



# Sooner Swim Club

## New Member

## Handbook

Welcome to Sooner Swim Club (SSC)! This handbook contains useful information about SSC, how we operate, and the expectations we have of our swimmers and their parents. Before a swimmer may participate in any swimming activities, all fees must be paid, and the forms listed below must be completed, signed, and returned. **Please complete and return the following forms:**

1. Team Registration Package
2. USA Swimming Registration/USA Swimming Transfer Form
3. OU Release Form

You may write one check for all fees and dues made payable to SSC. Monthly due payments received after the 10th are subject to a \$10.00 late fee. Parents can set up auto pay via the SSC website (<http://soonerswimclub.com>) by clicking “My Account” – “Payment Setup” – “Add New Card” or “Add Bank Account.” The auto drafts occur on the first day of each month.

All swimmers and their parents/guardians must sign a Code of Ethics and Conduct when they first join. This code list rules for Sooner Swim Club; however, our swimmers and parents also are bound by the rules set down by OK Swimming and USA Swimming as well. When you join SSC, you also are joining those two organizations.

If at any time you have questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact any board member. If you have questions specifically related to your child's swimming, please contact your child's primary coach.

### General Information

Kent Nicholson is our head coach and can be reached at [kentn@norman.k12.ok.us](mailto:kentn@norman.k12.ok.us). Sooner Swim Club is a non-profit organization that is directed by a parent-run board. SSC considers competitive swimming to be a year-round sport. The swim year is broken into two seasons, short course and long course. Short course season runs approximately late August – early March and long course runs approximately April – the beginning of August. A short break from practice is taken at the end of each season. SSC considers the year to run from short course through long course, roughly August – July.

## Financial and Other Commitments

Through the years, SSC has evolved into one of the finest competitive swim programs in Oklahoma. The attention given by our dedicated coaches has created an excellent atmosphere for the development of young swimmers. Commitment to quality does not come without cost, however. SSC has many fixed, year-round costs that include coaches' salaries and pool rental fees. The pool rental is not determined on a month-to-month basis, but by signing a yearly lease with The University of Oklahoma (OU), our primary swim facility. In order to maintain a quality swim team, each of us must be willing to make certain commitments.

### **Dues:**

Dues are based on an annual fee, which is broken down into monthly installments for the convenience of our members. Dues are to be paid monthly. SSC depends upon prompt payment of monthly dues in order to meet the club's financial obligations. Therefore, monthly dues must be paid promptly; payments received after the 10th of the month are subject to a \$10.00 late fee. Dues and other fees are NOT prorated for partial periods EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF NEW SSC MEMBERS. If you have any questions, please contact a club board member.

All rates and fees are subject to change. The following are the current monthly and annual charges (as of this publication):

- Minnows: \$62 per month
- Dolphins: \$72 per month
- Barracudas: \$79 per month
- Sharks: \$92 per month
- Seniors: \$92 per month
- For NPS high school students participating in SSC-related events: summer dues are paid for two months, June and July. Summer dues must be paid in full prior to the start of the summer session (June 1). Five hours of volunteer time also are required for the summer session. SSC and USA Swimming annual registration fees also must be paid for NPS high school students.
- An annual registration fee of \$40. This will be collected in February. New swimmers pay upon joining.
- USA Swimming registration fee of \$75 annually (amount will change each fall). New swimmers pay upon joining; renewals are assessed in October.
- Parents with more than one swimmer may reduce the monthly fee for each additional swimmer over the first swimmer by \$5.00 per swimmer

Scholarships are available for those who qualify.

