

FAQs for Bulldog Aquatics – Swim Team

- **What has changed?**

- There are no more “sessions”.
- There is now two basic options to participate on the Bulldog Swim Teams which includes a longer term commitment of either 9 or 11 months
- There is now a an annual, non-refundable registration fee for all groups
- Payment now must be made in advance
- Monthly payments must be set up via credit card or EFT
- Discounts will be applied for the following:
 - Multi swimmers in a family (household)
 - Individual swimmers who also register for water polo
 - Swimmers whose parent(s) are or become USA Swimming certified officials AND volunteer for meets and events as will be laid out in the parent handbook

All discounts will be applied ONLY if the athlete does NOT opt out of the team during the 9 or 11 month time frame. Discounts will NOT be applied to any account where the athlete opts out for any amount of time.

All discounts will be applied to the last month of the 9 or 11 month term.

- **What is the new structure?**

- Developmental Groups & Advanced Water Polo Will now register for a nine (9) month period that will run from Sept 4th, 2018 thru the end of May 2019
- Competitive Groups will now be required to register for an eleven (11) month period that will run from Sept. 4th thru the end of July 2019.
- The above groups will be allowed to “opt out” of team participation for up to three (3) months with a 30 day written notice.
- Beginning Water Polo will require the registration fee and a monthly authorization form completed. However, participants will be permitted to opt out for longer periods of time. The 30 day written notice is still required to stop EFT/CC monthly charges.

- **Why did the structure change?**

- Philosophy that swimmers improve and retain technique, strokes and conditioning the more consistent they are with practices.
- Based on lengthy research of surrounding teams. Majority of teams are structured based on this format. Following USA Swimming short course season and long course season.
- Implement consistency in structure, billing, lane usage and scheduling for coaches, families & other rentals.
- Most quality programs are structured so that there is a focus on the developmental groups during the short course season. And, the competitive groups focus on both

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- the short course and long course seasons. This is why you will typically see most clubs or teams won't swim in the month of August.
- Streamlining program to align with the goals of SMAC to offer a highly competitive senior group within the next 12 months
 - Build a foundation to mirror when the new Canada complex is complete.
- **Do I have to pay all the fees upfront?**
 - No. The only thing due upon registration is the annual, non-refundable fee and the first month's fees. The remaining balance is broken up into 8 or 10 equal monthly payments.
 - You are welcome to pay in full to avoid any monthly charges.
 - Monthly auto drafts for checking or monthly billing on a credit card are the acceptable forms of payment
 - Monthly auto draft payments will begin on October 1, 2018.
 - **What if I don't want to set up auto draft?**
 - Monthly auto draft or monthly credit card charges can be avoided by paying in full.
 - **What are the practice attendance requirements?**
 - There are no practice minimums or maximums for the developmental groups. The more a swimmer attends practice, the better they become. We ask that you set your expectations realistically so that they align with how often your child is able to attend practice.
 - Good rule is 2-3 times per week for younger swimmers; 4-5 times per week for older swimmers.
 - The requirement for practice attendance in the Gold group is 70%.
 - **What if I need my swimmer to opt out of the team?**
 - Any parent/swimmer may submit a written 30-day notice to put their account on hold for a maximum of three months. The written notice MUST be received on the first day of the month PRIOR to the month that the hold will occur. Example: You want your swimmer to swim for their high school team & they will not be able to swim with BSC for the months of Feb, March & April. You must submit a written notice and deliver to us by January 1st to stop your auto payment that will occur on Feb. 1st.
 - There are no refunds and accounts can only be placed on hold for a maximum of three months. These months do not have to be consecutive, but if they are not, a 30-day written notice must be given for each month. OR, the original notice must include the three months you are opting out of in advance.

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- Extenuating circumstances, such as illness, injury or moving out of the area will be considered on an individual basis. However, at no time will the fees already paid be refundable.
- Beginning Water Polo participants are permitted to opt out for longer periods of times. However, the registration paperwork will still be required, as well as the 30 day written notice.
- **Will there be a discount for multiple children from the same family?**
 - Yes, The highest level swimmer will pay full price. Each additional swimmer from the same family/household will receive one month's fees waived. The last month of the 8 or 10-month commitment will be the month that is waived. Example: one swimmer in Gold and one swimmer in Blue. The swimmer in Gold will pay full price. The swimmer in Blue will have fees in month 8 waived.
 - The discount only applies to the monthly fees and not to the annual registration fees.
 - All swimmers from the same family (household) will pay the full registration fee. The multi-swimmer discount applies ONLY to the monthly fees.
 - **All discounts will be contingent on the fact that ALL swimmers that the discount applies to, swims for the team the entire length of the 9 or 11 month commitment.**
- **Why did some practice times change?**
 - We wanted to be more consistent with every group (except Gold) getting 15 minutes of dryland
 - We felt there was an increase in value with our competitive groups gradually increasing the time they spend in the water
- **What other types of discounts might be available?**
 - Swimmers who register for both a swim group and water polo will receive one month's fees waived for both the swim group and the water polo group. Similar to the multi swimmer discount, this will apply to the last month. The highest registration fee will be paid; the other will be waived. The discount(s) will only be applied if the entire term of the 9 or 11 months is met.
 - Parents will also receive one-month fees waived if they **are or become** a USA Swimming certified official **AND** volunteer for BSC during home and/or away meets. There will be certain restrictions/obligations to volunteer at our own hosted meets and/or larger, USA sanctioned meets. These volunteer hours will be verified. Again, the one-month fees will be waived during the last month. **Simple terms - we expect you to officiate regularly.**
 - Becoming a SMAC member also offers a significant discount to programs registration fees. On average, non-members pay 25% more than members.

