



PARENT GUIDE 2016/17



In this guide, new members as well as returning or current parents, will find a lot of comprehensive information on absolutely everything that encompasses the NWAA Sharks Swim Team.



WELCOME!

- ✓ Parents, Board Members, Coaches, Swimmers & New Members
- ✓ Parent liaisons - Emily Tong (emtong@yahoo.com) and Angie Waters (angiewaters@icloud.com)
- ✓ Reason for parent meeting
 - Welcome new families and returning families
 - General information
 - Squad & Practice Requirements
 - Meet info, schedules, code of conduct, volunteering etc.
- ✓ The team has set the bar very high with their achievements over the last year. In order to keep up with this high level of achievement, it is going to take an added effort each season. If we keep doing things the way that we used to do them..... we will likely keep getting the same or worse results.
- ✓ Team achieved level 2 Club Recognition status.
- ✓ NWAA ranked in the 80th percentile (Top 19%) of teams in the United States.
- ✓ This means that we need to do things better, harder, faster and with more discipline. We need to continue the chase towards excellence in swimming, sportsmanship and personal growth.

NWAA Mission Statement

- ✓ NWAA is a premier Swim Club focused on instilling a life-long love of swimming and to build a program of excellence in training, team unity, character development and family support, where every swimmer has the opportunity to achieve their potential and compete at the highest level.

Head Coach Coaching Philosophy

- ✓ “My basic coaching philosophy is inspired to a large extent by Coach Richard Shoulberg (U.S. Olympic Coach & Germantown Academy Coach) whom I consider to be a friend. I believe in basing my entire program around one event. For me that event is the 400 yard/meter Individual Medley. By basing my program on the 400 I.M., my swimmers will be taught to be proficient in all 5 strokes and more importantly, they will learn how to swim all 5 strokes correctly whilst fatigued. Why 5 strokes and not 4? I am a believer in the theory of the Butterfly Kick/Dolphin Kick being the “5th” stroke. It is used in so many important facets of modern day swimming that it deserves to be developed thoroughly. By doing a lot of IM work I can also ensure that the younger swimmers do not specialize at too early an age.
Some might say that I am “old school” in my approach as a swimming coach and they may not be far off. I place a lot of stock in the true basics of swimming although I am constantly trying to improve, learn and better myself as a coach. The biggest mistake a coach can make is to assume that he/she knows it all. In my opinion, we (coaches) learn the most from the swimmers themselves and not only from literature or video. A decent amount of discipline, without being too overbearing, will always be a part of my philosophy.”

- Marcel da Ponte -

1. 2016/17 Coaching Staff

- ✓ Head Coach/CEO – Marcel da Ponte (Makos + National Development + National Team)
- ✓ Head Age Group Coach – Myriah Frabasilio (Makos + Tiger Sharks)
- ✓ Millie Cole – Hammerhead + Great White coach
- ✓ Leanne Jacobsen – Great White + Tiger Sharks coach
- ✓ Elissa Kennedy – National Development + National Team + Dryland
- ✓ Emily Deal – Hammerheads
- ✓ Erin Dolan – Makos + National Development + National Team

2. Volunteering

- ✓ Emily Tong & Angie Waters are the NWAA Parent Liaisons and Volunteer Coordinators. Expect to get to know them well.
 - Emily Tong (emtong@yahoo.com)
 - Angie Waters (angiewaters@icloud.com)
- ✓ They can provide further information on:
 - Volunteer requirements - Different job opportunities (swim meets/administrative/at home)
 - What to do if you are struggling with volunteer commitment?
 - Certain away meets still require volunteers (timers), just fewer needed than our team hosted meets.
 - Sign-ups typically done via sign up genius.
 - If you cannot fulfill your spot, please go to website and remember to remove yourself!
 - The “how’s” and “what’s” of swim meets and team procedures.
 - Becoming an official - Officiating at swim meets is another volunteer opportunity. If you would like to become an official, please contact Kim Sparks (kim.sparks@me.com)

3. Fundraising

- ✓ Board member Brianna Gogel is our fundraising committee chair assisted by Coach Myriah and their committee.
- ✓ Team receives some sponsorship although companies are cutting back on sponsorships.
- ✓ Needed for Team & Social Activities, Equipment, Team Travel, Insurance, Pool Rental etc.
- ✓ Swim-a-Thon, pancake breakfast, Triathlon (in the past).
- ✓ One of the main reasons for fundraising is to try to keep our dues as low as possible.

