



Kincaid Forest Stingrays Parent Handbook

Updated April 2, 2023

Swim Team Policies

The Kincaid Forest Stingrays, hereafter known as the KF Stingrays, is a recreational summer swim team. We are part of the Old Dominion Swim League (ODSL). The KF Stingrays swim team is dedicated to providing a fun and spirited environment to inspire older swimmers and to develop younger swimmers. Our team exhibits the best qualities of community living by bringing together Kincaid Forest families to enjoy friendly competition and encouragement. The swimmers learn new strokes, create new friendships, and are encouraged by positive role models.

Membership:

The KF Stingrays is open first and foremost to Kincaid Forest residents. Swimmers must be 18 or younger as of June 15th of the swim season. We will accept outside swimmers from neighboring communities, only if there is space available on the team. Kincaid Forest residents and returning non-residents will have the opportunity to register before any new, non-residents. We have a 120 swimmer cap on the team.

Swim Requirements:

Swimmers must be comfortable in the water, able to put their face in the water, and able to swim across the pool using a kick board to be part of the team. While we currently have no minimum age to join, all swimmers must meet minimum requirements listed above. The ultimate goal of the team is for swimmers to legally swim all four strokes: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle. In order to compete in meets, swimmers ages 8 and under must be able to swim 1 length (25 meters) of the pool without assistance. Swimmers 9 and older must be able to swim 2 lengths (50 meters) of the pool.

Communication with Coaches:

The KF Stingrays board hires the coaching staff. The coaches are responsible for all training and instruction of the swimmers. Coaches will be available for questions from parents. However, if you need to speak with a coach this **MUST** be done through email or conversations after practice. During practice it is very important for the coaches to stay focused solely on the swimmers. When your child's practice is over, another one may be starting. Please be aware of this before approaching the coaches. The coaches are responsible for the swimmers during practice and cannot be distracted. This is very important for everyone's safety!

Team Communication:

The KF Stingrays use kfstingrays.info website to post all messages regarding meets, practice times, etc. Contact information for the president and head coach can be found on the website. Please make sure your contact information is accurate at all times (phone, email, home address) so that we can communicate with you consistently. The KF Stingrays also will be posting important deadlines, meet delays and cancellations and pool closings on the team's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/45764692683>.

Parent Meeting:

Each year new and returning members are required to attend the Parent Meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to review any changes that have come up over the winter, meet the coaches, meet the board, hear what is planned for the season and answer questions that you may have.

Equipment:

All swimmers should have a good pair of goggles—swim masks that cover the eyes and mouth may not be used. Swim caps are required for girls and boys with long hair past their ears and practices and meets and encouraged for all swimmers at meets. Caps with the team logo will be provided.

Items needed for practice:

- 2 pairs of goggles
- Towels (1 or 2)
- Practice suit—Please do not wear your team suit to practice as it will fade due to the chlorine.
- Sweatshirt or jacket depending on the weather
- Swim cap if you have long hair past the ears.

Items needed for meets:

- 2 pairs of goggles
- 2 Towels (1 to sit on in our team area and 1 to dry off with)
- Team Suit
- Sweatshirt or jacket
- Sunscreen
- Team Swim Cap (provided)

Team Suits and Practice Suits:

Team suits are available for purchase through our Cassels online store. Suits need to be ordered by May 21st in order to have them in hand for the first meet. Cassels can help with fittings if you go to the store. The team suit should fit tight—it will loosen almost an entire size when it hits the water. The suit should not be baggy or have wrinkles or creases when dry.

If possible, your swimmer should have a practice suit separate from their team suit. When a suit is worn every day for practice, the chlorine causes the suit to fade, stretch and eventually deteriorate. Therefore, practice suits are highly encouraged. A practice suit can be slightly larger than the team suit, color doesn't matter—but the suit must be one-piece for girls. No two-piece suits or bikinis will be permitted. For boys jammers or briefs are preferred as opposed to swim trunks.

Non-Swimmer Supervision:

The KF Stingrays require that all children be supervised by a parent or another designated adult. The coaching staff is not responsible for non-swimmers. Non-swimmers will not be allowed in practice lanes during practice or in the pool during meets. If you are working a meet, please find supervision for your younger non-swimming children.

Volunteering:

Swim team is powered by parent volunteers. Without parent volunteers, we can NOT run a meet. When you sign up to be part of our team, you are signing up to volunteer throughout the season as much as you are able. We require that each family volunteer for **AT LEAST 5 swim meets**. However, if your child is swimming a meet and you are able—we need you to volunteer as many meets and events as possible. Our team is only as strong as the volunteers we have (see volunteer section of this document).

