

# THE SUBURBAN SEAHAWKS TEAM HANDBOOK



3615 Gradyville Road, Newtown Square, PA 19073



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## **ABOUT THE SUBURBAN SEAHAWKS AND USA SWIMMING**

According to USA Swimming, the governing body for the sport of competitive swimming in the United States, the Suburban Seahawks Club (SSC) is one of the oldest continuing operating clubs in the country. SSC has undergone many metamorphoses during its long life, but the intended goal has always been the same – the pursuit of perfection in swimming instruction and excellence in competition.

In 1950, Peter Daland, a Swarthmore College graduate coaching at the Rose Valley Swim Club, gathered together a group of strong summer swimmers from the Suburban Swim League, the only summer league in the country at the time, to form the initial SSC team. Peter brought together swimmers from five summer teams: Rose Valley, Aronimink, Marple Newtown, Colonial Village and Martin's Dam. When Peter left the club in 1955, two parent volunteers, Bill Taylor and Gus Schell, took over coaching duties. Peter ultimately became the legendary swimming coach of the University of Southern California and served as coach of the 1964 women's Olympic swim team, and the 1972 men's Olympic swim team.

During the club's formative years, SSC sought only experienced swimmers for membership. The team was also nomadic, renting space wherever pool time was available. This included trips as far away as downtown Philadelphia. In 1959, SSC parents decided to have a facility built to serve as a "home" for the team. Under the leadership of Frank Edwards, the current Newtown Square site was selected as a convenient location for its membership. The Suburban Seahawks Club and Swim School opened its doors in November, 1960.

In 1966, Frank Keefe, a Villanova graduate who later went on to coach at Yale University, took control of the swim team and the swim school. At this time, swimming as a sport was proliferating in the Delaware Valley. Under Frank, the Suburban Seahawks Club became a nationally prominent team at both the age group and senior levels. The team swelled to over 300 swimmers, in part due to use of the long course pool on John DuPont's estate in Newtown Square, but also due to a change in philosophy. Rather than only accepting experienced swimmers, the Suburban Seahawks Club began to accept swimmers of all levels and taught them how to excel in the pool. As a result, the Suburban Seahawks Club created Olympic champions. In 1968, Carl Robie won an Olympic gold medal in the 200-meter butterfly and Phillip Long finished seventh in the 200-meter Breaststroke in Mexico City. In 1972, Tim McKee won a silver medal in



both the 200 and 400-meter IM at the Munich Olympic Games. At the Montreal Olympic Games in 1976, Tim won silver in the 400-meter IM. Brenda Borgh also represented the United States in Montreal, finishing sixth in the 400-meter freestyle.

In the fall of 1976, Frank left the Suburban Seahawks Club to start his own club on the DuPont Estate, The Foxcatcher Swim Club and a former Suburban Seahawk swimmer and assistant coach, John McFadden, became the Head Coach of the Suburban Seahawks. John continued to develop strong age group swimmers until his departure in the fall of 1981, when the West Chester swim club attempted what was ultimately an unsuccessful merger with Suburban. In July of 1982, the merger was dissolved and a search began for a new head coach. In August of 1982, former Suburban Seahawk, Charlie Kennedy, was hired. A University of Iowa Alumnus and “Phi Beta Kappa”, Charlie captained the Hawkeyes for three of his four years—a feat unequalled by any athlete in the history of Iowa athletics at that point. He also established five individual and several relay records. Although Charlie lost his opportunity to compete at the Olympic trials due to the United States’ boycott of the Moscow Olympics, he remains sincerely grateful for a long and rewarding athletic career!

During Charlie’s leadership, the team has grown from 28 swimmers to an annual average size of 200 swimmers who continue to excel on the local and national level. Over the years, Charlie’s swimmers have been Middle Atlantic Junior Olympic Champions, Middle Atlantic Senior Champions, High School State Champions in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware and US Junior National and Senior National champions. Since 1983, Suburban has consistently sent swimmers to represent the Middle Atlantic Local Swimming Community (LSC) at Zone meets and annually to the USA Swimming Junior and/or Senior National Championships. The Suburban Seahawks have sent squads to seven Olympic Trials. Brendan Hansen, a winner of 25 medals in international competition, including eighteen gold, four silver, and three bronze, spanning multiple Olympics, World, and Pan Pacific Championships, and was voted captain of the 2012 Olympic team by his peers, spent several years under Charlie’s guidance at the Suburban Seahawks Club. Additional renowned alumni include 2 time US National Champion and National Team member Grace Cornelius, US National Champion and National Team member Corrie Clark, Pan American Games Team member, Ian Clark and Egyptian National Record Holder Sharif Madkour.



Charlie is proud of the accolades that Suburban swimmers have earned over the years. But at the core of his coaching philosophy is to use the athletic experience to teach children the skills essential to successfully navigating the path through life. “Fast swimmers can certainly inspire us, but great people can change the world.”

## **FUN FACT: WHAT IS A SEAHAWK?**

According to the Audubon Society, there is no such thing as a Seahawk. But many people consider “Seahawk” to be a nickname for two kinds of birds, the osprey and the skua.

Skuas (a term that covers a group of seven related species of seabirds) are migratory birds found from the North Pole to the South Pole. They rarely come ashore. Skuas have the reputation for being relentless when it comes to what is important to them – finding a meal!

Ospreys are found on every continent except Antarctica. They typically nest on land, but always within a few miles of either the ocean or a body of fresh water. Although eagles and other raptors catch fish, ospreys are unique in their ability to dive into the water and completely submerge themselves. In order to avoid getting water up their noses, they have long slitted nostrils that close voluntarily. They also have great endurance. Experts believe ospreys to be capable of flying over 160,000 miles in their lifetime. During the middle Ages, people thought ospreys to have magical powers. If a fish looked up at an osprey, it would become mesmerized and would give itself up to the predator.

## **USA SWIMMING/MIDDLE ATLANTIC SWIMMING**

USA Swimming is the governing body for the sport of competitive swimming in the United States. In this capacity, USA Swimming is responsible for the conduct and administration of swimming in the United States. USA Swimming determines rules, implements policies and procedures, conducts National Championship meets, spreads information about safety and sports medicine and selects athletes to represent the United States in international competitions. The USA Swimming vision statement is “To inspire and enable our members to achieve excellence in the sport of swimming and in life.”

USA Swimming has divided the country into 59 Local Swimming Communities (LSC). Each LSC is responsible for the administration of USA Swimming



activities in a defined geographical area and has its own set of bylaws under which it operates. The business affairs of each LSC are managed by a House of Delegates which includes representation by athletes, coaches, members of the Board of Directors and participating swim clubs. Each LSC is grouped into one of four zones: Western, Central, Eastern, and Southern.

The Suburban Seahawks Club is part of the Middle Atlantic (MA) LSC. The Middle Atlantic LSC extends from the portion of New Jersey south of Mercer and Monmouth counties, Delaware, and the portion of Pennsylvania east of and including the counties of Potter, Clinton, Centre, Huntingdon and Bedford. The Middle Atlantic LSC requires swimmers to pay a membership fee in order to compete in Middle Atlantic swim meets. The membership is valid for one year. The MA LSC is part of the Eastern Zone, which includes the following other LSCs: Maine, New England, Connecticut, Adirondack, Niagara, Metropolitan Alleghany Mountain, New Jersey, Potomac Valley, Maryland and Virginia.

