

# Miramonte Swim Club

*"We are Gators,  
Green and White!  
We are Gators  
LOVE TO FIGHT!  
GOOOO M.S.C!"*



## Gator Handbook

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# Introduction

## **Eligibility**

Any youth age 4-18 is eligible to swim for Miramonte Swim Club, provided he/she has not competed or trained with a U.S. Swimming team after December 31. (Additional information on eligibility in regard to USS teams and high school interscholastic swim teams can be found in the section on County Meet Eligibility Rules.) We have an open membership; registration can occur throughout the swim season.

There are no tryouts or cuts. Swimmers who can swim the length of the pool will be on the team and able to compete in swim meets with other teams. Non-swimmers can participate in the Junior Gator program, where they can learn how to swim and proper stroke technique. Once they meet team eligibility criteria, Junior Gators can graduate to the swim team.

## **Refunds**

If a swimmer resigns from the team by June 1, he/she is eligible for refund of the registration fee less \$125.

## **Termination of Membership**

Under the Miramonte Swim Club By-Laws, membership may be terminated for (a) failure to pay the registration fee; (b) failure to “commit their personal time and efforts assisting at swim meets” (work obligations); (c) serious failure “to observe the rules of conduct governing the swim team, or the rules and regulations of any league or association of which the swim team is a member.” There is no refund of the registration fee in the case of termination.

## **The OMPA**

Miramonte is one of 9 summer recreational swim teams in the Orinda Moraga Pools Association, the OMPA. During the summer, we will have swim meets with the other teams in the OMPA league, some meets with teams outside our league, and some special invitational meets involving several teams. Pool locations and contact information can be found on the MSC Website.

Miramonte Swim Club By-Laws and OMPA By-Laws will be in a binder, for reference at the pool. Due to their length, we have not provided members with individual copies.

# Miramonte Swim Club Philosophy

## **Work With Every Swimmer**

All members of the team, regardless of skill level, should receive personal attention from the coaching staff.

It is important that all swimmers participate and have fun.

## **Encourage Good Sportsmanship**

Encourage respect for oneself — taking responsibility for one's own behavior and learning.

Encourage respect for one's teammates — working to become a team member who contributes to the good of the whole team.

Encourage respect for the other team — considering the other team as an essential partner in competition.

Encourage respect for the rules and officials who uphold them.

## **Work on Basic Skills and Teach Good Physical Fitness Habits**

Teach the skills and concentrate on the basics.

Help swimmers become conscious of the importance of proper techniques, using positive reinforcement whenever possible, rather than criticism.

Demonstrate the importance of good fitness habits, such as warm-up and conditioning exercises.

Talk to swimmers about diet, rest, and involvement in other sports and activities.

## **Help Swimmers Set and Evaluate Individual Goals**

Competing against oneself is perhaps the best way to improve skills.

Help swimmers measure their skills.

Set goals for the future and work to reach those goals.

## **Keep Winning in Perspective**

Winning events or meets is one of the many important goals in sports. Help swimmers and parents become aware of other important goals such as learning skills, improving one's own personal times, becoming more fit, a good leader and a good follower, dealing with the emotions of sport, *and enjoying oneself*.

# Gator Rules – Based on Respect

## Being members of the Miramonte Swim Club, we show respect for:

- Ourselves: Each person can be a good citizen and club member.
- All adults: Coaches and parents. Obey their direction.
- Each other: No verbal abuse or profanity.  
No physical abuse. No pushing into pool or dunking.
- Property: Keep the pool area, restrooms, locker rooms and parking lot clean.  
Adults observe high school rules: no smoking in the pool/locker room areas and no alcohol on school property.
- Environment: Conserve water; limit showers at the pool to only the time needed to clean up.
- Safety: **NO BAREFEET ANYWHERE AROUND OR NEAR THE POOL**  
No running or horseplay around pool or in locker rooms.  
No playing on the pool cover reels or diving board.  
No swimming in the pool unless a coach has given permission and is present to supervise.
- Other Teams: When we are guests at other pools, it is just as important to practice these rules of respect and good sportsmanship. All competition should be in the pool!

# How to Be a Successful “Swimming Parent”

1. Be positive!

2. Be patient - good swimmers take time to develop, and some develop quickly while others take longer. It's never too late! But unless the swimmer is exceptional, don't expect him/her to immediately perform as well as those in the same age group who have been swimming several years. The new swimmer can catch up, but it will take time and patience!

3. Help your swimmer learn to deal with frustration - don't add to it. Children change in so many ways from year to year - physically and psychologically. Don't expect your swimmer to pick up where he/she left off at the end of last season. Swimmers who have done very well one season and then move to the bottom of the next age group can place very high expectations on themselves, which is even tougher to deal with if their parents also expect them to still be the “star” of their age group.

4. Help your child learn (and acknowledge yourself) that the drive to do well must come from within, not from the outside. A child who comes to depend on someone yelling at him to motivate him will flounder when that external motivation disappears.

5. Your swimmer will perform as well as he/she wants to, not as well as you or the coach wants him/her to. Your swimmer's performance will be based on the daily physical and mental effort he/she puts forth, not on the effort of which we believe he/she is capable.

6. Never complain about the number of hours of practice your child logs. Anything worthwhile usually means sacrifice and hard work. Make sure your swimmer realizes that you support him/her in every way possible.

7. We all want the best for our swimmers. But please leave the coaching to the coaches. Swimmers, especially young ones, can become confused with potentially incorrect or unnecessary advice. Our coaches want to be accessible to parents, but please realize that as soon as one age-group practice ends, the next one begins. So if you would like to contact or speak with a coach, please leave a note in the coach's folder (the coaches' file box is brought to every practice). Be sure to include your name, child's name, and the best way to reach you. Rest assured that the coach will get back to you as soon as possible.

