

The logo for Platinum Aquatics features the word "Platinum" in a bold, blue, italicized sans-serif font, positioned above a thin horizontal line. Below the line is the word "Aquatics" in the same font style. The text is centered within a dark blue rectangular background. Two light blue curved lines, resembling water splashes or arcs, frame the text from above and below.

***Platinum***  
***Aquatics***

*Our impact is better than Gold!*

***Platinum Aquatics Team Handbook***  
***2012-2013***

# ***Platinum Aquatics Team Handbook***

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the Platinum Aquatics, also known as “PLAT”. Whether you are joining our club for the first time or have been a member for several years, we hope you will take the time to become familiar with our club, our policies and our sport by reading this handbook.

### **We Believe**

***The lessons learned through swimming are invaluable; these lessons include safety, fitness, youth development, and social responsibility.***

SAFETY - Because drowning is one of the leading causes of death for children ages 1-4, we believe all children need to learn to be safe in the water. USA Swimming promotes learn to swim as an introduction to the activity of swimming.

FITNESS – With over 300,000 members, USA Swimming is America’s largest program of guided fitness activity for children. Children who progress through age group swimming build a strong foundation for good health by learning the fundamentals of fitness.

Youth Development – Because the process is as important as the outcome, the swimming environment encourages important life skills such as goal setting, time management, self discipline, commitment, delayed gratification and perseverance.

Social Responsibility – By encouraging healthy competition, versus a “winning at all costs” attitude, swimming promotes dignity, integrity and sportsmanship. Through the example of family and community volunteerism, swimming promotes strong family values and an attitude of giving back to the community.

### **Our Mission**

Promote swimming instruction, water safety, improve the physical fitness of athletes, and provide a positive program with the opportunity to participate in meets, events, and to have fun.

Provide an organized, competitive swim program for swimmers of all ages and abilities; emphasizing safety, fitness, individual responsibility, and social responsibility through team participation and support.

### **Our Vision**

Offer age specific training for all of our athletes geared toward challenging each individual and developing each individual to the best of THEIR abilities.

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## **We Expect**

the Board of Directors, any employee, athlete, parent volunteer, or individual affiliated with the team to conduct themselves at all times, in a manner that will reflect the highest standards of sportsmanship and character. These individuals must abide by the following as applicable:

- The USA-S Code of Ethics
- The American Swim Coach's Association Code of Ethics
- The PLAT By-Laws

## **History of Platinum Aquatics**

There has always been, and continues to be, a strong interest in competitive swimming in the Greater Houston, which is evident by the large number of USA Swimming programs in this area. The Gulf region (or "LSC") of USA Swimming is one of the largest in the United States.

PLAT, owned and operated by Greg Spano, was originally developed as a non-competitive program to accommodate home-school, clinic and individual opportunities for swimmers in the Southwest Houston area. Clinics focus on stroke technique, training, motivation and nutrition, while individual opportunities focus on stroke development. In 2011, PLAT developed a competitive year-round swimming program.

## **Club Management and Organization**

Platinum Aquatics (PLAT) is a nonprofit corporation organized to foster local, national and international amateur swimming competition. PLAT is under the direction of a permanent board of directors, with managerial responsibility for the club delegated to the Executive Director/Head Coach. The fiscal year commences September 1<sup>st</sup> and the annual directors' meeting is held in September.

Board of Directors - The PLAT Permanent Board of Directors is the official governing body of the team. The Board consists of 3 members including the Executive Director/Head Coach, Operations Director, and Financial Director. Board members shall remain in office until which time they tender resignation and a replacement is agreed upon by a majority vote of the Board.

- Executive Director – Greg Spano
- Operations Director – Mary Spano
- Finance Director – Floyd Kaigler

Parent Booster Club - The PLAT Parent Booster Club assists the Head Coach with the organization and daily operations of the club. The Booster club includes parents of swimmers from several different program levels, in order to get a wide range of representation. The Parent Board is announced and introduced to the club each September. The permanent board of directors will always serve as members of the booster club.

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## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **Physical Development of Swimmers**

***Physicians and pediatricians consider swimming the ideal activity for developing muscular and skeletal growth. They consider swimming the perfect activity because:***

- Swimming develops high quality aerobic endurance. Every moment of practice time is utilized to develop fitness and teach skills.
- Swimming uses all of the body's major muscle groups, which enhances proportional development of the muscular system.
- Swimming enhances the flexibility of children by exercising all the major joints through a full range of motion.
- Swimming develops greater coordination through complex movement of different combinations of various body parts. This creates harmonious muscle function, grace, and fluidity of movement.
- Swimming is the most injury-free sport for children.
- Swimming is a life-long sport, as reflected by Masters Swimmers.

### **Athlete Development Philosophy**

Platinum Aquatics (PLAT) is an IM based team. We believe in developing "well-rounded" athletes through education and training in all four of the competitive swim strokes.

Platinum Aquatics offers training and practice groups for swimmers of all ages and ability levels. It is the goal of the Platinum Aquatics to offer age specific training for all of our athletes geared towards challenging each individual and developing each individual to the best of THEIR abilities.

### **Training Philosophy and Group Structure**

Platinum Aquatics (PLAT) is structured with an Athlete Track System to meet the needs of the individual athlete. As PLAT athletes grow and improve, new challenges are presented and higher level skills are taught. The track system takes into consideration not only the athletes age, maturity and skills but also their goals and commitment levels. Each athlete will develop at their own rate. Our objective is to allow our athletes to arrive at their physical maturity with all the skills and the physical conditioning background needed to excel and be successful if they strive to perform at a higher level. The athletes will find appropriate fun in the sport, whether it be with skill-building games for newer athletes, meeting new friends with shared interests, or having the satisfaction of setting and achieving goals as older athletes.

Our practice groups are designed to follow progression "tracks." New athletes start on a Developmental track. Once athletes have developed a solid foundational skill base they will progress to either the Navy or Platinum track. The athletes will be moved through the tracks as they progress, grow, change their goals and commitment levels, and change in their ability

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relative to their peer group. Prospective PLAT athletes will be evaluated by a team coach who will ensure the most beneficial placement for the athlete to begin or continue their career.

## **Developmental Track**

\*Foundations Group

\*Age Group

## **The Navy Track**

\* Carolina Blue Group

\* Junior Group

\* Navy Group

## **Platinum Track**

\*Pre-Senior

\*Senior National

## **Masters Track**

\*TBD in near future

**The Developmental Track** is designed for children ages 5 and up who have taken swim lessons, can complete at least one length of the pool (without stopping and without in water coach assistance) in freestyle and backstroke and are in the beginning stages of understanding swimming as a sport. The emphasis is placed on teaching these children the basic skills of swimming, gaining confidence in the water and to view swimming as a fun activity.