Practice

Practice is crucial in developing our swimmers. Consistent attendance is encouraged. We understand that we are a summer team and therefore camps and vacations will cause conflicts. Please keep the coaches informed about vacations and camps and be sure to declare “not participating” in meets your swimmer can’t make so they aren’t added to the line-up.

Practice Schedule:

Practices will be held Monday-Friday until meets begin and then will be offered Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (no practice on Wednesday nights due to meets). For newer swimmers the coaches will work on basics first—kicking, stroke drills, etc. and slowly move toward full swim stroke. Swimmers will be broken up into different lanes depending on ability. Practice times are as follows:

- 8 & Under—6:00-6:45 p.m.
- 9-12 year olds—6:45-7:45 p.m.
- 13 & Over—7:45-9:00 p.m.

Discipline:

Please ensure your swimmer uses the restroom before their scheduled practice time. Bathroom breaks are disruptive to sets and to other swimmers. If discipline becomes a problem with a swimmer, the swimmer will be asked to leave from the session and the parent will be contacted.

Time Trials:

Time trials are a mock meet that allows a swimmer to get a time in every stroke. Swimmers are encouraged to swim all 4 strokes—backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle. Older swimmers—9 yrs old and above are encouraged to swim all 4 strokes and the IM. If your swimmer is participating in time trials, it’s required that you work the meet.

Swim Meets

Swim meets take place on Saturday mornings and on Wednesday evenings. A swimmer **MUST BE LEGAL** in a stroke to participate in that stroke in a meet. You will declare whether or not your child can participate in the meet on the KF Stingrays website: kfstingrays.info. You **MUST** declare their participate by the due date for that meet. Late entries will not be accepted.

Saturday Meets:

Arrival—7:00 a.m.

Warm-ups—7:15 a.m.

Meet begins—8:00 a.m.

Wednesday Meets:

Arrival—5:00 p.m.

Warm-ups—5:15 p.m.

Meet begins—6:00 p.m.

Meet Events:

All events are grouped by age and gender except for the mixed gender or mixed age relay. Whatever age your swimmer is by **June 15th** is the age group in which they compete—no exceptions. Swimmers may swim a maximum of 3 individual events (backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle, IM) and up to 2 relays at each meet. IM=Individual Medley. During an IM event, a swimmer completes 100 meters in this order—25 fly, 25 back, 25 breast, 25 free. Swimmers must be legal in all 4 strokes to compete in this event. The lengths of the individual events are:

25 meters: 6 & under all strokes
 7/8 all strokes
 9/10 butterfly only

50 meters: 9/10 back, breast, free
 11/12 all strokes
 13/14 all strokes
 15-18 all strokes

100 meter IM 9/10
 11/12
 13/14
 15-18

During a Meet:

When your swimmer arrives at the meet, they must check-in with Coach Jenn or Coach Anne before warming up. Swimmers should remain in our team area for the entirety of the meet. If a swimmer needs to use the restroom, they must tell a coach before leaving the team area. Jr. Coaches will help get swimmers lined up in order of heats/lanes and get them to the clerk of course to be seeded. All swimmers should cheer on teammates during a meet and should plan on staying for the whole meet. Most swimmers will be seeded in a relay and relay teams **COUNT** on your swimmer's attendance.

Ribbons and Ribbon Distribution:

Ribbons are awarded to swimmers for every meet and race in which they compete. Ribbons are given out at the practice following the meet—not at the meet. Ribbons can be found in the ribbon box in a file folder organized alphabetically by last name. The ribbon box will be out at each practice.

All ages are eligible for placement ribbons—1st through 6th place. If a swimmer places after 6th place they will receive a participation ribbon only. If a swimmer disqualifies in an event (DQs) they will receive a participation ribbon. Heat ribbons are awarded for each heat winner during the meets.

Divisionals and All Stars

Divisionals and All Stars are post-season meets. These meets have specific qualifications. A swimmer may only swim in (1) post-season meet—divisionals OR All Stars, not both. The All Star meet is only for those that meet qualifying times—the top 24 fastest times in each event qualify for All Stars. Divisionals is for all swimmers who have competed in 2 meets during the regular season (not including time-trials). All swimmers who have legal times in each event, have attended at least 2 regular season meets should plan to attend divisionals.

