



Stingray Swim Team
Hand Book
Updated April 28, 2016



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the exciting world of competitive age group swimming! By joining USA Swimming, your child has become a member of one of the country's largest, most organized and competently coached youth sports. In addition to our coaches' influence, with a positive attitude and a willingness to lend a hand, you can also have a great impact on your child's athletic environment and his or her love of swimming. There are many benefits to participating in the sport of swimming: Meeting terrific people (many swimming buddies become lifelong friends); beneficial exercise for cardiovascular and overall fitness; life skills (which include time management, self-discipline and sportsmanship); and fun! Age group swimming is fun, exciting and rewarding! Remember - not every swimmer becomes a world record holder but EVERY SWIMMER can gain from the experience of being on a swim team!

THE STINGRAY SWIM TEAM

We welcome any youth to our competitive groups who can swim at least one length of the pool freestyle and one length backstroke unaided. They must be able to put their face in the water when swimming freestyle and turn their head to breathe to the side. They must also be able to follow directions. Any swimmer who is comfortable in the water, can float unaided, and tread water are welcome in our non-competitive group.

We emphasize the **lifetime value** of the sport, the importance of teamwork, the necessity of a thinking approach to training and the positive aspects of competition. Swimmers learn skills while they build strength and endurance. They learn to plan for success, to cope with setbacks and to take responsibility for themselves and their teammates. Our team environment encourages young people to develop self-discipline, consistency and reliability. And they have fun while they're doing it!

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The most visible goal of our program is to help young people develop their individual potential in the sport of competitive swimming. Our program provides a good foundation for those swimmers who wish to go on to high school and/or college swim teams. All swimmers, regardless of their individual abilities, will receive encouragement and comprehensive instruction.

Stingray Swim Team strives to make practice times focused and fun for our swimmers and as convenient as possible for our families. Swimmers are assigned training groups as soon as they join the team so they'll swim with other children of similar age and ability. Groups swim at both the Alaska Club South and the UAF Patty Pool. Swimmers are encouraged to practice as often as possible - up to six days a week. Swim schedules are posted on our website at www.stingrayswim.org.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Swimming is considered the ideal activity for developing muscular and skeletal growth by many physicians and pediatricians. Why do doctors like it so much?

- Swimming develops high quality aerobic endurance, the most important key to physical fitness. In other sports, an hour of practice may yield as little as 10 minutes of meaningful exercise. Age group swimming teams use every precious minute of practice time developing fitness and teaching skills.
- Swimming does a better job in proportional muscular development by using all the body's major muscle groups. No other sport does this as well as swimming.
- Swimming enhances children's natural flexibility (at a time when they ordinarily begin to lose it) by exercising all their major joints through a full range of motion.
- Swimming helps develop superior coordination because it requires combinations of complex movements of all parts of the body, enhancing harmonious muscle function, grace, and fluidity of movement.
- Swimming is the most injury-free of all children's sports.
- Swimming is a sport that will bring kids fitness and enjoyment for life. Participants in Master's Swimming programs are still training and racing well into their 80's.

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INTELLECTUAL COMPETENCE

In addition to physical development, children can develop greater intellectual competence by participating in a guided program of physical activity. Learning and using swimming skills engages the thinking processes. As they learn new techniques, children must develop and plan movement sequences. They improve by exploring new ideas. They learn that greater progress results from using their creative talents. Self-expression can be just as much physical as intellectual. Finally their accomplishments in learning and using new skills contribute to a stronger self-image.

DUES AND FEES

The Stingray Swim Team is a nonprofit organization. Stingray Swim Team charges monthly dues to help cover a portion of their budget. Some of the funds go toward coaching salaries, equipment, and travel expenses for out-of-town meets. Fundraising activities provide the rest of the income for the team. If for any reason a parent knows their child will be out of the water for an entire month, they just need to tell one of the coaches or the team treasurer and a maintenance fee will be charged that month rather than the full dues. This will hold that swimmer's spot on the team until they're back in the pool.

