

# PARENT HANDBOOK



**2023**

### **2023 BOARD MEMBERS**

Amy Bankard, Team Rep  
Morgan Muse, Outgoing Team Rep  
Megan Magers, Treasurer  
Tamara Strobel, Secretary  
Kim Hawkins, Tech and Statistics  
wststingrays@gmail.com

### **COACHES**

Head Coach: Michael Brant  
Lesson Coordinator: Wendy Schneider  
Assistant Coaches: Laura Midkiff

### **WESTMINSTER MUNICIPAL POOL**

325 Royer Road  
Westminster, Maryland 21158  
410-857-5633

### **WELCOME TO THE WESTMINSTER STINGRAYS!**

For those of you who have experience in summer swimming programs, you may find that this Parent Guide contains some vital team updates, but for many new parents, we hope this guide will assist you in understanding how our swim team and meets are run. One of the concerns parents have expressed over the years is their confusion over terminology, which is foreign to new swimmers and their parents. This guide provides a list of commonly used terms to help you and your swimmer orient to swim team life.

If the need arises, please feel free to contact board members for answers to your questions. You may also approach the coaches before or after practice, but please refrain from reaching out to them during practice, as they are extremely busy during practice and swim lesson times.

### **ABOUT OUR TEAM**

The Westminster Stingrays Swim Team started in 1989 and has grown each year to a team of about 150 swimmers. This year we will swim in Division II of the Central Maryland Swim League.

### **TEAM MISSION**

The mission of the Westminster Swim Team is to create a positive experience for every swimmer and parent. We encourage all swimmers to strive to improve their swimming and to learn the strokes to the best of their ability. Every swimmer should set personal goals and not compare themselves to others. Swimmers should judge their success by how they improve every week and not by the number of ribbons they win. Our goal for the team is that every swimmer and parent supports each other. Most importantly, we want everyone to meet new friends and to have fun!

## COMMUNICATION

Our website, [www.westminsterstingrays.org](http://www.westminsterstingrays.org), is your source for season information and registration forms.

Email and weekly newsletters are the main tools for communication with our parents and swimmers. All information regarding swim meets and team activities will be sent via email, so please check your email frequently.

Each family will have a folder in the Family Mailbox, which will be available at all practices. Please check it daily for important information.

Feel free to contact the coaches and board members at [wststingrays@gmail.com](mailto:wststingrays@gmail.com).

## SWIMMER AND PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

During registration, all parents agreed to abide by the code of conduct (located at the end of this handbook). Please review this document with your swimmers. By agreeing to the code of conduct during registration, parents acknowledged that they understand and agree to abide by the code of conduct. See a member of the board for any questions about the code of conduct.

## MINI-STINGRAYS

This group is designed for swimmers who are close but not quite able to swim a full 25 meters on their own. Swimmers in the Mini-Stringrays group must be able to swim unassisted in deep water. Mini-Stringrays will not be entered into a meet until the coaches determine they are able to swim 25 meters unassisted. The goal of this program is to enter all Mini-Stringrays in a meet by the end of the season. Appropriate candidates for Mini-Stingrays must:

- Have some prior experience (lessons, etc.).
- Be at least 5 years old.
- Be comfortable swimming in the deep water unassisted, as this group will be practicing in the deep well.
- Be able to swim at least 15 meters unassisted.

### **Mini-Stingrays practice 8:45-9:15 and 7:45-8:15**

Please be advised the Mini Stingrays will not move to regular practice. Once the swimmer can complete a full length of the pool, they will be invited to participate in the swim meet but will continue at the same practice time.

**If a child does not meet the minimum requirements for the Mini-Stingray Program, the family will be offered the opportunity to sign up for two swim lesson sessions or be eligible for a refund of the swim team registration fee minus a \$15 processing fee and the \$14 AAU Membership Fee. No refunds are available for Westminster**

## Pool Family Membership.

### ATTENDANCE AT MEETS/PRACTICES

**Practices:** In order to get the most out of your season, we recommend attending practice at least 3 times per week. If you are signed up for evening practice and you are not going to be able to attend we ask that you email [wststingrays@gmail.com](mailto:wststingrays@gmail.com) as early as possible as there is often a waiting list for evening practice.

