



Gold River Stingrays Team Handbook

Revised: January 2024

STINGRAYS HANDBOOK

The Gold River Sports Club **Stingrays Swim Team Handbook (Handbook)** has been prepared to provide general information to the swimmers and their parents about the team, its philosophy, organization, practices and meets with other clubs. The team competes in the NorCal Swim League; and to the extent that the policies set forth in this Handbook conflict with the bylaws or rules of the League, the League Bylaws and rules shall prevail. Similarly, any rules of the Gold River Sports Club shall supersede the policies set forth in the Handbook in the event of a conflict.

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ABOUT THE STINGRAYS

The Gold River Sports Club's Stingrays Swim Team is comprised of approximately 150 swimmers from ages four to 18. We compete in the Gold Rush Conference of the Nor Cal Swim League. In 2023, there are four teams in our conference and 22 in the League, comprised of 5,000 swimmers. Our season officially begins the first Monday in April and ends in late July.

OUR TEAM VISION

The words that best describe our vision are Perseverance, Commitment, Courage, Consistency, and Belief. We strive to create a unified, multi-level training setting designed to instill confidence, inspiration, and motivation. Throughout this process, young members learn to goal-set, attain those aspirations, and reach even higher.

OUR TEAM MISSION

The Gold River Stingrays is a recreation-based age-group competitive swimming program committed to providing every participant with high-quality swim technique training in an environment that is both safe and fun. We emphasize sportsmanship, family participation, teamwork and BELIEF in ourselves and teammates. Swimming teaches essential skills that will lead to a lifetime of fitness and personal and professional success.

SWIM TEAM STATEMENT OF VALUES

Physical Fitness

Take care of ourselves through proper nutrition, exercise, and rest.

Individual Excellence

Do our best by always endeavoring to master skills that contribute to personal best performances.

Teamwork

Work together by being flexible and supportive, producing a result better than can be achieved alone.

Competitiveness

Develop and maintain a discipline, perseverance and determination that results in positive competition and self-confidence.

Sportsmanship

Demonstrate integrity, respect, responsibility, and accountability in our behavior towards others.

A Great Place to Swim

Create an enjoyable and encouraging environment that fosters a positive attitude about the sport of swimming and our teammates, coaches, and supportive families.

OUR TEAM GOALS

- Swimmers will be instructed in the proper technique of the four swim strokes.
- Coaches will utilize endurance and Ultra-Fast Race Pace training and instruction for proper take-offs, turns and finishes.
- Parent volunteer committees shall be coordinated to include all parents in the running of swim meets, Championships, social events, and fundraising events.
- Social activities help develop camaraderie and team spirit among participants.
- Appropriate behavior, good sportsmanship, and respect of all club property/facilities by swimmers and parents will be expected at all times.
- Parents will be supportive of coaches and use appropriate procedure for complaints.

COACHING STAFF

The coaches are employees of the club and report to the GRSC General Manager.

The coaches shall understand and accept the philosophy of the team and the NorCal Swim League. They provide examples of leadership, cooperation, and good sportsmanship to the team members. The coaches shall attempt to foster these qualities in the swimmers.

In the event of a violation of the Swimmers' Code of Conduct agreement, general deck rules, and/or any behavior deemed unacceptable at any team function, the coaches shall have the discretion to enforce disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from the team. Junior coaching staff shall defer disciplinary action to the Head Coach or Age Group Coach.

The coaches shall familiarize themselves with each swimmer's abilities and instruct individuals to learn proper techniques for strokes, starts, turns, and touches. The team intends that the techniques of each swimmer and his/her times will improve over the course of the season.

The coaches shall schedule swimmers for the meets in a manner consistent with the philosophy expressed in this Handbook and League rules.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of this code of conduct for coaches is to establish common expectations for all members of the coaching staff of the club. It is to be used as a guide to promote a positive team environment and good sportsmanship.

- At all times, adhere to USA Swimming's rules and code of conduct.
- Set a good example of respect and sportsmanship for participants and fans to follow.
- Act and dress with professionalism and dignity in a manner suitable to his/her profession.
- Respect officials and their judgment and abide by the rules of the event.
- Treat opposing coaches, participants, and spectators with respect.
- Instruct participants in sportsmanship and demand that they display good sportsmanship.
- Coach in a positive manner and do not use derogatory comments or abusive language.
- Win with humility and lose with dignity.
- Treat every athlete fairly, justly, impartially, intelligently, and with sensitivity.
- Always place the well-being, health, and safety of swimmers above all other considerations, including developing performance.
- Continue to seek and maintain their own professional development in all areas in relation to coaching and teaching children.
- Always maintain a professional separation between coach and athlete.

Any complaints of a coach violating this code of conduct will be brought to the attention of his/her supervisor and/or the club's board of directors.

PRACTICES

Practice begins on **the first weekday in April** and continues Monday through Friday until the Championships Meet in July. Regular season practices end after Championships. For those meeting the time standards, the Meet of Champions follows.

- Each season the team issues a practice schedule with the practice times for each age group/level.
- During the school year, practices are conducted after school in the afternoons/early evenings. Practice times then fluctuate between afternoons/evenings to mornings.
- Each swimmer should allow at least five minutes before the scheduled practice time to gather gear and be ready to get into the water.
- Swimmers should not enter the water until invited by their coach and must not remain in the pool until their scheduled time ends.
- **Children under FIVE (5) may not use the spa at any time. Swimmers under FOURTEEN (14) may only use the spa in the**

presence of a parent/guardian within view of the spa, even before/after practice. Coaches are not responsible for children in the water after their practice ends.

