

Karishim Swim Team 2011-2012

Swimmer/Parent Handbook



Leventhal-Sidman Jewish Community Center

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WELCOME!

Welcome to the Karishim Swim Team and thank you for your interest and support. When a child joins a swim team, the whole family joins the swim team. The time and energy required by the swimmer and family is considerable. However, the lessons and rewards can be priceless and lifelong. This handbook is designed to familiarize swimmers and their families with the world of competitive swimming and to answer questions that parents and swimmers may have.

Karishim Swim Team

Karishim Swim Team is a competitive program offered by the Leventhal-Sidman JCC. The team incorporates all of the JCC philosophies promoting values while developing a healthy spirit, mind, and body. The program is offered to children ages 6-18. Eligible swimmers must be able to swim USA legal front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke for the length of a 25-yard pool without stopping. The team practices at two facilities; the Leventhal-Sidman JCC and the Regis College.

The coaching staff strives to provide opportunities for young athletes to learn life skills, to develop his or her character, and to learn as much about the sport of swimming as he or she wishes. Our coaching philosophy can be summarized as follows:

We strive to:

1. Provide a fun and enjoyable environment.
2. Demonstrate that competition and being part of a team can be fun.
3. Provide an opportunity for personal and social development.
4. Teach responsible behavior.
5. Teach swimmers to be respectful of coaches, teammates, competitors, as well as themselves.
6. Provide an opportunity for leadership.
7. Meet each child at his/her level of commitment and ability.
8. Provide an opportunity for swimmers to excel in the sport.
9. Introduce young people to competitive swimming.
10. Encourage lifetime involvement in sports and physical activity.

EXPECTATIONS

Behavior

Swimmers are expected to be on their best behavior while representing the Karishim Swim Team. This includes behavior during practice sessions, meets, and all team-related functions.

During practice hours, swim team members are not allowed to be unsupervised in off-limit areas. These areas include but are not limited to the fitness center, coaches' office, and locker rooms. Use of JCC property belonging to other departments is off-limits unless otherwise given permission.

The following behavior WILL NOT be tolerated:

- Inappropriate language anywhere in the building or during team events
- Excessive horseplay or noise in locker rooms and/or other areas of the JCC
- Disrespecting of coaches, teammates, competitors, meet supervisors, JCC staff or JCC members
- Intentional damage of facility or equipment
- Theft
- Violent behavior

Goal Setting

Each swimmer will have the opportunity to set goals for the swimming season. These goals will be discussed with the coaches and reviewed and updated periodically.

Swim Practice Expectations – Practices are the most important part of swim team. The purpose of practice is to improve the swimmer's technique, endurance, and speed. This does not come quickly or easily, therefore, attendance is crucial.

- All swimmers are expected to be on deck (sitting on the bleachers), dressed and ready to swim five minutes prior to the start of practice. It is important to be on time so coaches can begin practice.
- SWIMMERS MAY NOT GET IN THE WATER PRIOR TO PRACTICE STARTING.
- Swimmers are expected to bring a bathing cap, goggles, swimsuit, towel, and a water bottle to practice.
- Swimmers are expected to stay for the entire practice session. Leaving early and arriving late can be disruptive. If a swimmer must leave practice before the scheduled time, he/she must bring a signed note from a parent or guardian stating the time and the person who will be picking up the child. Otherwise, we cannot allow the swimmer to leave early.
- Swimmers improve with practice. Please be aware of the mandatory amount of practices required for your child's swim grouping per week.
- Swimmers should not leave gear in the locker room unless it is in a locked locker. The JCC is not responsible for lost items.
- Swimmers may not leave gear in the aquatics office during practices or meets. The office is for JCC staff only.
- No one under the age of 18 is allowed in the Men's or Women's Health Centers.
- Swimmers are expected to encourage and support their team mates at all times.

Swim Meet Expectations for Swimmers/Parents

1. Swimmers are expected to be on time for swim meets.
2. Swimmers must be prepared to enter the pool at their scheduled warm-up time, having already stretched with cap and goggles on.
3. Swimmers are expected to stay until the end of meets and sit with the team.
4. Inform coaches of illness/emergencies.
5. Parents are NOT allowed on deck unless volunteering.

Before Swim Meets

1. Practice hard to be ready to swim your best.
2. Turn in your Swim Meet Sign-Up Form to the Aquatics Office located in the gym by October 3. Swimmers who are not signed up on time will not be allowed to swim. It takes time to prepare the swim meet roster, so please make sure to hand this form in on time.

