

CHERRY VALLEY SWIM TEAM

2011 - NEW PARENTS GUIDE

This guide was prepared to familiarize parents with the activities of our swim team. We hope to present an overview of our team and how we are integrated within the Tri-County Swimming Association.

Tri-County Swimming Association, of which Cherry Valley Swim Club is a member, is comprised of 36 swim clubs in Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester counties. For the purpose of competitive swimming, the league is divided into six divisions each with six teams. The divisions are designated A through F, with A division being the most competitive. In 2011 Cherry Valley will compete in the "F" Division.

"A" Meets Each summer, the six teams in each division compete in meets on Saturday mornings. The meets are known as "A-meets." There are five meets scheduled for each team; each team in the division swims every other team once. Some meets are at home; others are at the pool of the opposing team. The win-loss record in these meets determines the team standing in each division. Each year, the team with the most wins moves up a division, the team with the most losses moves down a division. In this manner, the composition of each division changes yearly. Not every swimmer will swim. However, the coaches will make every effort to swim everyone at least once. "A" Meets begin at 9:00 a.m. and usually run until about 12:00 noon. Our coaches will usually require that the swimmers be at the pool (home or away) at least by 7:30 a.m.

Swim Team Practice begins after the club opens on Memorial Day. The swimmers practice after school for an hour. When the school year ends, practices will be in the morning for the duration of the swim season. All practice sessions are under the supervision of our coaching staff. Practices are divided into sessions based on age and ability. The coaching staff will determine which practice a swimmer should attend. All swimmers are expected to attend practice. ***Our coaches are Red-Cross certified and available to give private lessons at a small cost. Contact them directly if you are interested.***

Parent Responsibilities In addition to the swimmers having the responsibility of attending practice, parents of swimmers also have certain responsibilities. We cannot have an effective team without parental involvement. The swim team committee is comprised of parents who have volunteered to coordinate the swim team activities for the season. However, we cannot do all the work alone. Many parents are needed each week to conduct a meet. ***Every family MUST contribute to the swim team program*** by volunteering for meet or fund raising activities. Every family will be assigned items to be brought to meets for our snack bar. If you are asked to provide soda, donuts, etc., please bring these early.

Volunteers Aside from our coaches, no one involved in the swim team is paid. For the program to be a success, we need AND REQUIRE contributions from every family. For each "A" and "B" meet we need parents to set up equipment and the facility, serve as timers, referees, starters, stroke and turn judges, score keepers, record keepers, announcers, ribbon writers, "team parents" to supervise swimmers and also parents to organize our fund raising activities. We need parents to assist in planning the swim team banquet, Pep Rally Pasta Nights, Cherry Bowl and Tri County Championships. As parents, we should all join together and share the burden of the work to be done.

Team Gift Each year the bulk of our fund raising activity is directed toward purchase of a team gift. The purchase of these gifts (usually around \$20) for nearly 100 swimmers is a substantial expense. One of our rules is that, if a swimmer does not participate in the required number of meets, or his or her parents do not volunteer or contribute to the swim team program, then the parent will reimburse the swim team the sum of \$30.00 per swimmer.

Meet Officials Not all of the volunteer positions require a specific skill. However, for those that do (referees, starters, etc.), the Tri-County Swimming Association sponsors clinics prior to the beginning of swim season. Parents are urged to attend one or more of these clinics in order to become certified in their area of interest.

"B" Meets In addition to Saturday morning meets there are four Wednesday evening "B" meets during the season. The opposing teams are not a team from the same division; usually the competitors are chosen because of their close geographic proximity to Cherry Valley. The Wednesday "B" meets are considered developmental meets for the swimmers. No score is kept at these meets. However each swimmer will receive a ribbon for individual events swum. Generally, the less experienced swimmers are featured at these meets. "B" Meets generally begin at 6:00 p.m. and you will be required to have your child(ren) at the appropriate pool by 4:45.

The Swim Team The swim team is comprised of swimmers as young as age five through eighteen. For the purpose of age groups, the child's age on June 15 determines the age group in which the child will swim. The age groups are 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-18, separated by sex. A child may swim in his own age group or in an older age group, but never in a younger age group.