**DUES ARE PAID EVERY MONTH FOR THE FULL MONTH, ALL YEAR, WHETHER WE SWIM OR NOT.**

**SWIMMERS WHO ARE BEHIND IN ANY PAYMENTS FOR 60 DAYS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED IN THE WATER UNTIL PAYMENTS ARE BROUGHT TO A CURRENT STATUS.**

### **Reinstatement Fees:**

When a member family discontinues paying monthly dues, unless the swimmer is injured and incapable of participating in SSC, the swimmer forfeits membership. A physician's letter will be required to validate injuries. Reinstatement occurs when the member family remits the equivalent of up to three months' dues per swimmer to be reinstated. This figure is capped at the equivalent of the two swimmers paying the highest monthly dues for families with more than two swimmers. Back dues or \$150 will be required for reinstatement.

### **Quitting the Team:**

A swimmer wishing to leave the team must submit a written statement or e-mail SSC (by clicking on "Contact Us" in the left-hand column of the SSC homepage) **30 days before leaving**. Member families are reminded that SSC incurs pool and coaching expenses for the hours these resources are utilized, not based on the number of active swimmers. Our annual budget is developed based on the number of active swimmers at the end of each season along with assumptions about adding swimmers, losing swimmers, pool time required, and coaching required. We are obligated to pay for the pool time and coaching salaries associated with these contracts. Consequently, the loss of dues over an extended period of time creates a severe financial hardship for SSC.

## **Service Hours**

A well-run club requires a large numbers of volunteers. Each family should be prepared to work the specified number of hours. There are numerous opportunities to fulfill this obligation over the two swim seasons each year.

Beginning in September, each family will be required to provide **at least 10 hours of club service for the swim year** (August – July). At the end of our year, a family will be assessed \$15.00 per hour for each volunteer hour not completed during the past year.

Families joining SSC for the first time will have their volunteer hours waived for the first year only, from their start date until the end of the following August.

### **Service Options:**

Prior to each event requiring volunteers, an e-mail will go out announcing the areas where help is needed and how to sign up to help. Opportunities for obtaining volunteer hours include the following:

- Helping with hosted meets (e.g., timing, concessions, heat sheet sales, food and drinks [cost of food and drinks are credited as service hours])
- Helping with fundraisers, such as a swim-a-thon
- Helping with social events, such as end-of-season parties
- Serving on a committee (e.g., swim-a-thon committee, apparel committee)
- Serving as an official at SSC meets and USA Swimming sanctioned meets (training provided)
- Serving on the SSC Board of Directors

## Parental Responsibilities

Although a parent's first and foremost responsibility is to their children, they do have responsibilities to Sooner Swim Club as well. The following are general guidelines:

- At meets, do not distract the coach while another SSC swimmer is competing. Save all questions and concerns until a break occurs or after the meet.
- Attend and volunteer at SSC hosted meets and other events.
- Pay all dues and fees in a timely manner.
- Keep informed by reading SSC e-mails and checking the SSC website.
- Attend all parent meetings and provide suggestions and input.
- Help your swimmer(s) in setting realistic goals and encourage them to achieve those goals plus any the coaches have set.
- Refrain from taking pictures or videos during SSC practices.
- Pick up your swimmer(s) in a timely manner from practices. **Swimmers must be picked up within 15 minutes of the end of their practice. A \$50 FEE WILL BE ASSESSED TO A SWIMMER'S ACCOUNT WHEN THE SWIMMER IS NOT PICKED UP WITHIN 15 MINUTES OF THE END OF PRACTICE.**

## Use of Swimmer and Family Information

While we do display pictures at OU Pool and on the SSC website and other social media, we will not include the swimmer's name or personal information. Occasionally, pictures are taken for use in newspaper articles. If you wish that your swimmer not be a part of this, please put this request in writing and turn it in to a coach or board member.

## Team Suits and Apparel

While SSC does have a team suit, swimmers are not required to wear them. We strongly encourage that the team suit be worn to all non-championship meets in order to promote team spirit and unity. Suit orders usually are placed in the fall. Other team apparel (e.g., t-shirts) may be purchased periodically through the club.

Swimmers should have separate suits for practice and for meets. A swim cap is provided to each swimmer upon joining.

All suits worn should follow the guidelines and restrictions provided by Oklahoma Swimming (OKS) and USA Swimming.