### *Developmental Track Groups:*

*Foundations Group:* 3 x 45 minute practices will be offered each week, with 2 attended practices per week preferred. The swimmers will work primarily on Backstroke and Freestyle. Breaststroke and Butterfly will be introduced. Drill and skill work will be introduced. These swimmers will be encouraged to compete in team meets and a maximum of 1 LSC meet per quarter. The primary emphasis for this group is to ensure a solid foundation of swimming skills and to understand that swimming is not only fun but also great for a healthy lifestyle. When these swimmers progress to the next level they should be ready to legally perform all four of the competitive strokes.

*Age Group:* 4 x 1 ¼ hour practices will be offered each week, with 3 attended practices per week preferred. These swimmers will move into the process of refinement of the four competitive strokes. Drill and skill work will continue to be developed, the beginning stages of age appropriate training sets and dry land activity will be introduced. Swimmers will be encouraged to compete in all team meets as well as a maximum of 2 LSC meets per quarter.

*\*Swimmers within this group maybe invited to attend a Carolina Blue group practice. (These*

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*decisions will be made at the coach's discretion based on readiness of the swimmer, lane space demands of the other group and staffing availability.)*

**The Navy Track** is designed for swimmers ages 9 and up. Groups within this track are designed for athletes who; swim for social reasons, may mature later, or excel in the water and are committed to swimming as their primary sport. These groups will continue to focus on the enjoyment of the sport, while continuing stroke development and understanding why a solid foundation of proper swimming habits are important. Implementing IM and endurance with proper stroke technique/refinement becomes an integral part for progress towards the Platinum Track. These groups will begin the process of learning dry land activity and how it applies to swimming.

## *Navy Track Groups:*

*Carolina Blue Group:* 5 x 1 ½ + hours practices will be offered each week, with 4 attended practices per week preferred depending on age. Athletes, 9/10 years of age, will be asked to attend 4 practice days per week maximum, at the coach's discretion. These athletes will continue to work on refinement with each one of the four competitive strokes. Drill and skill work will begin to be refined and built upon. Introduction of endurance base work load and IM base sets will be emphasized. Dry land activity will continue to be developed and built upon. These athletes will be asked to attend a 2 hour practice on a Saturday with the Junior Group. Athletes will be encouraged to compete in all inter-squad meets as well as a maximum of 1 LSC or travel meet per month. In addition these athletes will be encouraged to attend their highest eligible level championship meets. *\*Elite level 10 years and older athletes may be invited to attend a Pre-Senior group practice (at the coach's discretion) based on the athletes readiness, lane space demands of other groups and staffing availability.*

*Junior Group:* 5 x 1 ½ + hour practices will be offered each week, with a minimum of 4 attended practices per week preferred and a mandatory 2 hour practice on Saturday. These athletes will work on stroke development with each one of the four competitive strokes. Drill and skill work will be part of the practices. Additionally, dry land activity will be part of this group. Athletes will be encouraged to compete in all inter-squad meets as well as LSC meets but are not required. *\* 11 years and older athletes may be invited to attend a Pre-Senior group practice (at the coach's discretion) based on the athletes readiness, lane space demands of other groups and staffing availability.*

*Navy:* 5 x 1 ¾ + hrs and 1 Saturday 2+ hrs practices offered each week. (4 practices minimum each week preferred) This group is designed for the high school athlete who is involved in other activities but would like additional training. The athletes in this group will continue to work on

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refinement with each one of the four competitive strokes through drill and skill work that will be incorporated into training sets. IM and endurance based sets will be emphasized. Additionally, dry land activity will be an integral part of this group. Athletes will be encouraged to compete in LSC and or travel meets each month. In addition, these athletes will be asked to attend their highest eligible level championship meets.

**The Platinum Track** is for athletes ages 11 and up who view swimming as their primary competitive sport, have higher performance-oriented goals, may have matured earlier and demonstrate their commitment toward swimming. This track focuses on building speed and endurance, improving stroke technique, and preparing pre-high school athletes as well as high school/collegiate athletes who have achieved state level (high school/Sectional or higher) time standards, or swimmers ages 15 and over with multiple USA Swimming Motivational "A" or higher time standards. These groups focus on specific training and working towards their highest level swimming goals. *\*Please note: the groups in this track have more stringent recommendations for attendance and competition.\**

### *Platinum Groups:*

*Pre-Senior:* 5 x 2 ½ + hrs and one 3+ hrs practices offered each week. (6 practices minimum each week strongly preferred) These athletes from time to time will be asked to attend double practices. This group is primarily for elite level athlete's ages 12+ years of age. IM and endurance base sets will be emphasized. Dry land activity within this group will be important at specific parts of each season. Athletes will be strongly encouraged to compete in LSC and or travel meets each month. In addition, these athletes will be asked to attend their highest eligible level championship meets. *\* 13 years and older athletes may be invited to attend a Senior National group practice (at the coach's discretion) based on the athletes readiness, lane space demands of other groups and staffing availability.*

*Senior National:* 6 x 2 ½ + hrs and one 3 hrs practice offered each week. These athletes will be asked to attend 2 double practices each week during specific training periods each season. (7 practices are strongly encouraged each week.) This group is primarily for elite level athlete's, ages 14+ years of age and have higher performance-oriented goals. These athletes may have matured at an early age and may demonstrate a higher commitment level toward swimming. (i.e. Swimmers with sectional level or higher time standards.) Dry land activity within this group will be important at specific parts of each season. Athletes will be required to compete in LSC and or travel meets each month. In addition, these athletes will be asked to attend their highest level eligible championship meets.

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**Masters Track** *This group has not yet been formed and start dates, times and locations will be determined, hopefully in the near future.*

Masters swimming is for adults age 19 and older. This group is oriented first towards participation and lifelong fitness, with competition in Masters meets a motivating but secondary goal. The group is diverse and workouts are written to suit the ability and interests of novice adults with no prior experience, former elite competitors, tri-athletes, and includes parents of children in other PLAT groups.

**Group Changes** - Group changes/moves for athletes usually occur after the end of season championships meets, twice per year. However, they can also occur as appropriate throughout the year as determined by the coaching staff. For some athletes there will be a "cross-over" transition period during the move-up where the swimmer will remain with their primary group but attend a few practices each week with the new group they will join until they adjust to the new workload. Periodically, some swimmers may be invited by special request to attend a higher group practice. This must be a mutual decision between all staff members involved and the PLAT head coach.

