

NSC Team Handbook

2007-2008 Season

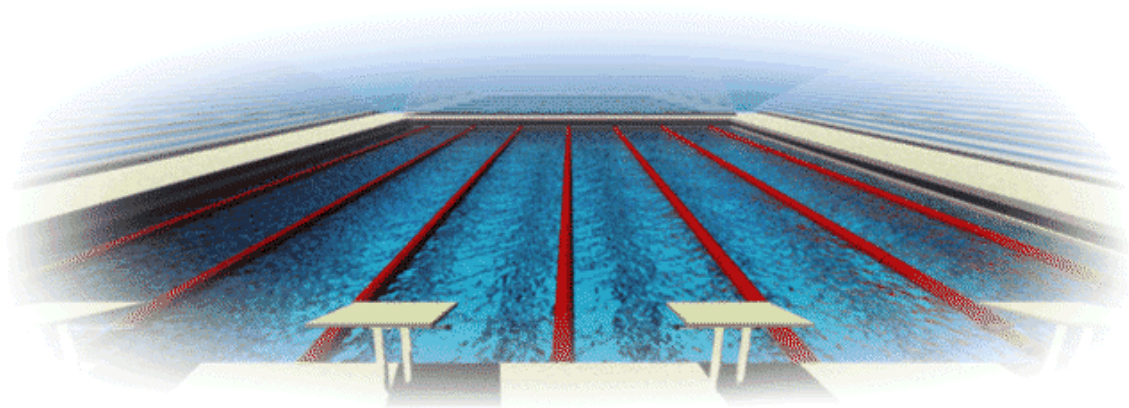


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Introduction

This Newington Swim Club Team Handbook has been prepared for the purposes of acquainting you with the team and sport of competitive swimming. It will give you and your child information that will allow you to get the most out of participating in an age group program. The following pages will also provide information on how your child can be a good teammate and how you can assist them in being a good teammate.

The sport of swimming has many benefits, including the people you and your child will meet. The camaraderie among athletes is unique; many swimming buddies become lifelong friends. Mark and Eric have been friends since they met at the age of six while swimming for the Southington YMCA in 1980! Possibly the greatest benefits of participating in an organized swimming program are the life skills your child will develop. These skills include time management, self-discipline and sportsmanship. Most athletes go on to be very successful and productive adults.

Newington Swim Club has had a lot of success in recent seasons. We were undefeated for over five seasons in Central Connecticut Winter Swim League Division II competition. Because of this success we have earned the right to compete in the elite CCWSL Division I. And while we are the young team in Division I winning is not our main goal. Personal achievement is stressed as our most important goal. We believe that by having fun while showing dedication, team spirit and sportsmanship - success is inevitable.

Supporting your child in swimming can be one of life's most rewarding experiences. You will soon find yourself cheering at meets, going to team outings, working during meets, and maybe even going on to become a certified official. Whatever your role, do it with positive support.

Please ask questions of your coaches, and fellow parents. We all have the same goal; to give your child the best possible experience in swimming. With the right attitude and a good understanding of what is involved, everyone will have a pleasant experience.

Best wishes for a very successful season. Have a good time!

The Newington Swim Club Coaching Staff

Newington Tidal Waves Swim Club (NSC)

The Newington Tidal Waves Swim Club is a recreational and United States Swimming (USS) team made up of swimmers from Newington and surrounding towns. NSC is a member of the Central Connecticut Winter Swim League (CCWSL). NSC is one team made up of boys and girls ages 5-17. The CCWSL is split in three divisions made up of teams from Windsor, Manchester, Glastonbury, West Hartford, Springfield JCC, Newington, Storrs, Wethersfield, Windsor Locks, Rocky Hill, Farmington, Enfield and Hartford JCC.

Team Philosophy

The Newington Tidal Waves Swim Team is structured so as to provide for: the growth of the individual, a co-operative group experience, the development of social interaction skills, the commitment of self-improvement, the strengthening of the individual's self-esteem. The program provides both boys and girls, ages 5-17, a unique opportunity to develop their competitive swimming skills, increase their aerobic fitness level, stroke technique, and personal accomplishments. This opportunity will be provided, if the athlete is eager to swim, work hard and diligently in practice, and is willing to follow rules and regulations as expected. All new swimmers are required to take and pass a basic team try-out. This team is intended to be an exercise in learning, i.e. knowledge gained that can last a lifetime.

