



INFORMATION BOOK

for swimmers & families

2022 – 2023 Swim Season

******Please note that this Information Book references our registration with the New England Swim League. We are currently registered under the Adirondack Swim League but are in the process of transferring leagues and hope the process is completed prior to the start of the 2022-2023 season. If that is not possible, we will remain under the Adirondack Swim League until it is possible to switch.**

This document has been prepared by the AOST Board of Directors and Head Coach. It should provide answers to just about every question but please reach out to the Board or Coach if further details are needed.

INFORMATION BOOK

For swimmers & families

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1. TEAM HISTORY

The Addison Otters Swim Team (AOST) is a private club that was created in 1972 by community members wishing to establish a competitive swim team for local youth that would utilize the pool facility at Mt. Abraham Union High School.

Throughout its history, AOST has been a member of both the New England Swim League and, more recently, the Adirondack Swim League. While it has been part of the Adirondack Swim League for many years, starting in 2022 the team will revert back to being a member of the New England Swim League. ***See disclaimer on cover page of this Information Book.

2. TEAM PHILOSOPHY

The Addison Otters Swim Team is a competitive swim team that focuses on providing instruction and training in ways that encourage and support all swimmers to achieve their highest potential.

Along with training and improving technical swimming techniques, members have the opportunity to develop self-discipline and sportsmanship skills, along with a strong sense of responsibility and independence. While learning these life-long lessons, it is the intent that all swimmers develop an appreciation for the sport and thoroughly enjoy swimming.

3. TEAM STRUCTURE

a) GENERAL

The Addison Otters Swim Team is a nonprofit corporation organized under the Vermont Nonprofit Corporation Act (11 V.S.A. Chapter 19), and has been filed as such with the Office of the Secretary of State since January 28, 1983. The team is a member of the New England Swim League which is a member of USA Swimming. Practices are held at Mt. Abraham Union High School pool in Bristol, VT and is open, based on availability, to youth in grades K-12.

Members of AOST are individual members of the New England Swim League and USA Swimming.

As a benefit of being a member of the New England Swim League and USA Swimming, swimmers receive accidental and secondary liability insurance, which is in effect while swimmers are participating in meets and practice sessions. Due to insurance reasons, non-members may not participate in practices or meets.

b) COACHES

The Addison Otters Swim Team employs a Head Coach and an Assistant Coach when possible. Coaches must meet all coaching requirements and certifications required to register as non-athlete members of both the USA Swimming and New England Swim League.

The Head Coach is ultimately responsible for the coaching of all the swimmers on the AOST. The Head Coach makes long range plans for the team, supervises the assistant coach when one is employed, plans and supervises practices, critiques and tracks swimmer performance, approves meet entries, and cares for the welfare and progress of every swimmer on the team.

The Head Coach also communicates with and guides the Board of Directors with the main goal being to manage all aspects of the team keeping the best interest of all swimmers in mind.

The coach also has the discretion to allow some senior swimmers to assist with younger, less experienced swimmers. All assistants will be supervised by the Head Coach. Our experience shows that this is a valuable learning tool for all involved.

The coach for the 2022-2023 season is:

Head Coach: Bill Clark

c) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 2022-2023 Board of Directors consists of the following volunteers. The officers are elected yearly at the annual meeting. Each member of the Board is required to meet all of the requirements necessary to register as non-athlete members of both the USA Swimming and New England Swim League.

