



2011-2012
Handbook

About Our Team

SPORTSPLEX BARRACUDAS MISSION STATEMENT & OBJECTIVE

- *Through swimming, develop teamwork and self esteem in children*
- *Foster a life-long love for the sport of swimming*
- *Teach correct swimming technique*
- *Give swimmers the opportunity to reach their fullest potential*

The Barracudas Swim Team offers a guided youth program for children age 6 to 18 (5 year-olds may participate in Summer Swim Team), from the swimmer new to competitive swimming to the most skilled swimmer.

Our focus is not on winning races but on teaching correct technique, good sportsmanship, and striving to perform at the best of one's ability.

COACHING STAFF

Nothing has a greater influence on the quality of children's sports than the excellence of the coach. Our coaching staff provides the assurances that the time your children spend in swimming will be quality time. We pride ourselves on our professionalism as coaches and are continually seeking out new educational opportunities.

Beth Johnson

Coach Beth is the Head Coach of the Barracudas. She has been involved in the sport of swimming for 27 years, having coached Olympic Trials qualifiers and beginning swimmers, alike. Coach Beth is an American Swim Coaches Association (ASCA) Level 1 Coach and is certified in Safety Training for Swim Coaches certified. Beth has been at Sportsplex since May 2006, and is entering her sixth season as Head Coach with the Barracudas.

Christiane Pryne

Assistant Coach Chris has been with Sportsplex since 2000. She is an occupational therapist, the mother of two, and gives what spare time she has to coaching. Coach Chris, who works primarily with the beginning swimmers, has the ability to use different coaching techniques until she finds what clicks with each swimmer. She expects the best out of each one of the swimmers, and they love seeing her at the pool. Coach Chris is certified in Safety Training for Swim Coaches.

Cathy Vaughn

Coach Cathy is the General Manager of Sportsplex. She has an extensive coaching background and continues to be an avid swimmer. Coach Cathy's love for the water is obvious whether she is coaching, swimming, or just "talking swimming."

Other Coaches

From time to time, Sportsplex swim instructors who have an interest in coaching will join the coaching staff on the deck. These individuals have experience teaching swimming strokes and working with children. They will be coaching under the supervision of Coaches Beth, Chris, and Cathy.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between the coaching staff and parents is essential for optimal development of the swimmers. However, there is an appropriate time, place, and method of communication. Please do not communicate with coaches or swimmers during practice. This distracts the coach, your child, and the other swimmers from the task at hand. Please use the following methods of communication:

E-mail

Information that is pertinent to all Barracuda families will be distributed through e-mail. Please check your e-mail regularly for meet information, articles on training, nutrition, sport psychology, etc, and any other general items we need to get to all families quickly.

Barracuda Banter

The team publishes a newsletter called "Barracuda Banter." Results of the last swim meet, general information from the coaching staff, upcoming events and swimmer accomplishments are covered. Make sure you and your swimmers read the contents of the "Barracuda Banter" when it is distributed.

One Team Text

In the case that we reschedule or cancel practice or a meet (due to weather, etc.), we will use the One Team Text service to send out an e-mail or text. This is a different list from our regular e-mail list. Please see the enclosed information on how to sign up.

Written

Sending a note with your swimmer is a way to quickly get information to coaches. Good information for notes includes a need to get out of practice early, an injury/illness that your child can practice through with modifications, or why your child is late for practice/a meet (more on tardiness later).

Face-to-Face

The best way to have a face-to-face communication with any of the coaching staff is to schedule an appointment. Coaches will do their best to be at the pool ten minutes before and after practice, although please understand that this will not always be possible. Please note the following ways to get in touch with each coach.

Head Coach Beth:

E-mail bjohnson@sportsplex-nw.com.

Phone Sportsplex at (845) 565-7600. Will not be available by cell phone, but will check her Sportsplex voicemail frequently on meet weekends.

Office Hours: Mon 7:30-8 pm, Tue 6:30-7 pm, Wed 5-5:15 & 7:30-8pm, Thu 2:30-5:00 & 7:30-8 pm, Fri 5-5:15 & 7:30-8, Saturdays 10:15 am-12:30 pm

Coach Chris:

Phone: call Sportsplex at (845) 565-7600 and ask receptionist to leave a note.

