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CARY SHARKS

SWIM TEAM HANDBOOK

CARLISLE FAMILY YMCA

Revised 8/17/2023

CARLISLE FAMILY YMCA

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Welcome to the Carlisle Family YMCA swim team (CARY). This handbook has been prepared for use by parents and swim team members. We hope it will answer many of your questions and make your swim team experience enjoyable and fulfilling.

PHILOSOPHY

The Carlisle Family YMCA competitive age group swim team program is dedicated to the philosophy of providing an activity that meets the needs of all children, regardless of skill level. An integral part of the program is the belief that the development of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility are as important as acquiring aquatic skills. The Y has employed a competent staff to coach, guide and provide the discipline that is necessary for individual improvement and team cohesiveness.

CARY COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH / GREEN TEAM COACH

Tara Young

WHITE TEAM COACHES

Elizabeth "Shorty" Young
Shannon Maher
Dana Hall
Erin Donley
Lara Kauffman

SILVER TEAM COACHES

Shannon Maher
Mike "Ferg" Ferguson
Isaiah Bell
Erin Forest
Drew Arteaga

GOLD TEAM COACHES

Shannon Maher
Mike "Ferg" Ferguson
Isaiah Bell
Erin Forest
Drew Arteaga
David Weist

AGE GROUP DESCRIPTIONS

GREEN TEAM

High school swimmers

WHITE TEAM

Swimmers ages 10 and up (younger by invitation only)
with competitive swimming experience

SILVER TEAM

Swimmers ages 9-10 (older by invitation only)
with little or no competitive swimming experience

GOLD TEAM

Swimmers ages 8 and under

PROGRAM POLICIES AND INFORMATION

YMCA Membership Required – A Youth, Teen or Family membership to the Carlisle Family YMCA is required to participate with the CARY Sharks.

Program Payment – Program fees may be paid in full or on a monthly payment plan (by request only) for the White and Gold Teams. Payment must be made in full for the Green Team. If you would like to utilize the monthly payment plan, contact Tara Young at tyoung@carlislefamilyymca.org prior to registering. You will pay the first installment at the time of registration. Future monthly payments will be deducted from the payment method on file at the Y on the 1st of the month from November to March.

Payment Problems – Should your payment not be honored by your Bank or Credit Union or be denied by your credit card on file, for any reason, you are still responsible for the payment, plus a \$35 service charge applied by the Y. This is in addition to any service fee charged by your Bank or Credit Union.

Do you have a change to your credit or debit card information (i.e., expiration date, new card number)? If so, it is your responsibility to notify the Y of any changes that would affect the successful processing of your monthly fees.

Cancellation/Withdrawal from Program – Two-week notice is required. Non-attendance, without written cancellation, does not relieve you of the responsibility to pay for the program. **Monthly Draft Participants** – You must have your written cancellation submitted by the 20th of the month in order to stop payment on the 1st. **Program fees are not refundable after January 1.**

USA Swimming Registration Fees are paid directly to USA Swimming. A USA Membership (Flex or Premium) is required for all CARY Swim Team members. Swimmers 12 & under can select Flex to start and upgrade to Premium later if the swimmer chooses to swim more than 2 USA meets. All swimmers ages 13 and up must choose a Premium membership.

Meet Entry Fees – Meet entry fees are set by the host team and are charged to swimmers' Y accounts for each meet they enter. Once entry fees have been sent to the host team, you will be responsible for the entry fees even if you decided not to compete due to personal choice or illness. No exceptions will be made. Lack of knowledge of the meet entry process does not waive meet entry fees. Relay team entry fees will be split evenly among the swimmers for regular season meets. The team will cover relay team fees at championship meets.

COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

The coaches are hired by the Carlisle Family YMCA to supervise age-group swimming practices and competitions. While executing their responsibilities, the members of the coaching staff will:

- **Place the swimmers into practice groups.** Within the practice times, the coaches will separate the swimmers into groups according to the swimmers' abilities and goals. The coaching staff will advance a swimmer into a more challenging group when it is in that swimmer's best interest.
- **Provide competitive instruction and set training regimens.** The coaches will be solely responsible for ensuring that swimmers receive appropriate instruction in competitive techniques and conditioning.
- **Encourage good swimming habits.** The coaching staff will advise swimmers on specific training procedures and proper use of equipment during practice and competition. At times swimmers may be requested or encouraged to purchase and use caps, goggles, swim fins, etc.
- **Provide discipline and supervision during practice.** The coaches are responsible for all swimmers in the pool area. They therefore are given full authority to discipline any swimmer that disrupts practice or endangers the health and safety of the other swimmers. Please refer to "CARY Policy for Disciplining Unacceptable Behavior" for detailed information on discipline procedures.
- **Determine team line-up for competitions.** The coaches will make the final decisions concerning events and lane assignments in league competitions. This responsibility includes determining whether a swimmer will swim in a relay event (including what leg of the relay each swimmer will swim). The coaches also will make decisions regarding relays for YMCA championship meets based upon the swimmers' performances, training habits and attitude.
- **Supervise and conduct team activities at swim meets.** The coaches are responsible for supervising and conducting warm-ups before each meet. After each event, the coaching staff will discuss the race with the swimmer and provide constructive comments for furthering the swimmer's progress.
- **Provide a forum for communication with parents.** The coaching staff will make themselves available to address concerns with parents. These meetings can be private and shall be at a time that does not conflict with scheduled practices. Please do not approach a coach during practice to discuss your swimmer. Please wait until after practice to schedule a meeting time that works for everyone.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The greatest contribution any parent can make to their swimmer's progress is to be loving and supportive. Despite hours of practice and regular exposure to competition, the main source of confidence and self-esteem for most swimmers is a simple word of praise from their parents. Between rounds of encouragement parents should make sure they do the following:

- **Review this handbook with your swimmer(s).** Parents should ensure that their swimmers understand the responsibilities connected with belonging to a swim team, especially with respect to behavior at practice and meets.
- **Get your swimmer(s) to practice on time.** Every effort should be made to have swimmers to the pool on time so that practices will run smoothly for everyone. Latecomers not only disrupt the rhythm of other swimmers, they also miss important warm-up laps designed into the beginning of practice to decrease the possibility of injury.
- "Quick" questions for the coaches should be addressed after practice sessions or by making an appointment with the coach.
- **We would prefer that parents do not sit on deck and observe practice. This can be a disruption to your child as well as to the coaches. If you are concerned about your swimmer, please address this with one of the coaches after practice or by appointment.**
- Check the website (<https://carlislefamilyymca.org/programs/aquatics/swim-team/>) and Team Site (<https://www.teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=reczzcy>). Read our weekly emails with important deadlines and information. Parents can stay informed by checking these forms of communication for information on upcoming meets or team functions. It is very important to check these resources regularly to stay informed.
- **Address issues with the coaches in private. Parents should refrain from criticizing the coach in front of swimmers and other parents. Young swimmers are easily discouraged and often become discipline problems when they are constantly hearing negative things about the coaches or the team. Disparaging remarks about the team or the coaches should not be vented on other parents. Such negativity weakens the social atmosphere of the team and destroys any pleasure swim parents may derive from conversing with each other. Parents who have an issue to address with the coach should either make an appointment via email or speak with the Aquatics Director regarding their concern.**
- In circumstances where an issue has been discussed with the coach and the parent still feels that the problem has not been fully resolved, the parent should present the problem to the Aquatics Director. The director may choose to intercede with the coaching staff on behalf of the parent, or to stand behind the actions of the coaching staff if they deem those actions to be in accordance with CARY and YMCA policy.
- **Volunteer, volunteer, volunteer!!** Parent volunteers perform a variety of tasks ranging from simple jobs such as setting up for a meet or selling concessions to the more complex jobs such as officiating a meet or running the computerized timing system. No job is too small or unnecessary. All jobs are important for the team to operate smoothly and effectively. For this reason, it is essential that every parent participate in some way by volunteering their time and talent during the season.

We can't run this program without YOUR help!!

