

# Powhatan Secondary Seastars Parent Handbook



## Summer of 2015

*Mission Statement:*

*The mission of the Powhatan Secondary Seastars Swim Team is to provide a recreational summer swim program providing the children of our community with an opportunity to learn sportsmanship, build team camaraderie, and compete in athletic swim events in a fun and healthy environment. With the cooperation of our coaches, parents, and community members, we will encourage team spirit, personal commitment, and individual growth for each member of the team.*

**Seastar Swim Board:**

Chairperson	Eric Dawnkaski	<a href="mailto:eric.dawnkaski@gmail.com">eric.dawnkaski@gmail.com</a>	220-5867
Vice-Chair	Debbie Wright	<a href="mailto:dwright103@cox.net">dwright103@cox.net</a>	645-4866
Secretary	Kim Squire	<a href="mailto:mksquire@cox.net">mksquire@cox.net</a>	645-2386
Treasurer	Karen Quinlan	<a href="mailto:karenbq3@gmail.com">karenbq3@gmail.com</a>	564-0381
VPSU Rep.	Mike Squire	<a href="mailto:mksquire@cox.net">mksquire@cox.net</a>	645-2386
Pool Rep.	Chris Walls		

**Coaching Staff:**

Head Coach	Conor Cudahy	<a href="mailto:cjculahy@email.wm.edu">cjculahy@email.wm.edu</a>	703-463-6581
Assistant Coaches	David Dawnkaski, Lorna VanGheem, Colin Wright		

**\*\*Coaches will address individual swimmers with reasons for DQs during practice.**

**\*\*Swimmer Evaluations will be given out at least 1 time over the season. These will include attendance, attitude, areas that need to be improved and positive comments about what each swimmer is doing well.**

## **Practice:**

### **2015 Practice Schedule:**

#### **While school is in session, Starting Monday, June 1st:**

Practice will be in the evenings probably starting at either 4:00 or 5:00 for high school students, then running from youngest to oldest until 9 pm. A detailed schedule will be released after registration.

#### **Beginning Monday June 15:**

8:00-8:45 - youngest swimmers

8:45-9:45 - middle swimmers

9:45-11:00- older swimmers

Specific age groups will be determined and a detailed schedule will be released after registration.

#### **Frequently asked questions-practice:**

*1. How will I know if practice has been cancelled?*

An email will be sent out asap when the coaches/board members see dangerous weather conditions. The rule of thumb on rain is that if you can't see the bottom of the pool, the practice is cancelled for safety reasons. A sign will also be posted on the pool gate.

*2. Is it possible for my child to change practice times?*

The answer is yes and no depending on the situation. We schedule our practice groups by peer age to make the practice experience more comfortable and fun. If your child has a camp for a week, we will try our best to work with the families but the coaches and chairperson have the final say. We believe that each child learns technique best in their correct group where coaches have the numbers to focus better on the swimmers. Safety can also be an issue when bigger kids are swimming with smaller kids.

*3. Do I need to stay for practice as a parent?*

Parents are welcome to stay for practices especially for the younger ones in the early part of the season. However, it can be distracting to the coaches and the swimmers if the numbers get too high and it becomes a social event. Please be courteous and remember our mission statement about being positive. Let the coaches do their jobs and speak with them only beginning or after practice. The best way to communicate is through email for safety reasons. Please also remember that the pool is officially closed and there is no lifeguard on duty during morning practices. For this reason, only registered swim team members may be in the water during practice. Siblings of swimmers are not permitted in the pool or the baby pool during this time.

## **Registration Information:**

~Each family is required to fill out a Powhatan Secondary Seastar Registration Form that includes address, phone numbers, emergency contacts, and date of birth for each swimmer.

~Swimmers will swim in the age category they belong in on June 10th regardless of birthday. For example, if a swimmer turns 9 years old on 6/11, he will compete in the 7-8 age group for all meets because he was still 8 on 6/10. Please be very careful when filling in birthdays.

~Each family must also fill out and sign a VPSU Waiver Form. No swimmer may get in the water for a meet without it completed.

~Dues are as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> swimmer in a family is \$85.00, the 2<sup>nd</sup> swimmer is \$75, 3<sup>rd</sup> swimmer is \$60 and each additional is \$5.00 each. All dues must be paid in full by the first practice.

~ Pool Dues MUST be paid before joining the swim team. There will be no exceptions.

~Registration forms may be downloaded from the Powhatan Secondary Seastar Website and the VPSU Waiver may be found on [www.vpsu.com](http://www.vpsu.com).

### **Frequently asked questions-registration:**

#### *1. What are the qualifying events for refunds?*

Prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>, families may qualify for ½ of a refund based on condition of injuries that keep swimmers out of the water (a broken arm, etc...) or a change in residency. After June 1<sup>st</sup>, there will be no refunds given.