## Pool Facility

Currently, SSC rents pool space and time from The University of Oklahoma (OU). SSC swims year-round at OU's Murray Case Sells Swim Complex. The pool is located at 1401 Asp Avenue, Norman, Oklahoma 73072. The pool facility's phone number is 405-325-4837.

**Pool Rules and Regulations:**

While on OU grounds/property, all swimmers and their parents/guardians are required to adhere to the code of conduct set down by OU, including the university's policies for having minors on campus.

**Pool Storm Closure Policy:**

The OU Pool will not allow any swimming unless no thunder has been heard for at least 30 minutes. Thunder and other weather conditions (e.g., snow, ice) may require SSC swim practice to be cancelled. Practice cancellations will be announced via e-mail and Facebook. Weather conditions sometimes may necessitate ending a practice early; parents should stay weather aware during practice times.

## Practice Teams/Groups and Schedules

SSC currently has five practice teams: Minnows, Dolphins, Barracudas, Sharks, and Seniors. The coaches decide which team the swimmer is on and when the swimmer moves from one team to another based on the swimmer's ability and workout performance.

- **Minnows:** should be able to perform freestyle with breathing to the side and backstroke. They must be able to swim 4 X 25 yards of freestyle with no more than 30-second rest intervals between. They practice two days a week.
- **Dolphins:** must be capable of: freestyle with bilateral breathing, backstroke with proper body position, freestyle flip turn, backstroke flip turn, and a 300 freestyle with flip turns. Training includes using a clock, turns, starts, and lane management (circle swimming), 5-second drag and other basic techniques. They swim three days a week.
- **Barracudas:** must be capable of a racing start, legal breaststroke, legal butterfly, a 600 free with legal turns, and a freestyle set of 16 X 50 on the 1:15. They are scheduled for three practices per week.
- **Sharks:** a fully structured training group. The basic requirements are: legal 200 IM with breaststroke pull-out, 16 X 50 on the 1:00, and commit to at least three practices per week. They are scheduled for five practices per week.
- **Seniors:** the top training program. Basic requirements are: 10 X 200 free on 3:00, 4 X 400 IM on 7:30, 15 X 100 free within 10 seconds of best average, and 4 X 200 IM on the 3:30. They are scheduled for at least five practices per week.

**Fall/Spring Practice Schedule:**

Minnows - Tuesday and Thursday: 5:15 to 6:00 PM.

Dolphins - Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 5:15 to 6:00 PM.

Barracudas- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 5:15 PM to 6:45 PM.

Sharks and Seniors - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 5:15 PM to 6:45 PM.

**Summer Practice Schedule:**

The summer practice schedule and locations will be announced in April or May of each year. Summer practices will include morning sessions for advanced swim groups (e.g., Sharks and Seniors) in addition to afternoon practices.

## Swim Meets

### Swim Meet Costs:

A host team incurs a cost in both money and volunteer time in order to have a swim meet. These costs may be directly proportional to the type/level of meet and the total amount of time scheduled for the meet. These costs include, but are not limited to: pool rental, equipment rental, and awards. Attending teams also may incur costs related to the number of coaches sent and the distance traveled to attend the meet. All of these costs may be passed on to the swimmer in some form. Swim meet fees will be posted to your account. The fees that SSC charges per swimmer to attend a swim meet includes, but are not limited to:

- Charges/fees required by the host team – these amounts vary between meets.
- SSC coaching fees for meets. Fees are \$0 per swimmer for developmental SSC-hosted meets (e.g., unsanctioned “mini meets”). Fees are \$10 per swimmer for other meets (e.g., USA Swimming sanctioned meets).

