

My Kid is on a Summer Swim Team (and I need help figuring it all out!)



A Guide for Navigating the Waters of a Summer Swim Team

2023 Edition

INTRODUCTION

Many swim parents have experienced that first day of swim practice or that first swim meet and wondered, “Why am I here and what's going on?” We've all been there before and will be glad to enlighten you in your quest to understand the World of Summer Swimming.

Please remember that the only foolish question is the one which is not asked. Your team reps, coaches, and fellow swim parents all want you to understand and enjoy our summer swim program.

Welcome to the Barracudas. We're glad to have you with us!

GO...



Chapter 1: About The Swim Team

Our Philosophy

The philosophy of the Hollin Meadows Barracudas swim team is that personal swimming development is what is most important, and for swimmers that means improving your times. We believe that by establishing a healthy environment that encourages the kids to do their best, recognizes their contributions, and is fun for the entire family, we will have met our goals. Most of the kids don't care if we're in a top division or a bottom division. We'd all like to be division champions, which usually means going undefeated, but only one team out of six can claim this honor in each division.

We've all taken our kids to soccer or other sports and probably stood by as two or three parents ran the team. Swimming isn't like that. You can't run a swim program without parental help. In fact, it takes over 40 parents to time, officiate, and score a typical swim meet, and that doesn't include pool set-up and tear down, or running the concession stand, or other non-swimming team activities.

Swimming is unique in that there's a place on the team for anyone eighteen or younger who can swim across the pool without assistance. How many other sports have kids five years old to eighteen years old and their parents on the same team involved in the same competition?

Expectations

Although swimming is considered an individual sport, our summer league is structured with an emphasis on the team. Any team is only as good as the people on it. In keeping with the philosophy articulated above, our expectations are simple:

1. The Hollin Meadows Swim Team is not a swim lesson program. A swimmer should be able to swim a length of the pool comfortably to join the team. We don't care how fast or how ugly or how legal the stroke is or how long it takes to swim that length. We'll help your swimmer become a better swimmer, but in fairness to the other swimmers on the team, as well as the safety and happiness of your child, we must insist that all swimmers be able to swim. Your child will feel better about his/her being on the team if he/she is competitive with most of the other kids of the same age.

2. Keep your commitments: At the beginning of the season we ask for information about your child's availability to swim at the meets, and your availability to work them. The NVSL has very strict rules about the number of swimmers we may enter in each event, and our ability to substitute in case of absences. It is not easy to substitute another swimmer if someone just doesn't "show up." Our team reps and coaches must complete the entries for each Saturday meet on **Wednesday**, so we are counting on you to compete if we don't have information that you will be unavailable by Wednesday morning. ***It is very important to put that information in writing***, rather than relying on your swimmer to remember to tell the coach, who must then remember to tell the team rep, etc, etc.... You will need to declare your child's availability for each swim meet online. Please be sure to go back in and update the website if your plans change. We rely solely on the website to know who can swim and who can't which helps us determine who is available to swim each meet.

3. Pay attention to the coaches: With over 130 swimmers, ranging in age from five to eighteen, disruptions aren't fair to the coaches or other swimmers. Parents are reminded that the coaches are on deck to work with the swimmers--- not to talk with parents during practices!

4. Do your best- it's a lot more important than being the best.

5. Have fun!

Chapter 2: Important Basic Stuff

Practices

Practice times are posted on the Swim Team Bulletin Board, in the club newsletter and on the team website. Swimmers should come to practice regularly and be prepared to do their best. It is important that swimmers arrive on time, ready to swim, and that they attend workouts whenever possible.

Swimmer Apparel

Swimmers should wear a swimsuit that will be appropriate for racing. The Barracudas, like every other swim team, have a team suit. The wearing of the team suit is optional. However, a “Speedo” or racing suit is certainly recommended – it is not fun to be slowed down by bulky “drag suits!”