4. Age Group Squad Practices (Hammerhead, Great White, Tiger Shark, Makos)

- ✓ Tiger & Makos squads will be doing a team bonding activity every month (Saturday).
 - This is a requirement that every swimmer needs to participate in. MUST GO!
 - More Information about these days will be sent out the first of every month.
- ✓ Pursue attendance requirement.
 - 90% but preferably more for MAKO SQUAD
 - 80% but preferably more for TIGER SQUAD
 - No attendance requirements for Hammerhead & Great White squads.
 - Must be on time for practice! (More than 15 Minutes late, the swimmer will be asked to sit out or leave)
- ✓ Attend all competitions (especially Championship meets) as designated by the coach.
- ✓ Represent Northwest Arkansas Aquatics with maturity and good sportsmanship.
- ✓ Please ensure that swimmers are wearing the appropriate dryland clothing.
 - TENNIS SHOES ARE A MUST!!!!
- ✓ Swimmers not meeting expectations may be asked to move to a different squad.
- ✓ Please ensure that swimmers have all the required equipment.
 - Pull-buoy, Kickboard, Paddles, Snorkel, Fins.

5. National Development & National Team Practices

- ✓ Practice is always a little hectic when we first start a new season. Please be patient in this regard.
- ✓ Attendance. Please take note of the attendance policies for these squads. These requirements will be STRICTLY enforced.
 - 100% for National Team
 - 90% for National Development (can miss 1 practice out of 8 per week)
- ✓ Injuries and/or Illness. Absolutely no swimmers will be allowed to practice or attend a workout if they are either injured or sick.

- In the best interests of the swimmer.
- Please seek medical assistance and only return to practice once they are 100% cleared to resume activities.
- Continuing to practice while injured fur exacerbates the injury.
- Athletes heal much faster by not exercising during injury or illness.
- ✓ It is mandatory that ALL Championship Meets that are qualified for must be attended. State meets are crucial to attend for ALL members.
- ✓ All morning practices must be attended.
- ✓ Please ensure that swimmers are wearing the appropriate dryland clothing.
- ✓ Swimmers not meeting expectations may be asked to move to a different squad.
- ✓ Please ensure that swimmers have all the required equipment.

6. Discipline

- ✓ Swimmers that are disrespectful, disruptive, caught cheating or not following instructions etc. will be asked to sit out or leave practice.
 - Athletes need to learn to take responsibility for their actions when testing these boundaries.
 - It will be explained to a swimmer why he/she is being asked to sit out or leave practice.
 - Ill-discipline/disruptive behavior often places other swimmers at a disadvantage during practices.
 - Could also be a safety risk. (swimmers running & jumping into the water etc.)
 - Our coaches need to reinforce the team expectations, USA Swimming rules and BCC rules.
 - We encourage you to reinforce the coach's practice expectations by discussing your child's behavior and the consequences of that behavior.
 - This "time out" should begin to reinforce self-discipline, accountability and respect for others.
 - Discipline should be viewed as a learning curve and in a positive manner. Coaches are not in the business of punishing athletes purposely and without reason.
 - No need for "side issues" resulting from a consequence. Keep the focus on swimming. If the issue is a continuing one or of a serious nature, your swimmers squad coach/Head Coach will contact you.

7. Meets

- ✓ Signing up for meets.
 - Done via website
 - Meet schedule is set months in advance. Please mark your calendars.
- ✓ Team Suits/ Caps.
 - Wearing team apparel is very important at NWAA.
 - Promotes team spirit and unity.
 - Team caps for new members will be available shortly. \$9 each.
 - New team suits and team warm up available via the "team gear" tab on our website.
 - Mandatory items – suit, cap, warm up, 3 pack t-shirts.
- ✓ Practice equipment.
 - Required items. Listed on website. (swimoutlet.com is a great resource)
- ✓ What to do if you are Sick/Emergency?
 - Email Kim Sparks (kim.sparks@me.com)
 - Sometimes it's too late to scratch and meet fees will still be charged.
 - Entry/Meet fees are non-refundable.
- ✓ Who picks the swimmers events?
 - Parents can pick events should they wish to.
 - Coaches may change/switch events at their discretion.
 - No changes can be made after the deadline.
- ✓ Meet Schedule

- More meets, more team expenses.
- Opening meet. Intrasquad October 8th. NWAA Only (sanctioned meet, all times will count).
- Spa Halloween Classic or Jenks Meet – October 21st, November meet to be decided, RAC December Invite – December 2nd, Elite Pro Am – December 15th, NWAA Meet – January 13th, Regionals – February 18th, State meet – March 3rd, Sectionals – March 9th.
- ✓ Travel meets
 - Elite Pro Am – Dallas.
 - Qualifying time standard meet.
 - Mid-season focus meet (shave & rest).
 - Meet will be team travel.

