

# *WILDCAT* SWIMMING & DIVING 2020 – 2021

Welcome to Owen J. Roberts Swimming & Diving! We're excited to be here and are looking forward to this upcoming season! The purpose behind this information is to inform both the swimmer or diver and the parent/guardian of expectations we have as coaches and procedures each athlete will be expected to follow. There are several items that must be addressed and understood by each individual, including team procedures that are pertinent to the members on the team. Further information will be provided as the coaching staff considers each item, if necessary.



## EVALUATION PERIOD

There will be a general evaluation period of one to two weeks.

This is a varsity sport. We reserve the right to reduce numbers if in the eyes of the coaching staff it is necessary. We need to be honest in saying we cannot take on athletes who do not have the capability to practice at a high level or compete, or create a disturbance that requires the constant attention of the coaching staff, which in turn takes us away from effectively coaching all of the athletes.

Things the coaching staff must consider, but are not limited to:

- Safety
- Knowledge of the basic strokes and skills
- Talent and skill-set
- Training ability
- Attitude
- Focus
- Attention to details
- Listening skills
- Effort & work-ethic
- Space available in the pool
  - This year more than any year, space in the pool is going to be a challenge!

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

### **Your #1 responsibility is your HEALTH & SAFETY.**

In being a responsible member of a team, one must help to establish and maintain a team first attitude. No one individual should make himself or herself feel like he or she is above the total team. Nor should one individual, or group of individuals, make any other individual or group of individuals feel negatively about himself or herself. The team is what succeeds. From the beginning of the season to the end of the season, you are a part of this team. It doesn't matter if you are in the pool or away from the pool area. How we interact as a group is of paramount interest to us.

In accepting a role on the team you are in the position to accept:

1. Responsibility for your actions. Do not do anything that will be perceived negatively by school officials, teachers, or coaches in the school district or community.
2. The practice slot, lane, or training group you have been assigned.
3. The number of events or selected events you swim in meets.
  - With increased numbers, there may be times not all athletes get to participate in meets.
  - It is virtually impossible to announce line-ups prior to the meet days. Often line-ups are completed the night before a meet. There will not be advanced notice for meet line-ups due to the quick changes that may need to take place pending a variety of reasons.
  - Pending on numbers, we may need to create a traveling team for away meets. This is also at the discretion of the coaching staff.
4. Responsibility for your grades. Please do not become ineligible. It creates a major dilemma both for the coaching staff and your teammates who are depending on you.
5. Responsibility to your teammates to be dedicated!

Practices, meets, team functions, meetings, and **WORK ETHIC.**

Again, if in the opinion of the coaches, you fail to meet the team expectations and policies you will receive a fair warning. If the situation(s) persists, your position on the team will be reevaluated, perhaps to the point of dismissal. Our focus as coaches should always be on the athletes that want to be there!

## MEETS

**Will we have any this year?**

**The structure will be different, given the situation.**

**This is the format from prior years, and is subject to change!**

As coaches, it's our job in preparing you to be ready. Not only is it our duty to prepare you for your swims, but it is important for us to have some sort of plan in creating match-ups that will favor our team. Therefore, meet line-ups are done by the coaches. We will attempt to make the best possible line-ups for each meet as the competition necessitates. However, a swimmers' input, when asked, will not be disregarded.

Remember, we are interested only in those who have a positive "team first" attitude. If you are asked to swim an event that you feel is not your specialty, you are to approach it with the same attitude you would approach your favorite event. It is acceptable and appropriate to express nervousness and seek advice about an assigned event that you view as difficult. If you are not in the meet line-up, you should still approach the meet with the same enthusiasm for your team!

- You are required to stay until the end of the swim meet. Your teammates are there for you and you will support them, as well.
- You should travel with the team on the bus. However, if an emergency occurs and you need to make other arrangements, you must get the consent from the coaching staff and make the necessary arrangements with the athletic director.

### **Set-up / Clean-up at Home Meets**

- **Lane Lines:** putting the lines in the pool for the meets and rolling them up afterwards.
- **Timing System:** please be ready to lend a helpful hand if the table needs assistance!
- **Trash:** cleaning up after ourselves.

Personally, we believe our standards are displayed through our actions and appearance. We will be a first class team both in and out of the water.

We will...