In addition to monthly dues, swimmers must pay an annual fee for membership in USA Swimming and Alaska Swimming. This membership is mandatory for all swimmers participating on any swim team, except our non-competitive group.

Swimmers also pay an entry fee for each event in which they swim at a meet. Stingray Swim Team pays for these fees prior to the meet and bills each swimmer on their monthly statement. Once a swimmer is officially entered in a meet (usually ten days before the meet), his/her fees become non-refundable, even if the swimmer does not swim.

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Stingray Swim Team has two mandatory fundraisers each year: a raffle in the fall and the Swim-a-thon in the spring. Families are required to generate a minimum of \$300 per swimmer per year through their participation. The maintenance fee and two fundraisers are seen as the fairest ways to assess the cost of running a year around program to each family even if they don't participate every month of the year.

A \$25 late fee applies to any bill that is over 30 days late. If after two notices your bill remains unpaid, your child will not be allowed to participate in practice or meets until the debt is cleared.

PRACTICE LOCATIONS AND TIMES

Stingrays practice at both the Alaska Club South and at the UAF Patty Pool. Our Head Coach, Josh Gregory, coaches at the Patty Pool during the majority of the year. From mid-August through early November, all practices are held at The Alaska Club South (when the West Valley high school swim team uses Patty Pool). Our Age Group Coach, Heidi Morel, is the primary coach at the Alaska Club. Our Assistant Age Group Coach, Hilary Nichols, assists Coach Heidi at The Alaska Club. Madison McConnel and Ashley Harshell are the team's substitute coaches. *Please check our web site (www.stingrayswim.org) for current practice times at both locations.*

TRAVEL

The faster our swimmers become, the bigger the meet they may qualify for. Although most swim meets on our competitive schedule are in town, three of the state championship meets could be out of town. Also, our swimmers could qualify for and participate in large meets outside of Alaska such as The Western Section Age Group and Senior Championships, the Western Zone Championships, Region XII Championships, Junior Nationals, Senior Nationals, the U.S. Open and the Olympic Trials. As a rule, the Stingray Swim Team makes every effort to send a coach to the meets when one of our swimmers qualifies to compete. The team may supply chaperones to championship meets.

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TEAM STORE

The Stingrays have an online team store, as well as local partners. You can purchase practice and team suits, Stingray t-shirts, caps and goggles. There are also many other items available and will be delivered to your home. As a Speedo sponsored team, all items through our online store are discounted. This is the best way to buy Stingray gear, stay comfortable, and show your team spirit. The online store is available on the team website at www.stingrayswim.org.

THE COACH'S ROLE

Our Stingray coaches are the most important resource in the journey toward swimming excellence. We're fortunate to have Josh Gregory as our Head Coach and Heidi Morel as our Head Age Group Coach. Head Coach Josh Gregory swam for NCAA Division I Western Illinois University, coached at the college level, and joined the Stingrays in 2012. Head Age Group Coach Heidi Morel swam for the University of North Texas and began with the Stingrays in 2014. All our coaches enjoy working with young people and have over 80 years of combined swimming experience.

Our coaches manage and supervise training and practices, tutor swimmers in technique and racing strategies, and set standards for behavior and performance. Our coaches set high standards for our swimmers' behavior both in and out of the pool and will notify parents if their children engage in any inappropriate behavior or language at practices or meets.

Coaches are available to talk with parents (outside of practice time) who are seeking information or have questions or concerns. Please do not approach the coaches during practice time to allow their full concentration to be on the swimmers.

Coaches Want:

- To coach, teach and motivate swimmers
- To have fun

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- Parents who model positive behavior and good sportsmanship
- Parents who support them – and the swimmers
- Parents willing to help with team operations / swim meets

THE SWIMMER'S ROLE

Swimmers need to attend practice consistently. They should arrive on time, suit up, shower and report promptly to the coach on the pool deck. A positive attitude, good diet and adequate rest will insure that practices are productive and fun.

