



# CASCADES SWIM TEAM, INC.

## Handbook

*Updated 2021*

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Cascades Rapids are a member-run, family-oriented swim team that seeks to provide a fun and competitive environment for swimmers in the Cascades community.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

The CASCADES RAPIDS SWIM TEAM believes that swimming should be available to everyone who lives in the Cascades community (proof of address will be required at registration) age 5-18 years who can swim 25 meters unaided. While this is a summer developmental program, the Rapids is not a substitute for swim lessons. Swimming is competitive, challenging, and fun. Safety will be stressed at all times.

The Coach and the coaching staff will teach and/or develop competitive stroke techniques in freestyle, backstroke, starts, turns, finishes, and proper swimming equipment usage. Butterfly and breaststroke will be introduced based upon swimmers' abilities. Practices will be structured to provide a thorough physical workout to help develop swimming speed and endurance.

## **MESSAGE FOR FIRST TIME FAMILIES**

Welcome!! For many of our parents and swimmers this will be their first experience with a swim team. You may be thinking, "I don't know what to do" or "I'm not a good enough swimmer". That is OK! Our coaching staff along with a handful of seasoned swimmers and parents will help you see that first time families are absolutely necessary for the team's success.

This handbook will help parents and swimmers know what to expect of the team and what the team expects of them. It will answer many of the questions you may have about the team and about summer swim league.

Please attend Time Trials. Time Trials are run as an intrasquad meet so that the children have a "trial run" at the usual dual meet process. Each swimmer's times will be recorded as a baseline for the season. It is also an opportunity to learn about the importance and functions of the various volunteer positions.

For a successful swim season, be involved and ask questions of the board members, coaches, officials, and fellow parents. We all have the same goal: to provide your child with the best possible experience in swimming.

## **SWIM TEAM EXPERIENCE**

The swim team experience consists of the coaching program, developmental and competitive meets and awards for the purpose of recognizing the swimmers' accomplishments. The program is structured to meet the needs of all participating swimmers, and to encourage and reward personal improvement as well as competitive excellence. Personal improvement is celebrated to encourage swimmers to participate and progress in all swimming skills and strokes, not just those in which they excel.

The Coach and the coaching staff are responsible for enforcing the rules of safety and discipline, and will have the full support of the Cascades Rapids Board of Directors and parents. Swimmers are expected to comply with the directions of the coaching staff and all requested swimming drills are considered mandatory. The Coach will notify the Cascades Rapids Board of Directors, in a timely manner, of all disciplinary actions taken.

All pool regulations in effect during normal pool hours are to be honored during swim team activities. These regulations are posted at the pool and published in the Cascades Community Association Bylaws. Enforcement procedures will be consistent with those in use during normal pool hours.

Parents contribute greatly to the successes experienced by the swimmers and the team. Just by ensuring your child's punctual attendance at practices and meets you help out more than you realize. The Coach is then able to concentrate on developing your swimmer's skills rather than wasting time waiting for tardy swimmers or scrambling at the last minute to change meet sheets.

Individual times can be set at any official League meet (Dual or Developmental). The team will maintain and post ladders based on the results from these meets. The Coach will use these times, from the ladder, to help seed the events for subsequent meets.

## Refund Policy

All refunds of membership dues shall be at the discretion of the Cascades Rapids Board of Directors. The Board shall use but not be limited to the following guidelines:

All refunds are subject to a \$25 non-refundable fee. The remainder of refunds will be processed as follows:

Withdrawal on or Before:	Rapids:	Riptides:
First Day of PM Practices	Full Refund minus \$25	Full Refund
Time Trials	Registration Fee Paid minus \$35	Full Refund
Last Day of PM Practice	Registration Fee minus \$50	Registration Fee minus \$25
No refunds given after June 15. Full refund will be given if the swimmer is not approved by coaching staff.		