## **Group Schedules**

*Platinum Aquatics offers both morning and afternoon scheduling during the school year.*

Morning scheduling is geared toward our Home School families, but may also work as an alternative for our Junior High or High School aged swimmers who have flexibility in their school schedule.

You are signing up for a program that runs either in the mornings or in the afternoons. *Morning and afternoon groups are not interchangeable*, as we may not have the lane availability to accommodate an unexpected swimmer. Variations to this policy will be handled on a case by case basis.

Please note: Pre-Senior/Senior Swimmers in the morning groups may be specifically asked to attend an afternoon practice from time to time.

Current schedules and temporary schedule changes can be found on our website under the Schedules tab.

## **Equipment**

ALL swimmers should be prepared for practice with the appropriate equipment. Equipment may be purchased at Lane 4 swim shop in Sugar Land. Lane 4 should be able assist in purchasing the appropriate equipment.

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**\*= Priority items**

## Foundations Group

- \*Junior Kick board,
- \*Fins (no scuba diving fins) Triton (preferred) or TYR Flex fin
- \*Competitive swim goggles (no scuba goggles)
- \*Swim Cap
- \*Water bottle
- \*Dry land clothing, lace up tennis shoes and extra towel

## Age Group

- \*Junior Kick board,
- \*Fins (no scuba diving fins) Triton or TYR Cross Blade fin (preferred)
- \*1 small blue pull buoy (must be small size)
- \*1 used or unused Tennis Ball
- \*Water bottle
  - Finis Snorkel (12&unders) Finis (Pink or Yellow for all strokes)
  - Strokemaker (smaller) Blue or Red paddles (*paddle should not be 10% (maximum) bigger than hand*)

### *Dry Land Equipment:*

- \*Jump Rope
- \*Shorts, t-shirt & lace up jogging shoes & extra towel

## Junior Group

- \*Junior Kick board,
- \*Fins (no scuba diving fins) Triton or TYR Cross Blade
- \*1 small blue pull buoy (must be small size)
- \*2 used or unused Tennis Balls
- \*Water bottle
- \*Speedo IM Tech Paddles (S/M, blue tubing)
- \*Finis Swimmers Snorkel (Pink or Yellow for all strokes)

### *Dry Land Equipment:*

- \*Jump Rope
- \*Shorts, t-shirt & lace up jogging shoes, yoga mat or extra towel

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## Pre-Senior & Up Groups

- \*Junior Kick board,
- \*Fins (no scuba diving fins) Triton or TYR Cross Blade
- \*PDF Fins
- \*1 small blue pull buoy (must be small size)
- \*Strokemaker (smaller) Green paddles (*paddle should be 5% to 10% (maximum) bigger than hand*)
- \*Finis Swimmers Snorkel (Pink or Yellow for all strokes)
- \*Water bottle
- Speedo IM Tech Paddles (S/M, blue tubing) \*see Coach Spano

### *Dry Land Equipment:*

- \*Shorts, t-shirt & lace up jogging shoes, yoga mat or extra towel
- \*Jump Rope
- 2 to 4 lbs. set of dumbbells \*see Coach Spano
- 6 lbs. Med Ball (BCG @ Academy) \*see Coach Spano
- Green Stretch Cords with handle \*see Coach Spano

## **Being Prepared for Practice**

Swimmers should arrive at practice with enough time to put their bags down, take out necessary equipment, take bathroom breaks and be ready to begin practice at the scheduled time. However, no swimmer should arrive more than 15 minutes before their scheduled practice time.

Swimmers should arrive at practice wearing tennis shoes, shorts, and a t-shirt over their swimwear and be prepared to begin dry land exercises. While we understand that things happen, a swimmer who is getting out of the car at their scheduled practice time is not ready to begin practice on time.

## **Communication**

The club's primary means of communication with members is through the PLAT website. PLAT's web page, [www.platinumaquatics.org](http://www.platinumaquatics.org) offers members the ability to check the club's monthly calendar, view meet information and results, and obtain important announcements.

The Operations Director maintains an e-mail distribution list and periodically sends out club information of a general nature. The coaches and group parent reps also periodically e-mail group-specific information to each family providing an accurate email address.

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While PLAT coaches try to communicate important information via e-mail to their group members, it is necessary for parents to take a proactive role by checking the PLAT website to stay informed regarding club matters. Members cannot rely on coaches to send all pertinent information via e-mail. The ultimate responsibility for keeping up with meet and practice schedules, meet eligibility requirements and meet entry deadlines lies with each swimmer and their family.

The PLAT also encourages parents to regularly check these additional swimming websites:

<http://www.gulfswimming.org>

<http://www.usaswimming.org>

These websites provide helpful information to parents. In particular, the Gulf Swimming website contains the comprehensive meet schedule for the Gulf LSC, meet invitations (with entry deadlines and eligibility requirements) and meet timelines. The USA Swimming site contains motivational time standards, articles regarding swimmer nutrition, parenting swimmers, etc., and provides access to a database which allows parents to view and track their swimmers' best times, national and local rankings, etc.

## **Parent Participation**

Families new to USA Swimming might not realize the importance of parent volunteers. The success of the Platinum Aquatics would not be possible without the commitment of its volunteers.

Our philosophy is: "If you have a swimmer who participates in team activities, you are expected to volunteer your time in assisting the club. Payment of dues and fees does not relieve you of this obligation – it merely gives you the privilege to participate in your child's individual development and future. In fact, participation is great fun and rewarding."

The most important obligation is to help supply the required number of lane timers for away meets. PLAT asks each family to provide a timer to work each away meet attended by their swimmer(s). PLAT will post timing assignments for each meet on the website and the list of assignments will be available at the pool prior to the meet. We try to set up schedules based on family attendance, so that each family's designated timer works only a couple of hours. If you cannot time at a meet to which you have been assigned, you must find someone attending the meet to cover your timing slot.

If you have never timed at a swim meet, don't be timid. It is not difficult and there are always people willing to show you how. In addition, timers usually have the best view of a swim meet with the most comfortable seats.

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## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### ***PLAT's Responsibility to Club Coaching Staff***

- Stable work environment with reasonable pay and benefits.
- Professional training. Opportunities to learn from other professional sources, including academic classes and clinics.
- Opportunities for advancement from within.
- Challenging and diverse coaching assignments.
- A clear line of responsibility and authority.

### ***PLAT's Responsibility to Club Parents***

- Information and communication regarding USA Swimming and Gulf Swimming rules, regulations and team procedures.
- Opportunities to participate in club activities.
- Opportunities to train for USA/Gulf Certification as officials.
- Forum to communicate interests, concerns, and contributions to the club and swimmers.

