



Welcome

Congratulations! You are now a member of the Sonic Waves Swim Family. We strive to develop excellent swimmers in all aspects of the individual: mentally, physically, and socially. We nurture the whole athlete, including a positive attitude of sportsmanship, cooperation, and dedication. By joining the Sonic Waves you have decided to join a sport that helps you set goals and provides you the opportunities to strive to achieve these goals. Swimming establishes a positive self-image, provides new friendships and teaches responsibility. The information contained in this booklet will introduce you to the Sonic Waves and to competitive swimming. Please take the time to read the entire handbook.

The Sonic Waves Mission

We provide developmental instruction in competitive swimming so that individuals, through personal dedication and discipline, experience success in the sport to the best of their ability. Also, we strive to provide a team atmosphere that allows swimmers to have fun while gaining a unique experience in team bonding.

About the Sonic Waves Program

The Fon du Lac Park District has been providing a high quality swim program since 1998. Sonic Waves is open to boys and girls from as early as 5 years old to the age of 18 (summer after senior year of high school). We offer a balanced program of practice, competition, and social activities. Our coaches provide instruction and training in competitive swimming for boys and girls in a highly structured, closely supervised, regularly scheduled format. The coaches also have optional Monday night "Stroke Clinics". Our team offers just-for-fun social activities including team bonding nights, end of season awards picnic, and swimming.

Values of Competitive Swimming

- Swimming has no bench sitters. Competitive swimming is a sport in which athletes participate in individual events to the best of their ability, while also having the benefit of a team environment such as swimming in relays.
- Swimming is healthy. Injuries are few and mild. The sport has been shown time and time again to be the best sport for over-all conditioning of the body. Swimming provides cardiovascular fitness, muscular fitness and endurance, and increased flexibility.
- Swimming teaches the relationship between team and individual. Neither team nor individual can exist and prosper in swimming without the other. Swimming teaches people to work with others.

- Competitive swimming encourages individuals to set up attainable goals, track their progress, and reach those goals, as well as help the team accomplish its goals. This process will carry on into many different aspects of life, as our swim team develops a solid foundation for goal setting.

Swimmer Responsibilities

Swimmers are encouraged to attend all practices and meets as are possible. If a swimmer chooses to play organized baseball, softball, soccer, etc. during the summer swim season, there will be times the swimmer will need to choose between a swim meet and another event/game if scheduled on the same date and time. We understand if a swimmer chooses to participate in another sporting event, he or she will not be penalized in any way. The key is to let the coaches know ahead of time and try to find a balance between the various sporting events. Swimmers are expected to adhere to rules and structure as outlined by the coaches. Swimmers are expected to be supportive and encouraging to their teammates.

Team Loyalty

We feel that the sport of swimming is an excellent way for families to come together. In addition, we feel that we offer programming to fit the needs of swimmers of all ages and ability levels. As such, we encourage all of your children to join our team. If new to the program, the Sonic Waves offers a free trial week the first week of summer practice. If you feel that Sonic Waves is not the right program for your child, we encourage you to discuss your concerns with the one of the coaches. After the first “trial” week, if you decide that you would need to discontinue your participation with Sonic Waves, the coach will help to initiate the process of obtaining a refund.

Also, there are many ways to show your team spirit. Attached is the team spirit order form with items that can be purchased such as car stickers, beach towels, and parent shirts.

Practice Guidelines

To ensure quality instruction during practice, we will be utilizing the following basic structure by age groups as listed below. Exceptions to this, based on ability and performance, are up to the coaches’ discretion.

Sonic Waves Morning Practice Times

7:15 – 8:30	11 - 18 years old
8:15 – 9:15	9 - 10 years old
9:00 – 9:45	8 and under

Cancellations: Practices or Meets

Cancellations of practices or swim meets will be sent out through the Park District Texting Program (TEXT FONDULAC to 40518) Messages will be up by 6:45 AM the day of practices. The message will also be posted on the Sonic Waves Facebook page. If there is not a new message, continue as scheduled. Rain generally will NOT cancel practice, but lightning WILL. Meet cancellations will also be passed on as soon as we are made aware of them.

