

*The Connecticut River
Valley Stingrays*



Swim Team

*Summer and Winter
Handbook*

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WELCOME

Welcome to the Connecticut River Valley (CRV) Stingrays Swim Team. The Stingrays team operates under the management of the Edgar May Health and Recreation Center as part of the aquatics program. The team is a member of the Southern Vermont Swim League (SVSL) and the Vermont Swim Association (VSA) for the summer season and the New Hampshire Swim Association (NHSA) and USA Swimming for the winter season.

The CRV Stingrays formed in the spring of 2007. Many of the members were from the original Springfield Swim Team (SST), which competed summers in the Vermont league. The move to the EdgarMay allowed the team to expand to year-round training and competition. The EdgarMay has also provided the guidance and stability needed in full-time operations. The team offers guided age-group swimming for children from beginning swimmers--those just learning the four swim strokes used in competition--to the most competitive and skilled swimmers. Swimming through the CRV Stingrays provides physical, emotional, and intellectual skills that will last a lifetime.

Our Mission:

The mission of the CRV Stingrays is to promote lifetime physical fitness and wellness by teaching the skills and techniques of competitive swimming. We celebrate both individual and team achievements in an environment that develops responsibility, respect, honesty, and caring while striving to serve the needs of the diverse local community.

Our Vision:

Every swimmer who joins the CRV Stingrays brings a particular level of talent or natural ability. Coaches and swimmers on the Stingrays work to help develop that potential in each person to the best of their ability. Success is not measured in gold medals or first places, but in the journey each swimmer takes to bring out his or her best.

In addition, we strive to develop life skills and confidence through the sport of swimming. Swimming is an individualized sport which, unlike many other choices today, teaches persistence, personal improvement and long-term goal setting. The CRV Stingrays promote a healthy, fun, and positive environment to reach those goals. The values of teamwork, sportsmanship and leadership are emphasized, with respect for officials and volunteers, the encouragement of teammates, and the respect and congratulations of other competitors expected from all swimmers, parents, and coaches.

Important Names and Numbers

The Edgar May Health and Recreation Center General Information: (802) 885-2568

Scott Bushway, Aquatics Director: (802) 885-2568

sbushway@myreccenter.org

Stephanie Pinney, Head Coach: (H) (802) 885-8148 (C) (802) 289-1051

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Belinda Thayer, Assistant Coach: (802) 952-9073

cpsanctuary@comcast.net

Christian Avard, Assistant Coach: (802) 380-9021

christianavard@gmail.com

MEET THE AQUATICS DIRECTOR AND COACHING STAFF

Scott Bushway is the Aquatics Director of the Edgar May Health and Recreation Center. He has over 25 years of aquatic experience with certifications in Lifeguarding, Lifeguarding Instructor, Water Safety Instructor and WSI Trainer. He is responsible for hiring coaches and lifeguards as well as other organizational aspects of running the team.

Nothing has a greater influence on the quality of children's sports than the quality of the coach. Our coaching staff provides the assurance that the time your children spends swimming will be quality time. When you have questions and concerns about the team or your swimmer, ask one of the coaches if you can speak for a few minutes before or after practice. It is difficult for a coach to visit with you during practice. If the coaches are not able to answer your questions satisfactorily, questions should be addressed to the Aquatics Director.

COACHING STAFF

Stephanie Pinney is back for another season as the Head Coach of the CVR Stingrays. She spent the past two years really getting to know our swimmers and is looking forward to putting her stamp on the team. She swam for 8 years on the Valley Gators Swim Team and has a daughter on the CRV Stingrays.

Coach Pinney's Important Points –(PIPs)

***Every swimmer counts and has an equal opportunity to learn, grow and be taught.**

***Have fun!**

***Be a Winner.** Winning is not how many ribbons or metals you have. Winning is achieved when you practice hard and give your best effort every time get into the water. Best times and swimming a new event is WINNING.

***Take responsibility.** Everyone on the team needs to take responsibility. Coaches will give their best effort to educate, train and support each member of the CRV Stingrays including swimmers, parents, coaches and the Edgar May staff. Swimmers are responsible to work hard, listen and ask questions. Parents are responsible for supporting their swimmers and keeping communication open with the coaches.

***Stay focused.** Everyone on the CRV Stingrays has a goal. Edgar May staff, coaches, parents and swimmers have different but equal goals. Make sure that you have them written down and review them often.

***Don't be afraid of change.** A small change can make a big difference.

Belinda Thayer is also back this season. She is a former swimmer and swim team parent. She will continue her role assisting Coach Stephanie with an emphasis on helping our younger swimmers build on their basic swimming skills and prepare them for the Junior and Senior teams.