During Swim Meets

1. Show up fifteen minutes before warm-up. Parents are required to drive swimmers to all meets.
2. Bring the following:
 - a. Swim suit, cap, goggles, and towels.
 - b. Dry clothing (t-shirts, sweatshirt, and sweatpants as needed)
 - c. Foot apparel (flip-flops, sneakers)
 - d. Healthy snacks (there are usually concession stands at these events)
 - e. Water bottle
 - f. A positive attitude
3. Team Cheer: All swimmers are expected to stay to the end of the meet and complete the final cheer. After the final cheer, swimmers will be dismissed to leave.

Swim team parents who are assisting at the meets should wear comfortable clothes. Remember, it is a hot environment. At the Brookline pool flip-flops are required.

Nutrition

Proper nutrition is essential for all levels of swimmers. A balanced diet in accordance with the food pyramid is highly appropriate for young athletes. Foods low in saturated fats and simple sugars are recommended. Treats and non-nutritional foods are acceptable in moderation but are not appropriate as a primary source of nourishment at swim meets.

Staying hydrated helps the body perform at optimal levels and is a very important part of training and competition. Swimmers should bring a filled bottle of water or other non-carbonated, caffeine-free fluid to practice.

Illnesses and Injuries

It is important that parents of athletes inform their coaches of any chronic health issues, such as asthma, diabetes, etc., as well as acute injuries. All health-related conversations are strictly confidential.

Banquet & Other Social Events

The team hosts a banquet at the conclusion of the fall season. The banquet is a chance to celebrate and reflect on the accomplishments made by our entire team including our parents, coaches and most importantly swimmers. The Banquet is held at the end of the Fall/Winter season in the middle of March in the JCC Auditorium. All swimmers and their family members are invited to attend the event. A fee is charged to cover the cost of the food.

Other social events will be scheduled throughout the season. The team has a Hanukkah party where they participate in games and bond with one another. Dates for these events will be announced throughout the season.

Helpful Tips for Parents for a Successful Season

Leave the coaching to the coaches

Karishim Swim Team has selected its coaching staff based on their knowledge and experience in competitive swimming as well as their passion for the sport and their desire to train your child. Please be respectful of the coaches by doing your part to forge a good relationship with them. You can do this by:

- Approaching them with concerns and questions at appropriate times (before or after practice, never during practice times).
- Avoid giving your child conflicting coaching advice
- Watching practice from the upstairs vestibule. Parents ARE NOT allowed on the deck except in the event of an emergency.

Encourage but don't push

Most athletes have a desire to compete to the best of their ability and have certain goals that they strive to achieve. It is understandable for parents to also want their children to excel, but it is tremendously harmful for anyone to inflict too much pressure on a young athlete. Excessive pressure is counterproductive and can often lead to burnout and resentment.

Understand plateaus

Swimmers often improve steadily for a period of time and then reach a point at which improvement in performance does not come as easily as it once did. Coaches refer to this as "hitting a plateau." This is usually not an easy time for a swimmer, but with patience, determination, and, oftentimes, a rest period, he or she will sooner or later bounce back. It is important for parents to recognize when your child has hit a plateau, offer encouragement, and be supportive.

Make a commitment, but don't stretch yourself too thin

Karishim Swim Team and its coaching staff understand that being the parent of an involved swimmer requires a considerable amount of time. We also understand that the expenses can add up quickly.

To ease the potential strain, please consider:

- Setting up a carpool with other families in your neighborhood. KAP parents will be contacting people who wish to receive calls regarding carpools in their area.
- Taking advantage of the JCC's other facilities and programs (i.e. the weight room, aerobics classes, swim classes, swim lessons, family swim)

How can Parents help?

Opportunities exist for parents to help with the team. Please notify the coaches if you are interested in any of the following:

- Meet set-up and clean-up
- Timing or officiating at meets (training is provided)
- Record keeping
- Banquet planning
- Special event planning

Periodically we will hold parents meetings to keep everyone involved and informed about the team. You will be emailed about these meetings.

Coaches will primarily correspond with the team via email. Deadline-oriented information will be posted on the web-site as well. Please make sure to provide your email address so it will be placed on the email distribution list.

Parents should NEVER interrupt practices to communicate with coaches. Parents can email the Head Coach at karishim@jccgb.org or call at 617-558-6490. Emails as well as phone calls will be answered within 24 hours.

PRACTICE SCHEDULE

The coaching staff feels strongly that practice attendance demonstrates commitment to the program and is absolutely vital to a swimmer's success. Swimmers who do not attend practice regularly will experience less achievement and may be moved to a different practice group. The season runs from September 19-mid-March. All swimmers are encouraged to continue attending practice throughout the season which ends the week of the New England Championships.