PRACTICE INFORMATION

Swimmers are expected to attend practices for their level/age of swimming as many days as possible. The practice schedule for each group is posted on our website and team site. Below are a few pointers to make practices run as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

- Arrive on time. Swimmers should make the most of their practice time by arriving early and ensuring that suits, caps and goggles are properly fitted. Arriving late is often disruptive for other swimmers and for the coaches, who must adjust lane assignments.
- Listen to the coaches. Each individual practice session is one small part of a long-term competitive strategy mapped out by the coaching staff at the beginning of the season. Each swimming drill and every series of laps are important steps in the coaches' plans to develop each swimmer's competitive edge. Try to concentrate on specific aspects of your stroke as you practice. Remember: Perfect Practice Makes Perfect Permanent!
- Practice good sportsmanship. Being courteous toward your coaches and teammates will cause them to want to treat you with equal respect. The result will be more effective communication between the coaches and swimmers and a more pleasant practice experience for everyone.
- Stay in supervised area when practice is over while waiting for a ride home. Many activities go on in and around the Y building during all hours of the day. Swimmers should exercise good judgment and caution when walking through the building or when going outside. Please do not congregate in the hallways outside the pool. Tables and chairs are available in the lobby area and Living Room for your comfort.
- Check the website (<https://carlislefamilyymca.org/programs/aquatics/swim-team/>), Team Site (<https://www.teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=reczcy>) and your email frequently for up-to-date information on meets and practices.
- Refrain from horseplay and unruly behavior. Practice sessions can be fun but clowning around and horseplay can lead to injury. Unruly behavior also is disruptive to those who are really trying to gain something from practice. The coaching staff is authorized to take disciplinary action when they feel the situation is dangerous, disruptive or a negative influence on the other swimmers. Review and make sure you understand CARY's policy for handling unacceptable behavior and administering disciplinary action.
- The following rules specifically apply at practices and meets:
 - Team members shall not dive from the sides of the pool or into shallow water/no diving zones. Diving is only permitted while under the direct supervision of a coach.
 - Team members shall not push or shove anyone into the pool. **This includes after meets.**
 - Team members shall not throw anything into the pool.
 - Food and beverages are prohibited in the pool area. **Parents and siblings of team members should refrain from eating snacks while in the pool area.** Water bottles ARE PERMITTED on deck, but please make sure they are disposed of properly at the end of a practice/meet.
 - Team members should not wander around the facility. They always should be in the pool area. Please check out with one of the coaches before leaving the pool deck – i.e., bathroom trips, early departure from practice, etc. Please use the bathroom BEFORE reporting to practice. Do not use the pool as a toilet.
 - No glass or gum on the pool deck.
 - Horseplay will not be tolerated ANYWHERE during practice or meets.
 - ALL jewelry is to be removed before entering the water for practice and meets. This includes earrings. Medical bracelets should be secured to the child by using first aid tape.
- If a swimmer is going to miss several practices consecutively, please contact Coach Tara via email at tyoung@carlislefamilyymca.org. If on the morning of a meet your child wakes up ill and will not be able to participate, please contact Coach Tara on her cell phone (717-448-6291).

SWIM TEAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Swim Team Advisory Committee is a group of **volunteers** who work with the Carlisle Family YMCA Aquatics Director to help the CARY Sharks coaches and swimmers have a smooth functioning competitive swimming program by chairing designated committees. All parents are invited to attend the Advisory Committee meetings throughout the season. Meetings will be announced in the weekly team email newsletter and will be posted on the team site. In addition to Board Officers, we need people to chair some of the committees such as Fundraising, Parent Engagement, Concessions, Banquet, Meet Volunteer Coordinator, Team Unify Manager, Officials Coordinator, Meet Set-Up Coordinator. Please consider offering your time and talents to serve in one of these areas.

Stay tuned for the announcement of our next Advisory Committee Meeting.

FUNDRAISING

We no longer have a mandatory fundraising fee. Instead, we offer opportunities throughout the season to support the team, such as:

- Spirit Wear Store
- Restaurant Nights
- Sub & Pretzel Sandwich Sale

Money raised is used to purchase equipment, year-end recognition awards and team gifts and to help defray the costs for swimmers who qualify for YMCA Nationals.

