

Potomac Station Sailfish Parent Handbook

Updated February 19, 2015

Swim Team Policies

The Potomac Station Sailfish, hereafter known as the Sailfish, is a recreational swim team. We are part of the Old Dominion Swim League (ODSL). Our team seeks to develop individual swimmers physically. We also teach the kids about sportsmanship and what it means to be a part of a team. We hope this experience with the Sailfish will help all swimmers to grow both in the sport of swimming and within themselves.

Membership:

Membership on the Potomac Station Sailfish is open to all Potomac Station residents from under the age of 18 that can swim 25m unassisted. We will accept outside swimmers, from neighboring communities without swim teams, only if there is space available on the team. Potomac Station and returning Non PS families have an opportunity to register before any new non PS families. PS Families must be current with PS HOA dues in order to swim with the team. Non PS families must pay a nonresident fee.

Coaching Staff:

The Sailfish board hires the coaching staff. The coaches are responsible for all training and instruction of the swimmers. Coaches will be available for questions from parents. However, if you need to speak with a coach this must be done through email or conversations after practice. During practice it is very important for the coaches to stay focused solely on the swimmers. Also, when your child's practice is over another one may be starting. Please be aware of this before approaching the Coaches. The Coaches are responsible for the swimmers during practice and cannot be distracted. This is very important for everyone's safety!

Communication:

The Sailfish use the potomacstationsailfish.org website to post all messages regarding meets, practice times, etc. See *Coaches* button on Sailfish website for Board Members and Coaches contact information. Please make sure that the information in your on-line account is accurate. This is our best way of communicating with our 200+ swimmers and if an emergency arises, that info is used to help your child. Meet schedules will also be posted on the bulletin boards at the pool. Be sure to check the website daily for the latest changes and information.

Swim Team Cost/Fees:

The Sailfish (**Community Resident**) fees are posted on the website under registration.

Parent Meeting:

All new and returning team members are required to attend the Parent Meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to review any changes that have come up over the winter, meet the coaches, meet the board, hear what is planned for the season and answer questions that you may have.

Equipment:

All swimmers should have a good pair of goggles. The Sailfish have goggles for sale in an emergency. Swim Caps are required for girls and boys with long hair past ears at practices and meets. Caps with team logo are available for purchase from the team. See Heather Brabant at practices to purchase one.

Team suits will be available for purchase. Two styles are being offered. The suit can be used year after year and will be available for purchase online or locally. Check the website in April for information and a session date for fittings.

Items needed for practice:

- 2 pairs of Goggles
- Towel(s) 1 or 2
- Practice suit, PLEASE DO NOT wear your team suit to practice if possible as the color can fade due to the chlorine in the pool.
- Possibly a sweatshirt/jacket especially for the first several practices where the water and air may be cool.
- Swim cap if applicable

Items needed for Meets:

- 2 towels - 1 to sit on in your age group section on the deck and 1 to dry off with.
- Bathing suit (team suit preferred)
- A sweatshirt/jacket for those early morning meets
- Sunscreen
- Team Swim cap if applicable
- 2 pairs of Goggles, bring extra goggles just in case one breaks
- Possibly a sweatshirt/jacket especially for the first several practices where the water and air may be cool.

Non Swimmer Supervision:

The Potomac Station Sailfish require that all children be supervised by a parent or other designated adult. The coaching staff is not responsible for non-swimmers. Non-swimmers will not be allowed into the pool during practice or meets. We have signed an agreement with the HOA that ALL children will be supervised at all times and ALL children will be kept off of Pool landscaping. The HOA is EXTREMELY serious about this and offenders will be asked to leave!

Meets are very busy times. It is for the safety of your younger children that we ask you to arrange for their supervision while you are working at the meets. Exchanging childcare with another parent works well.

Old Dominion Swim League:

ODSL is comprised of many teams. These teams are from all over Loudoun County. A link to the list of teams, as well as driving instructions can be found at the Sailfish website.

PRACTICE

Practice is the single most important means of developing our swimmers! Consistent attendance will be considered in scheduling team members for meets. Practice will be held Monday thru Friday; we ask that your child attends as many of these practices as possible. Please inform the coaches if your swimmer cannot attend the 3 days of required weekly practices. Attendance will be taken at practices and meets. There will be attendance sheets located by the cabana, for the swimmers to check themselves in so that we know they attended practices.

