



Waldo County YMCA
★ We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities. ★

Bluefish

Swim Team



Team Handbook

2011-2012

WELCOME TO THE WALDO COUNTY YMCA BLUEFISH!

The Waldo County YMCA Swim Team program is organized and operated by the Aquatics Department and staff of Coaches here at the Waldo County YMCA. Consistent with the YMCA's mission, the team focuses on building strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

The Bluefish Swim Team participates in YMCA competition at the local, state, regional and national level. We also offer competition at USA Swim Meets that allow further competition.

The primary sources of information for our team are: our website, team calendar, bulletin board, facebook page, and a weekly email update. Your swimmers will also have their own mailbox located upstairs in the spectator area of the YMCA. Each of these sources is intended for both swimmers and parents and should be checked weekly.

The purpose of the handbook is to provide an introduction of our team. This should be read by both new and returning parents and should also be shared with your swimmer(s). It will document various policies that will affect all swimmers, year after year. Swim families should read this document so that they may become familiar with the important facts and rules of our swim team.

ABOUT OUR TEAM

The YMCA is committed to offering a quality swim team which emphasizes teaching the value of competition through teamwork, sportsmanship and doing ones best.

Vision Statement:

The Waldo County YMCA Bluefish's vision is to offer a high-quality; fun and motivating age group and ability level swim team that focuses on the overall swimmer and community development.

The swimmer, coach and parents are all necessary components in carrying out this philosophy. In order to accomplish these goals, we expect the following from our swimmers:

- Attend training sessions on time and with the necessary equipment (goggles, swim suit, cap and towel)
- Keep communication lines open with the coaches; share goals, ideas, concerns & questions
- Establish reasonable and achievable goals and practice to succeed in those goals.
- Practice good sportsmanship by also complimenting your competitors & fellow teammates on a good race.
- Respect the Waldo County YMCA facility and follow our facility rules and guidelines.
- Most important..... We want them to **HAVE FUN!**

Team History:

In 1972 a young man named Dan Horton (who is now a member of our YMCA Board of Directors and a Swim Meet Official) had a vision – gather a bunch of kids together and start a swim team. It was a great opportunity to develop their coordination and strength, teach self-discipline, and let the kids enjoy the water. With all of this in mind, the Bay Area Swim Club (BASC) came into being. Many of our Swim Parents, Coaches and YMCA Staff swam for BASC.

As this swim team grew, the Waldo County community began to see the need for other team sports and a governing body to house them under. The Waldo County YMCA asked the BASC to come under its wing. Putting the two organizations together created a greater growth opportunity for everyone involved, and in 1998 the BASC joined the YMCA and became the Waldo County YMCA Bluefish Swim Team.

The Team Today:

Today's Bluefish consists of approximately 100 swimmers from all over Waldo County and surrounding communities. Our paid coaching staff includes one head coach that oversees the entirety of the program and two assistant coaches. We are also extremely lucky to have volunteers help out with coaching and other team activities. We wouldn't be the team we are today without our amazing volunteers! Swimmers from age of 5 through 18 compete at all levels with the Bluefish. Practices and home meets are held at the Waldo County YMCA.

Our swimmers develop self-discipline, self-confidence, and are able to enjoy the experience of swimming with our YMCA team.

TEAM STRUCTURE

The Bluefish Swim Team is managed by the Waldo County YMCA, and is affiliated with the National YMCA organization. And so, if eligible our Bluefish Swimmers can compete in the National YMCA program ranging from local meets within the State of Maine to the annual meets of New England Regional Championships in Boston, MA and the YMCA National Championships in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