Christian Avard grew up in Nashua, NH and swam competitively for four years. He swam with the Nashua Country Club in the summer time and the Nashua YMCA Prospectors in the winter. He won the Nashua Country Club "Most Improved Swimmer" award in 1986, "Most Outstanding Swimmer in 1987, and the Nashua YMCA Prospectors Coaches' Award in 1987 and 1989.

Christian was recognized by New England Swimming for the 10th fastest 50 meter freestyle time in the 13-14 boys' age group in 1987 and set the Granite State Swim Association 200 meter freestyle state record in the division III 15-16 boys' age group in 1988. He now competes in U.S. Masters Swimming.

Christian lives in Dummerston with his wife Wendy Baxter and his two boys Forrester, 6, and Hayden, 4.

PRACTICE SESSIONS

Practices are the most important aspect of competitive swimming. The purpose of practice is to improve the swimmer's technique and increase his/her endurance and speed. None of this comes quickly or easily, therefore attendance is critical. Being on time for practice and staying for the entire practice as often as possible will maximize learning and bring rewards. Practices are at the following times:

Winter Season 2011-12

	Monday	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Senior Team	6:00-7:30pm	6:00-7:30pm	6:00-7:30pm	4:30 - 6pm	7:15am – 8:15am
Junior Team	6:00-7:00pm	6:00-7:00pm	6:00-7:00pm	4:30 - 6pm	
Pre-Team	6:00-7:00pm	6:00-7:00pm	6:00-7:00pm		

Pre-team:

Beginning swimmers or those that can complete 1 lap backstrokes and freestyle. These swimmers are generally 10 and under.

Coaches will work in and out of the water to teach each swimmer hands on. The focus will be on strokes. The swimmers will also progress to longer lengths of swimming in order to give them the endurance they need for shorter races.

1 hr 3x per week

Jr. Team:

Each swimmer must be 8 years old, be able to swim 50 yards of each stroke and a 100IM with minimal corrections. They will work on developing more proper technique. The swimmers will swim longer yards and multiple sets. This allows them to feel and change any part of the stroke and turns that may need improvement.

Coaches will work in and out of the water. DVD's or other training materials may be used.

1hr 4x per week

Sr. Team:

Each swimmer must be 11 years old, be able to swim 100 yards of each stroke, a 200 IM and know all of the correct turns and starts. We focus a little less on technique and more on training. They will swim a variety of sets from 25's to 1Mile. This will help each swimmer to become rounded in the styles and lengths of races.

Coaches will work in and out of the water. DVD's or other training materials may be used.

1.5 hrs 4x per week, 1 hour on Saturdays

Changes in group levels will be done at the discretion of the Head Coach.

There will be no practice on meet days. Changes in the practice schedule will be communicated through email and the website.

PRACTICE POLICIES

- Swimmers should arrive for practice 15 minutes early. They should also be picked up no later than 15 minutes after practice. Swimmers should be ready to swim five minutes prior to the start of practice. Practice start times are posted on the Swim Team tab of the EdgarMay website www.myrecenter.org and in the Swim Team's Blue Box available at practices.
- Swimmers are expected to attend all scheduled practices. Swimmers must attend at least two practices in the week prior to a meet. Attendance will be taken at each practice. Swimmers should inform coaches if they will be missing practice or leaving early.
- At the beginning of the season, the coach is responsible for assigning swimmers to a practice group appropriate for their age and ability level. When it is in the best interest of the swimmer or the team, the coach may change these groupings. Please let the coach know if you have questions about such changes.
- Swimmers are expected to show respect and support their teammates at all times during practice as well as at any competitions. Working for the benefit of all individuals on the team is essential for the best possible learning environment.
- Swimmers are expected, at all times, to follow verbal directions of the coaching staff. At no time will swimmers be disrespectful towards the coaching staff.
- Any swimmer showing disrespect towards any teammate or coach may be dismissed from practice. Continuing unacceptable behavior may lead to being dismissed from the team. (See disciplinary procedures)
- Abusive language, bullying, lying, stealing or vandalism will not be tolerated. These behaviors are directly in contrast with the EdgarMay's policies as well as not being representative of a Stingrays athlete.
- Swimmers may leave practice only after having talked to a coach.
- Parents are allowed to observe practice from the pool deck. Please be considerate and do not distract the swimmers or coaches during practice. Younger siblings should be kept away from the edge of the pool.
- All athletes, parents and coaches are expected to follow the Edgar May Health and Recreation Center rules and regulations. (See EdgarMay rules and regulations)
- Parents and athletes who are members of the EdgarMay may use the facility at any time.
- Parents and non-team family members who **are not** EdgarMay members are welcome to watch the swimmers at practice, but must refrain from use of the EdgarMay.
- **No cell phones or cameras are allowed on the pool deck or in the locker rooms. This is EdgarMay policy**
- Chewing gum is prohibited during training. Please deposit chewing gum in a trash container when you come into the Center. The staff is continually picking up used gum along the path. Water bottles may only contain water.
- No food or drink is allowed on deck or in the locker rooms.
- Swimmers should bring to all practices goggles and swim caps. Spare goggles are often a good idea.
- Swimwear worn for both practice and competition, must be non-transparent and conform to the current concept of appropriate swimwear according to USA Swimming Rules & Regulations.

