



Methow Valley “KILLER WHALES” Team Handbook

Purpose of the Methow Valley Killer Whale Swim Team:

Our mission is to promote and support a supervised competitive age group swimming program.

Our primary focus is three fold:

1. Develop individual swimming skills & stroke proficiency
2. Develop individual goal setting and self-improvement skills.
3. Develop teamwork, respect for others and sportsmanship

To be Swim Team Ready, it is important that your swimmer can meet the Town of Twisp LEVEL 4 STANDARDS:

1. Demonstrate deep water bobbing
2. Demonstrate floating positions
3. Demonstrate rotary breathing in chest deep water, or demonstrate in dry land drill
4. Dive from the side of the pool (if water depth permits) from stride and standing positions
5. Perform elementary backstroke – 10 yards
6. Demonstrate sculling back for 5 yards or 15 seconds
7. Swim front crawl for 25 yards with rotary breathing
8. Swim back crawl for 25 yards
9. Demonstrate breaststroke kick with or without kickboard for 10 yards
10. Demonstrate scissor kick with or without kickboard for 10 yards
11. Demonstrate change of direction at wall
12. Tread water with modified scissors, modified breaststroke or rotary kicks (2 minutes with any kick)

Registration:

Registration generally occurs in April. Details and registration forms are posted on the team website, <http://www.mvkillerwhales.org> . Registration may be limited if necessary to provide enough room in the pool for all team members. The team invites all committed and qualified swimmers to register. For those who would find team expenses to be a hardship, a limited amount of financial aid may be available. Financial aid recipients are expected to send written thanks to their sponsor, support the team by raising money in the Swim-a-thon, and be good representatives of the team.

Practice Schedule

The season starts with Swim Team «Boot Camp» typically the last week of public school, then shifts to the regular summer Schedule which is posted on the team website under schedules. <http://www.mvkillerwhales.org>

Swim Team Rules (Code of Conduct)

Swimmers must display good sportsmanship at all times:

1. Behave respectfully at all times, including showing respect for your coaches, parents, officials, judges, and chaperones.
2. Participate in all practices and swim meets.
3. Treat guests courteously at home and be polite guests when away.
4. Exhibit good sportsmanship at both meets and practices. Congratulate opponents on races, win or lose.
5. Refrain from all “horseplay” in the pool area, locker rooms or on park premises.
6. Refrain from inappropriate comments or obscene language, or actions by gesture, words, or actions that can be considered as any type of harassment.
7. Exhibit tolerance and courtesies toward all team members. We are a swim “TEAM” and our energies should be spent helping each other to develop.
8. Show respect for pool equipment and facilities.

Swim Team Rules (Team Procedure)

1. Only swimmers who sign up by the roster deadline will be placed on the team roster for that particular meet.
2. If a swimmer notifies the coach that they will not make a meet but then decides to register late, the coach and data entry person will try to accommodate the change but cannot guarantee that swimmer will be able to participate. Changes to a team roster after the entry deadline require the efforts of the opposing coach and data entry person as well. Needless to say, roster changes are extremely time consuming and burdensome for many people involved.
3. If you sign up for a meet you must attend! This is IMPORTANT! Other swimmers and the team are significantly impacted by “no shows.” Think of your coaches and teammates and communicate in advance of planned absences.
4. If a swimmer (boy or girl) has long hair, he/she will be required to wear a swim cap or to get it cut, as long hair may slow down a swimmer’s time, have an effect on his/her stroke and is a potential problem for pool filtration.
5. Any swimmer, who presents a disciplinary problem at practice or at the meets, will be given a verbal warning. If the swimmer’s behavior does not improve, the swimmer will then be asked to leave the practice or meet. He/she will not be allowed back at practice until the parent(s) have spoken with the Head Coach.

Our coaching staff will strictly adhere to proper behavior and the Code of Conduct for the safety and security of all team members. Killer Whale Swim Team is and will be a safe place for our swimmers to participate and feel part of a healthy, supportive team.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF KILLER WHALE SWIMMERS?