OUR COACHING STAFF

Aaron Winslow: *Head Coach*

- Aaron began swimming for Bay Area Swim Club in 1989 and swam both YMCA and USA until 1997.
- He swam 4 years at Belfast Area High School where they won four KVAC titles and were state runners-up in 1994 and 1997.
- After graduating high school he attended Keene State College where he swam all 4 years and was captain of his team both junior and senior year.
- As a senior in College Aaron was All-New England in the 400 IM.
- He has 3 children, two of whom swim for the Bluefish.
- ❖ Fun Fact: Aaron is an avid whitewater canoe racer, and won 2 WWOC National Championships in 1995

Susan Cooney: *Assistant Coach*

- Susan started swimming in her family's backyard pool at age 2 ½ and began competitive swimming at age 14. She swam throughout her high school years in Kingston, NY where she also swam for the local USA team. During the summer months Susan began coaching with the local recreational swim club.
- In college, she swam four years for NCAA Division III State University of New York (at New Paltz), and was a conference champion and record holder. In the summers, she competed in triathlons and also competed in USA swimming long course meter swim meets.
- After graduating from college, she swam for the Adirondack Masters Swim Club, competed at the 1992 Masters Nationals and still holds records in the 18-24 age groups for the NY club.
- Susan competed with the PenBay YMCA Masters team and began coaching the Camden Hills Regional High School swim team from 1999-2002.
- Susan and her husband moved to Belfast in the winter of 2004, where she began patiently waiting for the Waldo County YMCA pool to be built! She swam on the first day it opened and tries to get in every weekday. Susan joined the Bluefish in 2009, and our Masters group in 2011.
- ❖ Fun Fact: For many years she lived on a sailboat right in Belfast harbor (year round!) with her husband, Steve and our dog, Fonzie!

Brett Steele: Assistant Coach

- Brett swam for Belfast area High School from 1980-1984. He was coached by Aarons dad, Bob Winslow.
- Brett first joined the Bluefish as Assistant Coach under Andy Thompson. And then later rejoined the team in 2006 under Aaron Winslow.
- The 2011-2012 Season will mark his 6th consecutive season with the Bluefish.
- Brett has had the opportunity to work with over six Bluefish Coaches including: Andy Thompson, Aaron Winslow, Scott Bowen, Loni Brown, Susan Clooney, and Betsy Bradley
- Brett is a proud Bluefish Dad to daughter Brittany and this will also be her sixth season with the team.
- ❖ Fun Fact: Brett is a character in the Milton-Bradley game “Real People”.

Betsy Bradley: Volunteer Coach

- Betsy has been swimming competitively since she was seven years old.
- Growing up she swam for both YMCA and USA swimming (which was called AAU and then USS swimming back then)
- Betsy swam four years for the Orono High School swim team.
- After graduating High school she went on to swim for the University of Maine all four years of college.
- Betsy started Coaching YMCA swimming with the Canoe City Swim Team in Old Town/Orono and stayed with the team for six years.
- After enjoying her experience with the Canoe City Swim Club she joined the University of Maine Swim team as the new Assistant Coach.
- This is her fourth season with the Bluefish and she is a proud Swim Mom of two Bluefish Swimmers.

Coach Responsibilities:

The main responsibility of the coaching staff is to meet the needs of all swimmers in both programs offered (YMCA & USA Swimming). The coaches are responsible for teaching and training swimmers the four major strokes (Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle) and to help them gain skills, knowledge & confidence to compete in competitive swim meets. Some of these skills include stroke mechanics as well as demonstrating good sportsmanship and responsibility to the team and teammates.

The Coaches goals are for each child to have fun, become a better swimmer, and to help our swimmers grow not only as athletes but also as individuals.

- The coaches are responsible for placing swimmers in practice groups. This is first based on age and then by the ability of each individual. When it is in the best interest of the swimmer, he/she may be placed in a more challenging group at the coach’s discretion.
- At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-ups for the team and direct swimmers to their events. After each race, a coach will offer constructive criticism and support regarding the swimmer’s race.