### ***PLAT's Responsibility to Club Athletes***

- Professional coaching across the competitive levels.
- An environment for positive feedback and reinforcement.
- An environment in which the athlete may establish realistic goals and objectives and measure their progress against established standards.
- Provide team identification and socialization for the athlete by hosting award banquets, team trips and team parties.

### ***The Coaching Staff's Responsibility to Club Athletes:***

- Being a good role model for the purposes of goal setting, motivation, attitude, enthusiasm, morals and maturity.
- Acting as an authority figure by exercising good judgment and accepting responsibility for swimmers before, during and after team activities.
- Building a cohesive team that emphasizes support of each swimmer by all team members and families. Internal competition should be used only as a positive training tool.
- Assisting each athlete in setting his or her own realistic and measurable goals, analyzing individual performance and establishing a program for improvement.

### ***The Coaching Staff's Responsibility to PLAT:***

- Informing the families of any pertinent information that may be applicable to club activities.
- Planning and implementing major fundraising and social activities such as Swim-A-Thon and club events.
- Fully utilizing available "water time" for practice while limiting conversations to only those necessary to perform their coaching assignments. Conversations with parents should take place before or after practices.
- Referring administrative questions to the appropriate office staff when the coach cannot answer the question.

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- Conducting a coach-parent-swimmer conference on an “as needed” basis. Conferences may be requested by any coach, parent or swimmer.

## ***Head Coach’s Responsibility:***

- Monitoring each program through personal observation and communication with coaches.
- Developing standards of measurement for each program that assists the program’s swimmers to establish individual goals and objectives.
- Assisting in the development and control of budget line items.
- Conducting coaches meetings on a regularly scheduled basis.
- Preparing Long and Short Course season schedules, practice times and team structure, taking into account existing team circumstances, coaching performance at various levels of competition, and planned goals and objectives for the season.

## ***Parents’ responsibility:***

- Getting their athletes to practice on time. Keeping in mind that swimmers need the opportunity to be physically ready to begin practice on time.
- Permitting each coach to do his/her job by not disturbing them during practice or swim meets.
- Promptly picking up each athlete following practices or swim meets.
- Properly supervising young swimmers and siblings (young swimmers or siblings should not be left unsupervised before, during or after practice or swim meets).
- Providing or arranging for adequate adult supervision and accommodations for your athlete at swim meets.
- Maintaining a positive and open relationship with the coaching staff, other swimmers and their parents.
- Promoting the teams and the athlete’s goals and objectives.
- Becoming familiar with the PLAT Team Handbook

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Registration Procedures**

Before registering with Platinum Aquatics, it is necessary for new members to schedule an evaluation time. Evaluations are intended to insure each child is placed in the best group for his/her age and ability. When you receive group placement, registration paperwork may be completed at [www.platinumaquatics.org](http://www.platinumaquatics.org).

### **Parent Code of Conduct**

Nothing reflects more poorly on a program than a parent who does not know how to behave appropriately. Please remember the reason we exist is to encourage all of our athletes. In order to run a successful program, a positive and cooperative attitude on the part of each parent is required.

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## **Parents Should**

- Promote PLAT team and athlete goals and objectives, by becoming familiar with the PLAT Swimming Handbook.
- Have a positive attitude, cheer on and support all PLAT athletes.
- Maintain a positive and open relationship with the coaching staff, other swimmers and their parents.
- Permit each coach to do his/her job by not disturbing them during practice or swim meets.
- Get your athletes to practices and meets on time. Keeping in mind that swimmers need the opportunity to be physically ready to be in the water at start time.
- Promptly pick up each athlete following practices or swim meets.
- Properly supervise young swimmers and siblings (young swimmers or siblings should not be left unsupervised before, during or after practice or at meets).
- Abstain from using profane language.
- Help keep our team areas clean, whether we are at home or visiting another facility.

## **Meet Expectations**

- Provide or arrange adequate adult supervision and accommodations for your athlete at swim meets.
- Wear PLAT team apparel (t-shirts, ball caps, and etc)!!
- Never approach or confront an official or meet sponsor. Please remember these are volunteers doing the best job they are capable of doing.
- Ensure that your athlete completes all races/events, prelims and finals, unless otherwise instructed by your coach.

## **Prohibited Behaviors**

- Disrespectful behaviors toward coaches, other parents, teammates, members of other teams, meet staff or meet officials.
- Theft or destruction of any property.
- Illegal use of drugs.
- Use of tobacco products.
- Illegal use or abuse of alcohol.
- Use of equipment without permission.
- Sexual misconduct.

**Disciplinary Measures** will be and are enforced at the discretion of the coaching staff. Consequences depend upon the severity and/or continued abuse of the rules and expectations. Consequences for Code of Conduct violations include but are not limited to the following:

- Coach and parent meeting.
- Temporary suspension or your athlete from assigned group or competitions.
- Permanent suspension from the team.
- Report to the proper legal authorities.

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## **Athlete Code of Conduct**

Athletes of Platinum Aquatics are expected to behave in an exemplary manner at all practices, competitions, and team functions. Rules, regulations, and expectations set forth by PLAT are to be obeyed at all times.

## **Practice Expectations**

- Respect the coaching staff, teammates, guests, and parents at all times.
- Have a positive attitude towards your coach, teammates, and yourself.
- Abstain from using profane language.
- Do not distract, disturb, or interfere with another teammates practice.
- Do not roughhouse or horseplay during practice.
- Practice to the best of your ability.
- Adhere to all practice requirements for your group.
- Bring required practice materials to each practice.
- Arrive and leave at the scheduled practice times for your group.
- Notify your coach by email or phone of tardiness or absence.
- Clean up after yourself and help clean the pool area at the end of practice.

## **Meet Expectations**

- Wear PLAT team apparel (suit, cap, t-shirt, etc) only!!
- Be respectful to all coaches, officials, swimmers, and parents at all times.
- Clean up after yourself and respect the host facility.
- Have a positive attitude, be positive, cheer on and support all PLAT athletes.
- Always speak with your coach before and after each race.
- Be on time for warm-up and competitions, and adhere to any team curfews.
- Complete all races / events, prelims and finals, unless otherwise instructed by your coach.
- Athletes must travel with the team or an adult for out-of-town competitions.

## **Prohibited Behaviors**

- Disrespectful behavior towards coaches, parents, teammates, or swimmers of other teams.
- Theft or destruction of any property.
- Illegal use of drugs.
- Use of tobacco products.
- Illegal use or abuse of alcohol.
- Use of any equipment without permission.
- Sexual misconduct.

