

TEAM

HANDBOOK

Welcome!

                        Superior Stingray Swimming is a competitive swim program under the management and supervision of Superior Athletic Club and coached by Siouxha Tokman. United States of America Swimming (USAS) is the national governing body for competitive swimming in the United States.

                        Coach Tokman brings more than 50 years of coaching and 17 years of competitive swimming experience to our team. Our Head Coach brings his energy and enthusiasm back to the Rogue Valley. Siouxha was the former coach of the Superior Aquatics/Stingrays from 1995 to 2006. Since 2006 he has been coaching in Turkey and Alaska and was able to take several swimmers to European Championships, World Championships and one of his swimmers participated in the Beijing Olympics. The swimmer was recruited by the Head Olympic Coach and competes for the University of Georgia.

                        Coach Tokman has achieved level 5 status with the American Swim Coaches Association. It is the highest level a coach can receive for education and excellence in coaching. Coach Graduated from University of Alaska in 1990 with Elementary Education teaching degree. Coach Siouxha wrote a book called “Handbook of Swimming Sport” and sold more than 4000 copies in Turkey and neighboring countries.

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***This team was organized to teach the young swimmers in this wonderful town the best way to become competitive swimmers. We are a competitive team and we want these athletes to enjoy a safe, healthy, and fun activity.....swimming.***

***We do not only want to develop great swimmers but understanding youth and adults as well. We want to encourage swimming and exercise for a life time.  If your goal is get fit, to train to receive college scholarship or swim in the Olympics we have the coaching and expertise to get you there.***

Superior Stingray Swimming

**Vision Statement**

**It is our vision to have the majority of our swimmers qualify for Oregon State, Region 12, Western Zone, National Championship meets and beyond....**

**Mission Statement**

**We will achieve this vision by teaching goal setting, respect, and an understanding for others, by encouraging hard work and by forging an “unbreakable team bond”**

**Central Theme**

**We are the Team of the Future**. **Our swimmers learn to set and accomplish goals, eat** **right, respect others, become good winners and learn how to lose properly as well. Most of all, we learn to handle stressful situations in a positive manner.**

**HOW DO I JOIN?**

Swimmers who join the Superior Stingrays Swimming (SSS) will become a member at Superior Athletic Club. Therefore each athlete must go through the regular club sign up process at the front desk. We do try-outs three times a year. ( September, January, June) but already established swimmers can join any time upon the Head Coach's approval.

One of the most important parts of getting you signed up as a new SSS member is completing the USA Swimming Registration Form (available upon registration). All SSS swimmers must be registered with USA Swimming.  The yearly cost of this registration is approximately $70.00 a year.  This form must be filled out completely for each swimmer being registered and returned to Head Coach with a check made out to SSBA.  The form and payment must be received before the swimmer can participate in practices with SSS. This is very important for insurance purposes.

 Please remember, SSS is, in most activities, a volunteer-run organization and helping out in the club is a fun and rewarding way to encourage your swimmer to participate and excel in swimming. Being a Superior Stingray requires time in the pool and out.  Parents play an important role in the success of our club – from helping run swim meets, housing swimmers, working at our club activities and by helping your swimmer lead a healthy lifestyle.

**Superior Stingray Swimming**

**Monthly Dues and Joining Policy**

The Cost To Join The Superior Stingrays:

$50 initial joining fee plus team fee ($50), first and last month's dues. Annual Team Fee helps cover the cost of swim team travel expenses for the coaches.

Group Fees:

Sharks              $60 per month

Silvers              $70 per month

Golds               $80 per month

Elites                $90 per month

Dues are billed by and paid monthly to Superior Athletic Club.

Dryland training opportunities may be offered for an additional fee.

