

PENNYPACKER SWIM TEAM HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Pennypacker Swim Team! The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information about our team, as well as what can be expected during the season regarding team activities, practice groups, meets, volunteer opportunities and much more. This handbook is designed to answer some of the more frequently asked questions that parents have about our program.

REGISTRATION

Returning Swimmers -

Each year, returning Competitive Swim Team members are required to register online (and sign the online waiver form), and pay the annual registration fee. There is an “early bird discount” if these items are completed and submitted by the early bird date listed on the team calendar each season.

New Swimmers -

If your child is interested in joining our team, please complete the online registration form on our website. Pre-registration closes Memorial Day weekend, but walk ups are welcome at evaluations, which usually take place the week after Memorial Day. All new swimmers and returning Developmental Team swimmers must attend evaluations for the coaches to determine team placement. Additional new swimmer info is listed under the swim team tab on the home page of the team website.

Full team registration by the required date includes: inclusion on the official team roster, the ability to participate in league meets and the end of season team gift. Timely completion of the team registration is necessary, as the Suburban Swim League requires each team to submit a team roster by a certain date. Late registrations will not be accepted.

TEAM UNIFORM

The swim team uniform consists of the team swimsuit and cap.

All Competitive Team members must purchase a team suit, but purchase is optional for members of the Developmental Teams. Purchasing info will be provided at the start of each season, as the suits usually change from year to year.

Each member of the swim team is also required to wear the PCC team cap to all meets. All team members will receive a cap in their family folder at the start of the season. If at any point during the season you need a replacement cap, they will be available for purchase from our team President.

SPIRIT WEAR

A selection of PCC spirit wear and other accessories will be available for purchase via the team website at the beginning of each season. Details will be provided at the Parents Meeting. We encourage everyone to wear PCC spirit wear or something green to the meets to show our team spirit!

TEAM INFORMATION RESOURCES:

Website:	Our Team Unify website is pccswimanddive.com. It is loaded with useful information on all aspects of our team. The website is the first place you should go for answers to your questions. This is also where you will sign up for all meets and events throughout the season. Once your swimmer is evaluated and placed on either our Developmental or Competitive Team, you will receive an email with login information, which will allow you to access information specific to your swimmer(s) and your family. Login information for returning families remains the same as the previous season.
Email:	All information for swimmers will be communicated via email from our team President. A weekly email with details for the upcoming week is generally sent out each Sunday evening throughout the season. All of these Sunday emails will also be accessible under the "NEWS" tab on the website for your continued reference.
Family Folder:	Each family has a folder located in the file boxes by the lifeguard station. Swim caps, swim meet awards, team picture forms, and other updates are distributed through these folders. Please check them at least once a week.
App:	Team Unify has an App called On Deck Parent. This has all PCC meet results, times, A champ qualifying times, and a conversion calculator. It's an extremely helpful tool, so please download it from the app store. Use your pccswimanddive.com login and password.
Shutterfly Site:	We have a team Shutterfly photo sharing site. Team members can see, load and order pictures on this site. Login and password info will be provided in team emails during the season.
Team Board:	Located under the barn outside the lifeguard station. This is used primarily for posting meet results.
Parent Meeting:	This information session for swimmers and their parents takes place in May before the season begins. Returning families are expected to attend, and swimmers interested in joining the team are invited to attend, along with their parents. After the coaches complete their portion of the meeting, they will do team building activities with the children while the team Board members lead the remainder of the meeting.

SWIM TEAM BOARD MEMBERS & PARENT VOLUNTEERS

- Provides information and support to the coaching staff
- Coordinates all social and fundraising activities for the team
- Organizes and supplies officials, timers, and other volunteers as required by the League for all home and away meets
- They are invaluable in helping to make sure our season runs smoothly!

It is vital for our team to have many volunteers to help the season run smoothly and efficiently. The coaches train your swimmers, but the parents run the meets and activities for your child to participate in. It is unfair for a small percentage of parents to take on all the work. We strongly encourage you to help out with the activities. If we do not have adequate volunteers, the activities will be cancelled. All descriptions are posted on the website and take a minimal amount of your time. *We can't do it without your help!* Volunteer positions can be found on the home page of the website, in the Team Volunteer tab.

