



New Parent Guide to Swimming and the River Rats Swim Club

Introduction:

First and foremost, welcome to the River Rats Swim club! We are thrilled to have you and your swimmer join our swim family! This guide was developed not only to help you understand a little more about our club team but also to help you learn a little more about the sport itself, and help you understand what to expect this season.

Though this guide can help you understand some of the basics of swimming and a bit about our team, please do not hesitate to reach out to one of the board members if you have any additional questions!

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What is USA Swimming?

Overview:

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming in the United States. USA Swimming promotes the culture of swimming by creating safe and healthy opportunities for athletes and coaches of all backgrounds to participate and advance in the sport through clubs, events and education. Membership is comprised of swimmers of every age and ability, all the way up to the Olympic Team, as well as coaches, officials and volunteers.

Clubs/Teams are the heart of USA Swimming. Without a strong club system, USA Swimming would not be able to develop their athletes to reach their highest potential. USA Swimming has over 3,100 clubs, servicing 400,000+ members.

USA Swimming Background

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for competitive swimming in the United States. USA Swimming was conceived in 1978 with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act which specified that all Olympic sports would be administered independently. Prior to this act, USA Swimming was the Competitive Swimming Committee of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) located in Indianapolis, Indiana. USA Swimming Headquarters office was established in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1981 and is located at the Olympic Training Center. As the National Governing Body for the sport, USA Swimming is responsible for the conduct and administration of swimming in the United States. In this capacity, USA Swimming formulates the rules, implements the policies and procedures, conducts the national championships, disseminates safety and sports medicine information and selects athletes to represent the United States in international competition.

USA Swimming Headquarters

USA Swimming Headquarters provides a variety of services and programs for its membership. Among the many services are publications, educational programs, fund-raising activities, sports medicine programs, resources and general information about swimming related activities. USA Swimming staff are available to assist you in answering questions or providing additional information about USA Swimming.

USA Swimming
1 Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5707
Phone: 719.866.4578 Fax: 719.866.4669

USA Swimming Mission Statement

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. We administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Amateur Sports Act. We provide programs and services for our members, supporters, affiliates and the interested public. We value these members of the swimming community, and the staff and volunteers who serve them. We are committed to excellence and the improvement of our sport.

USA Swimming Vision Statement

To inspire and enable our members to achieve excellence in the sport of swimming and in life.

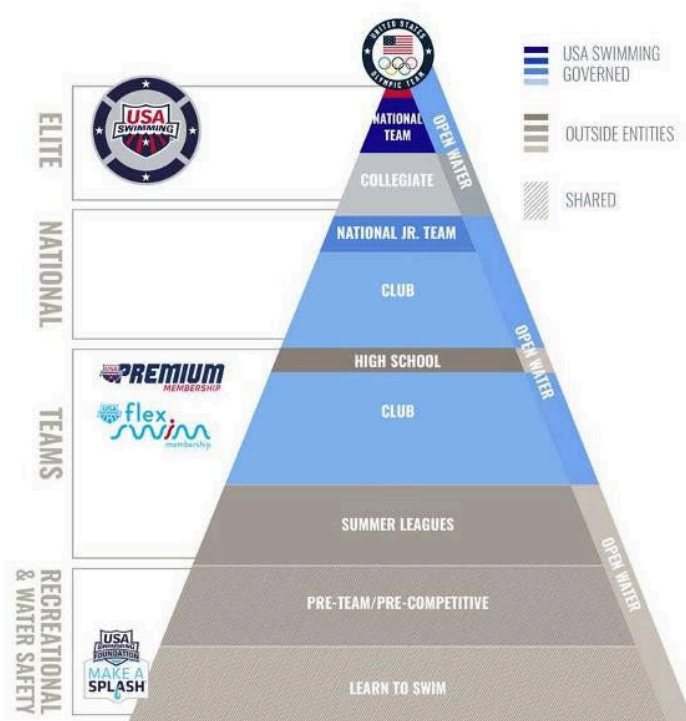
USA Swimming Core Objectives

Build the base. **Promote** the sport. **Achieve** competitive success.

The Pyramid

The USA Swimming pyramid is a visual manifestation of the organization's priority to be recognized as a best-in-class National Governing Board. Not only should USA Swimming be world class for its own members, but should also be a positive influence and make significant contributions to the sport of swimming across the entire country.

As the preeminent organization for the sport of swimming in the U.S., the organization has the opportunity to influence and architect the development of the sport for all swimmers. USA Swimming should, and will, embrace the responsibility to grow the sport. The organization recognizes the importance of each level of the pyramid and continue to search for ways to strengthen areas that aren't directly governed by USA Swimming.



<https://www.usaswimming.org/about-usas/organization/overview> USA Swimming

Organizational Structure

Clubs/Teams:

Clubs/Teams are the heart of USA Swimming. Without a strong club system, USA swimming would not be able to develop their athletes to reach their highest potential. USA Swimming is comprised of over 3,100 clubs, servicing 400,000+ members.

LSCs

Local Swim Committees (LSCs) are groups that act as representatives for specific swimming communities throughout the country. There are 59 LSCs with defined boundaries that are unique to an area of the country. LSCs are tasked with registering members, scheduling competitions and leading clubs on behalf of USA Swimming. You will see us refer to the Niagara LSC often. For more information regarding the Niagara LSC feel free to visit:

<https://www.gomotionapp.com/team/eznslsc/page/home>

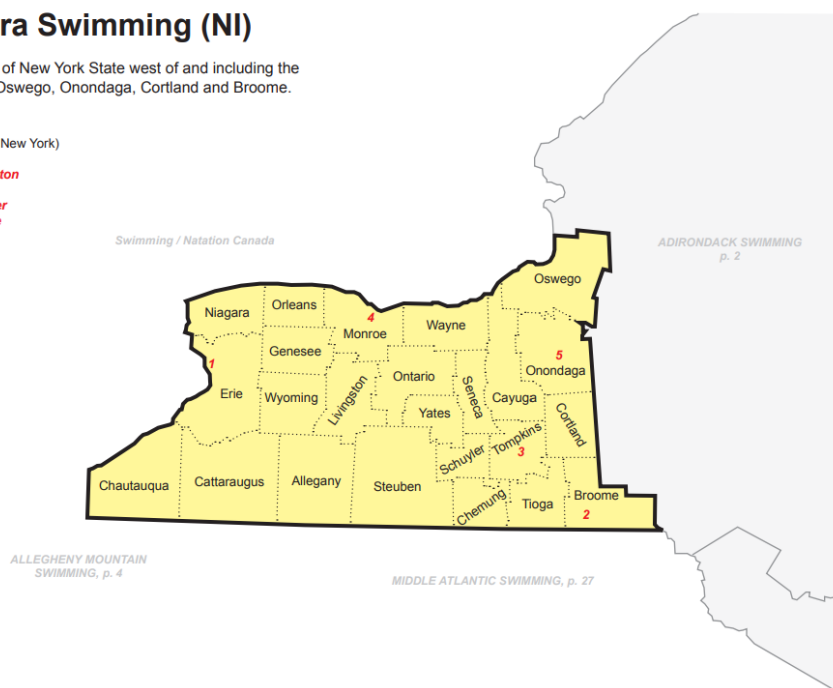
Niagara Swimming (NI)

Eastern Zone

That portion of New York State west of and including the counties of Oswego, Onondaga, Cortland and Broome.

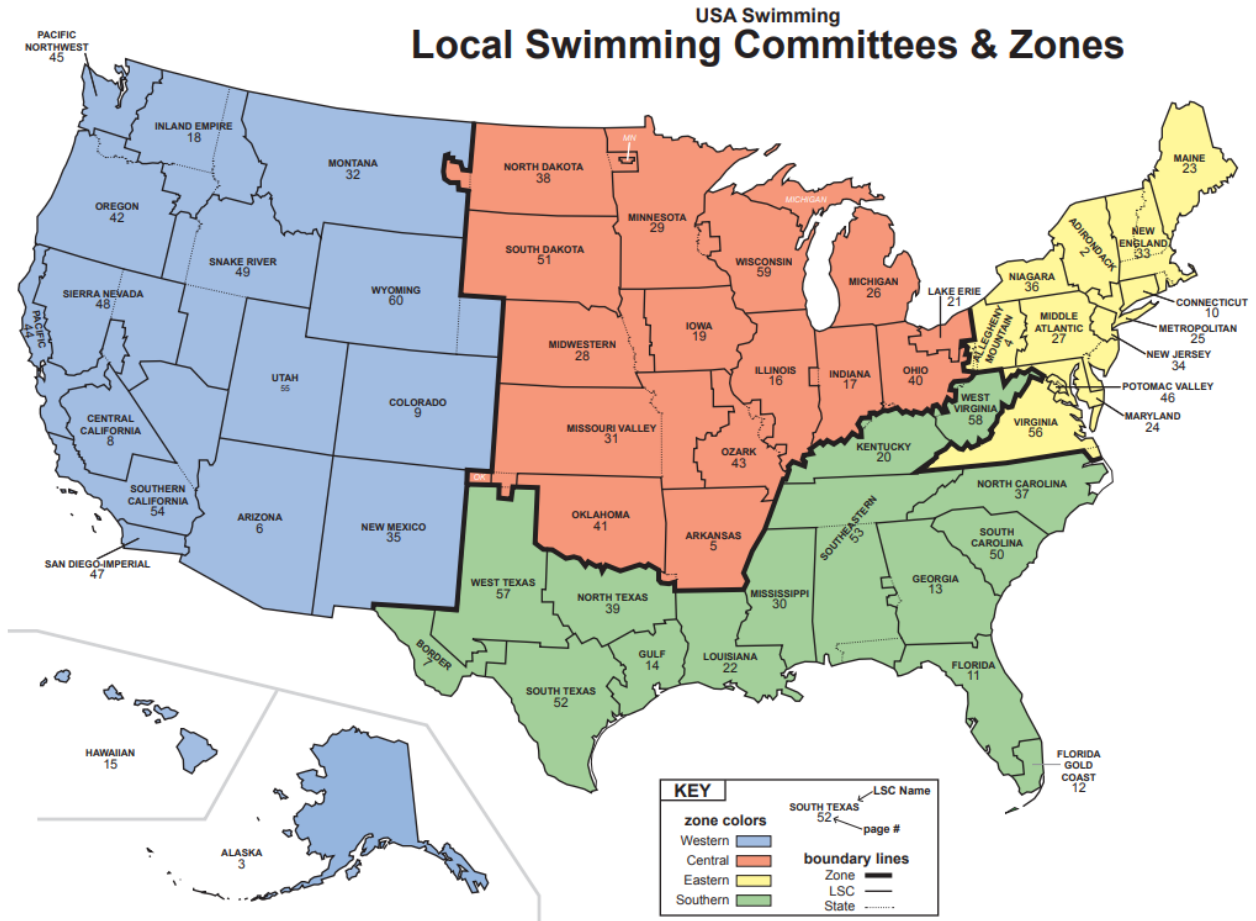
Cities (all in New York)

- 1 – Buffalo
- 2 – Binghamton
- 3 – Ithaca
- 4 – Rochester
- 5 – Syracuse



Zones

There are four Zones that divide up the United States: Western, Central, Eastern and Southern. Each Zone's responsibility is to represent the LSCs in their regional area, as well as conduct Zone-level championship meets.



<https://www.usaswimming.org/about/lsc-websites>

Niagara LSC

The Local Swimming Committee (LSC) is a separate and independent corporation to whom USA Swimming has delegated certain governing and supervisory responsibilities within the geographic boundaries designated by USA Swimming. Each LSC shall have jurisdiction over the sport of swimming as delegated to it in the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations to conduct swimming programs consistent with the policies and procedures of USA Swimming and to sanction, approve, observe, oversee and conduct on behalf of USA Swimming competitive swimming events within the LSC boundaries. Each LSC is tasked to provide programming, service and support to its member athletes, teams, coaches and volunteers.

River Rats Swim Club is a member of the Niagara LSC.

Mission

Supporting strong clubs,
building stronger swimmers
by providing opportunities
from novice to elite.

Vision

Inspiring swimming for
generations.

The Niagara LSC website can be a helpful resource for any parent and swimmer. You can find a list of observed meets, information regarding Safe Sport, time standards and much more.

<https://www.gomotionapp.com/team/eznslsc/page/home>

Time Standards

A time set by a meet or LSC or USA-S (etc) that a swimmer must achieve for qualification or recognition.

Some meets require your swimmer to have a certain time in order to qualify for the meet. These are also sometimes called “cut times”. In most cases your swimmer will need to have a faster cut time than the standard (cut) in order to qualify to swim in. In some cases you need to be slower than the standard because the meet is intended for slower swimmers.

For meets like “golds” and “silvers” your swimmer will need to achieve a certain time in order to qualify. The Niagara LSC updates the time standards annually. These can be found at the link below.

Below are the SILVER time standards for the year 2023-2024. Please note these times are organized by age and gender and event. For the majority of the meets we participate in we swim SCY (short course yard), there are some exceptions. You can find this information on each individual meet announcement.

