Chelmsford Swimming And Tennis Club-Handbook

2008

CS&T
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Greetings from Coach Josh Blagg

Welcome to the 2008 Swimming season with the Chelmsford Swim and Tennis Club's Swim Team! I look forward to a great season full of fun and success.

The rich tradition of teaching fundamentals, work ethic, and sportsmanship began with the arrival of Allen Thomas to the club around 1975. Al was manager and swim coach for twenty years and established this proud tradition. He also coached the boys and girls high school teams at Chelmsford High to numerous league titles. It is through his passion and leadership that the club became a model for swim teams in the area.

A disciple of Coach Thomas is Joshua Blagg, the current manager and swim coach. Coach Josh learned how to swim at the club, swam for Coach Thomas at the high school level, and has gone on to continue the rich winning tradition at the club. Coach Josh teaches at Chelmsford High School, coaches the Chelmsford High girls in the fall and Chelmsford High boys in the winter. He has recently completed his twenty-first year working at the club and has been the head swim coach since 1995.

Colonial League

CS&TC competes in the Colonial Swimming League from late June through the first weekend in August. The league consists of five area teams including Westford Swim & Tennis, Wedgewood Club (Bedford), The Heritage Pool & Racquet Club (Concord), and Wayland Swim & Tennis Club. There are five dual meets, an All Star meet where swimmers are chosen according to times, a Colonial Classic meet for those not competing in All Stars, and the Colonial League Championships which culminates the season.

Important note: In order to be eligible for the Championships, a swimmer must compete in at least two dual meets.

The ages of swimmers range from 17 to under 6 years of age. There are six different age groups: 17 and under, 14 and under, 12 and under, 10 and under, 8 and under, and 6 and under.

Welcome to CS&T SwimTeam 2008

Forget about winter, it's time to swim! This year the CS&T Swim Team is better than ever and ready to dominate yet again. Inside you'll find the following swimming information:

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CS&T Swimming Tradition

Chelmsford has a rich tradition in the sport of swimming. It is well known throughout the state and in New England for its continued success. The Chelmsford Swim & Tennis Club has been the integral breeding ground for champion high school and college swimmers for years.

The club swim team has been perennial powers in the Colonial League for over twenty years. In fact the swim team has captured the league championship in twenty- four of the last twenty-seven years with a record twenty consecutive titles. Over the years many of the club's swimmers have gone on to high school teams, junior national teams, senior national teams, Division I, II, and II college swim teams, and even 3 swimmers who have qualified for the Olympic Trials.

Not only are many of our swimmers excellent swimmers, but also many go on to excellent colleges. Our alumni frequently attend universities such as Harvard, Brown, Yale, Holy Cross, U.S. Naval Academy, and Boston College. It seems that there is a direct correlation between swimming and excellent academics!

There are 5 regular swim meets, an All-Star meet, Championships and Colonial Classics.

2008 CS&T Swim Team Schedule

Colonial League Schedule 2008 – Final

June 21, Saturday	8:30/9:30 am Wedgewood @ Chelmsford
June 28, Saturday	8:30/9:30 am Chelmsford @ Heritage
June 30, Monday	12/1 diving @ Heritage
July 7, Monday	12/1 pm Diving @ Westford
July 12, Saturday	8:30/9:30 am Chelmsford vs. TBA
July 14, Monday	12/1 pm Diving All-Stars @ Chelmsford (Raindate 15th)
July 16, Wednesday	4/5 pm Swimming All-Stars @ Wayland (Raindate 17th)
July 19, Saturday	8:30/9:30 am Wayland @ Chelmsford
July 21, Monday	12/1 pm Diving @ Wayland
July 23, Wednesday	4/5 pm Colonial Classic @ Westford (Raindate 24th)
July 26, Saturday	8:30/9:30 am Chelmsford @ Westford
July 28, Monday	12/1 pm Diving Championships @ Wedgewood (Raindate 7/29)
August 1, Friday	8:30/9:30 am Championship Trials @ Heritage
August 2, Saturday	8:30/9:30 am Championship Finals @ Heritage

