



**Swim Team**  
Marquette County and the Copper Country

# Handbook

*For Marquette County  
Families*



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

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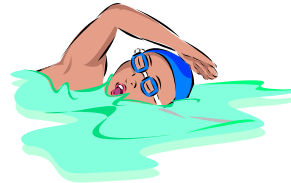
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## **Welcome Letter**

Welcome to our team!

Whether you are a returning family or a first-time swimmer we are glad to have you with us. I believe you'll find a program that provides fun and fitness, challenges and friendships. This is going to be an exciting year!

This handbook should answer many of your questions about the season including practices and meets. We also have a website [www.mqtyswim.com](http://www.mqtyswim.com) with tons of information.

I look forward to meeting our new athletes and their families and building on the success and goals of our returning athletes.

See you at the pool,

Matthew Williams, Swim Coach

## **Mission Statement**

Our mission is to offer all athletes the opportunity to reach their potential in an environment that promotes a healthy and active lifestyle.

## **Practice Groups – Marquette County**

### **“Future Stars”**

This program is designed for children ages 8 and under who are new to the sport of swimming. An emphasis is placed on developing proper swim skills and self-confidence in an environment rich with opportunities for making new friends and having fun.

### **Age Group Development**

This group is for new athletes ages 9 & older as well as athletes with intermediate skills. Practice time is dedicated to skill improvement, aerobic development, knowledge of competitive rules and fun. Swimmers also learn about goal setting and race pacing.

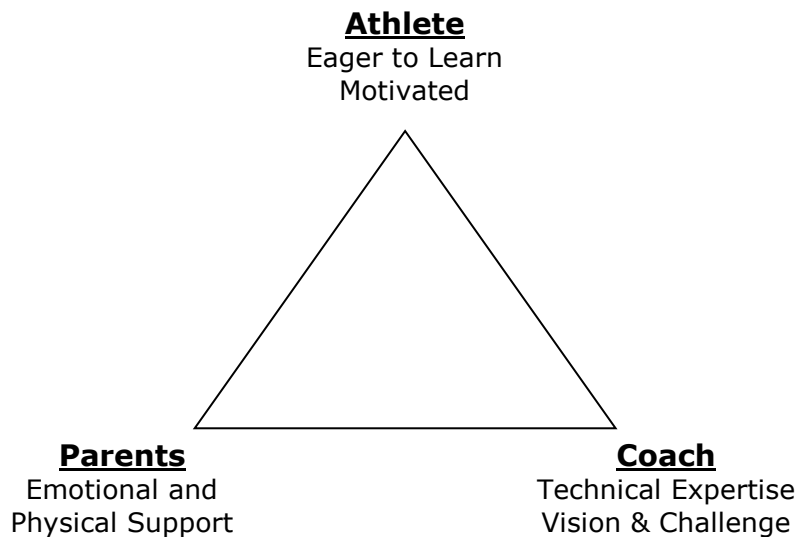
### **Advanced and H.S.**

This training group is for the advanced swimmer, high school athletes and National Team prospects. Advanced training concepts, race strategies and strength training are added to a foundation of technical skill and endurance. Self motivation and dedication is a must for any athlete in this group.

### **Adults Fitness Swim**

Whether you swim for general fitness or are training for triathlons, we provide a fun, healthy and supportive environment that will help you reach your fitness goals. We have athletes of all abilities and design programs for each skill level.

## **Relationship Among Athlete, Parents & Coaches**



*Eager to Learn* - Always mentally ready to participate in swimming and listen to the coaching staff's instructions

*Motivated* - Excited to swim and achieve goals

*Emotional Support* - Understand the athletes' goals and commitments, and support them with encouragement. Help them develop positive philosophies of sports and life through swimming.

*Physical Support* - Provide necessary swim gear. Transport swimmers to practice and swim meets. Help them eat right and get enough sleep.

*Technical Expertise* - Maintain currency in certifications. Continue to learn and expand coaching skill set.

*Vision and Challenge* - Understand abilities of each swimmer and develop individual guidance as needed to help them reach their goals.