PRESIDENT:	TBD
TREASURER:	Deena Miller – (home) 877-1312; (email) deena_david@msn.com
REGISTRAR:	Martha Davis – (home) 453-7817; (email) marthand@gmavt.net

SECRETARY: Julia Doucet – (cell) 802-999-4384; (email) jgranddoucet@gmail.com
MEMBER: Jenny Koopman – (cell) 802-458-2932; (email) jennylynnkoop@gmail.com

In collaboration with the Head Coach, the Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing the operation of the team. The Board's main responsibilities are to:

- Work as a unit to support the team, coach(es), swimmers and families with the best interest of all members in mind.
- Ensure this Addison Otters Swim Team Information Book for swimmers & parents is current and approved by Board members at the start of each season.
- Manage the day-to-day operation and planning of the team.
- Oversee all financial and administrative aspects of the team, including setting and collecting fees, registering swimmers/ coaches/ team with the New England Swim League, paying coaches, entering swimmers in meets, paying meet fees and overseeing fundraising efforts and team gatherings.
- Hold Board meetings throughout the season
- Ensure coach(es) and Board members are current on all required certifications.
- Hold annual meeting following the completion of the swim season to discuss finances, set goals for next season and elect officers.
- Address all suggestions, complaints and problems from coach(es)/ swimmers/ parents/ guardians in a timely and respectful manner.
- Ensure all USA Swimming Policies & Procedures, USA Swimming Safe Sport Policies and Rules, New England Swim League Policies & Procedures and Addison Otters Swim Team Information Book for swimmers & families are available to and followed by all swimmers and their families.
- File appropriate Vermont State and Federal tax forms.

4. POLICIES & PROCEDURES (including Covid policy below)

Addison Otters Swim Team coaches, members and families are required to abide by USA Swimming Policies and Procedures, the USA Swimming Safe Sport Policies and Rules (information below), New England Swim League Policies and Procedures and this Addison Otters Swim Team Information Book for swimmers and families.

These are detailed documents that address all expectations of all people associated with the team as well as steps to take and people to contact if issues arise.

**** NEW COVID-19 POLICY FOR 2022-2023 SEASON**

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused vast disruption across the country and in Vermont. As a non-profit recreational swim team, the health and safety of AOST coaches and swimmers, and their respective families, is a top priority.

The AOST board has adopted the following policies and procedures for the 2022-2023 season. Please note that this policy is subject to change based on updated guidance from the CDC, VDH, and Mt. Abe Union High School. Questions or concerns about this policy may be directed to Julia Doucet at (802)999-4384.

Vaccination status:

While the AOST does not require vaccinations at this time, for the health and safety of our coaches, swimmers, and their respective families, full vaccination is strongly encouraged.

Practice and Operating Procedures:

Only swimmers and coaches will be allowed on the pool deck.

All swimmers must enter and exit the high school building through the back door closest to the pool.

Social distancing of 6' shall be maintained as much as possible.

Swimmers and coaches may not attend practice or other team activities if they have contracted Covid and must follow CDC guidelines to return to the pool.

AOST members must contact our Covid coordinator Julia Doucet at (802) 999-4384 or another board member or coach if they receive a positive test for Covid.

5. SAFE SPORT – ATHLETE PROTECTION POLICIES & RULES

Protecting our young athletes is all of our responsibility, as coaches, volunteers and parents. In order to create a positive experience and a safe environment for athletes, USA Swimming has developed a SAFE SPORT program that provides specific, mandatory policies that must be followed at all levels of the organization. Policies are enforceable by the National Board of Review process. Consequences for breaking a policy include but are not limited to, revocation of membership.

The New England Swim League and AOST have appointed a Safe Sport Coordinator that serves as the primary contact at the LSC level for Safe Sport incident reporting, and are available to confidentially address any related questions or concerns. New England Swimming General Chairperson may also be contacted to report Safe Sport issues. Contacts are as follows:

- AOST Safe Sport Coordinator: Martha Davis, marthand@gmavt.net
- AD Swimming Safe Sport Coordinator: Andre Paradis, ajparadis@yahoo.com, (315) 269-3880
- NE Swimming Safe Sport Coordinator: Anne Kaufman, nesafesport@gmail.com (857)928-3638
- New England Swimming General Chair: JoAnn Fawcett, fawcettjm@aol.com, (518) 399-0494
- New England Swimming General Chair: Betsy Russell, (617) 699-1033
- Safe Sport resources: <https://www.teamunify.com/team/lscnes/page/safesport>

6. COMMUNICATION

Team information can be found on the AOST website at addisonotters.com. Emails will be sent from the website to members when information needs to be distributed to the team. However, we strongly encourage families to check the calendar on the website frequently. We will be keeping the calendar updated. **Examples:** school closings, cancelled/ changed practices, vacation practice schedules, or meet information.