* Russell Mill meet is still to be scheduled

season Events

See the schedule for dates and times

Practices - There are two different practices that run each day Monday through Friday. One practice is for children who are 11 and under, and the other practice is for those who are 12 and over. Practice times are as follows:
From mid June through the end of school:
3:30 - 4:30 - ages 12 -17
4:30 - 5:30 - ages 11 and under
After school ends through Championships:
9 - 10 a.m. - ages 11 and under
10 - 11 a.m. - ages 12 - 17

Swim Team Cookout/Parent Meeting/Job Sign-Up
There is a meeting after practice sessions start to orient parents to the team. Coach Josh addresses the parents and there are experienced parents there to meet with you and answer questions. The handbook is distributed at this meeting. Parents sign up for the various jobs necessary to conduct the meets on the swim team sign-up form (usually distributed in the first newsletter of the year). Volunteers run the meets, therefore, each family is responsible for volunteering during at least two meets each season.

Communications

Each team family will have a "mailbox" in the clubhouse (2 crates containing folders labeled with the family's last name). All team communications and the swimmer's ribbons will be placed in this folder, PLEASE check it daily. Parent volunteer assignments will be posted on the swim team bulletin board the week prior to the meet. Assignments will also be placed in the mailboxes, and a reminder email will be sent.

Suit/Equipment Orders
Tricon Sports of Lexington will come to the club in mid-June to take suit orders. Caps and goggles will also be available for purchase at this time.

Awards Cookout
There is an annual season ending awards cookout out following the championship meet on the first Saturday of August. This cookout allows swimmers, coaches, and parents a chance to celebrate and reflect on another great season.

Why Swimming is Great

Swimming is one of the best sports for the general conditioning of athletes. Many athletes in other sports use swimming for cross training to enhance their cardio-vascular and aerobic development in a low physical-impact environment.

For many of the swimmers, this will be their first experience with physical training. Swimming is different from game sports in that the majority of time is spent on training and skills-improvement over team performance. The swimmers gradually refine the physical and emotional skills necessary to sustain an increasing level of work during practice. They also learn a different, but related, set of skills necessary to retain focus and intensity during a race. Their hard work is rewarded by electronically timed proof of improvement. We like to think of it as a process of getting good – at getting better.

Excerpted from AB Town Team Handbook.

What Happens at Practice

CS&T practices 5 days per week from 9:00 am at the club pool. Coach Josh prefers that parents keep a low profile during practice after the first day. He considers practice to be a learning environment similar to school, where full attention to the instructor is required.

Naturally enough, parents are curious about what a typical practice looks like for their child, so here's a synopsis. At the beginning of the season, each swimmer sets individual goals based on their performance in time trials and the first meets. Josh has several assistant coaches drawn from the ranks of high school and college swimmers. These assistants typically have 6-10 years of experience in swim programs. Each coach is assigned to work with a group of swimmers developing their strokes, coordinating the session, and helping them work toward their goals, under Josh's general supervision.

The swimmers go through a mixture of dry-land exercises, interval training, and fun water activities, all appropriate to their age group. Don't know what interval training is? (We tried to sneak that term in on you.) Each swimmer has a target amount of yardage to complete during a practice. However, it is not swum all at the same time. After a warm up of a certain number of laps, the swimmers begin practice by performing shorter swims of 1, 2, 4, or 8 laps (for example). Each of these swims is timed against the pace clock on the wall of the pool.

The swimmers do a set of swims with a rest interval between each swim or they perform each swim in the set at a given interval of time, such as every 2 minutes. At the end of a set, they monitor their heart rates and have a longer rest period. The intervals gradually decrease during the season and the swimmers increase their capacity to sustain a higher performance level during a race in this way.

Parent Survival Techniques

Get to know the parents in your child's age group. It's fun to watch how the swimmers progress during the season. Talk to people as you perform your jobs during the meets. Car pool with other families to practice and meets. You'll find that you become interested in the progress of other swimmers in their individual events and especially on the relays.

