



Area Tallahassee Aquatic Club
Team Handbook

Revised 04/08/2020

Welcome to the Area Tallahassee Aquatic Club (ATAC) Swim Team

This Team Handbook is provided by the City of Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department, Performance Enhancement Enterprises, Inc., and the ATAC Boosters.

With this guide, we have attempted to provide as much information as possible for our ATAC family members. It is an introduction to competitive swimming and our team organization. We hope this guide will help you feel a part of the team and will encourage your active participation.

In addition to this guide, the ATAC website, SwimATAC.com, is a great resource to find the answers to your questions. If you can't find the answers to your questions or need additional information, talk to another ATAC parent, one of the coaches, a board member, or the office staff.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
MISSION STATEMENT	1
TEAM POLICIES	1
Privacy Statement	1
MAAP (Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy)	1
Anti-Bullying	1
Code of Conduct	2
Coach Code of Conduct	2
Parent Code of Conduct	3
Athlete Code of Conduct	3
Photography Policy	4
Grievance Procedures	4
COACHING STAFF	4
ATAC BOOSTERS	5
TRAINING GROUPS	6
PROMOTIONS	9
GUIDELINES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL SWIM PARENT	10
SWIMMER'S RESPONSIBILITY	11
REGISTRATION	11
FEES	12
REFUND POLICY	12
PRACTICE SCHEDULE	12
COMMUNICATION	12
WEATHER POLICY	13
EQUIPMENT AND TEAM MERCHANDISE	13
SWIM MEETS	13
Philosophy of Competition	13
Seasons - Long and Short Course	13
Meet Schedule	14

Types of Meets	14
Meet Policy	14
Meet Entries	14
Meet Entry Fees	15
Procedures for entering meets:	15
Relay Policy	15
Swim Meet Procedures - What to Expect!	15
WHAT TO EXPECT AT A MEET	16
LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT	17
GLOSSARY	18

INTRODUCTION

ATAC is a competitive swim program sponsored by the City of Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs department. The team is administered by Terry Maul, Head Coach and President of Performance Enhancement Enterprises, Inc.

We are a year round swim team offering programs for beginners through Olympic Trial qualifiers.

ATAC is a member of USA Swimming, the governing body for swimming in the United States. Florida Swimming is our local swimming committee (LSC).

The team is supported by our parent volunteer organization, ATAC Boosters, a Nonprofit 501(c) (3) corporation. Each parent of an ATAC swimmer is automatically a member of the ATAC Boosters and is expected to assist in team-sponsored functions and events.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Area Tallahassee Aquatic Club is to provide a broad-based competitive swim program in a safe, healthy and positive environment in order to assist with the physical, mental, and moral development of the youth of the Tallahassee community.

TEAM POLICIES

Privacy Statement

ATAC will not share member information with the general public. E-mail addresses are only used for team communication and will never be sold or given to any other organization. Families may also opt out of our online team directory.

MAAP (Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy)

Effective 5/15/2019 ATAC has implemented MAAP. All parents must review and agree to this policy IN WRITING annually. The complete policy is posted on the ATAC website. [ATAC MAAP POLICY](#).

Anti-Bullying

[ATAC's Team Bullying Prevention Plan](#) is posted on SwimATAC.com in the SafeSport > Policies and Forms section.

Code of Conduct

Coach Code of Conduct

The purpose of this code of conduct for coaches is to establish common expectations for all members of the coaching staff of ATAC. It is to be used as a guide to promote a positive team environment and good sportsmanship.

- At all times, adhere to USA Swimming's rules and code of conduct.
- Set a good example of respect and sportsmanship for participants and fans to follow.
- Act and dress with professionalism and dignity in a manner suitable to his/her profession.
- Respect officials and their judgment and abide by the rules of the event.
- Treat opposing coaches, participants, and spectators with respect.
- Instruct participants in sportsmanship and demand that they display good sportsmanship.
- Coach in a positive manner and do not use derogatory comments or abusive language.
- Win with humility and lose with dignity.
- Treat every athlete fairly, justly, impartially, intelligently, and with sensitivity.
- Always place the well-being, health, and safety of swimmers above all other considerations, including developing performance.
- Continue to seek and maintain their own professional development in all areas in relation to coaching and teaching children.
- Always maintain a professional separation between coach and athlete.

Any complaints of a coach violating this code of conduct will be brought to the attention of the Head Coach.

