

CATY BARRACUDAS

Team Handbook



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TEAM PHILOSOPHY

The CATY Barracudas Swim Team follows the central philosophy of the YMCA: to equip swimmers with skills and values that help them grow in mind, body and spirit. The YMCA principles of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility are at the core of our mission and drive our everyday activities. This focus helps distinguish us from other teams in our neighborhood and the Baltimore area. Learning punctuality and time management, good sportsmanship, goal setting, and teamwork are positive aspects of the CATY team experience. Our coaches not only instruct the swimmers, but also serve as positive role models for their growth and development as individuals.

Swimmers are expected to be at practice on time, and to show effort in the pool and during dryland. They should commit to every practice and every meet; however, our program -- in keeping with the YMCA philosophy -- carries a built-in degree of flexibility to accept that swimmers may have other commitments. The CATY Barracudas swim team has an active and helpful group of parent volunteers. Parents do many of the jobs necessary to keep our team and meets running smoothly; they are always needed and expected to share in the responsibilities associated with our various team activities. **The parents' contribution of time and energy makes the difference in the quality of the swim program and allows the coaches to concentrate on their most important job: making the swimmers the best athletes and teammates that they can be.**

PRACTICE GROUPS

MINI- This is our beginner group. They will focus on learning streamline position, kicking in all 4 competitive strokes, swimming freestyle and backstroke, and introduction to butterfly and breaststroke. Fun is the major motivation for this group.

ADVANCED MINI- This group is for 8&unders and 9 year olds that are still learning the basic skills. The focus will be learning all 4 competitive strokes, and starts and turns.

PREP- This group is for 8-10 year olds that are refining their skills in all 4 strokes. They will focus on technique and building their kicking endurance. Swimmers will begin to learn practice etiquette (use of pace clocks, how to swim in a lane together).

CUDAS- This is our advanced prep group for 8-12 year olds. Swimmers will continue to learn practice etiquette. They will focus on increasing endurance, while maintaining good technique. Swimmers will start to learn race strategies at this level. Dryland is introduced at this level. The focus of the dryland workout is to begin establishing overall flexibility and core strength.

JUNIOR 1- This group is for 9-12 year olds and is designed to increase the swimmers aerobic capacity gradually. Swimmers will begin aerobic training, but will still focus on technique mainly. We will continue to work on race strategy for distances over 50 yards. The Dryland training will begin to work on upper body strength as well as increasing flexibility and core strength.

JUNIOR 2- This group is for 11-14 year olds. They will begin to learn about specialized training (i.e. Sprint/Middle Distance). They will focus on increasing aerobic capacity, while maintaining proper technique. The dryland for this group increases in intensity at this level. Swimmers will focus on increasing overall strength and flexibility.

SENIOR PREP- This group is for 11 & older swimmers, and will focus on increasing endurance, while improving technique in all 4 competitive strokes and turns. They will gradually increase aerobic and anaerobic training to prepare for the senior level. Swimmers will be taught how to warm themselves up correctly at this level. It is recommended that swimmers attend as many of the practices offered as possible.

SENIOR-This group has a focus to National Level Competition. They will continue to improve/work on stroke technique as well as learn specialized training(i.e. Sprint, Middle Distance, or Distance). Swimmers must have completed at least one season in the Senior Prep group to advance to this level. Swimmers are required to attend a minimum of 50% of the offered practices to remain in the group.

NATIONAL TEAM- Swimmers must achieve a National qualifying standard, and attend a minimum of 75% of the practices offered to be allowed to compete at YMCA Short and Long Course Championships.

TEAM GEAR

CATY swimmers are required to wear the team suit at all meets. In addition, those swimmers who use caps must wear the CATY team cap. CATY swimsuits are available at the initial suit sizing in September. Our suit vendor is CY's swimwear of Catonsville. Caps are available from the coaches, or from the concessions table at home meets. To cover up and keep warm at meets, swimmers are expected to exhibit only team shirts, sweats, shorts and warmup suits. In the event that a swimmer has not yet received his/her team gear, team-colored clothing (black, red and white) is acceptable.

Senior Swimmers who attend travel meets (Raleigh, Summer or Spring Nationals) are required to wear the team warmup suit on deck. These warmup suits may be ordered from CY's in the fall along with other team gear. ***CATY prohibits the use of Performance suits (fastskin, FS PRO, etc.) by any swimmers other than those 14 and older swimmers in the Senior group attending Senior competitions (Districts, Raleigh, Nationals).***

GOALS AND GOAL SETTING

Goals motivate swimmers: they make practices meaningful, focus energy, and teach life skills. We use goals as stepping-stones toward success and excellence. Swimmers who come to practice with a specific goal in mind are more motivated. Eventually swimmers establish a natural pattern of goal setting while discovering that achieving goals is fun.

One goal of our program is for the swimmers to understand and respect the sport of swimming. The coaches' job is to help them with the particulars of strokes, speed, and endurance. Every time a swimmer comes to practice, he or she is working toward a goal. Becoming involved in teammates' goals helps swimmers to encourage each other, and it is easier (and more fun) to reach goals together than on one's own.

Swimmers also learn the delineation between outcome goals (making a time standard, winning a certain meet) and process goals (completing a certain set successfully, concentrating on every turn in every practice). Goals are determined through individual and group conferences between the coaches and swimmers.

8 and Unders' goals are oriented toward specific stroke techniques. Prep swimmers' goals are oriented toward making improvements in technique and practice attendance, and knowing their best times(to the seconds at least). Junior and Seniors look at their season and construct goals for attendance, technique improvement, and time improvement. Senior swimmers also set goals for swimming beyond high school, whether it is for college, club, Masters or fitness-level participation.

10 and under swimmers are rewarded each meet with a ribbon for best times achieved. As swimmers move into the older age groups, coaches prefer to focus them on the intrinsic values of achieving their goals, while encouraging them in their efforts.

It is important to note that while swimmers may initially perform well for the promise of a new toy or a certain amount of money, as they mature, swimmers are more likely to enjoy the sport and continue swimming if they are taught to swim for the goal of IMPROVING. CATY Barracuda parents are encouraged to talk to their children about the myriad ways they can improve:

Practice attendance and effort

Good sportsmanship

Mastering technique for a stroke/event/turn

Dropping time

Communicating goals to the Coaches
 Leadership ability
 Understanding of the sport of swimming
 Demonstrating the YMCA Principles of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility.