2023-2024 Niagara Championship Qualifier (Silvers) Time Standards						
Qualifying period 09/01/2022 to entry deadline						
LCM	Girls SCM	SCY	10 & Under Event	SCY	Boys SCM	LCM
0:47.19	0:46.19	0:41.59	50 free	0:42.19	0:46.89	0:47.89
1:46.19	1:44.19	1:33.79	100 Free	1:35.49	1:45.99	1:47.99
3:52.39	3:48.39	3:25.69	200 Free	3:29.39	3:52.49	3:56.49
6:43.99	6:37.59	7:21.39	500 Free	7:27.79	6:43.29	6:49.69
0:54.29	0:53.29	0:47.99	50 Back	0:48.89	0:54.29	0:55.29
1:59.39	1:57.39	1:45.69	100 Back	1:49.29	2:01.39	2:03.39
1:01.09	1:00.09	0:54.09	50 Breast	0:56.19	1:02.39	1:03.39
2:14.49	2:12.49	1:59.29	100 Breast	2:05.69	2:19.59	2:21.59
0:54.89	0:53.89	0:48.49	50 Fly	0:51.39	0:57.09	0:58.09
2:10.19	2:08.19	1:55.49	100 Fly	2:02.79	2:16.29	2:18.29
NA	1:57.59	1:45.89	100 IM	1:49.39	2:01.49	NA
4:12.79	4:08.79	3:44.09	200 IM	3:55.99	4:21.99	4:25.99

2023-2024 Niagara Championship Qualifier (Silvers) Time Standards Qualifying period 09/01/2022 to entry deadline						
LCM	Girls SCM	SCY	11-12 Event	SCY	Boys SCM	LCM
0:38.29	0:37.29	0:33.59	50 free	0:34.29	0:38.09	0:39.09
1:24.59	1:22.59	1:14.39	100 Free	1:16.09	1:24.49	1:26.49
3:09.39	3:05.39	2:46.99	200 Free	2:49.99	3:08.69	3:12.69
6:37.19	6:30.79	7:13.69	500 Free	7:19.99	6:36.39	6:42.79
--	--	--	1000 Free	--	--	--
0:45.29	0:44.29	0:39.89	50 Back	0:40.69	0:45.19	0:46.19
1:35.69	1:33.69	1:24.39	100 Back	1:27.29	1:36.89	1:38.89
3:12.49	3:08.49	2:49.79	200 Back	2:46.29	3:04.59	3:08.59
0:49.89	0:48.89	0:43.99	50 Breast	0:45.49	0:50.49	0:51.49
1:48.59	1:46.59	1:35.99	100 Breast	1:39.09	1:49.99	1:51.99
3:38.29	3:34.29	3:12.99	200 Breast	3:09.19	3:30.09	3:34.09
0:43.19	0:42.19	0:37.99	50 Fly	0:38.79	0:43.09	0:44.09
1:39.69	1:37.69	1:27.99	100 Fly	1:32.99	1:43.29	1:45.29
3:28.29	3:24.29	3:03.99	200 Fly	3:01.19	3:21.19	3:25.19
NA	1:34.59	1:25.19	100 IM	1:26.49	1:36.09	NA
3:31.69	3:27.69	3:07.09	200 IM	3:10.99	3:31.99	3:35.99
--	--	--	400 IM	--	--	--

2023-2024 Niagara Championship Qualifier (Silvers) Time Standards Qualifying period 09/01/2022 to entry deadline						
LCM	Girls SCM	SCY	13-14 Event	SCY	Boys SCM	LCM
0:34.99	0:33.99	0:30.59	50 free	0:29.19	0:32.49	0:33.49
1:16.29	1:14.29	1:06.89	100 Free	1:04.19	1:11.29	1:13.29
2:50.39	2:46.39	2:29.89	200 Free	2:24.89	2:40.89	2:44.89
6:02.79	5:56.39	6:34.99	500 Free	6:27.99	5:50.19	5:56.59
12:57.99	12:45.19	14:08.99	1000 Free	14:09.99	12:45.99	12:58.79
23:20.99	22:56.99	22:50.99	1650 Free	22:34.99	22:40.99	23:04.99
1:25.79	1:23.79	1:15.49	100 Back	1:14.09	1:22.29	1:24.29
3:12.49	3:08.49	2:49.79	200 Back	2:46.29	3:04.59	3:08.59
1:37.39	1:35.39	1:25.89	100 Breast	1:23.39	1:32.59	1:34.59
3:38.29	3:34.29	3:12.99	200 Breast	3:09.19	3:30.09	3:34.09
1:25.29	1:23.29	1:14.99	100 Fly	1:13.29	1:21.39	1:23.39
3:28.29	3:24.29	3:03.99	200 Fly	3:01.19	3:21.19	3:25.19
NA	1:25.59	1:17.09	100 IM	1:14.39	1:22.59	NA
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6:51.69	6:43.69	6:03.69	400 IM	5:58.09	6:37.49	6:45.49

2023-2024 Niagara Championship Qualifier (Silvers) Time Standards Qualifying period 09/01/2022 to entry deadline						
LCM	Girls SCM	SCY	15 & Over Event	SCY	Boys SCM	LCM
0:34.29	0:33.29	0:29.99	50 Free	0:27.49	0:30.59	0:31.59
1:14.59	1:12.59	1:05.39	100 Free	1:00.59	1:07.29	1:09.29
2:50.09	2:46.09	2:29.59	200 Free	2:17.29	2:32.39	2:36.39
5:59.89	5:53.49	6:31.69	500 Free	6:09.29	5:33.59	5:39.99
12:19.69	12:06.89	13:25.89	1000 Free	12:58.39	11:42.49	11:55.29
22:48.19	22:24.19	22:18.19	1650 Free	21:43.99	21:49.99	22:13.99
1:23.39	1:21.39	1:13.29	100 Back	1:12.79	1:20.79	1:22.79
3:11.09	3:07.09	2:48.49	200 Back	2:39.79	2:57.39	3:01.39
1:36.49	1:34.49	1:25.09	100 Breast	1:17.89	1:26.49	1:28.49
3:34.29	3:30.29	3:09.39	200 Breast	2:59.19	3:18.99	3:22.99
1:23.79	1:21.79	1:13.69	100 Fly	1:07.19	1:14.59	1:16.59
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NA	1:25.39	1:16.89	100 IM	1:12.29	1:20.29	NA
3:08.19	3:04.19	2:45.89	200 IM	2:36.69	2:53.99	2:57.99
6:37.79	6:29.79	5:51.09	400 IM	5:32.69	6:09.29	6:17.29

Updated time standards can be found at the link below. These time standards will also be posted to the club website.

<https://www.gomotionapp.com/team/eznslsc/page/times/time-standards>

Competitive Rules Primer:

The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer.

Trained officials observe the swimmers during each event to ensure compliance with these technical rules. If a swimmer commits an infraction of the rules that is observed by an official, a disqualification (DQ) will result. This means that the swimmer will not receive an official time and will not be eligible for an award in that event. A disqualification may result from actions such as not getting to the starting blocks on time, false starting, performing strokes in an illegal manner, or unsportsmanlike conduct.

- **Start of Race** - At the commencement of each heat, the referee signals to the swimmers to get ready with a short series of whistles, followed by a long whistle, which indicates they should take their positions on the starting blocks. When everyone is ready, the referee signals with an outstretched arm to the starter that the swimmers are ready. The starter will issue the command “take your mark” and the swimmers will immediately assume their starting position. When all swimmers are stationary, the starter will give the starting signal.
- **False Starts** - A swimmer that starts before the starting signal will be disqualified. When that occurs, swimmers remaining on the starting blocks will be able to leave their starting positions when the “Stand up” command is issued. If the starting signal has been given before the disqualification is declared, the race will continue without stopping. If both the referee and starter observe the violation, the swimmer or swimmers involved will be disqualified once the race is finished.
- **Events** - In preliminaries and finals meet, a swimmer may compete in no more than three individual events per day. In a timed finals meet, a swimmer may compete in no more than six events per day.
- **Seeding and Finals**
 - **Preliminary Heats** - Entry times shall be listed by the meet committee with the fastest swimmer first and the slowest swimmer last. Swimmers with no times listed will be considered the slowest and placed at the end of the list.
 - **Seeding Heats** - Championships have three final heats. The fastest swimmer will be placed in the final heat, with the second-fastest swimmer placed in the second to last heat, and the third-fastest swimmer placed in the third to last heat. The fourth-fastest swimmer and subsequent qualifiers are placed in the final heat alongside the fastest swimmer.
 - **Finals Lane Assignments** -The fastest swimmer heading into the finals will be placed in the middle lane, with the second and third fastest placed next to them. Lower seeding will continue towards the ends of the pool.

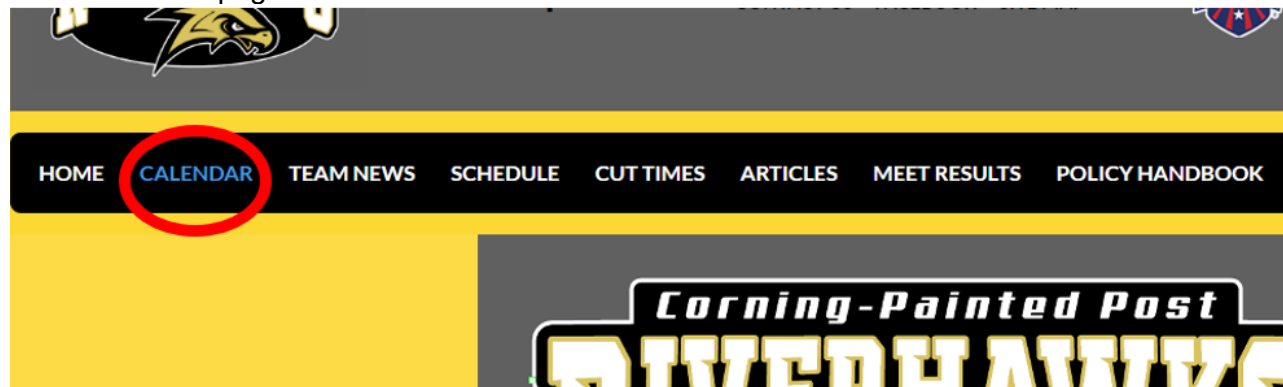
DQs are also a result of technical rules violations. They include but are not limited to:

- Freestyle: Walking on the bottom, pulling on the lane rope, not touching the wall on a turn, or not completing the distance.
- Backstroke: Pulling or kicking into the wall once a swimmer has turned passed the vertical onto the breast. Turning onto the breast before touching the wall with the hand at the finish of the race.
- Breaststroke: An illegal kick such as flutter (freestyle), dolphin (butterfly), or scissors (side stroke); not on the breast; alternating movements of the arms; taking two arm strokes or two leg kicks while the head is under water; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.
- Butterfly: Alternating movements of the arms or legs; pushing the arms forward under instead of over the water surface (underwater recovery); a breaststroke style of kick; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.

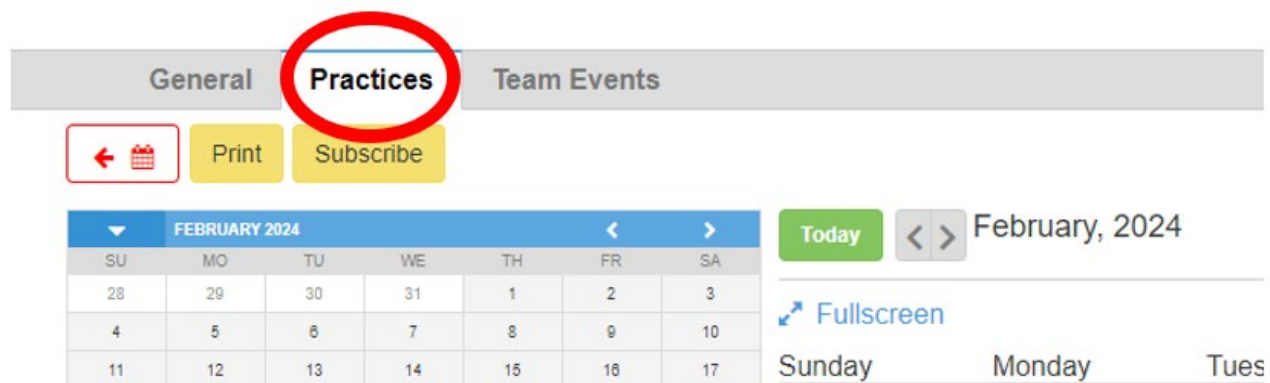
For specific language on any technical rules consult the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations book. Violations of the rules are reported to the Referee. The rules require that every reasonable effort be made to notify the swimmer or his coach of the reason for the disqualification. If your child is disqualified in an event, be supportive rather than critical. For beginning swimmers, a disqualification should be treated as a learning experience, not as a punishment. A disqualification alerts the swimmer and coach to what portions of the swimmer's stroke need to be corrected. They should be considered in the same light as an incorrect answer in schoolwork-they point out areas that need further practice. Disqualifications are necessary to keep the competition fair and equitable for all competitors. A supportive attitude on the part of the official, coach, and parent can make a positive situation out of the disqualification.

Practices

From the home page click on “calendar”



Then select “practices”



This will open an updated practice calendar. From the month view you will see practices for the entire month. You can hover over a specific practice to view more information regarding this practice (ex time, location, any other important information which may have been posted regarding the session).

18	19	20 Group 1 - N... Group 1 - N... Group 3 (Se... Group 2 (Int...	21 MORNING ... Intermediate...	22 MORNING ... Group 1 - N... Group 1 - N... Group 3 (Se... +1 more	23 MORNING ... Group 3 (Se... Group 2 (Int...	24
25	26 Group 1 - N... Group 1 - N... Group 3 (Se... Group 2 (Int...	27 Group 1 - N... Group 1 - N... Group 3 (Se... Group 2 (Int...	28	29 Group 1 - N... Group 1 - N... Group 3 (Se... Group 2 (Int...	1 Group 3 (Se... Group 2 (Int...	2

Unfortunately at times practices will need to be cancelled last minute (ex. When the school districts cancel evening activities). If this happens the board/webmaster will do their best to send out an email and sms text ASAP. Please remember the board members and webmaster have jobs and other obligations, they work very hard to ensure all are updated timely!

