

The Bradley-Bourbonnais Swim Club Handbook



Welcome to the Dolphins!

Many swimmers begin the swim season, wondering what the year will bring: Will they learn a new stroke? Will they perfect what they know? Will they better their times? Many parents begin the swim season, wondering what the year will bring: Will my child fit in? Will they accomplish their goals? Will they enjoy being a part of this team? The Bradley Bourbonnais Swim Club has the same answer for all of these questions

YES !

You may think that these questions only run through the mind of the new swimmers and their families, but just ask, and you will find that the same questions run through the mind of the swimmer or parent who has been a part of this team for many years. Those same swimmers can also tell you about the lifetime friendships they developed and the feelings of accomplishment they experienced as they progressed through the years. Those parents can tell you about the pride of watching their child grow from being afraid to dive in the water to swimming a 200 yard race.

The Dolphins compete in the South Suburban Swim Conference. Every swimmer, by attending practice, growing in their ability, and participating in meets; and every parent who encourages their swimmer, all other swimmers and supports the swimmers through volunteering contributes in our ability to grow the team. With you as a committed member of the Dolphins, we look forward to another successful season.

This handbook was developed to provide answers to many of the questions and concerns you may have. It is written for both the swimmer and their parents. It is a source of information about who we are, about what parents and swimmers can expect from the club, and about what the club expects from parents and swimmers.

Thank you!

Goals and Philosophy

The goals and philosophy of our club concern the growth of our swimmers in every facet of life. First and foremost, being a member of the Dolphins should be a fun experience. Not every swimmer will compete at the conference meet, but every swimmer will get the chance to compete as a member of our team. Not every swimmer will finish first, but every swimmer will, with dedication, improve their abilities and their times. We are concerned with the growth of our members as swimmers and as well rounded children.

Our philosophy is that participation in athletics is an important part of a child's life. We want to allow every swimmer to develop to their fullest extent. We want the swimmers to set goals, and by attaining those goals, develop confidence and a positive attitude toward swimming and life. We want to offer a safe environment where each swimmer and their family can experience competitive swimming at their own level. We want Dolphin swimmers to be challenged, and through those challenges, grow as individuals.

To support that philosophy, *the goals of the Bradley Bourbonnais Swim Club are:*

- To promote, encourage and develop the skills necessary to succeed in individual and team competitive swimming.
- To enable our swimmers to develop confidence, pride and discipline to strengthen all facets of their life.
- To develop the team concept through good sportsmanship, parental support and the swimmer's dedication.
- To support a coaching staff dedicated to the advancement of the team.

Our Board Members

President	Joe Schroeder
Vice-President	Tim Lehman
Treasurer	Dave Nemeth
Secretary	Addison Goering
	Gabrielle Dubravec
	Jody Goering
	Deb Howard
	Heather Kane
	Daniella Prograis

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Head Coach	Kathy McLaughlin
BBCHS Aquatic Director	Scot Boudreau
Awards Chair	Karen Nemeth

The club is "owned" and governed by the parents of each swimmer. The board is elected annually by the parent-membership to hire and support the professional coaching staff, and to lead in the growth and development of the club. Board meetings are planned for the 3rd Monday of every month. Your input at this meeting is valued and parents are welcome to attend. Notice of meeting times and locations will be posted on the bulletin board at the pool.

Our Coaches – Fall/Winter 2008

Head Coach

Kathy McLaughlin – Kathy has been coaching swim teams for 12-1/2 years, and is glad to be back coaching the Dolphins. In addition to her previous experience with the Dolphins, she had also coached the Summer League Team of Sugarland, Texas and the Bishop McNamara High School boys and girls team. She swam age group, Evergreen Park High School and North Central College. Kathy has a B.S. in Math and Computer Science, attended the Central States swim clinics for 6 years and is certified in lifesaving, CPR, first aid and water safety instruction.

Assistant Coaches

Kyle Boudreau – Kyle is a 20 year old graduate of Bishop McNamara. He swam for the Dolphins in 2000 and 2001, and for Bishop Mac his freshman year. Kyle has taught swim lessons at BBCHS since 2005 and is currently attending Kankakee Community College.

Mark Bundy – Mark comes to us from Jackson, MI. He is a 19 year graduate from Jackson High School, where he swam on the varsity team. His best strokes are freestyle and back, but his favored stroke is the breaststroke. He also swam age group from 8-10 years old. He is a Biology major at Olivet Nazarene University and plans to become a Chiropractor upon graduation.

