

2026 Colony Cudas  
Swim Team Handbook



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## PRACTICE

The purpose of practice is to build endurance, improve stroke technique, and learn competitive strategies. Practices will be held every weekday afternoon from the day after Memorial Day through the last day of school. Morning practices will begin after school gets out for the summer. See team calendar for exact dates, practice groups and times. Any changes will be posted on the team bulletin board at the pool and communicated via email.

## SWIMMER GUIDELINES

1. For safety reasons, swimmers must be able to swim the length of the pool in a reasonable amount of time, using a competitive stroke of choice.
2. Attend practices, be on time and help with set-up and/or clean-up when asked.
3. Swimmers who refuse to participate in practice must leave the pool premises, so as not to disrupt practice. (See Code of Conduct)
4. Exhibit good behavior and cooperation at practices so as to gain maximum benefit of available time.
5. Seek additional help with stroke and competitive techniques when necessary.
6. Attend practice the day of a meet in order to be eligible to swim in that meet, unless otherwise excused.
7. USA or other club swimmers are expected to attend their club's daily practices and Colony practice the day of a meet.
8. If a swimmer is assigned to swim in a meet and does not show up, he/she may not be allowed to swim in the next meet (at the coach's discretion).
9. Read, Sign and Abide by the Colony Cudas Code of Conduct, show team spirit, and good sportsmanship at all meets.

## PARENT GUIDELINES

1. Complete registration & medical release/Code of Conduct/Photo Permission forms, and other requirements as part of registration process
2. Have your swimmer arrive at practice and swim meets on time.
3. Inform the Head Coach, IN WRITING, as far in advance as possible, of any practices or meets your swimmer will be unable to attend.
4. Do not approach coaches during practice or swim meets. Coaches need maximum interface with swimmers during these times. Please wait until after practice or email the coaching staff if you have any questions about your swimmer's progress. Any coaching concerns should be brought to the Swim Team Coordinator or GPSA Representative.
5. Learn as much as you can about competitive swimming so you can better realize and support the coaches' responsibilities and decisions.
6. Attend a Parents/Officials Swim Clinic (more information on page 9)
7. Address constructive criticisms and/or concerns to the Swim Team Coordinator or GPSA Representative.
8. Support the Board and Team. Volunteer!! Each family is required to volunteer for 8 points throughout the season. (See page 8)

## COLONY CUDAS SWIM TEAM CODE OF CONDUCT

The Colony Cudas strive to provide a fun, safe and positive experience for all of our swimmers, parents, coaches, and spectators. As such, this Code of Conduct has been developed to provide guidelines and expectations for all people in the Cudas family. As a parent or swimmer of the Colony Cudas, I understand that I am representing Colony Pool and the Colony Recreation and Civic Association. I understand and agree to the following:

At all times a Cuda will:

1. Respect, encourage, and support fellow teammates, competitors, and visitors.
2. Not use inappropriate language, gestures, or hurtful behavior as these are NEVER acceptable.
3. Listen and show respect towards all coaches, lifeguards, officials, and meet staff.
4. Come to swimming prepared with all necessary equipment and be responsible for all belongings.
5. Arrive on time for all practices and meets and be ready to begin when scheduled.
6. Always give 100% effort at each practice and meet.
7. Set a positive example.
8. Display good sportsmanship at all times both on and off the pool deck.
9. Avoid the use of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs or other banned substances.
10. Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.
11. Have fun!

At practices, a Cuda will:

1. Learn/understand proper lane etiquette and how to swim with others in the same lane.
2. Not interfere, disrupt, or distract other swimmers while practicing.
3. Respect, encourage and support fellow teammates.

A Cuda parent will:

1. Teach and practice good sportsmanship at all meets and practices. You are role models!
2. Respect the sport. Respect the officials. Respect the coaches. Respect other parents, who often serve as volunteers.
3. NEVER criticize other swimmers, coaches or officials regardless of the circumstances.
4. NEVER coach my child. I will let swimmers swim and coaches coach, and support both positively.
5. Emphasize the FUN of the sport and the benefits of training, competing and putting forth effort at all times. I will not emphasize winning or beating another swimmer.

## MEETS

Colony Cudas is part of the GPSA Swimming League – Red Division. Our 2026 schedule consists of five league meets, our Blue/White intrasquad meet and any additional "Friendship Meets" that we can schedule. League meets are those set up by the GPSA (appendix A). These meets determine our standing with the league. Friendship meets are designed to provide additional experience in a competitive setting. Weekday meets begin at 6 p.m. Swimmer should arrive at 4:30 p.m. for HOME meets and 5:15 p.m. for AWAY meets in order to have time for warm-ups.