**Meets:** Each week you will receive an email from Team Unify asking you to declare if your swimmer will be attending that week's meet. Please complete this declaration by Tuesday as the coaches must complete the meet lineup by Wednesday. **If an emergency arises the morning of a meet and your swimmer is unable to swim in the meet, please email [wststingrays@gmail.com](mailto:wststingrays@gmail.com)**

### VOLUNTEERING

**It is the requirement of the Westminster Swim Team (WST) that all parents actively participate in the team's swim meets.** It is our goal to have all necessary jobs filled for each meet and for each family to participate equally, therefore:

#### VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

When you registered your swimmers for the team you agreed to the following:

- **Each family will complete the following:**
  - **4 volunteer duties for regular season.**
  - **Families with swimmers in optional meets (CCI, Jr. Champs, and Divisionals) must complete at least one more volunteer duty at one of these optional meets.**
  - **All families with swimmers participating at Straehle will be required to volunteer at that meet.**
- Please keep in mind:
  - Each family is required to fulfill all their volunteer duties. A family's volunteer commitment may be fulfilled by **any** adult family member or friend.
  - Volunteers must check-in with the volunteer coordinator(s) before the meet and must stay until their assigned duty is complete in order to receive credit for their duty.
    - Each volunteer must complete their entire assigned duty. In some cases, your swimmer will be finished with the meet before your duties are completed.
    - Some jobs extend beyond the end of the meet. Volunteers signed up for these jobs must stay until their job is finished.
  - If you cannot perform your volunteer duty, it is your responsibility to find a replacement and inform the volunteer coordinator(s).
  - If all jobs are not filled within 2 days of the start of the meet, the volunteer coordinator will start soliciting volunteers with the families who have accumulated the least amount of volunteer points to date.

- Families who are in danger of not completing their volunteer requirements will be contacted by the volunteer coordinator and encouraged to catch up with their volunteer responsibilities.
- Efforts will be made to assist people with difficulty performing certain volunteer positions due to childcare, injuries, etc. find appropriate jobs but “special” assignments cannot be held for specific people. All jobs are open to all team members on a first come, first served basis.
- Childcare, injuries, etc. cannot exempt families from volunteer duties as jobs can be done by any adult family member and we have jobs available that are suitable for people of all abilities.
- If you are having difficulty finding a volunteer job that is suitable for your particular circumstances, please reach out to the volunteer coordinator or the team rep.
- VOLUNTEER PENALTIES
  - Parents who do not show up for their volunteer duty or leave early will be charged a \$50 fee for each duty that they signed up for and did not complete.
  - Families who do not satisfy the required amount of volunteer jobs (including volunteering for an optional meet if your family participates in any) will be charged \$50 per duty missed at the end of the season.
  - Families that do not fulfill their volunteer requirement more than once may not be eligible to register with WST the following swim season.

### **STINGRAY Tokens**

Each time a swimmer on our team improves their personal time in any event they will receive a Stingray Token. This token is worth twenty-five cents at the team concession stand during meets or at the pool concession stand. The tokens are given out with the ribbons at the end of Monday or Tuesday practices following a dual meet.

### **TEAM EVENTS**

#### **TIME TRIALS**

The Time Trials meet is run very much like a regular swim meet. The purpose is to allow swimmers to compete in every event they are capable of swimming. The times recorded for each swimmer in each event are used to seed the swimmer for the first dual meet of the season. We also use this meet to orient new swimmers and parents to the world of summer swimming.

#### **PEP RALLIES**

Pep rallies are held at the end of practice on the Thursday evening and Friday morning before a meet. Pep rallies traditionally include some fun activities, cheers and refreshments. This is a time to come together as a team to promote team spirit.

#### **DUAL MEETS**

There are 5 dual meets in the summer swim season. These are meets between the Stingrays and another team in our division. They are usually held on Saturday mornings.

### **JR. CHAMPIONSHIP MEET\***

This meet is for new and/or inexperienced swimmers or experienced swimmers who do not qualify for Straehle to come together for competition. This is an opportunity for these swimmers to earn medals & ribbons. If the swimmer has qualified for an individual event at the Straehle meet they may not participate in the Jr. Championship meet. However, a swimmer who qualifies for Straehle only as a member of a relay is still eligible to participate in the Jr. Championship meet.

**Commented [TS1]:** Note that these are not necessarily on Saturday mornings?

### **CARROLL COUNTY INVITATIONAL\***

This meet is hosted by the South Carroll Swim Team. This is an opportunity for our swimmers to swim against other Carroll County swim teams who are not in our division. There are no relays at this meet.

