

NORTH CHEVY CHASE SHARX
SWIMTEAM

HANDBOOK



Dear NCC Sharx Family,

Welcome to the NCC Sharx Swim Team and the Sharx Team Handbook! This handbook is designed to provide you with answers to most, if not all, of your questions about how the team works, how the Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL) works, and how we work together to give our Sharx a great season. Summer swim team is unique in spanning preschoolers through high school athletes for an intense two months of conditioning, improving, socializing, volunteering, and, most importantly, FUN!

We look forward to seeing you and your kids in the water this summer!

The Coaching Staff and Swim Reps

P.S. As the inaugural edition of the team handbook, we know this could use improvement! Please share your suggestions with us:

swimreps@nccspa.com

Thanks!

Handbook Executive Summary

We understand everyone is very busy, six things to know if you don't read the entire handbook. Please be sure to read sign Parent's Code of Conduct on Page 23 & give signed copy to the Swim Reps.

- 1. Swim Team Registration:** Please register your swimmer(s) online by the selected due date. The fee for joining the swim team is \$165 for the first swimmer* and \$135 for each additional swimmer in the family. The fee for joining pre-team is \$135 per swimmer. Swim fees include a free t-shirt (be sure to enter the t-shirt size on the registration page), and swim team social events. Parents who are unable to provide food donations for at least 2 home meets can pay an additional \$20 opt out fee with your check. All swimmers must be **registered by the selected due date** in order to participate in Time Trials and to receive a free t-shirt.

Please send your check made out to NCCSPA and mail to: NCCSPA c/o Maggie Sisti 3612 Littledale Road Kensington, MD 20895 (preferred) or leave your check in a sealed envelope in the designated folder in the pool kitchen/office.

- 2. Attendance & Swim Meet Protocol:** Swimmers are expected to attend every practice. At the beginning of the season, please log onto the swim team web site and identify which meets your child(ren) is available to swim throughout the entire season. Under "Events", "Edit Commitment" for a particular meet, and click on the appropriate box. If your status for a meet changes, you need to do **2 things**: change your response on the website AND email the coaches directly to be sure they have timely information for making meet lineups. You can email Coach Kevin at swimcoach@nccspa.com.
- 3. Parents & Volunteering:** MCSL, and the NCC Sharx, are all about families, community, and building swimming skills for healthy competition. The parents are just as important as the swimmers! It takes **over 30 parents** to run a meet, so this is an all-inclusive, all-hands-on-deck adventure each summer. Volunteering is critical but you can pick which jobs suit your family and your schedule the best. **Your family is expected to volunteer at least 8 times during the swim season.** We need the most help for "Home" meets (see website swim meet calendar). We recommend going to the NCC Sharx web site at the beginning of the season and sign up for your preferred jobs that fit your schedule before they are filled up. If something arises and you are unable to fulfill the 8 volunteer jobs expected per family, please email the swim team reps at: swimreps@nccspa.com. If you are unable to serve at a meet for which you have signed up, we ask and expect that you will secure a replacement.
- 4. Communication:** A minimum of one parent from each family must designate a primary email address to receive communications sent through the team website. We strongly encourage our older swimmers to also include their email address so that they receive communications directly, rather than relying on parents to convey important information. The team reps and coaches communicate regularly via email about all swim team events. We have over 100 kids on the swim team, if you have a concern, please don't raise it with the coaches during practice, as their focus and attention must be on the swimmers. We encourage you to set aside time separately. Also, be sure to check the bulletin board at the pool for periodic events and updates.
- 5. Practice Schedule & Time Trials:**
See the website calendar for Practice Times and Time Trial date.

Time trials are run as a mock swim meet to time each swimmer in each stroke. Swimmers who cannot participate in time trials are expected to swim at the next Wednesday night meet to have

an official time in each of the strokes. All swimmers must receive an official time before competing in a Saturday meet. Plan to arrive at 7:45am.

- 6. Team Picture:** See website calendar for Team Pictures date. Swimmers will wear the team t-shirt. Individual and sibling photos are available for those interested.

Introduction

The NCC Sharx Swim Team is a member of the Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL). The league consists of 14,000 kids on about 90 teams, distributed into 15 divisions of six teams each, ranked A - O. Division placement is determined by a computerized swim-off using times from the previous summer, the fastest team being placed at the top of Division A.

