



**Stonewall Park Swim Team**

# SWIMMER HANDBOOK

## Purpose and Goals

The purpose of the Stonewall Park Swim Team (SPST) is to provide opportunities for swimmers ages 4 to 18 to participate in a competitive swim program during the summer (May, June and July).

Our team is open to everyone, no matter where you live. There are no residency or HOA requirements.

Swimming is a healthy, competitive, and fun sport. Our goals are not only to develop a quality swimmer but we also strive to instill team pride, sportsmanship, and a respect for others.

## What SPST Is All About

Working hard in the water, learning, making new friends, gaining confidence in abilities that you may not know you ever had, achieving goals for yourself and your team, and most of all having fun!

The coaching team at SPST this season will be dedicated to teaching the swimmers the importance of good sportsmanship, as well as providing a learning environment for the swimmers to grow in the sport.

## Registration and Fees

Summer registration fees are \$140 per swimmer for all groups. These costs are due to rising rates for pool use, and we are making all attempts to keep costs to a minimum.

### Age Groups:

Lil' Firecrackers	Co-Ed
8 and under	Boys/Girls
9 – 10 years	Boys/Girls
11 – 12 years	Boys/Girls
13 – 14 years	Boys/Girls
15 – 18 years	Boys/Girls

**New Swimmers:** All swimmers new to SPST will be evaluated by a coach during the first two weeks of practice to determine their readiness for a competitive swim team. It is at the discretion of the head coach and Board to remove any swimmer who is not deemed

ready. Coaches may recommend swim lessons prior to joining the swim team. These registrations are conditional until the evaluation is complete.

**Payments:** Payment can be made online using a credit card (via PayPal) or you can pay by check or cash.

If paying by check/cash, you still must register online and indicate you are paying by check/cash. A Board Member will be at the registration party to accept your payments. If you cannot make it to the registration party, you can mail your check to our treasurer (address is provided during the registration process when Check is selected as payment).

### ***Make payments out to: Stonewall Park Swim Team***

**Late fee:** \$20 per swimmer for payment received after June 3.

### **How to Register**

Go to our website [www.stonewallparkswimteam.com](http://www.stonewallparkswimteam.com). Click on the Registration button to start the process. All registrations must be done online through our website.

The site will navigate you through step by step to get your swimmer registered. Many of you already have information in the system that is incorporated into TeamUnify form previous years. If that is the case, you can use your existing username and password to log in. If not, you will be prompted to create those. It will take about 10-15 minutes to register.

Check that your contact information is current and up to date. We need valid contact information to communication with you throughout the season (email, phone number, texts, etc.). Be sure to update your swimmers' T-shirt size.

### **Registration Refund Policy**

Each swimmer must be registered to swim in practices and/or meets. Registration includes the provision of pertinent demographic data, official parent/guardian signatures and payment in full. The Board makes decisions based on swimmer safety and legal obligations, and therefore can't make concessions on any of the listed requirements.

This policy makes only one exception. Swimmers may "Bring a Friend" to one practice before registration is required. The registration and pool party is a great opportunity for new families to check out the team before registering. Other potential team members may swim one practice before deciding to register.

As a team, each swimmer is insured under a team/parks and recreation policy, for which there is a fee paid out of registration fees by the team. In addition, the Prince William Swim League (PWSL) requires payment for record-keeping and awards. That fee is also paid by the team.

**Cancelation and refund policy:** Until June 3, 2019, families will be refunded their membership fee minus a \$25.00 administration fee per swimmer. We cannot refund credit

card or other transaction fees. No refunds will be issued after June 3, and fees cannot be pro-rated.

To begin the process of removal, please contact any Board Member. The request will be discussed with other Board Members. The Board will either give consent or issue a statement of refusal of refund to the parent/guardian of the named swimmer.

## Lil' Firecrackers Program (2019)

Stonewall Park Swim Team is proud to invest in young swimmers and prospective swim stars and to nurture their talents through our Lil' Firecrackers program (formerly called the farm team).

The Lil' Firecrackers program allows children with an interest in swimming to improve their skills in a fun and age-appropriate environment. We focus on teaching the basic swim strokes (freestyle and backstroke), proper kicking technique, back and front floats, streamlining, and beginning dives. Our goal is for your child to fall in love with the sport, swim confidently across the pool, and get ready to join our competitive program.