## **Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians**

As swim team parents/guardians, we will:

- ◇ provide encouragement and support to our athlete(s)
- ◇ provide transportation to/from practices, arriving 15 minutes before practice starts so our athlete(s) will be on the pool deck and ready to begin 5 minutes prior to practice begin. We will also arrive promptly at the end of practice to pick up our children
- ◇ ensure our athlete(s) attend practices each week and if unable to do so, establish a routine which provides consistency for our athlete(s) which will bolster our athlete's(s) responsibility and commitment to swimming and the team
- ◇ not disturb the coaches before or during practice as this time is reserved for practice preparation and for our athlete(s)
- ◇ approach the coaches after practice or call/email them to discuss any issues/concerns we have
- ◇ not voice any concerns we have to our athlete(s) so as not to undermine the coach/athlete trust we are all striving to create
- ◇ provide feedback to the coaches, positive thoughts as well as constructive concerns as appropriate
- ◇ request assistance from the Parent Advisory Committee in resolving an issue if it becomes too emotional
- ◇ promptly read all communications from the coaching staff and respond as appropriate
- ◇ provide transportation to/from meets
- ◇ observe practices from the observation area, not on the pool deck
- ◇ participate in team parent meetings
- ◇ participate in team socials and potlucks
- ◇ turn in meet entry forms on time; and understand that if we don't, our swimmers won't be able to enter that particular meet
- ◇ NEVER compare our swimmer(s) to others so as not to lower our swimmers' self-esteem, build animosity and competition among teammates or undermine our swimmer's goals
- ◇ NEVER critique a swim. Critiquing is the responsibility of the coaching staff
- ◇ ALWAYS be positive and encouraging - especially after a practice or bad swim

## **Athlete Code of Conduct**

The YMCA swim team expects all athletes and coaches involved in athletic competition and events, who are representing the YMCA, to present themselves in a positive manner at all times.

### **CATEGORY I**

In order to maintain a positive image of the team and support its performance objectives, the YMCA strictly prohibits:

- A. The use or possession of tobacco in any form.
- B. The purchase, possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- C. The purchase, possession, use or sale of controlled substances.
- D. Insubordination, illegal acts, vandalism, promiscuity or conduct in direct violation of YMCA rules.

### **CONSEQUENCES**

Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct as established in Category I may result in payment of any incurred damages, if necessary, and:

- A. First offense: a one-month suspension from all team activities.
- B. Second offense: suspension from the team for the remainder of the season.
- C. Third offense: permanent suspension from team activities.

### **CATEGORY II**

In order to take full advantage of the Y swim team experience and to ensure the safety of all team members, each athlete is expected to:

- A. Pay attention and apply him/herself at all practices and meets.
- B. Display proper respect, honesty, and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, chaperones, parents and fellow competitors.
- C. Maintain a lifestyle that will allow proper rest and nutrition to ensure a healthy body, mind and spirit.
- D. Display a positive and supportive attitude toward the YMCA program, coaches and teammates.

### **CONSEQUENCES**

Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct as established in Category II may result in the following actions:

- A. First offense: discussion between parent, athlete and coach.
- B. Second offense: removal from the event (practice, meet or team function) and further discussion between the parent/guardian, athlete and coach
- C. Third offense: team suspension for up to one month

## **PROCESS FOR DETERMINING VIOLATIONS**

Coaches, officials, chaperones, YMCA personnel, athletes and parents should inform the Head Swim Coach or YMCA officials of any violations. In the event of a violation, the head coach or his/her representative shall have the responsibility of exercising the consequences listed by category as soon as he/she has been notified of a violation. It shall be the coach's prerogative to exercise less than, but not more than the stated consequences if he/she feels it is in the best interest of the athlete. The coach shall notify the parents/guardian of the athlete of the violation as soon as it is practical. Thereafter, the coach shall arrange a meeting with the athlete and parents or guardian. The YMCA administration shall act as arbitrator if an athlete or the athlete's parent or guardian feels they have been treated unfairly.

### **Fees, Billing Policy and Procedures**

As a team, we are made up of a group of people who are working toward the common goal of providing a quality swim program where our swimmers can excel and grow. The only paid personnel are the coaches and lifeguards. Everything else is done by parent volunteers.

Each swimming session will have its own program fee based on length of the session which determines the costs (i.e., coach and lifeguard wages and pool rental). These fees are paid to the YMCA Marquette via their on-line billing system.

