

Heart of the Hills Swim Team

Members Guide



Welcome

We'd like to welcome our new Swim Team families, and welcome back our returning swimmers and their families. This brief guide is intended to provide you with some background and guidance on the Swim Team – how things work, our policies and expectations of swimmers, parents, and coaches, tips on how to get the most out of the swim team experience, and ways to get involved and support the team. We are glad you're on the team, and we hope you will find it an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

Mission Statement & Goals

The Heart of the Hills Swim Team mission is to provide an enriching competitive swimming experience for all interested Heart of the Hills members through age 18. We will provide an opportunity to develop competitive swimming skills while making new friends and having fun with group activities. We will strive to balance the goals of winning and good sportsmanship, responsibility and teamwork, and commitment and personal discipline.

Each swimmer, from the youngest to the oldest, from the average to the "superstar", will be treated as a valuable member of the HHSC team. Some swimmers will compete at the top level for Heart, while others may be focused on learning a new stroke or having fun swimming with their teammates. What is important is that all swimmers have the opportunity to develop their skills to the best of their ability, realize the benefits of regular physical exercise, and support one another to help build a strong, cohesive team.

Who We Are

The HHSC swim team is a summer program. We are a member club of the North Suburban Swim League (NSSL). The league is made up of fifteen teams; thirteen are membership swim clubs like Heart of the Hills and the other two are community pools

with restricted membership. The NSSL follows Michigan High School rules for swimming. The NSSL was started in the early sixties and has been very strong throughout the years boasting some of the best swimmers in the state!

At Heart we are proud of this tradition and have been instrumental throughout the years providing leadership to the league. Each member club has a designated representative responsible for communicating league information to the member club and voting league business on behalf of the club. A non-voting executive board position is rotated through each of the clubs annually. This position serves a four-year term.

HHSC hires a professional coach and at least one assistant experienced with technique training and competitive conditioning. We provide additional coaching staff to ensure a strong coach-to-swimmer ratio and safe swim environment.

Our athletes are the children of duly qualified members of Heart of the Hills. The children of the head coach may also compete with the HHSC team. Swimmers on the team must not be older than eighteen years of age. The age of the swimmer on May 30th is the age group they will swim with for the season.

All meets are in 25 meter six lane pools. There are 52 events, the first 46 are individual events, and the last six are relay events. The events are numbered to distribute the age groups evenly. All events ending in a (1) are 11/12 Girl events, (2) 11/12 Boys, (3) 13/14 Girls, (4) 13/14 Boys, (5) 15-18 Girls, (6) 15-18 Boys, (7) 8&under Girls, (8) 8&under Boys.

While not all swimmers compete for points, exhibition heats are scheduled in order to allow all swimmers the chance to compete in at least two events. All the times are recorded. The goal for every swimmer is to continue to improve his/her personal best time in each stroke. We keep a “Star Chart” posted in the club lobby showing each swimmer’s improvement.

Guiding Principles

No prior experience or skill is required to join the team, but for safety reasons, it is expected that all swimmers will have some competency in the water. Swimmers eight and under need to be able to swim one length of the pool unassisted, without stopping to rest. If they are unable to swim the full length right away, they are encouraged to take swim lessons and come back to try again when they are ready (they can join the team at any time during the season). In competition, they will be required to swim one length of the pool for each of their events, and they must be water safe and able to swim six to eight lengths during a practice. Swimmers older than eight will need to swim two lengths of the pool in competition and should be capable of multiple lengths during practice.

Coaches will work with all swimmers to develop their individual skills and technique. They will recognize and encourage improvement at all levels, and endeavor to

get to know and interact with all swimmers. Each coach or assistant will have a particular age group they will work with regularly, and the head coach will provide oversight and direction for all groups.

As this is a swim team, not open swimming, swimmers are expected to attend practice and abide by the rules set down in this document and by the coaches. The coaches will write a workout for each day and swimmers are expected to swim the workouts to the best of their ability.