EQUIPMENT

We suggest swimmers have the following equipment for practice:

- pull buoy
- fins
- snorkel
- paddles

All of this equipment is available for purchase in our team store (<https://www.swimoutlet.com/collections/carlisleswimming>). It is highly recommended that swimmers also get a mesh bag to keep their equipment in so it can be transported to and from practice easily. All personal equipment and apparel should be clearly marked with the swimmer's last name.

Although the equipment necessary for swimming is minimal compared to other sports, swimsuits, caps and goggles require special care to make them last as long as possible.

Always bring an extra pair of goggles to practice and meets.

Swimsuits usually come with care instructions, but general care includes rinsing immediately after swimming to remove pool chemicals and air drying on a flat surface to prevent stretching of fabric. **DO NOT DRY YOUR SWIMMER'S SUIT IN THE DRYER.**

Swim caps suffer the most if handled with neglect. The latex used in swim caps is extremely susceptible to deterioration from pool chemicals, hair care products and trapped moisture. Caps should be rinsed after use, dried thoroughly and dusted with a light film of talcum powder. If your child is allergic to latex, silicone caps are available and usually will last longer than the thinner latex caps.

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SWIM MEET GUIDELINES AND BEHAVIOR

The following procedures will help swimmers and parents participate effectively in swim meets:

- All swimmers **MUST** be signed up for participation in any scheduled meet by the deadline announced in weekly emails. Sign-ups will be done online, and the link will be provided in the newsletter.
- Any swimmer not signed up to participate in a meet will not be entered in the team's meet line-up. The meet line-up will be posted no later than the Friday before the meet. No changes will be made after the Friday before the scheduled meet except for cases of illness. A swimmer who is not originally in the meet line-up will not be added on the day of the meet. Changes to the line-up on the day of the meet may be made at the discretion of the coaches.
- Meet times will be announced prior to the meet. Our home meets are almost always on Saturday afternoons with warm-ups beginning at noon and the meet at 1pm.
- Get enough rest and proper nutrition prior to the meet. A well-rested mind is as important as a well-rested body when competing. Performance is also dependent on body strength and stamina, which are influenced by diet.
- Be on deck 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up begins. Allow plenty of time to find a place to put swimming gear and to get any last-minute instructions from the coaching staff. Prompt arrival of team members also allows the coaches to identify no shows.
- Warm-up with the team. A good warm-up is essential to successful performance. Begin warm-up with land based stretching and loosening exercises then follow with a comprehensive swimming warm-up. Swimmers also should use this time to familiarize themselves with pool conditions that may affect swimming starts and turns. Swimmers who are uncertain of how to maximize their warm-up time should ask the coaching staff for clarification during weekly practice.
- Know your events and report to the starting block on time. Check the event assignments as soon as they are posted and ask any questions at that time. Each swimmer is responsible for knowing the events they are swimming and for being at the assigned event on time. **It helps to write the event number and lane in magic marker on the swimmer's hand prior to warm-up.** Although there may be deck volunteers at some meets who will help younger swimmers line up for their events, team members should learn to be responsible for their own assignments.
- Participate as a team member. CARY swimmers have the option to wear team suits during competition, however all swimmers will be issued a team swim cap and they should plan to wear this cap during their events. Proper competition attire not only enables the coaches and spectators to identify team members, but it also promotes team spirit and unity. It is also essential that CARY swimmers sit together during a meet not only to promote team spirit, but also so that the coaches and deck volunteers know where each swimmer is. If it is necessary to leave the team area, the coaching staff or a deck volunteer must be notified as to where the swimmer will be.
- Stay warm, rest and drink plenty of fluids during the meet. By staying warm, energy is conserved for use during competition instead of used up trying to heat the body. Warm muscles are also better at converting energy into motion. While waiting between events, activities should be kept at a minimum, again to conserve energy. It is most important that you drink plenty of cool (not ice-cold) fluids to keep your body hydrated. Even though you may not feel like you're sweating, your body is losing fluids at an accelerated rate during competition, and good hydration is required for effective muscle performance.
- Plan on staying for the entire meet. Swimmers are expected to stay for the entire league meet as a display of team unity. Sometimes last-minute changes in relays may require your swimmer to be available to swim. **At the conclusion of a home meet, parents and swimmers are expected to stay and help clean up.**
- Contact Coach Tara as soon as possible if a swimmer is ill and can't attend or continue to participate in a meet. This will allow the coach adequate time to adjust the line-up.

