

## **MADISON AREA YMCA MARINERS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

### **How big the team is currently with break down of how many swimmers in each practice group?**

For the 2022-2023 season, the Mariners Swim Team has 261 swimmers. The team is split into roughly 5-6 different groups, which can range from 20 swimmers total with our younger swimmers, to roughly 80 swimmers in our high school groups.

### **How are the try-outs conducted and generally when are they?**

Generally our evaluations take place in Late June/Early July for the upcoming Fall/Winter Season. There is also an additional evaluation for our Spring training that takes place in Mid April. Information is posted on our TeamUnify website roughly a month in advance with dates and locations. Evaluations consist of swimmers being invited to attend a practice so coaches can assess their practice behavior, how they respond to feedback, and how they interact with everyone on the team.

### **How practice groups are divided, their practice schedules, price for each group.**

Our Practice Groups are broken down by grade: Red Group [Grades 1+2], White Group [Grades 3+4], Gray Group [Grades 5+6], Silver Group [Grades 7+8], Gold/Platinum [High School]. Each groups schedule is listed on our website.

### **Break down of when fall/winter season and spring season and summer season start and end.**

Our Fall/Winter season generally starts after Labor day, and will go until the middle, to end of, March. Spring Training runs from the middle of April until the middle of June, and Summer Training is from the end of June until the end of July. The Red, White, and Gray groups have a seasonal offering (Fall/winter, spring, summer), whereas Silver and High School swimmers registration lasts from Mid August until the end of July.

### **Approximate number of meets offered per month during each of the three seasons.**

The meet schedule changes from year to year, as well as season to season. For the Fall/Winter season (Short Course), we offer roughly 4-6 Dual meets, 2-3 Intersquad Meets, 8-12 Invitational Meets, 4-7 Championship level meets that swimmers can qualify for (18-28 Total opportunities to swim). Some meets have requirements (ie-Age, USA vs YMCA, Time Standards) that swimmers must achieve prior to attending. For the Spring & Summer seasons, these meets are on a first come, first served basis. We host roughly 3-4 Long Course Meets, and attend 2-3 championship level meets (Total of 5-7 meets offered).

### **What are the age cut offs - youngest and oldest?**

The ages of swimmers on the team range roughly from 6 - 18 years old.

**What are the performance and experience levels for each group?**

All performance and experience level expectations for each group is currently listed on our website – [www.madisonymcaswimming.org](http://www.madisonymcaswimming.org)

**What is the likelihood of an older (12+) novice being accepted to the team?**

Swimmers who are 12+ would be expected to know how to swim all four competitive strokes, have a working knowledge of proper turns, as well as racing starts.

**Can disabled/handicapped swimmers join the team?**

Depending on how the swimmer may fit in, yes.

**Are swimmers required to compete? Can a swimmer simply join the team to achieve a fitness or other goal?**

Swimmers are not required to compete, but are encouraged to if they are interested.

**Which towns does the team draw swimmers from?**

Madison, Chatham, New Providence, Morristown, Morris Township, Florham Park, Hanover Township, Parsippany-Troy Hills, Montclair, Bloomfield, Livingston, Maplewood, South Orange, West Orange

**Is financial assistance offered?**

Yes! All families who are in need of financial assistance would need to go through the YMCA and apply. Click [HERE](#) for more information!

**Do swimmers only compete in Y meets?**

The Mariners Swim Team competes in both YMCA Closed Meets (ie-Dual/Tri meets and Invitational Meets), as well as USA Sanctioned Meets. For USA Meets, all swimmers would be required to register with USA Swimming.

**What are the volunteering requirements for parents/guardians**

Parent volunteering is vital for the team to function.

**What is the athlete to coach ratio?**

We try to maintain roughly a 8:1-10:1 ratio for our younger swimmers, whereas our middle school and high school groups can go up to 15:1.

**During practice, how many swimmers are there in a lane, on average?**

The amount of swimmers in each lane could range from 8-10 for our younger swimmers. For our high school swimmers could range from 5-7 swimmers per lane.

**What are the national/regional level meets at which the team's swimmers have competed?**

The Mariners Swim Team attends a number of different local and regional/national level meets. The YMCA 12&Under State Championships is in Toms River, NJ and the YMCA 13&Over State Championships are in Lancaster, PA. We also attend a Jr/Sr National level meet called the Sun Kissed Invitational in Charlotte, NC. Lastly we attend and compete in the YMCA Nationals Championships that has been held in Greensboro, NC for the past few

years. Swimmers who qualify for meets such as USA Futures, Winter Junior Nationals, Summer Junior Nationals, etc., are eligible to attend and represent the Mariners swim team.

**What are the financial obligations besides the team fees? (equipment, social events, meet fees)**

Outside of the program fees, families are expected to purchase a team suit, cap, goggles, and any equipment that is required for their practice group (fins, paddles, snorkels). Meet fees are an additional cost for swim families that vary from meet to meet. There is a \$200 MPO fee that is required for each family to help the team function. Most social events (ie-ice cream socials, pizza parties, end of the season banquet) is covered by the MPO for swimmers on the team only.

**What are the practice expectations for the different age groups?**

Red Group - 2 of 5 practices are expected. 3 of 5 practices are encouraged  
White Group - 2 of 5 practices are expected. 3 of 5 practices are encouraged  
Gray Group - 3 of 6 practices are expected. 4 of 6 practices are encouraged  
Silver Group - 3 of 6 practices are expected. 4 of 6 practices are encouraged  
Gold/Platinum Group - 4 of 6 practices are expected. 5 of 6 practices are encouraged

**Do swimmers need to try out each year or are they on the team permanently once they are accepted?**

Swimmers must attend evaluations in order to be considered for the Mariners team. Once on, most swimmers are allowed to return after each year, as long as they register before the deadline.

**Can swimmers join mid-season?**

Because of lane space and safety for swimmers already on the team, we generally don't accept swimmers mid season.

**How far and how often does the team travel for meets? Is transportation provided?**

Travel time/distance for meets can range anywhere from a 10-15 minute drive to flying to North Carolina (ie-YMCA Nationals/Sunkissed).

**Is there a program/class to help a new swimmer prepare for the tryout?**

We encourage all swimmers who are interested to enroll in our Swim Clinic program, as well as any Competitive Swim Specific (CSS) Clinic that is offered.

**Where does the team practice**

The team practices are generally at the Madison Area YMCA, but also may have practices at the Ferguson Recreation Center at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison, NJ.

**Do we have to be members of the Y to join the team?**

Yes - all members of the Mariners Swim Team are required to have a full membership.