You should also buy our team cap, which is available for a small fee. We also offer personalized swim caps if you want your family name put on it. These caps are more expensive, but the benefit to having one is if it’s lost we know who it belongs to! The NVSL does not permit you to wear a cap which displays the logo or name of other teams or programs while you compete for the Hollin Meadows Barracudas – you may wear a Barracuda cap, or a plain cap, but not a team cap from a high school or USS swim team. All swimmers should wear a cap for practices and meets!

Accessories for the well-dressed swimmer

Every swimmer needs a towel, the bigger and thicker the better. Most swimmers also find goggles essential, and they are available through the team and at swim suit try-ons. Other accessories you should consider include a sweatsuit (for cool days), a hat or other sun protection, and a bag to carry everything. You should also have liquid refreshment (a water bottle will do!) and a light snack for during the meet such as fruit, granola bars, or other healthy foods. Save the sweets at the concession stand as a reward for swimming a great swim.

Team Information

We use the team website and e-mail as our primary means of communication throughout the summer. These communication tools are updated and sent regularly to inform everyone about upcoming events, parent meet responsibilities, and the directions to away meets. We also use file folders, which are located at the front check-in desk, for forms, unclaimed ribbons, etc. We try very hard to keep everyone informed about events such as our our team trip, pasta dinners, pep rallies, and relay carnivals. It really helps the program run smoothly if everyone checks the website, e-mail and file folders at the guard desk regularly, and responds as necessary. Please make sure that the team has all of your current contact information, so that we can communicate with you in a timely manner.

Chapter 3: Organizational Stuff

Let's cover a few organizational items, just to make sure we're in sync.

Hollin Meadows Swim and Tennis Club

Under the rules of the Northern Virginia Swim League (NVSL, see below,) all competitors must be *bona fide* members of HMSTC. Hollin Meadows is governed by a board of directors, including one board member who is designated as the swim team representative. In addition to the pool facility, the Club also provides financial support for the team so that we can pay our NVSL dues, purchase ribbons, and pay our coaches. We also run a concession stand and charge a registration fee to help defray some of the above expenses, purchase equipment, and provide an end-of-the-season awards night.

Swim Committee and Coaches

The people you'll run into the most in your swim team dealings are the coaches and the members of the swim committee, which consists of five parent volunteers who were also once new to swimming. The five committee members include the Board Representative, mentioned above, Social Events Coordinator, Treasurer, and Team Representative and Assistant Team Representative. The "Team Reps" are our link to other swim teams and the NVSL. It's a job that is impossible to do successfully without help from a great many parents. The goal of the committee is to be transparent about swim team dealings such as rules, communication, activities, etc. They are all VOLUNTEERS and do the best they can for the good of the TEAM. The Swim Committee members for the 2020 swim season are:

Team Rep	Lauren Iannitto	Lfalkenhan@gmail.com
Assistant Team Rep	Kim Dwyer	kim.f.dwyer@gmail.com
Board Member	Matt Iannitto	matthew.a.iannitto@gmail.com
Social Events	Marie Chambers	marie.m.chambers@gmail.com
Treasurer	Heather Young	youngres@msn.com

Our coaches are salaried employees of our pool management company, specifically hired to coach the Barracudas after interviews with the swim committee. They are selected on the basis of their previous experience with swimming and coaching, their knowledge and enthusiasm, and ability to work well with swimmers of different levels of interest and ability.

For 2023, our **Head Coach is Ken Dicesare**. Ken is starting his 17th season with us, is a Nation's Capital Swim Club Coach, teaches Middle School and has been coaching our winter swim program. Coach Ken is known and well-loved by all of the kids. Ken brings loads of experience to our team and we are very happy to have him with us!

Our **Assistant Head Coach is Kaitlyn Gerke**. Kaitlyn is a former Barracuda and also swam year-round for Nation's Capital Swim Club (NCAP) and in high school for Bishop Ireton HS. Coach Kaitlyn has coached at James Madison University, Highland Park, Stratford Landing and Mt Vernon Country Club. Coach Kaitlyn is currently a coach for NCAP and the Head Coach for Bishop Ireton HS Swim & Dive, serving on the VISAA executive board for high school swim.

Our developmental **Swimmer Coaches for the 2023 season are Gavin Brown, Aidan Petretich, Natalie Goel, Sayla Runnels and Shea Dwyer**.