Rob White – Rob joins us from BBCHS Water Polo, where he has coached for 6 years. Prior to teaching science at BBCHS, Rob swam competitively under Scot Boudreau from 1993-1997 and also for the Dolphins. While attending Perdue University, he played Club Water Polo, helped win 2 Big Ten Titles and was named 'All Big Ten Honorable Mention'. Rob is very excited to join the Dolphins and looks forward to an exciting season.

Melissa Wright – Melissa has been swimming with the Dolphins since she was 6 years old. A 2007 graduate of BBCHS, she played water polo and swam for 4 years, qualifying for State Championships each year. She is a lifeguard at BBCHS and coached for the Dolphins in prior seasons. Melissa is majoring in Psychology at Olivet Nazarene University.

Ashley Young – Ashley is a 2007 graduate of BBCHS where she swam and played water polo all 4 years, and swam for the Dolphins for 5 years. She is a lifeguard at the BBCHS pool and has taught diving lessons over the summer. Currently attending Olivet Nazarene University, Ashley is majoring in Family Consumer Science Education.

Please contact the coaching staff to inform them of planned absences from practice.

Coaching Responsibilities

The coaching team's job is to supervise the training and team administrative functions of our program.

- The head coach will develop the training routine and implement it throughout the coaching staff.
- The head coach will assign the coaching staff to the age group where they will have the greatest impact on our swimmers.
- The coaching staff will decide which events, both individual and relay, that swimmers are to swim and in which meets, including the conference meet. (This does not include USA meets, which provide a good opportunity to swim events in which a swimmer might not otherwise get the chance to compete).
- The coaches will offer immediate review of a swimmer's performance, through praise and review, offering tips for improvement. (It is the parent's job to offer unconditional support and understanding, whatever the outcome of that performance).
- The coaching staff, with the full support of the board, is responsible for promoting the team concept, improving the training process and encouraging the growth of each swimmer.

Parents

Parents have the greatest impact on our team by supporting their child and in their support of the team through volunteering. We need you to show your child that you support them in both words and actions.

Parents Responsibilities:

- Offer praise and reassurance to all swimmers. As parents, we need to cheer for and support all of the children. Choose your words carefully when talking with the swimmers about their progress. It only takes one instance of negativity to wipe out weeks of positive reinforcement.
- Ask questions. We have all heard it before, but there is no such thing as a dumb question. If there are concerns, clear the air right away. The more you know, the better able you are to support your child.
- **Do not try to coach your swimmers.** Instead, support the efforts of our coaches. Let the coaches do their job. If you wonder why something is or isn't being taught, ask. They are trying different and new coaching techniques all the time. Some produce great results and some don't work. The coaching staff will discover which is which and use those that work.
- Attend practices. Parents are not permitted on the pool deck during any swim team practice or meet, but are encouraged to observe from the stands. This is very helpful for new or younger swimmers who need the assurance that mom or dad is there.
- Speak with the coaches. If you need to speak with a coach, **please see them before or after practice.** You can also leave a note in the coaches' mailbox to contact you. Once practice begins, the coaches need to give their full attention to the children. If you should need to contact your child due to an emergency during practice or at a meet, please go through the coach.
- Attend meets, make sure that your swimmer attends meets and support all of the swimmers at each meet. This means allowing your swimmer to stay for the entire meet so that you and they can cheer for and support every swimmer in every event. Staying until the end allows you to know how the team fared, and at conference, be around to accept a team trophy.
- ***Volunteer, volunteer, volunteer!*** Unlike most every other team sport, a swim team cannot function without volunteer support from the parents (**See Volunteering**).

Swimmers

Everything in this handbook and everything that is done by all involved is to ensure that you become the best swimmer that you can be. You are what this team is all about! You also have some responsibilities to the team.

Swimmers Responsibilities

- Give all you can every time you enter the pool, at practice and at meets.
- Attend as many practices as you can.
"Every time you are not practicing, someone else is".
- Pay attention to your coaches and ask questions. They are your teachers.
- Cheer on your teammates at practice and meets. When you're not racing, you should be supporting those who are.
- Treat your teammates, coaches and opponents with respect.
- Take pride in being a Dolphin.
- Talk with your coach after each race for immediate feedback.
- Work with your coach to set, work toward, and achieve personal and swimming goals.
- HAVE FUN !!!