Superior Stingrays Practice Schedule

**Group Name**          **Days**                                **Times**

SHARKS                            M-W-F                                        3:30 TO 4:15 PM

SILVERS                            MONDAYS & FRIDAYS         4:00 TO 5:00 PM

                                           TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS    3:30 TO 4:30 PM

GOLDS                              MONDAYS & FRIDAYS          4:45 TO 6:15 PM

                                           TUE, WED, THU                     4:15 TO 5:45 PM

ELITES                              M&W                                           6:00 TO 8:00 PM

                                           FRIDAYS (with Golds)              4:45 TO 6:15 PM

                                           TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS    5:30 TO 7:30 PM

**Additional dryland training opportunities may be available outside this practice schedule. Coach encourages and recommends all swimmers participate in all available dryland training.**

**Equipment:**

Each entry level swimmer is required to have water bottles, goggles, swimsuits, caps, fins and towels. Hand paddles, pull-buoys and kick boards are provided by our club for the work-outs. Our higher level swimmers Golds and Elites also need snorkels. All required equipment is sold at our front desk at the club, ask coaches for detailed information.

Swimmers are required to swim with a SSS swim cap during the swim meets if they wear swim caps. Also our Head Coach Siouxha would like our swimmers to wear team suits when competing. Ask coaches how to order one.

**Please place your name on all your equipment!**

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**Swim-A-Thon participation:**

 Once a year each swimmer is REQUIRED to raise pledges, which help support our team. Money raised from this event goes to our budget for the team's yearly spending. (Awards banquets, meetings, parties, equipment, hosting meets....etc) **Swimmers** **who earn the most money will be awarded prizes.**

**Okay, I've joined the team. Now what?**

            SSS has many groups to serve different levels of swimming abilities.During our try-outs, each swimmer will be personally evaluated by the Head Coach to determine his or her ability level. The team is currently divided into the following groups:

**A) Sharks:**This is the swim team's **entry level**. In Sharks, swimmers will learn four competitive strokes (Freestyle, Backstroke, Butterfly and Breaststroke) as well as their turns and starts. Swimmers do not compete at this level. A swimmer who finishes all the requirements of this group may move up to higher levels. It takes about four months to graduate from Sharks.

Swimmers of all ages may be in the Sharks group.

**B) Silvers:**In this group, stroke and technique are emphasized. Silvers are the lowest competitive group, yet we do have some of our very best younger swimmers in it.

**C) Golds:**Swimmers in this level are a little older and faster. The golds group is a stepping stone for the Elites level. Most of these members have Oregon State Qualifying times. There will be more distance and yet still stroke and technique work in this level.

**D) Elites:**Our highest ability level. Here most swimmers will have State, Age Group Sectional, Western Zone, and Senior Sectional or higher meet qualifying times. Attendance, commitment, and dedication are very important in this level. The elites group produces most of our championship swimmers.

NOTE: all swimmers are moved up or down levels based on achievement and commitment at the Head Coach's discretion.

**WHAT ARE THE RULES I NEED TO KNOW FOR WORK-OUTS?**

1)                  Be dressed and ready to swim ten minutes before the practice begins.

2)                  Always listen to the coach (especially when he/she is talking to the whole group) No horsing around during the practice.

3)                  Bring a **water bottle** and needed equipment to **all** practices.

4)                  It is one of our LOGICAL rules that if a swimmer is going to be late to practice or planning to leave practice early, he/she must have a note from a parent.

5)                  THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!! Appropriate behavior is **REQUIRED** in and out of the locker rooms and at the pool lobby. Keep our facilities clean! BEING **RESPECTFUL** TO PEOPLE AROUND YOU, TO OTHER POOL USERS AND THE POOL PERSONEL IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE.