- **Inclement Weather**

- Coach will make every effort to be at practice during inclement weather. We ask that parents use their own judgment on whether to attend practice or not. We have swimmers from many towns and school districts so we are leaving the decision to attend practice up to the parents. **If the EdgarMay Health & Recreation Center closes due to weather there will be no practice.** Swimmers will not be penalized in any way for missing practice due to weather conditions. For inclement weather on Swim Meet days we will get out any changes via email as soon as we know. If you have any questions and you are unable to check your email, you can call the EdgarMay Health and Recreation Center at 802 885-2568. As with all matters your family's safety should be your highest priority

SWIM MEETS

Meets are a lot of fun for swimmers. In addition to swimming, they get to visit with friends, cheer on their teammates, and meet swimmers from other teams. They also get to race and see how much they have improved from all the hard work put into practice. Swim meets are a place where the whole family can spend time together.

For new parents: "What to Expect at a Swim Meet," found towards the end of the handbook will answer many of the questions you may have. If you still have questions, please feel free to ask the coaches or any of the returning parents. Everyone has been there and had questions; returning families are always willing to share what they have learned.

Meet participation is encouraged but not required. Please sign up for meets before the cut off date. All sign-ups are done by email. For regular meets (dual or tri) we generally assume a swimmer is coming to a meet unless we hear otherwise. For larger meets (invitational, States, etc) we often ask for a response from all planning to attend. Let us know as soon as possible if your swimmer will not be attending a meet she/he has signed up for as this affects the line up for the heats and relays.

All meet communications should go to Coach Pinney at stingrays@myreccenter.org

A few of the larger meets require an entry fee. Some are included in the sign-up fee, others we will collect ahead of the meet. All fees and other payments must be up-to-date or other arrangements made with the Aquatics Director before swimmers compete in meets.

PHILOSOPHY OF COMPETITION

The CRV Stingrays Swim Team attempts to provide challenging yet success-oriented competitive situations for swimmers of all ages and abilities. The following policies outline our philosophy:

- We emphasize competition within oneself. Winning ribbons, medals, and trophies is nice, but not our main objective. Awards are a result of the goals that athletes set for themselves. Constant improvement towards one's potential is the primary goal.
- Sportsmanship is of equal importance to improved performance. Respect for officials, opponents, coaches and teammates is expected.
- A swimmer is praised for improvement, whether it is time, swimming technique, attitude, or effort. It is the coach's' job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance.
- Swimmers are taught to set realistic, yet challenging short and long term goals for meets and to relate those goals to practice to direct their training efforts.

- Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances, and strokes. This policy promotes versatility and encourages the swimmer to explore his/her potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming. Specificity of swimming events occurs in the latter years of a swimmer's career.

BEHAVIOR AT MEETS

Wherever and whenever a Stingrays swimmer wears any item of the team uniform, the individual should be aware that his/her actions and words reflect on the team and they should behave accordingly.

- As a matter of courtesy to the officials and meet hosts, it is preferable that parents stay off the deck, most meets require it, others simply request or suggest it. However in some cases (as with the Recreation Center) being on the deck is the only option. In this case staying back from the edge of the pool at least 8-10 feet is appropriate.
- At no time will any swimmer or parent confront an official on deck. Any question that a swimmer or parent may have during the conduct of the meet should be directed to your coach. The coach will then pursue the matter through proper channels.
- As a matter of pride, leave the Stingrays team area in a neat and clean condition at the conclusion of each session of the meet.
- **All athletes and parents are expected to represent the CRV Stingrays with the utmost sportsmanship and respect.** Proper courtesy will be shown to all teammates, competitors, officials, coaches and other parents. Failure to do so may result in the removal of that person from the entire meet and put their team participation in jeopardy.
- Swimmers will not leave poolside to get changed before the end of the meet unless permission is given by one of the coaches.
- All swimmers will support and encourage every swimmer on the team, accept defeat and success with grace, and show good sportsmanship.

