

Storm Metro Storm Swim Club

Handbook

History

In 1999 the Lakeville Otters merged with the Prior Lake Swim Club and formed the South Metro Storm Swim Club. Phil Smith joined the staff in 2002 and Chuck Smith joined in 2003. In 2005, the club members voted to form a new coach-run, non-profit organization. On January 1, 2006, Phil Smith became the President, Chuck Smith was the Vice President/Treasurer and Rick Ringeisen was the Secretary. In 2002, the club had two coaches and 115 total yearly participants.

Presently, Storm boasts more than 400 swimmers over the year with a large contingency of young swimmers getting ready to take the reins from our older competitors as they move on to other aspects of life. Our programs include eight levels of participation for swimmers of advancing cognitive and athletic ability as well as specialized clinics. We also offer an adult Master's swimming program, with a desire to instill the basic foundations of lifetime fitness and health and to showcase the realization that there is active life after high school sports end.

The Storm has grown consistently over the years and is now among the largest swim clubs in the state of Minnesota. Our goals as a team are to continue this growth and to become a Bronze Level Team with USA Swimming. These statements and goals are testaments to our team, the current key volunteers, and the unwavering support from our coaching staff. Storm has earned AAA status, the highest team division in Minnesota as well as a Level 3 in the USA Swimming Club Recognition Program. Storm swimmers have attained national records, state records and state championships as well as JR and SR national time standards. Discipline, sportsmanship, hard work and team involvement are stressed throughout all levels of the club.

South Metro Storm Swim Club is a non-profit organization 501c(7)

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to give families an overview of the South Metro Storm Swim Club history, policies and expectations. Please familiarize yourself with this book so that you can get the most out of your Storm experience. This handbook and other club information can be obtained from our website at: www.mnstorm.org. By signing the South Metro Storm Swim Club registration form, parents/guardians and swimmers acknowledge that they understand and agree to all monetary and time commitments and policies. Consequences for violating South Metro Storm Swim Club policies may range from a verbal warning to dismissal from the club.

South Metro Storm Swim Club

Vision

To provide our members with the highest level of competitive swim programming.

Mission

To develop a passion for the sport and the confidence to gain technical, physical and mental tools to assist them in achieving their goals in and out of the water. Showcase our developmental plans from our Learn to Swim StormChasers program, to our national level competitor. Obtain the best facilities and pool schedules possible. Continue the education of our coaching staff and work toward the same goals.

Team Structure

South Metro Storm Swim Club is a coach-run club. This means that the head coaches are responsible for the administration of the club. However, there is a Parent Advisory Board that helps with important club functions.

Administration (Head Coaches)

- Manage and direct the swim program
- Coordinate day-to-day club operations
- Manage club finances
- Establish club policies
- Hire and support coaches and staff
- Recruit Parent Advisory Board (Parent Advisory Group) members

Coaches

- Create and run practices
- Provide technical and critical direction to swimmers
- Assist with determining meets and events swimmers will enter
- Enforce Club policies
- Respect swimmers, parents, fellow coaches and property

Parent Advisory Board

Storm is a coach operated swim club. We do have a parent board that provides support for our coaches and families. The parent members are volunteers who believe that Storm Swim Club is a fantastic team and support it with their time and talents. Current board member names and email addresses are listed under CONTACTS on our Storm web page.

Our parent board members:

- Coordinate and implement some club functions.
- Propose and implement fundraising and other activities.
- Help educate swimmers and parents about South Metro Storm Swim Club.
- Help promote Storm as a positive experience to club members and the community at large.

Parent Board positions at Storm

- **Volunteer Coordinator/Co-Meet Director** (bulletin boards)
- **Webmaster** (assists with the team web site, publicity, social media and new parent meetings)
- **Concessions/Hospitality Director**
- **Apparel Representative**
- **Officials Chair**
- **Software Training**
- **Compliance**

Families

- Support swimmers, coaches and staff
- Volunteer and participate in club meets, activities and other fundraising
- Respect coaches, swimmers, fellow parents and property
- Have swimmer(s) to practice and meets on time and ready to enter the pool
- Pick swimmers up promptly at the end of the scheduled practice time
- Learn about competitive swimming

Swimmers

- Attend practice regularly
- Have a positive attitude
- Respect coaches, parents, fellow swimmers and property
- Be ready to enter the pool at the scheduled time
- Represent Storm positively at swim meets
- Have fun

Swimmer Progression

Swimmer placement and progression is at the discretion of the coaches. If you have any questions or concerns about your swimmer's placement, please address your questions to his/her coach.