1. cheer for our teammates.
2. wait until **each** and **every** swimmer is finished before exiting the water after finishing a race.
3. use comments such as "good luck" and "nice race" in talking to our teammates **and** opposition.
4. never question a call of an official.
5. never taunt or make negative comments towards our opposition.

\*\*\*Out of the water we may dress up for some away swim meets, pending the meet. Dressing up together as a team shows both class and team unity. This will be announced throughout the season by the coaches and/or captains as to the attire.

### **MEET ORDER OF EVENTS**

Girls will swim first, then the boys, in an alternating event fashion:

- 200 Medley Relay
- 200 Freestyle
- 200 Individual Medley
- 50 Freestyle
- Diving Event
- 100 Butterfly
- 100 Freestyle
- 500 Freestyle
- 200 Freestyle Relay
- 100 Backstroke
- 100 Breaststroke
- 400 Freestyle Relay

Please know, there is only one heat of each event for girls and one heat of each event for boys.

Meets will generally last around 2 ½ hours. Remember, you are required to stay until the end of the meet.

Our final meet of the season will be the PAC Meet. This competition is for all swimmers and divers who meet time standards or diving qualifications in order to be entered. Information about this meet will be announced later in the season.

There may be other announced meets throughout the season, including diving invitationals. Athletes will be made aware of these meets, as soon as information becomes available to the coaching staff.

Following the dual meet formatted season and PAC meet, there are the PIAA District I and PIAA State Championship Meets. These meets are for those athletes who achieve or meet a predetermined time standard for the event(s). Relay times are also set by the District I Committee when trying to qualify a relay for the District I Championships. A team may enter 4 individuals per event and one relay team at the District I Championships. Those relay teams are decided by the coaching staff. State qualifiers are determined by time and placement at the District I Championships.

## OJR Swimming & Diving Practice Attendance

### **\*\*\*If you are not feeling well, stay home!**

The bottom line is coaches, in general, shouldn't have to make attendance policies. The athletes should want to be at practice or team functions, go out of their way to be at practices or team functions, and attend all if they are healthy enough to do so.

#### Regular non-holiday practice policies:

1. **Absences:** You are expected to attend all practices. Things like doctor/dentist appointments & after school make up tests can occur, we know. But at the same time, you need to find a way to manage and budget your time wisely and schedule appointments around practice. If you are legitimately injured, with consultation from the trainer, or sick, the absence will not be held against you. \* **Note:** The coaches should never be “**guessing**” as to your whereabouts at practice time. If you are absent from practice or late for any other reason, you are required to inform the coaches prior to the absence.
  
2. **Lateness:** Please don't be late. Advanced notice of late arrival is expected.

We will be logging absences, lateness, illnesses, & injuries for our records.

We hope to never have to approach you in regards to practice attendance!

#### Holiday Practices:

Holiday practices are mandatory and the same rules as above apply, with the exception of family trips. If you are going on a family trip over the holidays we do understand, but missed practices during this time can be made up on the following optional Saturdays.

\*The coaches must be notified of the days that you will be out of town and unable to attend practice.

#### Club swimmers:

It is our desire to train all of our athletes for a variety of reasons. Even with the club swimmers of recent years, most have continued to train here at Owen J. Roberts during the high school seasons. We will be discussing with each club athlete a plan to make both situations work, and each plan could be different.

## **PRACTICE TIMES**

There needs to be an understanding that your flexibility Monday through Friday between 2:45 – 6:30 PM is critical, as we may make adjustments throughout the season, pending what we are seeing and updated protocol in the pool area.

### **Swimming:**

#### **Scenario #1**

Monday – Friday: Boys: 2:45 – 4:30 PM

Girls: 4:45 – 6:30 PM

Saturday: Boys: 8:15 – 10:30 AM  
Girls: 10:15 – 12:00 PM

#### **Scenario #2**

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday: Group X: 2:45 – 4:45 PM  
Group Y: 5:00 – 6:30 PM

Tuesday & Thursday: Boys: 2:45 – 4:30 PM  
Girls: 4:45 – 6:30 PM

Saturday: Group X: 8:15 – 10:30 AM  
Group Y: 10:15 – 12:00 PM

### **Diving:**

Monday – Friday: 4:45 – 5:45 PM, one board.

Saturday: 8:15 – 9:15 AM, one board.

