



**TEAM SUFFOLK SWIM TEAM**

# **SWIMMER HANDBOOK 2023**

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# Team Suffolk Swim Team

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is two-fold: to explain to new members just what the Team Suffolk Swim Team is and to outline various policies that affect all swimmers, year after year. It should be read by all families so that they may become familiar with important facts and rules of the club.

## WHY SWIM?

The United States Swimming (USS) age group swimming program is America's largest program of guided fitness activity for children. Age group swimming builds a strong foundation for a lifetime of good health, by teaching healthy fitness habits.

- Swimming develops high quality aerobic endurance, the most important key to physical fitness. In other sports an hour of practice may yield as little as 10 minutes of meaningful exercise. Age group swimming teams use every precious minute of practice time developing fitness and teaching skills.
- Swimming does a better job in proportional muscular development by using all the body's major muscle groups. No other sport does this as well.
- Swimming enhances children's natural flexibility (at a time when they ordinarily begin to lose it) by exercising all of their major joints through a full range of motion.
- Swimming helps develop superior coordination because it requires combinations of complex movements of all parts of the body, enhancing harmonious muscle function, grace, and fluidity of movement.
- Swimming is the most injury-free of all children's sports.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVE

The Team Suffolk Swim Team, founded in the 80's as Half Hollow Hills Swim Team, is known throughout the county, and Metropolitan Swimming, for a first-class, year-round swim program. We offer a guided age-group youth program for children age 6 and up, from the beginning swimmer to the most competitive and skilled swimmer. One of our major objectives is to prepare young swimmers to compete at the college level. Many of our swimmers have left the club to continue a successful swimming career at the college level, largely due to the discipline and work ethic developed during the age group years at Team Suffolk.

When a young person becomes a member of Team Suffolk he/she learns the values of sportsmanship and team work.

The mission of Team Suffolk Swim Team is:

**To develop the character traits, technical skills and intense desire necessary for maximum realization of each individual's potential.**

## Team Suffolk Swim Team

### Coaches Responsibilities

**Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with the coaching staff.**

The coaches' job is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. Team Suffolk's coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for swimmers that will enable them to learn the value of striving to improve oneself--"to be the best you can be." **Therefore, the coaches must be in total control in matters affecting training and competition.**

1. The coaches are responsible for placing swimmers in training groups. This is based on the age and ability level of each individual. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, he/ she will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach.

2. Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with the coaching staff. Each group's practices are based on sound scientific principles and are geared to the specific goals of that group.

### Swim Meets

3. The coaching staff will make the final decision concerning which meets Team Suffolk swimmers may attend. The coaching staff also makes the final decision concerning which events a swimmer is entered into.

4. At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmers performance. (It is the parent's job to offer love and understanding regardless of their youngster's performance). There are NO cell phones allowed on deck by the Swimmers and Swim Suits must go with Team colors, any changes outside of this must be pre approved by the Coach.

### Relays

5. The building of a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff. In most cases the selection of relay swimmers has been determined well before the meet session. The program used for team management automatically selects the fastest swimmers for the given relay event.

During the course of a meet a coach on deck may change the order of the swimmers in a relay, or even members of the relay based upon swims performed during the course of the meet.

The coaching staff is constantly updating and improving the Team Suffolk program. It is the swimmer's and parents' responsibility to make the most out of the excellent opportunity this program provides for success in swimming.

## Team Suffolk Swim Team

### Practice and Attendance Policies

The following guidelines are to inform parents and swimmers of the coaches policies regarding practice. These policies have been developed over many years and are designed to provide the best possible practice environment for all. On occasion, new policies may be created and implemented if necessary.

#### Attendance Requirements

1. Each training group has specific attendance requirements appropriate for the objectives of that group. As a general rule, the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success. The club has a minimum practice attendance of 80% with the Elite level requiring 90% attendance. The club does, however, encourage younger swimmers to participate in other activities in addition to swimming. The expectation level of the coaches for swimmers to attend practices increases as swimmers move to higher groups. **By the age of 13, swimmers should begin to focus on one sport rather than many. It is also at this age that the swimmer should refrain from attending summer sleep-away camps and train with the team year-round.**

#### Religious Education/ Social Functions

2. The club does allow for practices to be missed for Religious Education. The swimmer will not be penalized for a missed practice due to religion or education. A practice missed due to attending a social event, (i.e. Bar mitzvah, Confirmation Party), however, will be counted as a missed practice .

