

HAZEL GROVE AND BRAMHALL ASC SWIMMERS' HANDBOOK – MAIN CLUB

Welcome to Hazel Grove and Bramhall ASC (Saracens). This handbook contains various information about the club and competitive swimming and although not exhaustive it is a good source of information.

The club was founded in the early 70s. We currently have around 400 members and cater for swimmers from of all ages and ability from our small pool Learn to Swim group to swimmers of regional and national level and our masters section.

The objectives of the club, as written into its constitution, shall be the objectives of Swim England and in particular the promotion and encouragement of the art of swimming, and the coaching of swimming for all levels of competition.

As a competitive club, our aim is to provide and encourage active participation in competitive swimming up to and including the highest levels.

All our other coaches, poolside assistants and committee members are volunteers who willingly give up their time to spend time on poolside week after week aiming for all swimmers to reach their full potential. They are usually qualified to Level 1/2 standard and have completed DBS clearance checks. For a full list of current coaches can be found on our website. Our Head Coach is qualified to level 3 performance level.

The club actively encourages and supports parents and older swimmers with an interest in swimming to gain a coaching qualification. In return for a commitment of coaching a training session each week the club assists with the costs of courses.

Saracens has held Swim Mark (formerly swim21) accreditation since 2005. This is regarded as the backbone of Swim England's development programme. Saracens is the only local swimming club to have this award. Swim Mark is a club development model – a planning tool, enabling clubs to help swimmers, coaches and administrators achieve their full potential. It is centred around the needs of the swimmers – striving to provide them with the best possible environment.

Parents are expected to respect the coaches and not interfere with training sessions. If you wish to get involved, then please volunteer – this could be as a poolside assistant or to undertake a coaching course. If want to ask a coach something, please do it after a training session and not during it.

Parents are also encouraged to take an active interest in the sport and discuss it with their children. There is an abundance of literature that can be purchased from the Swim England website.

Learn to Swim Programme

Our 'learn to swim' programme is delivered in the small pool by a number of qualified swimming teachers. The staff follow the National Teaching Plan for Swimming. This is the first level of Saracens Swimming Club and swimmers in this group are invited to join the 'big pool' only when they are considered to be ready and have attended a transition group and passed a trial training session and time trials taken by the Head Coach. It is a programme designed to teach youngsters the basic techniques of swimming.

Main Club

Group 1 – The focus for these swimmers is stroke development and establishing a solid base of skills in all four competitive strokes. Coaching is intensive, usually with one coach per lane and time will be spent by coaches demonstrating different techniques and skills. When being coached swimmers are being asked to build technical competence. Improvers will be encouraged to compete in the Club's Internal Galas and may be asked to compete for the club in Intertown Friendly League and other novice galas. Swimmers in this group generally attend one or two sessions per week.

Group 2: This is for the improvers that are getting ready for the move to intermediates. This group build on technique, but also start to build up stamina. They generally attend two or three sessions per week.

Group 3: Once the Head Coach feels a swimmer has reached a competent level that will support them with the demands of the next level of swimming. This group currently swims three or four times a week.

Group 4: This group is for those swimmers who have mastered good technique in all strokes and have built up the stamina to cope with longer training sets. Swimmers in this group generally swim four times a week. The demands of this group are much higher than other groups. There are fewer coaches and swimmers are expected to be able to listen, remember, organise themselves and to be able to use the clock to time themselves and to know when to set off.

The club has a supply of kick boards, pull buoys, and flippers to aid swimmers' training, all of which are available for use free of charge from the club although members are encouraged to buy their own kit.

All swimmers will be expected to compete in the Club's Internal Galas, some swimmers may be asked to compete for the club in the Intertown League galas. Our younger swimmers are encouraged to enter the novice galas designed to introduce competitive swimming.

The Group 3/4 swimmers should be developing excellence in all strokes, starts and turns, building on a firm basis to move onto the District/County competitions and other Open Meets.

Group 4: The training sessions can be demanding and swimmers are expected to understand technique and to be able to experiment and adjust to get the best out of themselves.

Our Club also caters for those swimmers who may have outgrown the juniors but may not wish to compete in higher level competitions. They are still expected to be available for local league galas and are encouraged to take part in the internal Club Galas.