Practices start at designated times, there are times the club will need to put the lane lines into the pool, or wait for another team to get out of the pool, we make our best effort to get practice started ASAP. We do expect all swimmers to help get the lane lines in and get the pool ready for practice. It is expected the swimmer will arrive ready to start practice at the designated time. If a swimmer arrives to practice **15 minutes late**, he/she will not be able to practice for that session, late arrivals pose as a distraction to swimmers that arrived on time and to the coaches. Swimmers need a proper warm up to avoid injury, and lateness creates unnecessary distraction and disruption.

All swimmers will help set up and put away all equipment including lane lines. Swimming is a team sport and every member of the team is expected to help with setting up the pool before practice and cleaning up the pool after.

What to bring to practice:

1. One-piece suit (females) or jammer (males). Team suits should not be worn to practice and reserved for meets only. Additional resistance/drag training apparel is optional.
2. Pair of goggles with a backup set in swim bag
3. Water bottle
4. Swim cap required for girls, optional for boys
5. Training fins
6. Sneakers as needed and/or requested by coaches
7. Paddles
8. Kickboard
9. Pull buoy (required for mid-level and advanced training groups)
10. Towel
11. Optional pieces of equipment may be needed including snorkels and parachutes (recommended for advanced training groups)

Swimmers are expected to arrive at the pool with a 'positive practice' attitude. Behavior that either disrupts another athlete's ability to practice or the coach's ability to conduct practice is inappropriate and will not be tolerated. Persistent disruptive behavior may result in an athlete being asked to leave the water, a parent/coach conference, and in extreme situations an athlete may be asked to leave the program.

All swimming practices are open to observations by parents.

- Parents are not allowed on deck, and should not talk with swimmer or coaches during practice session unless participating in an official capacity.
- Parents are NOT allowed in the locker rooms or changing area

Practice will end on time so parents must be on time to pick up their children. It is requested parents arrive no later than scheduled end time.

As mentioned above, there are times when practice may need to be cancelled last minute. The board members and webmaster work hard to make sure this information is communicated timely. If you know there are potential weather events, please check your email. Also having a cell phone listed on file through Team Unify website will allow urgent messages to be sent to your email. Refunds will not be offered for weather related practice cancellations

Practice/Training Groups (Group Advancement):

Novice (Group 1) - This is the clubs entry level group; this group provides an introduction to competitive swimming. Ideally swimmer should have completed a learn-to-swim program (YMCA, Red Cross) to the highest level. The swim team is not intended to be a substitute for swim lessons. Swimmers should have ability to swim a solid freestyle and backstroke and have a fundamental knowledge of breaststroke and butterfly. New swimmers will be asked to demonstrate the ability to:

- Swim one lap of the pool without stopping of freestyle stroke
- Complete one length of pool in backstroke
- Demonstrate fundamental knowledge of breast stroke and preferably butterfly
- Be comfortable swimming with head in the water
- Show ability to dive from the side of the pool
- Tread water for minimum of 30 seconds

Practice focuses on developing proper competitive swimming stroke technique in all four strokes and beginning endurance build and lung capacity. The basics of starts, turns and breakouts are also introduced as well as bilateral breathing. Competition in STSL league meets is expected as swimmer as readiness develops. Distances typically competed in are 25 & 50 yards or meters and the 100 medley (25 each stroke).

Group level moves are based on skill, maturity, speed, times, endurance, age, the skill level of everyone on the team and in a group, lane space and a whole slew of other things. It is not based on who else in in a higher group level, if the swimmer makes a certain time in an event or is a certain age. **GROUP LEVEL IS DETERMINED BY COACHES! PARENTS, SWIMMERS, NONCOACH BOARD MEMBERS DO NOT HAVE A SAY IN WHICH GROUP THE WILL PARTICIPATE IN. THIS IS TO ENSURE ALL SWIMMERS GET THE ATTENTION AT PRACTICE THEY DESERVE AND TO ENSURE SAFETY OF ALL OUR SWIMMERS!**

Intermediate (Group 2) - Swimmers progress to this level at the coach's discretion after mastering all four competitive stroke elements, starts and turns, and show a readiness to improve competitive performance and endurance. Swimmers must have demonstrated proficiency in starts and turns for all strokes and clearly understand competitive swimming rules. Swimmers advancing to this level should be able to obtain silver time standards. Intermediate level swimmers are expected to participate in scheduled STSL league meets as well as encouraged to participate in larger USA invitational meets.

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Senior (Group 3) - Swimmers move into this group at the invitation of the coaching staff. Athletes in this group are usually at least 11-12 years old. Swimmers at this level have demonstrated mastery in all strokes, turns and starts and are dedicated, competitive swimmers.

Training at this level is more intense designed to prepare for higher levels of competition (varsity and on). Competing at scheduled league swim meets and invitational meets is expected and swimmers should be able to meet silver time standards and aiming for gold times in multiple events

Once Again: Group level moves are based on skill, maturity, speed, times, endurance, age, the skill level of everyone on the team and in a group, lane space and a whole slew of other things. It is not based on who else is in a higher group level, if the swimmer makes a certain time in an event or is a certain age. **GROUP LEVEL IS DETERMINED BY COACHES! PARENTS, SWIMMERS, NONCOACH BOARD MEMBERS DO NOT HAVE A SAY IN WHICH GROUP THEY WILL PARTICIPATE IN. THIS IS TO ENSURE ALL SWIMMERS GET THE ATTENTION AT PRACTICE THEY DESERVE AND TO ENSURE SAFETY OF ALL OUR SWIMMERS!**

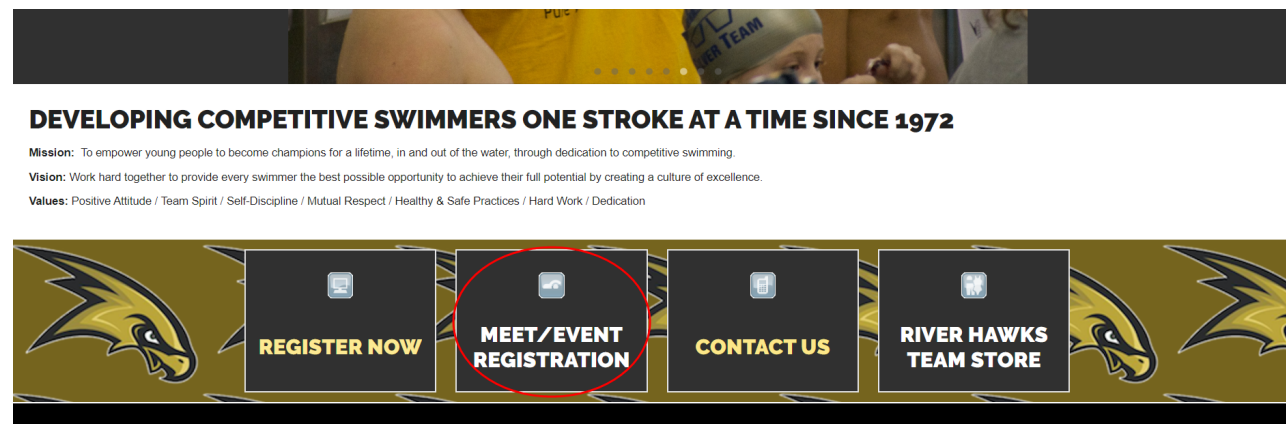
- Attendance: Does the swimmer consistently attend scheduled practices set per level?
- Does he or she show desire to increase his or her commitment? Is meet attendance on a regular basis?
- Technique: Is the swimmer's technique strong enough to maintain at next level, i.e. meet interval times for sets, when training is increased? Does he/she listen to coach feedback and correction to improve technique opportunities?
- Time Standards: Does the swimmer understand goal setting, and have ability and desire to reach the USA time standards based on group level?
- Body Conditioning: Is the swimmer's body in proper condition for the appropriate swim level?
- Maturity & Responsibility: Overall does the swimmer demonstrate readiness and determination to advance to the next level of training. The swimmer must also present strong work ethic as well as show proper attentiveness, respect and response to constructive feedback and coaching.
- **Age is NOT a criterion for group advancement.** Group placement is per the coaching staff's recommendation. If you have questions regarding your child's placement, please reach out to the board president or vice president and they can assist you in arranging a meeting with the head coach or assistant head coach.



How to register for swim meets

There is a guide on the homepage that can provide more details regarding meet/event registration.

Log into the club homepage <https://www.teamunify.com/team/nscyrri/page/home>



Click on meet/event registration which will bring up the window below. Select “Team Events”

COACHES SITE MAP USA SWIMMING LIVE NOW RIVER HAWKS DECK PASS NIAGARA SWIMMING

HOME CALENDAR TEAM NEWS SCHEDULE CUT TIMES ARTICLES MEET RESULTS POLICY HANDBOOK LOCATIONS USA SWIMMING DECK PASS

Calendar Settings Calendar Notes Help

General Team Events

Print Subscribe

Search for Events

DECEMBER 2019 Today <> December, 2019

Fullscreen

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

☐ Team Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Intermediate Practice - ...	Novice Practice - Middl...	Intermediate Practice - ...	Novice Practice - Middl...	Intermediate Practice - ...	Novice Practice - Middl...	NO
Senior Practice - Middle...	Senior Practice - Middle...	Senior Practice - Middle...	Senior Practice - Middle...	Senior Practice - Middle...	Senior Practice - Middle...	

Click on the meet name

GeneralTeam Events

Event Notes

Current & UpcomingPast & Archived

SubscribeSearch for Team EventsCustomize Filters

Dec 13 2019

2019 CNY Invite

Dec 13, 2019 - Dec 15, 2019 Event Category: USA Invitational Meet

See attachment for meet details. The Marlin Thanksgiving Invite Results were just posted so with those results I was able to run an eligibility report for the CNY Invite. It is uploaded as a document with this event. In addition to what is listed in the report, two swimmers have previous times from other clubs that qualify. Transfer times from previous club not in our system that qualify

Email EventEdit Commitment

Dec 28 2019

Holiday Sprints

Dec 28, 2019 Event Category: USA Meet

Please see meet announcement for details.

Email EventEdit Commitment

Jan 11 2020

2020 HAST Winter Warrior

Jan 11, 2020 - Jan 12, 2020 Event Category: USA Meet

Details to Follow

Email EventEdit Commitment

The meet information will open. From here you can see more information about the meet. Date and location of the meet are at the top of the meet post. You will see the Registration Deadline (this is **NONNEGOTIABLE** – once the registration deadline has passed you will **NOT** be able to sign your swimmer up for the meet! The meet announcements are sent out via email and also available on the website, please be cognizant of the deadlines)

The meet announcement can be found under “forms/documents”, this document has all the information you will need to know about the meet.

Team Event Details

EditEdit CommitmentMeet EventsEmail EventDelete

Holiday Sprints

Dec 28, 2019 - Dec 28, 2019 | Chenango Valley High School, 221 Chenango Bridge Rd, Binghamton, NY 13901, USA |

EVENT INFORMATION

Event Location: Chenango Valley High School, 221 Chenango Bridge Rd, Binghamton, NY 13901, USA

Start Date Time: Dec 28, 2019End Date Time: Dec 28, 2019Registration Deadline: Dec 18, 2019

Job Signup Deadline:

MEET EVENT INFORMATION

Course Type: YMeet Type:View Meet Events

Enforce Entry Based on [Qualifying Times]: NoRestrict Entry [Best Time] to Same [Meet Type]: NoMeet Declaration Setting: Commit by Event

Allow Course Conversion for Relays: NoMaximum Event Entry Limitations: View / Edit

If Swimmer Qualifies for Non-Conforming Course, Default [Entry Time] to the Min. [Qualifying Time]: No

DESCRIPTION

Please see meet announcement for details.

FORMS / DOCUMENTS

Holiday_sprint_info.pdf

+ Files ...

Delete

PHOTOS

+ Files ...

Delete

Close

To register your swimmer for the meet click on “Edit Commitment”

General		Team Events		
				Event Notes
Current & Upcoming		Past & Archived		
		Subscribe		Search for Team Events
				Customize Filters
Dec 13 2019	2019 CNY Invite	Dec 13, 2019 - Dec 15, 2019 Event Category: USA Invitational Meet	Event Notes	Edit Commitment
See attachment for meet details. The Marlin Thanksgiving Invite Results were just posted so with those results I was able to run an eligibility report for the CNY Invite. It is uploaded as a document with this event. In addition to what is listed in the report, two swimmers have previous times from other clubs that qualify. Transfer times from previous club not in our system that qualify				
Dec 28 2019	Holiday Sprints	Dec 28, 2019 Event Category: USA Meet	Event Notes	Edit Commitment
Please see meet announcement for details.				
Jan 11 2020	2020 HAST Winter Warrior	Jan 11, 2020 - Jan 12, 2020 Event Category: USA Meet	Event Notes	Edit Commitment
Details to Follow				

Click on your swimmers name to edit commitment

Change Account (Admin Only)

Click on Member Name to declare for this Event:

VIEW DEMO

Member Name	Member Commitment
Caitlyn Bain *Active	Undeclared

A drop down box will open, select either “yes, please sign [swimmer’s name] up for this event” or “no, thanks, [swimmer’s name] will NOT attend this event”

Member Athlete:
Caitlyn Bain

*Declaration

--SELECT--

--SELECT--

Yes, please sign [Caitlyn] up for this event

No, thanks, [Caitlyn] will NOT attend this event

YOU MUST SAVE THESE CHANGES

Caitlyn Bain

*Declaration
[Yes, please sign [Caitlyn] up for this event]

Notes
(days cannot attend, etc.):

Save Changes

If you have selected “yes, please sign [swimmer’s name] up for this event” a screen will open allowing you to select the events for your swimmer to participate in. Refer back to the meet announcement document regarding how many events your swimmer can participate in. IF AN OVERRIDE SCREEN POPS UP THIS LIKELY MEANS YOU HAVE SELECTED TOO MANY EVENTS, DO NOT OVERRIDE, GO BACK AND REVIEW THE MEET ANNOUNCEMENT FILE.

