

MCR - Aquatics MCSL General Information

Welcome to Montgomery County Recreation (MCR) summer swim teams, one of the many programs that are offered by Montgomery County Recreation. Our summer teams participate in the Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL). MCSL is one of the local organizations which provide a venue for competitive summer swimming. Summer swimming is an opportunity for young swimmers to have a positive introduction to competitive swimming with their local pools. While operating under the guidelines of the MCR and the MCSL, Recreation staff and our swim team coaches strive to provide a learning and positive experience. This document is designed to provide you and your swimmer(s) with general information needed for your swimmer(s) participation.

MCR summer swim team program strives to promote the life-long love of swimming for recreation and as a competitive sport. The team will help develop and improve the participant's swimming technique, meet new friends, bring families together, improve cardiovascular endurance/body tone, develop self-esteem, discipline, and positive self-image while also incorporating teamwork.

As part of MCSL, our teams follow the rules and regulations of this league. The MCSL is comprised of more than 90 teams divided into multiple divisions. "A" Division has the teams with the overall fastest times from the prior season; "B" Division, the next fastest, and so on down the alphabet. For more information on the MCSL please visit www.mcsl.org.

Every participant is an important part of the swim team. The parents/guardians are equally important. Please support your swimmer by giving them lots of encouragement and by volunteering to help the program. A large number of parent/guardian volunteers are needed to ensure that the program runs smoothly and on time. For this reason, it is imperative that ALL parents/guardians volunteer their time by assisting with home meets. The home meets can only happen if parents volunteer as timers, certified officials, and ensuring that swimmers do not miss a race. Volunteers are requested/organized by the MCR recognized Team Reps (A Rep or B Rep).

Swimmers must be between 5-18 years of age and meet the minimum qualifications for the appropriate age group. New swimmers must attend team evaluations before registration can take place. Dates are available in the Summer REC Guide. A new swimmer is someone who did not participate on the team last season.

- **8 & Under swimmers:** must be able to swim one continuous length (25 meters) of the pool using a coordinated stroke and rhythmic breathing and be able to float on their back.
- **9-12-Year-Old swimmers:** must be able to swim one legal length (25 meters) of freestyle with good rhythmic breathing and one length (25 meters) of backstroke.
- **13 & Over swimmers:** must be able to swim two continuous legal lengths (50 meters) of freestyle with good rhythmic breathing and two continuous legal lengths (50 meters) of backstroke.

We do NOT offer pre-team. We do offer a full range of swimming lessons at each facility. For information on swim lessons, please inquire at your specific facility or visit MOCOREC.com.

Communication

Frequent and open communication is the key to the success of our teams. There are several ways to obtain specific information. The coaches are available after practices and meets but NOT during practice and meet times, please! The MCR recognized team reps, both A and B, can provide pertinent information. And, of course, your fellow swim team families are a helpful and knowledgeable group – from info about where to buy goggles, what kids might need at a meet, or helping each other with carpooling to meets. For general program information, or any concerns which cannot be handled at the coaches' level please email the MCR MCSL Aquatics Team at rec.mcsl@montgomerycountymd.gov.

To access your actual team website, visit www.mcsl.swimtopia.com and click on the team link.

Please note: Several groups have web sites which are related to the teams but not part of the County per view. There are also several organized parent's groups which were organized to support the various teams but are not part of the County per view. MCR employees are the only official authority for each Team.

MCR Program Registration

MCR program registration, for returning swimmers, can be completed online (through Memorial Day) at ActiveMontgomery.org. In-person registration can take place at the outdoor pool on specific days or anytime at our indoor pools. This year's MCR program registration fee is \$200 per swimmer (non-county resident fee, additional \$15). The last day to register is June 15. There are no pro-rates or refunds for missed/canceled practices or joining late. Each swimmer (including any team coaches with team eligibility) MUST be registered, and payment made before any participation in the program may occur.

The last day to request a refund is June 30th. All MCR withdrawal and refund policies apply. To request a withdraw, please email rec.financeoffice@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Optional costs may include team suit, cap, and team events. Information regarding optional costs, should be directed to the team reps or parents/guardians organizing events. Please note, support of these events and purchases are not required for team participation. All events and purchases are at the discretion of the participant/guardians.

Certified Officials

Every team in MCSL must provide certified officials during both "A" and "B" meets. If you are interested in becoming certified to serve as a Stroke and Turn Judge, Starter, or Referee, the Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL) provides clinics before and during the season. Information can also be found on the MCSL website at www.mcsl.org.

