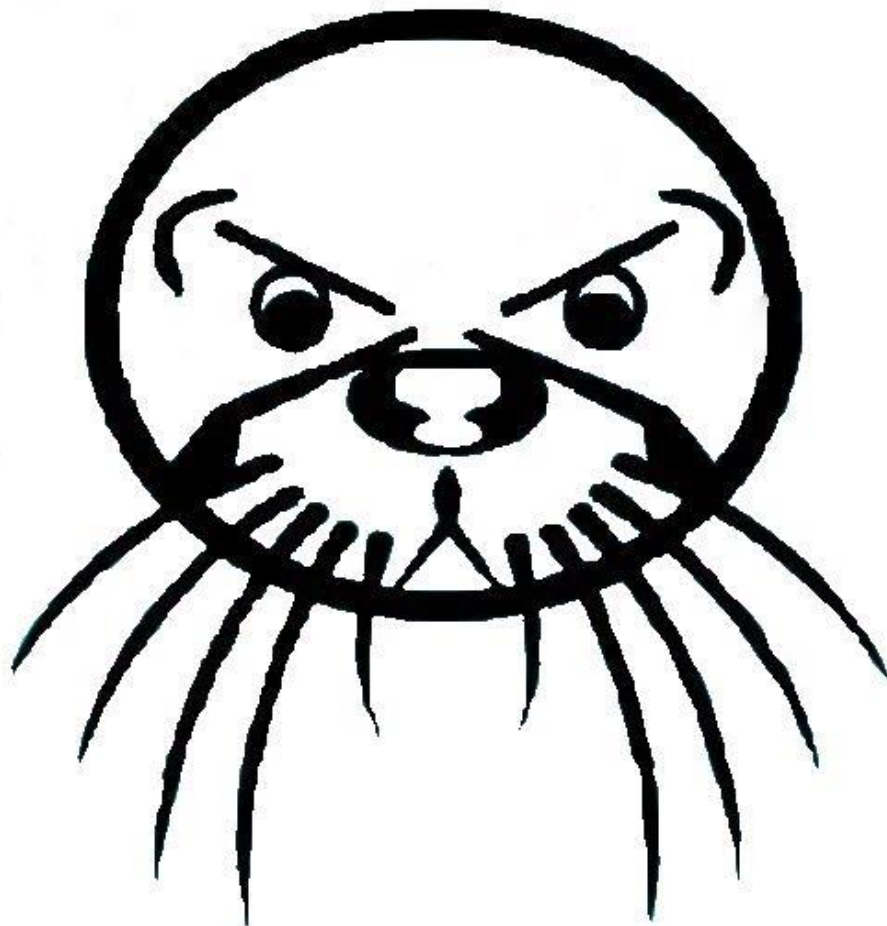


Otters Swim Team Handbook



CONTENTS

Contents.....	- 2 -
Mission Statement & Goals for the Otters	- 3 -
North Central Illinois Swim Conference.....	- 3 -
Parent Support Group.....	- 4 -
Coaching Staff	- 4 -
Swim Practice.....	- 5 -
Team Unify.....	- 6 -
Communication.....	- 6 -
Transportation	- 7 -
Swim Meets	- 7 -
Meet Rules, Responsibilities, and Procedures.....	- 10 -
A Word About Eating	- 12 -
PARENT INVOLVEMENT	- 12 -
Team Suits, Caps, Goggles, & Apparel.....	- 13 -
Vacations.....	- 13 -
Lemon Shake-Up Fundraiser at Prairie Fest	- 13 -
Order of Events	- 14 -
Events.....	- 16 -
Common DQ's.....	- 16 -
Helpful Terminology.....	- 17 -

Welcome to the Oswego Otters Summer Season!

The Otters Swim Team is an Oswegoland Park District program supported by a volunteer parent group. This handbook is to help guide new and returning swim team families through a fun and busy summer season. Please read it thoroughly. You will receive weekly newsletters emailed through Team Unify (see page 6) will supplement information in this guide.

The parent support group, coaching staff, and park district look forward to another fun and successful season. This team would not exist without the volunteering and cooperation of the swimmers and their parents. Parents are a key part of the team. They are expected to work one of many volunteer jobs during each home meet. Thank you for your support.

