



Westridge Waterstorm Parent Handbook 2024

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Important Swim Team Information

Greater Omaha Swim League

Westridge Waterstorm is a member of the Greater Omaha Swim League (GOSL). GOSL is a summer rec league, comprised of several neighborhood membership pools in the Omaha metro. For more information on GOSL, please visit www.goslschwim.com.

Swim Team Eligibility

Any child who is a pool member may join the swim team, however swim team is not swim lessons. A team member must be swimming independently and, based upon age, be able to make one length of the pool (25 meters) or 2 lengths of the pool (50 meters) without assistance. The coaches will decide when a swimmer is ready to compete in meets.

Swim Team Dues

Swim team dues for the 2024 season are \$75 per swimmer and will be paid online through the pool's website. The team dues help to cover the costs incurred from having a swim team, such as paying GOSL dues, buying team equipment and paying for team awards. All swim team members must have a paid membership to the pool before they are allowed to participate. Deadline for team registration is Monday, June 3, 2024.

Volunteering for Swim Team

The Westridge Waterstorm swim team and swim season runs smoothly because of our parent volunteers. We need help in several areas and at many events during the season. Please watch your email for volunteer sign ups through Signup Genius. Also, your help at home swim meets satisfies hours of your pool membership volunteer requirement.

Apparel

We recommend the use of the Waterstorm team suit and cap as these visually unify us and set us apart from other teams. We strongly recommend the use of a team cap, especially for our older swimmers and swimmers with long hair. Caps keep the hair contained and out of the face maintaining visibility and reducing drag during swimming. Information about fitting and purchasing suits and other apparel will be given at the swim team kick-off. *Please write your name on EVERYTHING as swimmers will have the same gear and things do get left behind. To mark goggles, you can purchase a bungee strap or tie on a piece of string or ribbon for identification.

Special Events

A calendar of swim team special events will be available before the first practice and posted on the Westridge website.

Sponsorships - Open Position

The fun and festivities of summer swim team are possible in large part due to sponsorships. In the midst of practices, meets and social events, bills need to be paid, equipment needs to be purchased and payroll needs to be made. That's where sponsorships come in! If you own a business, or wish to support the team as a family, you can help by being a team sponsor or by purchasing ad space in our meet programs to cheer on your swimmer(s). Please contact the swim team coordinator for more information.

Questions that Come Up?

Email questions to westridgewaterstorm@gmail.com, and a coach or coordinator will get back to you. Coaches are generally not available for discussions at practice, but we DO want to help you and your swimmers stay informed and have fun!

Practice Policies

Practices run Monday through Friday. Practice start date and practice times will be posted on the team page on the pool's website as well as on the Facebook page. Please be prepared with a suit, goggles, cap and towel. Practices continue through finals, which will take place in mid-July.

- In order to keep practices running smoothly and free of distractions, we would like to keep the pool deck clear of parents/guardians and/or siblings unless it is necessary for them to be waiting at the pool during practice. Should parents/guardians/siblings need to be at the pool during practice, please wait to converse, unless absolutely necessary, with coaches until after practice. Also, please, unless asked to help, let the coaches coach.
- Swimmers need to be on time to practice and be ready to get into the water! Being late is disruptive to your team. Start time means IN the water, not when you walk in the door.
- Rain DOES NOT cancel practice. Thunder and lightning DO cancel practice. Certain air temperatures MAY cancel practice. An email will be sent out and a message will be posted on the pool's Facebook page by 7:30 am regarding practice cancellations. Check your email and Facebook for practice status on questionable days.
- If your swimmer(s) needs to miss a practice, arrive late to practice or leave practice early, please email the coaches ahead of time.
- Swimmers are expected to be respectful to all coaches, teammates and parent volunteers.
- Each age group will be assigned tasks to be done at practice. Swimmers must be ready to help their fellow age-group swimmers with those tasks.
- Cell phones should be left in swim bags during practice. (Please keep valuables at home as we cannot be responsible for these items during practice.)
- No one is allowed to hang on the lane ropes during practice.
- Team members must promptly exit the water after practice is over.
- While we have always encouraged team members to swim their club practices, attending Wednesday morning practice is encouraged. Swimmers will find out their events for the evening meet at Wednesday practice. Relay exchanges will be rehearsed on those mornings as well. Also, many of the team-building social events are planned for Wednesdays, as we expect most of the team to be in attendance. (If your child(ren) has practice for another sport that conflicts with Westridge practices, please contact the coaches.)
- A swimmer's performance is more likely to improve with regular attendance!

