

## **Seahorse Swim Team Parent Information**

The following information is meant to acquaint parent's with the various aspects of age group swimming and the philosophy of the Seahorse Swim Team.

The team competes in the First Capital Swim League during the Winter Season. The teams we compete against are within 1 hour travel time from Hanover. Our dual meets are held on Saturdays. You will notice on the meet time schedule the time your child is to be at the meet and the exact meet time. Please try to be at the meet fifteen minutes ahead of the listed warm-up time. Transportation to away meets will be by car, therefore, it is important to have your child there on time. If you need a ride for your child, check with other parents or contact the coaches well in advance of the meet. We encourage parents to attend all meets, whether home or away for team support.

Practice is a very important part of development for the individual as well as the team. The team practices Monday through Friday according to the schedule. It is important to attend practice on a regular weekly basis as well as arriving so that your child is ready to begin practice on time. Parents are welcome to watch practice from the hall area, but please remain out of the pool area. There may be special times when all parents will be invited on deck to either watch or participate in a practice. Any questions you have will be answered after each practice session. Please avoid talking to coaches during practice.

Meets are an important part of the program for each child. This is where the coaching staff can evaluate the progress of each swimmer. In each dual meet there are four age groups. The age of the swimmer is determined as of December 1<sup>st</sup> for the Winter League. The age groups are 8 & under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14. Each age group emphasizes the four competitive strokes which are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly. The racing distance for each event is based on average ability of each age group.

Each event is scored by awarding points for each place. Points vary by place and the number of lanes in each pool. Most pools have six lanes with the following points being awarded. Individual events: 1<sup>st</sup> – 6 points; 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4 points; 3<sup>rd</sup> – 3 points; 4<sup>th</sup> – 2 points; 5<sup>th</sup> – 1 point; 6<sup>th</sup> – 0 points. Relays (team of four) 1<sup>st</sup> – 8 points; 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4 points; 3<sup>rd</sup> – 2 points. A running total of points is kept of all events and the total points of the boys and girls teams at the end of the meet determines a winner. All swimmers and the points they score are important to the outcome of the meet. Individual accomplishment in meets is important to the personal development of each swimmer. Success for each individual swimmer is not measured by how many first places he/she got, but it is measured by stroke improvement and improvement in time in the different events. Ribbons are awarded to six places at home and away meets.

In a meet, all age groups may swim in 2 individual events and 2 relays. We make every effort to get each swimmer into at least one official event for score or place. Because of the number of swimmers in a specific age group and the importance of having each swimmer swim in the maximum number of events, we enter swimmers in exhibition heats. These heats are not included in the score but the performances are important in the overall development of each swimmer. It also gives the coaches a chance to see the swimmer perform a specific race in a meet situation and achieve a personal best time.

We do order a team suit at the beginning of each season. We do encourage team members to purchase a team suit but it is not mandatory for team membership. Team sweat shirts, sweat pants, and t-shirts can also be ordered. Order forms will be available during the first week of practice.

The team does have an active parent's group which is open to all parents. The duty of the parent's group is to help run meets ( provide help with timing, ribbon labeling, scoring, refreshment stand, meet set-up and clean-up) and to assist in any team fund raisers. The team runs very few fund raisers, so it is important that all parent's support the ones that are conducted. The parent's group meets only when the need arises, usually following home swim meets. A meet sign-up sheet will be sent home in the near future. Feel free to sign the sheet in an area you are interested in helping. New parents will receive a handbook explaining meet help duties before being asked to sign-up for meets. We also need help at away meets. It is important to have as many parents as possible so that the meets can be run effectively with the responsibility being shared by all parents.

A league championship meet is held at the end of each season. This meet is for all swimmers on the team. Also offered are several invitational meets during the season. Swimmers are permitted to choose the events they wish to enter in these meets. Usually an entry fee is required to enter an invitational meet. Relays will be chosen by coaches.

We hope this information helps you better understand age group swimming and how the team operates. We look forward to working with the swimmers and the parents in order to make this a rewarding experience for everyone.

Seahorse Coaching Staff and the Swim Team Parents