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**\*\*\*\* NOTE: ATTENDANCE IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS IN SWIMMING SPORT. IF YOU ARE NOT AT THE POOL, WE CAN NOT HELP YOU IMPROVE** **\*\*\*\***

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**Communication:**

**WE DO COMMUNICATE MOSTLY VIA OUR WEB-SITE, BUT PLEASE DO             COMMUNICATE WITH OUR COACHES AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE BY PHONE OR**

**E-MAIL.**

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS, PLEASE DO NOT APPROACH       THE COACHES DURING A WORK-OUT SESSION, WHEN COACHES ARE   CONDUCTING A PRACTICE.**

**Coach Siouxha  (541) 227-9007**[**siouxha@yahoo.com**](mailto:siouxha@yahoo.com)

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**At Superior,**

**“The Water Is Our Sky”**

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**How long are the swim seasons?**

This sport is divided into two seasons:

            “SHORT COURSE” - In which the swimmers compete in 25 yard pools, runs from September to end of April.

            “LONG COURSE” - In which the swimmers compete in 50 meter pools, runs from May to mid- August.

**SWIM MEETS**

                        Superior Stingrays participate in swim meets year around. Our short course season meets are between October and end of April. In May through August, we compete in our long course season.

                        Before the Championship meets we do participate in a number of meets to get times to qualify for the State Meets.

**“Very Important”**

**NO SSS SWIMMER SHOULD ENTER A SWIM MEET THAT IS NOT ON OUR MEET SCHEDULE.SOMETIMES THIS IS ALLOWED WITH THE HEAD COACH'S PERMISSION ONLY.**

**How do I sign up for a swim meet?**

**Please do not contact the host team directly to sign up for a meet**. We enter as a team.

            Some time prior to a meet, we will announce the entry procedure at our Team Unified System. Entries are done electronically and Team Unified system will explain how to proceed. Coaches have the final decision for swimmer's events to swim in the meets.

**What does it mean to be an “A”, “B”, and “C” swimmer?**

These are time standards. Times are established by Oregon Swimming. Most entry level swimmer fall into the “C” category. A “C” swimmer can only compete at certain designated meets. Official times are established at the meets or at the Sanctioned home Time Trials. As the swimmer's time improves, he/she moves up to a category and qualifies to attend the more competitive “A”/ “B” meets. Remember, the coveted “A” time is necessary to compete at State Championship meets.

**What to do during the swim meets.**

1)                  Bring all the necessary equipment to meets: Goggles, extra goggles, towels,something to wear on pool deck, socks to keep feet warm, and most importantly, the event list.

2)                  Try to sit together., teams arriving late usually do not get to sit in good areas. Arriving a little early helps us to secure a good seating area for the team. When we sit together we can cheer together. This support helps fellow teammates as they prepare to compete and show your friends that you care for them.

3)                  Warm-ups are an extremely important part of swim meets, especially for older swimmers. Younger swimmers do not need long warm-ups. However, as the Head Coach, I really stress the importance of good warm-ups for the older swimmers. The team warms up TOGETHER. No one should warm up on their own away from the team. However, I might divide the team into groups to fit everyone into our designated warm-up lane. If that happens, we will be grouping swimmers according to their ages. NO ONE SHOULD START THE WARM UP WITHOUT COACHES KNOWLEDGE.

4)                  During the warm up, never stop in the middle of the lane for any reason at all!!!. If you must stop, get out of the pool. When we warm up with great numbers of swimmers in one or two lanes we swim very close to one another. One person stopping in the middle of the lane messes up the rest of the lane. It looks very bad and embarrassing and it is dangerous.

5)                  If you want to pass a swimmer, please simply pass like a car on the left. If some one is passing you, please stay very close to the lane line so that the person can pass you easily. DO NOT STOP WHILE BEING PASSED!!!

6)                  Listen well to all warm up instructions. When coach is talking, pay attention. Swim meets are very noisy, so help your coach by being quiet when he/she is talking to the team.

7)                  After the warm up we do sprints. Everyone must do them. We also do them together. Your coach must start you off the blocks. They are not the same in every pool and try to get used to them. When you are done with your sprints, do easy swim before you get out.

