Topspin

Dolphins

2023

*SWIM TEAM HANDBOOK*

Topspin Racquet & Swim Club

5347 Sunset Blvd

Lexington, SC 29072

Website: [Top Spin Swim Club Home (teamunify.com)](https://www.teamunify.com/team/recsctss/page/home)

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2023 Swim Team

# Coaching Staff

Head Coach Christian Mowles

Assistant Coach Anna Beth Cochran

Assistant Coach Jane Taylor

Assistant Coach Tommy Spurgeon

Assistant Coach Paige Collins

Assistant Coach Makenzie Mills

Topspin Swim Team Mission Statement

The Topspin Swim Team offers programs to swimmers ranging in age from 6 to 18 years. We encourage all swimmers who meet the minimum swimming requirements to participate.

Since joining the Columbia Swim League (CSL), coaches and parents have worked to develop a successful program. It is our desire for all swimmers to love the sport of swimming, improve, and excel. Those who attend practices regularly and display a positive attitude will have an opportunity to compete at a level appropriate for their skills.

Our success is the result of strong parental involvement and a dedicated coaching staff. Parents and coaches work closely together to help our youth have a great summer experience. We believe in teaching proper swimming techniques and good sportsmanship, and in creating a safe, fun environment for all members to enjoy.

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# Minimum Swimming Requirements

To participate on the **Competitive Team**, swimmers must be between the ages of 6 to 18, be able to swim one length of the 25-meter pool unassisted, and swim comfortably with their face in the water. If a child does not meet the minimum requirements,  If your swimmers is not ready yet to swim a length of the pool w/o assistance visit the [swim lesson page](https://www.teamunify.com/team/recsctss/page/swim-lessons).  Lessons include a swim team membership when swimmers are ready to compet.

No refunds will be offered after the first swim meet.

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# Team Registration

Online registration opens April 1. To register visit the [Topspin website](https://www.teamunify.com/team/recsctss/page/home).

# Groups

**LESSONS:** Swimmers who do not meet the minimum training requirements for the competitive Team should consider participating in the Topspin lesson program For more information visit the [swim lesson page](https://www.teamunify.com/team/recsctss/page/swim-lessons).  Lessons include a swim team membership when ready.

**COMPETITIVE TEAM:**

**10 and younger** Should already know the freestyle stroke and be able to swim a 25-meter length of the pool. They will work on stroke refinement, starts, turns, and race preparation.

**11 & Older:** Should already know the freestyle stroke and be able to swim a 25-meter length of the pool. They will focus on further stroke refinement for all strokes, starts, turns and race preparation.

# Fees

**The Competitive Team** registration fees are $120.00 per child for Topspin pool members; $150 for non-members. This fee includes CSL dues, ribbons, awards, team swim cap, and coaching. No refunds will be offered after the first swim meet. (June 2)

**Pool Memberships** are available at $600 for a family membership. Topspin is a 6 lane, 25m pool located in the Topspin Complex with tennis and baseball.  The pool is open to members from noon to 8pm.  The mornings are dedicated to lessons and competitive swimming.

Dates to Remember

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| April 1 |  | Open On-line Registration Begins |
| May | 13 | Meet and Greet Coaches, Swimsuit Try-on at Topspin between noon and 2:00p |
| May | 13 | Parent Volunteer sign up during Meet & Greet |
| May | 23 | After-school practice begins (see times below) |
| May  June | 29  1 | No Practice (Memorial Day)  1st A Meet at Quail Hallow |
| June | 5 | 1st Morning practice and B Meet at TCC |
| July | 9-10 | City Meet |

# Practice Schedule

**May 23-June 3 Monday through Thursday**

10 & younger 4:30-5:15p (6 & younger Tuesday & Thursday only)

11 & older 5:15-6:45p

\*No Practice Memorial Day (Mon29 May)or Independence Day (Tue 4 July)

**Beginning June 6**

Monday through Thursday

11 & Older 8:45-10:15A

10 & younger 10:15-11:00A (6 & younger Tuesday & Thursday only)

Friday Fun 10:00-11:00A All ages

# Swimsuits

Our team suit is an Arena Lightdrop black suit. The suits made are made from an extremely chlorine-resistant swim fabric that offer UV protection and has quick-drying and super durable properties. These suits can be worn for both practice and swim meets and should still be in good shape by the end of the summer. Girl's suits are - $59 (tax not included). Boy's suits are $43 (tax not included) for jammers and $36 for a brief. Suits will be available for try- on May 13 at the Parent’s Meet and Greet, noon until 2:00pm. All suits will be available for purchase at [augustaswim.com](http://augustaswim.com/). Once on the website, click on TEAMS LOGIN, the username is TOPSPIN and the password is 1234. **Extra Team caps will also be sold for $5.00 throughout the season.**

