

NORTHERN BERKSHIRE

YMCA

BETTA SWIM TEAM

HANDBOOK

UPDATED 052410

WELCOME

Welcome to the Northern Berkshire YMCA Beta Swim Team. Parents and swimmers are equally important to the success of this program. The team cannot exist without each other's support, hard work, encouragement, respect and spirit. We hope that you and your family have fun, success and build lasting relationships and memories.

This program offers the swimmer structure, leadership opportunities, stroke instruction, physical exercise and good fun. Being a member of the swim team will help develop strength, coordination, endurance and discipline. Being a member of any team helps develop values, tolerance, co-operation, relationships and positive self image.

The regular swim season runs from late September to early February, with some swimmers qualifying to swim in championship meets in March. The regular season includes approximately 6-7 meets. These meets are typically on Saturdays. Meets are our competitions with other YMCA swim teams. We do offer a shorter and less competitive summer program as well, which offers newer swimmers a chance to give the swim team a try without the longer commitment of the fall/winter season. Competitive swimming is a yearlong sport in terms of training and ongoing improvement.

We swim our regular season meets as part of the Western Massachusetts YMCA District League. The league website is: www.hvyswimming.org/WinterLeagueWeb/index.htm. There is also opportunity for swimmers to participate in additional competition through the USA Swim program. (Further information about USA swimming is found later in this handbook and attached to the end of this handbook).

There are many events other than swimming scheduled throughout the year to bring families, coaches and friends together. These events are designed for fun, making friends and building team spirit.

We hope this handbook provides you with helpful information to help make this a successful activity for your family. Any information you do not find in this book can be obtained from the coaches or Parents' Advisory Group Board.

CONTACT INFORMATION

YMCA Program Director, Sonia DiSanti: (413) 663-6529 sdisanti2000@yahoo.com

Head Coach: Alyssa Nappi anappi83@hotmail.com

Asst. Senior Coach: Eryn Brewer ebrew14@gmail.com

Asst. Senior Coach: Joyce Brewer ebsswimmom@yahoo.com

PARENT ADVISORY GROUP BOARD

President: Bernadette Bernardy 458-2180 bbernardy@roadrunner.com

Vice President: Carrie Ghidotti 663-3455 cghidotti@roadrunner.com

Secretary: Janette Dudley 822-3089 kesslerdudley@verizon.net

Treasurer: Regina Hill 743-3260 regina.hill@mineralstech.com

USA Swim Coordinator/Timing System: Jen Bush 743-2524 jcbush@roadrunner.com

Concession Coordinators: Tina and Chad Lapine mass1312@msn.com

The Northern Berkshire YMCA Betta Swim Team Parent Advisory Group meets approximately once per month. It is strongly recommended that at least one parent of each swimmer attend meetings. This group plans meets, organizes team fundraisers and addresses parent concerns and recommendations.

FINANCES

The Betta Swim Team is an official program of the YMCA. To belong to the swim team, a child must possess a YMCA membership. Additionally, there is a swim team assessment fee, payable to the YMCA. Membership and swim team fees cover the cost of league meets and some championship meets. The YMCA scholarship program is available to swimmers in need. Inquire with Gail, at the front desk for scholarship forms.

Additional costs to swim team members include:

Suits, caps, goggles, fins, Invitational Swim Meet fees (optional)

Expenses that are supported by team fundraising events include some practice equipment, ribbons, timing system, banquets, supplies and socials. Fundraising events include, but are not limited to concession, invitational meets, program advertising, 50/50 raffles, lap-a-thons, bottle redemption, spaghetti suppers, dances etc.

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS DISTRICT SWIM LEAGUE

The Betta Swim Team is a YMCA team and some swimmers also choose to swim the USA swim program. During the fall/winter season, we are a member of the 8 team Western Massachusetts District Swim League as follows:

Northern Berkshire YMCA	Keene NH Family YMCA
Greater Holyoke YMCA	Tri-Community YMCA
Hampshire Regional YMCA	Westfield YMCA
Pittsfield YMCA	South Berkshire YMCA

Directions to each of these YMCA's are included at the back of this folder.