We realize that swimmers may miss practice or meets because of summer vacations or other activities. If a swimmer will miss a meet, they must sign the "I can't swim list", which is posted on the bulletin board in the pool lobby. This should be done as soon as possible in order to assist with meet scheduling, but no later than the designated date on the list, usually the Monday or Tuesday prior to the meet. This is important for the coaches and other swimmers, and your attention to this is greatly appreciated. The coaches spend a considerable amount of time planning the lineup for meets and need to know who will not be available to swim. If one swimmer needs to be pulled from the schedule at the last minute, it can have a ripple effect on the rest of the schedule, affecting replacements, relays, etc. If illness or emergency arises the day of a meet, please call the club and ask that the coaches be notified.

Swimmers who miss practices and meets should understand that their absence may affect their position in the meet lineup. The coaches set up the lineup to score the most points against the competition. Swimmers who attend practice are more likely to improve and swim faster. If you know that you will be absent for an extended period of time (late in starting, vacation, camp, etc.) please let the coaching staff know.

Included in the Appendix is a copy of the "10 Commandments for Swimming Parents", a good recap from USA Swimming of how we can best support our children and the team effectively.

Conduct

Proper conduct is the responsibility of the swimmers and their parents. Any swimmer who is disruptive or creates trouble in the pool area or in the locker room will be subject to disciplinary action, ranging from dismissal from practice and/or a meet to suspension from the team.

Practice

Practices usually begin the second week of May and continue through the championship meets at the end of July. The first week or two is usually at a local high school pool until the Heart pool is ready. Practices are held five days a week and the schedule is posted on the web site, club bulletin board, or emailed as soon as possible.

The first two days of practice a lane will be designated for evaluation swims of all eight and under swimmers and any new swimmer unsure of their group placement. The coaches will divide the practice into 4 groups (Senior, A,B,C) based primarily on age and sometimes on ability. Parents should not move swimmers to a different group without the approval of the head coach.

Practice consists of both technique and conditioning. Practices for the younger swimmers are focused almost entirely on stroke technique; older swimmers, while still instructed in technique, spend more time on conditioning. The practice schedule is designed by the professional coaching staff and should be adhered to by all team members.

Swimmers should come prepared for practice - wear a suit suitable for swimming (boys swim trunks, jammer, or speedo, girls one piece tank style suit); bring goggles, swim caps, water bottles, and towel(s). Early in the season depending on weather and pool conditions swimmers may be doing dryland exercises, and should wear comfortable exercise clothes and sturdy shoes to run in.

Meets

The team participates in a number of meets throughout the season. The types of meets vary, and are explained in greater detail below:

Inter-squad and Mini Meets

We swim an inter-squad meet (Red & White) in the pre-season to establish swimmers times and introduce new swimmers and parents to how a meet functions. Optional mini meet invitational meets may also be offered. These meets are age level meets that allow the swimmer to compete with swimmers of their same age from all fifteen clubs. Example: an 8 & U mini meet will have separate events for six and under swimmers, seven year olds, and eight year olds.

Dual Meets

The six dual meets are determined by the league based on the standing of each team in the previous season's championship meet. We will swim against all four teams in

our division along with a team from each of the other two divisions. Three of the meets will be home meets and three will be away meets.

Every swimmer is expected to swim at the meets. There are three places for scored points in each event per team. The coaches will incorporate exhibition heats as needed. A swimmer is limited to three events per meet, only two of which can be individual events. The coaching staff determines the line up and all relays.

General Meet Guidelines

Meets begin at 6:30 PM, unless an earlier time is decided on by both teams (meets with the larger clubs will typically start earlier). For home meets, swimmers should be at the pool by 5:00, and for away meets by 5:30. Plan to have your swimmer at the club early enough to find parking, get settled, check the schedule and record their events on their hands to eliminate any confusion once the meet begins. Meets typically last about 3 to 4 hours, depending upon the size of the clubs involved.