New this year we have several CIT's (coaches in training). Our CIT's will be in the water assisting our 8 and unders with stroke development and providing hands-on instruction. Our CIT Coaches for the 2023 season are **Zorig Javkhan, Alex Millimet, Rachel Cotton, Four O'Neill, Wyatt Parks and Kate Tuttle**. All coaches are available to give private lessons. To coordinate lessons with a coach you may sign-up in the "coaches" book at the guard desk or speak with them in person.

Northern Virginia Swimming League (NVSL)

In 1956, eight Northern Virginia community pools founded the NVSL. Today, the NVSL has over 10,000 swimmers on 102 teams and is the largest summer swim league in the United States. Obviously, with this many teams, there has to be some division of teams. During the offseason, the NVSL ranks each team from 1 to 102 based primarily on swimmer's times, and then divides the teams, based on these rankings, into 17 Divisions of five or six teams. This means that the fastest teams are in the lower numbered Divisions and the less competitive teams are in the higher numbered Divisions. In recent years, Hollin Meadows has become a medium sized team by NVSL standards and has moved between Divisions 8-11. Last year, the Barracudas were in Division 10, finishing the season 2-3. We came in 4th at Relay Carnival and Division Championship! This summer, we will compete in Division 11 along with **Mosby Woods, Fox Mill Woods, Greenbriar, Highland Park, and Sideburn Run**.

Dual Meets

The six teams in each division swim the other five teams, one at a time on five consecutive Saturdays, in a series of Dual Meets, so called because there are two teams competing. Based upon the results of these five meets, a division champion will be named. These Saturday morning meets are commonly referred to as "A" meets. They operate with a fixed order of events, and formal procedures for entries, scoring, and reporting results. A "meet sheet," which lists the swimmers and lane assignments for each team is printed and posted at the pool and sent electronically to families. If you wish to follow along with a meet you will need to print and bring a copy of the meet sheet with you.

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 relays (each swimmer swims the Freestyle) and Medley relays (each swimmer swims a different stroke). Only the four fastest swimmers in each age group swim on the relays, but it is very important to the team that each swimmer check to see if he or she is swimming on a relay – nothing is more disappointing to three swimmers ready to compete for the team than to have the fourth team member fail to "show up." ***This is especially true at NVSL Relay Carnival, as no swimmers are allowed to "swim up" to substitute for others. Every relay that is "legally" swum earns points for our team!***

Hollin Meadows has also traditionally competed in the Ft. Hunt Sportsmen's Relay Invitational, which

is usually held the last Wednesday of June. This meet is held for teams in the Ft. Hunt – Mt. Vernon area, regardless of their division. There are lots of fun and unusual mixed age relays, and traditionally a coaches' relay to conclude the meet. Our swimmers really enjoy this meet, and it is important to check to see if your swimmer will be competing, for all the reasons mentioned above!

In Relay Carnivals, teams are not seeded. Each team's lane assignment for the first event is based upon luck of the draw and the teams then rotate one lane to the left after each event. The meet sheet lists only the team swimming in each lane in each event (except for All Star Relay Carnival).

Divisionals

On the Saturday of the sixth week, each Division has an Individual Championship meet, commonly referred to as "Divisionals". Each team is allowed to enter only two swimmers in each event and a swimmer can enter no more than two events. If a team does not have two swimmers for an event, the other teams can bid-in other swimmers to fill the empty lanes. This is an individual meet and is not scored. Swimmers placing in the top six earn a medal while swimmers who place 7th-12th will receive a ribbon. Awards are distributed at our Swim Banquet

All Stars

After the Divisionals, all the Division coordinators gather to select swimmers for the All Stars Meet the following week. The sole criteria for selection to All-Stars is to have one of the eighteen fastest times swum that day in an event in the Divisional meets. 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 your swimmer is fast enough to be named an All Star, it is a thrill they will never forget.

