

AUBURN YMCA-WEIU STINGRAYS

TEAM HANDBOOK

(Revised October 08, 2024)

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1. PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The Auburn Stingrays is a co-educational, competitive swim team that participates in age-group swimming under the auspices of the YMCA. Since competitive swimming is both a highly individual and team sport, the values of sportsmanship, teamwork, and individual development are stressed. The coaching is planned to teach, train and encourage swimmers to achieve their potential in swimming, in the belief that this experience will prove valuable to them as they grow and develop. To enhance the opportunity for this personal development, a policy of "Everybody Swims" is followed. During meets, swimmers will generally compete in three events.

2. STINGRAY SWIMMING PROGRAM

For the purpose of training and competition, the swimmers are grouped into five classes based on age and sex as illustrated below:

Age	Class
8 and under	E
9 and 10	D
11 and 12	C
13 and 14	B
15 to 19	A

YMCA class placement is determined by the age of the swimmer on December 1. Their age on that day will be the age class throughout the season.

The swimmers must be between the ages of 5 and 19 and be able to swim one length of the pool (25 yards). In the case of younger children, consultation with the coach and/or Aquatic Director is required prior to enrollment. Endurance is not a factor, since this is developed through daily practices and instruction. Basic YMCA membership is a prerequisite.

Practices are held Monday through Friday in the afternoon/evening. It should be noted that practice is essential to successful swimming. Endurance, speed, and stroke perfection evolve from repetition and concentrated effort by the individual. Swimmers age 10 and under must swim a minimum of **two** practices per week regardless of whether there is a meet. Swimmers age 11 and 12 must swim a minimum of **three** times per week and ages 13 and up a minimum of **four** practices a week regardless of whether there is a meet. Practice attendance will be strictly enforced by the age-group coach. Dual meet eligibility may be lost if practice requirements are not met.

All swimmers choosing to wear a swimming cap in YMCA or USA competition representing the Auburn YMCA Stingrays **MUST** wear a Stingray team cap.

All swimmers ages 11 and up who qualify for states must attend 85% of practices offered between districts and states. 100% of practices are required for swimmers who qualify for nationals. Individuals who fail to meet the practice requirement will not be eligible to compete at either meet.

In the event of sickness, family emergency, etc., absence from a meet must be reported to a coach as far in advance as possible (by Monday the week of the meet if known that early) by having a parent call the age group coach who's contact information is listed on the Stingray website.

With the amount of practice time and the large number of participants, it is important that all parents and swimmers understand the need for cooperation between swimmers and coaches. The coaches are responsible for maintaining control and discipline to achieve a safe and

productive practice session for the accomplishment of individual and team objectives. A discipline policy is in effect (see Section 3 below). Other basic rules include:

1. Any cheating during practice (i.e. a swimmer cutting a length short) may result in everyone starting the set over. We want to develop individual responsibility to the lane and the team as a whole.
2. To maximize our practice, wasted time in between sets will have to be kept to a minimum. Therefore, it is necessary that you are attentive when your coach is speaking. This means all swimmers need to look at the coach and quietly listen.
3. **ANYONE** that is found to be a continuous disruption at practice (not listening, arguing, teasing others, etc...) will be asked to sit out (time out) or leave practice. If disruptive behavior is continual, then the result may be suspension or dismissal from the team.
4. Each swimmer is responsible for neatly putting away their own equipment following practice (kick board, pull buoy, etc..)

The coaches will follow the procedures outlined in this discipline policy. Consequences for improper behavior may lead to suspension from the bus or team for one or more meets or dismissal from the team.

The Stingrays is a place for young athletes to learn and grow, not only in the pool but out. We want our swimmers to:

- learn the value of teamwork, self-discipline, work and personal sacrifice;
- appreciate team contribution over individual achievement;
- be a good winner, but an even better loser;
- acknowledge the skills of teammates and opponents;
- value being in good health and maintain a level of physical fitness throughout life.

The Stingrays belong to the YMCA Central New York District Swim League. In season competition will include approximately 6 dual swim meets, as well as a few invitationals, during the season. The meets are usually divided into an equal number of home and away meets.

In a dual meet situation, each age class (boys and girls) competes against the same age class on the opposing team. There are, in effect, ten different competitions within each dual meet. A total of 90 events comprise a dual swim meet. In dual meet competition each swimmer may be entered in up to three individual events and one relay event. A swimmer may "swim up" one age group in any dual meet, for any or all of his/her events, as long as the total number of events does not exceed three.

