



BC Summer Swimming Association
SWIMMING | DIVING | WATER POLO | SYNCHRO

Guide to the Development & Operation of a Competitive Swim Club

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Introduction

The BC Summer Swimming Association exists to promote, encourage and develop an individual's capacity to achieve excellence and life skills through participation in competitive aquatic activities. In doing so, BCSSA will arrange, operate and facilitate competitions and activities for member athletes in all communities of British Columbia and surrounding areas.

In order to foster the development of Summer Competition & Recreation throughout BC, the province has been divided into eight regions.

Cariboo
Fraser South
Fraser Valley
Kootenays
Okanagan
Simon Fraser
Vancouver & District
Vancouver Island

There are 60 member clubs associated with BC Summer Swimming and over 5000 registered athletes.

The competitive season runs from May 1st to September 30th and offers the following aquatic sports: Speed Swimming, Diving, Water Polo, and Synchronized Swimming. These sports provide discipline, responsibility, physical fitness, personal achievement, the competitive experience, and the opportunity to develop long lasting friendships.

The following guide is designed to assist people who wish to become involved with competitive aquatic sports. It is directed to parents of young athletes and community volunteers in order to assist with the initiation and operation of a club within your community.

General Information

1. Swimming competition is divided into 8 Divisions and 2 Categories with the following age groups:

Div 1	8 & Under
Div 2	9 – 10 ½
Div 3	10 ½ - 12
Div 4	12 – 13 ½
Div 5	13 ½ - 15
Div 6	15 - 16
Div 7	17 - 19
Div 8	20 & Over
O Cat I	Div 3 & Under
O Cat II	Div 4 – 6 (an 'O' Cat swimmers above this will swim in Div 8)

Age group eligibility is based on the swimmer's age as of April 30th. This determines the age group category of competition in each year.

Meet Levels are listed as: "A", "B" & "C" (developmental)

*Are based on the ability levels of the competitors from the invited clubs.

Distance swum in competitions are 50m, 100m, and 200m in individual events, 200m relay races, while strokes swum are, freestyle, breaststroke, butterfly and backstroke and individual medley. 25m events are sometimes organized for swimmers 6 years old and under, "B" swimmers or in "Developmental" meets.

2. Synchronized Swimming is divided into three age groups:

Div 2 & Under
Div 3 & 4
Div 5 & Over

Age group eligibility is based on the swimmer's age as of April 30th.

3. Water Polo is a fast growing component of our summer clubs. Since 1982 the association has offered introductory, recreational and competitive water polo. Water Polo is divided into 5 age groups:

12U (generally 12 years of age or younger)
14U (generally 13 & 14 year olds)
16U (generally 15 & 16 year olds)
18U (generally 17 & 18 year olds)
Senior/Open (19 and over)

Age group eligibility is based on a player's age as of December 31st.

4. Diving offers competition to both beginner, as well as the advanced diver. There are seven age categories on the one meter and six age categories on the three meter board.

Div. "S"		Cat "O"
<u>1 Metre</u>	<u>3 Metre</u>	
8 & Under	--	
9 & 10	10 & Under	10 & Under
11 & 12	11 & 12	11 – 13
13 & 14	13 & 14	14 – 19
15 & 16	15 & 16	20 & Over
17 – 19	17 – 19	
20 & Over	20 & Over	

Eligibility is based on the Diver's age as of December 31st.

5. The BCSSA Provincial Office is your go to place for information on our organization or if you have any questions or require supplies.

Materials presently available at the office:

- BCSSA Brochures
- BCSSA Reference Guides (available through the website)
- BCSSA Officials Rulebook
- BCSSA Coaches Code of Ethics
- Newsletters & Communications
- Officials Training Certification Program
- Officials Certification Card
- Provincial Meet Package (available on the website)

Most of the resources and information that BCSSA has available to clubs is on our website for download. If there is something else you require the staff at the Provincial Office will be happy to get it for you.

Preliminary Organization to Develop a Club

The following information must be compiled by those interested in leading the movement to develop a swim club prior to calling a meeting of interested parents in the community.

- a. The availability of water in a local pool.
- b. Times available for use.
- c. Cost of pool per hour or cost by lane per hour.
- d. Is any pool staff member qualified and interested in working as a part time coach?
- e. Contact the B.C. Summer Swimming office for names of coaches looking for employment.
- f. Develop a simple budget based on water cost for training hours, coaching costs, equipment costs and the minimal number of swimmers necessary to get the enterprise underway on a breakeven basis. Cost of club affiliation and swimmer registration costs with the provincial and regional swimming association must also be included.

