

Sturbridge Woods Swim Team

Handbook



Preface

The Sturbridge Woods Swim Club swim team will celebrate another competitive season this summer as a member of the Suburban Swim Association of South Jersey (SSASJ). Beginning in 1993, the first year the club was open, the team signed up 80 swimmers, fewer than 10 of whom had ever participated in competitive swimming! What we lacked in experience, we made up for in spirit!

Since 1994, we have had a team of about 100 swimmers. Many team members now swim all year long. Not only has the Sturbridge Woods Swim Club given summer swimming some serious competition, but it has also brought the sport of competitive swimming to the community of Voorhees.

SUBURBAN SWIM ASSOCIATION: PRESENT, PAST, AND FUTURE

Welcome to another season of summer swimming with the Suburban Swim Association of South Jersey. Our league is dedicated to fun and friendly competition and recognizes individual as well as team accomplishments.

The league began in 1964 with eight charter members, which included Gloucester, Hammonton, Raccoon Valley, Whitman Square, Haddontowne, Barclay Farms, Blackwood, and Rainbow Lake in Millville. The last five of these teams either moved to the Tri-County League or ceased competition. Other early league members included Oaklyn, Elmer, and Vineland (Dolphin). In the late 1970's, a second division was added, and then in the 1980's, a third was added.

Each of the clubs in our league has a representative who attends monthly meetings during the off-season. At these meetings, plans are made for running the league in the upcoming season.

STURBRIDGE WOODS SWIM TEAM PARENT GROUP

This organization of talented and energetic Sturbridge Woods Stingray supporters ensures the success of our program each year. Active participation by **ALL** family members is invited and encouraged!

ELIGIBILITY FOR THE SWIM TEAM & PRE-TEAM

Any Sturbridge Woods Swim Club member, 18 years old or younger, who can swim the length of the pool, is eligible to join the swim team. Swim team members compete against other swimmers within their own age group. The age of a swimmer as of June 15th determines his/her age group for the season. Members ages 4 & up may join the pre-team to learn the competitive strokes with the eventual goal of participating in swim meets. In order to participate in the pre-team, swimmers must have their basic band. The basic band test consists of swimming one length of the pool and treading water for one minute.

TEAM INFORMATION

Want the latest Stingray information? Check the Stingray bulletin board, where you will find schedules, swimmers' times, information on social and swim events, and other important information.

www.swstingrays.com

Check the Stingray bulletin board and Website!!!!

BEING A STINGRAY!!

- 1. PRACTICES** - *It's no secret that for a swimmer to achieve success in swimming, a successful practice routine is essential. The coaches will try to plan workouts which will best prepare you for competition. However, the degree of success achieved at a practice greatly depends on attendance as well as the readiness and effort of the swimmer. Please arrive 15 minute prior to practice to stretch..*
- 2. ATTENTION** - *to coaches' directions is very important to get most out your practice.*
- 3. BATHROOM/WATER** - *Please avoid having to leave practice for a trip to the bathroom or to get a drink. Please use the facilities before practice time and bring a water bottle along with you to practice.*
- 4. SPORTSMANSHIP IS AN EXTREMELY HIGH PRIORITY-** *of our program. That includes attitudes toward all swimmers, coaches, parents, officials, and spectators.*
- 5. STAY IN THE TEAM AREA-** *during all meets. If you must leave for any reason, report to a coach for permission. Don't leave the pool area during practice without reporting to a coach.*

6. **TEAM-MANSHIP & TEAM SUPPORT**- *When you are in the water - swim fast!! When you are out of the water - cheer loud!! Team suits are to be worn only during meets. Team caps are mandatory for **all** female swimmers at **all** meets. Caps are optional for male swimmers.*
7. **SEE A COACH** - *prior to and after swimming your event. Reminders before you swim and positive reinforcement after the event are important during competition.*
8. **PROBLEMS?** - *Mental, physical, attitude, mechanical, starts, turns, etc.? We will help you fix it. SEE THE COACH! CONCERNS? SEE THE COACH! Good communication is important for a team's success.*
9. **ATTENDANCE AT MEETS** - *Coaches must know IN WRITING by the Wednesday prior to a Saturday meet if a swimmer is not able to compete (emergencies excluded, of course). Designing a meet so that ALL swimmers and the team can compete on the highest level is dependent on knowing who will be there. One person missing on a Saturday morning or a Wednesday evening could cause as many as 10 or more changes in a meet lineup. Coaches have a hard time watching the swims at a meet when they are busy making last-minute changes.*
10. **MEET PREPARATION** - *Swimmers should pack their swim bags the night before a meet and make sure that equipment is in working order. Swimmers should bring an adequate supply of towels and other personal goods including sunscreen, healthy snacks, water bottles, books and games, any required medication, and any other essentials.*
11. **COMPETITION READINESS** - *Besides being conscientious of their physical conditioning as athletic competitors, swimmers should also be mindful of steps which will enable them do their best in meets. Of course, adequate sleep is essential, and prior to meets, swimmers should eat meals of easily digested foods. Pasta is recommended for dinner the night before a meet. A pre-meet breakfast may include orange juice, dry cereal, toast with jelly, or pancakes with syrup. Most importantly, and as recommended by the coaching staff, swimmers should establish a healthy diet and stick to it. The best diet will not substantially benefit a swimmer if he/she is not consistent. It is further recommended that during the meet there be no trips to the snack bar, although juice, fruit and/or granola in limited quantities may be consumed.*
12. **PRIDE in your team and the Sturbridge Woods Swim Club** - *When we are "home," clean up the team area and return chairs to the proper area. When we are visiting another club, the same clean-up is expected.*
13. **A "TOUGH" TEAM CAN BE A "NICE" TEAM.** *Swim your best. Accept the results even when you don't swim your best. Make no excuses!!! Be Gracious. Say, "Please," and, "Thank You." Wish your opponents' luck before the race; shake their hands after the race.*
14. **YOU WILL COMPETE THE SAME WAY YOU PRACTICE!!** *Listen, think positive, feel the water.*

100% Effort in Practice = Meet Excellence!!!

