

TRI-COUNTY SWIM LEAGUE
Rules and Guidelines
Revised May 28, 2012

I. ELIGIBILITY

A. Team Membership

1. All teams must have a viable parent group.
2. Fees:
 - a. Each member team of the Tri-County Swim League owes \$10.00 annually to the league organization to pay for administrative costs.
 - b. Fee may be waived if the treasury does not need the income.
3. New teams that wish to enter the Tri-County Swim League must be approved by a majority of the member teams of the league.
4. The executive committee shall set league size.

B. Athlete Membership

1. Swimmers must be bona fide members of the club which they represent, including full payment of all initiation deposits/fees, bonds, stock certificates, annual dues, maintenance fees, swim team fees, etc., however it applies to each individual team.
2. One coach (to be designated at the beginning of the season), who has been granted full privilege membership but is not a bona fide member, and a supervisory personnel's immediate family granted full privilege membership may also swim provided they have paid swim team fees for that season.
3. A swimmer may represent only one team within the league during one summer season.

C. Age Group

1. Age as of June 1st determines the age group.
2. Swimmers may swim in the older age groups; however, all individual events must be swum in the same age group.
3. Six and under swimmers are exempt from the above rule. They may swim freestyle and backstroke in the six and under age group and individual medley, butterfly, or breaststroke in the eight and under age group; however, if a six and under swims eight and under freestyle or backstroke, he/she must swim "up" for all three events.
4. At any league meet or championships a team must have two actual swimmers the correct age within an age group (i.e. swimmers who are actually the age of the age group where the relay is to be swum) before younger swimmers may be brought "up" to fill a relay.
5. Swimmers may compete in THREE individual events, ONE medley relay, and ONE freestyle relay. Swimmers may swim "up" for a medley relay and "down" for a freestyle relay, or vice versa.

D. Rule for Disabled Swimmers

1. Upon written approval of the TCSL Board, a swimmer may swim in a lower age group during the dual meet season if they are disabled or have special needs.
2. The swimmer shall swim in their correct age group at championships; although, the meet director has the ability to allow a swimmer to swim a shortened distance.
3. If the swimmer has been allowed to swim in a lower age group or a shorter distance, he/she must swim exhibition and/or be listed as exhibition.

II. GENERAL

- A.** Teams in the Tri-County Swim League are permitted to swim teams not in the league.

- B. TCSL Rules Interpretation/ Officiating Clinic(s):** Clinics for interpretation of TCSL rules followed by a training session for officials are to be held for all teams in the league in late May or early June.
1. One coach and one parent board member, preferably the head official, **must attend one of the above named meetings.**
 2. A \$50 fine each person will be assessed for non attendance.
 3. The clinics for officials will serve to educate any willing person and to train attendees to serve as stroke and turn judges at dual meets and championships.
 4. Newly trained officials must work a minimum of 3 dual meets during the current season in order to work at championships.
 5. All teams are to declare their current/paid coaching staff at the time of this clinic.
- C. Vote:** Each team in the league will have one vote in league meetings. More representatives are invited to attend.
- D. Rule Books:** The Tri-County Swim League will provide a current USA Swimming Rules Book for each team in the league each year if money is available.
- E. Inclement Weather:** When lightning and thunder have been verified, the home team referee and/or the pool personnel are required to follow existing pool policy on lightning.
- F. Lifeguard:** The host team must provide and pay for a lifeguard, who will sit in the lifeguard chair during the warm-up and the meet. The lifeguard must be certified in American Red Cross life guarding, Ellis, or YMCA life guarding. If there is no lifeguard, there is no meet.
- G. Pool Depth:** The official minimum depth accepted by the league is 4 feet 6 inches. YMCA's may not dive into water under 5 feet, and the scheduler will attempt to honor this rule in scheduling their meets. Any pool with a depth at the starting end less than 4 feet 6 inches must do in water push off starts. There shall be no flooding or redistribution of lanes.
- H. Relays:** When relay exchanges start in the water, the swimmer waiting for a relay touch must have some part of their body on the wall until the preceding swimmer touches.
- I. Parent Code of Ethics:** All parents/guardians of participating athletes are bound by the Parent Code of Ethics of the Tri-County Swim League. Please refer to Addendum #2.
- J. Protests:** All protests are to be directed to the meet referee by the coach. Coaches, parents, and swimmers ARE NOT to confront any other meet official.
- K. Sportsmanship:** Parents and swimmers participating in the Tri-County Swim League programs are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship at all times during dual meets, invitationals, and championships. Ridicule, derogatory remarks, and taunting directed toward opponents, officials, or teammates, both verbal and non-verbal, are strictly prohibited. Appropriate sanctions against the offending parent and/or swimmer will be decided by the swim team board of the Tri-County Swim League member team to include banishment from the pool deck and/or swim meets for a specified period of time. If the offending behavior continues, the matter will be brought before the board of directors of the Tri-County Swim League. Unsportsmanlike conduct between swimmers will result in immediate ejection from the meet by the meet referee.
- L. Alcohol and Smoking:**
1. There shall be no smoking or drinking of alcoholic beverages on the competitive pool deck or grounds accessible to swimmers during competition or warm-ups. Hosting facilities may impose a stricter rule, but may not loosen the rules.
 2. Public pools may not have alcohol on the premises at all.
- M. Team Size:** The division of a club team into manageable units swimming in different league divisions or as "home" and "away" units does not affect swimming in the championships as long as all swimmers compete in two league dual meets as required by current league rules.
- N. Records:** "League" records can only be set at the annual Tri-County Swim League Championships. Records must be set in the actual event. Lead off splits on relays do not qualify as record breaking swims.