Progression through the groups

Moving between groups is based on a swimmer's performance and commitment. Decisions are based on criteria such as technical proficiency and speed shown during coaching sessions. The head coach does have the final say. For this reason, age or time spent in a particular group does not influence when a swimmer is moved.

If a swimmer performs to a particularly high standard, then they are likely to be invited to train with a PERFORMANCE swim squad. There are three performance squads locally: Stockport Metro, Macclesfield Satellites and City of Manchester Swim Team.

If the Head Coach believes this is in the best interest of the swimmer then the club will fully support a move to train with a performance squad, Saracens still remains the swimmer's "home" club. If the Head Coach believes that the swimmer has not yet reached the limit of what the club has to offer, then the swimmer will be encouraged to stay training with the club.

Training Programme and Venues

Saracens has the use of two pools: Hazel Grove Pool for our lessons and main club, and Stockport Grammar Swimming Pool for our master's group (over 18s). There are training sessions on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. For details of the training times please refer to the club's website.

Parental Involvement and Responsibilities

Dropping Off and Picking Up: All swimmers are the sole responsibility of parents outside of the water. Parents must escort their children into the pool area, ensuring the training session is taking place.

Observing Training Sessions: Parents are encouraged to stay and watch their child train; this is compulsory for parents of children under the age of **10 years (end of Y6)**. Training can be observed from the spectator gallery over the main pool.

Parents are asked not to interfere with a training session, and should they wish to discuss any of your child's training this should be done either before or after the training session but not during.

How Can You Help: As a voluntary club most of our coaches, poolside helpers and committee members are volunteers. We welcome any parents who may be able to spare some time to help with the running of the club. This can be in any way from setting up the lane ropes at a training session, selling raffle tickets at presentation evening or joining the committee. If you think you may be able to help us, please see a member of the committee or your child's coach.

Belongings: All swimmers belongings are their own responsibility; parents should ensure that bags and any swimming kit and aids are named using a permanent marker. It is advisable not to bring any valuables to training and to use a locker (£1 coin is required).

Fees and Other Payments

When you join the club, all main pool swimmers must become a member of Swim England; this membership is compulsory as it ensures that all swimmers are fully covered on our insurance. This membership runs from 1st April through to the end of 31st March and is renewable annually. The membership fee is dependent upon the category (1, 2 or 3). Swimmers wishing to enter Open Meets must be category 2 registered.

Saracens membership runs from 1st January through to 31st December, and fees are published on the membership renewal form. Fees can be paid in full or half yearly.

The committee exists to run the financial and logistical affairs of the club, and to support the swimmers and coaches. Regular monthly meetings are held, and the Annual General Meeting is in March. All committee members are volunteers. For a full and up to date list of committee members please see the website. If you would like to get involved in this side of the club, please speak to the Club Chairman or any committee member.

Club Constitution

The Club Constitution is registered with and approved by the Swim England and is available to view or download from the website.

Swim Shop

Saracens Swim kit is available to purchase via our Swim Shop Manager or via the website link. All items are payable at the time of order. All swimmers that represent the Club in galas are encouraged to wear the designated kit of black costume/trunks and red swim cap.

Entry to Competitions

Entry forms for individual competitions are available from the Head Coach/Team Manager. Details can be found on the notice board or via the website. Some competitions require the swimmers to have achieved specific qualifying times these will be published with entry forms and the club may run time trials to give swimmers up to date times, however some competitions demand that times are achieved at Licensed meets. All competitions held charge an entry fee plus a fee for each event entered, therefore all entry forms must be fully completed including the swimmers Swim England registration number, correct times for events and correct payment. Incomplete, incorrect or late entries will not be processed.

For all team competitions the Team Managers will pick the team and contact you with the details of the event or publish a team sheet on the notice board. It is important that all swimmers put the dates of any team galas into their diaries; these can be found on the notice board or the calendar on the website. The coaching staff assume all eligible swimmers are available for selection, unless a swimmer has notified the team manager of non-availability.

At present the club enters the following competitions:

- Intertown Friendly League: This is a local league comprising of clubs from Stockport and the surrounding areas. There are approximately 12 galas each season between September and June. Each club holds one home and one away gala. These are free of charge.
- Tadpoles Galas: graded meet for grade B and C swimmers. There is an entry fee for these galas.
- Invitation Galas/Novice galas: various locations and times of the year. These are free of charge.
- Spring Sprints – 25 and 50m races. These are free of charge.
- Club Championships – 50 and 100m races. These are free of charge.
- Mini Gala for our learn to swim programme which all members are encouraged to enter. These galas are all free of charge. These are free of charge.