PARENTS: Your Swimmer Needs You!**Parents Responsibilities:**

To have a successful program there must be understanding and cooperation amongst swimmers, parents and coaches. The progress your swimmer makes depends heavily on these relationships. It is with this in mind that we ask you to consider this section as you join the Waldo County YMCA Bluefish swim team and re-acquaint yourself with this section if you are a returning parent.

The most important role of a swim team parent is to offer POSITIVE ENCOURAGEMENT. Your child works hard at practices and meets; please make sure you let them know their efforts are appreciated.

Please make every effort to have your swimmers at practice on time. Arriving at the YMCA 10 minutes early to change up and get ready for practice will teach your child responsibility and discipline.

Parents, we need your help too. At the very beginning of the season please speak with your swimmer(s) about your expectations for them during and after practice and what is and what is not appropriate behavior for the deck or locker rooms. Please encourage your swimmers to change and shower quickly and not participate in rowdy or disruptive behavior.

The following guidelines will help you keep your child's development in the proper perspective and help your swimmer reach their full potential as both an individual and as a member of our Bluefish swim team.

The Coach Is Just That..... The Coach

We want your swimmer to get to know and relate to his/her coach right at the beginning of the season. The Coach's job is to give your swimmer the tools and skills they need to do their best. It is up to your swimmer on how they choose to use those tools. If you have questions about training, our strategies or our coaching philosophy please contact the coach and/or come to a Parent & Coaches meeting to ask questions.

The Best Kind of Parent

Our coaches will give support and constructively criticizing your swimmers performance. It is the parent's job to supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to make the child work harder and focus during practices, which in turn gives him/her the confidence to perform well in competition.

10 and Under Swimmers

Ten and under swimmers can be the most inconsistent with progress and sometimes that becomes frustrating for both swimmers & parents alike. We mainly want these swimmers to have fun, learn new skills and enjoy the sport of swimming. If your swimmer continues to work hard, consistency and good performance will come as they get older and stronger. Sometimes the growth we see in our swimmers is not in cut times or speed but in confidence and enthusiasm. And that's what Bluefish swimming is all about!

It Won't Happen Every Time

Even the very best swimmer will have meets where they don't have their best times. These "plateaus" are a normal part of swimming. Over the course of a season times may improve, but sometimes they will fluctuate as a swimmers body grows and develops. This is to be expected. If your swimmer has a "bad swim" talk to them about it and ask questions. Maybe they were nervous, tired, distracted or it could have simply been an "off" day for them. Don't accuse them of "not trying" or "being lazy." This won't help your swimmer be the best they can be. Always try to give positive feedback.

COMMUNICATION:

Where Can We Find Out the Information We Need To Know?

As a growing team with several practice groups and multiple coaches, we truly need to communicate in both formal and informal ways. As in every organization, communication is the cornerstone of effective functioning. Coaches are available by email, phone or in person. Do keep in mind that there's a right time and place for everything and that during meets and practice, coaches must give their full attention to their duties and the swimmers.

Also, all of our coaches have full time jobs, families, and other commitments. This means they may not be available to respond to emails or phone calls right away. If you have a question about practice times, or swim meets during business hours please try referring to our Team Website, Online Calendar or Team Bulletin board to find the information you need. Also, please feel free to contact the YMCA with any questions you may have.

Communication Gaps

We've set up a few ways for you to have direct communication with the Bluefish Staff so that we can answer your comments and questions when they arise.

A few ways for families to communicate with the coach are;