- Practice is canceled in the event of electrical storms and severe wind. Rain, hail, and/or cold weather are not grounds for canceling practice. Please see below (GRSC POOL CLOSURES) for more information regarding practice cancelations.
- Parents are welcome to observe practice from the deck but should not approach coaches on deck during practice. Any questions or concerns for the coaches are welcomed before/after or via email.
- Practice levels for each swimmer will be determined by the coaches and based on each swimmer's technique, endurance, and/or age. Although subject to change, typically levels are determined as follows:
Level 1: Ages 5-7, Level 2: Ages 6-9, Level 3: Ages 7-12, Level 4: Ages 9-13, Level 5: Ages 10-14 and Level 6: Ages 13-18 (High School swimmers).
- Swimmers may be asked to move up or down a practice level to best meet the needs of the individual swimmer. Swimmers should only attend their assigned level unless approved in advance by a coach.

GRSC POOL CLOSURES

AIR QUALITY and WEATHER POLICY

Gold River Stingrays Swim Team (GRSST) considers the air quality website at www.purpleair.com (zip = "95670") as the source for ozone and particulate matter measurements. This site has four sensors .125 miles surrounding our pool location at Gold River Sports Club. By monitoring all four sensors, we can obtain a more comprehensive outlook of the air quality in the surrounding area. Additionally, the board and coaching staff monitor air quality conditions on the website daily/hourly to determine whether or not to hold or modify practice.

GRSST recognizes the parent is the final decision maker for their child's safety. Therefore, our policy dictates whether or not practice will be held or modified, and it is the parent's responsibility to determine whether or not their athlete will participate.

Air quality index for practices

- All practices should be canceled at 151 or greater AQI Ozone or PMI levels.
- At 101-150 AQI Ozone or PMI levels, training may be modified to include more breaks and less strenuous activity.
- At 100 or below, practice will be held as usual.

Weather conditions for practices

- When the air temperature is 105 degrees or higher, or a pool temperature of 85 degrees or higher, all practices should be canceled.
- If lightning is in visual or thunder is in audible range, all outdoor practices are suspended until a period of 30 minutes without any visible lightning strikes has concluded. The coaching staff has the final authority on returning to swim after 30 minutes have passed.
- The practice should be canceled when wind speeds average 31 miles per hour or higher or for frequent wind gusts 46 miles per hour or higher.

While every effort will be made to cancel practice at least 2 hours before the start of the first practice group, GRSST recognizes that weather and air quality conditions can change rapidly in our area. Therefore, indoor options will be considered if the outdoor practice is canceled. Consequently, it is always the decision of our coaching staff to cancel or modify practice based on the conditions they are experiencing on deck throughout all our practice groups.

CONTAMINATION

If debris is solid:

- Pool Closed for **(2) two hours** from that time.
- Maintenance staff will check chemicals to determine if chlorine is between 0.6-5.0 (ideal would be 3.0) and ph should read 7.5 or under (ideal would be 7.4-7.5).
- If chemicals fall **within the safe** ranges after two hours, maintenance staff will reopen the pool.

If debris is liquid:

- Pool Closed **(8) eight hours** from that time.
- Maintenance staff will check chemicals to determine if chlorine is between 0.6-5.0 (ideal would be 3.0) and ph should read 7.5 or under (ideal would be 7.4-7.5).

- If chemicals fall **within the safe** ranges **at eight hours**, maintenance staff will reopen the pool.

If debris is soft but not liquid:

- Pool Closed **(4) four hours** from that time.
- Maintenance staff will check chemicals to determine if chlorine is between 0.6-5.0 (ideal would be 3.0) and ph should read 7.5 or under (ideal would be 7.4-7.5).
- If chemicals fall **within the safe** ranges **at four hours**, maintenance staff will reopen the pool.

POWER OUTAGE

During a power outage, inoperative recirculation and purification systems will prevent the proper filtration and disinfection of the pool water. This quickly leads to unsafe conditions such as cloudy water, inadequate sanitizer levels, and high levels of bacteria and other disease causing organisms. The California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Chapter 20, Article 3, Section 65525 requires that the recirculation and purification systems be in operation when the pool is available for use. The following procedures must be implemented in the event of a power outage:

- Have bathers get out of the water.
- Close the pool and post a closure sign. The swimming pool may be reopened when ALL the following conditions are met:
- Power is restored.
- Pool recirculation and purification systems are functioning properly.
- Pump and chlorinator have been running for at least one hour.
- Ensure proper pH and sanitizer residual. Check the sanitizer level as soon as possible.

JOINING THE SWIM TEAM

The number of swimmers in any age group will be at the coaches' discretion, with priority given to those swimmers that meet the requirements outlined in the SWIMMER RESPONSIBILITIES, Item 3, within the Handbook.

REGISTRATION, CONDITIONS & SWIM TRYOUTS

Registration will be conducted online at the team Website: www.goldriverstingrays.org. The current year's registration schedule will be posted on the Website and via emails. Onsite registration is offered on a scheduled day for those requiring assistance. The closing date for registration will be determined as needs dictate.