## Volunteers

Swim teams require a large number of individuals to be present and participating in volunteer positions before a meet can even begin. In order to adhere to guidelines and ensure the integrity of the meet, volunteer positions will be slightly less than in previous years. Many others work in the background to raise funds, provide for social events and coordinate all other team activities. To ensure that volunteer jobs are divided **EQUITABLY** among **ALL** families participating in the swim team program, the Cascades Rapids Board of Directors will track volunteers' commitments.

All members are required to perform volunteer functions as a condition of the membership of their swimmer on the team. Each family not complying with this requirement shall be prevented from participating in future seasons of the Cascades Rapids. Occasionally families may be asked for additional volunteer work for special events; however, we will attempt to create a flexible scheduling system so that all parents can perform their duties in a manner that will coordinate with their personal schedules.

Pre-approved out of pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the swim team will be reimbursed by the Treasurer upon receipt of a complete expense form/reimbursement request, accompanied with receipts.

## Fundraising

The difference between the income generated by registration fees and our actual expenses, Coaches' salaries, ribbons, awards, and many other items cost money. Part of this shortfall is made up through the sale of concessions and wearables. Additional revenues are generated by an annual Swim-a-thon which is run during the swim team season. **Fundraising is A MUST! Without fundraising there can be no swim team.**

## Meet Etiquette (for all meets)

There are a few rules of etiquette, which should be followed at ALL dual and developmental meets.

1. If your child must miss a meet at the last minute due to illness the night before, or car trouble the day of a meet, you must let the Coach know immediately. This allows another swimmer the chance to swim in his/her absence.
2. During any meet, everyone (parents, swimmers, officials) must be silent after the Referee blows the whistle. During this silence, the Starter gives the command to "Take Your Mark" and the starter is sounded to begin the race. Swimmers must be able to hear the starter.
3. Only swimmers for a particular event are allowed in the water. No others are allowed, even at the shallow end, to get in the water during a meet.
4. For liability reasons, parents are not allowed within the competitive area unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the team representative. They, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
5. If you wish to leave a meet before it is over, PARENTS must first check with the Coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer has completed all of his/her events and is not included on a relay. It is not fair to the other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and he/she is not there.
6. Swimmers stay in the water until all swimmers of your heat have finished swimming.

### **Team Makeup**

The CASCADES RAPIDS are part of the Colonial Swimming League. A swim team is composed of many swimmers from different age groups. Swimmers are divided according to gender and age as of the June 15 of the current season (e.g., girls swim against other girls in their age group). The age groups are:

- |               |         |         |
|---------------|---------|---------|
| * 8 and under | * 11-12 | * 15-18 |
| * 9-10        | * 13-14 |         |

With parental permission the Coach may choose to have your child swim in a higher age group (commonly called "swimming up"), however, they cannot swim in a lower age group.

Children in the five to eight swim group may swim competitively in A and/or B meets, or participate in the Riptides program. The selection of one or the other is at the discretion of the head coach. The Riptides is a developmental program that focuses on proper swim technique with the goal for the child to swim 25 meters freestyle unassisted. Your child should be comfortable in the water and be willing to receive direction; this program should not be viewed as a substitute for beginner swimming lessons.

### **Practice Attendance**

The coaching staff wants the team members to excel. All swimmers are encouraged to attend all practices and meets. In return, the coaching staff will be expected to provide a positive, competitive, supportive environment for all swimmers and their families.

If a swimmer consistently misses practice, that swimmer should not expect to swim in the upcoming

Saturday meet. The staff recognizes that there will occasionally be other summer activities which will conflict with swim practice, and consideration will be given to swimmers with scheduling problems.

### **Practice Etiquette**

The team is fortunate to get pool time from the community for practicing and meets. What little time we get is extremely valuable. Please make sure your child gets to practice at least 10 minutes prior to assigned practice time. As soon as practice is over your child must leave the area promptly.

### **Practice Schedule**

The Coach will assign specific times for each age group. This information will be made public in time for the annual spring Parents Meeting.

### **All Practices will take place at the Stonehouse**

#### **After-school practice:**

After-school practice begins the day after Memorial Day and continues until the last day of Loudoun County Public Schools. The practices will run each weeknight from 5:00pm to 8:00pm.