ATTENDANCE/SEASON PLANS

Perhaps the most important aspect of becoming a part of the CATY Barracudas swim team is making a commitment to attend as many practices as are offered for your particular practice group. Each segment of the season, for each group, is targeted for specific skill goals (see an example below). Those swimmers with high attendance rates attain more improvement in stroke technique, turns, starts, and consequently, in best times.

Coaches design each practice group's season plan around the swimmers who attend every practice. To do otherwise would not only prove difficult, but would also diminish the results reached by those swimmers who have high attendance. Below is an example of a rough outline of how the coaches plan the season for each group. (Actual training may vary somewhat depending on the makeup of the group.)

A swimmer's success is determined by the attitude and effort of both the parents and the swimmer. Parents should encourage their swimmers to attend each practice and to make it a priority. **It is difficult for coaches to properly evaluate a swimmer's progress if he or she has attended less than 75% of the group's offered practices. Likewise, parents and families should use caution in evaluating our program, or any other, based on the progress of any swimmer who has attended fewer than 75% of the group's practices.** For example, for groups who have four practices a week, swimmers must attend three practices a week, on average, for coaches to properly evaluate their progress.

EXAMPLE OF SEASON PLANS FOR EACH GROUP (FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY)

GROUP	SEPT-DEC	JAN-MAR	POST-SEASON MEET(S)
Mini/Adv Mini	Freestyle, Backstroke, streamline, starts and finishes, some breast and fly, kicking, STROKE GOALS	Longer distances, all strokes, turns, maintain technique	8U Championships/Districts
Prep	Basic skills in all strokes, turns, practice skills (using the clock, intervals, lane etiquette, etc), GOALS	Longer distances, speedwork and endurance while maintaining stroke technique, practice skills	8U Championships/Districts/Regionals
Cuda/Junior	Stroke/start/turn techniques, conditioning base, sprinting, GOALS	Longer distances, sprint and race sharpening, maintaining stroke technique	Districts/Regionals
Senior Prep	Stroke/start/turn techniques, conditioning base, some sprinting, GOALS	Longer distances, sprint and race sharpening, maintaining stroke technique, increasing attendance/commitment	Districts/Regionals/Commit training/LC Nationals
Senior	Stroke/start/turn technique, conditioning base, some sprinting, GOALS / Taper for Capital Classic or DEC. meet	Primary stroke sharpening/race focus, maintaining stroke technique	Districts; Regionals or SC Nationals (Separate training plan for LC sum

YMCA SWIMMING - C&P LEAGUE

The CATY (Western Family YMCA) Barracudas swim team competes in the **Chesapeake and Potomac (C&P)** swim league. The Chesapeake & Potomac (C&P) Swim League is a YMCA winter swim league comprised of solely YMCA swim teams (14 from Maryland and 3 from Delaware and from Virginia).

C&P Teams

Division assignments this year are based on geography.

<u>Central</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>West</u>
CATY	MDY (Salisbury)	CCY (Carroll Co.)
SPY (Severna Park)	Dover (Delaware)	HAGY (Hagerstown)
HCY (Howard Co.)	TCY (Talbot Co.)	CUY (Cumberland)
TY (Towson)	SFY (Delaware)	FCY (Frederick)
Randallstown Y	Western (Delaware)	RY (Reston VA)
CECY (Cecil Co.)		

Dual/tri meets are scored team competitions. However, since the divisions are based solely on geography, dual meet records do not count for league standings. Scores at the South District Championship meet determine each team's standing in the League.

GET LOUD!!

You're standing behind the blocks waiting to swim and the sound of your name catches your ear. A section of the crowd is slowly chanting it. Louder and louder, faster and faster your name forms a crescendo of noise filling the air. From across the pool your teammates join in. Then, as you step up to the block, your teammates break into another cheer for you. A cheer ends up in a clamor of whistles and applause. Nice? Wouldn't that help you swim fast? Well you know what? IT DOES. So why not do it for your teammates? Staying in the meet and supporting your teammates is extremely important to doing the best as a **team**. If you're swimming at home and want the home team advantage that comes with a boisterous crowd, get out and ask people to come to a meet. Even at an away meet, gather up teammates, friends and relatives and request their aid. Make banners, practice cheers, anything to give your team the psychological advantage. You'll be amazed at how much it helps!

REGULAR SEASON DUAL/TRI MEETS

Dual/tri meets are scored competitions between two/three teams. Each swimmer is normally eligible for up to four events, relays included. The coaches decide in which events each swimmer will be entered. Due to the large size of some of the age groups, some swimmers will be entered in only three events at dual/tri meets. This policy is necessary so that each swimmer has the chance to participate.

While we strive to win at every meet both individually and as a team, the Catonsville Y Barracudas program stresses effort, best times and sportsmanship as our most important goals at meets.

Coaches often enter swimmers in events that they do not consider their favorites; doing so also provides swimmers the opportunity for a broader range of experience and to exhibit teamwork.

Coaches set up **relays** according to the competition, and choose swimmers whose composite times should challenge the other team's relay (which means that it may not always be our fastest four swimmers).

All swims in dual meets count for best times, goal times, championship cutoffs etc. Coaches use all swimmers' times in planning the next meet; therefore, ***all swimmers should do their best regardless of which events and heats in which they swim.***

At the meet, coaches post a matrix and a program, so that the swimmers may see their events, with heat and lane assignments; however, sometimes due to last-minute changes the information becomes incorrect. In this case, ***the swimmer's coach will have the correct information.*** The hosting team sells

the program to participants/spectators for a fee. (See below for example of a program.) Swimmers should be aware that, although the program can be very helpful, it is not always the official lineup. Last-minute re-seedings can cause program heat and lane assignments to be incorrect; *swimmers should always verify their assignments with the coaches or the lineups posted by the coaches.*

Swimmers age 9 & up are expected to keep track of their event/heat/lane assignments and to line up behind the appropriate lane's block in plenty of time to prepare to swim. 8U swimmers will stay together and be taken to line up as a group by a coach or parent volunteer.