Parent Code of Conduct

The purpose of a code of conduct for parents is to establish consistent expectations for behavior by parents. As a parent/guardian, I understand the important growth and developmental support that my child's participation fosters. I also understand that it is essential to provide the coaching staff with respect and the authority to coach the team. I agree with the following statements:

- I will set the right example for our children by demonstrating sportsmanship and showing respect and common courtesy at all times to the team members, coaches, competitors, officials, parents, and all facilities.
- I will get involved by volunteering, observing practices, cheering at meets, and talking with my child and their coach about their progress.
- I will refrain from coaching my child from the stands during practices or meets.
- I understand that criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials, volunteers, and/or any participating swimmer will not be tolerated.
- I will respect the integrity of the officials.
- I will direct my concerns first to the lead coach; then, if not satisfied, to the Head Coach.

Athlete Code of Conduct

The purpose of a code of conduct for athletes is to establish a consistent expectation for athletes' behavior.

- I will respect and show courtesy to my teammates and coaches at all times.
- I will demonstrate good sportsmanship at all practices and meets.
- I will set a good example of behavior and work ethic for my younger teammates.
- I will be respectful of my teammates' feelings and personal space. Swimmers who exhibit sexist, racist, homophobic, or otherwise inappropriate behavior will be faced with consequences.
- I will attend all team meetings and training sessions, unless I am excused by my coach.
- I will show respect for all facilities and other property (including locker rooms) used during practices, competitions, and team activities.
- I will refrain from foul language, violence, behavior deemed dishonest, offensive, or illegal.
- If I disagree with an official's call, I will talk with my coach and not approach the official directly.
- I will obey all of USA Swimming's rules and codes of conduct.

I understand that if I violate this code of conduct, I will be subject to disciplinary action determined by the Head Coach.

Photography Policy

Upon registering for the team, parents are asked for consent to include their children in team photographs, and video for promotion purposes. If you want to decline having your child included in team photos / video, please notify Head Coach Terry Maul in writing by e-mail at perfenh@aol.com

- Photos / video are not permitted behind the starting blocks at swim meets or practice at any time.
- Cell phones / cameras are not permitted in the locker rooms during swim practice or swim meets at any time.
- Failure to abide by these policies of ATAC and USA Swimming can result in suspension and or termination of team membership.

Grievance Procedures

PURPOSE: Your safety is paramount to the Area Tallahassee Aquatic Club, the City of Tallahassee, and USA Swimming. If you experience or witness actions or events that concern you or make you feel uncomfortable, it is important to talk to someone about it. This document, [ATAC Grievance Procedures \(.pdf\)](#) outlines the processes where a swimmer, parent, or coach can bring forward a complaint or concern.

COACHING STAFF

The Head Coach is responsible for the philosophy and the implementation of the entire program. Each of the assistants has the responsibility of directing their group within the philosophy of the team. The ATAC staff is dedicated to providing a quality program that will allow every swimmer to reach their full potential.

The ATAC Coaching staff is made up of recognized professional coaches, including US National Team Coaches, Florida All-Star Team Coaches, and several assistant coaches with varied and extensive coaching experience. All coaches are USA Swimming Certified.

ATAC BOOSTERS

The function of the ATAC Boosters is to provide support to the successful implementation of the philosophy of the Head Coach. If you want to learn more about the purpose of the boosters, meetings are held on a monthly basis, generally on the second Tuesday of each month in the team room at Trousdell. These meetings are open and all parents of ATAC swimmers are encouraged to attend and get involved. The ATAC Boosters Bylaws are available upon request.

The ATAC Boosters are responsible for hosting local swim meets, fundraising and social activities. Money raised goes toward such things as travel, equipment, social activities, awards, and incentives for the swimmers, coaches and parents.

ATAC usually hosts three big meets during the year, (June, August, and January.) We also run small developmental meets during the year Every family is expected to help run the meets.

TRAINING GROUPS

ATAC provides several training options to provide for all levels of skill and goal orientation for children, adolescents, and young adults.

Practices are held at Trousdell Pool and Myers Park (Wade Wehunt Pool). A cooperative program is also conducted in Thomasville, GA.

The requirement for ATAC membership is that the child be able to swim one length of a 25-yard pool in good freestyle form. A member of the coaching staff will conduct a short water test to determine the best group for the child's skill level.