Stingray Swim Team guides each swimmer to the understanding that they're responsible for their attendance, performance, attitude, equipment, fitness, nutrition and enjoyment. Stingray Swim Team will help the swimmer acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to attain all these good habits.

Kids Want:

- To have fun
- To learn and improve skills
- To make friends
- To compete
- To get/stay in shape

In order to insure a positive environment for our swimmers and others at the Alaska Club and Patty Center, the following rules will be strictly enforced.

- Any act of vandalism at the Alaska Club, the Patty Center or any other pool may lead to suspension from the team.
- Inappropriate language or behavior will not be tolerated in the buildings, in the locker rooms or in the pools and may lead to suspension from the team.
- Absolutely no horseplay will be allowed on the pool decks, in the locker rooms or anywhere else in these facilities.
- Respect and courtesy are expected at all times.

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ROLE OF SWIM PARENTS

As parents, our major responsibility is to provide a supportive, positive environment which encourages kids to continue swimming – regardless of times or meet results. Parents show their interest by driving swimmers to practices, attending meets and volunteering to help the team. Parents also serve as role models ---demonstrating good sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, teammates and opponents. It's crucial for the health of our team for our parents to be involved. Parents can sign up for various volunteer positions such as being a Board Member, our designated Meet Director, a certified official, a timer at a meet, etc. Each family is expected to volunteer at least 15 hours/year.

Supportive Swim Parents:

- Focus on skill mastery rather than on winning, or rankings.
- Decrease the pressure to win
- See swimming as an opportunity for self-development
- Communicate effectively to child, coach and club
- Understand their role in supporting the swimmer

Parents Want:

- What's best for their kids
- To be treated with respect
- To be informed and get answers to questions
- To know how best to support their swimmer(s)
- To know how they can help the team, and feel appreciated for their efforts

STINGRAY SWIM TEAM HOSTED MEETS: IM PENTATHLON, SPOOKY SPRINT & SWEETHEART MEET

Our swim team hosts the IM Pentathlon and Spooky Sprint meets in October and Sweetheart Meet in January/February each year. Every parent is expected to contribute to these events and there are plenty of jobs to go around. This is a great opportunity to host the other teams in our area and around the state.

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SWIM MEETS

SIGNING UP FOR A MEET

Local swim meets are held once or twice a month and alternate between North Pole and Fairbanks. Meets will be announced at practice, through email and on our web site. It's the parents' responsibility to sign their child up for local meets. Our web site platform makes this easy with an intuitive step by step process. If you are unsure which events to sign up for, you may leave the event list blank and the coaches will assign the events. Coaches may alter your child's events to promote new races and challenges.

If your swimmer is not signed up by the deadline, they will not be able to swim since no late entries are accepted. If your swimmer is unable to attend a meet they are registered for, notify your coach as soon as possible. *Swimmers will be billed for meets they are signed up for even if they do not swim once the deadline has passed.*

WHAT TO EXPECT AT A MEET

There are wonderful benefits to gain just from practice, but the primary purpose for training is to prepare for swim meets. Meets are where it all comes together. Swim meets are opportunities to draw on resources deep inside the swimmer strengthened from their commitment to higher levels of training as they push their mind and body. *Meets are exciting and fun!*

Coaches will determine if a swimmer is ready to participate in a swim meet and which events the swimmer is ready for. Some factors to consider are the type of meet, the qualifying times, and the number of events the swimmer may enter. Parents and swimmers are encouraged to give input, but the final decision rests with the coach. The coach also determines who will participate in relay events and makes the final decision on any scratches from an event.

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COME PREPARED

Swimmers should arrive at a meet at least one hour early in order to warm up, and check in with the coach. The events that the swimmer is entering are usually written on the back of their hand. Swimmers should watch the event board to check for their next race and report to the coach before they go to the starting block. A warm up and cool down area is usually available and should be utilized.