Swimmers sit as a team in a designated area of the pool, or other space (such as a gym) as designated by the hosting team. Coaches run warmups by groups (see warmup schedule). ***Coaches will not be responsible for swimmers missing events if they are not seated in the designated team area.***

A **sign out sheet** (see below) will be posted on the bulletin board in advance of each dual meet. Swimmers who will be arriving late, leaving early or unable to attend the meet **MUST** put their names on this sheet by the date specified on the sheet. In emergency situations where a swimmer must cancel at the last minute, please email your coach.

Signing out is extremely important for the whole team, since the lineup must be submitted several days prior to the meet, and after that it cannot be changed. The coaches make decisions about event assignments for each swimmer based on the team's potential performance as a whole. Neglecting to communicate with the coaches may result in diminished opportunities for other CATY swimmers to compete.

NOTE: If you will be unable to attend a dual or championship meet, or if you must arrive late or leave early, PLEASE sign the signout sheet on the swim team bulletin board by the date specified on the sheet. Please do not rely on the coaches' faulty memories; write it down!

CATY DUAL MEET SAMPLE WARMUP SCHEDULE

For half-hour dual meet warmups, in 6-lane pool:

Group Name	Warmup Time	Lanes	Report to Coach
Mini/Adv Mini	12:45-1pm	1,2,3,4	Jenn
Prep	12:30-12:45pm	1	Mike
Cudas	12:30-12:45pm	2,3,4	Joe
Junior 1	12:45-1pm	5,6	Mike

INVITATIONAL MEETS

Invitational meets are closed YMCA-sponsored meets designed to give swimmers additional opportunities to swim in competition, as well as to swim events that are not part of a dual/tri meet. The coaches encourage participation in the invitationals. Coaches generally allow swimmers to indicate specific individual events they wish to swim in these meets. *There is a per-event charge for each event swum, including relays.*

The coaches place a summary of information and an entry sheet in each mailbox and post it on the website (www.catyswim.net). The notice will indicate when and where, start times, the order of events, per-event costs, and the maximum number of events in which a swimmer may participate. These meets may run from a half a day to two full days, generally in different sessions; in the longer meets, different age groups and/or genders will usually swim during these separate blocks of time.

There is a posted deadline for signup because entries must be submitted to the hosting team's meet director ahead of time. The signup sheet will ask for swimmers to indicate which individual events (by event number) they wish to swim, and also if they will be available for relays. ***After the signup deadline, the coaches will review all entrants and determine team relays.*** Each swimmer will be charged for the cost of all individual and relay events that they entered; this cost will **not** be refunded if the swimmer does not attend the meet, since it is forfeited to the team hosting the meet.

Volunteers from all teams are needed to assist the hosting team in assuring that the meet runs smoothly and efficiently. These jobs can include timing, scoring, clerk of course, overseeing swimmers in the gym or seating area, and officiating. Swimmers are expected to report to the clerk of course, if one is used, to line up in time to swim their events. Lineups will be posted and swimmers should pay close attention to their heats and lanes in the program.

SOME INVITATIONAL MEETS:

Opening Gun

Early November at Talbot County YMCA. This is a great initiation to the season, and a fun meet for new and returning swimmers. No qualifying times. *Parents are expected to travel with their swimmers.*

Capital Classic

Early December in Raleigh, N.C. This is a Senior YMCA invitational meet open to swimmers age 12 and up who have achieved designated qualifying times and who have committed to and attended 75%+ of practices. *Parents are expected to travel with their swimmers.*

Mark Schisler Memorial Classic Invitational

Early December at Towson University hosted by CATY. This meet is an **excellent** opportunity for all CATY swimmers to experience the invitational format. *All Senior swimmers not attending Raleigh are expected to attend, since the focus of the first half of their season is to swim fast on that weekend. No qualifying times.*

Winterfest invitational

Mid-January at UM College Park. This meet is a prelims/finals format and attracts YMCA teams from all over the country. Coaches will inform swimmers who have made the qualifying times for this meet. This is a team-focused meet, and CATY coaches encourage all qualifiers to attend.

Cumberland Invitational

Late January at Cumberland YMCA. This is a fun team meet open to all CATY swimmers. No qualifying times. *Parents are expected to travel with their swimmers.*

CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS

CATY participates in a number a post-season championship meets. Some of these meets have qualifying times that a swimmer must meet in order to participate. (Please note, however, that some of the time standards are not released until mid-season. When this is the case, the previous year's times are posted for **reference purposes only**.) Check the website for up-to-date information.

If time permits, some meets may hold **time trials** at the end of a session/day, which a swimmer may sign up for by asking the coach early in the day at the meet, and paying a cash fee. Swimmers should understand, though, that time trials are offered for swimmers who are close to qualifying for the next level championship meet.

CATY coaches see these championships meets as the culmination of a full season of training. Therefore, ***we encourage CATY swimmers to participate in as many of these championships meet as possible.***

C&P League Invitational

Usually in mid- to late-February. This meet is open to all CATY swimmers who participated in a *minimum of three dual/tri or invitational meets* during the season, and *are not FASTER than the time standards set by the C&P League*. This is the last meet for swimmers who have not qualified for Districts, Regionals, or Nationals.

8&U Championships

Early to Mid-March at Towson University. Swimmers compete in age-specific groups for most events (e.g., separate 25 Free for 6&u, 7, and 8). This meet gives younger swimmers, who generally cannot qualify for other post-season meets, a chance to participate in the excitement and challenge of competing in a championship format. Team scored. Last meet for 8 & unders that have not qualified for Districts or Regionals.

East Field South District Championships

("Districts") Two or three weeks after C&Ps. Swimmers must equal or better time standards. (The youngest group for which time standards are given is 10&under; 8&under swimmers must meet these cut-off times to participate.) Participants must also have swum in at least three dual/tri or YMCA-sponsored

invitational meets during the season. Coaches assign events for this meet, as it is a team-scored meet and determines the team's overall place in the C&P League standings for the year. Banners are awarded for the top 3 total scores overall for boys and girls teams and an overall combine team champion.