Know your swimmer's times and which events they usually swim. Races are timed to one hundredth of a second. The swimmers all know their best times and expect you to be aware when they do better, even if it's just a couple of hundredths difference. They gradually develop a swimming vocabulary in which times, distances, and strokes play a central role. It's a good opportunity to reach out and communicate with your child in a new way.

Know ahead of time how to respond to good and bad races. The swimmers work very hard in practice, so when they improve by a small amount, it's very significant. It proves to them that hard work makes them better. Let them know you're proud. Conversely, remember that a poor time or losing a race has an impact on them as well. It's a rare instance where, negative remarks or attitudes help. Be ready with your personal beliefs about dealing with adversity and use it as a chance to communicate with them.

"It's too hard..." They're right, practice is challenging. Try to encourage them to go to practice as often as possible given their capacity to handle it. The key is to be able to practice with a good degree of intensity. Rather than quitting, make adjustments to the number of times per week, or alternate the number of times one week to the next. Don't make them go through the motions and attend with mediocre performance. It's a good way to talk about the importance of focusing and attitudes toward hard work in preparation for experiences where such skills are critical - such as in school.

Contact Information. The best way to get information and have your questions answered is to talk to other parents or the coaches at practice or at the meets.

Meets!

At swimming meets, the swimmers display the product of all their hard work. Considering travel time, warmups, locker room time, and the time it takes to run through the events, meets can take up 3, 4, or more hours in a day. A lot depends on the number of swimmers on each team, however the pace of events is very fast (See *A Typical Meet*). You'll be required to sign up to work one of the jobs during the meets (listed elsewhere in this handbook). Don't worry, the jobs are pretty easy and they can help get you closer to the action.

The actual swimming takes place in a series of events and heats. The 60 events (that's right, six-oh) are organized into 5 age group levels for boys and girls. The events include all four strokes, the individual medley (Fly, Back, Breast, and Free in one race), and relays. The swimmers race in heats (or races) of six at a time. There may be several heats in one event, but points are tabulated for only the first heat. The teams have swimmers in alternate lanes. The order of events for town swim meets is as follows:

- 100 Yard Graduated Medley Relay
- Butterfly
- Freestyle
- 100 yard Individual Medley (9 years and over)
- Breaststroke
- Backstroke
- Freestyle Relays (100 yards for 10-and-unders and 200 for 11 and above)

The 10-and-unders swim 25 yards in their races. 11 and above swim 50 yards. 15 and over swim 100 yards in freestyle only; 50 yards in other 3 strokes. The IM is always 100 yards, one length per stroke.

Absences – If your swimmer is not going to be at a meet, please inform a coach in advance. State the swimmer's name and the date of the meet that will be missed.

Transportation – **All swimmers must arrange their own transportation to the meets – home and away**. We do not provide bus service for the swimmers.

Warm Up - Warm up is important because it prepares the swimmer's body for competition and reduces the chance of muscle pulls and strains. Make sure you are at the pool for home meets one hour before the start of the meet.

False Starts, Stroke Judging, and DQs – The swimmers can't move on the blocks after the starter says, "Swimmers take your mark." If they do, or if they jump in, that's a false start. They get one false start and then they're out of the race. Also, there are judges who evaluate their stroke as they race according to the rules of swimming. The coaches teach them the proper techniques, but, if they vary too much, they will be disqualified. There's no shame in getting DQ'd, it's a learning experience that happens to everyone who swims competitively.

What events do they swim – Typically, Coach Josh and his staff place the swimmers in two individual events at a dual meet according to his estimate of how their ability helps the team. They may also be placed in a relay.

Scoring – Only the first heat scores points. The points are allocated this way: 1st = 6, 2nd = 4, 3rd = 3, 4th = 2, 5th = 1. Relays: 1st = 7, 2nd = 3 (most points for one team is 7).

Relays – Relays are the most fun! Four swimmers go off one after another until they all have swum. The graduated medley relay includes four age groups doing four different strokes in this order: back, breast, fly, free. Generally, the lead changes frequently, so the excitement gets pretty intense. Be ready for some noise!