#### **Morning practices:**

Morning practice starts after the last day of Loudoun County Public Schools. They will be held every weekday until the end of the swim season. In general team practices run between 7:30am to 10:45am.

### **Time Trials**

All swimmers should attend Time Trials to obtain their first official times. **Swimmers without official times cannot swim in a Saturday Dual meet without permission from the head coach and the board of directors.** These times also serve as a baseline to allow the tracking of a swimmer's improvement over the summer. **Everyone is expected to attend Time Trials and help out.**

Time Trials also allows new parents, swimmers and officials to get acquainted with how meets are run, who does what, where to go, etc. The pool will be set up just like at a regular meet. The difference is that only the Cascades Rapids will be swimming.

### **Saturday Dual Meet**

A dual meet means two teams are swimming against each other. The Cascades Rapids will participate in five Colonial Swim League sponsored Dual meets that will be held on five consecutive Saturdays. In Dual meets, you can expect 1 heat of each of the 52 event; lasting about three hours.

Swimmers will be selected for each event in accordance with official time trials and the needs of the team as determined by the coaching staff. Depending on which team will be hosting the meet, between three to four swimmers will be selected to swim in each event in each age group. Typically these swimmers have the fastest times for that event, but the Coach has the authority to select whomever the Coach feels will benefit the team the most. Swimmers may swim up to three strokes and two relay events per meet.

Wearing the current team swimsuit is encouraged for all meets. If a swimmer opts to wear a different suit at any meet, it is mandatory that it be a solid navy blue suit, with no other team logo on it. If a swimmer arrives at a meet not wearing the above stated suit, they will be given one warning. If they arrive at a second swim meet without the above stated suit, the Coach will follow the guidelines as stipulated in the Cascades Rapids Code of Conduct.

At swim meets, if a swim cap is worn, it must be a Cascades Rapids team cap. No swimmer will be permitted to swim with a non-Cascades Rapids swim cap. If a swimmer attends a meet wearing a cap other than the team swim cap, the Coach will ask them to remove it while attending and representing the Cascades Rapids swim team. If the swimmer will not comply, the Coach will follow the guidelines as stipulated in the Cascades Rapids Code of Conduct.

On Fridays prior to Saturday Dual meet, the Coach will post the meet sheet and any other important information you will need.

If any swimmer selected for a Saturday Dual meet is a “no-show”, with no advance warning by the swimmer or his/her parent; the Coach has the right not to swim the swimmer in the subsequent Saturday meet.

First, Second, and Third place swimmers in each event will receive ribbons. Teams also get points for each swimmer who places in each event (5 points for first, 3 for second and 1 for third). There will be relays at the end of the meet (worth 7 team points). Total team points will determine the winning team. Relays may be changed during the meet so swimmers should not leave the meet without speaking with the Head Coach. Relay teams are based on the ladder, day of performance, strategy and coach discretion.

### **Wednesday Developmental Meet**

Developmental meets do what the name implies --- they "develop". They are held to provide an opportunity for swimmers to experience the competitive environment. These meets are especially good for the swimmers who often do not get to swim in the Saturday meets. Whether a swimmer swims two or no events on Wednesday night, the entire team is encouraged to come out and cheer on your team members. Swimmers who place 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> on a Saturday, may not swim that stroke/event on the subsequent Wednesday (e.g. Sophie places 1<sup>st</sup> in Butterfly on Saturday, she may not select Butterfly for the following Wednesday Meet).

Developmental meets are run in a similar manner to Saturday meets, except the meet is not scored. In developmental meets you can usually expect multiple heats of each event. Ribbons are awarded to the First through Sixth place swimmers. All other swimmers receive participation ribbons.

For "away" Wednesday meets, maps/directions will be posted on white board at Wednesday morning practice. Since there is only a small amount of time allotted for a visiting team to warm up, please be at the away team's pool on time.

If a Wednesday night “home” meet is canceled due to inclement weather, the swim meet will be re-run the next evening (Thursday). The Cascades Rapids Board members will inform all volunteers on deck of the time change.