#### Guidelines for Practice

3. For the swimmers protection, they should arrive at the pool no earlier than 15 minutes prior to their workout time. They should also be picked up no later than 15 minutes after their practice is over. **Swimmers should be ready to swim five minutes prior to the start of their practice.** Swimmers should do their stretching prior to the start of warm-up.

4. In case a swimmer is late for practice, it is our hope that the parents will send a note with the child explaining the reason of the tardiness. **If a habit of lateness is noted, the swimmer will not be permitted to swim the practice. All swimmers will not be permitted to swim if they arrive late without prior approval from Head Coaches or a valid explanation that is acceptable.**

4. **Plan to stay the entire practice.** The last part of practice is very often the most important. Usually, there are also announcements made at the end of practice. In the event that your child needs to be dismissed early from practice, a note from the parent to the coach the day prior is required. Swimmers in all groups will not be allowed to leave practice early without prior approval from their respective coach.

## Team Suffolk Swim Team

### Practice and Attendance Policies (cont.)

5. Occasionally, most of the groups may be attending a meet, in which case you will be notified of a practice change or cancellation. It is your responsibility to check the website, bulletin board or read the monthly calendar for the most accurate and up to date information.

#### Practice Conduct

6. While in the pool, the swimmers are the responsibility of the coaching staff. During practice sessions, swimmers are never to leave the pool area without the coach's permission. Playing outside before practice is not permitted. Playing outside after practice is not permitted unless there is parental supervision.

7. The club has an obligation to act as guests while in the high school pool or the outdoor pool (both swimmers and parents). Every member of the club needs to do everything possible to respect this privilege. Any damages to the school property may result in financial liability of the swimmer's parents. Any damage may also result in the swimmer being asked to leave the team permanently.

#### Parent 'Do's & Don'ts

8. Parents are not allowed on the pool deck during practice (or at meets). They are to remain in the stands/bleachers

9. Parents are allowed to observe practice. Please be considerate and keep conversations at a low volume level while in the pool area. Do not try to communicate with any swimmer from the observation area. This is not only distracting to the swimmer, but to the entire team as well as the coach.

NOTE: Stop watches and video cameras and cell phones are not allowed for video recording or pictures during practices.

10. In the summer, parents may observe the outdoor practice from the concession area and outside the fence of the outdoor pool. However, no food from the outside may be brought to the outside pool, all food must be purchased from the food concession.

11. Attendance and Practice Effort are monitored daily and used to determine a swimmer's participation in meets. Swimmers are graded according to their effort during the course of the practice. These grades are tracked, and included in the determination of High Point Awards at the Awards Banquet. Swimmers not working and/or missing practices – minimum of 80% attendance – will not be permitted to swim in meets. With regard to championship meets, please see section entitled 'SWIM MEETS'.

## Team Suffolk Swim Team

### Practice and Attendance Policies (cont.)

#### Injury & Illness

12. Whenever possible, the coach should be informed in advance of an illness or injury. Regardless of how serious or trivial it may be, it will almost always be possible to find a physician (or parent) who will recommend abstaining from training and one who will recommend a modified approach. For this reason, the coach must be the one to determine if the absence is excusable (especially for the advanced swimmers). It is helpful to find a family physician who appreciated the importance of participation and who understands the repercussions associated with missed meets and training sessions.

If your swimmer will be out of the water over a long period of time with an injury or illness, please notify the coaching staff so they are aware of the problem.

### Swimmers Training Responsibilities

Participation in practice is a privilege. Any misconduct, disrespect or failure to abide by the policies and rules, as set forth by the coaching staff, may lead to suspension from practice or the team for a definite or indefinite period of time.

As the swimmer's level of swimming ability increases, so does his/her responsibility. The program is designed to encourage all swimmers to be Senior Swimming bound. As swimmers improve, there is a deep commitment that requires great effort on all parts.

A swimmer has responsibilities to the team, the coach, his/her parents and most importantly to themselves. Swimmers need to prepare themselves for a 100% effort each time they come to practice. A strong positive mental attitude is very important in practice.

## Team Suffolk Swim Team

### Swimmers Training Responsibilities (cont.)

#### Outside Coaching Not Permitted

Swimmers are not permitted to be coached outside the Team Suffolk program by any other coach or instructor unless permission is given by the Head Coaches. This situation usually leads to a conflict in coaching philosophy and techniques. Due to inconsistent terminology, many swimmers can become confused regarding key aspects of technique which can hinder their development.