The Events Each "A" meet consists of 66 events. We are allowed to have a maximum of three swimmers or relay teams in each event. There are medley relays, individual medley events, freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly, and freestyle relay events. In each dual meet, a swimmer is limited to participating in two relay and two individual events. Ribbons are awarded to the winning relay team in each event and to the top four finishers in individual events. Points are awarded to each team for the first place relay team and for the first three finishers in individual events. A swimmer who earns points in an individual event on a Saturday meet may not swim the same stroke in the same age group in a Wednesday evening meet. Some of the events in a "B" meet are the same as the "A" meets. There are other events with distances unique to the "B" Meets. "B" meet times cannot qualify a swimmer for the Tri-County Championships.

Directions to Meets Prior to the first meet, parents will be given a schedule of meets for the remainder of the swim season. Parents will also receive a packet containing directions to all away meets. Parents are encouraged to attend away meets as well as home meets.

Be on Time Please make sure swimmers arrive 15 minutes before assigned practice time. This allows the swimmers time to put on caps, goggles, and time to go to the bathroom. PRACTICE WILL START ON TIME!!!! If parents are unable to attend an away meet, or wish to arrive at the meet later than swimmers are required to be there, it is the responsibility of the parent to arrange transportation for his swimmer. Please don't just leave a child at the pool and expect that he will get to the meet. It is not fair to the child or other parents.

Behavior and Sportsmanship Please remind your swimmers about good sportsmanship, respect for other swimmers, and their property. Our coaches cannot be expected to run practices or meets and be disciplinarians to unruly children at the same time.

Championship Meets After the regular swim season there are two additional meets: Cherry Bowl and Tri-County Championships. Cherry Bowl is a meet in which only the 13 Cherry Hill clubs participate. However, each club may only enter one child for each event plus a relay team for each age group. The swimmers chosen to participate are at the discretion of the coaching staff. Swimmers usually earn their Cherry Bowl spots by swimming best times in their age groups. Swimmers qualify to swim in the Tri-County Championship Meet by swimming as fast as or faster than the qualifying times that are announced each year by the Tri-County Association. Tri-County meet swimmers are limited to two individual events. In addition a relay team for each age group participates, regardless of entry time. A child may also swim in two relays. Parents of swimmers who participate in Cherry Bowl or Tri-County are expected to fill official positions as designated by the host club.

A few words of advice to parents and children who attend Championship meets: The meets are longer in duration than a regular season meet and the time between events in which a swimmer participates can be lengthy. Swimmers should be sure to bring something to occupy their time while waiting to swim. Many bring a book, game or even small radio to keep busy. Be sure also to bring an extra towel or blanket on which to sit. Each team's area is usually small, however there are many teams at each meet. Children should stay with the team to be sure they are available when races are announced. Although these meets are very organized and well orchestrated, it can be confusing and overwhelming to a young child. Snacks are always sold at these meets, however you should send a cooler with water or juice and perhaps a small snack.

Cherry Bowl: Parents, unless you want to sit in bleachers, which directly overlook the pool and usually fill up early in the day, you should bring a folding chair for yourself (especially if you want to be sure to get a space in the shade!). You can go to the pool area prior to your child's event.

Tri County: Swimmers not selected or qualified to compete in the championship meets are still welcome to participate in the team parades that precede the championship meets, and are encouraged to be spectators, and cheer on their teammates.

Mini/Midi Meets In addition to the Championship meets, there are a few mini-meets for younger swimmers during the season. Our Club does not send an entire team, however if you are interested and would like your child to participate, please contact the coaching staff for details.

Awards Banquet The culmination of our season is an Awards Ceremony. All swimmers and their families may attend. Additional details will be announced later in the season. Each swim team member will receive recognition and there will be other special awards. To qualify for the team gift, each swimmer must participate in a minimum of two meets **and** his or her parents must contribute to the program.

Questions or Suggestions We are happy to hear your constructive suggestions. Please feel free to contact any of our swim team parents' committee members or coaches.