8. Help your swimmer remember that although swimming events are individual in nature, he/she is part of a team.

9. The most important thing swimming can do for your child is give him/her a positive self-image and the sense of sportsmanship.

# Communication

Effective communication among coaches, board members, swimmers and their families is crucial. We have over 100 families with busy and varied schedules, and a summer program packed with meets, practices, and social activities. Several key mechanisms have been set up to funnel information to and from you:

## **File Boxes**

The file boxes contain a folder for each family, each board member, and each coach. They are kept poolside. Check your folder DAILY! Regular newsletters and special notices are distributed there. Swimmers love to check their folders; that's how ribbons are distributed, usually one or two days after a meet. If you need to speak to a coach or board member, leaving a note in their folder is usually the most efficient way to arrange a meeting or leave a message.

## **MSC Web Site**

Our web address is [www.msccswim.org](http://www.msccswim.org). Bookmark the page and check meet results or review other information.

## **E-mail Communication**

You will be receiving e-mail communication throughout the season. We will send you specific information on upcoming events, messages from the coaches and board and any last-minute announcements. If you would prefer that we keep you posted in another way, please leave a message in the Secretary's folder.

## **White Boards**

The board by the opening of the Miramonte pool will list upcoming events, new dates or schedule changes. Make sure you check it as you enter the pool for practice and meets.

## **Meet Line-ups**

An email will be sent to all MSC families one to two days prior to a meet with the meet line-ups. The line-ups will also be posted on the website. Make sure to check your email or the website prior to the meet. Once entries are submitted for invitational meets, the events your swimmer is scheduled to swim cannot be changed. Never assume you are or are not in a meet!

## **Meet Sign-outs**

If your swimmer will not be able to swim at a meet, be sure to sign out ahead of time using the MSC Website. You can sign out your swimmer on the Website under the "Swim Meets" tab by removing your swimmer's name under each swim meet. For dual meets, you should sign out at least a week before the meet. Failure to sign out of meets causes coaches extra work and often can seriously jeopardize the relays.

## **Invitational Meets Sign-Ins**

Participation in these meets requires an entry fee be paid for each swimmer whose name is listed as a participant. Therefore, it is your responsibility to the team and the coaches to sign in to these meets as early in the season as possible. Your child will not

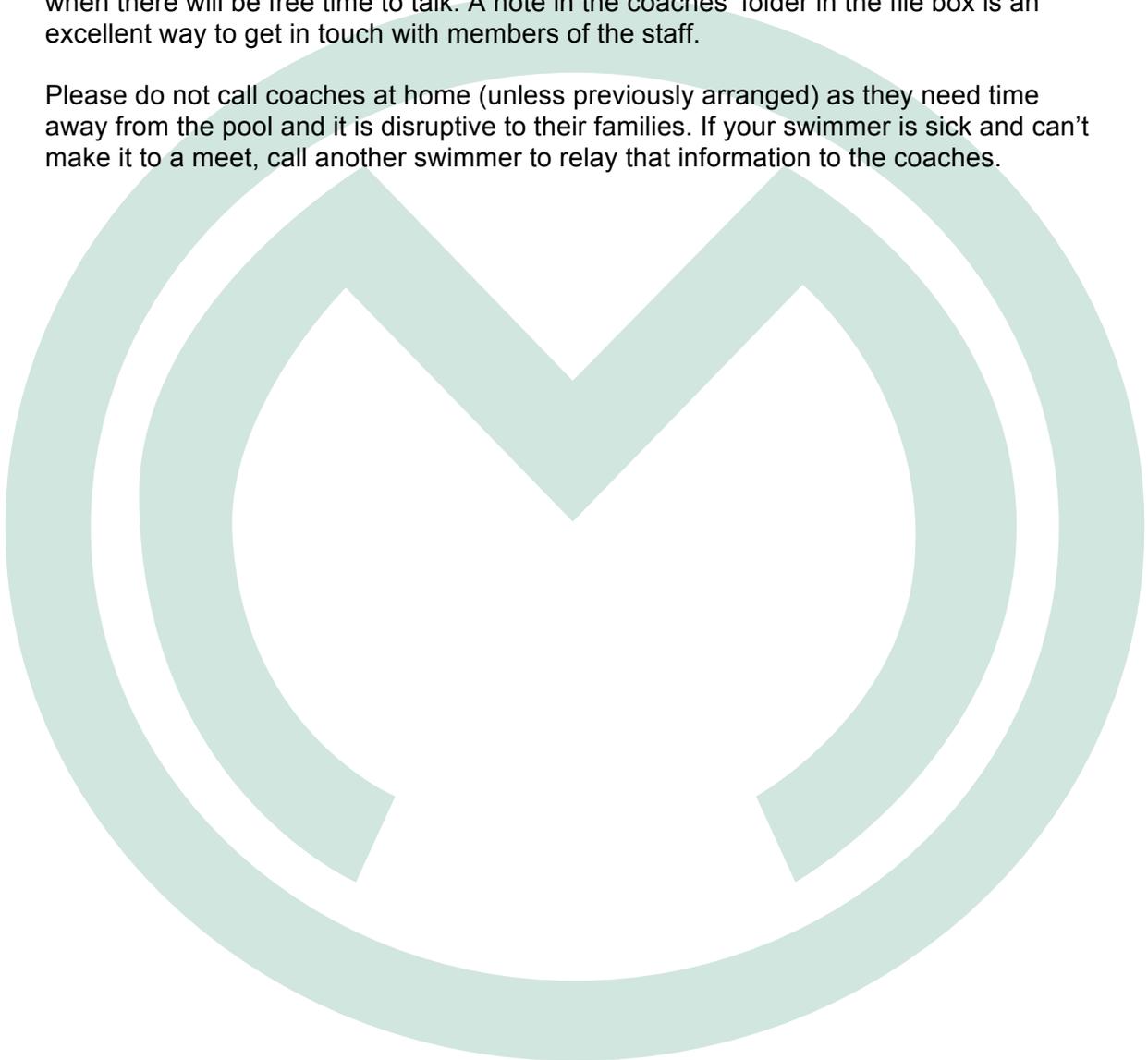


swim in the Invitational unless he/she is signed in. Remember that coaches must submit their list of entries to the sponsoring team three to four weeks before the meet, so sign in early in the season. You can sign in your swimmer on the Website under the "Swim Meets" tab and entering your swimmer's name under each invitational.