Upper South Field Regional Championships

Mid-March in North or South Carolina (facility TBA). Regionals is open to swimmers who equal or better cut-off times for their age groups (again, 8&unders must qualify as 10&unders to participate). 13 and older swimmers swim prelims and finals; 12 and under events are timed finals. This is a full three-day meet (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). Coaches recommend attempting to attend 2 to 3 days of the meet. *Parents are expected to travel with their swimmers.*

YMCA Short Course Nationals

Early- to mid-April in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. This is a Senior YMCA Championship meet open to swimmers age 12 and up who have achieved designated qualifying times and who have committed to and attended 75%+ of practices. They must have participated in a YMCA Sanctioned meet (Districts, Capital Classic or SF Regionals). *Parents are expected to travel with their swimmers.*

YMCA Long Course Nationals

Early August at Georgia Tech University. This is a Senior YMCA invitational meet open to swimmers age 12 and up who have achieved designated qualifying times and who have committed to and attended 75%+ of practices. They must have participated in a YMCA Sanctioned meet (Districts, Capital Classic or SF Regionals). Interested participants must practice with CATY **all summer** in order to compete.

All swimmers who qualify will be entered in the Championship meets unless they sign out or notify the coaches in writing. All championship meets have a per-event fee, like invitational meets; swimmers will be charged for all entries, and will not be credited back if the swimmer scratches or does not attend.

PRELIMS/FINALS FORMAT

Certain meets, such as the Capital Classic, Winterfest, South Districts, Upper South Field Regionals, and Spring and Summer Nationals are set up as preliminaries and finals. In each of these meets, all qualifiers compete in the morning. The top 8-24 swimmers will return in the late afternoon or evening to compete in finals. (The meet administrator determines number of heats.) This format is used in all championship meets on the college and international level.

The seeding during prelims is different from the seeding in timed finals (one-session) meets. Championship seeding is used in prelims. This method places the fastest three swimmers in lane 4 of the last three heats, and sorts the remaining swimmers similarly. The top seeded swimmers do not swim in the same heat until finals.

The prelims/finals format prepares young swimmers for future competition. In addition, many swimmers who achieve best times in the morning session come back in the evening and improve even more. The sense of competition is dynamic, and often CATY team members of different age groups have the rare and important opportunity to bond during the finals sessions.

CATY coaches expect all swimmers to compete in any event for which they make finals, unless there is illness or injury. Swimmers and parents in the position to qualify for finals should plan to return for the evening session **when they submit their entries**.

CATY coaches have found that resting between sessions ensures swimmers a more successful experience with this format. Swimmers should return home (or to the team hotel) to rest and do homework between morning and afternoon sessions. The two and three day meets are tiring, even without the prelims/finals format. Swimmers should not be encouraged to sightsee, shop, sunbathe or play outside between sessions.

In USAS meets, the scratch rule is in effect for all finals sessions. If a swimmer qualifies for finals and does not compete or formally scratch within the 30-minute deadline, he or she may not swim his or her

next event. If the event missed was the swimmer's last of the meet, our team will draw a fine. This is a USAS rule.

SWIM MEET RULES AND PROCEDURES

If a swimmer will be arriving late, leaving early or cannot attend a scheduled dual or championship meet, he/she *must sign out on the bulletin board by the posted date prior to a meet*. If a swimmer must scratch after sign out deadline, he/she must leave a message on the swim team voice mail *as soon as he/she knows they won't be able to swim*.

Swimmers are expected to consult with their Coaches immediately following each event that they swim. This time is the most important opportunity for swimmer and coach to communicate and offer feedback.

It is the swimmer's family's responsibility to arrange transportation to swim meets.

Swimmers are to arrive NO LATER THAN 15 minutes prior to the announced team warm-up time. Arriving later may force the coaches to scratch the swimmer from relays.

Horseplay, running, carrying of glass objects, etc. are not allowed on deck or in the locker room area.

Swimmers must stay in the CATY team area, whether it is on deck or elsewhere such as a gym, when not swimming in an event. It is permissible to visit the stands during the meet, *but make sure a coach or your parents know where you are* at all times. Coaches are not responsible for swimmers missing events if they are not seated in the CATY team area.

Swimmers and their parents should be judicious in approaching the coaches immediately prior to the swim meet, as the coaches are busy making last minute arrangements and/or giving the team last minute instructions.

No swimmer is allowed to touch the water, enter the water, or place anything in the water without the permission of an official or a coach.

Swimmers and spectators must be quiet at the start of each race. It is the responsibility of the swimmer to know what event is in progress. Events are announced as they are swum, and if possible will be identified on a board in the CATY team area. A coach or volunteer parent will be in the team area to assist the younger swimmers (8&under) in getting to the blocks for their events.

Swimmers are expected to swim all events they are scheduled to swim, and to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times. *Shake hands with your opponents, and stay in the pool until all swimmers have finished the heat*.

Swimmers must wear their official CATY team suits, gear and caps (if they wear caps). Senior swimmers attending travel meets will be instructed which team gear to wear on each day. These swimmers are also required to wear the team warmup suit at all meets.

Swimmers and their families should *plan to stay until the last event of the meet* to show team support. In addition, swimmers *may not leave* a meet without first contacting the appropriate coach, unless they have signed out. Failure to do this could result in a swimmer not being entered in the next meet. A swimmer who leaves without proper notification can cause other swimmers to be ineligible to swim a relay, and/or the team to lose the meet because of the possible points a relay could score.

OTHER SWIM MEETS

USA Swimming (USAS) is an adjunct program to YMCA swimming. Swimmers compete against athletes in their own ability levels, at select meets, **which the coaches determine at the outset of the season**. USAS competition emphasizes individual, rather than team, performances.

USA Swimming is the national governing body for non-YMCA amateur swimming in the United States. USAS is the organization that sends American swimmers to the Olympics. Within the United States, USAS is divided into local swimming committees (LSCs), each one responsible for administering activities in a defined geographical area. The CATY Barracudas swim in the Maryland Swimming LSC.

Times achieved at USAS meets are eligible for YMCA Championship cutoff times, goals, team records, etc. CATY is committed to support swimmers with a coach **at the meets selected at the outset of the season**, unless the meet conflicts with a YMCA meet.