1. In person. Coaches can be available before or after a swim practice. Face to face is the best way to have a conversation about your swimmer. If you would like to meet with a coach please try and arrange a meeting ahead of time. This will help the coaches make time for you and your questions.
2. Attend our Parent/Coaches meetings. These meetings are designed for parents to have direct access to the coaches, ask questions and to hear their opinions on recent events, training, philosophy and coaching styles. Meetings will be posted on our Bulletin Board and our Team Calendar online.
3. Email. We've developed a bluefish email address so that coaches and parents can have a clear channel for communication: wcbluefish@gmail.com
4. Evaluations. The Aquatics Department releases Midseason and End of Season Evaluations during the swim season. These are read by our Aquatics Director, Program Director and the Bluefish Coaches. This is a tool used by our team management to get the insight of our swimmers and their parents. *We want to hear from you!* Our goal is to have 100% participation in our evaluations this season.
5. Coaches & Swimmers Mailboxes. These will be located upstairs on the spectator area. Please check them weekly. This is where your swimmer can pick up their ribbons & medals from recent swim meets and will receive important event reminders.
6. Team Facebook Page. Search: *Waldo County YMCA Bluefish* to add us as a friend! This will be a great tool to send out quick reminders and we will also use the site to alert families about practice or meet cancelations.

PRACTICE & TRAINING SESSIONS

Your swimmer is only expected at those practices which you and he/she can handle with their family and education coming first, as expected.

- We want to encourage our swimmers that being on time is important and arriving even 5-10minutes late can set back a practice and the workout schedule for the day. Being on time means arriving at the YMCA 10minutes early.
- When swimmers arrive at practice they should sit on the Blue Benches that line the wall of the natatorium and wait for instructions from the Coach.
- Plan to stay the entire practice. The last part of practice is very often the most important. Usually, there are announcements made and it is our goal to hold informal group meetings to discuss and wrap up practices. In the event that your child needs to be dismissed early from practice, a note from the parent for each dismissal is encouraged.
- Coaches will inform swimmers when to sign up for swim meets. Competition in meets is encouraged but not required. Signups are located on our team bulletin board and swim meet results will be posted upstairs next to the swimmers mailboxes a few days after each meet. If you are unsure of what events your child should swim ask a coach or simply write "Coaches Choice" and the coaches will select events that are right for your swimmer. *If not attending please check the "not attending" box.*
- *During the winter months we ask that you use your best judgment about traveling to & from practices. If we are experiencing inclement weather please call the YMCA before traveling. We will send out an email and Facebook update when a practice or a meet has been canceled.

BLUEFISH PRACTICE GROUPS:

8 & Under *Two nights per week	Monday-Thursday	4:45-5:30pm
9-11yr olds	Monday-Thursday Friday	5:30-6:30pm 3:30-4:45pm
Middle School	Monday-Thursday Friday	3:15-4:45pm 3:15-5:30pm
High School	Monday-Thursday Friday	6:30-7:45pm 3:15-5:30pm

FEES AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Annual Membership

All Bluefish swimmers must be *Annual Members of the Waldo County YMCA*. This is a YMCA of the USA regulation in order to swim in any YMCA swim meet. A youth membership is \$132 for the entire year. For first-time members, there is a one-time joiner fee of \$15, for a total of \$147. The annual membership may be paid in full up front or in three monthly payments. By becoming an annual member, your child will also be able to participate in other YMCA programs at a reduced rate. *Financial Assistance is available upon request. All membership fees must be paid in full by December 31st of the current season.

Elementary and Middle School Swimmers

The rate for elementary and middle school swimmers has been structured to reflect the amount of practice time and instruction they will receive throughout the season.

FEES:

8 & Under	\$150 (three installments of \$90, \$30, and \$30)
9-11 year old	\$215 (three installments of \$115, \$50, and \$50)
Middle School	\$225 (three installments of \$125, \$50, and \$50)

The swim team fee may be paid in three (3) installments with the final payment due by December 31st of the current season. This fee includes all YMCA meet fees for the season, including championship meets.

High School Swimmers

We recognize that High School students who are swimming *both* YMCA and High School are not able to attend all Bluefish practices once the high school season begins, and therefore are offered a reduced fee. To be eligible to compete in YMCA meets, high school swimmers must practice at the Y at least once per week. Anyone taking advantage of this lower rate *MUST* also swim on the high school swim team.

FEE: \$125

This fee is payable in three (3) installments of \$65, \$30, & \$30.

The final payment is due by December 31st of the current season.