**Dryland:** We will plan to have workouts available and do some wetland on the pool deck.

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### **Reminder:**

The coaches do reserve the right to alter the practice schedule as they see fit.

## **PRACTICE PROTOCOL**

We will be following the District protocol set forth by the Athletic Department, in addition to other safety measures we feel are necessary.

It is critical we take all necessary precautions for EVERYONE'S safety!

### **MASKS:**

- Wear your mask when you arrive to the Middle School to practice.
- Your masks are on at ALL times... in the pool area and locker rooms, unless you are told by a coach to take off your mask to enter the pool. We will have a plan to quickly stagger water entries and exits, when the masks are not on.
- Coaches will be wearing masks.

### **ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE:**

- Please arrive socially distant... not crowding in the halls, stairwell, etc.
- When you enter the pool area, we will have you spaced out on the bleachers with your swim bags, etc.
- We will stagger how many people will be quickly changing in the locker rooms.
  - Locker room / lane-line rotations / help with the diving boards, etc.
- If your practice is the second time slot, plan to arrive in your suit.
- The athletes in the first practice will depart exiting the stairwell by the block end of the pool.

### **LOCKER ROOMS:**

- The locker rooms are not a hangout!
- In fact, your bags will remain on the bleachers after changing.
- Yes, the locker rooms can be used to go to the bathroom.
- After practice, athletes should dry off first by their bags at the bleachers, and then quickly change in the locker room. We will again stagger this, as needed.
- No showers are necessary.



### **SPACING IN THE POOL & DURING DIVING:**

- The current policy is 57 people are permitted in the pool area (as of 11/10/20).
  - This allows for us to arrive and depart in a social distant way, but also following the protocol set forth.
  - But we know we CAN'T and WILL NOT have 57 people in the pool at one time.
- We will be creative in our spacing in the water.
  - Using opposite ends.
  - Stopping at different points in the pool.
    - Having a ½ shallow and ½ deep pool actually works to our benefit in this situation.
- Divers, you will need to remain socially distant after each dive.
  - As you are awaiting your turn to dive, you will put your masks back on.
    - We can create a separate space for individuals to put their masks, towels, etc. on in between dives.
  - Plan for a method to keep you warm between your dives.
    - The tub will not be used.

### **EQUIPMENT:**

- No equipment should be shared.
- Everyone will have to get retrieve their own equipment.
- Equipment will be disinfected at the conclusion of each use.
- You may bring your own equipment bag if you desire, but you must take it home each day.
- We do recommend getting your own paddles. These can easily stay in your swim bag, as they are not bulky.

### **BRING A DRINK:**

- You will need to have your OWN water bottle. The water fountains are not available in the pool area. Obviously, you are not sharing a water bottle with a teammate.
- The water “cooler” as you enter the building is available for fill up on your way in.
- Always keep an extra snack in your bag; it's always smart.

## ILLNESSES / SICKNESSES / INJURIES

### **\*\*\*If you are not feeling well, stay home!**

Any illness, injury, or sickness should be reported to a coach as soon as possible. A coach should not find out at practice or at a meet, through someone else, that you were at home sick for the school day. Please send an email right away in the morning! If you get sick during the school day, please also notify the coaching staff immediately.

You must be present at school on meet days by 8:45 to be eligible to compete that afternoon in a completion.

If you are injured, please notify a coach immediately. We have a tremendous training staff here at OJR, and we will refer you to them, if needed.

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All of the above items are the general and specific areas of the program. Expect to perform for the benefit of the team. Get your priorities straight! While swimming or diving may be important to you, just as it is to your coaches, remember why you are at Owen J. Roberts. Your number one priority at Owen J. Roberts is to succeed academically. Do your work. Do it on time. Be prepared for exams. You will need to budget your time wisely in order to stay well-rested, succeed academically, and meet the team expectations. We will mention, quite frequently, the importance of your academics throughout the season.

### **GET YOUR PRIORITIES IN ORDER:**

1. Family & Health
2. Academics
3. Swimming / Diving

You will all be treated in a respectful manner, and in return we trust we will receive the same high level of respect from you. This is accomplished by communicating with us, as we will with you. Anytime that you have a problem, question, or concern about anything we are available to discuss and/or help!

We look forward to a great season!

Sincerely,

The Coaching Staff