

## **Listed in By-laws as HSL Guidelines for Sportsmanship**

**Definition:** Sportsmanship is the ability to win without gloating, lose without complaining, while treating all with respect.

### **1. Abide by the rules of the sport.**

Part of good sportsmanship is knowing the rules of the sport and swimming by them. It is the responsibility of the swimmer to learn how to swim according to the rules which have been established and standardized to allow fair competition.

### **2. Try to avoid arguments.**

Part of good sportsmanship is anger management. Arguing with officials, coaches or opponents is often simply a misguided effort at "letting off steam" in the heat of competition. A good sport knows how to walk away from an argument and to stay focused on the event at hand.

### **3. Share in the responsibilities of the team.**

Good sportsmanship implies that the swimmer is a team player. In other words, the swimmer understands that his or her behavior reflects on the team in general. Moreover, a team player does not condone unsportsmanlike conduct from teammates and reminds others that they all share in the responsibility of promoting good sportsmanship.

### **4. Give everyone a chance to play according to the rules.**

In youth recreational sports the more talented people, if they are good sports, will look out for and encourage the less talented swimmers on the team, cooperating with coaching plans to let everybody be a part of the team.

### **5. Always play fairly.**

Honesty and integrity should be an integral part of sports. A swimmer with good sportsmanship does not want a hollow victory which comes as a result of cheating.

### **6. Follow the directions of the coach.**

A swimmer with good sportsmanship listens to and follows the directions of the coach, realizing that each swimmer's decisions affect the rest of the team. If a swimmer has a disagreement with the coach, the swimmer discusses the disagreement privately in a civil manner, away from the public eye.

### **7. Respect the other team's effort.**

Whether the other team swims better, or whether they swim worse, the swimmer with good sportsmanship does not use the occasion to put the other team down. In the field of competition, respect for opponents is central to good sportsmanship.

### **8. Offer encouragement to teammates.**

A sign of good sportsmanship is a swimmer who praises teammates when they do well and who comforts and encourages them when they make mistakes.

### **9. Accept the judgment calls of the meet officials.**

The swimmer with good sportsmanship knows that errors may be made, but the swimmer also knows that a meet is made up of all the swims and calls from the beginning to the end of the meet, not just the call in dispute. The swimmer with

good sportsmanship may be upset, but that swimmer also has learned to focus his/her energies back on the meet and on doing the best he/she can do for the rest of the meet.

**10. End the meet smoothly.**

When the meet is over, pouting, threatening, and cajoling have no place in the life of the swimmers with good sportsmanship, who emphasize the joy of participating, regardless of outcome. They're not devoid of emotions but they know that their efforts to end the competition smoothly, without antagonistic emotional display, will help ensure that the meets will continue in the future.

## **HSL Amendment to By-laws or Rules as determined by the HSL Board**

1. Sportsmanship Pledge and parent handout
  - a. All HSL athletes and parents will read and sign the sportsmanship pledge upon signing up to join a team within the HSL (these can be done in family groups – all family members sign one form). For the first year of any swimmer, a signed paper copy is required, which can later be scanned for record retention. Following years, electronic signature can be allowed by HSL board approval.
  - b. These will be retained by the team and are the responsibility of the individual team within HSL. They can be asked for at any time by the HSL Executive Board or member teams of the HSL Swim Board. Failure to produce a signed copy (either electronic or physical) can result in team sanction and forfeiture of meets as deemed necessary by the HSL Executive Board.
  - c. All HSL parents will be given the Take Away parent's page with the understanding that this is a part of what they are agreeing to.
2. Coaches, Non-Parent volunteers, and other spectators will be governed by the team they are supporting and the HSL teams need to communicate to these individuals that they will be held to the same level of sportsmanship as the swimmers themselves. HSL teams will need to develop their own policies for communication to and monitoring of non-parent participants, and spectators.
3. HSL will not tolerate unsportsmanlike conduct from swimmers, coaches, volunteers, parents, or spectators.
  - a. Individuals and/or Teams can fall under these rules if it is found to be a widespread issue.
  - b. The three levels are not all inclusive and should apply evenly to actual behavior at meets and outside of meets. Public conversation and public postings in non-electronic and electronic media (Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, email, and many others) of any means can fall under governance by these rules. (this maybe expanded later as its own policy).
  - c. Three levels of unsportsmanlike conduct will be defined with varying levels of actions that can or will be taken.

