

FAIRFIELD-FAIRFIELD CREST SWIM TEAM HANDBOOK

SUBURBAN SWIM LEAGUE

Fairfield/Fairfield Crest (FFC) is a member of the Suburban Swim League (SSL), which is composed of 24 swim clubs, predominantly from northwestern Delaware. These teams are grouped into three divisions. Groupings are based on competitive ability. After each season, the team with the best record in the White and Blue division will move up to the next division for the next season. Consequently, the team with the poorest record in the Red and White division will move down a division for the next season. The divisions for the 2008 swim season are as follow:

RED	WHITE	BLUE
Drummond Hill	Delaware Bluefish	Arundel
Kennett YMCA	Fairfield	Crestmoor
North Star	Maple Valley	Glasgow Pines
Persimmon Creek	Nottingham Green	Hockessin Athletic Club
Western YMCA	Oaklands	Oakwood Valley
Southern Chester County YMCA	Sherwood Park	Penn Acres
Three Little Bakers	Skyline	Valleybrook
Westminster	Yorklyn	Wedgewood

SWIM TEAM ELIGIBILITY

The age group for a swimmer for the entire season is determined by his/her age as of May 30th. Swimmers are eligible to compete until age 19. Swimmers must swim in at least 4 meets to qualify for Time Trials and Championships. Age groups are as follows: 15 -18/ 13-14 / 11-12 / 9-10 / 8 and Under .

PRACTICES

PRACTICE IS REQUIRED FOR ALL TEAM MEMBERS. Attendance will be taken and rewarded at the end of the season (see Awards). Swimmers will be placed in the following practice groups according to both age and ability:

Minis:

This group is optimal for young swimmers becoming comfortable swimming in the water. We emphasize the development of freestyle and backstroke through basic exercises in kick and pull. The goal is to prepare the young swimmers in this group for a more active participation on the swim team, and for competing in swim meets. Swimmers range from age 4- 8 and cannot meet the Blue requirements.

Blue (generally ages 5-8)

Swimmers must be able to swim a full length of the pool. The primary objective is to develop the strokes so that the swimmers become legal in all four strokes according to the standards of the SSL League. Coaches will be in the water to assist swimmer development.

White (generally ages 9-12)

This group strongly emphasizes stroke mechanics. Practices generally consist of stroke drills for the majority of the time, and a short set at the end for conditioning. Swimmers must be mentally committed to utilize instruction in stroke refinement. Although coaches will generally not be in the water, there are practices in which a hands-on approach is necessary.

Gold (generally ages 13-18)

The focus of this practice is conditioning, to prepare the older swimmers to compete optimally in the swim meets. There will be days in which we will focus on stroke mechanics and important aspects of races, such as starts and turns. In order to reach their full potential, swimmers should be committed to attending practices regularly.

Group	Practice time starting May 27	Practice time starting June 11
13-18 GOLD	3:30-5pm	7:30- 8:45am
9-12 WHITE	6-7:15pm	8:45- 10:00am
8 and Under BLUE	5:00-6:00pm	10:00-11:00am
Mini	No practice	11:00-11:30am

PARENTS MAY ATTEND PRACTICE BUT MUST REMAIN ON THE FOOD DECK. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE BABY POOL IS CLOSED DURING ALL PRACTICES AND MEETS. Exceptions may be made during morning practices ONLY when arranged through the pool manager and a lifeguard is on duty for the baby pool specifically.

MINIS: Minis begin at four years of age. Minis must be comfortable in the pool (will put their face under water) and eager to learn. The goal of Minis is to swim one length of the pool and eventually compete in the meets. When the child and the coaches feel they are ready, a Mini will normally be rostered to first swim exhibition events.

Parents of Minis are required to begin participating in swim meets by working a minimum of two meets per season.

SWIM MEETS

Swim Meets are Wednesday evenings beginning at 6:00 PM and Saturday mornings beginning at 9:00 AM. Warm-ups precede every meet and swimmers should be at the pool an hour before the meet begins. The coaches' rule is that no swim team member is permitted at the pool on Wednesday afternoons (after practice) before a meet or on Friday evening after 7:00 PM before a Saturday meet. This rule will be strictly enforced by the coaches and lifeguards. If a swimmer is unable to participate in a meet, parents must notify the coaches by signing the swimmer's name in the "Missed Meets" book. Coaches must know as soon as possible if a meet will be missed.

In cases of illness, notify coaches as soon as possible.

Swimmers can swim a maximum of three events per meet. These may be a combination of individual and/or relay events. Swimmers may be asked to "swim up" an age group. These swims might provide an opportunity for the team to gain points in an age group in which we do not have many swimmers. (Swimmers can never "swim-down", however.)

