Blaze Team Handbook

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**Introduction**

Welcome to the Johnston Blaze. Whether you are new to the team or a returning swimmer, you will find this handbook useful and informative. The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize you with the world of competitive swimming and Johnston Blaze Swim Club. The more you know and understand about USA Swimming, Iowa Swimming, and Johnston Blaze, the better your experience as a swimmer will be . Please take the time to read the handbook and learn our policies and procedures. If you have questions, the coaches, Aquat Director and member of the Anchor Club are available to help you.

**What is USA Swimming?**

United States Swimming is the national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. It was conceived in 1978 with passage of the Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act, which gave the Olympic Sports the ability to govern themselves. Prior to this act, USA Swimming was the Competitive Swimming Committee of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) located in Indianapolis, Indiana. USA Swimming Headquarters office was established in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1981 and is located at the Olympic Training Center.

As the National Governing Body for the sport, USA Swimming is responsible for the conduct and administration of swimming in the United States. In this capacity, USAS formulates the rules, implements policies and procedures, conducts the national championships, disseminates safety and sports medicine information and selects that athletes to represent the United States in international competition.

USA swimming organizations are divided into four Zones –Eastern, Southern, Western, and Central. Each of these Zones is split into various LSC’s (Local Swimming Committee). Often times LSCs mirror state boundaries, but not always. Some states are broken into multiple LSCs. Each LSC sets its own meet schedule, procedures for sanctioning meets, registering athletes, training officials, and, in general, rules for governing the clubs within its boundaries. For more useful information on USA Swimming please go to their website at [www.usaswimming.org](file:///C:\Users\breonnhia.bailey\Downloads\www.usaswimming.org).

**What is Iowa Swimming, Inc.**

Iowa Swimming, Inc is the LSC for the state of Iowa. ISI’s responsibility included registering clubs and athletes within its jurisdiction, setting the LSC meet schedule, sanctioning meets, training and governing officials, hosting the annual ISI Banquet, and selecting Team Iowa members for participation in All-Stars and Zones.. The ISI website is https://www.teamunify.com/team/lscis which contains information regarding teams, club contacts, the ISI meet schedule, the ISI codebook, Iowa records, and information for coaches, officials, athletes and parents. .

**Safe Sport Program**

Safe Sport Program USA Swimming is committed to fostering a fun, healthy, and safe environment for all its members. The Safe Sport program is a mandatory program providing education, policies, a reporting structure and tools to serve our athletes, parents and coaches in fostering and promoting this environment. In addition, BLZ swimming has individual athlete, parent and coach codes of conduct that strictly follow USA Swimming policies and promote a positive and productive atmosphere for our athletes. The U.S. Center for SafeSport helpline and resources may be found online at [www.safesport.org](http://www.safesport.org).

**THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:**

* All USA Swimming non-athlete members and adult athlete members;
* Participating non-members (e.g., meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.);
* LSC and club adult staff and board members; and
* Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes

Collectively “Applicable Adult(s)”

**GENERAL REQUIREMENT**

USA Swimming member clubs and LSCs are required to implement this Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy in full. The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy must be reviewed and agreed to in writing by all athletes, parents, coaches and other non-athlete members of member clubs on an annual basis with such written agreement to be retained by the club.

ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

1. Observable and Interruptible One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor’s legal guardian) must occur at an observable and interruptible distance from another adult unless meeting with a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider (see below) or under emergency circumstances.
   1. II. Meetings a. Meetings between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult may only occur if another adult is present and where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult, except under emergency circumstances.
   2. b. If a one-on-one meeting takes place, the door to the room must remain unlocked and open. If available, it must occur in a room that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.
   3. c. Meetings must not be conducted in an Applicable Adult or athlete’s hotel room or other overnight lodging location during team travel.

III. Meetings with Mental Health Care Professionals and/or Health Care Providers

If a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider meets with a minor athlete in conjunction with participation, including at practice or competition sites, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy provided that:

a. The door remains unlocked;

b. Another adult is present at the facility;

c. The other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring; and

d. Written legal guardian consent is obtained in advance by the Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider, with a copy provided to the club.

IV. Individual Training Sessions [Recommended]

Individual training sessions outside of the regular course of training and practice between Applicable Adults and minor athletes are permitted if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the training session.

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

I. Content

All electronic communication from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.

