

**NORTHERN LIGHTS**  
**YMCA SWIM TEAM**  
**HANDBOOK**  
**2011-2012 SEASON**

# Northern Lights YMCA Swim Team

## SWIM TEAM AND YMCA PHILOSOPHY

The primary purpose of the Northern Lights YMCA is to promote the spiritual, mental and physical well-being of all persons.

The purpose of the NLY Swim Team aquatic program is to use competition as a tool for learning the lifelong values of goal-setting and hard work for reward. Participants should learn to accept winning with humility and defeat with dignity and strive to try harder.

Coaches, officials, administrators, and parents must create an environment in which competitors achieve this ultimate objective: Developing into true athletes.

The NLY Swim Team exists to benefit ALL children who show an interest in training and competing. The objectives of the program are to help these young athletes develop to their full potential, while clarifying their personal values.

The team is a tool to reach and teach youth important life values and decision-making skills. The program stresses self-improvement. Winning is a secondary goal. Positive support from coaches and parents help to accomplish the program goals:

- FUN!!!
- Development of Self-Esteem
- Development of Lasting Friendships
- Development of a Lifestyle of Health and Well-Being
- Development of Discipline, Cooperation, Sportsmanship, Dedication and Confidence
- Development of the YMCA values: Caring, Respect, Honesty and Responsibility
- Opportunity for Travel

## Coaching Staff

Tom Desy – Head Coach

Aimee Tatangelo- Assistant Coach

Sue McDonnell- Assistant Coach

# **TEAM EXPECTATIONS**

## **INFORMATION FOR SWIMMERS**

You are representing our team and the YMCA at all times. Conduct yourselves wisely. Please show proper **respect** for yourselves and for others with your actions and words.

Come to practices dressed for the weather. Be dry and dressed warmly before leaving the YMCA. Remember, your success is dependent on your health.

Always be on time for practice and meets.

Always use a lock on your locker to keep your belongings safe.

If you have any questions or difficulties, always consult with your coach.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Discipline on the team shall be such that the safety and well-being of the individuals and the team are not jeopardized. Discipline problems will be handled between the athlete, the coach, the parents or guardians, and the YMCA administrator if deemed necessary.

Please see the Code of Conduct for more specific detail.

## **TEAM SUITS**

Team swim suits are available for purchase. Swim suits are not included in program or membership fees. A latex team swim cap will be provided to each swimmer. Additional team swim caps may be purchased from the front desk at the YMCA. Silicon team swim caps may also be purchased from the front desk. While competing, a team suit and cap presents a unified team spirit.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Athletes improve their skills and endurance by practicing and competing. While swimmers attendance at practice is not required, it is encouraged, and expected, that swimmers make as many practices as possible.

Attendance at swim meets is not required, however, it is encouraged, and expected, that swimmers attend as many meets as possible.

For out-of town meets, swimmers are responsible to make their own transportation & lodging arrangements.

If a swimmer cannot make a practice, please call or email Coaches Tom, Sue, or Aimee to let them know. This helps with the planning of practice.

## **RELAY POLICIES**

Relays for all meets are determined by the Head Coach and coaching staff. There is no established rule for setting up relays at regular meets. Relay teams will be with the Escanaba and Iron Mtn. swimmers combined. At States the "A" Relay will be the fastest four swimmers, as determined by the coaches.

## **MEET ENTRIES**

Entering swim meets is the responsibility of the swimmer. A meet sign-up sheet will be posted in the pool area, or an e-mail to the head coach ([desy\\_dolphins@hotmail.com](mailto:desy_dolphins@hotmail.com)) for meet entry. The coaches would prefer picking events for the swimmer, but swimmers can pick the events they would like to swim in, or swimmers can pick one or two events and the coaches can pick other events for them. The coaching staff reserves the right to change swimmers events.

Those who do not put their name on the sign-up on time risk the chance of not getting entered into a swim meet. All swimmers who enter a swim meet will be considered for relays and expected to participate in relays if assigned by the coaching staff. All completed entries are posted on the wall in the pool area in the YMCA. It is the responsibility of the swimmer or family to check each entry to make sure that your swimmer was entered correctly into a swim meet. ***Once a swimmer is entered in a swim meet the entry fees should be paid at the YMCA front desk before that meet.*** Entry fees are not refundable. If a swimmer does not attend a meet they will be responsible to pay their share for any relays that may be scratched.

During the season, the parents may contact a coach if they have any questions.