### **Communication with Coaches**

The coaches welcome and encourage parent interest, but please be considerate. Don't interrupt the coaches during lessons, workouts, or meets. Arrange for an appointment when there will be free time to talk. A note in the coaches' folder in the file box is an excellent way to get in touch with members of the staff.

Please do not call coaches at home (unless previously arranged) as they need time away from the pool and it is disruptive to their families. If your swimmer is sick and can't make it to a meet, call another swimmer to relay that information to the coaches.



# Team Apparel and Equipment

We STRONGLY PREFER that you purchase the team suit that has been selected for the swim season. Wearing the team suit is an excellent way to demonstrate team spirit and team identity. Information on how to purchase a team suit is on the MSC website. Though sport swimsuits are more expensive than department store suits, if you consider the amount of time over the summer swimmers spend in them, you may feel a little better! We suggest that the team suit be worn for swim meets only.

An important characteristic of a good racing suit is that it fits snugly. Any additional material causes drag in the water and occasionally a lost suit upon a dive in! Girls' racing suits must be high in front for streamlining with a back that allows full and comfortable use of the arms.

Although all a swimmer absolutely needs is a suit, other items are handy:

- Big, warm towels, enough to have a dry one after warm-up and each event they swim.
- Warm sweat suit and sleeping bag, for foggy/chilly mornings or evenings.
- Team swim cap, worn by most girls and many boys. You may purchase a team cap at Registration and at Time Trials. If you need one later in the season contact our Apparel Coordinator. Team caps help identify our swimmers, promote team spirit, keep hair out of the eyes while swimming, and make the swimmer feel more streamlined. (Caps last longer if rinsed in tap water, dried, and dusted with baby powder.)
- Goggles, recommended for workouts since many swimmers find that the chemicals in the water bother their eyes after a period of time in the pool.
- Thongs, or some kind of footwear. (Sneakers for cooler meets.) Swimmers may not go barefoot for safety reasons.
- T-shirt & sunscreen, to prevent sunburn.

Miramonte sells other team apparel such as team sweats and swim coats. These are of high quality and help to keep swimmers warm at chilly meets. Details about ordering are available early in the practice season. (Contact the Apparel Coordinator listed under Board members for more information or check the Apparel section on the MSC website). These items are not fundraisers and are reasonably priced for the quality.

The team OMPA T-Shirt is a club tradition. These shirts are ordered in late July for delivery during Spirit Week, prior to our OMPA championship meet. Worn by swimmers and parents alike, these shirts are a chance to "strut our stuff" at the OMPA!

# Checklist for New Families

- BATHING SUIT** Number one source of identity as a Miramonte Gator.
- TEAM SWIM CAP** This identifies our swimmers and protects hair.
- GOGGLES** Only if swimmer feels they are necessary.
- FOOTWEAR** This avoids any chance of injury to feet.
- BIG TOWELS** Enough to have a dry one for warm-up and after each event.
- SWEAT SUIT** To keep warm in between races.
- SLEEPING BAG** For foggy/chilly mornings and evenings.
- BLANKET** To spread on ground for coverage.
- SUNSCREEN** 30 SPF or higher a must for prolonged sun exposure and should be reapplied throughout the day.
- SUN VISOR / HAT** Helps keep the glare out of your eyes while also protecting your head and face.
- UMBRELLA** To provide shade in open spaces. Umbrellas with a stand work the best.
- BOOKS, GAMES** To pass the time between events.
- SIGN IN/OUT** Remember to sign your child out of any meet that he/she will be unable to participate in and sign your child into any Invitational he/she will be able to attend. This is very important for our coaches to know before they make the lineup.
- FILE BOXES** Check this every day for announcements, activity information and awards.

## Workouts

Swimmers age 8 and under practice once a day, Monday through Friday, in the afternoon; there is typically no afternoon practices on meet days. This age group is broken into a practice for novice swimmers and a practice for returning swimmers. This allows the coaches to work on the basic stroke skills for the new swimmers and to refine the strokes and further develop the experienced swimmers.

For swimmers ages 9-10 the morning practice is their primary practice but they can come to the afternoon practice if they cannot come to morning practice (i.e., the swimmer is in day camp, etc.) and they obtain the MSC President's permission.

For ages 11 and older, their primary practice is the morning practice with the afternoon practice for those wishing to do double workouts, which is strongly encouraged. Swimmers are not to attend the afternoon workouts in lieu of the morning workouts without prior consent of the head coach, and only for extenuating circumstances, e.g. summer school.

Workouts will become more strenuous around the beginning of July followed by a "tapering" in mid-August when they are less strenuous, with the hope that swimmers will "peak" and swim their best times at the OMPA Championship meet.

Regular attendance and punctuality is expected and encouraged, and is important for swimmers' development. Coaches expect attentiveness while at practice, and horseplay in the pool or on the deck is not tolerated. Swimmers should remember that workouts are a learning time and should strive to always put their best effort forward. Serious workouts are rewarded by "fun days," when swimmers participate in fun relays, games, and diving board time.