Transport to some of the team competitions is usually by coach arranged and paid for by the club. For local team galas, there will be no transport provided and parents/swimmers are expected to make their own way to the venue.

Nutrition

The Sports Diet: A healthy diet is one that provides the correct balance of carbohydrates, protein, fat vitamins and minerals. A swimmer's diet must also provide the additional requirements imposed by the volume of training: carbohydrates are the main fuel used by muscles during training. Fat is also used during longer low-intensity (aerobic) sets, but as the training becomes more intense there is more reliance upon carbohydrates.

The body can store virtually unlimited quantities of fat, but only limited amounts of carbohydrates, so a diet high in carbohydrate is essential to maintain the quality of training. Ideally 70% of calories consumed daily should be carbohydrate, from as wide a variety of foods as possible.

High Carbohydrate Choices: The following are all high carbohydrate alternatives:

- Bread/rolls/pitta bread
- Potatoes (plenty of jacket/mashed/boiled, not so many chips or roast)
- Sweet corn and root vegetables
- Couscous, polenta and other grains
- Breakfast cereals, oats, porridge
- Low fat yoghurts/rice pudding/custard

Post Training Snacks: A key time to restock on energy is the first 30 minutes after training, and 30-50g carbohydrate (depending on age) is an ideal amount, from food or energy drinks.

For example, 50g of carbohydrate can be found in:

- 3/4 litre of isotonic sports drink
- 1 pint of unsweetened orange juice
- 1/4 French loaf with jam
- Large tin of beans on toast
- Large tin of rice pudding

When to eat: as well as a quick snack, you should try to eat a meal 1-2 hours after training. Successful refuelling involves eating regularly throughout the day. Large gaps between food intakes are not ideal, and regular amounts of carbohydrates at frequent intervals throughout the day are ideal.

Vitamins & Minerals: there is no need to bother with vitamin supplements as long as a varied diet is followed. The key features are:

- Eat plenty of cereals and grains such as rice/pasta/bread/breakfast cereal
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables (at least five portions a day)
- Stock up with pulses (peas/beans/lentils) sweet corn and potatoes
- Regularly eat low fat dairy products (milk/yoghurts/cheese)
- Regularly eat lean cuts of meat and fish

- Occasionally consume nuts, seeds, pure vegetable oils and oily fish

Fluid Replacement: thirst is a bad indicator of when to drink – by the time you feel thirsty you're already dehydrated, so you need to develop the habit of drinking little and often. It is particularly important to drink between 150 and 500mls prior to training or racing.

While water is good, the addition of a small amount of carbohydrate and salt helps the body to absorb the fluid faster. The ideal amount is 5-8% carbohydrate, or 50-80g per litre. The commercial drinks such as Lucozade Sport all fit this requirement or make them up much weaker than the recommendations (<8%). Alternatively make your own using:

- 2 parts orange juice to 3 parts water
- 1-part orange cordial to 5 parts water
- 1-part Ribena to 10 parts water
- 1-part flat cola to 2 parts water

If you want some salt add about 1/4 teaspoon per litre.

Eating at Competitions: In general, it is advisable to leave 3-4 hours to digest a large meal and 1-2 hours for a light meal prior to any competition. Between races, if there is less than 1-hour stick to drinks. If the gap is longer stick to a high carbohydrate snacks like toast, bananas, breakfast cereals, jam sandwiches, crumpets with jam/honey, pancakes with syrup, toasted tea cakes, beans on toast, pasta with tomato sauces, jacket potato with low fat filling, dried fruit, Nutri Grain bars.

If you can, try to avoid the crisps, burgers, pies, pasties, sausage and chips that the cafes at most pools offer you, and leave the chocolate and toffees at home!

If you get an injury remember RICE:

- Rest- obvious really, you can't make it better with more training!
- Ice- ice packs, bags of frozen peas are perfect (especially if you don't like peas).
- Don't jump into a 'nice hot bath' with a recent injury; it'll probably make it worse!
- Compression – elastic bandages can help stop swelling
- Elevation- it's a good chance to put your feet up

If you have an injury, which persists for a long time, it may be worthwhile getting help from a physiotherapist.

