

# Lahāina Swim Club Parent Handbook

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## Lahāina Swim Club History

As soon as the gates of Lahāina Aquatic Center opened to the public in the summer of 1992, a corps group of Lahāina parents banded together to form Lahāina Swim Club.

The Club began with seven swimmers, all under 10 years old. We have steadily grown to 70+ members today, ranging in age from five-year-old Learn-to-Swimmers through High School aged young adults.

## Coach Tom Popdan

Coach Tom has an extensive background in competitive swimming. He earned a swimming scholarship to Villanova University in Pennsylvania, and after completing his studies there he embarked upon a coaching career that has spanned more than twenty years. Tom has coached at Division I Temple University and the University of Virginia, as well as at an Olympic-level team in Mission Bay, Florida. He has coached the Lahāinaluna High School swim team since 1994, and Lahāina Swim Club since 1995. In

addition, Tom has individually completed numerous marathon swims on the East Coast, and he successfully swam the English Channel in 1983.

### Lahaina Swim Club Goals

- To develop each swimmer's skills to the fullest
- To impart character building traits of discipline, sportsmanship, integrity, commitment, and leadership
- To innovate constantly, improving the quality of teaching and coaching

### Lahaina Swim Club Culture

Lahaina Swim Club culture is based upon safety, preparedness, and doing one's best in an environment that is positive at all times.

- Be safe both in the water and on deck
- Be punctual and prepared with cap, goggles, and fins
- Be 100% personally responsible for putting forth one's best effort at every practice and every meet.
- Have respect for self and others, and eliminate all negative talk. Whether it is self-talk or comments to other swimmers, we will learn and excel best in a positive environment

### Team Commitment

Lahaina Swim Club wants members who are committed to this program. We ask that swimmers commit to a swim season, which means Short Course Season up until Christmas break, and/or Long Course Season from January through the end of the school year.

Coach Tom would like parents to use this program as an opportunity to sit down and talk with and teach their children about the importance of commitment. Communicate with your child and let him or her know what your expectations are for them. Be consistent, follow through, and let them know how proud you are when they do complete the Season, as well as all of the smaller steps in between. There will always be waning levels of interest in any endeavor, but no matter the circumstances, parents and swimmers need to follow through to the end of the Season.

The end of a Season is the bare minimum commitment. Completion is often different from swimmer to swimmer. For some, it is to learn all four strokes, while for others it is to compete in all four, or to compete in a State Championship Meet, and for still others it is to compete through High School or beyond. Assisting children in working their way to an end is a huge part of this Club's mission, and successfully doing so is quite possibly the most important by-product of the program.

### Competition

Lahaina Swim Club is a competitive swim team. Practices are focused around an end result of swimming well, which allows swimmers the opportunity to develop realistic goals towards which they can work. Swim meets give swimmers the opportunity to attain those goals, and after participating in a meet, it is not uncommon to see increased determination in practice.

Coach Tom makes the decision as to when a swimmer is ready for competition, typically when he or she demonstrates the ability to swim a stroke successfully in practice. Children are not rushed into competition; they race only when they are ready, and success is generally thereby guaranteed. When a swimmer competes for the first time, it is often an emotional event for both the swimmer and the parent alike.

It is imperative that swim team members notify both Coach Tom or coaches if they will not be competing in an upcoming meet. Entry fees have increased dramatically starting with the 2008 Short Course Season, and it is a waste of Club dues if we unnecessarily enter a swimmer who will not be attending. Entries are due on the Monday before an upcoming Saturday event.

All swimmers who wear caps are expected and required to wear a Lahaina Swim Club cap at meets. Latex caps are available for \$5, and silicone for \$15. See any Board member to purchase.

Swimmers who qualify for the State Championship meet will have the opportunity to travel interisland to attend the meet when it is not held on Maui. It is an honor to qualify and compete for Lahaina Swim Club at this level.

## Practice Expectations

The following are guidelines that are to inform both swimmers and parents of the Coach's policies during practice.