If lightning begins during a practice, the pool will be cleared and will wait 10 to 15 minutes for the “all clear” (THOR lightening detection system). If an “all clear” has not been sounded within that time frame then the remainder of the practice will be canceled.

If there is inclement weather during a swim meet, it will be up to the meet director, coaches, and/or pool managers to determine whether to cancel or wait a period of time for the weather to clear.

Team Communication

The best source of information about team events is the Sonic Waves Swim Team Facebook Page or the swimmer's mailbox.

- We have a box that will have a file folder for each family on the swim team. Any handouts, meet results and awards, and other pertinent information will be placed in these "mailboxes." Please be sure to check the box often.
- The coaches will also have folders in the box. An excellent way to get information to coaches is to leave a note in their mailbox. You may also send them an email (see contacts at end of document). Weekly newsletters will be distributed via the mailboxes on the first practice of the week.
- Swim Meet Sign-out binder is very important to the coaches. This binder indicates which meets you are not planning on attending. Any changes must be communicated to the coach by the deadlines required. Watch the newsletter for due dates.
- Any issue or concern can best be solved at the source. Coaches are available by appointment to talk to anyone who may have a concern. It is unfair to the team to discuss an individual swimmer's issue or concern with a coach during practice. You may leave a note in the head coach's mailboxes and one of them will contact you to set-up a timely appointment. Also feel free to contact either of the coaches via cell phone. Leave a voicemail and it will be returned as soon as possible.

Swim Equipment

All registered Sonic Waves team members will receive a team t-shirt. Optional Team Suits are available to purchase prior to the season starting at the Fon du Lac Park District Administration Center. Team suits are optional, but highly recommended. We want our team to look united and the best way to do this is to be wearing the same suit. If money is an issue, we do have some of the old style suits that are different, but the same color for less cost. Sizing availability is limited for these suits so let the coaches know as soon as possible. It is best for your swimmer to try-on the suit for the best fit. The recommended equipment for each swimmer, regardless of age is: practice suits, team suit (optional), team cap (optional), and 2 pair of goggles. During morning practice pull buoys, kickboards, and fins may be utilized in some instances, but they will be provided by the team.

Team Participation Guidelines

For participants to be eligible to swim on the Sonic Waves swim team they should be comfortable in the water and know the front crawl with side breathing (freestyle) and be able to swim the entire length of the pool or at least have passed level 3 swim lessons offered at Splashdown Water Park.

NOTE: Even though Sonic Waves has a lifeguard on duty your novice swimmer must be strong enough to handle 45 minute practices.

We believe that swimming is a direct reward system: the harder you work, the greater the reward. We realize that many swimmers are also involved in other activities or sports. Each swimmer must evaluate the level of dedication they wish to put into the sport, knowing what to expect as a result.

All swimmers will compete within the following age groups based on their age on the day of the swim meet: 8 & under | 9-10 | 11-12 | 13-14 | 15-18

Girls will compete against girls and boys will compete against boys in all regular meets. In the event that events are combined in order to speed up meets, swimmers will only be competing in their age group and gender (ex. boys 15-18 will not be competing with girls 15-18 if events are combined).

Meet Rosters and Relays

Meet rosters and relays are generated and submitted to the host swim team by the coaches. They will be posted at the swim meet and it is recommended that you arrive a little bit early so that you are able to write down your events before the meet starts.

NOTE: Relays are not negotiable by the swimmers or parents. The relays are subject to change at the last minute due to illness or other extenuating circumstances. The coaches will do their best to let the affected swimmers know as soon as possible.

Coaches may place a swimmer in one age bracket above their age in a meet. This often benefits the team and also the swimmer. (This is referred to as "swimming up".) This should be viewed as an opportunity and happens when there is an opening in the lineup in an older age group. We do not do this to "bump" an older swimmer out. After a swimmer "swims up" for an event, they will have to swim the rest of the meet in that age bracket.