Multiple Swimmer Discount

For families with more than one swimmer, we offer the second (and all additional) swimmer(s) to receive a 25% discount on their program rate. The first swimmer must pay full tuition.

- Parents are still responsible for YMCA memberships for all children.
*If electing to enroll children in USA Swimming, parents are responsible for those fees for all of the swimmers in the family. Please see information regarding USA swimming in this packet and on our website.
- As with all Waldo County YMCA programs, there is financial assistance available to you. Financial Assistance is only available for YMCA swim tuition and membership fees. If you are interested in applying for financial assistance, please obtain a form at the Front Desk of the YMCA and make arrangements to speak with Bruce Osgood before the season gets started.

Payment Options

Visa, MasterCard, Checks (payable to the Waldo County YMCA), and Cash are accepted forms of payment. All payments should be given to a member of the Front Desk Staff at the YMCA.

OTHER COSTS

Swimmers should have at least one if not two practice suits. Swim suits usually last four to six months depending on usage & care. Our team swimsuits are for competition only and are not allowed to be used as a practice suit. Your child will also need goggles and possibly a spare swim cap. Goggles are a must for the amount of time your child will be spending in the water.

Caps will keep long hair under control, reduce any drag during a race, and help maintain pool cleanliness. Any swimmer with shoulder length hair needs to have hair pulled back with a hair tie and is highly encouraged to wear a cap at practice and swim meets.

Writing your child's name on their goggles, suits, and t-shirts is encouraged. They have a tendency of "wandering" off during the season. If your child loses one of these items check in with the YMCA front desk staff, coach, lifeguard or the Aquatics Director before purchasing another set. They may be in the lost and found. Emphasize to your swimmer that it is their responsibility to keep track of their goggles, suits & caps and bring them to practices and meets.

FUNDRAISING

Our swim team depends heavily on fundraising, as do most YMCA swim teams.

And the big questions are: *What do our program fees pay for? And why do we need to fundraise??*

Although our program fees help pay for a portion of our team operating costs, running a swim team of this size is expensive. And since we try and keep our program fees as low, we need to make up for that difference in fundraising.

Over the last few seasons we've been very lucky to offer three paid coaches at most practices. And that happens to be one of our highest operating costs. Our coaches put in an incredible amount of hours on deck, planning and being with the kids. This includes the hours spent at practices, home meets and traveling to & from away meets.

Other big ticket items include our swim meet entry fees, meet ribbons & trophies, team awards for our end of season swim banquet, training clinics for our coaches, and purchasing & maintaining practice & meet equipment.

Last but not least is the high cost of the team providing suits, caps and a t-shirt for all swimmers on the team. This is a big bonus for our swim families! We love providing these for the kids and have been fortunate to be able to do so over the past few seasons. But in order to continue doing this we need our fundraisers to be successful.

Some of our fundraising activities include: Our first annual Murder Mystery Dinner (October 15th) selling Christmas trees (November), Splash-a-thon (November/December), Concessions & Raffle tickets at home meets, Annual Masters Swim Meet (June) *Hint, hint parents.. that means we want to see you swimming too! 😊

Our team also receives 8% cash back from all purchases made at **SwimOutlet.com/Bluefish**. Please keep this in mind when purchasing any swim or triathlon gear in the future!

If you can think of other fundraising ideas please let us know. We want them to be fun & include the entire team!

It is important that ALL PARENTS & SWIMMERS become involved in fundraising efforts. We do not want this task to fall onto a small group of parents. Please see our Team Calendar for all upcoming events & share these events with your swimmer. You can find our team calendar on our website & also on our team bulletin board.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We encourage all parents to try and participate in at least one fundraiser and get involved with the organization. Everyone is invited to attend our Parent meetings and learn what is going on behind the scenes. There are many opportunities to get involved and some allow you to be right on deck with the team. Please visit our team website to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

Find a way to get involved and make this a program you and your child can participate in together! Many hands really do make light work 😊 Please speak with any of our Swim Coaches or Erin Mank, our Aquatics Director about other Volunteer opportunities or how you can get involved.