## **SUBURBAN SEAHAWKS CLUB – STRUCTURE**

### **The Board**

As one of the oldest USA Swimming registered clubs, the Suburban Seahawks Club is a parent owned and operated club, registered as a 501(c) 3 non-profit: the age-group team, swim school and facility are managed by an all-volunteer board of directors. The parents serving terms for the 2020-2021 competition year bring a mix of backgrounds in finance, small business, health care, technology, law, athletics and construction. Working as a team, we meet monthly and focus our strengths into committees further comprised of coaching staff, parent volunteers and community members. We strive to keep our non-profit club financially stable and to make the SSC environment one where swimmers of all ages can grow and develop, supported by an excellent coaching staff.

### **The Office**

The SSC office is primarily managed by the Business Manager, currently Joanna Murphy, with support and oversight from members of the Board on the Operations Committee, Coach Charlie and Coach Tara. The Business Manager is responsible for, among other things, handling billing and collections, including billing associated with swim team session fees at the start of each session. Issues or questions regarding billings and payments should first be directed to the Business Manager by email ([office@sscswim.org](mailto:office@sscswim.org)).





## The Finance Committee

The Board has a number of committees that are responsible for handling specific issues. Financial decisions regarding SSC are handled in the first instance by the Finance Committee and then typically approved by the Board at a regularly scheduled board meeting. Currently, the members of the Finance Committee of the Board are: Drew Murphy (President), Matt Lunn and Rick Simpson.

## FEES

### Financial Policy and Payment of Session Fees

Annual fees and swim team session fees are required to be paid in full at time of registration through Team Unify and the credit card on file with Team Unify.

Annual fees and swim team session fees are not prorated and no refunds will be issued once a session starts. \*\*\*For the 2020-2021 year there will be no refunds for forced shut downs.

### Meet Fees

There are instances where registration for certain meets is prior to the deadline to register and to pay swim team session fees. If the applicable swim team session fee is not paid in full, such swimmer is not eligible to register for any swim meets during the applicable session. Meet fees are the responsibility of the swimmer and are billed through Team Unify and charged to the credit card on file with Team Unify. Fees associated with travel meets are also billed through Team Unify and charged to the credit card on file with Team Unify. If you do not want your credit card associated with Team Unify billed for meet fees or travel meet fees, contact the Office Manager upon registering for the applicable meet to discuss different payment arrangements. If different payment arrangements are not made and approved prior to the applicable meet registration deadline, the credit card associated with Team Unify will be charged.

### Session Fees for the 2020-2021 Season

Annual and swim team session fees are typically adjusted on a yearly basis by the Board to account for various issues and circumstances and, as a result, such fees are subject to change in the discretion of the Board

The following are the annual fees: Paid only once at registration

- Swim Team Membership: \$450 (per family)
- Facility Improvement Fee \$50 (per swimmer)



- COVID Cleaning Fee \$50 (per swimmer)
- USA Full Fee \$80 (per swimmer)

The following are the swim team session fees for Fall/Winter 2020:

- Tadpoles, Herrings \$500
- Minnows, Guppies \$500
- Dolphins & Sunfish \$600
- Barracudas \$780
- Stingrays \$1,025
- Sharks \$1,350
- Piranhas \$1,400

## **SSC UNIFORM POLICY & SPEEDO SPONSORSHIP**

SSC is fortunate to be sponsored by Speedo. The company provides our team with equipment, coaches' gear, advertising and more. Our relationship with Speedo is dependent on the commitment by our team to wear Speedo suits and to try, whenever possible, to use Speedo equipment. Most private swim clubs and swim schools have a similar contractual relationship with a corporate sponsor.

All swimmers are required, once per year, to purchase a team suit at the time of registration. These Speedo suits have been pre-selected by the Board of Directors in consultation with the coaching staff and Senior Gold Swimmers. You will be asked to select a suit size when you register for the fall season and a team suit will be ordered for your swimmer. Your swimmer should wear this Speedo team suit for all team effort swim meets. \*\*\*This year we are not selling a team suit through Suburban 2020-2021.

Swimmers are required to wear only Speedo suits (practice and tech) at national level meets. Swimmers are encouraged to wear Speedo suits for all other meets. Members of the SSC National Team are eligible for certain discounts on the purchase of Speedo tech suits from Toad Hollow Athletics (location and contact information below.) If you have any questions about this, please ask an SSC staff member.



Swimmers are also required to wear an SSC cap for all meets and competitions. There is a team order for caps in the fall and another order in the spring.

## **PRACTICE GROUPS**

### **Group Placement and Moving Up**

Every new swimmer must be evaluated prior to entrance into the SSC program to ensure proper placement. Swimmers can be moved up or down from one group to another based on current practice habits, attendance and behavior. Current SSC swimmers are consistently evaluated during each and every practice with the SSC coaches communicating regularly regarding a swimmer's progress. We have a system in place to evaluate swimmers on a numeric system, based on their age, their race times relative to Age Group standards, work ethic and endurance. Parents are expected to trust the coaching staff, particularly in regard to group placement. They are the experts! Since our coaching staff is comprised of over 150 years of combined coaching experience, we assume this is why you have chosen our club!

### **The Groups (These groups are suspended for the 2020-2021 year.)**

#### **Mini Team**

The fundamental skills for participation in this group begins with the knowledge of all 4 competitive swimming strokes. An SSC mini swimmer must have the ability to swim (continuously) 25 yards of backstroke, 25 yards freestyle with side breathing, 25 yards of rudimentary butterfly (knowledge of the concepts of dolphin kick and moving both arms together), and 25 yards of rudimentary breaststroke (knowledge of but may not be legal in the breaststroke kick). He or she should have some prior knowledge of diving and be able to flutter kick with a kickboard. The swimmer must have the ability to function appropriately in a large group setting and the ability to follow directions from the coaching staff.

The Mini Team places a heavy emphasis on legal stroke mechanics, kick, starts, finishes and is considered an introduction to competitive swimming. The age range is 6-10 years old, each swimmer is afforded the opportunity to compete in age and ability appropriate swim meets. Swimmers are usually in this group for a minimum of 1-2 years.



## Developmental

Skills for entry into this group: - the ability to legally swim 50 yards of free, back, breast, and butterfly. Practices focus on technique, starts, turns and small amount of conditioning. This group continues to place emphasis on legal stroke mechanics, start, turns, stroke drills, and an introduction to swimming “sets”, which is building a stronger basic understanding and fundamental swimming foundation. Average age for this group is 7-12 years old, each swimmer is afforded the opportunity to swim in age and ability appropriate swim meets. Participation in meets is encouraged.

## Bronze

Skills necessary for entry begin with the legal execution of all 4 competitive swimming strokes. The swimmer should have the ability to legally swim 100 yards freestyle, 100 yards backstroke, 50 yards butterfly, and 100 yards breaststroke with legal starts, turns and finishes. Previous competitive swimming experience either with SSC or another USA Swimming organization is recommended. Each swimmer in this group must display an adequate level of fitness conditioning which is evaluated at practices/meets and displayed by attendance, effort level and meet participation. Swimmers must be willing to develop a working knowledge, execution and understanding of the stroke drills and kicks frequently used by the SSC coaching staff. A strong, developing technical foundation and knowledge of the basic legal aspects of competitive swimming should already be established for entry into this group.