### Swim Meet Policies:

- Coaches establish the meet schedule for the team.
- Coaches will be sent to the meets on the team schedule unless attendance is deemed too low. Meet information will be provided via the SSC website and e-mails.
- Entry deadlines must be met.
- Some meets will have qualifying times. Swimmers must meet those qualifying times to attend. Swimmers are expected to swim the events they have entered unless excused by the coach.
- Relay-only swimmers (swimmers not swimming in individual events) must show up and participate in the relay. Failure to do so may result in the relay fee being charged to the family.
- Be at the meet pool at least 15 minutes prior to warm-up times.
- In a prelim/finals meet, swimmers are expected to swim in their finals unless excused by the coach. If a swimmer becomes sick at a meet, the coach should be notified as soon as possible.
- Swimmers and parents will show good sportsmanship, including but not limited to:
  - Respecting officials, competitors, teammates, coaches, and meet personnel.
  - Cheering for all SSC swimmers.
  - Refraining from poor behavior such as booing or throwing items.
  - Refraining from bad mouthing other swimmers’ performance.

All swimmers are encouraged to participate in each season’s meets and, if qualifying times are met, to attend DII and/or State Championship meets. Special recognition will be given by SSC to swimmers with this level of participation.

## Contacting SSC, Additional Information Sources, and Social Media

### SSC Postal Address:

Sooner Swim Club  
PO Box 1433  
Norman, OK 73070

**Websites:****SSC:** <http://soonerswimclub.com>**SSC Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/SoonerSwimClub>**Oklahoma Swimming:** <http://www.oks.org>**USA Swimming:** <http://www.usaswimming.org>

## **Sooner Swim Club Board of Directors, 2018-2019**

Alicia Maddocks, President  
Jennifer Bain, Vice President  
Christie Shaffer, Treasurer  
Ann Beutel, Secretary  
Richard Leader, At-Large Member  
Yan Zhou, At-Large Member  
Alva Brockus, Past President

## **Coaches**

**Head Coach:** Kent Nicholson

- Swam for Sooner Swim Club (SSC), 1972 – 1983
- Three-time All-State swimmer in high school; his high school team won State three times in four years.
- Swam at Drury College, 1983 -1987
- National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics—All-American Team National Championship, 1988
- SSC coach/assistant high school coach, 1989 - 1994
- Head coach SSC, 1997 – present
- Head coach Norman High School/Norman North High School, 1999-present
- Teaches at Dimension Academy High School (alternative high school), 1997 - present

**Assistant Coaches:** Tyler Crowe, Jodie Brister, Hunter Bannick, and Jayden Starkey.

## **History of Sooner Swim Club**

Sooner Swim Club (SSC) was founded in 1963 by a group of Norman parents, among them Henry Enterline and Donald and Jane Menzie, who wrote the bylaws and designed the logo. The club from the beginning was a part of the national swimming organization under its various names, now called USA Swimming.

The club was formed to promote a love of swimming as a sport and as a healthy lifestyle among young people. Under SSC auspices, children and adolescents have been taught to swim competitively and provided access to all reaches of the sport. From early on, SSC produced notable swimmers, several of whom achieved state records. SSC swimmers have competed at Zones, Futures, Junior Nationals, and Senior Nationals. Many SSC swimmers have received college swimming scholarships from schools across the country; Harvard, Cornell, University of Chicago, Georgia Tech, and Delaware are some of the recent colleges and universities.

SSC originally trained at and maintained what was known as the South Base Pool and indoors at the Field House Pool until they closed. SSC then began to lease pool time from The University of Oklahoma at the Murray Case Sells Swim Complex. Hundreds of Norman-area children and youth have participated in SSC since it was formed. The club has grown from less than two dozen swimmers in the early years to over 100 swimmers annually in recent years.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q: How is Sooner Swim Club (SSC) structured?**

**A:** SSC primarily is structured to enable individuals to accomplish their personal goals within a team environment. SSC provides a well-rounded, quality, competitive swimming program for young people of varying ages and swimming abilities. There are a total of five programs available for abilities ranging from novice competitors (generally six to eight years of age) through high school age swimmers, where the focus is on success at regional and national competitive levels.