Coach Cathy:

E-mail cvaughn@sportsplex-nw.com

Phone Sportsplex at (845) 565-7600

PRACTICE AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Attendance Recommendations

The Barracudas do not require attendance at a certain number of practices per week. As a general rule the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success. However, the team does encourage swimmers to participate in other activities in addition to swimming, plus it is not necessary for younger swimmers to be in the pool every night of the week. The expectation level to attend practices increases as swimmers move to higher groups and set loftier goals. Below are the coaches' recommendations:

- 10 & unders within their 1st year on the team: 2-3 practices per week
- Experienced 10 & unders: 3 practices per week
- 11-12 year-olds: 3-4 practices per week
- 13 and older (especially varsity level swimmers): 4-5 practices per week

General Practice Policies

1. Swimmers are to enter the building at the front doors and go directly to the locker room or pool area.
2. Swimmers who are not members of Sportsplex should arrive no earlier than 15 minutes prior to their workout time (or a younger sibling's practice time), and should be picked up no later than 15 minutes after their practice is over. They may not use the kiddie pool or spa.
3. Swimmers should be on the deck (out of the water) at the shallow end of the pool, ready to swim five minutes prior to the start of their practice.
4. In case a swimmer is late for practice, parents should send a note with the child explaining the reason for tardiness.
5. During practice sessions, swimmers are never to leave the pool area without the coach's permission
6. Parents may drop off children six and older. Parents who remain at Sportsplex during practice may relax in the Café, observe from the lounge chairs on the east side of the pool or members of Sportsplex please feel free to work out during practice time or.
7. Please do not try to communicate with your swimmer during practice. This is not only distracting to the swimmer, but can also be a distraction to the entire team as well as the coach.

Tardiness

Being on time involves more than being physically present at the pool at the start of practice. Swimmers should be in bathing suits, with cap and goggles on, ready to jump in the pool at the time practice is to start. It is our hope that the swimmers will learn that punctuality is a skill that will serve them well throughout their lives.

When swimmers walk into practice late, it is very disruptive to their teammates and coaches. When a swimmer jumps in after practice has started coaches may need to reassign lanes and have

to take extra time to get the late swimmer up to speed on the practice. To avoid such disruptions, the Barracuda Tardiness Policy is as follows:

- 1st offense: coach will speak to the swimmer after practice regarding the importance of being on time.
- 2nd offense: Head coach will speak with parents by phone or in person.
- 3rd offense: Swimmer will not be allowed to practice, and a meeting will be set up with swimmer, parent, and head coach.

ILLNESS AND INJURY

If your swimmer will be out of the water over a long period of time due to an injury or illness, please notify Coach Beth so the coaching staff is aware of the problem.

In the event your child cannot compete in a meet he/she is signed up for, please leave a voice message for Coach Beth at Sportsplex as soon as you know you will not be attending. One swimmer's absence can affect the events and relays of other swimmers.

COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The coaching staff's job is to supervise the entire swim team program.

1. Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with the Barracudas coaching staff.
2. The coaches are responsible for placing swimmers in practice groups/lanes. This is based on the age and ability level of each individual. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, he/she will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach.
3. The coaches may occasionally ask the swimmers what events they would like to swim, but the final decision will be made by the head coach.
4. At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer feedback regarding the swimmer's performance.
5. The coaching staff will determine relay teams. The factors involve scoring potential, making sure as many team members as possible can swim relays, and the number of swimmers in each age and gender.

SWIMMERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

As a swimmer's level of swimming ability increases, so does his/her responsibility. A swimmer has responsibilities to the team, the coach, his/her parents, and most importantly to themselves.

Swimmers will be expected to arrive at practice prepared. This means having a bathing suit, cap for swimmers with long hair (Barracudas latex caps will be provided) and water bottle. Goggles should be properly adjusted and a spare pair readily available. While for new 10 and under swimmers, having their workout gear properly adjusted is a learning process, for older and

experienced swimmers, equipment adjustment and repair will not be accepted as an excuse to miss part of a training session.

Code of Conduct

1. Any swimmer who is known to use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco is subject to suspension from the team.
2. Never interfere with the progress of another swimmer, during practice or otherwise.
3. At all club functions, whether practice, meets, or social gatherings, we expect each swimmer to behave in such a way that their actions reflect positively on the team.
4. Any swimmer who touches or speaks to another swimmer in an aggressive manner (punching, slapping, kicking, biting, scratching, pushing, name calling, etc.) is subject to disciplinary action or dismissal from the Barracudas and Sportsplex.

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and coaches want the same thing: happy, successful children. However, the parent and the coach have different roles.