**Disciplinary Measures** will be and are enforced at the discretion of the coaching staff. Consequences depend upon the severity and/or continued abuse of the rules and expectations. Consequences for Code of Conduct violations include but are not limited to the following:

- Coach and athlete meeting.
- Parent, coach, and athlete meeting.
- Temporary suspension from assigned group or competitions.
- Permanent suspension from the team.

# ***Platinum Aquatics Team Handbook***

## **Billing Policy**

Platinum Aquatics has a year round operating budget which includes lane space and facility rental, coach and staff salaries, certification and continuing education expenses, travel expenses and a variety of other organizational costs. Unlike some youth organizations, coaches affiliated with USA Swimming are professionals in their field and must maintain strict education and certification requirements in order to coach. Families register for a program that lasts an entire Swim Year. The club divides the program fees into monthly payments for the convenience of our members, much like balanced billing. Payments are due even if a swimmer takes time off for vacations, holidays, illness or other reasons. Detailed within the ***billing policy*** is a summary of the fees and/or dues that may appear on the monthly bill. Each member will be responsible for these financial obligations.

Registration Fees – Platinum Aquatics’ fiscal year runs from September 1 through August 31. Prior to the start of each fiscal year, families are required to pay the annual registration fees in order to participate for the next year. When you join or re-join the club each year, there is a non-refundable annual registration fee of \$125.00 to include a latex team cap and team t-shirt. In addition there is a non-refundable USA Swimming annual registration fee of \$69. These fees provide insurance for the club, coaches, athletes and facilities. Everyone re-joins each year.

Monthly Training Fees – Each **Group** has a monthly fee for participation. These fees vary depending upon the level and ability of your child and are competitive with similar area programs. Training fees will be payable on the first of the month. Each family is required to pay the appropriate monthly training fees in a timely fashion as set forth in this billing policy. More information on our multiple family member discount is available in the team handbook available at [www.platinumaquatics.org](http://www.platinumaquatics.org).

Meet Fees - Invitations for each meet can be found on the Gulf Swimming website at <http://www.gulfswimming.org/meets.html>. Swimmers pay individual entry fees for each event they enter and will be responsible for any per swimmer surcharges. The cost of each meet is determined by the hosting team and can be found in the meet invitation. In addition, PLAT charges a \$1.00 per event fee to cover coaching expenses. For out of town meets a \$10.00 travel charge will be assessed to help offset the travel and accommodation costs for the coaching staff. Each family is responsible for paying meet fees before a swimmer will be entered into a meet. In addition, once entry fees have been sent to the host team, you will be responsible for the entry fees even if you decide not to compete due to personal choice or illness, no exceptions. In rare cases, a meet may be canceled due to poor weather or unforeseen circumstances. Families are still required to pay the entry fee for these meets. It is the opinion of Gulf Swimming that the host team would have hosted the meet if not for extreme circumstances prohibiting them from doing so. Lack of knowledge of the meet entry process does not waive meet entry fees.

Training fees at registration may be prorated to ½ month if the member joins after the 15th of the calendar month. A full registration fee, the prorated training fee and the first full months training fee will be due in advance.

## ***Platinum Aquatics Team Handbook***

Families choosing to pay training fees monthly will be billed in advance of the training month. Families are billed via e-mail only. Account statements for the month are available to view online at anytime. Your online billing statement is a fluid document and may change throughout the month as meet fees, apparel fees and other fees are charged. You will have until the 24th of each month to notify the Operations Director at [mekspano@gmail.com](mailto:mekspano@gmail.com) of any perceived errors on your bill. Full payment of your account balance is due on or before the 1st of the month.

After the 5th of the month a \$15.00 late fee will be assessed on any unpaid balances. If special consideration is needed please contact the Operations Director to have your account reviewed.

A \$35.00 fee will be assessed for any returned checks.

**One Month Only Policy:** Guests wishing to participate for one month only will pay a prorated fee of \$30 for the PLAT annual registration, plus the appropriate monthly training fee, plus the required USA Swimming fee. One Month Only families will not be refunded any fees for any reason. The Operations Director must be notified of the length of stay up front, which will be approved based on lane space and coaching availability.

Families with balances 30 days or more past due will not be eligible to enter meets until the account is brought current. Balances 60 days past due will result in termination of membership privileges. **You must contact the Operations Director immediately to avoid termination of your membership.**

If a member quits the program or is dropped from Platinum Aquatics due to a delinquent account, overdue and current account balances are immediately due in full. The member will be allowed to rejoin the program only after the past due balance is cleared and a re-joining fee of \$30.00 is paid. Any exemption of the \$30.00 fee will be made on a case by case basis.

Families will be charged a **full month's dues** for every month in which they compete or attend a training session. Training fees are not refundable for a partial month. Fees will not be prorated under any circumstance other than a **documented medical condition** that would prohibit physical participation. Team members who do not participate in an entire month of training risk losing their spot in their respective practice group. They will be assigned a practice group by the head coach upon return, based on lane space and coaching availability.

**Families wishing to drop out of the program must notify the Operations Director in writing or by e-mail by the 15th of the month in order to avoid being billed for the next month.** Verbal notice to a coach or anyone other than the Operations Director that one plans to discontinue participating in Platinum Aquatics is not proper notice. If a member is billed and cannot provide proof of termination date, the member will be responsible for all charges on the account(s).

If a family is not satisfied with the Platinum Aquatics Program and wants a refund, an assessment will be conducted to determine the cause of dissatisfaction. Requests of this type will be evaluated on a case-by case basis. Families who are not satisfied with the Platinum Aquatics Program after the first five calendar days of participation may cancel their membership

# ***Platinum Aquatics Team Handbook***

in writing and be eligible for a full refund of training fees but may forfeit the team and USA Swimming registration fee. Again, these refunds will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Families may contact the Operations Director at [mekspano@gmail.com](mailto:mekspano@gmail.com), with questions on the accuracy of any PLAT bill. If it is determined that a member was incorrectly charged for a service, the family is entitled to a prompt refund of all incorrect amounts.

## **Weather Policy**

It is the intent of Platinum aquatics to provide practice every day as scheduled. Because most of our training facilities are outdoors we will, at some point, have to endure the elements. When out of the water, coaches will run either a dry-land practice, show a program related video, or hold a program related group discussion. Program related videos and discussions may include swimming, training, health, nutrition or any other appropriate and applicable topic.

