



Swimmer and Parent Handbook
Revised 2018

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Chapter 1: Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to the Fairfax Frogs! This handbook is for both swimmers and their parents. It is structured in two sections – Chapters one through five are for all swimmers and chapters six through nine will be most helpful to those not as familiar with competitive swimming.

Our goal is to promote the philosophy of the Northern Virginia Swimming League (NVSL):

To develop in the children participating in this program a love for the sport, advanced aquatic skill, teamwork, and the principles of good sportsmanship.

For those parents who are new to the swimming program, this handbook contains a wealth of information to ease your transition into the swim lifestyle. The handbook provides a brief introduction to the swim season and rules. We've all been new before and will be glad to enlighten you in your quest to understand the world of Summer Swimming.

Your team representative, coaches and fellow swim parents all want you to understand and enjoy our summer swim program and most importantly for your children to have fun. Again, welcome to the Frogs. We are glad to have you with us!

Chapter 2: About Our Swim Team

Frogs Philosophy

The Frogs philosophy is to encourage our swimmers to have lots of fun while developing a love for their sport, working as part of a team and practicing good sportsmanship. Personal development is what is most important. For a swimmer that means improving your times, being courteous, supportive and enthusiastic, and making the most of your summer swim season. By establishing a healthy environment that encourages swimmers to do their best, recognizes their contributions and achievements, and is also fun for the entire family, we will have met our goals.

Swimming is unique in that there's a place on the team for everyone. How many other sports have kids, five to eighteen years old, and their parents on the same team participating in the same competition?

For our team to be successful, we need the support of all our Frog families. Swim meets alone take more than 40 parents to time, officiate and score, and that

doesn't include pool set-up and tear-down and running the snack bar. There are many other team-related volunteer tasks that require a dedicated volunteer network. Families are encouraged to volunteer frequently to help ensure a successful swim season for our team.

Swim Team Eligibility

Participation on the Frogs requires a family stockholding membership at the Fairfax Swimming Pool. Those on the Fairfax Pool's New Family Waitlist with Access Privileges are also eligible for our swim team.

If a family has a membership at another pool in addition to their Fairfax Swimming Pool membership, and their swimmers wish to participate on the Frogs swim team, those swimmers and their parents must fully commit to the Frogs. This includes practices, competition and parent volunteering. Divisional Relay and Individual Divisional Meet selections will be limited to swimmers who are fully committed to the Frogs, including making themselves available to swim with the team during Saturday A Meets.

Parents' Responsibilities

Swimmer's parents are actively involved in the swim team as much as the swimmer. Parents are responsible for making sure that their swimmers attend and get to and from swim team practices, swim meets, and other team activities. It is important that everyone be on time.

Swimmers should not be left unsupervised at the pool before and/or after practice. All 8 & Under swimmers **must** be accompanied by a responsible individual at least 15 years of age or older during practice. Coaches are responsible for the swimmers when they are in the water and cannot monitor the swimmers out of the water.

Practices can be watched from the upper deck, gazebo or grassy area. We ask that parents and other swimmers not be on the pool deck during practice times – it is disruptive to both the coaches and the swimmers in the water.

Volunteering

It is critical that we get enough parents to volunteer for the many duties required to run an effective swim meet and have a successful swim season. All types of skills are required and the team rep will gladly assist you in determining how you can help. If you are asked to help, please know it is because you are needed and please consider saying yes.

Swimmers' Responsibilities

In order to maximize fun and safety at the pool, all swimmers must be aware of the rules and follow them. It is each swimmer's responsibility to:

- Attend all practices on time (preferably arriving a few minutes early). We ask that the all swimmers be respectful of the coaches and the other swimmers in the water.
- In addition, we ask the older swimmers to:
 - Know the required strokes
 - Participate in events as assigned by the coaches

Disruptive swimmers will be asked to leave. Swimmers will be asked to leave the deck upon completion of their practice time. This allows the coaches to concentrate on the swimmers in the water.

During meets:

- Arrive on time (coaches will announce times)
- Wear the Fairfax Frogs swim team cap or a plain cap (Do not wear a cap with a different team name or an event printed on it.)
- Remain in the designated team area until instructed to proceed to the clerk of course
- Do not visit the snack bar until you have finished swimming all of your events, including relays.

