



FALLS POINTE SWIM TEAM

2016

SWIMMER / PARENT INFORMATION

Falls Pointe Piranhas Swim Team Philosophy

"Swimming is never an end unto itself; it is always a means to a greater end."

The Falls Pointe Piranhas emphasize the personal growth that occurs through training and competition.

We believe that measuring the experience only through the numbers on a stopwatch can be unhealthy and lead to "burnout".

Recording best times, winning championships and getting your name in the paper are all positive things, but developing integrity, responsibility and commitment are skills that serve team members for a lifetime.

The Piranhas emphasize recognizing the value of sacrifice and setting goals while having fun.

Our philosophy is that swimming is a wonderful tool to develop character traits that allows youngsters to have success in competition and then translate this success into their lives.

2015 Falls Pointe Swim Team Leadership – Administrative Board

Frank Horvath, President
Tara Podojil, Team Communications
Tami Kennedy, Treasurer
Gretchen Cerovac, Coaching
Danni Bennett, Technology
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Welcome to the Falls Pointe Piranhas!

Welcome to membership in the Falls Pointe Piranhas Swim Team. We are a nonprofit club offering competitive swimming for anyone between the ages of 4 and 18 who is able to swim one length of the pool (25 yards) without assistance from another individual, floating devices, or the wall.

We are affiliated locally with the South West Swim League.

The Falls Pointe Swim Team was created in 2000 by a small group of local families looking to provide an environment for young swimmers to develop fitness, personal growth, goal setting, and team spirit. The team adopted the name "Piranhas" as a nickname and logo. We had 36 registered swimmers in our first year; we are now at approximately 60+ swimmers.

Swim meets are a great family experience; they are a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. If you need more information, or something is not clear to you, please ask someone on the swim team leadership. We've all had to start at the beginning at one time or another!

Parents...

The team is run by parent volunteers and is financially self-supporting. Your help is crucial to the success and fun our swimmers have throughout the season! All meets are run by parent volunteers. Jobs include: timers, clerk of course, runners, lane marshals, awards table and concession stands. **Parents are expected to fulfill four volunteering slots per season.** You will learn about the sport and meet your neighbors and your child's friends. Please inform the leadership if you ever experience a conflict with a volunteer commitment as soon as possible. In the event your swimmer will miss a meet please give written or email notice to the head coach at least a week ahead of time if possible.

Competition...

The four competitive strokes are:

Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Butterfly

Events are held in all of the competitive strokes at varying distances depending on the age group of the swimmer. Other swimming events include relays, which are a group of four swimmers who either all swim freestyle (freestyle relay) or each swim one of the competitive strokes in the order of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle (medley relay).

Falls Pointe Swim Team does not see the first place person as the only winner. We would rather look to see who behaves like a winner. There are certain characteristics of a winner, and every swimmer, no matter where they place, has the opportunity to emulate those winner characteristics: concentration, listening skills, and working towards goals.

In competition, the important measure is not who collected the most medals or even who improved the most time. The real critical measure is who learned the most from the competitive experience. Swimmers quickly forget the medals, record times and other material benefits as they get older. They will, however, remember the development of interpersonal skills, discipline, listening skills, time management, goal setting and enhanced self-image.

Before a meet starts...

1. Arrive at the pool at the designated time.
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags, and/or sleeping bags. The team should sit together, so look for the Piranhas banner, team captains or coaching staff (especially at away meets relay meets or the championship).
3. Look for the area marked "Clerk of Course". This is the check-in area your child must report to for a particular event. (Clerk of Course is usually rows of chairs lined up to designate the separate lanes of the pool.) "Checking in" is done so that the people running the meet know who is actually at the meet. Never check-in another swimmer!
4. The Piranhas coaching staff will have posted the events your child is scheduled to swim. Your child will be told the events at practice the morning of the meet, but in case your child is too young to understand or misses practice, please refer to the posted list. CHECK THIS BEFORE THE MEET AS LINEUP CHANGES CAN HAPPEN DURING WARM-UPS.

5. Swimmers should write their event numbers on the back of their hand in ink. This helps them to remember what they are swimming and what event number to listen for. (Parents sometimes write the event numbers on their hands too!)
6. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. After warm-ups, your swimmer return to the Piranhas "area" where his/her towels are and sits there until their next event is called to Clerk of Course. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary, gets a drink or just settles in. Cheer your teammates on!
7. Parents are to stay out of the roped area around the sides of the pool. These areas are where the officials walk and chairs or bodies must not block that area. Only swimmers are allowed in Clerk of Course.
8. **It is the policy of the Falls Pointe Piranhas that the coaches are not approached before or during a meet.** It is very distracting and causes the coach to miss another team member swim. *If you have any questions, please see a member of the Falls Pointe Swim Team Board, who will attempt to answer all questions.*
9. Heat sheets are available for invitational or championship meets only. These sheets list all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". The "seed time" is the best time a swimmer has swam in a particular stroke. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no time" or "NT".

During the meet...

1. It is important that each swimmer knows his/her events. **It is the parents and swimmers responsibility to pay attention and get to clerk of course when your event is called. Clerk of Course is not responsible for finding swimmers.**
2. Listen for the announcements. A swimmer's event number will be called, and he/she will be asked to report to the "Clerk of Course." Generally, girls' events are odd-numbered and boys' events are even-numbered. Example: "Event #26, 9-10 Boys, 50 Freestyle, please report to Clerk of Course." Remember to report with goggles and cap.
3. The volunteers running Clerk of Course will give an event card to each swimmer. The clerk will usually line up all the swimmers and take them down to the starting point in the correct order. The swimmers are to hand their event cards to the timers when it is their turn to swim. They should tell the timer their name, their event, and their lane number. This is just to double-check information; sometimes cards and children end up in the wrong lanes!
4. You will notice that Piranhas swimmers will either swim in lanes 1 & 3 or lanes 2 & 4. The swimmers with the faster times may be placed in the middle lanes with the slower swimmers on the outside lanes.
5. Expect two to three heats of each event. If your child wins his/her heat it does not necessarily indicate the event has been won. (Note: the slower heats swim first with the fastest heats swimming last.) The winner of an event is determined after *all* heat times are compiled.