8. Coaches

- ✓ Please remember to be respectful of the coaches' and office assistant's personal and family time.
 - Try not to text or call coaches/office assistant before or after regular business hours.
 - Coaches need privacy and their family time too.
 - All general enquiries should be emailed to Kim Sparks (kim.sparks@me.com)
 - Please try not to interrupt coaches during workouts.
 - Trust your coaches, they ALWAYS put the best interests of their swimmers before their own interests.
 - Not everything that coaches do will make sense, once again, believe & trust!

9. Team Website

- ✓ Our team website is our lifeblood. Please visit www.northwestarkansasaquatics.org regularly.
- ✓ Use the online calendar to keep track of meets & events. It has a print function so you can run a copy to hang on the fridge.
- ✓ We use our website for Meet sign-up, meet entries, reports, news bulletins, pictures, policies, calendar, links, emergency account info (kept private, but important in case of medical emergency!).
- ✓ It is important to LOG ON when using the site to view all content.
- ✓ Please keep your email address current.

10. Communication

- ✓ Facebook (NWAA Sharks Swim Team); Twitter (@nwaasharks1); Instagram (nwa.sharks)
- ✓ Please contact Kim Sparks (kim.sparks@me.com) to sign up for the "Remind101" text messaging service.
- ✓ We are always happy to answer emails, but please see if you can find the answer on our website first. Email traffic is extremely busy at the NWAA Sharks.
- ✓ Keep Coach discussions to after practices or via email. Discussions during practices distract the Coaches from watching their swimmers.
- ✓ Please remember to be vigilant about safety both at practices and meets. Trust your instincts-if you see something suspicious or that doesn't sit right with you, please report to a board member immediately. We would rather err on the side of caution.

11. Team Goals

- ✓ Get all swimmers to wear NWAA gear at meets.
- ✓ Achieve 90% meet participation.
- ✓ Qualify 80 swimmers for the ASI SCY State meet.
- ✓ Place Top 3 in every relay at State meet.
- ✓ Achieve USA Swimming "Bronze Medal Club" recognition.
- ✓ Improve on starts & turns

QUESTIONS PARENTS ASK (FAQ)

(more information can be found on our website at www.northwestarkansasaquatics.org)

1. Sometimes my child doesn't want to go to practice. He wants to play with his friends. Should I force him to go?

You should not force your child; you want his/her participation to be his/her decision. Reinforce the choices and decisions he/she has made to start his/her sport. For example, your swimmer chose to go to practice on Tuesday and Thursdays, on other days they have the freedom to do other activities. As a parent, explain your expectation that they fulfill the commitment they have made by joining the team. You don't want to force your child into a sport that they do not enjoy, yet you want your child to be involved in a 'lifetime sport', to learn about making and keeping a commitment and to interact with peers. So, what are you to do?

Instead of allowing your child to make a daily decision about going to practice, allow him to decide whether or not he wants to participate for the season. Once the decision is made to participate, he is making a commitment to the team and needs to follow through on it by attending practice on a regular basis. A haphazard schedule is detrimental to the athlete's overall development.

Interestingly, when asked to reflect on the role of their parents in their swimming, athletes from a recent USA Swimming World Championship team talked about being pushed to swim by their parents on a weekly basis but knowing they could quit if they stopped having fun with swimming.

2. My child has a lot of interests and activities so he only attends about half of his practices. What will happen to his competition results?

Children involved in other activities can benefit in the areas of coordination and balance, as well as improved social and intellectual development. Specialized training in one activity does not necessarily need to take place at this stage of development. Will your son's teammate who makes all practices have better results? Probably he will because his teammate is working solely on developing one sport skills. It is up to you to explain to your child that making the choice to participate in other activities can have its consequences. Tell your son that he should not compare his results to that of his teammate, but to focus on the fact that he is benefiting from and enjoying other sports.

3. It looks like my child is having a lot of fun at practice. Shouldn't she be working harder?

Be happy that your child is having fun! According to a recent study conducted by USA Swimming children who experience fun while participating stay in sports longer (Tuffey, Gould, & Medbery, 1998). At this stage of the game, the most important aspect of development is the mastery of skills, which means learning the proper technique. Fundamentals must be established prior to true "training" taking place. And, if she is having fun in the process of learning, she is more likely to continue to the sport.

4. It looks like all they do at practice is drills. Shouldn't they be training more?

Your child needs to develop a solid foundation in mechanics. Drills and drill sets serve the specific purpose of teaching skills and fundamentals. Drills develop motor coordination, motor skills, and balance. In fact, your child's coach may prescribe a particular drill, just for your child, in order to improve an aspect of her technique. In addition, she may actually be experiencing a "training" benefit from drills. Drills require concentration and aerobic energy to do them correctly.

