

# Arden Sharks

## Swim Team Parent Guide

### Sign up

The season begins with the parent meeting and team sign up session. The coaches and swim team parents will discuss the details for the session, outline expectations for the swimmers and provide sheets for you to volunteer to help at swim meets, fundraisers, etc. This is also an opportunity to meet new and experienced parents, to ask questions of the coaches and find out the team schedule. We ask that a parent or guardian please attend this important meeting. There will be a short practice for the team during the meeting.

Health forms and emergency contact sheets are filled out at this time so please be sure to bring insurance and contact information with you.

### Practice

Practices are held in the evenings the first couple of weeks of the season and then every weekday morning during most of June and July. There are two groups that practice. Practice for the younger swimmers begins at 8:30 am and lasts an hour every weekday and is followed by a 1\_ hour practice for the older swimmers.

Practice is a time for the team members to improve their skills, learn new techniques and better their times. It's also a time for them to get to know one another better and have fun. Please be sure to have the children at practices each day.

### Meets

Meets are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. They begin promptly at 6:00 pm. It is important that you have your child at the meet by 5:00 pm for several reasons:

- The first event the team swims is the Medley Relay and if your child is not present before the meet begins, he/she will be scratched from the event. The team can lose vital points if a swimmer is scratched from the roster.
- Warming up is essential for athletic events of any kind. Swimmers perform better if he/she can loosen and warm up before the meet begins.
- Team members are provided information regarding which races, race numbers and lanes that they are to swim in during that hour before the race.

Coaches put together the swim roster the day of the meet. Please inform the coaches if your child is NOT swimming in the meet no later than the morning of a race.

## **Volunteers**

In order to have a team and meets, many volunteers are needed. Being a volunteer in swim team related activities can get you involved with the swimmers, have fun and show support for the whole team. There are a number of activities that require volunteers summarized in the sections that follow.

## **NBSL Representative**

Arden is a member team of the North Brandywine Swim League (NBSL). The NBSL sets the schedules and rules for meets provides forms for volunteers, runs the preliminaries and championships (see Championships below). The NBSL meets approximately monthly, to set policy, schedules and to share ideas between pools.

Each team is required to have an NBSL representative, in order to swim in the league. The NBSL representative attends the monthly meetings, communicates pertinent information back to the team and pool board, and is a voting member of the NBSL. The NBSL representative should also be present at the swim meets and be familiar with the rules, and works with the team parents to make sure that the jobs are filled and that the meet runs smoothly according to proper procedure. The NBSL reps from each team are to determine if the meet is cancelled or postponed due to inclement weather, and set the make-up date. The NBSL rep ensures that our dues are paid and that we have volunteers at the preliminaries and championship meets. The NBSL rep also places an ad for the Arden Sharks in the programs for preliminaries/ championships.

## **Home and Away Meets**

We need Swim Team parents to participate at every swim meet. Each swim team must have timers, judges, ribbon writers and runners at every meet. There is always someone to explain how to do any of the needed jobs - nothing complicated! It's a lot of fun and can be very exciting to be right down where the action is. And, most importantly, it does make the meet go faster!

We ask that parents sign up for a *minimum* of three meets for any of the activities.

We need parents to help make sure swimmers are close by and know which race they are in. We try to get them lined up a couple of races before theirs, particularly with the younger ones.

Here is a brief description of the jobs we must fill during all meets:

**Announcer**- Announces events, swimmers name and other pertinent information. We need 1 - 2 volunteers (for home meets only).

**Starter** - Responsible for starting each home race. We need 2-3 volunteers, as it is very helpful to split this so you don't lose your voice!

**Timers** - Each lane has 2 timers (one from each team) who time the swimmers and report the average of the two times to the runner. Stopwatches provided. We need 5 - 10 volunteers (10 will allow relief during the meet for all).

**Head Timer** - Collect times from timers. We need 1 - 2 volunteers (for home meets only).

**Runner** - Collect times and DQ cards from head timer. We need 1 - 2 volunteers (for home meets only).

**Place Judges** - Responsible for capturing the order of finish, and watching starts for relays. We need at least 2 volunteers in order to split it.

**Stroke and Turn** - Responsible for making sure proper stroke are swum and make sure starts, turns, finishes are legal. Stroke and Turn clinics are available. We need at least 2 volunteers since we need one at all times at all meets (this is a good job to split).

**Ribbon Writers** - Write out the ribbons for swimmers. We need 2 -3 volunteers.

**Scoring** - Keep track of score of the meet. At least 2 volunteers needed.

**Snack Bar (Home meets)** - 4 - 6 volunteers are needed to set up snack bar, sell goods and handle money.

## Home Meets

Visiting teams enjoy the Arden atmosphere and home meets are an opportunity for us to show what a great place Arden is. In the first year of awarding a trophy for the "Best Sportsmanship" exhibited by a team in the NBSL (2006) - we won!

During Home Meets, the Arden Pool runs a snack bar to raise money for the Swim Team. Foods ranging from grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, fresh salads, sodas, and snacks are sold. Every home meet, each family should provide baked goods or packaged snacks that can be sold. Please wrap baked goods in individual servings. It can get pretty hectic for the parents running the Snack Bar.

We always welcome parents to volunteer to work at the Snack Bar. Working the Snack Bar can make the meet just fly by. The money made at the Snack Bar enables the Swim Team to purchase lane markers, stopwatches, ribbons, trophies and all the many things needed to make this all come together.

## Fundraising

Funds are needed to support the team needs. We are always looking for new ideas to raise funds. In 2007 we anticipate at least one car wash. We will have the date(s) by the team signup and will be looking for volunteers to help. In

the past we have sold pizza kits, ice cream, T-shirts, and baked goods. We will be doing some of those things this year as well and need assistance.

### Swim Team Board

The Swim Team Board meets in the spring and as needed during the season. Generally meetings are held poolside on a weekend when it's convenient. The board reviews the finances, determines ways to raise funds, and evaluates any team related issues.

### Preliminaries and Championships

At the end of the season, the NBSL holds the league preliminaries and championship meets. Swimmers qualify to swim in the Championships in one of two ways:

- A swimmer will be placed in the Championship meet if he/she meets the qualifying time in a stroke for their age group. The qualifying times are posted on the bulletin board at the pool.
- Finish 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Preliminary meet (held the weekend before Championships for all other swimmers).

The NBSL Championship meet is comprised of top swimmers from all 18 NBSL swim teams. Because the Championship meet is so big, it is also a long day starting early morning and running many hours. Be sure to take something to sit on and something to read or do! Team families sit together in a group so it's a nice time to visit with neighbors as well.

It is very exciting to see our Arden Sharks well represented and for parents and teammates to cheer each other on at Preliminaries and Championships.

The season is short and rather intense which makes for a busy but exciting June/July for the swimmers and parents. Your help in any way as a volunteer is absolutely critical to make this happen for our young swimmers. It provides them with lifelong memories of fun times in Arden with their friends, helps them gain a love of swimming and improves their skills.

**Thank you for your help.**