Primary correspondence and notification about the meets will be posted on the team bulletin board at the pool and via email.

## WHO SWIMS IN A MEET?

Due to the size of our team, we are sometimes unable to swim every swimmer in every meet. Please remember that the coaches do their best to allow everyone a chance to swim. The coaches consider the following when creating the line-up:

- ❖ Participation in practice
- ❖ Who is available to swim
- ❖ Stroke times
- ❖ A swimmer may only compete in three individual events and one relay per meet (per GPSA rules)
- ❖ All Pool and Team Financial Obligations have been met

## What are Exhibition Lanes?

These are the two outside lanes in a six-lane pool, with each team using one. The coaches are free to use it at their own discretion. No points are earned toward the score, but the times are applicable to the City Championship Meet. The coaches will make good use of this lane during the season. Note that all pools do not have six lanes. As a result, there will be additional heats of events to swim exhibition swimmers.

## ILLNESS / VACATION

It is important that the Head Coach is notified promptly if a swimmer is unable to swim in a meet due to illness / vacation. This gives her time to make the necessary changes in the line-up.

*Remember to notify the coach if you know in advance that your swimmer will be unable to swim in a meet for any reason.*

## TRANSPORTATION

Parents are responsible to see that their swimmer(s) has transportation to and from practices and all meets. This is not the coaches' responsibility! Parents are encouraged to stay and support the team!

## TEAM PICTURES

Individual and team pictures will be taken, typically prior to a home meet. Date TBD

## FUNDRAISING

Team fundraising is vital to meeting expenses outside of what registration covers. Other fundraising campaigns may be held during the course of the season.

- Swim-a-thon – Participation or buyout required
- Mid-season fundraisers TBA
- Tuesday Float Nights - Please donate at least three ice cream toppings per family, and volunteer for at least two float nights in the concession stand.

## VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

### FLOAT NIGHTS - 2026

Each family can volunteer for Float Nights. Swim team sponsored Float nights will be held on alternating Tuesday nights, starting June 18 at the pool from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. Members & guests are allowed to bring float apparatus those nights and the swim team sells ice cream sundaes for \$2 each. Additionally, each family is asked to donate at least two ice cream toppings per family for these events. Donations can be dropped off during the first week of practices.

### SWIM MEETS

Swim meets cannot be held unless the required number of volunteers is on hand. Please see the Descriptions of Meet Volunteer Positions/Duties below. Also please see the point system we will use (Appendix B). Each family must volunteer at least 8 points worth during the season.

#### Descriptions of Meet Volunteer Positions/Duties:

- ☐ GPSA Representative (at least one per team): Pool's representative to the summer league, the Greater Peninsula Swimming Association (GPSA). The **ONLY** person designated to approach a referee in regard to a question relative to a ruling by a meet official.
- ☐ Referee (one per home meet): Conducts and manages the meet. Makes the final determination in regard to eligibility and finish of swimmers, interpretations of rules, and conduct of the meet. \*Requires attendance at Officials' Clinic.
- ☐ Starter (one per home meet): Prepares and starts each event and works closely with the referee to ensure a fair and smooth running meet. \*Requires attendance at Officials' Clinic.
- ☐ Stroke & Turn Judge (minimum of two per team per meet): Responsible for ensuring that the swimmers are swimming the respective strokes correctly as specified in the USA Swimming Rules. Also responsible for ensuring that turns and finishes are completed in conformance with the rules. Makes written report of disqualification of swimmers who do not comply with rules, and explains the violation(s) to the referee. \*Requires attendance at Officials' Clinic.
- ☐ Sweeps Judge (one per team per meet): Observes and records order of finish of competing swimmers in each event. Receives lane slips at the completion of each race and marks placement on slips and hands to Referee for review.