Most swimmers come equipped to the meet with two (2) swim suits, two (2) pairs of goggles, two (2) towels, a combination lock, a book to read, a water bottle, healthy snacks, shampoo and conditioner, t-shirt/sweatshirt, and money for concessions. Parents will often bring snacks, water, concession money and a pen/pencil for marking their “heat sheets” which show the schedule of events.

MEETS ARE A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Swimmers may be disqualified from an event by an official for technical or stroke violations. Swimmers are never happy about being disqualified but it's a good learning experience. Race officials kindly explain to the disqualified swimmer what they did wrong and what they should work on. New USA Swimming rule books are printed each year. They provide information on all aspects of swimming and can be found on the Northern Area Aquatics web page (www.northernareaaquatics.org).

At the meet, the top swimmers in each event are given points. The points are totaled and the top finishers are awarded with a ribbon or a trophy. The total number of points is credited to each team so that entire teams are also able to compete with each other.

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PARENTS RUN THE MEETS

Parents run all swim meets. There are frequent opportunities for parents to receive training on how to be an official. Although automatic timing is now used at all swim meets, parents act as back-up timers for each event with two timers normally required for each swimmer. Helping time events is fun since you get to see races close up. Parents also help at the concession stand and some prepare a lunch for the race officials and parent volunteers. *Any parent who helps at a meet is usually treated to a lunch prepared by the hosting swim team*

DISCIPLINARY ACTION PROTOCOL

The Stingray Swim Team expects each of its members to act in an appropriate and mature manner at all times. This includes during practice, competitions, and when representing Stingray Swim Team outside the pool. Horseplay and/or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated as it negatively affects other members. When our team rules and expectations are not met, disciplinary actions will be enforced. Each member will have the right to due process during all disciplinary decisions, but the ultimate plan of action resides with the coaching staff and board of directors. Below is the Stingray Swim Team disciplinary action protocol, but please note that each decision will be on a case-to-case basis including, but not limited to, the following situations.

MISCONDUCT	DISCIPLINARY ACTION
Repeated horseplay or disruptive behavior	The coach will set up a meeting with the parent(s) to discuss the swimmer's actions. If the misconduct continues post-meeting, further disciplinary actions will be enforced, ultimately requiring dismissal from the team.
Dangerous behavior including spitting, pushing, hitting, and/or fighting	The coach will set up a meeting with the parent(s) after the first offence. A second offence will require the swimmer and parent(s) to meet with the board of directors. The swimmer will be dismissed from the team after a third offence.

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Disruptive parent behavior toward swimmers and/or coaches	The parent(s) will be required to meet with the board of directors to discuss their behavior. If the misconduct continues, the parent will be asked to avoid the facility. If this action does not solve the issue, dismissal from the team may be warranted.
Bullying	At the first sign of bullying, the involved swimmers will meet with the coach to discuss their actions. If the misconduct continues, the swimmer and parent(s) will meet with the board of directors. We take bullying seriously, and this misconduct may require suspension or dismissal from the team.
Law Enforcement charges	All Stingray Swim Team members represent our team outside the pool area. Any criminal misconduct reflects negatively on our program and will not be tolerated. Disciplinary actions will be taken on a case-by-case basis, ultimately requiring dismissal from the team.

Following suspension or dismissal from the team, the parent(s) are required to pay their account balance in full. If the parent(s) and swimmer wish to rejoin the Stingray Swim Team, they must meet with the board of directors to discuss their past actions and how they have eliminated the misconduct. The board of directors and coaching staff will act in the best interest of the team, and all reinstatement decisions are at the discretion of the board of directors. The above disciplinary actions protocol is not all-inclusive, and further disciplinary actions will be determined by the board of directors.