NOTE: Each family can have multiple email addresses for information to be sent. After you have signed in to the website (addisonotters.com), click on *My Account*, and you are able to add additional email addresses under the *Account Info* tab.

The AOST has a Facebook group page at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/283673788392070/>. This is used to post information similar to emails that are sent from the website. Everyone is invited to request acceptance to the AOST group Facebook page and post comments and pictures on the page. Please note that it is not updated as regularly as our website.

7. REGISTRATION

a) ADDISON OTTERS SWIM TEAM REGISTRATION

All swimmers and parents/guardians must complete a two-part on-line registration process. This will include registration with USA Swimming as well as AOST. Information on how to register can be found on our website at www.addisonotters.com (contact team Registrar if unable to access internet). This form contains parent contact information, medical information that is important for the coach to be aware of and other information required by the team, New England League and USA Swimming. Your signature on this form acknowledges that you have access to USA Swimming Policies & Procedures, USA Swimming Safe Sport Policies & Rules, New England Swim League Policies & Procedures and Addison Otters Swim Team Information Book for Swimmers & Parents and will abide by their content. No swimmer will be allowed in the pool until the registration process is completed.

To complete the AOST registration process and begin practice, the following is required from each swimmer:

- AOST on-line registration
- USA Swimming on-line registration
- Mt. Abraham Union High School Hazing form, if necessary (see below),

- Birth Certificate for all new swimmers
- Membership fee as described in Section 8 of this document.

b) MT. ABRAHAM UNION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

All AOST swimmers that attend Mt. Abraham Union High School or Middle School, are required to sign and comply with the ***Mt. Abraham Student Athlete Hazing Forms***. Parents/ guardians are also required to sign these forms. By signing the forms, all Mt. Abraham Union High School students that swim on the AOST are eligible to earn a varsity letter for swimming. Eligibility is based on having participated in the sport of competitive swimming at a level in which the Head Coach feels merits a high school varsity letter for swimming. This level includes consistent attendance at practice and participation at swim meets throughout the season. Swimmers attending high schools other than Mt. Abraham Union High School are welcome to make similar arrangements with their schools. This form will be posted on the team website prior to the start of the season. These forms are required to be submitted prior to the first practice.

NOTE: TRANSFERS FROM OTHER SWIM TEAMS – The AOST accepts transfers from other teams. All previous commitments, including financial, must be met prior to AOST registration. AOST reserves the right to contact previous teams for verification.

8. FEES STRUCTURE

a) MEMBERSHIP FEES

AOST is a private club. The income from Membership Fees and fundraising cover expenses, including but not limited to, employing a coach(es), USA Swimming and New England Swim League registration, and swim meet fees. Each swimmer’s family is responsible for payment of fees prior to the start of practice in accordance to the payment schedule below. Payments not made in accordance with the schedule are considered past due and swimmers will not be allowed to swim or sign up for meets until payment is current. This will be strictly enforced. Please note that the team will make reasonable accommodations for swim families who are experiencing a hardship. If this is the case, it is the parent/guardian’s responsibility to notify the Treasurer to collaborate on creating a reasonable payment plan.

Fees are payable prior to the swimmer entering the pool for the first practice. It is the expectation that when registering, swimmers are committing to the entire season and full season payment is due even if a swimmer decides to not complete the season.