HAZEL GROVE AND BRAMHALL ASC SWIMMERS CODE OF CONDUCT

Swimmers are the most important people in the sport. Swimming for the club to be successful is the most fundamental part of training and competing but not at any cost. Respect and regard for fellow swimmers is of the upmost importance.

Obligations Towards the Sport and Club

Every swimmer should:

- Make every effort to develop their own swimming ability in terms of skill, technique and stamina.
- Give maximum effort and strive for the best possible performance during training and competition.
- Set a positive example for others, particularly new and younger swimmers.
- Always have regard to the best interest of the sport and club.
- NEVER criticize or condemn a fellow swimmer.
- Never use inappropriate language, gestures or disrespectful behaviour.
- Resist any influence which might or might be seen to bring into question your commitment to the club and any individuals performance.
- Arrive for training on time.
- Accept without question the trainings session plan.
- Accept without question the coach's decision regarding lane position. Coaches will determine this through the assessment of an individual's ability, attitude and aims for that session. Issues such as recovery from illness or injury may also influence these decisions.
- Use appropriate training aids as requested by the club and coach.
- Wear appropriate swim kit both when training and representing the club in competitions.
- NEVER take any banned substances and always make known to the club coaches any medication currently being taken.
- Know and abide by the laws, rules and spirit of the sport in both training and competition.
- Accept success and failure, victory and defeat equally.
- Treat opponents and fellow swimmers with respect at all times, irrespective of the results of training and when in competitions.
- Accept the decisions of the club, coaches or competition officials.
- Show respect for all club, coaches or competition officials, regardless of their age or qualification level.
- Respect and acknowledge the club supporters.

Any swimmer in breach of any of the above will be dealt with in accordance to the Behaviour and Sanctions Policy of this club.

HAZEL GROVE AND BRAMHALL ASC PARENTS AND SPECTATORS CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents and other spectators have a great influence on a swimmer's enjoyment and achievement within the sport and both play an important role in the success of the club as a whole. ALL spectators are expected to adhere to the following code to ensure enjoyment for all; NEVER shout negative comments to any swimmer or use inappropriate language or gestures.

- Show respect for Club officials and accept their decisions are final with regard to any aspect of training or competing.
- Positively encourage your swimmer to train and compete to the best of their ability.
- Reinforce and support the club's Code of Conduct for swimmers.
- Ensure your swimmer arrives on time for training.
- Ensure your swimmer attends all training sessions for their squad as far as possible.
- Pay the required membership fee and Swim England fee when due as requested.
- Resist negatively discussing a swimmer's, other than your own, ability and performance.
- Support the club in a positive manner at both team and individual competitions even when the desired result is not achieved.

Any parent or spectator in breach of any of the above will be dealt with in accordance to the Behaviour and Sanctions Policy of this Club.

Support the club fully in any way you can for example by volunteering to assist the committee, assist at social functions, share any skills you may think could help the development of the club.

HAZEL GROVE AND BRAMHALL ASC BEHAVIOUR AND SANCTIONS POLICY

SWIMMERS

Where an individual's attitude, behaviour or conduct is deemed to be inappropriate and to have a negative effect on both their own and fellow swimmers' ability to train as desired, coaches may take the following action in order to resolve the difficulties:

- Speak on a 1:1 basis with the individual, clarifying the expectations and belief in their ability.
- Review session plans to ensure they are appropriate for ALL swimmers attending the session.
- Determine and consider any other factors that may possibly be affecting the individual, for example age (is the swimmer mature enough and physically able

to cope with the training demands), sickness, injury* or any personal circumstances.

- Where an individual's behaviour has a negative effect on those within their lane the disruptive swimmer will be removed and placed in a lower lane.
- Where coaches are forced to reprimand swimmers, every effort must be made to resolve the situation amicably and without fuss, however if a coach is forced to reprimand a swimmer on three occasions in the same session then on the fourth occasion the swimmer will be removed from the water for the remainder of the session. If this situation occurs the coach is expected to speak directly and privately with the swimmer's parents at the end of the session and complete a report to the Head Coach and Committee with details of the incident.
- In the case of consistent unacceptable behaviour or lack of effort in training, coaches will review the situation and in consultation with the club committee a decision may be made to either remove and demote the swimmer to a lower squad or ask the swimmer to leave the club.
- Swimmers who arrive more than 5 minutes late to a training session will be expected to give a valid reason, should this become a persistent issue then coaches must in the first instance speak with parents, should this not solve the issue then coaches have the right to refuse swimmers entry into the water and participation in the training session.