- Lil' Firecrackers is for beginner swimmers who are at least 4 years old (by June 1).
- Lil' Firecrackers must be comfortable in the water without a parent.
- Lil' Firecrackers be willing to jump into the pool.
- Lil' Firecrackers be able to swim unassisted for 10 meters (any style; it doesn't have to be a recognizable stroke.)
- Lil' Firecrackers must be fully potty-trained (no swim diapers or training pants allowed).
- Lil' Firecrackers must be able to follow the coaches' instructions.
- Parents must remain on deck and available to their children throughout practice.
- Parents must be willing to help their children succeed and be ready to assist the coaches, if needed.

*This isn't a swim lesson clinic.*

### **Lil' Firecracker Schedule**

The 2019 Lil' Firecrackers program will begin on Tuesday, May 28, and continue through the last week in July, with one-hour practice daily Sunday through Thursday. At the end of the program, we hope to see all of our Lil' Firecrackers swimming competitively.

Lil' Firecrackers practices are always the first evening practice (no morning practices).

Participation on the Lil' Firecrackers team is determined by the SPST head coach and farm team coaches based on the guidelines outlined by the SPST Swim Team Board. Coaches will be conducting evaluations on all new swimmers and returning farm team swimmers during the first two weeks of practice to determine each child's readiness for a competitive swim team. It is at the discretion of the head coach and Board to remove any swimmer

who is not deemed ready. Coaches may recommend swim lessons prior to joining the swim team.

## Practice Schedule

*BEFORE SCHOOL ENDS (MAY 28- JUNE 13, 2019)*  
*(We follow the Manassas City Public Schools calendar)*

<b>Monday through Thursday EVENINGS</b>		
1st Practice	6:15 - 7:15 PM	Lil' Firecrackers Younger, less advanced swimmers
2nd Practice	7:15 - 8:15 PM	Older, more advanced swimmers

<b>Sunday EVENINGS</b>		
1st Practice	7:45- 8:45 PM	Lil' Firecrackers Younger, less advanced swimmers
2nd Practice	8:45-9:45 PM	Older, more advanced swimmers

*AFTER SCHOOL ENDS (STARTING JUNE 16, 2019)*

- Families must choose to swim mornings or evenings not either/or
- Coaches need to staff properly for who is swimming when
- No farm team in morning practices

<b>Sunday through Thursday EVENINGS</b>		
1st Practice	7:45-8:45 PM	Lil' Firecrackers Younger, less advanced swimmers
2nd Practice	8:45-9:45 PM	Younger, less advanced swimmers

<b>Monday through Friday MORNINGS</b>		
Morning Practice	7:15 - 8:15 AM	All levels NO Lil' Firecrackers

Our practices and home meets are at:

**Stonewall Park Pool**  
8351 Stonewall Rd., Manassas, VA 20110

The pool will not open the gates to the swim team until quarter after the hour on evening swims. Swimmers should be at the pool and ready to swim 15 minutes before their practice time. Bring your swim suit, swim cap (optional), towel and a water bottle.

The ultimate decision on who swims which practice is up to the head coach. In certain circumstances, the coach may request that a swimmer attend a different practice time than the normal guideline as listed above.

**Practice Attendance Policy**

Each swimmer is encouraged attend at least three (3) practices each week, except for those swimming Long Course on a year-round team. Year-round swimmers are encouraged to attend at least two (2) SPST practices each week. If this policy presents a hardship, please talk to the Head Coach. Swimmers are asked to arrive at least 15 minutes before practice is scheduled to begin.

**Weather Policy for Practices**

If the weather is too severe for swimming, practices will be canceled. If there are thunderstorms in the area, lifeguards will close the pool for at least 30 minutes until the weather clears and there is no lightning. If it's raining but warm, we'll still have practices.

But if the air temperature is below 70 degrees F, coaches might decide to have land exercises instead of swimming. Please don't leave your swimmer at the pool until you have verified that practice will be held on days like these.

If practice is canceled in advance, parents will be notified via TeamUnify email/texts.

*Please make sure the email address/mobile phone set up on your SPST account is current and set to receive these updates.*

## Communications

Communication is key to a successful swim team. The Board and Coaches make every effort to quickly relay information to SPST swimmers and families, via our website, Facebook group, and text messages. Here's where to get the latest information:

**The SPST website:** [www.stonewallparkswimteam.com](http://www.stonewallparkswimteam.com). It has information on swim meets, meet results, upcoming event, important reminders, registration information, Board meetings, and more.