The SSL follows the USA-S MEN'S AND WOMEN'S SWIMMING AND DIVING RULES in conducting and judging all meets. Points are awarded as follows:

	INDIVIDUAL EVENTS	RELAY EVENTS
1 st PLACE	5 POINTS	7 POINTS
2 nd PLACE	3 POINTS	3 POINTS
3 rd PLACE	1 POINT	1 POINT

A swim meet consists of 70 events. First are Medley Relays, followed by the individual events (IM, Freestyle, Butterfly, Backstroke, and Breaststroke), and ending with the Free Relays. In a MEDLEY RELAY, each member of the four-person team swims one stroke (Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Freestyle). An Individual Medley (IM) is held for the 12 & under, 14 & under, and the 15 & over (OPEN) age groups. In this event each swimmer swims all four strokes. Generally, 8's and 10's swim 25 meters; 12's and 14's swim 50 meters; Opens swim 100 meters. Some pools are marked in yards. There are two official events for the 6 & Under age group: 25 Freestyle and 25 Backstroke.

During meets, swimmers should remain with their age group so they can be found for their events. Swimmers **MUST** be on the ready bench (with cap, goggles, and ready to swim) 2 events prior to the event in which they will swim. Swimmers who do not follow these rules risk being scratched from their next event. The team is expected to stay throughout the entire meet to cheer on their teammates. They are also expected to pick up all trash at the completion of the meet (this includes away meets).

OFFICIALS AND WORKERS

It is required that parents of each swimmer on the team work a minimum of two meets per season. If you do not sign up, activities will be assigned to you. It will be your responsibility to find a replacement if you can not work. If you are willing to work more than twice, it will be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Workers for the first shift need to be at the pool ½ hour before the meet for set-up. Second shift workers need to stay after the meet and clean up.

Officials:

STARTER/REFEREE - The REFEREE is the head official and often serves as the STARTER. The REFEREE has full jurisdiction over the meet and sees that all rules are enforced. The STARTER advises swimmers at the start of each race as to the stroke and distance. The STARTER/REFEREE is supplied by the HOME TEAM and must attend a clinic run by SSL at the beginning of each season.

STROKE AND TURN JUDGE - Two are required, four are preferred; one/two from each team. JUDGES observe starts, strokes, and turns of each event; they may disqualify (DQ) a swimmer for any violation of their stroke or turn and must also attend a clinic run by SSL at the beginning of each season.

PLACE JUDGE - Two are required, one from each team. They determine the order of finish for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each race. SSL offers an optional clinic.

HEAD TIMER - Supplied by HOME TEAM, records and verifies names of swimmers in each lane; record finish position, time and possible disqualification of each swimmer in each event. NO clinic is required.

SCORERS – Required from each team. They receive all roster changes, prepare event cards, record event results, and assign, record and total team points. We provide two (2) scorers for each AWAY meet, and three (3) for each HOME meet. SSL provides a clinic at the beginning of each season and scorers are encouraged to attend.

TIMER - Two are required per lane, one from each team. Timers average and record each individual swimmers time. NO clinic is required.

READY BENCH/CLERK OF COURSE - Two (2) are needed for each home meet to line up swimmers prior to their events. A crucial job to keep the meet running smoothly and on time. The Clerk of Course will check in and line up the swimmers and seat them on the **READY BENCH**. When their event is called the swimmers will move from the ready bench to the appropriate lane.

ANNOUNCER - Supplied by the HOME team. Announces swimmers in the next event and the results of the previous events.

In addition to the officials, the following workers are needed at the meets.

RIBBONS - Three (3) volunteers are needed at each meet to write names, events and times on award ribbons.

PHOTOGRAPHERS - At each meet we need photographers to take pictures using your own camera with team supplied film if not digital. You will not be responsible for developing the film. Just return the used roll of film or lend the memory card to a swim team rep at the end of the meet. The pictures will be used in the slide show at the end of the year. Our goal is to get at least one picture of each swimmer during the season. We will happily accept donations of pictures taken during the season that can be made into slides from either a digital or film camera.

TURTLE SHELL aka concessions - Six (6) workers are needed to work in the Turtle Shell at each home meet- three for the first half and three for the second half. An additional person is needed to work the grill for the second half only of a Saturday morning meet, and for all of a Wednesday night meet. Those working the first shift need to arrive at the Turtle Shell 30 minutes before the meet begins and those working the second shift must stay 30 minutes after the meet to help clean up. No children are allowed in the Turtle Shell while their parent is working.

50/50 - Two people are needed at home meets to sell 50/50 tickets. Profits help support the Swim Team.

MEET SET-UP - Three parents are needed before each home meet to prepare the pool for the meet. Workers need to arrive at the pool by 7am for Saturday meets and 4pm for Wednesday meets. Duties include setting up scorers' tent and tables, putting up flags, preparing the pool, etc.