II. Open and Transparent

Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), the minor athlete’s legal guardian must be copied. If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Applicable Adult must

**What is Blaze?**

The Johnston Blaze Swim Club is a USA-Swimming sponsored competitive swim club offering opportunities for young people of different abilities in Johnston and surrounding communities. Blaze is sponsored by the Johnston Community School District Community Education Dept and abides by school policies that can be found on the district website. (Please list the District website)

**Mission Statement-**

Blaze seeks to actualize its vision by maintaining a structured, multi-level program that fosters participation at all ages and ability levels.  The coaching staff is provided opportunities and experiences that further each coach’s professional development in the areas of technical knowledge, leadership, athlete protection training, and administration. Parent involvement opportunities are broad ranging. An active parent organization supports both the developmental growth and fiscal responsibilities of the program.

Blaze promotes physical and mental fitness in a safe and fun environment. Our swimmers develop a positive self-image through discipline, commitment and perseverance. The professional coaching staff teaches technical swimming proficiency, proper body conditioning, goal setting, motivation and sportsmanship. The athletes’ active participation in competitive events instills the ability to deal with success and failure, self discipline and the adherence to rules, respect for others, team spirit, and other invaluable life lessons. This is all accomplished in a family oriented setting that creates an atmosphere of fun, social interaction and fellowship.

**Vision Statement**

Blaze strives to be the finest competitive aquatics program in central Iowa. Our commitment to excellence begins with a professional coaching staff fully supported by an active parent organization. Our swimmers set an example of integrity and leadership while representing the community in highest form.

**Organization**

Community Education works to hire quality staff that enable program areas to grow and provide a continuum of programs for people of all ages, skills, abilities, and opportunities to learn. Coaches are hired through the community education department with guidance from the aquatics coordinator. They are paid district employees that need to meet appropriate requirements dependent upon the position and have the same expectations of customer service, program knowledge and professionalism as do other district positions. Staff is evaluated on a regular basis by their immediate supervisor and/or aquatic coordinator.

Blaze is also Supported by a volunteer parent board (Anchor Club.) It is the responsibility of the board to make recommendations and to provide record-keeping for the club and its members, and appoint chairs of various committees. The board generally meets quarterly. All board meetings are announced ahead of time and are open to the general membership.

**Swim seasons**

The USA Swimming calendar runs from Sept 1 until August 30th of the next calendar year. The year is broken up into two seasons; Short Course and Long Course. Each season culminates in a series of championship meets at the LSC, Zone and National level

* Short Course Yards (SCY) Season. The short course season runs from September 1 through March 31st. The season wraps up in late February/early March at the LSC level with Silver, Age Group and Senior Championship meets. At the Zone level, Sectionals are held in mid March for those swimmers who qualify. Actual season length can vary based on age and training group.
* Long Course Meters (LCM) Season. The long course season runs from April 1st through August 30th. The season wraps up at the end of July at the LSC level with Silver and Combined Championship meets. At the Zone level, Sectionals are held in mid July, prior to the LSC championships, and Zones are held in early August. At the National level Junior Nationals, the US Open and the National Championships are held in early to mid August

**Swimming and Competition 101**

* The four competitive swimming strokes are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly. The combination of all four strokes is called a medley. If one swimmers races in an event using all four strokes, it is called the individual medley. A relay in which each swimmer uses a different stroke is called a medley relay
* In freestyle events, the competitor may swim any stroke. The stroke most used is sometimes called the crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the surface of the water surface and an alternating (up-and-down) flutter kick.
* Backstroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back.. The swimmer must finish on the back.
* The breaststroke requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pressed out from in front of the breast in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion like the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously.
* The butterfly features a simultaneous recovery of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissors or use the breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish.
* The individual medley (IM) features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle.
* Participants compete in different age groups and meets depending on their achievement level and how old they are on the first day of the meet. Traditionally recognized age groups are 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Many local meets feature 8 and under, single age groups, or senior events.

**Blaze Team Information**

The single most important requirement for being a member of Blaze is the desire to become a part of a competitive swim team. Blaze encourages swimmers of all ages, ability levels and experience to join the team, with the understanding that members always strive to improve. Membership requires the following:

* Ability to swim one length (25 yards) of the pool with a freestyle or crawl stroke.
* Complete the BLZ registration form which includes our Athlete and Parent/guardian Code of Conduct and other BLZ and USA Swimming policies.
* Obtain a USA-Swimming membership which is renewed annually. Swimmers transferring from another club will be attached to BLZ however, transferring swimmers will be Unattached-BLZ at swim meets for a period. USA registered swimmers not attached to BLZ except for transferring swimmers or guest swimmers, may not practice with the team unless approved by the head coach.
* Payment of all fees, including any past dues. BLZ policy is that all dues are payable at registration or the first practice of each month a swimmer attend. If a bill is 60 or more days delinquent swimmers will not be allowed to swim until their bill is paid. Fees for new swimmers are not discounted.
* Swimmers without a current USA-Swimming registration are prohibited from practicing for insurance purposes.