- All returning swimmers in good standing must re-register during the registration period each year in order to retain their position on the team. A returning swimmer "in good standing" shall be defined as someone meeting the requirements specified in the SWIMMER RESPONSIBILITIES section of the Handbook.
- New swimmers must sign up during the registration period with returning swimmers. They must be assessed to meet criteria and be approved by the coaches to join the team. Any swimmer that is not invited to join the team after assessments will receive a full refund of registration fees paid.
- All new swimmers will participate in assessments by coaches, scheduled shortly after registration. During assessments, coaches will evaluate individual swim ability, stroke mastery, water safety, listening skills, and overall capability to be coached within parameters appropriate for each age group.
- Participation times for assessments will be posted on the team Website.
- All swim team fees must be paid at the time of registration. A copy of each new swimmer's birth certificate is required by the NorCal Swim League and must be provided at the time of attending assessments and prior to the registration being approved. Birth certificates must be available with 72-hours of a request.
- ALL SWIMMERS MUST BE MEMBERS OF THE GOLD RIVER SPORTS CLUB. No registration will be approved until the Spare Time membership is verified.
- All approved swimmers will also be required to register and pay a NorCal Swim League fee.

SWIMMER ELIGIBILITY

Each Swimmer:

- May not swim for another club during the season except as provided in Section 11.02 of the League Bylaws. Refer to: www.norcalswimLeague.com/recncsl/_doc_/244867_2_2014%20NCSL%20Bylaws--Dec%2013.pdf
- Must not be older than 18 years of age on June 15 of the current season.
- May not participate in any organized swim program consisting of endurance training between February 1 and March 31. *(Year-round gym dryland is acceptable and encouraged. March Clinics are likewise acceptable and encouraged, the focus not on endurance training, but on technique. This is in accordance with League Bylaws).*
- Must be water-safe, as determined by coaches.
- May not participate in any organized swim practice including any instruction or direction either verbal or written (other than stroke & turn lessons, high school practices, or as provided in Section 11.02 of the League Bylaws) before April 1 of the current season.

SWIMMER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Within a single swim season, swimmers must not miss more than two League dual meets and **must** attend both Time Trials and the Championships meet. A request to be excused from either must be forwarded **in writing** to Coach Christie and is then subject to approval, provided a suitable replacement is arranged for the Championships meet and the parent/s volunteer responsibilities.
- In order to be eligible for Championships, a swimmer must swim at least two events each (not to include relay events) at two League meets each season.
- Swimmers should attend at least three practices each week.
- **Each swimmer (or parent) must sign 'In' or 'Out'** for each meet on the team Website before the registration deadline.
- Each swimmer **must** be present to Check--in by a pre--determined time at each meet.
- Each swimmer should wear appropriate swimwear, goggles and swim cap (long hair) to practices as directed by the coaches. The team uniform (or racing suit) and team cap should be worn at all swim meets.
- Swimmers are expected to be **on time** to all practices and swim meets.
- Each swimmer must exhibit good sportsmanship and adhere to the Swimmer Code of Conduct.
- General deck rules shall be followed and respect for home and away facilities shall be shown at all times.
- Swimmers should always maintain a cooperative and positive attitude during practices and meets.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Get your children to practices and meets **on time**.
- Sign up for and fulfill the required number of volunteer shifts at meets or team social events as determined at the beginning of the swim season. See the 'Parent Volunteer Positions' section.
- Ensure your swimmer/s is well rested, hydrated, and properly nourished for meets and practices.
- **Sign your child 'In' or 'Out'** for each meet of the season.
- Communicate constructively with coaches, swimmers and other parents.
- Set an example of good sportsmanship through positive, encouraging behavior.
- *Do not leave a meet early with your swimmer (s) without checking in with your coach.*
- Use appropriate procedure to resolve conflicts. (See below)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

When a conflict arises between parents and coaches, email is the best way to communicate any concerns you may have. If you prefer to meet in person, the following steps should be taken:

- Avoid discussing the issue with other parents or coaches on deck.
- Schedule a specific time to meet with a coach via phone or email with the reason for such request.
- Be prepared with specific concerns and suggestions to resolve the issue.
- If the conflict is not resolved, the parent should take the written complaint to a member of the swim team board and if it is still unresolved, contact the Club Manager at GRSC.
- Email addresses for all coaches and board members can be found under the Coaches/Board tab on the team Website.

PARENT VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENT

Parent volunteers are essential to the sport of swimming! In order to maintain efficiently run swim meets and fun social activities, ALL parents are required to volunteer several hours each swim season. This benefits each and every swimmer on our team! [Descriptions of all volunteer positions can be found on pages 15--17 of this Handbook.](#)

Parents must meet their volunteer requirement for the regular season in the following ways:

- By signing up on the team Website for 25 volunteer credits during the regular season
- By volunteering for two shifts at Championships at the end of the season
- Each shift is approximately half the duration of the swim meet, with some exceptions. Most shifts allow for flexibility to view your swimmer/s' events.

If you cannot make a shift you have signed up for, please contact the volunteer coordinator at least one week before the scheduled shift. You may be asked to find a replacement or 'trade' with another family. You will still be required to meet the 25-credit requirement for the regular season.

Failure to show up or cover your volunteer shift will require the submission of a check in the amount of \$50.00, payable to the Gold River Stingrays.

CHAMPIONSHIPS MEET VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENT

Our League Championships Meet ('Champs') is a huge, rewarding endeavor requiring parent volunteers from ALL teams in our conference. Each family in attendance at Champs is required to volunteer two/three shifts over the course of the weekend, depending on needs determined by the League. Champs shifts are in addition to the 25-credit requirement for the regular season.