Parents are encouraged to watch our teaching and training sessions, but please do so from a distance. Parents are not allowed on the pool deck close to the swimmers; the bleachers provide a convenient vantage point. Never talk, signal, wave to or admonish your child while he is in workouts. If you notice a problem, talk to the coach in charge of your child's workout after practice. Never time your child in workouts. If your swimmer has a poor workout, offer encouragement for a better swim at the next one.

If you cannot stay at the pool during your swimmers workout or lessons, please be prompt in dropping off and picking him/her up. Children should not be left unattended before and after practice. Tell your children to wait for their ride safely inside the pool gates, not alone in the parking lot. Swimmers should not distract coaches and swimmers that are busy with another practice.

Swimmers need to remember that we are guests of Miramonte High School, and should treat the pool and the facilities accordingly. Please clean up after yourselves. And for safety's sake, never bring glass into the locker rooms or pool areas. Failure to keep the pool and locker facilities clean and in good order will result in having our locker room privileges revoked and/or having to pay for additional janitorial expenses, which could jeopardize the team.

# Workout Schedule

The swim practices will be held at the Miramonte High School Swim Pool. For the first few weeks of our season, the high school team is still using the pool after school. Because it is the beginning of the season and because our time is limited, workouts are shorter. During the summer, our workouts are in the morning and afternoon and are longer.

The age groupings below are generally followed, but the coaches may wish to move some swimmers to a different workout depending on the size of the workout and the swimmer's ability. Swimmers 8 and Under do not attend the morning workouts as the latter are geared for the longer distance and turns swum by the older swimmers.

Check the MSC website for specific practice times for each age group. Swimmers' age groups are determined by their actual age on June 15 of the current swimming year.

**Practices are held at the Miramonte High School Swim Pool from Monday to Friday.**

At the request of the Acalanes High School District, **we will NOT have practice on the last day of school** due to end of school and graduation activities.

**There are NO workouts on holidays. There are no afternoon workouts on meet days.**

The workout schedule for the week before the County Meet will be posted in August.

## **Pre-Season**

6 and under  
7 – 8 Year Olds  
9 - 10 Year Olds  
11 -12 Year Olds  
13 and Up

## **Summer Season**

Junior Gators  
6 and under  
7 – 8 Year Olds  
9 - 10 Year Olds  
11 -12 Year Olds  
13 and Up

## Private Swim Lessons

In an effort to better accommodate swimmers and their families, we have created a private lesson program. This program will give swimmers an opportunity to benefit from the expertise of our coaches outside of the regular practice schedule. Sign-up sheets will be at the Miramonte High School pool and the instruction will be one-on-one with the coaches. These will be intensive 30 minute sessions and are designed to give your swimmer an edge for the upcoming swim season as well as reinforcing the skills they are learning during practice.

We urge you to have your swimmer ready to start on time as these lessons fill up quickly and we want to give each swimmer the best possible swimming experience. There are no refunds for missed lessons, but we will try to accommodate each swimmer with rescheduling in the event of an emergency no-show.

## Setting Swimmer Goals

A goal gives swimmers something to work toward, and a way to measure growth and achievement. Goals help keep swimmers motivated, and individual goals remind swimmers that their object is individual improvement - competing with themselves, not with other team members or the opposing team.

It would be unrealistic - and discouraging - to expect all swimmers to set County qualifying times as their goals; very few swimmers are able to achieve all County times. Quite a few swimmers are able to achieve one or two County times, in their "best" strokes. Still, County times are a far-off goal for many swimmers, especially swimmers at the bottom of their age group and beginning swimmers, so there are two other goal levels swimmers can aspire to that are more within reach: "bronze" (blue) times and "silver" (Gator) times. These goal times are listed on the OMPA Website. (You can find the link to the OMPA Website on our Home Page.) Swimmers and parents may work together with the coaches to establish intermediate goals as well.

At each meet, beginning with Time Trials, swimmers' times are entered into our statistical computer program, and reports are printed that show the swimmer's time in each stroke swum at the last meet, their best time so far in all their strokes, how many seconds they have improved in each stroke, and how far away they are from qualifying for the County Meet. Swimmers and parents can get their times within a day or two after each meet, from two binders that are kept at the pool, "Girls' Times" and "Boys' Times." (Swimmers who want to know their time as soon as they've finished a race need to ask the recorder as they get out of the pool; the desk cannot give times to swimmers or parents. At invitational meets, swimmers' times are posted periodically.)

## Time Trials

Time Trials is the first official swim meet of the season, although we are not swimming against another team. The purpose is to have swimmers swim competitively within their age groups, trying to swim their best possible time in each stroke, or in all the strokes that they know at that time. Swimmers are expected to swim every stroke they know, and each swimmer is expected to swim the best he/she can. The times posted are used by the coaches as an initial assessment and a starting point from which the swimmer can work to improve during the summer. The initial times are entered in our statistical data base.

Time Trials is also training time for parents of new swimmers. Each parent will participate in one or more of the following functions during the course of Time Trials: Set-up, timer, recorder, starter, stroke-and-turn judge, desk worker, runner, shepherd, announcer, snack bar, and “take down” after the meet. Parents will be instructed on the “how to’s” before Time Trials begins, and then will be paired with an experienced parent during events to learn firsthand what is required in each function. This training will aid parents in fulfilling their required work obligations during the season.

## Parent Work Obligations

Good parental support is the foundation for a successful swim program. Miramonte Swim Club would not exist without parents’ participation. **Our Club is run totally by volunteer effort; only the coaches are paid. We require that all parents take an active role at meets.**

Each family is required to complete a total 30 hours for the summer. This does not include the County meet.

There are two types of jobs: Meet Operations Jobs and Social Jobs. Meet Operations include jobs performed during the meet; social jobs are done to support a variety of activities that are scheduled throughout the summer. More detailed job descriptions, including number of credit hours, are listed on the MSC website.