Be a Stingray!!!!

BEING A STINGRAY PARENT

1. *Have swimmers at practice and meets on time. They should arrive 15 minutes prior to practice. Please do not come onto the deck during practice to talk to your children.*

2. ***Your** goals for your kids and **their** goals may not be the same. Discuss. Within reason, help them achieve **their** goals.*

3. *CONCERNS? Coaches can be seen prior to or after practice. First, let the swimmer and the coach "work it out." If a concern is not then resolved, by all means, see us. We Are Concerned!!! We Care!!! Please do not come onto the deck during practice to talk to the coaches.*

4. *Being a supportive parent of a Stingray is important. Young folks are proud of parental involvement as long as it is supportive and encouraging.*

Dedicated, Informed, Supportive Parents & Swimmers = Stingray Success

5. *Read and discuss BEING A STINGRAY with your Stingray(s).*

6. ***Do not coach your children from the sidelines.** Rather, seek to build them up*

Be a Proud & Involved Parent!!!

PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Please note that the age group practices are not restrictive. Some swimmers will be moved into different practice sessions based on their abilities. Please consult with the coaching staff if there are any questions.

Check the team calendar, Stingray bulletin board, or team website for details on practice times.

All Stingray swimmers should bring running shoes and a water bottle to every practice.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES DURING MEETS

Many volunteers are needed during every swim meet to officiate, to coordinate, to time, to write ribbons, to "control" the team area, and, in general, to assist the Stingrays and the coaches so that our meets move smoothly and safely.

Some positions require training and certification, but others can be filled by any willing adult. Please review the responsibilities outlined and then volunteer to help. Working at a swim meet makes the time go much faster!

STARTER - notifies swimmers of the distance and event.

REFEREE - shall have the full authority over all officials and shall enforce all applicable rules. Referees are certified every year.

The swim team is required to provide a Starter and Referee for each home meet.

STROKE AND TURN JUDGES - have the responsibility of assuring that all US Swimming Rules are followed for each stroke and lap turn. They may disqualify a swimmer who swims/kicks incorrectly or does not touch the wall appropriately. The swim team is required to provide 2 stroke-and-turn judges for every meet. Stroke and turn judges are certified every 2 years.

PLACE JUDGES - record the order in which the swimmers finish the event. The place judges' results are compared to each other and to the official times to determine the winner. No formal certification is required for this position. Each team provides one place judge for each meet.

HEAD TIMER - starts his/her watch at the sounding of the "gun" and is available to fill in for any lane timer who misses the start or whose watch malfunctions during an event. The swim team provides the head timer for each home meet.

TIMERS - We provide 2 timers per lane (12) for home meets and one timer per lane (6) for each away meet. The 3 timers per lane start their watches at the sounding of the "gun" and time the swimmer in their lane. When the swimmer finishes his/her event, the watches are stopped, and all three times are recorded on the swimmer's card for the scorer. The middle score is circled. If one timer misses the start, the Head Timer is alerted and will fill in. No training is required, and volunteering as a timer is a guaranteed way to be "in the thick of it" during a swim meet.

RUNNERS - For home meets, the swim team provides 2 runners who pick up the swimmers' cards from each lane and cards from the place judges after each event and then turn them in to the scorer's table. Runners move quickly!

SCORER - The scorekeeper takes all the swimmers' cards and compares them with the decisions of the place judges. Then a numerical score is assigned for the first, second and third place winners, and a running score is kept. At all meets, each team provides a scorekeeper. This position requires "on-the-job" training.

RIBBON WRITERS - fill out the ribbons with the name, time, event and date for any swim team members who win 1st, 2nd or 3rd place. Three ribbon writers with neat handwriting/printing are needed for each meet.

TEAM PARENTS - are responsible for "containing" the Stingrays in the designated team area, passing out the swimmers' event cards, making sure the swimmers are at the starting blocks in time for their events, and also helping the swimmers line up in the proper order behind the blocks. Team parents are particularly important in assisting the younger swimmers for whom swimming competition is all new and confusing! The team needs 2 to 3 parents in the team area and 2 other parents behind the starting blocks to maintain order. No training or certification is necessary to be a team parent - just a lot of patience and a voice the kids can hear!!!

Since no one wants a "little Stingray" to miss an event, parents of 8 & under swimmers **must** volunteer to work in the team area at least twice during the season.

SCORING AT MEETS

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS	RELAYS
1 st place = 5 points	1 st place = 7 points
2 nd place = 3 points	2 nd place = 0 points
3 rd place = 1 point	

A swimmer can swim in as many as 5 events per meet, provided that one event is the IM (Individual Medley). The maximum of 5 events could include either 3 individual / 1 relay / IM or 2 individual / 2 relays / IM.

SUBURBAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Qualifying swimmers from all Suburban League swim clubs participate in this three-day meet. Four swimmers from each age group may swim in a relay. There are no qualifying times for relays. Swimmers may not swim in any age group other than their own in this league championship meet.

The Stingray coaching staff will determine which Stingrays will participate in this meet. All team members should check the Swim Team Bulletin Board the week prior to the championships to determine if they have in fact qualified for the championship meet.