SWIM MEETS

This portion of the Handbook describes the events leading up to each swim meet and the sequence of events at each meet.

MEET SCHEDULE

Each season the League establishes a schedule for the team League meets, possible non-League meets, Invitational meets, the League Championships Meet (in late July) and the Meet of Champs. The League strives for a balance between 'home' and 'away' meets.

- Most meets occur on Saturday mornings, with the occasional exception.
- The Championships Meet (in July) is a two-day meet occurring on Saturday and Sunday.
- The meet schedule for the season will be established before the beginning of the season and posted to the team Website for planning purposes.
- "Dual Meets" (meets with one other team) generally last from 6:45 am at check in until around 2 pm.

THE EVENTS

There are three types of events at each meet:

- **Individual Events** (in which a single swimmer competes in one of the following strokes):
 - Backstroke ("Back")
 - Breaststroke ("Breast")
 - Butterfly ("Fly")
 - Freestyle ("Free")
- **Individual Medley or 'IM'** (in which a single swimmer swims one length each of the four strokes in the following order: fly, back, breast, free)
- **Relays** (in which four swimmers compete in a single relay event of two types):
 - Freestyle relays where each swimmer swims freestyle
 - Medley relays where each swimmer swims a different stroke in the following order: back, breast, fly, free

Per League Bylaws, swimmers may swim in no more than three individual events and two relay events (except 15 18 swimmers). The number of swimmers in a given event and the number of heats per event may be limited as well. **The swimmers who compose the relay teams for any given swim meet are selected by the coaches, at their discretion, on the basis of team needs within the age group for the strokes involved.**

Boys and girls compete separately in the following age groups as determined by their age on June 15:

6 & Under	7 - 8	9 - 10	11 - 12	13 - 14	15 - 18
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Events are organized by age group and stroke. Although there are some variations, generally all the events for a particular stroke are conducted in one block. Following that, all the events for the next stroke are conducted.

6 & Under boys & girls typically swim only Freestyle and Backstroke events and have one relay at the start of the meet.

SIGN IN/SIGN OUT OF MEETS

Each swimmer (or parent) must sign 'In' or 'Out' of each meet they will be attending using the team Website. The sign-in/out deadline is the Saturday prior to the next weekend's meet.

- When signing in for a meet, please make sure swimmers select the strokes they would like to swim and add comments or notes for the coach's review. Coaches ultimately determine the events that swimmers will participate in based on team needs.
- Any swimmer who cannot attend a meet **MUST** sign out of the meet on the team Website by the registration deadline for the meet. A swimmer who 'no shows' will be subject to sanction at the coach's discretion.
- Any swimmer who plans to attend a meet, but forgot to sign in by the deadline, should contact a coach or board member immediately.
- If a child is sick the day of the meet, parents should call to notify a coach **no later than 7 am on the morning of the meet.**
- Any swimmer/family who cannot attend the Championships Meet must contact the board **in writing at least one (1) month prior** with a reason for the request to be excused.

MEET ENTRIES

Meet entries are the events each swimmer will compete in at a particular meet. Preliminary meet entries can be found on the team Website at least 24 hours before the meet under your account. Final meet entry information (including heat/lane) can be found:

- Posted at home and away meets on a large yellow board by the coaches at the shallow end of the pool. (This includes individual and relay events.)
- On the Meet Mobile app for smartphones

Swimmers/Parents: Be sure to check the posted final report for changes to your events or to relay teams, as there are often changes after the morning scratch meeting!

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Each of the four strokes (Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Butterfly) has rules governing the proper, legal technique of the stroke and turn so as to not gain an advantage over a competing swimmer. In addition, rules governing proper starts and finishes apply. In the event of an illegal stroke, turn, start or finish, a swimmer may be disqualified (DQ'd) from an event. Please refer to [USA Swimming's Rules and Regulations page](#) for more information:

Swimmers who "false start" as defined in USA Swimming Rules and Regulations will be disqualified as follows:

- Swimmers in 6 & Under, 7/8 and 9/10 age groups are allowed one "false start" per event. In the event of a second false start by any swimmer in the same heat, the offender of the second false start will be disqualified and not permitted to swim the event.
- Swimmers in 11/12, 13/14 and 15/18 age groups who "false start" will be disqualified immediately and not permitted to swim the event.

Coaches shall make an effort to constructively discuss DQs with swimmers at the meet. Swimmers who DQ for any reason shall not receive official times or ribbons for that event. DQs are to be viewed as an opportunity for swimmers to learn and work with coaches toward stroke mastery.

RIBBONS & AWARDS

Ribbons are given to every swimmer based on their finish in their heat. Points for the team are only awarded for finishes in the first heat of each event. Ribbons will be placed in swimmer files in the Swim Team File Box following the meet and can be picked up at the next practice. Swimmers and parents should not go to the scoring table during the meet for ribbons.

Ribbons are not given for Time Trials. Special awards and recognition may be given to swimmers for team, conference and League records, personal best times, scoring at invitational meets, high point, sportsmanship and overall improvement during the season.

LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIPS MEET

The League Championships Meet is held at the end of each season on a Saturday and Sunday in late July. All teams in our conference compete. The location of this meet will vary from year to year as determined by the League.

