

DUBOIS YMCA DOLPHINS SWIM TEAM

2023-2024 Winter Season

MISSION

The mission of the DuBois YMCA Dolphins Swim Team is to provide swimmers of all abilities the opportunity to reach their fullest potential as both swimmers and individuals in a positive, confidence-building environment. We believe that age-group competitive swimming offers a wonderful opportunity to learn the values of sportsmanship, dedication, commitment, responsibility, and hard work. The team provides a fun atmosphere that allows for an exciting, wholesome, constructive environment for character development and competitive achievement in a sport that offers lifelong health and enjoyment.

MESSAGE FROM THE COACHES

Welcome DuBois Dolphins swimmers and families! We are Gabi Wayne and Caitlin Drahushak and we can't wait to spend this season with all of you! We grew up in the tri-county area and spent most of our childhoods at swimming pools - in fact, the DuBois Dolphins was our first swim team. We are looking forward to getting to know each swimmer and family as we spend this season together.

We love swimming, and we love to share our passion with others! Swimming is such an amazing sport - it allows each person to grow and improve, regardless of their experience level or age. Swimming is also a sport that you can enjoy for life.

As swim coaches, **we want swimmers to enjoy swimming** - we want them to look forward to the time that they get to spend at the pool and the experiences they have with their coaches and teammates. We also want them to grow at each practice and every meet. We want them to push themselves to become better athletes, but **we also want them to grow as individuals**. We consider ourselves successful as coaches when we see swimmers improve both in the water and as they interact with their families, friends, and others around the pool deck.

Here are a few goals we have for the team this season:

- **Work hard:** We want each swimmer to be proud of the effort they are putting in and the results they will achieve with persistence, dedication, and hard work.
- **Make swimming fun:** We can have a lot of fun while working hard - both in and out of the pool.

We are looking forward to an amazing year together. Thanks for being part of the DuBois Dolphins swimming family!

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TEAM COMMUNICATION

- ***Remind Notification System***

- Primary communication with parents will be through **text messages** and **direct email**. The team uses a tool called Remind to send out messages to parents. **Parents must sign-up to receive notifications**. Downloading the Remind App provides a better experience and additional options for notifications, however, direct text messaging is also available.
- To **sign up for the Remind group**, text @duboisdol to 81010. You can also join by visiting <https://www.remind.com/join/duboisdol>.

- ***DuBois Dolphins Swim Team Facebook Group***

- The team maintains a Facebook group to provide information to swimmers and families and to collect information throughout the season (e.g., swim meet registration details, volunteer signups, etc.). This is a **private** group that only current DuBois Dolphins families have access to.
- Although this is not an official mode of communication for the team, the coaches and parent organization members try to post information and answer questions regularly.

FEES

The fee for the DuBois YMCA Dolphins Swim Team supports the general operating expenses of the program including the salaries of the coach staff who provide your child(en) with the personalized attention that is the basis of the program. Fees are paid directly to the YMCA. Please note "swim team registration" in the memo section of checks.

The fee for the 2023 -2024 Winter Season is unchanged from last year: **\$145 per swimmer**. The fee for high school swim team members is \$50 per high school swimmer. Additional swimmers from the same family are half price. High school swim team members are excluded.

In addition, each swimmer on the DuBois Dolphins Swim Team must also be a member of the DuBois Area YMCA. Youth, individual, and family memberships are available with a variety of payment terms. For further details on the benefits of becoming a member of the YMCA, see the full YMCA brochure available at the YMCA, 25 Parkway Drive, DuBois, PA 15801, calling 814-375-9622, or visiting the website at <https://www.duboismymca.org>.

AFFILIATION

The DuBois Area YMCA is affiliated with YMCA National, which establishes rules and regulations for the conduct of YMCA competitions.

YMCA SWIM LEAGUE

The DuBois Dolphins Swim Team is a member of the CENKEY YMCA Swim League, which provides opportunities for competitive meets against other league teams. Dual (and often triple or tri) meets are held on weekends (usually Saturdays) throughout the winter, beginning in early December and running through February. A league championship is held in February with all league teams participating. The meet schedule will be distributed and published as soon as it becomes available.

SWIM MEETS

The CENKEY League meet schedule is usually finalized in early October and posted shortly thereafter. The meet schedule will be distributed and posted as soon as it is available. The remaining meet schedule, consisting of invitationals, will be developed by the DuBois Dolphins coaching staff.

A typical CENKEY season consists of approximately six dual/tri/quad meets and a championship meet. Swimmers are highly encouraged to compete in all meets - especially home meets. Coaches will determine the line-up of swimmers registered for these meets to maximize the individuals' performance in their best events as well as the team's overall performance. Questions regarding meets and race events should be directed to Coach Gabi and Coach Caitlin.