- ❑ **Head Timer or Back Up Timer (one per home meet):** Ensures that each swimming lane has a timer to determine the time a swimmer uses in each event of the meet. Maintains TWO stopwatches as back-ups in the event of a watch malfunction or other issue in a swim lane.
- ❑ **Timers / Writers (six per each meet; twelve for Blue/White meet):** Timer uses stopwatch to determine the time a swimmer in a particular lane uses to complete an event. The timer starts the watch when they see the flash from the starting system (or the sound if another system is used) and stops the watch when any part of the swimmer touches the wall. The writer works beside the timer and records the time for that swimmer on the lane slip. Neither the timer nor the writer makes decisions on legal strokes/turns/finishes. The timer times and the writer writes the times down. The timer calls for a back up (Head Timer) if their watch fails during the event.
- ❑ **Runner (two per home meet):** Picks up the lane slips after the completion of each race and delivers to the Sweeps Judges for final placement. Carries slips from Referee's table to Score Table for use in determining scores given each swimmer and team for that particular event.
- ❑ **"Lil Swimmer" Wrangler (two per meet):** This position is not in the GPSA rules, but is absolutely essential! Helps distribute lane slips to younger swimmers as needed and help line up the swimmers in the correct order/lane prior to each event. This leaves the coaches free to coach – watch the swimmers, and provide them with instruction and feedback following their swim, when it is most helpful to the swimmer.
- ❑ **Scorekeeper/Data Entry - (one per team per meet):** On the Swimtopia web site, scorekeepers will enter swimmer times and places from the lane slips brought to them by the Runners. Scoring will automatically be calculated and the times converted to standard meter times as the times/places are entered.

## OFFICIALS TRAINING

Training will be provided for essential volunteer positions, such as Stroke & Turn Judges, Meet Referee, and Meet Starter. The schedule is TBA. They will be held IN PERSON. We are required to have 2 Stroke & Turn Judges at each meet and one Meet Referee at home meets.

We encourage our parents to take part in these training sessions as we are always in need of officials.

Please attend one of these:

Training for Stroke & Turn, Referee, Starter: (2 identical session, please attend one)  
Time and date, TBA

## SWIMMERS' AWARDS

### Meet Ribbons

Ribbons are awarded for each swimmer who participates in an event. Ribbon colors are as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Place – Blue

2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Red

3<sup>rd</sup> Place – White

Participation – Rainbow (or other) for those who swim in an exhibition lane or an exhibition heat

### Banquet awards

Various awards are given out by the coaches at our annual banquet. These may include awards for accomplishments and improvement, as well as spirit and sportsmanship. The coaches also present the swimmers with a printout showing their best swim times for the season, and recognize those who qualified for the annual City Championship Meet.

## TEAM SWIM SUIT

The preferred team suit is solid navy. Male suits are available in both jammer and racing brief styles. Suits may be purchased at the Colony Cuda Store on the SwimOutlet web site. Please see our website at <https://colonycudas.swimtopia.com/> to find the store. Please order your suit by May 25, 2026 to receive prior to our first Red Division meet. Team pictures will be taken at the Blue/White Meet on June 11 and we want your swimmer in their team suit! If you have questions about the team suit, contact us at [colonycudas@gmail.com](mailto:colonycudas@gmail.com).

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### What is GPSA?

The GPSA is the Greater Peninsula Swimming Association. There are three divisions within the GPSA – red, white, and blue. We currently swim in the Red division. At the City Championship Meet, we compete against all of the swimmers in the GPSA that have qualified for the events. [www.gpsaswimming.org](http://www.gpsaswimming.org)

### How many practices do I have to attend each week?

If the coaches feel that a swimmer has not been at enough practices and they have not been attending a year-round practice, then they may not be eligible to swim in a meet. Please make every effort to attend every practice and let your coaches know if you will be missing any practices and why!

### What do I bring to practice?

Be dressed in your swimsuit and bring your cap, goggles, towel, and a bottle of water.

### When am I supposed to arrive at a swim meet?

For home meets, arrive by 4:30 p.m. and by 5:15 p.m. at away pools. Directions for away meets are included in this packet. Weekday meets begin at 6 p.m. City Championship Meet is on Saturday and begins early in the morning.

### What are "A" meets and "Friendship" meets?

"A" meets are used to determine a place finish within the Red division of the GPSA. The fastest swimmers will swim for points so that the team can win the meet. However, there are exhibition heats at every "A" meet so that every team member has a chance to swim. "Friendship" meets give less experienced swimmers a chance to compete with others at their level and win place ribbons. All times at any meet can be used to qualify for the City Championship Meet at the end of the season.

### What do I wear to a meet?

We have a team swimsuit and cap that you will wear for meets. Swimmers are encouraged to "save" the team suit and purchase an alternative practice suit or jammer. Board shorts, regular swim shorts and girls' two pieces are not recommended – they tend to fall off when diving!

### What about the caps?

Swimmers will be offered a free latex cap at registration (if they need one) Replacement caps will be available at a cost of \$6. Silicone Caps can be purchased at a cost of \$15.

How do I know if a practice or meet is canceled?