### **STRAEHLE INVITATIONAL\***

This is a voluntary individual championship meet for the entire CMSL, where top swimmers from all 47 teams compete against each other. Swimmers must qualify for this meet to participate (see Westminster Swim Team website for list of qualifying times). Relay teams are included at this meet.

Former Olympians who have competed in this meet include Michael Phelps, Beth Botsford, Anita Nall and Tommy Hannan.

**\* Participation in Jr. Championship, Carroll County Invitational, and Straehle require additional fees and extra volunteer time.**

### **DIVISIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP MEET**

At the Divisional Championship Meet, all teams in the Division compete on the last Saturday of the summer swim season. Each team may send their top 3 swimmers in each event. Our team makes every effort to have as many swimmers participate as possible. The coaches make the selections for this meet. The swim team pays all fees for swimmers participating in the Divisional Championship Meet.

### **END OF SEASON BANQUET**

This is a party held at the Westminster City Pool following the Divisional meet. Every family brings a covered dish or dessert to share. Awards are given out for the year.

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### **CMSL**

The Central Maryland Swim League (CMSL) governs all teams in the league and establishes guidelines and rules. The teams are divided into 10 divisions (I-X); Division I teams are generally very large (more than 200 swimmers) and are highly competitive. Division X teams are generally small teams or teams new to the league. Teams are assigned to Divisions annually, based on the team record at the end of the previous season. The Westminster Swim Team is in Division II.

### **CLERK OF COURSE**

Revised 2/23

The clerk of course is a centrally located staging area for swimmers to be lined up in their correct lanes and heats just prior to swimming their event. This area is generally near the pool under a canopy.

**D.Q.**

Disqualified for improper strokes or turns.

**DUAL MEET**

Two teams in the division that compete against each other in 56 events.

**EVENTS**

Events include individual medley, freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and relays. Swimmers compete against those in the same age group and gender. Events may consist of more than one heat.

**HEAT**

This is a wave of swimmers in an event. There is more than 1 heat if the number of swimmers exceeds the number of lanes in the pool. Usually the first heat will consist of the swimmers with the slower seed times, and the final heat will consist of the swimmers with the faster seed times. Heats are assigned by seed times.

**TIMER SHEETS**

Timer sheets are used to record each swimmer's time during an event. These sheets are then taken to the head table for recording.

**OFFICIAL**

The official is in charge of the pool deck during a meet and starts every heat of every event. The official understands, interprets, and enforces the rules of the CMSL. These include the rules of swimming and sportsmanship.

**RUNNER**

A runner brings the timer sheets from the finish line to the head table for recording.

**SCRATCH**

To withdraw from an event.

**SEEDING**

Placing swimmers in heats of an event according to previously recorded times.

**SET**

Usually refers to a set of laps.

**STARTER**

The official who starts each event of the meet.

**STROKES**

There are 4 strokes that swimmers perform: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle. An individual medley requires that the swimmer swim one lap of each stroke. Relays are competed with the freestyle stroke.

**STROKE AND TURN JUDGE**

The stroke and turn judge is a volunteer from each team who has been trained in the proper form of swim strokes and turns. He/she assists the official in judging which swimmers are performing the strokes and turns properly and disqualifies any swimmer who is not.

**TABLE WORKER**

A volunteer who works at the scoring table during the meet.

**TIME TRIALS**

A practice meet used to establish seed times for swimmers before the regular dual meets begin.

**TIMER/RECORDER**

A timer is a person who times the races with a stopwatch at the meets. Each timer is assigned to a specific lane to time the swimmers in that lane. A recorder is a timer who writes down the 3 times for a swimmer from the stop watches of each timer in a lane.



## Westminster Stingrays Swim Team

### Code of Conduct

#### **PARENTS**

##### **I. Need for a Policy**

This policy helps to guide our organization and ensure the continued success of the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team by addressing the Team's expectations for parent and swimmer behavior.

##### **II. Statement of Policy**

- A. It is the purpose of the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team to promote the sport of swimming and in the process help to develop the character of the individual swimmers.
- B. For the orderly operation of the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team, certain rules, regulations and procedures for enforcing the same must be established. Personal conduct shall not bring discredit to any individual swimmer, parent or guardian, coach, or the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team.
- C. This Code of Conduct shall apply to all behavior occurring during an activity or function that is associated with the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team.