When placing a child on the team for the first time, the coaches will place swimmers where they can be successful. When the swimmer falls between two groups, we will place the swimmer in the easiest group. Placing a swimmer in a group "over their head" for car pool or convenience reasons usually leads to a situation of poor self-image, inability to keep up and eventually quitting the sport. Swimmer promotion will be determined by the coaching staff.

NOVICE (BRONZE) *Average Ages 5-10*

The Bronze group is intended to teach children the four competitive strokes, Individual Medley (IM) and starts and turns while developing a love for swimming and improving physical conditioning.

Attendance: We encouraged attending at least three times a week.

Swim Meets: Swimmers are encouraged to participate in local and some out of town meets.

NOVICE (SILVER AND GOLD) *Average Ages 6-11*

After the child has mastered the four basic stroke techniques, they will move to this level where the emphasis will be to improve physical conditioning while teaching the basic skills necessary for competition. This group will maintain a strong emphasis on developing correct habits in stroke technique.

Attendance: We encourage attending at least four times a week.

Swim Meets: Swimmers are encouraged to compete in local meets and occasionally travel to an out-of-town multi-day meet.

SEASONAL LEAGUE

ATAC offers three seasonal league opportunities for swimmers that only want to participate during a specific time of the year. Each league season is approximately ten to twelve weeks in length with a one-time registration fee. League swimmers will be grouped within the Novice Bronze/Silver/Gold programs based on their ability. Each season will provide competition opportunities through scheduled "League Meets" as well as additional opportunities to compete in Developmental and Invitational meet offerings throughout the year.

AGE GROUP (1 & 2) *Average Ages 9-12*

This level is divided into two levels of intensity (AG 1 and AG 2). Both levels are intended to move the child's training experience to another level of intensity by increasing intensity and volume of training. The AG 1 group works at a higher level of intensity and volume of training than AG 2.

Attendance: We encourage attending five times a week.

Swim Meets: Swimmers in these groups are encouraged to compete in all ATAC team competitions.

HIGH SCHOOL CONDITIONING *Average Ages 13-17*

This group is intended to provide an opportunity for swimmers in high school to maintain a high level of physical conditioning without making the intense commitment to year-round swimming that is expected of the Pre-Senior and Senior groups. The emphasis will be improving stroke technique while maintaining physical conditioning in a healthy social environment.

Attendance: We encourage attending at least three times a week.

Swim Meets: Swimmers in this group have the option to compete in local and out-of-town meets.

PRE-SENIOR *Average Ages 13-14*

The Pre-Senior group is made up of swimmers who have a need to increase volume and intensity beyond the Age Group offering, but are not quite ready to take on the demands of the Senior program. The emphasis of this group is to prepare the swimmers for Senior level training. Strength work in the weight room may be included with this group.

Attendance: We encourage attending at least six times a week and at least one morning practice.

Swim Meets: Swimmers in this group are expected to compete in all meets.

SENIOR *Ages 13 – College Age*

The Senior group trains at the highest level of volume and intensity provided by the ATAC program. Swimmers in this group are generally focusing on state and national level competition and are expected to make a high level of commitment to training. The training in this group includes morning and afternoon sessions, as well as optional strength training in the weight room.

Attendance: We encourage attending seven-nine times a week.

Swim Meets: Swimmers in this group are expected to compete in all meets.

CHALLENGER – SPECIAL NEEDS *All Ages*

The Challenger group meets three days a week and is intended to provide an aquatic experience for children or adults with special needs requiring more individual attention. Many Challenger swimmers have been with ATAC for over a decade.

Attendance: We encourage swimmers to attend as often as they can.

Swim Meets: Swimmers in this group compete in local and national meets.

PROMOTIONS

GROUP CHANGES: ATAC coaches will address group changes in August and May.

Some of the following considerations are carefully taken into account when a decision is made to move or not to move a swimmer to the next highest level in our program. Usually, the coaches of the groups in question discuss the situation with the Head Coach; to be sure all areas of consideration are taken into account.

Ability to Train: Consistent ability to hold repeat times and intervals in all aspects (swimming, kicking, pulling, etc.) is the primary consideration for a group change.

Attendance: A prime consideration to the team is the swimmer's ability and/or desire to handle the amount of work needed to be in the next group level for a predetermined period of time BEFORE being allowed to move up.

Attitude: ATAC considers attitude to be a prime factor for success. Can swimmers handle the increased workload with a positive attitude?