What to expect at a Home Meet

- Parents should park in the St. Irenaus church lot so that our lot is available to the visiting team. Please be aware that parking is not permitted on Avon Road or Old Perch Road, nor on the grass in front of the club.
- Swimmers should not wear any jewelry to the meet. This is a disqualification under Michigan High School rules.
- Swimmers should put their bags and personal belongings under the team tent away from the pavilion. (The pavilion is for concessions and food only)
- The coaches will post the lineup on a fence by the team tent.
- Swimmers should mark the backs of their hands with a permanent marker listing their event numbers, lanes, and strokes.
- For home meets, our team warms up first. The 11 & up swimmers usually go first for approximately 20 minutes, then the 10 & unders get in for about the same amount of time. All swimmers should have their caps and goggles ready and be listening for the coach's directions.
- After warm up the coaches will have a team meeting at the flagpole or by the team tent. Swimmers should go there immediately after warm up. Parents of ten and under swimmers should go with them.
- The marshallers will be announced at the team meeting. Swimmers ten and under will see who will be marshalling them and get directions on where they are to meet.
- When the meet starts the area behind the blocks is reserved for swimmers only. Team members should cheer for their buddies and teammates at the turn end of the pool!
- After each event, swimmers should talk with their coach to receive feedback about their swim.
- Ribbon awards will be given to all swimmers, scored and exhibition. Ribbons should be picked up before leaving at the end of the meet.

Away Meets

Much the same as home meets except:

- Our warm up will be after the home team.
- The coaches will designate a meeting spot and will post the line up close to it.
- The marshalling captain will designate a marshalling area for our swimmers.

What to bring to a meet

- Extra suit, goggles, cap just in case. Team caps are usually available at the meets from the merchandise chairperson
- Extra towels
- Sweat suit or warm clothes
- A healthy snack
- Water
- Buddy bag for your buddy. Please try to limit the sugar, think granola bars, cheese sticks, peanut butter crackers instead of candy. Sport drinks or juice boxes instead of pop. A little treat is OK but sweets should not make up the whole buddy bag.
- If it looks like rain, bring garbage bags to put over swim bags and personal belongings just in case.

Championship Meets

A Finals

The top two swimmers, based on times during the dual meet season, for each event will be asked to compete at A Finals. This is a two day event and is a prelim-final format (qualifying swimmers swim their events on second day) A swimmer is limited to three events, only two of which can be individual, and appearing as an alternate on a relay is considered one of their events. Relays and the lineup for this meet are determined by the coaching staff based on winning strategy. Our standing at this meet determines which clubs we swim against the following season.

B Finals

All swimmers not assigned to the A Finals meet will swim in the B Finals meet. All fifteen clubs attend this day and a half event. This is a great opportunity to finish out the season with your best times! Coaches will ask each swimmer what they would like to swim at this meet; relays are not usually swum. This is a timed final format, swimmers only swim their event once. Team scores are not usually kept.

Communication

File Box - Every family will have a folder in the team family file box. Any communication, unclaimed ribbons, paperwork etc. will be in your folder. Please check it often. It is stored in the pool office during non-practice times and in the lobby during practices. Coaches also have folders so that you can better communicate with them!

Heart Beat - Newsletter up to date weekly information during swim season. This is now sent electronically and is posted on the web site.

Web Site - hhscswim.org Team schedule, maps to away pools and any other important swim team information.

E-mail - We use e-mail as our primary source of communication. It has worked great as a fan out tool so check it often. If you have multiple addresses that you would like us to send to please include those in your registration information

Volunteer Opportunities

Awards (for home meets)- Printed stickers for each participant in an event will come from scoring. Three to four people are needed to fix the appropriate label to the correct ribbon and post on the awards board.

Banquet Coordinator-Organize end of year banquet.

Computers-Responsible for data entry, setup and operation of the computer system at all home swim meets, export of meet information for each away meet, and other computer related duties throughout the season.