IM Invitational (IMI) Meet

The Barracudas traditionally compete in other meets late in our season. The IM Invitational, originally held at our club, gives our swimmers a chance to get a time in the individual medley while competing against the best swimmers from the Ft. Hunt area. In a 100m IM, each swimmer swims one length of butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle, making for a very challenging race. 8 & Unders may swim butterfly at the IMI or, if approved by our coaches, they can swim IM in the 10 & under event. The meet is held on the Monday before Divisionals, which provides an opportunity to get a great IM time just prior to seeding for Divisionals. Since IM is not swum at A Meets we encourage our swimmers who can legally swim all four strokes to swim this event at least once at a B Meet. The three fastest IM swimmers in each age group have an opportunity to swim in the IM Invitational. The times are based on the top three fastest times of the *current* season. In some cases we use times from the previous season if one is not available for the current season, however to be fair to the swimmers who make the effort to swim IM in at least one meet of the current year, those swimmers will be entered with a slower time than the swimmers who swam it in the current season even if their time is faster. Swimmers who wish to swim at the IM Invitational need to make every effort to get at least one time at a B Meet during the current season. In addition to the three fastest swimmers, we also submit names of alternate swimmers who are "bid in" to the meet based on the number of swimmers submitted by each team (some teams do not have enough swimmers to submit three

swimmers into each age group). We are often able to get some of our “alternate” swimmers into this meet. If your child is an alternate, they are encouraged to go to Clerk of Course dressed and ready to swim the evening of the IMI—just in case. The details surrounding who can swim in this meet can be confusing to first-time swimmers and parents. Ask one of the coaches or team reps if you have any questions about how swimmers are selected for each meet.

Chapter 4: My Kid Says He's Supposed to Swim Like a Butterfly

If you're not a former swimmer, the strokes and their rules can be a cause of bewilderment. While the stroke rules are simple enough for a six year old to understand, most people do not have a copy of the US Swimming Rules, so we'll briefly describe the strokes below. The rules below are the US Swimming rules as modified for use in the NVSL. Teams in other leagues may have slightly different rules.

Freestyle

The freestyle is defined as any means of swimming across the pool. Any stroke and kick are acceptable. There are, however, a few don'ts associated with this stroke, specifically: (1) You cannot walk on the bottom or pull yourself along using the lane lines and (2) In a 50 Meter race (two pool lengths) you must touch the wall at the 25 meter end before touching the wall at the 50 meter end (This may seem obvious, but sometimes swimmers miss the wall at the turning end of the pool).

Backstroke

Like the freestyle, almost anything goes on the backstroke as long as you stay on your back. Watching swimmers learn the backstroke is a perverse sense of fun as they bounce off lane lines and wonder where they are. Eventually, they will learn to guide off the lane lines, use the overhead backstroke flags and the lane line markings to know where they're at in the pool, and count strokes from the flags to the wall.

Backstroke starts are different from all others because the swimmer is in the water feet planted against the wall, and hanging on to either another swimmer's legs or the lip on the pool awaiting the starter's signal. "Legs" must be grabbed below the knee. Persons serving in an official capacity (such as timers or coaches) may not serve as "legs".

If your swimmer is a backstroker, he or she will eventually learn the backstroke flip turn. This is the one exception to staying on your back and can be used only as part of a turn (not a finish) at the pool wall.

Breaststroke

The Breaststroke has two components, the kick and the arm pull. The pull and its recovery must both be under the breast and cannot extend further back than the waist area. The kick is a "frog" kick and the toes must be pointed outward during the propulsive part of the kick. The arm pull and kick must be in an alternating sequence and the elbows must stay below the water except for tagging the wall at the finish. Breaststroke turns and finishes require a simultaneous two hand touch.

Butterfly

A well executed butterfly (or Fly) is the most beautiful exhibition of power you'll ever see in a swimming pool. Quite frankly, the fly can be the hardest stroke for some swimmers to perfect and while they are learning it may look like they are drowning. There are two components of the fly: the arm pull and the kick. The arm pull must be an over the water recovery (elbows breaking the surface of the water) with the arms moving simultaneously. The kick is a dolphin style kick with both legs moving simultaneously. Unlike the breaststroke, there is no requirement to alternate the kick and pull. Turns and finishes require a simultaneous two hand touch at the wall.