If you must leave during a meet, please advise a coach. We do not want anyone to miss an event because they wandered away from the team area. Coaches cannot leave the pool to search for missing swimmers.

Swimmers are required to clean up the team area after all meets (both home and away). A helpful hint: Keep the area clean during the meet, so the cleanup will be quick.

Please demonstrate good sportsmanship and appropriate behavior at all times. Failure to do so may result in a swimmer being removed from a meet or practice session. All swim team family members must remember that they represent our community when participating in team events and social activities. We are competing **with our friends and neighbors** in Fairfax and neighboring counties. We **are not** at war with an enemy. So, cheer on all swimmers...just a little louder for the FROGS! The Frogs pride themselves on swimming hard, having fun and doing their best. Just remember – our coaches want to see smiling faces and fast swims whenever the Frogs are in the water. The Frogs also swim as a team and an important part of being on the team is supporting teammates. CHEER LOUDLY.

Team Representatives and Coaches

The people you'll run into the most in your swim team dealings are the Team Representatives and the Coaches. The Team Reps are volunteer parents who were new to swimming at one time. The Team Reps are responsible to the Pool Board for running every aspect of the swim team and are the representatives of the Fairfax team to other swim teams and the NVSL. It's a job that is impossible to do successfully without help from many parents. The Team Reps hire the Coaches (with the approval of the Pool Board), who are responsible to the team reps for the swimming portion of the swim team program.

The Frogs' professional coaching staff has the knowledge and training to guide our swimmers. Our coaches are also an important source of motivation for our swimmers.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the coach or team reps. The best time to speak with the coach is after a practice. If possible, write a note asking to speak with the coach, and briefly describe what you would like to discuss. The coach will get back to you as soon as possible.

Communication

The primary means of communicating swim team news is through SwimTopia and e-mail. Additionally, each family has a Family Folder in the team filing cabinet in the guard's office. Please check it often as you never know what you might find in there!

Chapter 3: Practices, Time Trials and Meets

Practices

Swimmers are strongly encouraged to attend as many practices as possible throughout the swim season and **must attend the practice scheduled for their age**. Additionally, swimmers must make every attempt to attend at least one practice each week to be considered for that Saturday's NVSL dual meet.

Weekday practices before school is out are limited to three lanes. After school is out, practices will be held in the mornings. It is important to come to practice prepared – preferably a few minutes early so that you can stretch, put on your cap and goggles and be ready to enter the water when the coach requests.

Practice will be held regardless of weather. If it is cold, coaches may conduct "dry land" practices. Please dress warmly and bring sneakers.

Time Trials

The purpose of Time Trials is to have swimmers swim competitively within their age groups, trying to swim their best possible time in each stroke (or in all the strokes they know at that time). The times achieved during Time Trials give coaches a starting point from which the swimmer can work to improve during the summer.

Swim Meets

There are two basic swim meets held throughout the summer swim season – NVSL Dual Meets (referred to as “A” Meets) and Monday Night Meets (referred to as “B” Meets). Other NVSL Meets include Divisional and All Star Relays, Divisionals and All Stars.

NVSL Dual Meets

The NVSL is comprised of more than 100 swim teams divided into 17 divisions, each with six teams. Teams are placed into divisions that will allow for competitive meets. On Saturday mornings throughout the summer, the Fairfax Frogs will compete against each of the other five teams in our division during an NVSL Dual Meet (A Meet).

Saturday A Meets are scored and the team that does best in the division becomes the Division Champion. Coaches select the swimmers to compete in the Dual Meets and will use their judgment along with swimmers’ official times to make their selections.

Each Sunday, parents must declare whether their swimmer is available for that week’s A Meet. Reminders will be sent to all parents with instructions on how to declare availability. Coaches will only select swimmers who are available for each A meet, which is why it is so important for parents to declare availability by the stated deadline.

Line-ups for Saturday meets will be sent via email. Please check the meet line-up each week. Swimmers and their events WILL change from week to week. In the event your swimmer is included in an A Meet, but can no longer attend the meet, please tell the Team Reps **immediately**.

(More specific information on NVSL Dual Meets is included in Chapter 6.)