Parent's Jobs

Age Group Coordinator
Age Group Coordinators are responsible for

- communications with the parents in the age group
- tracking best times and delivering Personal Best ribbons and other achievement awards for a set of swimmers in their age group

Starter (requires certification)

- Calls each event and heat to the starting blocks.
- Announces the event and distance.
- Alerts the timers to clear their watches back to zero.
- Coordinates with the timing system operator.
- Keeps other swimmers and the crowd quiet for the start of each race.
- Watches for false start movement prior to the start.
- Calls the events in the following manner:
    - Swimmers step up on the blocks.
    - Watches back to zero.
    - Swimmers take your mark.
    - Presses the start button.
- Calls the swimmers back after false starts using the recall procedure.

Stroke & Turn Judge (requires certification)

Usually each team supplies one judge.

- Ensures that the rules of the Winter Suburban League and USS are followed correctly.
- Observes the swimmers in the closest three lanes as he or she walks along the side of the pool.
- Disqualifies swimmers who do not conform by raising one arm and notifying the timer in the swimmer's lane to mark "DQ" on the event card.
- Informs the swimmer of the DQ and provides explanation.
- Judges false starts in relay events.
- Has the final say in settling disputes involving league rules and regulations.

Scorer (1 head scorer and 3 assistant scorers for home meets)

The scorer records points for each team as the event cards and electronic timing printouts are handed in. He or she records the name, time, and points awarded to each swimmer for each team. A cumulative score is figured as the meet progresses and is recorded after each event. The events are scored as follows: 6-4-3-2-1 in individual events and 7-3 in relay events (only one relay scores per team). Only first-heat swimmers score, but all other swimmers must be recorded on the "unofficial heat" sheets.

Ribbon Writer

After the scorer has placed the cards, they are handed to the ribbon writer to complete the ribbons. Using the information on the swimmer's card, they fill out the back of the ribbon with the swimmer's name, the date, the meet, the stroke, length, and finally, the swimmer's time for that particular event. The ribbons are then separated by teams and placed in their respective bins.

Timers (2 per lane from CS&T at home meets plus one backup; 1 per lane at away meets)

- One timer receives the event cards for each swimmer, verifies the swimmers name, and records the stopwatch times for the heat. All timers operate their stopwatches to time the heats.
- Pays close attention to the starter.
- Starts the stopwatch at the sound of the starter's horn and/or flash of light from the timing system.
- Stops the watch immediately as the swimmer touches the wall.
- After the race is completed, records the swimmer's time in the space provided, then passes the card to the runner.
- Clears the watch and prepares for the next race.

A timer acts in the following sequence:

1. Waits to receive the event card from the runner or swimmer.
2. Makes sure that the lane indicated on the event card is the same lane.
3. Puts the watch back to zero for the start of each race.
4. Starts the watch at the sound of the starter's horn.
5. Observes the swimmer and progress of the event.
6. Immediately stops the watch when the swimmer touches the wall.
7. Records the swimmer's time on the card and hands the card to the runner.

Runners (2 per home meet)

- Note: You can't actually run while doing this job, so it should be called something else. Since this is the coolest job at the meet, it's reserved for the coolest parents (or those who want to be associated with them;).
- For 25-yard races, collects the swimmers event cards (from both teams) as the swimmers approach the starting blocks and takes them to the timers at the opposite end of the pool. After the race, the runner collects the cards and brings them to the scorer's table.
- For 50 yard races, collects the cards after the race and brings them to the scorer's table.

Concessions

The snack bar is a popular and successful fundraiser for the team. Parents running the snack bar are asked to sell food, make change, and count the total sales at the end of the meet. All proceeds are used by the club to purchase supplies or support the team in some way.

A TYPICAL HOME MEET

Sometimes its more fun to watch us parents at a meet than the swimmers! Here's what to look for as we progress through a typical meet.