To join USA Swimming, a form and annual fee are required. CATY has one big USA registration at the beginning of the season (good through December of the following year). The Maryland USAS rep will not accept any forms unless the CATY rep submits them. The meet schedule, and individual meet announcements for CATY-supported meets, are posted on the bulletin board, and include the appropriate qualifying times and other important meet information. **It is the parent/swimmer's responsibility to fill out the posted entry form for the meet and ensure that payment is made for the meet fees (by check only), by the posted sign-up deadline.** All USAS entries may only be submitted by the coaches. Please note: USA Swimming rules prohibit parents from entering the pool deck at all meets. Doing so will result in expulsion from the facility and a fee to CATY.

COMMUNICATION VEHICLES

CATY Web site – All team information, including the meet schedule, meet notices, directions and results, can also be found on the CATY web site: www.catyswim.org. The web site has the most up-to-date information, including last-minute changes and weather announcements.

Barracudas Swim Team Newsletter - Each week, the team representative publish a newsletter that keeps swimmers and parents up-to-date on all team info.

Coaches' Office Hours – Coach Mike has office hours most Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 6-7 PM in the aquatics office or on the pool deck. Drop in if you would like to talk to him about anything related to the team.

CATY Waiting List – All interested parties should click the Wait List link on our website and apply to become a CATY swimmer. CATY will send a confirmation email and will keep the info on file until a spot opens.

Swim Team Bulletin Board - The Bulletin Board is used to post information of interest to the entire team. There will always be a copy of the current newsletter, all current meet sign-up and sign-out sheets, the volunteer chart for upcoming meets, and so forth.

*****Swim Team Mailboxes***** - Each family has a file folder in the swim team mailbox, kept on the pool deck, by the mailboxes, at all times. All important communications are in the file; please check it every time you come to the pool. You may also use the mailboxes to leave messages for any of the coaches, or for any other member of the CATY Barracudas swim team, including the Parents' Board.

Phone tree - A quick communications phone tree is being set up for the team. You may be contacted to make calls for the phone tree.

PARENT/COACH COMMUNICATION

Catonsville Y Barracudas Parent Committee and coaches organize at least two parent meetings throughout the year: the initial meeting in September, one in December or January, and sometimes one at the end of the season. All parents are welcome and urged to attend. In the past, these meetings have proven quite beneficial in airing concerns and making suggestions.

Coaches are available for parent/coach, swimmer/coach, or swimmer/parent/coach conferences. Parents or swimmers may set up a time to meet with any coach before or after practices. Parents, swimmers, and coaches benefit by setting aside time to discuss concerns: each person gives undivided attention to the issue at hand. **Parents should NOT approach coaches with concerns while the coaches are on deck with swimmers or directly before or after the meet, or during practice time. Doing so takes time away from swimmers and frustrates everyone involved.** Feel free also to use the email address provided through the CATY website, but do understand that it may be a few days before the coaches can respond.

SNOW CLOSINGS

Practices are cancelled on days that **Baltimore County Schools** are closed, unless the swim team website says otherwise. For the ease of communications during holidays and snowstorms (in the event that Baltimore County Schools are not in session), please **consult the website, and check your email.**

FUNDING/BUDGET

As with any program of this size and depth, there are a number of costs involved. However, in keeping with the overall Y philosophy of providing services affordable by all families who wish to participate, we try very hard to provide the best possible team at the lowest possible cost.

First, ***all swim team participants must be members of the Y of Central Maryland.*** You can do this either through a youth membership for each swimmer, or a family membership. Payment can be made either annually or through monthly deduction from your checking account. If you choose the annual payment method, it must be current before you can register for the swim team. Please deal directly with Nicol Clark or Betsy Lappe, Catonsville Y membership directors, on Y membership matters.

Second, **program fees** are monies that go directly to the Y for support of the program. Program fees are used for the following: coaches' salaries, operational pool expenses, a portion of Executive Director's salary, and administrative overhead (office supplies, copies, printing of documents). ***Make all program and membership checks payable to Catonsville Y Swim Team;*** these payments may also be charged to a credit card.

Families are responsible for event fees for swimmers in invitational, USAS and YMCA championship meets. These fees are collected throughout the season, close to the dates of each of the meets. Each meet notice will contain all necessary information, including the due date, per-event amounts, and ***appropriate payee*** for the fee check.

FUNDRAISING

CATY Barracudas plan a number of fundraising events over the season. Money raised in these activities is used to purchase team equipment such as lane lines, stretch cords, etc. It is also used to cover any needs not fully met by the Y program fee and to help send the team to the major travel invitational and championship meets. Fundraising monies occasionally are donated to a family or individual within the Y community who is in crisis. Lastly, fundraising covers team expenses such as start-up costs for the concession stand, swimmer holiday gifts, and the end-of-year awards and party. All monies raised in team fundraisers stay at our Y branch and all stay with the swim team unless the team has pledged them to support the branch's Strong Kids Campaign.

Parent volunteers run a **concession stand** at each home meet, and invitationals that CATY hosts. Most food items are required donations by each family. At the beginning of the year, each family is assigned a fairly nominal item to bring to each meet. Any family who does not make the required donation will be asked to donate a small stipend to cover the cost to the team of purchasing the item directly.

Senior group swimmers are also responsible for raising funds to help reduce the cost for the senior team to attend out-of-town meets, and train Long Course during the summer. The team captains set up and recruit swimmers to run fundraisers, such as pizza and candy sales, and the annual fall car wash. New ideas are always welcome!

PARENTS' COMMITTEE

The Parents' Committee takes responsibility, along with the coaches, for all of the administrative jobs involved in running our large competitive team. Committee members coordinate all parent volunteer jobs, as described below.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

At swim meets, our swimmers are timed, officiated, organized and awarded. Throughout the season, the swimmers will participate in various social events and receive incentives for their hard work. At **every** swim meet, the **parents** are responsible for these duties. It takes at least 90 volunteers to run a home swim meet, and our team must supply 20 or more volunteers at away meets, plus there are many special events and fundraising activities to be coordinated and staffed. The more volunteers we have, the less

time each parent must work. More importantly, parental involvement enables the coaches to focus all of their attention on the swimmers.

The sport of competitive swimming requires more parental involvement than any other activity or sport in which your child may be involved. Families volunteer or are assigned to positions based as much as possible on their preferences.