Support

It is the parent's job to supply the recognition and encouragement necessary to continue to develop the child's enjoyment of swimming. The greatest contribution you can make to your swimmer's progress is to be a loving, supportive parent.

Things you can do to help your child reach his/her fullest potential include:

- Make sure your child arrives on time to practice and meets.
- Encourage a good diet and sleeping habits.
- Be a positive role model by showing good sportsmanship.
- Help your child organize priorities and time commitments (homework, family, church, sports, and other extracurricular activities) to reduce stress and burnout.
- Attend as many meets as possible.

Please avoid "coaching" your child. This includes stroke instruction, commenting on race strategy, psyching your child up for a race, giving him/her practice tips, and making your child swim laps outside of practice time. Engaging in those practices creates confusion for your child as to whether he/she should be listening to you or the coach. Also, when a child feels pressure from a parent to perform, it makes swimming less fun for your son/daughter. Research has shown that the #1 reason, kids participate in sports (from young children to Olympians) is FUN! Your child needs you for support and to be their number one cheerleader.

Volunteering

One of the commitments we ask parents to make upon joining the Barracudas Swim Team is to volunteer at swim meets. We would be unable to have meets without the help of parent timers, score keepers, officials, ribbon labelers, etc.

Communication with the Coach

Any time you have questions regarding your child's experience with the Barracudas, please contact a member of the coaching staff as soon as possible. We will be happy to speak with you regarding your child's training plan, any of our team policies, or any other issues that come up.

Listed below are some guidelines for a parent raising some difficult issues with the coach:

1. Try to keep foremost in your mind that both you and the coach want your child to be happy and successful. If you trust that the coach's goals match yours, even though his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy good rapport and a constructive dialogue.
2. Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team or training group. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group, but in the long run, the benefits of membership in the group compensate for occasional short term inconvenience.
3. If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach. He/she is the only one who can resolve the problem.

PRACTICE TIMES, GROUPS, & LANES

Practice Times

On all practice days other than Saturday, we have divided the team into two practice times. Swimmers 10 years old and younger practice first followed by swimmers 11 and older. Dryland workouts (out of water) will be open only to swimmers 11 and older. For swimmers that turn 11 during the season, the Head Coach will have a discussion with the parents regarding whether or not the swimmer will move to the later group. The decision will be based on the swimmer's physical and social maturity as well as swimming skill.

The 2011-2012 practice schedule is

<u>Day</u>	<u>10 & Under</u>	<u>11 & Older</u>
Monday	5:00-6:00	6:00-7:30
Wednesday	5:30-6:30	6:15-7:30
Thursday	no practice	5:30-6:00 dryland 6:15-7:30 swim
Friday	5:30-6:30	6:15-7:30
Saturday	9:00-10:00	9:00-10:00

Practice Groups/Lanes

In the beginning of the season, we will frequently move the swimmers into different lanes to help them get to know each other as well as to help the coaches determine practice groups. In general, more beginner swimmers will practice in Lane 3, while more advanced swimmers will train in Lane 1. Lane placement may change depending on the objectives of each practice.

As your child's swimming "career" progresses, he or she will move through the following stages. Please remember that as each child is different, he/she will progress at his/her own rate. The

coaching staff recognizes this fact by making team assignments based on a swimmer's physical, mental, and emotional level of development.

Stage 1

This stage includes children new to competitive swimming and the swim team environment.

Swimmers will:

- learn correct technique of the four competitive strokes and associated drills, the freestyle flip turn, and racing start.
- begin learning how to swim in a lane with others and use the pace clock.
- gain an understanding of the terminology of the sport.
- begin to translate their love of the water to a love for the sport.
- learn good sportsmanship and how to deal with nerves through their first experiences with competition.

Stage 2

This stage includes children ten and under, beginning at least their second year on the team and 11 and older swimmers in their first year on the team. Swimmers will:

- begin to refine the strokes beyond correct mechanics, learning how to get faster through improved technique.
- learn the backstroke flip turn, breaststroke pullout, and breaststroke and butterfly turns.
- become more proficient at swimming effectively in a lane with other swimmers.
- be able to start taking on greater challenges in practice.
- begin general goal setting including possible qualification for Championships.
- gain a greater understanding of being part of a team and the corresponding responsibilities.
- hopefully develop a love of the sport of swimming.
- as more mature competitors, begin to learn racing strategies.