All-Star Qualifications: If a swimmer qualifies for (1) event for All-Stars, the swimmer may choose to attend divisionals OR All-Stars but not both. The event in which the swimmer qualified for All-Stars may NOT be swum by that swimmer at Divisionals. If a swimmer chooses to compete in Divisionals, they forfeit their spot in the All-Star meet. If a swimmer qualifies in (2) events for All-Stars, they must swim All-Stars and are not eligible to swim at Divisionals.

More information about Divisionals and All Stars will be distributed later in the season.

Volunteering/Parent Participation

The KF Stingrays are powered by our parent volunteers. Without volunteers, we can NOT run a swim meet or do fun team building events. A home meet requires nearly 50 volunteers to make the meet successful. Away meets require 25-30 volunteers. Volunteering is EASY. We offer training and clear guidance for every single role. You do not need to know about swimming to volunteer. You do not need to have certifications to volunteer (unless you choose to help as a Stroke & Turn Judge, Starter or Referee). No parent should ever feel they don't know what to do in a volunteer role. We want to make it as easy as possible for parents to feel confident signing up for volunteer roles! Volunteering gives you a front-seat to all the action. Volunteers often have the BEST view of their child swimming. If your child is swimming a meet and you will be in attendance to watch, we ask that you volunteer to help with the meet.

You can sign-up for jobs on kfstingrays.info under the "events" tab and by clicking the "job sign-up" next to the meet. Once you commit to a job, if you are unable to fulfill that job for ANY reason, you are responsible for finding a replacement. **The team President will be keeping track of volunteer slots for each family. If your family doesn't fulfill the minimum of 5 meets, it may affect your child's participation in future meets and team events.**

Meet Volunteer Roles:

Timers: Time the swimmers using provided stopwatches. At each meet there are 6 lanes. You will be paired with 1 or 2 more timers per lane and will take the middle of the 3 times recorded.

Head Timer: Coordinates and recruits lane timers for each meet. Assigns lanes and teaches volunteers how to use stopwatch. Serves as back up timer. Directly oversees Timers. Need two leads to alternate home meets or one who can be at all home meets.

Parking: Direct people where to park for meets at Kincaid Forest. You will also put up "NO PARKING" signs before the home meets. There are many restricted areas that are not available for parking. This position is only required at home meets.

Clerk of Course: Line up the swimmers so that they are ready to swim in the correct lane and heat. Each team has 2 or 3 Clerks at every meet.

Runner: Pick-up the sheets from timers after each age group event. Pick up DQ slips from Stroke and Turn judges, take them to the Referee for review. Then bring to the coach. This position is required at both home and away meets. We need 2 runners per meet.

Meet Set-up: Set-up tables, chairs, backstroke flags and sound equipment and rearrange pool furniture. Set-up begins at 4:45pm for Wed. meets, Saturday meets setup is Friday night at 7:00pm and/or 6:30am Saturday. We need at least 6 people for this job. This position is only required at home meets.

Meet Clean-up: Stay at the end of the meet to take down the backstroke flags, pick-up trash that the teams missed, put tables, chairs and sound system away and return the pool furniture to its proper places. Cleanup can start towards the end of the meet i.e. collecting trash. We need at least 6 people for this job. This position is only required at home meets.

Concessions: Work at the concession stand during home meets, grilling, and/or selling food. This position is run in shifts and we always make sure you are able to watch your child swim. This position is only required at home meets.

Computer Operator: Communicates with opposing team to set-up and finalize meet, prints heat sheets for coaches, stroke & turn judges and referee. We need 2 people for this job. This position is only required at home meets. Position requires in-house training.

Data Entry: Works entire meet entering both teams' swimmers' times in database. Must be accurate and not afraid of a computer. Oversees Ribbon Writers & Scorers. Need two leads to alternate meets – home and away.

Scorer: Work during entire swim meet at score table sorting time cards, calling out times to data entry, recording swimmers' place.

Ribbon Writer: Work during entire swim meet at ribbon writing table writing swimmers' times on preprinted labels and affixing to ribbons.

Starter/Announcer: Announce and start each race, determine false starts, keep the meet running smoothly. This position is only required at home meets. **ODSL training required and provided at no charge to the judge.**

Stroke and Turn Judge: Observe the swimmer's strokes and turns. Disqualify, in a fair and consistent manner, swimmers who violate the league disqualification standards. This position is required at both home and away meets. We will have 2 judges per meet. **ODSL training required/provided at no charge to the judge.**

Referee: Sees that the swimming rules are enforced during the meet and ensures all swimmers have uniform and fair competitive conditions. Final authority for the conduct of competition. **ODSL training required/provided at no charge to the judge.**