POSTSEASON MEETS

- ***District Championship Meet***
 - The DuBois YMCA Dolphins Swim Team is a member of the PA West District, which hosts the Western PA District Championship ("Districts") meet in early March. Swimmers must qualify to participate in districts by achieving a qualifying time in each event they hope to swim at the meet. District qualifying times will be shared with swimmers once finalized.

- ***State Championship Meet***
 - Swimmers qualify for the PA State Championship meet ("States") based on their performance at districts. Generally, the top six swimmers in each event from the Western PA District Championship meet advance to the PA State Championship meet from across all three districts in Pennsylvania. In addition, six swimmers from across all three districts will receive bids to states based on their times.

MEET ENTRY FEES

Meet entry fees are fees charged to enter swimmers in an event. *There are no entry fees for league meets.* Invitationals, championships, and other special meets **DO** charge entry fees.

NECESSARY EQUIPMENT & TEAM WEAR

- **Goggles:** Swimmers use goggles to protect their eyes from the chlorine as well as to gain a clear view of their surroundings in the pool. There are a variety of colors and styles depending on the preference of the swimmer. Goggles meant for competition, not recreation, are preferred.
- **Caps:** Caps are designed to keep the hair out of swimmers' faces and goggle straps in place. Latex and silicone caps are the most popular types of caps for competitive swimmers. Many families prefer silicone caps because of their durability.
- **Practice Suit:** Practice suits are worn during workouts. Girls' suits need to be a one-piece competitive suit with no ties or loose straps. Most boys wear jammers or form-fitting long shorts. Boys can also wear speedos/briefs.
- **Team (Competition) Suit:** Team suits are not mandatory, but are available. They should be worn at competitions only. Information for ordering a team suit will be available soon.
- **Team Apparel:** Clothing orders for team apparel will be available soon.
- **Tech Suits:** High performance "tech" suits are sometimes worn by DuBois Dolphins swimmers at major meets (Championships, Districts, and States). Although FINA-approved tech suits are legal for YMCA meets, they are expensive and not necessary nor required for most swimmers. *As of September 2020, all swimmers 12-years and younger are not permitted to wear tech suits.* If you are interested in purchasing a tech suit for your swimmer, please talk to a coach first!
- **Swim Meets:** Parents are encouraged to bring hand sanitizer, lawn chairs, blankets, snacks, cash, warm clothes, multiple towels, crocs/flip flops, and a fine-tip Sharpie marker to all swim meets.

TEAM CONDUCT

A hallmark of the DuBois Dolphins Swim Team family is our reputation for both team conduct and pride during meets and practice. We are often "guests" at facilities and each individual's actions are a reflection on the DuBois Dolphins Swim Team. Keeping in mind the YMCA's core values of caring, respect, honesty, responsibility, and inclusiveness, swimmers and family members should always conduct themselves in a manner befitting the highest ideals of the DuBois Dolphins program.

FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

Informed swimming families and volunteers are critical to the success of every swim meet and our team!

- Each family is expected to register their swimmer with the YMCA. It is also expected that parents will read Remind messages and know deadlines.
- Each family is expected to sign up for meets in a timely manner. Please communicate with Coach Gabi and Coach Caitlin to avoid errors. If you sign up for a meet, it is expected that your swimmer will participate in the meet. Relays rely heavily on everyone attending. If there is a chance of a no-show, please let Coach Gabi or Coach Caitlin know as soon as possible.
- Each family signed up for a meet is expected to volunteer in some capacity at each meet your family attends. (One job consists of either setting up before the meet, working during the meet, or tearing down after the meet.) Areas you can help: concessions, timing, scoring table, officiating, seating, set up, and tear down.
- Each family is expected to make a concession stand donation for each home meet.
 - The concession stand coordinator will assign each swimmer an item to donate to the concession stand. Possible items include (but are not limited to) fruit, pre-packaged items, drinks, and ice.
 - Donation lists will be sent via Remind, posted in the Facebook group, and emailed to all families.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The activities of the DuBois YMCA Dolphins Swim Team could not happen without a lot of help from volunteers. ALL FAMILIES are expected to volunteer at the meets your child is attending. **We need many volunteers for swim meets to run on time and smoothly.**

It is important to sign up to volunteer prior to a swim meet. Sign-Up Genius will be used once again this season. Links to sign-up to volunteer will be shared via Remind, posted in the Facebook group, and emailed to all families. We need to know which positions we have covered and which we still need assistance prior to meets. If your child is attending a meet and you have not volunteered, a member of the parent organization will contact you. Once you sign up for a volunteer position, it is your responsibility to fulfill that position or find someone as a replacement.

