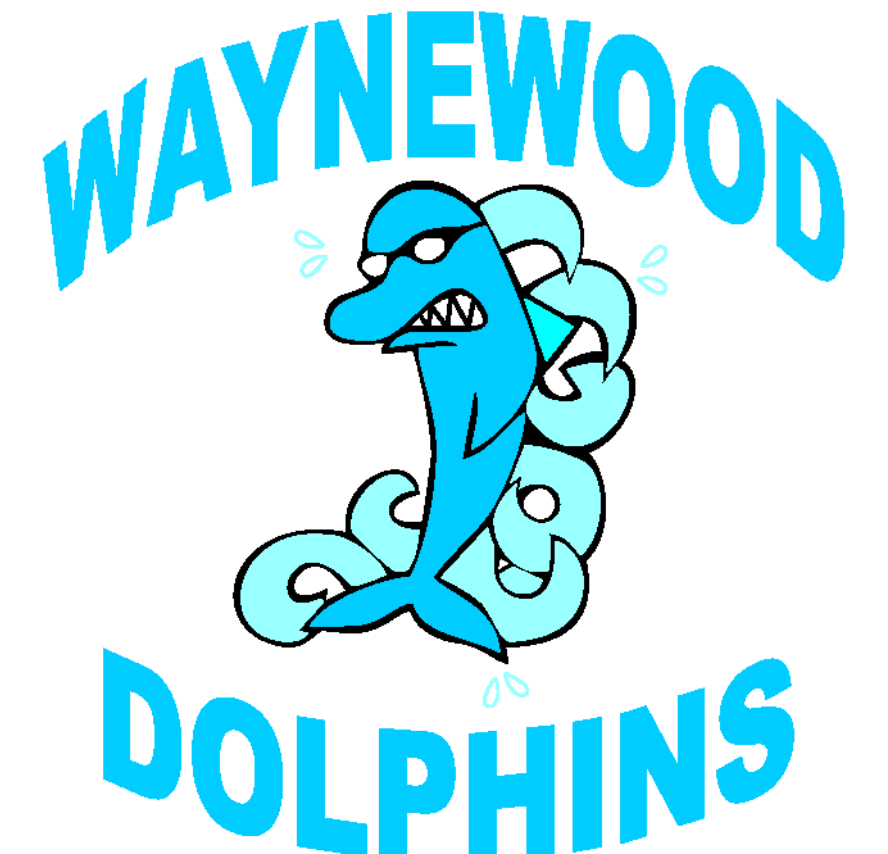


***WAYNEWOOD DOLPHINS
PARENT'S
HANDBOOK***



INTRODUCTION

Every swimmer's parent has experienced that first day of swim practice or that first swim meet where they wonder, "What am I doing here, and what's going on?" We've all been there before and, hopefully, this handbook will enlighten you in your quest to understand the world of Summer Swimming. It can be a little overwhelming at first, but don't worry; you and your kids will have a great time.

Please remember that if you have any questions, the Team Reps, coaches and fellow swim parents are all very willing to answer your questions.

Our team philosophy is that having fun and personal development is the most important thing we can do. We believe that if we can establish a healthy environment that encourages the kids to do their best, recognizes their contribution, and is fun for the entire family, then we will have met our goals.

Welcome to the Waynewood Dolphins. We're glad to have you with us.

THE LEAGUE

In 1956, eight Northern Virginia Pools founded the Northern Virginia Swim League (NVSL). Today, the NVSL has over 14,000 swimmers on 102 teams and is the largest summer swim league in the United States. During the off season, the NVSL ranks each team from 1 to 102 based primarily on swimmers' times, and then divides the teams, based on these rankings, into 17 divisions of five or six teams. Waynewood joined the league in 1963 (?).

THE TEAM

The team is made up of kids from the neighborhood. Their families must be a member of the Waynewood Recreation Association and each child must be able to swim at least the length of the pool (25 meters) unassisted. The team has the competitive part (generally 7 or 8 to 18 years old) and the development part (4 or 5 to 7 years old). The development part of the team is referred to as the "Little Dolphins." The older kids swim in various meets (explained below) and the younger kids concentrate on learning proper stroke techniques. At the end of the year, the Little Dolphins will have their own min-meet with neighboring pools – more on that later.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETS

Neighborhood meets are not sanctioned or scheduled by the NVSL. They are arranged with other pools in the local area. Times recorded at these meets are not recognized by the NVSL.

B-Meets

Our pool and the surrounding area pools have joined together to conduct un-scored swim meets on Monday nights. Each swimmer can swim the maximum of two strokes at the B-meet. Swimmers who have placed first, second, or third in any Saturday meet cannot swim that stroke at a Monday night swim meet.