Please follow this outline for inclement weather. *Keep in mind that the weather at your house may be different from the weather at the pool. In addition, use caution while driving.*

1. If the weather is questionable before you leave for practice, check the weather at <http://weather.weatherbug.com>.
2. Check your e-mail. If the coaches are able to send an e-mail regarding the weather, they will do so. Please understand this may not always be an option.
3. Check the front page of the web-site. If the coaches are able to update the website regarding the weather, they will do so. Please understand this may not always be an option.
4. If the weather is questionable once you have arrived at practice, please wait for about 15 minutes to ensure that practiced is not cancelled. It is not our policy to provide “make-up” options for cancellations, as it is the intent of PLAT to follow the posted group schedule if not for extreme circumstances prohibiting us from doing so.
5. If practice has to be stopped, each coach will monitor the weather conditions. It is the goal of the coaching staff to return swimmers to the water as soon as the bad weather passes and it is safe to resume the water workout.

## **Swim Meet Procedures**

Invitations for each meet can be found on the Gulf Swimming website at <http://www.gulfswimming.org/meets.html>. PLAT Meet fees are outlined in the billing policy.

Entry Procedures – Please keep in mind that every swim meet has a firm entry deadline. Members who fail to enter their athletes by the PLAT entry deadline will be required (if allowed by the meet director) to enter their athletes at the meet itself through the “On-Deck” entry procedure.

On-Deck Entry Procedure - “On Deck” means you may simply show up on the morning of the day of the meet you want to swim and enter there. The “On-Deck” entry fees generally are double the pre-meet entry fees. Be sure to consult your swimmer’s coach in advance to

# ***Platinum Aquatics Team Handbook***

determine which events he/she wants your swimmer to swim, and make sure to have your swimmer's times with you. In addition, on all Meet Invitations, you will see somewhere near the Order of Events page a box or table listed "Entry Rules." This is where you can find out any specific things that you need to know about the meet such as if you may enter with "no time" (NT) or not.

Swimmer Entries – will be determined by the coach based on what is being worked on in practice. Please know the coaches will not place a swimmer in an event that they are not capable of swimming.

Relay Rules and Considerations - PLAT will enter relay teams for each age group that has enough swimmers participating in the meet. The rules regarding relay entries are as follows:

- The composition and order of each relay team is at the coach's discretion.
- Relay Fees are paid by the club if PLAT has pre-entered relays for the meet.

If a swimmer has been designated for a relay and fails to show up for the relay, that family may be responsible for the relay charges

## **Travel Policy**

Members of the PLAT family are expected to abide by the parent code of conduct, athlete code of conduct, and all policies and procedures at all times. PLAT will communicate travel policies specific to each travel event that is attended by PLAT swimmers and families.

## **Apparel Policy**

### Swim Practice Apparel

Any athlete with hair below the ears must wear a swim cap during practice. Fun Caps (strongly preferred), College, University, School Team or Summer League Caps are acceptable. **NO OTHER USA SWIMMING YEAR ROUND PROGRAM CAPS ARE PERMITTED, NO EXCEPTIONS.**

All athletes must wear appropriate practice suits. For girls, 1 piece suits are permitted, *2 piece suits are not permitted*. For boys, jammers or briefs are permitted, *board shorts or cut off shorts are not permitted*. **NO OTHER USA SWIMMING YEAR ROUND TEAM SUITS ARE PERMITTED, NO EXCEPTIONS.**

### Swim Meet Apparel and Equipment

Swimmers will need a pair of goggles and an extra pair for back up. Clear goggles are suggested for indoor meets and dark goggles are suggested for outdoor meets.

Swimmers must wear a PLAT Team Swim Cap and PLAT Team Suit for all in season meets.

*Performance suits may only be worn for highest level championship/end of season championship meet. If you have questions, please see coach Spano. \*Performance suits must be approved by Coach Spano. PLAT coaching staff reserves the right to scratch any PLAT athlete*

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*from any event during a meet for wearing a performance suit that has not been approved by Coach Spano in writing. NO EXCEPTIONS.*

Team Shirts will be assigned for each day of a meet. All athletes will be given a Team Shirt for registration and family members will be given the opportunity to purchase team shirts.

## **Publicity Policy**

Platinum Aquatics uses photographs and/or videos of swimmers and their families on its website. PLAT may also use such photographs, in print form, in conjunction with press releases, community service activities, or for recruiting or fundraising purposes.

Any family objecting to PLAT's use of photographs of its swimmers or other family members must note its objections or use restrictions in writing and deliver the executed copy to PLAT. Without a written objection to PLAT's publicity policy, consent to the policy will be deemed to have been granted.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **Program Fees**

Platinum Aquatics has a year round operating budget which includes lane space and facility rental, coach and staff salaries, certification and continuing education expenses, travel expenses and a variety of other organizational costs. Unlike some youth organizations, coaches affiliated with USA Swimming are professionals in their field and must maintain strict education and certification requirements in order to coach. The club divides the program fees into monthly payments for the convenience of our members, much like balanced billing. Payments are due even if a swimmer takes time off for vacations, holidays, illness or other reasons.

Our principal sources of income include:

- Annual Registration Fees
- Monthly Training Fees
- Fundraising Events
- Charitable contributions

### **What You Can Expect to Pay**

*Annual Registration Fee*- Platinum Aquatics (PLAT) charges a non-refundable annual registration fee of \$125.00 per swimmer, to include a latex team cap and team t-shirt. In addition there is a non-refundable USA Swimming annual registration fee of \$69. These fees provide insurance for the club, coaches, athletes, facilities and the option to participate in meets. Everyone re-joins each year.

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Monthly Training Fees- Families register for a program that lasts an entire Swim Year. The club divides the program fees into monthly payments for the convenience of our members, much like balanced billing. Payments are due even if a swimmer takes time off for vacations, holidays, illness or other reasons. Detailed within the [billing policy](#) is a summary of the fees and/or dues that may appear on the monthly bill. Each member will be responsible for these financial obligations. Each group has a [monthly fee](#) for participation. These fees vary depending upon the level and ability of your child and are competitive with similar area programs. Training fees will be payable on the first of the month. Each family is required to pay the appropriate monthly training fees in a timely fashion as set forth in the billing policy.

Fees Due at Registration - Team registration fee, USA registration fee, and first months training fee.

T-Shirts and Swim Caps -Each swimmer participating in the year-round competitive program will receive a team t-shirt and latex swim cap with registration. Additional latex and silicone caps may be purchased for swimmers, as well as t-shirts for swimmers and family members.

Other Associated Costs - Girls suit with logo and Boys suit with logo, we ask that each swimmer have a PLAT team suit for competition. In addition swimmers may need equipment based on training group placement.