1. The coaches have made out event cards before the meet. Each card has the name of each swimmer, the event he or she will be in, and a place to record their time. Well before the start of each race, the Coaches hand the cards to the swimmers who will be in each event. You will see each swimmer holding and waving the card nervously in anticipation.
2. The swimmers line up 3 or 4 deep behind the starting blocks (referred to as the 'bullpen') prior to each race. Just before they climb onto the starting block, they hand the card to the runner for, 12.5 – or 25-yard races or one of the timers for 50-yard races. (The runner or timer should ask them their name to make sure they are in the right race, if possible.)
3. For 12.5- or 25-yard races, the runner brings the cards to the other end of the pool to the timers. This has to happen fast, but the interesting thing is that *there's no running on pool decks*! The savvy swimming spectator knows to look to runners for ballet-like, high-energy moves as they make their way down the pool deck. (Don't worry; we have the system all worked out.)
4. When the previous race finishes, the starter tells the swimmers to take the blocks. He or she asks the timers if they are ready and if their watches have been set back to zero. The timers check their watches. If there is a problem, they raise their hand and the starter will wait. One timer has a clipboard with the swimmers card.
5. The starter calls the start of the race, watching for false starts. The stroke and turn judges watch the swimmers in the 3 lanes on their side of the pool for correct technique. These judges call a DQ by holding up one arm and notifying the timers in the DQ lane to mark it on the event card.
6. At the finish, all timers stop their watch clocks, A timer records all watch clock times on the event card and hands the card to the runner. (Runner is definitely the coolest job!) The runner, *again without running*, brings the event cards.
7. Meanwhile, at the scorers' table, points are awarded according to the order of finish as listed by the middle time of the three times recorded by the timers, or if only two times are recorded, the average of the two clock times. The scorer records the points for each team on the meet results sheet.
8. Then it's all repeated. (We won't say how many times. Hint: It's a lot!)
9. As the meet progresses, the snack bar coordinators are raising money via the sale of nutritious victuals to help pay for it all.

That's all there is to it! A piece of cake.

Away Meets

At away meets, we can relax a little more. We provide one timer per lane, a stroke and turn judge, and sometimes a scorer or ribbon writer. The home team handles everything else.

Directions to Meets

Maps to be distributed before each meet.

Championships and Colonial Classic
Held at one of the league pools on a rotational basis. Location will be posted well in advance.

Wedgewood Swim and Tennis Club 85 Page Road, Bedford MA
From Chelmsford, take Rt. 4 towards Bedford. Take a left onto Pine Hill Road and follow to a 4 way stop. Straight across to Page Road. Wedgewood club is at the intersection of Page and Brooksbie Road. Take a left into the parking lot.

Westford Swim and Tennis Club 250 Littleton Road, Westford MA 978-692-7597
Rt. 110 (Littleton Road) towards Westford/Littleton, past the main intersection at Carlisle/Boston Road to the Westford Swim and Tennis Club just ahead on the left.

Heritage Pool and Racquet Club Old Bedford Road (Rt. 62) Concord, MA 978-369-6461
From Concord, take Rt. 2A towards Lexington. Take a left onto Rt. 62 (Old Bedford Road) and immediately pass an antique home (Joseph Meriam House) on your right. Past fields on either side of the road, take your first left at the vertical Heritage sign under a tree. Pool parking to the left.

From Chelmsford, Rt. 4 south towards Bedford. Take a right onto Rt. 62 just before Bedford Center (and just past the Volkswagen dealership). Follow until you reach a Y in the road at Pine Tree Farm. Bear left at the Y and Pass Meriam Road on your right. The next right is the Heritage Club. Pool parking to the left.

Wayland Swim and Tennis Club 228 Glezen Lane Wayland, MA
From Rt. 2, turn south onto Rt 126 toward Walden Pond. Proceed 4.9 miles until you come to Glezen Lane. Take a left onto Glezen and go 1.1 miles. Turn left into a wide driveway, marked with a blue mailbox with WSTC on it.

From Rt. 117, turn south on Rt. 126. Proceed 2.5 miles until you come to Glezen Lane. Take a left onto Glezen and go 1.1 miles. Turn left into a wide driveway, marked with a blue mailbox with WSTC on it.