

A Winner IS

The first place person is not the only winner, a winner is one who behaves like a winner. There are certain characteristics of a winner, and every swimmer, no matter where they place, has the opportunity to emulate those characteristics: concentration, listening skills, and working toward goals.

Sports is not an end in itself, but a vehicle we use to teach children life skills and how to reach their potential. We use sport as organized play to demonstrate and measure one's abilities. Seen in that light, winning without learning is not the desired intention. In competition, the important measure is not who collected the most medals, or even who improved the most seconds. The real critical measure is who learned the most from the competitive experience.

Swimmers will, over time, forget the medals, records, and other material benefits. They will, however, remember the development of interpersonal skills, discipline, listening skills, time management, goal setting, and enhanced self- image. These are the things that make the swimmer a more successful person with a better chance of living a life closer to their peak potential, and to contribute to the world they live in.

Competitions occur each week-end beginning in late June and winds-up with the North and South semi-finals on the August long week-end. Provincial finals are the following weekend.

*Not all swimmers need to attend any competitive meets, however **to attend the provincial semifinal, a swimmer must compete in at least one other meet.** The top six swimmers in each event at the semifinal are eligible to compete in that event at the provincial finals.*

Swimming that, like our training program, attempts to provide challenging, yet success-oriented competitive situations for swimmers of all ages and abilities. The following policies outline our philosophy:

- 1. We emphasize competition with oneself. Winning ribbons, medals, or trophies is not our main goal. Even if the swimmer finishes first, but has swum poorly in comparison to his/her own past performances, he/she is encouraged to do better. The individual's improvement is our primary objective.*
- 2. Sportsmanlike behaviour is of equal importance as improved performance. All the coaches teach swimmers how to behave like a champion when the swimmer has both a "good" and a "bad" swim. Respect for officials, congratulations to other competitors, encouragement to teammates, determined effort, and mature attitudes are examples of behaviour praised and rewarded by the Nipawin Lions Swim Club coaching staff.*
- 3. A swimmer is praised for improving his/her stroke or time. It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's responsibility to provide love and encouragement that bolster the swimmer's confidence along the way.*
- 4. Swimmers are taught to set realistic, yet challenging, goals for meets and to relate those goals to practice to direct their training efforts.*

5. *Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances, and strokes. This policy promotes versatility and encourages the swimmer to explore his potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming. Oftentimes, a swimmers "best" stroke changes as they mature and his/her body goes through physical changes.*