If your swimmer is an 8 & Under, your family is encouraged to shepherd at least one time as one of your work credits. In addition, each family is expected to work at the OMPA meet. This can be accomplished in many ways: one parent does all of the meets while the other watches the baby; both parents work. Do friends owe you a favor? How about trading carpooling for work obligations? However accomplished, it is critical that every family does its share.

Do not sign up for a job if you must leave the meet early. Be prompt for your work assignments. You must report to the meet director at least 15 minutes before the start of the meet or your job may be reassigned. If you do not show up for your assignment, you



may be charged a \$50 no show fine. The fine must be paid prior to your swimmer's participating in the next swim meet.

At the end of the season, those families who have not met their work obligation of 30 hours, will be assessed a fee of \$10 per hour not worked. For example, if your family completed only 25 hours of work, you will be assessed a fee of \$50. Your swimmer will not be able to register for the next swim season until this fee is paid.

If you know ahead of time that you will not be able to work your assignment, contact another family to trade job assignments or hire a substitute to work your job (there is a list of substitutes on the website on the work obligation page. Once you have traded your job or hired a substitute, it is your responsibility to notify the volunteer coordinator of the change.



# Meets

There are two basic types of meets that Miramonte attends: Dual meets (A or B), and Invitational meets. In a dual meet, we swim against one other team; invitational meets involve several teams who are invited to participate. They are explained in more detail below, followed by a description of various Invitational meets. All meets are shown on the Calendar and on the Schedule of Meets.

## How Meets Are Scheduled

Each September, the Board, through our OMPA Representatives, tries very hard to put together a balanced season of A meets for stronger swimmers, B meets for developing swimmers, and Invitational meets. Our A meets are set for us by the OMPA. We fill in available dates with B meets; due to scheduling conflicts, we sometimes have to go to out-of-league teams to get enough B meets. We try to set our out-of-league meets with teams of similar size and ability. There are out-of-league teams who seek us out for meets due to our size and strength. If we have both an A and B meet with the same team, one will be a home meet for us, and the other an away meet; the next year, it will be the reverse. Similarly for out-of-league meets, we alternate home and away meets.

## Line-up Guidelines

The coaches determine the meet line-ups. They try to allow swimmers to swim all events, realizing they might swim their best strokes more often. A swimmer will usually be entered in his/her best events. However, other circumstances must be considered, such as the strengths of all the swimmers involved, the number of pool lanes available for each event, workout attendance, attitude, and the coaches' need for an updated time. Swimmers need to get times and experience in all strokes, and the coaches need to develop overall team strength.

If you have a question about the events your child is scheduled to swim, ask the particular coach who prepares that age group's meet line-up, preferably before the day of the meet. Just before meets, coaches are very busy and it is difficult for them to handle a lot of parent questions at that time. (Each coach will be responsible for a particular age group's line-ups for the summer, although all the coaches will work with all the swimmers over the course of the summer.)

Swimmers should arrive for a meet at posted warm-up time. This is very important! The coaches must make sure everyone is there. Also, the team warm-up is vital for best performance. If swimmers are not there at least 1/2 hour before the meet, they may be replaced in their scheduled events.

Shepherds will gather the 8 and Under swimmers together for each event and line them up in their lanes. Parents can assist by instructing their children to stay in the team area and letting the shepherds know if they leave.

Older swimmers are responsible for knowing their heats and lanes for each event, for following the progress of the meet and for being lined up behind their lanes, ready to swim, when their heat is called.

Heat and lane are shown on the meet line-up sheets, posted before and at each meet,

as two numbers with a slash between them; the heat number is first, then the lane. For example: 2 / 3 would mean heat 2, lane 3. Swimmers usually have a different heat/lane for each event. Generally, the faster swimmers are put in the center lanes, and in earlier heats, so they are swimming with swimmers of similar ability.

All swimmers are expected to stay until the end of the meet. If swimmers have completed all of their individual events and are not scheduled for a relay, they should check with the head coach before leaving. Often a swimmer will be needed on a relay at the last minute to replace someone who became ill or had to leave suddenly. Also, the coaches will sometimes have the opportunity to swim an extra heat of relays to allow more swimmers to participate. More than one relay has been cancelled, much to the disappointment of the other three swimmers, because someone left the meet without checking with the Head Coach first!

### **Comfort and Survival**

Since meets can be quite large, it is critical that swimmers stay in the team areas. Since the locales of many of the Invitational meets do not have much shade, families may wish to bring umbrellas to supplement the elaborate overhead tarp systems our team is famous for. In addition to the equipment mentioned under "Team Apparel & Equipment," you may want to bring some simple, inexpensive games (like cards or travel games) to occupy swimmers between their events, and a blanket or sleeping bag to sit on. Finally, parental comfort is often enhanced by a lawn chair or two.

Most meets have a snack bar, but the quality and selection at away meets can be quite variable, so it is advisable to bring nutritious snacks and plenty of beverages for your swimmers and yourself. (Many parents bring fruit or dry cereal for swimmers' snacks.) However, please remember that *no alcohol* is allowed at any swim meet. The snack bar at Miramonte home meets is an important fund-raiser for the team. Much effort is made to ensure a large selection of healthy, satisfying items for swimmers and their families. Your patronage is appreciated!

### **Strokes**

The strokes swum at most meets are freestyle, breaststroke, backstroke, butterfly, individual medley, and two relays: medley relay and freestyle relay. (These events are usually referred to as "free," "breast," "back," "fly," "IM," "medley relay," and "free relay.") In the free, breast, back and fly events, swimmers 8 and younger swim 25 yards - one lap, swimmers 9 and older swim 50 yards - two laps; sometimes 15-18s have the option of swimming 100 yards in A meets, to prepare for the distance that is swum at the County meet by their age group. The individual medley event is 100 yards - one lap each of fly, back, breast and free, but is not swum by 6 and unders.