Individual Medley

The individual medley (or IM) is when an individual swims each of the four strokes in the sequence Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle. We swim a 100 Meter IM, which means that 25 Meters, or one pool length, of each stroke is swum. In a 100 Meter IM, every turn is a stroke change and stroke finish rules apply. This means no Backstroke Flip Turns.

Relays

There are two kinds of relays, the freestyle relay and the medley relay. Both involve a team of four swimmers, each swimming one quarter of the total distance. In the freestyle relay, each swimmer swims the freestyle. In the medley relay, the sequence is Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle.

In all relays, each swimmer must wait until the previous swimmer touches the wall prior to leaving the deck. Running starts or pushes from teammates are not allowed.

Team Records

Team Records, both individual and relay, can only be broken by swimmers who are swimming in their actual age group. While "swim-ups" can and should occur when it benefits the team, broken records by out-of-age-group swimmers will not be official records and will not appear on the record board.

Officials

If you are interested in learning more about the strokes and getting involved with the team, please plan on attending one of the officials' clinics at the start of the season. We are always very interested in adding to our list of qualified meet officials, especially stroke-and-turn judges, starters, and referees. Dates and locations for the clinics are listed on the NVSL website www.mynvsl.com.

Chapter 5: Swim Meets

There are two basic meets you will encounter as a parent: Saturday meets, which are scored dual meets and Monday meets, which are un-scored dual meets, commonly referred to as “B” meets or Developmental meets.

Saturday Meets

Saturday Meets consist of 40 Individual events and 12 Relays. The events for each stroke and age group are shown below. Remember, each pool length is 25 meters.

Saturday Meet Events and Distances

Age group	Freestyle	Backstroke	Breaststroke	Butterfly	Freestyle Relay	Medley Relay
8 & Under Boys	25 M	25 M	25 M	25 M	100M	
8 & Under Girls	25 M	25 M	25 M	25 M	100M	
9-10 Boys	50 M	50 M	50 M	25 M		100 M
9-10 Girls	50 M	50 M	50 M	25 M		100 M
11-12 Boys	50 M	50 M	50 M	50 M		100 M
11-12 Girls	50 M	50 M	50 M	50 M		100 M
13-14 Boys	50 M	50 M	50 M	50 M		100 M
13-14 Girls	50 M	50 M	50 M	50 M		100 M
15-18 Boys	50 M	50 M	50 M	50 M		200 M
15-18 Girls	50 M	50 M	50 M	50 M		200 M
Mixed Age Boys					200 M	
Mixed Age Girls					200 M	

1. The order of events is to go down each column starting on the left side except that the mixed age relays are the last two events. The Mixed Age Relays are swum by, in order, an 11-12 year old, a 9-10 year old, a 13-14 year old, and a 15-18 year old.

Who Swims?

These meets are to see who can score the most points, so the fastest swimmers get to swim. Three swimmers can be entered in each individual event and no swimmer can swim more than two individual events. Since swimmers take vacations and go places such as scout camp, and a swimmer can swim in only two events (plus relays) in any meet, you don't have to be one of the three fastest swimmers to swim in a Saturday meet. Who swims an event may seem to be a mystery. However, after the first meet both teams know the other's swimmers times and we try to position our swimmers to maximize our points and win.

While winning is certainly not everything, nor indeed the most important thing, it is important to team morale and a sense of accomplishment to have as many swimmers as possible available for our Saturday competitions. It can be very discouraging to our swimmers to see the other team “fill the lanes” while we have no chance to score points and no one to cheer for during the race because the swimmers in an age group have gone tubing or are sleeping in; please try to plan other activities with our Saturday morning meets in mind, and make sure that the team reps are notified at the beginning of the season if you will have unavoidable conflicts!

Disqualifications (DQs) and False Starts

A swimmer will be disqualified (or DQ'd) if he/she does not follow the rules of the stroke or has a false start. These are covered in more detail in chapter 7.