Possessing the above information, give notice to the community of an ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING TO FORM A NEW SWIM CLUB.

Notices should be posted in supermarkets, laundromats, recreation centres and schools around the community. It should be inserted as news in the local paper and on the radio station. The notice should list:

- Location of Meeting
- Date
- Time
- Contact name and telephone number

The Organization Meeting

The aim of this meeting is to develop an interim executive if the proposal to form a swim club is accepted, and to activate the program.

The interim executive should consist of the following club officers:

1. President
2. Secretary
3. VP Finance
4. Registrar

This group is responsible for:

- 1) Applying to have the club affiliated with the provincial association through the Regional Director and the swimmers registered with the provincial association through the Provincial Registrar.
- 2) Drawing up an operating budget.
- 3) Arranging an agreement with a local pool for rental of water time for practice sessions.
- 4) Formally hiring a coach.
- 5) Registering the new swimmers with the club.
- 6) Recruiting other children in the neighbourhood to become members:
 - a. Have a coach talk to elementary school children about the swimming program.
 - b. Have each club member invite friends to try out for a week with the club.
 - c. Spot community announcements on local cable TV and radio.
 - d. Post notices listing tryout times. Have swim schedules posted in local stores, laundromats and supermarkets in the community.
 - e. Offer a program to clubs in the community that are full and have a waiting list.

The Club Coach

The Club's Head Coach is responsible, in consultation with Club Executive, for establishing the club program, including decisions about the number of coaches required, types and sizes of groups, pool time, equipment, and short and long term goals. The coach is key to a successful club. To ensure that the club functions effectively, areas of responsibility should be clearly defined. The coach should show leadership, set standards in personal appearance, behaviour and discipline.

The club executive should write a job description prior to hiring a coach including the salary range, (decide what you can afford), specific working days and hours as well as the club's expectation of the coach and discuss his/her philosophy.

Coaches Responsibilities:

1. The development and delivery of the swimming/aquatic program: planning training sessions, running workouts, maintaining water safety, pool rules and regulations while conducting training sessions in rented pools.
2. Maintenance and discipline of deck at all times during practice time or at a meet.
3. Meets: Is responsible for meet entries.
4. Other duties are required.

Coach Recruitment

1. Procedure:

- 1.1 Check your local community list. Check with lifeguards and instructors at local pools to see if anyone is interested in coaching with a club part-time.
- 1.2 Contact the B.C. Summer Swimming office for names of coaches looking for employment.
- 1.3 Check with the swim team coaches at UBC, SFU, and University of Victoria for students who are looking for summer employment in the field. Hiring a student often allows a club to get government assistance to help pay the salary.
- 1.4 Talk with other clubs; see if any coaches are looking for employment.
- 1.5 Place an ad on the BCSSA Website's Coaches Employment page.

2. Employer Responsibilities:

- 2.1 An employer must ensure that every individual who is hired for employment involving work with children and every employee who works with children undergoes a criminal record check.
- 2.2 An employer must not require an applicant for employment to authorize a criminal record check unless the employer has offered employment to the applicant.
- 2.3 The employer must inform individuals of the requirements of this Act if those individuals are employed by or are applicants for employment with the employer in a job that involves working with children.

3. Applicants for Employment

- 3.1 When an individual is offered employment that involves working with children, he or she must provide a criminal record check authorization to the employer.
- 3.2 An employer must not employ an applicant in a job that involves working with children unless the applicant has provided the criminal record check authorization in accordance with subsection (1).

Club Executive & Directors

Once the club is operational it is expected to call a meeting of the parents to develop a slate of officers to run the club for the first year. This can be achieved by nominating the elected members, accepting volunteers, or by appointment. The persons listed below are necessary for a competent club operation, and during the first year a constitution and by-laws of the club should be developed and registered under the Societies Act. A swimming club, like any other organization is only as good as the people who run it.

1. **President** To be chairperson of club and executive meetings. To oversee the operation of the club and to represent the club at official functions.
2. **Vice President** To be chairperson of club and executive meetings in the absence of the president. To assist the president at all times in the performance of his/her duties. Whenever possible to be the president-elect. In the first year of the club's operation, he/she could be responsible for the development of the constitution and bylaws for the club.
3. **Secretary** To keep accurate minutes of the club and executive meetings. To be responsible for organizing incoming and outgoing club mail. Organize a mailing list of club members, copy and circulate a club newsletter, and other information as requested.
4. **Director of Finance** To keep accurate accounts of all financial transactions of the club. To develop an annual budget and maintain control of the budget. Collect club fees and travelling expenses. Pay coaches (salaries and expense accounts), club registration and affiliation fees. Maintain a list of paid swimmers in the club. To keep the executive and board of directors updated on the club's financial status. Collect overdue debts. Develop a travel / expense form for coaches to be completed with receipt prior to disbursement of funds. To have control over monies brought into the club by fundraising projects.
5. **Registrar** To administer eligibility rules if applicable. To register all eligible swimmers with the provincial organization. To register the club with the provincial organization. To record all this information legibly so that a club directory can be compiled from this information by the secretary and so that the treasurer has a record of the membership and the payment system. Registration should be completed using the Hy-Tek Team Manager program, which must be purchased by the club. It is recommended that the registrar is proficient with the use of the computer.