Practices

Practices begin the first Wednesday after Memorial Day. Pre-season evening practices will be held until school is out. The full summer practice schedule begins the day after the last day of school for MCPS. Summer practices will be held M-F mornings and M, T, Th evenings (8:00pm -

9:00pm). Pre-season and summer practice times vary at each facility. Practice schedules will also vary by group. Schedules will be presented at the parent/guardian meeting. This meeting is the Tuesday after Memorial Day at each outdoor pool at 7 pm (rain or shine).

Unless the County close the pools, due to weather (or facility issue), practices will be held (rain or shine). Practices are not required, therefore, if you feel you do not want to send your swimmer to practice, due to the weather, you do not have too. This will not be held against the swimmer. Coaches may offer on-land training when the weather is cold or rainy. Parents are encouraged to sign up for Rec Alerts to stay up to date on closures.

Swim practice is the most important facet of the program. Although competition is the test of the swimmer's ability, practice is where the potential and foundation for achievement is established. Swimmers should attend practice on a regular basis to give themselves a chance to achieve their potential as a swimmer.

Parents/guardians are not allowed on deck during practice. There will be a designated waiting area for each team, typically the snack bar area.

Swim Meets

Most weeks there are two meets, a Wednesday night "B" Meet and a Saturday morning "A" Meet. The age categories for both meets are as follows:

AGE GROUP CATEGORIES FOR ALL MEETS

Each MCSL meet (Wednesday evening or Saturday morning) is divided by gender into races for each stroke in the following age groups:

- 8 and under
- 9 and 10
- 11 and 12
- 13 and 14
- 15 to 18

A swimmer's age category is determined by the **age of the swimmer as of June 1st** of the current swim season. For example, a swimmer who turns 9 years of age on June 3rd will still swim the entire summer season in the 8 and under age group, as he/she was 8 on June 1st.

PLEASE INFORM THE COACHES WHICH MEETS (IF ANY) YOUR SWIMMER(S) WILL MISS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

REPORTING TO THE POOL ON TIME BEFORE MEETS. The coaches will announce what time swimmers need to report to the pool before a meet. These times will vary depending on whether the meet is at home or away.

Saturday Morning Meets - "A" Meets

It is especially important on Saturday mornings for swimmers to report on time. Roll is taken and if a swimmer who is scheduled to swim is not there, he or she may be scratched from the meet and another swimmer entered. We must follow the MCSL rules concerning "scratches". Our teams are allowed only 3 scratches per meet. If scheduled swimmers do not check in or come to the meet, we might have to swim with an empty lane, which could cost the team points and potentially affect the outcome of a meet.

A swimmer in a Saturday morning "A" meet may swim in a maximum of five events: three individual events, including the IM and relays. (Individual strokes include Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Backstroke). The combination may include:

- 3 individual strokes, 1 individual medley (IM), and 1 relay
- 2 individual strokes, 1 IM and 2 relays
- 3 individual strokes and 2 relays

Only coaching staff will select which event(s) a swimmer will swim and who will swim in the relays.

There will be **four** relays at each dual meet; the Boys and Girls Open Medleys and the Boys and Girls Graduated Relays. The Open Medleys are open to the fastest swimmers regardless of age. They proceed in the following order: back, breast, fly and free. The Head Coach prior to the start of the meet chooses the participants. Two Graduated Relays are swum in the following order: 9-10 (25M), 11-12 (50M), 13-14 (50M), and 8 & Under (25M). The participants are chosen by the Head Coach.

Each individual event will be scored for the first five finishers, points scored as follows

- 6 points for 1st place
- 4 points for 2nd place
- 3 points for 3rd place
- 2 points for 4th place
- 1 point for 5th place

Medley relay events and graduated relay events will be scored for the first three finishing teams, points scored as follows:

- 8 points for 1st place
- 4 points for 2nd place
- 2 points for 3rd place

Wednesday Evening Meets - B Meets

The Wednesday night "B" meets provide an opportunity for all swimmers to participate in organized meets. All swimmers are eligible to swim in the Wednesday "B" meets if they are "legal" in the stroke that they will swim. Only Coaches make the final decisions concerning event eligibility. In most Wednesday night B meets; swimmers are eligible to swim three events and the Individual Medley (IM).