**Responsibilities of Anchor Club**

* We will conduct regularly scheduled monthly board meetings; post an agenda and make available meeting minutes.
* Board meetings will be open to all members of BLZ.
* We the club will operate on a calendar matching the ISI calendar (September through August).
* We will support the coaching staff through continuing education and accreditation programs sponsored by USA Swimming, American Swim Coaches Association or other accredited source.
* We will support our team manager by providing resources and training as necessary to effectively perform the duties as described by the club.
* We will maintain a website as a means of communication to swimmers, coaches and parents. •
* We will head various volunteer committees.
* We will not direct the coaching staff regarding training methods or techniques.
* We will be available on a limited basis for special meetings.
* We will not respond to individual issues regarding swimmer / coach / parent relationship unless those issues cannot be resolved after a direct meeting with the parties involved.
* We will continue to host swim meets as pool availability and volunteer efforts allow.
* We will pursue outside sources of funding, sponsorship and grants.
* We will conduct / sponsor fundraising activities.
* We will market our club through the website, distribution of flyers, volunteering or other means at our disposal.

**Responsibilities of Coaches**

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

* The Head Coach(es) shall be in charge of:
  + Overseeing all levels of swimming: designs, policies and plans for all groups.
  + Directly coaches at least one group.
  + Educates and supervises all coaches.
  + Sets practice schedule.
  + Sets workout groups and criteria for advancement.
  + Sets team performance goals. Facilitate individual goal setting process with swimmers.
  + Coordinates stroke instruction and training principles at all sites and workout groups for consistency.
  + Sets attendance and discipline policies for swimmers.
  + Has authority to dismiss any swimmer per disciplinary policy / procedures of BLZ.
  + Determines meet schedule and policies for team.
  + Attends highest level of competition and sees that all swim meets are attended by a team coach.
  + Oversees individual and team entries.
  + Supervises athletes at meets.
  + Recommends to the AQ coordinator the hiring or dismissal of all coaching staff.
  + Educates and supervises all coaches.
  + Authority to dismiss staff only with AQ coordinator approval.
  + Plans and directs staff meetings at least once a month.
  + Formally evaluates all staff members one time during the short course season and once during the long course season.
* Assistant Coach(es) are in charge of:
  + Overseeing daily workout groups.
  + Facilitate individual goal setting process with swimmers.
  + Has prompt attendance on all scheduled practices and swim meets.
  + Maintains attendance lists.
  + Establish an environment that fosters positive team attitudes, encourages self-discipline, sportsmanship, responsibility and respect.
  + Challenge swimmers mentally and physically.
  + Recommends individual’s meet schedule (with parent approval).
  + Selects individual meet events including relay assignments.
  + Supervises meet warm-ups to prepare swimmers, to ensure safety and to comply with USA Swimming warm-up procedures.
  + Attends all pertinent meetings at meets.
  + Match swimmer with the appropriate training group.
  + Move swimmer from one training group to another group
  + Maintain a schedule of 2 hours per week to meet with athletes / parent by appointment only

All BLZ coaches must meet high criteria set forth by USA Swimming. Each coach is a certified in athlete protection and holds a current First Aid and CPR Training for the Professional Rescuer and Lifeguard certification. BLZ coaches have also passed a background check. All of the above requirements must be kept up to date for a swim coach to remain in good standing with USA Swimming and the Blaze swim club.

**Responsibilities of Parents and Guardians**

Be supportive. A parent’s major responsibility is to provide a stable, loving, and supportive environment. This positive environment will encourage your child to continue. Parents can show their interest by ensuring their child’s attendance at practice and by coming to meets. The best way to help a child achieve his/her goals and reduce the natural fear of failure is through positive reinforcement. No one likes to make a mistake. If your child does make one, remember that he/she is still learning. Encourage his/her efforts and point out the things he/she did well. As long as he/she gave his/her best effort, you should make him/her feel like a winner. The coach is the only one qualified to judge a swimmers performance and technique. A parent’s role is to provide support.

Be a good role model. Parents are not participants on their child’s team, but contribute to the success experienced by their child and his or her team. Parents serve as role models and their attitudes are often emulated by their children. Be aware of this and strive to be positive role models. Most importantly show good sportsmanship at all times toward coaches, officials, opponents and teammates.