Important Notes:

1. Please pick the individual events below that the Athlete wants to attend and enter [Entry Time]. Please enter NT if no Entry Time is available.
2. Relay teams are solely determined by the coaches. If you have problem attending the relay teams, please contact coaches directly.
3. You cannot make changes after the coach approved or rejected your application. Please contact admin to change your records.
4. Please enter [Entry Time] in this format: mm:ss.hh.
5. [Bonus] is not a standard option; send Entry Report to the meet host in addition to the SD3 file.
6. Only Admin can customize [Entry Time] and set [Bonus] fields.

Day 1 Session 2										Max Entry Time
	Best Time	Entry Time	Bonus	Exhibition	Approval	Evt	Gen	Event	Qualify Time	
<input type="checkbox"/>	2:20.201	2:20.201	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		12	X	11 & Over 50 Free		
<input type="checkbox"/>	1:42.201	1:42.201	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		13	X	11 & Over 100 Free		
<input type="checkbox"/>	1:11.201	1:11.201	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		14	X	11 & Over 50 Back		
<input type="checkbox"/>	1:21.201	1:21.201	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		15	X	11 & Over 100 Back		
<input type="checkbox"/>	1:11.201	1:11.201	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		16	X	11 & Over 50 Breast		
<input type="checkbox"/>	1:21.201	1:21.201	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		17	X	11 & Over 100 Breast		
<input type="checkbox"/>	1:11.201	1:11.201	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		18	X	11 & Over 50 Fly		
<input type="checkbox"/>	1:21.201	1:21.201	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19	X	11 & Over 100 Fly		

Again make sure to save the changes

Declaration
(Yes, please sign) ☐ up for this event

Notes
(days cannot attend, etc.):

 Save Changes

You know you are done when the screen returns you to the athlete sign-up page and the commitment matches your changes.

Click on Member Name to declare for this Event:

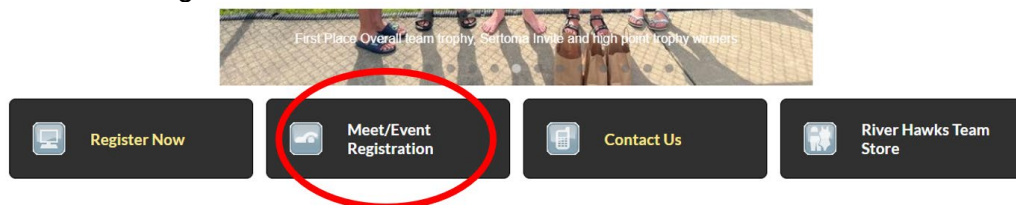
VIEW DEMO

Member Name	Member Commitment	Last Updated
Caitlyn Bain <small>*Active</small>	✓ Committed	12/12/19 11:14 AM

Commitments and changes can be made up until the registration deadline!

How do I read the Meet announcement?

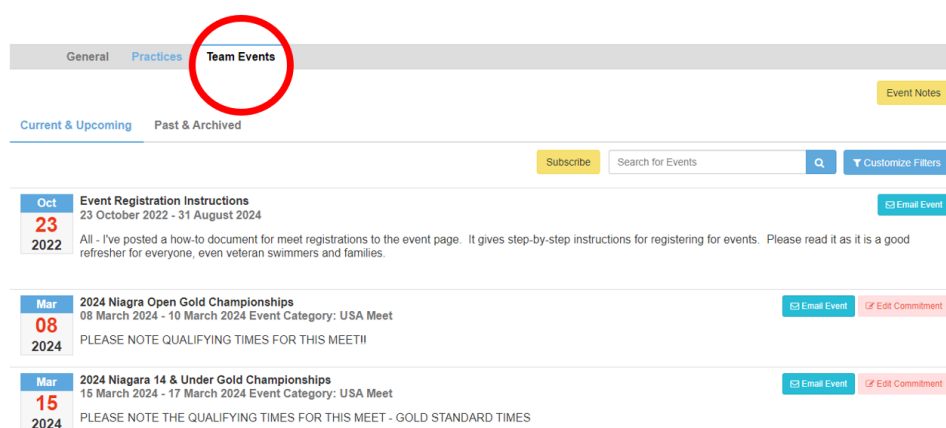
To access a meet announcement, you will need to log onto the club website, again select “meet/event registration”



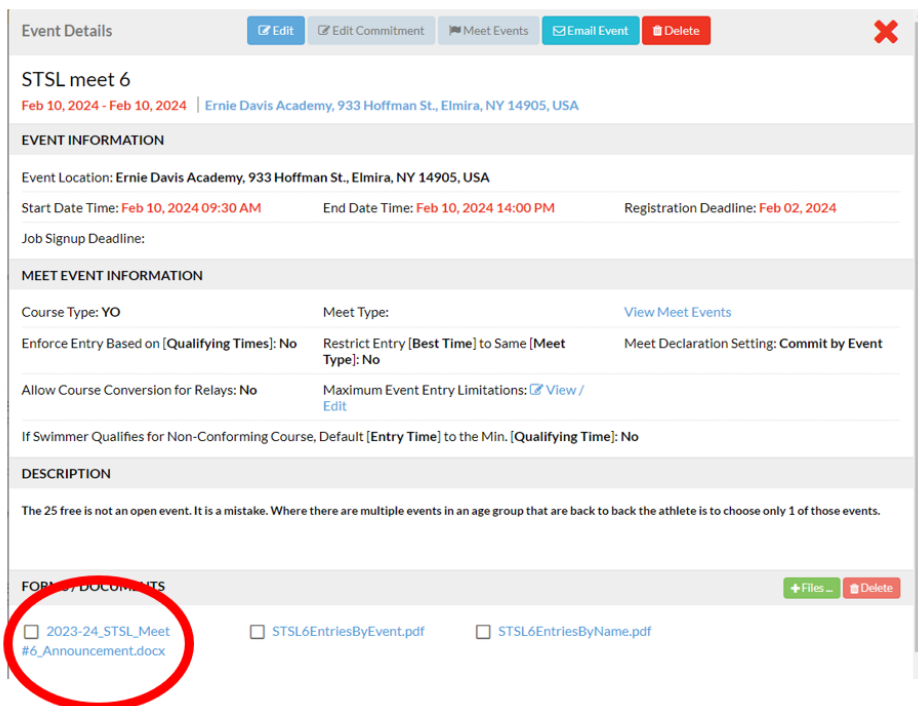
Team News

Upcoming Events

Next select team events. Click on the name of the event you wish to view



The event details will open. Under the “Forms/Documents” label the “meet announcement” will be posted. Select the meet announcement.



The meet announcement is a several page document. At the top of the page will have the meet name and date, the host club, the name of the meet director and meet referee. There is detailed information about the facility (address, information about the pool, etc).

There is information regarding entry deadline. **PLEASE NOTE THE ENTRY DEADLINE WILL BE LATER THAN THE DEADLINE WE POST ON THE WEBSITE, THIS GIVENS THE TEAM TIME TO RECEIVE ENTRIES, MAKE RELAY TEAMS, AND REVIEW SWIMMERS REGISTRATIONS FOR THE EVENTS. AGAIN PLEASE BE COGNIZATION OF THE DEADLINE POSTED ON THE WEBSITE, THIS IS NONNEGOTIABLE AND IF YOU DO NOT REGISTER YOUR SWIMMER BEFORE THE DEADLINE LISTED ON THE CLUB EVENT POSTING YOUR SWIMMER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEET!!!**



2023-24 STSL Meet #6

February 10, 2024

Sanction # NI-2324-

Hosted by:
STSL/CSST
Chemung Sailfish
Swim Team

MEET DIRECTOR Jerry Roberts jroberts19@stny.rr.com	MEET REFEREE Dr. Trung Tran trant02@yahoo.com	CLUB OFFICIALS CHAIR Jerry Roberts jroberts19@stny.rr.com
SANCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Held under the sanction of USA Swimming through Niagara Swimming: Sanction Number. In granting this sanction it is understood and agreed that USA Swimming, Niagara Swimming, Host Club Name, and Facility Name shall be held free and harmless from any and all liabilities or claims for damages arising by reason of injuries to anyone during the conduct of this event. 	
FACILITY	<p>Ernie Davis Academy 933 Hoffman St, Elmira, NY 14905 (607) 735-3100</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6-Lanes, x25 yards (SCY) Water depth: From the starting end, pool depth is 8 feet at 3 feet 3 ½ inches and 6 feet at 16 feet 5 inches. From the turn end, pool depth is 3 feet 9 inches at 3 feet 3 ½ inches and 4 feet at 16 feet 5 inches. The competition course has not been certified in accordance with current <i>USA Swimming Rules and Regulations</i>, Article 104.2.2(C). Meet host will ensure the required course dimensions. 	
ENTRY DEADLINE	<p>Tuesday February 6, 2024 by 9pm</p> <p>IMPORTANT: The above date is the deadline for clubs to submit their entries to the Meet Director. Therefore, clubs usually set an earlier deadline to receive entries from their swimmers. Check with your club for this information.</p>	
SCHEDULE	<p>Saturday February 10, 2024</p> <p>Session 1: Warm up 9:30am Meet start 10:30am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet Director reserves the right to adjust times/sessions after entries are received. 	
ELIGIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed Meet Athletes must be registered USA Swimmers. Athletes must be a member of a Southern Tier Swim League Club. No swimmer will be permitted to compete in the meet unless the swimmer is registered as an athlete member of USA Swimming as provided in <i>USA Swimming Rules and Regulations</i>, Article 302. 	

Under the “entry deadline” you will see “schedule”. This will tell you what time your swimmer should arrive for warm-ups and what time the meet starts. **It is VERY important your swimmer arrives ON TIME for warm ups.**

	your club for this information.
SCHEDULE	<p style="text-align: center;">Saturday February 10, 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Session 1: Warm up 9:30am Meet start 10:30am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet Director reserves the right to adjust times/sessions after entries are received.
ELIGIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed Meet

You will find information regarding how the meet will be scored. If there will be awards given at the meet. Information regarding whether there will be programs for sale at the meet (sometimes the programs can be printed prior to the meet from the host club's website.). There is also information regarding whether or not there is a fee for spectators.

SCORING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events shall be scored as indicated in the event list. Scoring shall be top 16 in the following age groups: 8 & <u>Under</u>, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15 & Over 1st=32pts 2nd=28pts 3rd=26pts 4th=24pts 5th=22pts 6th=20pts 7th=18pts 8th=14pts 9th=12pts 10th=10pts 11th=8pts 12th=5pts 13th=4pts 14th=3pts 15th=2pts 16th=1pt. Relays are not scored.
AWARDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heat winner ribbons
PROGRAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs will be for sale at the concession.
CREDENTIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents not working the meet as a deck official, volunteer timer or other position are not permitted on deck. Only athletes, USA Swimming certified coaches, and deck officials will be permitted on the deck. Coaches and Officials should have proof of active USA Swimming membership with them at all times.
SPECTATOR ENTRY FEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A

There is info regarding entry fees. You will be billed by the club AFTER the meet, please note if you register your swimmer for the meet but you do not attend YOU WILL STILL BE BILLED. Changes to meet commitment CANNOT be made after the deadline. Again if you sign your swimmer up but do not attend the meet you will still be billed for your swimmer's entry fee.

Very important in the meet announcement is entry limits. For this particular meet swimmers can be entered in up to 3 individual events and 1 relay.

ENTRY FEES	<p>Per Swimmer Surcharge: \$10 Relay event fee: \$0</p> <p>Individual event fee: \$0</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make checks payable to Chemung Sailfish Swim Team. Checks may be mailed to: Jason Westervelt Entry fees are due with meet entry. Unpaid fees will be reported to the NI Administrative Office at the conclusion of the meet.
Entry Limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Athletes may enter up to 3 Individual events and 1 relay</u>
Available Medical Supervision/Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical assistance will be provided at the facility. If you require medical assistance, please notify a member of the meet staff. AED, backboard, & First Aid supplies at facility.

You will also find the event list, this is helpful so you know what event your swimmer will swim. It can also be helpful if you want to make sure your swimmer does not swim back to back events.

Session 1

STSL Meet #6 Event List

Event #	Age Group	Event Description	Scoring
1	Mixed 8 and <u>Under</u>	25 Free	YES
2	Mixed 10 and Under PICK ONE	100 Free	YES
3		100 Back	YES
4		50 Fly	YES
5	Mixed 11 & 12	50 Free	YES
6	Mixed 11 & 12	200 Free	YES
7	Mixed 13 & <u>Over</u>	50 Free	YES
8	Mixed 13 & <u>Over</u>	200 Free	YES
9	Mixed 8 and <u>Under</u>	25 Back	YES
10	Mixed 8 and <u>Under</u>	50 Back	YES
11	Mixed 10 and <u>Under</u>	50 Breast	YES
12	Mixed 10 and <u>Under</u>	100 Breast	YES
13	Mixed 11 & 12	50 Fly	YES
14	Mixed 11 & 12	100 Fly	YES
15	Mixed 13 & Over PICK ONE	100 Back	YES
16		100 Fly	YES
17		100 Breast	YES
18	Mixed 8 and Under PICK ONE	25 Fly	YES
19		50 Breast	YES
20		100 IM	YES
21	Mixed 11 & 12 PICK ONE	100 Back	YES
22		100 Breast	YES
23		100 IM	YES
24	Mixed 13 & <u>Over</u>	200 IM	YES
25	Mixed 13 & <u>Over</u>	400 IM	YES

Swim Meets

As a new parent swim meets can be a little overwhelming at first! For warm ups our swimmers will be assigned a specific lane to swim. There will be SEVERAL swim teams all in the pool at the same time circle swimming. If your swimmer is a little overwhelmed before their first meet find a board member or have your swimmer buddy up with an experienced swimmer to help them get where they need to be.



PARENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON DECK DURING MEETS!
PARENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN LOCKER ROOMS OR ATHLETE BATHROOMS DURING MEETS OR PRACTICES!

If your swimmer needs assistance getting dressed for the meet this CANNOT BE DONE IN THE ATHLETE LOCKER ROOMS, please have your swimmer arrive to the meet ready to go! (for more information regarding this please review the team policies, Safe Sport information, and USA swimming codes of conduct)



Meet Program

The meet program can be very helpful for you to see which event, heat, and lane your swimmer

will swim. It often gives an estimate of the time the event will take place. Many of the meets have the programs for sale at the event for a small fee (\$2-\$5+). Some of the meets will have the program available on the host website, you can print this and bring it to the meet.

Meet Mobile

Meet Mobile can be another helpful tool that can help you navigate the swim season. Many of the meets we participate in utilize meet mobile. You can access meet programs, heat sheets, psych sheets and real-time results.

You can estimate the time of your swimmers events and keep track of their times.

Meet mobile is available for apple and android devices. There is an annual fee for full access.



Meet Mobile: Swim 4+

Active Network, LLC

Designed for iPad

★★★★★ 4.8 • 57.4K Ratings

Free · Offers In-App Purchases

What to Bring to the Meet

1. Most important: Team swimsuit, Team Cap and goggles (always a good idea to have an extra pair of goggles and caps!)
2. Towels (plural) Realize your swimmer will be there awhile, so pack at least two
3. Note card with a permanent marker or pen placed INSIDE of a sandwich sized ziplock bag so it will not get wet (the swimmers write their event, heat and lane on the notecard)
4. The meets are long, your swimmer is doing a lot of physical activity, they will likely get hungry. Pack them some health snacks (preferably snacks that do not make a mess, we do not want our coaches to have to stick around after the meet to pick up after your swimmer).
5. Swim Parka or dry clothing that your swimmer can put on over their suit between events.
6. Change of clothes to wear after swim meet
7. Games/Activity for siblings: travel games, coloring books, books, anything to pass the time.
8. Something for you to do: Book/magazine/knitting/sudoku
9. Money (for heat sheet, usually \$2-\$5+) Highlighter, pen, sharpies (to mark the program)
10. Water, Gatorade & Snacks: Granola bars, fruits, yogurt, cereal, nuts
11. Parents you may want a cushion or bleacher chair. The meets last for several hours and often the sitting is not the most comfortable!

Once you have attended one or two meets this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask any other parent for help or information! These meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! He/she gets to visit with his/her friends, play games, and meet kids from other teams. He/she also gets to "race" and see how much he/she has improved from all the hard work he/she has put in at practice.

How does my child know what they swim?

The coaches do a great job keeping your swimmer on track! Remember parents are NOT allowed on deck during the meet, so your swimmer needs to know to go to the coaches with questions. As mentioned in the "what to bring section", it can be helpful to pack your swimmer with a blank note card and permanent marker. Often the swimmers will also write their events, heats, and lanes on their arm (or leg), the permanent marker comes in handy for this too!



Special Parent's Note

The pool area is usually very warm. You may want to dress in layers. The swim meets are several hours long and there is nothing worse than sweating for hours in the bleachers at a hot pool. It makes the time pass very slowly!

Meet Results

Encourage your swimmer to do their best and have fun. Results are usually posted on a wall at the meet as they become available. If you download meet mobile you will see "unofficial" results during the event. The times posted during the meet will show the swimmers official time and place for each event. The coaches also get all results after the meet. Sometimes during the meet, if your child is the "heat winner" he may walk away with a "heat ribbon". For some of the bigger meets, if your child places in an event, ribbons may be given to the coaches and are given out during practice. How the meet is scored and awarded is usually on the meet information or the meet program and can vary from meet to meet. **Encourage your child to go out and have fun and not worry about placing or getting ribbons.**

Disqualifications:

If your child is disqualified (DQ'd) in an event the officials will usually talk to them after the race and explain why. The coaches are also notified of the reason and will talk to your child. This helps them learn the rules and helps the coaches know what they need to work on in practice. Try to keep your child from getting discouraged when this happens. The most important thing to remind your child is to go out and have fun!!

Parent and Athlete:

Competitive swimming programs provide many benefits to young athletes including self-discipline, good sportsmanship, and time management skills. Competition allows the swimmer to experience success and to learn how to treat success and failure as two sides of the same coin, while becoming healthy and physically fit. As a parent, your major responsibility is to provide a stable, loving and supportive environment. This positive environment will encourage your child to continue. Show your interest by ensuring your child's attendance at practices, by coming to swimming meets and volunteering for your club at swim meets, or by participating in fundraising, etc.

Parents contribute to the success experienced by the child and the team. Parents serve as role models and their children emulate their attitudes. Be aware of this and strive to be positive role models. Most importantly, show good sportsmanship at all times toward coaches, officials, opponents and teammates. Remember that you are teaching your child at all times.

Be Enthusiastic and Supportive!

Remember that your child is the swimmer. Children need to establish their own goals, and make their own progress towards them. Be careful not to impose your own standards and goals. Do not over burden your child with winning or achieving best times. Let them know that first they are the child you love, and second, a swimmer. Tell them you will love them whether they swim well or not, and ask only that they give their best effort. Learning about oneself while enjoying the sport is the most important part of the swimming experience. The swimming environment encourages learning and fun, which will help your child develop a positive self-image.

Positive Parenting Tips

- Your child needs your emotional, physical, and financial support. Be liberal in providing this support.
- Support but do not push your child.
- Understand development – long-term development as an athlete, and growth and development as it impacts performance.
- Be realistic in terms of expectations; factor in age and skill level; be aware of your child's perception of your expectations.
- Emphasize performance and effort, not just outcome. The athlete only has control over his/her performance. Define and measure success as giving maximal effort and as personal improvement.
- Keep winning in perspective.
- Do not bribe.
- Give plenty of encouraging and rewarding statements. Criticize sparingly.
- View swimming as an arena in which to teach your child about commitment, hard work, and coping with adversity.

The best way to help your child achieve goals and reduce the natural fear of failure is through positive reinforcement. No one likes to make a mistake. If your child does make one, remember that this is a learning experience. You and your child should learn to treat success and failure as learning experiences and not life changing situations. Encourage your child's efforts and point out the positive things. The coach is the one you have assigned to judge a swimmer's performance and technique. Your role is to provide love and support regardless of outcome.

Parent & The River Rats Swim Club

Parental involvement is crucial to every club. Regardless of the organizational model of the club, parents play key support roles. We are looking for volunteers to help with swim meets, coordinate social events and organize fundraising. Volunteering to help the club is a great way to get involved, meet other parents and be a positive role model for your child. Contact the club board or an involved parent to find out more about what you can do and how you can be a positive force in your club

Roles and Responsibilities

Getting involved with your child's club is a great way to meet people, have fun and teach your child about commitment. Many swim parents develop long-term friendships and enjoy the family-like atmosphere that develops when people work together. Working at a meet can be a lot more fun than sitting in the stands! Additionally, when your child sees you devoting time and energy to help the team, he or she understands that team loyalty is important and worthwhile.

How can we help support the team?

That's a great question. Check with the board of directors to find ways that may be helpful for you to support the team. We would love to have your help and we value your feedback and opinion.

It takes an awful lot of people to run a meet! What can I do to help?

If you have already attended a meet, you have probably been approached to be a timer. This is a great way to begin to help run meets. It takes at least several volunteers to put one heat of 6 swimmers in the water. Some of the volunteer positions for our league meets are:

- Timers & Runners;
- Clerks of Course;
- Scoring & Awards Workers;
- Referees, Starters & Stroke & Turn Judges;
- Marshalls and
- Concession Workers.



PARENT AND COACH...THE OTHER STUFF

BY TOM SLEAR, SPLASH MAGAZINE SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Coaching is about more than athletes, practices, and competition. As Mike Krzyzewski, Duke's hugely successful basketball coach said, it's also about "the other stuff." For coaches of club teams, that means parents.

"All that craziness," is how Monica Teuscher describes the rituals of other parents who nervously follow their children's swimming development. Teuscher, mother of Cristina, a 1996 and 2000 Olympian, never owned a stopwatch and rarely bought a meet program. She didn't track her daughter's times, yell during her races, or seek out her coach after practices for private chats. During swim meets, she went off by herself to read or knit, only to be amused when other parents gave her a rundown on Cristina's swims, complete with split times.

"I thought it was important that I was there, but for support, not for coaching or to add pressure," Teuscher explains. "My job was to take my daughters (older daughter Carolina also swam) out for a good meal after they raced. The last thing we talked about was swimming.

" Most coaches would agree that the best team to coach is one filled with parents such as Teuscher, who recognize the line between parenting and coaching and avoid it as if it were radioactive. They somehow manage to counterbalance their staunch support with a refreshing cluelessness. Years ago Debbie Phelps, mother of Michael, the world recordholder in the 200-meter butterfly, relocated the family so that her children would be closer to North Baltimore Aquatic Club's practice facility. Yet when asked about Michael's world record time, she can do no better than to say, "I'm not sure – 1:50 something?" (Actually, 1:54.58)

"The swimmers I've had who have had the most success were unencumbered by parents calling the shots behind the scenes," says John Collins, who has coached Olympians Rick Carey and Lea Loveless as well as Cristina Teuscher at the Badger Swim Club in Larchmont, N.Y. "These parents are very good about backing up their kids, but they are hands off when it comes to swimming business."

The Growing Intrusion of Parents

Most coaches will tell you that Teuscher and Phelps are hardly exceptions. The overwhelming majority of parents instinctively, or with gentle guidance, find their place in the background. A few, however, can't resist meddling, such as the mother who wrote Collins a five- or six-page letter every week for a year and a half. Rare is the swim coach who doesn't have a similar story to tell.

"So many," says Chuck Warner, the head coach at Rutgers University who coached club teams for years before entering the college ranks. "All filed away in a painful spot."

The effect of such parents is all out of proportion to their numbers. A survey by Dan Doyle, which will be published in his forthcoming book, *The Encyclopedia of Sports Parenting*, found that high school coaches across different sports are convinced that the biggest change in their profession over the last 15 years has been the growing intrusion of parents.

"No other factor they mentioned even came close," says Doyle, the executive director of the Institute for International Sport.

The top issues raised when the development coordinators for USA Swimming solicit opinions from club coaches are "parent education" and "club governance," euphemisms for the difficulty of

dealing with parents, whether individually or as members of the club's board of directors.

An Oasis

But a bit of perspective is in order here. While all coaches labor to properly shape the parent-athlete-coach triangle, some suffer more than others. Rick Wolff, chairman of the Center for Sports Parenting (www.internationalsport.com/csp), calls swimming "an oasis." Coaches of team sports have only subjective means to evaluate talent. Even at its best, the process is imprecise and open to question. How does a coach fix with any certainty which offensive lineman blocks better, or which outfielder offers the best combination of hitting and fielding?

Yet these judgments determine playing time, which is at the root of nearly all parental complaints. Coaches are forced to defend themselves armed with nothing stronger than an arbitrary standard. Who's to say a guard with a deft shooting touch should play more than a tenacious defender?

With swimming the only standard is time, so performance is entirely quantifiable, measured precisely by a stopwatch. And playing time is rarely an issue. The only barrier to entry at most age-group meets is the entry fee. Everyone who wants to swim can compete.

"When you compare what coaches of team sports have to put up with when they make decisions about who makes the team and who plays, coaches of individual sports like swimming and track are not even in deep water as far as their problems with parents," says Doyle. "They are barely in three feet of water."

Swimming's preciseness, however, comes with a price. In sports such as soccer and basketball, parents can judge their children's potential only against the players they compete against, which typically stretches no farther than adjacent counties. Not until the last two or three years of high school do they step onto a stage that provides statewide or national exposure.

Swimming, on the other hand, allows comparison between a 10-year-old breaststroker in Pennsylvania to one in California right down to the hundredth of a second. The temptation for parents to extrapolate is irresistible. If a son or daughter is among the Top 16 when they are 10, shouldn't they be in the running for a national championship when they turn 18?

In fact, quite the opposite is the case. Improvement is not a steady, positive slope, especially for prodigies. A study by USA Swimming using the All-Time Top100 swims in each age group through 1996 found that only 10 percent of the Top 100 10-and-Unders maintained their status through age 18. Only half of the swimmers among the Top 100 in the 17-18 age group had made any top-100 list when they were younger.

"Those winning races at 10 probably won't be winning races when they are 20," says John Leonard, the executive director of the American Swimming Coaches Association. "This is one of those things that is obvious to coaches but is a mystery to parents. Coaches understand the long-term nature of the sport, parents often don't."

This misunderstanding creates swimming's equivalent of playing-time disputes. As swimmers begin to slip in national, regional, and even local rankings, their parents scramble for solutions. Sue Anderson, a former world record-holder and one of USA Swimming's development coordinators, saw the pattern repeat itself many times when she was head coach of the Scarlet Aquatic Club in New Jersey during the 1990s. These "pressure parents," as she calls them, begin to micromanage their children's swimming by arranging for extra practices and seeking out meets not on the team's schedule. When expectations still aren't met, they invariably blame the coach, who is mostly defenseless because no one can say for sure why young, talented swimmers stop

improving. Maybe it is the coach's fault, though the problem just as likely could stem from the swimmer's early physical maturation or a mindset that has become mis-wired because of parental pressure, or a host of other reasons. Regardless, the conflict heats up until the swimmer jumps to another club, which is often the first of several such moves.