5. My daughter's coach sometimes makes her "sit out" for disciplinary reasons. Isn't that a waste of her time?

The coach has set up expectations of proper behavior. Hopefully, your child is aware of the consequences of testing these boundaries. Obviously the coach is reinforcing what is expected of the children at practice. We encourage you to reinforce the coach's practice expectations by discussing your child's behavior and the consequences of that behavior. Hopefully, this "time out" begins to reinforce self-discipline, accountability and respect for others.

6. My son complains that some of the kids cheat in practice. What should I tell him?

Praise him first for completing the workout the coach offers. Remind him that he is there to improve himself and he can't control what his teammates do. Tell him however, that his best course of action is to continue to do things right and others may actually be influenced by his good example. By committing to do his best at all times, over the long haul he will reap the benefits of his hard work.

7. My daughter just moved up to the Senior Group. Now the coach wants her to train twice a day. Is this really necessary?

Your child has established proper technique and fundamentals by progressing through the levels of the team. It is appropriate at this stage of your daughter's career development to increase the training loads. This includes adding the two mornings per week. Although morning practices come extra early, most coaches feel that this level of commitment is necessary for your daughter to reach the next level of her career.

Training for competitive sports is demanding on young athletes. As athletes develop, they need to understand the upcoming time demands. One specific principle of training that applies is the progressive overload principle. A person must be stressed slightly more each day over time to continue to improve. In order to do that, the coach must plan additional time. The addition of morning workouts often becomes necessary for the coach to develop young athletes to their maximum potential.

8. What type of commitment is needed for higher levels of competition?

While an athlete's performance is influenced by numerous factors, there are three that exert the greatest influence: physical, technical and mental. As athletes progress, a greater commitment, of both time and energy, is needed to enable an athlete to address all of these factors.

Additionally, the athlete is asked to take more responsibility for and ownership of his practice and competition performance. One way of doing this is by accepting responsibility for leading a lifestyle conducive to performance, i.e., proper nutrition, adequate sleep, time management and managing extra-curricular activities.

9. Is my teenager sacrificing too much to train?

What you may consider a sacrifice, such as missing a school dance, football game or simply going out with friends, your child may not consider a sacrifice at all! Instead, your child has chosen to commit to his sport. By doing so, he realizes that a certain level of training is necessary for him to achieve greater goals and does not look at these activities as missed opportunities. Keep in mind that your child realizes missing a workout is like missing sleep, it cannot be made up. If, however, your child is expressing sentiments that he is missing these chances, then it is time to re-evaluate the balance in his activities.

10. What does the coach mean when she says that my teenaged daughter controls 80% of her own training?

At this stage it is important for the athlete to take full responsibility for her sport. Your coach is just reinforcing this concept. Having a good attitude, developing proper time management, and demonstrating a strong work ethic are important both in and out of the practice and competition. What your child's coach is referring to is what we call "hidden training factors." She is in control of what she eats, how much sleep she gets, her practice attendance, and even her effort on practice sets. This may really add up to even more than 80%.

11. My child used to compete in all of the events, but now her coach has her focusing on only a few.

Prior to now, your child needed to acquire a wide range of skills and the aerobic development necessary to allow for this specialization. At this point in her career, her physical development allows her to train for specific events. Children at this stage have reached the physical maturity necessary to specialize in particular events for which they are best suited.

12. I notice the coach having meetings with the older athletes at the beginning of the season. What are they talking about? Is he asking for input?

Typically, the coach likes to share his seasonal plan with the group prior to the start of the season, as well as reviewing the previous season's strengths and weaknesses. This plan highlights the major competition, tapering and the overall training plan. By presenting the athletes with information, the coach is making the athlete part of the process. This meeting may also be a prelude to individual goal setting sessions and an opportunity to begin to build team unity.

13. My child was very successful as very young child. How can I help her reach the next level?

When your daughter is making the transition, she needs to realize that she is participating at a higher level. Improvements are in tenths and hundredths, rather than seconds, due to biological and physiological factors.

Throughout her career, you have been very supportive. This support is still needed but it may have to be a little different than in the past. It is a good time to discuss with your daughter what she needs from you. Do not be afraid to ask her "How can I support you in your sport?" While you are an important part of her support network, realize your daughter, at this level, should be taking on more ownership of her athletic career.

14. I want my son to qualify for Nationals so badly, but he keeps just missing. What can I do to help?

It is important for you to acknowledge that this is your child's goal, not yours. Your expectations may actually be putting undue pressure on his performances. There are two types of goals that athletes can set. Outcome Goals focus on the end result of performance such as "win" or "make finals." Process Goals relate to the process of performance. Examples are "great technique" or "strong finish."