The Bronze group continues with the progression of learning proper stroke and turn technique, drills and mechanics. There is also an introduction to interval training and race strategy. The age range for this group is typically between 8-13 years old. The swimmers must be able to function in a large group, follow prescribed directions of each set (i.e. performing stroke drills, kick or strategy as described), demonstrate the ability to follow time intervals while counting repetitions and maintain consistent practice attendance. Meet participation is encouraged. Swimmers in this group display a desire to continue through the SSC competitive team progression, aspiring to a higher level of swimming success and longevity in the sport. Swimmers may be in this group for 1-3 years while developing their technical foundation and understanding of the SSC philosophy.



## Senior Silver

Skills for entry into this group: - the ability to legally swim 100 yard of butterfly, and 200 yards of IM, free, back and breaststroke, with legal turns and finishes. Swimmers must have competed in USS swim meets and have established times in a variety of swimming events. Swimmers must have a foundation of aerobic conditioning; display a working knowledge of stroke and kicking drills frequently used by the SSC Coaching Staff during practices. This working knowledge not only includes execution of the stroke drill but understanding of why the drills are being performed. Swimmers in this group should display the ability to understand and execute swimming sets, the knowledge of reading the pace clock, keeping time, and keeping track of repetitions as outlined by the SSC coaching staff. An advanced technical foundation should already be established and executed consistently during a swimmers current practice group. This technical foundation includes (but not limited to) streamline, body and head position, consistent kick, consistent breathing patterns, legal turns and transitions, shimmer kicks and underwater swimming. Swimmers should be able to execute a coaches instructions and able to complete a 1.5 hour training session which includes dry-land, stroke drills, kicking, aerobic and anaerobic conditioning. Swimmers in this group will be introduced to strategies of racing and competitive swimming and must be able to train consistently, and willing to develop leadership skills and display strong character towards younger members of the SSC program. A year round commitment, consistent practice attendance and participation in meets is expected. Swimmers in this group display the desire to continue thru the SSC competitive team progression in an effort to achieve a higher level of swimming success, longevity within the sport and the desire to swim at top level regional, zone, and national competitions.

## Senior Gold

Swimmers in this group are truly dedicated to the sport of competitive swimming. This training group is structured to produce outstanding swimmers and leaders within the community through teamwork, intense training and competition at regional, national and international levels. These are the most dedicated and skilled swimmers in the club. The SSC coaching staff utilizes the most up-to-date training techniques, race strategies and preparation for competition.

Swimmers seeking entrance into this group must display high levels of physical conditioning, ability for increased work load and intensities, ability to handle challenging physical expectations, commitment to regular practice attendance,



effective communication skills, respect for each member of the SSC organization and USA Swimming community and a willingness to pursue a leadership role within the SSC organization and the community. It is paramount that Sr Gold swimmers understand the impact of their words and behavior on the younger members of our team and other swimmers in the swimming community. Our goal is to command the highest respect FOR each other and OF others in our community and beyond!

Entrance into this group is by Charlie Kennedy, Head Coach, only. A variety of physical test sets, technical evaluations and intellectual maturity will play a role into acceptance. A try-out period may be recommended for any swimmer seeking entrance into this group in order for the coaching staff to appropriately evaluate a swimmer's capabilities.

## **TEAM COMMUNICATION**

### **Swimming/Performance Questions or Issues**

Most communication should take place between parents and the coaches of your swimmer's practice group. Questions about training, missing practices, and swimmer performance can only be addressed by the coaches who are working with your swimmer on a daily basis. The preferred method of communication with coaches is via email. You may email your message to [office@sscswim.org](mailto:office@sscswim.org) and your message will be directed to your child's coach. If you seek a face-to-face discussion with the coach, you may set up a meeting by emailing [office@sscswim.org](mailto:office@sscswim.org). Coaches should never be approached on the pool deck for any reason at all. If there is an emergency situation, the coaches will notify you immediately.

### **Billing/Fees/General Questions or Issues**

Questions regarding billing, fees, employees, volunteering, general questions/concerns about the program should be directed to Joanna Murphy ([office@sscswim.org](mailto:office@sscswim.org)). Questions regarding scheduling (practice or meets), schedule changes, SSC hosted meets, meet entries, SSC Swim School, group or private lesson, should be directed to Tara Bolivar ([meets@sscswim.org](mailto:meets@sscswim.org)).



## Folders

Every family has a folder in the filing cabinet in the SSC lobby. Team/Office staff will leave papers and awards for your swimmer in the team folder.

## General Team Announcements/Practice Changes/Etc.

For general club information and team announcements, follow us on Facebook at Suburban Seahawks Club, follow us on Instagram at sscswim and follow us on Twitter at @SSCSwim.

We will make every effort to notify you of practice changes or cancellations and team activities. Our protocol for notifying you will be as follows: 1) Post an announcement on our Facebook page, Instagram and Twitter; 2) Send an email to all active accounts, and 3) Post an item in the “Announcements” section of the website. We will issue information on emergency closings as soon as it is determined by the coaches. Often, the coaches hold practices even during inclement weather for those who can safely attend. Please do not attend these practices if you cannot safely transport your child to and from practice. Attendance at these practices is at the discretion of the parents.

## **PRACTICE \*\* (Please note: Practice procedures should follow the new COVID requirements for 2020-2021)**

### Swimmer Information

#### Arrival

- Swimmers should be respectful of SSC, Swarthmore College, Hidden Hollow or any pool in which you are visiting.
- Swimmers should arrive prior to the start of practice and allow enough time to change, gather equipment and be on the pool deck prior to the listed practice start time.
- No loitering in the parking lot, entry area or locker room.
- Swimmers should refrain from running around the outside of the building, or inside the building. Swimmers who are at the pool before their practice time should be quietly waiting in the entry area, mezzanine or kitchen. Any swimmer under the age of 10 should be under the supervision of a parent if they are at the pool prior to the start of practice.



- Swimmers are expected to enter and exit the pool deck thru the locker rooms. PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE POOL DECK FROM THE OFFICE.
- All swimmers shall wait on the sides of the pool deck, near or on the benches until a SSC coach calls for that practice group. This allows for proper space behind the blocks for the group in the water to exit safely.
- Swimmers should refrain from yelling, running, climbing on the railings or entering the water in the teaching pool or on the ramp prior to the start of practice.

### During

- Swimmers are encouraged to stay in the water for the entire practice. Each practice is most beneficial when every lap is completed.
- A parent may be contacted if a swimmer is consistently asking to be excused from practice to go to the bathroom or if not completing the prescribed sets. Coaches encourage swimmers to attend to bathroom breaks prior to practice or during certain times during the practice.
- Swimmers must notify the SSC coach on deck if they leave the pool or pool deck during practice.
- Swimmers are expected to focus their attention on the SSC Coaching Staff and limit the amount of time spent looking for/at parents in the lobby or up in the stands. The SSC coaching staff discourages “coaching” from the balcony”.
- Swimmers who are behaving inappropriately, disruptive and/or not following instructions may be removed from practice and instructed to sit on the pool deck until practice is over and a parent can be contacted.