This list identifies behavior that is expected of all CARY members, both swimmers and parents.

- Behave in a manner that generates respect. Swimmers and parents should remember that any time CARY and YMCA uniforms, apparel or logos are worn, the action of the wearer reflects the image of the team and our Y. Swimmers should behave in a manner that reflects the discipline of their sport and thereby exhibit pride in being part of a team.
- Be courteous to officials and meet hosts. Courteous behavior is always required. At meets, courtesy should be extended to meet officials by staying off the poolside unless you are a competing swimmer or a working official. Questions or comments from swimmers or parents at the meet should be directed to the CARY coaching staff, who will then pursue the matter through appropriate channels. Please do not approach host team members or volunteers during the meet.
- Be a good sport. Swimmers always must compete according to the rules of the sport. Swimmers and spectators must never bad mouth teammates, competitors, officials or coaches. As a gesture of good sportsmanship, swimmers should remain in the pool until all swimmers have finished the race and offer congratulations or some other positive comment to competitors.
- Accept the coach's judgment. The head coach is responsible for swimming assignments and for giving advice to swimmers during a meet. The coach has worked with the swimmers and knows the extent of their competitive poise and ability. Poorly delivered comments during a swim meet can quickly erode a swimmer's positive attitude and undermine the swimmer-coach relationship. Therefore, opinions regarding the coach's decisions should be addressed with the coach after the meet in private. Remember, one of the aspects of good sportsmanship is self-control; mature swimmers must learn to control their emotions even when the situation is not to their liking.
- **Flash photography IS NOT PERMITTED during the start of a race.** Once the whistle is blown by the starting official prior to each race, there should be no cheering or shouting until after the start of the race.

COACHES' CONTACT INFORMATION

There are various ways to reach the coaches if necessary. Remember, the coaches need to know if your swimmer will not be at practice for an extended period, or if the swimmer is going to miss a meet.

Team email address: carlisleSwimming@gmail.com

Head Coach Tara Young

Phone: 717-448-6291

Email: tyoung@carlislefamilyymca.org

INCLEMENT WEATHER PLAN

When Carlisle Schools have a delayed opening due to inclement weather:

- The afternoon practice will be held unless weather conditions deteriorate throughout the day in which case an email will be sent to inform you that practice will not be held, and we will post it on our Facebook page.

When Carlisle Schools are CLOSED or have an early dismissal due to inclement weather:

- All practices will be cancelled.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT A SWIM MEET

Listed below are some guidelines to help you through the season.

BEFORE THE MEET STARTS

For our home meets, we ask all team families to contribute to the concession stand by providing one food item and one drink item per home meet. A link will be provided in the weekly email so you can sign up for the items you will provide. Once you sign up, it is important that you follow through and bring the items to the concession stand the day of the meet. This is one of the ways we raise money for the team to be used for team gifts at the end of the season.

Many volunteers are needed during a home meet, such as timers, officials, announcers and concession stand workers. **At least one parent from each family is expected to work every meet (including away meets).** For home meets we can often use both parents. "Many hands make light work." Everyone volunteering for a task at a swim meet appreciates a relief volunteer to take over half-way through the meet. Officials are the only workers who must receive special training. Everyone is trainable as a computer or console operator, timer, runner, announcer, etc. Get involved. It makes the meet go faster and it's actually fun. Dress for summer. Even on the coldest days, you'll get hot and you'll get splashed, guaranteed. **REMEMBER, this a parental participation sport.**

On the date of the swim meet, swimmers need to arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the warm-up time begins. Upon arrival, find a place to put the swimmer's bag and look for familiar faces. The swimmers sit together.