Check the team bulletin board at the pool, Colony Cudas Swim Team Facebook page as well as your email!

What do we use the registration and fundraiser money for?

Each year we raise funds for coaches' salaries, buy new equipment, and support the general management of the team. We also try to provide some type of spirit wear at the beginning of the season to each swimmer as well as a gift at the team banquet.

When can parents talk to the coaches?

Anytime except when the coaches are on the deck leading practice or during a meet. The coaches need to have their full attention on the swimmers. Catch them before or after practice or email them your questions or concerns.

How is information communicated to the parents?

Email! Email! Email! We rely heavily on email communications so please make sure we have a valid email address on file for you. If you have a situation where both parents need to be notified separately, that's not a problem – just provide both email addresses! Check the team bulletin board at the pool. Updates and other information will be posted here regularly. We're also on Facebook! Search Colony Cudas Swim Team and join us. Updates and information are posted here as well.

Who do I ask if I have questions?

Contact the Swim Team Coach, one of our Swim Team Board Members, or our GPSA Representative at the phone #'s / email address listed below. Do not hesitate to ask questions! Other families who are veteran swim team families are also a great resource!

[colonycudas@gmail.com](mailto:colonycudas@gmail.com)

[Colony Cudas Swim Team – Facebook page](#)

Head Swim Coach:	Nick Barrows	n.barrows@yahoo.com
Head Swim Coach:	Kim Kinder	kimjkinder@gmail.com
Asst. Swim Coach:	Bernard Kim	
Asst. Swim Coach:	Rhilyne Harris	
GPSA Rep:	Scott Gold	spgold09@gmail.com
President:	Ashley Coleman	ashleycoleman@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Alison Kirsteatter	ameasterday20@gmail.com
Secretary:	Jeremy Scicchitano	jescicchi@gmail.com
Volunteer Coordinator(s):	OPEN BOARD POSITION	
Fundraising Coordinator:	Christine Gold	cgold0909@gmail.com
Concessions Coordinator:	Amanda Burns	ama.burns@hotmail.com

## APPENDIX A

### GPSA/Colony 2026 SCHEDULE

May 22: Ice Cream Social 5:30 to 7 pm – This is an opportunity to eat some ice cream, meet the coaches, finish paperwork, hear more about volunteer requirements and for the Cudas to meet. Kids will have the opportunity to swim (weather permitting).

May 26: Evening Practices Begin. Times TBA

June 11: Morning Practices Begin. Times to TBA

June 11: Home - Blue and White time trial meet (5:15-8pm) Our team will split in 2 and compete 'against' each other to simulate what a meet will look like for new swimmers and their families.

June 18: Home meet vs Marlbank. Arrive at 4:30 for warm ups

June 20: Swimathon (morning): 8-10am

June 22: Home meet vs Poquoson. Arrive at 4:30 for warm ups

June 25: Save the Date for Friendship Meet

June 29: Away meet vs Windy Point. Arrive at 5:15 for warm ups

July 9: Save the Date for Friendship Meet

July 13: Home meet vs Coventry. Arrive at 4:30 for warm ups

July 20: Away meet AT Willow Oaks. Arrive at 5:15 for warm ups

July 18: Save the Date: 8 & Under Mini Meet

July 25: Summer Splash Invitational AT Midtown

July 27: Swim Team Banquet

July 31: Pasta Dinner for City Meet Qualifiers and their families

August 1: City Meet AT Hampton AquaPlex

APPENDIX B

Colony Volunteering Point System 2026. Families are required to meet the point level for volunteering. Each family must acquire 8 points worth of volunteering during the season, including regular meets, the 8 & Under Superhero meet (TBA), and City Meet on August 1. Points also awarded for Float Nights, some fundraising shifts and other jobs as they come up. Families must sign up for 8 points prior to the Blue/White Meet.

8 points required per family per season

GPSA Officials in-person training in June	1 per season
Non-GPSA-trained meet/float night jobs (timer, runner, etc.)	1 per shift
Active Board members	3 per season
GPSA trained Meet jobs (referee, stroke and turn, starter, admin ref)	2 per shift
Swimathon/banquet/bake sale, etc. jobs (non-swim-meet) (Note: kids working at bake sale, etc. does not earn points)	1 per 2 hr. shift
Active committee members	2 per season
Coordinators (float night, volunteer, fundraising)	3 per season
Sponsorship or finding a sponsor	TBD
Other (behind-the-scenes activities, one-time jobs not mentioned above, etc.)	TBD