

2. **HERNDON**



HAMMERHEADS

Swim Team

Parents Handbook

WELCOME TO THE HAMMERHEADS

Welcome to the Hammerheads! We're glad to see those of you who swam with us last year and we're thrilled to welcome new Hammerhead swimmers and their parents.

For those of you returning, welcome back. For those who are new to the Hammerheads, we'd like to welcome you to what we think is one of the best summer swim programs in the Northern Virginia area.

The philosophy of the Herndon Hammerheads swim team is that having fun is the most important thing we can do. Most of the kids don't care what division we're in. We'd all like to be division champions, which usually means going undefeated, but only one team out of six can usually claim this honor. Personal development is what is most important and for a swimmer that means improving your times. We believe that by establishing a healthy environment that encourages the kids to do their best, recognizes their contributions and achievements, and is fun for the entire family; we will have met our goals. With that in mind, our goals this year, are simple:

To become the best swimmers that we can be!

To demonstrate good sportsmanship and Team Spirit!

To have a FUN summer!

We're all looking forward to a great season. GO HAMMERHEADS!

Herndon Swim Club Pool

The Herndon Recreation Inc. (HRI) Swim Club owns the facility that we use. Although each member of the swim team pays a fee in order to belong to the team, the pool membership funds a portion of the cost of the team. An 11-member board of directors governs the club. One board member is designated to oversee the swim program. To be a member of the swim team, your family must own a membership or rent a membership and meet other NVSL criteria.

Team Reps

The team reps are Joanne Lyons and Mary Brown. Team reps are volunteer parents who were new to swimming at one time just like you are today. The team reps are responsible to the pool board for running every aspect of the swim team and are the representatives of the team to NVSL and other teams in the league. It's a job that is impossible to do without the help of a great many parents. The team reps hire the coaches.

NVSL

The NVSL has over 10,000 swimmers on 104 teams. It is the largest summer swim league in the United States. The league is divided into 18 divisions with five or six teams in each division. The fastest teams are in the lower divisions and the less competitive teams are in the higher numbered divisions. The other teams in our division and meet locations are provided on the team schedule. Directions to pools are provided prior to meets.

Current NVSL Handbooks will be available before the first meet. We encourage you to read the handbook to familiarize yourself with NVSL rules and meet procedures. NVSL provides us with one copy of their handbook for each swim team family.

The NVSL presence on the Internet continues to expand. Every team, including our Hammerheads, has a home page. Check it out at www.nvsl.nvblu.com.

Dual Meets

Each of the six teams in a division swims against the other five teams in the division, one at a time, in a series of dual meets, on five consecutive Saturdays. They are called dual meets because only two teams compete at the meet. A division champion is named based on the results of these meets.

Saturday dual meets are scored meets. They consist of 38 individual events and 12 relays. The events for these scored meets are shown in the table below.

Age Group	Freestyle	Backstroke	Breaststroke	Butterfly	Freestyle Relay	Medley Relay
8 & Under Boys	25M	25M	25M		100M	
8 & Under Girls	25M	25M	25M		100M	
9-10 Boys	50M	50M	50M	25M		100M
9-10 Girls	50M	50M	50M	25M		100M
11-12 Boys	50M	50M	50M	50M		100M
11-12 Girls	50M	50M	50M	50M		100M
13-14 Boys	50M	50M	50M	50M		200M
13-14 Girls	50M	50M	50M	50M		200M
15-18 Boys	50M	50M	50M	50M		200M
15-18 Girls	50M	50M	50M	50M		200M
Mixed Age Boys *					200M	
Mixed Age Girls *					200M	

* Mixed age relays are swum in the following order: 11-12 year old, 9-10 year old, 13-14 year old, and then 15-18 year old.

Who swims?

Since these meets are scored, swimmers with the fastest times are selected to swim in these meets. Each team can enter 3 swimmers in each event. No swimmer can swim in more than two individual events, plus relays. Since a swimmer can only swim in 2 events, and since some swimmers may miss a meet because of vacations, you do not have to be one of the three fastest swimmers in an event to swim in a scored meet. Swimmers are selected for events in an effort to maximize the potential points for the meet as a whole.

Relay Carnival

Another NVSL event is the Division Relay Carnival. The relay carnival takes place on a Wednesday in the middle of the season. All six teams in the division converge on one pool for an evening of relay races. These include both freestyle relays and medley relays. Following the relay carnival, the NVSL division coordinators select relay teams to swim at the All-Star Relay Carnival. Teams are selected that hold one of the 18 fastest times (in the league) in any of the events swum in one of the Division Relay Carnivals.

Divisionals

Each division holds an individual championship meet in the sixth week of the season. This meet is commonly referred to as "Divisionals." Each team is allowed to enter 2 swimmers in each event. A swimmer cannot be entered in more than 2 events. This is an individual meet and is not scored.

All-Stars

The NVSL All-Stars meet is held on the week following divisionals. NVSL swimmers with the 18 fastest times (throughout the league) swum in an event during the divisional meets are selected to compete in the All-Stars meet. Approximately 600 swimmers from all over the league compete in this 6-hour event. If your swimmer is fast enough to be named an All-Star, it is a thrill they will never forget.