Stage 3

This stage includes swimmers 11 and older who have been on the team for more than a year and are ready to make a stonger commitment to swimming, and have a love for the sport. Swimmers will:

- continue to perfect their technique in all strokes, starts and turns.
- participate in at least one dryland workout per week.
- start to understand the process of goal setting.
 - understand that practice performance directly correlates to meet performance
 - will be expected to rise to challenges in practice, developing mental toughness
- understand that time improvements become smaller as a swimmer gets faster.
- begin swimming longer events.
- work with the coach to develop personalized racing strategies.
- begin to learn about nutrition and psychology as part of training.
- be a good role model to younger swimmers.

Stage 4

At this stage, swimming becomes the primary sport/activity, due to the commitment involved to achieve the swimmer's goals. Child will be swimming year-round. Swimmers will:

- continue to perfect their technique in all strokes, starts and turns.
- participate in two dryland workout per week.

- understand in detail the process of setting goals, be able to set goals with less guidance from coaches, and understand what it will take to achieve those goals.
- willingly take on an increasingly difficult work load.
- Understand the season training/racing plan.
- actively seek feedback from the coach.
- include nutrition and psychology as part of training regimen.

FEE STRUCTURE

Option One

Pay in full at registration

Ages 6-10 member:	\$380
Ages 6-10 non-member:	\$480
Ages 6-10 non-member 2 nd child:	\$430
Ages 11-18 member:	\$420
Ages 11-18 non-member:	\$520
Ages 11-18 non-member 2 nd child:	\$470

Option Two

Four payments: 1) at time of registration, 2) Nov 1, 3) Dec 1, 4) Jan 1

Ages 6-10 member:	\$95.00 each
Ages 6-10 non-member:	\$120.00 each
Ages 6-10 non-member 2 nd child:	\$107.50 each
Ages 11-18 member:	\$105.00 each
Ages 11-18 non-member:	\$130.00 each
Ages 11-18 non-member 2 nd child:	\$117.50 each

Guests of the Sportsplex must provide credit card information at registration if choosing Option Two.

For those on payment Option Two, if check or cash payment is not received before the end of the day it's due, member's account or guest's credit card will be billed the next morning.

If parent is a member of Sportsplex and the swimmer is not, the non-member fee applies.

Swimmers joining the Barracudas late in the season will pay prorated fees based on the month they begin. Prorated fees will reflect that most team expenses occur toward the end of the season.

Competition

PHILOSOPHY OF COMPETITION

The Barracuda Swim Team staff does not see the first place person as the only successful swimmer. We look for focus, hard work, and improvement as marks of success. Swimmers quickly forget the medals, records, and other material rewards. They will, however, remember

the development of social skills, discipline, listening skills, time management, goal setting, and enhanced self-image. These are the things that make the swimmer a more successful person with a better chance of living a life closer to their peak potential, and of contributing to the world they live in.

1. Winning ribbons, medals, or trophies is not our main goal. Even if the swimmer finishes first, but has swum poorly in comparison to his/her own past performances, he/she is encouraged to do better. The individual's improvement is a primary objective.
2. Sportsmanlike behavior is of equal importance as improved performance. All the coaches teach swimmers how to behave like champions when they have "good" and "bad" swims. Respect for officials, congratulations to other competitors, encouragement to teammates, determined effort, and mature attitudes are examples of behaviors praised and rewarded by the Barracuda Swim Team coaching staff.
3. A swimmer is praised for improving his/her stroke or time. It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's responsibility to provide love and encouragement to bolster the swimmer's confidence along the way.

Swimmers are taught to set realistic, yet challenging, goals for meets and to relate those goals to practice to direct their training efforts.

Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances, and strokes appropriate to their age and ability. This policy promotes versatility and encourages the swimmer to explore his or her potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming. Oftentimes, a swimmer's "best" stroke changes as they mature and his/her body goes through physical changes.

EMPIRE STATE SWIM LEAGUE

The Barracudas Swim Team is one of 15 teams that make up the Empire State Swim League (ESSL). The league is comprised of two divisions: Red and White. The larger teams are in the Red Division and the smaller teams in the White Division. The Barracudas are in the White Division. The ESSL's website is <http://www.esslswim.com/>.

AGE GROUPS

The ESSL has the following different age classifications: 8 and under, 10 and under, 12 and under, 14 and under, 18 and under. A swimmer's age for the season is age as of November 1.