##### **III. Policy**

A. Encouraged and expected behaviors:

1. Demonstration of good sportsmanship evidenced by parents by conducting themselves in a manner that earns the respect of all swimmers, parents, officials and coaches.
2. Open and respectful communication between parents, swimmers and coaches that emphasizes goal-setting to meet the performance expectations of both swimmers and parents.
3. Involvement and commitment in supporting all team activities including organizing and running meets, fundraisers, social events and banquets. All parents will be assigned to, and expected to, perform a duty at all swim team functions including, but not limited to, concessions, Clerk of Course, runners, timers, setup, or clean up.
4. Positive reinforcement of all swimmers.
5. Maintenance of self-control and knowing their roles:
  - Swimmers – Swim
  - Coaches – Coach
  - Officials – Officiate
  - Parents – Parent

B. The following behaviors will not be tolerated:

1. Abusive and/or disrespectful language and actions towards coaches, swimmers, parents or officials.
2. Interference with or disruption of coaches on the deck.
3. Interference with the coach's coaching of swimmers.

##### **IV. Sanctions**

Should behavior bring discredit or discord to the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team, the involved parent voluntarily subjects themselves to disciplinary action by the Board of Directors or designated subcommittee of the Board. The Westminster Stingrays Swim Team maintains the right to terminate any Team membership in the interest of our Team's

## Westminster Stingrays Swim Team

### Code of Conduct

vision, mission and objectives.

### **SWIMMERS**

#### **I. Need for a Policy**

The Westminster Stingrays Swim Team has a behavior policy for all members of the Team. The policies identify certain rules of conduct and expected standards of behavior. The policies also outline the possible consequences of inappropriate behavior. This policy provides guidelines for the board, swimmers, coaches, and parents/guardians concerning the behavioral expectations of the swimmers.

#### **II. Statement of Policy**

- A. It is the purpose of Westminster Stingrays Swim Team to promote the sport of swimming and in the process help to develop the character of the individual swimmers.
- B. For the orderly operation of the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team, certain rules, regulations and procedures for enforcing the same must be established. Personal conduct must not bring discredit to the individual swimmer, his/her parents or guardian, fellow team members, coaches, or the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team.
- C. This Code of Conduct shall apply to swimmer's conduct while a member of the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team, whether it occurred during or at an activity or function that is associated with the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team or not.

#### **III. Discipline Management**

The following are the disciplinary actions that will be used when a swimmer conducts himself/herself inappropriately as described below.

Level I - Deals with behavior that is somewhat disruptive to the Team; does not portray the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team in a good light; or other actions that are not in compliance with appropriate behavior as a member of the Team or society in general.

Level II – Deals with behavior that is considered significantly disruptive to the Team; has a detrimental effect on one's self, other members of the Team or the general public; causes significant damage to the reputation of the Team; or may lead to the injury of self or other persons.

Level III –Deals with behavior that is considered very severe and disruptive to the Team; or likely to cause significant harm or injury to yourself or others. These are actions that are so detrimental that it is not desirable to have such a person associated with the Team.

#### **A. Level I Objectionable Behavior**

Examples of this type of conduct include but are not limited to: insubordination; failure to follow basic direction; lack of respect for coaches, parents, teammates and/or equipment; failure to act responsibly in the pool or on the deck or pool grounds; use of profanity; racial, ethnic or sexual slurs; inappropriate display of affection.

#### **Level I Disciplinary Procedure**

The coaching staff will handle the disciplinary procedures, and parents/guardians will be notified if discipline will result in a suspension from practice or scheduled team activity.

## Westminster Stingrays Swim Team

### Code of Conduct

#### Level I Recommended Discipline

1. First Offense  
The swimmer will receive a verbal warning from the coaching staff to stop the inappropriate behavior. The coaches may require the swimmer to sit out of an activity after giving an explanation of the offense.
2. Second Offense  
Discipline may include, but is not limited to, extra laps, clean-up duties, or suspension from practice for an amount of time as determined by the coaches.
3. Third Offense  
The swimmer will not be allowed to participate in the next dual meet or divisional meet.
4. Fourth Offense  
The swimmer will be removed from the Team for the remainder of the season. Repeated Level I offenses may result in the offense being considered a Level II Objectionable Behavior.

#### **B. Level II Objectionable Behavior**

Examples of this type of conduct include but are not limited to: repeated Level I offenses; possession or use of illegal drugs, alcohol or tobacco; presence at parties or events where minors consume alcohol, tobacco or other drugs; significant vandalism; harassment, including verbal harassment and hazing (any form of intimidation or initiation) of a fellow swimmer; theft; destruction of personal property belonging to others; fighting; actions which jeopardize the safety of self and/or others.