Previous swim lessons are recommended and encouraged prior to participation in this program. Coaches will evaluate new swimmer abilities to swim across Winrock Pool. The minimum requirement to participate in this program is the ability to swim 25 continuous yards of Freestyle with breathing to the side, and 25 yards of Backstroke, both without signs of distress.

MISSION STATEMENT & GOALS FOR THE OTTERS

1. To provide an opportunity to learn proper stroke technique, gain strength and endurance.
2. To supply training and the opportunity to compete.
3. To offer opportunities to learn excellent sportsmanship.
4. To create an environment where self-esteem and self-confidence may be increased.
5. To have fun!

NORTH CENTRAL ILLINOIS SWIM CONFERENCE

The Oswego Otters has been a member of the North Central Illinois Swim Conference (NCISC) for 28 years. The conference is currently made up of 10 teams. This season all teams will compete in the same division. Swimmers must participate in a minimum of 3 of 6 conference dual meets in order to qualify for the Conference Championship Meet which will be held on Saturday, July 16. The 10 teams include Algonquin Lifetime Fitness, Cary Barracudas, DeKalb County Swim Team, Geneva River Rats, Huntley Stingrays, McGuire Aquatics, Oswego Otters, YMCA of Rock River Valley Stingrays, Trails of Algonquin, and Woodstock Dolphins.

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

The Oswego Otters Swim Team is operated by a volunteer parent support group. The support group meets monthly throughout the year and is responsible for Publicity, Lemon Shake-Ups, Meet Concessions, Fundraising, Sportswear, and Running Home Meets.

2022 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Any parent interested in becoming more involved with the Parent Support Group should contact Carly Hontanon, chontanon@oswegolandpd.org.

Secretary
Publicity
Lemon Shake-Ups
Concessions
Fundraising
Meet Director
Conference Representative
Sportswear
Park District Liaison

2022 COACHING STAFF

Head Coaches: Mark Urso

Assistant Coaches:

Matthew Gorney, Janet Liska, Beckett McGraw, Abby Szadorski, Alexa Szadorski


SWIM PRACTICE

Evening practice begins Tuesday, May 31st. Morning practice begins Monday, June 6th.

See schedule below.



WILL WE HAVE PRACTICE?


The answer to this question is usually “YES”. Lightning or extreme cold (low 50s) are typically the only circumstances that cancel practice. If the temperature outside feels cool to you, remember that the water temperature is heated between 79 and 82 degrees, plus your child is exercising. Rain definitely will not stop us.



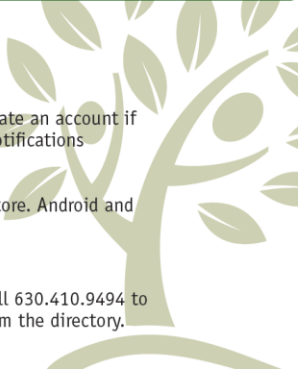
Cancellation Information & Facility Closure Notifications

The Park District uses RainoutLine.com to share cancellation information for select program areas and facility closures. For your convenience, you can view the status of select program areas online, sign up for text and/or e-mail alerts, download the mobile app, or call to access the recorded hotline.

- **Online**
 1. Visit www.rainoutline.com
 2. Search & Select Oswegoland Park District
 3. Choose a program to view the current status
 4. Choose e-mail & text alerts from the left to create an account if you would like to receive text and/or e-mail notifications
- **Mobile App**

Search RainoutLine from your mobile device's app store. Android and iPhone apps are available.
- **Phone**

RainoutLine messages will be available by phone. Call 630.410.9494 to access the recorded hotline and select a program from the directory.



PRACTICE SCHEDULE

All practices will be at Winrock Pool.

Evening Practice: May 31- June 1-3 *No Practice Memorial Day, May 30

Green 3:45-4:15pm White 4:30-5:15pm Red 5:15-6:15pm Black 6:15-7:45pm

Morning Practice - Begins Monday, June 6 - Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays (dryland)

Black 7:00-9:30am Red 9:00-10:45am White 10:30-11:15am Green 11:15-11:45am

Morning Practice-Tuesdays, Fridays

Black 7:00-9:00am Red 9:00-10:30am White 10:30-11:15am Green 11:15-11:45am

Morning practices are held Monday-Friday mornings, according to team group level. Daily practice is desirable. Swimmers are expected to practice a minimum of 3 times per week to participate in the following week's meet. Swimmers should be at the pool at least ten minutes before the start of their practice. Practicing 5 days a week is beneficial to all swimmers in improving their swim skills and endurance. Some days may include dry land workouts.

