

Frequently Asked Questions

Do swimmers need to tryout?

The YNWL Bolts Swim Team and the YMCA offer training and practice groups for swimmers of all ages and ability levels. Open Evaluations will be held in August and anytime by appointment to place swimmers into appropriate groups. Contact Head Coach Eddie Adams or Swim Team Admin Danielle Wheeler by calling the BHP Billiton YMCA at 318-674-9635.

Can swimmers be involved in other sports?

Many swimmers participate in other activities. Our practices are offered four to six days a week depending on the group to allow swimmers more opportunities to participate.

Is there a lot of travel involved?

Meets/Competition participation is not required but is encouraged. Meets are typically offered 1-2 times per month. The location of competitions range from local to throughout Louisiana and the surrounding area. Multiple meets each season are offered at BHP Billiton YMCA and as close as Ruston, LA just over an hour drive away. Additional meets are offered further south in Lafayette, Baton Rouge, Sulphur, New Orleans and other locations, including most season ending Championship meets. We also have offerings as far west as Dallas, TX.

Can a swimmer join anytime?

Yes, a swimmer can join anytime throughout the year.

Are the coaches certified?

All YNWL Coaches are USA Swimming Registered and Certified. All coaches are required to pass a USA Swimming background check and complete certifications for CPR, Safety Training, Athlete Protection, and USA Swimming Foundations of Coaching. YNWL Coaches are also members of the American Swim Coaches Association, giving them access to the largest collection of training and educational materials available. Any chaperones for team trips are also USA Registered and must pass the USA Swimming background check and complete the Athlete Protection training.

What are the benefits of year-round swimming?

Year-round swimming will improve swimming ability as well as can improve other aspects of an athlete's life. Listening, discipline, organization, work-ethic, time management and goal setting skills learned in year-round swim transfer to the classroom and into the real world. Swimmers also learn how to handle both successes and failures, how to show good sportsmanship and how to have confidence in themselves. As swimmers compete, times will improve, and they will see how hard work at practice pays off.

Are there any additional cost associated with year-round swimming?

Swim meets do have entry fees associated with participation. If a swimmer does not enter a specific meet, there is no charge. Entry fees typically include an \$8 LA Swimming Surcharge, a \$5-\$10 Facility Surcharge, and an approximately \$4-\$5 per event fee. Other possible costs on top of team fees include extra team caps, goggles, equipment, optional Social Event expenses, and optional team apparel.

Do swimmers have to wear Arena brand suits or use Arena brand equipment?

Arena is the official Team Sponsor of YNWL. Through our official partnership with Arena, YNWL members receive 30% off official team apparel, suits, and equipment. The team also

receives significant support, athlete outfitting support, and more. YNWL Swimmers are required to make every effort to be in Arena brand suits and to use Arena brand equipment in both practice and meets. Any currently possessed non-Arena brand suits and equipment can be used and are not required to be replaced. When it is time to replace suits or equipment, please make every effort to replace them with Arena brand products. Details about our Arena Sponsorship, D&J Sports(official team provider), can be found on our team website under 'Team Apparel / Equipment'.

Do swimmers have to have to buy a team swimsuit?

The only specifically required item for YNWL Swimmers is the official team suit for use at swim meets. Team suits are not required for practice but every effort should be made to purchase Arena brand practice suits of your choosing. Our official team suit is a plain black Arena brand suit. Official team logos are an optional addition to the suit.

How to know if your swimmer is ready for a swim meet?

A swimmer's desire for competition, ability and age will determine if a swimmer is ready for a swim meet. Ask the coach if your swimmer is ready for competition. Swimmers do not have to compete in all four strokes. Younger swimmers or new swimmers may just compete in freestyle and/or backstroke.

How do I sign-up my swimmer for a swim meet?

To sign-up for a swim meet you must log-in to your Team Unify account. Meets are listed under 'Events' on the team website. The event schedule for each day can be found once you select the meet. You will commit your swimmer for each specific meet by selecting 'attend'. In the notes section list any conflicts (i.e... – Sam can swim Saturday, but NOT on Sunday) or the coaches will assume your swimmer will be competing each day. If you are unable to attend a meet, please log-in and select decline.

What is the difference between Short Course (SCY) and Long Course (LCM)?

Short Course takes place in a 25 yard pool and Long Course in a 50 meter pool. Long Course Meters is abbreviated LCM. Short Course season runs from September through March. Long Course begins in late April and ends mid-July.

What should I bring to a swim meet?

- Swim bag with a competition suit, YNWL cap, 2 pairs of goggles, towels
- Clothes to stay warm
- Healthy snacks, drinks and water
- Portable chairs and/or a blanket
- Sharpie to write events on swimmer's hand
- Highlighter to highlight events on heat sheet

How does a swim meet work?

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time. Warm-up times will be listed on the website.

- If not provided ahead of time, purchase a heat sheet so you can determine events, heat, and lane for your swimmer.
- Find a place to put your swim bags, chairs, etc... The team tries to sit in one place so look for familiar teammates.
- Find your coach and make sure the swimmer gets to the correct warm-up lane. After warm-ups, swimmers can go back to their area and wait for their first event.
- Swimmers can determine their event, heat, and lane and write it on their hand, arm or leg in a permanent marker to help them remember what and when they are swimming.
- Before and after each race the swimmer should go see their coach
- After each race, the swimmer should FIRST check-in with the coach to discuss the race.
- After the last event, the swimmer should check in with the coach before leaving to make sure they are not on a relay.

Why do swimmers write on their hands, arms or legs?

Swimmers, who are learning how swim meets operate, keep track of their events by writing them on their hand, arm or leg. The information written include Event Type, Event Number, Heat Number and Lane. More experienced swimmers follow a heat sheet. The heat sheet can be printed prior to the meet, purchased at the meet or posted around the pool deck...depending on the meet.

What is expected of me as a parent?

Parental support is required to provide a high quality program for swimmers and families. Timers, officials and other jobs must be filled in order to provide an efficient swim meet experience for all at both home and away meets. It is the expectation of YNWL Bolts and the YMCA that all families of registered swimmers be available and willing to share in the volunteer responsibilities throughout the year.

What are the four competitive strokes?

The four competitive strokes are Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Freestyle. Your swimmer will learn the rules for each competitive stroke at practice. However, parents often want to know the rules as well (how to start, how to finish, legal turns, illegal kick or stroke...). The best way to understand this is to ask the coach directly.

What is a Heat and Heat Sheet?

When all the swimmers have registered, it is likely that there are more swimmers registered for an event than there are lanes in the pool. For this reason, swimmers are grouped into heats. If there are 24 registered swimmers but only 8 lanes, there will be 3 heats. Heats are organized from slowest to fastest entry times. A "NT" stands for No Time and will be seeded in the early heats.

When and where do swimmers receive their awards from each meet?

Each family has a 'Family File' inside the coaches office off the pool deck. Awards are generally available for pickup by mid-week following a meet.