

Information for Parents of New Swimmers

Welcome to the **Falcon Swim Club!**

Coaches - Tim Allen (head), Carolyn Webber (asst.), and Michael Berthaume (asst.)

Club President – Robin Dunn – 599-4888

How to Stay Informed

Communication is important, especially in a club of this size. Should you have any questions feel free to ask, or email hwfalconsclub@yahoo.com. The board members are listed on the pool bulletin board and on our website, under "Get Involved". Please help us keep everyone, (over 100 swimmers and their families), updated by frequently checking the following sources:

Website - <http://www.geocities.com/hwfalconsclub> - frequently updated with announcements, directions, results, and general information.

Bulletin Board - at the pool, to your left as you enter.

Notices – sometimes on the desk as you enter the pool.

Meet Notebook – on the desk once meets start; has meet details and swimmer/parent sign – ups.

The first competitive swim meet can seem rather confusing. It's probably more confusing for the parents than the swimmers. We hope the following information will help to explain how a dual competitive meet is generally run. After you and your swimmer have experienced your first meet, this will make even more sense!

1. Before the Meets

a. Swimsuits and Merchandise

In addition to a suit and towel, swimmers should bring goggles to each practice. Team swimsuits are sold in the beginning of each season for both boys and girls. Your swimmer will have the opportunity to try on some sample suits. Although a team swimsuit is not necessary, most of the swimmers do wear a current or past season swimsuit to the meets.

b. Practice

Both the summer & winter season are preceded by a 4-week Stroke & Turn Clinic, which stresses swimming technique. Practices are held as follows:

Age 10 and younger: Monday - Thursday 6:00-7:00 PM

Age 11 and older: Monday - Thursday 7:00-8:00 PM & Friday (team only, not clinic) 6:00-7:30 PM

These age groupings are general guidelines, as some swimmers' practice times may be moved at the coaches' discretion.

New this winter, (2005-06), our team swimmers will be asked to check in on an attendance log before they get in the pool for practice. This will help coaches and swimmers track progress vs. attendance. Of course, the more frequently swimmers come to practice, the more progress they will make. They might earn a "Personal Best" ribbon for improving their time at meets! Check the FSC website for any last minute cancellations due to inclement weather. For safety reasons, swim practices are suspended or canceled for lightning storms.

c. Meet Sign-Ups

The winter season typically has about six to eight dual swim meets. They are usually held on Saturdays, (occasionally Friday nights), beginning in mid-November through late January. For each meet, there are sign-up sheets in a notebook on the table by the entrance to our pool. During the winter, the deadline for signing up for a Saturday dual meet is the Wednesday day before. Please sign your swimmer up under the appropriate age group. The age groups are as follows and are separated by gender:

8 and under

9 and 10

11 and 12

13 and 14

15 and up

The coach decides what events you will actually be swimming, although your preferences are taken into account. If you have not signed up for the meet, you will not be added to the roster for that meet. **If you have signed up for a meet and find you are unable to swim, please contact one of the following:**

Coach Carolyn Webber 566-2451

President Robin Dunn 599-4888

If you can't reach either of them at the last minute, please tell another team member you can't make it. Don't be a 'no show' as it affects the meet lineup and relays.

The sign-up sheet for parent volunteers for the meet is also at the front desk, usually in the notebook. You sign up for one half of the meet. It takes 40 – 50 parents to conduct a swim meet!!

2. At the Meet

a. Order of Events

At the meets, events are always run in the same sequence throughout the season. While the length can vary, they usually last about three hours plus a half-hour warm-up beforehand. Younger swimmers warm up first. The meets begin with the medley relays and end with the free relays. The order of events for summer meets is listed below: (Girls, then boys, youngest to oldest for each stroke.)

Events	1 - 10	Medley Relays (Each swimmer swims a different stroke.)
	11 – 20	Individual Medley (One swimmer swims all four strokes.)
	21 – 24	Freestyle Relays (ages 8 & under and 9-10)
	25 – 30	200 yd. Freestyle (age groups 11-12 & up)
	31 – 40	Short Distance Freestyle (25 or 50 yd.)
	41 – 50	Butterfly (remember two hands touch at the same time)
	51 – 60	Long Distance Freestyle (50 or 100 yd.)
	61 – 70	Backstroke (starts in water)
	71 – 80	Breaststroke (two hands touch at the same time)
	81 – 86	Freestyle Relays (age groups 11-12 & up)

Events may be combined or run together. There may be more than one heat for an event but in a dual meet, the first heat is official, scoring team points. Anyone swimming can try to improve their time. You must listen for the event number being called. Timers will usually double check with the swimmers to make sure they are in the right heat and lane.