We typically enter multiple relay teams per age category at each meet, depending on how many swimmers sign up for the meet. **Important: Please check to see if your swimmer is swimming the free relay before leaving a swim meet (typically the last event of a swim meet).** If you leave after your child's last individual event and if your child is entered in a relay, you will disappoint the 3 other swimmers that were scheduled to swim in the relay. However, if your child is not in the free relay and they are done swimming for the day, they are free to leave the meet. Most children choose to stay to hear the final meet results. If we win the swimmers get to push the coach in, which is always fun.

Meet expectations will be discussed with the swimmers before meets

The Four Strokes

FREESTYLE - In freestyle events the stroke used is sometimes called the front crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the surface of the water surface and an alternating (up-and-down) flutter kick.

BACKSTROKE – The backstroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may rotate to the stomach and perform a flip turn and some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. **The swimmer must finish on their back.**

BREASTSTROKE - The breaststroke requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pressed out from in front of the breast in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously at, above or below the water surface.

BUTTERFLY - Some consider the butterfly to be the most beautiful of the strokes. It features a simultaneous recovery of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissors or use the breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY, commonly referred to as the IM, features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle.

SWIM MEETS

Swim meets are a great family experience. They're a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. If you have any questions, please ask your coach or a parent of a returning swimmer.

WHAT TO TAKE TO A SWIM MEET

- Team suit, team cap, and 2 pair of goggles
- Drinks – Water is the best; sports drinks are also acceptable
- Two or three towels
- Something to sit on such as a sleeping bag, blankets, or chairs
- Parents are allowed by most of the host teams to set up folding chairs
- T-shirt, extra change of dry clothes to go home in
- Games – travel games, books, cards, anything to pass the time between events
- Food is usually available at the meets, but it is recommended to bring your own nutritious snacks. Good ideas include cereal, hard-boiled eggs, bagels, pasta salad, veggies, and crackers.

BEFORE THE MEET STARTS

1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information handed out to all swimmers and also in the team newsletter.
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your belongings. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces. At our home meets we will meet under one of the umbrellas in the splash and play area. At any of our away meets we will try to find a place to hang our team banner.
3. Once "checked in", write or have the swimmers write each event-number on his or her hand in marker. This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen or watch for. You will be able to find the list of events on the building between the locker rooms at our home meets. At away meets the "heat sheet" will be hung near where the team is set up. The coaches will point out where the heat sheet is located as soon as it is posted by the host team. Please try to have your swimmer ready AT LEAST 4 EVENTS before their scheduled event. This will help coaches during meets, as they will be preoccupied and might not be able to remind swimmers of their events.
4. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. A swimmer's body is just like a car on a cold day-he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out.

5. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her team is sitting and wait there until their first event is called. This is a good time to make sure bathroom breaks are taken, get a drink, or just get settled in.
6. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over. **It is very important for swimmers to stay in the team area during meets.** It makes it easier for our "bullpen" workers to find them for their events. It is ultimately your responsibility to be in the right place at the right time to swim your events.

WHEN THE MEET STARTS

1. It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers he/she is swimming (again, mark event numbers on their hand). Your swimmer may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile.
2. To get swimmers to their lane:
 - In most summer meets, a swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker, and he/she will be asked to report to the "bullpen". Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggle. During a meet, the "bullpen" is the area where our swimmers are lined up for their upcoming events. Swimmers should report from the team area usually 4 or 5 events from the event being swum. Example: While event #20 is taking place, events #24 and #25 will be lining up in the bullpen area.
 - The swimmers are then taken to the blocks by a meet volunteer. For some meets they will have a lane card with their name & lane on it. Swimmers need to pay attention to stay in their lane and listen for their event to be announced. It is possible that their lane would be vacant in the race ahead of them. It is ultimately the swimmers responsibility to be there and ready to swim. No race will be delayed because a swimmer is not there.
 - Girls' events are odd-numbered and boys events are even numbered. Example: "Event #26, 10-Under Boys, 50 freestyle, report to Bullpen."
3. The swimmer swims his or her race. **Please note that where your child finishes a race is not nearly as important as how much your child improves their technique and time.** The goal of our program is to enable our swimmers to proficiently swim all four of the strokes, and to improve their times throughout the season.
4. Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim:
 - Tell your child how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with your child. You need to tell them how proud you are and what a great job they did.
 - Take your child back to the team area and relax.
 - This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or something light to eat.