PRACTICE RULES FOR SWIMMERS

1. Be on time with caps and google ready to go. (Girls and boys with long hair should wear a cap.)
2. Wait on the deck chairs near the locker rooms for a coach to call you over behind the lanes.
3. Listen to coaches and follow directions.
4. Have a good attitude and work hard.
5. Be a good teammate.
6. No food or gum during practice.
7. Keep locker rooms clean.
8. Listen to lifeguards and follow all pool rules.
9. No swearing or foul language.
10. Wear sunscreen and bring water bottle/sports drink to practice every day.

PRACTICE RULES FOR PARENTS

1. If you need to talk to a coach, please do so before or after practice. To send a message, email ottersswimteam@oswegolandpd.org
2. During practice, all parents are able to watch from the bleacher area or outside the fenced area.
3. Please do not talk to your children during practice, as they should be listening to their coaches.
4. Parents/Guardians of 8 & unders must remain at the facility during practice.

TEAM UNIFY

Team Unify is a software program for parents and swimmers to sign up for meets, volunteer, communicate with coaches, and check weekly newsletters and updates. Each family will be sent an email with a log in ID to go in and create a Username and Password. It is very important the Otters have a correct email address, as all communications will be made through the Team Unify Program. Please add your cell phone number in TU under My Account, SMS is where your cell phone # goes and then provide your cell phone carrier in the next box. This will allow you to receive text alerts from the coaches. Please use Team Unify to get your swimmers events prior to the meet.

COMMUNICATION

FAMILY FOLDERS

Each family will have a file folder. Folders will be put on deck during practices and home meets. Swimmers are expected to check their file folders daily. This is where you will receive picture day forms, ribbons, certificates, Beat the Clock sign-up, and some informational flyers.

EMAIL

Our newsletters will go out weekly via email. Please make sure you have verified your email through Team Unify to confirm you will be receiving the newsletters as well as any other emails from Coaches or the Parent Support Group. Newsletters will also be posted on Team Unify under the News You Otter Know tab.

WEBSITE

The Oswego Otters Team Unify website is at www.oswegootters.org. The website has a variety of information. You can easily find registration dates, practice group info, event schedule, directions, and more.

QUESTIONS

All questions that are specific to your child's swimming skill should be directed to the coaches before or after – not during – practices. You can also leave coaches notes in their file folder or email a Coach at ottersswimteam@oswegolandpd.org. Please do not interrupt practice time. All other questions should be directed to a parent support group member or Carly at chontanon@oswegolandpd.org. We are happy to answer any and all questions, concerns, and suggestions you have about the program.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from practices and meets is the responsibility of the swimmer(s) and their parents. The coaches will not be responsible for making transportation arrangements for any swimmer. Please make sure you are prompt in picking up your swimmer when their practice time is over. Swimmers who “hang around” once their practice is over can become a distraction to swimmers in the pool. If a swimmer must remain at the pool while a sibling practices, please make sure they have something to occupy their time. They will not be allowed on the pool deck without a manager or coach permission.

SWIM MEETS

There are 72 events in a Dual Meet and 84 in the Conference Meet. Each event has a specific stroke and distance. Swimmers race against the same sex in his/her age group. Age is determined according to a swimmer's age as of June 1st (if you are 12 on June 1st and 13 on June 2nd, you will still swim in the 11-12 age group the entire summer). Age groups are divided into the following: 6 & under, 8 & under, (6 & under can swim 8 & under if they have legal strokes for the particular event), 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-18. In a dual meet, the 13-14 and 15-18 age groups have been combined to save time, but will be scored separately. If the event is “open”, any age can compete. The maximum number of events a swimmer may swim at a dual meet is four. This may either be a combination of two relays and two individual events or one relay and three individual events. However, the number of swimmers in the meet/age group and number of lanes in the pool factor into how many events in which a swimmer is entered.