Athletics can be one of the very special and beneficial experiences in life. This will only happen when the importance of athletics is kept in proper perspective, and swimmers compete in a positive atmosphere. We hope that you, the swimmer, will always strive to make the most out of your abilities, to support and encourage your teammates, and to represent your family, and community. Competition is an important concept to be learned in life. This swim team program will put competition into a proper perspective for your child. One will also learn to lose. Then the swimmer will have to find out how to improve his or her weaker skills in order to experience consistent success.

An important aspect of our program is communication. If either swimmer or parent has any questions about the content of this handbook, please feel free to speak to one of your coaches. Your coaches would much rather deal with any issues as soon as possible, because that can prevent larger problems in the future.

This quality program will help develop the growing child in many ways: physically, mentally and emotionally. We would like to do all these things for your child.

Team Communication

- The Team Bulletin Board (located outside the pool) has the latest news and information.
- Each family will have their own folder in our Family Folder Bin. The Family Folder Bin will be located right outside the pool during every practice. Team newsletters, announcements, and all other important information will be placed in these folders. Please be sure to check your folder everyday during or after practice.
- Special emails will be delivered if you have access to email.
- We have a team website!! Our website will contain all team info, and lots of fun stuff like pictures and fun links. Please visit at www.newingtonswimming.com
- Please see the USS section in this handbook for more information about USS.

Athlete's Safety

It is important to remember that **parents are responsible for their own child while in the locker rooms**. During each practice, swimmers should not be in the locker rooms unless given permission by a coach. Please do not drop your child off outside the building, be sure your child goes on deck, and be back at the end of practice when they leave the deck. For your child's safety, Newington High School requires that the following rules be followed by all team members, siblings and other team visitors:

- No running or horseplay on pool deck, in the locker rooms, or in the lobby.
- No one is to wander any area of Newington High School except the lobby area right outside the locker rooms.
- No one should be in the gym or any other area of the building.
- Pets are not allowed inside Newington High School.

Conditioning

There is no sport where conditioning plays a more important part than in swimming. You really must be "in shape." You have to be able to "put out" from the beginning to the end of each race. This means you have to pay the price at practice. If you are not tired at the end of each practice, you have not been working hard enough. Do not hold back! Practice is where you get your best times.

Your coaching staff's goal is to make each practice fun and challenging. But your coaches believe that the fun things are to be earned and should not be expected. Swimming in itself should be fun enough.

Team Level Descriptions

RED TEAM – Beginner Level 1 – The Red Team is designed for 8 & under, entry-level swimmers with limited or no competitive swimming experience. It is an excellent extension from Newington Park & Rec's swimming lesson program. Red Team members will be instructed in the four competitive strokes, starts and turns. The atmosphere is low-key and relaxed, allowing each child to have fun while learning. The Red Team will compete in all CCWSL meets. Optional USS meets are available.

WHITE TEAM – Beginner Level 2 – The White Team is designed for 9 & over, entry level swimmers with limited or no competitive swimming experience. It is an excellent extension from Newington Park & Rec's swimming lesson program. White Team members will be instructed in the four competitive strokes, starts and turns. The atmosphere is low-key and relaxed, allowing each child to have fun while learning. The White Team will compete in all CCWSL meets. Optional USS meets are available.

BRONZE TEAM – Intermediate Level – The Bronze Team is designed for 9 & over swimmers with some competitive swimming experience. Emphasis is on good sportsmanship and teamwork as training prepares swimmers for competing in all CCWSL meets and optional USS meets. The Bronze Team develops team skills while refining stroke mechanics, starts and turns, and swimming efficiency in an enjoyable atmosphere. Bronze Team members will also be required to do dryland homework which includes stretching and ab exercises.

SILVER TEAM – Advanced Level – The Silver Team works on making the transition from being an intermediate level swimmer to an advanced swimmer by focusing on technique and conditioning in all four competitive strokes, starts & turns. The program requires a swimmer's dedication which includes goal setting, outstanding practice attendance, and cooperation. Silver Team members will be required to do dryland homework which includes stretching and ab exercises. The program requires the swimmer's will to learn how to be a team leader. All Silver Team members will compete in all CCWSL meets and are encouraged to compete in optional USS meets.

