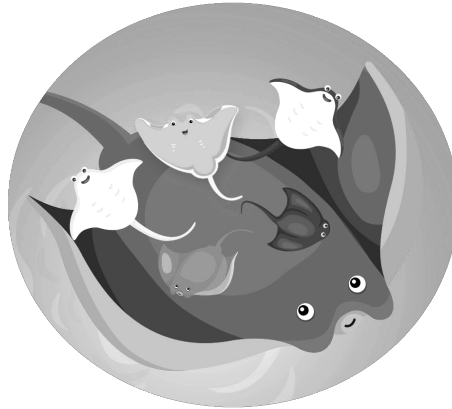




MJCC Junior Rays



Junior Rays Pre-Swim Team Parent Handbook 2026-27

The Junior Rays' mission is to provide our athletes an open, welcoming, safe, and healthy atmosphere where they can not only expand their athletic abilities but also grow as community members. We challenge them physically, nurture them developmentally, and encourage them to build life-long relationships. The Stingrays coaches will help develop the character and self-discipline necessary to succeed not only in swimming but also in life away from the pool.

MEET OUR COACHES

Our coaching staff is shared with the Stingrays Swim Team, with one or two assistant coaches working specifically with the Junior Rays. Our coaches are a group of talented and dedicated professionals who work on supporting and encouraging each swimmer to develop technique and endurance in an appropriate progression for age and ability.

Head Coach, Jennie Condon, jcondon@oregonjcc.org

Jennie Condon joined the MJCC in early 2011 and started as the Stingrays' assistant coach in the fall of 2012, moving up to the head coach position in 2014. She is an American Swimming Coaches' Association Level 4 (Education), World Open Water Swimming Association Level 3, and United States Masters Swimming Level 2 certified coach, a graduate of Hollins University in Virginia and a lifelong athlete and swimmer, including swimming competitively in high school and college. Her combined love of water and working with youth has led her to a 20-plus-year career in aquatics. She spends her time outside the pool horseback riding, reading, and checking out new perspectives on the world through her camera.

Assistant Coach for Junior Rays, Lizzie O'Mahoney

Lizzie is going into her second year as our Junior Rays coach. Lizzie was a Stingrays swimmer when she was younger, and came back to her home pool to lifeguard, teach, and coach in 2025. She loves working with young swimmers and is always enthusiastic and creative in both coaching and life. If you look around our pool deck, you can spot some of Lizzie's art on our whiteboards and postings!



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2026-2027 PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Oct 5 (returning swimmers) or Oct 6 (new swimmers) - May 27

Mon - Thurs 4:45 - 5:30pm

Note: With rare exception, we practice every day that the MJCC is open through practice time, including during school breaks. Any changes to this schedule, including due to inclement weather, will be communicated via email with as much advance notice as is practical and possible.

SWIMMER EXPECTATIONS

We expect each swimmer to treat all participants, members, MJCC staff, and coaches with respect and arrive at every practice and team event with a desire and willingness to work hard and have fun.

- Swimmers should be on deck ready to enter the water at the beginning of their practice time.
- Swimmers should never interfere with the progress of another swimmer, whether through actions or words.
- Swimmers should behave in a way that demonstrates good sportsmanship, sets a good example to other swimmers, and reflects positively on the team. Violent, sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, illegal, or otherwise inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.
- Swimmers should treat the facility and equipment with respect. Belongings not needed on the deck must be locked in lockers or kept neatly in a bag on the bleachers during practice.
- Lockers with personal belongings in them should be locked. Unfortunately, we experience thefts in the locker room every year, almost always from unlocked lockers.
- Swimmers must use the "family" area if in the main locker rooms and must not be loud, disruptive, or disturb lockers that they are not using. They are not permitted in saunas, steam rooms, or hot tubs. Locker room use is a privilege, and may be rescinded for an individual or the entire team if behavior standards are not met.
- MJCC rules state that children age 12 and under must be accompanied by a responsible caregiver age 16 or older while on campus, unless they are actively participating in a program. If young swimmers want to come early or stay late, they must have an adult supervising them. (It is permissible for swimmers to be dropped off alone as long as they come directly to the pool deck for practice, spending only a reasonable amount of time in the locker rooms to change before and after.)
- Profanity and other inappropriate language or discussion topics are not allowed at practice or any team functions.
- Bullying is prohibited. While the Junior Rays are a pre-competitive group, we adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct in this area. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more [Junior Rays] members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:
 - i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
 - ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
 - iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any [Junior Rays] activity;
 - iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any [Junior Rays] activity; or



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- v. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any [Junior Rays] activity. [Quoted from USA Swimming Code of Conduct]
- *Swimmers who cannot adhere to these expectations may be asked to leave the team. We do not give refunds to swimmers dismissed for behavioral reasons.*

PRACTICE EQUIPMENT

Each swimmer should bring goggles, a swim cap (not required for those with short hair, but highly encouraged for all), and a water bottle to practice each day.