MEET SIGN-UP

Swimmers must commit on Team Unify for the meets that they would like to participate in by the deadlines posted. **Please remember to check your calendars for any other obligations.** If you need to be removed from a meet, notify us the day before during practice hours (7:15a-11:45a) to ensure we receive the message. You may email the coaches at ottersswimteam@oswegolandpd.org. These two forms of communication are the most effective. Those who do not give proper notice will be removed from the next meet for which they are signed up. The only exceptions will be for family or medical emergencies. Scheduling conflicts do not count as exceptions to this rule. When you drop out of a meet the morning of, or do not attend the meet without notifying the coaches well in advance, you affect other swimmers as well as the whole team. Some swimmers are not able to compete in relays when swimmers do not tell us they are not coming to a meet or are shuffled around unfairly to fill holes in the lineup. Lineups are often due 12-24 hours in advance, and the coaches do not have time to make effective changes to that lineup once it is set the day before the meet. We do understand emergencies happen, however we need to be able to reschedule relays so other swimmers get to swim their events.

TIME TRIALS

Swimmers from our own team compete against each other in a mock meet. This helps new swimmers and their parents become familiar with the workings of a dual meet. This meet will have only individual events so that the coaches can have a base time for each swimmer. There is a theme that will divide the swimmers up into two teams. Swimmers are encouraged to make posters, wear t-shirts, etc. to support their team spirit.

BEAT THE CLOCK TIME TRIALS

This meet is not a “regular” swim meet; it is a fundraiser for the Otters Swim Team. Each swimmer will have a list of events to choose from that will be placed in your family folder. Your swimmer may choose up to four events to swim. They can try to improve their official time, break a record, or just swim for fun. Swimmers are allowed to swim any event in any age group; 13 year-olds can swim in 25-yard events, 6 & unders can swim 100-yard events. Each individual event is \$1. Relays are \$4 (\$1 for each swimmer). You may write in your team with all four participants or only put your name and the coaches will put together relays of all willing participants. The family relay is a bonus event that does not count as one of your four events and is also \$4. There will be a short break at the end of the meet for parents/siblings to warm up for the family relay.

HOME DUAL MEETS

Swimmers should report to the pool during positive check-in. Positive check-in times will be posted on Team Unify. To check in, each swimmer highlights their name on the positive check-in sheets that are located on the pool deck. Black Group warms up first, followed by Red, then White and Green Groups. Swimmers should check Team Unify after 12pm on the day of the meet for their events (event #, stroke, and distance of races in which they are entered). All of their information can be found under the Edit Commitment Tab for that meet online on our website. Please use the website not the app when getting your swimmers events, the app does NOT show relays. Your swimmers events can also be found on the positive check-in sheets if you do not have access to Team Unify prior to coming to the meet. These should be written on hand, arm, or leg in permanent marker. Heat sheets will be posted right before the meet starts. Warm-ups typically start between 4:45-5:00pm. Meets typically start at 6:00pm and generally last between 3 and 4 hours. Our conference rule states all meets have to end by 10:00pm unless coaches agree to extend. Times may vary depending on opposing team.

AWAY DUAL MEETS

There will be no team bus transportation provided to away meets. Swimmers should check Team Unify after 12pm on the day of the meet for their events (event #, stroke, and distance of races in which they are entered). All of their individual event information can be found under the Edit Commitment Tab for that meet. Events should be written on hand, arm, or leg in permanent marker. All swimmers are expected to positive check-in for the meet. You may do so during practice on a meet day, via email to Coach Kim or at Winrock Pool prior to leaving to the meet. This allows coaches to make last minute changes to the line-up. After positive check-in, drivers will create a caravan to the meet. Directions to each meet are listed on Team Unify. If a swimmer does not have transportation to an away meet, they must contact the coach 2 days prior to see if there is a park district bus that can accommodate them. Space is limited on the park district bus and can only accommodate those in true need. The team will warm up upon arrival, and the meet warm up and start times will be posted on Team Unify.

CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP

At the end of the season, the Conference holds a championship meet. To be eligible to compete, swimmers must have competed in three dual meets (excluding Intra-Squad and Beat the Clock Time Trials). This meet is the culmination of summer competition, and ALL eligible swimmers are encouraged to sign up and compete.

