

Palmerton Porpoise Swim Team Handbook 2016

Mission

“To provide a competitive swimming program which teaches the principles of teamwork and good sportsmanship, promote a love of the sport, and advances aquatic skills.”

Objective

The main goal of swim team is to have fun. If we mix fun with hard work, the summer becomes an exciting and growing experience for the swimmers.

1. ATTENDANCE:

- Swimmers are encouraged to attend practice regularly to improve techniques and build endurance.
- Swimming strokes and techniques are not learned at the same rate by each child or in a matter of a few days.
- This is a nine-week commitment to the Palmerton Porpoises.

2. MEET COMMITMENT FORM, VACATION LOG and ABSENCE:

We understand that many families will have vacations scheduled during our swimming season. It is very important to accurately declare meet participation online.

- The meet declaration will be used to compile and publish meet lineups in advance.
- If you commit to attending the meet, it is the responsibility of parent/swimmer to make appropriate arrangements for transportation to away meets.
- If a swimmer is unable to attend a meet to which he/she originally committed, we ask for a **minimum of 72 hours notice** due to rostering duties (understanding that emergencies do happen that can not be avoided). Please email the coach at palmertoncoaching@gmail.com and the board at palmertonporpoises@gmail.com as soon as possible and team.

*****Please remember, when a swimmer is rostered and then does not show up for a meet it impacts relays and events of other swimmers and not just that swimmer.*****

3. TEAM SUITS:

Please purchase a team suit for your child(ren); it is an important part of our mission to foster team spirit. Suits will be available for purchase through the team apparel provider. Check calendar for the date and time.

4. SWIMMER ASSESSMENT & PLACEMENT

- **Is my child too young?** If your child can swim the length of the pool **without** assistance from the lane lines, he or she is welcome to compete.
- You are not expected to be skilled in swimming. You should expect a physically demanding program, with a pace that is designed to stretch but not overwhelm the abilities and strengths of the group.
- **Swim Team vs. Swim Lessons:** Palmerton Memorial Pool offers season members an outstanding series of swimming lessons for all ages and abilities. All swimmers are encouraged to sign-up and actively participate in swim lessons - this will provide 4 weeks of stroke instruction allowing the swim team coaches to focus on endurance and improving mechanics.
- Swimming needs both stroke ability (mechanics of swimming) and endurance (swimming fast for the entire race). The more time the swimmer has in the water the better they become.
- Coaches will perform stroke assessments at some point during the first 2-3 weeks of practice to evaluate ability and areas of focus for improvement.
- **WHAT AGE GROUP AM I IN?** Swimmers are placed based on the swimmer's age as of June 1. Age groups are: 8 & Under, 10 & Under, 12 & Under, 14 & Under, 15 & Over.

5. POOLS - YARDS OR METERS?

- Palmerton's pool is 30 yards.
- All other pools are either 25 yards or 25 meters. We will convert times for record keeping.
- A conversion calculator is available on the Suburban Swim League Website at www.surburbanswimlehighvalley.org

6. EVENTS:

- Each swimmer on the team will be entered in as many events as possible in a meet, but at most 4 as per league constitution, with due consideration given to the swimmer's ability to swim the stroke.
- Other factors, such as the number of heats and the number of swimmers, play a part in which events a swimmer swims.
- Remember, the coach's job is to supervise the entire swim program, and therefore has the final decision as to which events a swimmer will be entered in for a meet.

7. WEATHER POLICY: If it is absolutely pouring, or there is a thunderstorm, practice will be cancelled. If it is showering off and on and the pool is open, we will practice. (They get wet anyway!) Bottom line, ***If the pool is open, then there will be a practice.***

8. TEAM MAILBOX: Parents, check the team mailbox folder for your child(ren) at practice at least weekly for pertinent information.

9. SWIM PRACTICE:

Please note: *If you are **NOT** a member of the Palmerton Memorial Pool, while your swim team member will be able to get in the water and practice with the team, this will only be allowed during swim team practice times, and this is only for **the child who is the swim team member**. All other family members who are **not on the team and not a member of the pool will not be allowed** in the water unless a **daily fee or membership is paid for at the pool office.***

- In an effort to give our swimmers more "in the water" time, we will follow the following schedule:
Group 1: Generally for younger swimmers through 10yrs old - 6:00-7:00 pm

Group 2: Generally for older age, and more advanced swimmers - 6:00-7:30 pm
*****See our coaches to check which group your swimmer will be practicing in*****

PARENT INTERACTION WITH COACHES/SWIMMERS DURING PRACTICE

- While the coaches are on deck, and during practice, they are **NOT** able to talk to parents. ***It is very important that they use all this time to work with the swimmers exclusively.***
- **Viewing of practice** by parents is allowed, but must be done from the entrance side of the pool. Interaction with the coaches and/or swimmers is not allowed during practice sessions.
- If you, as a parent, have a question for a coach please see a coach **before or after** practice or email the coach directly.
- The coaches are **NOT** involved with any other aspects of the team other than coaching. If you have general questions about the team please see a board member who should be available at each practice.