GOLD TEAM – Elite Level – The Gold Team focuses on distance and individual medley training, along with stroke mechanics, and dryland homework which includes stretching, ab work and flexibility training. The program requires a swimmer's dedication which includes goal setting, outstanding practice attendance, and cooperation. Gold Team members are expected to have all the qualities of a leader and use those qualities to lead by example. All Gold Team members will compete in all CCWSL meets and are strongly encouraged to compete in optional USS meets.

NSC Practice Schedule

DAY	TIME	TEAM LEVEL
Monday	5:30-6:15	Red (split – group1)
	6:15-7:00	Red (split – group 2)
	5:30-7:00	Bronze / Silver / Gold
Tuesday	5:30-6:15	Red
	5:30-6:30	White
	6:30-8:00	Bronze / Silver
	6:30-8:30	Gold
Thursday	5:30-6:15	Red
	5:30-6:30	White
	6:30-8:00	Bronze / Silver
	6:30-8:30	Gold
Friday	5:30-7:00	White / Bronze / Silver / Gold
Saturday	10:30-Noon	Bronze / Silver / Gold

Swimmers are required to attend at least 2 practices a week but **for best results the coaching staff recommends 3 practices a week for Red & White Team members, and 5 practices a week for Bronze, Silver & Gold Team members.**

Parents are encouraged to view practice from the gallery but please do not come onto the pool deck for insurance reasons. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Please be sure your child arrives in ample time to be on deck at the beginning of practice (at least 15 minutes). Stretching and warm-ups are extremely important to avoid injury.

Coaches are available to speak to **AFTER** practice every night. Coaches are busy preparing for the day's practice, taking attendance and dealing with swimmers before practice starts. Coaches love to speak to parents but please save your questions, comments and concerns until after practice.

Team Policies

- Practice discipline procedures:
 - 1st Warning – swimmers name will be written on dry erase board.
 - 2nd warning – a check will be placed next to that swimmer's name and a consequence will have to take place after practice. Ex. 200 FLY or PIGS
 - 3rd warning – swimmer will be dismissed from practice, asked to get changed and come back down to the pool. Parents will be called.
- At all meets all swimmers will wear team suits. It is recommended that team suits not be worn at practice.
- Team suits, caps, t-shirts, or warm-ups from other Age Group or USS teams are not allowed. High School team suits and caps are acceptable at practices only.
- Swimmers need to attend the minimum of 2 practices per week.
- Swimmers will attend all scheduled meets.
- For safety purposes, no swimmer will leave the pool deck during practices except to use the restrooms. Any swimmer leaving practice early must be picked up from the pool by an adult.
- Any discourteous behavior to any swimmer, coach, or parent during practices, meets, or any swim club event will not be tolerated. The coaching staff will follow the discipline policy stated above for these behaviors.

Team Rules

- Any drug/alcohol abuse will result in suspension from the team.
- For the sake of your performance, your health and the health of others, Newington High School does not allow smoking in or on the grounds of Newington High School.
- The only people allowed on the pool deck during team practices are the swimmers and coaches due to insurance reasons. Parents may observe practices from the gallery.
- Every team member is to attend at least their minimum number of required practices each week.
- All NSC swimmers will appear at all meets wearing team suits and t-shirts if possible, and will behave in a manner which reflects favorably upon both you and Newington. We expect team members to sit together as a team and not in the stands or with other teams.
- Team spirit and good sportsmanship are expected at all times.
- All decisions will be made by the coaching staff in the team's best interest.
- There will be no horseplay at team practices, meets, or other team activities.
- Any type of vandalism or property damage done to Newington High School or a host team's facility will result in suspension from the team.
- Equipment will be put away before any swimmer is allowed to leave practice.
- Any discourteous behavior to any swimmer, coach, or parent during practices, meets, or any swim club event will not be tolerated. The coaching staff will follow the discipline policy stated for these behaviors.

Team Goals

- To promote the physical and mental well being of every youth.
- To develop resourcefulness, initiative, self-reliance, and recognition of the worth and dignity of each individual.
- To provide good sportsmanship within the team and among other teams.
- To develop a sense of responsibility, qualities of leadership, and awareness of competition among youths.
- To provide enjoyment for both swimmer and coach.
- To provide a sense of accomplishment and to stimulate each youth's awareness of their athletic abilities.
- To provide an environment to facilitate social interaction between teammates and fellow competitors.
- To teach swimmers to excel to the best of their abilities.
- To learn how to make a team successful by respecting authority and placing the objectives of the team above personal desires.
- To develop positive feelings about swimming in athletes which they will carry into their adult lives.