The league is open to any swimmer 18-years-old or younger (as of June 1st) who is a member of his or her pool. The majority of MCSL teams operate out of neighborhood-based pools similar to NCC in size and organization. However, there are also a few public pools in the league, which are operated by the Montgomery County Recreation Department. Country Clubs are not included in MCSL, as they have a separate league. MCSL has a well-defined set of rules and operating procedures, which are outlined in the MCSL Handbook, which is available at the league's web site www.mcsl.org. This website includes meet results, driving directions to pools, all-star rankings and more.

The NCC Sharx

The North Chevy Chase Swim Team is a community-based swim team striving to create a healthy, positive experience among community members while improving and growing as we compete in the pool against other teams. Our goal is to improve aquatic skills, while fostering good sportsmanship, teamwork, and having fun. Unique to summer swimming is the opportunity for children of a wide range of ages to compete on the same team. The older swimmers act as role models for the younger ones, who in turn grow up to do the same. Many of our coaches and lifeguards through the years have been current team members or Sharx alumni.

Expectations of Swimmers

In order to have fun, improve their swim skills, and contribute to the team, swimmers should read and follow a few simple guidelines, in addition to reading and signing the Swimmer Code of Conduct at the back of this handbook.

Attendance

- Swimmers are expected to attend practice every day.
- Arrive 5 minutes early to practice so that you are ready to go when practice starts. If you are late you may miss important announcements or some of the fun.
- If you are not available to swim a meet, please make sure the coaching staff knows you cannot participate! At the beginning of the season, please go to the NCC Sharx website, which is the cornerstone of our team communications, and note your availability or unavailability for all meets for the season. Under “Events”, “Edit Commitment” for a particular meet, and click on the appropriate box.
- If your status for a meet changes, you need to do 2 things: change your response on the website AND email the coaches directly to be sure they have timely information for making meet lineups.

Behavior

- Follow the coaches’ instructions during practice. They are experienced and only want you to be successful. The goal of swim team is for each swimmer to improve over the season and to have fun. These goals are easier to reach if you listen to the coaches.
- During meets, stay in the team area and follow instructions. Meets can be loud and confusing. Not following instructions may cause you to miss your race.
- After each race, stay in the water until all swimmers have touched the wall. Reach across the lane line to shake the hand of the swimmer next to you. Shark Shakes are an important part of who we are as fair and respectful competitors!
- Check in with a coach after each race. Upon exiting the pool, walk around to the side where the coaches are standing, and ask for feedback about your race. You may need to be patient as the coach may be watching another race or timing a swimmer. As soon as s/he can, s/he will give you helpful feedback on what went well and what

you can do differently next time. Seeing you swim at “race pace” is very helpful for the coach and s/he will give you good things to focus on at practice.

- Good sportsmanship is a must. Sportsmanship means keeping a positive attitude, working hard, and showing respect for your teammates and your opponents.
- Swimmers must clean up after themselves at all meets. It is important that the team area be left clean after a meet, regardless of whether the meet is home or away.

Nutrition

- Swimmers need to eat healthy food and drink plenty of water, especially during meets.
- At meets, donuts, candy, etc. are absolutely prohibited until a swimmer is done swimming for the day. Donuts and junk food make for good treats after all the day’s races are done. We suggest bagels, fruit, non-sugary cereal, etc. as good pre-meet foods.
- We suggest bringing a water bottle to meets and practices. It is easy to become dehydrated very quickly in the summer heat, even if you are in the pool. This is a good idea for parents and officials too.

Meet Preparation

- For Saturday meets, swimmers need to get a good night’s sleep on both Thursday and Friday nights. On Fridays, swimmers need to stay out of the sun and the heat. This means minimizing time spent hanging out at the pool. Junk food is also a bad idea on Fridays.
- For Wednesday meets, swimmers should get a good night’s sleep on Tuesday night. On the day of the meet, heat, sun, and junk food should be avoided.
- For each meet, we recommend you bring: 2 towels, 1-2 NCC caps, 1-2 goggles (in case one breaks), a water bottle, a healthy snack, sunscreen, and a sweatshirt or sweat pants (if the weather is cool). Keep your things together in a bag to minimize losing track of items.

Expectations of Parents

Parents are the backbone of the swim team. We ask that parents take a few simple steps to help the swim team run smoothly to ensure that it is a positive experience for the children.