"What the parents think is helping their kids is only putting them under a lot of pressure," says Anderson. "Many of these kids do very well when they are 10-and-under and 11-12, but eventually a lot of them they stop living up to expectations, and they fall apart."

The Other Stuff

Of course, not all disputes fall under the category of domineering parents and underachieving swimmers (though they tend to be the most intractable). A coach's personal style can cause problems, particularly if he focuses almost exclusively on the senior swimmers. There is also the matter of different outlooks. Parents see only their sons and daughters and the next few weeks and months. Coaches see the entire team and the upcoming years. Then there's the issue of how coaches are viewed. Many parents don't see a professional, but a former jock slumming between real jobs.

"It was amazing how differently parents acted when I started coaching at the college level," says Warner. "I knew nothing more than when I was coaching a club team, but the parents assumed that I did."

Mike Krzyzewski, who, over the last 20 years at Duke has established himself as one of the most successful college basketball coaches ever, once said, "The coaching I love. The kids I love. It's the other stuff you have to watch out for."

What often matters to parents is the other stuff, whether coaches are returning their phone calls promptly or thanking them for their volunteer work on behalf of the club. These small courtesies seem insignificant by themselves, but when taken together they acknowledge that the coach is meeting the parents halfway. They also keep disputes to a minimum. A meticulous plan handed out in March for the summer season will inhibit parents from overlapping family vacations with major competitions. Regular parent meetings run by the coaches and board members that both inform and educate will minimize rumors and alleviate concerns over the cyclic nature of competitive swimming. Set office hours for the coach will discourage interruptions from parents during practice. The biggest courtesy of all, Leonard believes, is listening. A handful of parents are unreasonable. Others simply have healthy concerns about what's best for their children. Separating the two requires more than a five-minute conversation.

To make his point, Leonard refers back to his first coaching job, which was in Illinois during the 1970s. The father of a talented girl initially gave off all the signs of trouble.

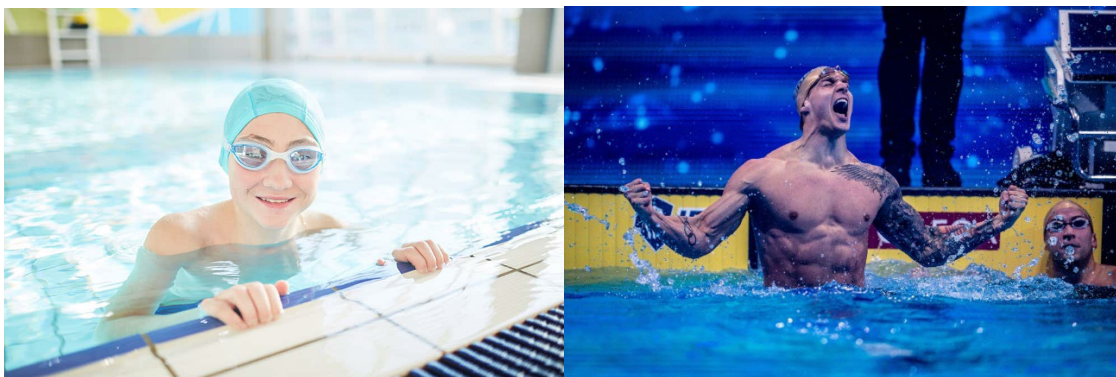
"The classic horror story of a parent," Leonard recalls. "He was a trial attorney. Very pushy. His style of conversation was confrontational." Yet Leonard endured and gradually came to realize that despite the father's bluster, he had a lot to offer. After two years, they were running together. Leonard would talk about his new ideas and the father would poke holes in all of the right spots.

"He'd question me on everything I was doing, which gave me a lot to think about," Leonard says. "Our relationship lasted for eight years and the daughter represented the United States on national teams. The mother and the father were the most active parents in helping to run the club. They were the best swimming parents I have ever known. It took me a while, but I discovered they were only interested in the best possible 22 experiences for their daughter – both in life and in swimming – and they wanted to learn all they could about the sport."

"It just took a little bit of willingness to understand what they were after, and a little bit of patience to give them the opportunity to do the right thing." Good advice, both for coaches and parents.

Physical Growth & Maturation

During childhood kids grow on average 2.5 inches in a year and gain five pounds per year. Athletes of the same chronological age can vary by as much as five years in biological maturation! So, with two 13 year old swimmers, biologically one may be 10 years and the other 16 years - - what a huge difference.



Girls generally reach peak growth around 11-13 years old, and boys generally reach peak growth around 13-15 years old. Hormonal changes in males and females cause different and often drastic changes in body composition.

Once a child reaches puberty, scientists and coaches feel more serious training can begin. This can be a particularly frustrating time for swimmers. During this transition from age group to senior swimming and from childhood to young adulthood, an athlete may experience a plateau in performance. Best times can be few and far between, while training commitments increase, requiring more time and dedication. Hopefully the coaches have prepared swimmers for this change, but many parents may begin to question whether a child's swimming career is over at this point. These factors, coupled with the other normal difficulties of puberty, can sometimes lead a swimmer to leave the sport prematurely. It is critical that parents and coaches be cooperative and very supportive during this period of adjustment, realizing that it will pass and the rewards will be even better.

Below are common discussion topics dealing with growth and development. You should schedule an appointment with your child's coach if you have other questions or concerns.

Growth & Development FAQs for Age Group Parents

Q: When is my child ready for competition?

A: That is a difficult question, as research on athlete development provides no clear-cut answer. In an article by Passer (1988) addressing this question, he reviewed several areas of development in attempting to provide guidelines on determining readiness for competition:

- Motivational readiness: Because competition is a social comparison process, the young athlete is motivated to compete when he or she possesses a social comparison orientation. Research suggests that around the age of 5-7 kids have the desire for and ability to use social comparison information.
- Cognitive readiness: Competition requires numerous cognitive and reasoning skills (i.e., perspective taking, differentiating between effort and ability) that take some time to develop in youngsters. Researchers suggest that kids do not develop the cognitive abilities to have an understanding of the competitive process until approximately age 12.

- Physical growth, physiological capacity, and development: These factors must also be considered when trying to decide readiness for competition.

Q: What should I tell my child when he or she says it's not fair that I have to swim against Suzy, she is so much bigger than I am?

A: Look at a classroom full of school children. The diversity in size and shape is remarkable. Even though these children are similar in chronological age (calendar age) they may be very different in biological age (physical/sexual maturity). Puberty is a critical point in the developmental process. It is well known that girls mature more rapidly than boys do. In fact, the average girl matures 2-2.5 years earlier than the average boy (see sidebar on next page). However, these values are merely averages and the range can be several years within each gender.

It is important to remember that “early bloomers”-children who move through biological maturation more rapidly than average- tend to be more physically developed. This can sometimes be an advantage for them in the swimming pool. “Late bloomers” tend to catch-up over time and will often become even more proficient at the sport. Regardless of the maturational pace of your child, she needs to focus on her personal improvements over time.

Q: Should boys and girls be trained differently?

A: During the early years of competitive swimming, children of both genders are predominantly prepubescent. This stage allows for some flexibility in grouping the young athletes. At this point, young boys and girls can train together with relative ease.

Girls tend to move through biological development more rapidly than boys of similar chronological age (approximately 2-2.5 years earlier). This may cause initial differences within the training groups. Further, elements such as aerobic capacity (ability to use oxygen to make energy) and muscle mass are different between genders throughout the later developmental period. Aerobic capacity reaches its peak between the ages of 12-15 in girls and 16-20 in boys. Ideally, training programs should be specifically tailored for the individual.

Q: Are there some exercises that prevent injuries to growing muscles and bones?

A: Physical activities like swimming are considered repetitive movements. Training for swimming will enhance the ability of the muscle to work over and over in the same movement pattern. These types of activities do not typically place large strains on the bones and joints. However, to prevent injury, it is important to develop and maintain strength and flexibility in the joints, as well as to use proper stroke technique.

The use of certain training aids, or swimming with poor technique, may place excessive force on the shoulder during training that may be harmful. Be sure to have your child check with his coach for more information. It is important to develop muscular strength, endurance and flexibility to reduce the risks of both shoulder and knee problems. Your child should check with the coach before participating in any exercises designed to increase strength.

Q: Why does it seem so many kids have inhalers? Should my child be on one?

A: Exercise-induced asthma (EIA) and exercise-induced bronchoconstriction (EIB) are common diseases in children. Various agents (such as humidity and temperature of the air) cause an irritation of the bronchioles in the lungs resulting in bronchoconstriction. Due to these facts, the warm moist (humid) environment of the swimming pool is helpful in reducing the onset of asthmatic attacks. Therefore, many children with asthma are advised to swim if they are interested in sport participation.

Typical treatments for EIB or EIA are inhaled medications that aid in reducing the

bronchoconstriction and opening the airways (McArdle, Katch, Katch 1991). The inhalers are prescribed by a licensed doctor for the youngster following medical testing to determine both the presence of and severity of either EIA or EIB. As with any prescribed drug, sharing inhalers is not a safe practice.

Although many swimmers may be seen using inhalers, the sport of swimming does not cause asthma in children. The warm moist environment of the swimming pool is often one of the only places that children suffering from EIB or EIA can be physically active without severe problems. Advances in the diagnosis and treatment of asthma have allowed more children and adults to participate in organized sport throughout their lifetime.

*If an inhaler is prescribed for your child, you might want to double-check the USADA (United States Anti-Doping Agency) drug hotline for which drugs are acceptable and which are banned. (800) 233-0393

Q: My daughter can beat several girls in the senior training group, but her coach won't move her up. Why not?

A: While your child may have the physical skills or times to move to the next group, move criteria may also be based on emotional, social and cognitive skills. Additionally, having performance times does not necessarily equate to being able to train in that group. Progression from group to group is set by the coaching staff to ensure long-term development. This allows proper training to be introduced at the appropriate level for each individual child. Obviously your coach believes it is in the best interest of your daughter to remain in that group. Express your concerns to the coach in private, and value the opinion and decision made by your coach.

Q: My son comes home every night and says, "Tommy doesn't help cover the pool or pick-up boards." What do I say to him?

A: First of all, be sure to commend your son for helping out and explain why that's important. Praise him for helping without being asked. In this case you might encourage him to talk to Tommy and ask him to help the coach and the group by pitching in. This will begin to teach your son to deal directly with a problem and the person he has the problem with. Obviously, your son has a respect for others and a good team concept or he wouldn't be asking this question.

Q: My daughter is influenced by the senior athletes. How do I encourage her to have the appropriate role models?

A: That's a tough one. We suggest you begin by complimenting or simply pointing out the behavior of athletes you want her to emulate. Focus on such things as a good work ethic, sportsmanship, a good attitude, and other values held by your family. There have been many heroes and role models throughout the history of swimming, e.g. Tracy Caulkins, Mary T. Meagher, Pablo Morales, Jeff Rouse, etc. Encourage your daughter to do some homework on these heroes. The "Swimmers" section of the USA Swimming web site has profiles of many great role models.

Q: I worry that my child is overwhelmed by all of his commitments. What can I do?

A: Talk to your son. Is this your perception or is it really happening? If your son is overwhelmed, it's time to work together in establishing priorities. Be sure to make any observations of "wasted" time in his day. After helping him establish his priorities, help your son determine whether it is necessary to drop some activities. Then, some decisions have to be made by you and your child to relieve this pressure and allow your child to be better balanced and enjoy his activities. This experience will teach your son how to better manage his time and balance his schoolwork, family, training, and activities.

Psychological Development for Age Group

The mental side of athletic competition is just as challenging as the physical side. Parents want to help their children set appropriate goals and handle nervousness before competition. Coaches work with athletes on the "mental side" as part of their training, but there are things parents can do also. Below are some frequently asked questions and discussion topics that can guide you to help guide your swimmer.

Psychological Development Discussion Topics

Q: What are "Process" goals?

A: There are two types of goals that swimmers can set:

- Outcome Goals: focus on the end result of performance. "Win, make finals."
- Process Goals: relate to process of performance. "Breathe every 3rd stroke, streamline."

Swimmers have much more control over Process Goals. Outcome Goals are uncontrollable since they also involve the performance of other competitors. Swimmers and coaches, especially at the Age Group level, should concentrate on Process Goals.

Q: Should my child begin setting goals?

A: Of course! Everyone should set goals. In fact, most kids have already set goals. As adults, however, we must remember that kids are not simply little versions of us and are not going to set the same types of goals as adults. One developmental difference is that children lack the cognitive ability to distinguish time and are also very concrete thinkers. Therefore, setting long-term goals often doesn't provide the motivation for kids that it does for adults. Kids want results today. With younger swimmers, it is appropriate to talk about short-term goals - - what they need to work on today. Most coaches will emphasize goals that reinforce skill development and the process of swim performance. Additionally, based on cognitive development research, we know that around the age of 6 or 7, kids enter the stage of social comparison. In this stage, they begin to evaluate their own performance by comparing it to others. So as the parent, reinforce what the coach has emphasized and help her focus on individual improvement.

Q: My son has set some great goals but I am not sure if the coach is aware of them.

A: Ask your son if he developed the goals with his coach. You might find that the coach actually helped your son set these goals. This is the beginning of your son learning to take risks and responsibility for his swimming. Encourage his goal to be "SMART".

- **Specific:** tells the athlete what to do
- **Measurable:** able to measure and record progress
- **Attainable:** athlete can experience success
- **Realistic:** challenging but "do-able"
- **Trackable:** short-term goals build into long-term goals

Q: All my swimmer talks about is being an Olympic swimmer. Should I discourage this since it may not be realistic?