ENTRIES & ELIGIBILITY

- A League participant must swim in at least two events (not including relays) in at least two League dual meets during the regular season to qualify for participation in the Championships meet. For purposes of this Section IV.A., the term "League dual meet" is defined as any dual meet occurring on a Saturday between two teams as defined in Article 3 of the League Bylaws. In addition to the foregoing requirement, a copy of a Northern California Swim League Application and a copy of a birth certificate for each League participant must be submitted to the League.

Register by the League participant's team no later than July 1 of the current regular season to qualify for participation in the Championships meet.

- In order for a swimmer to enter an event, the swimmer must have a seed time taken from either a League meet, a practice meet or Time trials conducted by an official or coach. The swimmer's best-recorded time in each event will be utilized for Championships seeding purposes. In simple terms, entries with "No Times" will not be allowed.

CHAMPIONSHIPS MEET INFORMATION

The Championships Meet is a two-day meet that follows a preliminary heats and finals format. Attendance at Championships is mandatory for all eligible swimmers. Check the team Website for the date and location of Championships and plan accordingly.

Families with 6 & Under swimmers only should plan to attend on Saturday only, as their events and Awards Ceremony will conclude Saturday evening.

Dependent upon the location of Championships, some families choose to stay at a hotel Friday and/or Saturday nights. Make your reservation early!

Swimmers will swim all strokes in which they have "legal" technique.

Parents will be required to work approximately two/three volunteer shifts over the course of the weekend, as determined by the League. Sign-up for these shifts will take place on our team Website two/three weeks before the Championships Meet. These shifts are in addition to the 25 regular season credits.

Each team will be assigned a team area at Championships, and all Stingrays families are required to set up their tents/chairs in our designated area.

Teams may set up family tents on Friday evening before the meet and can leave their tent frames overnight. You may set up your tent Saturday morning if you choose.

Awards for 'High Point' are given to the top three point scorers in each age group at the League Championships Meet. Team awards are given for Championships and the Dual Meet season. The onsite Awards Ceremony is Sunday evening after the conclusion of this meet.

Additional detailed information regarding Championships will be sent via email and/or posted on the Website as the meet approaches.

PREPARING FOR A SWIM MEET

BEFORE THE MEET

- Check the team Website to ensure swimmer(s) are signed 'IN' and check to see which events your swimmer(s) are in.
- Parents check the 'Job Sign-Up' tab to see which volunteer shift(s) they have been assigned.

WHAT TO BRING TO A MEET

Each swimmer should make sure that he or she has the proper equipment for each meet:

- Team uniform suit, team cap, and **at least two** pairs of goggles
- Sunscreen
- Extra warm clothes, sleeping bag or blanket for cold mornings and evening meets
- A shade structure and portable chairs. (EZ--Up tents can be purchased at Big 5, Costco, etc.)
- Water and healthy snacks! Some families will pack their own lunches. However, most meets provide a snack bar with lunch fare. A portable cooler is recommended for summer meets.
- Books, games, and other relaxing activities to occupy swimmers and/or parents between events
- Towels
- A Sharpie (permanent marker) is recommended for writing event/heat/lane on swimmer's arm

SWIMMER CHECK-IN

Each swimmer should check--in at the meets at least **1½ hours** before starting time of home and away meets. **Saturday meets usually start at 8:30 am.**

- Find our "team area" (each team has a designated area).
- Each swimmer must Check--In personally with the "Check-In Table." ****Parents may NOT check in their children, and swimmers are NOT to leave the club after checking in.****
- Check the posted "Final Meet Program" for last-minute changes to your events and mark your hand/arm with your event # --- heat # --lane #.
- Check with your Age--Group Coach for last-minute changes to relays.
- Be ready for warm--ups! Your level/age group will be called to the deck by the coaches.
- Stay in our "team area" except for warm--ups and swimming an event.
- Any swimmer who has not checked in by the designated time will be scratched (not allowed to swim) from the meet.

PARENT VOLUNTEER CHECKIN

- Parent volunteers with a scheduled shift should arrive at the meets approximately one hour before the meet and check--in at the **"Volunteer Check--in Table"**. Prepare to assume duties as required. **Certain shifts may require you to arrive earlier. (i.e. Set--up, Age Group Parent, Check--in table staff)**
- Check in with your committee head and be on time for your shift.
- Shift 1 begins at the start of the meet and typically ends after the last backstroke event. Shift 2 begins at the start of all long freestyle events and lasts until the end of the meet. There are some exceptions.
- If you are not assigned a job for a meet and are willing step in for a shift, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know. This is much appreciated!!

WARM-UPS

Each team has a set period of time before each meet to warm-up. Pay attention to the coaches for warm--up times and instructions. When asked to "clear" the pool, do so promptly. After warm--ups, the team will have team cheer, and then the meet will begin.

GENERAL DECK RULES

- No photography of any kind from behind the starting blocks.
- No obstruction of the orderly conduct of the meet.
- No bad language or excessively loud, obnoxious or unsportsmanlike conduct during the meet.
- No goofing off during races or at the starting blocks.
- No rowdy behavior in the “team areas”. (e.g. chasing each other around or wrestling)
- Spas and wading pools may not be used at any meet.
- Property or facilities of any club shall not be damaged or misused in any way.

Certain sections of the pool areas are restricted as to access. For example, there must be an alley on each side of the pool for the Stroke & Turn Judges, and there must be as much room as possible in the “Ready Bench” and Timers’ areas. Unless you are authorized to be in such areas, please keep out.