As meets approach, the specific assignments will also be posted on the bulletin board, and if possible, reminders placed in each working family's mailbox. Your family is responsible for the assigned jobs/shifts, **even if you are not attending the meet (LIKE THE MSM)**. In that case, **you are expected to find a replacement (or trade) for your time slot**. Parents should be aware that, unlike CATY, the private teams in the area charge families significant fees if they do not perform their assigned duties.

If you are assigned and/or do not volunteer to a job and either are a “No Show” or check in then do not perform your assigned duty, you will be assessed a fine \$75 (last-minute emergencies will be given special consideration). If you do not pay the fine prior to the next swim meet, your swimmer will not be entered into the meet. If you continue to avoid meeting your volunteer obligations, your swimmer(s) will not be allowed to participate in practices or swim meets, and may not be allowed to register for the following season.

Following are the various volunteer jobs that our parents perform, both at meets and otherwise during the swim season.

Locker Rooms - Ensure safe behavior at practices and at meets.

Personal Best Ribbons – Check the database report and fill out labels, then file in the Team Mailboxes.

Administrative Help - The coaches and Parents' Board can always use some help in organizing, filing, copying, and putting together mailings.

Meet Director – Oversees the preparation for and running of each home meet and deals with problems as they occur.

Timing

Seating area monitors –Monitor the swimmers in the seating area and get swimmers lined up at the clerk of course in time to walk into the pool area with their heats.

Clerk of Course -- Line swimmers up by heat and lane before sending them to the blocks.

Runners - Taking the filled-in sheets from the timers to the scorers' table.

Officials - Starters or stroke and turn judges.

Announcer – (Home meets) Announce event numbers and other information.

Concessions - Help set up and clean up in the All-Purpose room, and to serve food.

Setup/Cleanup – (Home meets) Prepare the pool area, All-Purpose room and lobby for the meet. Ensure that the YMCA can return to normal for operations immediately after the meet concludes.

Averager – (Scorers' Table) Compare each swimmer's three times for an event and circles the median time.

Ribbons – (Home meets) Prepare the ribbons, affix labels to the appropriate color ribbons, and sorts the ribbons by team. There is a separate box or section for each team's completed awards.

TEAM WAITING LIST

CATY is a YMCA team, and as such accepts swimmers on a first-come, first-served basis, up to our capacity. The team and the Y of Central MD have set up this capacity, by age/practice group, to ensure that each member gains the most out of the instruction and competition offered. The only requirement is that a swimmer must be able to complete a workout appropriate to his/her age group.

Normally, some age groups are filled to capacity and others have a few openings. Swimmers are placed on the Wait List based on the date and time their applications are received. All interested parties should click the Wait List link on our website and apply to become a CATY swimmer. CATY will send a confirmation email and will keep the info on file until a spot opens. There is currently a 1-2 year wait time, depending on age group and sex.

SPRING AND SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Stroke Clinic - The coaching staff offers this course through the Y of Central MD, Catonsville Center after the swim season is completed. It is open to swim team and Y members, as well as any non-members who are interested in improving strokes and preparing for the summer swim season. Emphasis is placed on both stroke technique and endurance. Class time and fees are established and published after the YMCA swim season is completed. Call the YMCA Aquatics Director (410-747-9622, X229) for more information. Sign up early; we fill up very quickly!

Summer Practice – CATY offers summer workouts for swimmers in the Junior 2, Senior Prep, and Senior groups. All Senior swimmers who intend to participate in Long Course Nationals in August must practice regularly with the team throughout the summer. This summer's schedule will be announced near the end of stroke clinic.

STROKES

Freestyle - Any stroke is acceptable in freestyle as long as the swimmer does not walk, push off the bottom, or pull on the lane lines to assist in forward propulsion. In any freestyle event requiring a turn, the swimmer must touch the wall with any part of his or her body. The crawl stroke is the most popular way to swim a freestyle event.

Backstroke - Swimmers may use any style on their backs to get to the other end, but back crawl is the fastest and most commonly used. In the backstroke flip turn, a swimmer may take one stroke to turn over, but must use one continuous motion to propel the body through the flip. Some part of the swimmer's body must touch the wall on the turn.

Breaststroke - Arms and feet move symmetrically, feet must be flexed (no freestyle kicks). The head may submerge but must break the surface once every stroke cycle. Feet stay underwater during the kick, and elbows must remain under the water. Swimmers must always touch the wall with two level hands. Shoulders stay on the same plane when approaching a turn and when executing a pullout off of the start or turn.

Butterfly - Arms and legs must move symmetrically, arms must come out of the water on each recovery. Swimmers must touch the wall with two hands. Feet must move up and down simultaneously (no flutter kick).

Individual Medley (IM) - One event that consists of equal distances of each butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle, in that order. Swimmers must follow stroke and turn rules for each stroke.

Medley Relay - Four swimmers swim in order equal distances of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle, in that order.

Freestyle Relay - Four swimmers swim equal distances of any stroke (mainly crawl stroke).

GLOSSARY OF USEFUL SWIMMING TERMS

age up - to change age groups. A swimmer's age for the entire season is determined as of December 1 for YMCA meets. USAS meet notices usually post an age cut-off date, which is usually the first day of the meet.

anchor - the fourth and final position in a relay.

block - the starting platform.

clerk of course (seeding room, marshaling area) - area or room at some meets where clerks arrange swimmers prior to their heats. Swimmers then proceed to the blocks in lines.

code of ethics - an agreement signed by a swimmer and parent stating that they will abide by certain behavioral guidelines.

cut – See “qualifying time.”

distance - a longer event, set, or workout that stresses aerobic endurance.

Dive overs – swimmers stay in the water at the completion of their event, and may only exit after the next heat has entered the water. Not used in backstroke.