ADDITIONAL MEET INFO

Additional Heats: Due to high numbers of swimmers in some age groups, we will run additional heats. The non-scoring 10 and under swimmers will receive an exhibition ribbon for his/her participation and official time. The emphasis of any competitive swim is on the time achieved and not on the placement at the finish. Improving on a swimmer's personal best time is the most important thing in competitive swimming.

Ribbons will be awarded as follows:

1st – 4th place ribbons for individual events

1st – 3rd place ribbons for relays

Exhibition ribbons for non-scoring swimmers 10 & under

MEET RULES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PROCEDURES

WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO A MEET?

- 2 or more towels
- Something warm to wear, sweatshirt and sweat pants (especially in cooler weather)
- Cap and goggles (spares of each)
- Blanket or sleeping bag to sit on
- Playing cards, book, or other games to help pass time between events (nothing that involves running around)
- Water or sports drink to stay hydrated
- Healthy snacks that won't upset your stomach during physical activity; fruit, energy bars
- Sharpie marker to write event numbers with heat and lane on your hand

MEET ARRIVAL & OUTLINE

1. Prior to Check-In: You can get your child's event information off Team Unify prior to coming to the meet. Please use the website as the app does not show relays.
2. Check-In: Find your child's name on the positive check-in sheet, which are posted on the pool deck at home meets. The positive check-in sheets are separated by gender. Use a highlighter to check your child in. If you have not done so already prior to arriving to meet, write your child's event #s and description on his/her hand. (ex. #23 50 Back),
3. Away Meets: We will meet at Winrock Pool prior to leaving to the meet. Coaches will check swimmers in before leaving and can give swimmers their events if you cannot get the information off of Team Unify. You may also check-in during practice or via email to Coach Kim day of meet.
4. If you do not check-in your child, he or she will be removed from the meet.
5. Find the Team Area: Find a spot, set up your gear, and listen for warm-ups.
6. Warm-Up: Swimmers warm-up with their practice groups. Time is short, and lanes will be crowded. Swimmers must be alert and ready to go at a moment's notice.
7. Check the Heat Sheet: Once check-in is over and the coaches from both teams have finalized their line-ups, every race is organized and printed on a Heat Sheet. This sheet has heat and lane assignments for every event and will be posted on the pool deck.
8. Listen for your Event and Report Promptly: The meet announcer calls events 10 & under to the bullpen as the meet progresses and announces which event is in the water. Swimmers 10 & under should go to the bullpen ready to swim. There may be several events in the bullpen at once.
 - a. At Home Meets: 10 & under swimmers must go to the bullpen before his/her event for heat and lane assignments. 11 & older swimmers can find their heat and lane assignments on the posted heat sheets and go directly to their lane.

- b. At Away Meets: having a bullpen is up to the hosting team. If there is no bullpen, it is the swimmer's responsibility to check the heat sheet for their heat and lane assignments and report behind the starting block at the appropriate time. Copies of the heat sheet will be posted in the team area, and each coach will have a copy.
 - c. Coaches cannot make sure everyone goes to the bullpen or behind the block at the right time, and the announcer cannot call every individual who's missing. Swimmers risk missing an event by not listening carefully.
9. After the Race: Swimmers should get their race time from the timers and see a coach immediately for feedback.

MEET RULES

1. Good conduct and sportsmanship are expected for each swimmer.
2. Rudeness and/or misbehavior will result in disqualification of the swimmer and could result in disqualification for the entire team.
3. Swimmers are to stay in a designated team area during the meet so that a swimmer does not miss his/her event.
4. It is the parent /guardian's responsibility to supervise their swimmers at all times.
5. The team area should be kept clean.
6. **There will be no food allowed on the pool deck.**
7. All swimmers (male and female) who have hair long enough to be in their eyes must wear a team cap.
8. Swimmers may not change or skip an event without the consent of the coach. (Doing so could result in disqualification of the swimmer from the meet.)
9. Swimmers are encouraged to stay until the meet is over and cheer on their teammates. **All swimmers must check with a coach before leaving the meet.**
10. Each swimmer is responsible for reporting to the bullpen or starting blocks when his/her event is called.
11. If a swimmer misses his/her event, it cannot be rescheduled.
12. Immediately after a race, a swimmer should:
 - a. politely ask the lane timers for his/her time
 - b. go directly to a coach to discuss your swim