III. RULES

- A. **USA short course rules** apply to all competition, except for violations covered in the Tri-County Swim League Rules and Guidelines.
- B. **Rule Infractions:** All swimmers must be told of any rule infraction by the stroke or turn judge. Should the official miss the swimmer, every effort should be made to contact the coach.
- C. **Leniency:** There is *no leniency* in the rules for any age group at any time.

IV. DUAL MEETS

A. General

1. **Scratched Events:** No event may be scratched even if only one swimmer is entered. If neither team has an entry, the event may be scratched.
2. **Lanes per Team:** At a dual meet each team may enter a number of swimmers per event equal to one half the number of lanes. In a tri-meet each team may enter one-third the number of lanes.
3. **Required Schedule:** Each team is required to swim the schedule and program of events provided by the league. Meets cancelled due to inclement weather should be made up if possible.
4. **Definition of a Meet:** All swimmers in the TCSL must participate in a minimum of two league dual meets for the club they represent prior to entry in championships. Any invitational a TCSL team hosts shall also count towards this requirement. If a swimmer has a valid time in the data base for a meet that was subsequently cancelled due to inclement weather, that time constitutes a “meet” for that swimmer.
5. **Lane Assignments:** The home team takes the ODD numbered lanes; the visiting team takes the EVEN numbered lanes.
6. **Dual Meet Confirmation/Communication:** The host team head coach will contact the visiting team head coach by 5 PM (Friday before a Tuesday meet or Tuesday before a Thursday meet). Exhibition heats must be discussed and mutually agreed upon. Entries are to be submitted by 5 PM the day prior to the meet. All changes the day of the meet must be submitted at least 30 minutes prior to the meet start time or the changes may not be accepted. **If a team must cancel** (only under dire circumstances), 48-hour notice must be given. (Exception: inclement weather)
7. **Warm-Up:** Home team has 30 minutes starting one hour before the meet, and the visiting team has the 30 minutes immediately preceding the meet. Warm-up procedure must be followed (Please refer to Addendum #1).
8. **Start Time:** Suggested meet starting time is 6:30 PM; however, allowances can be made for lack of proper lighting at the home facility. Proper advance notification must be given to the visiting team.
9. **Diving is optional:** Coaches will decide prior to a dual meet whether diving events will be held. Diving and swimming events are to be scored separately. Individual diving meets can be held. Date and site is to be decided by the two teams involved.
10. **Dual Meet Results:** All dual meet results shall be sent, via email (Hy-Tek Meet Manager preferred), to the designated league representative.

B. Equipment

1. **Stopwatches:** Each team should supply stopwatches and any other equipment as requested by the home team. (Each team should provide the stopwatches for their respective timers.)
2. **Backstroke Flags** are required for both ends of the pool.
3. **Lane Slips:** If used, HOME team will use GOLD lane slips; VISITING teams will use BLUE lane slips; all exhibition swimmers will use PINK lane slips.
4. **Starting blocks** shall be placed at the deep end of the pool. The blocks shall be placed with

lane #1 on the RIGHT and lane #6 (or # 8) on the LEFT as you face the course from the starting end of the pool, whenever possible.

C. Officials

1. At a dual meet each team is required to supply:
 - a. One clerk of course
 - b. One turn judge
 - c. One stroke judge
 - d. One timer per lane from visiting team and two timers per lane from home team, thus making the middle time the official time
 - e. One warm-up monitor (in addition to the lifeguard)
2. The visiting team must make a courtesy call to the host coach or meet referee if the former is unable to provide sufficient officials for the meet.
3. It is suggested that the responsibility of starter and referee should be split between home and visiting team. In the case that the visiting team is unable to supply a starter or referee, the responsibility falls on the home team.

