

Role of a Parent within the Club

The parent of a swimmer can wear many different hats.. Official, administrator, meet manager, fund raiser and more. But in the end remember why you are working with the club, your son or daughter enjoys the sport of swimming and you are there for support.

So consider,

• How you can help support the team?

That's a great question. Check with the coach to find out if there is a parent's committee that supports the team. Many clubs have programs in place to maximize parent involvement and resources. For example, the club may have a fundraising committee, or even a social committee. Find out from your board or coach how the team can best utilize your skills.

• It looks like it takes an awful lot of people to run a meet. What can I do to help?

If you have already attended a meet, you have probably been approached to be a timer. This is a great way to begin to help run meets. In fact, this is how many officials get started. Officials are a necessary part of every type of competition. Here is a list of the officiating positions:

- Stroke and turn judges
- Clerk of course
- Computer operator
- Starter
- Referee

If any of the jobs interest you, check with your official's chair.

If your club hosts meets, you may be able to help in the following areas:

- Soliciting sponsorship
- Meet Director
- Hospitality and snack bar
- Meet Entries
- Meet results/awards
- Set up and clean up

And much more. Check to see if your team has a meet committee and find out how to get involved.

This is our Canadian procedure:

• What does it take to be an official?

The first step to becoming an official is to be certified as a Level 1 official. There are clinics held around the province at regular intervals (usually Spring and Fall) and some clubs will hold internal clinics to compliment the schedule. Training is established province wide and meets the prescribed national. Following the Level 1 course there is any number of clinics offered in all the roles of officiating. Officials are trained to be consistent in their knowledge of the rules and protocol involved in each position. If you

are really interested in becoming an official, speak with one of the officials during a break at your next meet. Or, feel free to contact your official's chair for more information.

• Our coach misses practice to go to a Swim Ontario Regional meeting. What is that? What is involved?

You would be surprised at how many people don't know what their swimming region is within the province much less what it does.

Let's begin by telling a little about how Swim Canada is organized. Swim Canada is the national governing body for the sport of swimming. In this capacity, Swim Canada formulates rules, implements policies and procedures, conducts national championships and offers a variety of services and programs to enhance the swimming experience of all members. Swim Canada is made up of 10 provincial bodies – Swim Ontario being one of them.

Swim Ontario has responsibility for defining age groups, provincial time standards, sanctioning meets and much more. Within Swim Ontario are 6 regions (Central, Eastern, Huronia, Northwest, Northeast and Western).

The reason your coach and hopefully another representative of your team attend these important meetings is to keep informed as well as participate in all the activities of the region. The region is responsible for defining training clinics (officials and swimmers), regional championships and more.

• Our coach is going to an OSCA and CSCTA meeting. What's that all about?

First of all, congratulations to your club for understanding the importance of these two meetings by making sure your coach is in attendance as well as financing his travel. The OSCA meeting is actually a meeting of all the Ontario coaches. There is both an educational as well as a business aspect to the meeting. The CSCTA meeting is where various committees meet with provincial coaches to discuss national strategy and other business issues surrounding the sport. Both OSCA and CSCTA are responsible for electing their officers, voting on an annual budget and responding to any rule changes or legislation for the next year. By attending these events, your coach will be bringing back invaluable first hand information and knowledge that will benefit your team.

• I have just been asked to submit myself as a candidate for the board. What kind of commitment will this mean?

Becoming a member of the club's board of directors is an important decision, a decision that requires a great amount of consideration. Find out from current board members what their experience has been, like what kind of time commitment and responsibility are involved. Most clubs should have already defined roles and responsibilities outlined in its by-laws or team policies. Ask your coach or team president for a copy of these documents.