Monday Night “B” Meets

The Monday swim meets (B Meets) are developmental meets designed to give all swimmers a chance to participate. The Frogs swim against another local

team; however, B Meets are not scored and swimmers choose their own events with the following guidelines:

- Swimmers may choose no more than two events.
- Swimmers are encouraged to discuss their selections with their coaches.
- If a swimmer has not placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in an individual stroke in the previous NVSL A Meet, the swimmer may officially swim that stroke in a B Meet.

B Meet selections are completed through SwimTopia and must be submitted the day before (Sunday) at noon.

Fairfax Frog coaches discourage “unofficial” swims at Monday night meets. It is important to give the swimmers who do not get to swim on Saturdays or, who do not normally place, a chance to swim on Mondays and be recognized for their efforts. If there is a reason why a swimmer must swim “unofficially” it will be cleared with the team rep and coach. Unofficial swimmers cannot earn ribbons.

Ribbons

Ribbons are awarded for 1st through 6th place finishes in all meets. In Monday Night Meets, ribbons are also awarded for being a competitor. The ribbons a swimmer earns at a meet during the season will be filed in the swimmer’s Family folder.

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). The next night, all the Division Coordinators meet and relay teams are selected to swim at the All-Star Relay Carnival the following week. The sole criterion for selection to the All-Star Relay Carnival is to have one of the eighteen fastest times in events swum in the Division Relay Carnivals.

Divisionals

The sixth week of the season, each Division has an Individual Championship meet, commonly referred to as "Divisionals." Each team is allowed to enter 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.

All-Stars

After the Divisionals, all the Division coordinators meet to select swimmers for the All-Stars meet the following week. The sole criterion for selection to the All-Stars is to have one of the eighteen fastest times swum that day in an event in the Divisional meet. 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.

Nutrition Tips for Meets

Proper nutrition is a key ingredient for successful athletic performance. In swimming, just as in any other sport, 'you are what you eat.' Here are some simple Dos and Don'ts for Frog Swimmers to keep in mind.

- DO 'carb-up' for swim meets. Carbohydrate rich foods such as pasta help build the nutrition reserves you'll need while swimming. The best time to carb-up is at least a day ahead. Make Wednesdays and Thursdays Pasta nights in your house for Saturday meets. Spaghetti, Lasagna, Macaroni & Cheese and Pizza are all excellent foods to 'carb-up' on.
- DO eat a light but healthy meal before meets. Fruit and cereals are excellent. Avoid sugarcoated cereals.
- DO bring a healthy snack to swim meets. Fruit or dry cereals (Cheerios) are excellent.
- DO bring something to drink to swim meets. Swimming will dehydrate you, but because you're in the water you never notice that you're sweating.
- DO get a good night's rest before a Saturday meet.
- DON'T spend an active afternoon in the sun before an evening meet.
- DON'T bring sweet juices and carbonated beverages to drink at a swim meet.
- DON'T eat high sugar foods before, during or just after a meet.

Chapter 4: Swim Team Social Activities

Swimming is a significant commitment of time and energy. To help channel that endless youthful energy, build team spirit, and have some fun, we have outlined some of the activities we have on the radar.

Pep Rallies

There will be Pep Rallies held Friday nights prior to a home meet on Saturday.

Team Photo

We take a team photo every year and we would like your swimmer to be in it. You are not obligated to purchase a photo.

Other Social Events

Over the course of the season, we will have a Dessert social, a breakfast the morning of the relay carnival, Secret Pals and any other activities that someone would like to plan.

Swim Banquet

We cap off the season with a Swim and Dive Awards Banquet.

What's Mandatory?

While we hope you will participate in 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!

Chapter 5: Swimsuits, Spirit Wear, Helpful Accessories and Prohibited Meet Wear

Swimsuits

Every other year, the Frogs select a team suit that remains the team's suit for two years. Team suits are not mandatory. If you choose to purchase a team suit, please purchase it through Suit Up Water Sports located at University Mall.

While team suits are not mandatory, swimmers may not wear suits or swim caps in competition that feature a team other than the Frogs.

Spirit Wear

Each swim team member receives a Fairfax Frogs t-shirt with his or her team registration. Other team gear is made available for purchase during the season through the Frog Shop on SwimTopia.

Helpful Accessories for Swim Meets

Every swimmer needs a towel, goggles, a sweat suit (for cool days), a swim cap (especially for girls and boys with long hair), a hat or other sun protection, and a bag to carry everything in. You should also have liquid refreshment (Water, Gatorade, Powerade, etc.) 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 after your races.