- The swimmer's USA registration must be current
- Plan to arrive on time and stay the entire practice
- During practice, swimmers must ask the Coach for permission to leave the practice area. For their safety, swimmers must never leave the pool area during practice without the Coach's knowledge.
- Bring cap, goggles, fins, suit, towel and yoga mat (for Level IV swimmers) to each practice. A mesh bag or backpack specifically for this purpose works well. Label all items (waterproof paint pens are available at Maui Dive Shop), and carry spare goggles and caps. It is the swimmer's responsibility to bring and take home equipment at each practice.
- Coach will explain and then expect proper lane etiquette
- Parents should avoid interacting with their child during practice
- If parents have concerns relating to their child, talk to the Coach either directly before or after practice. Speaking with the Coach during practice sessions can be disruptive and potentially dangerous to swimmers, no matter how well intended. If you have difficulty making contact with the Coach outside of practice, contact the Coach's liaison

## Parent Volunteer Opportunities

Swim meets require enormous amounts of manpower in order to happen, all of which is volunteer time. As such, every Lahaina Swim Club family is expected to complete volunteer responsibilities during the season. Please see the Participation Contract for specific requirements.

## First Swim Meet

Listed below are guidelines to help parents with their child's first meet

1. Arrive at least 15-20 minutes early, and situate yourselves in the bleachers where Lahaina is sitting. WEAR SUNSCREEN.
2. You will receive an Individual Entries Report for your child, which lists the events by name and number that your child has been entered in.

3. Make sure your child is ready to swim, with cap and goggles in hand. Swimmers should report to the Coach in time for warm-ups.
4. Per USA Swimming rules, only parents serving in an official capacity (i.e. coaches, timers or officials) are permitted on deck during meets
5. After warm-ups, swimmers should get something to drink (preferably water, Gatorade or Powerade) while they wait the 10-30 minutes for the meet to start.
6. Once the heat sheets are posted on the wall, swimmers should refer to them with their entries report in hand to record their heat and lane assignments for each race. Many choose to write their event #, Heat #, and Lane# for each race on their hand with a permanent marker.
7. Coach will inform new swimmers when it is time to report for their race behind their respective starting block.
8. After their swim, each swimmer should report immediately to the Coach for positive comments and praise.

After your child has completed his/her individual event(s) for the day, be sure they check with the Coach to see if they are included in a relay before leaving the meet.

Parents, please always wear a smile, be proud, and have a hug ready no matter the outcome of your child's race. Never coach your child.

Keep your swimmer relaxed, hydrated, (or fed a light snack) and warm; visit the bathroom before their event.

Make sure you are on time. This helps your child be calm and relaxed.

Make sure that your swimmer's bag is packed with the essentials: at least one towel, suit, cap, goggles, healthy snacks, drinks, and clothes for after the meet. Remember to include games, books or activities to help pass the time between events.

Sit with other Lahaina parents and families, have fun, and always speak positively about your team and Coach in the spectator area.

WHAT IS ALL THIS STUFF AND WHAT DO I NEED TO DO WITH IT???

- 1) Fill out the LAHAINA SWIM CLUB REGISTRATION FORM and return it to us today. This is how Coach Tom will be able to figure out which group your swimmer fits into, and then tells him how to contact you to let you know. For returning swimmers, we still need it to update our contact list.
- 2) Fill out the USA SWIMMING 2014 ATHLETE REGISTRATION APPLICATION and return to us, with \$65 payment (all payments can be lumped into one check) by September 10, 2013. This is a membership with USA swimming, and it is required by the County of Maui for insurance purposes. If you have not returned it with payment by September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013 your swimmer WILL NOT be able to practice until it is in. Hardship forms are available for this fee; see Candace Faust if you need one. For returning swimmers final date for the USA registration form will be November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013
- 3) If your child is new to Lahaina Swim Club you must submit a COPY of their BIRTH CERTIFICATE. This we send along with item #2 to USA Swimming, and as such, it is also DUE by September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013.
- 4) Read and keep the PARENT HANDBOOK, the MEET SCHEDULE and the POOL RULES.
- 5) Sign and return FEES and POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT form.
- 6) To pay the PROGRAM FEE or TEAM DUES please make checks to Lahaina Swim Club by September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013
- 7) Pay the \$10 ANNUAL FAMILY FEE by September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013. This can also be lumped into one check.
- 8) If it applies to your situation, sign and return A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT POOL RULES. Due by September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2013. If you do not receive this back, we will assume that you are taking charge of your under 12 year old swimmer(s) before and after all practices this year.