Additionally, as members of the YMCA, all swimmers are required to maintain a \$17/month YMCA membership.

Meet entry fees are additional to the team fee and are deducted through the YMCA bank draft system.

We expect all parents/guardians will live up to their financial commitments to their swimmers and the team. We ask that everyone pay their fees on time. If special arrangements are needed, please contact the YMCA-Marquette Chief Executive Officer or Financial Officer to discuss individual family situations.

Financial assistance may be available through the YMCA Strong Kids program. For more information, contact a coach or YMCA Marquette.

## **Equipment for Our Swimmers**

- ✓ Swimming suit (cost \$20-60 depending on style and fabric)
- ✓ Goggles (\$10-15, prescription goggles \$25-\$30)
- ✓ Swim Cap (\$2-\$5)
- ✓ Fins, Speedo Optimus recommended (\$20)
- ✓ Towels

Make sure you put your swimmer(s)' name(s) or initials on each item.

## **Parent/Guardians and Volunteer Roles**

### Home Meets

We typically host 2-3 Marquette-area home swim meets each year, and two in Houghton. Parents'/guardians' involvement is vital to ensure our meets are successful. Home meets have two important goals:

1. Provide all athletes with a meet that is easy to attend.
2. Raise funds for the team

We ask all families to participate in the following ways for the Marquette meets):

- \* Provide a concession item for Saturday meets
- \* Help at the meet

The following is a list of all positions, with their descriptions, required to orchestrate a successful home meet. We have jobs that are good for first-time parents. Just ask for suggestions. The volunteer coordinator will begin putting together the team about 6 weeks before the home meet:

*Technical Coordinator/s:* Responsible for computers, scoring and scoreboard operation (Meet Fee for one child is waived for this job)

*Head Timer:* Coordinates, educates, & supports all timers

*Officials:* Officiate swim meet (meet fee for one child is waived for each session served). Training and job shadowing provided.

*Marshals:* Coordinate event boards in hallways/cafeteria during the meet

*Advertising Coordinator:* Sell happy ads, business ads and procure ad designs.

*Concession Coordinator:* Assigns concession items, coordinates concession stand (Meet fee for your child is waived at home meets for this person)

*Concession helper:* Work a shift at concession stand

*Sales:* sell heat sheets and 50/50 tickets

*Awards:* label and sort awards during the meet for distribution to teams afterward (medals, ribbons, heat ribbons/prizes), post results at the conclusion of events

*Set Up:* Day prior to meet helping set up pool and athlete areas.

*Timers:* two timers per lane. Time events. Work with head timer

*Runners:* collect cards from timers; deliver to 'results' computer station

*Clean up:* take down, clean up, put away at the meet conclusion.

### Fundraisers

All parents/guardians are needed to ensure successful fundraisers that support the team. All parents/guardians have talents that can be used to raise monies for socials, meet entry fees and state competition...and we ask that everyone shares their talents to the best of their abilities.

### Committees

If parents/guardians would like to become more involved, we are always looking for adults who would be willing to serve on a committee or volunteer for other roles. Help is never turned down and always greatly appreciated.

- Parent Advisory Committee: This committee assists the YMCA coaching staff in matters pertaining to the smooth functioning of a competitive swimming program within the framework of the YMCA's values, purposes, policies and objectives. This committee typically meets once every two months. We try to have representatives of each age group on this committee.

- Social, Sunshine, and Spirit Committee: This committee plans family and team social activities, banquets; sends cards to swimmers who are sick or celebrating a birthday; and recognizes coaches and other family achievements.

### **General Practice Policy Information**

- ~~☞~~ No practices are held if school is cancelled (i.e., snow day)
- ~~☞~~ The coaching staff supervises swimmers during swim practice hours only. You are responsible for ensuring proper supervision of your swimmers before and after practice, including in the locker rooms

### **Meets**

Swimmers are encouraged to participate in our home meets. Away meets are encouraged but not required.

#### Eligibility

A swimmer **MUST** be a member of a YMCA **30 days prior** to competing in regular 'Y' meets, and **90 days prior** to either a state or national championship. Swimmers are divided into different age groups for competitive purposes, most often they are: 8 & Under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15 & Over. During the fall/winter season, the age of the swimmer is determined by how old he or she is on December 1. In the YMCA summer season swimmers are grouped by their age on the day of the meet.