Swimmers will be placed into practice groups based primarily on ability. Other factors such as age, emotional and physical development, and number of team members may also be considered. Groupings are not reflective of status or achievement but represent the best learning environment for your swimmer. The decision to place a swimmer in a specific practice group is solely that of the coaching staff. Parents should NOT question their child's practice group placement.

The following is a brief description of the practice groups:

- Novice: Beginners who are new to competitive swimming. We recommend 3 hours per week.
- Silver: Beginners with some stroke or competitive swimming experience. We recommend 3 hours per week.
- Gold: Intermediates with stroke and competitive swimming experience. We recommend 2-4 practices per week.
- Advanced Gold: Advanced swimmers. We recommend 3-5 practices per week.
- Senior/High School Group: Elite swimmers and most advance training. We recommend 4-5 practices per week.

2011-2012 Swim Team Practice Schedule

	Sunday*	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Novice/Silver	3:15-4:45pm	5-6pm	5-6pm	5-6pm	5-6pm	OFF
Gold	3:15-4:45pm	5-6:30pm	5-6:30pm	5-6:30pm	5-6:30pm	OFF
Adv. Gold/ Senior/ High School	3:15-4:45pm	6:30-8:15pm	6-8:15pm*	6:30-8:15pm	6-8:15pm*	4-5:45pm*

*Dryland practices are held on Tuesday and Thursday from 6-6:30 and on Friday from 4-4:45 for ADVANCED GOLD AND SENIORS ONLY!

**There are no Sunday practices on swim meet weekends.

Membership and additional fees

Full-Privilege JCC Membership Fee

All swim team participants MUST be full members throughout the duration of the swim season. Having a full-privilege membership entitles you to pay member rates on all other JCC programs.

Equipment Fee

Swimmers will have the opportunity to purchase team bathing suits, swim caps and t-shirts on September 27 from 5-6:30pm in the pool lobby.

COMPETITIVE SWIMMING SEASON

JCC League

We will compete in dual meets against other JCC teams of approximately the same size as Karishim Swim Team. At these meets, in addition to winning points for Karishim Swim Team, swimmers have the opportunity to achieve qualifying times for the US Regionals and New England Championship meets. Qualifying times can be made available to you by seeing the Head Coach.

JCC League Age Group Criteria

Swimmers will compete against other swimmers in their own age group. Occasionally, groups will be combined in order to save time at a swim meet. A swimmer's age as of November 15, 2011, will determine the age group that swimmer will compete in for the entire JCC swim season.

Age groups: ages 13 to 18 or still in high school
ages 11 & 12
ages 9 & 10
ages 8 & under

Dual Meets

Swim meets are typically held on Sunday afternoon and last about 4 hours. The dual meet season begins in November and will end in March.

For dual meets:

1. An individual swimmer may compete in three individual events or two individual events and two relays.

JCC Championship Information

There are no qualifying times for JCC Champs. It is mandatory for all swimmers to attend JCC Champs. Swimmers are allowed to swim three individual events or two individuals and two relays at the JCC Championship. There will be a team dinner the night before the championship meet. More details will be provided as the season continues.

Qualifying for JCC Championships (Must meet all two requirements)

1. Compete in three dual meets; and
2. Be a full member of Karishim Swim Team (Paid all swim team and membership fees).

US Swimming

Swimmers on the Karishim Swim Team can participate in the United States Swimming League by registering to be a part of the league and by paying the \$60 registration fee (made out to the JCC). An additional escrow of \$100 (made out to the JCC) will be needed to cover entry fees and championship meet fees. The escrow will be able to be used throughout the spring if you sign up for the full year. However, if money is leftover, and you are not signing up for the spring season, the money will not be refunded. **Swimmers who have paid the \$60 fee in the fall/winter season do not need to pay again; however, swimmers must pay the escrow fee as it does not carry over from season to season.**

These meets are held in the New England region, mostly in the local area. It is an incredible experience for all swimmers to participate in this league.

US Championship Information

US Championship meets require a qualifying time. If a swimmer qualifies, he/she should attend. All swimmers are invited to attend championship meets to cheer on their teammates.

Swimmers pay an entry fee for US Championship meets. At US Championship meets, swimmers are allowed to swim up to five events per day.

Qualifying for US Championships

1. Qualifying times are required in order to participate.
2. Compete in at least three US swim meets.

***Karishim Swim Team Calendar:** Please check the calendar on a regular basis for any updates.

****Stroke Clinics:** During the season stroke clinics will be available during school vacation holidays. Swimmers receive detailed instruction on strokes and skills. More information will be available soon.