Find the coach and check in. You are needed by the team. Late swimmers make the coaches nervous. Once checked in, your swimmers should write each event number on his/her hand in ink and their lane assignment. This helps the swimmers remember what events they are swimming. Make sure the swimmer checks to see if he/she is in a relay. It is not fair to other swimmers who have stayed to swim on a relay and one swimmer has left to go home. **No swimmer should leave a meet without first checking with a coach to make sure they are finished swimming for the day.** All swimmers are expected to remain until the end of the meet unless you have a prior commitment that has been discussed with the coach prior to the meet.

Moms and Dads – don't expect the families of the last swimmers in the water to take care of pool clean-up. Everyone is exhausted after a meet, but with only a few helpers, meet cleanup can take as much as an hour. But if everyone pitches in, it can take less than 20 minutes!

THE MEET STARTS

Our coaches will decide the line-up for the meets. The coaches may ask your child what they might prefer to swim, but the final decision belongs to the coach in dual meets. Encourage your child to see his or her race as part of the team effort.

It is important for all swimmers to know what event numbers they will be swimming and where those events fall in the meet line-up. A swimmer might swim two events early in the meet and then not swim in another event until much later in the meet.

Event numbers and the names of the events will be called by an announcer. Swimmers should be watching the meet and anticipating their event. Boys' events are odd numbered, and girls' events are even numbered. Swimmers need to report to the starting block area with cap and goggles. At most meets, the announcer will call out the names of the swimmers for each lane in each event, but it is always best to know your lane assignment in advance since acoustics in a pool area are often very poor.

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After swimmers complete their events, they should ask the timer for the unofficial time and then go immediately to the coaches. The coach will discuss the race briefly and offer encouragement. At this point, it is a good time to visit the bathroom, get a drink or something light to eat.

INVITATIONALS

Invitationals are sponsored by individual clubs/teams as fundraisers. It provides swimmers with opportunities to compete with swimmers from many of the surrounding areas. It is a good gauge of the local competition and prepares swimmers for bigger championship meets. These meets are optional, and fees are charged to swimmers for each event entered. Information on invitationals will be posted on Team Unify and will be included in the weekly email to families a few weeks prior to the meet date. Watch carefully for due dates. No entries will be accepted late or without meet entry fees.

YSCAP CHAMPIONSHIP MEET

This meet will be held at the end of the dual meet season. There are no qualifying times for this meet. All swimmers who are eligible and who wish to swim will be entered. There will be a nominal cost for the swimmer to participate in this meet. These fees will be collected in advance of the meet before the meet entry deadline.

YMCA DISTRICTS

This meet is for swimmers who are 9 and older or younger swimmers who have met the time standards for the 10 & U age bracket. Swimmers must meet the qualifying times to participate. The qualifying times will be posted on the team site as soon as they are available. These times should be a swimmer's goal to achieve during the season. Our coaches will help by telling swimmers when they have qualified. Sometimes multiple relay teams from the same age category will qualify. It is the coaches' decision as to what relay team will be entered into the championship meet. This will be based on the coach determining which relay has the best chance of advancing to the State meet. Y Central Districts usually are held in mid-March. Even though you have qualified, you still need to enter, and fees will be collected. Keep an eye on the team site and weekly emails for more information.

YMCA STATES

The top swimmers from the YMCA Districts advance to swim at the PA YMCA State Championship meet. It is a great accomplishment and a big thrill for swimmers to compete in this meet!

YMCA NATIONALS

Swimmers will need to meet qualifying times to be eligible to attend the National YMCA meet. YMCA Nationals are held in North Carolina in April. More information regarding Nationals may be obtained from the coaches. Those who qualify and plan to attend the meet will be asked to participate in a fundraiser to help defray the costs associated with the trip for the coaches and the swimmers. The swimmer's family will be responsible for additional costs not covered by fundraising funds.

REMEMBER – staying informed about swim team news is both the **swimmer's and the parent's responsibility**. Check the website (<https://carlislefamilyymca.org/programs/aquatics/swim-team/>), Team Site (<https://www.teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=reczzcy>) and your email frequently for up-to-date information.

If you are new to our team, WELCOME! Talk to other parents and ask questions. By the end of the first season, both you and your swimmer will have learned a lot about swimming. Enjoy your year with CARY – we hope our love for swimming is contagious!

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