MEET JOB ASSIGNMENTS/SIGNUPS

A successful season depends on many people behind the scenes. ***Each swim team family is required to work a minimum of two dual meets AND also required to volunteer at the inter-squad and Championship meets.*** All job signups will be on our team website. If you cannot complete the assignment you signed up for, please find a replacement and notify either the Varsity or JV Coordinators, as well as make the correction in Team Unify. Below are descriptions for the different job assignments that you can choose from...jobs are on a first come first serve basis for each meet.

To sign up to volunteer for a job at a meet, simply go to the meet/event tab (where you commit your swimmer to the meets), and click on the blue box that says "job signup" on the top right of the page, then follow the "how to signup event jobs" instructions on the page.

Timers:	Time each heat in a specific lane using stopwatches that are provided by the host team. This job is very important, but very easy, and keeps you right next to the action. No prior experience necessary, and officials will provide training prior to the start of the meet.
Stroke & Turn Judge:	Act as judge in observing the swimmers and their proper compliance and execution of the strokes. Training is necessary, and can be provided by other PCC parents. Suburban Swim League does not require official training. <i>There is always a need for these volunteers!</i>
Runners:	Assist the scoring table by obtaining results from the timers. No prior experience is necessary.
Scorers:	Input data into the computers during the meets. Training on specific software is needed, and will be provided by our Technical Coordinator.
Announcer:	Announces the events and swimmers' names prior to each heat entering the water, as well as announces other important meet updates. No prior experience is necessary.
Clerk of Course:	Makes sure the swimmers are lined up for their events. No prior experience is necessary.
Starter:	Operates the starter and conducts the meet. Some training is necessary, and will be provided by another experienced PCC parent. <i>There is always a need for these volunteers!</i>
Place Judge:	Watches the finishes closely, and records the placing of the swimmers. No experience necessary.

SWIM TEAM ACTIVITIES

One of the reasons why swimmers enjoy being a part of Pennypacker's team is because of all of the fun activities planned throughout the season. There is a fun event planned almost every week! Listed below are descriptions of some of our annual team-building events. Check out the website calendar for dates and times!

Rooster Picnic:	Join everyone in the picnic grove immediately following the Rooster meet. Pack your own picnic, and have fun socializing with the other families on the team. This is a fun way to officially kick off our season!
Team Pictures:	Individual and Team pictures will be taken. Swimmers should wear their team suit. Order forms will be placed in your family folder.
Charity Swim Event:	This charity event takes place immediately following team pictures. This is a wonderful opportunity for our swimmers to raise money for a great cause and have fun while helping others.
Fundraising:	There's no better way to help raise money for our team, than having fun and creating great memories and friendships while we do it!
Senior Night:	We will honor our graduating seniors at our last home meet of the season. Following the meet, each senior will have two of their teammates share some of their favorite memories, then everyone can enjoy cake under the barn!
Spirit Breakfast:	The entire team will celebrate a terrific season by eating together and sharing in team building activities. Please watch for sign-ups for food donations.
Awards Dinner and Team Party:	Bring your family and join your teammates to celebrate the end of the season. Awards are given to the Most Improved and High Point swimmers in each age group and gender. Spirit Awards and the prestigious Kise Cup are also given. Each team member will receive a special gift as a memento of our season. A DJ will provide music, and the swimmers have lots of fun dancing with their teammates under the barn. Although there is no dress code, most attendees dress up for this special celebration: sundresses for the women and girls; collared shirts and shorts for the men and boys. The pool is not open for swimming for the party attendees!

SWIM TEAM INFORMATION

Our swim team consists of four different levels:

Two Competitive Teams:

Varsity and Junior Varsity

- Swimmers ages 6-18.
- **Evaluations are required for new swimmers and returning Developmental Team swimmers. Returning Competitive Team swimmers do not need to be evaluated.**
- Afternoon practices usually begin the week after Memorial Day.
- Morning practices will begin after DASD is out of school, and will be Monday through Friday mornings.
- Swimmers must commit to attending practices and meets.
- Placement on either JV or Varsity will be determined after Time Trials.
- Time Trials are mandatory for all swimmers ages 14 & younger.
- Team suits and caps are required.