- Be proud to be a member of the Methow Valley Killer Whales.
- Put out 100% physically and mentally.
- Challenge yourself and teammates to improve and work harder.
- Behavior at its best, 100% of the time, home and away.
- Clean up the Killer Whales area after all meets.
- When not swimming, motivate and cheer on your teammates

At Practice:

- Attend practices (3 mandatory practices each week unless cleared with the coach).
- Be at practice 10 minutes early.
- Have all equipment on and ready to go (suit, goggles, swim cap, water bottle).
- Be at practice the entire time (unless cleared by coach).
- Complete workouts with a concentration on proper technique (not speed).
- Be willing to push yourself physically to build up endurance
- Sign up for Meets before Roster Deadline
- Listen carefully for any information that needs to go home, check the team file box for ribbons, information and be certain to get all handouts to parents.
- Use equipment with care and replace after use.
- Turn off all faucets and showers after use.

At Meets:

- Arrive on time for warm-ups (you are expected to warm up with the team and coach).
- Wear team suit if you have one.
- Mentally go through your race before stepping on the block; be ready, be confident. Remember, you have prepared yourself in practice.
- When another Killer Whale swimmer is competing, cheer, applaud and pat them on the back after their race.
- Practice GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP!
- Help teammates, especially younger or new swimmers. Be a good example to other team members.
- Help set up equipment when requested and help clean up after home meets.
- HAVE FUN!

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF KILLER WHALE PARENTS?

- Familiarity with the Parent Organization manual and team handbook.
- Team assistance. Parents may choose to either work 3 meets or participate on one of the important committees of the Board.
- Support the coaches. PLEASE NOTIFY THEM WHEN YOUR SWIMMER CANNOT MAKE A MEET OR IF YOUR SWIMMER MUST LEAVE EARLY OR LATE.
- Go over all “team rules” and “what is expected of swimmers” with your children.

SUGGESTED TEAM EQUIPMENT

- Two swimsuits for practice (need not be the team suit). Chlorine is extremely hard on suits and they deteriorate fairly quickly. This also allows for one to be in the laundry.
- One team suit for meets
- One pair of goggles. This is mandatory for practice and meets
- One swim cap. This is optional for most, but is required for all swimmers with long hair (longer than shoulder length). It may help protect hair from chlorine damage as well. Swim caps are highly recommended for all swimmers as the cap helps maintain vital body heat during colder morning practices.
- At least two towels. One for drying off, (if a swimmer is in many events, more might be needed) and one for sitting on.
- One water bottle for practices. Practice will be demanding and “in pool” drink breaks will take place every 20 minutes or as needed individually.

HOW TO FIND YOUR WAY AROUND A SWIM MEET

- Lengths: Age groups are organized around the different lengths. Generally, 25 yards is one length of the pool. Fifty yards is 2 lengths, or from the blocks, a turn and back. 100 yards is 4 lengths, etc.
- What is Freestyle? Freestyle is the front crawl with a flutter kick. It is the most common stroke used by most swimmers. In a race, freestyle technically means swimmer's stroke choice but front crawl is used because it is fastest.
- What is Backstroke? Backstroke is done on your back. Head is back, back is arched; the kick is a flutter kick, arms alternate (one than the other). Swimmers cannot roll past 90 degrees from their back as they stroke and cannot roll onto their side or stomach when approaching the finish line. (Many younger swimmers have a tendency to do this to see how close they are to the wall; they should learn to count the number of strokes they need to take after they pass under the flags.
- What is Breaststroke? The breaststroke uses the whip kick (or frog kick is acceptable), while the arms pull underwater simultaneously. The head moves up and down but must not go below the surface of the water. Feet must stay below the water. The two hands must touch on the turn and finish level and simultaneously (two hand touch).
- What is the Butterfly? In the butterfly the feet and knees are together on the kick, arms move simultaneously. The two hands must touch level and simultaneously on turns and at the finish.
- What is the Individual Medley (IM)? An event for those 9 years and older, in which the swimmer completes one length of each of the following strokes in this order – FLY, BACK, BREAST, FREE.