Grades 7 - 12	\$400 per athlete
Grades K - 6	\$300 per athlete

b) REFUNDS

Under special circumstances, refunds will be given up until November 15th less a \$100 administration fee (due to league memberships that are non-refundable to AOST). No refunds will be given after this date.

c) MEET FEES

Swim meet fees for the two local GMA/St. Mike’s meets are included in the membership fee. If, however, a swimmer signs up for a meet and then does not attend, the swimmer will be charged for the cost (approximately \$50 - \$75). Additional meets may be added to the schedule at the coach’s discretion. Meet fees will be the responsibility of the swimmers who opt to attend and will be payable prior to registering for the meet. Information will be available on our online meet registration page.

d) OUTREACH PROGRAM

New England Swimming and USA Swimming offer reduced USA Swimming Membership fees for qualified athletes. The purpose of this program is to provide competitive swimming opportunities to underrepresented and economically disadvantaged youth. If approved, Membership Fees will be reduced by \$84.00. Applications are posted under the Information tab on the AOST website.

9. SEASON AND PRACTICE SCHEDULES

Practices are held at the Mt. Abraham Union High School pool in Bristol, VT. To achieve the full benefit of the AOST program, practice should be attended regularly. Swimmers who miss practice may fall behind their group.

a) SEASON START

The swim season will commence as close to November 1st as possible.

The season begins with emphasis on stroke/turn/start technique, moves toward endurance training, then to final preparations and fine tuning for any final championship meets.

b) SEASON END

Season finishes at the end of last regular season meet or the Friday prior to February school break (generally mid-February). In the event that a swimmer qualifies for regional and/or Zone championships, that swimmer's season may be extended and arrangements will be made with the Head Coach.

c) SEASON PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Each season starts with the practice schedule listed below. Swimmers are expected to be ready to swim at the times listed. Please notify the coach if your swimmer needs to leave practice early. Swimmers should be in their swimming gear and ready to begin practice promptly at 4:30 p.m.

Grades 7 - 12*	Monday, Wednesday, Friday	4:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Grades K - 6**	Tuesday, Thursday	4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

* At the discretion of the coach, a swimmer may be moved from the Tues/Thursday group to the M/W/F group if the swimmer demonstrates an ability to swim at a more highly skilled and technical level.

**Swimmers must demonstrate an ability to successfully swim the length of the pool in order to register for swim team. This is for the safety and well-being of all swimmers. We do not have the capacity to teach basic swim instruction and would be happy to recommend swim lesson programs for those particular swimmers. Please note that this is a change from our prior years' policies.

Please note that as of September 15, 2022, there will be no practice group for Tues/Thursday grades K-6 as we have been unsuccessful in employing a coach. If the situation changes (which we hope it does!), we will gladly welcome the younger swimmers. If you know of a coach who would be interested, please send them our way!

c) DRY LAND TRAINING AND/OR ADDITIONAL TRAINING

Advanced swimmers may be eligible to participate in additional training including a dry land training program when available. This would be included in the membership fee. Participation in this program is at the discretion of the Head Coach. Dry land training is out-of-the water strength and conditioning practice that enables our swimmers to improve their performance in the pool and reduce the risk of injury. These practices will be scheduled based on coach and location availability.

LATE START PRACTICE DATES (due to after school programming):

Due to some after school programming at the pool for younger kids, we may need to start practice late on a few days. These dates will be added to our team calendar if and when they become available.

10. SWIM MEET INFORMATION

a) SWIM MEET SCHEDULE

The following is the tentative 2022-2023 AOST swim meet schedule and is subject to change. These meets are included in a swimmer's membership but are not refundable if a swimmer chooses not to attend or if a meet is cancelled for reasons beyond the team's control. All meet and event entries will be determined by practice participation and ability, and approved by the Head Coach. Additional meets may be added to the calendar based on coach availability and will be at the swimmer's expense. Information about all meets and any additional costs will be on our website.

Friday, January 6th - Sunday, January 8th

GMA Winter Knight Specialty Meet, St. Michael's College, Colchester, VT

Sunday, January 29th

GMA Meet, St. Michael's College, Colchester, VT

b) SWIM MEET SIGNUP

Meet signups are done on the team website and/or by the Head Coach. Instructions and guidance will be provided on our website to all eligible swimmers and their families.

c) SWIM MEET PREPARATION

Swim meets can be confusing and intimidating for new and/ or young swimmers and their families. Below are some suggestions that can help with meet n.