**Join our Facebook group:** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/swimSPST/>

**Contact us via email:** [spstboard@gmail.com](mailto:spstboard@gmail.com)

**Contact Head Coach Maurie Stevens:** He's available in person before and after practices.

**Contact the Board:** The Board is available during practices, meets and other events. Also, by email at [spstboard@gmail.com](mailto:spstboard@gmail.com)

## Meet Attendance Policy

It is very important to attend all meets. Swimmers are encouraged to attend and participate in all meets, especially divisionals. Because of vacation plans and other conflicts, it is understood that this may not be possible.

All swimmers are assumed to be available to swim for a meet unless the coaches are notified otherwise. Let your coach and/or Head Coach know if you can't attend a meet. You can also declare, via our website, which meets your swimmer won't be attending. Please do so by the Tuesday before each meet so the coaches can plan for events/relays/etc.

### To Attend/Decline for a meet:

1. Login to [www.stonewallparkswimteam.com](http://www.stonewallparkswimteam.com).
2. Go to the home page under EVENTS where all the meets are listed. Find the meet, click ATTEND/DECLINE.
3. Select swimmer's name then click SELECT to get your declaration choices. It will display the following choices:
  - a. Yes, please sign (Swimmer) up for this event
  - b. No, thanks. (Swimmer) will not attend this event
4. You may also include a note for the coach. Such as: "Swimmer needs to leave at 10:00" or "Swimmer wants to swim the 100 IM if possible."
5. Click the SAVE CHANGES button to submit.
6. Repeat these steps for each swimmer in your family.

7. If after you declare your swimmer, you discover you need to change your declaration, you can go back in click EDIT COMMITMENT and change it. No declaration changes are allowed after the Tuesday deadline.

Swimmers may request which events they would like to swim. The coaches have the final say and will take their requests into consideration when planning their meet strategy.

## Concessions and “Punch Cards”

The team sells snacks at night during first practice and at home meets. To help eliminate the need for children/adults to have cash on hand, we sell “punch cards.”

Punch cards cost \$10 and \$20 each. They have a 10% bonus value – so a \$10 card has \$11 in value, and \$20 card equals \$22. The cards are kept at the concession stand and can be assigned to a specific child or to a family. Parents can place restrictions on the card if they want.

## Volunteer Positions

The Stonewall Park Swim Team is truly a volunteer effort. To make the team run smoothly, every family must participate. We have a variety volunteer opportunities for every skill level.

We also need help setting up on Friday night before a home meet and cleaning up after a home meet.

Here are some of the volunteer positions for swim meets:

**Announcer:** Required for home meets. The announcer calls swimmers to clerk of course, makes special announcements for concessions, provides scoring updates, etc. An event timeline is provided and the announcer lets swimmers know when it’s time to line up and where to report.

**Clerk of Course:** Needed for both home and away meets. The Clerk of Course helps get the swimmers lined up for their events. Clerk of Course calls out the swimmers names, passes out deck cards and arranges the swimmers into heats. This job can be done in shifts and is done with a parent from the other team.

**Clerk of Course Helpers:** For the 8-and-under swimmers, we always need extra help to line them up and make sure they get to their events.

**Computer Support:** Needed for both home and away meets. All final swim teams for each event and each swimmer are entered into MeetManager software. There are other duties associated with this job so if you love computers talk to Harry Clark and he will give you the low down.



**Concessions:** Required for home meets. Prepares and serves food for swimmers and families, collects money, and makes change.

**Head Timer:** Needed for both home and away meets. A head timer carries the extra watches in case a lane has a problem with a watch. The Head timer starts their watches when the starter horn sounds and looks out at the timers for a raised hand. A timer that raises their hand has a watch failure. The head timer will switch watches with the lane timer.

**Heat Ribbon Runners:** Needed for both home and away meets. A heat ribbon is passed out to every heat winner. Whoever touches the wall first gets a ribbon. If it's too close to call both swimmers get ribbons. This job requires a person handing a ribbon to swimmer as they get out of the pool. This job can be very rewarding as young swimmers are especially excited!

**Recorders:** Needed for both home and away meets. The recorders sit on the deck (chairs provided) and write the swimmers times down on cards that will be scored. Cards are delivered by runners, timers call the times out after the swimmer completes their event and a runner will pick up the cards after its filled out. This job is done in 2 shifts and is a great position for a new parent.