#### How to Enter

We provide an electronic entry system on our website. It will contain a listing of all the races divided by age category. Parents enter their child in the meet and may request desired events. The

coaches may change a race or two after talking to the swimmer, based on their observations in practices.

Things to keep in mind when selecting events to participate in:

- Choose races the swimmer is **ready** for
- Choose a race that 'challenges' the swimmer
- If in doubt, discuss with coaches

#### Fee Structure

Each event a swimmer participates in has an entry fee. Once we submit our entries to the host team, these fees are nonrefundable, even in the event of illness or injury. An athlete involved in a 4-person relay who does not show up is responsible for the fees of the other three members. Coaches will make every attempt to find substitutes for relays when there is a "no show."

#### What Should Swimmers do at Meets:

- ~~1.~~ Find the staging area (usually a gym or cafeteria) and set up camp. The team usually sits in one place together
- ~~2.~~ Report to their coach at the pool at least 15 minutes prior to their warm-up time and should be prepared to swim
- ~~3.~~ Keep warm during the meet
- ~~4.~~ Write their event numbers on their forearms or thighs or have a parent do it
- ~~5.~~ Pay attention to the event order and make sure they know when their event is called. They will want to arrive at the blocks three heats before they swim. If they are 8 or under, they will likely report to a marshalling area.
- ~~6.~~ Sit with their teammates and cheer them on
- ~~7.~~ Keep their eye out for really fast swimming
- ~~8.~~ Talk to a coach after their swim; coaches will provide feedback

#### What Parents/Guardians do at Meets

- ◇ Ensure swimmers arrive at the pool ready to swim at least 15 minutes before warm-ups are scheduled
- ◇ Purchase a heat sheet. These are usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. Heat sheets generally sell for \$2-\$5 per day. They list all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is submitted, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event.
- ◇ Write your child's event information on their arm or leg with a marker. This ensures all meet volunteers, officials and coaches

- can assist your child at any time.
- ◇ Sit with other team parents/guardians and cheer the team on; it's a great opportunity to meet some more super swimming supporters
  - ◇ Ask swimmers what the coach had to say (to help reinforce any recommendations for improvement; remember not to critique the swim
  - ◇ According to USA and YMCA swimming rules (because of insurance purposes), remain off the pool deck unless serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the coaching staff. Coaches will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
  - ◇ Be considerate of fellow parents/guardians watching races around you; try not to stand in front of chairs, bleachers, etc.
  - ◇ Ensure your child makes it to all their events including relays

#### What to do in the Event of a Disqualification (DQ)

- ◇ Swimmers: Don't be discouraged. It happens to everyone as some point. Talk to the coaches to see what happened and develop a strategy to prevent it in the future. Remember the 'thing' that caused the DQ and practice not doing it at practices
- ◇ Parents/Guardians: This is one of the toughest parts of swimming you'll have to deal with. A DQ is more common than not, especially for new swimmers. Please encourage your swimmer and let him/her know that a DQ is not the end of the world, it's something that can be fixed, and he/she can always try again and do better at the next meet. Swimmers who receive a DQ need support and encouragement more than anything else right after it happens, and they need to get right on to their next races. Please help the coaches keep DQs from being totally devastating...a positive attitude about learning and trying again make all the difference in the world.

#### **What to Take to a Meet**

Most swimmers swim in multiple events, both individual and as a member of a relay. This oftentimes can lead to a full day at the

pool. The following list is provided to assist with keeping the swimmers warm and dry, nourished, and entertained. It will also help the parents/guardians and any siblings who attend as well. It is not all inclusive; it's a starting point that can be tailored based on the families' needs.

- ◇ MOST IMPORTANT: Swimsuit, cap, and goggles
- ◇ Several towels for drying after races
- ◇ A robe for staying warm between races (fleece works very well and doesn't absorb water like cotton does)
- ◇ Several changes of clothes (another option instead of a robe)
- ◇ Permanent marker (to write race/heat/lane info on swimmer's arm)
- ◇ Highlighter (to highlight your swimmer on heat sheet)
- ◇ Portable sports chairs
- ◇ Blanket or sleeping bag to lounge or nap on
- ◇ Healthy snacks & drinks (each meet organizer usually has a concession stand to help raise money for their teams, so we try to support them as we hope they would support us at our home meets)
- ◇ Footwear such as sandals or flip flops (recommended for swimmers and parents/guardians; pool areas get rather toasty and humid)
- ◇ Homework (ha ha ha)
- ◇ Entertainment (GameBoys, Leap Frogs, coloring books, decks of cards, crossword puzzles, Mp3 players, etc.). Anything to pass the time...

