

Welcome to the Clemens Crossing Cyclone Swim Team!

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We are glad you are considering joining our swim team! People decide to join a swim team for many reasons. Some of the more common reasons that people join swim teams are:

- You have seen or heard how much fun our swimmers have over the summer.
- You're looking for a summer sport that won't give you heatstroke.
- You want your child to learn to be a stronger swimmer.
- Your family loves the water and enjoys swimming.
- Your child likes to compete against him or herself, always trying to improve just a little from the last attempt.

Whatever the reason, we're glad you're here. You might be wondering what to expect. This handbook will give you all of the information you need to know to make it through the summer. And, if you have any questions that haven't been addressed here, please don't hesitate to ask. You can always refer to the bulletin board at the entrance of the pool or simply ask the Coaches or Team Managers. In addition, you can go to our team website at www.clemenscrossingcyclones.com or to the Columbia Neighborhood Swim League website at www.cnsiswimming.org. Everything is here to answer any questions you have and help you in any way possible. Here are some common questions people have:

We just want to give it a two-week trial, can we?

Yes! Columbia Association allows you to come to the first two weeks of practice and attend the time trials meet before committing your money to swim team. However, in order to participate in the first meet, you must have your registration postmarked by the date of time trials. Other important deadlines are located in the lower left corner of the registration form. We highly recommend having your child come to as many practices as possible, but most importantly, participate in the time trials meet. Practice for any sport really isn't that much fun. It's work. And like most kids, they don't really like to work too hard and, the water can still be pretty cool for the first two weeks the pool's open. But, the meets are fun!!! The kids really look forward to the Saturday meets because their friends are there, there's lots of cheering, they look forward to getting a treat from the concession stand and most importantly, collecting their ribbons at the end of the meet.

When are practices held?

Until school gets out, practices are held after school at the pool. Once school is out, practices are sometimes in the morning and sometimes in the evening. One night each week, we meet at the Hawthorne Pool for practices. Practice times are set out in a

separate document. Parents must supervise their swimmers at all times other than when they are practicing or arrange for another person to supervise them. Be sure to pick up your child on time and have your child waiting inside the pool gate for their ride.

It's raining today. Will there still be practice/meet?

Yes. The only time practices and/or meets are cancelled are for thunder and/or lightening. If a meet is cancelled due to weather, we try to reschedule for the next morning. Parents and swimmers should also make their own decisions about whether they're comfortable attending a particular practice.

Do we have to buy a team suit?

No, you don't have to buy the team suit. However, your child(ren) will probably want to wear one and it will make them feel part of the team. We get a substantial discount from the supplier and we only switch our team suit every other year. (Most children can only get two years out of a suit anyway.) If you choose not to go with the team suit, we recommend you purchase a swimsuit in our team colors – royal blue, black, and white.

** Note to parents of boys – swim team suits can be a touchy thing. We've gotten away from the old Speedo style briefs (though they're making a come back for some of our teen swimmers and swimmers can certainly choose that style). Most boys wear a suit called "jammers." They look like racing bike compression shorts. Some older boys can be a little embarrassed when wearing them in the beginning. Some of the older boys will wear swim trunks over the jammers until it's time to get into the pool for a race or practice and then put their swim trunks back on when they get out of the water. They'll get used to it when they see all the other boys wearing jammers and they'll soon realize that it's better to swim without all of the extra fabric that comes with regular swim trunks.

It's 7:40 am on Saturday and it's total chaos at the pool! What have I gotten myself into?

You look around the pool at the first meet and see lots of kids running around, parents with that crazed "I need a cup of coffee look" hovering at the concession stand waiting for the coffee machines to finish percolating, groups of neighbors catching up with each other and, several adults, and quite a few teens, catching a few more minutes of sleep. This appears to be the most unorganized sport you've ever signed up for. All of a sudden you notice a shift occur. Children all head to one side of the pool and trade cheers with the opposing team. The parents have all moved to various spots around the pool and seem to all have a job to do and know how to do it. At 8:00a.m. the announcer starts the first race and the morning proceeds with a military precision as hundreds (yes, hundreds!) of races are held and the entire meet is completed before noon. Ahh, you've just witnessed the beauty that is a swim meet. The important thing to do when you arrive at a meet is to have your swimmer sign in with the clerk of course while you look at the posted lists to find out when your child is swimming. Located with the lists are small event cards for you to use so that you can write down which events and lanes your swimmers are in...be sure to carry the card with you all morning.

Everyone seems to have a job. What are they doing?

Team Managers – The managers are the “top dogs” at the pool. They are parent volunteers who coordinate all aspects of the meet with the Columbia Association. They contact visiting teams and work out the details of the meet, coordinate with chairpersons of various team committees’ and work with the coaches to insure a wonderful summer program for our children. During the swim meets they are busy coordinating all aspects of the competition and putting out any fires that crop up during the day. They work hard for no pay, so remember to thank them for all they do for our team! (Actually, their kids swim for free which is a sort of payment. They also get the prime parking spaces at the pool for meets.)

Clerk of Course – The parents who volunteer as Clerk’s have the responsibility of taking the line-ups the coaches prepare for the meet and recording them onto individual cards for each swimmer. This is done on Friday night. On the day of the meet, the Clerk’s sit at designated tables and hand the cards out to the children before their race and find children who have not reported to the Clerk’s table for their races. These cards will be used to record the swimmers time after the race.

Deck Manager – Deck Managers make sure that swimmers are in the right heat and lane. If swimmers have not shown up to swim, they re-arrange the heats to make sure that no one swims a heat alone.

Runners - Once a child is at the starting block, runners pick up all the individual swim cards just prior to the race’s start and run them to the other side of the pool and hand the cards to the timers.

