

General Swim Team Questions



1. What is the Blue Marlins Swim Team and why would I want my child to participate?

It's fun. It's great exercise. It builds confidence. It's a great way for your child to meet other kids and for you to meet other parents.

2. Who can answer my questions about the swim team?

Hopefully, most of your questions can be answered here. If not, contact our Coaches, Board Members, or District Representative. See our Contact Us link on this website.

3. What strokes do the swimmers use in competition?

Freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly.

4. What swimming strokes does my child need to know to join the team?

If your child is 5 to 18 and can swim ten yards unassisted by May 2, then they should come to a swim team practice and have the coach evaluate them for the team. Younger children do not necessarily have to be proficient in the breaststroke or butterfly in order to participate.

5. I see that there are different age groups for the swimmers. How does that work?

The age groups are 6 & under, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-18. Every other year your child will have an "up" year when they are the oldest in their age group and a "down" year when they are the youngest in their age group. The age group depends on the child's age on June 1st.

6. What kind of pool does the Blue Marlins have?

The length of our pool is 25 yards.

7. What is VFCAL?

The Valley-Foothill Competitive Aquatic League is a league made up of teams from area Parks and Recreation Departments. This is a recreational league set up to encourage participation from children of varying levels.

Practices

8. How often and when is practice?

Please see the "Team Practice Info" page for more information.

9. Should I stay and watch a swim practice?

You're welcome to watch. Please refrain from talking with the coach during practice. Practice is when the coach spends time with the swimmers. Please hold your questions for the coach until before or after practice.

10. What is dry land training?

Workouts out of the water improve strength, flexibility, and endurance. Practice equipment will include running shoes, shirt and shorts/sweat pants for the dry land training. Parents are encouraged to help out.

11. What happens if we have a conflict and my child is not able to attend practice?

Please contact the coaches, if possible.

12. Does a child have to swim in a particular number of practices during the week in order to swim in a meet?

Please contact the coaches regarding this question.

13. Does my child need to wear the team swimsuit during practice? During a meet? What brand and where do I buy it?

Not during practice. In fact, to reduce wear-and-tear, the swim team suit should probably only be worn during meets. The current style is the Tyr Titan Splice. California Swim Shop has our suits in stock at 7330 Fair Oaks Blvd. You can contact California Swim Shop at 971-9836. California Swim Shop will also be on deck a couple of times before the season starts to sell suits.

Meets

14. What is a dual meet and what other kinds of meets are there?

A dual meet is held between two swim teams. One swim club is the host team and the other is the visiting team. The Blue Marlins participate in six dual meets. The schedule is available on this website under the Calendar link.

There are two main championship meets that the Blue Marlins participate in: VFCAL championships and the Meet of Champions.

In addition, the Blue & Gold Meet is a mock meet, a fun opportunity for our swimmers to compete against each other and practice getting ready for the racing season. Date to be announced.

15. When are the meets?

Meets are Saturday morning. Your child must check-in by 7:00 AM or they may be scratched from the meet.

16. How long does a meet last?

Meets usually end by 2:00 PM.

17. What teams will we swim against?

In 2006, the Blue Marlins will swim against: Granite Bay (home), Woodcreek (home), Roseville (away), Placerville (home), Auburn (away), Orangevale (home), and.

18. Where can I find directions to the swim club we are visiting?

You can find directions to all the clubs on the Blue Marlins website. Just click the link of the meet in the Calendar.

19. Where do we set-up at the meets?

At home meets, Marlin families set-up "on the hill", the grassy area behind the baby pool. At away meets, the team is designated an area, so look for other Marlin families.

20. What can I do to help prepare my child for a meet?

Have your swimmer eat a healthy diet, get plenty of sleep, bring a water bottle to the meet, and get them to the meet on time. Advise them to listen to the coach and to have fun! Cheer them on too!

21. What are the events in a meet?

See "Swim Meet Info" on this website.

22. What is a "heat"?

An event may be divided into multiple "heats." Usually a dual meet will usually have two or three heats in each event with 2 to 8 swimmers depending on the number of swimmers and the size of the pool. The championship meets with multiple teams often have multiple heats of each event to accommodate the large number of swimmers.

23. What is a relay? And what stroke(s) do the swimmers use?

Relays consist of four "legs" with a different child swimming each leg. The distance varies with the age group from 100 yards (one length of the pool per swimmer) for the younger age groups to 200 yards (one length of the pool per swimmer) for the older age groups. You can review the full list of events under Swim Meet Info to get a feel for where the relays occur in the meet.

There are two types of relays: medley and freestyle. The medley relay has four different legs: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle. The freestyle relay has four legs of freestyle.

24. How is it determined what swimmers will be on a relay?

The coach makes this decision. There are a variety of factors involved.

25. How is the winner of a dual meet determined?

The fastest swimmers in each event earn points for their team. The team with the most points at the end of the meet is the winner of the meet. A first place finish scores 9 points for the team, second place – 7 points, third place – 6 points, and so on until 8th place, which scores 1 point. Relays count as double points.