Northwest Developmental League

Herndon, Hiddenbrook, Pinecrest, Fox Mill Estates and Fox Mill Woods have joined together to conduct developmental swim meets on Monday nights. These meets are un-scored. In these meets, swimmers who have taken a second or third place in any Saturday meet cannot officially swim the stroke that they have ribboned in. A swimmer who took first place cannot officially swim any stroke except the IM or, in the case of eight and under swimmers, the butterfly. These events are not swum during Saturday meets. These developmental meets give all swimmers a chance to compete, earn ribbons, and develop their strokes in a meet environment.

Volunteers

Please remember that we're a volunteer driven operation and need everyone to volunteer and contribute to make a fun, positive experience for our children. Our swim program can't run without parental help. We've been fortunate to have such great parental involvement in the past, but it takes so many adults to administer meets, that we need some new volunteers. In fact, it takes over 40 parents to time, officiate and score a typical swim meet, and that doesn't include pool set-up and tear down or running the snack bar or non-swimming team activities. Some of the many positions that we need to fill to administer meets are:

Clerk of Course
Referee
Starter
Announcer
Stroke and Turn Judges

Marshals
Relay Take Off Judges
Table Workers
Timers
Concessions

Free training is available to all volunteers. A sign-up sheet will be posted at the first practice. We need the help of every family in order to have a successful swim season.

Communication

The Hammerheads swim program cannot be run successfully without effective communication among all the participants. In an attempt to implement effective communications, we ask that everyone follow established methods already in place.

A folder has been assigned on a one per family basis for the distribution of written communications. The folders will be at practice daily and will be kept in the pool office so it will be available whenever the pool is open. Use the folder for written notes back to the coach and Team Reps.

Our goal is to make this an enjoyable summer for everyone. We can help make this happen by not having any unnecessary misunderstandings due to miscommunication.

Safety

Safety is of paramount importance. Observe all pool safety rules at both our pool and every other pool we visit.

Meet and Practice Attendance

Our summer swim season is nine weeks long from the first practice through Divisionals. Swimmers who qualify for All-Stars practice for an additional week. Attendance by every swimmer at every possible practice is essential. We realize that there are numerous end of school year activities, spring sports and scouting are still ongoing, and summer camps happen, but it is important that you attend every possible practice session. If you have a scheduling conflict, please let the coach know in advance.

For each Saturday (A) Meet, we have to finalize the list of who is swimming in each event by Wednesday night so that we can pass it to the other team on Thursday evening. After this occurs, we can only replace missing swimmers with a swimmer who has recorded a slower time in the event where the seeded swimmer is missing. We cannot swap swimmers among events to optimize our swim selections.

If you will not be available for any Saturday meet, please communicate this to the Team Rep Joanne Lyons and Head Coach in writing as soon as possible, but not **later than the Wednesday before that meet**. Also, let us know in writing if you will not be able to attend the Division Relay Carnival (see calendar for date) by the Saturday prior to that event.

Since we select events for Monday (B) Meets at practice on Mondays, if you can't attend practice on Monday, but want to swim on Monday night, it is important that you communicate with the coaches or Team Reps.

If you have a question or concern about something that occurs at practice, either bring it to the attention of the team reps, or discuss it with the coach after practice.

Expectations

Although swimming is considered an individual sport, our summer league is structured with an emphasis on the team. Any team is only as good as the people on it. In keeping with our philosophy we expect the following from swimmers:

- A swimmer must be able to swim the length of the pool to join the team. We'll help your swimmer become a better swimmer, but it is important that all swimmers be able to swim.
- Each swimmer should be on time to practices and meets and come prepared to swim and have fun.
- Inform us when you will not be at a meet. We plan on you being available for all swim meets unless you tell us you cannot make it.
- Pay attention to the coaches. Everyone will learn more from the coaches when swimmers pay attention. Disruptions aren't fair to the other swimmers.
- Do your best. Doing your best is a lot more important than being the best.

Swimmer Apparel

Swimmers should wear a swimsuit that will be comfortable for racing. The Hammerheads have a team suit.

Every swimmer needs a towel, the bigger and thicker the better. Swimmers should also have goggles, a sweat suit (for cool days), a swim cap (especially for girls with long hair), a hat or other sun protection, and a bag to carry everything. You should have a water bottle and a light snack at meets.

To purchase a team suit, team cap, or goggles, please contact one of the team reps.

Ribbons

Ribbons are awarded for first through sixth place finishes in all meets. In Monday night meets, ribbons are also awarded for being a competitor and for winning a heat. Ribbons will also be awarded during the season every time a Personal Best time is swum in any event.

Concessions

The concessions stand is the primary means of raising funds for swim team activities. Over the course of the season every swim team family will be asked to contribute food items. We will be looking for food donations for our Saturday morning HOME meets for the team to sell at the concessions stand. Some popular items are bagels, bananas, fruit cups, muffins and donuts. One of the team's biggest money – makers is the selling of dinner concessions at the home "B" meets. No need to bring food items, just plan on having dinner at the pool while cheering for our Hammerheads.