- Read this handbook and sign the page at the back stating that you have done so.
- Read and sign the Parents' Code of Conduct at the back of this handbook. Place signed documents in the envelope on the team bulletin board.
- Stay informed of team news by reading your email and checking the website regularly – it is the core of our team communications! Pay particular attention to the meet lineups, which may come as an attachment, to ensure that you know if and what events your child is swimming. If you see an error (child scheduled to swim but will be out of town, for example) contact the coach immediately at swimcoach@nccspa.com. The meets have deadlines for lineup exchange that coaches must abide by, so they need as much advance notice as possible when your child isn't available.
- We also have a bulletin board on the bathhouse at the pool where information is regularly posted, including meet lineups.
- Make sure your swimmers have read and understood the above "Expectations of Swimmers" section as well as the Swimmer Code of Conduct.
- Volunteer for 8 jobs during the season (see below).
- At the beginning of the season, please go to the NCC Sharx website, which is the cornerstone of our team communications, and note your availability or unavailability for all meets for the season. Under "Events", "Edit Commitment" for a particular meet, and click on the appropriate box.
- If your child's status for a meet changes, you need to do 2 things: change your response on the website AND email the coaches directly to be sure they have timely information for making meet lineups.
**Monday Midnight is the deadline for making changes to your child's availability for the upcoming Wed/Sat meets online. If you are unable to change your child's availability here, email the coach directly at swimcoach@nccspa.com
- We encourage swimmers and their parents to communicate regularly with the coaches about their participation in meets and practices.

Parent Volunteers

MCSL, and each team in the league, could not exist without the help of parent volunteers. It takes 30 people from each team to hold a meet. In short, “It takes a village to run a swim meet.” This figure does not include the people needed to prepare for a home meet and coordinate the many non-meet team functions (Thursday Team Breakfasts, Fun Fridays, Age-Group Social events, Banquet, Shark Shop, photo-sharing & slide show production, etc.).

All parents are required to volunteer for 8 or more job assignments and encouraged to do more. If your schedule presents a challenge for service during a meet, please contact the Team Reps to make alternative arrangements. There are all kinds of ways you can help, but we need you to choose how you can best contribute... and then do so.

Can't make it to a Wednesday meet until it has already begun? Consider being a Ribbon Writer – there is little to do at the beginning of the meet for ribbon writers – or be a second-half timer, coordinating with someone who can do the first half of the meet. For home meets, be on the cleanup crew for Shark Bite Café and relieve those folks who arrived early to set up and worked the first half of the meet.

Can't make it to the meet at all? Here are a few ways you can help...

1. The Shark Bite Café could really use you! Help with the Costco shopping before each home meet. (Nannies can do this too!) Ice needs to be purchased before each home meet and delivered to the pool (i.e. run to Safeway at 6:30 AM to have ice to pool by 7AM for Saturday meets). (Save receipts for reimbursement!)
2. Or, help with the Banquet – someone needs to line up a caterer, track and collect registration money, create themed props and decorations, and we need lots of help on the day of the Banquet to set up.
3. Organize an age-group social event for your child's age group! These are an important way for the kids to get to know each other, as age groups change every year! Talk to the reps and schedule it for whenever fits with your schedule – a Sunday afternoon or weeknight (not Wednesday or Friday) is fine! Fun ideas include a trip to a movie and frozen yogurt, Shadowlands + pizza, or a BBQ!

Work from home or have little ones who aren't water-safe yet? Bring them along and help with our Thursday morning Breakfasts and Fun Friday activities! These are both pretty relaxed and are a great way to meet other parents and your kids' friends and teammates.

There are also a limited number of pre- and post-season tasks that you may help with such as helping with the design, order, and organization of team shirts for distribution, preseason supply purchases, pre and post season shed and team closet clean-out, for example.

While we encourage you to sign up for all of your volunteering duties at the beginning of the season, you may sign up for specific shifts throughout the season on line, and it is up to you to communicate your availability and preferred duties. If you don't see something posted, contact the reps. You will receive the brief training necessary to be effective at any of our volunteer positions. The team reps are always available to answer questions!

If you are unable to serve at a meet for which you have signed up, we ask and expect that you will secure a replacement.