*(It is the parents' responsibility to inform coaches of any injury their child is carrying without this coaches will expect all swimmers to train to their full ability).

Whilst coaches are keen for all swimmers to train hard and consistently, they must anticipate that this will not always be the case and on some occasions allowances may need to be made. Coaches must always bear in mind that whilst they want each and every swimmer to reach their full potential, ultimately it is the swimmer who can make this happen, not the coach!

COACHES

Where a coach's attitude, behaviour or conduct is deemed to be inappropriate and detrimental to the reputation of the club and well-being of the swimmers, the committee will take the following action:

- The Club Chairman and Head Coach will discuss the issues with the coach. Should the concerns be with the Head Coach then the club chairman and one other elected committee member will discuss the issues.
- Request a meeting between the coach in question and the executive committee.
- Where this situation has been instigated by receipt of a written complaint, a separate meeting will also be arranged between the complainant and the executive committee. In order for the coach to understand and prepare for the meeting they will be informed of the details of the complaint.
- Where a coach is in breach of the Club's Code of Conduct and other supporting documentation, for example Health and Safety, Role Description, Service Agreement or Club Constitution. The executive committee will serve a

formal written warning for any such issues to be addressed and resolved within a given timescale.

- Should an amicable resolution not be achieved following any of the above, the Executive Committee will exercise the dismissal of the coach.
- In all cases the decision of the Executive Committee will be final.

PARENTS AND SPECTATORS

Where a parent or spectator's behaviour attitude or conduct is deemed to be detrimental to the reputation and working procedures of the club, the Executive Committee will impose the following actions:

- The coach will discuss any issues and concerns directly and privately with the parent/spectator reminding them of the Parent/Spectator Code of Conduct.
- The coach will make a written report to the committee detailing any incidents that have occurred.
- Should the parent continue to disregard the club's code of conduct, the executive committee will exercise the right to revoke any membership held and ban the individual from attending any training sessions or club competitions.

The club will of course endeavour to resolve any issues amicably however parents and spectators are required to appreciate and accept the club's rules and show respect for both the coaches and the swimmers' efforts at all times.

HAZEL GROVE AND BRAMHALL ASC COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT

Coaches are key to the establishment of ethics, development and achievement within the club. Their concept of ethics and their attitude directly affects the behaviour, development and achievements of our swimmers; therefore, they are expected to pay particular care to the moral aspect of their conduct. The health, safety and well-being are a coach's first priority before achievement, or the reputation of the club and all coaches are expected to disassociate themselves with a 'win at all costs' attitude.

- Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of each and every person and treat equally within the context of the sport.
- Coaches must place the well-being and safety of each swimmer above all other considerations, including the development of performance.
- Coaches must adhere to all club policies and procedures as set out in the Constitution as determined by the committee and have regard for further guidance by Swim England and the training venue facilitator, with particular regard for Health and Safety aspects.
- Coaches must develop an appropriate working relationship with each swimmer based on mutual trust, respect and an individual's ability.
- Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.

- Coaches must encourage and guide swimmers to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance and must never humiliate by publicly criticising an individual's performance or efforts.
- Coaches must ensure that all training session plans are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the swimmers.
- Coaches should at the start of each training session clearly identify to the swimmers what the session entails and what is expected of them.
- Coaches must co-operate fully and show respect for their colleagues and other officials within the club and the sport, always acting in the best interests of the swimmers.
- Coaches must always promote the positive aspects of the sport and never condone any behaviour or techniques contrary to the spirit of swimming or relevant rules and regulations.
- Coaches must consistently display a high standard of behaviour, appearance, respect and attitude.
- Coaches must never use or tolerate inappropriate language.
- Coaches must, wherever possible, wear the club official T-Shirt when representing the club at competitions and at training sessions.

REMEMBER – Respect is earned, regardless of status, not automatically gained.

Should any Saracens' coach experience difficulties with any of the club swimmers, they are expected to deal with the situation professionally and in accordance with the guidance set out in the club's Behaviour and Sanctions policy.