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Problems/questions/complaints regarding practice, stroke instruction, meets, team rules or any other part of the training program should be discussed with the following individuals, in order, until the situation is resolved:

- (1) The swimmer's coach
- (2) The head coach
- (3) The president of the board of directors
- (4) The board of directors at the next board meeting

Problems/questions/complaints regarding any other area of the team should be discussed with the following individuals, in order, until the situation is resolved:

- (1) The chair of the committee of the area in questions
- (2) The head coach
- (3) The president of the board of directors
- (4) The board of directors at the next board meeting

Problems/questions/complaints regarding other parents should be discussed with the following individuals, in order, until the situation is resolved:

- (1) The parent(s) in question
- (2) The head coach
- (3) The president of the board of directors
- (4) The board of directors at the next board meeting

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GLOSSARY

A Glossary of the specific terminology use in the sport of swimming will help you understand what's going on. 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 these definitions. Soon you'll understand and maybe even speak "the swimming language".

Age Group	Division of swimmers according to age. The National Age Group divisions are: 10-under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Some LSC's have divided the swimmers into more convenient divisions specific to their situations: (ie) 8-under, 13-Over, 15-Over, Junior, Senior.
Anchor	The final swimmer in a relay.
Approved Meet	Swim meets conducted by organizations (other than USS member clubs or LSC's) that have applied to USS or the local LSC for approval. If approval is granted, swimmers may use times achieved as USS qualifying times. A USS official must be present at all sessions of the meet. Approval does not mean Sanctioned.
Backstroke	One of the 4 competitive racing strokes, basically any style of swimming on your back. Backstroke (nicknames BACK) is swum as the first stroke in the Medley Relay and second stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds/mtr, 100 yds/mtr and 200 yds/mtr. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd back)
Beep	The starting sound from an electronic, computerized timing system.

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Blocks	The starting platforms located behind each lane. Some pools have blocks at the deeper end of the pool, and some pools have blocks at both ends. Blocks have a variety of designs and can be permanent or removable.
Bottom	The floor of the pool. Bottom depths are usually marked on the walls or sides of the pool.
Breaststroke	One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Breaststroke (nicknames BREAST) is swum as the second stroke in the Medley Relay and the third stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds/mtr, 100 yds/mtr, and 200 yds/mtr. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd breast)
Butterfly	One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Butterfly (nicknamed FLY) is swum as the third stroke in the Medley Relay and first stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds/mtr, 100 yds/mtr, and 200 yds/mtr. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd fly)
Cap	The latex or silicon covering worn on the head of swimmers. The colors and team logo's adorning these caps are limitless. National Caps, State Team Caps, award caps, plain practice caps, etc.
Car pool	The major transportation service provided by parents of a swim club, organized car pools shuttle swimmers to and from practices.
Championship Meet	The meet held at the end of a season. Qualification times are usually necessary to enter meet.
Championship Finals	The top 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals; the fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held. "Big" Finals.

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Club	A registered swim team that is a dues paying member of USA Swimming and the local LSC.
Colorado	A brand of automatic timing system.
Course	Designated distance (length of pool) for swimming competition. (1e) Long Course = 50 meters / Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.
Deck	The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches. No one but an "authorized" USS member may be on the deck during a swim competition.
Dehydration	The abnormal depletion of body fluids (water). The most common cause of swimmers cramps and sick feelings.
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).
Disqualified	A swimmers performance is not counted because of a rules infraction. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with open hand above their head.
Dive	Entering the water head first. Diving is not allowed during warmups except at the designated time, in specific lanes that are monitored by the swimmer's coach.

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Dropped Time	When a swimmer goes faster than the previous performance, they've improved or "dropped their time".
Dryland	The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.
Dry Side	That part of the Code book (rule book) that deals with the "Administrative" Regulations of Competition.
Entry	An Individual, Relay team, or Club roster's event list into a swim competition.
Entry Fees	The amount per event a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the LSC and type of meet.
Electronic Timing	The level of timing which normally uses 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' time.
Equipment	The items necessary to operate a swim practice or conduct a swim competition.
Event	A race or stroke over a given distance. An event equals 1 preliminary with its final, or 1 timed final.
False Start	When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn or gun. One false start will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team, although the starter or referee may disallow the false start due to unusual circumstances.