Each swimmer must be prepared to work hard at all practices. Each swimmer's efforts is graded at each practice. In addition, attendance is also recorded. Any swimmer not working or missing too many practices will not be entered into upcoming meets

#### Training Equipment

Swimmers will be required to bring specified training accessories (i.e., Elite swimmers need mesh bag, paddles, pool buoy, snorkel, fins, water bottle) to workouts. It is the swimmer's responsibility to make sure these items are properly adjusted and that spare are readily available. Equipment adjustment and repair will not be accepted as an excuse to miss part of a training session.

Each training group has specific equipment required for that group. Check with the coach of the training group for the exact requirements.



## Team Suffolk Swim Team

### Meets

#### Meet Attendance Requirements

Attending meets is mandatory for all swimmers at all levels. It is not an option, therefore plan on attending every meet on the meet schedule, if qualified, especially Championship Meets.

In September, a meet schedule is distributed to every swimmer/family which lists all the meets of the entire short course season. If you cannot attend a particular meet, prior WRITTEN notification is necessary in order to avoid being billed for the meet entry fees. Prior notice usually is at least two months in advance of that meet. Some meets may need three months prior notice. Once entered, you are expected to swim in that meet.

**Swimmers must attend all sessions and days of the meet if entered unless prior approval has been given by the Head Coaches. A swimmer may miss a Friday Meet Session due to School/Exam commitments, but prior approval is required. If the swimmer misses sessions/days of a meet without approval, the disciplinary action may be removal from the next meet. And for older swimmers, they may be deemed not to be in good standing and risk their eligibility for the senior scholarship. If the swimmer misses two meets, they will no longer be competitive.**

#### Swimmer Conduct During Meets

Arrive at the meet at least 30 minutes before the scheduled warm up time. If a swimmer arrives late to the meet, the coaches have the option to send that swimmer home. Swimmers must stay for the entire session unless permission to leave is given by the coaches on deck. **Swimmers qualifying for finals must return for the final session – no exceptions.**

Swimmers are not permitted to go to their parents during a meet unless permission is given by the coach on deck. Parents, please do not call your child to the stands or any other place to talk to them during the meet. This includes meeting them in the bathroom! Feed them at home and send them to the meet with plenty of fluids. Swimmers are not permitted to go to the snack bar for food. If found at the snack bar or food concession during an active session of a meet they will be sent home from the meet.

#### Team Apparel During Meets

Swimmers must wear the team uniform at all meets. This includes suit, sweat pants, or shorts, fleece or sweatshirt, cap, t-shirt, team bag, 1-2 towels, 2 pairs of goggles, water bottles and a light snack. Swimmers not in uniform may be sent home from the meet. Uniforms must be purchased with the team store and issued by Speedo.

Swimmers going on vacation or absent from practice for more than a few days must be back in practice for at least two full weeks

prior to the meet in order to swim at that meet – three weeks prior to a Championship meet.

## Team Suffolk Swim Team

### Swim Camps/Vacation

#### Camps

The Head Coaching Staff does not support the concept of summer camps that conflict with our long course season. As a result, the coaching staff will enforce the following policy for all swimmers wishing to attend summer Competitive Swimming Camps during the months of June and July.

Swimmers wishing to attend a camp will do so during the last week of June, the first week of July or any time in August, after JO's. In addition, the swimmer must notify the Head Coaches in advance of his/her intention and declare the name and type of camp.

The following policy has been established for all swimmers attending summer camps.

#### Three Week Minimum Prior to Championship Meets

Swimmers attending swimming camps...

1. During the last week of June and/or first week of July must return to practice by the following Monday in order to compete in the Senior Metropolitan Long Course Championships and the Metropolitan LC Junior Olympics, subject to remove from following meets. Keep in mind that the swimmer must be back in the water, at practice, a minimum of 3 weeks prior to a championship meet.
2. Will not be entered into any meets during the long course season if the above policy is not adhered to.

Meets will not be added to the summer schedule to make up for missed opportunities to make qualifying times for important meets.

#### Vacations

All vacations are still  
subject to the 80%  
practice rule.

The coaching staff strongly recommends that when you are considering a vacation that you go during the Spring Break (April). This is the time when the district drains the pool to comply with Suffolk County Dept. of Health guidelines.

**The coaching staff does not encourage vacations during the Holiday Break (December) due to the fact that it is in the middle of our training season.**

Keep in mind that any vacations taken are still subject to satisfying the 80% practice rule enforced by the team.

Vacations during the summer should take place after the Summer Qualifying Meets, which in most cases is Long Course JO's.

All swimmers on the team are expected to train through the summer season. Swimmers who do not train for the entire summer season risk jeopardizing their status with the club.