In the changing rooms swimmers must:

1. Behave in a responsible and orderly manner in the shower area and the changing rooms and change as quickly as possible.
2. Respect the property of other swimmers and EdgarMay Members
3. Failure to abide by locker room rules will result in disciplinary action.

COMMUNICATION

Ninety percent of team communications come through email and the website. Please make sure Coach Pinney and Scott have your active email address. Some internet providers may block our emails as they are being sent to a large number of people. If you are not receiving emails check with your provider to find out how to put us on your "white list". We will also try to post all important emails in the Blue Box.

E-mail— Changes to the practice or meet schedule will be communicated through email whenever possible.

Websites – The EdgarMay website, www.myreccenter.org gives general information about the center and is where you can access all handouts, schedules, updates, changes, and results from the meets.

Blue Box – This box will be on Deck during all practices. It will contain; schedules, swimmers' folders, meet entries, and meet results. Check with coach if you are looking for something specific.

Stingrays Message Board— Quick news, messages and reminders will be posted on the bulletin board by the wading pool in the pool area.

Telephone— Call the front desk at the EdgarMay if you have general questions about schedules etc. We will make every attempt to reach you by phone if a meet or practice is unexpectedly cancelled on short notice. You may also call Coach Stephanie at 802 289-1051.

SAFETY RULES

In order to keep injuries to a minimum, it is important that all swimmers abide by the following rules:

- **NO** running on the pool deck or in the locker room areas.
- **Always** enter the water feet first unless directed otherwise by a coach.
- **DO NOT** push anyone into the pool.
- **Never** sit or hang on lane ropes.
- **Always** follow posted rules at all pools where the team practices or attends meets.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to build and maintain the team's reputation as a friendly and disciplined organization and above all for the safety and well being of swimmers. Members must agree to abide by the rules of the team, and in particular the rules contained in the following Code of Conduct.

General:

- Any swimmer who is known to use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco is subject to suspension from the team.
- Swimmers and/or parents never interfere with the progress of another swimmer during practice or otherwise.
- At all club functions, whether practice, meets, or social gatherings, we expect each swimmer to behave in such a way that their actions reflect positively on the team.
- All members of the team, whether parents or swimmers, will help build an excellent reputation for the CRV Stingrays throughout the region.
- Members should behave in a polite and orderly manner at any time they are representing the team. This includes in the locker rooms and poolside at the CRV where we share the space with regular members.
- The team will not tolerate bullying in any form.

In the water and on poolside swimmers must:

- Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- Have eyes and ears above the water and pointed toward the coach when he/she is talking and have silent voices.
- Obey promptly all instructions from the coaches and obey instructions at meets from any of the officials or volunteers.
- Not use abusive language or act in an aggressive manner.
- Remain with the team at all times at meets and practice.

ILLNESS AND INJURY

At the beginning of the season, all parents will fill out health information sheets for their swimmers. Please notify the coach of any changes to this information during the season as these will be referenced in case of an emergency. Let the coach know of any temporary injury or illness that would affect your swimmer's participation. If your swimmer will be out of the water for an extended period of time because of illness or injury, please notify the EMHRC.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The greatest contribution you can make to your swimmer's progress is to be a loving, supportive parent. Please make every effort to have your swimmers at practice on time. Realize that your child is working hard and give all the support you can. Encourage good diet and sleeping habits. They will serve your children well.

If you have questions about the program please use the proper chain of command: **Coaches -> Aquatics -> Executive Director**. This is the most effective way to get your questions answered.

Parent participation is vital to the development and maintenance of a successful swim team. No team can succeed without strong parent participation, volunteering, supporting the swimmers, serving as role models, etc.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

All families of swimmers are expected to volunteer before, during, or after each home meet. Help is also needed organizing swimmers and timing at away meets. Please be thinking about the talents you can contribute.

In addition to the home meet expectations for volunteers; there are several other jobs that need to be filled.

They include:

- Concessions Coordinator – Plan and organize concessions for all home meets and fundraising events as needed. Determines what will be sold and who is responsible for bringing needed items to events and recruits volunteers to run concession stand during events.
- Fundraising Coordinator – Plan and organize fundraising events throughout the year. Work closely with Aquatics Director and coach to determine needs of the team and fundraising goals.
- Volunteer Coordinator – Responsible for organizing and recruiting volunteers for home and away meets. The Volunteer Coordinator will be the person overseeing all other coordinators and volunteers. This person will keep the Aquatics Director up to date on all volunteer issues and concerns.