Be a volunteer. Parents donate their time, energy and expertise at every level from volunteering at meets to serving as a board-of-directors. Without parent volunteers our club could not function; therefore, it is a required expectation that ALL parents volunteer at some level. A list of volunteer positions is provided in this handbook.

* Practice teamwork with all parent/guardians, swimmers, and coaches by supporting BLZ's core values of team loyalty, integrity, competition and hard work.
* Practice restraint by not coaching or instructing the team or any swimmer at practice or meets, and by not interfering with coaches on the pool deck.
* Demonstrate good sportsmanship by conducting myself in a manner that earns the respect of my athlete, other swimmers, other parent/guardians, volunteers, officials and coaches at meets and practices.
* Understand that non-constructive criticism, name calling, use of abusive language, gossip, and/or gestures directed toward the coaches, officials, other parent/guardians, and/or any participating swimmers will not be tolerated.
* Enjoy involvement with BLZ by supporting the swimmers, coaches, and parent/guardians with positive communications and actions.
* Assimilate into the BLZ culture and actively participate in a volunteer role supporting the team and our athletes.
* During competitions, any questions or concerns regarding decisions made by meet officials or our coaches must be directed to the BLZ head coach.
* Bring any problems, concerns, or constructive criticism to the Aquatics Coordinator.
* All parent/guardians must also abide by the USA Swimming Code of Conduct and the applicable portions of the following USA Swimming/CIA Policies below.
  + Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAP)
  + Anti-Bullying Policy
  + Photography Policy
* I understand the coaching staff has the authority to remove my swimmer from an individual practice at any time for disruptive behavior.
* I will expect my child to be coachable and not be disruptive during practice.
* I will communicate concerns about the program or my child’s progress with the coach, not with my child. I will not complain about a coach to a child.
* I understand that the swimmer / coach / parent relationship requires a commitment from all parties to be successful. Its success/failure depends on trust and the ability to overlook minor imperfections, much like a marriage.
* I understand that the coach needs to know of any injuries or illness that will affect my swimmer’s ability to train.
* A parent’s attitude toward swimming, the program, the coach and the swimmer’s participation is key towards the swimmer’s attitude and success.

**Responsibilities of Swimmer**

The purpose of this code is to promote the best possible individual, team and program which supports the development of first-class citizens. All athletes are expected to abide by this code. Registering with BLZ assumes an agreement to comply with our Athlete Code of Conduct below.

* I will conduct myself with dignity and respect for others and for the property of others.
* I will be on time for practice, training sessions, and meets.
* I will comply with all team rules.
* Athletes will wear BLZ swim caps when competing for BLZ. Suits, caps and other clothing with other team name/logo may not be worn when representing BLZ in competition or at awards ceremonies
* As a matter of team pride & courtesy to meet hosts, pool facility operators, & janitorial staff member, swimmers will leave the BLZ team area in a neat & clean condition at the conclusion of each practice session. I understand this also applies to pool locker/rest rooms, bleacher areas, pool decks, etc.
* I will respect the rights and space requirements of other groups using the swimming facility.
* All swimmers must abide by the USA Swimming Code of Conduct and the applicable portions of the following USA Swimming/BLZ Policies below.
  + Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAP)
  + Anti-Bullying Policy
  + Photography Policy
* I will practice and teach good sportsmanship. I will offer congratulations and encouragement to his/her opponents.
* I will promote positive team spirit and morale. I will support my teammates at practice and at competition. Working together as a unit will benefit each team member and is an important part of the Blaze spirit.
* I will follow verbal directions of the coaching staff. At no time will disrespectful attitudes by any swimmer be tolerated.
* I will follow the Code of Conduct at home, at away events and at any event where the Blaze is represented. This includes when wearing BLZ apparel.

***Prohibited Behavior: I understand that at no times will the following be accepted:***

* Use or possession of any illegal substance (i.e. alcohol, drugs, tobacco).
* Destructive behavior.
* Inappropriate or unruly behavior, including fighting or striking another athlete.
* Inappropriate language (swearing or derogatory comments) or lying.
* Stealing and vandalism.
* Bullying or isolating another swimmer.
* Interference with the progress of another swimmer during practice or at any other time.