At the conclusion of the dual meet schedule, a daylong or multiple day **District Championship** is held in early-February. There are no qualifying times for this meet, and all members of the team are expected to compete in the District Meet if they have competed in a minimum of **three** dual meets. Ribbons are awarded to individuals and trophies are awarded to winning age groups.

In March, a three-day **State Championship** is held. Swimmers must meet qualifying times to participate in this meet. Prior to the State Meet, swimmers must have competed in a **minimum of three dual meets and the District Meet**. Medals and ribbons are awarded for placements one through sixteen. Participation in this meet involves a 1 or 2 night hotel stay and other related expenses. Locations of the state Championships vary each year and can be anywhere in the state.

Upon registration for Stingrays all swimmers will be offered registration for USA swimming. As a USA swimmer, there will be the opportunity to swim in additional invitational meets. The YMCA dual meets, Districts, States, and Nationals are a priority for competition. USA swimming invites should be used for additional competition but NOT in place of YMCA competition.

The YMCA **National Championships** are held in April of each year in the South. Once again, swimmers must meet extremely difficult qualifying times to compete. There are no "age groups" at this meet. This competition is open to all ages that qualify. In the past, the Stingray Parents' Association has helped to defray a portion of the cost involved in this meet. However, swimmers need to be prepared to finance transportation, lodging and food expenses for a week in a Southern state. This competition is limited to outstanding swimmers, or approximately 6% of the team.

The Parents' Association has developed a Stingray support policy, which follows. The policy was updated in September 2017.

2. YMCA STINGRAYS NATIONALS SUPPORT POLICY

1. The YMCA Stingrays will provide 20% of the pool/lane sponsor monies to the Nationals funds each season. There is no "flat" amount per swimmer as the number of swimmers attending Nationals will also vary from year to year. Any monies not consumed in a season will roll-over to the next.
2. Swimmers and parents are required to participate in fund raising events held by the Auburn Stingrays during the year to be eligible for this support.
3. Swimmers are required to participate in at least 50% of the Stingray dual meets to be eligible for support unless excused by the Stingray Head Coach.
4. Monies given by the YMCA Stingrays to support the swimmers are to be used by the swimmers for expenses to YMCA Nationals, i.e. housing, transportation, meals, etc.
5. Final eligibility for this support will be determined by the Chairperson of the Stingray Parents Association and the Stingray Head Coach.

3. STINGRAY/YMCA CODE OF CONDUCT and DISCIPLINE POLICIES

The Auburn YMCA is a family-oriented membership organization whose purpose is to promote the spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical welfare of boys, girls, men and women. Participation in the Stingray program is a privilege and not a right. All athletes are expected to earn the honor and respect participation on this team affords. Acts of dishonor to an athlete, the team, or the YMCA tarnish the reputation of everyone associated with the Stingray program. We expect all the Y-members and program participants to meet the minimum standards of conduct. These include but are not limited to the following:

1. Compliance with all Y policies regarding use of facilities and equipment.
2. Respect for YMCA staff, other Y-members, and program participants.
3. No swearing, abusive or vulgar language.
4. No fighting or unsportsmanlike conduct.

Failure to meet these standards will result in the following actions:

FIRST OFFENSE:

1. Immediate suspension from the YMCA for a period of 1 week. Notification of parents/guardian by phone, if under 18.
2. Written confirmation of the suspension in Service Desk Suspension Book.
3. Letter sent to violator (or parents if under 18) outlining reason for suspension, length of time and requirements for re-admittance.
4. Prior to re-admittance, a written apology and a meeting with professional staff person is required.

SECOND OFFENSE:

1. Immediate suspension for 30 days. Notification of parents/guardian by phone, if under 18.
2. Written confirmation of the suspension in Service Desk Suspension Book.

3. Letter sent to violator (or parents if under 18) outlining reason for suspension, length of time and requirements for re-admittance.
4. Prior to re-admittance, a written apology and a meeting with professional staff person is required.

THIRD OFFENSE:

1. Immediate termination of membership privileges.
2. Letter sent to violator (or parents if under 18) outlining reason for termination.
3. Individual warned in writing about trespassing on Y property.
4. Written confirmation of membership termination in Service Desk Suspension Book.
5. Notify front desk so membership record can be amended.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Suspension policy may be implemented by a professional staff person or building supervisor. Follow-up is the responsibility of the appropriate professional staff persons. Program staff may ask offenders to leave their program area. They should then refer the incident to the building supervisor for further action.