### After

- Swimmers will be released from practice at the documented conclusion time.
- Swimmers may shower briefly and change in the locker rooms.
- There is to be no loitering, fooling around or any behavior deemed undesirable allowed in the locker-room.
- Parents are expected to be at the pool and ready to pick up their swimmer at the conclusion time.

### Parent Information

- Parents are not allowed on the pool deck during any scheduled practice. If you are on the pool deck, a SSC Coach or lifeguard will ask you to leave. Insurance and USA Swimming Safe Sport guidelines does not cover a parent observing practice from the pool deck.





- Parents can observe practice from the lobby area or the upper mezzanine area at SSC and the stands at Swarthmore College.
- Communication with the SSC Coaches should not happen on the pool deck during practices unless it is an emergency. If you would like to meet with your swimmer's coach, please email: [office@sscswim.org](mailto:office@sscswim.org) with your request.
- It is highly encouraged to allow the SSC Coaching Staff to maintain the focus of your swimmer during practice.
- "Coaching from the stands", verbal or non-verbal communication from parents in the stands/lobby to swimmers during practice is discouraged. In the event this behavior becomes disruptive (interferes with a swimmer's focus on the coach's instruction), the parent may be asked to refrain from attending practices and a meeting with members of the SSC Coaching Staff and Board of Directors will be scheduled.
- Parents observing practice should be respectful to all members of the SSC community including other parents, swimmers, swim lesson members, lap swim members and coaches. Any behavior deemed toxic or detrimental between parents in the stands regarding any aspect of the SSC program will cause the parent to lose the privilege of observing practices and a meeting with members of the SSC Coaching Staff and Board of Directors will be scheduled.

## Equipment Needed for Swim Team Practice

### Mini-Team

Kick board, fins, and equipment bag.

### Developmental

Kick board, fins, and equipment bag.

### Bronze

Buoy, fins, snorkel, kick board, and equipment bag.

### Senior Silver

Paddles, buoy, snorkel, fins, kick board, and equipment bag.

### Senior Gold

Paddles, buoy, snorkel, ankle band, fins, parachute, kick board, and equipment bag. Cross blade fins or zoomers are recommended for Senior Gold.

### For All Practice Groups

\*\*\*PLEASE MARK ALL EQUIPMENT & BAGS WITH SWIMMER'S NAME \*\*\*



## Purchasing Equipment

Equipment may be purchased at Toad Hollow Athletics:  
1590 E. Lancaster Avenue Paoli PA 19301 610-640-0594

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF SWIMMERS

A successful swimming program requires understanding and cooperation among the coaches, swimmers and parents. This relationship can be critical to your child's successful development on the team. The coaching staff understands your commitment to your child. Many of the coaches are also mothers and fathers. While the coaches are also committed to ensuring that your child's best interests are served, their responsibility is to serve each and every athlete on the team. Your perspective may differ from the coaches' perspective when it comes to your child's swimming development. Patience, understanding and most importantly, communication are the cornerstones of this relationship. With this in mind, please review and consider the following guidelines:

- Individuals learn at different rates and in different ways. Some athletes will quickly pick up a skill while others may require more time to learn the same skill. Please be patient with your child and his/her development. Direct any questions to the coach of your child's practice group.
- Progress is rarely immediate. New team members will always go through a period of adaptation, no matter their age. This may temporarily impede progress. This could be caused by greater training demands, a stronger emphasis on technique, or simply nerves. Patience, trust and communication among coaches, swimmers and parents will help any struggling swimmer through such a period.
- Plateaus can occur at one time or another in every swimmer's career. A plateau can signify the swimmer has mastered lower order skills, but he/she is not sufficiently ready to attach newer, higher order skills. Plateaus can occur in both training and in competition. It is important to explain to your swimmer that the more successful athletes are those who work through this temporary delay in improvement and go on to achieve greater performance. During these plateaus, the swimmer should communicate regularly with the coach to review training and technique.



- Swimmers ten years and younger are the most inconsistent swimmers. This can be frustrating for parents and swimmers alike. We must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport, the team atmosphere and the fun of competition.
- Parents must realize that slow development of the competitive drive at an early age is normal and perhaps preferable to precocious or forced competitiveness. It is more important that swimmers learn to compete and develop some competitive spirit. It is equally important for children to learn to adapt to reasonable levels of emotional stress. The small disappointments they learn to handle as young children will prepare them to handle the larger challenges they will face as teenagers and adults.
- It is the coaches' job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parents' job to supply love, recognition and encouragement necessary to help the young athlete feel good about him or herself. Be enthusiastic about taking your child to practice and meets, volunteering, attending team events and meetings. Acknowledge and emphasize their effort at practice and meets, rather than focusing on their times. Criticizing the coach in front of the child undermines the coach's authority and breaks the swimmer/coach support that is necessary for maximum success.
- No parent should behave in any manner to discredit the team or the club. Any disagreement with a meet official should be brought to the attention of the coach and handled by the coach. Parents should not directly contact Mid Atlantic Swimming or USA Swimming regarding disqualifications or other official-related matters.
- The communication between coach and swimmer is very important. It is imperative that the coach has the swimmer's full attention at practice. While parents are allowed to watch practice only from the balcony area, parents are not permitted to participate or instruct, nor are they permitted to speak to the coach during practice. Parents who attempt to enter to the pool deck during practice will be asked to leave. Please leave all coaching to the coaching staff. If you have questions or concerns regarding technique or coaching strategies, please arrange a meeting with your child's coach.



- Be punctual for practice and meets and plan for your child to spend the entire practice at the pool, if possible. It is disruptive to have a child arrive late or leave early and it diminishes the quality of the training.
- Support the team at practice and at meets! Make sure your child wears SSC apparel. Volunteer at home meets and, as needed, at away meets; encourage and model good sportsmanship for your child and among other parents; donate food, beverages and money as requested for home meets;
- Encourage healthy eating for your child and do not allow your child to take any performance-enhancing substances for meets or for practices.

Specifically, do not allow your child to eat or drink caffeine, excessive sugar, C4, steroids, human growth hormones or prophylactic anti-inflammatories (unless the latter medications are prescribed by a physician).

## **SWIM MEETS**

SSC participates in local, regional, inter-state, national, and international levels of competition through USA Swimming sanctioned meets. The emphasis is on competition and comparison with oneself with individual improvement being a primary goal along with sportsmanship and team-spirit.

### **Types of Meets (changes have been made to the number of jobs per COVID.)**

#### **SSC Hosted Meets**

Throughout the season, SSC hosts several meets at our home facility. These meets are a great way for swimmers to race without travelling far, bring in revenue for our club and help the MA have a robust meet season. Parent volunteers are essential to running a smooth home meet. You can volunteer at a meet in which your child is not swimming.

All these meets are sanctioned by MA & USA Swimming, meaning we follow all published guidelines and pay associated fees – thus our swimmers are billed for events they swim even if their parents are volunteering.

2 weeks prior to an upcoming meet, a TU sign up will be posted for meet associated jobs. Some jobs require prior certification or training – official, safety, and Colorado computer operator. Some jobs require early arrival at SSC – admissions, parking lot, snack bar. We need at least 17 timers per meet. Once



the jobs are filled for the meet, we will open donations for the snack bar, which is another way to get volunteer credits.