A: Most kids will have long-term or "dream" goals of making the Olympic team or winning Nationals. Dream goals can be beneficial by helping motivate your athlete to go to practice and to train hard (and there is no way of knowing if it is realistic or not). While it is okay to have dream goals, there are several problems with athletes **only** having dream goals. These problems include not knowing if they are making progress towards their goal, not experiencing little "successes" along the way, and losing motivation when the goal seems so distant. To combat this, it is important to also talk to your child about setting short-term or even daily goals. Ask him what he is

working on in practice this week (just as you ask him what is going on in school), get him to identify skills he needs to improve on, and follow up with him to help him recognize successes along the way. Be sure to ask your son to speak to his coach if he needs help seeking some practice or short-term goals.

Q: I know the mental aspect of swimming is important. Should my child be using mental skills, or is she too young?

A: If we equate mental skills with physical skills, as we should, this question becomes easier to answer. Just as there are certain physical skills that a young swimmer is not physically, developmentally, or cognitively ready for, there are also mental skills he is not ready to learn. But, on the flip side, there are basic mental skills young athletes can be taught at this level. It is great to begin laying a foundation of mental skills (just as it is great to introduce basic physical skills at a young age). Some basic skills that can be introduced include setting goals, imagery, concentration, and relaxation. We often tell athletes to "concentrate" or "relax," but fail to teach athletes what it means or what they need to do to concentrate or relax. These are skills that coaches can work on with young athletes.

Q: My child gets so nervous before a competition. Is this natural? What can I do to help her to reduce this competitive pressure/stress?

A: To a degree, nervousness is part of the competitive experience and can be used as an opportunity to teach the young athlete specific strategies or skills to help her manage this arousal or nervousness. A simple skill that young athletes can learn to help manage the "butterflies in their stomachs" is belly breathing. The athlete is taught to take slow, deep breaths into her belly, hold it briefly, and then exhale slowly. Words can be included to help the athlete focus her thoughts on something besides worry. This is a quick strategy that helps calm the body and mind and only takes a few seconds to do. Another skill to help the athlete deal with muscular tightness brought on by nervousness is progressive muscle relaxation. In this procedure, the athlete goes through the major muscles in her body and first tenses and then relaxes each muscle. This teaches athletes to learn the difference between a tense and relaxed muscle, to learn where different muscles are located, and to eventually be able to relax specific muscles as necessary. Remember that these skills must be taught and practiced before the athlete will be able to use them effectively.

We also know that excessive anxiety can be damaging to both performance and to the athlete's desire to enter such situations in the future. Two factors which have been found to play a role in the level of anxiety experienced are the importance of the event and the uncertainty of the outcome. Greater importance and greater uncertainty lead to increased anxiety. Parents, this suggests that you can play an active role in reducing competition anxiety by devaluing the outcome of the event and by focusing on the individual performance over which the swimmers have control.

Symptoms of Anxiety:

- increased heart rate
- rapid breathing
- sweating
- negativity
- jittery
- frequent 'pit stops'
- excessive worry
- doubts
- talk of failure

- low confidence

Strategies to Manage:

- Deep belly breathing
- positive self-talk
- relaxation exercises
- think of successes
- stretching
- visualize race
- focus on goals
- light massage
- distract by talking with friends, family

10 COMMANDMENTS FOR SWIMMING PARENTS

by Rose Snyder

1. Thou shalt not impose your ambitions on thy child. Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is people can strive to do their personal best and benefit from the process of competitive swimming.

2. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what. There is only one question to ask your child after a practice or a competition - "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

3. Thou shalt not coach thy child. You are involved in one of the few youth sports programs that offer professional coaching, do not undermine the professional coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to provide unconditional love and support and a safe place to return at the end of the day. Love and hug your child no matter what. Tell them how proud of them you are. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy or any other area that is not yours. And above all, never pay your child for a performance. This will only serve to confuse your child concerning the reasons to strive for excellence and weaken the swimmer/coach bond.

4. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet. If you are going to show up at a swimming meet, you should be encouraging, but never criticize your child or the coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made. And remember "yelling at" is not the same as "cheering for". You also may want to consider being positive anytime you are around the pool.

5. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears. A first swimming meet, 500 free or 200 IM can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child was not ready to compete in it. Remember your job is to love and support your child through all of the swimming experience. Most of their fears are one's you have given them.

6. Thou shalt not criticize the officials. If you do not care to devote the time or do not have the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can. You too can be trained to be an official in an afternoon.

7. Honor thy child's coach. The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child, it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.

8. Thou shalt be loyal and supportive of thy team It is not wise for parents to take their swimmers and to jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer in another team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long, long time by the teammates they leave behind and are slowly received by new team mates. Often times swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

9. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning. Most successful swimmers are those who have learned to focus on the process and not the outcome. Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else did it too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. Does this make me a failure? No, in fact I am very proud of that swim." What a tremendous outlook to carry on through life.

10. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian. There are 280,000 athletes in USA

swimming. Only 2% of the swimmers listed in the 10 & Under age group make it to the Top 100 in the 17-18 age group and of those only a small percentage will become elite level, world class athletes. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are about .0002%.

Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask your coaches why they coach. Chances are, they were not an Olympian, but still got so much out of swimming that they wanted to pass the love for the sport on to others. Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self-esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they may have won. Swimming builds good people, like you want your child to be, and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS *(Adapted from USA Swimming.org)*

There are a lot of strange and unusual words used in swimming. You may or may not find these words in the English Dictionary, and if you do, their definitions will probably be radically different than the ones listed in this Glossary. Relax and take your time reading. Soon you'll be understanding and maybe even speaking some "swim slang."

Age Group – Division of swimmers according to age. The National Age Group divisions are: 10-under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Pacific Swimming also has an 8-under division.

Age group meet – a competition in which events are divided by age, as opposed to entry time.

Alternate – In a Prelims/Finals meet (see below for the definition of that), after the finalists are decided, the next two fastest swimmers other than the finalists are designated as "alternates." The faster of the two is the first alternate and the next is the second alternate. If a finalist cannot participate, the alternates are called to take their place.

Anchor – The final swimmer in a relay. Also a term coaches use for the beginning of all four strokes indicating the "high elbow", "catch," or "early vertical forearm."

Approved Meet – A meet conducted with sufficient USA Swimming officials to certify conformance to USA Swimming rules. The meet may include competitors who are not USA Swimming members. The meet may be a competition sanctioned at the LSC level with the added approval of USA Swimming because both member and non-member athletes will be competing.

ASCA - The American Swim Coaches Association. The professional organization for swim coaches throughout the nation. Certifying coaches and offering many services for coaches' education and career advancement.

Attached - swimmers are registered in US Swimming through their team, compete in official meets, and score points for that team. Our swimmers are "attached" to JAX.

Backstroke - One of the four competitive racing strokes, basically any style of swimming on your back. Backstroke is swum as the first stroke in the Medley Relay and second stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 25 yard (8-under only), 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter.

Blocks - The starting platforms located behind each lane. Minimum water depth for use of starting blocks is 4 feet. Blocks have a variety of designs and can be permanent or removable.

Breaststroke - One of the four competitive racing strokes. Breaststroke is swam as the second stroke in the Medley Relay and the third stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 25 yard (8-under only), 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter.

Butterfly - One of the four competitive racing strokes. Butterfly (nicknamed "fly") is swam as the

third stroke in the Medley Relay and first stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 25 yard (8-under only), 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter.

Camp - A swimming function offered by USA-S, your LSC, or a USA-S coach. There are many types of camps for just about every level of swimmer. When selecting a camp, ask for your coach's advice as to what will be the best for the swimmer, or see the USA-S swimming website for details on the many camps they offer.

Cap - a latex or lycra swim cap used during a race or workout to protect a swimmer's hair from the effects of chlorine in the water as well as help cut down water resistance.

Carbohydrates - The main source of food energy used by athletes. Refer to a Nutritional Manual for more information.

Championship Meet - The meet held at the end of a season. Qualification times are usually necessary to enter meet.

Championship Finals - The top six or eight swimmers (depending on the number of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the prelims are swum, qualify to return to the Finals. The fastest heat of finals, when multiple heats are held.

Check-in - an administrative procedure at meets where the swimmer signs in to confirm his/her intention to swim an event.

Circle Seeding - A method of seeding swimmers when they are participating in a prelims/finals event. The fastest 18 to 24 swimmers are seeded in the last three heats, with the fastest swimmers being in the inside lanes.

Clinic - A scheduled meeting for the purpose of instruction. (i.e. Official's clinic, Coach's clinic).

Closed Competition - Swim meet which is only open to the members of a specific organization or group. Summer club swim meets are considered to be "Closed Competition."

Club - A registered swim team that is a dues-paying member of USA-S and the local LSC.

Code of Conduct - A Code of Conduct that both swimmers and coaches are required to sign at certain USA-S/LSC sponsored events. The Code is not strict and involves common sense and proper behavior.

Consolation Finals - After the fastest six or eight swimmers, the next six or eight swimmers (depending on the number of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the prelims are swum, qualify to return to the Finals. Consolations are the second fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held and are conducted before the Championship heat.

Convention - United States Aquatic Sports annual, week long, meeting where all rules changes are decided and working committees are established. Representatives are sent by each LSC to make up the voting body.

Course - Designated distance (length of pool) for swimming competition. Long Course = 50 meters / Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.

Deadline - The date meet entries must be received by, to be accepted by the meet host. Making the meet deadline does not guarantee acceptance into a meet since many meets are "full" weeks before the entry deadline.

Deck - The area around the swimming pool, often reserved for only swimmers, officials, and coaches. No one but an "authorized" USA Swimming member may be on the deck during a swim competition.

Deck Entry – Entering meet events on-site at the meet. It is VERY uncommon for deck entries to be accepted at Pacific Swimming meets.

Deck Seeding – When heat and lane assignments are posted after swimmers have checked in or have “scratched” (indicated they will not participate in the event.) Swimmers are placed in proper heats and lanes according to their seedtime just prior to the event.

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

Developmental - A classification of meet or competition that is usually held early in the season. The purpose of a developmental meet is to allow all levels of swimmers to compete in a low-pressure environment.

Distance - How far a swimmer swims. Distances for short course are: 25 yards (1 length), 50 yards (2 lengths), 100 yards (4 lengths), 200 yards (8 lengths), 400 yards (16 lengths), 500 yards (20 lengths), 1000 yards (40 lengths), 1650 yards (66 lengths). Distances for long course are: 50 meters (1 length), 100 meters (2 lengths), 200 meters (4 lengths), 400 meters (8 lengths), 800 meters (16 lengths), 1500 meters (30 lengths).

Diving Well - A separate pool or a pool set off to the side of the competition pool. This pool has deeper water and diving boards/platforms. During a meet, this area may be designated as a warm-down pool, if there is proper supervision.

Division I-II-III - NCAA member colleges and universities are assigned divisions to compete in, depending on the school's total enrollment. Division I being the large universities and Division III being the smaller colleges.

DQ – short for “disqualification.” Happens at a meet when a swimmer does not swim a stroke according to the guidelines set forth by US Swimming. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with open hand above their head. If a swimmer is disqualified from an event, the finish time is not recorded.

Drag suit - a second, loose fitting swimsuit worn by swimmers in workout and warm-up to add a certain amount of weight and resistance to the flow of the water around the swimmer. The concept is similar to a batter swinging two or three bats while on deck in a baseball game.

Dry land - The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.

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

Entry - An individual, relay team, or club roster's event list in a swim competition.

Entry Fees - The amount per event that a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the LSC and type of meet.

Entry Limit - Each meet will usually have a limit of total swimmers they can accept, or a time limit they cannot exceed. Once an entry limit has been reached, a meet will be closed and all other entries will be returned.

Electronic Timing - Timing system operated on DC current (battery). The timing system usually has touchpads in the water, junction boxes on the deck with hook up cables, buttons for backup timing, and a computer-type console that prints out the results of each race. Some systems are hooked up to a scoreboard that displays swimmers times.

Event - A race or stroke over a given distance. An event equals 1 preliminary with its final, or 1 timed final.

False Start - occurs when a swimmer leaves the starting block, or is moving on the block, before the starter officially starts the race. Once the starter says "take your marks," all swimmers must remain motionless until the starting horn sounds. In USA Swimming, one false start will result in an automatic disqualification from the race.

Fastest to Slowest - A seeding method used on the longer events held at the end of a session. The fastest seeded swimmers participate in the first heats followed by the next fastest and so on.

FINA - Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur, the international governing body of competitive swimming, diving, water polo and synchronized swimming.

Finals - The final race of each event. See "Consolation Finals", "Timed Finals", etc.

Final Results - The printed copy of the results of each race of a swim meet.

Fins - Large rubber flipper-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. Used by swimmers in backstroke to judge how close they are to the wall.

Freestyle - One of the four competitive racing strokes. Freestyle (nicknamed "free") is swum as

the fourth stroke in the Medley Relay and fourth stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 25 yards (8-under only), 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, 200 yards/meter, 400 mtr/500, yd 800 mtr/1000 yds, 1500 mtr/1650 yds.

Goals - The short- and long-range targets for swimmers to aim for.

Goggles - Eyewear worn by swimmers in the pool to protect the swimmer's eyes from the effects of chlorine in the water.

Gravity wave - Wave action caused by the swimmers bodies moving through the water. Gravity waves move down and forward from the swimmer, bounce off the bottom of the pool and return to the surface in the form of turbulence.

Gun (or Bell) Lap - The part of a freestyle distance race (400 meters or longer) when the swimmer has two lengths plus five yards to go. The starter fires a gun shot (or rings a bell) over the lane of the lead swimmer when the swimmer is at the backstroke flags, to indicate that only two laps are left in the race.

Gutter - The area at the edges of the pool in which water overflows during a race and is re-circulated into the pool. Deep gutters catch surface waves and don't allow them to wash back into the pool and affect the race.

Heats - All of the swimmers entered in the event are divided into heats, or groups of swimmers. The results are compiled by the times swum, after all heats of the event are completed.