DQ - disqualified. The swimmer's start, stroke or turn is illegal according to USAS/YMCA or NCAA swimming rules. When DQ'd, a swimmer's time will not be official, and the swimmer does not place in that event, regardless of his/her time.

drag suit – a swimsuit worn over the swimmer's suit during practice and warmups, to add resistance to the flow of water around the swimmer.

dryland – strength and endurance training outside of the pool. Junior group swimmers begin dryland training with stretching and calisthenics; older swimmers work out with weights and a certain swim-specific equipment such as stretch cords. Running is also good dryland training.

event - a particular age group, stroke, and distance. Many events have more than one heat.

false start - a swimmer moving before the starter's gun or horn. Instead of stopping the heat, the swimmers will continue swimming, and the false starting swimmer will be disqualified after completing the event.

finals - held in the evening of preliminaries/finals meets. Includes the fastest eight to twenty-four qualifiers (depending on number of lanes and number of heats) from the morning's trials or prelims. (These types of meets are swum in the YMCA league mainly as Senior-only competitions, such as YMCA Nationals, and also some USAS meets.)

heat - the group of swimmers in an event, who swim at the same time (according to their seeding).

heat sheets/programs – listings of a meet's order of events, by heat and lane, including each swimmer's name and seed time; often sold in meets as the program.

lap counter - a set of numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race; also the person who counts for the swimmer, stationed at the opposite end of the pool from the starting blocks.

long course - meets held in 50-meter pools. The main long course season is during the summer months. The Olympic Games is a long course meet.

mini-meet - a meet that includes only age 8 and under swimmers.

negative split - to swim the second half of a race faster than the first.

open event – an event open to any age swimmer; usually for time only, and not scored for awards.

official - a starter or judge on deck during meets who enforces rules on starts, turns, strokes, placing, etc.

official time - with stopwatches, the middle (when there are three) or average (when there are two) time of all watches; with electronic timing, the time printed out by the computer on the official results. Sometimes differs from the unofficial time given to the swimmer by a timer/recorder or the coach.

prelims - held in the morning of a trials/finals meet. Swimmers who place in the top eight to twenty-four (depending on the number of lanes and heats returning) have the opportunity to return in the evening for finals. (See also **finals**.)

qualifying time - the seed time needed for a swimmer to swim in a particular meet. Swimmers may have to be faster or slower than a specific qualifying time (also known as a "cut").

ready room – area where swimmers who have placed in the finals of an event gather to proceed in order to the awards platform. Mainly used at Nationals and the Capital Classic.

scratch - to *officially* opt out of an event or meet that a swimmer has signed up for. This generally means a coach's formal notification to meet officials, not just failing to show up for an event or meet.

scratch rule – states that any swimmer who fails to scratch an event and does not swim will be barred from competing in the rest of the meet and/or fined.

seeding - the way in which swimmers are arranged to swim in an event. Heats are arranged slowest to fastest, with the fastest swimmers in each heat in the middle lanes. Therefore, the fastest swimmers in any event would swim in lane 3 or 4 (in a 6 lane pool) of the last heat. In meets with prelims and finals, circle or championship seeding is used in trials. This method places the fastest three swimmers in lane 4 of the last three heats, and sorts the remaining swimmers similarly.

seed time –used to place the swimmer in the proper heat in an event..

shave - during taper, swimmers shave arms, legs, backs, etc., to reduce drag and improve feel for the water.

short course - meets held in 25 yard pools (short course meters = 25 meter pools). See also *long course*. The main short course season is in the fall/winter. All of the fall/winter season pools we compete in are 25 yards.

split - an individual swimmer's time for his or her leg of a relay. In relays, only the first swimmer's split counts as an individual official time, since it does not involve a "flying" (or relay) start. Split also denotes a part of a swimmer's race; for example, the first 50 in a 100.

sprint - a short, fast race or repeat, 200 yards or shorter.

streamline - the body position used after starts, turns, and pushoffs used to gain maximum distance.

stretching - done before/during/after practice and races to keep muscles loose.

stroke goal – specific time or techniques for each swimmer for each stroke that he/she strives to achieve, as determined between the swimmer and the coach.

taper - (noun or verb) - the period of time before a championship meet in which yardage and intensity steadily decrease. The purpose of tapering is to maintain conditioning while resting.

timed finals – meet or event format in which the initial swim counts for final standings (as contrasted with a prelims/finals format).

time trial - an event swum for time only, and not noted on the initial scorers' sheets. Also, a small in-house “meet” held at the beginning of the season to establish swimmers’ seed times and familiarize swimmers and parents with meet procedures.

touch pads - electronic pads on the wall below the starting blocks that are attached to computerized timing system; activated when swimmer touches the wall.

turnover – the number of times a swimmer’s arms rotate, or cycle, in a given distance or time during a race.

warm down - a low-intensity swim after an event or practice used to loosen muscles, reduce lactic acid and lower heart rate.

warm up - a low-intensity swim before a meet or practice used to loosen and warm muscles and increase heart rate.

USAS - USA Swimming, the national governing body for non-YMCA amateur competitive swimming in the United States.

Caring*Honesty*Respect*Responsibility

CATY SENIOR GROUP

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION

ATTENDANCE: Year-long program/National focus:

Guidelines

The CATY Senior Group is a year-long program with a focus to National Competition. Prerequisites include a commitment to the majority of practices offered, unless illness, injury, or extenuating academic or personal circumstances are present. I agree to the following:

- Senior Group: Practice attendance/notification of absence, by month, will be **75% or higher** to go to Travel and Taper Meets (i.e. – average 4 practices a week). See below for attendance timelines/travel meets. Actual practice attendance must be **50% or higher** to remain in the group.
- *Y National Team*: Practice attendance/Notification of absence, by month, will be **90% or higher** to attend YMCA National Championship meets. Actual practice attendance will be **75% or higher** to go to YMCA National Championship meets. Standard will begin when a swimmer qualifies or is chosen for a relay position.
- Notify the coaches in advance if I am going to be late or leaving early. Lack of phone call, TXT, handwritten letter, or email will count as an absence. I will take responsibility for contacting the coaches.
- If I miss 7 practices in a row, regardless of calls or emails to the coaches, I have chosen to move indefinitely to the Senior Prep group (unless ill, injured, or have extenuating academic or personal circumstances).
- **Mandatory** High school swimming or water polo practices will count toward my attendance (the coaches get reports from the coaches in the MIAA and IAAM conferences). CATY practices are preferred and expected over high school team practices.
- If I am swimming and/or playing water polo primarily with my high school team, I will attend **at least 1** CATY practice per week, during that high school season.
- For **non-aquatic** other sports, I must have met the CATY Senior Group minimum practice requirements (attending the afternoon and/or evening practice sessions) to participate in travel meets. If I do not meet the minimum attendance percentage, I will be considered by the coaches and Y of Central MD administration to be a part of the Senior Prep Group for that time period (and therefore **will attend only** the Senior Prep Group practices and will be ineligible for travel meets).
- I will bring equipment in a mesh bag to every practice (fins, buoy and paddles, water bottle, extra caps and goggles, and appropriate clothes and **shoes** for dryland and/or lifting every day).
- I will set up my summer work schedule around practices so that I am able to attend practices during the summer, as outlined above.
- I will take responsibility of informing my coaches **in writing**(email and TXT are acceptable) of vacations and periods of time when I am unable to attend due to illness, injury or family emergencies.

