

SCARLET-NJ WAVE SOCIAL MEDIA / ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION POLICY

Electronic Communication Policy of Scarlet Aquatics

PURPOSE

Scarlet Aquatics recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While the Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Club also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when minors use these methods to communicate.

GENERAL CONTENT

We must recognize that the words and photos that we post on-line are there for everyone to read and view, as well as know the consequences of public communication.

Why this is important: By now many have seen and heard of the mistakes people have made using social media. In constructing this policy, we hope to help our athletes avoid taking these missteps that could negatively impact their future. Here are some recent examples.

A high school student-athlete is expelled from school after tweeting racially charged and sexually explicit messages.

Multiple members of a high school team are suspended after posting sexually provocative pictures on social networking sites.

Another program bans its players from Twitter after one of its student-athletes tweets song lyrics about killing cops, drawing the attention of local police.

A little league softball team is kicked out of the playoffs after a picture is posted of 4 teammates making an obscene gesture to a rival team.

Representing the Club

Swimming for Scarlet Aquatics is a privilege, and the club expects those affiliated to portray themselves, Scarlet Aquatics, and the community in a positive and respectful manner.

No matter where you are, who you are with, or what you are doing, you are a member of this team. Your actions can reflect on this club, even when engaging in activities outside of the pool or team functions.

Posts are always visible

Once an athlete posts, snaps or tweets a message, it is captured and indexed by any number of search engines that crawl the Internet. This means that a message never actually goes away. Text messages and photos can be saved or screen shot without the sender's knowledge. Colleges, coaches, and employers will research potential recruits, and turn them away based on social media findings.

Rules and Guidelines

Using social media to attack, degrade, or demean any person, team or organization is not allowed.

Profanity, obscenities, vulgarities, sexism, racism, homophobic and sexual references and sexually explicit images & videos will not be tolerated. Do not engage with members from our team or other teams if they are making derogatory comments online. Anything deemed inappropriate or upsetting should be brought to the attention of an adult.

Athletes may not create pages or accounts that represent Scarlet Aquatics unless given permission by the Scarlet Aquatics staff.

Athletes will not engage in posts, snaps, pages, tweets, etc. that are anonymous, meant to be “confessions,” or an outlet for hurtful material. If you don’t want people to know you are the owner of a statement, then that statement shouldn’t be made.

Use some common sense. If you are not sure whether a post, snap or tweet is appropriate, then it probably is not. Never tweet or post when you are emotional. The decisions we make while emotional are myopic and rarely look ahead to potential consequences. Chances are the action will have a negative outcome.

Be cautious when retweeting or reposting someone else’s content. Such action can appear to be an endorsement of the message, even if you are not the original author.

Never assume that a message or post is protected from public view, even if you have the “private” settings turned on for your profile.

Before posting anything to the internet or texting to someone, we would like each Scarlet team member to ask themselves the following questions:

- 1) Would I send this message or photo to my parents?
- 2) Would I send it to my coach or teachers?
- 3) Would I send it to my pastor, priest, rabbi or other religious leader or mentor?

If you cannot answer “yes” to all of the above questions, perhaps you should hit the “delete” button. Your future is too important to be affected by an action that is impulsive and rash.

CONSEQUENCES

Any action that Scarlet Aquatics deems to be harmful to another athlete, coach, staff member, or the Scarlet Aquatics image will be subject to consequences including but not limited to:

- Practice and / or swim meet suspension (including multiple meet suspension when deemed appropriate by the staff).
- 6 month or more suspension from Social Media interaction and text message interaction with teammates.
- Mandatory counseling or therapist sessions (especially in the case of posting of sexually explicit material).
- Expulsion from the team.