



Mahaska County YMCA
Swim Team



2011 – 2012
Parent Handbook

Dear Parents-

The YMCA mission is: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

The YMCA strives to build character in all who participate in YMCA programming. The character values of **CARING, HONESTY, RESPECT** and **RESPONSIBILITY**, are part of every program the YMCA offers.

The swim team seeks to encourage and motivate each swimmer to develop his or her individual skills and to enhance self-esteem. The team can only accomplish this through the active involvement of each swimmer and his/her family. Everyone involved in the coordination of the swim team: the administration, aquatics personnel, swim team parent group and coaches, pledge to make this an experience that will positively shape your child.

We thank you in advance for your involvement and commitment to this program and we look forward to a fantastic swim season!

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Ryan Harkema, Aquatics Director
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Requirements:

To participate on the swim team:

- Participants will be required to be YMCA members. Swimmers must be a YMCA member for 30 days before competing in a swim meet.
- 8 and under swimmers must be able to swim 25 yards (one length) unassisted of a legal freestyle; 9 and older swimmers must be able to swim 50 yards (2 lengths) unassisted of a legal freestyle.

Swimmers will swim in the age group for the age they are on December 1.

To be eligible to participate in a Iowa YMCA Sectional Championship meet, a swimmer must have participated in at least three YMCA CLOSED meets that season.

Try-Outs:

For those who did not participate in Swim Team last year, and who are interested in joining the team for the current season, we ask that your child join the Swim Team in one of two ways:

- Participate in try-out week running November 1-November 3 at the YMCA pool. This period is one where both members and non-members can swim for free. Swim Team coaches will be present at these practices and can recommend whether Swim Team would be a good fit for your swimmer. Please remember that in order to participate in any Swim Team meets, your swimmer must be a YMCA member in good standing for 30 days before that meet.
- Get signed approval from either of the Swim Team coaches to join the team before try-outs begin. These approval forms are available at the front desk.

Swim Team members who participated in the 2010 season are able to join the 2011 squad by signing up at the member services desk and are welcome, but not required, to attend the try-out period from November 1-November 3.

Registration/Fees:

- \$120.00 per swimmer for the season. This fee must be paid at the time of registration.
- Greenery sales: each swimmer has the opportunity to sell greenery in Oct/Nov to offset the cost of swim team registration/suit and to raise money for the club. Information packets are available.
- Team swimsuit: team suits are available for purchase. Suits will be available to try on for size and then ordered for arrival by December. Suits must be paid for at the time of ordering. Team suits are not required, but it is nice to have similar suits to look like a team at competitions.

Swim Team Practice: Monday and Wednesday
Session 1: 6:00-7:00
Session 2: 7:00-8:15

Tuesday and Thursday
Session 1: 3:45-4:30
Session 2: 4:30-5:15

We recommend that each swimmer attend at least two practices a week. Swimmers cannot attend two sessions in the same day. Please remember that the skills will be best developed by regular practice attendance.

There are no practices when the public schools cancel classes due to inclement weather.

Parents will not be allowed on the pool deck during practice. A waiting area is available in the lobby by the windows. Please remember, a current Y membership is required for the use of any area of the facility. Parents or family members who wish to use other programs and facilities of the YMCA can obtain a membership at the front desk.

Communication:

Team website: www.ymcaswimteam.com

For coach, swimmer and parent communication purposes, we use an e-mail list as the primary source of communication. Please provide your e-mail address during registration to ensure that you receive communication from the coaching team.

Information is posted on the Swim Team bulletin board located on the wall next to the glass windows in the parent waiting area. Check the board often for updated information.

You are encouraged to talk with the coaches before or after practice or to set up a time that is convenient for everyone. Please do not try to talk to coaches during practice or when busy at a meet. We appreciate your support with this!

Family Involvement:

Any parent, guardian or volunteer participating in the Competitive Swim Program is automatically part of the Swim Team Parents' Organization. All are welcome to attend the Parent Board Meetings.

Family involvement is critical to the success of the team. The assistance of all families is needed to conduct home meets. There are many opportunities for involvement, and most of the duties do not require previous experience. A sign up sheet will be posted on the bulletin board prior to home meets. All parents are expected to assist with at least one home meet.

Parent Responsibilities:

- Keep yourself abreast of your child's swim team activities. Monitor their best times and inform the coaches if your child has a qualifying time for regionals.
- Volunteer to help run home meets
- Be uplifting and supportive of your child throughout the season
- Help your child plan, set, strive and achieve their goals
- Be patient. Each swimmer progresses at a different pace
- Much of swimming is an individual sport, but most importantly, swimmers are part of a **TEAM**.

The single most important thing that parents can do to help their child is to instill a strong and healthy sense of sportsmanship, character and self-image. Swim team is a program to create better general life skills in addition to producing a great swimmer.