#### Level II Disciplinary Procedure

The coaching staff will verbally instruct the swimmer to stop the inappropriate behavior (if applicable) and will take such other disciplinary action as deemed necessary and appropriate.

If requested by the swimmer or the coach, the following procedure may also be used:

- A meeting with a Disciplinary Committee consisting of the Board of Directors.
- The Board shall send notice of the meeting to parent/guardian and swimmer via email and/or phone call with parent/guardian and swimmer being invited to be present. Typically, the coach involved and/or head coach will also be present.
- The Board can ask for a summary of the alleged facts from those involved or those that assisted in the investigation.
- The Board can take whatever action it deems appropriate (considering the offense and the discipline already leveled against or served by the swimmer) based on a decision by the majority of the Board. The decision of the Board will be mailed to the parent/guardian and swimmer typically within one week.
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#### Level II Recommended Discipline

1. First Offense  
Although the coaches and Board retain full discretion as to the appropriate discipline, the recommended discipline for a first Level II offense is suspension\* from the Team for a period of up to fifteen (15) days of the swimmer's season (the suspension may extend into the swimmer's next season, if needed). Additional requirements may be imposed such as parental supervision requirement for all activities for a determined period of time.
2. Second Offense  
Although the discretion noted above remains, the recommended discipline for a second

## Westminster Stingrays Swim Team

### Code of Conduct

Level II offense is suspension\* from the Team for a period of up to a year together with such other requirements as deemed appropriate.

\*Terms of suspension shall be spelled out by the Board of Directors and must be adhered to by the swimmer/parents in order to be reinstated at the end of the suspension period. During the periods of suspension, swimmers remain a member of the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team and thereby all dues and fees are still due in full. The swimmer cannot be reinstated until any fees and/or dues that are in arrears are paid in full.

### C. Level III Objectionable Behavior

Examples of this type of conduct include but are not limited to: Repeated Level II offenses; sale or distribution of alcohol or illegal drugs; physical and/or sexual assault; dangerous acts that could affect the health and safety of self or others, including but not limited to false fire alarms, bomb threats, arson, possession of a firearm, knife, or other dangerous item; conviction of felony; or fighting that results in the severe bodily injury of any person.

#### Level III Discipline Procedures

The coaching staff will verbally instruct the swimmer to stop the inappropriate behavior (if applicable) and will take such other disciplinary action as deemed necessary and appropriate.

In addition, a meeting with the Board of Directors will be required. The following procedure will typically be followed:

- A mandatory meeting with the Board of Directors.
- The Board shall send notice of the meeting to parent/guardian and swimmer via email and/or phone call with parent/guardian and swimmer presence being required. The coach involved and/or head coach will also be present.
- The Board can ask for a summary of the alleged facts from those involved or those that assisted in the investigation.
- The Board can take whatever action it deems appropriate (considering the offense and the discipline already leveled against or served by the swimmer) based on a decision by the majority of the Board. The decision of the Board will be mailed to the parent/guardian and swimmer within one week.

#### Level III Recommended Discipline

The most likely outcome is membership termination. These offenses will be disciplined by the Team and may also include the involvement of the proper authorities (police, school authorities, city officials, etc.). The Team's coaches or Board of Directors may be required to notify certain individuals or authorities depending on the nature of the offense. The Team's consequences may include any of those listed in this policy. Additional consequences may be issued by other agencies.

### IV. Responsibilities

- A. It is the responsibility of each swimmer and his/her parents/guardians to read, review, and sign an acknowledgment of this code of conduct as written.
- B. It is the responsibility of all Westminster Stingrays Swim Team swimmers to abide by this

**Westminster Stingrays Swim Team**

**Code of Conduct**

code of conduct.

- C. Typically, the coaches will review the code of conduct at the beginning of each season and remind swimmers and others of expected behaviors.
- D. The coaches and Board of Directors are to act on any discipline matters or any grievance stemming from a discipline problem in a professional and timely manner.

Please sign and return the signature page that refers to this policy to the Team Representative.

**Retain the above policy for your records.**

**Signature Page**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of parent/guardian), agree to the Code of Conduct Policy as set forth by the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of swimmer),  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
agree to the Code of Conduct Policy as set forth by the Westminster Stingrays Swim Team.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Swimmer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Swimmer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Swimmer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Swimmer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Received by** \_\_\_\_\_  
Member, WST Board of Directors  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_