Fort Hunt Sportsmen's Relav

This is a local relay meet where swimmers get to compete in a relay carnival (various different relays of four swimmers each). The swimmers are generally kids who compete in B-Meets and who are not swimming in the Divisional Relay Carnival.

IM-Invitational

Only individual medleys (IM) are swum. An IM consists of all four strokes (back, breast, fly, and freestyle) swum by the swimmer. The swimmer must have an IM time from an earlier B meet to participate in this meet. Swimmers who are 8 & under do not swim IM's. They are eligible to swim butterfly at this meet, provided, of course, if they can swim the butterfly stroke properly.

Waynewood Invitational

This is a local meet open to all swimmers, age 12 and below, who will not be participating in the Divisional (see below). It is an age group swim meet (i.e. kids swim against kids in their age bracket.)

Mini Meet

This is a meet designed for our Little Dolphins and the kids in the developmental parts of the teams in the local area. It is toward the end of season so the kids will have plenty of time to work on their strokes before then. It is great fun and the kids will love the ribbons they get.

NVLS MEETS

A-Meets (Dual Meets)

The six teams in each division swim against the other five teams, one at a time on five consecutive Saturdays. Based on the results of these five meets, a division champion will be named. These meets are scored; therefore, the fastest swimmers on the team swim.

Relay Carnivals

Another NVSL event is the Division Relay Carnival, which takes place on the Wednesday between the third and fourth weeks of the season. All six teams in each division converge on one pool for an evening of relay races. These include both Freestyle relay (each swimmer swims the Freestyle) and Medley relay (each swimmer swims a different stroke). The next night, all the Division Coordinators meet and relay teams are selected to swim at the All-Star Relay Carnival the following week. The selection to the All-Star Relay Carnival is based on having one of the eighteen fastest times for the age group, gender, and relay type during the season.

Divisionals

On the sixth week of the season, each Division has an Individual Championship meet, commonly referred to as "Divisional". Each team is allowed to enter two swimmers in each event and a swimmer can enter no more than two events. This is an individual meet and is not scored. In order to be eligible for this meet a swimmer must have competed in one of the five NVSL dual scored meets during the regular season.

Individual All Stars

After the Divisionals, all the Division coordinators meet to select swimmers for the All-Stars meet the following week. The sole criteria for selection to All-Stars are to have one of the eighteen fastest times swum that season. All Stars can be overwhelming for a first time swimmer as approximately 600 swimmers plus parents, coaches, and officials converge on a pool for a meet that takes about six hours. If you swimmer is fast enough to be named an All star, it is a thrill they will never forget.

VOLUNTEERS – VOLUNTEERS – VOLUNTEERS

Have we driven you crazy yet with all this talk of volunteering and why are all those people wearing white shirts and blue shorts? Why do we talk about this so much? The answer is pretty simple. Unlike soccer, basketball, and the other recreational leagues, it takes A LOT of parent volunteers to run a swim team and swim meet. For example, for a normal dual meet, it will take at least 40 adults to properly run the meet. Below is a very brief description of the various volunteer positions so you can get an idea of what might interest you. There is obviously more to each position that can be summarized in a sentence or two, but you will get the idea. By the way, the “uniform” for the referee, starter, stroke and turn judges, timers, table workers, team reps, and clerk of the course is white shirts and blue shorts. This makes them easily identifiable during the meet.

Team Representatives – These parents, generally two, are the team’s representatives to the NVSL and Division. They are responsible for registering team members and coordinating logistics for all the meets. They will hire the team coaches and assist the volunteer coordinators in making sure enough adults are scheduled to assist in the upcoming events.

Volunteer Coordinators – These parents ensure that we have enough volunteers for each different area (e.g. concessions, timers, officials, table workers, etc). They will be the ones calling you up to schedule your volunteer time.

Referee – The Referee is the chief official for each swim meet and is responsible for the conduct of the meets and is the final authority on the interpretation and enforcement of all swimming rules – he/she runs the meet. You must attend NVSL training to be a referee (half a day training before the season starts) and have experience as a Starter and Stroke and Turn Judge.

Starter – The Starter is responsible for insuring that all swimmers are given a fair and equitable start. They are the folks who announce the event, give “take your mark”, and start the race. You must attend NVSL training to be a Starter (half a day training before the season starts) and have experience as a Starter and Stroke and Turn Judge.

Stroke and Turn Judge – They are responsible for insuring that all swimmers obey the rules for the stroke they are swimming. You must attend NVSL training to be a Stroke and Turn Judge. Generally, you are a Stroke and Turn Judge for a few years before you become a Starter or Referee.

