

# City of Mesa Swimming Program

## I. Swimming Philosophy

The swim program is organized to help youth develop important qualities that will carry into their adult life. Through consistent practice, participants will enhance their physical coordination, fitness, and skill development. Gradual improvement in competition encourages stronger self-confidence and personal esteem. Participation in a team environment generates sportsmanship and team spirit. This program encourages family participation as support spectators, members of parent support groups, or volunteer officials at the competitive meets. The Mesa Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities hopes to make your child's experience fun and rewarding.

## II. Objectives

Each child who participates in the program shall:

1. Be taught basic competitive swimming skills.
2. Participate in rigorous, organized training sessions.
3. Develop the qualities of self-discipline, sportsmanship and fitness through cooperative and regular participation in the practices and team competitions.
4. Gain knowledge of the life-long benefits to be found in competitive swimming and pride in accomplishment.
5. Learn the values of team membership.

## III. Registration

No swimmer shall practice until registration form is completed and fee is paid.

## IV. Eligibility

1. No league swimmer may participate in any organized competitive swim program other than those approved by the League Director any time after **March 31<sup>st</sup>**. If a swimmer participates in an unapproved program after March 31<sup>st</sup>, they are **not** eligible for participation in the Mesa City League. Any falsification of this rule will result in suspension from summer competitive leagues. Organized competitive swim programs will include but is not limited to USA swimming, country club swimming, and YMCA's.
2. Determination of age for swimming in the league meets shall be the swimmer's age on the first day of the program. Proof of age must be made available upon the request of the League Director.
3. Participants must be at least 5 years of age. **Athletes ages 10 and younger must be able to swim 25 yards without assistance, eleven and older swimmers must be able to swim 50 yards to join the team. Participants who are unable to meet the basic requirements will be asked to move to our lesson program to strengthen their skills.**
4. Age groups for competition shall be: 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-17.
5. Once a swimmer competes with a City of Mesa League team during that season, he/she may not compete with any other league team during the same season without the permission of the League Director.
6. A swimmer must participate in at least **two** meets prior to divisional qualifying to be eligible for league championships. The only exception is in the 5-6 age group, where a swimmer only must participate in one pre-divisional meet. The Relay Meet is considered an eligible meet.

## V. Risks and Weather

1. A parent or guardian signature is required on the registration form when registering for the swim program. The form informs the parent of the risks associated with strenuous physical exertion when participating in competitive aquatic activities and injury may result. Mesa Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities employees are not liable for any injury sustained in participating in the program including transportation to and from the activities. The supervisor, participants, and parents are also held harmless. If you have any questions about this, please consult the League Director.

2. **Bad weather-** The safety of the swimmers and spectators are very important. Stroke meets that are cancelled will not be rescheduled. You can call the pool or go to the pool to determine the decision on the meet. Qualifying and championship meets must be swum. If bad weather occurs, the meet **will** be postponed until the weather clears. If the meet cannot be conducted on that day, it **will** be rescheduled. Participants must call or come down to the pool to determine the scheduled start time.

## VI. Swim Suit

1. Team suits are selected for each team; however, they are **not** required, and purchase is optional. We do encourage participants to wear a suit in the team's color. Any swimsuit that is functional for competitive swimming is acceptable. **(String bikinis and shorts below the knee are not considered functional.)**
2. Team participants may purchase team suits from any vendor. Vendors in Mesa include East Valley Sports located at 6306 E. Main St. 480-832-8172 and Ski Pro located at 1924 W. 8<sup>th</sup> St. at the Riverview shopping area. 480-962-6910.

## VII. Awards and Meet Organization

### I. Awards

- A. Stroke Meets:** Ribbons will be awarded for places 1-8 in both the individual heat swims and the relay heats. Participation ribbons will be available for swimmers that get disqualified.
- B. Relay Meet:** Ribbons will be awarded for all places 1-10. This meet is for "A" relays only. Participation ribbons will be available for the teams that get disqualified.
- C. Individual Medley Meet:** Ribbons will be awarded for places 1-8. This meet is an "A" meet only.
- D. Divisional Meet:** Ribbons will be awarded for places 1-16 in each age group. All other swimmers will be awarded **one** participant ribbon for the meet.
- E. League Championship Meet:**
  1. Medals will be awarded to places 1, 2, and 3 in the finals.
  2. Ribbons will be awarded to places 4-16 in the finals.
  3. Trophies will be awarded to age group high point winners and runner-up winners.