Athletes have much more control over Process Goals. Outcome Goals are uncontrollable since they also involve the performance of other competitors. Athletes and coaches should concentrate on Process Goals since they involve aspects an athlete can control. Focusing on a time is outcome driven. Although you want what's best for your son, encourage him to talk to his coach to clearly identify Process Goals to achieve improvement.

15. Who can I contact about information and questions regarding the Sharks?

Kim Sparks is the office assistant for the NWAA Sharks. Any and ALL queries and questions can be directed to her and she will be happy to assist you. Kim's email address is: kim.sparks@me.com

16. Does a potential new NWAA swimmer need to tryout?

Yes, NWAA now accepts new swimmers on a year-round basis. If you are interested in joining NWAA then please contact Kim Sparks to set up a tryout.

17. Which squad (group) is my swimmer in?

You should be able to tell by looking at your online NWAA account under the "members" tab. Alternatively, you can contact Kim Sparks (kim.sparks@me.com) and she should be able to assist you.

18. Where, when and at what time does my swimmer practice?

Once you have determined which squad your athlete is in, you can visit the "Schedules/Time Standards" tab on our website.

19. What are the squad expectations for my swimmer?

The expectations for each squad can be found under the "ABOUT" tab on our website.

20. Does my athlete have to compete in swim meets?

No, although all NWAA swimmers are encouraged to compete, most of our squads do not require swimmers to compete.

21. What items does my swimmer need as a new member of NWAA?

The most important items are obviously a swimsuit (brief or jammer for boys), an NWAA swim cap, goggles, kickboard and short fins. These are the BASIC items needed for practice, there are various other items needed depending on the squad requirements.

In terms of Team Apparel. NWAA focuses heavily on team identity! It is mandatory for all new swimmer members to purchase the following NWAA branded team items:

- 1 Speedo Swimsuit
- 1 NWAA Team Cap (\$9)
- 3 Pack of NWAA T-Shirts (blue, black, gray)
- 1 NWAA Speedo Warm Up

These items are all available via the "Sharks Gear" tab on our website.

22. When is my child ready to swim their first meet?

As soon as your swimmers' squad coach is satisfied that he/she is legal (won't get disqualified) to complete a freestyle and backstroke race then they will be ready to swim in their first meet. NWAA highly encourages meet participation so please check with your squad coach concerning this.

23. How do I commit (sign up) my swimmer for swim meets?

This process is very simple. On our homepage, click on the "Meets/Events Calendar" button. A list of all the meets/dates for the season will come up. Simply click on the meet/event that you are interested in and a new page will appear with a blue button on the top right hand corner of the page which says "Attend/Decline". Click on that button. You should be done!

24. Once an athlete is signed up for a meet, do I have to pick my swimmers' events?

This is totally up to you. You are welcome to pick your athletes events although it is important to understand that your swimmers squad coach may or may not make changes to the events that you have selected. If you do not choose the events, then our coaches will take care of entering the swimmer in his/her events.

25. I want my swimmer to attend a meet however we can only attend certain days, what do I do?

When you commit/sign up your swimmer for a meet, you will have the option to make a 'note' on the sign up page. Please list your instructions there, our coaches will be able to view these notes when they do the entries.

26. Is there an attendance requirement for my child's squad?

Although most of our younger squads do not have an attendance requirement, we highly recommend attending as many practices as possible. They will learn a lot faster.

27. What type and size of equipment should I buy for my swimmer?

Great question. There are 2 kickboard sizes, adult and junior. For swimmers 10 years and younger, buy a junior kickboard, any other swimmers should be using an adult size. With fins you can just buy the same size short fins as their regular shoe size. Paddles also come in different sizes, small, medium, large and sometimes extra-large. Buy small for 9/10-year old's, medium for 11/12-year old's and large for any other age.

Swimsuits should fit as tight as is possible. Especially racing suits. Racing suits should literally be so tight that they can only be worn for a few races at a meet before it starts feeling uncomfortable to be in them. There should be absolutely no "play" in the suit once it has been put on. We generally have a fitting for suits at our Fall Mixer social in September.

28. What is the teams' main form of communication?

With over 170 families and more than 200 swimmers, we are a sizeable team. Therefore, our main form of communication is via email. Another great option is to sign up for "[RemindMe101](#)". This will allow you to receive instant text messages regarding practice cancelations/updates/important info etc. Please contact Kim Sparks for the sign up link.

NWAA also has a Facebook Page (NWAA Sharks Swim Team), Twitter (@nwaasharks1) and Instagram (nwaa.sharks)

29. Life happens! My swimmer will not be able to make practice or they are sick. Do I need to let someone know?

This is not an absolute necessity however it would help if you could pop an email to Kim Sparks to let the coaches know what your situation is.