Four swimmers make up a relay team. In the freestyle relay, all swimmers swim freestyle, but in the medley relay, each swimmer swims a different stroke in this order: back, breast, fly, free. Except for occasional 6 and Under relay events, there are separate girls and boys relays for each age group. Additional information on the strokes can be found on the OMPA website ([www.OMPASwim.com](http://www.OMPASwim.com)).

### **Stroke and Turn Judges**

Stroke and Turn judges are usually present at all A meets and most Invitationals, and at some B meets. Their emphasis is to instruct, not punish. The OMPA rules provide for

leniency (warnings in lieu of disqualifications) for 8 & Under swimmers early in the season, unless an illegal move gives them a material advantage over their competitors. However, Stroke and Turn judging is very strict at the OMPA meet, so it is important that swimmers learn early in the season how to do starts, strokes, and turns legally.

### **Dual Meets**

Dual meets are swum against one other OMPA (Orinda-Moraga Pools Association) league team or an out-of-league team. Swimming against teams from outside the OMPA provide our swimmers additional opportunities to hone their skills against top-notch competition. OMPA dual meets are usually held on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Most weekend meets start at 9 a.m., with swimmers required to be at the pool at 8 a.m. Most weeknight meets start at 6 p.m., with swimmers arriving at 5 p.m. A dual meet usually lasts about 2-3 hours. These times can change with a particular meet, so be sure to check the board to be sure.

In an OMPA dual meet, a swimmer is allowed to swim three individual events and two relay events. Swimmers in the 6 and Under age group may only swim two individual events and two relays. (Six and Unders do not swim individual medley.)

The normal order of events for a dual meet are medley relay, individual medley, freestyle, breaststroke, backstroke, butterfly and freestyle relay. Each event is separated by age groups, which swim in the following order: 6 & Under, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-18, with the girls swimming first at each age level.

Having A and B meets provide the opportunity to meet the competitive needs of swimmers of all abilities. Most A meets are limited to one heat per age group per event, which means three swimmers for that event. (For example, from the 6 and Under age group, there would be three girls swimming freestyle and three boys.)

### **A Meets**

The three fastest swimmers in each stroke will participate in an A meet. The three fastest swimmers in a stroke in an age group are considered A swimmers for that stroke and may not compete in a B meet in that stroke. However, because swimmers are limited in the number of events they may swim in a meet, and also because swimmers may sign out of a meet, swimmers may swim in an A meet even if they do not have one of the three fastest times. These “move up” swimmers are still permitted to swim in a B meet. This means that they are simply swimming for time and are not eligible for ribbons. There is one medley relay team and one freestyle relay team per age group at A meets.

Dual A meets are scored to determine the winning team. Relays receive seven points for first place and three points for second place. Individual strokes, including the IM (Individual Medley) are scored five points for first place, three points for second and one point for third. Ribbons are usually awarded to first place in each relay event and first through third place in each individual event.

A meets are usually shorter than B meets, since only one heat is swum in each event. The IM is usually not swum at B meets.

### **B Meets**

B meets provide the opportunity for all swimmers to compete. If a swimmer did not swim

in an A meet that week, he will be scheduled for a B meet. Some swimmers will swim in both. For example, if a swimmer has two A strokes and three B strokes, he may swim in both meets to gain experience in all the strokes. B meets are not scored, and are not limited to one heat. An effort is made to schedule as many heats as necessary to accommodate all of the swimmers, although under OMPA rules, B meets can be limited to three heats per age group (three heats for girls, three heats for boys). As a result, especially when swimming against other large teams, these meets can be long. Individual Medley (IM) is not swum at B meets. There can be more than one relay team per age group at B meets.

Ribbons are awarded as follows: A/B meets and B meets first through eighth place receive ribbon awards for individual events and first and second place relay teams receive awards. Please note this does not mean first through eighth place for each heat of an event; the times from all the heats of an event are ranked fastest to slowest, with ribbons going to first through eighth place. A meets first through third place receive ribbons for individual events and first place ribbons are given to the relay participants.

### **Invitational Meets**

An Invitational is a special meet hosted by a swim team, usually as a fund-raiser, to which several teams are invited. Eligibility varies with each meet. (See below.) Entry fees are charged per individual or relay event entered. Miramonte Swim Club pays these fees out of our budget; a single invitational meet can cost several hundred dollars in entry fees. As stated previously, it is very important for any swimmer who will be attending to sign into the binder poolside at least three to four weeks in advance of the meet date. The deadline for submitting entries and fees for invitationals is usually three weeks before the meet. Once entries and fees are submitted, there are no refunds.

Swimmers should check the line-ups posted at the pool or with the coaches regarding their participation in each Invitational. The line-ups are posted a couple of days before the submission deadline so swimmers can see what they will be entered in. (This is another good reason for parents to come into the pool area regularly to check bulletin boards.) If you have a question about what your child is swimming, ask before the line-ups are submitted. Once submitted, there can be no changes in what events your child will swim.

Following are brief descriptions of the Invitational meets in which Miramonte participates:

### **Moraga Valley Bottoms Up Invitational Moraga Valley Pool**

This meet is only for those swimmers who are at the bottom of their age group this year, i.e., those swimmers who are 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15 on June 15. Medals or ribbons are awarded to the top 10 individual swimmers and top three relays in each age group. All relays are "mixed," with two girls and two boys swimming each. There is also a parents' relay. This is an all-day meet.