Meet Fees- Invitations for each meet can be found on the Gulf Swimming website at <http://www.gulfswimming.org/meets.html>. Swimmers pay individual entry fees for each event they enter and will be responsible for any per swimmer surcharges, as well as any fines incurred by fault of the athlete. The cost of each meet is determined by the hosting team and can be found in the meet invitation. In addition, PLAT charges a \$1.00 per event fee to cover coaching expenses. For out of town meets a \$10.00 travel charge will be assessed to help offset the travel and accommodation costs for the coaching staff. Each family is responsible for paying meet fees before a swimmer will be entered into a meet. In addition, once entry fees have been sent to the host team, you will be responsible for the entry fees even if you decide not to compete due to personal choice or illness, no exceptions. In rare cases, a meet may be canceled due to poor weather or unforeseen circumstances. Families are still required to pay the entry fee for those meets. It is the opinion of Gulf Swimming that the host team would have hosted the meet if not for extreme circumstances prohibiting them from doing so. Lack of knowledge of the meet entry process does not waive met entry fees.

Fundraiser - The PLAT annual fundraiser is held during the fall of each year. We encourage each PLAT athlete to raise a minimum of \$100.00 for this fundraiser.

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Discounts (Applies to Training Fees only) - Highest Level Participant = Regular Training Fees, 2nd Highest Level Participant = Regular Training Fees, 3rd Highest Level Participant = 25% off Regular Training Fees, 4th Highest Level Participant + =50% off Regular Training Fees. Regular Training Fees paid annually will receive a 5% discount.

Financial Aid - PLAT may provide financial assistance to families who are currently on a Free & Reduced Price Lunch Program. Aid is available on a first come first served basis as determined by group, lane space and coaching availability. Prior to registering we must first have a copy of the letter provided to you by your district as verification. Once we receive the letter we will aid families with the registration process.

## **Financial Aid Programs**

Free & Reduced Lunch Program Discounts - PLAT may provide financial assistance to families who are currently on a Free & Reduced Price Lunch Program. Aid is available on a first come first served basis as determined by group and lane space availability. A Confidential Financial Aid Application (available from the Executive Director or Operations Director) must be submitted to the Operations Director, along with official verification from the family's school district in order to register its athlete(s) for financial aid and provide the discounts. We keep the district's letter on file and families must re-apply annually. For those who qualify, the following discounts will apply:

- Dues Discount –
  - **Free lunch** recipients will have a monthly discount of 75% off of our normal dues (i.e., recipients pay 25% of specified program dues).
  - **Reduced lunch** recipients will have a discount of 50% of our normal dues (i.e., recipients pay 50% of specified program dues).
- Registration Discount - The annual Registration Fee charged to any family who qualifies for any free or reduced lunch program discount is \$30.00 per child.
- Entry Fee Discounts - Once the athlete entitled to a free or reduced lunch discount has been officially registered with USA Swimming, his or her family will receive information in the mail from USA Swimming regarding its procedures for entry fee reimbursement. The family must pay all entry fees posted to its PLAT account, but will be reimbursed by USA Swimming for the fees by following the established procedures. PLAT does not guarantee or fund entry fee reimbursements. Also, TAGS, Nationals and out-of-state meets are not reimbursable. Please keep this in mind when entering these meets.

Hardship Discounts - Families who have a change in their family financial situation, due to such things as a job loss, can apply to the PLAT for a hardship discount to their monthly program dues. A Confidential Financial Aid Application will be made available upon request. Decisions regarding dues discounts and the duration of aid are discretionary and will be made on a case-by-case basis. In addition, Hardship Discounts will be re-evaluated every quarter of the Swim Year. The PLAT Parent Board will participate in decisions regarding these financial aid requests.

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Hardship discounts are available only with respect to monthly program dues. Annual registration fees and meet entry fees must be paid as normal.

Requirements for Maintenance of Financial Aid - Recipients of on any form of financial aid must adhere to the following requirements:

- At least one parent must serve in a volunteer capacity as coordinated with the parent booster club.
- Athlete(s) must attend at least 80% of the monthly practices offered for their program group.
- Athlete(s) must maintain appropriate behavior at all times.

Those who fail to comply with these requirements may lose their financial assistance or be denied assistance the following year.

## **Charitable Contributions**

PLAT solicits community contributions in order to keep our team fees affordable for our families. Community members and businesses may contribute through the purchase of Website Advertising Packages or Sponsorship Packages, more information may be found on our website.

## **Changes to Fee Structure, Withdrawal and Return Policy**

Platinum Aquatics prides itself on providing a quality aquatics program at a reasonable cost, and we work hard to make swimming affordable for everyone. PLAT does not pro-rate the annual registration fee, nor does PLAT issue refunds for registration fees or monthly dues. Families register for a program that lasts an entire Swim Year. The club divides the program fees into monthly payments for the convenience of our members, much like balanced billing. Payments are due even if a swimmer takes time off from time to time for vacations, holidays, illness or other reasons. That being said, under any of the following circumstances, there will be an adjustment in a family's annual dues and/or registration obligations:

Program Changes - The coaching staff assigns each swimmer to a competitive practice group based upon age and ability. Any advancement to a higher group may trigger a mid-season fee increase.

Program Withdrawal - **Families wishing to drop out of the program must notify the Operations Director in writing or by e-mail by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month in order to avoid being billed for the next month.** Verbal notice to a coach or anyone other than the Operations Director that one plans to discontinue participating in Platinum Aquatics is not proper notice. If a member is billed unnecessarily and cannot provide proof of termination date, the member will be responsible for all charges on the account(s).

Return to the Program - If a member leaves the program or is dropped from Platinum Aquatics due to a delinquent account, overdue and current account balances are immediately due in full. The member will be allowed to rejoin the program only after the past due balance is cleared and a re-joining fee of \$30.00 is paid (Any exemption of the \$30.00 fee will be made on a case

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by case basis). Return is subject to available capacity in the relevant program. PLAT does not prorate monthly dues for the month when any swimmer reactivates their membership; therefore, you may wish to reactivate program membership at the beginning of a month.

## **GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS**

*from usaswimming.org*

### **A**

**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 LSCs have divided the swimmers into more convenient divisions specific to their situations: (i.e.) 8-under, 13-Over, 15-Over, Junior, Senior.

**Alternate** - In a Prelims/Finals meet, after the finalists are decided, the next two fastest swimmers other than the finalists are designated as alternates. The faster of the two being the first alternate and the next being 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.