These five directors form the club executive. They are responsible for making recommendations and decision in the day to day operations of the club between regular board meetings. These decisions should always be presented at the following board meeting for ratification. The President, VP or a member of the coaching committee could be chosen as the direct liaison with the Head Coach.

6. Fundraising To develop a committee of club members and be responsible to the board for organizing and running fundraising activities. These monies assist a club to keep its fee structure as low as possible. Special projects can be designated for travel funds. Generation of fundraising ideas and their implementation. This should NOT be the responsibility of the club treasurer but should work in consultation with the treasurer.

7. Meet Manager To be responsible for the overall management of all swim meets hosted by your club. Can assist with training club meet officials, if qualified. Maintain a record of all club personnel and areas of expertise. Obtain a copy of BCSSA's Meet Manager Guide. These responsibilities are frequently assigned to a Vice-President.

8. Director of Officials Responsible for the tracking and certification of officials and seeking out parents to become BCSSA certified officials and officiate during meets.

9. Equipment Manager To keep track of a clubs equipment such as:

- i. Starting Guns
- ii. Lane Ropes
- iii. False Start Ropes
- iv. Starting Blocks
- v. Starters Platform
- vi. Kickboard
- vii. Pull-Buoys
- viii. Watches
- ix. Clipboards
- x. Club Tent

To make sure that the pool is available and in working order when required by the Meet Manager, and to assist with pool setup for a meet if required. To purchase and sell goggles, club caps, swim suites and sweat suites if so desired by the Club Executive. To advertise the cost and availability of this merchandise for sale through the club newsletter.

10. Public Relations To present the fundraising club activities and swimming achievements to the general public through the news media. To develop the image of aquatics as a healthy sport both physically and mentally. Inter-Club communication via a newsletter.

11. Social Chairman

To develop a committee of workers available to cover various social functions.

- i. Run a concession for swimmers at a club hosted swim meet.
- ii. Organize food and drinks for officials working at your swim meets.
- iii. Arranging for coffee at club board meetings if necessary.
- iv. Organizing an annual club dinner or picnic.

12. Coach Liaison

Advocate for coaches.

Only the first six positions need to be directors in a small club. The other roles can be filled by club members willing to develop expertise in the various fields, or by the persons who already have that expertise at their fingertips. However, **ALL** these positions are recommended for your club structure if you want to have an effective, well organized and successful club. Involve as many of your parents as possible in the running of your organization.

Communication

The better the communication in your club the greater support you will witness from your parent body and swimmers. Methods of enhancing parent participation are:

1. **Club Newsletter** – This is a quick method of developing communication within and outside of your club. It should include the following areas of information:
 - a. Swim Meet Information
 - i. Current upcoming meets, Results from past meets best swims
 - ii. Most improve swimmer of the month
 - b. Upcoming fundraising or social events being sponsored by the club
 - c. Articles for consideration (BCSSA has some resources for your articles)
 - i. Role of the coach or Make-up of club relays
 - ii. Deck discipline and Workout times
 - iii. Training of officials for club meets
 - iv. Club cap and suit (information/purchase)
 - v. Parents' responsibilities and becoming effective swim parents.
 - d. Birthday greetings and age group changes
 - e. Coaches Corner
 - i. Technical information on swimming or other aquatics
 - ii. Swimmer of the week award
 - iii. Nutrition
 - iv. Upcoming travel meets
2. Have periodic "meet the coach sessions" – keep them small – divide by training groups if needed, so that inter-communication can develop. This meeting could be chaired by the President or Vice-President of the club.
3. Offer a course to your membership on how to be an effective swimming parent.
4. Encourage all members to participate in fundraising events.
5. Help parents assist their children to establish and reach realistic individual goals.
6. Arrange an annual club picnic or awards dinner.
7. Ensure that all families have a club directory listing all members of the club.
8. Have club members sit together at meets and develop a cheering section offering support for ALL swimmers.
9. Develop a club identity:
 - a. New swim clubs will need a name – vote on names submitted by swimmers
 - b. Develop a club emblem – use an artistic swimmer
 - c. Use an identifiable club cap
 - d. Club suit and sweats all help build "identity"

Fundraising

Registration fees are never adequate to cover the total cost of operating a competitive swim club. Options when setting the fee structure for the swimming season consists of:

1. Keeping the fee structure at a reasonable level, relying on team-work in fundraising projects to finance the club.
2. Set the fees to cover operating costs so that swimmers are not always being constantly diverted into fundraising drives.
3. Setting the fee structure as above and offer the option of working off part of this cost by participating in fundraising if the swimmer and family wish.