Meet Volunteer Positions:

- **Clerk of Course** (check swimmers in before each event and escort them to the starting area, great way to learn kids' names!)
- **Timers** (with two other parents, keep time in one lane for each event; a focused job with the best view in the house! One break halfway through meet.)
- **Ribbon Writers** (put identifying stickers on each ribbon and file in the correct child's folder – this is a later-in-the-meet job, under the pavilion or often in a clubhouse, which affords easy opportunity to pop out to watch races or assist young children; always runs a bit beyond the end of the meet as final events are scored and processed).
- **Head Automation** (for home meets, combine teams' lineups Tuesday and Friday evenings to create a heat sheet and send to both coaches; work with coaches/reps to ensure official roster is current each week, at the meet, enter results into computer to generate results; alert announcer and reps to any new records set)

- **Automation Assistant** (take timer sheets and assist with scoring verification and post results as each event is completed)
- **Runner** (courier time sheets between timers and Automation table; great exercise!)
- **Meet Official** (each team supplies three officials per meet, requiring MCSL training and certification preseason, these include Starter, Stroke & Turn Judges, and Referee)
- Home meets also require an **Announcer** and **someone to perform the national anthem** (usually a swimmer who sings or plays an instrument)

Sharx Bite Café

The Sharx Bite Café during home meets is our biggest revenue-generator and essential to the financial health of our swim team! Everyone is required to donate fruit or dessert to a Wednesday night meet or breakfast snacks for a Saturday morning meet. See the signup page on the website for specific donation needs and sign up accordingly. If you cannot do this, add \$20 to your team registration to cover the cost of purchasing these items.

There are a number of jobs that need to be filled in order to run the Sharx Bite Café. These include but are not limited to: shopping ahead of time, purchasing ice, prepping food and the café, grilling/cooking, selling, and clean up.

See the website calendar for home meets.

NOTE: You may choose to work a meet where your child is not swimming. Some parents find it preferable to volunteer at meets where they do not have a swimmer entered, so they can relax and enjoy those at which they do.

Officials Certification Clinics

Some of the jobs at each meet require formal MCSL training and certification. These include: Stroke and Turn Judge, Referee, and Starter. To become certified, you must attend one of the league's training sessions below, and must renew your certification every two years. If you plan to renew or become certified in *two* positions, you will need to attend two clinics as the sessions for each position at a clinic are run at the same time.

If you have any questions regarding becoming an official or your current certification status, you can ask Desiree Drakakis (swimreps@nccspa.com) or Kathleen Teixeira who are responsible for coordinating our team's officials. For more details, please visit www.mcsi.org and click on the "Officials Certification" link.

Communication

With a team of over 100 swimmers, communication is a challenge. We have several means in place for the exchange of information between parents, swimmers and coaches. Please avoid talking to the coaches during practice; at that time, their priority are our swimmers.

Web Site

The swim team's website is swimteam.nccspa.com.

This is separate from the main NCC pool site. The team site has all the current information regarding team activities and announcements and is updated regularly throughout the season. We rely on it heavily for communication with parents and swimmers this season. Check here frequently.

Bulletin Board

In addition to the website, the Swim Team maintains a Bulletin Board with periodic announcements about team-related functions. All line-ups and notices will be posted on the bulletin board.

Email

A minimum of one parent from each family must designate a primary email address to receive communications sent through the team website. We strongly encourage our older swimmers to also include their email address so that they receive communications directly, rather than relying on parents to convey important information. The team reps and coaches communicate regularly via email about all swim team events. All team-related emails are intended to inform as clearly and comprehensively as possible. Sometimes they can be long, but please read them.

Each week, you can expect: a Sunday night email from the coaches reviewing the past week's meets and previewing the week to come including who/where we are swimming and what the spirit theme will be for

the meets; an email from reps on Tuesday or Wednesday morning with details about when to arrive for Wednesday night's meet and driving directions if away; a heat sheet on Wednesday that you can print before coming to the evening's meet; an email on Thursday night from coaches with names of Saturday's swimmers; an email Friday from reps with details about Saturday's meet; and an email Friday night with a heat sheet (unless the other team is selling them in which case they don't distribute ahead of time). Additional brief reminders may come out during the week reminding the team about upcoming social events and asking for volunteers for various needs.

