Pines Lake Swim Team Handbook

The Pines Lake Swim Team is offered to Pines Lake Association members through age 18 who want to learn to swim competitively during the summer swim season. The team focuses on developing swimmers' fitness and skills throughout the season. New swimmers must meet two requirements. First, they must be comfortable in the water and have sufficient confidence to briefly hold their breath underwater. Second, they must be able to swim unassisted in the lane lines from one side of the dock to the other.

Swimming is a sport that in its very nature demands self-discipline, strength, and purpose. Swimmers, more than most, learn early the relationship between hard work and results.

Plateaus can occur at one time or another in every swimmer's career. Plateaus can be both in competition and training. It is important to explain to the swimmer that plateaus occur in all fields of "physical learning". The more successful athletes are those who work through this momentary delay, go on to achieve greater performance, and approach their personal potential.

Ten and under swimmers are the most inconsistent swimmers and this can be frustrating for the parent, coach, and swimmer alike. We must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport. Parents must realize that slow development of competitive drive at an early age is normal and perhaps more desirable than precocious or forced early development. It is important that everyone learn to compete and develop some competitive spirit. It is also important that children learn to adapt to reasonable levels of emotional stress. The small disappointments they learn to handle as children helps to prepare them for the larger ones, which they are certain to experience as adults.

Remember, particularly in the case of younger swimmers, that the attitude and behavior of the parents in regard to their outlook on the sport has an important effect on the child. Parents should help the swimmer set and evaluate individual goals. Competing against oneself is perhaps the best way to improve skills. In swimming, as in life, nobody can "win" or succeed all the time there will be some disappointments. Every child can gain from their experience whether or not they ever win a single race. The important thing is to keep striving to do better the next time. The goal is not only to produce great swimmers, but also to produce great young people who happen to swim!!

Registration

Each swimmer must register with the Pines Lake Swim Team Administrator in order to be placed on the official team roster. At the time of registration, we ask that each family donate $20.00 toward the team. This fee will help to cover snack table inventory, league dues, and other financial responsibilities of the team.

Swim Team Suits

Swim Team suits are available for purchase at the preseason meeting. The selection of the suit is the discretion of the Swim Team Suit Representative. The team suit is optional and purchase is not required. The style of the suit is available for two years. Therefore, you may wish to wear the team suit only during competition in order to preserve the suit for the next year (providing the suit still fits).

Communication

All notices regarding the swim team will be posted on the bulletin board located at South Beach. Notices (i.e. changes in meet times/dates, swim team activities information, swim team picture dates, etc.) will periodically be distributed to the swimmers after swim team practice. Parents are advised to refer to the bulletin board every so often to insure receipt of up-to-date information, especially if a swimmer has missed a practice. This year we will also try to send emails to the email provided at the time of registration.

Swim Meet Changes/Cancellations

Any change or cancellation will be posted at South Beach on the bulletin board, as well as emailed to the email provided at the time of registration. This is our form of communication. DO NOT expect a phone call when there is a change/cancellation of a swim meet. Our swim team is comprised of many families and it would be very time consuming to call everyone when there is a change, especially if the change is made last minute.

Every effort is made to hold a swim meet since the season is short and the schedule is tight. For this reason, meets are held even if it is raining. (no thunder and lightening) Keeping this in mind, please bring proper clothing and extra towels if rain is predicted.

Fundraising

To finance the team and related activities, the swim team holds several fundraisers such as apparel sale and snack table during home meets. The revenues made by these fundraisers, directly offset the costs of the team.

FINALLY, BUT MOST IMPORTANT, ALWAYS REMEMBER A TEAM IS ONLY AS GOOD AS THE INDIVIDUAL ATHLETES' SPIRIT, ATTITUDE, AND COMRADESHIP.

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SWIMMER INFORMATION

Swim Team Practice

Swim team practices are scheduled everyday Monday thru Thursday. Your improvement is directly effected by the amount of practices you attend. Your positive attitude and respect of others is also expected during practices. Please refer to the Pines Lake Reporter regarding the age appropriate times your swimmer(s) are scheduled.

Swim Meets

Our swim team is a member of the Ramapo Hills Swim Conference, which is comprised of 10 teams. We swim six teams. Each meet will begin at 10 am. All swimmers must report to the meet site no later then 9:15 am. At the end of the season, there will be a Championship meet held at Pequannock, where you will have the chance to swim all 10 teams.

Ramapo Hills Swim Conference Championship Meet

At the end of the season, the RHSC sponsors a Championship swim meet. Since there are 10 teams in the league, only one swimmer from each team can swim in an event. Swimmers may only swim one event and/or one relay. The coaches will pick the swimmer with the top time in an event. To be fair and to try and get as many children in the meet as possible, the top four swimmers from each age group will swim the individual events and the next four will be put in a relay (unless a relay has the possibility of breaking a record). In order for a member to qualify for the Championship meet, a swimmer must swim in four meets.

