



# Cougar Aquatic Team

## Try-out Information Packet

2024-2025 Swim Year

(September 3, 2024 – June/July 2024)

July 3, 2024

Hello Try-out Participants,

Thank you for your interest in trying out for the 2024-2025 swim year! We look forward to hosting you and your swimmers. This packet outlines everything you need to know to make your decisions should you be accepted onto the team.

### The season:

The program is run out of two Montclair area pools and you must attend the practices at the location your group is assigned to for any given day. You do not have the option to swim at one pool or the other.

We are a year-round competitive swim team. When you join, you are joining for the entire swim year starting in September and ending at some point during the summer (different age groups end at different times).

Once you become a member, an invitation back onto the team each September will depend on your commitment to the team throughout the year. If you drop out mid-year, you must re-try out to join again. All financial obligations to the team must have been met to receive an invitation.

You are currently trying out to join us for the beginning of the 2024-2025 Swim Year in September. Below is a breakdown of what the swim year looks like. There is a Fall/Winter portion and a Spring/Summer portion.

The Fall/Winter portion is swum in short course yards, while the Spring/Summer portion is a combination of short course yards (indoor training) and long course meters (outdoor training).

Age Group 1 (Ages 6-9)	Fall/Winter Season: Sept – Feb Spring Break: Mar - mid-Apr Spring Season: mid-Apr – June
Age Group 2 (Ages 8-11)	Fall/Winter Season: Sept – Mar Spring Break: early April Spring/Summer: mid-Apr - July
Senior Prep (Ages 11-14)	Fall/Winter Season: Sept – Mar Spring Break: early April Spring/Summer Season: mid-Apr – July
Senior A (High School) Senior B (13-19)	Fall/Winter Season: Sept – Mar Spring Break: early April Spring/Summer Season: mid-Apr – July  (Later for those who qualify for Senior Zones, Futures, and other higher-level meets)

# Team Tuition:

There are no refunds on tuition installments. The tuition amount is the price for the whole program and is not adjusted based on the number of practices you attend during the season. If for some reason your swimmer stops swimming mid-season, any future tuition payments will be halted, but any meet fees that remain to be billed will be charged before their registration is cancelled. A swimmer's spot on the team is no longer guaranteed once tuition installments have been halted.

	<b>Total Due for the 2024-2025 Swim Year</b>	<b>Registration Fee - 1<sup>st</sup> Installment due at Registration</b>	<b>Tuition Installments</b>	<b>IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT EACH GROUP</b>
<b>Age Group 1</b>	<b>\$1,450.00</b>	\$650.00	<b>4 Installments</b> 10/1/23 - \$200.00 11/1/23 - \$200.00 12/1/23 - \$200.00 1/1/24 - \$200.00	The end of the swim year is timed with the end of the school year (~June 19, 2025).
<b>Age Group 2</b>	<b>\$1,970.00</b>	\$500.00	<b>6 Installments</b> 10/1/23 - \$245.00 11/1/23 - \$245.00 12/1/23 - \$245.00 1/1/24 - \$245.00 2/1/24 - \$245.00 3/1/24 - \$245.00	The end of swim year is July 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2025.
<b>Senior Prep</b>	<b>\$2,900.00</b>	\$800.00	<b>6 Installments</b> 10/1/23 - \$350.00 11/1/23 - \$350.00 12/1/23 - \$350.00 1/1/24 - \$350.00 2/1/24 - \$350.00 3/1/24 - \$350.00	The end of the swim year is July 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2025.
<b>Senior B</b>	<b>\$3,400.00</b>	\$800.00	<b>6 Installments</b> 10/1/23 - \$433.33 11/1/23 - \$433.33 12/1/23 - \$433.33 1/1/24 - \$433.33 2/1/24 - \$433.33 3/1/24 - \$433.33	
<b>Senior A</b>	<b>\$4,000.00</b>	\$800.00	<b>6 Installments</b> 10/1/23 - \$533.33 11/1/23 - \$533.33 12/1/23 - \$533.33 1/1/24 - \$533.33 2/1/24 - \$533.33 3/1/24 - \$533.33	

**All payments will be handled through auto-charge on the Commit Team Suite which charges a 3.7% +.20 cent transaction fee on all transactions.**

### ***USA Swimming Registration Fee (Separate charge – Required to participate):***

USA Swimming registration is a separate registration process for all member athletes (as well as officials). This is in addition to registering for the team through the Commit Team Suite.