Consequences

-I understand that the CATY Senior Group is a year-long program. I understand that I will be choosing to be a part of the **Senior Prep Group** for the remainder of 2009-10 [or for the beginning or all of 2010-11] if I do not meet the above criteria in any part or portion of 2009-10.

BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES:

Guidelines

-I will attend the majority of scheduled practices prior to the meet, as outlined above.

-I will email or call my practice coach if I have to miss any practice. I will take responsibility for contacting the coaches.

-I will demonstrate respect for the coaches, my teammates, and for the CATY swimming program during practices and at meets.

-I will listen when the coaches are talking, and will verbally and visibly show respect for their judgment in choosing events and relays for meets, when applicable. I understand that being selected for any relay at any meet is an honor and will treat it as such.

-I agree to conduct myself in a courteous, respectful and exemplary manner.

-I recognize that the reputation of myself, my family, and CATY Swimming are affected by and dependent upon my conduct and behavior at all times.

-I will conform to all rules, regulations, and procedures announced by the CATY Coaches and the Catonsville Y Staff.

-I will compete in all of my events to the best of my ability.

-I will not in any way endanger the safety of another swimmer in practices (including dryland), or meets.

-I will participate in practices, meets, and CATY events with a positive, optimistic attitude, and will work to support my teammates.

~~ If my attendance fails to meet the minimum requirement after entries are handed in, I have cleared the coaches to pull me from relays; all other guidelines apply toward my next travel or taper meet.

***If attending any of these meets, I make the following commitments:

- I will be available to be present at every preliminary session and every final session to which I have committed [mutually agreed upon by swimmer and coaches prior to entry submission], whether or not I am competing at that session. In other words, if I am at the meet city or location, I am at the meet when any CATY swimmer is participating.
- For LC YNATS: I will clear my schedule completely for 4 days prior to the first day of the meet and for the entire meet. I will not compete in any meets for 7 days prior to the meet through its completion.

- When I have completed my events, I will continue attending any prelims or finals session(s) in which a CATY swimmer will participate (includes swimming in finals, consols, and bonus consols, receiving an award, giving the devotion, participating in the color guard/water banner, or performing the National Anthem, etc).

Consequences

- I understand that I will not be entered into **any meet** for which I do not meet the above criteria.
- If I fail to attend all required parts of travel meets and/or Nationals, the coaches will not be required to enter me in any subsequent travel or national competitions, and I am clearing the coaches to pull me from any relays I in which I may be entered at that meet.

FUNDRAISING/TEAM FUNCTIONS:

Guidelines

- I will assist in setting up and/or participating in CATY Senior Group fundraising.
- If my family has moral objections to fundraising, I will inform the coaches via a handwritten note or an email.
- I will participate in CATY functions when the Age Group team is involved, because I understand my responsibility to be a role model for the younger swimmers.

Consequences

- The coaches will find another constructive way for me to help out that doesn't involve fundraising.
- If I do not participate in team functions involving the younger swimmers, I have cleared the coaches to move me to the Senior Prep Group.

CATY BARRACUDAS SWIM TEAM/Y of Central MD
CODE OF ETHICS FOR SWIMMERS AND FAMILIES

Swimmers:

- I agree to conduct myself in a courteous, respectful and exemplary manner.
- I recognize that the reputation of myself, my family, CATY Swimming and the Y of Central Maryland are affected by and dependent upon my conduct and behavior at all times.
- I will conform to all rules, regulations, and procedures announced by the CATY Coaches and the Y of Central MD Staff.
- I will compete in all of my events to the best of my ability.
- I will not in any way endanger the safety of another swimmer.

Parents and Families:

- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support verbally and by my actions for all swimmers, coaches, and officials at every game, practice or any other event.
- I will trust the coaches and/or Y of Central MD staff to approach officials and representatives of other teams when and if any issues arise, and will not approach or contact these representatives myself.
- I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of my personal desire to win, remembering that the sport is for youth – not adults.
- I will require my child to treat all other swimmers, coaches, fans and officials with respect.
- I will remember that the CATY Coaches are accredited, trained professionals.
- I recognize that the reputation of myself, my family, CATY Swimming, and the Y of Central MD are affected by and dependent upon my conduct, words and behavior at all times.

Swimmers and Families further acknowledge that the following conduct is unacceptable and will not be tolerated:

- Possession or use of illegal drugs.
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages, or tobacco products (by swimmers).
- Use of profanity or inappropriate language.
- Inappropriate or unsupervised activities between team members.
- Use of tobacco products on Y of Central MD property (by parents).

I understand and accept that failure to abide by the CATY SWIM TEAM/Y of Central MD, Catonsville Center CODE OF ETHICS FOR SWIMMERS AND FAMILIES may result in immediate disciplinary action including but not limited to the following:

- Suspension from the meet, event or practice session.
- Suspension or expulsion from the team.
- Forfeiture of all payments or credits for participation in the meet or event.
- Dismissal from the Y of Central MD and the team. If the dismissal occurs while on a trip, the cost of the immediate return trip will be at the swimmer's/parent's expense.
- Any combination of the above.

I understand that CATY Coaches and Y of Central MD, Catonsville Center Staff judgment will prevail in any disciplinary action that arises, and that any necessary code interpretation will be the sole responsibility of CATY Coaches and Y of Central MD, Catonsville Center Staff.

I pledge to abide by the CATY SWIM TEAM/ Y of Central MD, Catonsville Center CODE OF ETHICS FOR SWIMMERS AND FAMILIES.

Swimmer's Signature Date

Parents' Signatures Date