



The **Raeburn Rays** Swim Team Handbook



The Raeburn Rays Swim Team

We are one of forty summer swim teams, divided into six divisions, within the Greater Charlotte Swim League (GCSL). GCSL provides each team with ribbons, determines the meet schedule, devises the scoring system and maintains bylaws for our league to follow. Our league abides by USA Swimming guidelines to maintain safe and equitable competition for everyone.

Parent volunteers manage our team. Parent volunteers coordinate the team, including registrations, order team apparel, organize equipment, activities, and volunteers; devise and execute various types of recognition; keep track of swimming times and records; and provide communication between coaches, swimmers, and parents. Meet management and league representation are also provided by volunteers.

The Raeburn Rays Swim team strives to provide a fun, competitive and family centered environment. We are open to all skills levels and want to make this a fun experience that will inspire and challenge every swimmer to do their very best! The teams' goals that we strive for each season are SPORTSMANSHIP and TEAMWORK. Our ultimate goal is to instill a love of swimming that will last a lifetime. We hope this summer helps move your family towards these goals. For more information visit www.raeburnhoa.com and contact the Swim Team Committee.

REMINDERS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SEASON!

Come to practice. The swim season is a short 6-8 week commitment. Most children do not have access to year-round swimming. As a result, many swimmers show dramatic improvement over the course of the season just by coming to practice, increasing their satisfaction and making it even more enjoyable for parents to watch your child swim.

PRACTICES

Arrive on time and ready for practice. We will begin each practice with stretching and "dry land" exercises, so a few minutes before practice time, spread out your towel, and assemble as a group.

The coaching staff is dedicated to helping every swimmer be the best he/she can be. To achieve this goal, coaches, swimmers, and family members must all work together as a team. Part of this team is respecting the need for coaches to do their jobs without parental or swimmer interference. Time spent on-deck with swimmers is precious. It is unsafe and unfair for coaches to be interrupted when they are working with the children. We need your cooperation and support to be successful.

The Raeburn Rays Swim Team

Here are a few rules to follow:

- Please email the coaches with questions or information. It can be distracting to coaches to ask them questions or pass along information during a practice and is difficult for them to remember considering the number of swimmers they are coaching. Having this information in an email will be helpful. Please include your child's full name and age category.
- Please pick up your swimmer at the end of their practice. Raeburn swim team is not responsible for a swimmer before or after their scheduled practice time. If your swimmer is under 6 years old, please stay for each practice. The coaching staff cannot keep track of every swimmer if they choose to leave the pool area.
- Please respect the decision of the coaching staff regarding practices and meet entries. The events that the swimmers are placed are based on the swimmers times and ability and needs of the team. We look at the best interest of the team as a whole. We will make every effort to place each swimmer in the events they chose but the final decision will be determined by the coaching staff.
- Observe the posted rules of the pool at all times.
- LISTEN to your coaches and TRY your best!

MEETS

The coaches will determine what events you will swim. Entries will be posted at the pool on the bulletin board by the bathrooms the morning of the meet. Be sure to check these and write down the event numbers and strokes you will be swimming. Parents, it is helpful to write the event numbers on your child's hand with a Sharpie marker so they can remember when they are swimming.

Arrive at the meets no later than 5:00 for home meets and 5:30 for away meets. We will warm up in the pool as a team and then the meets will start at 6:00. Be sure to eat before the meet and save the snacks from the concession stand until after you swim.

Get to swim meets on time. Swim meets can be chaotic; so do not make it more difficult by getting the meet late. Coaches make final adjustments to the relay teams during the warm-up session after they have been able to confirm which swimmers are present. Please honor and respect their decisions.

Make sure you know what events you/your child will be swimming at the meet. Each child is allowed up to three individual events and two relays. The coaches determine what events each child will swim and will post the entry sheets on the bulletin board at the pool the morning of the meet. It helps to write your child's event numbers on their hand so they know when they are swimming.

The starter will announce each event when the clerk of course is ready for it. It is very important to listen to the starter because no one wants to miss his or her event and the event will continue even if a swimmer is not on the block. The clerk of course is located at the starting block end of the pool at home meets. At the clerk of course, volunteers will place the swimmer in the heat and lane that they will be swimming in for the particular event. It is important for all swimmers (even older swimmers) to report to the clerk of course at least two events prior to your race so the volunteers know you are there; they might be combining heats or making last minute changes that you need to know about.

Report to the clerk of course. The meets move very quickly, so pay attention to the event number (at home meets there will be an event board located by the starter to indicate which event number they are on) and get swimmers to the clerk of course (at home meets this is located at the starting block end of the pool) at least two events before they swim. All swimmers should check in (even older swimmers) with the clerk of course at least two events before they swim because heats may be combined or other last minutes changes made to lane assignments.

If you and your swimmer must leave a meet early, PLEASE NOTIFY A COACH. This is very important because the swimmer could miss important information or possibly miss a relay they are scheduled to swim.

MISSED MEETS

Please email the head coach as soon as possible if you can't attend a meet. This is important to setting up the relays and event entries.

Always encourage your swimmer and teammates. Congratulate them after each race and be sure to cheer for your neighbors. The summer swim league is competitive, but it is more about getting outdoors during the evenings with many of your neighbors and having fun.

CONDUCT WHILE ON THE RAEBURN SWIM TEAM:

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child's involvement with the Raeburn Swim Team. A partnership between parents and the Raeburn Swim Team Coaches and Staff requires meaningful and appropriate communication.