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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. Many times these events will alternate one girls' heat and one boys' heat until all swimmers have competed.
Fees	Money paid by swimmers for services, e.g., practice fees, registration fee, USS membership fee, etc.
FINA	The international organization which makes rules governing all levels of the sport of swimming.
Fins	Large rubber coverings/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.
Fund Raiser	A money making endeavor by a swim team/club usually involving both parents and swimmers.
Freestyle	One of the 4 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 50 yds/mtr, 100 yds/mtr, 200 yds/mtr, 400 mtr/500 yd 800 mtr/1000 yds, 1500 mtr/1650 yds. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd free)
Goals	The short and long range targets for swimmers to aim for.
Goggles	Glasses type devices worn by swimmers to keep their eyes from being irritated by the chlorine in the water.

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Gun	The blank firing pistol often used by the starter to start the races.
Gun Lap	The part of a freestyle distance race (400 meters or longer) when the swimmer has 2 lengths plus 5 yards to go. The starter fires a gun shot over the lane of the lead swimmer when swimmer is at the backstroke flags. A bell may also be used.
Handbook	A reference manual published by teams/clubs and LSC's or other swimming organizations.
Heats	A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are ranked by the times swimmers swam, after all heats of the event are completed.
Heat Award	A ribbon or coupon given to the winner of a single heat at an age group swim meet.
Heat Sheet	The pre-meet printed listings of swimmers seed times in the various events at a swim meet. These sheets vary in accuracy, since the coaches submit swimmers times many weeks before the meet. Heat sheets are sold at the admissions table and are used mainly to make sure the swimmer has been properly entered in all the events they signed up for. Parents enjoy looking at the seedings prior to the race, and swimmers can tell the order the events will be conducted and get a rough idea how long the meet sessions will last.
High Point	An award given to the swimmer scoring the most points in a given age group at a swim meet. All meets do not offer high point awards; check the pre meet information.

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IM	Individual Medley. A swimming event using all 4 of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle. Equal distances must be swam of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yds, 200 yds/mtr, 400 yds/mtr.
Insurance	USS offers "accident insurance coverage" which is automatic when swimmer, coach, official, pay their USS membership fee. Many restrictions apply so check with your club for detailed information.
Interval	A specific elapsed time for swimming or rest used during swim practice.
Invitational	Type of meet that requires a club to request an invitation to attend the meet.
J.O.	Junior Olympics. An age group championship meet conducted by the LSC.
Jump	An illegal start done by the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th member of a relay team when the swimmer on the block breaks contact with the block before the swimmer in the water touches the wall.
Juniors	A USS National Championship meet for swimmers 18 years old or less. Qualification times are necessary. National Meets are conducted both short course (in April) and long course (in August).
Kick	The leg movements of a swimmer. A popular word to "yell" to encourage swimmers during a race.
Kick Board	A flotation device used by swimmers during practice.

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Lane	The specific area in which a swimmer is assigned to swim, i.e., Lane 1 or Lane 2. Pools with starting blocks at only one end: As the swimmers stand behind the blocks, lanes are numbered from Right (lane 1) to Left (Lane 6).
Lane Lines	Continuous floating markers attached to a cable stretched from the starting end to the turning end for the purpose of separating each lane and quieting the waves caused by racing swimmers.
Lap	Two lengths of the course; down and back. (50 yds/meters in short course, 100 meters in long 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.
Late Entries	Meet entries from a club or individual which are received by the meet host after the entry deadline. These entries are usually not accepted and are returned to sender.
Leg	The part of a relay event swam by a single team member. A single stroke in the IM.
Length	The extent of the competitive course from end to end.
Long Course	A 50 meter pool.
LSC	Local Swim Committee. The local level administrative division of the corporation (USS) with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by the Corporation