Directory

For the first time, we are going to distribute a team directory to facilitate communication among parents, carpooling and ride arranging, and team socializing. This is NOT to be used for non-swim team purposes!! No advertising, soliciting, or other activities. If this becomes a problem, we'll discontinue directory distribution next summer.

Practices

It is important that swimmers come to practice every day on time and ready to swim. Missing practice might mean missing important instruction. Swim goggles and water bottles are strongly suggested. Please avoid talking to the coaches while they are coaching; their priority is to focus on the swimmers. Practices are designed to focus on various aspects of mechanics and conditioning while still being fun for the swimmers. A primary focus of practice will be to teach and improve the swimmers' strokes, with close attention paid to technique. Specialized time will be spent working on each stroke and starts, turns, and finishes. In addition to technique, practice also serves the purpose of improving the swimmer's conditioning and preparing them for competition. Most importantly however, practices are meant to be fun, work on team building, and foster a love for the sport of swimming.

Practice Schedule

From the beginning of the season until public school dismisses, practices are held in the afternoon only. After public school dismisses, practices are held in the morning. For those who cannot attend morning practice, we offer afternoon practice on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday only. Morning practices are highly preferable to afternoon because we have more space, more time, more energy and fewer distractions. See Practice Schedule on the team website.

Private Lessons

Lessons may be scheduled at a mutually convenient time with a coach. Rates range from \$20 - \$30 for a 30-minute lesson.

Cost/Payment

Please register your swimmer(s) online by the stated due date. The fee for joining the swim team is \$165 for the first swimmer* and \$135 for each additional swimmer in the family. The fee for joining pre-team is \$135 per swimmer. Swim fees include a free t-shirt (be sure to enter the t-shirt size on the registration page) and swim team social activities. Parents who are unable to provide food donations for at least 2 home meets can pay an additional \$20 opt out fee with your check. All swimmers must be **registered by the stated due date** in order to participate in Time Trials. **Swimmers who are registered on time will receive a free t-shirt.**

Please send your check made out to NCCSPA and mail to: NCCSPA c/o Maggie Sisti 3612 Littledale Road Kensington, MD 20895 (preferred) or leave your check in a sealed envelope in the designated folder in the pool kitchen/office.

The Pre-Team

The NCC Sharx Pre-Team is designed to prepare young swimmers to join the swim team. It is taught as a group lesson. In addition to improving water skills, another goal of the Pre-Team is to introduce young swimmers to some of the other aspects of the swim team: teamwork, sportsmanship, spirit, and most importantly, fun. It is important to note that Pre-Teamers are considered by the coaching staff to be an important part of the NCC Sharx Swim Team... they are the future!

If and when a swimmer is ready to move up to the swim team, the Pre-Team Coach will inform the Swim Team Head Coach. To move up to the big team, the swimmer will have to swim one length of freestyle and show demonstrable progress in at least one other stroke.

All new swimmers must be screened for placement on the Team or the Pre-Team at the Safety Check on the Tuesday after Labor Day (see exact date on team website), after school, or by appointment with the Head Coach.

Cost

Payment (checks only) is \$165 for the first child per season, \$135 for additional children. Upon promotion to the Swim Team, no additional registration fee or dues will be required.

Pre-Teamers are encouraged to attend all team activities, including meets, and other social events. Such events will be announced beforehand and are always posted on the Swim Team bulletin board. Pre-Teamers will be invited to participate in a special pre-team debut at the end of the season (see schedule on the team website). Teen helpers will swim alongside the pre-teamers to cheer them on and offer assistance as needed.

Meets

Although there are two kinds of swim meets (A and B), NCC does NOT have separate "A" and "B" Teams. We are one team. Some swimmers may swim the A Meet one week and the B Meet the next week, and some swimmers may swim both. Regardless, we encourage everyone to attend every meet. Coming to meets is the best way to have fun, make friends, learn the cheers, and get the most out of being an NCC Shark. Please let the coaches know when your kids are able to swim by declaring their availability to swim on the team's website.

If your swimmer(s) will be unavailable for any meet, for any reason, the coaches must be notified as early as possible (see previous "Expectations of Parents" section). Unexpected absences generate a lot more work for everyone in terms of line-up changes, and could cause our team to lose A Meet points. There are far too many swimmers for the coaches to remember everyone's schedule.

