

Bulldog Aquatic Home Team Participation Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why does the Bulldog Aquatics Club need this program?

- a. BAC is an organization that can only succeed with the support and participation parents.
- b. We need participation from members in order to adequately staff the BAC hosted swim meets -- there are many participation sign-up slots that need to be filled over the course of a swim year to staff the meet(s) alone. This does not include all of the other activities that we depend upon the parents to help make successful, such as the Swim-a-Thon, team events, team store, etc.
- c. This program is the foundation for equal participation from all BAC families...everyone contributes to the Home Team!

2. Do other swim clubs / sport activities require parent participation like BAC does?

Yes, many other swim clubs and other organizations require parent participation. Many swim clubs, especially smaller ones, ask for both volunteer time as well as a financial obligation that must be paid outright or earned through fund-raising, such as selling candy, magazines, etc. The Home Team program at BAC requires a minimum level of participation from families, but allows them to avoid any financial assessments as long as they have fulfilled their Home Team requirements. These Home Team activities can be easily fulfilled at swim meets and other events where your child will be anyway. Families also have the opportunity to be rewarded for doing more than their required minimum by qualifying for our awards.

3. How did BAC develop the concept of this Home Team program?

BAC has always required parent participation from families, but needed a structured program to define and track that participation. The Home Team program was developed from a combination of past efforts at BAC, personal experiences of BAC members while in other swim clubs, as well as researching what type of participation/volunteer programs exist at various clubs around the country. The goal of developing our program was to achieve equal participation from all families in staffing BAC hosted swim meets and other activities and to reward those families who do more than their minimum requirements. We believe that the resulting program will achieve these goals. We also found that the BAC Home Team requirements and assessments are often less than what are required by other swim club programs!

4. How many events will I have to attend to satisfy my Home Team requirements?

That will be up to you. There are a variety of opportunities for earning credits. See the BAC Volunteer Opportunity List for a list of activities and their corresponding credit values. There is no reason to rush to get all your credits for the year. There are opportunities for earning credits throughout the year. Use the chart stating the number of credits required (found in the Home Team Program Guidelines) to guide you as to when you need to accrue your

credits. Our meets are very important and vital part of our team's culture. The greatest opportunity for earning credits will be in association with the meets, but there are other activities such as committees, Spring Banquet, Christmas party, etc. The more involved you become, the better your child's swimming experience will be. *Note: Credits awarded are based on the value of the job worked, not actual time worked.*

5. Do I personally have to work at all of the required sessions?

No! That is the beauty of this program. You have the flexibility to enlist the aid of friends or family members to work on your behalf. Be sure that when your friend/family member signs in to work, that they indicate that they are working on your behalf. A few examples:

- Ask a fellow BAC member to trade working a required session for you in exchange for carpooling their kids
- Invite a friend or grandparent to a front-row seat at a meet where they can time.

6. I have 3 swimmers in BAC in different swim groups. Do I have to participate more than someone who only has one swimmer?

Your level of participation is based only upon your most senior swimmer's group. For example: If you have one swimmer in Level 3, one in Level 4, and one in Level 6, then you are only required to meet the Home Team requirements listed for your Level 6 swimmer. A major benefit of the Home Team program is that the level of participation is equalized across the entire BAC membership.

7. My child is a beginning swimmer. Don't you think that asking this much participation is too much for parents new to swimming?

Many of our beginning swimmers and their parents have actually had prior swim meet experience on summer swim leagues where parent participation is required as well. Even if a family has no prior swim meet experience, getting involved right away is the best way to show support for your child's activity, learn how a swim meet works, and meet other swim team parents. The nature of the sport of swimming that you have chosen for your child requires a lot of parent involvement and participation. Swim teams cannot be run successfully without the parents.

8. Why is BAC asking so much more of me this year compared to prior years?

We're not! We've always had the need for numerous parent participants at all of our BAC hosted swim meets and activities. We have devised a program that defines and tracks the participation required of all members, making it fairer for everyone! We also want the coaches to spend time coaching, not planning parties!

9. Why such large assessments for non-fulfillment of the required home team activities?

We want you and need your time! It is vital that we are able to provide quality events and adequately staff them—we can only do that with your participation! The amount of the assessments were set to be proportionate with the need to maintain the number of families

that we have had step forward to participate in staffing meets and other team activities. Additionally, this is a way to expand what our team does.

10. You say you want my time and not my money—then why the need for any assessments at all?

We do want your time—***we need your participation***—in order to bring in revenue from swim meets. This revenue is necessary to the BAC budget and helps to keep our members' dues at a reasonable level. We encourage all swimmers to compete in our meets. It is a team activity that is fun and it is a great way to gauge a swimmer's progress. Even if a swimmer chooses not to swim in our meet, families can help out with the running of the meet. Meets REQUIRE a huge number of volunteers. If a family does not participate, then they cost every other member of the team lost revenue which may result in higher fees for everyone. It is only fair that those families who fail to participate are held responsible for that lost revenue and bear the burden of replacing it—therefore the need for assessments.

11. How do I know how many Home Team points I have fulfilled?

Log into your account at www.bulldogaquatics.com. Click on the "\$ My Invoice/Payment" link on the left side of the page. At the top of this page is a "Volunteer Hours" tab. Click on this tab and you will see a list of all the activities for which you've received Home Team credits. Scroll over to the right and you will see your total number of accumulated hours. This will appear as a negative number as the system assumes you begin with a requirement of zero hours and subtracts earned hours from zero. For example, if your balance is -5 hours, you have earned 5 credits toward your commitment. *Note: The website shows volunteer hours, not credits. This is not terminology we can change. The number of credits awarded are based on value of the job worked, not actual time worked.*

12. What if I want to help out by doing more than just my Home Team requirements?

Go for it! We love and need the help to successfully run all of our swim meets and other activities throughout the year such as Swim-a-Thon, acting as a team parent, heading up committees, etc... The Home Team Participation program becomes more of a volunteer recognition program once you have fulfilled your Home Team requirements! We will reward your efforts with awards based on your point accumulation.