There are, however, times that swimmers will be limited to three events total.

Special league rules govern eligibility at these meets such as, but no limited to:

- **Swimmers who placed 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th in a particular event in the preceding Saturday A meet may not swim that event on the following Wednesday B"" meet.**
- **Swimmers who placed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in three or more individual events, including the I.M., in the previous Saturday A meet may not swim at all in the following Wednesday "B" meet.**

The coach's decision will be final at all meets.

EXPECTATIONS AT ALL MEETS

Swimmers should remain in the team area during the meet. If a swimmer needs to leave the team area for any reason, the swimmer should inform one of the coaches before leaving. We do not want any swimmers to miss the check-in time for their event or cause the coaches to have to track them down. Parents/guardians should not be in the team area during the meet or attempt to talk to the coaches during the meet. The coaches are very busy watching each race so that they can give swimmers feedback regarding their race. Swimmers should NOT leave a meet for any reason without first checking with one of the coaches, as you could be scheduled to swim a relay at the end of the meet. At the completion of each swimmer's event, the swimmer should report directly to their coach (not a parent/guardian) and receive feedback from the coach.

Parents, guardians, siblings, relatives, friends, etc. are all encouraged to watch the meets. Cheering is welcome, but spectators need to be quiet once "Quiet for the start" is announced so that swimmers can hear the starting equipment. Parents/guardians who are helping with officiating, such as timers, are not supposed to cheer - this is per league rules, so that all officials can concentrate on officiating in a neutral manner.

The deck area around the pool and at the ends of the pool needs to be clear for officials working the meet. Please do not allow younger siblings to run up and down the side of the pool as officials need a clean line of sight along the pool to fairly judge the meet.

Please do not use flash photography during the meet since the flash may be confused with the flash of the starting equipment. Please keep cell phones on vibrate, as any ringtones may be confused with the sound of the starting equipment. No cell phones, cameras or non-officials are allowed behind the starting blocks at any time during the meet.

Other Meets:

RELAY CARNIVAL

The MCSL Divisional "A" Relay Carnival consists of relay teams from each of the six teams in the division competing against each other. The first-place relay team in each event competes at the end of the season at the All-Star Relay Meet. The exception to this is that the best times of the Graduated Age and Open Medley relays can be beaten by other relay teams competing during the regular "A" dual meets. The Head Coach will determine the relay teams, based on the best possible combinations of times from previous meets.

DIVISIONAL MEET

This meet is run in much the same way as a regular dual meet. However, in this meet, only the swimmers in each event compete against swimmers from the other five teams in the team division.

COACHES' INVITATIONAL LONG COURSE

Held midway through the season at the Rockville Swim & Fitness Center (RSFC), the eight fastest swimmers in the county in each age group compete against each other, swimming each event at double the distance of a regular meet and in a long course pool (hence "Long Course").

ALL-STAR RELAYS & INDIVIDUAL ALL-STARS

Also, held at RSFC, the Saturday and Sunday after Divisionals. For All-Star Relays, the first-place relay team from each division compete. The Individual All-Star meet consists of the 16 fastest swimmers in the county in each age group and event.

ALL-STAR NOMINATING TIMES for each event are established by the MCSL at the start of each season. Swimmers can achieve All Star nominating times and still not swim at the All Star meet if there are 16 other swimmers with faster times throughout the county. There are frequently more than forty or fifty swimmers who achieve All Star times. Nominating times can only be achieved in the Saturday 'A' meets.

SPORTSMANSHIP

MCR-MCSL teams have always taken pride in the good sportsmanship consistently shown by its swimmers, parents/guardians, and coaches. MCSL continues to stress good sportsmanship as one of its primary values. We support the MCSL's efforts and have attached the MCSL's codes of conduct for swimmers, parents/guardians, and coaches. We encourage all parents/guardians, swimmers, and coaches, new and old, to read these codes of conduct to remind them of the MCSL's expectations. If all teams abide by these codes of conduct, the season will be a better one for all our swimmers.

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.