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Lycra	A stretch material used to make competitive swim suits and swim caps.
Mark	The command to take your starting position.
Marshall	The adult(s) (official) who control the crowd and swimmer flow at a swim meet.
Medals	Awards given to the swimmers at meets. They vary in size and design and method of presentation.
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.
Meters	The measurement of the length of a swimming pool that was built per specs using the metric system. Long course pools are 50 meters long; short course pools are 25 meters long.
Mile	The slang referring to the 1500 meter or the 1650 yard freestyle, both of which are slightly short of a true mile (1760 yards).
Nationals	USS senior or junior level meets conducted in March/April and August. See Senior or Junior Nationals.
NT	No Time. The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swam that event before.
Nylon	A material used to make swim suits.
Officials	The certified, adult volunteers, who operate the many facets of a swim competition.
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	<p>Official Time. The swimmers event time recorded to one hundredth of a second (.01).</p>
Open Competition	<p>Competition which any qualified club, organization, or individual may enter.</p>
Parka	<p>Large 3/4 length fleece lined coats worn by swimmers, often in team colors with the team logo or team name.</p>
Paddle	<p>Colored plastic devices worn on the swimmers hands during swim practice.</p>
Practice	<p>The scheduled workouts swimmers attend with their swim team/club.</p>
Prelims	<p>Session of a Prelims/Finals meet in which the qualification heats are conducted.</p>
Prelims-Finals	<p>Type of meet with two sessions. The preliminary heats are usually held in the morning session. The fastest 6 or 8 (Championship Heat) swimmers, and the next fastest 6 or 8 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 are faster. The converse also applies.</p>
Pre-seeded	<p>A meet conducted without a bull pen in which a swimmer knows what lane and heat they are in by looking at the Meet heat sheet, or posted meet program.</p>
Proof of Time	<p>An official meet result, OVC, or other accepted form. Swimmers/Coaches must supply proof of time with some meet entries, and other meets it is not required unless a swimmer misses a cut of time at the meet.</p>
Psyche Sheet	<p>Shows the ranking of all swimmers in a particular event; without lane assignments.</p>

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Pull Buoy	A flotation device used for pulling by swimmers in practice.
Qualifying Times	Published times necessary to enter certain meets, or the times necessary to achieve a specific category of swimmer.
Race	Any single swimming competition, e.g., preliminary, final, timed final.
Referee	The head official at a swim meet in charge of all of the "Wet Side" administration and decisions.
Registered	Enrolled and paid as a member of USS and the LSC.
Relays	A swimming event in which 4 swimmers participate as a relay team, each swimmer swimming an equal distance of the race. There are two types of relays: 1.) Medley relay - One swimmer swims Backstroke, one swimmer swims Breaststroke, one swimmer swims Butterfly, one swimmer swims Freestyle, in that order. Medley relays are conducted over 200 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 80 yd/mtr distances.
Ribbons	Awards in a variety of sizes, styles, and colors, given at swim meets.
Safety	The responsible and careful actions of those participating in a swim meet. USS and each LSC now have a "Safety Coordinator" and each meet must have "Marshalls" in charge of safety.
Sanction	A permit issued by an LSC to a USS group member to conduct an event or meet.

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Sanction Fee	The amount paid by a USS group member to an LSC for issuing a sanction.
Schedule	USS or LSC list of meets with dates, meet host, meet location, type of meet, and contacts address and phone.
Scratch	To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if not followed, swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events.
Seed	Assign the swimmers heats and lanes according to their submitted or preliminary times.
Seeding	Deck Seeding - swimmers are called to report to the Clerk of the Course. After scratches are determined, the event is seeded. Pre Seeding - swimmers are arranged in heats according to submitted times, usually a day prior to the meet.
Senior Meet	A meet that is for senior level swimmers and is not divided into age groups. Qualification times are usually necessary and will vary depending on the level of the meet.
Senior	A USS National Championship meet for swimmers of any age as long as the qualification times are met.
Senior Nationals	Nationals are conducted short course in the spring (usually in late March) and long course in the summer (usually in late July or August).