10. VOLUNTEER HOURS & SNACK STAND DONATIONS

- In order for your child to be eligible to swim in a meet, a parent is **REQUIRED** to volunteer during **EVERY** home and away meet.
- Parents from both competing teams perform the duties associated with running a swim meet (i.e timing and stroke & turn officials).
- Donations are **REQUIRED** for the concession stand at all home meets.
- Swim Portal will be used to sign-up for volunteer opportunities and snack stand donations.
- We could not do it without you and we count on your support! Thank you!

11. SWIM MEETS:

- Arrival Times

Home Meets: Arrive by **4:45 pm**, as we have the 5:00 – 5:30 warm-up slot

Away Meets: Arrive by **5:15 pm**, as we have the 5:30 – 5:55 warm-up slot

- Positive Check-In: Swimmers must personally check in with a coach immediately upon their arrival to the pool.
- ***If a swimmer is not present by 5:30 pm and prior arrangements have not been made, that swimmer will be taken out of his/her events.***
- All pools are outdoors. Please bring folding chairs. It can get chilly in the evening, especially if you are in a wet swimsuit. Make sure your swimmers have plenty of towels and warm dry clothes to wear when not in the pool. Refreshments are available at all swim meets.
- Write event information on the back of the swimmer's hand for the best reference.
- Swimmers **MUST** stay in our team's sitting area so that the line-up parent volunteers can easily find the swimmers.
- Swimmers should plan to stay until the end of the meet to continue to support their teammates.
- Coaches will speak to the team at the conclusion of each meet.
- **Ribbons:** will be available in your child's personal file in the team mailbox as soon as possible after a meet.
- Addresses for away meets are available on the Palmerton Swim Team website under the calendar: www.palmertonswim.com and on the Suburban Swim League website: www.suburbanswimlehighvalley.org

Competitive Swimming – A Great Sport

The word competitive is used hesitantly here, and only because that's what everyone else calls it. After reading this you may agree that another word would be more appropriate. Many of the competitive swimming benefits come from it being an individual sport. Swimmers learn to stand on their own ability and hard work.

Swimming greatly helps self-image. A truly healthy self-esteem does not really come from how good you are, but from improvement and hope for the future. In swimming, hard work guarantees improvement that can be measured. In most sports it is hard to tell just exactly how much improvement there is. But in swimming, improvement is a concrete statistic. Swimmers are most often timed to the nearest 100th of a second. This is the best way to teach self-discipline and motivation.

All levels of ability are satisfied. There are no poor swimmers, just ones who aren't great yet. Many less talented swimmers leave meets proud and happy. They faced the challenge to themselves and won. The pride a less gifted swimmer takes in a little improvement must be experienced to understand it.

Our emphasis in this sport should not be swimmer vs. swimmer, but swimmer vs. self. In fact, there really is no opponent except the clock. The sport embodies the saying, "It is not whether you won or lose that counts, but how you swam the race." A first place swimmer not satisfied with his time is as common as a last place swimmer jumping out of the pool and hurrying to tell Mom and Dad about their BEST TIME! There is no failure, just success postponed until the next race.

Another invaluable lesson swimming teaches is about goals. How to set them properly, how to plan what it takes to get there and when to get there, how to follow through with the self-discipline and determination that it takes to get what you want, and then pick new goals and start all over again.

In addition, most swim meets require about 30 officials, which means a great deal of parental involvement. Parents who never swam competitively often learn a great deal about the sport and really share something in common with their children.

A famous philosopher once said that a man needs three things to be happy. Something to do, Something to love, Something to hope for. Swimming is all three!

***Please note: This PST Handbook is sole property of the PST. All rights reserved. Date: May 2016. All content in this handbook may not be copied, edited, reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, or otherwise, without prior written permission of the owner - PST.**