Time Trials

Time Trials can be likened to a "practice swim meet." It is a chance for the coaches to get times on all the swimmers and for the meet officials and other parent volunteers to try out their positions and work out the kinks of running the meet. All NCC Sharks will swim in Time Trials, see schedule on the team website.

A Meets

A Meets are swum on Saturday mornings, each one against a different team in our division. In general, the fastest swimmers in each event will swim in the A Meet (for related rules see MCSL rules, section 11). You may find your child's ranking in each event under the "Top Times" tab on the team website. The coaches make the line-up for each Saturday and post names of swimmers via email on the preceding Thursday. Check this email each Thursday night! This line-up will change every week due to swimmers' improvement, absences, and other factors. The top 6 swimmers in freestyle and the top 3 swimmers in other events swim in A meets. However, a swimmer is not allowed to swim in every single event, so the coaches are very careful and deliberate when making the line-up. Decisions pertaining to it will be completely at their discretion.

The detailed line-up (who is in which races) will be shared with the swimmers at Friday morning practice, and posted around noon on the Bulletin Board. Friday night, we try to email a “heat sheet” if we have it, that parents can print and bring to the meet to track their swimmer’s events, heat, and lane assignments.

“A” Meets begin at 9:00 AM. However, swimmers need to arrive earlier to allow time for warm-ups. Parent Volunteers also need to arrive earlier to allow time for set up (see “Expectations of Parents” section). For away meets, we typically rendezvous at NCC first to check in, ensure that everyone has a ride, and share team spirit items. Arrival times will be announced and posted separately for each meet. It is very important that everyone be on time for warm-ups! Swimmers who are late may be scratched from the meet.

Relay teams, including the very last event of Saturday’s meet, may be decided upon at the meet itself based on swimmers’ times that day. Always check with the coach before leaving the meet to be sure you aren’t needed for the final relay!

“A” Meets will usually be over by 11:30 and we always have a team lunch afterwards at a location near the location of the meet. This is a fun opportunity to hang out with teammates and coaches, and to pick up ribbons won that morning at the meet.

B Meets

“B” Meets are swum on Wednesday evenings, typically with teams that are geographically close to NCC, rather than teams that are in our division. For this reason, team scores are not kept in B Meets. Our policy is that swimmers may not swim an event on Wednesday that they swam on the previous Saturday. Additionally, swimmers will not swim events in which they do not yet have a “legal” stroke (see below). Relays are not swum in “B” Meets against other teams.

“B” Meets typically begin at 6:00 PM, with warmups and meet prep beginning earlier. The first meet of the season starts before 6:00 as it is longer because everyone may swim each event (see below). Specific warm-up times will be announced and posted separately for each meet. “B” meets usually end around 9:00 PM (and home meets are required to end at

9:00 due to county noise ordinances for residential areas). We do not meet at NCC before B meets – we all meet at the host pool.

For Wednesday meets, the coaches will have a preliminary line-up ready for practice on the preceding Monday. When signing up for Wednesday meets online, you have the option of choosing which strokes to enter your child in. Swimmers who did not swim any events Saturday may swim in all events on Wednesday assuming they are legal in all strokes. If unsure about what to sign your child up for, ask the coach or simply sign up, and if the coach feels a child isn't legal, he will not enter him/her in that event. No changes to the line-up will be made on the evening of the meet, unless there is an extenuating circumstance and the change can be made without altering the number of heats in the event. Such changes create more work for meet officials, distract the coaches from coaching, and interrupt the flow of the meet, causing it to run later into the evening.

Illegal Strokes

For younger swimmers or for swimmers new to the sport, it is common to experience difficulties learning certain aspects of the different strokes, especially breaststroke and butterfly. When these strokes are done incorrectly, they may be illegal. The difficulty is that one incorrect kick over the length of the whole race can cause a swimmer to be disqualified.

Swimmers will not be allowed to compete in any stroke unless the coaches are confident that he or she can complete that event legally. The reason for this policy is that "D.Q.s" as we often call them, create more work for meet officials and significantly slow down the meet.

For young swimmers, these difficulties are more the rule than the exception. For detailed rules on the legality of the strokes, consult the MCSL handbook. In addition, you can visit www.usaswimming.org, click on the "Members Resources" link, then the "Parents" link, and review the "Swimming 101" section. If you are unsure about the status of your swimmers' strokes, please ask any of the coaches when practice is not in session. Also, encourage/remind your swimmer to talk to the coach after each race to get feedback on what went well and what can be improved next time.