- Publicity Coordinator – A very important piece of getting the word out about our swimmers. Writes articles for local newspapers after each event or swim meet. May write other articles promoting special events or fundraising activities the swim team is involved with.
- Stroke and Turn Judges – Officiate at home and away meets
- Head Stroke and Turn Judge - Responsible for recruiting new judges and getting judges in place for all home and away meets.
- End of Season Party/Awards Ceremony Organizer - At the end of each season the team has a Party/Awards Ceremony. Responsibilities would include but not limited to ordering awards, setting time and place of event, organizing food responsibilities, recruiting volunteers to set up and break down.
- Swim Gear Coordinator – Organizes all aspects of choosing, ordering and distributing team swimsuits and other items.
- Serve on Parent Advisory Committee

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The following outline will familiarize you with the steps involved with disciplinary procedures. We hope you will never have to deal with any of these steps. It is necessary, however, to have a consistent policy regarding discipline.

Disciplinary procedures **may be** set into motion when any of the following occur:

1. Consistent or flagrant disregard of team and/or Recreation Center policies.
2. Disrespect towards any person while representing the CRV Stingrays
3. Use of profanity at any time while representing the CRV Stingrays
4. Actions during a meet or practice deemed disruptive by the coach.
5. Any act of violence or vandalism.
6. Unlawful use of drugs or alcohol.
7. Unruly behavior at any time while representing the CRV Stingrays.
8. Commitment of a crime.
9. Abuse of equipment.

The following outlines what may happen with repeated infractions:

- **Strike one:** Athlete will be reprimanded by the coach and reminded that continued improper behavior may result in being dismissed from the team. At this point it is up to the coach as to whether the athlete should be sent home from a competition or practice depending on the severity of the infraction. The athlete will have to meet with the coach before he or she will be allowed back to the competition or practice.
- **Strike Two:** Athlete will be reprimanded by the coach and reminded that continued improper behavior may result in being dismissed from the team. Athlete will be sent home and will not be allowed back until he or she and a parent meets with the coach.
- **Strike Three:** Athlete will be immediately suspended. The length of the suspension is up to the coaching and Recreation Center staff; the severity of the inappropriate behavior will determine the length of the suspension.

Swimsuits and Gear

Swimsuits - Swimmers should have at least 2 swimsuits. One or more for practice and one team suit for meets. It is strongly recommended that swimmers use their team suit for meets only and use a second suit for practice. Suits and caps in team colors are required for meet participation.

Cap – Swimmers with long hair (below the jaw line) are requested to wear caps at practice (boys and girls) and required at meets (team caps)

Goggles – goggles are recommended at all meets and practice. It is important to have a spare pair in your gear bag at all times as straps break or goggles “disappear” at the most inconvenient times.

PROPER CARE FOR SWIMWEAR

A little care of your suits will go a long way. The main culprits are chlorine, salt, the sun, hot tubs, and suntan lotions. Lycra, the material that allows the great stretch and comfort in your suit, is a fragile material. Chlorine and chemicals easily wear it down, and abrasive surfaces tear the fabric. Hot water permanently stretches the elastic, and dryer sheets, detergent and washing machines will finally destroy it. Most of these elements you cannot avoid, but some care will help prolong the life of your swimsuit.

After a swim, rinse. Whether in an ocean, swimming pool or hot tub, salt, chlorine, and bromine will eat away at the fabric. Rinsing your suit with cool or lukewarm tap water will wash away a lot of the harmful minerals and chemicals. Hang to dry as soon as possible (shade is best to prevent UV damage).

Never machine wash your suit. Hand wash the fabric in cool water with a gentle soap or a soap designed specifically for bathing suits, then hang it to dry. Never use a dryer or an iron. It is always best to use a swimsuit cleaner. It neutralizes chemicals that eat away at the material and extends the life of your new bathing suit. Regular soap cannot do this. If you don't have swimsuit cleaner, use a mild liquid soap (NO WOOLITE!). Rinse well.

Heat is bad. If your suit is wet, the heat from the sun will fade the colors and loosen the elasticity. If you enter a hot tub, wear an older suit.

Don't wrap your swimsuit in your towel and stuff it in your bag until the next practice. Your towel will contain all the chemicals you tried rinsing off your suit. Worse, if everything is in a closed bag in the sun, the towel will heat up, the worst combination possible.

Use two swimsuits. Wait 24 hours for your first one to dry. It will form back into its original shape. Wearing the same suit the next day will prevent the fabric from doing this.

Be careful where you sit. Pool edges and decks are rough on the fabric, even if it feels smooth. Place a towel underneath you before sitting.

What to Expect at a Swim Meet

Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Swim Meets...But Were Afraid to Ask

(or didn't know to ask):

Swim meets are a great family experience! They're a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some very in-depth guidelines to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as we possibly could. If you have any questions, please ask your coach or experienced parent. .

