

Branson Waves Swim Team

Parent Handbook

Updated 3.24.19

The Branson Waves Swim Team is a summer swim program sponsored by the City of Branson Parks and Recreation Department and driven by volunteer parents. The Branson Waves Swim Team participates in the Tri-State Conference composed of various summer and year-round teams from Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas and Oklahoma. The Branson Waves Swim Team teaches boys and girls, ages 4 to 18, how to swim competitively with emphasis on having fun both in and out of the water. The goal is to become a skilled athlete in freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly techniques and thereby enjoy fitness and good health. In addition to performing well in the water, the Waves swimmer develops a positive attitude as well as team spirit and sportsmanship. Swimming competition promotes a swimmer's individual achievement, which in turn improves the team's result. At the same time, the more the team supports the swimmer, the better the personal achievement. All swimming achievements result from commitment to practicing and learning from the coaches.

Family involvement is a major asset of the Waves with many parents volunteering to help run swim meets (both home and away) and host social events. The social functions are a significant part of the swim season, allowing the team members the enjoyment of each other's company as well as having fun at the various events. The development of friendships among the swimmers and parents is very much a part of the Waves family experience.

EMPHASIS

Our staff focuses on five things:

- Character building and self-confidence development
- Physical fitness through swimming
- Learning competitive swimming strokes
- Being a member of a team, working and getting along together
- Having fun in and out of the water

COST

The fee is \$85.00 (\$80.00 RD) for the first child. The fee is \$80.00 (\$75.00 RD) for the second and each additional child. Additional costs to a swimmer are a team cap, swimsuit, goggles, meet entry fees and travel expenses. Meet entries vary from meet to meet but are mostly \$8.00..

REQUIREMENTS

Swimmers must be able to swim the length of the pool (25 yards) without touching the sides or the bottom of the pool. They must also be able to fully submerge their head under water. The Waves is designed to teach competitive swimming and should not be confused with swimming lessons. If the coaches determine that a child does not meet the requirements or have the physical ability to be part of the Waves, the child will be asked to drop from the team. If a swimmer does make the team, the requirements for swim meet apparel are as follows: All swimmers must have a team cap, goggles, and swimmers with long hair will be required to wear a swim cap.

PRACTICE

Practices are held at the Branson RecPlex. They are Monday through Friday and will start May 20 and continue until August 2.

May 20 – May 24	Entire Group	6:00-7:00pm
May 28 - August 2	Advanced	7:00-8:30am
	Beginners	8:30-9:30am

Parents are not allowed on pool deck during or between practices. Parents are allowed to watch from the Parent's Viewing Area located under the blue pavilion at the pool entry.

EQUIPMENT

MARK YOUR NAME ON ALL EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING WITH A PERMANENT MARKER! Continue to check periodically for fading names from sunlight and chlorine exposure.

SUITS:

Team suits are available, but are not required for meets. For practice suits, those made with polyester wear substantially longer than traditional Lycra or nylon suits. Swimmers can also practice in old, baggy "drag" suits that encourage resistance. After use, the suits should be rinsed out with cold water and hung to dry.

CAPS:

Caps are REQUIRED in practice for swimmers with long hair, so that hair will not interfere with proper breathing patterns and strokes. At meets, the Branson Waves swim cap should be worn, and is considered part of our team uniform. Swim Caps are available for sale at the Branson RecPlex front desk for \$5.00. After use, rinse the cap, dry it and powder it with talcum (baby powder) for long wear.

GOGGLES:

Goggles are highly recommended for every swimmer. We recommend purchasing a brand name such as TYR or Speedo. Be sure that the goggles are sized for the swimmer's head. They should seal around the eye with light pressure. Be sure to use the same goggles for both practice and competitions.

MEET FORMAT

Swim meets are organized contests, lasting either one or two days, for swimmers to compete against other swimmers in the Tri-State Conference. Swimmers compete against other swimmers based on sex, age, time and stroke. Swimmers compete both individually and with other teammates in relay events. The Tri-State Conference allows the swimmer six individual events and two relay events in a two day meet. In a one day meet, only three individual events and two relay events are allowed.

EVENTS:

There are eighty-one events in the following sequence:

Event Number: Stroke

- 1-2: 200 Free (age 15-18 only)
- 3-12: Medley Relay
- 13-22: Short Free
- 23-32: Backstroke (Back)
- 33-42: Individual Medley (IM)
- 43-52: Butterfly (Fly)
- 53-62: Long Free
- 63-72: Breaststroke (Breast)
- 73-82: Freestyle Relay

AGE DIVISIONS:

There are age divisions in each relay or stroke series in this order: Swimmers will swim according to their age as of June 1. 6 & under (Invitational only), 8 & Under, 10 & Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-18

HEATS:

A heat is a group of swimmers that swim against each other at the same time. In each event, the number of heats depends upon the number of swimmers entered into the age bracket of that meet. The winner of the heat is often given a small award which differs at each meet. The "heat winner" does not necessarily mean the winner of the entire event. The first heat is generally the slowest, and the last is the fastest.

