for each half of the meet ~ total of 4.***

**Referee** - Instructs timers, place judges, and stroke and turn judges for proper procedure during each meet. The Referee is in charge of the whole meet. This position is for the person familiar with swim meet operations, strokes, and procedures. You **MUST** be a trained/certified YMCA official. ***Need one for each half of the meet ~ total of 2.***

**Starter/Announcer** - Notifies swimmers via intercom system of each heat and when they should be seated. Begins the race with the electronic starter system. You **MUST** be a trained/certified YMCA official. ***Need one for each half of the meet ~ total of 2.***

## Concessions

Concessions at home meets serve as fund raisers for the team, to offset costs of the end-of-the season banquet. To be successful, we need donations and assistance from each family.

**Drink Donations (for Each Swimmer):** families are asked to donate a case of drinks, according to the list below. (That is, if you have 2 swimmers, 2 cases - 3 swimmers, 3 cases...)

**Cubs/Pride:** 100% juice boxes

**D1:** Gatorade

**D2:** water

**D3:** Pepsi/Coke or Sprite/Sierra Mist or similar

**Jr/Sr:** DIET Pepsi/Coke or Sprite/Sierra Mist or similar

**Donations for HOME Meets:** For the home meets, we will ask that specific age groups be responsible for bringing donations for specific meet. These assignments will be announced after the meet schedule is determined. The exception to this will be the invitational meets, where ALL swim groups will be asked to donate items.

**Set-up and Clean-up for HOME Meets:** Also, we will ask that specific age groups be responsible for set-up and clean-up before and after home meets. These assignments will also be announced after the meet schedule is determined.

## Activities:

In addition to the competitive swim meets, SCAY provides plenty of opportunities for swimmers to have fun as a group and get to know other individuals and families within the Aqualion family. We'll let you know throughout the year as activities are planned and we welcome your input on suggestions for additional activities for swimmer & family fun. Some typical events held each year are: Kick-off Party, group-level gatherings, and late night at the YMCA.

## Fundraising:

There are three main needs for additional funds: 1) to keep program fees as low as possible 2) to help subsidize special swimmer activities such as the annual swimmer banquet or needed equipment purchases for meet operations and 3) to fulfill our capital commitment to the YMCA which helped fund the new SCAY pool which opened in fall 2003. In order to raise these funds, and avoid multiple fundraising activities, we have two major sources of income during the year: the Aqualaps fundraiser, and hosting the PA East-West State Championships (States). We do try to keep additional fundraising activities to a minimum if at all possible however if we do need to raise additional funds then other activities are added to the schedule.

***The first fundraiser, Aqualaps,*** is an intra-squad swimming event in which swimmers solicit commitments from sponsors. The event will be held on Sunday October 26<sup>th</sup> beginning at 1:00 in the afternoon. The event follows a relay

format, which makes it a fun day for everyone and it raises a lot of money towards our financial goals. Please plan to have your swimmer involved and come volunteer to help out as well.

***YMCA PA East-West States***, is the culmination of the year for YMCA competition. SCAY (along with Bellefonte YMCA) is the host for the State Championships held at the Penn State Natatorium. This event requires a large number of volunteers to make it a success, but the money raised offsets the need for higher swimmer fees. The championships are usually held in late March, typically on a Saturday/Sunday schedule.

## Tentative Calendar of Events:

(NOTE: Complete swim meet schedule will be determined in early October. Check the website [www.aqualions.org](http://www.aqualions.org) for updated information.)

September 14	Fall Aqualions Kick-off Meeting 1:00 p.m. State College Area YMCA
September 15	Swim practice begins for all age groups
October 26	Aqualaps Fund Raiser 1:00 p.m. State College YMCA
Late October	Halloween Meet in Williamsport All ages eligible
November 8, 2008	Tri-Meet with Bellefonte and Sunbury
November 8-9, 2008	Big Cat Meet at Penn State (must be USA swimming registered)
January 17, 2009	Late Night at the YMCA (Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday weekend)
Mid-February	KYS League Championships
March 15 & 16, 2009	PA West District meet - States Qualifier
March 21 & 22, 2009	PA East-West State Championships PSU McCoy Natatorium
April 6 - 9, 2009	Winter Nationals Fort Lauderdale, Florida
July 28 - 31, 2009	Summer Nationals College Park, MD