26. What does DQ mean?

Disqualification - this can happen for a variety of reasons including illegal strokes, turns, and finishes.

27. Are kids DQ'd a lot?

No. The younger swimmers, especially the 8 & under age group tend to have more problems early in the season, but you'll see a DQ from time to time in every age group.

If your child is disqualified, try not to get upset about it. Please encourage your child to work with his/her coach on the illegal stroke and remember it is a learning opportunity.

28. Does my child have to participate in every meet? What happens if my child has a conflict for a meet?

Without consistent participation, the team will have a poor season, but conflicts do happen. Let the coach know as soon as possible if your swimmer will not be able to attend a meet. And if you are going on vacation, please sign your swimmer out in the vacation binder.

29. How do swimmers earn ribbons at meets?

Ribbons are awarded to all participants.

30. What is the VFCAL Championship? When and where is it?

The VFCAL Championship is the championship meet with all of the VFCAL swim clubs. It is Saturday, July 22 - 23 at the Roseville Aquatic Center.

31. How are the results of the meet posted?

The team results will be announced at the end of the meet and posted on this website.

32. How can I best help the team?

Support your child by bringing them to practice, preparing them for the meet and cheering for them and the team at the meets.

Volunteer to help out at a swim meet or with other swim team duties. It's an all-volunteer effort and there is always something more that can be

done. There are many duties that must be fulfilled to have a successful meet, such as Team Parents, runners, snack bar help, and set-up/clean-up.

Consider becoming a stroke & turn judge, or timer. The officiating is all-volunteer and it always helps to have more people trained to step in when others have scheduling conflicts for a meet. You may also enjoy the meet more when you know the rules well.

All jobs are easy to learn and do. If you can help, go to the "Contact Us" webpage, and send an email to Kathy O'Connor, or call her at 368-1792.

Swim Meet Officials

33. How is a meet officiated and who are the officials?

A swim meet will have a starter who announces the event and starts the swimmers, multiple stroke and turn judges, a head timer and two timers for each lane. You'll get the hang of the flow of events very quickly. The pace is rapid since there are so many events.

34. Why do the timers have to go to the other end of the pool for some events?

The 8 & unders and 9-10 groups have some 25-yard events. They dive off the blocks (or start from the wall for backstroke) and swim one length of the pool. The timers have to see them touch the wall so they are located at the opposite end of the pool from the starting blocks.

By the way, it is legal to start from the side of the pool instead of a starting block. You may see this with some of the younger swimmers who are not comfortable diving yet.

The 11-12 year-olds and older have all 50 or 100 yard events. They start and end on the same edge of the pool by the starting blocks.

35. Being an official looks like fun and/or I want to help the team by being an official. How do I find out more?

There are free clinics to teach you the rules. Contact Kathy O'Connor, our Meet Coordinator, to find out more. You can email her directly using the Contact Us link on this website.

Coaches, Parents, Kids

36. Who are the coaches?

Ariane Bair is the Head Coach for the Blue Marlins in 2006. See the Contact Us link on this website for more information about our coaches.

37. How can I best help the coach help my child?

Bring them to practices regularly, prepared, and on time. Be supportive and let them enjoy the sport. Let the coaches do the coaching.

38. What if I have an important message to tell the coach?

Wait until the coach is not busy and then briefly tell them your message. Or call the Coach's Hotline at 363-0619.

39. It looks like there is a lot to do to run a swim team. Can I help?

Yes! Visit the Volunteer web page under Downloads and see if there are any jobs you would like to participate in. Also, see Kathy O'Connor, Meet Coordinator, for ideas. Finally, talk to you friends and neighbors and bring them out to join the team!

We encourage your input and invite your comments. Please contact members of the parent board, coaches, or Diane Robinson, General Recreation Supervisor, with any questions or comments. Click on the "Contact Us" tab for more information.

Glossary of Terms

Age Group

Division of swimmers according to age. The divisions are: 6-under, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-18.



Alternate

In a Championship meet, after the finalist are decided, the next two fastest swimmers other than the finalist are designated as alternates. The faster of the 2 being first alternate and the next being second alternate. If a finalist cannot participate, the alternates take their place.

Anchor

The final swimmer in a relay.

Backstroke

One of the 4 competitive racing strokes, basically any style of swimming on your back. Backstroke is swam as the first stroke in the Medley Relay and second stroke in the I.M.

Beating Your Best Time

When a swimmer goes faster than the previous performance they have "beat their best time".

Beep

The starting sound from an electronic, timing system.

Blocks

The starting platforms located behind each lane.

Bottom

The floor of the pool. Bottom depths are usually marked on the walls or sides of the pool.



Breaststroke

One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Breaststroke is swam as the second stroke in the Medley Relay and the third stroke in the I.M.

Butterfly One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Butterfly is swum as the third stroke in the Medley Relay and first stroke in the I.M.