Two Developmental Teams:

JV-B

- Swimmers ages 6-12.
- Practices will be held in the Competition Pool and will focus on improving endurance, body positioning, stroke technique, lateral breathing and strength of kick.
- **Evaluations are required, and preregistration is appreciated. Please see team website for preregistration details.**
- Practices will begin after DASD is out of school, and will be Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings.
- The JV-B team is invited to participate in JV meets, but it is optional.
- The JV-B team is invited to participate in the three "Mini Meets" that are held every other Friday at 11:30 during the season in the Competition Pool.
- Team suits are optional.
- Parents and swimmers have the option to choose the JV-B team if they do not want to make the full commitment to JV or Varsity.

Peeps

- A 6-week program for children ages 4-8 who need to learn, improve, or strengthen their strokes and endurance. Instructors will be in the water for hands on work with the children.
- *Children ages 6 and younger will automatically start in the Peeps group. There is one exception to this rule – if your child is 6 and swam for a winter club team, they may attend evaluations for team placement.*
- All children interested in this program must be fully potty-trained.
- **The Peeps program is open to anyone interested – no evaluations required, but registration is required. See team website for registration details.**
- Peeps will be included in all out-of-the-pool swim team events such as the Rooster Picnic, Spirit Breakfast, Team Party, and Team Pictures.

- With practices structured like group swim lessons, it is the perfect way for children to improve their technique while experiencing how much fun it is to be a member of the PCC Swim Team!
- Morning practices will begin after DASD is out of school, and will be Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings in the shallow section of the Competition Pool.
- Every other Friday, they can participate in a “Mini Meet” in the Competition Pool.
- Team suits are optional.

EVALUATIONS

Any swimmer age 7 and older, who is interested in the Competitive Team or JV-B (and who was not a member of Pennypacker’s JV or Varsity team the prior year) is required to attend evaluations. 6 year olds who swam for a winter club team may also attend evaluations.

Evaluations usually take place the week after Memorial Day (see team website for specific date).

The following placement guidelines are for your reference. Final placement decisions will be determined by the coaches at evaluations. The coaches will also consider other strengths and assessment indicators.

Competitive Team Requirements

Swimmers should be capable of continuous lateral breathing in freestyle, and should be able to complete 25 meters without stopping in both freestyle and backstroke. Swimmers are also required to tread water for 60 seconds. In addition, coaches will evaluate strength of kick, endurance and the ability to do other strokes.

JV-B Requirements

Swimmers should be able to swim 25 meters of freestyle with lateral breathing, and 25 meters of backstroke. They will also need to tread water for 30 seconds. Consistency of breathing, strength of kick, and body placement will be important considerations for Developmental Team placement.

PRACTICE TIMES

- **After School Practices**
Practice for the Competitive Team usually begins the Wednesday after Memorial Day, and is generally separated into these groups (though they are subject to change, depending on the size of each age group).
 - o 5:00-6:00 (8&u and 10&u)
 - o 6:00-7:00 (11 and older)
- **Regular Season Practices**
Morning practices for Varsity, JV, JV-B and Peeps will begin after DASD is out of school. (*Age groups are subject to change, depending on the size of each age group.*)
 - o 8:45-9:45 – 13/14’s and Opens
 - o 9:45-10:45 – 9/10’s and 11/12’s
 - o 10:45-11:30 – 8&U
 - o 11:30-12:00 – JV-B in Competition Pool (Monday/Wednesday/Thursday)
 - o 11:30-12:00 – Peeps in shallow end (Monday/Wednesday/Thursday)

PRACTICE ATTENDANCE

Our season is only 8 weeks long, and our success – both individually and as a team - is dependent on swimmers regularly attending practice. You are highly encouraged not to miss practice or schedule a vacation during the swim season, but the coaches realize that sometimes you do need to miss. Please keep in mind, the more you put into it, the more you get out of it (and the more fun you will have)!

PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

The start time for practice is the time when swimmers are expected to get into the water. Therefore, please make sure you arrive at the pool with plenty of time for the swimmers to put on their caps and goggles (and sunscreen !) *before* their practice is scheduled to begin.