What To Take To The Meet (for the swimmer)

- 2 Suits – team and back-up
- 2 Caps – team and back-up
- 2 pairs of goggles
- 2 or more towels
- 2 or more T-shirts
- Something to sit on and possibly wrap up in (sleeping bag, fleece blanket, etc)
- Sweats – top and bottom, maybe 2 for cold meets
- Deck shoes (flip-flops, etc)
- Sunscreen (summer meets)
- Food: Each swimmer is usually allowed to bring a small cooler. It is better to bring snacks. They usually have snack bars at the meet, but the lines are long and options are limited. Suggestions for items to bring:
 - Drinks: WATER, Fruit juice, Gatorade
 - Snacks: Granola bars, fruit, yogurt, cereal, sandwiches, trail mix, cheese sticks (according to articles from USA Swimming - sweets, chocolate, carbonated drinks, etc are among the worst things to eat at a swim meet. The body's response to the sugar ups and downs have been proven to decrease a swimmer's performance, sometimes substantially.)
- Games: travel games, coloring books, books, cards, anything to pass the time.
- Weather dependant – umbrella, extra warm clothes (Outdoor pools in June can be very cold)

Once you have attended one or two meets this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask any other CRV Stingrays parent for help or information!

Special Parent's Note - "Dress For the Meet" In winter the pool area is usually very warm. In summer outdoor meets can range from quite chilly (early morning meets in Rutland) to blistering hot afternoons. Being overdressed or under-dressed can make the time pass very slowly! At regular summer outdoor meets, the parents are allowed to sit with the swimmers in the pool area. In winter or indoor meets there is usually a staging area in a gym next door or nearby open space where the teams gather and wait for their events. If you find sitting on a gym floor or the ground for an extended period uncomfortable, feel free to bring folding chairs to sit on. At the summer meets, space permitting, we bring one or more awning/tents for swimmers and families to gather around and under.

Before the Meet Starts

1. For away meets, arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information, usually on the website and sent out in emails.
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags and/or sleeping bags. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces.
3. **VERY IMPORTANT - Check in with one of the coaches so they know you have arrived**
4. After the coaches have checked the team in with the officials, they receive a list of everyone's event number, lane number and heat number (ie when each swimmer will race). Some meets hand out an individual slip for each swimmer to keep, others give the coaches one copy of all the swimmers. Either way, once you learn what events your swimmer is in, write them down on their hand or arm or leg. (Example – 4/2/5 would mean event 4, heat 2, lane 5). This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen for.
5. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmer's bodies are just like cars on a cold day-he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out.
6. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her towels are and sit there until the next event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary, gets a drink, or just gets settled in. Make sure they stay warm.
7. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.
8. At some winter meets, according to USA Swimming (because of insurance purposes), parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an official capacity. All questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the coaching staff. They, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
9. Heat Sheets. At some larger meets a heat sheet is available for sale (sometimes free) in the lobby or concession area of the pool. Heat sheets generally sell for one to two dollars per day. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event.

Once The Meet Starts

1. It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers he/she is swimming (again, this is why they should have the numbers on their hand). He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile. Swimmers must stay with the team at all times unless given permission by the coaches.

2. A swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker. At most meets there is also a board listing what event/heat is up, and what is on deck. Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggle to their lane. Generally, girls events are odd-numbered and boys events are even-numbered.
3. After each swim the swimmer can ask the timers (people behind the blocks at each lane) his/her time. When you see your swimmer tell him/her how great they did! Tell him/her how proud you are. The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique or other aspects of their race with them.
4. Take him/her back to the team area and relax.
5. This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, or get a drink or something light to eat.
6. The swimmer now waits until his/her next event is called.
7. When the meet is over or, in some cases, when a swimmer has completed all of his/her events he/she and their parents get to go home. Make sure, however, you, as a parent, check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and he/she is not there. (The coaches speak from experience on this issue). Occasionally, a swimmer is asked to fill in on a relay unexpectedly.

Very Basic Swimming Rules

The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer. Trained officials observe the swimmers during each event to ensure compliance with these technical rules. If a swimmer commits an infraction of the rules that is observed by an official, a disqualification (DQ) will result. This means that the swimmer will not receive an official time and will not be eligible for an award in that event. A DQ may result from actions such as not getting to the starting blocks on time, false starting, performing strokes in an illegal manner, or unsportsmanship-like conduct.

Disqualifications – DQs are also a result of technical rules violations. They include but are not limited to:

FREESTYLE: Walking on the bottom, pulling on the lane rope, not touching the wall on a turn, or not completing the distance.