Cap The covering worn on the head of swimmers.

Carbohydrates The main source of food energy used by athletes.



Championship Meet The meet held at the end of a season.

Check-In The procedure required for swimmers when they arrive at a meet. Swimmers must check-in with their coach by 7:00 AM.

Chlorine The chemical used by most pools to kill the bacteria in water and keep it clear and safe to swim in.

Clinic A scheduled meeting for the purpose of instruction. (i.e. officials' clinic, coaches' clinic).

Deck The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches.

Dehydration The abnormal depletion of body fluids (water). The most common cause of swimmers cramps and illness.

Disqualified (DQ) A swimmers performance is not counted because of a rules infraction.



Dive Entering the water headfirst.



Dryland The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.

Dual Meet Type of meet where two teams compete against each other.

Equipment The items necessary to operate a swim practice or conduct a swim competition.

Event A race or stroke over a given distance.

False Start	When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn.	
Fins	Large rubber fin type devices that fit on a swimmers feet. Used in swim practice, not competition.	
Flags	Pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool approximately 15 feet from the wall.	
Freestyle	One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Freestyle (nicknamed Free) is swam as the fourth stroke in the Medley Relay and fourth stroke in the I.M.	
Fund Raiser	A money-making endeavor by a swim team usually involving both parents and swimmers.	
Goals	The short and long-range targets for swimmers to aim for.	
Goggles	Glasses type devices worn by swimmers to keep their eyes from being irritated by the chlorine in the water.	
Heats	A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by swimmers time swam, after all heats of the event are completed.	
Illegal	Doing something against the rules that is cause for disqualification.	
IM	Individual Medley. A swimming event using all 4 of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle. Equal distances must be swum of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yards, 200 yards.	
Kick	The leg movements of a swimmer. A popular word to "yell" to encourage swimmers during a race.	
Kick Board	A flotation device used by swimmers during practice. A lightweight object used with great accuracy by coaches.	

Lane	The specific area in which a swimmer is assigned to swim.	
Lane Lines	Continuous floating markers attached to a cable stretched from the starting end to the turning end for the purpose of separating each lane and quieting the waves caused by racing swimmers.	
Lap	One length of the course. Sometimes may also mean down and back (2 lengths) of the course.	
Leg	The part of a relay event swam by a single team member. A single stroke in the IM.	
Mark	The command to take your starting position.	
Meet	A series of events held in one program.	
Meet of Champions	The top 8 swimmers, plus 2 alternates, in each heat of the Championship meet who qualify to return for the Meet of Champions.	
Meet Results	The printed copy of the results of each race of a swim meet.	
Officials	The certified, adult volunteers, who operate the many facets of a swim competition.	
Pool	The facility in which swimming competition is conducted.	
Practice	The scheduled workouts a swimmer attends with their swim team.	
Race	Any single swimming competition.	
Ready Area	A staging area behind the blocks for the swimmers to gather before they compete.	

Relays A swimming event in which 4 swimmers participate as a relay team each swimmer swimming an equal distance of the race. There are two types of relays: 1.) Medley relay - One swimmer swims Backstroke, one swimmer swims Breaststroke, one swimmer swims Butterfly, one swimmer swims Freestyle, in that order. Medley relays are conducted over 200 yards and 400 yards distances. 2.) Freestyle relay - Each swimmer swims freestyle. Free relays are conducted over 200 yards and 400 yards distances.

Ribbons Awards given at swim meets.

Safety The responsible and careful actions of those participating in a swim meet.

Scratch To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if not followed, swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events.

Seeding After scratches are determined, the event is seeded. Swimmers are arranged in heats and lanes according to submitted times.

Stand-up The command given by the Starter to release the swimmers from their starting position.

Start The beginning of a race. The dive used to begin a race.

Starter The official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have a fair takeoff.

Step-Down The command given by the Starter to have the swimmers move off the blocks. Usually this command is a good indication everything is not right for the race to start.

Stop Watch The hand held device used by timers and coaches for timing a swimmer's races.

Stroke There are 4 competitive strokes: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle.



Stroke/Turn Judge	The official positioned at the side of the pool, walking the length of the course as the swimmers race. If the Judge sees something illegal, the swimmer may be disqualified.
Suit	The racing uniform worn by the swimmer, in the water, during competition.
Swim-A-Thon	The "Fund Raiser" for the team to make money.
Team Records	The statistics a team keeps, listing the fastest swimmer in the team's history for each age group/each event.
Timer	The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks/finish end of pool, who are responsible for getting watch times on events.
Trophy	Type of award given to swimmers at the end of the season.
Warm-up	The practice and "loosening" up session a swimmer does before the meet.
Water	For the purpose of filling swimming pools and swimmers drinking to properly hydrate themselves.
Work Out	The practice sessions a swimmer attends.
Yards	The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per specs using the American system. The Cordova pool is 25 yards (75 feet) in length.