A WORD ABOUT EATING

It is best for swimmers to eat about 3 hours before they swim, so that energy can go toward racing and not to digestion. Swimmers can snack between events on something light (fruit, crackers, string cheese), but should refrain from eating large quantities of food (pizza, burgers, nachos, pasta, etc.) until they are finished swimming. Most pools have food available for purchase, or you may want to send a sack lunch and purchase a beverage. **EATING BEFORE AN EVENT CAN CAUSE CRAMPING AND SLOW TIMES. EAT AFTER YOUR EVENTS ARE COMPLETED!**

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Oswego Otters Swim Team depends on parent volunteers to run home meets. No parent is expected to be an expert, **but all parents are expected to help at least 2 times throughout the season.** When you help the Otters, you are helping kids learn, grow, and have fun.

Volunteers can choose from a variety of jobs on first come, first serve basis. You can pick your position on Team-Unify under the Events tab. There is a Job Sign-up button located under each event where volunteers are needed.

The jobs that need to be filled in order for a meet to run smoothly are described below. All volunteer positions are able to watch their swimmers events!

Timers: Two people per lane + two back up timers (18 altogether) are needed to time the races. Instructions are given at a “timers meeting” before the meet begins. If 36 people sign up for this job, 18 people time for half of the meet, and the other 18 time for the second half.

Awards: Two people are needed to attach labels to the ribbons after the results have been entered into the computer. This job continues throughout the meet.

Bullpen Supervisors: At least four people are needed to get the swimmers lined up in the “bullpen” area and sent out to the blocks when it is their turn to swim.

Runner: One person is needed to “run” the results of each race into the computer room so that the results can be entered into the computer.

Announcer: One or Two people who are responsible for calling events to the bullpen and announcing swimmers in their lanes over the PA.

Scoring: One people who enter times into the computer, print labels for the ribbons and score meet in the Colorado system.

Officials: NCISC Official Training will be announced or you can log on to USA swimming to find other Official Trainings. The Otters Swim Team will reimburse any Official Training up to \$100.

TEAM SUITS, CAPS, GOOGLES, & APPAREL

Team suits are not required, but they are recommended. Pool chemicals and extended use fade and thin the material, causing it to stretch and become transparent. A second practice suit is recommended. Check the Otters schedule for suit sizing dates.

Team caps must be worn in meets by every swimmer who has long hair. A cap is also required during practice. They are available for purchase in the Civic Center or Winrock office.

Goggles should be worn by each swimmer. There are several different types on sale at Civic Center Aquatic Park and Winrock Pool in the office.

All Otters receive a team t-shirt. More information on Otters suits and sportswear will be sent out via Team Unify.

VACATIONS

We understand that many swimmers will miss a portion of the season as a result of vacation, camp, clinics, etc. In order to prepare accurate swim meet line-ups, it is vital for us to have up-to-date information of each swimmer's schedule. Please let your Coaches know of any dates you will be missing.

LEMON SHAKE-UP FUNDRAISER AT PRAIRIE FEST

JUNE 16-19

This is the biggest fundraiser of the year!

Many parents are needed to cover shifts at the Otters Lemon-Shake-Ups booth at Prairie Fest. Events like the team party, recognition night awards, and practice equipment depend on its success. Shifts are two hours long, and a sign-up will be through Team Unify. It is a fun way to spend time with your team at Prairie Fest!