These descriptions state the general outline followed by the Storm coaching staff. They offer parents and athletes a basic understanding of the club's structure and provide swimmers with goals to achieve. To enter the South Metro Storm Swim Club, a swimmer must be able to swim one length of the pool nonstop (both freestyle and backstroke), or have been passed up from our StormChasers Learn to Swim Program. The coaching staff determines a swimmer's initial placement and when a swimmer shall advance to the next level.

Advancing to the Next Level

- Group Advancement Workout Criteria outlines the level of training that each swimmer is expected to demonstrate on a daily basis before he or she moves to the next level. It can be found on the Storm website.
- Tryouts/Stroke Evaluations (for individuals interested in joining the club)

- Held at the beginning of each session Fall/Winter or Spring/Summer
- Coaches assess the swimmers and determine readiness to join the South Metro Storm Swim Club.
- With coach's approval, group placement is decided.

Age Group 1 (AG1)

This is the beginning level for the Storm Swim Club. It is designed to introduce young swimmers to the sport of swimming while allowing maximum opportunity to participate in other activities. Emphasis is placed on teaching the fundamentals of the four competitive strokes in a manner that makes swimming fun. Participation in Pre-C/Novice meets is appropriate, but not required. One-hour practices are offered four to five days per week; and swimmers are encouraged to attend three. You may pick the nights and locations that suit you best.

- 3 practices per week
- 60 minute practices

Age Group 2 (AG2)

This level is aimed at swimmers who are able to perform the four strokes legally and who need additional practice time to increase their endurance. An increased emphasis on turns and starts is implemented to prepare them for the competitive aspects of the sport. Participation in other activities is encouraged. Practices are offered four to five days per week; and swimmers are expected to swim three. Swimmers are encouraged to attend meets.

- 3 practices per week
- 90 minute practices
- Meet participation encouraged

Age Group 3 (Ag3)

This the highest level of our Age Group offerings. This group offers more advanced, young swimmers an opportunity to improve stroke and turn techniques while continuing to learn new aspects of competitive training. Some new aspects include set training and pacing. Practices are offered five to six days per week; and swimmers are expected to swim four. Swimmers are encouraged to attend meets.

- 4 practices per week
- 90 minute practices
- Meet participation encouraged

Junior 1 (JR1)

The first level of our Junior Group transitions swimmers from stroke development to a more rigorous training environment. Stroke drills and fundamentals are still a focus, but the swimmers are expected to utilize a clock, know the drills that our team utilizes, and be ready for more of a challenge during workouts. Practices are offered six times a week; and swimmers are expected to swim four. Swimmers are expected to contribute to the Storm by participating in end of year meets.

- 5 practices per week
- 90-120 minute practices
- Meet participation expected

Junior 2 (JR2)

This group is aimed at swimmers who have shown desire and commitment to the competitive aspect of swimming. The primary focus of this group is to begin implementing training elements that will follow them to the Senior level. Continued stroke reinforcement accompanies these higher intensity workouts. Practices are offered six times per week and swimmers are expected to swim five per week. Swimmers are expected to contribute to the Storm by participating in end of year meets.

- 5 or more practices per week
- 90-150 minute practices
- Meet participation expected

Senior (SR)

This group is the highest level of the Storm Swim Club. Practices are offered six days per week in the fall, winter, and spring sessions, and nine times per week in the summer session. During the summer session, we utilize long course training in the mornings and short course training in the afternoons. This level is aimed at the serious athlete who is looking to increase his or her ability to perform. Practices are offered six times per week and swimmers are expected to swim five or more of them. All athletes in this group are expected to contribute to Storm by participating in end of year meets. Seasonal training plans are incorporated for the fall, winter, and spring-summer training periods.

- 5 or more practices per week
- 120-150 minute practices
- Meet participation expected

High School Prep (HSP)

This group is for middle school aged swimmers who are looking to either try out swimming for the first time or improve their skills with their peer group as well as to high school swimmers whose intent is to stay in shape for the high school season. Their practice is less rigorous and focused on maintaining fitness level. This program is offered only to those in grade 6 or above. During the school year, this

group practices after school Monday - Thursday. During the summer, it practices in the morning Monday-Thursday.

- Fall is only offered to girls for the last 3-4 weeks of the fall season (after the school sponsored Middle School program ends)
- Winter is offered to both boys and girls in Prior Lake and girls only in Lakeville (8 or 12 week option, no practice during winter break).
- Spring and Summer are offered to both boys and girls in Prior Lake and Lakeville.