Swim Meet Information

The following information is about swim meets in the Greater Omaha Swim League. Westridge Waterstorm is part of the GOSL. The league is divided into several divisions. We compete in the "A" division. GOSL rules are posted on the league's website: www.goslswim.com.

A special note about eligibility for swim meets

Any child that is a paid member of Westridge pool may consider joining the swim team. A swimmer must be able to complete the assigned race length for his/her age group (one or two lengths of the pool) unassisted to be considered for a meet roster.

- Dual meets are held on Wednesday evenings. Typically, the Prelims and Finals meets are held during the second week of July. Prelims for 10 and under are on Monday evening. Prelims for 11 and over are on Tuesday evening. Finals for all age groups are on Thursday evening. Rain Dates are the Friday and Saturday of the same week.
- Swimmers should arrive at the meet pool by 4:45 pm.
- Warm-ups start at 5:00 pm. Swimmers need to be ready to get in the water at 5:00 pm.
- Meets begin at 6:00 pm. Most meets last around 2 hours.
- Ribbons are awarded to swimmers placing 1st through 6th at each dual meet.
- Participation ribbons are awarded to swimmers in exhibition heats.
- Exhibition swimmers are not scored in a meet. Swimmers are entered into exhibition heats to get an event time or for an opportunity to swim.
- Ribbons are distributed at a practice after the meet.
- Age of a swimmer on June 1, determines the age group for the entire summer season.
- Girls swim first in an event followed by boys. Youngest age groups start first.
- A swimmer is allowed to swim a maximum of 2 individual events and 2 relays at each dual meet.
- 10 and under age groups swim 25 meters (1 length of the pool) for each individual event. These swimmers each swim 25 meters per leg on a relay, for a total of 100 meters. (Some outdoor pools are yards.) There is a 100 Individual Medley event (4 lengths of the pool) for the 10 and under age groups.
- Eleven and over age groups swim 50 meters (2 lengths of the pool) for each individual event. These swimmers each swim 50 meters per leg on a relay, for a total of 200 meters. (Some outdoor pools are yards.) There is a 100 Individual Medley event (4 lengths of the pool) for the 11 and over age groups.

- "NT" next to a swimmer's name in the meet program means "No Time". That means that the swimmer's time was not available at the time entries were submitted, or the swimmer does not yet have a time in the event. "X" on a meet results page means the event was swam as an exhibition, and "DQ" means the swimmer was disqualified.
- At dual meets the home team is given lane assignments in lanes 1, 3 and 5 and the visiting team is assigned to lanes 2, 4 and 6.

Preliminaries (Prelims)

These meets determine the 6 fastest swimmers in each event in each age group in the entire league division. The 6 fastest times in each event advance to the Championship Finals swim meet. There are no relays at Prelims; each team submits one relay for Finals. The coaches will determine which swimmers will be placed on the relays for Finals.

At Prelims, each team is limited to 4 entries per individual event per age group, and each swimmer may only swim 2 individual events. The coaches enter the 4 fastest swimmers in each event. In some cases, one swimmer may have the fastest time in more than 2 events, but that swimmer is not allowed to swim more than 2 individual events. The coaches will determine strategically, looking at time and legality, which swimmers to place in each event seeking the best overall benefit for the team.

Final Championship (Finals)

The 6 fastest swimmers in each individual event in each age group advance from the Prelims and compete in the event at Finals. In each individual event there will be two alternates listed in the program (the swimmers who placed 7th and 8th at Prelims.) If a swimmer who qualified in the top 6 is not able to swim at Finals, the first alternate will compete in that swimmer's place. The second alternate will be used if needed. Each relay team will also have an alternate listed for each individual on the relay. If a swimmer is not able to swim, an alternate will compete at Finals. If a coach issues a change to the relay lineup, an alternate may swim on the relay instead. Alternates must be warmed up and ready to swim if the opportunity arises!