Medals are awarded to the top three swimmers and the rest of the swimmers will receive a ribbon according to their final placement in the event.

The award placement is based on an automatic timing system. Unless the system goes down during the meet or there is a dispute between the scoring table and the referees, will there be an emphasis put on the time.

Policy regarding illness/inability to make a meet or practices

Joining the swim team means making a commitment. Ideally, swimmers are expected to attend all meets and practices. We understand that there are circumstances that arise where a swimmer may not be able to make a meet/ practice. If you know in advance that you will be unable to attend a meet, please write a note to the coaches via email plscoaches@hotmail.com or fax 973-696-1662. All notices must be given to the coaches no later then Wednesday at 3pm. The meet line up must be done by Thursday morning so the coaches can confirm with the other team. No changes will be made to the line up on Friday morning.

If an emergency/illness occurs on the day of the meet, please call Coach Kristin at 201-396-6497 so that changes can be made if the swimmer is in a relay.

***** IT IS THE SWIMMER'S AND OR PARENT'S RESONSIBILTY TO INFORM THE COACHES OF AN ABSENCE. DO NOT RELY ON OTHER SWIM TEAM MEMBERS TO INFORM THE COACHES OF YOUR ABSENCES. ******

***** FAILURE TO SHOW UP AT A SWIM MEET WITH OUT NOTIFYING THE COACHES WILL RESULT IN NOT BEING ALLOWED TO SWIM IN THE FOLLOWING SWIM MEET!!******

Meet Etiquette

1. At the meet you are expected to respect yourself, each other, the other team, and their facilities by:
   - Waiting until after the last swimmer has finished his/her race to exit the lanes.
   - Congratulate each other and your opponents after the race is finished.
   - Thanking timers and officials.
   - Cheering for your teammates when they swim.
   - Picking up after ourselves before leaving a meet whether we are at another lake or our own.

2. During the meet, it is your responsibility to be aware of your upcoming event. **UNDERSTAND THAT THE MARSHALERS WILL NOT COME AND FIND YOU, YOU WILL MISS YOUR EVENT**.

3. Remember—We are a team! In order to run a smooth meet, swimmers **MUST STAY IN THE TEAM'S DESIGNATED AREA.** Many lakes have play areas and swing sets that may be tempting to younger swimmers. Under NO circumstances should a swimmer be playing in that area. While swimmers are waiting for their next event, they should be cheering for their fellow teammates who are racing.

Communication

All notices regarding swim team will be placed in each family's mailbox underneath the pavilion. Be sure that you check the mailboxes daily for updated information. Information may also be emailed to the email provided at the time of registration.

PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP

It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to help young athletes feel good about themselves. The parents should not attempt to coach; this often leads to confusion. The coach would appreciate it if a parent refrain from coming out to the dock to watch practice. Some swimmers may concentrate on the fact that the parent is watching and this may undermine their ability to connect with the coach and the swimmer's training.

If you have any questions about your child's training or a situation that may have occurred at a meet, let the coach know. Please choose an appropriate time to speak with the coach. Criticizing the coach in front of the swimmers undermines the coach's authority and breaks the swimmer-coach relationship.

Be sure your child swims because they want to, not because they have to.

Remember that the attitude and behavior of the parents concerning their outlook on the sport has an important effect on the child. Be enthusiastic about being involved.

PARENT INFORMATION

Unlike many team sports, parent involvement on a swim team is a must!! It takes 20-25 volunteers from out team to run each dual meet (i.e. timers, stroke judges, referees, recorders, runners, snack bar volunteers, etc.) In order to distribute the volunteer hours needed, parents are REQUIRED TO VOLUNTEER FOR TWO MEETS DURING THE SEASON. If you cannot meet this requirement, please reconsider registering your child.

Special Committees

In order to run a successful swim team program, several committees have been established. If you are interested in heading a committee, please call the Swim Team Representative.

Swim Team Representative/Activities Coordinator:
2009 season: Jim Gurriell (201) 697-9889

Coordinate all volunteers needed to run the Dual Meets and Champion Meet, including dock staff, and snack table.

Coordinate the activities, such as swim across the lake, and end of season awards party.

Swim Team Administrator:
2009 season:

Assist the Swim Team Representative and coaches with administrative tasks such as registration, and various administrative duties.

Swim Team Treasurer:
2009 season:

Responsible for the distribution and collection of money for the team.

Swim Suit Coordinator:
2009 season:

Responsible for the selection of the team suit and coordination of the swim team suit sale.

Apparel Sale:
2009 season:

A fundraiser, which requires the person to collect orders and coordinate the sale of assorted apparel (such as shirts, hats, bags). The items may also be on sale at the Pines Lake Association Fourth of July Picnic, select home meets, and the Pines Lake Association Labor Day Picnic.

Swim Team Pictures:
2009 season:

This person sets up a photographer to take individual and team pictures. The parent is responsible for booking a photographer, scheduling, collection of monies, and distribution of pictures.