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## 2023 Swim Meets

**B Meets (Monday) A Meets (Thursday)**

— @ Quail Hollow (1 June)

@ Timberlake Country Club (5 June) vs Quail Valley (8 June)

vs Harbison Rec (12 June) @ Golden Hills (15 June)

vs Edenwood (19 June) @ Murraywood (22 June)

vs Maxcy Gregg (26 June) @ Country Club of Lexington (29 June)

This year all swim meet signups will be done on our swim team website (the same website you registered for Topspin Summer League Team.) You will need to Commit or decline for each meet. The commit option will end 48 hours before the start of the swim meet to give the coaches time to set up entries. If a swimmer is not signed up for the meet by that time, reach out to the head coach.

To commit an athlete or athletes for a Swim Meet event:

Go to Topspin website [Event page](https://www.teamunify.com/team/recsctss/page/calendar#/team-events/upcoming).

* 1. Once the tab opens, find the Current & Upcoming tab, scroll down, and select the meet you wish to commit/decline to.
  2. Click the pink Edit Commitment button to the right, and select yes please select sign up or No thanks

## A Meets – Dual

We will be swimming 5 dual “A” meets this year. In dual meets, 3 swimmers represent our team in each individual event for each gender and age group. These are scored meets and the best swimmers will generally swim more events. **Every swimmer who signs up will be entered in at least one event at an A meet.**

### To ensure that every swimmer gets a fair chance to swim, sign-ups for swim meets will be available on our team website starting the first day of practice. It will be the parents’ responsibility to sign their child up to swim at the swim meets. If the child is not available to swim due to illness, vacation, or other, please go online and declare that your swimmer will not be able to swim for the meet.

**One More Note:** The coaching staff is committed to providing every swimmer with a chance to swim one event in an A meet. However, this may result in your swimmer being placed in a relay as their one event. All swimmers are encouraged by their coaches to compete and swim all events in B meets to compete for those line up spots.

## B Meets

We will participate in 4 developmental, or practice, meets this year. These are unscored meets that run in a slightly different format. Multiple heats in each age group allow every swimmer to swim every stroke, allowing for records of each swimmer’s times, prior to setting dual meet rosters. Ribbons are awarded to all.

These meets are great for beginners who can enjoy the competition without the pressure, and swimmers who want to compete for better placement in the A meet line up. Members will be allowed to participate in B meets once they are able to swim one length of the pool unassisted.

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## A & B Meets

Warm-ups are at 5:00 for home meets; please arrive at 4:40 to get ready to swim. Please arrive at away meets by 5:00 to be ready for warm-ups at 5:15. All meets start promptly at 6:00. Parent volunteers, please arrive by 5:30 so we can have volunteers in place on time.

**The meet line-up is made at the coach’s discretion to determine the best roster arrangement for any given meet.** That may include some swimmers swimming in older age- groups from time to time. This will make our team more competitive by filling up vacant spots and will also allow swimmers to compete in a greater number of events.

## City Meet

The City Meet is scheduled for July 9-10 at USC at the Blatt pool.

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## During Meets

Swimming meets can be very hectic. Our volunteers at Clerk of Course work very hard at both home and away meets to make sure all the children swim the right race in the right lane. However, if the children are not in the team area, it is not possible to do this.If you want your child to sit or visit with you during the swim meet, then you may take responsibility for getting them to the blocks on time. Clerks of Course will not be able to run all over the pool area, outside the fence, or in the changing rooms to hunt down children. Races are not held up for missing swimmers. Parents are welcome to come to the team area to visit with and congratulate children before and after races. Please help by seeing that they stay with the team.

## Additional Meet Information

* In case of inclement weather, a swim meet may **not** be postponed until a delay of 45 minutes has elapsed. In the meantime, if the weather clears, the swim meet may be resumed.
* The home team swims in odd-numbered lanes, visiting team in the even-numbered lanes. Smoking and alcoholic beverages are prohibited on the immediate pool deck during swim meets. Transportation to each away meet is the swimmer’s responsibility.
* The area immediately behind and around the starting end is strictly off limits to everyone except the next event’s swimmers and authorized officials.
* The winner is not just the swimmer who comes in first place in an event. Each time a swimmer achieves a “personal best time,” he/she is a winner. Swim not only against the other competitors in your heat, but against the clock and your own best time. Personal achievement is the best measure of success.