## **STATE "Y" MEET QUALIFICATION**

The big meet of the fall/winter season is the YMCA State Championships, usually held at the end of March. To qualify for this meet, a swimmer must equal or beat a qualifying time during the current swim year. In addition, a swimmer must swim in two meets during the current swim year. Those who do not intend to swim in the YMCA State Meet should notify the coach prior to the State Meet. The coach will determine all relays for the State Meet. Swimmers must be members of the team they will represent at least 90 days prior to the state meet.

## **NATIONAL QUALIFICATION**

There are two YMCA National meets held during the year. The Spring Nationals will held in North Carolina the 1<sup>st</sup> week of April. The Summer Nationals are held in Atlanta, Georgia the 1<sup>st</sup> week of August. National Meet swimmers must equal or beat National qualifying times or make a relay team that has made a qualifying time. In addition, swimmers who want to attend nationals must swim in 3 closed inter-association meets (meets with only YMCA teams) plus one sanctioned meet. The State meet is a sanctioned meet. All swimmers who attend National meets must be YMCA members. Swimmers must be members of the Y team they will represent at least 90 days prior to National meets.

## **PRACTICE GROUPS**

The NLY Swim Team participants are divided into three practice groups – Beginners, Intermediates and Seniors. Practice groups are determined by the head coach with assistance from the coaching team. Swimmers will be assigned by the head coach to a practice group with others of similar ability. Workouts are adjusted according to the experience and skill.

### **GROUP SWIM TEAM PRACTICES**

**BEGINNER:** This group is geared for swimmers who are new to competitive swimming. Practice time is devoted to the teaching of the four competitive strokes - Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Butterfly - and fundamental swimming skills such as starts and turns. Swimmers will also be introduced to endurance training. Beginners are welcomed to participate in Swim Meets, but swim meet participation is not required.

**INTERMEDIATE:** This group will continue to learn techniques for the four competitive strokes, along with starts and turns for the four competitive strokes. Practice will also be devoted to endurance training and learning the strategies of racing. Swim meet participation is recommended, but not required.

**SENIOR:** This group has competitive swimming experience. Practice time will be devoted to endurance training, continual teaching of the four competitive strokes - Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Butterfly - and fundamental swimming skills such as starts and turns. It is recommended that each participant try to swim at one lap swim on their own every week. Swim meet participation is recommended, but not required.

All swimmers are members of the YMCA and can swim during regular scheduled open or lap swim times. It is recommended for the intermediate and senior groups to swim at least once a week during open or lap times. Sample workouts will be available in the pool office.

### **COMPETITION**

Swimming meets are the pay-off for the hours of training. Competing in swim meets, swimming a new event successfully, improving times, meeting new friends, earning ribbons and/or medals, and increasing self-esteem are things that motivate swimmers in practice. In most cases, meets are selected to include a maximum number of our team members.

We are a dual branch team combining swimmers from Delta County (Escanaba) and Dickinson County (Iron Mountain) branches. At meets, both branches will swim for the NLY Swim Team. Relay teams will be combined with swimmers from both branches.

### **SWIM MEET FACTS:**

Age Groups for Competition

Swimmers are divided into different age groups for competition purposes. Age grouping combinations may differ at various meets. During the fall/winter season, the age of the swimmer is determined by how old he/she is by December 1 for the YMCA meets. However, some meets may have the swimmers age as of the day of the meet.

### **EVENTS:**

**Freestyle:** In the freestyle, the competitor may swim any stroke he/she wishes. The usual stroke is the Australian crawl. This stroke is characterized by alternate overhand motion of arms. The distances are 25 yards, 50yards, 100 yards, 200 yards, 500 yards, 1000 yards and 1650 yards.

**Backstroke:** In the backstroke, the swimmer is on his/her back. The stroke is alternating motion of the arms. The distances are 25 yards, 50 yards, 100 yards, and 200 yards.

**Breaststroke:** The breaststroke requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pushed forward from the breast under the surface of the water and brought backwards together. The kick is simultaneous thrust of the legs called a whip kick. No flutter kick is allowed. On the turns and finishes the swimmer must touch with both hands at the same time in the same plane. The distances are 25 yards, 50 yards, 100 yards and 200 yards.

**Butterfly:** The butterfly stroke features the simultaneous overhand stroke of the arms combined with the dolphin kick. In the dolphin kick the swimmer must kick with both legs together and may not flutter kick as on freestyle. On the turns and finishes the swimmer must touch with both hands at the same time. The distances are 25 yards, 50 yards, 100 yards and 200 yards.