The team will provide you with two separate registration links. One for the Commit Team Suite and a separate one for the USA Swimming registration. Both are required to complete your registration to the team.

#### **Yearly Registration:**

The cost to register for the 2024 Calendar year is \$100.00 per swimmer. Everyone pays this amount unless you are already registered for the 2024 Calendar year, either with Cougar or from another team.

#### **Transfer Fee (for those currently registered on another team):**

This fee only applies if you are currently registered for the 2024 calendar year with USA Swimming through another swim program. If you are a transfer from another program, Cougar Aquatic will process the transfer and your Commit Parent account will be charged \$10.00 to process.

### ***Family Discounts:***

If you have more than one child swimming on the team, you are eligible for the following discounts: First swimmer = full price; Second swimmer = 10% off. Third swimmer = 20% off.

The largest discount will automatically be applied to the swimmer in the lowest group. Discounts will only be applied to tuition fees (meet fees and registration fees are not discounted).

### ***Registration and Late Registration Fee:***

The swimming year begins **Tuesday, September 3, 2024**.

Deadline to register is **Friday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>** (Aug 9 for those trying out on the 7<sup>th</sup>), although we ask that you register as soon as you've made the decision to join ***as spaces may be limited***. After August 2nd, we will begin to reach out to anyone on our waiting list.

A ***late registration fee*** of \$200.00 will be added to any online registration completed after the deadline, provided there is still space on the rosters.

### ***Meet Fee's and Entry Process:***

Meet fees are a separate pass-through cost that are incurred on an ongoing basis. ***They are not included in the monthly tuition charges.***

The charges are run through the Commit Parent Portal and charged to the credit card you keep on file. The exact cost varies by meet and the amounts can always be found in the original meet information packet that gets published and distributed for each meet (once a meet is announced to your group, it is always linked on the calendar of our website).

Families will use the Commit Team Suite platform to confirm or deny their participation for each meet. Once the commitment period has ended, you will not have the opportunity to remove your commitment to the meet and you will be responsible for the entry fees. There will be no entry fees returned once the swimmer has been entered into the meet, even if a swimmer drops out of the meet the week before the event. This is because the meet fees are paid in advance to secure our spot at each meet.

You will also be responsible for notifying your group’s coach for each meet that you will not be able to attend. ***Blanket statements of availability*** will not be permitted in order to avoid the risk of making mistakes (i.e. “please don’t enter my child in any meets for the months of February and March”). You must commit/decline for each meet announcement that gets distributed for your group.

## ***Short Course Training (indoors) – Fall/Winter/Spring Portion (Sept 3 – tentatively June 19)***

*Practice schedule is always subject to change.*

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
<b>Age Group 1</b>		@MSU 5:30pm – 6:30pm		@MSU 5:30pm – 6:30pm		@MKA 1:45pm – 2:45pm	@MKA 10:30am- 11:45am
<b>Age Group 2</b>	@MSU 5:15pm – 6:30pm		@MSU 5:15pm – 6:30pm			@ MKA 12:30pm- 1:45pm	@ MKA 10:30am- 11:45am
<b>Senior Prep</b>	@MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm	@MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm	@MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm	@MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm		@MKA 11:00am – 12:30pm	@MKA 9:00am – 10:30pm
<b>Senior B (13-19)</b>	@ MKA 5:30pm – 7:00pm	@ MKA 5:30pm – 7:00pm	@ MKA 5:30pm – 7:00pm	@ MKA 5:30pm – 7:00pm		@ MKA ** 9:00am – 11:00am	@ MKA 7:00am – 9:00am
<b>Senior A (High School/Elite)</b>	@ MKA 7:00pm – 9:00pm	@ MKA 7:00pm – 9:00pm	@ MKA 7:00pm – 9:00pm	@ MKA 7:00pm – 9:00pm	@MKA 5:30pm- 7:30pm	@ MKA 7:00am – 9:00am	

**\*\*Senior B:** During the High School swim season, which begins mid-Nov and ends in February/March, Saturday practice will be relocated to MSU from 6:45am-8:45am.

### **Senior A & B Dryland Schedule (TENTATIVE SCHEDULE)**

Dryland is only available to Senior A and Senior B swimmers. It is available at no additional cost and our Senior athletes are strongly encouraged to participate. They are conducted off-site at Adrenaline, located at 9 Sand Park Road, Cedar Grove, NJ.

