



whetstone whales

2019

## Whales at a Glance

The Whetstone Whales, founded in 1975, is the oldest of the three Montgomery Village swim teams. Our swim team is open to children ages 4 - 18 who live in our assigned area. The Whetstone Whales' focus is to teach and improve swimming skills in a fun and friendly environment.

Regular team: Community members, 7-18

Pre-Team: Community members ages 4-6 (swimmers younger than 7 can move to the regular team when they are ready)

Swim Season: Tuesday after Memorial Day through the third week in July.

Meet Schedule: 10 dual meets - Every Tuesday or Wednesday afternoons ("B" meets) and Saturday mornings ("A" meets) generally starting the third week of June.

### **Practice Times:**

Early season (Tuesday after Memorial Day until MCPS lets out):

Ages 4-10 (Regular Team only, not pre-team): 5:00-6:00 PM

Ages 11-18: 6:00-7:00PM

### Regular Season:

Morning Practice: 7:30 to 9:00 AM (11 and older); 9:00-10:00 AM (10 and unders and pre-team)

Afternoon Practice: 6:30 to 7:30 PM (11 and older); 5:30-6:30 PM (10 and unders and pre-team)

We offer afternoon practice to accommodate busy schedules. However, we have limited use of the pool on days when it is open to the rest of the Village. *Please try to have your child attend morning practice when you can.* Our coaches are better able to provide instruction because we have more space to work. This is especially true for developing swimmers.

The Summer swim season is short. Swimmers should come to practice every day they are free. Please tell the coaches if your swimmer is unable to attend for several days. Also, it is important to pay attention and be respectful during practice. Any swimmer who is disrupting practice can be asked by the coaches to leave for that day. Please save questions for the coaches for during or after practice so that they can focus on our swimmers and their safety.

### **Canceling Practice:**

Practice is occasionally cancelled due to weather or pool closures. The team will be notified by the team reps by email and/or the Rained Out app. Please see the website to register.

### **Instruction/Private lessons:**

Most of the coaches can be hired for individual lessons. Contact information is listed on the website.

### **How do I join the Whales?**

Registration is available on-line beginning on or around May 1<sup>st</sup>. Click the registration tab on the website to begin the process. If you have questions or need a password reset, contact our team registrar, Joy Miller, at [millerjoy@yahoo.com](mailto:millerjoy@yahoo.com). All information about the team is listed on the website. More details will be sent through email updates by the team reps and coaches. When you sign up for the swim team you will be added to the e-mail list. Much of the information about the team is only visible on the website when you are LOGGED-IN.

**Who Runs the Team?** The swim team is run by parent volunteers. The committee meets at least twice a year, and otherwise as needed, to develop the budget, oversee coach selection, select Pre-Team coaches, ensure that individuals are assigned to complete essential tasks, and recommend changes in policies and procedures.

- Meet Rep: Serves as MCSL representative and liaison with the Montgomery Village Foundation. Assists “A” and “B” reps with the running of meets. Manages the running of additional meets (All-Comers, Relays, etc)
- Treasurer: Collects money, pays bills and prepares yearly budget
- Registrar: Updates registration portion of website;
- “A” Meet Rep: The Representative assists the Meets rep in representing the team at MCSL functions. Manages and makes sure “A” meets run smoothly.
- “B” Meet Rep: Coordinates and schedules “B” meets, Makes sure “B” meets run smoothly
- Social Rep: Plans and staffs social events

## **Coaches**

The Whales are led by a head coach and at least two assistants. They design and supervise practice, create meet line-ups, coach the “A” and “B” meets and advise the pre-team. If you need to speak with the coaches about your child, please approach them before or after practice, or by email or phone. Please do not approach them during practices or meets.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Meet Etiquette**

Swim meets are for fun. While you cheer on the Whales, please remember the following rules:

- Quiet at the start of each race.
- Do not talk to meet officials during the meet. Bring any concerns to Whale coaches and reps.
- Do not block the view of the meet officials, especially Stroke & Turn Judges.
- Smoking is prohibited on deck, in locker rooms, in spectator areas, and in all areas used by the swimmers.
- Clean up the deck at the end of the meet, whether we are home or away.