## II. Meet Organization and Administration

- A. **Stroke Meets:** Each team will be allowed 4 entries for the “A” heats and unlimited entries for the “B” heats. All “B” heats will be scrambled. There will be no changing from an “A” to a “B” heat in any meet. Swimmers must attend their age group practice time every Wednesday for time trials. Swimmers must also practice the relay with their team on Thursday.
- Stroke Meets will be run in split sessions with 10 and under swimmers competing first. Swimmers ages 11 and older will compete in the second session. Warm-up for the 11 and older swimmers follows the conclusion of the 10 and under session.
  - **During stroke meets straight heats will be run for all heats in all age groups.**
- B. **Individual Medley Meet:** Teams are limited to 4 girls and 4 boys per age group for this meet. The 6 and under age group **will not** participate in this meet. **This is an “A” level only meet.**
- C. **Relay Meet:** Each team may enter only one “A” team per event. One younger swimmer may move up to provide enough swimmers for a relay. The relay meet will be scored, only medley and freestyle relays will be swum.
- D. **Division Meets:** An entry form **MUST** be turned in for each athlete who wishes to participate. Athletes must check in for all events.
- **Swimmers must participate in the division meet to progress to league championships; however, if an age group doesn’t have enough swimmers (16) qualifying for league championships exceptions may occur. Only the league director has the authority to allow a swimmer to not swim in the qualifying meet. All age groups will swim during their divisional meet.**
  - The top 16 times from each Divisional Meet will qualify for the League Championship Meet. Two alternates will be named for each event. The alternates will be available to participate in their stated events only if one or more of the top 16 qualifiers are unable to compete in the League Championship Meet. **League champs will run all age groups straight through; it will not be a split meet.**
  - The League Championship Meet will be run as championship final age group meet with the Divisional Meets being used as a qualifying meet. There will be no exhibition swimmers in any meets.
  - The League Director will appoint the stroke and turn judges and starters for all divisional and league championship meets.
  - Protests will be heard **only** from the coach of the team concerned. Protests must be directed to the Head Swim Coach who will address parent concerns with the League Director.

**Disqualification Policy:** Recognizing that team members in the 6 and under age group have some problems with certain areas of technique, some allowances might be made in this age group. **This is not to say these children will not be disqualified.** At no time will a swimmer be allowed to bend any rule that might enable them to defeat other swimmers in an unfair manner. Most rules can be met with little work. The philosophy is designed for the children to learn correct stroke technique and they should not be rewarded for improper performances. Officials will strictly enforce the rules in all other age groups.

## **Individual Strokes and Relay Rules:**

### **Breaststroke:**

- Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order. All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.
- The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over the water. The hands are brought back on or under the surface of the water. The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn.
- During the complete cycle, some part of the swimmer's head shall break the surface of the water. After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.
- **Kick:** After the start and each turn, at any time prior to the first breaststroke kick a single butterfly kick is permitted. Following which, all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movements. The feet must turn outwards during the propulsive part of the kick. Scissors, alternating movements or downward butterfly kicks are not permitted. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward butterfly kick.
- **Turns and Finish:** At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water level.

### **Butterfly:**

- After the start and at each turn, the swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water, which must bring the swimmer to the surface. It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for not more than 15 meters after the start and after each turn. Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water and pulled back simultaneously under the water throughout the race.
- **Kick:** All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other. A scissors or breaststroke kicking movement is not permitted.
- **Turns and Finish:** At each turn the body shall be on the breast. The touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.

### **Backstroke:**

- On the start both hands must be placed on the gutter or on the starting grips. Placing the toes above the lip of the gutter or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter before or after the start is prohibited. The swimmer shall push off on his back and continue swimming on the back throughout the race. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race. A swimmer may be completely submerged for not more than 15 meters at the start and turn.

### Backstroke:

- **Turns:** Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. During the turn the shoulders may be turned past vertical toward the breast after which an immediate continuous single arm pull or immediate double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn. The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall.
- **Finish:** Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back.

### Freestyle:

- In an event designated freestyle, the swimmer may swim any style, except that in a medley relay or an individual medley event. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race. Upon completion of each length the swimmer must touch the wall.

### Individual Medley:

- The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and then freestyle.
- **Turns:** Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke. The turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed. **Butterfly to backstroke:** The swimmer must touch with two hands, then the swimmer may turn in any manner, but the shoulders must be at or past vertical toward the back when the swimmer leaves the wall. **Backstroke to breaststroke:** The swimmer must touch the wall while on the back. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner but the shoulders must be at or past vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall and the prescribed breaststroke form must be attained prior to the first arm stroke. **Breaststroke to freestyle:** The swimmer must touch with two hands. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner.

## VIII. Parents' Responsibilities

1. Provide transportation for their children to and from practices and competitions.
2. Give support to their children's efforts through praise, understanding, and attendance at meets.
3. Respect coach's authority by:
  - Refrain from interrupting practice. Try to keep communication with a coach to before or after practice.
  - Staying out of the water during practices and meets.
4. Parents are encouraged to support their athletes by volunteering at meets when requested.
5. Parents must pick up their children as soon as practice or meets are over. Coaches and staff are not responsible for children after their scheduled practice time or meets.

## IX. Concussion Awareness

1. Concussions can occur in any sport; therefore, all parents/guardians and coaches need to know concussion signs and symptoms and what to do if a concussion occurs. Coaches will notify parents/guardians and league director if a participant had contact with their head whether it seemed severe or not. The following is information for you as parents/guardians, please take a moment to read it over. <http://mesaaz.gov/home/showdocument?id=6148>