- What is the Medley Relay? It is a 4 swimmer event in which each swimmer on the relay team swims one of the 4 strokes in the following order – BACK, BREAST, FLY, FREE.
- My swimmer does well in the Freestyle. Why is he/she swimming the backstroke, his/her poorest? The coaching staff attempts to give every swimmer the maximum opportunity to swim all strokes regardless of the swimmer's ability as this serves to develop the swimmer's overall performance.
- My swimmer is only 10, why is he/she swimming in the 11-12 age group? Swimmers are sometimes moved up to help fill team requirements. Also, as a swimmer gets better, he/she can be moved up to give better competition and more of a challenge.
- What is exhibition swimming? If there are lanes open in an event, by agreement of the coaches, a swimmer, regardless of age or sex, can fill that lane as an exhibition swimmer. A participant swimming exhibition may not receive ribbons or awards for that event, and no points are awarded for their participation, but the swimmer will get timed and important race experience. Some swimmers swim exhibition to be able to swim in more races, to practice on a stroke they have difficulty with; to compete against the opposite sex; to practice starts and turns; or because their coaches requested them to do so.
- How many events can a swimmer compete in? This is determined by the type of meet. The limit is 4 events for dual meets. This can be 2 Individual and 2 relay or 3 Individual & 1 relay or 4 Individual. Invitationals and championships are not limited.
- Who are the Officials at the meet? The basic officials include a referee, starter, stroke, and turn judges, timers and scorers. All of our officials are swim parents who assist voluntarily. We depend heavily on parents to run these meets.
- What is a stroke judge? The stroke judge determines if the stroke is being swum properly. He/she usually walks along the edge of the pool.
- What is a turn judge? The turn judge determines if the swimmer touches before starting another length and makes certain the swimmer complies with the turning rules applicable to the stroke used. Turn judges stand at the opposite end of the pool from the starting blocks.
- What is a place judge? A place judge determines the finish of the swimmers by lane. This is a visual determination. He stands at the side of the pool where the race will end.
- What do timers do? The timers (2-3) per lane use stop watches or press buttons on automatic timing devices to obtain a swimmers time. They record the times on the swimmer's card. Timers also stand at the end of the pool where the race will finish.

- What is DQ? DQ means that the swimmer has been disqualified in that event. Generally, a swimmer is disqualified from an event when the swimmer does not perform the stroke properly, does not touch or turn correctly or swims a wrong stroke in a relay.

- **What are the common reasons for being “DQ”ed?**

- Not swimming the stroke properly, e.g. in the fly, the swimmer may not use a flutter kick.
- Not swimming the stroke throughout the entire event.
- More than one false start (diving before the gun is fired).
- Failure to touch simultaneously with both hands on turns and finish in both butterfly and breaststroke.
- Taking more than one arm pull or leg kick while submerged at the start or at the turn on breaststroke.
- A relay team may be DQ’ed for starting before the returning swimmer has touched the wall.
- What should a swimmer do if he/she realizes they are DQ’ed? Sometimes during a race a swimmer becomes aware that he/she has been DQ’ed. If this happens, he/she should **KEEP SWIMMING TO THE BEST OF THEIR ABILITY**. If one member of a relay is DQ’ed the team still completes the relay.
- Please help your swimmer realize that being DQ’ed is not the end of the world. It is important to try your best, but mistakes occur at all age groups. Please realize it takes a special kind of determination and sportsmanship to continue under these circumstances. It doesn’t hurt to let your swimmer know that you’re proud of him/her for their extra effort.

RIBBONS AND AWARDS

Ribbons are given for individual event finishes in first through fourth place. Relay teams earn a ribbon for a first place finish. Incentive ribbons may also be given for 'personal bests'. Ribbons and other awards will be placed in the family folders when available. Additional awards may be given at the discretion of the Head Coach or Board

THE “CHASE AWARD” is our only “Individual” honor given to one swimmer each

season who exhibits a high standard of personal commitment and team leadership by example. The award is named after “Killer Whale Chase Brandenburg” who left our world prematurely in 2007. Chase is no longer with our team but will always be a “Killer Whale” that inspires us all to be the best we can be!

Medals will be awarded at Championships only.