**Parent Swim Team Meeting Notes**

**March 23, 2016**

There is a meeting every 2 months or so.

April 30—Swim-A-Thon

May 2—Awards ceremony

Swimposium—Every few years for parents, coaches, board members—in Anchorage on April 9th.

Summer Travel Trip—Santa Claire, CA—any swimmer can go. Swim in morning, then watch the Arena Pro Series at night. There will be future Olympians at that meet. Swim meet from June 3-June 5, June 6th is either a water park or a theme park. Fly back on the 7th.

General reminder—Check team website, Facebook, and emails.

Swim-A-Thon—USA swimming foundation—supports lots of programs from Learn to Swim to Nationals—5% of what we raise goes to USA Swimming Foundation. The other 95% goes to the Stingrays. The Stingrays will spend the money raised on new starting blocks for the Patty and Alaska Club pools if the goal is reached. The current starting blocks are in disrepair, some even needing towels spread on the tops for traction. The goal is $18,000—each starting block costs $2000. Stingrays are hoping that UAF will also contribute some money. Donations are tax deductible. Directions to donate are on the website and non-Stingray members can enter the website. The goal breaks down to $175 per swimmer. The children will swim as many lengths as they can with a 200 length max. The board of director election will be held during the Swim-A-Thon at 3pm. People who are volunteering at the time will be relieved so that they can go vote.

Group Structure—Test sets are good guidelines about a swimmer’s abilities but the instructors look at more things to determine in which group to place a swimmer. The instructors think of lots of things when deciding where they think the swimmer is going to have success. Copper to Bronze—the instructors want them to be at practice regularly, Silver—covers the basics of all 4 strokes and gaining a general understanding of the clock, Gold—covers the 4 legal strokes and legal flip turns, Platinum—swimmers strive to achieve their age group Championship times, Jr. and Sr.—there are high expectations—it is a big jump from Platinum—they swim 6000 yards per day, Sr.—high school aged kids—they swim more yards than Jr. The coaches determine if a swimmer is ready or not ready to move onto the next level. They look at mental and physical considerations, work ethic, attendance, the social aspect—it is not based on scheduling. Success for the little guys means having fun at meets. As they get older, they are assigned to more events. The coaches are working to support well rounded swimmers. For the older ones, as they get older and older, it becomes harder and harder to achieve best times. And, every swimmer is going to have some pattern of having a great season and then hitting a plateau.

This team strives to teach life skills. The USA is the best swimming country in the world. Olympics—2 swimmers in each event go to the Olympics from the USA. 1,400+ at Trials. Going to the Olympics is not what the team is looking for. Teaching life skills is.

There is a tendency of the swimmers to swim the same events. The instructors work to get them comfortable with being uncomfortable. By the age of 14, the goal is that every swimmer has swum every event. Not too many people want to swim the 200 Fly but after they do it they think, “That wasn’t so bad.” To swim a mile is the same thing.

The coaches keep track of how many swimmers swim each event. There are tons in the 50 Free and sometimes none in the Mile. The instructors have gone over the history of swims and are changing now to make more well-rounded swimmers. The goal is to get everyone to swim everything.

Planning for the future—Macrocycle, mesocycle, and microcycle—How much time aerobic, how much time anaerobic. First—General aerobic—lots of free, lots of kicking. Second—Specific training for different strokes. Third—Competing. Fourth—Transitional phase—celebrating—change up the work.

Annual planning—what Champion meet they will go to. Stairstep within stairstep—local meets—go for good times in one meet then the next—the coaches want to see effort—it all adds up to the Champion meet. Every time they are tired and the coaches ask them to swim hard, they get better.

How to be a great swim parent: Support your swimmer by being a spectator. Let the coaches coach. Don’t compare your child’s performance to others. Reward effort, not results. Volunteer often—everyone appreciates it (especially your child). Give your swimmer ownership of their sport—step back and let them learn. Don’t get angry about poor swims. Don’t force your child to swim—if they don’t like it, try something else—chances are they will come back to swimming. Don’t bribe your child with money—the instructors are trying to instill internal rewards. Focus on enjoyment, exercise, and mastery of the skill. Stay informed on team activities through the website, emails, and Facebook.

What swimmers want parents to do: Love and support them regardless of performance, focus on effort instead of results, volunteer on deck, get them ice cream after the meet to celebrate their effort.

What coaches want parents to do: Same as above, be a spectator instead of a coach, talk to the coach after practice, not during, watch practice from the balcony not on deck—too distracting for the swimmers to have parents on deck during practice, support the coaches and realize that they are professional—they have lots of training and continue to travel far to receive further training.