BACKSTROKE: Pulling or kicking into the wall once a swimmer has turned passed the vertical onto the breast (rolling onto the stomach). Turning onto the breast before touching the wall with the hand at the finish of the race (rolling over before touching the wall).

BREASTSTROKE: An illegal kick such as flutter (freestyle), dolphin (butterfly), or scissors (sidestroke), not face down, alternating movements of the arms, taking two arm strokes or two leg kicks while the head is under water, touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.

BUTTERFLY: Alternating movements of the arms or legs, pushing the arms forward under instead of over the water surface (underwater recovery), a breaststroke style kick, touching with only one hand at the turns and finish.

Turns and finishes

1. Freestyle: feet have to touch the wall
2. Backstroke: swimmers have to be on their back when they touch the wall. After he/she touches, he/she can then turn around, but he/she must push off on their back. At the finish a swimmer must finish on his/her back. A swimmer may not roll over and grab the wall until they have first touched it.
3. Breaststroke and Butterfly: Swimmers have to touch with both hands at the same time. A swimmer may not freestyle kick off the wall in either breaststroke or butterfly. When swimming butterfly, both arms must move at the same time.

Glossary of Terms for Competitive Swimming

The Basics

Skills

The four competitive swimming strokes are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly. The combination of all four strokes is called an individual medley.

Competition

Each swim meet offers a variety of events and distances, depending on the age group and classification. Each swimmer will have a limit to the number of events he or she may swim each day, depending on the meet rules. For duel and tri meets swimmers are usually limited to 3 individual events and 2 relays. Sometimes that is modified to 4 and 1. Larger meets often have different limits.

In **freestyle** events, the competitor may swim any stroke. The stroke most commonly used is sometimes called the crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the water surface and an alternating (up-and-down) flutter kick. On turns and finishes, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. Most swimmers do a flip turn.

Backstroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may rotate to the stomach and perform a flip turn and some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. The swimmer must finish on the back.

The **breaststroke**, which is the oldest stroke dating back hundreds of years, requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pressed out from in front of the breast in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with *both hands simultaneously* at, above or below the water surface.

Some consider the **butterfly** to be the most beautiful of the strokes. It features a simultaneous recovery of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissors or use the breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish. (The butterfly is the

newest stroke and was developed in the early 1950s as a variation of the breaststroke. It became an Olympic stroke in 1956 in Melbourne.)

The **individual medley**, commonly referred to as the IM, features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle.

In the **medley relay**, all four strokes are swum. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly, and the final swimmer anchors the relay with freestyle.

The **freestyle relay** events consist of four freestylers, each swimming one quarter of the total distance of the event.

General Terms

Aging Up - In a swimmer's life a birthday often means moving up to the next age group. Standard age groups are: 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-19 (sometimes split 15-16, 17-19). Most meets age up the day of the meet. For multi-day meets the first day of the meet is the age-up day. Aging-up may also refer to moving a younger swimmer up to the next age group, often for completing a relay team.

Block - The starting platform. If your swimmer has not learned to dive yet, they may be starting the race from the pool deck.

Bullpen - A specified area at meets where swimmers are grouped by heats and sometimes lane. Often used with younger swimmers.

Circle Pattern Swimming – Swimming in an oval shaped path in a lane. Swimmers always swim on the right...up one side, back on the other (much like driving). This allows multiple swimmers to swim together in one lane. Used at practice and for warm-ups at meets. Diving or jumping into a lane which is being used by multiple swimmers is never allowed.

Course - Designated distance over which the competition is conducted. Long course (LCM) is swum in a 50 meter pool. Short course is 25 a yard pool (SCY) or a 25 meter pool (SCM). The EMHRC pool is a 25 yard pool (as is every pool we currently swim at in the summer and winter)

Cut - Another term for qualifying time; a time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.

Disqualification – DQ – You will hear swimmers talking about this and almost every swimmer has “DQ’ed” at one time or another. There will be Stroke and Turn Officials at every meet. They will determine if the swimmer has been disqualified from a race for a rule infraction. When a swimmer is disqualified, the official will raise his/her hand signaling a DQ.. Reasons for a DQ range from false starts to illegal turns/touches to an illegal stroke. The coaching staff will work with the swimmers to understand these rules. If the swimmer is disqualified from a race the swimmer does not receive a reward, nor can the time be used as an official time, nor is the

time posted. Once a swimmer has been DQ'ed from an event, they can still swim all other events for which they have entered.

Dual Meet - Meets conducted between two teams.

Dry land training - Training that is done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance, usually includes stretching, calisthenics and/or weight training.