### **Level I**

**Mild** unsportsmanlike conduct – such as but not limited to - taunting, teasing, negative/disrespectful actions or wording, in general putting down other people.

#### **Actions:**

1. Coach or Organization Parent Representative (OPR) is notified by affected individual, parent, or volunteer of possible issue and talks to affected individual to get their side of the story. If the coach or OPR is the person affected or involved, this should immediately be escalated to the Executive Board of HSL and will most likely be handled as a level II or III.
2. Coach to talk with other team coach if necessary (if the incident is between two teams).
3. The coach(es) or OPR to talk with individual(s) during the activity ongoing if possible or within one day of the activity to determine the extent of the at-fault in the incident.
4. Coaches or OPR to determine course of action – apology (written/verbal) or other and to let parents know if their swimmer is involved.
5. No formal written reporting needed. An email to the Executive Board will be drafted including an overview of the incident within 24 hours of resolution.

## **Level II**

Unsportsmanlike conduct – such as but not limited to - unwanted physical contact (horse-play), abusive language, disrespecting a volunteer as they are performing their tasks, disrupting a meet, safety incident, Level I conduct that is allowed to manifest repeatedly.

### **Actions:**

1. Coach and Organization Parent Representative (OPR) will be notified by affected individual, parent, or volunteer.
2. Coach to coach interaction if conduct occurred between teams.
3. OPR interaction if parent or volunteer. If the coach or OPR is the person affected or involved, this should immediately be escalated to the Executive Board of HSL and will most likely be handled as a level III.
4. Documentation of the issue must be made by a coach or OPR and submitted to the HSL Executive Board.
5. Take care of the incident immediately within the event occurring, if possible, or within one day following the event.
6. Starter and Admin are to be notified of incident if it involves a pool volunteer for the meet (official, timer, clerk of course, computer table, announcer, time slip runner) and must sign and date the investigation form.
7. Investigate and determine outcome – document clearly on the investigation form
  - a. Misunderstanding – no fault determined – offending person to give sincere apology to offended person
  - b. At Fault – sincere apology given to offended person and verbal or written warning to offending person to not let it happen again
  - c. Warning is a probation event – if two or more occur it becomes a Level III incident
  - d. The written report will be emailed to the Executive Board for review and record within 24 hours of resolution.

## **Level III**

**Severe** Unsportsmanlike conduct – such as but not limited to - fighting, verbal assaults, threats, unwanted physical contact that is harmful in nature, interfering with a volunteer trying to perform a task, Level II repeated violations.

### **Actions:**

1. Coach or Organization Parent Representative (OPR) will be notified by affected individual, parent, or volunteer. If the coach or OPR is the person affected or involved, this should immediately be escalated to the Executive Board of HSL.
2. OPR to perform investigation and document; may need multiple team OPRs involved.
3. Starter and Admin are to be notified of incident if it involves a pool volunteer for the meet (official, timer, clerk of course, computer table, announcer, time slip runner) and must sign and date the investigation form.
4. OPR to take care of the incident immediately within the event occurring or before leaving the event site.
5. OPR to get all information needed on the investigation form with witness statements, person affected statement, supposed person committing statement. Once investigation is completed, the OPR will determine fault with the Starter and Admin if only one team, or with Starter, Admin, and other team(s) OPR if multiple teams are involved.

- a. If determined to be at fault, the offending individual(s) are to be removed from the HSL event immediately by OPR and Coach – this will be supported fully by the Starter and Admin (even to the point of delaying the meet until the event is taken care of).
- b. The written report will be emailed to the Executive Board for review and record within 24 hours of the event
- c. The team will suspend the offending individual from any participation until the Executive Board can review and determine next steps. This includes participation in practices or any team events. If it is a parent or volunteer they will not be allowed at any team or HSL events until after determination of incident and punishment.
- d. The HSL Executive Board will review all Level III events and determine if further action is to be taken. Review by Executive Committee must be done within 48 hours of receiving the investigation.
- e. Any permanent action (longer than six weeks) recommended by the Executive Board must be brought before the HSL Board for a vote.