## What to Bring to a Meet

* Two towels, team T-shirt, team suit, team cap, pants/shorts, extra t-shirt, goggles (bring back-up pair), and shoes.
* Money for concessions
* Folding chairs
* Because of the length of some meets, swimmers are urged to bring playing cards, books, and electronic games.
* Permanent marker or ballpoint pen. Swimmers use markers to write events and lane assignments on their hands. This way they keep up with their swims.
* Before you leave the meet, make sure you have accomplished the following:
  + Cleaned up your sitting area
  + Have all your belongings - do a bag check
  + Thank meet officials (they don't get paid for this!)

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# Parent Volunteer Requirements

*Did you realize that it takes at least 28 parents to put on a home A meet??! WE NEED YOU!*

The Topspin Swim Team can only function if swim team parents volunteer support and time.

If your child is on the team, we encourage you to become involved. Job signups will be made available on our team website for each meet. **All families are needed to volunteer for the 2023 swim season.**

If you do not sign up in advance, you may be assigned a task and it will be your responsibility to find a substitute if you are unable to participate at the assigned time.

## Volunteer Opportunities

General:

* **Team Representative**: This position attend league meetings (3rd Tuesday of each month from February – July; 7:00 p.m. at Columbia YMCA) and help run/organize the City Meet.
* **City Meet Coordinator** – Ensures that Topspin volunteer and contribution to hospitality obligations have been filled.
* **Social Directors**- Coordinates food and beverage donations from parents for Fun Fridays, plans after meet meals, and plans social activities during the season. Also helps sort ribbons into swimmer’s folders.
* **Meet Volunteer Coordinator** – Ensures that all volunteer slots are filled for both home and away meets. Also ensures that all supplies are provided (stop watches, clipboards, pencils, etc.). This person can coordinate all the meets themselves, or delegate duties by meet to a Meet Manager.

Meet Specific:

* **Meet Referee** – Required at home meets. Must attend one hour clinic and have one year of stroke & turn judge experience
* **Stroke & Turn Judges** – Need at least three per meet; must attend one hour clinic
* **Starter** – Starts each race at home meets; must attend one hour S&T clinic or have prior experience.

*Important positions with NO experience required:*

* **Timer** – operates stop watches and records times for one lane in each race.
* **Runner** – Pick up time sheets and deliver to scorer after each race.
* **Scorer** – Keep track of score during meets using laptop (provided).
* **Ribbons** - Organize and record ribbons during meet for our team
* **Clerk of Course** – Help organize kids before each event at meets

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# Columbia Swim League

Topspin Swim Team is a member of the Columbia Swimming League (CSL). CSL is a recreational league for competitive swimming in the Columbia, SC area. CSL organizes competitions between over 20 teams and provides opportunities for kids from all over the Midlands to be involved. Teams compete in dual meets during June and early July, and then the season culminates in a two- day City Meet in mid-July. The league is operated by volunteers from all teams.

For more information about the league, you can join their Facebook page called Columbia Swim League.

# Communication

It is very important that all swimmers and parents keep abreast of team happenings, upcoming events, social activities, schedule changes and other related items. **Most information will be sent out via e-mail**. Items such as picture order forms, swimmer's ribbons, etc. will be placed in their file that can usually be found on a picnic table during practice (ask a coach if it’s not out). Any changes to the practice schedule will be e-mailed.

# Helpful Hints

1. Please stress being on time with your swimmers. A child who arrives late for practice or meets will miss the warm-up.
2. Coaches expect good attendance at practice. If for some reason your swimmer has to miss several practices or meets, please notify the coach as far in advance as possible. Our program is set up to accommodate different levels of swimmers. Total dedication from everyone is not possible, but the coach needs to know where your child fits and wants to be.
3. The best time to speak with the coach is right after swim practice ends. Please do not interrupt the coach during practice or delay the start of practice. This is not fair to the other swimmers.