ORDER OF EVENTS

DUAL MEETS ONLY

Girls	Event	Boys
1	Open 200yd Freestyle	2
3	8 & under 100yd Medley Relay	4
5	9-10 200yd Medley Relay	6
7	11-12 200yd Medley Relay	8
9	13-14 200yd Medley Relay	10
11	15 & up 200yd Medley Relay	12
13	9-10 100yd Individual Medley	14
15	11-12 100yd Individual Medley	16
17*	13 & up 200yd Indiv. Medley	18*
19	6 & under 25yd Freestyle	20
21	8 & under 25yd Freestyle	22
23	9-10 50yd Freestyle	24
25	11-12 50yd Freestyle	26
27*	13 & up 50yd Freestyle	28*
29	8 & under 25yd Butterfly	30
31	9-10 50yd Butterfly	32
33	11-12 50yd Butterfly	34
35*	13 & up 100yd Butterfly	36*
37	8 & under 50yd Freestyle	38
39	9-10 100yd Freestyle	40
41	11-12 100yd Freestyle	42
43*	13 & up 100yd Freestyle	44*
45	6 & under 25yd Backstroke	46
47	8 & under 25yd Backstroke	48
49	9-10 50yd Backstroke	50
51	11-12 50yd Backstroke	52
53*	13 & up 100yd Backstroke	54*
55	8 & under 25yd Breaststroke	56
57	9-10 50yd Breaststroke	58
59	11-12 50yd Breaststroke	60
61*	13 & up 100yd Breaststroke	62*
63	8 & under 100yd Freestyle Relay	64
65	9-10 200yd Freestyle Relay	66
67	11-12 200yd Freestyle Relay	68
69	13-14 200yd Freestyle Relay	70
71	15 & up 200yd Freestyle Relay	72

CONFERENCE MEET

Girls	Event	Boys
1	Open 200yd Freestyle	2
3	8 & under 100yd Medley Relay	4
5	9-10 200yd Medley Relay	6
7	11-12 200yd Medley Relay	8
9	13-14 200yd Medley Relay	10
11	15-18 200yd Medley Relay	12
13	9-10 100yd Individual Medley	14
15	11-12 100yd Individual Medley	16
17	13-14 200yd Individual Medley	18
19	15-18 200yd Individual Medley	20
21	6 & under 25yd Freestyle	22
23	8 & under 25yd Freestyle	24
25	9-10 50yd Freestyle	26
27	11-12 50yd Freestyle	28
29	13-14 50yd Freestyle	30
31	15-18 50yd Freestyle	32
33	8 & under 25yd Butterfly	34
35	9-10 50yd Butterfly	36
37	11-12 50yd Butterfly	38
39	13-14 100yd Butterfly	40
41	15-18 100yd Butterfly	42
43	8 & under 50yd Freestyle	44
45	9-10 100yd Freestyle	46
47	11-12 100yd Freestyle	48
49	13-14 100yd Freestyle	50
51	15-18 100yd Freestyle	52
53	6 & under 25yd Backstroke	54
55	8 & under 25yd Backstroke	56
57	9-10 50yd Backstroke	58
59	11-12 50yd Backstroke	60
61	13-14 100yd Backstroke	62
63	15-18 100yd Backstroke	64
65	8 & under 25yd Breaststroke	66
67	9-10 50yd Breaststroke	68
69	11-12 50yd Breaststroke	70
71	13-14 100yd Breaststroke	72
73	15-18 100yd Breaststroke	74
75	8 & under 100yd Freestyle Relay	76
77	9-10 200yd Freestyle Relay	78
79	11-12 200yd Freestyle Relay	80
81	13-14 200yd Freestyle Relay	82
83	15-18 200yd Freestyle Relay	84

EVENTS

Winrock Pool is 25 yards in length and has 8 lanes. Most pools are 25 yards or 25 meters. "25" refers to one length of the pool, and "50" refers to one lap.

Freestyle: Usually the front crawl with flutter kick, but any stroke or combination of strokes is legal as long as you never touch the bottom of the pool and touch the walls on turns.

Backstroke: On your back. The head is back, the back is arched, and a flutter kick is used while the arms alternate (one then the other). Swimmers cannot roll past 90 degrees from their back as they stroke and cannot roll onto their sides or stomach when approaching the finish wall.

Breaststroke: Uses the whip kick or frog kick, while arms pull underwater simultaneously. Feet must stay below water and ankles must be turned out. The two hands must touch on the turn and finish level simultaneously.

Butterfly: Feet and knees are together on the kick-dolphin kick, while arms move simultaneously. The two hands must touch the wall on the turns and finish level simultaneously.

Individual Medley: (IM) An event where the swimmer swims each stroke in a specific order: Fly, Back, Breast, Free.