Social Age: Can the swimmer relate to future peers in the next group? Is the swimmer "socially" ready to move to a higher level?

Techniques: Has the swimmer mastered the start, turn, and stroke techniques taught at the current level? Do they follow prescribed breathing patterns, etc.?

GUIDELINES FOR THE SUCCESSFUL SWIM PARENT

The following guidelines will help your child reach their full potential as an athlete.

Best Kind of Parent: This parent's role is to supply love, positive recognition, moral support and encouragement necessary to make the child experience a positive one.

Attendance: Please make every effort to have your swimmers at practice on time and picked up promptly after practice is over. Encourage a good diet and sleeping. They will serve your children well.

The Coach is the Coach!: The coach's job is to motivate and constructively criticize the swimmer's performance. We want your swimmer to relate to their coach as soon as possible concerning swimming matters. This relationship between coach and swimmer produces best results. When parents interject opinions as to how the swimmer should swim or train, it causes considerable confusion as to whom the swimmer should listen to. If you have a question or concern, please contact the coach.

Be Patient: Even the very best swimmers will have meets where they do not do their best times. These "plateaus" are a normal part of swimming. Over the course of a season times should improve.

Be Aware of the Big Picture: Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of a training group that can range in size of responsibility from 10-30 members. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group, but in the long run the benefits of membership in the group compensate for occasional short-term inconvenience.

Communicate: The best time to communicate your concern is when the coach isn't busy with the swimmers. Please arrange a time to talk with the coach, possibly before or after practice.

If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach. The coach is the only one who can resolve the problem.

SWIMMER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Disciplinary Action: Disciplinary action due to improper behavior or failure to follow team policy is the responsibility of the Head Coach who may impose sanctions ranging from a change in training opportunities, restriction from specific competitive experiences to complete dismissal from the team.

Swimmers and Parents shall be entitled to a conference with the Head Coach involving any sanction.

Examples of infractions and types of discipline:

INFRACTION	SANCTION
Inappropriate training behavior. Horseplay, consistent unexcused tardiness, fighting.	Dismissal from practice, loss of opportunity to attend meets.
Inappropriate meet behavior. Late for warm-up or team meeting, missing events, horseplay.	Loss of relay opportunity, loss of individual event opportunities
Disrespect of coaching staff. Verbal disrespect, refusal to follow instructions.	Loss of practice and/or meet opportunity ranging from one day to two weeks.
Behavior not consistent with the pursuit of excellence in competitive swimming, and/or damaging to the City of Tallahassee Aquatics Program (i.e., use of alcohol, use of drugs, vandalism, etc.)	Duration of suspension at the discretion of the Head Coach ranging from one week to a permanent dismissal.

REGISTRATION

All swimmers must be completely registered, including the payment of all fees **before** a swimmer is allowed to participate with ATAC. All forms and fees are due at the time of registration. All swimmers must renew their USA Swimming registrations annually.

Fees are due as long as a swimmer is registered whether they participate or not. **You are required to notify the team in writing if your swimmer is no longer participating.**

FEES

Coaching fees are paid to Performance Enhancement Enterprises, Inc. Year-Round coaching fees are paid Quarterly IN ADVANCE by check / cash or Monthly by automatic bank draft. Credit cards are not accepted for the payment of coaching fees.

USA Swimming renewals and meet entry fees are paid to the ATAC Boosters through SwimATAC.com. Payments to the ATAC Boosters can be made by Credit card or monthly bank draft.

REFUND POLICY

There are NO refunds for meet entry fees after the meet entry deadline.

Coaching fees are only refundable in the event of a medical condition supported by written documentation from a doctor. The refund will be in the form of a credit toward future coaching fees.

PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Posted on SwimATAC.com in the SWIMMERS section. Practice schedules are (1) School year: mid-August through the end of May. (2) Summer: June and July. (3) Winter holiday training: mid-December to the first of January.

COMMUNICATION

- **E-mail** is the primary way information is delivered to the team. PLEASE read all the team emails **THOROUGHLY**. One of the most common criticisms we hear from parents is 'How was I supposed to know that?' Most of the time it was in an email they did not read!

- **Website:** SwimATAC.com is the team website where announcements are posted regularly. Our site has everything a parent or swimmer would like to know about what's happening in ATAC. Meet schedules, news, time standards, links, etc. are included.