EVENTS, STROKES AND DISTANCES:

(INDIVIDUAL STROKES) FREESTYLE, BACKSTROKE, BUTTERFLY and BREASTROKE: Swimmers under 8 years old swim 25 yards. All other ages swim 50 yards with two exceptions: the Individual Medley, whereas it is only a 100 yard race until the swimmer is 13 years old or older; and the 200 yd Freestyle for the 15-18 age division.

MEDLEY RELAY: The four fastest swimmers from each age group will form a relay team. Each of the four swimmers swims a different stroke in the following order: Back, Breast, Fly and Free. The "8 & Under" and "10 & Under" age groups swim only 25 yards of each stroke, while all other ages swim 50 yards of each stroke.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY ("IM"): This is a medley swam by one swimmer who swims each of the following strokes in this order: Fly, Back, Breast and Free.

(INDIVIDUAL STROKE) LONG FREE: This is a 100 yard freestyle race, unless you are under 8 years old, in which it is a 50 yd race.

FREESTYLE RELAY: The four fastest swimmers from each age group form a relay team. Each swimmer swims 50 yards, for a combined total of 200 yards, with the exception of those under 8 years old, who each swim 25 yards, for a total of 100 yards.

VOCABULARY:

Flip turn – term used for changing directions in the pool without stopping; flip turns make the swimmer's stroke more efficient, thereby decreasing time. Freestyle and Backstroke use flip turns. Flip turns are not mandatory, however greatly beneficial.

Open Turn – term used for changing directions in the pool once a hand(s) have touched wall. Breaststroke and Butterfly require open turns.

Although slower, open turns are optional in Freestyle and Backstroke.

Starting Blocks – the raised platforms at the starting end of the pool in each lane. Swimmers are allowed to start from the blocks or from the edge of the pool; however, it is to the swimmer's great advantage to use the blocks.

Free – Freestyle stroke, *Back* – Backstroke, *Fly* – Butterfly, *Breast* – Breaststroke

TIME DIVISIONS, TIMES AND SEED TIMES:

There are two time divisions ("A" and "B") for swimmers. "A" times are the faster of the two. The "A" and "B" standards are goal times for swimmers to achieve. Official times are kept by the coaches throughout the season. Seed times are the swimmers' fastest recorded times for each event; these are the times used for placing a swimmer in a specific heat and lane. Swimmers are always encouraged to beat their old times and improve their standings.

DISQUALIFICATIONS:

At each swim meet there are official Stroke and Turn Judges who may disqualify a swimmer in an event if USA Swimming rules for strokes and turns are not followed. The most common reasons for "DQ's" are:

- flutter kick in the butterfly
- false start for the second time in a heat.
- not making a two-hand touch on the turn in the breast stroke and butterfly or at the end of the breast stroke or butterfly lap in the IM
- flip turn fails to touch the wall
- backstroke turns and finishes that rotate past vertical onto stomach
- early take-off by a relay member
- executing a scissors kick in the breast stroke

If a swimmer has been disqualified, the swimmer must notify his/her coach immediately.

BULLPEN:

Swimmers are called to the bullpen before their events by the announcer over the loudspeaker. The bullpen is a waiting area for swimmers to check in for their event and stay there until they are taken to their lane. As the event nears, swimmers are moved closer to the pool deck. Listen for bullpen calls. Do not miss races because of failure to hear announcements!! All parents and other swimmers not currently racing are asked to stay out of the bullpen and off of the pool deck.

"6 & UNDERS" AND "8 & UNDERS"

For "6 & Under" and "8 & Under" swimmers: The swimming distance is always 25 yards in Short Free, Backstroke, Butterfly and Breaststroke Events. However, in the Individual Medley, there is 25 yd of each stroke (totaling 100 yds); the Long Free Event for "6 & Unders" and "8 & Unders" is a 50 yard race. During Tri-State Championships, there is not a "6 & Under" division; those who fall into that category will swim with the "8 & Unders".

Note: Some young swimmers may not be ready or willing to swim in a competitive swim meet. If your swimmer feels that he or she is not ready, please speak with the coaches. Likewise, the coaching staff will not enter a swimmer into a competitive meet if they are not ready.

MEET PERSONNEL

MEET REFEREE:

The meet official is responsible for the invitational and has final authority.