After the swimmer completes his/her event...

1. He/she is to ask the timer (the volunteer with the stopwatch) his/her time.
2. He/she should go immediately to his/her coach. **(Parents-your cooperation on this, please!)** The coach will discuss the swim with the swimmer and include pointers for improvement, if necessary.
3. Generally, a coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims:
 - a. Positive comments regarding the swim.
 - b. Suggestions for improvement.
 - c. Reminders for the next coming event.
4. Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim:
 - a. You need to tell your child how proud you are and what a great job he/she did. (The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke techniques.) In addition, ask your child what the coach said to make sure he/she was listening. This way you will also learn more about swimming and what to watch for in a stroke.
 - b. Another good time to use the bathroom, get a drink or eat something *light*.
 - c. Your child should go back to his/her towel and relax.
 - d. The swimmer now waits for his next event to be called. (Swimmers can swim a maximum of 2 individual events and 2 relays.)
5. When a swimmer has completed all of his/her events, he/she may leave. However, if you are able to stay until the end of the meet it helps with the encouragement of teammates who must swim the last event of the meet. ***Make sure, if you do leave before the meet is done, that your child checks with the coach to ensure that they are not scheduled or needed for any other races.***

What to take to a meet....

1. Team swim suit, team t-shirt, cap, and goggles.
2. Baby or talcum powder-to dust the inside of the cap. This helps preserve the cap and makes it easier to put on.
3. 2 Towels.
4. Chair for parents to sit on during the meet.
5. Something for swimmer to sit on-a blanket, sleeping bag, etc.
6. Sweat suits-a swimmer may want to bring two because they get wet and soggy.
7. T-shirts-two or three for the same reason as above.
8. Games, coloring books, books, anything to pass the time. Make sure your name is on everything you bring!
9. Food-bring light snacks for your swimmer. Meets usually have concession stands (cash only), but sometimes all they sell is junk food. Bring Hi-C, fruit juice, Gatorade, granola bars, fun fruits, yogurt, Jell-O, sandwiches, fresh fruit, or vegetables.
10. Cash to support the team 50/50 raffle.
11. Make sure your swimmer has plenty of sun block or sun screen. A pair of sunglasses is especially handy for glare.
12. Please make sure to clean up your area after swim meets. Pick up all garbage and take all belonging with you.

Very basic swimming rules...

In the summer leagues, swimmers are basically allowed one false start. If they jump the start and the starter thinks they are trying to get an advantage (intentional or not), the race will be stopped (by whistles, dropping lines across the lanes), and the swimmers will be asked to return to the starting blocks. Tell your swimmer to relax. Every swimmer has false started in their lifetime.

1. Turns and finishes
 - a. Freestyle turn - **some part of the body must touch the wall**
 - b. Freestyle finish - **some part of the body must touch the wall**
 - c. Backstroke turn - **some part of the body must touch the wall.** The swimmer is permitted to turn on his/her stomach and flip over in one continuous movement.
 - d. Breaststroke, butterfly turns and finishes - **BOTH hands must touch the wall at the same time** and the shoulders must be in line with the surface of the water.

Awards...

For most of the summer league meets, ribbons are given out from first to ninth place. Ribbons will be given out by the coach at the next scheduled practice; they will not be given out the night of the meet. It becomes too confusing for the parent volunteers who work at the awards table if children keep coming up and asking for their ribbons. Patience-everyone will get what they deserve!

Away meets...

Please check your email for directions to away meets. Please arrive at the meet at the time specified by the coaches.

Championships...

According to the SWSL rules, each team is limited in the number of swimmers who qualify for Championships. Therefore, only those with the fastest times usually participate. Coaches spend many hours working on line-ups so that they can include as many swimmers as possible, but unless a team is really small, some swimmers may not be included, especially in those age groups with a lot of swimmers. Parents-if your swimmer qualifies, congratulate them! If they didn't- encourage them. Next year may be their year.

Practice and Attendance:

Swimmers will be required to sign-in at each practice with the coach. All swimmers must attend at least 3 practices per week if they want to participate in the swim meets. Swimmers who do not meet this requirement will not be entered into the meets. Vacations, sickness, or other occasional conflicts will not jeopardize a swimmers meet eligibility. Swimmers are required to sign-up with the coach for meets at least one week prior to the meet. Any swimmer who does not sign-up or email the coach will not be placed in the meet. **If you need to speak to a coach, please contact him/her BEFORE or AFTER a meet as they are busy with all 60 + swimmers.** Your cooperation is appreciated.

Code of conduct...

At registration time, swimmers and their parents will be asked to sign a code of conduct. We want swimmers to understand that they are responsible for their behavior. Disrespectful and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

Coaches...

We want your swimmer to communicate to his or her coach as soon as possible concerning swimming matters. This relationship between coach and swimmer produces the best results. When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim or train, it causes considerable confusion as to who the swimmer should listen to. If you have a problem, please see a member of the swim team leadership.

10 and under...

These are the most inconsistent swimmers and this can be frustrating for parents, coaches, and the swimmer. Please be patient and permit your child to learn to love the sport.

Compliments of the Westview Swim Board and adapted for use
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