Parents of young swimmers should try not to enter the Ready Bench area. Ready Bench volunteers and Age Group/Assistant/Junior Coaches will be there to encourage apprehensive young swimmers.

The following is strictly prohibited in the pool area:

- Smoking/Vaping
- Glass containers
- Alcoholic beverages
- Profanity or abusive language

The Meet Referee has the authority to eject any person from the pool area who is not abiding by these rules.

HOW A MEET WORKS

Once you have arrived, checked-in, warmed-up with your level, checked the posted ‘Final Meet Report’ and marked your event information on your arm, the meet is almost ready to begin.

A typical meet consists of 83 events, running in order starting with Event #1 (6 & Under mixed freestyle relays). Each event consists of several heats usually with the fastest heats swum first.

When the meet begins:

- The announcer will call for certain events to report to the Ready Bench Area.
- When one of your events is called, check in with your Age Group Parent and then go to the Ready Area.
- You will be placed in the Ready Area according to your heat and lane assignment for that event.
- You will move up until your heat is ready to swim.
- Proceed to the starting blocks when directed.
- The Starter will then call for swimmers to step up on the blocks (or enter pool for Backstroke). Do not step on blocks or enter pool until directed by the Starter.
- The Starter will command you to “Take your mark.” Then the loud “beep” signals you to begin your race.
- Once you have finished your race, shake hands with swimmers in neighboring lanes, and then exit the pool promptly. If possible, check in with your age group coach for feedback.
- Return to the ‘team area’ and listen for the announcer to call your next event to the Ready Bench.

All swimmers are strongly encouraged to remain at the meet until it is over to cheer on teammates in the freestyle relays at the end of the meet.

Meet results are posted on the pool deck and on the “Meet Mobile” app as they become available.

At the end of the meet, all families shall clean up their tent area and throw any/all debris in trash containers on the pool deck.

SOCIAL EVENTS & SPIRIT

The Stingrays have social events throughout the season to foster team camaraderie and relay important information. Some include:

- **New Swimmer Onsite Registration /Meet the Coaches (February)**

A great way for new families to learn about the team, get to know each other, meet the Board and Coaching staff, register for the March clinics and the season, new swimmer assessment, try on swimsuits, see apparel, and ask questions!

- **Mandatory Parent Meeting (March)**

A rundown of the season, any changes, and an open Q&A session.

- **Family Fun Day**

A fun afternoon with the team.. If at the club, during some seasons, there is a short intrasquad relay.

- **Spirit Night & Pasta Feed (July)**

An opportunity for swimmers and their families to get together, eat and show team spirit by decorating their cars prior to Championships.

- **Awards Night/End of Season Party (July)**

Shortly after Championships, this is an evening to recap the accomplishments of the team. Awards are given to all swimmers and recognize certain swimmers with special honors. Cake and refreshments served after awards!

- **Age-Group or Full Team Socials**

Fun gatherings of one age group or the full team. Look to the Website for these events.

- **Spirit Activities (all season)**

Our Spirit Committee plans fun things for each swim meet with goodies the kids LOVE!

The Buddy Program is also organized by the Social Committee and matches your swimmer to an older or younger 'buddy'! Swim Buddies encourage each other at meets by giving each other small gifts/notes/snacks and cheering for each other in races! Signing up for the Buddy Program begins in April and is optional. Remember the Buddy relationship is reciprocal!

You've Been Stung! Is a opt-in program where Stingray signs lawn signs are passed from family to family. It is required to have the lawn signs placed in your yard overnight and the delivery of the signs to the next family. We also ask that families post pictures of swimmers with the signs on Stingray hosted Facebook or Instagram pages, although this is not required.

COMMUNICATIONS

One of the key elements to a successful team is the effective communication of information and ideas throughout the season. This process requires the cooperation of all swimmers, parents, coaches, and the club staff.

The methods of communication are through the team Website www.goldriverstingrays.org, group Team Unify emails and occasionally through our internal Facebook page.

Email addresses for all coaches and Board members can be found on the team Website under the Coaches/Board tab. You may email any coach or Board member at any time with questions/concerns/suggestions.

Updates will be sent via email to the entire team with important information regarding upcoming events and reminders. These updates can also be found on the Website. Please be sure your email address is up to date on your account and check your spam folders for any missing emails.

Swim Team File Boxes can be found on tables on the pool deck during practices and meets. Each family should have a folder with their last name on the tab. Ribbons and awards will be placed in these files. Please check them often and collect items from your file regularly. If your family does not have a folder for some reason, or your folder goes missing, contact us ASAP to rectify it.

The Front Desk has a swim team box where messages can be left for coaches or board members.