Concessions (for home meets)-Sell food to parents, guests and swimmers during the meet.

Marshalling (for home meets)-Work to gather the swimmers (10 & under age groups) for each event and place them in the correct swimming order and lane based on entry times.

Merchandise: Responsible for coordination of order and delivery of team apparel

Heartbeat: Responsible for editing and publishing of the Team Newsletter, "Heartbeat"

Runners (for home meets)-Take the cards from the timers at the end of each event, and the official's record of place order, and bring them to the scorers.

Scoring (for home meets)- The Hy-Tek for swimming software is used for all NSSL meets. Scoring is coordinated through the computer chairperson.

Spirit Parties – Help organize pre-meet parties with activities such as painting vehicles, making buttons and other items, etc.

Timing (for all swim meets)-Operate a stopwatch at the end of a lane to record swimmer's times for the swim meet.

Waterpark coordinator – Plan and supervise end-of-season team outing to local waterpark.

Many more – just ask!

In addition to donating your talents, each family is expected to contribute snack items for home meet concession sales.

Appendices

List of NSSL Clubs

Beachwood Recreation Association
Beechview Swim Club
Beverly Hills Athletic Club
Bloomfield Surf Club
Compton Buckingham Swim Club
Cranbrook Swim Club
Farmington Glen Aquatic Club
Forest Hills Swim Club
Heart of the Hills Swim Club
Huntington Woods Aquatic Club
Kendallwood Club
Pleasant Ridge Community Pool
Village Athletic Club
Woodbrooke Hills Swim Club
Woodside Athletic Club

Dual Meet Events

The age groups and events are as follow (girls and boys swim separately):

8 & Under:	25 Free, 25 Back, 25 Breast, 25 Butterfly (one pool length)
9–10:	50 Free, 50 Back, 50 Breast, 50 Butterfly (two lengths)
11-12 & 13-14:	50 Free, 50 Back, 50 Breast, 50 Butterfly, 100 IM (one length each of fly, back, breast and free, in that order)
15-18:	100 Free, 50 Back, 50 Breast, 50 Fly, and 100 IM

Three teams of four swimmers participate in the following Dual Meet Relays:

40 year mixed 200 Free:	Four girls and boys whose ages total 40 years or less each swim TWO lengths of free
40 year mixed 200 Medley:	Four girls and boys whose ages total 40 years or less swim back, breast, fly and free
52 year 200 Girls Medley:	Four girls whose ages total 52 years or less swim back, breast, fly and free
52 year 200 Boys Medley:	Four boys – same as for girls
66 year 200 Girls Free:	Four girls whose ages total 66 years or less swim free
66 year 200 Boys Free:	Four boys – same as for girls

Dual Meet scoring is as follows:

Individual events:	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th : 5, 3, 2, 1 point respectively (only 1 relay team from each team can score points) (only 2 swimmers from each team can score points)
Relays:	1 st : 8 points, 2 nd : 4 points (only 1 relay team from each team can score points)

Event Schedule on next page (also published in the team directory)

Event #

1. 50 M Backstroke Girls (11-12)
2. 50 M Backstroke Boys (11-12)
3. 100 M IM Girls (13-14)
4. 100 M IM Boys (13-14)
5. 50 M Breaststroke Girls (15-18)
6. 50 M Breaststroke Boys (15-18)
7. 25 M Backstroke Girls (7-8)
8. 25 M Backstroke Boys (7-8)
9. 50 M Butterfly Girls (9-10)
10. 50 M Butterfly Boys (9-10)
11. 50 M Freestyle Girls (11-12)
12. 50 M Freestyle Boys (11-12)
13. 50 M Butterfly Girls (13-14)
14. 50 M Butterfly Boys (13-14)
15. 50 M Backstroke Girls (15-19)
16. 50 M Backstroke Boys (15-19)
17. 25 M Freestyle Girls (7-8)
18. 25 M Freestyle Boys (7-8)
19. 50 M Breaststroke Girls (9-10)
20. 50 M Breaststroke Boys (9-10)
21. 100 M Ind. Medley Girls (11-12)
22. 100 M Ind. Medley Boys (11-12)
23. 50 M Breaststroke Girls (13-14)
24. 50 M Breaststroke Boys (13-14)
25. 100 M Freestyle Girls (15-18)
26. 100 M Freestyle Boys (15-18)