Timers – Each team provides one timer per lane. The swimmers official time is the average of the two times recorded on their card.

Head Timer – The head timer stands behind all of the other timers with two extra stop watches. If any timers have a problem after the race has started, the head timer steps in to time in that lane.

Stroke & Turn Judges – Stroke and turn judges are trained to know the official rules for each stroke. They have the unfortunate job of disqualifying swimmers for improper strokes or turns, according to league rules.

Sweeps Judges – Sweeps judges sit in pairs at the end of the pool where the races will be finishing. They visually call out and record the order the swimmers reach the wall.

Starter/Announcer – This person is the voice of the meet. They direct the swimmers to take their marks and sound the buzzer to begin the race. They also make continual announcements throughout the meet of importance to swimmers, parents and coaches. Please listen to all announcements throughout the meet.

Scorers – The scorers sit at a table and receive all of the swimmers cards and the sweeps judges’ orders. Each team has representatives at the table. Results of the races are calculated and agreed upon and the places are given a numerical result. They keep track of the official score of the meet.

Ribbon Writers – Each team has a table of ribbon writers. Once the scorers are finished with the cards, they pass them to the ribbon writers who fill out the appropriate ribbons for the swimmers. Ribbons are given out at the end of the meet. If you leave a

meet before the ribbons are distributed, you can find them in your swim team mailbox during the week.

Concession Stand – The concession stand is our major source of income. Volunteers sell bagels, doughnuts, hot dogs, nachos, grilled cheese, candy, sodas, water, coffee and more throughout the meet. Families are asked to donate one six pack of soda and one six pack of water for each home meet.

Okay, now I know what the parents are doing, but what about the kids?

Each child can swim a maximum of two individual events and one team relay during a regular swim meet. The only exception to this rule is for time trials. Time trials are the first meet of the year and is only held with our team. This is the one meet where children are strongly encouraged to swim all four strokes and the Individual Medley Event (if age appropriate). There are no relays at time trials. This meet allows the coaches to see times in all events for all children and helps them when preparing the line-ups for the regular swim meets.

During the meets the children are everywhere! They can be sitting at the side of the pool cheering on their friends, sitting in the grassy area reading and playing with friends, or driving their parents crazy for money for the concession stand. However, they know to listen for their events to be called. Once they hear the announcer call, for example, all those swimming freestyle, the swimmers head directly to the clerk of course for their cards. Once they have their cards they wait by the fence with their age group. When all missing swimmers have been found, a parent volunteer takes the age group to the swim deck and helps them get in the appropriate lane and heat order. Deck managers keep an eye on all the children and move them along until it is time for their race. Once the race is over, the kids go back to doing whatever they feel like until it is time to start the process over for their next event.

My child can't swim the length of the pool without stopping, should we wait until next year and try again?

NO! This is very common with younger children and we encourage your swimmer to join and come to practices and maybe take extra lessons too. League rules allow them to compete in a meet so long as they can make it across unassisted by the wall/rope. However, they are not disqualified on freestyle if they do not pull themselves along the wall/rope, or let their feet touch the bottom. They can take as long as they need to to make it across the pool. Some new swimmers don't compete at the first meet but are swimming both freestyle and backstroke by the end of the season. Your child will have a great feeling of accomplishment when they make it to the other end. And, you'll see great improvement from the first meet to the last!

We have already planned a vacation and will miss a swim meet. Will this be a problem?

No. We know that children will miss meets because of vacations and sleep away camps. Your child must attend three of the six meets (time trials + 5 meets) in order to receive a trophy at the awards banquet at the end of the season. If you know you are

going to be missing meets, please go to the swim team bulletin board and write down what meets you'll be missing so that the coaches can plan accordingly.

I notice that there are lots of other swim team related jobs that go on during the week. What are they?

It takes a lot of volunteer time to make this a fun sport for our kids. Some of the other volunteer opportunities are:

Spirit Wear Sales – Coordinate sales of merchandise with team names and other gear.

Pep Rally Coordinator(s) – Plan, organize, and coordinate our Friday night pep rally's/pot luck dinners.

Doughnut Mondays – Orders, picks-up and distributes doughnuts to all swimmers who swim on Monday morning practice!

Swim Team Banquet Chairs – Coordinate all aspects of the end of season banquet.

Teen Party - Plan, organize, and coordinate our teen party, which is after the swim team banquet.

Swim-a-Ton Chairs and Committee members – Coordinate all aspects of our annual charity fundraiser. Swimmers get pledges of money for laps that they swim (adults and children can swim. Families can pitch tents and spend the night at the pool. An outdoor movie is usually shown and the kids have lots of fun while raising money for a worthwhile charity. This event used to be called our Swim-a-thon but for legal reasons, we changed it.

How does the team communicate with so many families that come and go at different times?

Once you officially register for swim team, you'll be given a swim team mailbox. The mailbox is actually a manila folder with your family's name on it. The folders are kept in a plastic bin that is located at the pool entrance or near the team shed during practices and meets. In your folder you'll find newsletters, ribbons that were not picked up at the last meet, notices and other necessary information. Make sure you check it regularly!

E-mail is also another regular method of communicating. Please join our yahoo group "clemenscrossingcyclones" to receive all our team e-mails. You can review recent postings by going to www.yahoo.com, clicking groups on the left side of the page, typing in clemenscrossingcyclones (all one word) and selecting that group. You can join the group on that page or provide your most current e-mail address to one of the team managers to be added. You can also check the bulletin board at the pool. We post sign up sheets and current information.

We hope this welcome guide has been helpful. If you have any questions that were not answered in this guide, ask either of the team managers or any of the coaches.