PREPARING FOR A SWIM MEET

WHAT TO PACK

- NWAA swim cap
- NWAA swimsuit
- Goggles
- Two towels
- Healthy, nut-free snacks & water
- NWAA t-shirts (3), sweatshirt, warm up, and/or parka
- Books or games
- Cash to purchase heat sheet (usually \$5-15; lists swimmers' events, heats and lanes)
- Permanent marker, highlighter

AT LEAST ONE DAY BEFORE THE MEET BEGINS

- Wait for further meet information from NWAA, usually sent via email.
- Check psych sheets to ensure that your swimmer is entered.
- Check the NWAA website to see if your practice group coach has made any changes to your individual events or added any relays to your schedule. Relays are a lot of fun, bolster team spirit, and can add a lot of points to help the team win a swim meet. All four members of a relay team **must be on time for warm-up** in order for the race to be swum.
- Make sure you know what time warm-up begins for each of your sessions, then prepare to arrive at the pool **at least 10 minutes before warm-up begins.**

BEFORE WARM-UP BEGINS

- Find a seat with your teammates
- Purchase a heat sheet; use highlighter to identify your events
- Using a permanent marker, mark your events, heats and lanes on your hand, arm or leg, or record them on an electronic device that you will keep with you. For example:

E	H	L
#1 – 200 free relay	2	6
#5 – 50 back	3	4
#11 – 100 free	1	2

NOTE: Permanent ink may be “erased” from skin by using baby oil, sunscreen spray, or another oily substance.

MEET VOCABULARY

Announcer: Announce events, results and other pertinent information during warm-ups and the meet.

Admissions: Collect spectator entry fee and psyche sheet fees at door. Will become floater after fulfilling this position during the meet session.

Awards: Prepare and distribute ribbons at the meets

Bull Pen: Area where swimmers are organized in their heat/lanes prior to the start of a race.

Tech Suit/Kneeskin: A racing suit made from special fabric. Only used for very important meets.

Set up/Clean up Crew: Clean up equipment (lane lines, flags, recall rope, touch pads, tables, chairs, etc.) in deck and spectator area after a meet.

Runner: Collect lane cards from timers and brings them to the scoring table.

Concessions: Set up concessions before the meet, sell food during the meet and clean up concession area after the meet.

Head Timer: Coordinate timers and relief timers at home meets. Checks watches for functionality and accuracy prior to meet.

Meet Marshal: Ensure USA Swimming & ISI safety rules are followed at the meets. Must be on deck at start of warm-ups.

Official: Assure that the competition is run fairly. If you are interested in becoming an official, you must attend a clinic and register with USA Swimming.

Positive Check-In: Assist swimmers in finding/marketing their names on the positive check-in sheet. Will become floater after fulfilling this position during the meet session.

Scorers' Table: Prepare, setup and work computer system at the meet. Enter meet line-ups in advance and print heat sheets prior to the meet. On the job training provided.

Setup Crew: Set up equipment (lane lines, flags, recall rope, touch pads, tables, chairs, etc.) in deck area and spectator area prior to meet. Will become floater after fulfilling this position.

Timer: Time swimmers with stopwatch & record backup time on lane cards.

SHARKS 101

USE THE WEBSITE Our website contains just about everything you need to know. There are FAQs, News Bulletins, Team Records, Calendar of Events, Links, Meet Results, to name a few. If you are looking for some information, the website is the best place to start. We have worked hard over the years to make sure the website holds all the vital information you will need. It is also important to **LOG IN** when you access the website. Many of the features and information is available only to team members and is not visible unless you sign in. There is a lot of information under the Parent tab for our families.

GET TO KNOW OTHER PARENTS Being part of a Swim Team can be something you do with your children for 10+ years. Because of this, as a parent, you will get to know the other parents and hopefully build strong friendships. If you are new to the team, these friendships can be valuable as the "elders" are usually a wealth of information to guide you on your journey. When you volunteer we share duties with other teams. Working side-by-side with parents from other neighborhoods can really broaden your sense of community. You will learn a lot simply by introducing yourself, asking to share some shade, volunteering to do something out of your comfort zone.

MEET BOARD MEMBERS Your Board Members are just like you-they are parents. Those on the Board are volunteers who are working to make the NWAA Sharks better and better each season. We have two parent members Designated as Parent Liaison's just to help you. While we encourage you to get to know your swimmers' Coaches, please remember that their job is to Coach, and with 7-15 swimmers in a lane, parents are a huge distraction. Utilize the Parent Liaison or our Office Manager as your go-to for problem solving.