Practice Times:

Please read the Practice Schedule for exact practice dates and times. Practices need to start on time and to be uninterrupted. If parents want to talk to any of the coaches, please email them or wait until after **ALL** practices have finished. Also, remember that our practices are back-to-back. When your child's session is over, the coach may be starting the next group's practice, and still is not available for personal discussions.

Practice Schedule:

The coaches will be working on the basics at first (kicking, stroke drills, etc.), slowly moving toward full swim strokes. The coaches will talk with the swimmers in each age group and let them know what they need to work on. Swimmers will be broken up into different lanes depending on their stroke ability.

Swimmers **need to attend at least 3 practices per week to be considered to swim in a meet.** If you have conflicts with your time please email the coaches as soon as you can so another time can be worked out.

Discipline:

If a swimmer becomes a problem and disrupts other swimmers during practice, a coach may dismiss him or her from the rest of that practice. The coach will contact the parents to discuss any ongoing discipline problems.

Time Trials:

Time Trials are intended to give the swimmers the opportunity to participate in a mock meet setting and establish their initial times for the season. It is a good time to refresh themselves with how a meet runs or give new swimmers the feel of what a meet is like. Parent helpers will be required for this meet which is done at the beginning of the swim season.

Parents of swimmers participating in the time trials will be required to work. This mock meet will give the swimmers and parents both a feel for how a meet is run and where they need to be.

SWIM MEETS

Participation on a swim team is a serious commitment for the parents and swimmers. Swim meets take place on Saturdays and Wednesdays. Arrival time for Saturday meets is usually to be on deck by 7:00 am, ready to get in the water by 7:15 am. Wednesday evening meets require the swimmers to be on deck by 5:00 pm and ready to get in the water by 5:15 pm. Saturday morning meets start promptly at 8:00 am and Wednesday evening meets start promptly at 6:00 pm. Please check the website for any changes to meet times/places and on deck times.

All swimmers should come to the meet, prepared to swim, with their caps and goggles on. Please drop your child at the pool entrance, when necessary, due to parking restrictions. At our pool and other teams' pools please be aware of and obey any "NO PARKING SIGNS".

Meet Events:

All competitions are by age group and gender except where it calls out for mixed gender or mixed age for relays. The date used to determine what age group your swimmers falls into will be June 15th. No exceptions will be allowed. The lengths of the individual races are as follows:

6 & under: 25 meters	9/10: 50 meters (25 meters butterfly)	13/14: 50 meters
7/8: 25 meters	11/12: 50 meters	15 -18: 50 meters

The swim events are Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, Medley Relays, Individual Medleys (IM), Freestyle Relay.

Swimmers will be scheduled to swim a maximum of 3 Individual events and up to 2 relays at each meet.

Meet Check-in:

Swimmers are required to check in with their Age Group coordinator and/or Coach at least 30 minutes before the meet starts. Failure to comply with this rule will cause the swimmer to be dropped from relays and individual events. Home team warm-ups begin at least 30-45 minutes prior to meet start time. Swimmers need to check in before warming up.

During a Meet:

Swimmers should remain in the age group area designated by an age group sign during the meet. This allows swimmers to rest between races and to be found in time for their events. If for some reason a swimmer needs to leave the team area (ie. Bathroom, getting something to eat, seeing their parents) they should notify their Age Group Coordinator before leaving. Remind the parents that it makes it easier if they come to check on their swimmers versus letting the swimmers leave the staging area.

The Age Group coordinator parents are there to get swimmers lined up in order of heats/lanes. It is the swimmer's responsibility to stay in their place once the age group coordinator has put them there. If the swimmer needs to go to the restroom they must notify a parent helper or the Clerk of Course.

If a swimmer needs to leave before his/her event they will need to notify their coordinator or they will be considered a no-show. The ultimate responsibility belongs to the swimmers!