4. STINGRAY PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The purpose of the Stingray Parents' Association is to support the YMCA and the coaching staff in providing the best possible competitive swim program for our children. There are no membership fees and no membership qualifications to be part of the Stingray Parents' Association; in fact, all parents are automatically members with the registration of their swimmer in the competitive swim program. The leadership of the Association is provided by an Executive Committee, which meets on a monthly basis to plan and implement the supportive activities required to maintain a viable and successful swimming program. The Executive Committee is composed of the following positions, which are volunteer positions. Each position is a minimum 2 year term, and can be extended if the volunteer and Committee agree.

- **Chairperson**
- **Immediate Past Chairperson** (1 year term)
- **Secretary**
- **Treasurer**
- **Head of Officials**
- **Community Organizer**
- **Head of Hospitality**
- **Head of Concessions**
- **Meet Manager**
- **Athlete Representatives** (1-2 year term)

In addition to the above positions, the following are ex-officio members of the Executive Committee:

- **YMCA Aquatics Director**
- **Head Coach**

Each of the above positions, carry a single vote in determining business matters. Meets are run in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order. A minimum of 6 meetings of the Association are held annually and all parents are encouraged to attend these meetings. Meeting dates and times are announced monthly in via website.

One of the primary functions of the Stingray Parents' Association is the organizing and staffing of the home dual meets during the YMCA swimming season. Parents announce, score, time, officiate, supervise, run concessions and serve refreshments after most home meets. The Stingray Parents' Association expects and encourages all members to attend both the home and away dual meets to support our swimmers in competition.

5. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Information covering the fees for Stingray membership is available from the YMCA. The basic costs consist of: YMCA membership and Stingray program registration fee. These fees should be paid directly to the YMCA in a timely fashion. Failure to pay will result in suspension from the team until the fees are paid. Any extenuating circumstances should be discussed with the YMCA staff.

In addition to these basic fees, there will be other costs during the course of the year, such as: transportation fees for away meets, entry fees for invitationals, USA meets, District and State events, optional equipment (team suit, goggles, locks, etc.), transportation, food and lodging expenses for State and National meets (for qualifying swimmers only), end-of-season banquet for swimmers and family, etc. Team uniforms (suits, caps, T-shirts) are optional, but all swimmers are encouraged to wear the official team uniform at all team competitions. A team T-shirt is provided to all swimmers by the Parents' Association. Entry fees for Districts and States must be paid in advance but only the swimmers with the fastest qualifying times on the day of the race will actually swim in relay events. Swimmers bumped from a scheduled relay can request a refund from the Head Coach.

6. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship and active participation are expected from all parents and families, as demonstrated primarily by their presence at the meets, cheering for and encouraging all swimmers.

Volunteering

Each family is required to complete at least 8 hours of volunteer time each season. All hours will be tracked, and this time may be spread over several meets or events, with contributions from multiple family members allowed. Due to the dual meet schedule this season, all volunteer hours must be completed by January 1, 2024. If circumstances prevent a family from fulfilling this requirement, please contact the Parent Association Chairperson. Volunteering opportunities include timing, officiating, serving deck refreshments to coaches, timers, and officials, updating the team bulletin board, working at concession stands, and assisting with fundraising activities. To help meet volunteer requirements, families will be awarded 1 hour of volunteer time for bringing a crockpot of food for the concession stand. All volunteer opportunities will be updated through Team Unify (the Stingrays communication platform). We greatly appreciate the support our families provide throughout the season.

Declaring for Swim Meets

It is the responsibility of parents to declare (aka. RSVP, commit/decline) for each swim meet listed on the Team Event schedule in TeamUnify by the posted registration deadline for each of your swimmer. Declarations must be made whether your swimmer(s) are attending or not attending a meet. If you miss the registration deadline, your swimmer(s) will most likely not be able to participate in the swim meet.

Please note that for invitationals, if your swimmer is unable to attend at the last minute, we cannot waive the fees associated with each event. These are fees that are paid out prior to the meet occurring.

7. AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

A number of incentives have been established to encourage and motivate all swimmers to strive for continued improvement at all times. Swimmers achieving their best time for an event in a meet will receive "Best Time" ribbons; swimmers making State cut times will receive a "State Cut" ribbon. At the end of the YMCA season, the Stingrays hold an annual banquet. At this time the majority of individual achievements are recognized.