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- The multiple kids discount does **NOT** apply if any of the athletes take advantage of the full three month opting out option during the 9 month or 11 month program. Extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual basis.

- **What are going to be the new parent commitments?**
 - As most of you are aware, a swim team cannot operate without parent volunteers. Currently, we are not instituting any requirements for those parents of swimmers in the developmental groups. We do, however, ask that you volunteer for intra-squad meets and other social events that we plan for the whole group.
 - We will be offering short, educational clinics for parents who have never volunteered or participated in structured swim meets
 - We are currently constructing the requirements and what that looks like. We would like to get more parent feedback before we put minimums or maximums in place. There are numerous ways to meet volunteer commitments. Some examples at swim meets: timing, officiating, marshal, hospitality, runner, registration table, and clerk of course. Some other examples not at meets: social event planning, meet set up or breakdown, child care for other families, carpool volunteer. There are numerous ways to contribute to your swimmers' team.

- **I heard there is a new parent committee. What is that?**
 - BSC is an entity owned team. Therefore a "parent board" is not permissible. However, a parent club or parent community is being established to help manage several aspects of running our club.
 - Our goal is to take most of this responsibility off of Coach Jim and place it with the parents. We need Coach Jim to focus on coaching the team, developing young coaches and swimmers.
 - We also have the goal of hosting at least two or three more meets at our home pool. This will require collaboration from all parents.
 - The following expertise are needed:
 - **Social media expert** to help post and oversee social media posts, a new team blog, etc.
 - **Social planning expert** to help plan events for individual groups and/or team events like potlucks, team trips, bowling outing or any other types of events to promote team bonding.
 - **Officials chairperson** who will help guide newer parents on the path to becoming an official; help set up training opportunities and host tutorials or brief educational opportunities for new officials.
 - **Volunteer chairperson** to help track & log our parent volunteer hours, etc. This person would also be the number one contact for parents to communicate schedules and sign ups.

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- **What other changes should I expect?**
 - Each swimmer will be issued a Bulldog Aquatics key fob to swipe in for each time they attend practice. The details are being finalized and will be available during the first week of practice.
 - Each swimmer will now receive a team t-shirt, swim cap and bag tag upon registration. These items will be dispersed to the swimmers/athletes within the first two weeks of practice. Those who received a t-shirt in July will not receive another shirt in Aug or Sept.
 - Parking passes will be more streamlined. Members of SMAC will NOT receive any additional parking passes. Non-members will receive one parking pass that is valid for the 9 or 11-month period that you are registered for. If you lose your parking permit, you will be required to pay \$25 for a replacement. Or, if you want to purchase an additional pass, you may do so for \$25.
 - Parent, swimmer and coach's handbook(s) and guidelines for expectations are being developed according to USA Swimming recommendations. These will include topics such as travel, bullying and/or sexual misconduct.

- **Who do I contact if I am not credited for working my volunteer hours? How do I contact them?**
 - Our parent volunteer who steps forward to manage this accounting of volunteer hours. This person will be established in the next few weeks and an announcement will be made with contact information.

- **Who should I talk to if I'm not getting the team emails from TeamUnify? How do I contact them?**
 - Please use the "contact us feature" in the right hand column on the website.
 - Coach Jim send out the team newsletter
 - We have recently hired a full time Aquatics Coordinator that will be working the Aquatics Desk Monday thru Friday 11:30am-7:30pm. This will be the person that will be most available for administrative questions.

A note of thanks and appreciation for your patience and continued patronage to the Bulldog Aquatics programs. Especially in this time of change. We will make some mistakes and will do everything we can to make things right.

Above all, our swimmers come first. We are still offering one of the best coaching staffs in the area, as well as one of the highest quality programs that focus on building not only good swimmers, but great citizens.

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