### **Q: How do we obtain information about practice and meet schedules?**

**A:** For information concerning the swim club schedule and all team activities, SSC maintains a comprehensive website (<http://soonerswimclub.com>). We also send information via e-mail. Checking your e-mail and the SSC website frequently is strongly recommended.

### **Q: How is the business of administrating SSC handled?**

**A:** SSC is a non-profit organization. The only paid employees are our coaches. Kent Nicholson, head coach, has supervisory responsibility for the entire swim program and day-to-day operations. SSC consists of a Board of Directors with elections held annually in September for President-Elect (Vice President), Treasurer, Secretary, and two At-Large Members. Other board positions are appointed as needed. The SSC Board of Directors serves to monitor and review club operations, including addressing problems that may arise. The Board also is responsible for the coaching staff, including their compensation and contractual arrangements. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend the monthly Board of Directors meeting held during practice at OU Pool.

### **Q: What are SSC's obligations and how does SSC support itself?**

**A:** The Board of Directors provides pool availability through contracts with The University of Oklahoma, coaching staff (including coaches' education, certification, and travel expenses), and pool equipment as necessary to support club activities. The coaching staff provides organized practices and professional swimming techniques, training, and instruction to provide the best opportunity for your child's swimming success. SSC supports itself through membership fees and fundraising activities.

### **Q: What is USA Swimming Membership and why is it required?**

**A:** As a USA Swimming licensed swim club, SSC is obligated to ensure all swimmers are members of USA Swimming. It also is necessary for participation in any USA Swimming sanctioned swim meet. USA Swimming provides SSC liability insurance in the event of an accident, and the swimmers' medical insurance to cover catastrophic medical costs incurred during a sanctioned activity, including SSC practices and activities. No swimmer will be allowed in the pool without a USA Swimming membership.

**Q: What are the swimmer's obligations to SSC?**

**A:** Swimmers are athlete members of Oklahoma Swimming (OKS) and USA Swimming. Their primary obligations are to enjoy themselves, make new friends, practice hard, attain their swimming goals, and conduct themselves as responsible young people in accordance with SSC and USA Swimming Codes of Conduct.

**Q: What are parental obligations to SSC?**

**A:** As a parent, your most important obligation is to provide constant encouragement to your child(ren). Providing quality swim instruction and water time does require a time commitment from parents, however, in addition to the fees paid. All SSC members are unpaid volunteers who often hold down full-time jobs, limiting their available time for SSC responsibilities. As a result, parents' willingness to work together and rely on one another is paramount to SSC success. Parents can become involved in SSC in a variety of ways (e.g., serving on the board or on a committee, helping at meets hosted by SSC).

**Q: I have other obligations as well. Why should I volunteer?**

**A:** The larger the number of volunteers, the less of a burden on any individual. Moreover, many of the personnel you observe at meets have older swimmers and will phase out their participation over the next few years as their children move on to college; parents of younger swimmers are needed to take over this work. The ability of any volunteer organization to prosper depends directly on the involvement of members of the organization. The overwhelming majority of this commitment is through serving on the SSC Board of Directors and helping at swim meets, social events, and fundraising activities. The best reason to volunteer may very well be that volunteers have a better understanding of SSC's internal operations and the rules under which we function.

**Q: Can I specify what I volunteer for?**

**A:** Certainly. Each of us has certain talents and attributes which, when put to proper use, would benefit SSC. We also gain personal satisfaction in different ways. There is obviously more value to each of us as individuals, and the club in general, if we can volunteer for activities we will enjoy and will benefit the club at the same time.

**Q: Why do we need so many volunteers at a swim meet?**

**A:** It is important to understand that the primary purpose of officials and timers at a meet is to ensure compliance with the technical rules of swimming, provide a safe venue, and ensure that no one individual has an advantage over another, in other words, to ensure a level playing field. Other functions (e.g., awards, hospitality) provide encouragement, information, and sustenance to everyone in attendance.

**Q: What if I still have questions?**

**A:** Please talk to any SSC board member or any of our coaches.