### **Code of Conduct**

The Montgomery County Swim League has codes of conduct for parents, swimmers and coaches. More information can be found on the MCSL website.

### **Swimmer Safety**

The safety of our swimmers is paramount. As part of this, we follow these rules:

- Coaches, reps and other key officials complete written applications noting that they have not been convicted of any crime involving physical violence or sex-related offenses.
- Third-party background checks are completed on all coaches
- Every coach, rep and volunteer must adhere to the “three person rule.” This rule prohibits one adult from being alone with one youth. A second adult must be present. If this is not possible, there must be at least two or more youths with an adult.
- We will report to law enforcement all known or suspected incidents of sexual abuse, molestation and misconduct.

## How can I help the Whales?

**It can take up to 36 adults from our team to run a meet.** We need each family (mom, dad, grandparent, older sibling) to volunteer several times during the Summer. We encourage one member from each family to work at most meets where their child is swimming – helping at the concession stand, writing ribbons, or timing. If your schedule does not allow you to attend meets, the team has several social events that require family involvement to be a success.

We always need people who are willing to be trained officials! Stroke and turn, starters, and referees are needed to run a meet. Great refs retire every year, so please consider these important jobs. If you are willing to take a training course (3 hours), tell us at the beginning of the season and we will tell you the dates, or you look on [www.mcsl.org](http://www.mcsl.org).

**Deck Jobs for Meets**-The Whales MUST have these jobs filled for every “A” and “B” meet we schedule.

Certified Officials: These jobs require attendance of a mandatory MCSL training session before the season.

1. Referee (home meets only) – runs meet
2. Stroke and Turn Judges (2/team at every meet) disqualifies swimmers who are not doing the stroke correctly
3. Starter (away meets only) – starts races

Uncertified Jobs:

- Automation – enter times after races and scores meet. We need 2 per team at every meet.
- Clerk of Course – checks in swimmers before races. A great job for those who like to interact with swimmers.
- Head Timer – Makes sure that timers are ready before race starts and ensures accuracy of recorded times for each meet
- Timers (need 9 per team) – time races (three per lane). This is a great way to get to know other team families.
- Announcer (home meets only)
- Runners – take time cards from Head timer to Automation. This is often worked by an older Whale or sibling who is not swimming in the meet.
- A Meet Food: Runs Concessions at all home A meets
- B Meet Food: Runs Concessions at all home B meets

### **Non-Deck Jobs for Meets (in the Community Center)**

- Automation: Maintain team computer and data base, enter times during meets.
- Ribbon Writers – fills out ribbons (sticks labels provided by automation)

**Non-Meet Jobs**-If your schedule or care for younger siblings (aka “future Whales”) does not allow you to help during the meets, there are plenty of other jobs during the season.

Social events (with the help of the Social Rep):

- Ice Cream Social: One or two families scoop ice cream to welcome our swimmers back at the Community Center in mid-May
- 13 and over BBQ: A week night before the beginning of the season. The coaches join our teens to determine the meet themes for the year and make other plans for the season
- Pasta Dinner: Usually scheduled the night before our first Saturday “A” meet, the pasta dinner is a potluck hosted by team parents and features pasta, salads and desserts. Parents and siblings are invited.
- Donuts: Purchase and sell donuts poolside for the kids who come to morning practice on Fridays.
- Team Pictures: Team and individual pictures for all swimmers will be taken sometime during the season. These will be available for purchase.

- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Coordinators
- Pancake Breakfast: A Tuesday or Wednesday during the last week of the season
- Crabfeast: Usually two families who coordinate the invitation, ordering set-up and clean up for the Crabfeast dinner, held on the last Saturday of the regular season.
- Parent Social: A potluck party held on a Saturday evening during season in your home
- Wine Women and Whales: Those over 21 for Divisionals poster making on the Thursday before Divisionals
- Divisionals Dinner: A dinner for those swimming the Divisionals meet on the night before

Pep Rallies: Fridays, 6 pm before each home A meet, for **ALL** swimmers (including pre-team-all are welcome!).