A special note about Prelims and Finals

Due to a limited number of entries, not every swimmer will have an opportunity to swim in Prelims or Finals. The coaches will select the swimmers based on fastest times and legality of stroke. Sometimes, a swimmer's work ethic, attendance and attitude have to be considered. Ultimately, the coaches seek the best overall benefit for the team. Please remember that a swimmer must have competed in at least 2 dual meets and be available for both prelims and finals and the rain dates to be able to swim individual events at these meets (for example, if you will be on family vacation during the finals meet, your swimmer(s) will not be entered into prelims). It is very tough for the coaches to make these decisions! We appreciate your understanding.

Following are descriptions of the competitive swimming strokes and some of the events performed in a meet.

- Individual Medley: Swimmers swim equal lengths of each stroke in this order – butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.
- Medley Relay: Each relay team consists of 4 swimmers. Each swimmer swims an equal length of a different stroke in the following order – backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle.
- Butterfly: This is a prone stroke using symmetrical motions of the arms and legs. The arms are brought out of the water behind the body; arms reenter the water out front of the body and pull back together. The kick, called a dolphin kick, is an up and down wave-like movement of the hips, legs and feet.

- Backstroke: This stroke is performed on the back using a flutter kick. The arms alternate entering the water behind the shoulder, elbow straight, little finger first.
- Breaststroke: This is a prone stroke using symmetrical motions of the arms and legs. The kick, called the whip kick, resembles the kick of a frog and the arms move simultaneously to create an inverted heart-shaped pattern.
- Freestyle: This is the fastest stroke in competitive swimming. The arms move in an alternating motion through the water. The head turns for inhalation in time with the backward thrust of the breathing arm. The flutter kick is used and is also a constant alternating motion of the feet.
- Freestyle Relay: Each relay team consists of 4 swimmers. Each swimmer swims an equal length of freestyle.

Please note: In order to make meet entry deadlines, the coaches must be informed of meet absences by 5:00 pm the Friday before the meet. Please email them at westridgewaterstorm@gmail.com.

“At the Meet” Tips – Home or Away

The coaches are aware of how stressful a meet night can be on a family. We hope the following information will help meet nights run smoothly.

- Between practice on a meet day and the meet, your swimmer(s) need to rest! Being active in the sun and heat can affect performance in a negative way. Stay inside and stay cool as much as possible.
- Before leaving for an away meet, look up directions for the pool. Addresses of the away-meet pools are located on the meet schedule.
- Check the forecast. Hot, rainy and cool evenings are all possible. Dress accordingly.
- Items to bring to meets:
 Team suit (plus an extra, just in case)
 2-3 towels
 Goggles (plus an extra pair, just in case)
 Hard case for storing eyeglasses if your child wears them
 Team swim cap (an extra is a good idea if one rips)
 Sweatshirt and/or sweatpants
 Water and/or sports drinks
 Fruit or other snacks
 Cash to buy meet program and concessions
 Highlighter to mark the program and a Sharpie to write your swimmer’s events
 Folding chairs and blankets for family members
 Sunscreen
 Insect Repellent
 Smiles and team spirit!!!
 *Please don’t let your child bring anything electronic or of \$\$\$ value – items WILL get wet or stepped on or both!
- Arrive 15 minutes prior to warm-up time. Warm-ups start at 5 pm—arrive at 4:45 pm.
- Buy a meet program (\$5 or less)

- Locate the Westridge team area. Swimmers need to report to the team area for event assignments. Older swimmers can write their events in Sharpie on their arms. There will be a few parents (perhaps YOU!) in the team area that can write events in Sharpie for the swimmers who need help. For each event, write the event (E), heat (H), and lane (L). In the example below, note that the individual stroke for the Medley Relay has been marked too – this is a great tip for younger swimmers!



- Swimmers should dry off after warm-ups and stay warm. Swimmers need to sit with teammates in the team area at all times other than during their swimming event. Those swimmers who like to be close to the pool in order to cheer on their teammates must still be paying attention to the progress of events and be to the Ready Area on time.
- Swimmers need to listen for their events and be ready to go to the Ready Area with goggles and/or cap. Ultimately, it is the swimmer's responsibility to get to the Ready Area and to the blocks on time. (There will be volunteers to help with this for younger swimmers.)
- Check with the coaches before leaving a meet if the meet is not yet over. (Your swimmer may have been added to another event.)
- Most importantly...