### **B**

**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 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd back).

**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.

**BOD** - Board of Directors of the Local Swim Committee (LSC) or USA Swimming (USA-S).

**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 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter. (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd breast)

**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 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yard fly).

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## **C**

**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 call USA-S swimming for details on the many camps they offer.

**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** - The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck-seeded meet. Sometimes referred to as positive check-in, the swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host.

**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. (i.e.) Lane 4 in the final three heats. See rule book for exact method for seeding depending on the lanes in the pool.

**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 an 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.

**Colorado Timing System** - A brand of automatic timing system.

**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. (l.e) Long Course = 50 meters / Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.

## **D**

**Deadline** - The date meet entries must be "postmarked" 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 reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches. No one but an "authorized" USA Swimming member may be on the deck during a swim competition.

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**Deck Entries** - Accepting entries into swimming events on the first day or later day of a meet.

**Deck Seeding** - Heat and lane assignments are posted after swimmers have checked in have "scratched" (indicated they will not participate in 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).

**Disqualified** - A swimmer's 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.

**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 with 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.

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

**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.

## **E**

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

**Entry Chairperson** - The host club's designated person who is responsible for receiving, and making sure the entries have met the deadline.

**Entry Fees** - The amount per event 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 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.

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

## **F**

**False Start** - When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn or gun. One false start

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will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team, although the starter or referee may disallow the false start due to unusual circumstances.

**False Start Rope** - A recall rope across the width of the racing pool for the purpose of stopping swimmers who were not aware of a false start. The rope is about 1/2 way on yard pools and about 50 feet from the starting end on meter pools.

**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.

**Fees** - Money paid by swimmers for services. (i.e.) Practice fees, registration fee, USA-S membership fee, etc.

**FINA** - The international rules-making organization for the sport of 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.

**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 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, 200 yards/meter, 400 mtr/500, yd 800 mtr/1000 yds, 1500 mtr/1650 yds (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd free).

## **G**

**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.

**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.

## **H**

**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.

**Heat Sheet** - The pre-meet printed listings of swimmers' seed times in the various events at a swim meet.

**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.

**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 USAS convention meeting

**Horn** - A sounding device. Used mainly with a fully automatic timing system.

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## **I**

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

**IM** - Individual Medley. A swimming event using all four of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle. Equal distances must be swam of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yards, 200 yards/meters, 400 yards/meter.

**IMX** - IMX is a motivational program that allows swimmers across the nation to compare themselves to the thousands of other athletes in their age group. All you have to do is swim a combination of events, at least one time per season, and USA Swimming will automatically give you your ranking.

**IM Ready** - A stepping stone program to IMX where swimmers compete in a series of five events at shorter distances and achieve a score. In this program swimmers are not ranked.

**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**

**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.

## **K**

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

## **L**

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

**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** - 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 IM.

**Long Course** - A 50-meter pool.

**LSC** - Local Swim Committee. The local level administrative division of the corporation (USA-S) with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by the Corporation. There are 59 LSCs.

## **M**

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

**Meet** - A series of events held in one program.

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**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 meters is 50 meters, short course meters is 25 meters.

## **N**

**NAGTS** - National Age Group Time Standards - the list of "C" through "AAAA" times published each year.

**Nationals** - USA Swimming National Championship meet conducted in March/April and August.

**Natatorium** - A building constructed for the purpose of housing a swimming pool and related equipment.

**NCAA** - National Collegiate Athletic Association

**NGB** - National Governing Body

**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.

## **O**

**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.

**Officials** - The certified adult volunteers who operate the many facets of a swim competition.

**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.

**Omega** - A brand of automatic timing system.

**OTC** - Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

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

## **P**

**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 warmups or swim practice.

**Paddle** - Colored plastic devices worn on the swimmers hands during swim practice.

**Positive Check In** - The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck seeded or pre seeded meet. The swimmer or coach must indicate the swimmer is present and will compete.

**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.

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**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.

**Pre-seeded** - A meet conducted without a bull pen in which a swimmer knows what lane and heat they are in by looking at the heat sheet or posted meet program.

**Psyche Sheet** - An entry sheet showing all swimmers entered into each individual event. Sometimes referred to as a "Heat Sheet" or meet program. However, a "heat sheet" would show not only every swimmer in an event, but also what heat and lane they are swimming in.

**Pull Buoy** - A flotation device used for pulling by swimmers in practice.

## **Q**

**Qualifying Times** - Published times necessary to enter certain meets, or the times necessary to achieve a specific category of swimmer. See "A", "AA" (etc.) times.

## **R**

**Ready Room** - A room pool side for the swimmers to relax before they compete in finals.

**Recall Rope** - A rope across the width of the racing pool for the purpose of stopping swimmers who were not aware of a false start. The rope is about 1/2 way on yard pools and about 50 feet from the starting end on meter pools.

**Referee** -The head official at a swim meet in charge of all of the "Wet Side" administration and decisions.

**Relays** - 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.

## **S**

**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.

**Schedule** - USA-S 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.

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

**Seed** - Assign the swimmers heats and lanes according to their submitted or preliminary times.

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

**Session** - Portion of meet distinctly separated from other portions by locale, time, type of competition, or age group.

**Short Course** - A 25-yard or 25-meter pool.

**Speedo Championship Series** - Open "senior level" meets held in the spring and summer. Each Zone may hold up to four meets. 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. A benefit of being a member of USA Swimming.

**Split** - A portion of an event that is shorter than the total distance and is timed. (i.e.) A swimmer's first 50 time is taken as the swimmer swims the 100 race. It is 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.

**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 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.

**Swim-A-Thon** - The "Fund Raiser" trademarked by USA Swimming for local clubs to use to make money.

**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.

**Swimming World** - A paid-subscription swimming magazine.

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

## **T**

**Taper** - The resting phase of a swimmer at the end of the season before the championship meet.

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**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 placings are determined by those times.

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

**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 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 USA-S club.

**Travel Fund** - A sum of money set aside for a swimmer to use for travel expenses and entry fees to specified meets.

## **U**

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

**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 will become the official time.

**USA-S** - The governing body of swimming--USA Swimming.

**USA Swimming** - The national governing body of the sport headquartered in Colorado Springs.

**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.

**USOTC** - United States Olympic Training Center located in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

## **V**

**VCC** - Virtual Club Championships. The VCC recognizes and highlight clubs that are developing athletes and achieving success at multiple levels emphasizing the team element in club swimming. This program serves as a key part of the Athlete Development & Performance component of the Club Recognition Program.

## **W**

**Warm-down** - The recovery swimming a swimmer does after a race when pool space is available.

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

### **Y**

**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.

### **Z**

**Zones** - 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.