On the day of a SSC meet we ask all volunteers to arrive early for their shift and come prepared to help – sometimes filling in if needed at another task than you signed up for.

We remind all swimmers, parents and volunteers to represent SSC in the best way: wear your SSC gear, be gracious to our guests, and help visitors find the locker room, spectator area as needed.

### **Team Effort Meets**

- The SSC Coaching Staff constructs a season schedule of USA Swimming sanctioned swim meets for all levels of swimmers. These meets are referred to as “team effort meets”.
- The seasonal training plans, constructed by the SSC Coaching Staff, are based on SSC team effort meets.
- SSC swimmers will have the opportunity to participate in Team Effort Meets approximately every 4-6 weeks. Participation is not mandatory but highly encouraged.
- SSC participates in “championship” meets in December and at the end of the short course season and the long course season. These meets vary in level and have qualifying time standards.
- Many championship meets have relays in which SSC will participate when appropriate. Any swimmer entered in a SSC team effort meet is considered available for a relay on any day of the meet, regardless if the swimmer is swimming an individual event the day of the relay. Relay teams are constructed by the SSC Coaching staff.

### **Non-Team Effort Meets**

- Swimmers have the option to swim in “non team effort meets”. These are meets in which SSC does not send an official SSC Coach to oversee the swimmers.
- Swimmers/parents have the option to enter these “non team effort meets” on their own or ask the SSC office staff for assistance with their entry (associated administrative fees apply).
- Swimmers/parents are responsible for finding the information for these meets, following rules and entry regulations, checking in and being assigned a “host club” plus any associated entry fees due to the meet host.



- Swimmers should maintain their club affiliation with SSC at the non team effort meets despite no SSC coach in attendance. This is for record keeping and liability insurance purposes.
- Non team effort meets do not follow the SSC seasonal training progression.

### **High School Swimming and High School Meets**

- Once a swimmer reaches high school, they may have the opportunity to participate in their high school swim team.
- High School dual meets and some invitational meets sponsored at the high school level are not USA Swimming sanctioned and the times achieved at these meets cannot be used in USA swimming meets (SSC team effort meets).
- Swimmers must communicate with their respective high school coaching staff and/or Athletic Director on their team rules of participation.

### **Swim Meet Entry Procedure**

- SSC Team Effort Meets will be listed online via the SSC Team Unify (TU) website, under the “MEET SIGNUP” tab.
- As meet information becomes available it will be listed on the website. During the season, we encourage parents to frequently check the “MEET SIGNUP” tab for updates.
- Once a meet is opened for registration, an email will be sent out to all active SSC members inviting you to register and providing registration instructions for TU. An additional reminder will typically be sent out 7 days prior to the SSC registration deadline.
- Review the SSC specific meet information and the meet information packet. This can be found by clicking the “MEET SIGN UP” tab, clicking on the specific meet name, and reading the information to the end of the page where the link for the meet information packet can be found.
- Once all relevant meet information has been reviewed, you can select the “EDIT COMMITMENT” tab and select events for your swimmer/s. Some meets have qualifying times, the times listed in the TU event selection page are not always correct, always refer to the qualifying times found in the meet information packet.
- Verify your swimmers meet entries prior to the SSC deadline. The SSC deadline is the final deadline for SSC swimmers and correlates to the meet entry open date/time. Many meets close out within minutes of the open date/time and significantly prior to the deadline listed in the meet information packet. It is imperative parents follow the SSC deadline not the deadline in the meet information packet.



- Report any time discrepancies, difficulty with the entry registration or event selection prior to the SSC deadline. Requests received after the deadline cannot be guaranteed.
- Parents are NOT permitted to contact meet directors or host teams. All communications regarding meets, events, entries should go through SSC.
- A note about event selection:
  - Swimmers should be permitted to select events for meets themselves.
  - A diverse menu of events and trying new events is encouraged. SSC training progressions emphasizes diversity.
  - Swimming multiple events is encouraged and the SSC conditioning and training progression prepares swimmers to handle the challenge physically/physiologically.
  - Swimmers should be prepared to swim all events they have selected.
  - Should questions regarding event selection arise, a swimmer is encouraged to talk with his/her coach. Establishing communication lines between coach and swimmer is essential and SSC encourages the development of the coach/swimmer communication.

## Meet Arrival & Warmups

- Warm up times are listed in the meet information packet with any changes being listed on the SSC TU meet information page of the website and are emailed out directly to participants.
- SSC swimmers are asked to arrive 15-20 minutes prior to the start of warm up. Swimmers should report to the SSC team area and check in with an SSC Coach.
- Many meets are “positive check in” and require SSC Coaches to check swimmers in upon arrival, if a swimmer is late, they may be scratched from the meet.

## At the Meet

### Equipment Needed

- SSC team suit
- Goggles
- SSC team bathing cap
- Folding chairs if permitted by the meet host (check meet announcement)
- Towels, sweats, socks, shoes – to stay warm and dry
- SSC t-shirts or other SSC team apparel.
- Technical suits are recommended for seasonal championship meets only unless previously discussed with a member of the coaching staff. A SSC team or practice suit is appropriate for “in season” meets.



## During the Meet

- SSC swimmers are to stay in the SSC team area, this is where the SSC coaching staff will look for and call swimmers for their events. A swimmer may miss their event if he/she is not in the team area when his/her event is called by a coach. SSC Coaches will not look outside the SSC team area for swimmers.
- SSC Coaches will provide the swimmer with the heat and lane number, and instruct the swimmer to go behind the blocks. It is then the swimmer's responsibility to go behind the blocks, check in with a timer to ensure they are in the right place and pay attention to when their heat is called, and get up on the blocks.
  - The area behind the blocks is busy with many swimmers and volunteers, it is imperative SSC swimmers pay attention.
  - SSC swimmers will only be called once by SSC coaches with their heat and lane.
  - 8 and under swimmers will have additional assistance in getting behind the blocks from SSC Coaches and meet volunteers.
- Swimmers are asked to check in with a SSC coach immediately following their swim for feedback and/or warm down instructions.
- Swimmers are encouraged to limit "screen time" and be engaged in the swim meet and what is happening "now". Swimmers benefit from being present in the moment and establishing a pre-race routine which may involve music, but video games, face-time, snap-chats, Instagram, social media platforms, texting are not recommended.
- Swimmers who qualify for a championship final in a "prelim-finals" meet are expected to compete in that final.
- Swimmers and parents are expected to offer support thru cheering for all members of the team. Negative commentary is discouraged and could result in a reprimand for all those involved.
- SSC Swimmers are expected to give 100% for every event he/she is entered.
- In the event a swimmer is ill or injured during the meet, the swimmer should report this to a member of the SSC coaching staff.
- Relays:
  - If SSC is participating in a meet in which the team has entered relays, all SSC swimmers entered in the meet are eligible for participation in relays.
  - Relay teams are constructed by the SSC Coaching staff.
  - Relay teams are finalized the day of the relay utilizing SSC swimmers most up to date times.