Seeding

In Saturday meets, the home team has lanes 1, 3, and 5 while the visiting team has lanes 2, 4, and 6. The fastest swimmers swim in lanes 3 and 4, the next fastest in lanes 5 and 2, and the next fastest in lanes 1 and 6. Swimmers are seeded based upon their fastest times obtained in prior competition. Lane 1 is always on the right side as you stand facing the pool at the starting end.

Meet Sheets

While all NVSL meets have an announcer, the best way to follow the meet is with a meet sheet, which lists all the events, swimmers, and seed times. Meet sheets need to be printed at home and brought to the meet if you want to follow along.

Scoring

In the individual events, a first place finish earns 5 points for the team, a second place 3 points and a third place finish 1 point. Relays are scored as 5 points for the winner and 0 points for the loser. There are 402 points up for grabs in a Saturday meet. Unless there are one or more places not awarded in an event due to DQs or lack of swimmers, you need 202 points to win.

In the event of a tie, the points for the places involved are equally split among the swimmers. For example, a two way tie for second place, each swimmer earns 2 points (3 points for second plus 1 point for third equals 4 points, half for each swimmer). No third place would be awarded because the next swimmer is fourth. For a third place tie, each swimmer is awarded 1/2 point.

Monday Evening "B" Developmental Meets

Monday meets are basically the same as Saturday meets except as follows:

- There are no relays and no team score
- In the Freestyle, Backstroke and Breaststroke, a 6 & Under age group is usually added and the 13-14s and 15-18s sometimes combine into one
- IM events are sometimes added for 10 & Unders, 11-12s, 13-14s and 15-18s
- There are usually multiple heats of each event for younger swimmers

Chapter 6: Who Are All These People Dressed in White?

Your first swim meet can be a bewildering experience as you encounter a vast horde of adults dressed in white and blue. NVSL rules require that white shirts and blue pants/shorts be worn by all officials. At least we're not the ones wearing Speedos!

Clerk of the Course

The Clerk of the Course is the "gatekeeper" for all swimmers in our meets. The people who perform this function get the swimmers to the right lanes for the correct race. You can't run a race without swimmers and the clerk of the course makes sure the right swimmer gets to the right place at the right time. Usually.

Referee

The Referee is the chief official for each swim meet. He or she is responsible for the conduct of the meets and is the final authority on the interpretation and enforcement of all swimming rules. Prior to the start of each race, the referee sounds two or three short blasts to advise the participants to get ready, and for the crowd to be quiet so that all competitors can hear the starting instructions. After the event is announced by the announcer or starter, the Referee sounds one long blast as a signal for swimmers to get into position for the start or to jump feet first into the water for a backstroke event. For backstroke events, a second long blast is given to bring the swimmers to the wall for the start. When the referee sees that all the swimmers are ready, he extends his arm pointing towards the starter. At this point, the starter takes control.

Starter

The Starter is responsible for ensuring that all swimmers are given a fair and equitable start. The starter will instruct the swimmers to "Take your mark". After all swimmers are ready and still, the starter will start the race using an electronic starter, complete with strobe light. Effective with the 2000 Season, a race can be recalled only if it was a bad start by the starter or for a safety reason. This is done using a recall signal on the starting system (you'll know it when you hear it). More information on False Starts is in Chapter 7.

Stroke and Turn Judges

Once the race has started, the Stroke & Turn Judges are responsible for ensuring that all swimmers obey all the rules for the stroke that they are swimming. These people are always at the ends of the pool for starts and finishes and walk the sides of the pool as best they can within the physical constraints of the pool. If a Stroke and Turn Judge sees a violation of the rules, he raises his hand to signify that an infraction has occurred. A Disqualification is recorded on a DQ slip, which the referee reviews and approves and forwards copies to the Table workers and the Team Rep.

Marshalls

Marshalls are responsible for ensuring that warm-ups are conducted safely and that order is maintained during the warmups. Duties include ensuring that diving starts are used in warmups only when a lane is "one way" away from the starting end, stopping any horse play, and making sure swimmers aren't hanging or sitting on the lane lines.