USA SWIMMING COMPETITION

Competitive swimming is a year round commitment to properly achieve maximum development. Should your swimmer wish to pursue this program as well, our coaching staff will assist and support you. USA swim meets are optional meets that are held in addition to the YMCA League meets. There is an additional fee to become a member of USA Swimming and additional fees associated with each USA swim meet that a swimmer chooses to attend. As USA meets come up, the USA team coordinator will provide all USA registered swimmers with meet information and sign-up deadlines as well as information regarding any associated fees. Entries and fees must be paid by the stated deadlines. Swimmers wishing to compete in USA swim meets must become a member of USA Swimming. See the attached USA Swimming information sheets at the end of this packet and check out the following websites:

www.neswim.com Our regions Local Swim Club (LSC) website for USA Swimming

www.usaswimming.org National website

RULES AND PROCEEDURES

Self-discipline and conditioning are essential to individual and team success. Please review the following with your swimmer and help reinforce these guidelines with them.

1. **GOOD BEHAVIOR** at all times. This is expected during practice, meets, fundraisers and extracurricular swim team/YMCA events. Unacceptable behavior will be addressed with parents and swimmers and appropriate, agreed upon discipline will occur. Foul language is not permitted and is grounds for dismissal from the deck and notification of parent.

2. RESPECT for others and others property. This includes coaches, parents, officials, other swimmers, equipment, locker rooms, transport vehicles etc. Beta swim team members are expected to clean up after home and away meets.
3. PROMPTNESS. Be ready for practice and on time for meets etc. All swimmers should report to practice 15 minutes early, in order to get ready to participate on time.
4. ATTENDANCE at practice, meets, activities. See the coach regarding your attendance requirement for practice. The basic guideline is that 8 and under swimmers attend at least (2) 45 minute sessions per week; 9 and 10 year old swimmers attend 3 full practices and 11-18 year old attend 4 full practices per week. At the coach's discretion, your swimmer may be asked to swim varying practice schedules. We realize that everyone has busy lives. Notifying the coach of absences is requested. IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND ANY TEAM MEET, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO NOTIFY THE COACH, ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE MEET. IF YOU ARE ACUTELY ILL, PLEASE CALL THE COACH. Events are set up during the week and relays cannot be run if swimmers are absent.
5. ATTENTION. Listen to your coaches. Do not talk when they are talking. Pay attention to officials at meets.
6. OBEY ALL RULES. This includes obeying all team, YMCA, pool and meet rules. They exist for your safety and benefit.
7. GRATITUDE to others. Be quick to say "thank you" to all who are helping you, including your coaches, meet officials, timers, teammates, and your parents.
8. BE THE BEST THAT YOU CAN BE. Maintain a positive attitude. Set goals. Be impressive!

FOR PARENTS

1. SUPPORT YOUR CHILD in all of the above. In successes and disappointments, children need our help. Goal setting with your child and the coach is a great way to support them.
2. SUPPORT YOUR COACHCS. Their job is to help your swimmer develop and succeed. Their job is the hardest. They need your help with supervision, behavior, organization, and focus.
3. HELP IN FUNDRAISING. This is for your swimmers benefit. All families are required to contribute to the concession for all home meets. Help by leading a fundraising program, donate your talents etc.
4. WORK AT MEETS. Meets will be as good as the parents working them. Without your help, there is no meet. At least one parent from each family is expected to work at each home meet. It takes all of us to successfully run a meet. Jobs include:

concession, timers, back-up timers, timing system, place judges, officials, runners, preparing the award ribbons and bull pen (helping get swimmers to their races at the appropriate time). There will be a job sign-up sheet posted, prior to each home and away meet. At away meets we will typically need 6 timers, bull pen help and officials from our parents group.

5. GET INVOLVED in all of the above committees, parent meetings etc. A representative of each family is requested to attend all parent meetings.

PRACTICE SCHEDULES AND MEET INFORMATION (fall/winter season only-summer varies)

Ages 8 and under: Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 5:30-6:15

Ages 9 and over: Monday, Wednesday & Thursday 6:00-7:30 and Friday 5:00-6:30

***Parents may come into the pool area to observe practices, but must let the coaches do the coaching. Parents will be asked to leave the pool area if they are interfering with the coaching process.*

Newer swimmers will start in lane 1 for instruction. As swimmers improve, they will progress into higher lanes. Coaches are assigned to specific lanes for coaching. Some of our younger/newer swimmers will be coached by parent volunteer coaches, under the direction of the head coach.

Regular season league meets are held on Saturdays. For all home meets, swimmers and parent volunteers need to report to the YMCA one hour prior to the start of the meet. We will warm-up in the pool ½ hour prior to the start of the meet. Meets will typically last 3 hours. The head coach will place swimmers in events (races) and relays (4 swimmers/relay team) for each league meet. Swimmers will find out what events they are swimming on the day of the meet.