- **Contacting Coaches:** When contacting the coaches, please be considerate. The best way to speak with the coaches is to meet with them before and after practice. They usually make themselves available for ten minutes before and ten minutes after practice to answer questions, provide information, etc. You may also send an email to the coach from the home page of SwimATAC.com or call the ATAC office at 850-891-4906. Please leave a message containing name, number and a good time to call and a coach will return your call within 24 hours. You may also contact the coaches by e-mail through the ATAC website (www.swimatac.com).

- **Social Media:** Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and **GroupMe** by meet

WEATHER POLICY

If the pool is open, ATAC will swim. If it is just raining, ATAC will swim. If there is lightning in the area, the City of Tallahassee will clear the pool and will let us back in when it is safe. Remember in Tallahassee it may be thundering on one side of town and perfectly clear at the pool. We will update the HOME page of SwimATAC.com with weather related delays and cancellations if possible.

EQUIPMENT AND TEAM MERCHANDISE

For practice each swimmer should have a suit, goggles (including an extra pair), fins, water bottle and a towel. Swim caps are optional but encouraged. At meets swimmers are encouraged to wear a team cap.

Training gear is available from SwimOutlet.com and Total Teamwares.

Generally, training equipment for new swimmers (kickboards and pull buoys) is provided by the ATAC Boosters. Swimmers in more advanced groups are required to purchase their own kickboard and pull buoys. Additional items such as fins, hand paddles and snorkels should only be purchased when directed by the Coach

Team caps, t-shirts and other limited merchandise are available through the ATAC Shack Spirit store. There is a link on SwimATAC.com where you can order items, pay online and have items placed in your swimmer's folder in the team room.

Team t-shirts (Garnet, Gold and White) are encouraged for meets and special shirts are given to certain championship meet qualifiers.

SWIM MEETS

Philosophy of Competition

All swimmers are encouraged to participate in meets. Different types of competition are available throughout the year. Each swimmer will be instructed to enter only those meets in which they can expect to feel a sense of pride and accomplishment in their performance. Generally, our schedule includes one weekend meet per month, and one small, local meet. Swimmers should consult with the coaches about what meets to attend.

Seasons - Long and Short Course

The swim year is divided into two seasons. The winter, or "short-course", season runs from mid-September to mid-March. The meets are held in a 25-yard pool. The summer, or "long-course", season runs from early April to mid-August. Meets are generally held in 50 meter pools for more advanced swimmers. Novice and Summer League swimmers will compete in 25 yard pools during the summer.

Meet Schedule

Each season's meet schedule is available at the beginning of the season. Swimmers are encouraged to compete in all meets indicated for their practice group. It is not mandatory to attend all the meets offered. Pick meets based on the practice group and your swimmer's level of achievement. A few meets are designated as "TEAM" meets and these will take precedence over the other competitions. Each meet listed has indicators (x) for swimming groups that should make every attempt to attend.

Types of Meets

- **League Meets:** The ATAC League has been set up to promote greater participation and opportunity for competition through a series of local meets. Each swimmer receives a ribbon for their place of finish or in recognition of a "Best Time". These often serve as an introduction to competitive swimming and are scheduled primarily during the Summer.
- **Developmental:** These meets are held locally to assist the swimmer in gaining experience and assessing how well they are developing their skills acquired during practice. Other teams may attend.
- **Invitational:** These are meets in which the swimmers and clubs are invited by the host team. Invitationals are for our more experienced swimmers to measure their progress against equally strong swimmers representing other USA swim teams.
- **Championship:** These meets, generally held for the State or Region, require performance standards and attract national caliber swimmers. Qualifying times for these meets may range from "B" times to "AA" times and sometimes even faster. Examples of these meets include Florida Age Group Championships (FLAGS), Senior Championship, Junior and Senior Nationals and the Sunshine State Games.

Meet Policy

All swimmers representing ATAC in meets other than designated team meets should clear entries with the coach of their group. Designated "team" meets take precedence over all other competition.

Meet Entries

Meet sign-ups are done on swimatac.com. Parents are responsible for signing up their swimmer to participate in meets. A credit card or bank account must be on file at SwimATAC.com to register for swim meets (except Summer League meets)

The online system will not allow late entries. Deadlines are final. Some meets accept deck entries but this is limited by availability in heats. There will be no exceptions to this policy, and it applies to all meets.