#### *2. Why are the rules for refunds so harsh?*

The swim team board budgets our year using the number of swimmers. We may hire additional coaches and/or make purchases expecting to have available funds. Refunds make a difference in the planning of such events. You may petition the board on a case by case basis but the board has the final say.

#### *3. What about insurance?*

Members of the team are covered by an umbrella policy through the Home Owners Association. However, this year the governing board of VPSU has inquired on a policy to cover each swimmer. The cost of that policy (\$5 per swimmer) is incorporated into the dues.

#### *4. How do I know if my swimmer is ready to participate on the swim team?*

Young swimmers may need to pass an evaluation before starting on the swim team. A coach will bring the swimmer to to a point approximately 3 feet from the side of the pool, and the swimmer will show that he can get himself back to the wall in some manner without assistance. This basic ability to return to the wall is a requirement for the safety of the swimmers.

## **Meets:**

We have 6 scheduled regular meets. There is also a Summer Awards meet for swimmers who wish to attend, and a Championship Meet for swimmers that qualify. See the schedule at the end of this handbook.

### **Frequently asked questions-Meets:**

1. *What division are we in this year?*

We are happy to say that we are in Division 2 again this year.

2. *How do I find directions to the pools for away meets?*

All of the directions to participating VPSU pools are found on the website [www.vpsu.com](http://www.vpsu.com).

3. *What time do I need to have my swimmer at the meets?*

For home meets, please have your swimmer at the pool by 4:45 since we warm up at 5:00. For away meets, please be at the pool by 5:00. Our warm ups will be at 5:30 for these but often there may be parking or traffic issues to be worked out.

4. *What if my swimmer won't be at a meet?*

There will be a "Vacation Book" in the Guard Shack. In it there will be sheets for each meet for you to fill out to let us know of any upcoming absences. This is very important because our coaching staff needs to have the meet roster ready the day before each meet. Please fill out the weeks your child will miss for camps and/or vacations.

5. *What items will my swimmer need for a meet?*

Please make sure your swimmer has a suit, cap, and goggles plus a couple of towels. A permanent marker is also helpful to write down your child's events and to do some body decorating-GO SEASTARS! You may bring your own food and drinks but each pool sells concessions, including ours. At our home meets, our concessions raise money for our team. Don't forget a couple of extra shirts or sweatshirts in case it gets chilly later in the evenings. Sunscreen and bug spray are not bad ideas either.

6. *How do the meets work?*

Events take place in the following order: IM (for 9-10 yr olds and up), Freestyle, Breast, Backstroke, Fly. Within each stroke, youngest boys start, followed by youngest girls. Each stroke progresses in this way through the increasing age groups, and then we move to the next stroke.

7. *How does my swimmer know when to swim?*

Each swimmer will report to the clerk of course area a few events before his/hers (listen to the announcements) to line up and receive a card to take up to the timer for his/her lane. Events for each swimmer will be posted at the pool the morning of the meet and also at the meet. Swimmer

events are listed as follows: Event-Heat-Lane. So if your boy is swimming the 6 &U freestyle, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> heat, lane 3, the event would be listed as 9-2-3 (if event 9 is the first free style event following the IMs) If this seems confusing or is more information that you want to deal with, don't be concerned! The clerk of course team will be there to answer questions and guide swimmers to where they need to be for every meet.

*8. What events will my child be swimming at each meet?*

That depends on the coaches. We like to swim kids in at least 2 events each meet but only if the coaches feel they are ready. Remember to support your coaches by letting them decide what your child swims; it may be based on the need for points. If your child would like to swim or not swim an event, encourage them to speak directly to the coaches.

*9. What about relays?*

Relays are held at the end of the meet and combine swimmers from different age groups into teams of 4 swimmers competing together. Relays are not only fun, but also very important for scoring. Please have your swimmer check with the coaches before they leave to see if they are in a relay. Once the cards get turned in to the head official that is how the relays must be done. Relays may change from the beginning part of the meet due to how kids are swimming or possibly illnesses. In some meets, there may be non-point relays put together but they are still a great experience.

*10. What about weather cancellations?*

Plan on going to each meet. Just because it is storming in Powhatan Secondary does not mean that it is storming in other parts of Williamsburg. The cancellation of a meet is a decision made between both teams (meet officials, coaches, VPSU Representatives, and the lifeguards) with the Meet Director of the Home Team having the final say. Please stay until the meet is actually called off. The meet must be completed through half of the events in order to not be made up. However, the Meet Director can ask for the entire meet to be finished. The protocol is that meets are to be made up as soon as possible, preferably the very next night. There are exceptions to this rule. Please pay close attention to your emails during meet make ups.