Parent volunteers who are not official committee members should not post information unless approved by the Swim Team committee. This is to maintain the integrity of the message and to allow coaches to release information that is consistent with the running of the team.

This requires that:

- No one disrupts or attempts to interfere with the operation of a Raeburn Swim Team at swim meets (home or away).
- No one disrupts or attempts to interfere with the operation of a Raeburn Swim Team, at swim practices.
- No one disrupts or attempts to interfere with the operation of a Raeburn Swim Team, as well as any other areas of the pool property used by the Raeburn Swim Team, to include but not limited to awards celebrations, banquets etc.
- Raeburn Pool rules will apply during swim meets and practices at home as well as at other neighborhoods during away meets.
- Official communication should not be done through social media but through the Raeburn HOA website and posted on the official swim team tab and all information from, or about the Raeburn Swim Team should be approved, and authorized, by the Raeburn Swim Team Coaches and Staff.
- Parent volunteers who are not official committee members should not post information unless approved by the Swim Team committee. This is to maintain the integrity of the message and to allow coaches to release information that is consistent with the running of the team.

CODE OF SPORTSMANSHIP:

Raeburn Swim Team will conduct in such a manner that good sportsmanship prevails at all times. It is therefore necessary that Raeburn Swim Team coaches and staff be individually and collectively responsible for taking every possible step to promote good sportsmanship at every swim event.

When attending Raeburn Swim Team sponsored events:

- Parents/Visitors/Swimmers will be a positive role model for children and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every swim meet, practice or other swim event.
- Parents/Visitors/Swimmers will not engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing, taunting or using profane language or gestures, etc.
- Parents/Visitors/Swimmers will teach my child to play by the spirit of the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- Parents/Visitors/Swimmers will respect the officials and their authority during swim meets and will never question, discuss, or confront coaches or referees at the swim meet, and will take time to speak with coaches at an agreed upon time and place.
- Parents/Visitors will refrain from coaching children during games and practices. All coaching instructions will come from the Raeburn Swim Team coaching staff.

Failure to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines, Parents/Visitors/Swimmers will be subject to disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to the following:

- Parents/Visitors/Swimmers verbal warning by Raeburn Swim Team coaching staff.
- Parents/Visitors/Swimmers game suspension with written documentation of incident.
- Parents/Visitors/Swimmers season suspension.

TEAM BANQUET

To cap off the season, we host a team banquet for the team, including families. Everyone receives a participation award and there are some additional special awards.

Parents Remember to Volunteer! The swim team runs on volunteer power and the team depends on you, the parents, to participate. This team could not be successful; it could not even exist if not for our parent volunteers. The swim team needs your time to operate successfully. So, sign up to be a timer, work concessions, or hand out ribbons!

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

We require several volunteers to run each meet. No matter what your skill level or how long your children have been involved in this sport, we have a volunteer opportunity for you. Many of these positions are on deck, close to the action, and volunteering at meets is a great way to get to know your neighbors.

Volunteer sign-ups for each meet are available at registration. We will send out a reminder email a few days before the meet. If you can't be there for your volunteer time it is your responsibility to find a replacement. Volunteers should arrive to the meet by 5:30 so we can start the meet on time. As a minimum, parents are asked to volunteer for one shift per meet or two shifts (full shift) at three meets.

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Starter –

Announces event number, event, and age group. Uses bullhorn to sound off the start of each heat and is responsible for noticing a “false start.”

Clerk of Course –

Keeps things organized behind the blocks. Uses heat sheets to organize swimmers to their assigned lanes. Clerk of course is always a few heats ahead of the meet so the swimmers are ready to step up to the blocks when the starter announces their event.

Head Timer –

In control of two stopwatches that are both started at the sound of the starter's horn. If one of the timers has a problem with their watch, they will raise their arm to alert you that they need your watch. You walk over to them and trade watches.

Timer –

One timer per lane from our team. Start the watch when the starter's horn sounds and stop the watch when the swimmer touches the wall. Then write down the time on the time card provided. Be sure to ask the swimmers' name and match it to the name on the time card to make sure you have the correct swimmer. There are two shifts changing halfway through the meet.

Runner –

Takes the time cards from timers and “runs” them over to the scorers' table for tabulation. If there are any DQ slips for the event, the stroke & turn judge will raise their hand; pick up the slips and take with the time cards to the scorers' table. There are two shifts changing halfway through the meet.

Scorer –

Enters in times from the time cards and any DQ slips into the computer. The computer will calculate event results and print labels for ribbons. The computer program is user-friendly but this person should be somewhat computer savvy.

Ribbons –

Takes the labels printed by the scorer and “sticks” them to the appropriate 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. place ribbons and places in the correct teams’ bin.

Heat Winner Ribbons –

The first place swimmer in each heat of 6&U, 8&U and 9-10 events receives a “heat winner” ribbon. All 6&U’s receive an “I did my best” ribbon. This volunteer will hand out these ribbons to the swimmers when they finish their race.

Stroke & Turn Judges –

Determines whether or not strokes, turns, and finishes are done correctly. Some training is needed for this position.

Concessions –

We will provide concessions at each home meet. Help is needed for set-up, sales, clean up and BBQ. You can always leave the tent to watch your swimmer swim!

Baby Pool Monitor –

For home meets we will allow the baby pool to be open for parents & children 5 & under. No swim team members are allowed in the baby pool during the meets and parents much accompany children at all times. This volunteer will stay in the baby pool area and enforce these rules.