**Results Runner:** Needed for both home and away meets. This job entails picking up cards from the recorders after each heat. After all the event heats are run the event cards are brought to the scoring table. The runner may work with the official to collect DQ slips before bringing the cards to scoring. A runner may be used to bring cards from the 25 yard events & relays to the recorders. Another great job for a new parent!

**Ribbon Writers:** Needed for both home and away meets. Each team provides a ribbon person. The job begins later in the meet and usually runs until a little after the swimming ends. After events are run the computer people print out labels for the award ribbons. Ribbon people stick the labels on the correct ribbons, sort then by team and age. Each age group is alphabetized and passed to the coaches. This is also a great job for a new parent.

**Scorers and Verifiers:** Needed for both home and away meets. This position requires working as a team with parents from the other team. A runner brings the cards from each event up to the scoring table. Each card will have 3 times written on it and the scorer determines the final time based on the rules set by PWSL. In addition, scorers work with the meet officials to collect and validate disqualifications (DQs). When completing an event, the scorers send the event cards to the computer people to enter in the computer. Verifying ensures the computer people did not make any mistakes checking cards against the computer results. Verifiers determine when the event results are official and have them posted for the swimmers to see. Positions require an attention to detail but are easy to learn after a few minutes of training. There is always someone there to help you out if you have a question.

**Stroke & Turn Judges:** Observes the swimmers from the sides/ends of the pool to ensure the rules relating to the mechanics of each stroke are being followed and to ensure the starts, turns and finishes comply with the rules applicable to each stroke.

**Timers:** Needed for both home and away meets. Lots of timers are required to run a meet. Each team needs about (9 to 12 per shift). Timers stand on the deck and run a stopwatch. After each heat, the timers read off the times to the recorders, reset their watch, and wait for the next heat to start their watch again. Great job for a new parent.

### **Pasta Parties**

We hold pasta parties every Friday before a home meet. This potluck is for everyone; all family members and their swimmers are welcome to eat, play, and then set up the pool area for Saturday's swim meet.

### **Board Members**

Board members are elected each year at the end of season swim banquet and they serve one year to make decisions about running the team. A complete list of Board positions and descriptions is available on the Board tab.

## **Strokes and Races**

There are two basic types of races: individual and relay. Individual races are broken into 5 categories: freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and Individual Medley (IM). The IM consists of all the strokes in this order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.

### **Relays**

There are two kinds of relays: Freestyle Relay and the Medley Relay, each with 4 swimmers. In the Medley Relay, each swimmer swims one different stroke: First swimmer, Backstroke; Second swimmer, Breaststroke; Third swimmer, Butterfly; Fourth (Final) swimmer, Freestyle.

*Before you plan to leave a meet, check with the coach to make sure you're not in a relay. Relay decisions can be last-minute, depending on meet attendance.*

### **How Far Does My Swimmer Swim?**

**8 & Under:** Each stroke is 25 meters

**9-10:** Each stroke is 50 meters, except for butterfly, which is 25 meters

**Individual Medley (IM) for all ages:** 100 meters total (25 meters per stroke)

**Relays:** 100 meters (25 meters per swimmer)

**All other age groups and events:** 50 meters

At each meet, there are Stroke & Turn officials on each side of the pool. These officials/judges determine if the rules for each stroke are being followed. The officials' goal is to verify/determine that no swimmer gains an unfair advantage by breaking the rules. If a swimmer defaults the rules, they will be disqualified (or DQ'd) from the race.

## Swim Meet Tips

### When to Arrive and Warm-Ups

Swimmers and families should arrive at the pool **around 6 am (home meets) and 6:20 am (away meets) for warm-ups** (except for Lil' Firecrackers).

All SPST swimmers need to participate in warm ups. The Head Coach has the final decision on whether a swimmer who doesn't swim in warm ups will be allowed to swim in the meet. It is very important to have the swimmers to the pool in time for warm ups. We will have warm ups for both home and away meets.

Bundle up. It is usually chilly in the morning during warm-ups and gets hotter later.

Meets start promptly at 7 am and last about 4 hours (6 for divisionals).

**Lil' Firecrackers:** Lil' Firecrackers don't have warm-ups so they don't need to arrive as early as other swimmers. Check with your coach when you should arrive for your events.