5. The swimmer now waits until his/her next event is called and starts the procedure again. When a swimmer has completed all of their events you can leave the swim meet. REMEMBER: before leaving check to see if your swimmer is on a relay.
6. Awards are often gathered for a team and given to the coach at the end of the meet. The coach will give the awards to the swimmers at a later time. Dual meets are intended to be fun! All swimmers will receive a ribbon at dual meets, based on how they placed in their event. You will find your child's ribbons in their mailbox.

Be aware that some pools are measured in meters and some are measured in yards so your swimmer's times will be different.

Tazewell County and Journal Star

- The sign-up sheets for both of these meets will be placed in your child's mailbox as soon as they become available. These two invitational meets are OPTIONAL and provide you the opportunity to choose your own individual events to swim.
- These meets require you to pay a fee for each event entered. Just as we do for our dual meets, our coaches will assign the swimmers on relays.
- Please note that these invitational meets are typically more competitive than dual meets. Unlike dual meets, not every swimmer is guaranteed an award. These meets typically include multiple teams so there can be several heats of each event.
- We encourage our newer swim families to consult with the head coach before signing up for these invitational meets. No one will be discouraged from attending or denied registration, but we want to make sure expectations are managed.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are the backbone of the organization. They drive the swimmers to workouts and meets, they work at home meets and away meets, and encourage their swimmers by constantly giving positive support. Parents are expected to be respectful of coaching decisions. Please remember that you do not have to agree with the coaches' decision, but you do have to respect it. Do not address coaches during practice times. The coaches are more than willing to meet individually with parents should they need anything. Be proud and encouraging when your swimmer is asked to swim up. Show good sportsmanship at all times. Check your mailbox on a regular basis to stay informed.

Parents Volunteer Obligation

The success of the Sonic Waves program is 100% dependent upon parent volunteers. There are several volunteer opportunities at each meet including: setting up the pool before a meet, working the "bull-pen", lane timer, ribbons/scoring, runners, concessions, and tear down/clean up after a meet. No matter what job you work, you will be able to watch your children swim each of their events. Some of these jobs lend themselves to viewing the events (timers and runners). Others such as concessions and ribbons are staffed by multiple people and provide opportunities for workers to step away to watch their children swim. All parents that volunteer will be trained the day of the meet by the coaches or other "veteran" parents about how to fulfill each position.

Note: Parent board and parent volunteer positions will be discussed at the first meeting.

Each family must volunteer at least two home meets during the season. If both parents (or a parent and grandparent or other relative) work two jobs during one meet, this will count toward fulfilling the two-meet requirement. Sign up sheets will be available at the parent orientation meeting as well as in the binder during the first week of practice. NOTE: if you do not sign up, you will be assigned to a meet task for two meets. A list will be placed in mailboxes the week before our home meet as a reminder. If you are unable to work you are responsible for finding a replacement. You will find that many parents volunteer for more than the two meet obligations. Sonic Waves has been fortunate over the years to have many dedicated parents which are the key to success at our meets. This policy brings a fairness to all the Sonic Waves families. Not only will you be helping out the coaches, you will also be helping out your swimmer. Coaches will have more time to attend to swimmers when they do not have to worry about the logistics of the meet.

Concessions

During our home meets we will sell concessions as a convenience to swimmers and families. It is also a way to generate some needed revenue for the team. Everything we sell is donated by our very generous Sonic Waves families. Since we host our meets on Saturday mornings we like to have donuts, bagels, and other snacks and drinks available. There will be a sign up sheet before each home meet with a list of items that we would like donated to sell. Please sign up for at least one item that you will purchase and bring to the meet. Monetary donations are also accepted. The parent in charge of concessions will purchase items as needed.

CONTACTS:

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