

The 11 Questions Parents Most Frequently Ask the coaches About The "Y" STINGERS SWIM TEAM

1. **Question:** How many practices should my child attend?

Answer: The minimum number of practices a girl or boy should attend is two per week. As stated, however, this is a *minimum amount*. Most of our team members attended well over 75% of all practices last year. Of course it goes without saying that the more practices attended, the better the swimmer becomes.

2. **Question:** Will my child swim in swim meets?

Answer: Swimmers who attend practices swim in every dual meet. We use practices attended as a criterion for swimming in dual swim meets. All swimmers who attend practices will swim regardless of the child's ability or speed.

3. **Question:** When are meets held? **Answer:** The "Y Dual Meet Season" begins in late October and goes until February. During that

time we typically swim eight meets, four at home and four away, against other teams in our league. The meets are held on Saturdays, usually beginning at 1 p.m. with warmups at noon. In February our league's teams meet for the **Central New York District Championships**. In March all the "Ys" in New York State meet for the **New York State YMCA Championships**.

4. **Question:** Will my child swim in the District and or State Championships?

Answer: District Championships: This meet is run after our dual meet schedule with all the league's teams participating. All Cortland swimmers participate; there are no "cut" times to meet. **State Championships:** Qualifying times are established for each event for this meet. Qualifying times for this meet will be posted as soon as they are received from the state commissioner.

SPECIAL NOTE for 2010: The 2010 State Meet is March 12,13,14 and is being held at SUNY Buffalo.

5. **Question:** What type of Y swim league does the Cortland Y participate in?

Answer: The Central NY YMCA Swim League consists of typically 8 or 9 teams from Auburn to Oneonta to Watertown. The league in recent years has become very competitive with excellent swimmers emerging from all the teams. Many State Champions have come from our league, of which the Cortland Y has produced at least one in each of the last 31 years. The league has provided an excellent opportunity for all swimmers to compete against top notch competition every week.

6. **Question:** How are parents involved in the Swim Team?

Answer: Parents are there first and foremost to provide emotional support to their children. Knowing that their parents are interested in what they are doing and how they are doing encourages each of the swimmers to continue to do their best. This support is demonstrated by making sure the swimmers have a way to attend practice, attending meets and having some knowledge of how your child is progressing.

In addition, the parents provide the structure which enables the swim team to function. Each meet is timed and officiated by parents. Parents also provide labor for the refreshment sale at each meet. The State YMCA Meet, which is run totally by parent volunteers, is hosted by the Cortland team every two to three years - we last hosted in March 2007. In addition we ask parents to actively and enthusiastically participate in our annual fund raiser, the Lap-A-Thon. Parent support is vital to the success of this event.

The YMCA Swim Team parents group is undoubtedly the strongest support group at the YMCA and without the contribution of each one, the Swim Team would not function at the level that it does.

7. **Question:** What is done with monies raised at this fund raiser and other money raising events such as hosting the District and State Championships in recent years?

Answer: The proceeds are used to provide bus transportation to our away meets as well as the everyday needs of our team. It is estimated that bus transportation to our away meets will cost between \$2500 and \$3000. The remaining balance goes for league team dues, mailings, awards night at the end of the season, etc. In past years we have hosted both our District Championships as well as the State Championships. The profits received from these ventures were used to support and promote the Stingers swimming program and to enhance the pool facilities at the "Y." For example we have financed new lane lines, starting blocks, benches around the pool, a lane- line takeup reel, the record board in the pool area, etc. Several years ago we purchased a new computer for the YMCA Business Office and a camera for Membership ID Cards. *Our parents committee* has control over all monies collected and supervises its spending.

8. **Question:** What happens when the Cortland "Y" team travels to away meets?

Answer: All swimmers will assemble at the "Y" at a specified time and will depart via bus to our meet. All children must ride the bus to the away meet, provided there is room. If parents go via cars, your children may ride back with you only if the designated coach is notified in advance. As we leave for most meets in mid-morning, please be sure a lunch is packed so that it can be eaten on the bus during the trip. We stop at a McDonalds or Burger King Restaurant on the way back. Upon our return to the "Y" all children have use of the telephone at the Y. A coach will remain (within reason) with them until they have been picked up. Please be prompt in picking your children up.

9. **Question:** Why does my child do mostly freestyle in workouts?

Answer: For most competitive swimmers, freestyle is the easiest stroke for one to swim and usually the fastest. During Monday - Thursday workouts, the Blue Team practice is presently swimming approximately 1 mile per night, while the Gold Team practice is going 2-3 miles. By mid-year, these two practices will be swimming 1 ½ to 2 and 4 to 5 miles per night respectively. One cannot get himself or herself into shape by doing less than the above and we try to do more. This of course depends on the age of the swimmer.

For the Blue Team, we will be teaching the fundamentals for freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and fly. Toward the middle of October, however, we will start working on endurance and speed. This will be done using freestyle as the main stroke. Swimming other strokes in practice, especially in the early months tends to take away from the amount of mileage we can attain in any one night of practice. As time goes on we will branch out into each one's specialty during a portion of each practice.

10. **Question:** When will my child learn to swim other strokes?

Answer: Essentially the answer to this question is when the child is ready. In most cases new members swim freestyle well enough for fun. Swimming for competition, however, where speed is needed, many changes must be made in their stroke. As all newcomers know how to swim freestyle, this is where we start. When changes are made in stroke fundamentals, it becomes to the swimmer as if he is learning all over again, like learning to walk again. After all changes have been made and the swimmer can function fundamentally correct with the freestyle, we are then able to move on to different strokes.

Other problems also occur during this learning period and play an important part in conditioning, coordination, and strength.

Competitive swimmers will eventually find their own stroke. Please keep in mind that all swimmers can't be good breaststrokers as all breaststrokers can't be good butterflyers, etc. We will, however, attempt to teach all strokes throughout the winter months.

11. **Question:** I hear swimmers and parents talking about USA Swim Meets -what are they and who swims in them?

Answer: The USA Swimming Association (USAS) is a national organization that like the YMCA sponsors age-group swimming. The Cortland Stingers Swim Team is first and foremost a YMCA competitive swim team, however because swimming under the USA Swimming flag is important to individual and team development, all Stinger swimmers are strongly encouraged and expected to register and participate in USA Swimming. The Stingers participate in the Niagara District under USA Swimming and are affiliated the Southern Tier Swim League. There is a separate registration fee for USA Swimming and when swimmers participate in USAS meets there might be entry fees per event entered and swimmers are required to find their own transportation to these meets. We do not provide buses. Please talk to one of the coaches for more information on USA Swimming policy, if you have additional questions.