## **Post Season Meets: Divisionals and All Stars**

At the end of the regular season, our team will participate in a Red Division Championship meet. Each division will hold a Division Championship meet on the same Saturday. Teams may send 3 swimmers to this meet in each event. A swimmer may swim up to 3 events. In order to be eligible to participate in Divisionals, a swimmer must have swum in at least two Saturday/Dual League-Sponsored Meets during the current season. Swimmers for each event are determined based on best times, swimmer preferences, and coaches' discretion. The top 18 swimmers from the entire league will make it to the All Star Meet.

The All Star Meet is the final meet of the season. The top swimmers from the entire league compete for the best times. This individual meet is a true reflection of hard work and accomplishment for the season. Since it is so competitive, it's critical that swimmers let coaches know immediately if unable to attend.

## **Team Awards**

All swimmers are to be given Participation trophies upon completion of the swim season. Additionally, High Team Point trophies will be awarded to the swimmer in each age group based on:

1. All points awarded for individual events at Dual meets.
2. One fourth of the total points awarded to a winning relay in which the swimmer participated in a Dual meet.
3. Points awarded for swim-ups. All swim-up points are to be earned by the individual swimmer.
4. Points for tri-meets will be scored as though they were two individual meets.
5. No points will be awarded for League sponsored unscored meets or non-League sponsored meets.

There will be two discretionary awards given to swimmers as selected by the coaching staff and approved by the Board of Directors. The Most Improved award will be given to both the boy and girl swimmers who have not won another skill/merit award and who have displayed the most improvement as determined by stroke technique, time, sportsmanship, effort, and attendance. The Coaches' Award will be given to the boy and girl swimmers who best exemplify excellence with regards to team spirit, attitude, and attendance. Additional awards may be awarded by Coaches. Awards are to be announced at the end of the season at the swim team banquet.

## **Photography**

Photographic images of swimmers and adults participating in team functions may appear in print materials (i.e., newsletter, newspaper, print publications, team photographs) or electronic media (i.e., Facebook, website, password protected team photo site). No names or other personal information will be identified about a swimmer without notification and consent by the parent/guardian first. These pictures may from time to time be used by the team in print or electronic form for internal team use or in promotional materials for the team. If a family has any questions or concerns about this policy, please speak directly with a board member.

## **Cascades Rapids Swim Team Code of Conduct**

To maintain a safe and structured environment which is conducive to achieving the objectives of the

Cascades Rapids swim team all swim team participants, family members, officials, and staff are expected to abide by the **Cascades Rapids Swim Team Code of Conduct** as signed during registration. It is important to note that in most cases these regulations are not only common sense methods of maintaining discipline, but mandated requirements for our use of the Cascades pool facilities and necessary to maintain liability insurance coverage.

Any behavior which poses a safety threat or disrupts a scheduled activity will result in immediate ejection from the facility for that day. Serious or recurring incidents will result in additional actions as outlined subsequently.

Enforcement will be reasonable and consistent with the magnitude of the offense. The general escalation procedure is as follows:

1. The Coach will attempt to avert problems by notifying parents of problematic behavior as it occurs.
2. Isolated incidents will result in ejection from the facility for that day. If the incident involves a minor, the parents will be notified.
3. More serious or recurring incidents will result in temporary suspension from the team until a consultation session is held between the Coach and the parent or guardian. If an agreement can be met, reinstatement will occur immediately after the consultation. The Coach will notify the Board President immediately after issuing a temporary suspension.
4. The Coach may elect to deny a swimmer the right to participate in the upcoming meet for serious offenses. The parent and the Cascades Rapids Board President will be notified immediately of this action.

Additional incidents subsequent to temporary suspension or denial of meet participation will require that an ad hoc meeting of Cascades Rapids Board President, the Coach and the parent be held as soon as possible to determine the proper course of action.

If none of the above actions remedies the situation, then the Cascades Rapids Board President may vote to expel a participant from the Cascades Rapids swim team for the remainder of the season.