Volunteering

Running a swim team is not just the responsibility of the board and coaches. IT REQUIRES YOU! We need all of our parents to become involved with the team. The more input and volunteering the team receives, the better it becomes and the more it grows. There is almost no volunteer job that can't be done with just a few minutes of training/orientation. Don't be afraid to try, or think that you are too new!

Meets

Running a meets requires the efforts of the board, the coaches, the swimmers and a multitude of volunteers. Home dual meets require volunteers in many different capacities. These include timers, locker-room monitors, a runner, timing system operator, computer operator and concessions help, to name a few. It takes 16 lane timers to run our home meets. If you have a finger and eye, you can be a timer with a short 5-minute orientation. Being a timer also gets you the best seat in the house: right on the finish line! All of these functions must be filled in order for a meet to take place. In addition to the functions listed previously, USA meets hosted by the Dolphins also require additional concession help, entry fees table help, ad recruiters, etc. Hosted meets are a major source of revenue for the team each year.

Committees

There are many committees which can use your help. These include the newsletter, fundraising, awards banquets, concessions, etc. These committees require chairpersons as well as volunteers to assist with their function.

Community Service

The Dolphins want to be known as a team that recognizes the support it receives from the businesses in the community and therefore desires to give back. There may be a team swim related function that will support an area charity. Swimmer involvement with this effort is appreciated, and lets the community know that we appreciate the support that we receive. Information will follow.

Team Apparel

All swimmers should wear a swimsuit that is both comfortable and appropriate for racing. Like many teams, we have a team uniform. The team uniform includes a swimsuit, t-shirt and, if needed or desired, a matching cap. The wearing of the team suit, and cap if worn, is required at all dual and conference meets. The team suit should not be worn for practice on a daily basis. Due to the amount of time spent in contact with cement and rough metal surfaces, nylon racing suits can wear quickly. You should consider buying at least one practice suit for your swimmer. Practice suits can be found inexpensively on-line, for sale at USA meets and at many retailers. The Team will publish information about suit fittings when scheduled, shortly after the season begins.

Code of Conduct

The coaches have both the responsibility and the authority to deal with a swimmers' behavior during practice sessions and swim meets. Disruptive behavior negatively affects not only the swimmer and the coach, but the entire swim group, and ultimately, the entire team's achievement. If a swimmer's behavior becomes disruptive during practice or during a meet, the coaches will work to mediate the problem.

Swimmers are expected to:

- Behave in a way that their actions reflect positively on the team.
- Support, not impede, the efforts and progress of other swimmers and / or the team at practice and at meets.
- Avoid the use of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs.

The coaches will take the following steps in the event of misconduct on the part of a swimmer:

First Offense: The coach will give the swimmer a clear verbal warning.

Second Offense: The swimmer will be removed from the pool and sit out the remaining part of the practice session in the bleachers. The swimmer's parents will be notified of the disciplinary action and a meeting may be required between the parent(s), the swimmer, and the coach.

Third Offense: A parent/swimmer conference will be called with the coach and a Swim Team Board member(s). The meeting will review this and prior offenses, and a determination will be made by the coach as to discipline, including removal from practices, non-participation in meets and up to removal from the team.

Communication

Mailboxes: Each swimmer is assigned a file folder/mailbox that is located at the pool. The mailbox is located near the concession stand, and is available at all practices. Throughout the season, notices of upcoming meets, payment reminders, fundraising information, etc. are placed in the swimmer's mailbox. It is each swimmer's and parent's responsibility to check the file at every practice.

Pool Bulletin Board: There is a bulletin board at the pool that is updated with the current flyers, photographs, swim times and general information. Be sure to check it for any new information on a regular basis.

E-mail: Email addresses of board members, coaches and our web chairperson are provided in this handbook. Please feel free to contact them with any suggestions, questions or concerns.

Coaches: The best way to speak with the coaches is to meet them before or after practice. They usually make themselves available for 10-15 minutes to answer questions or provide information. Sending a note or email to the coach with your swimmer is also a good way to get information to them.

Website: Our website is <http://bbdolphins.20m.com> It is a source for information about our swim team. On the site, you will find our newsletter, meet schedule, directions to other pools for away meets, practice and meet calendar, photographs, by-laws and links to other swim related sites.

General Swim Information

Strokes

If you're not a former swimmer, the strokes and their rules can be cause for confusion. Provided here are the basics.