### What to Bring to a Swim Meet

- Team swim suit, cap and goggles (2 pairs of goggles, if possible, as they can break)
- Two or more towels
- Something to sit on and/or under (lawn chairs, blankets, sun shades)
- Sunscreen, hats, sunglasses for swimmers and families
- Dry clothes to wear in between warm-ups (usually a sweatshirt/pants)
- Dry clothes to wear after events (T-shirt, shorts)
- Money for concessions and for heat sheets
- Sharpie marker, highlighter, pen (for marking heat information)
- Be sure to put your swimmer's name on everything they bring to the meet (and practice) – especially clothing, goggles, towels, water bottles

### Placing Your Swimmer's Events on Their Arm

This helps your swimmer remember what events they are swimming and what event number to listen or watch for. It also helps the coaches teach the kids about being accountable and bringing themselves to their correct event eventually.

Please do this before warm-ups. Write the Event Number and Event. Example:

#10 25 Free  
#28 25 Back  
#58 Free Relay

If you know what events your swimmer is swimming, check at the Volunteer Desk for a Psych Sheet or ask a Volunteer.

### **What to Expect**

Upon arrival to the meet, swimmers **MUST** check in at the **Check-In Table**.

Swimmers should be prepared for a pre-meet meeting with the coaches.

Volunteers and officials should check-in at the **Volunteer Table**.

Parking is limited at many pools. Please obey parking signs, etc.

**Heat Sheet/Psych Sheet:** An entry sheet showing all swimmers entered into each individual event. Usually sold at a swim meet or available for free download (depending on the team).

## **Swimming at the Meet**

### **What to Wear**

SPST encourages all team members to wear official team swimsuit to compete.

Swim caps are optional. But if a swimmer wants to wear a cap, it must be an SPST swim cap.

### **What to Do: For Swimmers**

1. When the event is called over the intercom, swimmers should immediately report to the Clerk of Course.
2. Clerk of Course will give the swimmer an event card. This will list the swimmers name, seed, event number, event description, heat number and lane assignment.
3. Swimmers will be led to the starting end of the pool and will give their card to the Runner or Recorder. This card is then used by the Recorder to note the swimmer's finish time provided by the timers.
4. After swimming each event, swimmers can get their times by asking the timers. Swimmer should then go to the coach to discuss the race.
5. Before you plan to leave a meet, check with the coach to make sure you're not in a relay. Relay decisions can be last-minute, depending on meet attendance.

### **What to Do: For Families**

**Families, be supportive and encouraging.** Talk about the good things and what your swimmer did well. The coaching staff will discuss stroke technique with them. You can focus on how proud of them you are and how great it was to watch them in the water.

**Help your child relax and get ready for the next event** they are swimming. Although there is a lot to remember, please encourage your kids to most of all have fun and enjoy the opportunity to race and show you all they have learned.

**Please do not approach the scoring table** to ask about a swimmer's time or the score of the meet. Table workers are very busy and cannot look for results for an individual swimmer while scoring the meet.

**Be aware of your surroundings.** The pool deck is crowded. Please do not stand in front of the officials, timers, or other volunteers to watch your swimmer. Officials and Timers need to have a clear view from the start to the end of the race.

**Keep your swimmers near the rest of the team,** or in the team designated area. This helps coaches and volunteers find swimmers for their events.

Encourage your swimmers to get involved in cheering for their teammates.

Remind your swimmer to **stay cool** (in the shade if possible) **and hydrated.** Drink lots of water, especially after swimming an event.

## Results and Ribbons

Event results (official times) are printed and posted outside the pool area as quickly as they become available.

If you see an error, tell your swimmer's coach immediately.

Results will also be posted on the team website.

Live meet results are available at <http://pswimmeets.com>.

Ribbons will be available for pick-up during evening practices. Stop by the concessions for yours.

## SPST End-of-Season Banquet

Each year after the last swim meet, we hold our annual banquet. This is usually on the Sunday after divisionals.

The banquet consists of a potluck dinner; general membership meeting, with the election of officers for next season's Board of directors; a silent auction fundraiser; and our awards ceremony.

### Awards

Awards include a medal/award of participation and special awards for each age group and graduating swimmers.

## **Silent Auction and Donations**

The silent auction is our main fundraiser for the season. We need your donations of new items and services that can be auctioned off during the banquet.

We begin accepting donations at our first practice and continue throughout the season. We need your help to make this event a success!