Swimmers can wear either a PCC cap or a cap with a fun design (not team specific) to practice. Swimmers should not wear another team's cap to practice. (For example, if your swimmer is also a member of a winter swim team, they should not be wearing the winter team's cap to a Pennypacker practice).

Swimmers who are also swimming with their winter club team or doing long course with their club team must attend at least one Pennypacker practice per week.

The coaches have requested that all parents and families stay in the grass and off the concrete pool deck during practice, in order to allow the coaches to work with the swimmers.

If your child is missing one or two practices due to sickness or another commitment, there is no need to notify the coaches. However, if for some reason your child will be missing a more significant number of practices, please email the coaches to let them know.

Swimmers should pack a water bottle with their name on it to keep at the end of their lane during practice. Even though they can't feel it because they are in the water, they are sweating from working hard and need to replenish their fluids!

TIME TRIALS

Time Trials are mandatory for all members of the Competitive Team, ages 14 & younger. Coaches will be placing swimmers on either Varsity or JV based on the results of Time Trials. Open swimmers (ages 15-18) are automatically placed on the Varsity team, per league rules.

Parents are required to sign up for a job at the Time Trials session that their swimmer(s) attend.

RECORDS

Meet results are closely tracked for any new team or league records. Team records can only be set at league sanctioned meets. New records are announced weekly, and are updated at the end of the season on our team records board.

MEET INFORMATION

Pennypacker Swim Meets will fall under four different categories: Dual Meets, Inter-squad Meets, Mini Meets and Championship Meets.

DUAL MEETS

The Dual Meets are divided up into Junior Varsity and Varsity Meets, and all members who are part of the official team roster should participate in these meets (SSL rules state that all meet participants must be 6 years old). Our JV and Varsity meet schedule can be found on our website in late spring, once it has been set by SSL.

We are a part of the Suburban Swim League. The Suburban Swim League's website is: www.ssl-summer.com. This site is a great resource for directions to league pools, meet schedules, meet results, individual standings in the league and more.

Events at the Dual Meets are in age order, youngest to oldest, and girls followed by boys. Each heat allows up to 6 swimmers, 3 from each team in alternating lanes. The order of events at each meet is as follows:

- Medley Relays: Four swimmers make up a relay. Each swimmer swims a different stroke in the following order: backstroke→breaststroke→butterfly→freestyle.
- Backstroke: Individual events
- Breaststroke: Individual events
- Freestyle: Individual events
- Butterfly: Individual events
- Freestyle Relays: Four swimmers make up a relay, and they all swim freestyle.

One of the most common misconceptions about swimming is that it is an "individual" sport. While it is true that you are trying to improve your technique and better your own personal times, at Pennypacker, WE ARE A TEAM. Our team's success is built from each individual's success. Our swimmers have a lot of fun, make so many friendships, work together as a team, and learn to shoot for their own personal best no matter their pace.

INTER-SQUAD MEETS

These meets are within our Pennypacker team.

Rooster Meet: This meet is for all members of Varsity, JV and JV-B and Peeps. It is one of the highlights of the season filled with lots of laughs and lots of team spirit! Older swimmers will be Team Captains, and they divide swimmers into three teams: Green, White and Rooster. There will be fun events such as the Ping-Pong, Corkscrew, Wheelbarrow, and T-shirt relays! Immediately following the Rooster Meet, swimmers and their families are invited to pack a picnic and we will eat together as a team in the picnic grove.

Distance Free Meet: This meet will take the place of practice on the day it is held, and is mandatory for all Varsity and JV swimmers. Swimmers will have a chance to swim a longer distance race that isn't offered in dual meets, but is offered at A Champs. 8&unders will swim a 100 free, 10&unders and 12&unders will swim a 200 free, and swimmers 13 and older will swim a 400 free.

Individual Medley Meet: This meet will take the place of practice on the day it is held, and is mandatory for all Varsity and JV swimmers. Swimmers will each swim an Individual Medley (IM). The IM isn't offered in dual meets, but is offered at A champs. For an IM, swimmers swim all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle. 8&unders and 10&unders will swim a 100 IM (one lap of each stroke). Swimmers 11 and older will swim a 200 IM (two laps of each stroke).