United States Swimming (USS)

USS swimming is optional, individual-based, state-wide competition for all levels of competitive swimming. NSC attends approximately 5-10 USS meets each season. USS meets are a positive experience for swimmers for many reasons including:

- More competition than our CCWSL dual meet schedule with swimmers of similar abilities.
- The opportunity to see all levels of swimmers around the state including the best swimmers in the state.
- The opportunity to make more friends.
- The opportunity to improve quicker.
- A smaller coach/swimmer ratio at USS meets than our CCWSL meets.

There is a USS membership fee that goes directly to Connecticut Swimming. USS meets also have small entry fees per event.

USS meets never conflict with our CCWSL dual meet schedule.

USS meets require sign-ups ahead of time. A separate newsletter about USS meet sign-ups will be in your family folder shortly after our season starts. Also, a USS info meeting will take place on early in the season to answer any of your USS questions.

Please see a coach with any questions you might have about USS swimming.

Meet Information

Meet line-ups take an extremely long amount of time to write. Especially if your coaches know the meet is going to be close. The following is a very brief summary of what goes into writing a meet line-up.

- Compare our opponent's results to our best times.
- Prepare a strategy that puts our team in position to be victorious.
- Write meet line-up / keep an eye on the score / make changes
- Make sure all swimmers are entered in at least 2 events.
- Make out event cards.
- Fill out score sheets.

If you cannot attend a scheduled meet please give a note to Mark no later than the Thursday before the scheduled meet. When swimmers are no-shows strategies are lost, relays are scratched, and swimmers who did show up lose the opportunity to swim.

- **NO-SHOW POLICY:**
 - 1st Offense – phone call from Club President.
 - 2nd Offense – swimmer will not swim in the next scheduled meet and phone call from Club President.
 - 3rd Offense – swimmer will not swim in any remaining meets including Championships. Phone call from Club President
- All swimmers are expected to be at all meets.
- Meets take place mostly on Saturdays and sometimes on Sundays.
- Directions for all away meets will be provided.
- Meet schedules are handed out very early in the season.
- All swimmers should be prepared to stay to the end of each meet.
- Swimmers are to be on deck ready to swim by the time given by their coaches.
- Line-ups will be posted before warm-ups on the day of the meet. Copies will be posted for parents in the spectator area.
- Parent volunteers will be needed (timing, concession, etc...) for all meets. A sign-up sheet will be posted on our team bulletin board one week before the meet.
- Swimmers are to stay on deck at all times. Swimmers must get a pass from a coach in order to leave the pool deck.
- Coaches will not look for "missing" swimmers when their events are ready to go.
- Swimmers should bring a combination lock to both home and away meets. If this is not possible, swimmers may bring their belongings on the pool deck. But deck space is often limited and wet!
- The coaching staff kindly asks parents to leave the coaching to the coaches. Advice from outside sources will only confuse swimmers and likely affect their performances in a negative way. We thank you in advance.

Ten Commandments for Swimming Parents

(Written by Rose Snyder for USS Swimming)

- **Thou shall not impose your ambitions on thy child** Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do their personal best.
- **Thou shall be supportive no matter what** There is only one question to ask your child "Did you have fun?" Your child should not be forced to participate.
- **Thou shall not coach your child** Do not undermine the coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to support, love and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent the swimmer/coach bond from forming. Have your child ask the coach if they have a question.
- **Thou shall only have positive things to say at a meet** When you go to a meet you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coach.
- **Thou shall acknowledge thy child's fears** A first time in competition or the first time doing an event can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be nervous. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if they were not ready to compete in it.
- **Thou shall not criticize the officials** If you do not have the time or the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those that are doing the best they can.
- **Honor thy child's coach** The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one and one that contributes to your child's successes as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child, it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.
- **Thou shall not jump from team to team** The water isn't necessarily bluer at another team's pool. Every team has internal problems, even teams that build champions.
- **Thy child shall have goals besides winning** Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning.
- **Thou shall not expect thy child to become an Olympian** There are 225,000 athletes in United States Swimming alone. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are 1 in about 4,300. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask a coach why he coaches. Chances are, he is not an Olympian, but still got enough out of swimming that he wants to pass that love for the sport to others. Swimming teaches self discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they have won. Swimming programs build good people, and you should be happy your child wants to participate.