Relay Carnival

Composed entirely of relay races, this is often the most fun meet of the season. All six teams in the division are present for this meet. Like an A-Meet, a line-up will be made and posted prior to the meet. It is especially important to let the coaches know in advance if your swimmer is not available to swim at this meet because making this line-up is even more difficult than the dual meet line-ups. Relay Carnival is very loud and confusing, but also very fun. It is especially important that swimmers in this meet are attentive and follow instructions. We are lucky to have a team of Relay Carnival Volunteers – older swimmers who are not competing -- in addition to our coaches, who help this event go smoothly and ensure that everyone is where they need to be. See the team website calendar for exact date for this year's relay carnival.

Divisionals

Divisionals is the annual Division Championship Meet. All six teams in the division are present. Each team enters only two swimmers in each event. The Divisionals line-up will be made and posted after the final "A" Meet. Since there are two heats of each event, this meet starts at 8:00 (instead of 9:00) because it is longer than a typical A meet.

Coaches' Long Course Invitational, All-Star Relays & Individuals

These are MCSL-wide meets for the fastest swimmers in the league. These meets are held at the Rockville Municipal Swim Center.

Coaches' Long Course is for the top 8 swimmers in each event in MCSL. In this meet, swimmers race the same number of lengths of the pool, but the pool is twice as long (50 M). For example, a 9-10 would swim 100 Free. The swimmers also dive off of blocks. NCC often sends a few swimmers to this meet. It is a great opportunity to cheer teammates and see some very fast swimming! See the team website for exact date.

The All-Star Relay meet is where the fastest relay teams from each division compete against each other. Most relay teams qualify at Relay Carnival because this is the only event at which most relays are swum – whoever wins the event at Relay Carnival qualifies for All-Star Relays. However, the All-Star qualifying teams in the relays which are swum at every dual meet

and at Divisionals (Open Medley and 14&U Graduated Free), are the teams with the fastest time achieved at any point in the season. Because there are so many divisions, All Star Relays is divided into two sessions, with Division H alternating each year between Session I (Divisions A-G) and Session II (Divisions I-O). This year, we will be in Session II. See team website schedule for exact date.

The Individual All-Star meet is the following morning (see team website for exact date). To swim in this meet, a swimmer must first achieve an All-Star Nominating Time (see MCSL handbook). Of the swimmers who achieve an All-Star Nominating Time, the top 16 will be invited to Individual All-Stars. With both Coaches' Long Course and Individual All-Stars, a swimmer is limited to two events so swimmers who may be ranked much lower than top 8 or top 16 may "scratch in" to these meets. All-Star rankings may be tracked at www.mcsl.org under the "All Star Information" tab on the left.

Meet Results

For Saturday meet results, visit www.mcsl.org and click "Meet Results." Go to our divisions to find our results. For Wednesday meet results, go to our team website.

Miscellaneous

SSL Hours

Students who are old enough to earn SSL hours for school may do so through a variety of volunteer opportunities with the NCC Sharx. They should track their hours, and then get their form signed at the end of the season (before the banquet) by a team rep. Volunteer opportunities include: working at a meet in which they are not swimming (timing at B meets if in high school, running at A or B meets, assisting clerk of course at Relay Carnival), assisting at Shark Bite Café with prior approval from coordinator, assisting with pre-team and lessons with prior approval/arrangement with pre-team coach, and assisting with banquet decorations or other tasks as available.

Weather Policy

With the exception of thunder and lightning, bad weather will not cause the cancellation of a meet or practice. Practices will be held on cold and rainy days -- when you're swimming, you're wet anyway. In the event of a thunderstorm, the pool must close and remain closed for a period of 30 minutes after the thunder has stopped. This is the Pool Manager's decision, not the coach's.

If practice is cancelled, the coaches will make every effort to disseminate this information in a timely manner via an email.

For meets, the Referee and Pool Manager will make decisions on a case-by-case basis. Thunder in the morning is very rare.

Suits and Equipment

A new team suit is typically selected prior to the start of every other season (i.e., 2013, 2015).

Suits and goggles are available at:
Capital Sport and Swim
10558 Metropolitan Ave.
Kensington, MD
301-949-7366

Additionally a rep from the store will be present at time trials to assist with sizing and ordering.