End of the Year Pool Party and Awards Banquet: This is the end-of-season pool party, including a slide show and presentation of trophies wraps up the year. ALL swimmers get trophies. All team members and their families are invited.

## Meets—Start to Finish

Swimmers should remain in the team area during the meet. If a swimmer needs to leave the team area or the pool for any reason, the swimmer should inform one of the coaches. We do not want any swimmers to miss the check-in time.

## All-Comers

This meet kicks off the swim team season. It is like a regular meet, but with Lake Marion and North Creek, which are the other teams in the Village. Swimmers are encouraged to attend, as times are used by the coaches to determine who is selected for the first "A" meet. If a swimmer cannot swim in All-Comers, the coaches will try to time as many kids as possible on practices that follow that meet or the swimmers will need to come to a "B" meet to get their first times.

## "A" meets

"A" meets are against other teams in our MCSL division on Saturday morning and scores are kept. These meets have a set line-up, developed by the coaches, using the top times in each event. The coaches send a copy of their line-up to the opposing team by Friday morning. Creating line-ups and entering them into automation takes a lot of time. This is why it is important to let the coaches know your availability and to follow through on your commitment to the meet. **If a swimmer does not show-up for an A meet, we have limited options to substitute another swimmer. This means we lose the chance to score points for that event. In a close meet, it can make the difference in winning or losing!**

Swimmers are assumed to be available for every "A" meet and will be considered for the line-up. If they are not available, they must indicate that they are not available for the meet by editing their commitment on the website. If you are placed in the line-up but have a change in plans, you must notify the coaches immediately by email. Coaches must follow MSCL rules when creating the Whales line-up. No swimmer may swim more than 5 events --3 individual events and two relays (including IM) or 2 individual events and 3 relays. These placements are mostly determined by the best time.

The swimmers in "A" meets will vary week to week. Never assume that your child will not be selected! Sometimes swimmers are contacted because other swimmers have pulled out of the original line-up. Please be flexible! Sometimes a younger swimmer is asked to "swim up" into an older age group or swim an event that is not their "preferred" events due to not having enough swimmers. Swimmers are expected to be willing to swim all events that the coach asks them to swim. This includes being willing to "swim up" and to swim events that are not their preferred strokes.

Every A meet ends with boys and girls freestyle relays, with an "A" and a "B" relay. The swimmers for this relay are not selected in advance. These are exciting races and can sometimes determine whether the Whales win or lose. **Please check with the coaches before you leave the A meet to see if your child has been placed in this relay!**

**Checking in for “A” meets:** All swimmers are expected to warm-up with the team. If a swimmer does not arrive for warm-ups, they risk being scratched. If you are running late, call the coaches, reps, or even a friend who is there so they can relay word to the coaches. Your child’s spot might not be held if they are late. We understand that emergencies can arise. Please contact the Head Coach, Meet Rep or A Meet Rep as soon as possible.

## **“B” meets**

“B” meets are Tuesday or Wednesday nights with other teams in the Village and the surrounding area. “B” meets are run like “A” meets, but a bit less formal. “B” meets may be scored, but the scores do not count to our MCSL standings.

- Swimmers who placed first, second or third in events other than freestyle or in the top six in freestyle at the preceding "A" meet may not swim that event at the "B" meet. They can swim other events and cheer for their team!
- The coaches need to know in advance who will be swimming in the "B" meets and ask that parents sign up their swimmers for events on the team website. Sign up instructions are available on the website.
- Home B meets: Arrive by 4:45 PM ready to warm up
- Away B meets: Arrive by 5:00 PM for warm-ups unless told otherwise.