- Become familiar with the websites for the Addison Otters Swim Team, New England Swim League, New England Swim League and USA Swimming.
- Find the meet information on the website (New England Swimming). Each meet is listed individually. Each listing contains meet information including meet location, date, times, list of events, and warmup times as well as other useful information. As the meet gets closer, other information will be added such as any changes, timing assignments and list of participates.
- Warmup times and timing assignments are usually posted and finalized a day or two prior to the meet. However, always check the website for changes before leaving for the meet. Warmup and start times frequently change.
- Manage time to be ready to swim and checked in with the coach 15 minutes prior to warmup times.
- Provide nutritional snacks and drinks. Limit processed sugar. Food and drinks are normally sold at meets.
- Know what events your swimmer is signed up for and verify, before the start of the meet, that your swimmer knows her/his events, heats and lanes and has them written on her/his hand. The coach always has a heat sheet for the swimmers to find their heat and lane numbers. Heat sheets are available for purchase prior to the start of the meet. If confused, younger swimmers can ask older swimmers or the coach for help.
- Bring extra suits, goggles, caps and towels in case of equipment malfunction. Swim gear is sometimes sold at the meets.
- **Ask questions before, during and after going to a meet!** If you or your swimmer has difficulty with event/ heat/ lane information or general meet procedures, ask the coach, older swimmer or experienced swim parent.

d) SWIM MEET TIMING ASSIGNMENTS

Each lane at swim meets requires two timers. Our team may be responsible for at least one timing assignment. The list of timers will be determined by the swimmers and events. For example: The parent/ guardian of the swimmer who is done swimming first, will time first. The parent/ guardian of the swimmers who swims last will time last. Parents should work together to organize a list of timers to cover the team's timing obligations.

Timing is required by ALL parents who have athletes participating in meets. Timing is not difficult and is a great way to watch your swimmer up close!

e) TRAVEL TO SWIM MEETS

Travel to meets is the responsible of each individual swim family.

11. EQUIPMENT

The following are suggestions/requirements for suits, goggles and caps. Other equipment may occasionally be suggested by the coach.

a) SUITS

It is suggested, but not required, that swimmers purchase a team swim suit for meets and also have a practice suit. One piece suits are required for all female swimmers, and jammers are suggested for male swimmers. Suits should fit snug to the body with no wrinkles in the fabric that cause unnecessary drag. Proper swim suit fit is essential for optimal performance. It is recommended that the team suit be worn only for competition because of the natural deterioration that occurs from exposure to pool water. Practice suits can be purchased from any swim wear supplier.

b) GOGGLES

Goggles are required for both practices and meets for better visibility and protection against the irritation of pool water. Goggles should be comfortable and watertight. Goggles can be purchased from any swim wear supplier and are often available for purchase at meets.

c) CAPS

Caps are suggested for practice and meets and particularly helpful for swimmers with long hair.

12. INJURIES, MEDICAL CONDITIONS, and ILLNESS

Swimmers are required to disclose any personal injury information, physical limitations, or pre-existing medical conditions. This information must be included where indicated on the **AOST Registration Form**. It is also helpful to notify the coach of any medical conditions so we can make accommodations as necessary. Please also communicate any medical plan(s) of action from your doctor that may be necessary to aid in an emergency situation. Swimmers and families are also expected to be responsible when suffering from an illness and take precautions to limit exposure and spread of your illness.

Injured or sick swimmers:

- Are required to notify the coach of injuries and/ or illnesses.
- Should not participate in meets or practices until condition improves.
- Can be directed by the coach to leave practice or to not attend a meet.