False start - Occurs when a swimmer is moving before the start is sounded. One false start will result in a disqualification.

Finish - The touch at the end of the race. Breast stroke and butterfly require 2 hand touches at the finish (and turns) or a DQ results.

Flags - Backstroke flags placed 5 yards (short course) or 5 meters (long course) from the each end of the pool. They enable backstrokers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently by counting their strokes from the flag to the wall.

Heat - Each race conducted within a particular swim event. Several heats may be held in a particular event.

Heat sheets - Printed listings of all swimmers at a meet showing event number, heat, and lane.

IM - (Individual Medley) Event in which a participant swims each stroke in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle.

Lap/Length - In swimming, a lap may refer to either one or two lengths of the pool. A length is the distance from one side of the pool to the other, typically 25 yards or 50 meters. Coaches and swimmers communicate in terms of "lengths" rather than "laps" to eliminate any confusion over intended distances.

Lap Counter - : A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. Also, the person who counts for the swimmer, stationed at the opposite end from the start.

LCM or Long Course Meters - A pool which is 50 meters long. Since there are fewer flip turns in this type of pool, the longer events can be very challenging.

LCY or Long Course Yards - -A pool which is 50 yards long.

Medley Relay - Where each swimmer swims a different stroke in the following order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Freestyle.

Middle Distance - : Term used to refer to events of the 200 yard/meters and 400 yard/meters in length.

Official - A judge on the deck of the pool at a meet who enforces the USA Swimming. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, timers and referees.

NT or No Time – This simply means that the swimmer has no official time for a particular event. Swimmers with an NT will usually race in the first couple of heats. Once they establish a time they will be seeded accordingly at future meets. Heats are seeded from slowest to fastest and lanes assignments are assigned by times as well. Some meets require an entry time in which case the coach will assign an entry time based on times taken at practice.

Pace Clock - Large clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice, may also be digital.

Psych Sheets - . List of everyone at the meet and their events, showing rank by time but not showing heat and lane assignments.

Qualifying time - Officially recognized time necessary to compete in some meets. Also known as a cut

Referee - The USA official who has the ultimate authority over all other officials at the meet. He makes all final decisions and ensures that the meet proceeds efficiently.

Relay - An event in which 4 swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

SCM or Short Course Meters - A pool which is 25 meters long. Since meters are a little longer than yards, this is a longer distance than a Short Course Yards event and that should be accounted for when looking at times.

SCY or Short Course Yards - A pool which is 25 yards long. Since yards are a little shorter than meters, this is a shorter distance than a Short Course Meters event and that should be accounted for when looking at times.

Scratch – Removal of a swimmer from an event for any reason (absence, injury, etc)

Seed times - The times a swimmer uses to enter a meet. These times, which were achieved at a previous meet, appear on the heat sheets and are used to determine heat and lane assignments.

Sets - : In workouts, a group of swims done on a given interval or time with a controlled (timed) rest.

Short Course - A pool that is 25 yards or meters in length.

Split - The time for a portion of a race or swim. Also called "Split Time". For example, the splits for a relay would list the times for each swimmer on the relay team.

Sprint - Describes the shorter events (50 and 100 yard or meters). In training, it means to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.

Starter - The official responsible for starting each heat.

Starts - In the start, the swimmer is called to the starting position by the starter who visually checks that all swimmers are motionless. When all swimmers are set, the starting horn is sounded to start the race. If the starter feels that one of the swimmers has moved, left early or gotten an unfair advantage, the guilty swimmer may be disqualified after the race for a false start. Under USA Swimming rules, one false start disqualifies the swimmer.

Streamline - The method of aligning the body so as to reduce resistance in the water. The position used to gain maximum distance during a start and/or push off from the wall in which a swimmer's body is as straight as can be. Often referred to by the coaches when working on starts and coming out of turns.

Stroke and Turn Judge - . A certified official, who determines the legality of swimmers' strokes, turns and finishes and disqualifies those who do not conform to USA Swimming rules.

Touch Pad - A large sensitive board in the water at the start end of some pools. Times are electronically registered and sent to the computer. Back-up timers are also used in case the pad is not touched or malfunction.

Time Trial - A time-only meet which is not part of the regular meet. Frequently, these are held at the end of the scheduled events to accommodate swimmers who still need qualifying times to compete in up-coming meets.

Tri-Meet - Meets conducted between three teams.

Unattached (UN) - A swimmer who swims at a meet without being affiliated with any team.

USA Swimming - The national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States.

USA ID Number - Unique number assigned to a swimmer when he/she joins United States Swimming (Only needed for Winter Season) The ID # will be required to enter a USA competition. .