STROKE JUDGES:

The officials who specifically watch how swimmers perform each turn, stroke and finish are stroke judges. It is the responsibility of the stroke judge to disqualify any swimmer who, in his/her judgment, does not properly perform the stroke, turn or finish correctly in agreement with the USA Swimming Rules. Parents are not to approach judges with a questionable call. The coach will handle all questionable decisions. Parents who are interested in becoming stroke judges are required to become certified by completing a stroke judge clinic.

PLACE JUDGES:

Two pairs of place judges sit in each corner of the finishing end of the pool to determine the order of the finishes (first, second, third etc.,). Parents may be required to volunteer as place judges.

TIMERS:

Timers are responsible for using a stopwatch to time specific lanes throughout the meet. The timer is asked to start the watch at the flash of the start and to stop the watch when the swimmer touches the wall. There are usually three timers per lane. Parents will be required to volunteer as timers.

MEET ENTRY

The swimmer registration is due the Friday of the week before the meet date. Entries will be made by the manager and head coach on Monday the week of the meet and all fees will be assessed on Tuesday. It is required that families leave either credit card information at the front desk that will be processed with proper fees or a minimum of \$100.00 (cash only) per swimmer to be deducted out of by the front desk for meet fees. Swimmers without paid entry fees by due dates will not be entered into the swim meet; however there is the option to deck enter the morning of the swim meet, based on availability and up to the discretion of the meet organizer. You must contact the coach to deck enter. Payments will be accepted at the front desk Monday-Saturday 8:00am-8:00pm or Sunday 12:00pm-6:00pm and are non-refundable. It is the responsibility of the swimmer to ensure there are adequate funds to cover the cost of their fees. If a credit card is declined or if there is not enough cash to cover the meet fees, the swimmer will not be entered.

MEET RESULTS

These are the printed times of all swimmers at an Invitational. They are posted in the pool area, coaches also have an official list of times. At most meets there is an app called "Meet Mobile" that shows meet results. This is not always official, but it is convenient and fast at updating.

POINTS AND AWARDS

SCORING

A swimmer may score from any heat. Only the top six times score, but these times can come from any heat.

Individual events score points for the top six times:

- 1st: 7 points
- 2nd: 5 points
- 3rd: 4 points
- 4th: 3 points
- 5th: 2 points
- 6th: 1 point

Relay events score double points for the top six times:

- 1st: 14 points
- 2nd: 10 points
- 3rd: 8 points
- 4th: 6 points
- 5th: 4 points
- 6th: 2 points

The top three teams at each invitational will receive a team trophy, which is given at the conclusion of the meet. A male and female from each age division who score the most points for their team are called "High Point Winners" and they will receive an award at the conclusion of the meet.

GETTING READY FOR THE MEET

REST

Including warm-ups, a two day swim meet can take up to seven hours or more per day and a one day meet can take over eight hours. Be sure your swimmer gets a good night's sleep before each race day starting on Thursday night. During the meet, the swimmer should rest to conserve energy between events and be protected from the sun. The sun will drain your energy, so stay as cool and relaxed as possible. While waiting between events, drink lots of water, play cards, video games or listen to music. No running or playing out in the sun.

WARM UPS AND WHEN TO BE THERE

All swim meets begin with warm ups, a 20-30 minute session for swimmers to get muscles ready for competition and to get accustomed to the pool, walls, and starting blocks. Warm up times will vary and may start as early as 7am. Arrive early to find a spot near the rest of the team for your gear and to attend the team meeting on the pool deck. It is MANDATORY that swimmers be on the pool deck, ready for swimming 10 minutes PRIOR to warm up times.

FOOD

Friday and Saturday night have a high carbohydrate meal, such as pasta, baked potatoes, pancakes or waffles to provide maximum energy and endurance for the weekend's meet. Have a light breakfast such as bagels, toast, cereal, fruit and juice Saturday and Sunday morning. During the meet, snack on bagels or fruit and drink plenty of water (No soda, sweet and sugary snacks!)

WHAT TO BRING

Most families bring a tent to stay shaded from the sun. Blankets/sleeping bags are usually spread out underneath for swimmers to rest on and parents set up lawn chairs. Bring swim equipment (swim suit, swim cap, goggles), towels, sandals, t-shirt, shorts, sun screen, a sleeping bag/blanket, ice chest with snacks and drinks to last all day, lawn chairs, resting games (cards, handheld video games, music, etc.), and of course, cheers and good spirit! Be sure to mark all items with swimmers name with permanent marker.