Relay Take-off Judges

During relays, you'll see four Relay Take-off Judges at each end of the pool (two per lane). Their job is to insure that each swimmer touches the wall prior to the next swimmer in the relay leaving the deck. Each Judge notes on a slip of paper whether each swimmer in his lane left before or after the swimmer in the water touched the wall. Relay Take-off Judges do not raise their hands when they observe an early take-off because a disqualification occurs only if both Relay Take-off Judges observe an early takeoff.

Timers

The timers are the most important people to every swimmer. They are the people who determine each swimmer's official time for each race. Being a timer is a good entry level position for new parents to help out. Some parents have been timers for years and wouldn't want to see a swim meet from any other viewpoint. If you can start and stop a stopwatch, you can be a timer. We'll even provide the stopwatch. Timers start their watches on the strobe light from the starting system and stop their watches when the swimmer touches the wall. There are three timers per lane and all three times are recorded. The middle time is the official time. The Chief Timer collects the time cards from the timers, reviews them for accuracy and completeness, and forwards them on to the table workers.

Table Workers

The time cards from the timers and any DQ slips go to 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 ensure that results are recorded accurately.

Concessions

Concession stand workers play a very important role at our swim meets, for in addition to providing a very welcome cold drink or a hot dog with all the "fixins," they also raise funds for the team. Proceeds from the concession stand are used to help keep registration costs down and are used to purchase awards at the end-of-season party as well as supplies and equipment.

Team Rep

The Team Rep is the designated recipient of all DQ slips for his team and is the only person with any official standing to challenge any decisions made by the referee. It sounds like an easy job, but remember, most of the Team Rep's job is done before the meet starts and after the meet ends.

Coaches

During the meet, the Coaches' primary responsibility is to encourage and praise the swimmers and to make sure that the swimmers get to the Clerk of the Course in time to swim.

Other Very Important People

It would be impossible to host a swim meet without a number of people in Other Very Important Positions. These people take pictures, set up the pool, announce results, and sell concessions. We need the help of every family in order to have a successful swim season!

Chapter 7: What Do You Mean, My Kid DQ'd?

In swimming, the rules must be followed in total or a disqualification, or DQ, is committed. This can be traumatic the first time a swimmer is DQ'd for just one mistake, but it isn't fair to other swimmers who swim the entire race per the rules to do otherwise.

What is a DQ?

A DQ (short for disqualification) is any violation of the rules observed by any appropriate official. Some of the more common reasons for DQing are as follows.

- Freestyle: Failure to touch the wall at the turning end of the pool
 Walking on the bottom or pulling on the lane lines
 Exiting the pool before swimming the specified distance
- Backstroke: Past vertical towards the breast at any time except during a flip turn
 Leaving the wall after a turn past vertical towards the breast
 Improper flip turn (older swimmers)
- Breaststroke: Incorrect kick, such as a Scissors kick or Flutter kick
 Non-Simultaneous two hand touch or one hand touch at turn or finish
 Toes not pointed outward during the propulsive part of the kick
 More than one stroke underwater with arms fully extended at start or turn
 Arm recovery past waist except on first stroke after start or turn
 Head didn't break surface by conclusion of second arm pull underwater after a start or turn
- Butterfly: Non-Simultaneous or one handed wall touch at the turn or finish
 Non-Simultaneous leg movement during kicks
 Arms don't break water surface during recovery (judged at the elbows)
 Non-Simultaneous arm movement during recovery
- Relay Races: A swimmer leaves the deck before the previous swimmer touches the wall or deck
- False Start: A swimmer starts the race early (more details below)

How will I know a DQ occurred?

Unlike football, we don't blow a whistle and announce to the world that a rules violation occurred. When a Stroke and Turn Judge observes a violation, s/he raises his hand to signify that s/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 rule has been broken and can question the stroke and turn judge to insure that s/he was able to see the violation that was cited. The referee then gives one copy of the DQ slip to the Team Rep and another copy to the Table Workers. Another clue that a DQ has occurred is a Stroke and Turn Judge writing and a longer than normal pause between events.