Swimmer's Code of Conduct

1. I will do my best to listen and learn from my coaches.
2. I will attend every practice and meet that I can and will notify my coach if I cannot.
3. I will treat my coaches, other swimmers, officials, and fans with respect regardless of age, race, creed, color, gender or abilities and I will expect to be treated accordingly.
4. I will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike behavior with any official, coach, swimmer, or other parent/guardian such as arguing, booing, and taunting; refusing to shake hands; or using profane language or gestures.
5. I will encourage my own parents or guardians to engage in good sportsmanship.
6. I will expect to be treated fairly over the course of a season with regard to meet entries and recognize that certain meets are more competitive than others.
7. I deserve to have fun during my swimming experience and will alert parents/guardians or coaches if there are problems or it stops being fun.
8. I deserve to play in an environment that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and expect adults to refrain from their use at all swim meets.
9. I will remember that meets are an opportunity to learn and have fun.

Coach's Code of Conduct

As a coach, you will realize that you are one of the most important and impactful role models in a child's life. Your words and your actions will have a positive and potentially devastating impact on the emotional well-being of the children in your charge. Coaching is a privilege and with it comes responsibility. Coaches set the tone for the team and are responsible for the conduct of their swimmers, parents or guardians and any other coaches on the field.

All children are influenced by my leadership and authority and as their coach; I understand I am a role model. I agree to the following:

1. I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my swimmers ahead of any personal desire or pressure to win.

2. I will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, opposing coach, swimmer, team representative, parent/ guardian or spectator such as: arguing, refusing to shake hands, excessive yelling or belittling or using profane language or gestures.
3. I will treat each official and opposing coach with respect, and will not engage in open arguments or confrontations, and will work to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
4. I will treat my swimmers fairly and will work towards improving a swimmer's individual skill set.
5. I will be knowledgeable of the rules set forth for swimming by MCSL, will teach the rules to the swimmers I coach and will adhere to these rules at all times.
6. I will do my best to provide a safe and encouraging competitive situation for my swimmers.
7. I will teach my swimmers to treat other swimmers, coaches, team representatives, and officials with respect regardless of age, race, creed, color, gender, or ability.
8. I will use coaching techniques appropriate for the skills that I teach and will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all swimmers.
9. I will lead by example in demonstrating fair play and sportsmanship to all swimmers.
10. I will remember that I am a youth swimming coach and that races and meets are for children and not adults.

We look forward to another quality and fun summer season!
Montgomery County Recreation – Aquatics

Frequently Asked Questions

What rules govern our meets?

Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL)

Who are the officials at the meet?

The officials include a referee, starter, stroke judges, turn judges, place judges, timers, and scorers. Most officials are swim parents who assist voluntarily.

What is a stroke and turn judge?

A stroke and turn judge will determine if the stroke is being swum correctly. He/she usually walks the side of the pool and will indicate to the referee and scorer's that a swimmer has been disqualified. In addition, determines if the swimmer touches the wall before starting another length and makes certain the turn is done correctly.

What is freestyle?

Freestyle is also known as the front crawl or forward stroke. In this stroke, the swimmer swims on their stomach with their arms alternating and legs kicking flutter kick.

What is backstroke?

Backstroke is also known as the back crawl. In this stroke, the swimmer swims on their back, arms alternating and legs kicking flutter kick. Backstroke is freestyle on your back.

What is breaststroke?

Breaststroke is swum on your front. The arms move in a circular pattern while the legs do a 'frog' kick.

What is butterfly?

Butterfly is swum on your front with both arms reaching forward simultaneously accompanied by a 'dolphin' kick.

What is an Individual Medley (IM)?

Swimmers, ages 9 and older, swim equal laps of each stroke in this order:

1. Butterfly
2. Backstroke
3. Breaststroke
4. Freestyle

What is a Medley Relay?

It is a four-person event in which each swimmer on the relay team swims one of the four strokes in this order:

1. Backstroke
2. Breaststroke
3. Butterfly
4. Freestyle

What is a Graduated Freestyle Relay?

It is a four-swimmer event.

What are the common reasons for being DQ'ed?

1. Not swimming the stroke correctly.
2. Not swimming the same stroke throughout the entire event.
3. A false start (leaving before the starter).
4. Improper turn.
5. Improper underwater streamline.
6. Relays - the swimmer left before the preceding swimmer touched the wall.

*When a swimmer has been DQ'ed it's important for them to go and talk to their coach. Please help your swimmer to understand that a DQ helps us learn how to swim more efficiently, and it isn't the end of the world.

What is a 'heat'?

When there are more swimmers for an event than there are lanes in the pool, another round or 'heat' is added for that event. The best times for the event swim in the final heat. Final place will be awarded to the fastest time, regardless of heat.