Dryland schedule for each portion of the season is tentative based on instructor availability. The final dryland schedule will be published before we begin in September.

Senior B	Monday – 7:30pm – 8:15pm (45m) Friday – 5:00pm – 6:00pm (1hr)
Senior A	Wednesday – 5:45pm – 6:30pm (45m) Friday – 5:00pm – 6:00pm (1hr)

## **Long Course Training (outdoors) - Summer Portion**

***Tentative Schedule Only*** (Finalized schedule will get distributed in the Spring)

Once school ends towards the end of June, our entire Age Group 1 as well as our Age Group 2-Green Team are encouraged to take some time off and participate in their summer league swim programs.

Meanwhile, our Age Group 2-White Team, Senior Prep, Senior B and Senior A will move outdoors and swim long course for the summer.

**Starting Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Senior B** and **Senior A** will begin Long Course training at the Cedar Street Pool in West Caldwell.

Until June 8<sup>th</sup>: Monday – Friday 5:00pm-7:00pm; Saturday 7:00am-9:00am

From June 9<sup>th</sup> – June 19<sup>th</sup>: Monday – Friday 6:00pm-8:00pm; Saturday 7:00am-9:00am

From June 23<sup>rd</sup> – July 30<sup>th</sup>: Monday – Friday 6:00am-8:00am; Saturday 7:00am-9:00am

**Starting Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Age Group 2** and **Senior Prep** will begin Long Course training at the Verona Community Pool.

From June 23<sup>rd</sup>\* – July 25<sup>th</sup>: Monday – Friday 6:00am – 8:00am

## **Holiday Schedules**

During any holidays, the schedule may be temporarily modified based on the facility availability. We try to adjust it so that it is convenient for most of our families as well as the coaches. We apologize in advance if this proves to be inconvenient for anyone. We will get those schedules out as early as possible so that families can plan accordingly.

## **Family Obligations:**

**There are two family obligations which are required for membership onto the team:**

**1. At every non-Cougar hosted swim meet that we attend:**

Every family must commit to timing at meets hosted by other teams. There is no opting out.

At every meet we attend, the host team provides one timer per lane while the guest teams are asked to provide a second timer. These back-up timers are essential to run meets as the times are used to confirm there was no malfunction with the equipment. For each meet that your child is signed up for, your family could potentially be designated a timing assignment. Depending on how many timers are needed, we cycle through our list of families. These timing assignments will be sent out to everyone before each meet, and it will then be your responsibility to find a replacement if you are not able to fulfill that obligation. It is critical that you always review parent timing assignments when they get emailed to your group. If you miss a timing assignment and fail

to find a replacement, **a fee of \$25.00 per occurrence will be billed to your family**. Any family not in good standing at the end of the season may not be invited back.

## **2. At our Cougar (CAT) hosted swim meets:**

Throughout the swim year, Cougars host a series of swim meets. These CAT hosted meets are fundraisers for the team and the revenue generated is used to pay a variety of expenses such as coaches travel expenses, group parties/celebrations, graduating senior scholarships, end of year gifts for the kids, etc.

All families are asked to help by signing up for a minimum of three (3) sessions of our Cougar hosted meets.

**Timing Assignments at non-Cougar hosted meets do not count towards this obligation.**

**There is a \$150.00/session opt-out fee that will be charged to your account should you not be able to fulfill your obligated 3 sessions at CAT hosted meets.**

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **We have our try-out date scheduled, what next?**

Everyone will receive an e-mail confirmation before their try-out confirming specific information such as location address, where to park, how to check-in, etc. a few days prior to your try-out date.

At any point after reviewing this document you decide not to try-out, please contact us at [cougaraquaticteamllc@gmail.com](mailto:cougaraquaticteamllc@gmail.com) and we will remove you from the try-out list. This will help us make sure everyone who wants to try out has an opportunity to attend on their preferred try-out date.

### **Is there a fee for trying out?**

No. However, registration is required. Spaces are limited.

### **What should the swimmer expect of the try-out?**

We will not be timing the swimmers. We will be evaluating how your swimmer moves through the water and how they function in a group setting. We are looking to analyze and determine technique level to see which group would be the best fit. We evaluate comfort level off the blocks, on flip turns, pushing off the wall in streamline, etc.