- When competing in a SSC relay, swimmers are representing their team and are expected to represent SSC with pride.
- Snacks are permitted at meets when food is allowed on deck.
  - Healthy snacks are highly recommended such as: fruits, pretzels, crackers, vegetables, sugar free cereal, water, Gatorade, etc....
  - Unhealthy or “heavy” snacks are not recommended: French fries, potato chips, chocolate, candy, sugar dominated food, caffeinated beverages, soda, coffee, energy drinks etc....
  - It is advisable to read the labels of any type of nutritional supplement, energy drink or sports “food” prior to allowing your swimmer to eat them. Some have surprisingly high sugar content and some supplements may have substances which are banned.
  - It is recommended that swimmers eat prior to arriving at the meet and snacks are reserved for meets which are lengthy. Non-stop snacking during a meet, especially if a swimmer is not really hungry (boredom eating”), is not beneficial and digestion will utilize energy which could be used for competition.
  - Short Course swim meet sessions can run up to 4 hours in length from meet start to finish. Long course swim meet sessions are allotted a 5 hour time limit from meet start to finish. Please plan accordingly. These times do not include warm-up times.
  - Parents should stay off the pool deck unless they are serving in a volunteer capacity.

### **Conclusion of the Meet**

- SSC Swimmers are responsible for checking results, and ensuring they are knowledgeable regarding any “prelim-finals” procedures and know if they are required to return to finals that evening.
- Swimmer should check in with the SSC Coaching Staff prior to leaving the meet.
- SSC swimmers are required to pick up any and all trash around the team area.

### **Travel/Hotel Meets**

- SSC does participate in some meets which may require swimmers to stay overnight at a hotel close to the competition facility.
- The SSC office staff will make SSC hotel room blocks for these meets and this information will be posted on the specific meet information page of the SSC TU website.
- Parents are responsible for travel / hotel arrangements and families are not required to stay at the SSC team hotel.



- Families are expected to respect the rules and regulations at the various hotels while a guest, keeping in mind that your swimmer is a representative of SSC.

## Motivational Times

USA Swimming publishes “Motivational Times” by event and by age group to encourage swimmers to step their swimming up to the next level. These time standards guide a swimmer from just starting out in his/her age group to reaching his/her highest potential. The standards change every 4 years based on how many swimmers in that age group achieve the standards. The standards usually get faster every update. Ideally our swimmers use these times to help set short and long term personal goals and track their progress. What we hope they all learn is that the more they practice and work hard, the closer they get to their goals.

Time standards are broken down into age group and level. Age groups are divided into 10&U, 11/12, 13/14, 15/16, and 17/18 year old categories. Eight and under swimmers do not have standards as this is an introductory age and the focus is on teaching strokes and having fun. Each category has a B, BB, A, AA, AAA, and AAAA level. Swimmers can begin at a B level and work their way up each level. There is a banner on the pool deck at SSC listing these times.

Most meets are divided into categories based on age and level. This allows for more fair competition. Championship meets use time standards to help divide competition in a fair and stepwise progression. A new swimmer with B times will race against others in the same age/level, while an advanced, experienced competitor may swim a different meet requiring AA standards within their specific age group.

When swimmers move up an age group bracket, the times they achieved to date still count toward a standard. Standards for older age brackets get more challenging as swimmers age up a level. These more challenging standards help encourage swimmers to move into the next level of swimming.

Every year the Middle Atlantic Junior Olympics are held in March (short course – 25 yard) and July (long course – 50 meter). These are the LSC championship meets for our 13/14, 11/12, and 10 and under athletes that qualify. To qualify for these meets, the time standards are typically somewhere between an “A” and an “AA” time. Also in March (short course) and July (long course) there are the MA Senior Championships that has one set of qualifying times with no age grouping.



And the MA also has a championship meet for 8 and under Mini's in March. Our LSC also offers Silver and Bronze champs for Age group swimmers who did not achieve a time fast enough for Jr Olympics but still want to finish the season with a championship format meet.

## Pyramid of Meets

Below is a pyramid of meets in which SSC has frequently qualified swimmers and attends. The pyramid starts with the USA Sanctioned A/BB/C meets in which any swimmer **9 and over** may attend, some meets require prior entry times in events, and some do not.

Progressing thru the pyramid, SSC attends the championship meets hosted by Middle Atlantic Swimming, our LSC governing body. As you move up the pyramid, the qualifying times get faster and once you reach the NCSA/USA Swimming Junior National Level, a swimmer is competing against swimmers from all around the United States. Swimmers competing on the national level may be competing for a spot on a USA National Team or USA Junior National Team. There are selection criteria and qualifying meets in order to be selected to the US National/World Teams.

At the top tier of the pyramid are the fastest swimmers in the United States who earn a spot to represent the US at the Olympics through the qualifying process at the US Olympic Trials. These are the top 52 (26 men and 26 women) in the sport of US swimming during an Olympic year.

There are many levels available for swimmers to compete on, with SSC's primary focus on individual improvement over time. In order to be eligible for a SSC National Team designation a swimmer must achieve one or more NCSA Junior National qualifying standards.





## **NATIONAL TEAM**

Swimmers achieving a NCSA Jr Nationals time, or faster are welcomed to the National Team. SSC is proud to support our national swimmers and laud the hard work and dedication it takes to achieve this status.

SSC reserves the right to approve every swimmer's entry to National Meets. If behavior at home meets has been deemed not appropriate we may not permit you to swim/travel with the team. Swimmers must have their TU account balance up to date to swim at national meets.

We want to remind swimmers and families that you are not only representing yourself, but also SSC and Coach Kennedy when you swim at these meets and certain behavior standards must be maintained. Many races and venues are videotaped and many coaches looking at potential college athletes are in the stands. There are races where swims are not what the athlete desired – and while we do understand how important these races are to the swimmer, we do remind everyone there is a time and place and way to process your disappointment.

## **MA Reimbursement**

Our LSC puts aside money to support travel expense for swimmers attending certain meets outside the LSC. SSC handles the application for reimbursement and all related MA communication. Awards are based on number of National level swimmers that season, an individual's overall rank at the meet and number of events swum. The money can be credited directly to your TU account, reimbursed directly to the family, or donated to SSC.

## **Speedo Gear**

We are a Speedo sponsored club, and proud of it. The gear we receive on a bi-annual schedule once an athlete attains a national cut is a gift from Speedo.

- We are sometimes limited in colors, choices and sizes. Choices are made to have the team look great as a whole and we do require swimmers to wear their Speedo gear on deck at national meets. That also means warming up in Speedo suits and racing in Speedo Tech suits
- Selecting a suit at Toad Hollow will be handled by the swimmer and their family. We remind everyone that this is also a gift. Toad Hollow not only gives the whole SSC family gear at discounted prices, they help our team to get the fancier suits on a discount. Trading that discount to swim in a



Non-Speedo brand suit or contracting to buy a suit and then not buying the suit is strongly discouraged. Please respect our relationship with Toad Hollow

- Per our Speedo sponsorship – only swimmers who are to swim at the national meets are eligible to get the gear in a particular season. It is unacceptable to declare intent to swim, get the gear and then not go to the meet and keep the gear.

## **Travel**

As with team effort meets in our LSC, we expect swimmers to be available for all days of the meet and ready to swim on relays. As a principle, Coach Charlie will modify the practice schedule leading up to the meet to allow for swimmers to travel 1-2 days before the meets starts. Swimmers are expected to stay through finals the last night of the meet, travelling home the following day. All rules posted for the swim venue and hotel should be respected.