### **THE BONUS OF MEETS**

One wonderful side benefit of traveling to swim meets is... Family Time. The family spends time together away from the rat race usually experienced at home; there are no dishes to wash, clothes to fold, floors to vacuum. You can spend time together doing whatever it is your family enjoys...playing games, swimming, eating out, visiting a museum before/after swimming depending on the time of your swimmers' events...possibilities are endless. Consider it a mini-vacation.

## **Glossary of Swimming Words and Terms**

(Source: USA Swimming 2010 Mini Rule Book)

**CLUB** — an organization which has been accepted for membership in the Corporation and which operates on a year-round or seasonal basis (e.g., YMCA club, USA Swim club).

**COURSE** — designated distance over which the competition is conducted.

**DNS, DID NOT SHOW, DID NOT SWIM —**

**DQ, Disqualified—**

**LONG COURSE** — 50 meters (55 yards to be recorded as 50 meters).

**SHORT COURSE** — 25 yards or 25 meters.

**FORWARD START** — a forward entry facing the course.

**HEATS** — a division of an event in which there are too many swimmers to compete at one time.

**LANE** — the specific area in which the swimmer is assigned to swim; e.g., lane one.

**LANE LINE** — continuous floating markers attached to a line stretched from the starting end to the turning end for the purpose of separating each lane.

**LANE MARKINGS** — the guide lines on the bottom of the pool and in the center of the lanes running from the starting end to the turning end.

**LAPS—LEG** — (relay) the part of the relay event that is swum by a single team member.

**MEET** — a series of events held in one program.

**NT, NO TIME—**

**PROGRAM** — the order of events, including starting times and intermissions in a meet or portion thereof, sequentially listed by class of competition, sex, age group, distance, and stroke as set forth in meet announcement.

**REFEREE** — Shall have full authority over all officials and shall assign and instruct them; shall enforce all applicable rules and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the final settlement of which is not otherwise assigned by said rules; can overrule any meet official on a point of rule interpretation, or on a judgment decision pertaining to an action which the Referee

has personally observed.

**SCISSOR** — use of the top of the instep of one foot and the bottom of the other foot in the propulsive part of the kick.

**SCRATCH** (from an event) — withdraw an entry from competition.

**SEED** — to distribute the swimmers among the required number of heats and/or lanes, according to their submitted or preliminary times.

**SESSION** — any portion of a meet distinctly separated from other portions by locale, time, or type of competition, i.e., preliminaries and finals; morning and evening; Senior and Age Group, etc.

**SPLIT TIME, SPLITS** — time recorded from official start to completion of an initial distance within a longer event.

**STARTER**— shall stand within ten feet of the starting end of the pool and upon signal from the Referee, shall assume control of the swimmers until a fair start has been achieved.

**STROKE JUDGE** — Shall operate on both sides of the pool; shall ensure that the rules relating to the style of swimming designated for the event are being observed.

**SUBMITTED TIMES** — those filed with an entry, as having been previously achieved.

**TIMED FINALS** — competition in which only heats are swum and final placings are determined by the times performed in the heats.

**TIME STANDARD** — the time a swimmer must have previously achieved in order to compete in that event at any designated competition.

**TURN JUDGE** — Shall operate on both ends of the pool; shall ensure that when turning or finishing the swimmer complies with the turning and finishing rules applicable to the stroke used; and shall report any violations to the Referee on signed slips detailing the event, the heat number, lane number and infraction observed.

***Need Additional Info?***

Check out [www.mqtyswim.com](http://www.mqtyswim.com)

Contact Coach Matthew Williams at [mwilliams@ymcamqt.org](mailto:mwilliams@ymcamqt.org) or (906) 869-5048

Call the Marquette County YMCA at (906) 227-9622

Ask a veteran parent—they were new once too!