### **Sleepy Hollow B Invitational Sleepy Hollow Swim and Tennis Club**

This meet is for B swimmers who are selected by having best times slower than cut-off time set by Sleepy Hollow for the meet. Be sure to check the meet sheets that will be posted at the pool. Medals or ribbons will be awarded to the top six swimmers and the

top three relays in each event. High-point trophies will be awarded to one boy and one girl in each age group. This can be a very long meet; be prepared to spend a full day. However, this meet can be very rewarding for the swimmers who attend.

### **Meadow Mini Meet Meadow Swim and Tennis Club**

This very important meet is only for swimmers ages 8 and under. Swimmers will swim in groups according to their age the date of the meet, and they will only swim against swimmers their own age, i.e., 7-year-old girls will be competing only against other 7-year-old girls. However, swimmers not yet 5 years old will compete in the 5 and Under category. Five and 6 year olds compete in the morning, and 7 and 8 year olds start when the younger swimmers are finished, but not before noon. Awards will include heat winner ribbons; medals or ribbons to the top eight individual swimmers; rosette ribbons to the top three relays in each event; and team trophies to the top three scoring teams.

### **Friday/Saturday/Sunday OMPA Championship Soda Center**

This is the “biggie” - the meet you work towards all summer! This will be the last meet of the swim season, except for those swimmers who qualify to swim in the County meet. All swimmers participate. For most swimmers, this meet is the highlight of the entire season. This is the meet the coaches train you for all season, and swimmers often swim their lifetime best times at this meet.

The meet spans two days. Each day, preliminary heats are run in the morning. The top eight swimmers in each event qualify for the finals and swimmers placing 9th through 16th qualify for the consolation finals.

The finals are swum in the afternoon. Relay events are also swum in the afternoon, with one relay team for each age group; there are no preliminary/qualifying heats for relays. Medals are awarded to all swimmers in the finals, rosette ribbons to all consolation finalists, and heat winner ribbons are awarded in the morning preliminaries. At the end of the meet, high-point trophies are awarded to one girl and one boy in each age group, as well as team trophies.

This meet is attended by virtually all Orinda-Moraga recreational swimmers and their families. It receives significant coverage in the community newspapers.

### **Saturday/Sunday Contra Costa County Championship**

In order to swim in an individual event in this prestigious meet, swimmers’ best times must meet or be faster than the qualifying times listed under “goal times” in this handbook. They will then find themselves competing with the top recreational swimmers from all over Contra Costa County. MSC can also enter two medley and freestyle relays for each age group. (Relays swim preliminary heats.) Swimmers do not have to have county times to be selected for a relay. Once again, check the boards or consult with the coaches before assuming your child will not be needed for County! Qualifying and swimming in this meet is definitely a challenge and an honor!

## Stroke Information

To increase your understanding of the specific requirements for each of the strokes, you can find descriptions of the USS swimming rules for each stroke on the OMPA Website ([www.OMPASwim.com](http://www.OMPASwim.com)). These rules are used by the stroke and turn judges in determining whether a swimmer is disqualified because of improper stroke execution.

## County Meet Eligibility Rules

The eligibility rules for the Contra Costa County Swim Meet are as follows: The total time a swimmer spends in clinics or lessons may not exceed 15 hours during the period from December 31 until the beginning of the swimmer's recreation swim team summer program. The last date that high school swimmers may swim for a USS team is March 15.

The following guidelines are intended to provide additional information to coaches, parents and swimmers on how the County Meet Committee will interpret these rules. Other considerations may also be taken into account with individual swimmers, as each swimmer's situation is unique.

### **General Policy: Protection of "Rec" Swimming**

We are fortunate that in our area we have strong USS and recreation swim programs, and we wish to keep both strong and separate. The County Meet is intended to provide a venue for summertime "recreation" swimmers to compete against each other. We encourage swimmers who want to pursue a more serious swimming career to join one of the USS teams in the area. "Rec" swimmers are expected to take a break from swimming and not swim year-round.

### **Eligibility Rulings: County Meet Committee**

The County Meet Committee, comprising the current, past and future County Meet Directors, is responsible for ruling on eligibility of swimmers. Only the County Meet Committee can decide questions of eligibility. Parents, coaches and swimmers are advised to call with questions. It is recommended that you not request rulings from LMYA members, directors or coaches, meet officials or USS coaches.

# Lessons & Clinics vs. “Training”

This chart is intended to show the difference between lessons/clinics and training.

## Lessons and Clinics

eligibility not jeopardized

### Type of Work

stroke techniques  
discussions  
movies  
demonstrations  
concentration on correction

### Size

5-7 swimmers and a coach

### Time

limited to 2 or 3 weeks  
30-45 minutes per session

### Goals

learning  
perfection  
fine-turning  
right/wrong

### Co-participants

“rec” swimmers

## Training and Workout

eligibility jeopardized

### Type of Work

lots of laps  
interval work  
sets  
weightlifting  
sprint work

### Size

varies, usually 7 or more swimmers to a coach

### Time

on-going, or more than 2-3 weeks, 45 minutes or more

### Goals

endurance  
conditioning  
strength  
distance work

### Co-participants

USS swimmers

## “Rec” vs. USS Swimming

Note: Although lessons and clinics are deemed “safe” for County entrants, “rec” swimmers are expected to take a break. This means that a swimmer who takes lesson after lesson, between December 31 and the beginning of his rec team’s workout (in essence, in the water year-round) could be ineligible, depending on the facts. Any protests must be in writing to the County Meet Committee.

## Time Standards

The OMPA time standards and the County Qualifying Times can be found on the OMPA Website ([www.OMPASwim.com](http://www.OMPASwim.com)).

# Awards

Awards provide on-going recognition of swimmers' achievements at the pool. Below are the types of awards given:

## Records

Miramonte keeps track of two types of swimming records for each age group: Pool Records and Team Records. These are posted at the pool. Swimmers achieving a new record at a meet will receive a rosette "record breaker" ribbon at the year-end Awards Ceremony.