Cost involved in being a swim club member:

1. Fees for training: Most clubs give a discount for more than one child swimming in a family.
2. Registration fee to the Regional Board and Provincial Association (BCSSA).

Suggestions for fund raising:

1	Bingo	12	Canned salmon sale
2	Raffles	13	Christmas tree sale
3	Paper drives	14	Presto log sale
4	Hosting an invitational meet	15	Pumpkin sale
5	Chicken sale	16	Bake sale
6	Casino	17	Lottery ticket sale
7	Candy and nut sales	18	Bottle drives
8	Swim meet concessions	19	Sponsorships
9	Car washes	20	Program advertising for swim meets
10	Auction of club services	21	Governement Grants
11	Swimathon		(Employement, travel, equipment)

Swim Meets

1. See Meet Manager Guide regarding Hosting a Swim Meet. Contact Regional or Provincial Director of Officials.
2. Training officials to run swim meets. Contact your Regional Director of Officials to run clinics in your club and within the region.
3. Going to a swim meet? Equipment every swimmer will need.
 - a. Swim suit
 - b. Club cap
 - c. Goggles
 - d. 2 or more large towels
 - e. Sweat suit, long, short or T-shirts and pants to wear between swims and over swim suit
 - f. Change of dry clothes to dress in after the meet
 - g. Socks and runners or thongs for the pool deck
 - h. Books, card games etc. to fill in times between races
 - i. Healthy snacks
 - j. Sleeping bag or a warm blanket
 - k. A warm jacket, even on a warm day

All personal clothing and towels should be marked with the swimmers name and club initials to assist in identifying and returning lost property.

Introduction to Officiating at Swim Meets

OFFICIAL'S CONDUCT

1. Arrive on time. (half hour before meet)
2. Dress in white or the designated meet colour.
3. Be fair to all competitors. Do not coach or cheer for swimmers while on deck as an official.
4. Be inconspicuous; allow the swimmers to be the focal point. Keep seated as much as possible. Be friendly to swimmers, but do not distract them if they are preparing mentally for a race.

MEET ORGANIZATION

You will find the following officials at the competitive swim meet:

1. **MEET MANAGER:** prepares for meet in advance; sends out notices, and prepares program and cards, convenes scratch meeting, handles paperwork during the meet. Is the person who is in-charge of the overall meet and its operation.
2. **REFEREE:** Chief official over all others during the meet; ensures fairness and makes decisions not clear in the rules; usually announces start of each race.
3. **STARTER:** starts each race by gun or horn making certain the start is fair.
4. **CHIEF JUDGE ELECTRONIC:** supervises results coming from an automatic electronic timing and judging system.
5. **CHIEF TIMER:** responsible for watches, take time of all winner of all heats, and if only two timers on winner's lane, use his/her time to ensure three times are recorded for winner of that heat.
6. **CLERK OF THE COURSE:** checks in swimmers and directs them to proper heats and lanes. Keeps quiet and order on pool deck; usually has one or two marshals to assist him/her, may see or re-seed heats on deck to shorten the meet, but shall discuss with Referee.
7. **CHIEF MEET RECORDER:**
 - a. Meet invitation
 - b. Event List
 - c. All meet entries go to this person
 - d. Meet and event "program"
 - e. During the meet, entering all the results and printing finals heat sheets.
 - f. Stickers for awards and distributing final results

8. **STROKE JUDGES:** one on each side of pool; watches correctness of stroke to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair advantage.

9. **TURN JUDGES:** from two to four judges watch correctness of stroke to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair advantage.

10. **LANE TIMERS & RECORDERS**

11. **AWARDS**

Basics of a Successful Club

1. A conscientious and hardworking executive leading the club.
2. A highly motivated coach leading a group of swimmers being encouraged to systematically improve individual best times, and who are being trained in an atmosphere of fun and discipline, but dedicated to excellence.
3. Dedicated and knowledgeable parents supporting the elected executive and the swimmers.
4. Development of a sense of pride in your club.
5. Creation of support from within the local community via the media and local merchants.
6. Establish and maintain a good development swimming program to perpetuate the club.