Every E and D swimmer receives a trophy. Also presented as highlights of the year are plaques, high point trophies, and various awards. Swimmers must participate in 5 dual meets throughout the swim season to be eligible to receive awards. The Stingray Record Board hangs in the A-R Pool area and displays the current Stingray record holders. The board exists to highlight the achievements of Stingrays swimmers only. For each event, the board displays the current record holder's name, time, and year accomplished. These records can be established at any organized competition, whether away or at home as long as it is while representing the YMCA Stingrays in competition. A log is maintained by the coaches for each swimmer of their times in all of the events in which they swim. The log is always available for review (via Team Unify) with the swimmers. Regardless of a swimmer's placement in a race, **the recording of a personal best time is a significant accomplishment, and is worthy of congratulations.** The log also serves the coaches in developing training strategies for each swimmer.

High Point trophies are presented at the annual banquet, and are the result of a cumulative effort over the complete YMCA short course swim season. Every swimmer accumulates points during competition, and the boy and girl accumulating the most points receives this trophy. Point Plaques are presented to each swimmer accumulating at least 50 points for the first time. Each year after that, swimmers are awarded a silver bar to place on their plaque if they accumulate between 50-99 points for the season. Gold bars are awarded for 100 points or more in a season

Individual points at dual meets are accumulated according to the following point awards schedule:

<u>Individual Events</u>	<u>Relays (Each swimmer receives these points)</u>
1st place - 5 points	1st place - 1.75 points
2nd place - 3 points	2nd place - .75 points
3rd place - 1 point	

State and District swim meets have larger point values, and generally award points for at least the first twelve to sixteen places. Refer to details in the District and State meet portion of this Handbook.

Swimmers that "swim up" an age group will receive points if their times would have placed in their own age group. If the swimmer placed in a higher age group, he/she will receive either those points or the points from placement in their own age group, whichever is highest.

Due to the large number of swimmers in some age groups, some swimmers will swim "exhibition" during the meet. Exhibition times will count toward swimmers season points, but do not count toward meet points. A maximum of three events per meet will count toward season total points. Exhibition swimming is necessary to insure all swimmers get to swim up to three times at each meet. For each event, the coaches are allowed to enter a maximum of three swimmers in a six lane pool, (two in a four lane pool). All other swimmers in the event are considered exhibition.

The events the swimmers swim in will be the decision of the coaches whose decision will be made for the good of the team.

District Meet –

The District meet is held in February; open to all eligible swimmers (see Section 2). Each swimmer will swim either 3 individual, 2 individual and 2 relay, or 3 individual and 1 relay events.

Scoring for individual events and relays is determined by the point schedule in the annual USA Swimming rule book, which the YMCA uses to base scoring. Points are directly dependent on the number of lanes in the pool where the District Meet is held.

For a **typical six lane pool** individual events are scored as follows:

1st place - 16 points	7th place - 7 points
2nd place -13 points	8th place - 5 points
3rd place - 12 points	9th place - 4 points
4th place - 11 points	10th place -3 points
5th place - 10 points	11th place -2 points
6th place - 9 points	12th place -1 point

Relay events receive double the individual score for each place. Each team member of the relay team receives $\frac{1}{4}$ of the relay score for their personal point total.

State Championship Meet –

The State Championship meet is held in March; swimmers must meet state qualifying times in advance to be eligible to attend (see Section 2). Each swimmer may swim a maximum of 3 individual events and 3 relays.

One point is awarded for each event a swimmer qualifies for and participates in; extra points for placing are determined by the current USA Swimming rule book point schedule, which is directly based on the number of lanes in the pool where the State meet is held. Relay events receive double the individual score for each place. Each team member of the relay team receives $\frac{1}{4}$ of the relay score for their personal point total. The open relay events do not count for points.

USA Swim Meets and YMCA invites –

NO points for gold/silver bar or high point are awarded for any of these meets. However, State and National cut times may be achieved at these meets.

8. SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events are held during the course of the year, some of which are non-swimming in nature. This includes a season-end award banquet, pre-season picnic, fund-raising events, pizza parties and pre-championship dinners. Additional activities may also be added from time to time. Other social activities may be organized during the course of the year.

This handbook is intended to be a reference and guide for new and established swim families. We ask that all of our Stingray families read through and acknowledge its information by filling out the form on the final page and returning that page to the Head Coach or Aquatics Director.