Masters (Mst)

This group is aimed at adults who desire structured workouts with other adults. The primary focus of this group is to provide challenging practices that enable participants to push themselves to the best of their abilities to achieve their goals. Ability levels range from beginning swimmers to accomplished athletes (swimmers, runners, triathletes, etc.). Practices include stroke drills to improve stroke technique, sprint, and endurance sets. One hour practices are offered on Tuesday and Thursday mornings during the school year at Kenwood Trail Junior High.

- High school graduate or 19+
- 2 practices per week
- 1 hour practices
- May participate in Masters meets

Arrival and Departure

- It is important that each child be at practice on time and be prepared to participate. Swimmers should arrive and be ready for practice ahead of the stated practice time. We recommend you strive to arrive ten minutes before your scheduled practice. Parents or guardians should arrive to pick up swimmers at the practice completion time. Coaches are not responsible for watching swimmers before or after their scheduled practice time. Although South Metro Storm Swim Club acknowledge that parents/ busy schedules can cause periodic tardiness, arriving late to practice should be a rare occurrence. Tardiness disrupts practice and interferes with swimmers' warm-up and consequently their ability to safely transition to faster swimming for later sets.

Attendance

- Attendance is specific to each group. Please do your best to attend all required practices. With more practice you will see noticeable improvement in many aspects of your child's swimming: their "feel for the water," their stroke technique, their general comfort with teammates and their overall physical conditioning.

Performance

- Swimmers are expected to give their best effort and to be active participants at every practice and meet. They are also expected to give their full attention to their coaches and fully comply

with their coaches' instructions. Swimmers must remember that their coaches are there to help them succeed.

Equipment

- Swimmers are required to provide their own swimsuits, caps and goggles. Junior 1, 2, Senior and High School Prep level swimmers must provide their own zoomer fins, snorkels, hand paddles, kick boards, pull buoys, ankle strap and nose plug (typically contained in a mesh bag). Please see equipment lists specific to each practice group on our Storm gear and apparel page on the web site.

Practice Conduct for Parents

Parents are welcome to watch practice as long as they follow these important guidelines for observing practice:

- Please do not communicate with your swimmer during practice and do not compete with the coach for your swimmer's attention.
- Please do not interrupt the coaches on deck while they are coaching. If you need to communicate with a coach, please do so before or after practice (if they are not coaching another group). Scheduling an appointment with the coach is ideal for discussions that may take more than a few minutes.
- Please refrain from coaching your swimmer based on what you see (or think you don't see) during practice.
- Please pick up your swimmer promptly at the end of practice. We must exit the pool and locker rooms no later than 15 minutes after the conclusion of practice.
- No photography or videoing of swimmers during practice, no glass or food in the stands and no loud conversations.

Practice Schedule Information for Parents

1. We are dependent upon Community Education (CE) confirming our practice requests. We are in queue behind all CE, school district and high school events, on the priority usage chart.
2. Estimated practice times are posted months in advance, so that new and current families can have a sense of our practices, even if the dates have not been confirmed.
3. Every summer and fall we receive the biggest conflicts with pool time, due to the high school and middle school girls' and boys' practice/meet schedules. These schedules become available in early August and late October, which then allows us to work toward a more concrete schedule.
4. The Storm practice schedule is fluid, so please do not print the schedules. Changes occur, from availability of pools and coaches, to last minute issues with air or water quality. To ensure accuracy, we are always working three weeks ahead. However, if there is a change the week of practice, we will send an email. All other changes will not be communicated by email, with the goal of keeping our email communication with you to a minimum. Please check the online practice calendar daily and before departing for practice.

Meet Conduct for Swimmers

- Swimmers are expected to sit with the team and participate in all team activities and team meetings. However, swimmers may visit parents briefly between events. Swimmers are expected to check in with their coach before and after each event. Swimmers may not scratch/cancel any event without getting their coach's prior approval.

Meet Conduct for Parents

- All questions about meet results, an officiating call or the conduct of the meet should be handled by the South Metro Storm Swim Club coaching staff only.
- In accordance with the USA Swimming rules, parents are required to remain in spectator areas and off of the pool deck unless they are working at the meet in an official capacity that requires them to be on the pool deck.

Leaving the Meet

- After your last event of the day you are welcome to leave the meet. Please make sure you tell your coach before you leave. If the meet ends in relays, make sure you are not swimming in a relay before you depart.