If you have any questions about a specific position, please ask! We can help you find something you enjoy and feel comfortable with. We are happy to train volunteers for any position they are interested in trying. Timers do not need prior experience to help out. Meet officials require special training and certification. If you are interested in becoming a meet official, please contact Coach Gabi or Coach Caitlin.

| Volunteer Opportunities at Swim Meets | | | |
|--|--|-------------|-------------|
| <u>Position</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Home</u> | <u>Away</u> |
| Pre-Meet Set Up | Plan on arriving 30-45 minutes prior to warmups to help set up the pool area and surrounding areas | 8 | |
| Timers | | ~14 | ~6 |
| Clerk of Course | Organize heats, place swimmers in the correct lanes, and update event numbers on the whiteboard | 3 | |
| Concession Stand Workers | Serve and sell snacks. | 2 | |
| Post-Meet Tear Down | Plan on staying ~30 minutes after the meet to clean up. | 6 | |
| Meet Manager | Enter results into electronic meet file | 1 | |
| Time Averager | Average the swimmers' times | 1 | |
| Runner | Collect results & assist at scoring table (young sibling) | 1-2 | |
| Admin Official (AO) | AO Certification Required | 1 | |
| Stroke/Turn Judge | Level I Certification Required | 4 | ~2 |
| Meet Referee | Level II Certification Required | 1 | |
| Starter | Level II Certification Required | 1 | |

GENERAL SWIM MEET Q&As

General Meet Rules

- Parents are only allowed on the pool deck during meets if they are volunteering. All other parents should remain in the gymnasium with their swimmer(s).
- Swimmers are expected to behave in ALL locker rooms and represent the DuBois Dolphins Swim Team in a positive manner.
- It is a good idea to let your swimmer know where to find you after a meet.
- Many YMCA pools do NOT have enough seating space for families to "camp out" in the pool area (or on the bleachers) for the entire meet. To allow everyone to see their swimmer's event, we ask that you only stay in the swimming area until your child has swum their event. Once it is completed, please move from the pool area/bleachers to the seating area (gym) until your swimmer's next event.

When Should We Arrive for Meets?

- It is important for the swimmers to be on time for meets. Swimmers must be on deck, ready to swim, 10-15 minutes before warm-ups. Meet warm-up times will be shared through Remind, posted on Facebook, and sent via email a few days prior to the meet.

Is There Transportation to Away Meets?

- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to get all swimmers to/from away meets. Swimmers MAY NOT ride with coaches to/from meets.

How Long Are Dual Meets?

- YMCA dual meets last approximately 3-4 hours. Championships and Invitationals can last all day or can take place over multiple days. Parents should make it a point to volunteer to work home meets, and perhaps some away meets. If you are volunteering, please make necessary arrangements for younger children.

Will There Be Food Available at Swim Meets?

- The DuBois YMCA Dolphins Swim Team hosts a concession stand at all home meets. Parents are responsible for donating food/drinks and their time to work in the concession stand. Food availability for away meets will be governed by the host team, however, most meets do have some type of concession stand.

How Should I Dress for Swim Meets?

- Dress comfortably for warm, humid conditions. Pool areas are often quite warm regardless of the weather outside. Dress in layers that can be removed based on your comfort level at the pool. If you are volunteering on deck and will be around the pool area, consider wearing clothes and shoes (sandals, slides, or sneakers) that you don't mind getting wet!

What Should I Bring to a Swim Meet?

- **Swimmers** need to bring the following to each meet: team suit, two sets of goggles (one as a backup pair), team cap, towels, comfy clothes, change of dry clothes, snacks, drinks, money for the concession stand, and activities (cards, crayons, coloring books, etc.). Some swimmers bring electronics; however, the team is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.
- **Parents/Guardians & non-swimmers** should plan on bringing fold-up chairs and blankets to lay out - gym floors tend to be cold and hard. Most YMCAs will provide space, such as gymnasium, where parents, siblings, and swimmers can set up during the duration of the meet. In some instances, gym seating may be limited, so arrive early!

Where Should I Park for Swim Meets?

- For home swim meets, drop off swimmers at the door and park in the YMCA parking lots.
- For away swim meets, follow the directions of the host YMCA (given the week of the away meet).

How Can I Show Support for the DuBois YMCA Dolphins Swim Team?

- Be sure to exhibit your best sportsmanship and team spirit! Cheering for your team during a meet is great! Please encourage your swimmer after each of their swims.