

HSL 2020 Season

First, I hope everyone is well and getting through these tough times. During this Covid – 19 Pandemic we are all facing challenging times and need to make tough decisions. The HSL just like everyone else must follow the guidelines and orders of the governor. Currently Maryland is under a Stay at Home order that has been extended until at least May 15th and will be lifted in phases to ensure the safety of everyone. We are constantly monitoring the re-opening of the state and will use this to make decisions on the upcoming season.

The HSL Board and Executive Committee have had multiple meetings to discuss the 2020 season and try to put together a plan that will potentially allow us to have some meets and still maintain a safe environment for everyone. We are doing everything we can to salvage some part of the season and try to give the swimmers and families some sense of normalcy in their lives. With so much uncertainty this is challenging to predict and plan. Based on these discussions, we have a proposal that I am going to layout in this document. This is based on a Best-Case Scenario and we have timelines to make final decisions.

While we are making plans for a modified season, we also understand that each swim family and team need to make their own decisions based upon their situations and safety concerns. I have outlined the Best-Case Scenario below with timelines to make decisions including what would make us cancel the season altogether. Our goal is to try and get swimmers into the pool to enjoy some time with friends and teammates.

The Proposal is as follows:

- We will have a shortened season of just 4 meets and only swimming on weekends. The 4 available weekends would be July 18th, July 25th, August 1st, and August 8th with the possibility to swim on both Saturday and Sunday to allow for separating swimmers into smaller groups.
- Teams would need to determine if they are able to field a team, if they have a facility to swim, or if they would like to combine with another team to get swimmers in the pool.
- The league will get a list of teams and swimmers and make a modified schedule based upon number of swimmers, and facility availability.
- We would limit the number of swimmers at a meet and would lock in rosters by July 1st to allow us to make a schedule for the meets. This means no additional swimmers will be allowed after July 1st.
- The meets will not be scored but times will be reported.
- Teams may be combined or split and entered into different meets. We will do everything we can to accommodate needs of teams or swimmers.
- We will need to coordinate ways to meet social distancing guidelines. This includes limiting swimmers on the deck, reducing timers, reducing other volunteers, and reducing spectators.
- There will be no Championship Meet.

Team Responsibilities:

- Teams will need to determine if they will have a facility available for them to swim.
- Teams will need to get a head count so we can determine how to make the meets work.
- Practices will not start before July 1st and will be limited based upon guidelines from the state and league.
- Teams will need to decide how they will register their swimmers and any financial responsibilities.
- Some teams have offered the use of their pool to other teams for practices or to have a meet if needed. We will coordinate what teams will need this help and what teams have offered.

Timelines:

- We will have another meeting on May 27th to see where the Stay at Home order stands for the state. If at that time we are not at minimum in Phase 1 of re-opening, we need to cancel the season.
- If we are at least in Phase 1 of re-opening, we will have another meeting on June 15th to see where we are. If we are not in Phase 2 on our way to Phase 3 we will need to cancel the season.
- If we make it to June 15th and we look like we may be close to Phase 3 we will make a final decision on June 30th. June 30th is our end date, if we pass all of the other dates, we will have a Go or No Go on June 30th.
- If we get to June 15th and have a chance to have a season, we will begin working on finalizing a modified schedule and plan.
- After each timeline, the league will send out a message on where we stand and if we need to cancel, we will try and get that out as soon as possible to let everyone know.

Changes to the HSL for 2020:

- The Board has proposed and voted to extend the age limit for the 2021 season to 19 to accommodate the swimmers who would be in their Senior year during the 2020 season. This situation is in effect whether we have a modified season or cancel the season, since the Seniors will not get the traditional season this allows them to return to get a full season.
- The HSL board will do everything we can to assist teams and swimmers.

Please remember that we are doing all we can to try and get this to work and will continue to send updates as we know them. Regardless of what happens this season we will work on making any necessary changes to the league structure to make sure we come back better next year. The HSL is always here to promote swimming, maintain a safe environment, and provide an opportunity to enjoy great things that come with this sport.

Please stay safe and we will get through this!

Sincerely,

HSL President.