



Cougar Aquatic Team
Try-out Information Packet
 2024-2025 Swim Year
 (2025 Spring/Summer portion)

March 12, 2025

Hello Try-out Participants,

Thank you for attending our Spring Try-outs! 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:

We swim out of two Montclair area pools. We run one program out of the two pools, and you must attend the practice for the group you are assigned. 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 a year-round program starting either in the Fall/Winter, or the Spring/Summer. The season ends either at the end of the school year for our youngest swimmers or the end of July for our older swimmers.

Once you become a member, 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.

Below is a breakdown of what the swim year looks like.

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: Mar – mid-Apr Spring/Summer Season: mid-Apr - July
Senior Prep (Ages 11-14)	Fall/Winter Season: Sept – Mar Spring Break: early April Spring/Summer Season: mid-April - July
Senior A & B (all High School)	Fall/Winter Season: Sept – Mar Spring Break: early April Spring/Summer Season: mid-April - July (Later for those who qualify for Senior Zones, Futures, and other higher-level meets)

The Cost:

Team Tuition Fee's

There are no refunds on tuition installments. The tuition amount is the price for the whole program, not the number of practices you attend during the season. If for some reason your swimmer quits swimming mid-season, any future tuition payments will be halted. A swimmer's spot on the team is no longer guaranteed once tuition installments have been halted.

	Total Due for the 2022-2023 Swim Year	1st Installment - Due at time of Registration	Future Tuition Installments; charged as described below	IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT TUITION FOR EACH GROUP
Age Group 1	Joining in Spring: \$600.00 (\$1,450.00 for 2024-2025 Swim Year)	\$400.00	1 installment of \$200.00 charged to accounts May 1.	These groups only part take in the short course portion of the season and end when summer begins towards the end of June.
Age Group 2	Joining in Spring: \$700.00 (\$1,970.00 for 2024-2025 Swim Year)	\$400.00	1 installment of \$300.00 charged to accounts May 1.	Group practices through to the end of July. (Summer/Long Course)
Senior Prep	Joining in the Spring: \$1,000.00 (\$2,900.00 for 2024-2025 Swim Year)	\$700.00	1 installment of \$300.00 charged to accounts May 1.	Group practices through to the end of July. (Summer/Long Course)
Juniors	Joining in the Spring: \$1,000.00 (\$2,500.00 for 2024-2025 Swim Year)	\$700.00	1 installment of \$300.00 charged to accounts May 1.	
Senior B	Joining in the Spring: \$1,300.00 (\$3,400.00 for 2024-2025 Swim Year)	\$800.00	2 installment of \$250.00 charged to accounts May 1.	
Senior A	Joining in the Spring: \$1,500.00 (\$4,000.00 for 2024-2025 Swim Year)	\$800.00	2 installments of \$350.00 charged to accounts May 1, June 1.	

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. ACH payments will charge a lower percentage rate.

USA Swimming Registration Fee – New Members Only:

USA Swimming requires a yearly \$100 registration fee for all member athletes. If accepted onto the team, you will be provided with a Cougar Specific-USA Swimming registration link. Registration covers insurance at practice and swim meets and the registration cost goes directly to USA Swimming. It is required to participate in the program and after the first year is handled directly by the team.

New Members of USA Swimming will receive \$100.00 credit after submitting their receipt showing proof that registration has been completed:

First time USA Swimming members are required to pay their first amount directly to USA Swimming. Once you have registered and paid this \$100.00 amount, forward your receipt to eric@cougaraquatic.com and **a \$100.00 credit will be applied to your account which will go towards any future amounts due.**

After an individual's first year as a registered member of USA Swimming, the team will handle future renewals each year. The cost of which will be incorporated in the tuition.

Already a USA Swimming member? If you are coming from another team, your affiliation needs to be transferred:

Any previously registered swimmers coming to us from another team need to be transferred from their old team to Cougars. If you fall into this category, please email eric@cougaraquatic.com to confirm a transfer of affiliation. During this process a \$100 credit will also be applied to your account.