## **REST**

Coach Charlie writes the season's practices based on the ebb and flow of the short course yard competition schedule for the Fall/Spring season and the Long Course for the summer. Built into the schedule is a week of NO practice in mid-April, after JO's and Senior Champs and again for the month of August. This rest is essential for the swimmers' body and mind to recover from the intensity of practice and racing.

Parents are encouraged to respect the Head Coach's rest period and let their kids be kids during this time: have fun at your local summer pool, cross train with running or biking, swim in the ocean – but don't do a yardage work out to stay in shape for next year. The first weeks back in September are all about building conditioning and stroke mechanics.

## **ILLNESS**

This policy applies to swim team members, coaches, swim lesson participants, and swim lesson instructors. The spirit behind this policy is to educate you about steps to stay healthy as well as preventing the spread of illness from sick patrons to healthy ones. This information comes from the Centers for Disease Control dedicated flu website: [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).



If you are sick: If you have been diagnosed with H1N1 flu or other respiratory illness (like the seasonal flu), you should stay home, follow your doctor's orders, and watch for signs that you need immediate medical attention. CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever (100°F or 37.8°C) is gone except to get medical care or for other things you have to do and no one else can do for you. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine, such as Tylenol®.) You should stay home from work, school, sports, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings. Avoid close contact with others, especially those who might easily get the flu, such as people age 65 years and older, people of any age with chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), pregnant women, young children, and infants. Clean hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub often, especially after using tissues or coughing/sneezing into your hands. Cover coughs and sneezes. Sneeze into the fold of your elbow. Wear a facemask when sharing common spaces with other household members to help prevent spreading the virus to others. This is especially important if other household members are at high risk for complications from influenza. Drink clear fluids such as water, broth, sports drinks, or electrolyte beverages made for infants to prevent dehydration.

All types of flu can cause: Fever, coughing and/or sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headaches and/or body aches, chills, fatigue. In addition to the above symptoms, a number of H1N1 flu cases reported vomiting and diarrhea

The CDC recommends that you stay home for at least twenty four (24) hours after your fever (100°F or 37.8°C) is gone except to get medical care. **DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO ATTEND PRACTICE IF HE OR SHE HAS HAD A FEVER WITHIN THE PRIOR TWENTY FOUR HOURS.** (The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine, such as Tylenol®.) Please seek medical attention right away if your child: Has difficulty breathing or chest pain; has purple or blue discoloration of your lips; is vomiting and unable to keep liquids down, or shows signs of dehydration, such as feeling dizzy when standing or being unable to urinate. If your child demonstrates any of these symptoms at practice, a coach will call you and you must pick up your child from practice immediately.



In order to prevent the spread of germs/viruses while at practice, please follow these further precautions: 1) No sharing of water bottles; 2) No sharing of towels or other clothing items; 3) Some swimmers are prone to “coughing fits.” If this happens to you GET OUT OF THE POOL IMMEDIATELY and get away from others. Completely cover your mouth when you cough. When you are finished let your coach know you are going to the bathroom and wash your hands with soap. 4) If you are sick, please stay away from SSC until you are healthy. Often, swimmers will return before their illness has completely run its course and relapse. It’s never good to miss practice. However, when you are sick there is nothing you can do about it except get healthy. Stay away from practice so you do not spread the illness to your teammates or coaches. A relapse could mean more missed practice time and make you susceptible to more serious illnesses. 5) No one should be leaving items at the pool or in the locker rooms. Damp items left in dark areas become breeding ground for bacteria. 6) Wash out your water bottle with soap and water every night! Following these precautions IN NO WAY guarantees you will not get sick. But following these precautions can help limit the number of SSC patrons and employees who miss time due to illness. For more information please go to the following websites: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov); [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov).

## **FACILITY GUIDELINES**

SSC has the privilege of owning its own facility and also the use of the pool at Swarthmore College. The following is a non-exhaustive list of general facility guidelines for SSC and Swarthmore College:

- NO glass bottles allowed in the building at any time.
- NO alcohol.
- NO smoking, vaping, or use of smokeless tobacco.
- NO drugs, including non-prescribed prescription drugs.
- NO firearms or knives.
- Any swimmer caught defacing SSC or Swarthmore College property will be suspended or dismissed from the team and held responsible for any damages.
- PARENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON THE POOL DECK, unless invited by a coach.





- PARENTS AND SWIMMERS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE OFFICE, OR TO WALK THROUGH THE OFFICE, unless invited by a coach, the manager or member of the Board.
- NO PARKING IN CHARLIE KENNEDY'S RESERVED SPOT (first spot, marked)
- Use of the kitchen at SSC is permitted provided that the area is cleaned after use. The failure to clean up the area will result in a loss of kitchen privileges.
- Parents and swimmers are not allowed in the dryland room, unless accompanied by a coach.

## **SERVICE HOURS POLICY (suspended for 2020-2021)**

New this year, volunteer hours will be charged during the last month of each session. Our club depends on the families of the club all pitching in to help keep the team running, viable, and in good fiscal health. We are hoping this year that all families will participate. That is what we are hoping, but remember – SERVICE HOURS ARE REQUIRED.

Service Hour Requirements are calculated on a per SWIMMER basis, but can be fulfilled by anyone in the family (swimmer, parent, guardian, brother/sister, cousin, aunt/uncle, babysitter etc.). There are LOTS of ways to fulfill your requirements. Volunteering on-deck or with donations for SSC hosted meets is an easy way to earn hours. SSC will send out information for other ways you can get service hours and have a sign-up in TU. Please email the office if you have a way to help the club we haven't asked for yet.

How to calculate your service hour requirement:

Families with multiple swimmers have a service hour requirement for the first two swimmers.

Your highest group swimmer is Band 1 and the next highest is Band 2.

### **BAND 1 Service Hour Requirements**

Gold, Silver, Bronze = 8 hours for Fall

Developmental, Minis = 4 hours for Fall

### **BAND 2 Swimmer Service Hour Requirements**

Gold, Silver, Bronze = 4 hours for Fall



Developmental, Minis = 2 hours for Fall

Each family is expected to serve during at least one home meet and (if your swimmer swims at away meets) at least one away meet. Keep in mind that at any meet in which your swimmer(s) swim, you may be required to serve, even if you didn't sign up.

If you sign up for a meet session and do not show up, your account will be charged \$20/hr. for each hour of the position (for example, a timer would be \$80 and cleanup would be \$40).

For any service hour requirements you don't fulfill by season end, your account will be charged \$20/hour.

If you wish to opt out of the service hour requirement, you can do so by paying \$20/hour, for your full service hour requirement, by Oct. 1. For example, a family with one Gold swimmer could pay \$160 to opt out.

Our goal is NOT to charge any accounts (unless you want to opt out). Our goal – and a requirement of team membership – is to have ALL families participate and help the team.