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Clerk of the Course – This parent(s) is the “gatekeeper” for all swimmers in the meet. They get the swimmers to the right lanes for the correct race.

Head Timer and Timers – Timers are the most important people to every swimmer because they determine each swimmer’s official time for the race. There are three timers for each lane (a mix of home and away team parents). The Head or Chief Timer collects the time cards from the timers, reviews them for accuracy and completeness, and forwards them on to the table workers.

Marshall – These parents are responsible for ensuring that warm-ups are conducted safely and that order is maintained during the swim meet (e.g. stop horse play, keep parents from getting too close to the pool, etc).

Table Workers – The time cards from the timers and any disqualification slips (a little more on this later) go the Table Workers who determine the order of finish for each event, score the meet, and prepare ribbons for the participants. Several people from each team perform these functions to insure that errors are caught before the results are announced.

Concessions – These important people sell the food to all the hungry parents and swimmers at the swim meets. This is a critical volunteer position because it helps the team raise money.

Set-up and Take-Down Volunteers – These parents arrive early to home meets and put up the tents, run the wire for the sound system, set up the tents, arrange the chairs, and the host of other things that have to be done for a swim meet. As the name suggests, the take-down volunteers take all the equipment down and put it back in our lockers, put the chairs back around the pool, and get everything ready.

Other – There are lots of other very important volunteer opportunities. Arranging for the trophies, being the meet announcer (the “Voice of the Dolphins”), buying concessions, helping with the pep rallies, being the team treasurer, and many other key jobs are just some of the other things parents can help out with.

We need the help of all families in order to have a successful and, and more importantly, fun swim season. Don’t worry, like we mentioned earlier. We have been in your position before, so don’t hesitate to ask another swim parent any question you might have about volunteering.

DISQUALIFICATIONS - DQs

What do you mean my kid DQ'd? Just a few words on disqualifications or, in swimming jargon, DQs. Most young swimmers disqualify several times during the course of learning how to "stay legal" in the various strokes. Coaches expect this and will simply work with the children to help them understand the reasons for the DQ. The following are the most frequent causes that a swimmer is disqualified:

Freestyle:

- Propelling by use of the lane ropes.
- Pushing off the bottom of the pool.
- Exiting the pool before swimming the specified distance.

Backstroke:

- Turning over before touching the wall at finish.
- Feet above the water line at the start.
- Flipping over too early on the turn (50M) and needing to kick or take additional strokes to reach the wall

Breaststroke:

- More than 2 underwater pulls at start.
- Incorrect kick, such as a Scissors kick or Flutter kick. Failure to simultaneously touch the wall with 2 hands. One-arm pull.
- Pulling down below waist after first stroke.

Butterfly:

- Flutter kick. Non-Simultaneous stroke.
- Failure to simultaneously touch the wall with 2 hands.

False Start - Forward motion before the starting signal. A false start disqualifies a swimmer unless the referee attributes it to something outside the swimmer's control.

When a Stroke and Turn Judge observes a violation, he raises his hand to signify that he has observed a violation then writes it up on a DQ slip. The judge then takes the slip to the referee, who verifies that a rule has been broken and can question the Stroke and Turn Judge to insure that he was able to see the violation that was cited.

The referee then gives a copy of the DQ slip to the Table Workers.

Why do we mention this? It might be a little traumatic (for both the swimmer and parent), but don't worry even the best swimmers DQ'd at some point. It is all part of learning how to swim the strokes properly.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Ribbons: NVSL ribbons are awarded at "A" meets for 1st through 3rd place only. Fourth through sixth place finishers also receive ribbons except the NVSL logo isn't on the ribbon. Ribbons at "B" meets are awarded for all places including a participation ribbon in the event of a disqualification.

Personal Best Ribbons: Every swimmer is awarded a personal best ribbon every time they improve their time for a certain stroke throughout the season. Improvement is calculated from times swam at time-trials at the beginning of the season.

Trophies/Awards: It is a Waynewood Dolphins tradition that everyone who completes the season – to include Little Dolphins - will receive a trophy. The three swimmers in each age group with the highest point totals get a High Point Trophy.

You will find that all kids – yes, even the big kids – will cherish their trophies and ribbons. Why? It is a great reminder of the great times they had during the season and recognition for all their hard work.

We hope this parent's handbook helps answer some of your questions. We can't cover everything here, but hopefully it will take some of the anxiety out of the season. You will find swimming is a great sport that your kids can do for the rest of the lives and they will have a great time hanging out with other great kids on the swim team!