Pool Record is the fastest time swum in the Miramonte pool, by any swimmer - from another club, or from Miramonte. Team Record is the fastest time swum by a Miramonte swimmer at any meet, home or away. Meet Records are kept by some Invitational meets such as the Mini Meet, the OMPA championships, and the County Meet, for the fastest times in the history of that meet.

## Weekly Awards

Informal awards presentations are made during workout on a weekly basis, usually on Fridays. Ideas for other weekly awards are always welcome. Typically awarded are:

- Swimmer of the Week—awarded to a swimmer making a special accomplishment or contribution to the team that week.
- Swimmer of the Meet—awarded to a swimmer making a special accomplishment or contribution to the team in a meet.
- No-Breather—awarded to 8 and Under swimmers for the first time they swim a freestyle or butterfly race without a breath.
- County Time—awarded each time a swimmer achieves a county qualifying time in an event.
- 10 Best Times—awarded to a swimmer who achieves 10 best times in any combination of strokes.

## Meet Awards

These consist mainly of ribbons. The home team provides the ribbons for a meet. Within the OMPA, ribbons are generally awarded as follows:

- A meets—first, second and third place ribbons are awarded in each individual event, and only first place ribbons are awarded for relay events.
- B meets—first through sixth place ribbons are awarded for individual events. However, more places may be awarded at the discretion of the home team. First and second place ribbons are awarded for relay events.
- Invitational Meets have their own guidelines for awards.
- Participant ribbons will be awarded by MSC to MSC swimmers aged 8 and under who participate in A and B meets but do not receive a ribbon at a home or away meet. For swimmers aged 9 and up, Best Times ribbons are awarded at both A and B meets.

## **End of Year Awards**

At the end of the season, an awards ceremony is held. Each and every swimmer receives an award! In addition, the following individual awards are presented:

### HIGH-POINT TROPHIES

Awarded in each age group to one boy and one girl scoring the highest number of points during the season in all team-scored A meets up to and including the OMPA Championship meet. The following meets are excluded from high-point scoring: all B meets, Invitationals, and the County meet. Ties will be given if within one point. (See Appendix for how points are calculated.)

### MOST IMPROVED and MOST IMPROVED NOVICE AWARDS

Awarded in each age group to one boy and one girl making the greatest improvement in their times from Time Trials (or when first timed). Swimmers must have times recorded in all four individual strokes (IM times are not included because IM is not usually swum at B meets), and swimmers must have participated in at least 50% of scheduled meets. (If you swim only B meets, this would mean participation in at least 50% of B meets.) Novice awards will be given for first-year competitors only. Transfers from other teams and high school team swimmers do not qualify for the novice awards. Ties will be given if times are within one second. (Improvement is shown for each swimmer and stroke in the Times binder kept at the pool.)

### OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Awarded to the top 12 scorers on the team who are not receiving a high-point award. The award will be calculated in the same manner as the high-point award, and the same meets will count. This award is not given by sex or age; only by the points earned throughout the summer. Also, any swimmer receiving all five county times will receive a rosette ribbon.

### RECORD BREAKING ROSETTE RIBBONS

Awarded to all swimmers breaking team records during the season.

### COACHES' AWARDS

A perpetual trophy is given to one girl and one boy of the coaches' choice. Generally, the coaches consider attitude, effort, and team spirit in their selection.

### OUTSTANDING RELAYS

Trophies will be given to each member of one boy relay team and one girl relay team, either a medley or free relay of any given age group. Selection will be based on the following criteria: setting/breaking team records, points earned for the team, and team spirit. This award may be given to a relay for one outstanding performance, such as breaking a county record or a long-standing record.

### OTHER AWARDS

These are awarded at the coaches' discretion. In the past, awards (trophies, paperweights, rosettes) have been given at each age level for "Team Spirit," "Workhorse," "Improvement," and "All Gator Times." Philosophically, the Club aims towards honoring as many swimmers as possible for individual contributions to the team. Awards are handled by the Awards Coordinator, with assistance from our team Statistician and input from our coaches.

High points are calculated according to the number of individual points earned in scored meets as follows:

Place	Dual A Meets	Tri-Meets	OMPA
1st	5 points	6 points	17 points
2nd	3 points	4 points	15 points
3rd	1 point	3 points	14 points
4th			13 points
5th			12 points
6th			11 points
7th			10 points
8th			9 points
9th			8 points
10th			7 points
11th			6 points
12th			5 points
13th			4 points
14th			3 points
15th			2 points
16th			1 point

### Determination of Most Improved Award

The best times of the season are subtracted from Time Trials or from the initial recorded time to determine which swimmer has made the greatest improvement in seconds in all four strokes. To be eligible for these awards you must have participated in at least 50% of scheduled meets. If you only swim B meets, this would mean participation in at least half of the B meets. The IM is not used for improvement awards determination.

<u>EXAMPLE</u>	<u>TIME TRIALS</u>	<u>BEST TIME</u>	<u>IMPROVEMENT</u>
Free	28.03	20.14	135.85 seconds
Breast	32.15	30.36	- 118.75 seconds
Back	30.00	28.01	<b>17.10 seconds</b>
Fly	<u>45.67</u>	<u>40.24</u>	<b>improvement</b>
	135.85	118.75	

## Social Activities

Social activities make the Miramonte Swim Club experience even more fun. These functions provide opportunities for swimmers, coaches, and families to get to know each other better. Additional social events for individual age groups are planned by the Age Group Coordinators and will be announced throughout the summer. Check the white boards and your folders for information on these events. Check the MSC Website for a complete list of social activities with dates and times.