Club Champs: This meet is for all members of Varsity, JV and JV-B. Swimmers will get to choose their own events. This is a fun way for the swimmers to race against each other in friendly competition, and try to improve their times. Club Champs also serves as a "last chance" opportunity for swimmers to achieve an A Champs qualifying time. Each swimmer may swim in 3 events at Club Champs.

MINI MEETS

Mini Meets are for our Developmental Team swimmers (Peeps and JV-B). These meets will be very informal, and are designed to give the swimmers a general idea of what a swim meet will feel like in a casual, non-intimidating environment.

There will be three Mini Meets throughout the season, which will give the swimmers a great chance to show off their progress!

CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS

All Varsity, JV and JV-B swimmers on the official team roster who have participated in two SSL dual meets are eligible to swim in a League Championship meet at the end of the season. We hope to see every swimmer participate! Just like the dual meets, Championships are for team points, so every single swimmer is a valuable part our team's success!

Blue Divisional Champs: All swimmers who have participated in two SSL dual meets during the current season, and who have not achieved an "A" Champs qualifying time, are eligible to compete in the Blue Divisional Championship. Our league is split into three divisions for this end of season meet. Pennypacker hosts the Blue Divisional Champs. Swimmers will be seeded in heats based on their times. Ribbons are awarded in each event.

A Champs: In order to swim at A Champs, swimmers must have participated in two SSL dual meets during the current season, and also must have achieved A Champ qualifying times (these are posted on the website). Swimmers must swim the stroke and event during the current season in order to swim it at Champs (this includes PCC Time Trials and Club Champs, as well as any SSL meets). A Champs consists of four different sessions spread out over the last week of the season: Distance Free Meet (Monday night), Individual Medley Meet (Wednesday night), and the Sprint Events & Relays (Saturday – morning and

afternoon sessions are divided by age group). The top swimmers in the league will compete in this meet.

Swimmers may swim in up to three individual “sprint” events at Championships. A swimmer can swim at both Divisional Champs and A champs if they have some events that qualify for A champs and some that do not, but the total number of sprint events allowed for both of the meets cannot exceed three. If a swimmer has achieved an “A” time in an event, he or she is not eligible to swim that event in Divisional Champs.

If a swimmer achieves an “A” time in a Distance Free event or IM event, they can swim in one distance event and three sprint events, or two distance events and two sprint events. The total number of events swam in Champs may not exceed four (not including relays).

If a swimmer qualifies for more than the maximum number of events allowed at Champs, the coaches will make recommendations as to which events they should swim based on what will help our team score the most points.

Relays will be determined by the coaches. In order to be considered for a relay at A Champs, swimmers must have participated in three SSL dual meets during the current season.

All medals and ribbons for the championship meets will be placed in the family folders at some point after the team party.

Elite Meet: The top two swimmers in each event at A champs are invited to attend the Elite Meet (the invite may be extended to other high placing swimmers, depending on the top two swimmers’ availability). The Elite Meet is held the Tuesday night after A champs. This is a competition between the top swimmers in each of the three local summer swim leagues: Suburban, IntraCounty and Delco.

MEET ATTENDANCE

At Pennypacker, we have a long tradition of team spirit and sportsmanship. We expect that parents and swimmers will support this, recognizing that missing meets impacts the team. Meets have been won or lost by one point...every single swimmer is an important part of our team and contributes to our success. It is expected that JV and Varsity swimmers will be able to attend all of their meets.

You must go onto the team website to commit to each meet *no later than* the Friday prior to each meet. Many parents find that it is easiest to commit to all of the meets at one time, at the beginning of the season.

In order for your child to be included in a meet lineup, you will need to go onto the team website and click on the “Meets & Events” tab. You will see the different swim meets listed here. Click on the name of the meet, and select “Edit Commitment”, and click on “commit” if your child is attending the meet, and “decline” if your child is unable to attend the meet. The coaches refer to the list of “Committed Athletes” when they make the meet lineups. The coaches will select the events for the swimmers attending the Varsity meets.