TEAM UNIFORM

The team colors are purple and white. Swimmers who wear a cap will wear the Barracudas cap at meets. Swimmers are encouraged to wear Barracuda "gear" at meets. Our team suit will be available to order early in the season. Other items will be available for purchase as well. It is highly recommended that each swimmer's name be placed inconspicuously on all pieces of the team uniform.

COMPETITIVE STROKES

The four competitive strokes are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly. Events are held in all of the competitive strokes at varying distances depending on the age-group of the swimmer. In addition, there is a combination of the strokes swum by one swimmer called the individual medley. We also swim relays, which are a group of four swimmers who either all swim freestyle (freestyle relay) or each swim one of the competitive strokes in the order of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle (medley relay).

TYPES OF SWIM MEETS

1. Dual Meets: Most of the Barracudas meets will be competitions with one other team.
2. Tri-Meets: The Barracudas may compete in several meets with two other teams.
3. Invitationals: Many teams may be present with one team as the host.
4. Last Chance Meet: The last meet in which a swimmer can achieve a qualifying time for the ESSL Championships
5. ESSL Championships: The final meet of the season for those who qualify. All teams in the league will be present.

MEET SCHEDULE

The season's meet schedule is distributed at the outset of the season. Most meets occur on Saturdays or Sundays and last from 3-4 hours. It is important that swimmers attend as many meets as they can. Not only will they get more experience racing, but each meet is a Team Effort. Each Barracuda swimmer competing makes our team stronger.

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SWIM MEETS, BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK (or didn't know what to ask)

Listed below are some very in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as we possibly could.

Before the meet starts

1. Arrive at the pool 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be e-mailed to all families as soon as we know it. Coaches cannot make accommodations for swimmers who arrive late. Space is very limited during a meet warm-up. Any late swimmer will need to join the warm-up wherever the rest of the team is at that point.
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's swim bag, etc. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces.
3. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmer's bodies are just like cars on a cold day-they need to get the engine going and warmed up before they can go all out.
4. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her towels are and sit there until their event. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary or gets a drink.

Meet starts

1. It is important for your swimmer to know what events he/she is swimming (some swimmers like to have them written on their hand in ink). He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile.
2. At dual meets, when the swimmer's race is coming up soon, a Barracuda coach will direct him or her to the correct heat and lane.
3. The swimmer swims their race.
4. After each swim:
 - a. He/she is to ask the timer (people behind the blocks at each lane) his/her time if it is not displayed by the timing system.
 - b. He/she should go immediately to their coach. The coach will ask him/her their time and discuss the swim with the swimmer.
5. Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim:
 - a. Tell him/her how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with them. You need to tell your swimmer how proud you are and what a great job he/she did.
 - b. This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or something light to eat.
 - c. The swimmer now waits until his/her next event is called.
6. We ask that all Barracuda swimmers stay at the pool until the meet is completed. Even if your child is not competing in the final relay, he/she is still needed to support those who are still swimming. Imagine your swimmer competing in the last event and having no teammates to cheer him or her on! Also, the coaches will speak with the team about how they did and what to expect in the coming week.

What to Take to the Meet

1. Most important: Swim suit, Barracudas cap, and goggles (if your swimmer uses them).
2. Towels. We suggest you pack 2-one for during the meet, and one for after.
3. Sweat suits and T-shirts to keep them warm in between events.
4. Water bottle.

Once you have attended one or two meets this will all become routine. Please do not hesitate to ask another Barracuda parent for help or information.

These meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers. He/she gets to visit with his/her friends, meet kids from other teams, and race and see how much he/she has improved from all the hard work he/she has put in at practice.

Special Parent's Notes

The pool area is usually very warm. Therefore, you need to make sure you dress appropriately. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes the time pass very slowly!

Parents are not allowed on the pool deck **at any time** during meets unless you are volunteering.

We do not allow the swimmers to have video games during dual and tri meets. We want the children to be involved in each other's swims - not absorbed into a screen.

VERY BASIC SWIMMING RULES

Starts

One false start is permitted.

Turns and finishes

1. Freestyle: feet have to touch the wall (turn)
2. Backstroke: swimmers have to be on their back when they touch the wall. After he/she touches, he/she can then turn around, but he/she must push off on his/her back. At the finish, a swimmer must finish on his/her back. A swimmer may not roll over and grab the wall until they have first touched it.
3. Breaststroke and Butterfly:
 - a. Swimmers have to touch with both hands at the same time.
 - b. A swimmer may not freestyle kick off the wall in either breaststroke or butterfly
 - c. Both arms must move at the same time.