## Everything you always wanted to ask about swim team!

1. **Should my child limit his activities on meet days?** Most important they will want to be well rested, hydrated and fueled.
2. **What if we have a prior engagement and can't be there for warm-ups?** Make sure you indicate this to the coach, in writing; otherwise, the coach assumes you are a no-show and will replace your child's spot in the line-up.
3. **If my child is only swimming in a relay, it won't matter if something comes up since he/she is only on a relay. Right? Wrong!** Every swimmer is important to the team and can contribute points. Many times, the ‘A’ relay is disqualified and without our B relay in place, we lose all the points for that event. In addition, three other swimmers are expecting to swim and will be very disappointed if your child does not show!
4. **What if my child is unavailable to swim a meet?** Indicate this by uncommitting on the swim meet event page, if the deadline has passed email Coach Abbey. Put all information concerning missed practices (more than 3 days) and vacation schedule in Coach Abbey’s file folder.
5. **How do I know if my child is swimming a meet?** The line-up for “A” meets will be posted (and e-mailed) at least by the morning of the meet. Please check the line-up thoroughly. Most of the time your child will be swimming in a certain age group, but occasionally the need arises to move your child to another age group. It's important that you are aware of this and check for such an event.
6. **Where does my child need to be during the meet?** All swimmers should stay in the designated space for the team so that the Clerk of Course/Assistant Coaches will be able to find your child easily and get him/her to the right place for his/her swim. This ensures we don't have an unhappy swimmer who misses an event.
7. **My child's best stroke is the butterfly; will he/she always swim the fly in the meet?** No. Most of the time your child will swim his/her best stroke, but in a scored meet, the coach will try to place your child where he/she can score the most points for the team.

## For Swimmers

*Things to help avoid disqualification (DQ) at a meet*

**Freestyle**

1. Touch the wall with your hands or feet before you turn around and swim the next length.
2. Use only the water, and not the lane lines or the bottom or sides of the pool to propel yourself.

**Backstroke**

1. Stay on your back.
2. Refer to rule #2 under freestyle.

**Breaststroke**

1. Both feet must be turned outward on the kick.
2. The body shall stay on the breast.
3. Both hands must move simultaneously and both feet must move simultaneously.
4. The head must break the surface of the water at some time during each stroke.
5. The hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and finish.

**Butterfly**

1. Both arms must clear the water and must move forward simultaneously.
2. Legs must be kicked in an up and down motion simultaneously.
3. Walls must be touched with both hands simultaneously

**Individual Medley (IM)**

1. IM must be swum in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and any other stroke not previously mentioned (typically freestyle).
2. All individual stroke rules must be followed.

**Relays**

1. Swimmers must wait until the previous swimmer completes his/her race before they start theirs.
2. Medley relays must be swum in the following order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle.

## Dictionary of Swimming Terms

**Block** - the starting platform swimmers begin their races from

**Bulkhead** - a wall constructed to divide a pool into different courses, such as a 50-meter pool, 25-yard, or 25-meter pools

**Circle Swimming** - used by swimmers so they do not run into each other during practice or meet warm-ups. They stay to the right of the back line on the bottom of the pool just like driving a car. **Clerk of Course** - arranges the swimmers in proper heats and lanes. Helps the coaches get swimmers lined up and ready to swim their events.

**DQ (Disqualification)** - this occurs when a swimmer has committed a rule infraction of some kind, e.g., two strokes underwater in breaststroke. A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive any awards, nor can the time be used as an official time.

**Drill** - a practice exercise involving a portion or part of a stroke, used to improve technique

**Electronic Timing** - a timing system designed to provide a fair and accurate time to .01 of a second for each swimmer. Includes a timing machine, touch pads, backup buttons and starting device.

**Event** - any race or series of races in a given stroke and distance.

**False Start** - occurs when a swimmer is moving prior to the starting signal. Results in a disqualification.

**Finish** - final phase of the race; the touch at the end of a race

**Flags** - backstroke flags placed 5 yards from the end of the pool. They warn swimmer in backstroke to begin counting their strokes for a turn or finish.

**Heat** - a single round of an event. A division of an event in which there are too many swimmers to compete simultaneously.

**Heat Sheet** - program that lists the swimmers' heat, and lane assignments for each event. **Heat Ribbon** - a ribbon awarded to the fasted swimmer in each individual heat of an event. This does not necessarily mean your child has placed in the final positions of an event.