SWIM TEAM JARGON

STREAMLINE:	The most important thing in the sport of swimming! Head in line, with straight arms overhead and hands palm over palm with thumbs locked, core strong and body straight.
SCRATCH:	When a swimmer who is signed "in" to a meet is removed from some/all events. (i.e. "My son needs to scratch this meet. He has the flu." or "I need to scratch the 50 Fly...my shoulder is sore.")
MARKING EVENTS:	When a swimmer writes his or her event/heat/lane information on his/her arm with a permanent "Sharpie" marker. (# 25/1/4 = Event 25, Heat 1, Lane 4)
I.M.:	Individual Medley; an event of the four strokes swum in order of Fly, Back, Breast, Free. MEDLEY RELAY: A four--person relay swum in order of Back, Breast, Fly, Free.
ANCHOR:	The fourth swimmer in a relay swimming Free.
HEAT:	A single race of swimmers in a competition pool. An 'Event' usually consists of several heats of swimmers. (i.e. "My son is in the second heat of the 25 Free.")
LANE:	A single lane in which a swimmer competes in a race.
SHORT FREE vs. LONG FREE:	All swimmers ages 7 & Up swim two different freestyle events. One is the shorter distance (short free), and the other is the longer distance (long free). Long free is double the distance of the short free.
SEED TIME:	A swimmer's best time in a particular event. A seed time determines which heat a swimmer will compete in. (Seed also means ranking in a particular event. I.e. "My friend is the top seed in the IM!")
PERSONAL BEST:	When a swimmer achieves a faster time than their previous best. Personal Best or "PB."
TIME TRIALS:	A required meet swum at the beginning of the season by our team only to establish a set of seed times for upcoming dual meets.
CHAMPS:	Champs is short for "Championships": a required meet for all swimmers at the end of the season.
MEET OF CHAMPS:	Also called MOC: a meet which takes place one/two weeks after Champs for swimmers with fast qualifying times only.
PRELIMS/FINALS:	Prelims means "Preliminary events" at Champs. All swimmers swim three events each morning (Sat: Short free, I.M, Back. Sun: Long free, Breast, Fly). The top 10 finishers in each "Prelim" advance to swim the same events in the afternoon "Finals".

VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTIONS

AGE GROUP PARENT:

- Two families each sign up for an age group. (6U Boys, 6U Girls, 7/8 Boys, 7/8 Girls, 9/10 Boys and 9/10 Girls)
- Responsible for helping swimmers get to ready bench, writing and gathering relay teams together, and helping parents write event/heat/lane information on swimmers' arms.
- **Who's it for:** Families with 6U, 7/8, 9/10 swimmers that love hanging out with a bunch of kids!
- **Who it's not for:** Parents that want a 'neat and quiet tent'. Parents who do not have 6 & Under, 7/8 or 9/10 swimmers.
- **Benefits of the Job:** You will be able to see all of your athlete's races and hang out near ready bench with your child and their friends!
- **Credits earned per shift:** 4

ANNOUNCER:

- This job announces each event/heat with swimmer names, volunteer shift changes and rotations, MC's special activities at the meet and social events, and plays music. Must have own library of music to play and stay in place during the shift.
- **Who it's for:** Someone with a clear, projecting voice; good with pronunciation; enthusiastic person who enjoys being on a microphone.
- **Who it's not for:** If you don't enjoy the spotlight, or have a really quiet voice this isn't the job for you!
- **Benefits:** Great seat to see all the events!
- **Credits earned per shift:** 5

COLORADO OPERATOR & COMPUTER OPERATOR:

- **Colorado Operator** works with the timing system during home meets, working closely with the starter and the computer operators to ensure a smooth and efficient meet. **Computer Operator** assists the Computer Coordinator in setting up computer operations equipment at home meets and runs the meet manager software during the meet. The **Computer Operator** verifies times, processes DQ slips, prints meet results and ribbon labels.
- These jobs work together as a team and require some training and a certain comfort level working with computers.
- **Who they are for:** People that LOVE working with computer systems. We know you're out there! Also, people that want to learn. It's really not that scary!
- **Who they are not for:** People that are baffled by computer systems. We know you're out there, too! Also, if you have little ones and need flexibility to come and go, this isn't for you.
- **Benefits:** Seat in the shade for the entire meet. Great view of all the events!
- **Credits earned per shift:** 5

HOSPITALITY:

- Prepares and delivers snacks and drinks to volunteers and coaches during home meets.
- **Who's it for:** Someone who enjoys prepping food and serving folks! This is a great job for someone who would rather move around during a shift than sit.
- **Who it's not for:** Some who would rather sit and doesn't like being in the sun.
- **Benefits:** FREE SNACKS! And you're well loved ... you're delivering food and drinks!
- **Credits earned per shift:** 3

MEET REFEREE, HEAD TIMER & STARTER:

- If a swim meet is like a ship, then the **Meet Referee** is like the captain. The **Meet Ref** oversees all aspects of the meet to insure a safe, fair, efficiently run meet. They are responsible for making sure the Starter is accurate and consistent and works with the Head Timer to make sure all lane timers are able to record accurate times. The **Meet Ref** resolves issues regarding timing, safety, disqualification discrepancies, and more. The **Head Timer** keeps GRSC stopwatches in good, working order and works with the lane timers to make sure each lane is staffed and timers know their responsibilities. The **Starter** works alongside the Meet Ref, calling swimmers to blocks and announcing the start of each race in a very precise and specific manner.
- Each of these jobs requires specific training. Training will be provided prior to Time Trials and you must be able to attend Time Trials to sign up as a new trainee. Prior swim experience is very helpful!
- **Who they are for:** Someone with swim experience and a willingness to go through training process. Natural leaders out there, this is for you!
- **Who they are not for:** Someone who does not want a lot responsibility or someone completely new to the world of swimming. These jobs also require a lot of standing for most of the meet.
- **Benefits:** These are the BEST SEATS IN THE HOUSE! Also, you receive advance sign-ups if you are qualified and commit to train for these jobs.