**Individual Medley:** The individual medley - or IM - features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, changes after 1/4 of the race to backstroke, changes again after another 1/4 to the breaststroke and finishes with the final 1/4 in freestyle. The distances are 100 yards, 200 yards and 400 yards.

**Medley Relay:** In the medley relay, all four strokes are swum by four different individuals. The order of the medley relay is backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle. The distances are 100 yards, 200 yards and 400 yards.

**Freestyle Relay:** In these relays, four swimmers swim freestyle for the entire relay. The distances are 100 yards, 200 yards, 400 yards and 800 yards.

## **TEAM EXPENSE**

### **MEMBERSHIP OF YMCA**

All NLY Swim Team members must be full members of the Northern Lights YMCA. These memberships vary from individual youth to family memberships. YMCA members are entitled to use the building facilities during regular business hours. Facilities in Delta County include the pool, hot tub, sauna, fitness center, gymnasium and some classes. Discounts on other classes are also offered to full members. Facilities in Dickinson County include pool, sauna, fitness center, gymnasium. Memberships may be paid on a monthly basis by bank draft program or annually in one lump sum. Scholarships are available for those who may need financial assistance. Forms are available at the front desk.

The diversity of programs available makes family memberships very popular. For more information, contact the Membership Director at the YMCA.

### **TEAM PROGRAM FEE**

The program fee charged for the Northern Lights swim team is \$230. There is also a discounted fee for additional family members of \$190. Fees are non-refundable. Program fees paid in full are for the fall /winter season which runs from October thru March.

The Northern Lights YMCA does have scholarships available for those swimmers in need (need based on family income.) If a family is interested applications are available online or at the front desk. Any swimmer applying for a scholarship must have this application turned in at the start of the practice season in early October.

## **FEE PAYMENT**

Swim team fees are due by November 30, 2011 unless prior arrangements are made. All swimmers will receive informational paperwork. Informational paperwork will include a registration form, emergency medical release, media release, and a code of conduct. All forms must be completed and returned to the coach by Friday, October 15, 2011.

If the terms of this agreement are not met, a swimmer will not be allowed to practice with the team or enter meets. Or, if a family has unpaid meet fees (from two meets), the swimmer(s) will not be entered in swim meets.

## **SWIM MEET SIGN UP and PAYMENTS FOR MEETS**

A sign-up sheet for swim meets will be posted in the pool office. The sign-up sheet will have the meet information. The coaches would prefer to pick events for swimmers, but swimmers can choose what events they would like to swim, or they can pick a couple of events and let the coaches pick the rest. The coaches reserve the right to change swimmers events. Once a swimmer is signed up for a meet and the entry forms are submitted, the swimmer is expected to show up for the meet.

Payment for meets will be done in advance. When sign-ups are finished, a sheet with the swimmers name and fees will be posted at the front desk or office of the YMCA. Payments for the meet will be made there. There will be no refunds once a swimmer is officially signed up for a meet.

If an account is negative, that swimmer will be prohibited from swimming in any swim meet until the negative balance is corrected.

## **SWIM MEET INFORMATION**

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Bad weather is a concern to parents. The decision to travel or to pull off the road is that of the parents. No meet is worth the risk of an accident.

If traveling to a meet, the swimmers must be on site and ready for warm-up time. The warm-up before a meet is VERY IMPORTANT to the swimmers and the team. Swimmers need to check out the starting blocks, check out turns, and condition muscles before the competition.

### **WHAT TO TAKE AND EXPECT FOR A SWIM MEET**

1. If you are scheduled for a meet and are unable to attend, please call the head coach. Remember that any relays scratched by your absence will be billed to your account. We will try to fill the relays with other swimmers.
2. Write your events and their numbers on your hands. Please know your meet numbers and what events they are. IT IS BEST TO USE A THIN, WATERPROOF MARKING PEN!
3. It is ideal to bring two towels, something warm to wear between events, footwear, two pairs of goggles, and an extra suit and swim cap. PUT YOUR NAME ON EVERYTHING! Inventory your swim bag before you leave home and before leaving the pool after the meet. Many swimmers like to bring sleeping bags for the rest area, as well as quiet games or reading material.

4. MONEY - Bring money for snacks or pack something. Please consume easily digested, high carbohydrate snacks such as bagels, pasta (it's good cold), low-fat muffins or fruit. You'll need to stay hydrated with a sports drink or just plain water.