Practice:

- Bring a non-breakable water bottle with cap to practice every day. The water bottle should be labeled with the swimmer's name.
- Be on time and ready to swim. That means on the deck with equipment ready when your workout begins, not talking in the bathroom or hanging around the locker room.
- Have equipment available and adjusted before practice.
- Work hard and try your best.
- Alert your coaches if your body is telling you to slow down or stop.
- Maintain proper spacing between swimmers before you start drills.
- Touch the swimmer's foot in front of you when attempting to pass. The swimmer in front should stop/move to the side so you may proceed to pass. Do not pull, yank or hit the swimmer in front of you!
- Listen and follow directions from coaches with no talking during drill instructions
- Follow all pool rules
- Demonstrate proper sportsmanship. Treat your coaches and teammates with respect and do not interfere with the ability of the other swimmers to complete their workouts. There is no place in the pool or locker room for rude or belittling comments, displays of anger or disgust or talking back to coaches, volunteers or other adults.

The following progressive discipline will be taken if deemed necessary:

1. Verbal warning to swimmer
2. Swimmer sits out for 10 minutes or the swimmer may be given appropriate conditioning to perform which helps focus their attention and build strength to accomplish the task at hand
3. Swimmer will be asked to leave the activity or event for the day. Parents will be notified.
4. Swimmer will be asked not to participate for an extended period of time in team activities. This action will be communicated by the coaches and Aquatics Director to the parent and swimmer.

Swim Meet Information

We encourage each swimmer to participate in each swim meet; however, it's not mandatory to do so. Each swimmer must compete in three closed YMCA meets to participate in Sectionals/State meet. You must notify the coaches no later than the Tuesday of the week of the scheduled meet if your swimmer will be competing.

Event Sign Up

Swimmers may swim a total of five events per meet – three individual and two relays. Entry sheets will be available to fill. Either return the hard copy or email your entries to coaches. It's the swimmer's responsibility to sign up for individual events, however, the coaching staff reserves the right to change one individual event. The computer system and coaching staff will make up the relay teams.

Pre-Meet Preparation

- Nutrition:
 - Eat properly before the meet, no junk food or soda
 - Plan nutrition for the meet before you arrive (concession stand food is very tempting), choose wisely.
- Sleep - get a good night's sleep before each meet
- Equipment – make sure everything is in good working order and pack it the night before the meet

Travel

Parents are responsible for driving swimmers to and from meets. Carpooling is encouraged but not facilitated by the YMCA. Please contact a parent board member or coach if your child needs transportation.

If a meet must be canceled because of inclement weather, the parent group calling tree, coaches and team email list will be notified to spread the message as efficiently as possible.

Day of the Meet

- If you are unable to attend the meet, call Coach Janet (660-8778) as soon as possible. This is very important so the coaches can readjust relays if needed.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before warm up.
- Check in with volunteer parent or coaches to receive event numbers.
- All swimmers are required to warm up at our assigned team time unless approved by a coach.
- After warm ups, all swimmers will meet together as a team for the National Anthem.

What to Bring

Swim meets can last four hours or longer depending on the number of swimmers competing. Things to bring:

Competition swimsuit
Flip flops or sandals
Healthy snacks (or money for concession)
Sleeping bag or blanket/pillow
Goggles
Swim Cap (if needed)
Warm clothes, sweats, robe, etc.
2-3 towels (these will get wet)
Cards/games/books/magazines, etc
Change of clothes to wear home
Water

At the Meet

- Notify a coach if you are sick or unable to compete. **You must swim all of your events unless approved by a coach.**
- Swimmers should stay in the team holding area when not competing or waiting for clerk of course (unless cheering for teammates)
- Conserve energy, save it for your races.
- Eat properly and drink lots of water.
- Cheer for your teammates
- Display sportsmanship.
- Help clean up the team holding area before leaving.
- Please remember, you are representing your family, coaches, town and YMCA.

What is the Clerk of Course?

- This is the area where swimmers report before a race. Volunteers will organize the swimmers into the proper events and heats. It is each swimmer's responsibility for being at the clerk of course at the proper time.
- Stay quiet and listen to the volunteers for instructions.
- Each swimmer is responsible for getting to the clerk of course for each event. Listen/watch carefully for your event number to be called.
- Always wear shoes and bring a towel, goggles and swim cap with you.

Oskaloosa Dolphins Swim Team 2011-2012 Meet Schedule

November 19	@ Ankeny
December 3	HOME – Ottumwa, Centerville
December 10	@ Riverfront YMCA (Des Moines)
December 17	HOME – Riverfront (Des Moines), Southern Prairie (Creston), Nishna Valley (Atlantic)
January 7	@ Waukee
January 14	@ Ottumwa
January 21	Off week
January 28	HOME – Centerville, Washington, Newton, Marion
February 4	@ Stoney Point (Cedar Rapids)
February 11/12	@ Sectionals (Location TBD)
March 3/4	@ State Meet (Location TBD)
March 31/April 1	@ Regional Meet (Minneapolis)

Championship Meets

Registration fees will be paid by the swim team, however, if a registered swimmer does not attend, he/she will be charged for the registration fee.

Sectional Meet: this meet is the qualifying meet for the State meet. To be eligible to compete, each swimmer must swim in three YMCA closed meets prior to this meet.

State Meet: to qualify for this meet, the swimmer must equal or better the state qualifying times AT THE SECTIONAL MEET. A swimmer may also qualify by placing first in his/her event in the Sectional meet.

Regional Meet (non YMCA meet): the swimmer must meet qualifying times at any meet DURING THE SEASON. A list of events and qualifying times will be available. If your child has a qualifying time, please notify the coaches.