Disqualifications for early relay takeoffs are done slightly differently. The referee receives all the take-off slips from all the judges. If both judges on a lane agree that an early takeoff occurred, the Referee will stand over the lane that the team being DQ'd swam in and raise his hand.

False Starts

A false start occurs whenever a swimmer moves towards the pool after having assumed a still position (taking his/her mark) and before the Starter has started the race. When this occurs, a swimmer is usually trying to anticipate the starting signal and beat the other swimmers into the water.

New rules are in effect for handling false starts which took effect for the 2000 Season. If the false start is detected before the starting signal is sounded, the offending swimmer can be removed from the race prior to it starting. If a false start occurs, but the starting signal has sounded, the race will not be stopped. Instead the false starting swimmer(s) will be notified of their false start at the conclusion of the race. The use of a recall signal is now limited to a bad start (i.e. not all swimmers were ready) or for a safety reason. If the starter sounds the recall signal, no swimmer can be removed for a false start.

How do I know if My Kid DQ'd?

Your swimmer will probably know before you do, since the Team Rep tells the coach, who tells the swimmer. You'll probably find out if you saw your swimmer finish with one of the top three times but he or she isn't announced later as one of the top three finishers. Similarly, someone else DQ'd if your swimmer placed 4th, 5th or 6th, yet is announced as having placed in the top three. Another way to find out is by reading the official Meet Results, which are posted at the pool by 4 PM the day of the meet. You also can get results by visiting the NVSL web site (www.mynvsl.com).

It is the coaches' responsibility to explain to swimmers the reasons for DQs and the steps that need to be taken to ensure that they do not DQ again. Parents are usually most helpful to their swimmers when they are supportive and sympathetic and able to leave the coaching to the coaches!

A Word About Officials and DQs

Every Official on the deck will always give the benefit of the doubt to the swimmer. Although the difference between legal but ugly vs. illegal is sometimes close to call, any violation called by an official is an "I saw" not an "I think I saw".

Protesting Disqualifications

The Team Rep is the only person who can officially question a disqualification or any other call by an official. If something happens involving your swimmer which you do not think is right, talk to the coach or the Team Rep. The Team Rep will initiate action in accordance with NVSL rules if thought to be appropriate.

Chapter 8: We'd Rather Have Fun Than Be in Division 1

If you get to know the parents of swimmers in Division I teams, some of them will tell you that swimming isn't always fun. At the pinnacle of NVSL are the six best teams and they all want to be #1. At Hollin Meadows, we like to win, but it isn't our reason for being. Some of the things we do to have fun are...

Pep Rallies

A Pep Rally is held every Friday morning at the pool during morning practice time. All swimmers combine for one practice, which is held from 9:30 to 11:30 on Friday mornings only. We have a team meeting to go over the Saturday morning roster, announce "Swimmers of the Week" and acknowledge those who have made great improvements in time, helped another swimmer, etc. We then have practice together, go over starts and turns, and do a special activity to help get excited for the upcoming meet. None of the swimmers, no matter how young or old, like to miss the Friday morning practice!

Team Pictures

We take a team picture every year, and we'd like your swimmer to be in it. You are not obligated to purchase a picture. All swimmers should wear their swimsuits for the picture and arrive at the pool no later than 8:45 so that we can get ready to smile for the camera. Families who purchase a photo will receive it at our Funny Awards Family Breakfast or at the Swim Banquet.

Other social events

Over the course of the season we'll have Pasta Dinners, Team Outings, and our Friday Funny Awards and Family breakfast, which is scheduled for the Friday before Divisionals. Dates are available on our calendar, and detailed information will be posted and sent via email prior to every event.

Swim Awards

We cap off the season with a Swim Team Banquet, which includes dinner and cake held at the pool on the evening of Divisionals. Every swimmer gets a trophy. We traditionally have had a wonderful slide show of highlights of the season, and various games, which includes a family medley relay. Start training now!

What's Mandatory?

While we hope you and your swimmers will participate in all the social activities, they are all optional. Similarly, the purchase of team suits and other team clothing items is entirely optional. What is mandatory is that you honor your commitments and ***have fun!***