## **ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. The SSC team rules are to be followed at all times, in all facilities.
2. The consumption or purchase of alcohol, marijuana, smoking or chewing tobacco or use of any other illegal drug, substance or prohibited performance-enhancing substance of any kind by underage swim team member, is prohibited. Any swim team member found to partake in the above activities, or suspected to be in the presence of others (regardless of team affiliation) partaking in any of the above activities will be subject to expulsion from SSC, at the discretion of the coaches and the Board of Directors.
3. Disrespectful, indiscreet or destructive behavior will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of each swimmer to make every effort to avoid guilt by association with such activity at any time. Any swimmer who, in the opinion of the coaches and the Board of Directors, violates this rule during practice or competition will be told to leave the deck immediately and the parents will be contacted to remove the swimmer from the facility. Any additional disciplinary action will be determined at the discretion of the coaches and the Board of Directors.



4. Use of proper language is expected at all times.
5. All athletes are expected to treat team members, coaches, staff and competitors with respect, support and kindness.
6. Any person guilty of thievery, on and off a SSC site, will be subject to expulsion from the team.
7. Each swimmer is responsible for replacing accidentally lost or damaged equipment.
8. Be on time and prepared for each practice, competition and team event.
9. ALWAYS represent the team positively in your behavior, appearance and sportsmanship.
10. Any swimmer or parent found to be in possession of a weapon while on SSC property, practice site or meet, will be subject to the following mandatory discipline:

The Board of Directors shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any swimmer or parent who violates this weapons policy.

A weapon is defined to include, but is not limited to, a knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, explosive device, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon and/or any other tool instrument or implement capable of inflicting bodily injury and/or used with the intent to threaten or inflict bodily injury. A swimmer or parent is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the swimmer or parent, in the swimmer's or parent's personal possessions or bags, under the swimmer's or parent's control while s/he is on SSC property or property being used by SSC or any meet or team event.

Any swimmer or parent who has knowledge of the possession of a weapon by any other person on SSC property or property being used by SSC, or any meet or team event, must immediately report this knowledge to a SSC coach or staff member. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action as determined by the coaches and the Board of Directors.

Those who cannot follow the rules stated above will not be welcome as part of our program. Failure to comply with these codes of conduct may result in financial penalties, suspension or expulsion from SSC.



## PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Model teamwork with all parents, swimmers and coaches.
2. Do not coach or instruct the team or any swimmer at a practice or meet (from the stands, through text message or otherwise) or interfere with coaches on the pool deck.
3. Demonstrate good sportsmanship by conducting oneself in a matter that earns the respect of your child, other swimmers, parents, officials and the coaches at meets and practices.
4. Maintain self-control at all times. Know your role:

Swimmers- Swim

Coaches- Coach

Officials- Officiate

Parents- Parent

5. Criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials and/or any participating swimmer will not be permitted or tolerated.
6. During competitions, questions or concerns regarding decisions made by a meet official are directed to a member of our coaching staff. Parents may address Mid Atlantic Swimming and/or USA Swimming officials ONLY via the SSC coaching staff.

Those who cannot follow the rules stated above will not be welcome as part of our program. Failure to comply with these codes of conduct may result in suspension and/or expulsion of the offending parent from SSC property, sites and/or program, and/or the suspension and/or expulsion of the swimmer from SSC property, sites and program.

## BULLYING POLICY

Sources: [www.usaswimming.org/protect](http://www.usaswimming.org/protect)  
[www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)



## **Purpose**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at SSC and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to the victim. SSC is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all swimmers and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member or staff member.

Objects of SSC's Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that SSC will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that SSC takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

## **What Is Bullying?**

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

USA Swimming defines bullying as the severe or repeated use by one or more members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

1. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
2. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;



3. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any SSC practice, meet or activity;
4. infringing on the rights of the other member at any SSC practice, meet or activity;
5. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operating of any SSC practice, meet or activity.

## **Reporting Procedure**

A swimmer who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

1. Talk to your parents
2. Talk to a SSC coach, Board Member or staff member;
3. Write a letter or email to their coach, Board Member or staff member;
4. Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

## **How We Handle Bullying**

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED and SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED using the following approach:



## **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED**

1. First, we get the facts.
  - i. Keep all the involved children separate.
  - ii. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
  - iii. Listen without blaming.
  - iv. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
  - v. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.
2. Then, we determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.
  - i. Review the USA Swimming Definition of Bullying.
  - ii. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
    - a. What is the history between the kids involved?
    - b. Have there been past conflicts?
    - c. Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
    - d. Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
  - iii. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
  - iv. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

## **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED**

3. Support the kids who are being bullied



- i. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- ii. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
  - a. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
  - b. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

#### 4. Address bullying behavior

- i. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- ii. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- iii. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied for example:
  - a. Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone who is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
  - b. Other times kids act out because something else- issues at home, abuse or stress is going on their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
- iv. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
  - a. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied;
  - b. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club or for others in your community;





- c. Clean up, repair or pay for any property they have damaged.
- v. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
  - a. Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
  - b. Conflict resolution and peer mediation doesn't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between two people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
- vi. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

## 5. Support bystanders who witness bullying.

Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening:

- i. Be a friend to the person being bullied.
- ii. Tell a trusted adult- your parent, coach, staff or board member.
- iii. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."
- iv. Set a good example by not bullying others.
- v. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY**

### **Purpose**

SSC recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method



of communication. While SSC acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, SSC also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

## General Content

All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection. (SSC adopts and incorporates by reference the USA Swimming Code of Conduct Article 304.1, et seq. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/safe-sportdocuments/safe-sport-basics/2017-code-of-conduct.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.)

For example, as with any communication between a coach and athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- drugs or alcohol use
- sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity
- the adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems, and
- inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures
- Note: Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: "Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?" or "Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient's parents, the coaching staff, the board or other athletes?"

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is **Transparent, Accessible and Professional (TAP)**.



**Transparent:** All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

**Accessible:** All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club's records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

**Professional:** All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of SSC. This includes word choices, tone, grammar and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the **TAP** criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

### **Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snap Chat, Blogs & Similar Sites**

Coaches and athletes may follow each other on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram (not Snapchat). Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "direct message" each other through these social media sites.

Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "private message" each other through Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat or any other similar site. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "instant message" each other through Facebook Chat, Instagram or other IM method.

SSC has an official Facebook page, Instagram and Twitter that athletes and their parents can "friend" for information and updates on team-related matters.

Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to "private" to prevent athletes from accessing the coach's personal information.

### **Texting**

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above (TAP), texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 6:30 a.m. until 9:30 p.m.



Texting only shall be used for purposes of communicating information directly related to practice, meets and team activities.

### **Email**

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 6:30 am and 9:30 pm. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach or a board member must also be copied.

### **Request to Discontinue All Electronic Communication**

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

## **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

At the end of the Short Course season, in late April or early May, SSC holds its annual awards banquet and membership meeting. Swimmers and their families of all practice groups are encouraged to attend. We gather as a team, celebrate our graduating seniors, honor individual and relay swims of note and vote for the upcoming Board of Directors.

## **ALUMNI NETWORK**

As one of the premier swim clubs in the suburban Philadelphia region, we have large group of SSC alumni. Many current swimmers have parents “who swam with Charlie back in... “ We are working to connect our alumni with the club for networking, fundraising and college recruitment – know a SSC alum? Have them email their contact info to the office, or follow the Friends of SSC on Facebook! #AlwaysASeahawk