13. What if I help out with something at BAC that is not currently listed as a job that qualifies for points?

There are endless ways to help at BAC and we would like to continue to add credit opportunities to our list. All participation opportunities will add to your point total to qualify you for awards. If you would like to receive credit for an activity not listed, please email the Home Team committee and tell us what you did or would like to do. We will review it, and

hopefully provide you with credits. We will request that you fill out a Home Team Credit form for review and approval. If this is an activity that is ongoing and one that other BAC members could also do in the future, we will add it to our list!

14. I have signed up to time at a swim meet, but I know I won't be able to stay and time for the entire session. If I leave early, do I still get credit for that session?

Families are required to work the entire scheduled session as determined by the meet director for which they signed up in order to receive credit for that session. Timers are needed for the entire swim meet. If you have to leave early, it is your responsibility to find someone else to take over your position and fulfill your commitment. Your relief timer will not earn credit, only you, the family who signed up for the position, will receive credit. *Partial credit will not be given, so please participate for the entire session for which you signed up.*

15. Can I choose to have any extra credits earned above my Home Team requirement roll over to the next year?

No, all Home Team credits will apply to the current year only. Everyone will start with a clean slate each year on August 1.

16. What happens if all of the slots for the position I want to work are already filled when I go online to sign up? Can I just show up and work that position anyway and still earn credits?

Only the number of positions offered online for each swim meet activity may be staffed for credit fulfillment. If all positions offered for concession stand are already filled, then you will not be able to just show up and work to earn points. Please look over the other available swim meet positions listed online that you can help out with, such as timing, runner, heat sheet sales, etc...and sign up in an open slot.

17. I am willing to fill in for a vacant slot at a swim meet, such as a timing position or any other position, if somebody does not show up to work. How do I do this?

In an effort to make the process as fair and as easy as possible, we have instituted a procedure for filling vacant positions the day of the meet, particularly timer positions. Please see below:

- a. Anyone who is interested working in any open participation slots the day of a meet, please put your name on the alternate list located at the participation check-in table as you enter the meet.
- b. All Home Team participants are required to check in at the participation check-in table as you enter the meet. Please note the required time that you are to report for your position-- timer positions are to check in 30 minutes before the start of the meet, all other positions are to check in at least 15 minutes prior to the start of your session. You will need to be at your work area at least 5 minutes prior to the beginning of your session. If you are not there, you will be replaced by the first available alternate from the current day's alternate list.

- c. The participation check-in person will take the current list of timers to the timers' area so that we can do a "roll call" to ensure that all timers are present. This will take place approximately ten minutes before the scheduled start of the meet. If any timer is not present at the time of this "roll call", (regardless of whether they have already checked-in), then they will be immediately replaced by the **first available alternate** on the list. The timer who was replaced will not receive Home Team credit for that session. The alternate who fills in will receive credit and will need to fill out a fair share credit form so their work session can be accurately credited for Home Team points. The participation check-in person will assist in making sure that this form is filled out and turned in.
- d. Alternates who are truly interested in replacing vacant timer slots at the time of the above "roll call" should also be standing near the timers' meeting location so that they are **available** and easily accessible for filling in for open positions.
- e. Any other open participation slots that occur the day of the meet, such as concessions, hospitality, etc... will also be filled from the list of alternates.

18. I did not sign up previously to work at the swim meet, but while I was sitting on deck, I was approached and asked to time for an entire session—I guess someone did not show up to work their slot. Do I receive Home Team credit for timing?

Absolutely! Even though you did not sign up previously and your name was not on our participation check-in list, you can still receive Home Team credit. Simply ensure that either the meet director (if it is a BAC home meet) or the away meet coordinator knows about the job you've done, and it will be entered into the system. To follow up, it would be best to send an email to the Home Team coordinator at bacswimteam@gmail.com.

19. I might want to serve as a meet director or in some other trained position, but I am not sure what these positions entail. How do I find out?

On the BAC website, you will see a link for the Home Team program found under the "Parents" tab at the top of the page. Click on this link. This is where you can get all information regarding meet positions and training opportunities. Here you will find a document entitled "Meet Positions" that thoroughly describes the duties required for each job. For further information, you may contact the meet director or the Home Team coordinator at bacswimteam@gmail.com.

20. I really want to qualify for your "Extreme" BAC volunteer level and qualify for the top award level! I help out all the time anyway—but will there be any opportunities to earn extra points?

Throughout the year, there may be opportunities to earn "bonus" points at swim meets and other activities as well. Members will be notified of extra credit opportunities by email, newsletter, and/or postings at pool locations. These bonus credit opportunities are the perfect way to increase your credit totals and qualify you for the larger award levels!

21. I have earned enough points to qualify as an "Extreme" BAC volunteer.

When will I receive my award?

The awards will be distributed following the July 31, 2011 evaluation at our fall kick-off event.

22. Do I earn hours for timing for longer events such as the 500 free or the 1650 free?

These are individual requirements and are not required by the team, per se. Therefore, these timing activities do not earn Home Team credit. This would also be true for meets that you choose to attend that are not team meets.

For example: You choose to attend a meet in Alabama that is not being coordinated by BAC and you time at this meet. You will not receive Home Team credit.

23. Can I transfer my extra Home Team credits to another family?

No, Home Team credits are non-transferrable.

24. What if I have other questions about the Home Team Participation Program?

Please contact the Home Team program administrator at bacswimteam@gmail.com .