Heat Award - A ribbon, coupon, or other prize given to the winner of a single heat at an age group swim meet.

High Point - An award given to the swimmer scoring the most points in a given age group at a swim meet. Not all meets offer high point awards; check the Meet Sheet.

HOD - House of Delegates. The ruling body of an LSC composed of the designated representative of each club plus the board of directors (BOD) of the LSC. One vote per club and board member. Also refers to the national USA-S convention meeting.

Horn - A sounding device used to start races. Used mainly with a fully automatic timing system.

Illegal - Doing something against the rules that is cause for disqualification.

I.M. - short for "Individual Medley," an event in which the swimmer uses all four competitive strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle. Equal distances must be swam of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yards, 200 yards/meters, 400 yards/meter.

Jump - An illegal start done by the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th member of a relay team. The swimmer on the block breaks contact with the block before the swimmer in the water touches the wall.

Junior Nationals - A USA-S Championship meet for swimmers 18 years old or less. Qualification

times are necessary.

Kick Board - A flotation device used by swimmers during practice.

Lane - The specific area in which a swimmer is assigned to swim. (ie) Lane 1 or Lane 2.

Lane lines - the dividers used to delineate the individual lanes. These are made of individual finned disks strung on a cable, which rotate on the cable when hit by a wave. The rotating disks dissipate surface tension waves in a competitive pool.

Lap - One length of the course. Sometimes may also mean down and back (2 lengths) of the course.

Lap Counter - The large numbered cards (or the person turning the cards) used during the freestyle events 500 yards or longer. Counting is done from the end opposite the starting end. The numbers on the cards are "odd numbers" only with the final lap being designated by a bright orange card.

Leg - The part of a relay event swum by a single team member. A single stroke in the I.M.

Long Course - a pool configured for swimming with a 50-meter long racing course. World records may be set in long course and short course competition. The main US Swimming Long Course season is during the summer months. The Olympic Games as well as all major international competitions are conducted in long course pools.

LCM – long course meter

LSC - Local Swim Committee. The local level administrative division of the corporation (USA-S) with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries. The LSC for JAX is Southeastern Swimming (SE).

Marshall - The officials who control the crowd and swimmer-flow at a swim meet.

Meet - A series of events held in one program.

Meet Director - The official in charge of the administration of the meet. The person directing the "dry side" of the meet.

Meet Sheet - The officially approved informational sheet for each swim meet. The meet sheet will include information about the location, rules, events, and other logistical details of the competition.

National Reportable Time (NRT) - the national age group time standard used for compiling top 16 USS age group times each season.

Nationals - USA Swimming National Championship meet conducted in March/April (short course) and August (long course).

NCAA - National Collegiate Athletic Association

Negative Split - a race strategy in the distance freestyle events in which a swimmer covers the second half of the race faster than the first half.

Non-Conforming Time - A short course time submitted to qualify for a long course meet, or vice versa.

NT - No Time. The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swum that event before.

Observed Meet - A meet that is not conducted according to USA Swimming rules (high school, YMCA) where a request for observation has been processed and approved in advance. Sufficient USA Swimming officials are present to certify that the athletes' swims are in compliance with USA Swimming technical rules.

Observed Swim - A swim observed by assigned USA Swimming officials for conformance with USA Swimming technical rules in a meet conducted under other than USA Swimming rules.

Official - a certified adult judge on the deck of the pool. Various judges watch the swimmer's strokes, turns and finishes or are timers.

Olympic Trials - The USA-S sanctioned long course swim meet held the year of the Olympic Games to decide what swimmers will represent the USA on our Olympic Team. Qualification times are faster than Senior Nationals.

Open Competition - Competition which any qualified club, organization, or individual may enter.

Pace Clock - The electronic clocks or large clocks with highly visible numbers and second hands, positioned at the ends or sides of a swimming pool so the swimmers can read their times during warm ups or swim practice.

Paddles - a swim aid, which attaches to the hand. These are generally used in the older age groups to work on stroke technique and strength.

Past Vertical - a disqualification used primarily in backstroke, where the swimmer is "past vertical" toward his/her stomach upon leaving the wall after a turn.

Practice - The scheduled workouts swimmers attend with their swim team/club.

Prelims - Session of a Prelims/Finals meet in which the qualification heats are conducted.

Prelims-Finals - Type of meet with two sessions. The preliminary heats are usually held in the morning session. The fastest six or eight (Championship Heat) swimmers, and the next fastest six or eight swimmers (Consolation Heat) return in the evening to compete in the Finals. A swimmer who has qualified in the Consolation Finals may not place in the Championship Finals even if

their finals time would place them so.
The converse also applies.

Psych Sheet - An entry sheet showing all swimmers entered into each individual event. Sometimes referred to as a "Heat Sheet" or meet program.

Pull-Buoy - a swim aid used to keep the legs motionless. It is a flotation device that is held between the swimmers legs and is generally used by older swimmers.

Pulling Tarps - placing or removing the blankets on/from the top of a pool, which help minimize evaporation and keep the water temperature steady.

Qualifying Times - Published times necessary to enter certain meets, or the times necessary to achieve a specific category of swimmer.

Referee - the USA-S official who has the authority over all other officials at the meet. He/she makes all final decisions and sees to the efficient running of the meet.

Relay - A swimming event in which four swimmers participate as a team. Each swimmer completes 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 yd/mtr and 400 yd/mtr distances. 2.) Freestyle relay - Each swimmer swims freestyle. Free relays are conducted over 200 yd/mtr, 400 yd/mtr, and 800 yd/mtr distances.

Relay exchange - the exchange between the swimmer in the water and the next swimmer on the relay team. A perfect exchange will simultaneously have the finishing swimmer's hand on the touch pad and the starting swimmer's feet just touching the starting block with the rest of the starting swimmer's body extended over the water.

Roll - to move on the starting blocks prior to the starting signal. A roll is usually caught by the starter and called a false start, but swimmers will often try to guess the starter's cadence and get a good start. This is similar to illegal procedure in football.

Sanction - A permit issued by an LSC to a USA-S group member to conduct an event or meet.

Sanction Fee - The amount paid by a USA-S group member to an LSC for issuing a sanction.

Sanctioned Meet - A meet that is approved by the LSC in which it is held. Meet must be conducted according to USA Swimming rules. All participants, including coaches, athletes and officials, must be USA Swimming members.

Scratch – The process by which a swimmer withdraws from an event that they have entered in. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if these are not followed, a swimmer can be disqualified from later events.

Sectionals - Nickname for Speedo Championship Series (see below).

Seed Time - the time a swimmer uses to enter an event. It is the swimmer's personal best time in that event and determines the placement of heat and lane for a swimmer.

Seeding – The placement of swimmers in heats and lanes for individual events.

Senior Meet – a high level meet in which all USA-S registered swimmers who have met the qualifying time standard for a specific event(s) are eligible to compete. See the Pacific Swim Guide for the times.

Senior Nationals - A USA-S National Championship meet for swimmers of any age as long as the qualification times are met.

Short Course - a pool configured in 25-yard or 25-meter lengths. US Swimming conducts most of its fall/winter competition in 25-yard lengths, including the Speedo Junior National Championships in March. NCAA swimming competition uses the 25-yard format. Most of the world swims short course meters in the winter (25-meter pool). The fastest times swum in a 25-yard pool may only gain US Open or American record status. The short course season generally runs from September to March.

SCY – short course yard

SCM – short course meter

Speedo Championship Series - Open "senior level" meets held in the spring and summer. Each Zone may hold up to four meets. These meets are commonly called "Sectionals." Qualifying times, sites, dates and meet rules are determined locally.

Splash - The USA Swimming magazine that is mailed bi-monthly to all members of USA Swimming.

Split - a swimmer's intermediate time in a race. Splits are registered every 50 meters or 25 yards, depending on the pool and the equipment on hand, and are used to determine if a swimmer is on pace, as planned.

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.

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

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

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

Stroke and Turn Judge - a certified USA-S official, who determines the legality of swimmers' strokes and disqualifies those who do not conform to USA-S Rules.

Swim-off - In a Prelims/Finals type competition, a race after the scheduled event to break a tie. The only circumstance that warrants a swim-off is to determine which swimmer makes finals or an alternate, otherwise ties stand.

SWIMS - USA Swimming database system that keeps track of every time achieved by all swimmers. Available through the USA-S website.

Taper - the resting process in training for swimming competition. During the middle of the swimming season a swimmer may work out up to 10 to 15 thousand meters (8 to 10 miles) each day. As major competition draws near, the swimmer will taper off (reduce) the distances swum each day. A perfectly designed taper will enable the swimmer to compete at their peak capability and is one of the most difficult aspects of swim coaching.

Team Records - The statistics a team keeps, listing the fastest swimmer in the clubs history for each age group/each event.

Timed Finals - Competition in which only heats are swum and final places are determined by those times. Most regular Pacific Swimming meets run with timed finals.

Time Standard - A time set by a meet or LSC or USA-S (etc) that a swimmer must achieve for qualification or recognition. Time standards in Pacific Swimming include, from slowest to fastest: PC-B, PC-A, JO (junior Olympic), FW (Far Western), PRT (Pacific Recorded Time).

Timer - The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks/finish end of pool, who are responsible for getting watch times on events and activating the backup buttons for the timing system.

Time Trial - An event or series of events where a swimmer may achieve or better a required time standard.

Top 10 - A list of times compiled by the LSC or USA-S that recognizes the top 10 swimmers in each single age group (boys & girls) by each event and distance.

Touch - the finish of the race, when the swimmer touches the touch pad or wall.

Touch-pad - the part of the electronic timing system that rests in the water at the finishing end of each lane. Swimmers' times are electronically recorded when the pad is touched. These are used most often in junior and above meets.

Transfer - The act of leaving one club or LSC and going to another. Usually 120 days of unattached competition is required before swimmer can represent another USA-S club.

Trials and Finals - in a trials and finals meet, trials are swum with all swimmers entering the event and are generally viewed as qualifying rounds for finals.

Turnover - the number of times a swimmer's arms turn over (cycle) in a given distance or time during a race.

Two-hand Touch - both hands must touch the wall simultaneously while swimming the butterfly and breaststroke.

Unattached - An athlete member who competes, but does not represent a club or team. (abbr. UN)

USA-S/USA Swimming - The national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in America.

USA-S ID Number - A 16-part number assigned to a swimmer after they have filled out the proper forms and paid their annual dues. The first 6 parts are numbers of a swimmer's birthdate: Day/Month/Year using zeros as place holders. The next three spaces are the first three letters of the athlete's legal first name. The next letter is the middle initial, followed by the first four letters of the swimmer's last name. For example: USA-S ID# for swimmer Suzanne Eileen Nelson and born Aug.27, 1976 = 082776SUZENELS.

Warm down – The recovery swimming that a swimmer performs after a race to rid the body of excess lactic acid generated during the race.

Warm-up - The practice and "loosening-up" session a swimmer does before the meet and/or before their event is swum.

Yards - The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per specs using the American system. A short course yard pool is 25 yards (75 feet) in length.

Yardage - The distance a swimmer races or swims in practice. Total yardage can be calculated for each practice session.

Zones (National) - The country is divided up into 4 major zones: Eastern - Southern - Central - Western. At the end of the long course season (in August) the Zone Administration sponsors a championship age group meet.

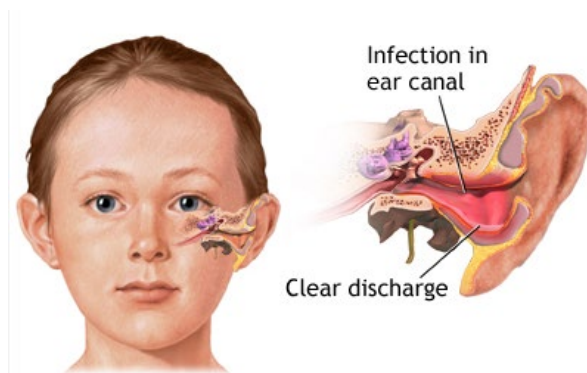
Preventing Swimmer's Ear

American Swimming Magazine, published by ASCA

You don't have to be a swimmer to get swimmer's ear. Athletes who frequently get water or perspiration in their ears are susceptible to the condition. Staying in a pool too long can reduce the acid level of the ear wax, which is there to help resist infections. Swimmer's ear (otitis externa) is actually one of several names that refer to an infection of the outer ear. It can be caused by a fungus, but is more commonly associated with bacteria that is brought into the ear with water. If the water then runs out, the ear and the bacteria dry up. But when some of the water remains trapped in the ear canal and the skin gets soggy, the bacteria are in a perfect environment to grow into a problem.

SYMPTOMS

The first symptoms are a feeling that the ear is blocked, muffled hearing, and an itch. Later, the canal can become swollen and painful, and a watery discharge accumulates in the area. If the ear gets to the point of being tender to the touch, it's time to get to a doctor.



PREVENTION

There are several ways to prevent swimmer's ear from ever occurring. Here is a summary of preventive methods:

- Don't swim in dirty water.
- Wear earplugs while swimming.
- After a swim, tilt and shake your head to allow the water to drain.
- Dry your ears with a clean cloth after showering and with a hair dryer set at low speed, held about 12" from your ear.
- Use one dropper of commercial eardrops, isopropyl alcohol, or white vinegar in your ear after swimming or showering. Wiggle your ear to let the solution get to the bottom, then let the fluid drain out. Drops should not be used by people with tubes in their ears or perforations in their eardrums.
- Some experts suggest that you use a dropper of mineral oil, baby oil, or lanolin to create a protective coating before you exercise. Get advice from a physician or trainer before using this method.

If you wear a hearing aid, remove it frequently to allow your ear to dry. Avoid excessive cleaning that removes all of the protective wax naturally present in the ear canal.

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