# Harford Swim League (HSL) Incident Investigation v2019Mar7

*To be used for gathering information and investigating incidents at HSL activities.*

Date / Time of Incident:

Name, Team, Contact Information of involved persons:

Description of Incident:

Statement from Person 1 involved: (If refuse to make a statement please note this)

Statement from Person 2 involved: (please use other paper if more than 2)

Name, Team, Contact information for person filling out the form:

Witness Name, Team, Contact information:

Witness 1 Statement:

Witness 2 Statement:

Name, Team for Starter and Admin:

At fault determination.

*All the following questions are to be answered with the understanding that they represent what was determined to the best of your abilities through the investigation documented on page 1. This in no way constitutes a legal decision and is governed solely by the bylaws and rules of the HSL, which each person involved in the HSL is subject to.*

1. Did the person accused of performing the action or activities, perform them as described? Y N
2. Were the actions or activities of a level where they heavily interfered with a volunteer trying to perform their duty, involve physical confrontation, verbal assaults / abuse / threats, or physical abuse / assault? Y N
3. Are there mitigating circumstances that would justify the accused person(s) actions or activities known to you or uncovered during the investigation? Y N
4. Does the accused acknowledge their behavior was unsportsmanlike and readily work to remedy the situation? Y N

**Fault is determined if the answer to question 1 is Y.**

**Level III fault must also have the answer to question 2 is Y.**

*If question 3 is a Y, please provide notes of the circumstances for HSL Exec Board consideration.*

*If question 4 is a Y, this again needs to be provided to the HSL Exec Board for consideration.*

For Level II involving a poolside volunteer, were the Starter and Admin Refs notified?  
Y N

For Level III, were the Starter and Admin Refs notified? Y N

For Level III was the person escorted from the facility and notified not to return from the duration of the current activity? Y N

If notified, Starter Signature and Date:

If notified, Admin Signature and Date:

## Proposed Pledges

### Athlete Pledge

As an athlete, I know I am a role model. I understand the spirit of fair play while working hard. I will refrain from engaging in all types of disrespectful behavior, including inappropriate language, taunting, trash talking, and unnecessary physical contact. I know the behavior expectations of my Team, and the Harford Swim League, and hereby accept the responsibility and privilege of representing this Team and community as an athlete.

Athlete Printed Name

Athlete Signature

Date

### Athlete's Parent Pledge

As a parent, I acknowledge that I am a role model. I will remember that Team athletics offers learning experiences for the swimmers. I must show respect for all swimmers, coaches, volunteers, and spectators. I will participate in cheers that support, encourage, and uplift the teams involved. I understand the spirit of fair play and good sportsmanship expected by our Team, and the Harford Swim League. I hereby accept my responsibility to be a model of good sportsmanship that comes with being the parent of an athlete.

Parent/Legal Guardian

Printed Name

Signature

Date



## Take away page for the Parents

“Your child’s success or lack of success in sports does not indicate what kind of parent you are. But, having an athlete that is coachable, respectful, a great teammate, mentally tough, resilient, and does their best IS a direct reflection of your parenting.”

### Parent Code of Ethics

As a swim parent,

- I (we) shall not impose my(our) ambitions on my(our) child.
- I (we) will be patient, realizing that all swimmers develop at different paces.
- I (we) shall provide positive support to my(our) child and team no matter what.
- I (we) shall support my(our) child’s responsibility to the team including attending practices, meets and team functions.
- I (we) shall encourage good sportsmanship by modeling the same to all swimmers, coaches and officials.
- I (we) shall communicate directly with my(our) child’s coach with any comments/concerns.
- I (we) shall support the decisions of the coaches, even if I(we) have a different agenda.
- I (we) shall not coach my(our) child no matter how difficult it may be.
- I (we) shall only have **positive** things to say at a competition.
- I (we) understand that for an age group swimmer, meets are a chance to both learn and have fun and for the coaches to observe how training should proceed.
- I (we) shall acknowledge my(our) child's fears.
- I (we) shall not criticize the officials or volunteers at meets (they are swim parents too!).
- I (we) shall respect the knowledge and guidance of my(our) child's coach.
- I (we) shall be loyal and supportive of our team.
- My (our) child shall have goals besides winning events.
- I (we) shall not expect my(our) child to become an Olympian.