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Shave	The process of removing all arm, leg, and exposed torso hair, to decrease the "drag" or resistance of the body moving through the water. Used only by Seniors at very important (Championship) meets.
Short Course	A 25 yard or 25 meter pool.
Simultaneously	A term used in the rules of butterfly and breaststroke, meaning at the same time.
Splash	United States Swimming newsletter that is mailed bimonthly.
Split	A portion of an event, shorter than the total distance, that is timed, e.g., a swimmer's first 50 time is taken as the swimmer swims the 100 race. It's common to take multiple splits for the longer distances.
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.
State	A meet held twice a year (Short Course and Long Course) sponsored by the LSC. It is common to hold a Championship Senior meet and Age Group meet separately. Qualification times are usually necessary.
State Qualifier	A swimmer who has made the necessary cut off times to enter the State meet.
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.

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Stroke	There are 4 competitive strokes: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle.
Stroke Judge	The official positioned at the side of the pool, walking the length of the course as the swimmers race. If the Stroke Judge sees something illegal, they report to the referee and the swimmer may be disqualified.
Submitted Time	Times used to enter swimmers in meets. These times must have been achieved by the swimmer at previous meets.
Suit	The racing uniform worn by the swimmer, in the water, during competition.
Swim-A-Thon	The "Fund Raiser" copyrighted by USA Swimming for local clubs to make money.
Taper	The resting phase of a swimmer at the end of the season before the championship meet.
Team	USS Registered club that has the right to compete for points.
Team Records	The statistics a team keeps, listing the fastest swimmer in the club's history for each age group, in each event.
Timed Finals	Competition in which only heats are swum and final placings are determined by those times.
Time Standard	A time set by a meet or LSC or USS (etc) that a swimmer must achieve for qualification or recognition.

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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; no placing or awards are given.
Top 16	A list of times compiled by the LSC or USS or Swimming World that recognizes the top number of swimmers in each age group (boys & girls) in each event and distance.
Touch Out	To reach the touchpad and finish first in a close race.
Touch Pad	The removable plate (on the end of pools) that is connected to an automatic timing system. A swimmer must properly touch the touchpad to register an official time in a race.
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 USS club.
Trophy	Type of award given to teams and swimmers at meets.
Unattached	An athlete member who competes, but does not represent a club or team (abbreviated UN)
Uniform	The various parts of clothing a swimmer wears at a meet. This may include: Parka, Warmup jacket, Team duffel bag, sweat pants, suits, hat, goggles, T-shirt, towel, etc.

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Unofficial Time	The time displayed on an electronic score board or read over the PA system by the announcer immediately after the race. After the time has been checked, it will become the official time.
USS	The governing body of swimming, USA Swimming.
USS Number	A 12 part number assigned to a swimmer after they have filled out the proper forms and paid their annual dues. The first six place holders are the swimmers birthdate, followed by the first three letters of the first name, middle initial, and first four letters of the last name. For example, the USS# for swimmer John William David, born Aug. 27, 2001 = 082701JOHWDAVI.
Warm-down	The gentle swimming a swimmer does after a race when pool space is available.
Warm-up	The gradual increased tempo swimming a swimmer does before the meet or before their event is swum.
Watch	The hand held device used by timers and coaches for timing a swimmers races and taking splits.
Whistle	The sound a starter/referee makes to signal for quiet before they give the command to start the race. Three short whistles indicate “behind your block”, one long whistle indicates “step onto your block”.
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.

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Yardage

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

Zones

The country is divided 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.