The Shark Shop, open at Time Trials and all home meets, is your source for team caps, towels, sweatshirts, and other Sharx swag!

Awards

Ribbons – awarded at meets for completed races. Participation ribbons awarded to swimmers who do not place 1-6 or disqualify.

Feet – awarded weekly to swimmers who achieve a personal best time.

All Star Caps – awarded to swimmers who achieve an All Star time (determined by MCSL) throughout the season.

Sharx of the Week Caps – awarded at the coaches' discretion to swimmers who show exceptional dedication to the team, commitment to practice, and/or achievement of an established personal swim goal.

NCC SHARX Varsity Letter – are awarded to swimmers who participate in at least 4 meets. This award is given the first season a swimmer participates in at least 5 meets.

Pins – a pin (intended to be placed on the varsity letter) will be awarded to swimmers who participate in at least 5 meets each season.

High Point Trophies – a high point trophy will be awarded to a male and female swimmer in each age group who earns the greatest number of points from meet 1A through meet 5A.

Overall High Point Trophies – the overall high point trophy will be awarded to the male and female swimmer who has earned the greatest overall number of points from meet 1A through meet 5A.

Coaches' Award – a trophy will be awarded to one male and one female swimmer who has demonstrated throughout the season an exceptional commitment to the team. Exceptional commitment to the team will be evidenced by actively participating in all practices, enthusiastically attending and racing in meets, displaying positive team spirit, encouraging other swimmers on the team to achieve their personal best, and/or assisting in tasks to help the team (when appropriate).

Most Improved Award – a trophy will be awarded to one male and one female swimmer who has demonstrated the greatest improvement in his/her abilities by increasing the number of strokes he/she can swim legally and/or decreasing his/her times.

Ultimate Sharx Award – awarded to the one swimmer who represents the very best of the team.

Annual Banquet

The annual Swim and Dive Banquet will be held at the pool in the evening (see the team website for exact date). As one of the culminating events of the season, it is an exciting theme-based celebration including dinner, a skit, awards, and a slideshow of the season. While the swim team has a social hour, the dive team does its awards under the pavilion. After the conclusion of the dive team presentations, dinner is served! Tickets are purchased ahead of time, and there are a number of volunteers needed to pull off this event! Sign up on the team's website to help.

Parent/Guardian's Code of Conduct

Parents and guardians will understand that MCSL and its activities are for the benefit of children. The goals of the league include helping young people establish a love for the sport of swimming, while developing advanced aquatic skills, teamwork, and the principles of good sportsmanship. To accomplish these goals, parents/guardians must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with creating a positive experience for children and their families.

As a Parent or Guardian of a child registered with an MCSL member team, you are responsible for the conduct of your guests and other family members. MCSL teams will not tolerate a parent or guardian yelling at or belittling a child, an official, coach or other parent or guardian in any way.

As an adult and role model, children are influenced by my words and actions. I agree to the following:

1. I will remember that all children participate to have fun and that competition is for youth, not adults.
2. I will be a positive role model for children and will encourage them to reach the highest levels of sportsmanship and to follow the rules.
3. I will be respectful and courteous of others, and will support and encourage swimmers, officials, team representatives, and coaches through my positive actions and attitude.
4. I will recognize that meet officials are volunteers and will treat them with the same respect that I would expect if I were in that position.
5. I will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike behavior with an official, coach, swimmer, or parent/guardian such as arguing, booing, taunting, or using profane language or gestures.
6. I will teach my child to treat other swimmers, coaches, team representatives, and officials with respect regardless of age, race, creed, color, gender, or ability.
7. I will not be aggressive or hostile towards another individual and will teach my child to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence or argument.
8. I will not ridicule or yell at my child or any other participant for making a mistake and will not hold a specific child responsible for losing a competition.
9. I will respect and support the team representatives', officials' and coaches' authority during meets and will never argue with, question, discuss, or confront officials or coaches.
10. I will support a swimming environment for my child that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and will refrain from their use at all team events.
11. I promise to help my child enjoy the summer swimming experience by doing whatever I can, such as being a respectable fan, volunteering at meets, and helping with other team activities.
12. I will do my best to make swimming fun for all children.

I have read the Parents Code of Conduct and this Handbook. I understand I need to volunteer at least 8 times and I pledge to do so.

Signature