## **SEASON END CELEBRATION**

### **AWARDS NIGHT – SEASON END**

After the conclusion of the Fall/Winter Season, there will be an Awards Night celebration (usually held in March or April). Location will be determined for each branch.

All NLY swimmers are recognized for their participation on the team.

Also, special awards are presented to the NLY swimmers. These include:

The Little "i" Award for most inspirational  
The Most Improved Award  
High points award for each gender in each age group  
"Biggest Loser" award for time dropped during swim season

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **YMCA ATHLETIC CODE of CONDUCT**

The YMCA expects all athletes, coaches, and chaperones involved in athletic competition and events who are representing the YMCA to present themselves in a positive fashion at all times.

1. While attending sponsored activities the swimmer will:
2. Obey the coaches at all times.
3. Be courteous to each other and the coaches.
4. Keep hands to yourself, no scuffles or fighting.
5. Do not use obscene language or gestures.
6. Do not damage the pool area or locker room in any way. Swimmer will be required to pay for any damage done.
7. Do not leave the pool area without permission from the coach.
8. Stay in the designated areas during swim meets.

Disciplinary action will be enforced for any, but not limited to, the following reasons:

1. Open or persistent defiance of authority and/or rules and regulations.
2. Striking or assaulting any swimmer or coach.
3. Threat of physical assault or intimidation of others, including efforts to obtain money or other materials of value.
4. Damaging any property - vandalism.
5. Profanity or obscenity.
6. Theft.
7. Failure to abide by corrective measures for misconduct.
8. Unauthorized possession of an instrument, weapon or materials capable of causing serious bodily harm or other disturbances (snowballs, rocks, etc.).
9. Use, sale, possession or under influence of any illegal, behavior-altering substance.
10. Smoking.

11. Creating swim instruction disturbances.
12. Leaving the pool area for whatever reason without permission from the coach.
13. Any property destroyed by a swimmer shall be the swimmer/parents responsibility for reimbursement.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

The Board authorizes suspension or expulsion of swimmers who violate rules of good conduct, who are disruptive, or whose presence is detrimental to the swim team.

### **WARNING**

A verbal discussion with the coach and may include a written letter or disciplinary action form to the parent.

### **SUSPENSION**

Suspension is defined as exclusion from swim class, programs, or NLY meets. A suspension may be for one or two weeks at the coach's discretion.

### **EXPULSION**

Expulsion is defined as the permanent exclusion of a swimmer from any team sponsored activity for the remainder of that swim season.

The Executive Director or Senior Program Director of the YMCA may expel a swimmer with board of director approval. Since expulsion is a drastic and the most serious disciplinary action, it shall only be recommended and imposed in an appropriate situation.

If a swimmer's participation is recommended to be expelled, the swimmer and parents shall be notified in writing by the Executive Director or Senior Program Director.

If a swimmer is expelled, no refund will be issued. Participants / Parents may appeal to the Program Committee or Membership Committee of the YMCA Board. Such committee decisions will be final.

### **NOTE**

The coach will recommend the level of disciplinary action to be taken and notify the Executive Director or Senior Program Director of the same.

If a disciplinary action form is sent because of a warning or suspension, the swimmer may not participate in any team sponsored activities until the form is signed by the parents and returned to the coach.



# **DELTA – DICKINSON SWIM TEAM BEHAVIORAL AGREEMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and agreed to all the rules and regulations of the Delta-Dickinson Swim Team.

I understand and accept the disciplinary procedures as stated.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Swimmer's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **PARENT ROLE**

Parents working together with coaches, officials and administrators, have a unique opportunity to influence the lives of young athletes. Positive support will help swimmers develop to their full potential while clarifying their personal values.

There are many ways to show this positive support. These include:

- Have swimmers at practice regularly and on time.
- Encourage children to get proper rest and develop good nutritional habits.
- Attend swim meet competitions regularly.
- Be informed by reading the handbook information sheets and the bulletin board in the pool area.
- Praise your swimmer and other team members.

Parents are the backbone of the swim team. Parent involvement is vital for a strong and effective team.

- Help support fundraisers. Remember a successful fundraiser helps keep program fees affordable.
- Be available to work at home meets. Even if you can help for a couple hours – it helps!
- Help chaperone at all meets.
- Attend the annual parents meeting held at the beginning of the season.
- Be willing, if asked, to donate items for concessions at the home meets.
- Enjoy the swim team season.