BE PATIENT, BE FLEXIBLE and HAVE FORGIVENESS So many youth sport teams have 20, maybe 25 members on the team. The NWAA Sharks have over 200! That is a lot of kids to manage! And like so many things, what looks good on paper may not actually work well in execution. Each summer we have dozens of new swimmers join the team, and it isn't until the first day of practice that we get to meet these new swimmers and discover their capabilities. Because of this, our Coaches have to make changes on the fly, be prepared to take on extra duties, and take some chances. Not everything goes smoothly all the time. Things get messed up; mistakes are made; someone is forgotten; things go missing. Understand that none of this is intentional, and your children's best interests are always our #1 priority!

COMMUNICATE The NWAA Sharks are a parent-run Team. Everyone contributes to our success, and communicating is a key factor. The Team does its best to make sure YOU know what is going on, and we need the same from our families. We need to know when you will be missing a meet. Let us know how you will be volunteering at meets. Have a brilliant idea to make the team better? Share it with us! Want to dedicate your time to make the team better, run for the Board of Directors. We have ways set up to do all of these things, but even if you aren't sure, a simple e-mail or a conversation at practice with a Board Member does not go unheard.

GET INVOLVED If every parent came to a meet, timed for an hour and a half, and then sat in their chair, our team would fall apart. There is so much that our parents give of themselves, and for that, we are eternally grateful. Timing is a great place to get started with the Team, and many of our parents have been professional Timers for years, but if you have the willingness to branch out, there are lots of volunteer positions. If you have a love for grilling, or a knack with computers, are a certified Lifeguard or want to be one-LET US KNOW. Our parent volunteers are our backbone. **WE NEED YOU!**

BE READY The rumors are true! Swim Meets are early on Saturday/Sunday mornings...VERY EARLY and you will need to be prepared. Early in the season we have a Parent Meeting which will help you understand how things work. It is a good idea to attend this, especially if you are a new parent. the Parent Handbook also has a lot of information about how a Swim Meet works, and what you need to do to get ready, and what to expect when you are there. We have swim meets in 100° plus heat, Arctic like temps and in the pouring rain; not much stands in our way.

***HAVE FUN!** That's why we are here. Simple.*

FROM A SWIMMERS PERSPECTIVE.....

Will I have anyone to sit with at a meet?

There will be lots of friends and people to help you with what you need.

Remind your parents you need to have a heat sheet and sharpie for meets.

The heat sheet tells you what information you need to write down on your arm, leg, hand or sheet of paper so you know when it's time for you to swim. If you get to the meet early, it is less stressful so you can get this done before the team starts warming up.

What do I do if my parents are late picking me up from practice?

Don't worry. Always stay with a coach and let them know your parents are late.

Don't be afraid to ask the coaches questions. They are friendlier than they look. ;)

If you need help putting your cap on, ask another swimmer or your coach, it's common practice.

I worry I will fall off the starting blocks.

If you do, just climb out and try again.

What happens when my goggles come off after my dive/start?

This, unfortunately happens frequently. If it is a freestyle race then you can quickly try to readjust while swimming. Butterfly, Backstroke & Breaststroke does not allow you to adjust goggles, just keep going, no matter where your goggles are.

What do I do on the first day of practice?

After you get your suit on, head to the pool and have your cap on and goggles ready. Wait for you coach to give you instructions.

How will I ever do a flip turn?

Your coach will teach you. Just keep working on it, you can do it!

Anything you are worried about, most of the other swimmers have had the same fears.

Don't compare yourself to anyone else.

Everything may seem scary at first, but hang in there, it's a lot of fun;)

Trust your coaches! They would never make you do something you aren't capable of doing.

Make mistakes, that's how you learn;)

Believe in yourself.

Try hard. Do your best. HAVE FUN!!

NWAA COMMITTEE'S/VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Concessions: Assist chairperson as needed to purchase supplies and food for the home meets and work the concession stand during the meets. **(Position Available)**

Publicity: Assist in the club advertising with local papers for NWAA registration and club events. Obtain coverage for home meets and report results to area newspapers. **(Position Available – Urgent)**

Volunteerism: Coordinate volunteer requirements for each season and ensure that all activities have sufficient volunteers. Tabulate volunteer activities for each family per season. Must be familiar with Word and Excel. **(Emily Tong - emtong@yahoo.com)**

Parent Liaison's: Assist new and old members with any questions from a parents perspective as well as provide information on how NWAA works.
(Emily Tong – emtong@yahoo.com; Angie Waters – angiewaters@icloud.com)

Apparel: Responsible for ordering and distribution of the team swim suits and caps from “The Starting Block”. The committee also makes available for purchase various team apparel at the start of each season and sometimes during home meets. **(Scot Harlow - scot.harlow@gmail.com)**

Social: Assist in the planning and execution for the 2 season-ending banquets, holiday party and other desired social functions for the club. **(Corinna Spencer - spencerhome40@gmail.com)**