USE OF FACILITIES

Whether home or away, at a practice or at a meet, you are a representative of our YMCA team. Your behavior directly affects our team's image. We are a respected group and will respect others. Please conduct yourselves appropriately in all areas, including those outside the pool deck – i.e., hallways, locker rooms, and restaurants.

When not directly participating in a program, Children 10 (ten) and under must be accompanied by an adult at all times while in the building.

SWIMMING 101

For more information about the sport of swimming & our team please visit our new & improved team website! Go to www.waldocountymca.org and scroll down the right hand side until you see: **YOUTH Bluefish Swim Team**. We've provided this information to help both new and returning parents learn more about the sport of swimming, swim meet results, swimmer development (both mental & physical), and also information about our team gatherings and meetings. Please take the time to review this information.

YMCA Swimming

Our values and philosophy are generated from the National YMCA movement. YMCA competitive swimming offers wonderful teachable moments where participants can develop values for a lifetime.

More information about Swimming can be found on the following websites:

www.YMCASwimmingandDiving.org

www.USASwimming.org

USA Swimming

The Waldo County YMCA Bluefish offers a USA Swimming membership to our swimmers. USA Swimming is a national organization dedicated to swimmers of all abilities and is the national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. USA Swimming offers year-round swimming opportunities in various events and distances. The swimmer chooses which meets he/she wishes to swim, as well as what events. There is no separate practice for USA Swimming, only Bluefish practice. The coach of USA Swimming is your YMCA head coach, Aaron Winslow.

USA swimming is not required of WCY Bluefish swimmers, but it is a great opportunity to improve your times, try new events, and swim in some of the most beautiful pools in the state! During the YMCA season, there are at least 7 USA meets within a couple of hours drive from the mid-coast area. If a swimmer is interested in participating in USA swimming, he/she must register with USA Swimming. Registration is done at the beginning of the season and information can be picked up from the front desk.

If you opt to participate in USA Swim, there may be times when lodging is involved. It is also the responsibility of the parents to make reservations in those instances. Event fees should be paid to the front desk of our YMCA before the meet.

USA Swimming Registration Fee: \$37.50 (seasonal membership)/\$60 (annual membership). A portion of this fee goes to our local swim club: Maine Swimming. Membership benefits for each swimmer include: USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, membership certificate, and certificate of insurance. Clubs joining USA Swimming have liability insurance coverage for approved insured activities.

USA Swimming Event Fees: Event fees will be paid prior to each meet, fees can be brought in and paid at the front desk of our YMCA. The coach will inform parents of the fees due and payment must be made for those events prior to the meet. If a swimmer registers for a meet and does not attend for any reason, he/she is still responsible for those event fees.

AWAY MEETS

Trips to meets in other towns are the responsibility of the parents. Carpooling with other swim families is highly encouraged. Please make every effort to attend away meets with your children. Take this opportunity to become involved, learn more about the sport, watch & cheer for your child's teammates, and meet other swim families from around the state.

If you are unable to bring your swimmer to a meet but they are still interested in competing, please check with another parent rather than the coach to arrange carpooling.

Always treat members of other YMCA's the way you would treat the members and staff at our YMCA. Be respectful and remember to practice good sportsmanship.

Swimmers, Please Remember To Clean Up After Yourself At Practices And Swim Meets. ☺

GENERAL POLICIES FOR SWIMMERS

Attendance

Attendance is important. If you know ahead of time that you will be unable to attend a meet or an extended amount of practice days due to vacation or sickness, please be responsible and inform the swim coaches as soon as possible.

Teammates

This is your team; make it enjoyable for everyone. Offer encouragement to at least one other swimmer each day. The better your teammates are, the better your team will be. A “good swim” or “wow, your butterfly looks great!” helps make the practice time shorter. Supporting teammates and giving positive encouragement is a good way to illustrate leadership and demonstrate team spirit.