Prohibited Meet Wear

As noted before, swimmers may not wear suits or swim caps in competition that feature a team other than the Frogs

Additionally, tie-back suits (e.g., Jolyn) are not allowed in league-sanctioned meets.

Finally, NVSL follows the USA Swimming Rule on the use of Tape: “Any type of tape on the body is not permitted unless approved by the Referee.” Elastic Therapeutic Tape, Kinesio Taping and any other taping intended to provide compression to support muscles, ligaments, tendons or joints is not permitted.

Chapter 6: Meet Basics

Saturday Meets

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

Saturday Meet Events and Distances

| Age Group | Freestyle | Back Stroke | Breaststroke | Butterfly | Freestyle Relay | Medley Relay |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|
| 8 & Under Boys | 25 M | 25 M | 25 M | 25M | 100 M | |
| 8 & Under Girls | 25 M | 25 M | 25 M | 25M | 100 M | |
| 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 | | 200 M |
| 13 - 14 Girls | 50 M | 50 M | 50 M | 50 M | | 200 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 | |

NOTES:

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. To make it easier to follow a meet you can purchase a meet sheet, available at all Saturday meets.
2. 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 in Saturday Meets?

Saturday meets are to see which team can score the most points, so the fastest swimmers get to swim. The Coaches prepare the meet sheet, which is a listing of all swimmers swimming in that day's meet and what strokes they are swimming. 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 optimize our points and win.

Seeding – Lane Assignments

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 1 and 2, and the next fastest in lanes 5 and 6. Swimmers are seeded based upon their fastest times attained in prior competition. Lane 1 is always on the right side as you stand facing the pool at the starting end.

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 420 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 210 points to win.

In the event of a tie, the points for the places involved are equally split among the swimmers. For example, in 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.

Developmental (“B”) Meets

Monday “B” meets are basically the same as Saturday meets except as follows:

1. A 6 & under age group is added for Freestyle, Backstroke and Breaststroke.
2. IM Events are added for 10 & Unders, 11-12s, 13-14s and 15-18s
3. There are usually multiple heats of each event.

Chapter 7: Strokes and Their Rules

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 swimmers' 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 is the hardest stroke for most swimmers to perfect and while they are learning it many 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 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 and Freestyle. In the NVSL, children swim a 100-Meter IM, which means that 25 Meters, or one pool length, of each strokes 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. At the NVSL Relay Carnival, swimmers eight and under swim a medley relay.

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.

Chapter 8: Officials and Other Very Important People

Your first swim meet can be a bewildering experience as you encounter a vast horde of adults dressed in white. NVSL rules require white shirts and navy blue shorts as the colors to be worn by all officials.

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.

Referee

The Referee is the chief official for each swim meet. He/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. After the announcer or starter announces the event, 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 a "Colorado System" (so called because it is built by Colorado Timing Systems). This system consists of a public address system, a horn, and a strobe light.

Effective with the 2000 Season, a race can be recalled only if it was a bad start by the starter (i.e. not all the swimmers were ready) or for a safety reason. This is done using a recall signal on the Colorado system (you'll know it when you hear it). For more information, see False Starts in Chapter 10.

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/she raises their 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.

Marshals

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

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 their 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 observed 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.** Some parents have been timers for years and would not want to see a swim meet from any other viewpoint. We will even provide the stopwatch. Timers start their watches on the strobe light from the Colorado 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 insure that errors are caught before the results are announced. The computer data person inputs all the swimmers' times at the meet. They maintain all the historical data for the team.

Team Rep

The team rep is the designated recipient of all DQ slips for his/her team. He/She 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.

Coaches

During the meet, the Coaches' primary responsibility is to encourage and praise the swimmers and to make sure that they 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 set up the pool for meets and sell concessions. They also announce the results, run social activities, act as Marshals in the team area and do other jobs that need to be done. We need the help of every family in order to have a successful swim season.

Chapter 9: 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 DQ'ing 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, he raises his hand to signify that 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 a rule has been broken and can question the stroke and turn judge to ensure that 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 since 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 kid 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 isn't announced later in the top three places. Similarly, someone else DQ'd if your swimmer finished in 4th, 5th or 6th, yet is announced as one of the top three finishers. You also can get results by visiting the NVSL web site www.mynvsl.com.

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 and 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 that 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.