13. EXPECTATIONS

a) MISSING PRACTICE OR SCHEDULING CONFLICTS

If your swimmer has a practice or scheduling conflict, or has to miss a practice, they are encouraged to talk to the coach. It is the expectation of the coach(es) that all swimmers be responsible for themselves and feel free to talk to the coach(es) at any time.

b) BEHAVIOR

Individual swimmers are responsible for their behavior. Swimmers are required to pay attention to and follow the instruction of the coach(es). It is important to allow coach(es) and teammates to focus on swimming and not be distracted by disrespectful behavior. All swimmers are expected to act in a respectful manner toward coaches, teammates, parents, opponents, officials and all other people at practice or meets.

Unacceptable behavior will result in sitting out of practice and/ or not participating in meets. Repeat offenders will be suspended from the team with no fee refund. Disciplinary actions will be at the discretion of the Head Coach. Parents/ guardians, family members and guests are held to the same standards.

These behavior expectations apply to all daily practices and all meets.

c) SWIM DECK ETIQUETTE

Only coaches, officials, timers and swimmers are allowed on the swim deck. Parents/guardians, family members and guests can view swim meets from the bleachers designated for spectators. Having extra people on the deck is a distraction to the swimmers, hinders training and is a safety issue. Please refrain from interrupting practices or meets by consulting with the coach(es) and/or swimmers while they are working, training, and racing.

This swim deck etiquette applies to daily practice and all meets.

d) POOL AND LOCKER ROOM CONDUCT

The AOST is fortunate to be able to use the Mt. Abraham Union High School pool and changing/locker rooms each year. Because of the generosity of the Mt. Abraham community, this team is able to exist.

It is important that our swimmers treat the pool and locker rooms with respect. Swimmers are expected to be in and out of the locker room in a timely manner and not use their time in the locker room for play. If it is found that any swimmer causes any sort of destruction to the facility or participates in horse play while in the locker room, disciplinary action, which could include suspension from the team without fee refund, will be taken.

NOTE: The locker room facilities are shared with other athletes. It is suggested that private property be taken with you to the pool room and not left in the locker room. Your personal property is your personal responsibility during daily practice or at away meets.

This pool and locker room conduct applies to daily practice and all meets.

e) **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Use of electronic devices on the deck during practice or meets is with coaches' approval only.

f) **MT. ABRAHAM UNION HIGH SCHOOL FACILITIES**

Swimmers must enter and leave the building through the rear pool entrance/exit and cannot prop open the back door. Hallways can be used for quiet play without the use of balls or any other equipment. If it is found that any swimmer or family member cause any sort of destruction to the facility or participates in horse play while in the facility for practice, waiting for swimmers or attending swim functions, disciplinary action, which could include suspension from the team without fee refund, will be taken.

14. SENIOR GROUP VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

There are volunteer opportunities for the senior swimmers to help coach younger teammates. If you are interested, discuss options with the Head Coach.

15. FUNDRAISING INCENTIVE

Fundraising is necessary to keep the swim season fees down. Any person or group of people wishing to organize a fundraising event will have half of the proceeds credited to their swimmer's account. It is necessary to consult with the Board of Directors when planning a fundraising event.

Membership fees are due per the payment schedule, however if with fundraising results in overpayment, a credit will be issued.

16. VOLUNTEERS

There are lots of opportunities to volunteer and be involved in the team. Volunteers will be needed throughout the season to organize the following:

- Team Pot Lucks
- Organizing timers at meets
- Fun meets
- Publicity
- End of Season Awards Banquet

NOTE: Please speak to any Board member if you are interested in volunteering.

17. COMPLAINTS, CONCERNS AND SUGGESTIONS

It is suggested that any complaints, concerns or suggestions should be brought to the attention of the Board President. Any issues that can't be resolved immediately will be discussed with the coach(es) and/or the Board of Directors. If an issue arises that can't be discussed with the AOST Board or Head Coach, refer to the Safe Sport – Athlete Protection Policies & Rules described in Section 5 of this document.

All input from swimmers and parents/ guardians is welcome.