At all of our swim meets, a parent volunteer will “bull pen” swimmers (get them to the blocks for their races), but swimmers need to stay on deck with the team, so that they can be located when it is their time to swim. If a swimmer needs to leave the pool deck, they must inform the bull penning parent. Parents of younger swimmers should stay on the pool deck with the team during the meet to supervise their young swimmers. **BULL PENNING IS IMPORTANT! MEETS CAN BE HELD UP LOOKING FOR SWIMMERS OR SWIMMERS CAN MISS THEIR RACES.**

Summer meets are generally held on weekday evenings.

ALL REGISTERED SWIMMERS ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND LEAGUE MEETS! If you cannot attend, there will be a sign-out sheet posted on the swim team bulletin board. Swimmers must also personally notify the head coach at least 1 week prior to the meet of their absence. Not showing up for a meet or cancelling at the last minute affects other swimmers, as most swimmers will be placed in a relay team that requires 4 swimmers.

Invitational Meets are optional. When information becomes available, it will be posted on the bulletin board. Swimmers choose their own races for an invitational meet.

Swimmers are encouraged to bring healthy snacks and quiet entertainment to meets. There are usually concession stands at away meets as well. Sometimes a pillow and/or blanket and sweats or a robe are helpful in maintaining comfort while traveling or waiting for events at a meet.

Transportation A YMCA van is available to away meets, if needed. If your swimmer and/or you intend to take advantage of this, a release form must be signed at the YMCA. Please let the coach know a week in advance so that they can have the needed vehicles to accommodate you. Good behavior, self-control, respect and tidiness are expected of the swimmers during these excursions in the van. Car pools are also strongly encouraged. ANY SWIMMER ATTENDING A HOME OR AWAY MEET MUST HAVE AN ADULT ASSIGNED TO THEM FOR RESPONSIBILITY. PLEASE NOTIFY THE COACHES WHO THAT PERSON IS. Coaches are too busy at away meets to be responsible for swimmers without parents in attendance.

EQUIPMENT

Team suits are to be worn for meets only and will be ordered by a designated team rep. Swimmers will be sized for a team suit in September. Competitive suits should be fitted VERY TIGHT! You should have 2-3 practice suits and rotate them because the chlorine eats them. After each swimming session, suits should be rinsed with clear water and/or other products that are out there that remove chlorine, and hung to dry. Each swimmer should have a pair of goggles and a back up pair if possible. Swim caps are to be worn at all practices and meets. In the fall, an order is placed for custom caps with swimmers names for purchase. There are several types of caps on the market and having an extra one is always a good idea. Two towels at meets are suggested. One towel should be used poolside and the other one for the locker room. Sandals should be worn at meets, poolside and in locker rooms. Be aware of how slippery the one you choose are. Water bottles are needed during all practices and meets. Hydration is very important. Swimmers should be drinking throughout a practice and during meets.

STUFF GETS LOST! Mark things, do bag checks, help swimmers organize etc. There is a lost and found at the YMCA.

HAIR AND SKIN ISSUES

Please encourage your swimmers to shower and shampoo after a pool session. Conditioner is essential and skin moisturizer is key to preventing dry skin, rashes etc. There are shampoos and conditioners made for swimmers that help battle the chlorine.

COMMUNICATION

There are many ways to communicate information. Frequently, check the swim team bulletin board and swimmers' folders (both are located in the pool hallway). Email has become our primary means of communication. Please make sure that the team secretary has your correct email address. Make sure that you check your email often for important updates. Let the team secretary know if you do not use email and she will provide you with information in another manner.

Each swimmer has a folder in the pool hallway that will contain information on a regular basis. Swimmers must check their individual folders at each practice session. This is also where swimmers will find ribbons and medals won at meets.

Practice and meets can be delayed during a thunderstorm. We must wait ½ hour after the last lightning to resume swimming. In addition, meets can be occasionally cancelled due to winter storms. If weather is questionable, please phone the YMCA front desk.

PUBLICITY/WEBSITE

Results of meets, photos and PR will be submitted to the local newspaper by a representative of the team. The team website is in the works.

TEAM/INDIVIDUAL PHOTOS

Team and/or individual swim photos will be taken during the season. Parents may purchase these at their option. This does not occur for the summer season.

BANQUET

In recognition of hard work, at the end of the regular season, there is a team banquet. This is financed entirely by the Parent Group. All swimmers who attend practices and dual meets for the season will be honored at this banquet. There will be an end of the season event for the summer season as well.