8)                  After swimming an event, for older swimmers, a short cool down is a very good idea. Not every facility will provide a cool down pool. If there is one, it is a must. No horsing around in these cool down pools. Younger swimmers do not need to cool down. If any swimmer needs to get in the cool down pool prior to swimming an event, he/she must ask the coach first.

9)                  Swimmers must check in with their coaches before and after their events. This is the time the coach gives swimmers some tips and comments. After an event, “NO MATTER HOW YOU PERFORMED” you must come and get your coach's comments about your swim. I personally love to give my swimmers huge hugs regardless of their performances after an event.

10)              Swimmers must check with the coach when they arrive and leave the competition pool area. Sometimes it is urgent that the coach must find a certain swimmer in a hurry. There have been many times I could not find a swimmer to fill a relay leg or ask an important question regarding an upcoming event.

11)              TEAM MEETINGS DURING THE SWIM MEET: It is extremely important to have the team meetings during the swim meets. How are we swimming? What and how did we do yesterday? What needs to be improved? How many DQs did we have? What were they? What are the team scores? How close are we to the other teams? Can we catch them? All these issues must be evaluated during these team meetings. There is always a team meeting right at the end of the warm ups, so, keep your eyes and ears open to find out where and when are we meeting. Do not wander away and make us look for you.

**Goal setting**

                        This is the main ingredient for success in swimming sport and in life. Each swimmer must learn the importance of establishing personal goals in swimming.

                        Each swimmer, guided by the coaches, will set his/her goals for each season. Each swimmer's goal will be unique. However, in general, the goals must be realistic and may involve times, technique, habits, and attitudes.

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**At Superior,**

**“More We Practice Luckier We Get”**

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**Helpful information for the parents.**

                        Parents play a very important part in the sport of swimming. Without parents, the sport could not survive. Besides driving children to and from practice, and running the team's administrative positions, parents also put the swim meets together. Parents involvement and time commitment is a “must” in the sport of swimming.

**What is the SSS Board?**

The Superior Stingray Swimming Booster Association is an IRS non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. The SSSBA organizes one or more fund raisers each year providing the funding for scholarships, transportation, banquet costs, awards, clothing and other charitable actions. They SSSBA Board of Directors are all volunteers who put in many, many hours to ensure our swimmers have a great experience.

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**At Superior, we advise that**

**in order to win, have;**

**“A Great Confidence**

**before your event starts”**

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**QUESTIONS:**

**WHAT IF I AM UPSET WITH ONE OF THE ASSISTANT COACHES OR THE HEAD COACH?**

1)                  Talk to Head Coach Siouxha first.

2)                  If the Head Coach is unable to solve your problem, then take it to the Club's General Manager.

She will meet with the Head Coach and resolve the issue.

*PLEASE REMEMBER THESE BASIC LINES OF COMMUNICATION*

*FIRST: SPEAK TO THE HEAD COACH.*

*SECOND: CONSULT OR WRITE TO THE GENERAL MANAGER.*

*THIRD: WE THANK YOU FOR FOLLOWING THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION.*

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**HELPFUL HINTS, TERMS, AND DEFINITIONS FOR THE PARENTS.**

DUAL MEET:

            A meet between your team and one other team. The dual meet is an excellent opportunity to introduce new swimmer to competitive swimming. Dual meets generally occur in one day.

INVITATIONAL MEET:

            A meet hosted by one team with invitations sent to many teams. Teams who do not get an invitation cannot enter these meets. In some cases, as many as 600 swimmers may be participating. Most invitational meets last two (Sat and Sunday) or two and a half (Friday afternoon , Sat.,and Sun.) days.

WHERE DO MOST MEETS TAKE PLACE?

            We do compete mostly in the State of Oregon. Most meets occur in Southern Oregon. But we do compete every year in other championship meets which take place in Seattle, Washington. Also, during the summer months we may travel to California or Nevada for long course meets.

WHAT IS A DQ?