The order of strokes for the **Medley Relay** is:

- 1st swimmer - Backstroke (starts in water)
- 2nd swimmer- Breaststroke (remember two hands touch at the same time)
- 3rd swimmer- Butterfly (remember two hands touch at the same time)
- 4th swimmer- Freestyle

The order of strokes for the **Individual Medley** is:

- Butterfly
- Backstroke
- Breaststroke
- Freestyle

b. Lineup

In the winter dual meets, swimmers can swim a maximum of 3 official events, with no more than two of these being individual events. Prior to the start of the meet, the coaches will post a list of events that your swimmer will compete in. At home meets, this is posted at the shallow end of the pool and it is the swimmers and/or parents' responsibility to check for event assignments. Many parents find it is helpful to write the event number and name on the swimmer's and/ or parent's hand with ballpoint pen or marker once they have found out their events.

Please do not ask the coaches to change events unless it is absolutely necessary. Remember you may not always be swimming your favorite event. Accept the challenge and be a team player!

c. Bullpen

In order to get through 86 events in a reasonable amount of time, the meet has to move right along. To get swimmers ready, a bullpen system is used. Approximately 10 events prior to their event, swimmers should go to the bullpen to get their event card or heat and lane assignment. Once you're there, remain in the bullpen. You risk missing your event if you don't!

d. Parent Volunteers/Officials

In order to insure fairness and compliance to league rules, there are a number of officials and volunteers needed to run a dual swim meet. Parents are asked to sign up ahead of time in the same notebook used by the swimmers. (Remember when you signed the registration form, you agreed to help at the meets?!?) If we are still in need of volunteers at the meet, the meet coordinators will approach parents for help. It takes at least 40-50 parents to run a meet so your help is welcome, needed, and appreciated!! It's fun to participate and it makes the time pass quicker. One adult per family is expected to work at a meet. You will only have to volunteer for half of the meet – we switch to a new set of volunteers after event #43. Most jobs, except for stroke judge, require no experience and everything you need is provided!

- a. Timers – Two per lane, one representing each team, each with a stopwatch, responsible for timing the swimmer in that lane. The home team timer usually records the two times and the 'runner' collects them after each race.
- b. Place Judge – Two per meet, one from each team, observes and records the order of the finish and gives it to the runner.
- c. Back up Timer – One or two per meet, each with a stopwatch, will provide back-up times in the event something goes wrong with a lane timer's stopwatch.
- d. Stroke & Turn Judge – One or two from each team (depending on the size of the pool), responsible to insure legal strokes and turns are used during the event. They may disqualify swimmers for specific rule violations. They also try to tell a disqualified swimmer what happened so some learning takes place. This is one job that requires training; if you are interested in learning, let us know!
- e. Bullpen - Gives swimmers their event cards or heat and lane assignments and lines them up before their event.
- f. Scoring Table - Usually two people from each team to record times, keep running scores, etc. It is increasingly done now on computer.
- g. Runner – At home meets, collects timers' and place judges' cards after each race and brings them to the scoring table.
- h. Food Table - Help with food sales at home meets.
- i. 50-50 Raffle- Help is needed during the first half of home meets selling raffle tickets throughout the pool area.

3. Championship Meet

At the end of the winter season, a league championship meet is held, usually the last weekend in January or early February. You will need to sign up for championships, just as you would for a regular season meet, although sign-ups occur a few weeks ahead. Each swimmer must participate in a required number of dual meets to be eligible to swim in the championship meet. Parent volunteers are also needed for this meet so remember to sign up and help out. Each team is assigned a job by the league. More info on this exciting meet will be posted as it becomes available during the season.

4. Miscellaneous Information

- a. Food Table – At home meets, the FSC provides a food table selling snacks, drinks and other more substantial items such as pizza and hot dogs with profits going to the FSC. Don't forget to patronize the food table at the meets and support your team!
- b. 50-50 Raffle – At home meets, the team will conduct a 50-50 raffle with 50% of the money collected going to the raffle winner. The winner is drawn midway through the meet around event #43.
- c. Team Photos – Usually once a year in the fall, we get the team together for a professional portrait. Individual portraits and trading cards can also be purchased as well. Make sure you're at the pool promptly on team picture day.
- d. Pizza Party– At the end of the season, we have a 'banquet', usually at Thornton Burgess School in Hampden. Anyone registered with our team is welcome, along with his or her family. You may be asked sign up to bring a snack or drink. The team gift is handed out to our swimmers. It's a great time for the kids so don't miss it.
- e. Team Merchandise – Gym bags, towels, T-shirts, etc. with the FSC logo are available. See a board member if you would like to purchase any of these items for your swimmer.
- f. FSC Parents Advisory Board – It takes a lot of dedicated parents to keep the FSC afloat. Please consider volunteering some of your time to serve as on the Board of Directors or on any of the committees. See a copy of the club by-laws for a description of each volunteer opportunity.
- g. One Hour Swim – Our annual fundraiser held during the winter season; swimmers swim laps for an hour to raise money through pledges per lap or flat donations.