Psych sheet ads: Locate vendors in the community that are willing to sponsor NWAA by selling ads for the psych sheets of team hosted meets. **(Position Available)**

Swim-A-Thon: Assist in the planning and execution of the annual team swim-a-thon fundraiser, including working the evening of the swim-a-thon and tabulating results. **(Brianna Gogel/Myriah Frabasilio - nanabanana0924@aol.com)**

Photos: Arrange for team photos; coordinate purchase of photos, collect money and distribute photos. **(Position Available)**

Membership: Must be available during the day. Prepares materials and coordinates team registration. Monitors team roster to ensure all swimmers are registered with USA Swimming. **(Kim Sparks – kim.sparks@me.com)**

Awards: Assist with ordering & distribution of ribbons before, during & after all home and conference meets. **(Emily Tong – emtong@yahoo.com)**

Meet Director: All things regarding our team hosted meets. **(David Vann – vannfamily5@gmail.com)**

NWAA Officials: Assist new members with signing up for training classes to become USA swimming official. Officiate at several meets each season. **(Position Available)**



Bentonville Community Center **Swim Team Expectations**

(from the BCC management)

We are excited for another year of competitive swimming at the Bentonville Community Center. In assisting us all with clear expectations of what is expected of our swimmers and teams, please read carefully.

- Every participant must be a member of the BCC scan at front entrance.
 - There is a \$5 replacement fee for lost cards.
- Bags are to be placed on bleachers in competition pool area.
- **Do NOT exit any natatorium doors, alarms will sound.**
- Please do not use the Cabana Bathrooms, these are needed for families.
- Please be mindful of other patrons when using locker rooms.
- Return equipment to where it belongs neatly.
- Only use lanes assigned.
- No food on pool deck.
- Please be respectful of the facility and the patrons.
- Parents should not stay parked in the pickup line, please park in the lot if you are waiting for a swimmer.
- All facility rules apply.

2016-2017 FAMILY VOLUNTEERISM

Volunteerism is crucial in keeping any athletic organization running smoothly. NWAA is no different. Participation from each family is required to host successful events. Typically, NWAA hosts four major events each year, including:

- *The Winter Invitational Swim Meet (generally held Fri-Sun on the 3rd weekend in January)
- **The Memorial Classic Swim Meet (held Fri-Sun at the beginning of June)
- ***The Shark Swim-a-Thon (generally held on a Saturday TBA)

Each event has upwards of 300 volunteer positions that must be filled. Families are required to work each event, whether their child is participating in the event or not.

Each NWAA family is required to work a minimum of:

2 sessions at The Winter Invitational

2 sessions at The Memorial Classic

The Swim-a-Thon or another fundraising event

Failure to fulfill the volunteer commitment will result in a \$100 charge to that family's invoice after the event has been completed. This penalty is not intended as a fundraiser. Rather, it is designed to motivate parents to assist in the crucially needed volunteer positions. Best case scenario: all families work and no fines are issued.

15-30 days prior to each event, the Event Director will post a volunteer sign-up sheet and provide sign-up information on the team website: www.northwestarkansasaquatics.org Prior to each event, NWAA families should utilize the website to select the volunteer positions and times that are needed. Each NWAA family should make a point to sign in in the Volunteer Check-in Notebook at each event. This ensures you receive credit for the sessions worked.

Unable to complete required volunteer sessions?

- Prior arrangements (ideally, 45 days in advance) must be made with the Volunteer Coordinator. This advance notification allows for pre-event tasks (as available) to be assigned and/or discussion with the NWAA board. If a pre-event task is not available, then you will be charged 40% of the above-mentioned fine.
- If you have travel plans for one of the above-mentioned weekends, please consider fulfilling your volunteer commitment on Friday and leaving town afterward. Friday volunteer slots may be reserved for you before the sign-up form is distributed to the team, if you notify the Volunteer Coordinator at least 45 days in advance of the event.
- Note: serving as an active board member also satisfies volunteerism requirement.

HOW TO SIGN UP FOR A MEET

To commit an athlete or athletes for an meet or event:

1. Go to the Meets/Events Calendar button on the NWAA Homepage and find the desired meet
2. Click Attend/Decline or Edit Commitment below the desired meet
3. Click Undeclared Athletes tab
4. Set any desired filters and click Search if needed
5. Select the athlete(s) you wish to commit by putting a check mark next to their name(s) (click check box next to "Member Name" column header to select all) and click Multi-Commit to Attend
6. Once this is done they will appear in the Committed Athlete Tab
7. Alternatively, you can click on a single name and sign them up by using the Signup Record or Declaration pull down
 - a. If there is an ev3 file attached to the meet (drop down is labeled "Signup Record") you will then be able to commit them for individual events by placing a check mark next to the desired events
 - b. Click Save Changes