- **Credits earned per shift:** 5

READY BENCH & CLERK OF THE COURSE:

- Uses the Meet Program to arrange swimmers in proper heat/lane order prior to each event. Takes swimmers in order to starting blocks before each heat of particular race. Works with a team of Ready Bench volunteers to help kids find their spot on the benches and keep them in order.
- **Who it's for:** Someone who is patient and great with organizing a group of excited kids! This is for a person who is positive, and efficient at moving kids through the ready bench process quickly. If you love to get swimmers 'pumped up' for their races, this is for YOU!
- **Who it's not for:** Someone who doesn't like corralling kids, or someone with little patience.
- **Benefits:** It's fun to get the kids excited about their races! You get to know A LOT of swimmers. Once the kids are over 10, they essentially know the drill!
- **Credits earned per shift:** 4

RIBBONS:

- Places computer-generated labels on corresponding award ribbons. File labeled ribbons in the family file boxes.
- **Who it's for:** Someone who likes to sit and chat, but also enjoys some busy filing work!
- **Who it's not for:** Someone who wants to watch the whole meet. The Ribbons table is usually behind the computer tents with a limited view of the pool deck.
- **Benefits:** Flexibility to step away to watch your swimmer's events. Not a stressful or difficult job!
- **Credits earned per shift:** 3

SET--UP/TAKE-DOWN (Home Meets Only):

- **Set--Up/Take-Down volunteers** arrive early before each home meet to set up tents, tables, chairs, equipment, etc. **and** stay after each home meet to take down tents, tables, equipment and restore pool deck back to its original layout.
- **Who it's for:** Someone who doesn't want to have to volunteer *during* the meet. Also great for someone who likes physical work! Set--up is for EARLY RISERS who are reliable and hands--on.
- **Who it's not for:** Someone who doesn't like physical work. This is not for people who want to leave right after the meet ... or families with only 6 & Under swimmers who are typically finished at the meet early.
- **Benefits:** Set--up/Take Down is great for parents that just want to relax and watch the meet, or for solo parents who need to attend to kids and want to volunteer before/after the actual meet.
- **Credits earned per shift:** 3

STROKE & TURN JUDGE:

- Stands poolside during the meet and observes swimmer's starts, turns, stroke technique, and finishes to ensure proper, legal technique. Writes disqualification slips for swimmers who do not have legal technique. Swimming experience is helpful but not necessary. Training will be provided prior to Time Trials and you must be able to attend Time Trials to sign up as a new trainee.
- Stroke and Turn Judges are only required to sign--up for five shifts during the season, not including Champs. They must be able to volunteer as Stroke and Turn at Champs.
- **Who it's not for:** Anyone who wants to learn more about swimming and wants to be involved on the pool deck during meets.
- **Who it's not for:** If you might be uncomfortable DQ'-ing a swimmer, or you don't like to stand a lot, or if you need to attend to little ones, this probably won't work for you.
- **Benefits:** Advance sign--up for these jobs if you commit to attend training. Lots of on--the--job training, too!
- **Credits earned per shift:** 5

TIMER:

- Each lane at a swim meet requires 3 timers. Timers sit at one end of each lane and operate a timing plunger and/or stopwatch. They watch for the light on the starter and then watch for the swimmer to touch the wall at the finish. The timer then records each swimmer's time on a sheet that is collected by the runner. No experience needed AT ALL. Seriously, it's pushing a button!
- **Who it's for:** Everyone!
- **Who it's not for:** Someone who isn't able to sit and stand for an entire shift. If you need flexibility because you are a solo parent at meets and you have younger swimmers, this may not work for you. If you don't want to get a little wet, pass on these shifts.
- **Benefits:** Its great seat in the shade with a view of all the races and the hospitality crew brings you snacks! How great is that? Plus, you get to meet other parents who are timing with you!
- **Credits earned per shift:** 3

OTHER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Social Committee Member** – Helps Board Social Events Coordinator plan and execute social events for the team. Sign up ASAP if you would be interested in serving on the Social Committee!
- **Photographer**- Takes pictures at all the meets, including Championships. Posts pictures to the Website. Provides pictures for the GRSC Newsletter and local papers.

COORDINATOR POSITIONS: (Please contact the Volunteers Coordinator if you are interested in one of these positions)

- **Check-in Coordinator** – Receives/prints check-in reports the night before each meet. Communicates with Check-in volunteers prior to each meet. Works with Computer team to create meet program with Check-in volunteers at home meets. This position includes Champs.
- **Computer Coordinators** --- Leads team of computer volunteers. May be needed in days leading up to home meets and on meet mornings. Assists in setting up computer/timing systems. Ensures all computer equipment is running properly.
- **Hospitality Coordinator** – Purchases food/beverages for hospitality services at all home meets. Communicates with hospitality volunteers prior to each home meet. Directs food prep and delivery to all home meet volunteers and coaches.
- **Ready Bench Coordinator** – Contacts all Ready Bench volunteers prior to each home meet and explains the Ready Bench process to ensure it is running efficiently. Keeps track of clipboards and other materials needed for Ready Bench volunteers.
- **Set-Up/Take-Down Coordinator** -- Coordinates Set-up of the pool deck for all home meets, including pop-up tents, tables, chairs, timing plungers, and other equipment. Works with Set-up/Take Down team and contacts volunteers prior to home meets on Set-Up/Take-Down process.

****See Website under Team Info Tab – Board, Chairpersons & Key Positions****