Club Constitution & By-Laws

Once established, a club **SHOULD** become registered under the Non-profit Societies Act with a Constitution and By-Laws. Information and a copy of a constitution can be obtained from the B.C. Registrar of Companies. Contact BCSSA for more information.

Volunteers

Volunteers are all the people who work to run your swim club. Many club programs experience a 50% turnover in workers from one year to the next. A program should be developed within the club to match volunteers with the jobs that need to be performed. If the work is not important to your club development and program, do not ask a volunteer to do it.

Common needs shared by volunteers are:

1. The need to feel welcome.
2. The need to feel wanted and that their input is important.
3. The need to know what, when, how and why they are doing this work.

When these needs are matched to work that is challenging and rewarding, members will stay with the club program.

Reasons volunteers stay:

- 1) Satisfaction from work.
- 2) Part of a successful team.
- 3) Wide range of experience.
- 4) Chance to grow in a learning experience.
- 5) Trusted to make decisions.
- 6) Comradeship.

Reasons volunteers drop out:

- 1) No real goals and objectives.
- 2) Tasks too easy, too many doing the task.
- 3) Little or no supervision.
- 4) Do not know why he/she is doing the task.
- 5) A few volunteers burdened with too many tasks.
- 6) In fighting - no common ground.

New club members should be encouraged to:

- 1) Observe the workings of the club.
- 2) Be welcomed and introduced to the other club members and the executive.
- 3) Background information on the operation of the club.
- 4) Given opportunities for immediate involvement.
- 5) Provided with detailed job descriptions with clearly defined duties and responsibilities.

A printed club manual can be a very useful tool to help orient new members. Some areas to be included in the manual might be:

1. Club History
2. Goals and Objectives (short and long range)
3. Organizational Structure of the Club
4. Executive Committee and the Job Descriptions

5. Programs
 - 5.1 Leadership
 - 5.2 Competitive
 - 5.3 Development

6. Finances
 - 6.1 Budget
 - 6.2 Sources of Funding
 - 6.3 Financial Statements

7. General information
 - 7.1 Contact List of Executive Members
 - 7.2 Calendar of Meets for the year
 - 7.3 Administration Needs (typing, telephone)
 - 7.4 Team suit Information

Responsibilities & Rights of Volunteer Relationships

THE VOLUNTEER

RIGHTS

A volunteer has the following rights:

- to be treated as a co-worker;
- to be given a suitable assignment;
- to know as much about the organization as possible;
- to receive training for the job;
- to have regular evaluation of their volunteer performance;
- to be given sound guidance and direction;
- to be given promotion and a variety of experience;
- to be heard;
- to be recognized;
- to receive enabling fund when needed.

RESPONSIBILITIES

A volunteer has the following responsibilities:

- to be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value of the job to be done;
- to be loyal to the organization they work with;
- to maintain the dignity and integrity of the organization;
- to carry out duties promptly and reliably;
- to accept the guidance and decisions of the coordinators of volunteers;
- to be willing to learn and participate in orientation, training programs, meetings, and to continue to learn on the job;
- maintain a co-operative working relationship and understand the function of the paid staff.

Planning a Volunteer Program

Before planning for a volunteer program keep this in mind, if the work is not important to your club, don't ask a volunteer to do it. If it is important, the volunteer should know how that the work matters and what is expected.

Think before doing. Plan where you want to go and what you want to do, before you recruit your first potential volunteer for your program.

A successful volunteer program is one that is able to match the goals and objectives of your club with the motivational needs of volunteers. This matching is not an easy task and remains an ongoing challenge for all club members.

The best way to start planning is to identify the goals and objectives of your club. What do you want to accomplish for this year and for the next few years. The difficult task is to determine how you are going to accomplish these goals and objectives through action plans. These action plans are then compartmentalized into job descriptions that clearly state who has to do what and when.

The following is a cycle of planning stages for developing a volunteer program:

1. Identify goals and objectives
2. Formulate action plans
3. Compartmentalize action plans into job descriptions
4. Identify volunteer sources
5. Evaluate and revise programs
6. Develop orientation and training for volunteers
7. Recruit volunteers and match them to job descriptions

The job description should clearly define a volunteer's duties and responsibilities, similar to a work contract that requires a specific commitment. A job description should be explicit and should include the following:

1. Position/Title.
2. Clear, Concise Duties and Responsibilities.
3. Time Requirements and Completion Dates.
4. Qualifications or Personal Interest Needed.
5. Specific Orientation and Training that is Provided by Club.