For those new to the sport, we suggest going to a local shop where you can try on suits and goggles to make sure they fit properly for each swimmer. The number one complaint we hear at every single practice is about goggles that do not fit and thus leak or come off. To ensure your swimmer's enjoyment and success, please make sure that they have properly fitting goggles that are replaced at least yearly!

We recommend that boys wear jammers-style suits and girls wear one-piece suits.* Please remember that swimming is a sport and suits should be chosen for their appropriateness as athletic gear, not for fashion! Swimsuits should fit snugly when purchased; they have a tendency to stretch and lose shape over time, so a suit bought large "to grow into" will usually end up too large for comfort and public appropriateness. Please keep an eye on your swimmer's suits so that they can be replaced before they become see-through or otherwise unacceptable. It is usual for a swimmer who comes to practice regularly to go through 2-3 good quality competition-style suits over the course of a season.

We recommend against shirts or rash guards in the pool. These are great tools outdoors where they protect from sun and abrasions, but are not needed for those reasons indoors. They create a lot of drag and the weight inhibits good form with swimmer's arms. If your swimmer is not comfortable without a shirt, please try to find one that fits very snugly (it should be hard to get off when it's wet) and, if possible, has short sleeves.

Latex Stingrays swim caps are provided to all swimmers who wish to wear one.

**Note that there are further requirements for swimwear once your swimmer moves up to Stingrays and begins attending competitions.*

ATTENDANCE

Junior Rays practice is a transition from swim lessons to competitive swimming, with components of technique, fitness, and racing skills. The development of endurance, especially, requires that swimmers attend practice with some regularity. We do not have an attendance requirement, but suggest swimmers attend at least twice a week in order to benefit from the program, and more often if they can. If a swimmer will not be able to attend at least twice a week on average, we suggest they stay in swim lessons instead, as once a week is not enough to build the same level of fitness as the other swimmers, and practices will quickly become discouraging. We do not offer pro-rating or refunds for missed practices.

Tardiness - In order for each practice to run smoothly without interruption, it is important for swimmers to be on time to practice. If you expect your swimmer to be consistently late (late school dismissal, tutoring, etc), please let us know in advance so we can make a plan.



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COMMUNICATION

E-MAIL

Our primary means of communication is e-mail. If you find you are not receiving emails from us or your email address changes please notify the Head Coach so that you don't miss out on any important information.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS

Our success depends on the support and involvement of our parents! In everything from getting swimmers to practice each day to volunteering at team functions, parental involvement is key. We may occasionally ask for volunteers for team events, and if that happens, please help out in whatever way you can – and don't hesitate to ask questions when you have them.

A few things for parents to keep in mind:

- Our coaches are professionals with a broad and deep understanding of competitive swimming and athlete training. Your questions are welcome, but please leave the coaching up to them!
- We expect everyone involved with the Junior Rays to demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times and show respect and common courtesy to the team members, coaches, parents, and facilities.
- Encourage your swimmer and remind them kindly, when appropriate, of advice or instruction that the coaches have given them.
- As we work on details of technique, swimmers will sometimes temporarily slow down, lose focus on other parts of their stroke, or start to feel awkward. These things are completely normal and will result in even better swimming over time; please remind your swimmer of that and encourage them to speak to the coach with any questions or concerns.
- Swimming is a sport made up of hundreds of tiny details – celebrate all accomplishments with your swimmer, even those that seem small!
- The 10 & under age group are the most inconsistent of all swimmers: one day they are finishing with top times and the next day they look like they forgot how to swim! This inconsistency can be frustrating for parents, coaches, and swimmers alike, but it is totally ordinary. Patience and positivity are the keys to getting through this developmental phase.
- Be supportive of "bad" or frustrating practices and remind your swimmer of how far they have come.
- Criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, parents, swimmers, or anyone else will not be tolerated, nor will sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, or other offensive language or behavior.
- *If parents cannot adhere to these expectations, their swimmers may be asked to leave the team. We do not give refunds to swimmers dismissed for parent behavior.*



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FROM THE COACHES

We are confident that we are going to have an amazing 2026-2027 season! Our proverbial door is always open to both swimmers and parents and we encourage your feedback. Our hope is that together we can provide your swimmer with a positive experience that will not be forgotten and help them nurture friendships that will last in the years to come. Thank you for the opportunity to work with your child and for our new swimmers, **WELCOME TO JUNIOR RAYS!**