Freestyle: The freestyle is defined as any means of swimming across the pool. Any stroke and kick are acceptable. There are, however, a few don'ts: You cannot walk on the bottom or pull yourself along using the lane lines, and in a 50-meter race or longer (two or more pool lengths), you must touch the wall at each end of the pool, including the finish. (This may seem obvious, but sometimes swimmers do miss the wall at the turning end of the pool).

Backstroke: Like the freestyle, almost anything goes on the backstroke as long as you stay on your back. Swimmers learn to guide off of the lane lines, use the overhead backstroke flags, the ceiling patterns and the lane line markings to know where they're at in the pool, and also to count strokes from the flags to the wall. The backstroke starts with the swimmer in the water, feet planted against the wall. If your swimmer is a backstroker, he or she will eventually learn the backstroke flip turn. The flip turn is the one exception to staying on your back, and can only be used only as part of a turn (never a finish).

Breaststroke: The breaststroke has two components, the arm pull and the kick, which must be done in sequence. The arm pull must be under the breast and cannot extend further back than the waist area. The kick is a "frog" kick and the toes must be pointed outward during the propulsive part of the kick. The arm pull and kick must be in an alternating sequence and the elbows must stay below the water except for touching the wall at the finish. Breaststroke turns and finish require a simultaneous two-hand touch.

Butterfly: The butterfly (commonly called the Fly) is the hardest stroke for most swimmers to learn. Like the breaststroke, the two components of the fly are the arm pull and the kick. The arm pull must be an over the water recovery stroke while moving forward simultaneously. The kick is a dolphin-style kick with both legs held together moving simultaneously. There is no requirement to alternate the kick and pull. Like the breaststroke, turns and finishes require a simultaneous two-hand touch at the wall.

Individual Medley: The individual medley (or IM) is when an individual swims each of the four strokes in sequence: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle.

Relays: There are two kinds of relays, the freestyle relay and the medley relay. Both involve a team of four swimmers, each swimming one quarter of the total distance. In the freestyle relay, each swimmer swims the freestyle. In the medley relay, the sequence is Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle. In all relays, each swimmer must wait until the previous swimmer touches the wall prior to leaving the deck or block.

DQ's

In swimming, the rules must be followed or a DQ is issued. A DQ (short for disqualification) is any violation of the rules observed by any appropriate official. To a swimmer new to a stroke or competition, a DQ should be viewed as a learning experience. For the seasoned swimmer, it is often viewed as a lapse in concentration, from which they can also learn. When an official observes a violation, he or she may raise their hand to signify that they have observed a violation, then write it up on a DQ slip and turn it in to a runner who will forward with lane time records. A new swimmer will most often be counseled immediately after the race by the official to let them know what was done wrong, and to offer comfort if needed. The seasoned swimmer will know what they did wrong often before leaving the water.

Some of the more common reasons for DQ's are:

Freestyle:

- Failure to touch the wall at the ends of the pool.
- Hanging on or pulling on the lane lines, walking or pushing off of the bottom.
- Exiting the pool before swimming the specified distance.

Backstroke:

- More than 90 degrees off of the back at any time except during a flip turn.
- Improper flip turn.

Breaststroke:

- Incorrect kick, such as a scissors kick or flutter kick.
- Non-Simultaneous two-hand touch or one-hand touch at turn or finish.
- Toes not pointed outward during the propulsive part of the kick.
- More than one stroke underwater at start or turn.
- Arm recovery past waist except on first stroke after start or turn.

Butterfly:

- Non-Simultaneous or one-handed wall touch at the turn or finish.
- Using an incorrect kick, such as a flutter kick or Breaststroke kick.
- Arms not breaking water surface during recovery stroke.
- Non-Simultaneous arm movement during recovery.

Relay Races:

- A swimmer's toes leave the deck or block before the previous swimmer touches the wall.
- An entire relay is disqualified if even one member of the relay DQ's.

False Starts:

A false start occurs whenever a swimmer moves to enter the pool after having assumed a take-your-mark stance, but before the Starter has started the race. This occurs when a swimmer is trying to anticipate the starting signal and beat the other swimmers into the water, or is not settled into a still starting position.

If the false start is detected before the starting signal is sounded, the offending swimmer may be removed from the race prior to re-starting. If a false start occurs, but the starting signal has sounded, the race will not be stopped. Instead, the false starting swimmer will be notified of their false start at the end of the race.

Protesting Disqualifications

The coach is the only person who can officially question a disqualification, or any other call by an official. Never directly approach the officials.