Missed Meets:

Every swimmer or parent is required to designate attendance online for each meet. Pay attention to emails regarding deadlines. Seeding meets takes time. Adding swimmers after the fact is not easy and in most cases CANNOT be done. If you do not designate for a meet we will assume your swimmer is not swimming. With our new timing system, we will not be able to add swimmers at the meet. If you designate yes, and then cannot come you must let the Coach know. Sometimes we have to scratch a relay because we were not notified of a swimmer not attending and it hurts the others that wanted to swim. By not showing up or letting us know, you let down the other swimmers on that relay team. The swimmers look forward to the relays and really enjoy working with the other swimmers on that relay team. **If you are late**, you will be scratched from any relay team you were placed on and a replacement will be found. **If you miss the meet**, without prior notification to the coaches, you will NOT be eligible to swim a relay in the following meet. Discretion is up to the coaches. Once a meet is seeded and merged with the other team it is very difficult to add swimmers. It is critical for the success of the meet to know who will and will not be able to attend the meet. If you need to leave early or arrive late you need to also let the coach/team manager know.

POST SEASON MEETS

There will be two (2) types of “Post- Season” meets. The Divisional Meets (the number of these meets will be determined by the total number of teams involved for that year) and the All Star Meet. The All Star Meet is only for those that meet qualifying times.

Post-Season Meet Criteria and Qualification

Any Swimmer that competes in at least two (2) League-sanctioned meets during the current regular season will be eligible to compete in one (1) of the two (2) Post-Season meets. A swimmer may only swim in one (1) Post-Season meet, either Divisionals or All-Stars, but not both. A swimmer without an official league time (NT) in an event cannot swim that event in the Divisional Meets or the All-Star Meet.

The League will establish an initial cut-time for each event equivalent to the 16th fastest time from the previous year’s All-Star Meet.

The League Board will establish a committee to re-evaluate the initial cut times after the 2nd meet of the season. The goal of the new cut-time will be to establish a benchmark where the swimmers with the top 24 fastest times will go to All-Stars.

Any swimmer to achieve a time better than the final cut-time will qualify for All-Stars. There may be ultimately more than 24 swimmers in an event in the All-Star Meet.

If a swimmer qualifies for 1 event for All-Stars, the swimmer may choose to go to All-Stars in the qualified event OR go to his/her Divisional Meet in any other event except the one qualified for in All-Stars.

If the swimmer chooses to swim at his/her divisional Meet, the swimmer forfeits the currently qualified for spot in All-Stars.

If the swimmer qualifies for 2 events in All-Stars, they must swim @ All-Stars and are not eligible to swim in the Divisional meet.

RIBBON POLICIES

Ribbons are awarded to swimmers for every meet and race in which they compete. No ribbons will be given out at the meets. Ribbons will be handed out at the next practice after the meet whenever possible.

Ribbons can be found in the Ribbon Box, filed in a folder under the first letter of the last name of the swimmer. The box is out at every practice.

All questions about ribbons should be directed to the Team Manager. Please email the team manager, SailfishTeamManager@GMAIL.COM with any questions you may have. Please let her know your swimmers name, the race, meet and what the problem is. Any information will be helpful in tracking down and correcting the problem.

Distribution:

All ages are eligible for placement ribbons 1st – 6th place. If a swimmer places after 6th place, they will get a participation ribbon only. This is for individual events and relays. If a swimmer is disqualified (DQ) they will receive a participation ribbon only. Heat winner ribbons are given out for each heat at the end of that heat. The timers will distribute them to the swimmers.

PATCH POLICIES

Sailfish Patches are available for purchase while supplies last.

Stroke bars are issued only one time when the swimmer accomplishes an individual event without being DQ'd. Once a stroke bar has been issued to a swimmer, it is their responsibility to not lose it. Stroke bars/year bars, etc will not be replaced. Please contact a board member if your swimmer hasn't received a bar they qualified for.

Bars and patches will be distributed through the ribbon box during the swim season.

Prior year rocker bars and Lost bars and/or patches, can be purchased.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

The Sailfish swim team is run by parent power. Without the active and full support of all the parents, a meet cannot be accomplished. A home swim meet requires close to 50 parents to help make it successful. Away meets require between 25 and 30 parent volunteers.