HEAT SHEETS AND PYSCH SHEETS

The Heat Sheet is the official program of the Invitational. It lists swimmers' seed times and heats of each event. A Psych Sheet lists only the swimmers' seed times of their events; it does not list the breakdown into heats. The Heat Sheets sell for \$3.00 - \$5.00 at each Invitational. The Heat Sheet also lists the lanes required from each team to provide timers or place judges.

LEAVING

Always try to stay to the end of the meet and cheer on other Waves teammates. Show support of the Branson Waves by seeing the meet through to the finish. If a swimmer must leave early, you must check out with the coach. Before leaving, help pick up trash in the area around the tent. Ribbons and medals will be handed out at the following week's practice.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Championship Meet of the Tri-State Conference season is the highlight of the season. Every swimmer should make it a priority to represent the Waves at this festive event. The Championship meet is generally held on the first weekend of August at an indoor facility with touchpad timers. All members who have participated in a minimum of three Invitational's and who have qualified with at least a "B" division time during the season may swim. The results of this meet determine the final team standings for the year.

The format for the Tri-State Championship Meet is slightly different than the Invitationals throughout the summer. At the Championship, each event is divided into "A" division swimmers and "B" division swimmers. The races during the day for the "B" swimmers are their finals and they are awarded ribbons for the top six times. However, the races during the day for the "A" swimmers are the preliminaries for their final swims in the evening. The top six swimmers from each "A" event will swim in their finals races on both evenings.

SOCIAL EVENTS

The Branson Waves Swim Team hosts social functions during the season. These events give both swimmers and parents a chance to become friends away from the pool, and promote camaraderie and team spirit. **A Parent Committee will be responsible for coordinating these social events. The Branson RecPlex will provide paper products and utensils, and parents will be responsible to provide a main dish, dessert, or drinks. If you are interested in serving on the committee please let the coach and manager know. The parent committee will work closely with the head coach and the manager to plan social events and the hosted invitational meet.**

SEASON OPENER POOL PARTY

The season opener/pre-meet Potluck dinner will be held **Thursday, June 6 at 6:15pm-8:00pm.**

TEAM PICTURE

A team picture will be taken TBA. Individual photos are taken as well.

AWARDS NIGHT

The annual awards dinner is held after the swimming season and will take place on **August 18 from 5:00pm-7:00pm.** It is the culmination of our efforts and achievements for the season. At the awards ceremony, all swimmers are recognized for their achievements. An individual Certificate of Achievement with best times of each event is given to each swimmer. Additional awards will be given out to swimmers for exceptional performance.

COMMUNICATION

It is vital that the Branson Waves Swim Team has clear communication between coaches, parents and swimmers. The main form of communication is email or text alert. If you are not receiving emails or text messages from us after the first week, please contact the manager or coach. Another way we communicate is through the File Folder System. Each swimmer/swim family has a file folder marked with their name, which is used throughout the season to file their ribbons, important handouts and information. Information such as meet entry dues, motels, awards, etc. will be in the swimmers/swim families file folder. The file folders are kept alphabetically in a file folder box and will be available during practice at the parents viewing area. The Branson Waves Swim Team also has a website www.bransonparksandrecreation.com, Facebook page, and you can sign up for **text alerts by texting @bwaves to 81010.**

RAIN DAYS

Because of our outdoor facility, all practices are weather permitting. However, practice is rarely cancelled. ALWAYS show up to the pool for practice, UNLESS you have received a phone call or text from the coaches.

COACHES EXPECTATIONS

By becoming a member of the Waves, families will be expected to act in a way that would represent us in a positive manner. Included in this, is the choice in which events swimmers will swim in Invitationals or Championships and who is chosen for relay teams.

We look forward to another great season! For any questions, please see our contact information below.

Coach – Logan Taylor (478)747-2156 or logantaylor777@gmail.com
Branson RecPlex – (417)335-2368 or bransonwaves@bransonmo.gov

MEET SCHEDULE

There are eight meets through the summer plus two championship meets for those with qualifying times. Below is the full schedule.

THERE IS NO HOME MEET THIS SEASON

- June 1-2 : Monett Outdoor
- June 8 : Siloam Springs- 1 day (Team Meet)
- June 15-16 : Lamar
- June 22 : Parsons- 1 day
- June 29-30 : Lebanon Outdoor (Team Meet)
- July 6-7 : Nevada
- July 13-14 : Carthage
- July 20-21 : Joplin (Team Meet)
- July 27-28 : B Championships @ Pittsburg (Qualifiers Only)*
- August 3-4 : A Championships @ Monett Indoor (Qualifiers Only)**

*To qualify for B Championships, swimmers must get a qualifying time (one time) AND swim at 3 meets.

**To qualify for A Championships, swimmers must get a qualifying A time AND swim at 3 meets (not including B Champs)