## **Meals after the meets**

Meeting after our swim meets is an important team tradition. After “A” meets, the team usually meets for lunch at Ledo’s in Montgomery Village. After “B” meets, we meet McDonald’s or another local restaurant. Meet ribbons are distributed and placing first, second and third (Blue, Red and White) in your races earns your chance to sing the Star Spangled Banner for the team😊 . This event is open to parents and siblings.

## **A and B Relays**

A relays are an all-relay meet, using 4-6 swimmers from each age group, which generally takes place on a Sunday morning. If you are likely to be in the meet, the coach will contact you a few days before to check if you are available.

## **Divisionals**

This is the championship meet for the six teams in the division. Fewer swimmers are entered than in an “A” meet, as each team may enter only two swimmers per event. Divisionals starts an hour earlier than an “A” meet. Swimmers who are selected to be entered in divisionals will be contacted by the coaches for availability.

## **Long Course and All Star meets**

These are for the top swimmers in the county, or the winners of the divisional relay carnival. Coaches will let you know if you have qualified for this meet. You can track your chances by looking at the top times report on the MCSL web site.

## **Disqualifications (“DQs”)**

Swimmers usually begin their meet experience with freestyle. The other strokes can be more difficult, and swimmers can be disqualified for not doing the stroke properly. Disqualifying can be frequent at first and can happen to even the most experienced swimmers. Disqualifying in an “A” meet will keep the team from earning points for that race. Coaches and swimmers should focus on legal starts, turns and stroke technique throughout the season.

## Can I leave my young child at the pool while I run errands?

All children 9 and under must be supervised by an adult when they are at the pool. This is a pool requirement and applies to swimmers and their siblings at practice, meets and team events. If the pool closes unexpectedly (such as for a Summer storm), coaches, lifeguards and team reps will not be responsible for watching children.

## What about Awards?

Place ribbons: These are given to any swimmer who scores points – the first 5 places in the individual events. There may also be “finisher” ribbons for those who participated. Swimmers do not receive a ribbon if they DQ in a race. Ribbons are handed out after the meet so teammates can celebrate their accomplishments. Times are printed on the back of the ribbon.

Personal Best Ribbons: Swimmers earn Personal Best Ribbons as they drop time throughout the season. If they aren't ready immediately after the meet, they will be placed in the family folders.

Participation Trophies: All regular team members, 12 and under, will receive a trophy at the Awards Ceremony. If you are not at the ceremony, you can contact a rep to pick up your trophy. Swimmers aged 13 & older receive an annual gift.

## Coaches Trophies:

“Most Improved” goes to male and female swimmers (10 & under; 11 – 18) who the coaches think have put forth the most effort and dropped the most time. “The Whale Award” goes to someone who demonstrates service and sportsmanship to the team. “High Point Award” trophies go to the top male and females in each age group.

## Senior Recognition:

The Whales honor our graduating high school Seniors throughout the season. They are part of a ceremony during the last home A meet, regardless of whether they are swimming in the meet, and will be recognized at the Awards ceremony. High School graduates who have not aged off the team are welcome to return to the Whales for another year of eligibility.

## Pre-team

Our pre-team is led by a head pre-team coach and assistants, supervised by our team Coaches and team reps, and assisted by volunteer helpers. Pre-team coaches receive a stipend, while helpers can receive SSL hours or a small stipend for the Summer. All pre-team coaches and helpers must attend a training session. The team does not pay for this training.

**Pre-team Mini Meet:** This is a wonderful tradition at the end of every season where the Pre-teamers get to show off their new swimming prowess, helped by our regular team swimmers. Pre-team coaches run the meet and they and their helpers are available to help the swimmers get across the pool and act as officials and timers. A mini-concession of candy, donuts and drinks is available. The mini meet has special events just for the pre-teamers.

## How do I learn more?

- Look for announcements in the Montgomery Village News
- Read announcements on the Swim Team e-mail list.
- Check out the team website is <http://www.whetstonewhales.com/>
- **Ask a rep! We're happy to answer questions and tell you about the Whales!!**