Swimmers attending JV meets will have the opportunity to select the events that they would like to swim, and the coaches will do their best to accommodate those requests.

If your child cannot attend a meet, you must select "Decline." This is the only way to "scratch" a meet! Please do not email "scratches" to the coaches or the team President!

If you fail to "Commit" or "Decline" your swimmer for a meet, the coaches will assume that your swimmer cannot attend the meet, and they will not be placed in the lineup. NO EXCEPTIONS. This is to ensure fairness to the entire team.

If your swimmer has "committed" to a meet, and they get sick or an emergency happens at the last minute, please email coach@pennypackerswimming.com ASAP so that the lineups can be adjusted. A lot of time and effort goes into developing a meet lineup, and missing just one swimmer unexpectedly can greatly impact the team, especially with relays.

MEET EXPECTATIONS

Please allow sufficient travel time to away meets – rush hour and traffic situations must be taken into consideration.

Please plan to arrive and report to the team area at least 15 minutes before warm ups are scheduled to begin. Make sure you leave enough time to find parking and walk into the pool area.

Swimmers should check in with the coach taking attendance as soon as they arrive.

Meets will only be postponed if there is continuous thunder in the area. Never assume a meet is canceled, as summer storms typically tend to pass quickly. In the event a meet is cancelled, you will be notified via email. Any meet changes will also be posted to the team website. *Please check your email and the team website for any last minute changes before leaving for each meet.*

Team suits and team caps **MUST** be worn.

Swimmers must sit with the team during a meet...because it is fun! And because it's not fair to the coaches or parent volunteers to have to hunt down missing swimmers when it is time for them to line up for their event. Coaches and Clerks of Course are not responsible for swimmers who miss their race due to not being in the team area! Swimmers are not permitted to use cell phones and other electronics during meets. We want them engaged and cheering for their team!

Swimmers should not leave the designated team area without first notifying the Clerk of Course. Swimmers are not permitted to go in other pools, the snack bar, etc. during the meet. (We encourage you to pack snacks and a drink for your swimmer, so if they are hungry or thirsty during the meet, they can have something to eat and drink without having to leave the team area). If you have a younger swimmer who needs comfort or assistance, you are welcome to come and sit with them in the team area.

Parents are asked to stay off the pool deck during meets in order to give the coaches, officials and other meet volunteer's room to do their jobs.

Swimmers are expected to stay until the end of the meet – even if their individual races are finished. It is important that they are there to cheer on their teammates! And sometimes, it is possible that they may be needed in an additional race at the last minute to fill in for another swimmer. It is league practice that opposing teams shake hands at the end of every dual meet, and we expect all of our athletes to be present in demonstrating good sportsmanship. It is also a Pennypacker tradition to do a team cheer at the end of every meet.

QUESTIONS

We are here to help you with any questions you may have throughout the season. If you are unable to find an answer on our website, please don't hesitate to contact us so that we can help!

For any questions pertaining to general team questions, registration, dues, team events, schedules, volunteering, or other administrative details, please contact president@pennypackerswimming.com.

If you have a question about practices, meets or anything swimming related, please contact coach@pennypackerswimming.com.

If you have questions about the website, please contact webmaster@pennypackerswimming.com.

Please remember, during practices and meets, the coaches need to give their full attention to the swimmers. If you need to speak with one of the coaches, please wait until after practice or the meet is finished, or email them to set up a time to talk.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A ROOSTER

Our 2015 Swim Team used these words to describe what being a Pennypacker Rooster means to them...

R	R espectful to our teammates and rivals; R ocks; R adical
O	O utstanding; O utgoing; O utrageous; O h-so-special
O	O ptimistic; O ver-achieving; Awes O me; O ut-of-this-world
S	S pirited; S upportive; S ensible; S weet; S tar; S wag; S wimmer; S uper duper speedy
T	T eamwork; T rustworthy; T errific; T eam
E	E very day we try our hardest; E nthusiastic; E xcellent; E xtraordinary; E nergetic
R	R eliable; R esponsible; R ecords; R ockin’; R eally really fast and fun!

We look forward to a great season...GO ROOSTERS!