            A DQ is a disqualification. Officials at meets are required to make sure all swimmers adhere to certain technical requirements for starts, turns, and strokes.

            Until swimmers learn what to do, it is not unusual for new swimmers to be disqualified (DQ). If your child gets a DQ, be sympathetic but realistic. Even experienced swimmers get DQs.

WHAT IS A HEAT SHEET?

            A Heat Sheet contains all of the events and the swimmers participating in those events. It will tell the swimmer what event, heat, and the lane he/she will be in. These can usually be purchased for a nominal fee from the host team prior to the start of the meet, or sometimes it can be copied on line too.

**EATING HABITS DURING THE SWIM MEETS**

                        On the day of the meet, swimmers should eat a good breakfast, but not overeat!!! Cereal, bagels, muffins, and fruits are all good choices. The best swimmer breakfast is, a couple slices of toasted bread and a little honey or jelly on them. Do not eat many eggs, spicy sauces or too much milk. Apple juice is the “best” choice of drink for swimmers. Snacking on oranges and apples are also very good. While at the meet, swimmers should snack after every event ( no more than half of a bagel). Make sure to snack soon after. There is a twenty- minute window that the snack will be useful for the next event. After that it is too late. Stay away from greasy and fatty food. Candy and sodas are very bad choices during the meet. Save the hamburgers and the pizza for after the meet.

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**HOW WILL WE GET IMPORTANT TEAM INFORMATION?**

**SSS maintains a website,** [**https://www.teamunify.com/team/ossss/page/home**](https://www.teamunify.com/team/ossss/page/home)**, as our primary means of club communication. The website and club e mails are the main avenue for passing information from the Coaches and other club personnel to all members of the club. Your account info and password will be emailed to you once your registration packet is complete. Email is an important communication tool for the club. It is important for you to keep the club updated with a current email address.**

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**A VERY IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD COACH**

**Winning isn't everything. So, what should I do when my child isn't?**

**Winning is wonderful, but there is no doubt about it there is only one winner per event. The very act of competing is a victory in sports. It means that your child is committed to participate in something athletic. Whether or not he or she comes first or last, is less important than whether they had fun and felt a sense of accomplishment.**

**Parents have a tendency to want the best for their kids, so assume the best means WINNING. If your child comes in dead last, but put in a lot of effort in trying, you need to support their effort. Parents who constantly criticize their children's performance will soon find that the child will lose interest in the sport.**

**In Superior Stingrays Swimming, we try to emphasize a swimmer doing his/her “PERSONAL BEST” no matter what the outcome. A swimmer who is encouraged usually improves. An improving swimmer is a swimmer that is having fun!**

**It should be noted that early in a swimmer's career, time drops will be dramatic. Later, at the higher levels, improvement is more difficult. Many swimmers go through “slumps” and “plateaus”, when there are no gains for months at a time. Then suddenly, the time drops again. As a reminder, a parent should encourage the swimmer to attend as many as practices as possible. Improvements in time will not come without commitments to practice on a regular basis.**

**Thank you,   Coach Siouxha**

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**“Champions are made at practice”**

**TEAM HISTORY**

**Southern Oregon** **Swim Association**(SOSA)

was the Rogue Valley's competitive swim team based out of the SOU pool. In 1990-91, Medford Superior Courts began planning a major addition to their existing facility.  The original plans were to build a four lane pool.   Doug Naverson, the President of SOSA along with Head Coach Ken Pappas started discussions with Jim Kusnerik to change the plan to build a larger pool to accommodate the swim team.  
The club was only able to fit in a 6 lane pool on the building lot. The name of the club was changed to Superior Athletic Club when the new basketball, weight room and pool was opened in the winter of 1991.  Superior Athletic Club took over operations of the swim team and changed the name to Superior Aquatics.  The team used both the SOU and SAC pool for the first 6 years before making the decision to end the program at SOU.

Coach Siouxha Tokman took over coaching duties in 1994.