Medley Relay: a four-swimmer event in which each swimmer on the relay team swims one of the four strokes: Back, Breast, Fly, Free.

Free Relay: a four-swimmer event in which each swimmer on the relay team swims the freestyle stroke.

COMMON DQ'S

Disqualifications (DQ's) often come up during the dual meet season. In fact, they are often an indication that an individual has progressed to take on more difficult strokes of breaststroke and butterfly. In other words, they are part of the learning experience. DQ's can also result from a lack of concentration on the part of a swimmer, or from "sloppy swimming". The following is a list of some common causes for disqualification strokes: Back, Breast, Fly, Free.

GENERAL

1. Pushing off from or touching the bottom of the pool during a race.
2. A false start.
3. Starting before a teammate touches during a relay event.
4. Swimming strokes in the wrong order during an IM (Individual Medley) or Medley Relay
5. Pulling yourself along on the lane lines of the pool.

BACKSTROKE

1. Turning onto the stomach during the race, except as part of the backstroke turn.
2. Not touching the wall during a turn.

BREASTSTROKE

1. Flutter kick, or scissor kick.
2. Not touching with two hands together during turns and finish. Hands must touch together.
3. Head does not break the water during one complete cycle of arm pull/leg kick.
4. Taking more than one arm pull or leg kick while submerged at the start or turn.

BUTTERFLY

1. Flutter kick, or scissor kick.
2. If arms do not leave and enter the water at the same times.
3. If arms do not come out of the water during recovery.
4. Not touching with two hands during turns and at the finish.
5. Not keeping both feet synchronized during the dolphin kick.

If you are disqualified during a meet, keep swimming to the best of your ability. If one member of a relay team is disqualified, the team should still complete the relay. If you have any question about a stroke judge's ruling, ask your coaches. They will be able to get an explanation for you.

HELPFUL TERMINOLOGY

Event Number: Each race is assigned an event number, 1-72 (Dual Meet) or 1-84 (Conference Meet). Swimmers are called to the bullpen or starting blocks according to event numbers.

Bullpen: A holding area for swimmers where races are organized before proceeding to the starting blocks. Age range varies at different pools for the bullpen.

Starting Block: Small platforms from which swimmers dive at the start of a race.

Backstroke Flags: Flags that extend across the pool perpendicular to the racing lanes. They are positioned exactly 5 yards/meters (standard in every pool) from the wall so backstrokers can count their strokes into a flip turn or finish.

Block: a starting block is a raised platform at the end of the pool lane. The swimmer stands on the block moments before a heat begins and dives into the pool.

Lane Line: The floating dividers between racing lanes.

Age Group: Age-groupings are made according to the swimmer's age on June 1. A swimmer competes in that age group for the entire season. Sometimes the coach will "age up" a swimmer for a race to fill a hole in the line-up.

Distance: Every pool we compete in is 25 yards or meters in length. 25 backstroke = 1 length of backstroke, 50 Freestyle = 2 lengths or 1 lap of freestyle, etc. In a relay, the distance is divided by 4 swimmers. For example, in the 200 Free Relay, each of the 4 swimmers swims a 50 of freestyle.

Course: The term used in reference to the unit of measurement for the length of the pool, yards or meters.

Stroke: Events are organized according to the 4 competitive strokes: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle. For an Individual Medley event, the swimmer swims a designated distance of all four strokes in order.

Heat: Some events have multiple races, depending on the number of swimmers entered in the event. Each race for that event is called a heat. Swimmers are assigned a heat according to previous race times and whether or not they are competing for points or for exhibition.

Heat Sheet: A listing of all events, swimmers, and the corresponding heat and lane assignments.

Individual Medley: A 100 or 200-yard race where the swimmer swims each of the four strokes in this order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle

Medley Relay: A 100 or 200-yard race where four swimmers compete in each of the four strokes in this order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle. In a 100-yard race, each swimmer swims 25 yards; in a 200-yard race, each swimmer swims 50 yards.

Disqualification: Every stroke has guidelines that must be followed in order to be considered 'legal'. The meet referee, starter, stroke judges, turn judges, and other officials watch every part of a race to ensure these guidelines are being met. When a swimmer does something 'illegal' during a race, that swimmer is disqualified, which means that no time, points, or awards are given.