While we are not timing them, if you have a list of times from another team (YMCA or club) or if you have any times from a summer league program, please plan to bring a copy of the times with you to try-outs. Please just note the length of the pool in which the time was achieved (i.e., short course yards, long course meters, short course meters). If you do not know what any of that means, just let us know the situation in which the time was made (i.e., it was a summer league meet, a middle school meet, etc.).

Swimmers should come dressed in a swimsuit and have goggles. As part of our try-out, you will be provided with a latex cap with the swimmer's name on them for use by the evaluator during the try-out. More details about this will be provided to you separately.

**Is it necessary for my 8 & under to be able to do multiple laps of the pool to try out or be part of the team?**

While they will not be swimming anything long in one go, they will be asked to swim the length of the pool multiple times throughout a practice, which can be hard for some young ones. During try-outs, we will be able to tell how comfortable they are in the water and if they are ready for the competitive team. If we feel that their endurance is not ready for what will be required during practice, we will let you know. We do not expect Olympians, but we do need them to be comfortable with the thought of being in the water for nearly an hour.

**My child is 12, turning 13 soon after the season starts (or 10, turning 11). Should they try-out with the older age group?**

Yes. Please bring any situation like this to our attention to make sure no one gets missed. You can e-mail [cougaraquaticteamllc@gmail.com](mailto:cougaraquaticteamllc@gmail.com) and someone will get back to you about adjusting your try-out session.

**Can sibling's try-out together if they are close in age?**

No. We ask that all athletes participate in the try-out for the age group they are in. We do this so we can be as fair as possible to the try-out participant. The only exception to this is if they are about to age up to that next group soon.

**Try-outs have finished, now what?**

The coaches will need some time to go over our notes from try-outs. While we have an idea as to what we want the groups to look like, group composition will be determined by who attends try-outs. You will be told at try-outs how quickly to expect notice from us.

**What happens if we receive an invitation to join the team?**

When you receive your acceptance letter, you will receive a more detailed 2022-2023 Registration Packet. This registration packet will contain all details about the swim season and can be referenced throughout the year. It will include the registration links as well as the required forms that will need to be filled out.

### **What happens if we are not invited to register for the team?**

If we do not think that your swimmer is quite ready for the competitive environment, we will let you know and do our best to offer any potential suggestions as to what can be done to better prepare your swimmer for the team.

### **What happens if we are accepted onto the team, but decide not to join?**

It happens. All we ask is that you please notify us that you have changed your mind so that we know that we now have an open spot. You can do so by e-mailing us at [cougaraquaticteamllc@gmail.com](mailto:cougaraquaticteamllc@gmail.com). It will not affect the results of any future try-out.

### **If accepted, does my swimmer have to attend practice every day? How often do they have to attend?**

With any sport, the more you practice the better your chances of success.

The level of commitment required increases as you progress through the program. We encourage our younger athletes to be multi-sport athletes, which will often mean that perfect attendance is impossible. All we ask is that you try your best to make practice as often as you possibly can. We cannot help you get faster if you only attend once a week. There is no minimum attendance required in the Age Group or Senior Prep program, but your coaches will let you know what their individual expectation of your swimmer is at the beginning of the season. However, if you plan to sign up for one of our Senior Groups and only plan to show up 50% of the time, this program is probably not meant for you.

While there is no set requirement for our Senior B group, an 80% attendance will be required if a swimmer wants to be promoted into the Senior A (our most elite) group. Any Senior A swimmer who cannot maintain an 80% attendance will be moved into the Senior B training group. Most of our Senior A swimmers maintain an attendance of 90% or better.

### **If accepted, does my swimmer have to attend every swim meet?**

No, each group coach will send out an email when we are ready to submit entries for a given meet. You will have the option to review meet information and determine whether you would like to decline the event. If you do not decline within the declination window, you will be responsible for those meet fee's as described within this document.

### **My child is registered but cannot attend their groups practice on certain days. Can they attend another group?**

No. All swimmers must attend only the practices that they are assigned to unless directed by a coach.



### **What are your pre-competitive or lesson options?**

Pre-competitive sessions will be offered regularly throughout the season. If your swimmer does not get accepted onto the competitive team, you will be given more information about our non-competitive option.

*At try-outs, we will make ourselves available to answer any questions you may still have. If you think of something that you would like to ask beforehand, please feel free to email us at [cougaraquaticteamlc@gmail.com](mailto:cougaraquaticteamlc@gmail.com).*