Parents' Role

- Parents must know and understand the South Metro Storm Swim Club mission, policies and procedures. They must also remember that the club champions a long-term approach regarding each swimmer's participation in the program.
- Staying informed is critical. Read the weekly email updates, web site news, follow our team social media, refer to Parent Resources on the Storm web site (must be logged-in); watch a practice; sign-up for volunteer opportunities; and communicate with the coaching staff before or after a workout session. Your involvement with the program sends a powerful message to your swimmer regarding your interest in his/her activity.
- When you have a specific question or concern regarding your swimmer, please go directly to your swimmer's coach before or after the workout session. Most questions are quickly answered at this level. If you feel that your question has not been answered satisfactorily, please contact one of the head coaches.
- An important part of our club's success is the involvement of parents. Your gift of time is a great way to have fun, make new friends and contribute to your swimmer's team.

Volunteer Hours/Sign-Ups

- To ensure that swimmers have the opportunity to participate in competition, South Metro Storm Swim Club must attend and host swim meets throughout the year. Swim meets cannot run without family volunteer participation. Additionally, the session fees alone do not cover all of the costs associated with running a high-quality swim team like South Metro Storm Swim Club. The swim meets are our largest fundraisers.
- All families are required to take part in all club-hosted swim meets and other required fundraisers. On a rare occasion, if a family cannot meet its obligation to participate in a required fundraiser, it is the family's responsibility to contact the Volunteer Coordinator well in advance of the event to be assigned other duties. There are fines to families who do not meet their

volunteer requirement per session. This will be charged to your acct and needs to be paid prior to the start of the new session. Please visit the Storm web site for specifics on the current Storm Volunteering Policy.

- Volunteer jobs are generally posted on our website at the start of a new session.

Website Tools

Online Sign Up and Registration

- All of your account information can be accessed through our online billing system. To sign up, you must be logged OUT of the system and click on the START REGISTRATION button located on the upper left-hand section of the home page of the club website (www.mnstorm.org). The program will walk you through setting up your login and password. You must know which group your swimmer is enrolled in and be ready to input your debit or credit card information for automatic billing. After a two-week trial period, swimmers are responsible for the entire session fee and USA Swimming registration.

Meet Sign-Up

- Meet Information and registration is posted to the club website as soon as it becomes available from the host club. This is located in the lower right-hand section of the club website. A PDF of the meet information, including the pool location, warm-up times and list of events is posted. Click "Attend This Event" to sign up for the meet. Generally, a day or two before the meet, a PDF of the timeline will be posted as well. If relays are offered at a meet, the head coaches assign swimmers to relays. Swimmers do not sign up for these themselves.

Payment of Fees

- An annual USA Swimming membership registration fee is required of all competitive team swimmers. USA Swimming Registration fees are collected when you join South Metro Storm Swim Club and every September thereafter. USA Swimming registration is a non-refundable fee and will be billed to your credit card on file with Team Unify/Storm website. The Storm also requires all accounts to be signed up for auto pay.

Safe Sport and Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)

- All non-athlete members (coaches, officials, etc.) are subject to a criminal background check and a pre-employment screening, as well as completing the USA Swimming Athlete Protection Training. The Storm has athlete protection policies in place with regard to travel, electronic communications and anti-bullying. The Storm has access to many resources to assist the club leadership with implementing best practice guidelines for athlete protection
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Team Travel Policy
- USA Swimming Safe Sport Initiative/Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)
- Locker room monitoring policy
- Electronic communications policy

PARENT RESOURCES

The informational sheets & tutorials listed below are kept up-to-date online and can be found at:

www.mnstorm.org

***Please LOG IN to the Storm Web Site to view these important items**

- Storm Volunteering Policy
- Volunteer Job Descriptions
- Parents-How Sign up for Volunteering Jobs on the Storm web page
- Meet Registration Memo
- What is an OPEN event in a Swim Meet sign-up?
- Sign Up Athlete for Meets/Commit to Events
- How to Prepare for a Swim Meet/What to Pack-Advice from a Seasoned Storm Swim Mom
- Time Standards
- Descriptions of Championship Meets
- Storm Technology Guide (web/social media/apps)
- Add/Verify a cell Number for SMS/MMS texting -receive text messages from the coaches
- Storm Practice Schedule/Calendar Policy
- Dues Schedule/Billing Info & FAQ's
- Practice Group Descriptions
- Practice Group Advancement Criteria
- Swim Team Gear/Apparel
- Storm Referral Program
- Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy
- Bullying Policy
- Team Travel Policy
- Locker Room Policy
- Swimmer Code of Conduct
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Lightning Procedure
- Relay Memo
- Minnesota Swimming web page