A swimmer's family member is required to work 25 hours, during the season, at either home or away meets. Divisionals and All Stars will not count toward this fulfillment.

It is the responsibility of your family to contact the Volunteer Coordinator if you are having trouble signing up for jobs on line or need to find opportunities to fulfill your volunteer hours during times other than at meets. Please understand that your child may not be able to participate on the swim team in the future if your family does not meet this requirement.

Once you have committed to the work assignments it will be your responsibility to find a replacement for your job if you need to miss a meet. Remember that you are still obligated to work your 25 hours. We will keep track of everyone and how many hours they are signed up for and actually complete. The Sailfish are a family team and it takes all of us to make the meets run smoothly. Please make every effort to fulfill your assignments. Please notify the Parent Volunteer Coordinator when you have switched with someone (prior to the meet).

All parents working the day of the meet need to check in with the Volunteer Coordinator when they arrive at the meet, unless you are part of the set-up crew. The Volunteer Coordinator will need to fill any jobs that are no-shows as quickly as possible. Please make every effort to be at the meet when you are expected.

All jobs, unless noted, are for the entire length of the meet. We provide breaks during the meet with "relief workers". These are not your replacement workers. Please return to your meet job after visiting the restroom and getting some food or drink. You may bring your food and drink back to your position with you. We will do our best to provide you with as much break time as we have relief workers for.

A training/informational session will be held prior to the start of the meets to help you become familiar with the tasks need to perform.

Job Description for Parent Volunteers

Timers: Time the swimmers using provided Dolphin Timing watch or stopwatch. At each meet there are 6 lanes. At our home meets we need to have 12 to 14 timers plus a Head Timer. At away meets we provide 6 to 9 timers.

Age Group Coordinator: This position is responsible for working with an age group (i.e. 6 and under, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13 and up). You will need to make sure all the kids are sitting within their age group. You will be given a meet sheet for your age group. You take roll at the beginning of the meet. You then will have kids lined up for their races during the meet. It helps if this person is familiar with many of the kids in the age group you are volunteering. You are required to stay until the end of the meet and/or until all the swimmers in your age group have finished. This position is required at both home and away meets. We need 6 to 7 age group coordinators per meet.

Parking : Direct people where to park for meets at Potomac Station. You will also put up “NO PARKING” signs before the home meets. There are many restricted areas that are not available for parking. This position is only required at home meets.

Clerk of Course : Line up the swimmers so that they are ready to swim in the correct lane and heat. Each team has 2 or 3 Clerks at every meet.

Runner : Pick-up the sheets from timers after each age group event. Pick up DQ slips from Stroke and Turn judges, take them to the Referee for review. Then bring to Team Manager. This position is required at both home and away meets. We need 2 runners per meet.

Meet Set-up : Set up tables, chairs, backstroke flags and sound equipment and rearrange pool furniture. Setup begins at 4:45pm for Wed. meets, Sat. meets setup is Friday night at 7:00pm and/or 6:30am Sat. We need 6 people for this job. This position is only required at home meets.

Meet Clean-up : Stay at the end of the meet to take down the backstroke flags, pick-up trash that the teams missed, put tables, chairs and sound system away and return the pool furniture to its proper places. Cleanup can start towards the end of the meet i.e. pickup trash. We need 6 people for this job. This position is only required at home meets.

Concessions: Work at the concession stand during meets, grilling, and/or selling food. This position is run in shifts and we always make sure you are able to watch your child swim. This position is only required at home meets.

Computer Operator: Focused computer operator to sit near Starter and Referee to make sure timers reset after each heat. Works closely with the Team Manager. We need 2 people for this job. This position is only required at home meets. Position requires in-house training.

Starter/Announcer : Announce and start each race, determine false starts, keep the meet running smoothly. This position is only required at home meets. ODSL training required/provided.

Stroke and Turn Judge : Observe the swimmer’s strokes and turns. Disqualify, in a fair and consistent manner, swimmers who violate the league disqualification standards. This position is required at both home and away meets. We will have 2 judges per meet. ODSL training required/provided.

Referee : Sees that the swimming rules are enforced during the meet and ensures all swimmers have uniform and fair competitive conditions. Final authority for the conduct of competition. ODSL training required/provided.