Discipline

We want to make sure our swimmers get the most out of every practice. Our swim team is supposed to be fun, but we expect the swimmers to listen to the coaches and do what is asked of them. Please help instill in your swimmer they need to treat the coaches with respect.

If the coaches have to spend time disciplining one swimmer that takes time away from the rest of the swimmers. For this reason, disobedience/horseplay will not be tolerated. If a coach has to speak to a swimmer, the following will take place:

1. Verbal warning
2. Time out from activity – Child may be asked to take a night off from program. Depending on the severity of the behavior, the parent may be asked to return with the child and remain at the program with the child for a number of sessions.
3. Behavior contract – A behavior contract may be drawn up between a staff member and the child. This contract allows the staff member and the child to discuss the behavior and put into writing what the child will do to improve the behavior. The parent will be given a copy of this contract and will be asked to sign and return it to the Aquatics Director or Coach the next time the child comes to the Y. The parent may be asked again to attend the program with the child until behavior shows improvement.
4. Suspension – If the behavior continues, we will ask that the child take an extended amount of time off from the Y program. This will be discussed with the parents and if upon returning the behavior is not improved the child will be dismissed from the Y program, effective immediately.

It is not our intention to try to eliminate anyone from a YMCA program. We want your child to have a safe, secure and enjoyable time when participating in any program. In order for this to be accomplished, some basic rules must be followed. Rules around the pool have to be strict and followed by everyone to insure the safety of all children.

There will be no toleration for any vandalism of any kind in the locker rooms or any area in the facility. Disciplinary action for vandalism will be severe and may result in dismissal from program.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT SWIM MEETS

Meets are usually held on the weekends, most often on Saturdays. YMCA *Dual meets* are when our team competes against one other team. *Closed meets* are when our team competes against two or more other swim teams. At YMCA Invitational meets, USA meets, and championships, several teams compete against each other, often vying for higher points & awards.

Meet schedules, practice schedules and driving directions to pools are posted on our team website under “Directions to Away Meets”. Please arrange your arrival for all meets and allow for a proper warm-up. If you’re sick, please call a coach ASAP!

Meets take time. A long time. A “quick” swim meet is over in roughly three-four hours. Please plan your day accordingly. For swimmers, make sure they bring something to keep them busy while not racing. Dry warm clothes are recommended for your swimmer while they wait for their next race (no cotton). Also, encourage them to cheer for their team mates and watch others swim their races.

After the meet ask your swimmer how some of his/her teammates & friends did. Did they watch other kids swim? This will help instill a sense of team membership and help your swimmer feel more involved in the meet. Watching older/more advanced swimmers can also be exciting for them, help them set goals and give them something to look forward to when they get older.

Swimmers must sit with their teammates during the meet. This is so coaches can find them when their event is up. Before each meet please have a discussion with your swimmers about appropriate behavior and being sure they stay on the deck and not wander around the facility or locker rooms during the meet.

The best way for parents to keep busy at meets is to volunteer to help! There is always a need for timers, computer & timing system operators, concession workers, and a host of other jobs. Most often, these jobs offer some of the best seats in the house to watch a meet. No experience is needed, just a willingness to learn! The more help we have in organizing and running our home meets, the more smoothly (and quicker!) they run. A well-run meet is a much more pleasurable and positive experience for all involved.

If you have any further questions about our program please feel free to contact us at the YMCA.

**We are thrilled that your child & family have chosen to swim with the
Waldo County YMCA Bluefish Swim Team!**

WELCOME TO THE BLUEFISH!



Waldo County YMCA • 157 Lincolnville Avenue • Belfast, Maine 04915
207-338-4598 • Fax: 207-338-2505 • email: aquatics@waldocountyyymca.org • www.waldocountyyymca.org