Meet Entry Fees

Fees are listed on each specific meet information page at SwimATAC.com. The following fee schedule is included only as a guide.

In Town ATAC hosted meets: \$4-\$7/event, \$20 surcharge, \$1-\$2 heat sheet. Note some ATAC hosted meets will also have additional surcharges.

Out of Town meets: The fees are set by host teams. ATAC charges the event fee + \$1/event, \$20 surcharge and all other fees assessed by the host team. (heat sheet fee, facility fee, non LSC fee etc.)

Relay fees: The team pays entry fees for relay events.

NOTE: There are no fees required for ATAC's Summer LEAGUE Meets

Procedures for entering meets:

Prior to a meet, the parent will receive an email with event information. Included in the information will be the date, time, location, required entry fee, order of events, entry deadline, and any special information about the meet (i.e. qualifying times, event limits, etc.) All entries for swim meets are done online through the team website. If a swimmer wishes to enter a meet, click on the attend meet button under the meet, click "yes" to attend and then select individual events. Please carefully read the "swimmer notes" to verify the number of events that can be entered. Click Save to exit.

Relay Policy

Coaches will determine relay participation based on their subjective assessment of what swimmers will make up the strongest team at a particular meet. Factors such as swimmers' performances at that meet, behavior at these meets, and illness will be considered.

Swim Meet Procedures - What to Expect!

A meet itinerary will be sent by email and posted on the ATAC website approximately two days prior to the first day of the meet. Warm-up times will be designated in this information. A heat sheet will be emailed as soon as it is available.

The heat sheet is the list of all swimmers by event, heat and lane and includes the entry time for each swimmer. This information lets parents and swimmers know exactly which event, heat, and lane your child is in. Swimmers are seeded according to their entry time (usually the swimmer's fastest time.)

WHAT TO EXPECT AT A MEET

Most swim meets are two and a half (2 ½) days long – Friday night, Saturday and Sunday. The Friday schedule **usually** begins between 4:00-6:00PM and has events for age groups 10 and under through Senior. Each meet schedule is different and is determined by the host team. The schedule for Saturday and Sunday has each age group **either** swimming in the morning or the afternoon. Expect a full morning or afternoon spent at the pool. For example, if your child's age group swims the morning session, plan on getting to the pool for warm-ups at approximately 7:00-8:00AM and leaving when the session is over at Noon-1:00PM, depending on the size of the meet.

Swimmers usually spend down time in a Team area. This is usually an area near the pool. Bring a sleeping bag or blanket to throw down. Most meets have concessions, but it is a good idea to bring extra snacks, water or sports drinks. The most important item is **LIQUID** – swimmers need to replace liquids. Do not drink dairy products before swimming – these can cause stomach cramps. Remember to pack games, books or music.

Most meets have "heat sheets" available to purchase. Heat sheets will specify heat and lane assignments your child will be swimming. This information is also available from the coaches. It is a good idea to write the event number and stroke on your child's arm or leg as a reminder. Psych sheets are another form of a heat sheet that only shows the swimmers in each event, listed by entry time from fastest to slowest. You can estimate the heat assignment and the swimmer will get their lane assignments when checking in with the Clerk of the Course.

Remember to dress accordingly – pool areas are usually hot and humid!! Crash areas may be cold for wet swimmers so don't forget a sweatshirt.

Swimmers should be ready to enter the pool at the time designated for warm-up, therefore they should arrive at the pool **NO LATER THAN 15 minutes** before that time – this will give them enough time to find the team in the "crash area". Swimmers need to make sure that they have their suits, goggles, swim caps and towel before they leave home!! It is a good idea to have back-up goggles and a swim cap.

It is a swimmer's responsibility to make sure they report to their event in time to swim.

Each swimmer is to report to the coach as soon as they have completed their event so the coach can give them feedback. If your child comes to you, remind them to see their coach first.

Do not leave the meet until you or your swimmer has checked with the coach to see if they are on a relay. If a member of the relay leaves before the event, the other three team members will not be able to swim.

Remember at meets, swimmers are working not only to win races but also to get new "best times". A child can take 25th place and be thrilled because he/she got a faster

time than before. A word of praise and support from family, other teammates and team families is a great way to reward and acknowledge their hard work. Last but not least, expect to have **FUN** at a meet! It's exciting to be on a relay or to cheer on teammates. Sharing snacks, playing games, and building friendships are all part of the meet experience. Setting and achieving goals, as well as perfecting skills, is rewarding.

LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

There are seven different age group classifications recognized by United State Swimming (the governing body of the sport): 8-Under, 10-Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, and Senior. The Senior classification includes any age registered swimmer who has achieved the prescribed qualifying time for the event. Not all age group classifications are offered at every swim meet. The swimmers age on the first day of the meet will govern the swimmers age for the entire meet.

Within each age-group there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. USS has implemented new national time standards beginning in 2007. The standards proceed through four levels or tracks of achievement: "C" track (C/CC/CCC), "B" track (B/BB/BBB), "A" track (A/AA/AAA), and "NTR" track (N/NN/NNN). Swimmers begin as "D" swimmers and as they improve they advance through the track standards. The times required for each ability level are published each year by United States Swimming. This permits fair, yet challenging, competition on all levels. The standards can be found on SwimATAC.com-Swimmers-Time Standards.

A swimmer may be in a different class in each stroke. For example: a "C" breaststroke time, a "B" freestyle time, and a "AA" backstroke time.

Some swim meets set certain qualification standards. In order to swim in a certain classification, a swimmer must have achieved the qualifying time for that particular classification.

GLOSSARY

Age Group: Division of swimmers according to age. The National Age Group divisions are: 10&Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, and 17-18.

Anchor: The final swimmer in a relay.

Blocks: The starting platforms located behind each lane. Also called Starting Blocks.

Cap: The latex, silicone or lycra covering worn on the head of swimmers.

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

Deck: The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, coaches and lifeguards. Only authorized personnel may be on the deck during swim practices and competitions.

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) and 1650 yards (66 lengths)

Disqualification: A swimmer's time is not counted because of a rules infraction. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with an open hand above their head.

Dual Meet: Type of meet where two (2) teams compete against one another.

Dropped Time: When a swimmer goes faster in an event than the previous performance they have "dropped time".

Dryland: Exercises and various strength training swimmers do out of the water.

Event: A race in a swim meet.

False Start: When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn or gun.

Flags: Pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool approximately 15 feet from the wall.

Heat Sheet: The printed listing of swimmers by event and name at a swim meet.

High Point: An award given to the swimmer scoring the most points in a given age group at some swim meets.

IM: Individual Medley. All four competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of a race. The order is Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle.

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, Lane 2 etc. 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 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.

Long Course: A 50 meter pool.

Mark: The command to take your starting position.

Marshall: The adult(s) (official) who control the crowd and swimmer flow at a swim meet.

Mile: 1650 yard short course freestyle or 1500 meter long course freestyle.

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

Officials: The certified, adult volunteers, who run a swim competition.

Official Time: The swimmer's event time recorded to one hundredth of a second (0.01)

Pace Clock: The large clocks with highly visible numbers positioned at the ends or sides of a pool so swimmers can read their times during warmups or practice.

Paddle: Colored plastic devices worn on swimmer's hands during practice.

Pentathlon: Type of meet where swimmers swim 5 individual events and no relays. Typically, swimmers compete in each of the 4 strokes, plus the Individual Medley (IM).

Prelims: Session of a meet where qualification heats are conducted.

Prelims-Finals: Type of meet with two sessions. Preliminary heats are usually held in the morning session. The fastest 6 or 8 swimmers (Championship Heat), and the next fastest 6 or 8 swimmers (Consolation Heat) return in the evening to compete in the Finals.

Qualifying Times: Published times necessary to enter certain meets

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, the swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events.

Seed: Assigning the swimmers heats and lanes according to their submitted or preliminary times.

Short Course: A 25 yard or 25 meter pool.

Split: A portion of an event, shorter than the total distance that is timed. (ie) A swimmer's first 50 time is taken as the swimmer swims the 100 race.

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

Touch Out: To reach the touchpad and finish first in a close race.

Touch Pad: The removable plate (on the ends of the pools) that is connected to an automatic timing system. A swimmer must properly touch the touchpad to register an official time in a race.

Unofficial Time: The time displayed on a read-out board or read over the intercom by the announcer immediately after the race. After the time has been checked, it becomes the official time.

Warm-down: The low intensity swimming used by swimmers after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid and gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

Warm-up: The low intensity swimming used by swimmers prior to a main practice set or race to get muscles loose and warm. Warm up gradually increased heart rate, respiration and helps to prevent injury.