Event #

27. 25 M Butterfly Girls (7-8)
28. 25 M Butterfly Boys (7-8)
29. 50 M Backstroke Girls (9-10)
30. 50 M Backstroke Boys (9-10)
31. 50 M Butterfly Girls (11-12)
32. 50 M Butterfly Boys (11-12)
33. 50 M Backstroke Girls (13-14)
34. 50 M Backstroke Boys (13-14)
35. 100 M Ind. Medley Girls (15-18)
36. 100 M Ind. Medley Boys (15-18)
37. 25 M Breaststroke Girls (7-8)
38. 25 M Breaststroke Boys (7-8)
39. 50 M Freestyle Girls (9-10)
40. 50 M Freestyle Boys (9-10)
41. 50 M Breaststroke Girls (11-12)
42. 50 M Breaststroke Boys (11-12)
43. 50 M Freestyle Girls (13-14)
44. 50 M Freestyle Boys (13-14)
45. 50 M Butterfly Girls (15-18)
46. 50 M Butterfly Boys (15-18)
47. 200 M Mixed Free Relay - 40 yr
48. 200 M Mixed Medley Relay 40 yr
49. 200 M Medley Relay Girls 52 yr
50. 200 M Medley Relay Boys 52 yr
51. 200 M Free Relay Girls - 66 yr
52. 200 M Free Relay Boys - 66 yr

Swimming Links & Reference

USA Swimming

<http://www.usaswimming.org/usasweb/DesktopDefault.aspx>

Local Year-round programs:

Towards the end of the season year round swim clubs will send us their fall and winter information. This information will be posted on the bulletin board in the HHSC lobby. If additional program guides are sent we will place them in the Heart Beat box next to the bulletin board for you to take. If you would like a complete list of the USA Swimming/Michigan Swimming clubs in the area please refer to the Michigan Swimming website.

Michigan Swimming

<http://www.uss-michigan.com/>

“10 Commandments for Swimming Parents”

by Rose Snyder, Managing Director Coaching Division, USOC
Former Director of Club Services, USA Swimming
(adapted from Ed Clendaniel's 10 Commandments for Little League Parents)

I. Thou shalt not impose thy ambitions on thy child.

Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push him based on what you think he should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do his personal best and benefit from the process of competitive swimming.

II. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what.

There is only one question to ask your child after a practice or a competition - "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

III. Thou shalt not coach thy child.

You are involved in one of the few youth sports programs that offers professional coaching. Do not undermine the professional coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to provide love and support. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. Never pay your child for a performance. This will only serve to confuse your child concerning the reasons to strive for excellence and weaken the swimmer/coach bond.

IV. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet.

You should be encouraging and never criticize your child or the coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made. Remember “yelling at” is not the same as “cheering for”.

V. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears.

New experiences can be stressful situations. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event or meet if your child was not ready. Remember your job is to love and support your child through all of the swimming experience.

VI. Thou shalt not criticize the officials.

Please don't criticize those who are doing the best they can in purely voluntary positions.

VII. Honor thy child's coach.

The bond between coach and swimmer is special. It contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child.

VIII. Thou shalt be loyal and supportive of thy team

It is not wise for parents to take swimmers and to jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer in another team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team find that it can be a difficult emotional experience. Often swimmers who do switch teams don't do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

IX. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning.

Most successful swimmers have learned to focus on the process and not the outcome. Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else did it too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. Does this make me a failure? No, in fact I am very proud of that swim." What a tremendous outlook to carry on through life.

X. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian.

There are 250,000 athletes in USA Swimming. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are about .0002%.