OTHER SWIM TEAM PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to working at least two meets:

- ◆ Parents/guardians must bring a bag of ice to every HOME meet.
- ◆ Parents/guardians are asked to donate bottles (no glass please!) of 24 water or 12 sport drinks for the Turtle Shell to sell. No soda please.
- ◆ Parents/guardians must also contribute, at the HOME meet specified, Turtle Shell food items for each child participating on the swim team.

The Turtle Shell items schedule is as follows:

- 13-18's contribute food items to the Sat., June 14 meet
- 11-12's contribute food items to the Sat., June 21 meet
- 9-10's contribute food items to the Wed., June 25th meet
- 8 & Unders contribute food items to the Wed., July 2 meet

For a list of suggested food items, contact the swim team reps.

AWARDS

RIBBONS - All swimmers ages 12 and under receive ribbons for every event they swim. Swimmers 13 and over will receive ribbons if they are requested of the coaches or swim team reps. All heats, including EXHIBITION heats, will receive 1st, 2nd, 3rd place ribbons or a PARTICIPATION ribbon. If a swimmer gets disqualified (DQed), he/she will receive a PARTICIPATION ribbon.

SUPER TURTLE AWARD - This award will be given each meet to the one swimmer who best exemplifies all-round team spirit as determined by the coaches. This swimmer will get the privilege of taking our giant stuffed turtle home with him/her until the next meet, at which time it must be brought back ready to be awarded to the next SUPER TURTLE.

SPIRIT AWARD - Most meets this season will have a fun, spirited theme, i.e. Hawaiian Night, Pajama Party, Blue and Gold. The person who best exemplifies this theme will receive an award which includes verbal recognition and the privilege of taking the Ninja Turtle home with him/her until the next meet.

TROPHIES - Each swimmer on the team will be awarded a trophy upon completion of the swim season. If a swimmer leaves the team before the season is over, they forfeit their trophy. Trophies are given at the end of season banquet (held the Saturday evening of Championships in July).

TEAM JACKET - Five-year jackets will be awarded at the banquet to those swimmers who have been a Fairfield/Fairfield Crest Swim Team member for 5 years.

ATTENDANCE AWARD - This award goes to the swimmer with the best practice attendance throughout the entire season. In addition to this award, swimmers who attend at least 90% of all practices will also be recognized at the end of season banquet.

COACHES' AWARD - The Coaches' Award goes to the swimmer in each age group who best exemplifies FFC swimming. She/he practices diligently, attends all meets, cheers for the team, and is an all-around good sport and help to the coaches.

MOST IMPROVED SWIMMER - The Most Improved Swimmer is the swimmer in each age group who shows the most improvement from the beginning to the end of the summer season. The swimmer must practice diligently, attend all meets, and support the team throughout the season.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD - The President's Award goes to the swimmer who scores the most points for the team in the season (who has the highest average number of points per individual event). This award is selected based upon individual performance in meets. This swimmer must attend all meets, and swim a minimum of 16 individual events throughout the season. Typically the award goes to one swimmer each season.

RANDALL SMITH AWARD - Given to the swimmer each season who best illustrates the spirit of sportsmanship, team play, and who best exemplifies all aspects of FFC swimming. Randall Smith was a 1978 graduate of Newark High School who was very dedicated to FFC and the swim team. Although never a "star," he was an active, long-term member of the team and especially supportive of all his teammates- from the very youngest to the oldest swimmers. At age 16 he became a lifeguard and continued to work at the pool every summer. He graduated from the Naval Academy and was later sent to Florida to train to become a fighter pilot. In September 1983, Randall died in a tragic water skiing accident while training in Florida.

All awards are determined by the coaches.

SSL TIME TRIALS and CHAMPIONSHIPS

SSL Time Trails are held at the conclusion of the regular season. There is one TIME TRIAL for each age group. At the time trials the top 16 swimmers in each individual event qualify to swim in Saturday's Championship Meet. Swimmers who place 1 through 8 qualify for CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS. Swimmers who place 9 through 16 qualify for CONSOLATION EVENTS. Championship relay events take place at TIME TRIALS. The league rules for Championships state that each team may have only FIVE SWIMMERS per event. The 6 & under backstroke event will be swum at TIME TRIALS and CHAMPIONSHIPS ONLY. At Championships, swimmers will receive medals for places 1 through 8 and ribbons for places 9 through 16. Swimmers in the consolation heat may NOT move beyond 9th place (even if they swim the event in a faster time than a swimmer in the finals heat); similarly swimmers in the finals heat may not place below 8th place (even if a swimmer in the consolation event swims faster).