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).

This discount is not automatically added on registration. In the first month after registration, it will get manually added to your account and credit will be applied for previously paid for.

Late Registration Fee:

Should you be invited to join the team, a late registration fee of \$50.00 will be added to any registration completed after the registration deadline listed on your invitation. This is to ensure that our rosters are set for the first day of practice.

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 the first of each month, through the “Commit Team Portal” to the credit card you keep on file. 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.

More detailed information about this process will be provided in the registration packet should you receive an invitation to join the team.

The Schedule: *First Day of practice for all groups is: Monday, April 14th, 2025.*

***Short Course Training (indoors) – Fall/Winter Season & Spring Portion
(until school ends – exact date TBD)***

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Age Group 1 (Ages 6-9)		@MSU 5:30pm – 6:30pm		@ MSU 5:30pm – 6:30pm		@MKA 1:15pm – 2:15pm	@MKA 1:15pm – 2:15pm
Age Group 2 (Ages 8-11)	@ MSU 5:15pm – 6:30pm		@ MSU 5:15pm – 6:30pm		@ MKA 7:30pm- 8:30pm	@MKA 12:00pm – 1:15pm	@ MKA 12:00pm – 1:15pm
Senior Prep (Ages 11-14)	@ MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm	@ MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm	@ MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm	@ MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm		@ MKA 10:30am – 12:00pm	@ MKA 10:30am – 12:00pm
Juniors (13-19)	@MSU 8:00pm – 9:00pm	@MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm	@MSU 8:00pm – 9:00pm	@ MSU 6:30pm – 8:00pm		@ MKA 10:30am – 12:00pm	@ MKA 10:30am – 12:00pm
Senior B (High School)	@ MKA 5:30pm – 7:00pm	@ MKA 5:30pm – 7:00pm	@ MKA 5:30pm – 7:00pm	@ MKA 5:30pm – 7:00pm		@ MKA 9:00am – 10:30am	@ MKA 9:00am – 10:30am
Senior A (High School/Elite)	@ 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	

Dryland Schedule

Dryland is only available to Senior A and Senior B swimmers 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. Final dryland schedule will be shared with the group once confirmed.

This was our Fall/Winter dryland schedule that we will try to keep:

Senior B	Monday – 7:30pm – 8:15pm (45m) Friday – 4:00pm – 5:00pm (1hr)
Senior A	Wednesday – 5:45pm – 6:30pm (45m) Friday – 4:00pm – 5:00pm (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, Age Group 1 and Age Group 2 are strongly encouraged to participate in their summer league swim programs.

Our Age Group 2, Senior Prep, Senior B and Senior A will move outdoors and swim long course for the summer. Age Group 1 may be offered a modified program for those interested.

Starting Tuesday, May 27th

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

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

From June 9th – June 20th: Monday – Friday 6:00pm-8:00pm; Saturday 7:00am-9:00am

From June 23rd – July 31st: Monday – Friday 6:00am-8:00am; Saturday 7:00am-9:00am

Starting Monday, June 23rd

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

From June 26th* – July 31st: 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, guest teams are asked to provide timers. These 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, there will be a timer sign up under the jobs section of our online platform.

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 3 sessions of our Cougar hosted meets per season.

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 2 sessions at CAT hosted meets. (A total of \$450.00 for 3 sessions).

Frequently Asked Questions:

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 6-year-old 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 10, turning 11 soon after the season starts. 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 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?

We ask that all athletes participate in the try-out for the age group that we assigned. We do this so we can be as fair as possible to the try-out participant. The only exception to this is if they were 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 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 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.

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 are only attending 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 attend the meet. Each meet will have a commitment deadline to enter. If you do not commit within the commitment window, you may not be able to enter once the deadline has passed. Your family is responsible for all meet fees associated with a committed meet.

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?

We offer seasonal pre-competitive groups. If this is of interest to you, please email cougaraquaticteamllc@gmail.com.

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 cougaraquaticteamllc@gmail.com.