**High Point Winner** - the swimmer who scores the most points for the team during the swimming season or meet

**IM** - slang for Individual Medley, an event in which the swimmer used all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle

**Kick Board** - piece of Styrofoam or plastic held in the hands to isolate exercise on the legs at practice

**Long Course (LC)** - competition conducted in a 50-meter pool.

**Meet** - a series of events held in one program

**Middle Distance** - term used to refer to events of 200 yards/meters to 400/meters or 500 yards in length

**Negative Split** - swimming the second half of the race equal to or faster than the first half **Officials** - present at all competitions to implement the technical rules of swimming and ensure that the competition is fair and equitable

**Pace Clock** - larger clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice; may also be digital

**Pull Buoy** - piece of Styrofoam or plastic placed between the legs to eliminate kicking and isolate exercising effort on the arms during practice

**Referee** - has the overall authority and control of competition, ensures that all procedures and rules are followed, assigns and instructs all officials, decides all questions relating to the conduct of the meet

**Relays** - events in which 4 swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time. There are two types of relays: Freestyle - four swimmers on each team, each to swim one fourth of the prescribed distance using any desired stroke(s), but almost always the freestyle. Medley - four swimmers on each team, each to swim one fourth the prescribed distance continuously in the following order: 1st leg backstroke, 2nd leg breaststroke, 3rd leg butterfly, 4th leg freestyle.

**Scratch** - withdraw an entry from competition in an event (only coaches are allowed to scratch swimmers)

**Seed** - distribute the swimmers among the required number of heats and/or lanes, according to submitted or preliminary times

**Seeding Positions** - to schedule the swimmers according to their times -- progressing from slower to faster swimmers

**Sets** - a swimming activity that is a goal-oriented exercise. This is used in practice to develop strength, stroke endurance, technique and speed

**Short Course (SC)** - competition usually conducted in a 25-yard or 25-meter pool.

**Sprint** - describes the shorter events (50 and 100). In training, to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.

**Starter** - assumes control of the swimmers from the referee, directs them to "step up" onto the block, "take your mark", and sees that no swimmer is in motion prior to giving the starting signal (beep or gun)

**Streamline** - the position used by a swimmer when starting or pushing off the walls, designed to reduce water resistance

**Stroke and Turn Judge** - positions can be combined or separated. Observes strokes and/or turns from the side or end of the pool to ensure fair and legal competition.

**Taper** - the final preparations phase for a major competition. Swimmers love this time, coaches and parents hate it.

**Timer** - person who stands behind the lane at the starting end of the pool and operates a stopwatch or a back-up button. No special certification is necessary, only a good set of eyes and reflexes.

**Touch Pad** - a large sensitive board at the end of each lane during a meet where the swimmers' touch is recorded and sent electronically to the timing machine

**Warm Down** - low intensity swimming used by swimmers after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid, and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration

**Warm Up** - low to moderate intensity swimming used before a meet to get muscles loose, gradually increase heart rate and respiration, and familiarize themselves with the pool. Also used to begin a practice or prepare for a hard set

# “Ten Commandments for Swim Team Parents”

By Rose Snyder

(Adapted from Ed Clendaniel’s “Ten Commandments for Little League Parents’)

1. Thou shalt not impose your ambition on thy child. Remember that swimming is the child’s activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don’t judge your child’s progress based on the performance of other swimmers or based on what you think should be achieved. The best thing about swimming is that everyone can strive to be his or her personal best, regardless of age or ability.
2. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what. There is only one question to ask your child: “Did you have fun?” If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.
3. Thou shalt not coach your child. You have taken your child to a professional coach. Do

not undermine that coach by trying to instruct your child on the side. Your job is to support, love and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. That is not your area. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent that swimmer/coach bond from forming.

1. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet. If you are going to show up at a meet, you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coach.
2. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child’s fears. A first meet can be a stressful situation. It is totally understandable for your child to have apprehension. Don’t yell or belittle; just assure the child that the coach would not have suggested an event or situation if the child was not ready.
3. Thou shalt not criticize the officials or other volunteers. If you do not have the time or desire to volunteer, don’t criticize those who are doing the best they can.
4. Honor thy child’s coach. The bond between coach and swimmer is special, contributing to your child’s success as well as enjoyment. Do not criticize the coach in your child’s presence. It will only serve to hurt the child, in and out of the water.
5. Thou shalt not jump from team to team. The water is not necessarily bluer at the other team’s pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even championship-winning teams. Better to teach children loyalty and responsibility in helping to solve problems than run from them.
6. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning. Giving an honest effort, regardless of outcome, is more important than winning. One Olympian said, “My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else did it too, just a little faster. I achieved my goal and I lost. This does not make me a failure. In fact, I am very proud of that swim.”
7. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian. Of the over 200,000 registered swimmers, only 52 make the Olympic Team every four years. Be realistic in goal setting but nurture the child’s dreams as well.