D. Scoring

1. NO team can sweep an event. In the case of a team placing first, second, and third, the THIRD PLACE RIBBON is awarded to the THIRD PLACE SWIMMER, but the POINT is awarded to the next qualifying swimmer. If the opposing team had no swimmers in the water, the third place point is lost.
2. Points awarded in dual meets:
 - a. Individual events: 5-3-1
 - b. Relay events: 7-0
3. In the event of a tie, the points to be credited to the disputed places are to be added together and divided equally between the two swimmers.
4. 6 and under events will be scored.
5. Lane slips, if used, must be filled out completely in order to avoid confusion and error in scoring.
6. The home team must provide the visiting team with awards, lane slips and a copy of the meet results with all swimmers and their times listed, including names and times of all exhibition swimmers participating the night of the meet.
7. The home and visiting teams shall sign the final results from league dual meets. The signatures must be from either a coach or parent board member.
8. **Exhibition Heats/Swimmers:**
 - a. Exhibition heats may be swum, with age groups and events to be determined by the coaches PRIOR to the meet.
 - b. Exhibition heats will be run BEFORE the scored event.
 - c. No points will be awarded.
 - d. Coaches must notify officials of all exhibition heats prior to the start of the meet.
 - e. No exhibition heats can be swum unless *opposing* head coaches have discussed and reached mutual agreement on the setup by 5 PM Friday before a Tuesday meet or 5 PM on Tuesday before a Thursday meet.
 - f. An exhibition swimmer may be put in any empty lane in a scoring heat.
 - g. Maximum number of exhibition heats allowed at a dual meet is TEN (total - not per team).

E. Awards

1. Host team provides awards for dual meets.
2. **Individual events:**
 - a. Ribbons for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd (This includes 6 and under).
 - b. For 6 and under swimmers, participation ribbons will be awarded to all other places.

3. ALL exhibition swimmers are to receive ribbons - all the same color. The ribbon color is left to the discretion of the individual team.
4. **Relays** will only be awarded ribbons for first place.

V. CHAMPIONSHIPS: All information about the annual TCSL Championships is contained the meet information. Note: Meet information is subject to updates, so please check the website for changes during the season.

ADDENDUM 1

TRI-COUNTY SWIM LEAGUE WARM-UP PROCEDURE

- I.** Pre-Meet Warm-up Period for Dual Meets
 - A.** General Guidelines
 1. Control/supervise are the keywords for safe warm-ups.
 2. Officials who are assigned as warm-up marshals, **DRESSED IN WHITE**, should be actively supervising, etc.
 3. Coaches should maintain as much contact with their swimmers as possible – verbal and visual – throughout the warm-up period.
 4. Coaches are reminded that the responsibility for supervision of their swimmers is the same at the meet as when on deck at practice.
 5. Officials who are warm-up marshals have authority to discuss with coaches any unsafe practice.
 - B.** Warm-up for **DUAL** meets is to be 60 minutes in length.
 1. The first 30 minutes is for the **HOME** team.
 2. The second 30 minutes is for the **VISITING** team.
- II.** General Warm-up Period
 - A.** Coaches must be on deck and responsible for general warm-up in all lanes.
 - B.** Athletes **ARE REQUIRED** to enter the water **FEET FIRST** at the beginning of the warm-up period.
 - C.** There should be no racing starts, diving/jumping off the blocks, or off the edge of the pool (except to enter the water) at this time.
 - D.** There shall be no sprinting or diving during two-way traffic.
- III.** Specific Warm-up Period
 - A.** After the general warm-up period and when the lanes are clear of swimmers, coaches may begin sprint work with starts.
 - B.** No diving or racing starts in lanes or ends of lanes other than those designated for diving.
 - C.** Start all swimmers in all lanes at starting end of pool. Swimmers are to get out at the end of the lap and **WALK** back to the starting end.
 - D.** Coaches should stand at starting end of pool when verbally starting swimmers for sprint work.
 - E.** Swimmers should be reminded by coaches that breaststrokes need more lead-time than freestyle or butterfly swimmers.
 - F.** Backstrokes should be reminded of the danger of leaving simultaneously with someone on the block. No one should be allowed on the starting block until the backstroker has executed his start.

IV. Warm-up at Championships

- A. Lane assignments are made according to the size of the team entered at championships at which time coaches are responsible for their team during their assigned time.
- B. Officials who are warm-up marshalls shall be designated by the meet director.
- C. Warm-up for championships shall be one hour in length divided as equally as possible among the TCSL member teams.

ADDENDUM 2 PARENTS' CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE TRI-COUNTY SWIM LEAGUE

TO PROMOTE BETTER SPORTSMANSHIP:

1. I will not force my child to participate in swimming.
2. I will remember that my child swims for his/her enjoyment not mine.
3. I will place the emotional and physical well being of my child ahead of a personal desire to win.
4. I will teach my child that doing one's best is as important as winning, so that my child will never feel defeated by the outcome of an event.
5. I will make my child feel like a winner every time by offering praise for competing fairly and trying hard.
6. I will never harass, ridicule, or yell at my child, his/her teammates, or opponents for any reason or for making mistakes or losing a competition.
7. I will remember that children learn best by example. I will applaud good performances by my child, his/her teammates, and their opponents.
8. I will never question or approach an official on any call. All questions are to be directed to the meet referee **BY THE COACH**.
9. I will respect and show appreciation for the many volunteers and paid staff who give their time to provide sport opportunities for my child, understanding that I have a responsibility to be a part of my child's development.
10. I will get involved with my child's team in a positive way.
11. I will refrain from drinking alcohol and from using tobacco products within the swimming venue.
12. I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for my child(ren) participating in competitive swimming by following this Parents' Code of Ethics Pledge.