*11. What about ribbons?*

Each VPSU pool will award ribbons but the policy must follow the VPSU by-laws. At our home meets, we will give ribbons for Finishes #1-6 in both competitive and exhibition heats. Ribbons will be handed out at the practice following the meet. If your swimmer isn't there to get their ribbon, the ribbons will be placed in a swim team box in the guard shack. Please only ask for these ribbons when there are guards in the shack, not on duty. Policies at away meets may differ.

## **Parent Work Commitments:**

Swimming is a unique sport because all of the positions are volunteer slots. The meets cannot happen successfully unless parents participate. **It is the expectation that each family will participate in at least 1 volunteer slot per meet.** The goal is to have each family only work ½ of the meet in a given position but if our numbers are lower than last year, it may end up being more than that. Depending on the number of lanes, we may need more or less volunteers.

We also ask that each family sign up for one team support task to help with team functions and fundraising outside of the meets. Examples of these tasks are attending training to be an official, scorer, ect, helping to organize a social event like the Wee Star meet or obtaining an ad for the Champs book.

Powhatan Secondary is known for having a wonderful set of volunteers but everyone must pull their share of the workload. Some teams have requirements on volunteering or swimmers are not allowed to swim. We would like to keep this as a strictly volunteer basis but we need your help.

### **Frequently asked questions-Parent Work Commitments:**

*1. What if I have small children or I am a single parent?*

The good news is that there are a lot of positions you can do and watch your children like Early Concession Set Up, Clerk of Course, or Runner. The best seat in the house is the one closest to the pool.

*2. What if I signed up for a spot but cannot make it?*

In this case, you are responsible for finding a replacement. Emailing the meet director right before a meet is not acceptable since they are responsible for their own duties. Emergencies arise and we will try to work with you but again, this is a sport that requires parent volunteers.

*3. How will I be reminded of the slot I signed up for?*

The day before the meet, the meet director will send out a Volunteer Roster with positions and names. The meet is divided into 2 parts so if you have little ones, you may want to try to sign up for the early session.

*4. Who are the people dressed in navy blue pants and white shirts?*

These are volunteers that went to special training sessions to learn how to be an official. Some are Starters, Stroke and Turn Judges, and Referees. Please do not ask a Stroke and Turn Judge about disqualifying a swimmer at the meet. They are not there to disappoint your swimmer; they are there to make sure your swimmer swims the correct technique and to make the races fair for all for all of the swimmers. Just like you, they are volunteers. Ultimately, the Meet Referee has the final decision on disqualifications.

## Volunteer Job Descriptions:

<b>Meet Referee-</b>	in charge of meet including rules, DQ's and cancellations
<b>Starter-</b>	at home, we have 2 workers doing ½ the meet
<b>Stroke &amp; Turn Judge-</b>	makes sure all swimmers are following stroke rules
<b>Head Timer-</b>	assigns lanes and watches at home meets plus has extra watches
<b>Timer-</b>	works ½ of the meet getting correct times-3 timers per lane
<b>Runner-</b>	distributes swimmer's cards to timers & picks up finished cards
<b>Ribbon Writer-</b>	works at the table on ribbons
<b>Scorer-</b>	averages times for each swimmer/keeps score
<b>Concessions-</b>	works in different sessions including set up/break down
<b>Clerk of Course-</b>	corrals our swimmers and makes sure kids are in correct lanes
<b>Hospitality-</b>	at home meets, distributes water and snacks to workers

\*\* All of our families will be asked to send in either bottled water or Gatorade for the season. Each family will also be asked for a 1 time donation of a food item for one home meet.

## Uniforms:

~The suit design will be the same as last year. If you have a suit from last year then you have the option to use that suit again or purchase a new one. We ask that all swimmers wear the team suit for meets. If this will not work for your family, please let Eric Dawnkaski know.

~Each swimmer will be given 1 cap. The fee is included in your registration costs. However, replacement caps will be \$1.00 this year to offset costs. They will be available from the coaches at away meets and in the concession stand during home meets.

~Consider showing your team spirit by dressing your family in Seastar merchandise for our meets!

## 2015 Meet Schedule:

Monday, June 15 <sup>th</sup>	Windsor Forest	Home	*Friendship Meet
Monday, June 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Stonehouse	Away	
Monday, June 29 <sup>th</sup>	Ford's Colony	Away	
Monday, July 6 <sup>th</sup>	First Colony	Away	
Monday, July 13 <sup>th</sup>	Two Rivers	Home	
Monday, July 20 <sup>th</sup>	Wellington	Home	
Saturday, July 25 <sup>th</sup>	Mini-Meet		



Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>

Champs

Ft. Eustis