***Swimmer Guidelines & Expectations***

* I understand all expectations as described for my training group.
* I understand that if circumstances within or beyond my control do not allow me to meet those expectations stated then a rematch for the training group is possible.
* I understand I will be challenged mentally and physically on a daily basis.
* I will come to practice prepared to face this challenge.
* I will support my teammates in their efforts to succeed and maintain a positive attitude.
* I will participate in practices as directed by the coaching staff.
* I will not waste practice time and respect the instruction of my coaches.
* I will not exit the pool unless injured or that I have received permission from a coach.
* I will stretch before each practice to reduce the risk of injury.
* I will work as a team. “United we stand, divided we fall”
* I understand that while at BLZ practice or swim meets that I will be respectful to all coaches, athletes, parents and surrounding environment.
* Shake hands with your competitors after a race and cheer on your teammates at meets AND at practice!
* I will eat healthy and make sure to replenish energy with healthy choices.
* I will remember to bring and use my water bottle at all practices.
* I understand that while at BLZ practice I may not wear a swim suit or cap relating to a local high school team or competing program.
* I understand that communication with the coach will be key for a successful season for each individual as well as the entire team. This includes: Questions in training or technique, Goals, Absence, Sickness, Anything that could impact my performance or the team in general
* I understand that part of the BLZ experience is to be involved with the team through: Positively supporting our teammates and families, Participating in meets; especially our championship meets (Silver, State, Sectionals, Futures, Juniors, etc) as well as our home meets. Participating on relays at meets o Financially supporting the team by taking part in fundraising activities, Recruitment of other families, Attendance of team gatherings and service projects
* The coaching staff has the authority to remove me from an individual practice at any time for disruptive behavior.
* My coach will select my meet events (swimmer may be consulted).
* I have read and understand the discipline policy contained in the team handbook.

**Discipline policy**

* As part of the commitment to our Athlete, Parent/Guardian and Coaching Code of Conducts, the following procedures are in place to resolve grievances. The procedures are intended to:
* Place primary responsibility with the BLZ coaches and if necessary, the BLZ board to resolve disputes between individuals and take necessary disciplinary action regarding any violations of the code.
* Provide timely and equitable procedures for the review of the coaches' disciplinary decisions and for addressing issues regarding coaches' conduct.
* Coaches have the initial responsibility to discipline individuals for inappropriate conduct. It is expected that the coaches will use their reasonable discretion when imposing appropriate discipline and that any disciplinary action will consider (1) the nature and severity of the conduct, (2) any prior disciplinary actions regarding the individual, (3) the adverse effect of the conduct on other members of the team, and (4) the application of the Code of Conduct.
* Examples of disciplinary action include verbal warning, removal from a practice, notification to an athlete’s parent/guardians, suspension from some or all BLZ activities, up to and including expulsion from BLZ. These examples are not exclusive, and it is expected that the coaches will exercise their discretion to fashion an appropriate disciplinary action, including consultation with the head coach, affected parent/guardians, and the board in the case of extraordinary disciplinary action. However, the coaches will take any immediate action that is necessary/appropriate under the circumstances to ensure athlete safety.
* Any behavior which poses a safety threat or disrupts a scheduled activity will result in immediate ejection from the facility for that day. The general escalation procedure is as follows; however, as stated above, this is at the coach’s discretion and may not occur in this order:
* Verbal Warning - The coach will notify the individual of the issue as soon as possible after the incident occurs. The coach will also tell the individual the correction for the behavior. A notification may also be given to the parent/guardians.
* Suspension - More serious or recurring incidents will result in temporary suspension from the practice, meet, activity, or team. The suspension may be removal from a practice, meet, activity, or team for that day or longer. Notification will be given to the parent/guardians. No refund will be given. Any extra expenses will be the responsibility of the individual, his/her parents, or legal guardians.
* Expulsion - If the above actions do not remedy the situation, or the situation is deemed severe enough, the individual may be expelled from BLZ. Expulsion requires the approval of the head coach and the board. No refund will be given. Any extra expenses will be the responsibility of the individual, their parents or legal guardians.

Blaze athletes, coaches, officials, administration, and parent/guardians are all expected to follow the Code of Conduct. Failure to follow the code may result in disciplinary action up to and including employment or membership termination. If an athlete, coach, official, administrator, or parent/guardian conducts themselves in such a way that brings discredit or discord to Blaze, Iowa Swimming Inc, and/or USA Swimming, that individual voluntarily subjects themselves to disciplinary action. As a private swim team, Blaze maintains the right to terminate any membership with or without cause in the interest of our vision, mission, and objectives.

**Swim Group Overview**

BLZ offers training and practice groups for swimmers of all ages and ability. The goal is to offer age specific training for all our athletes geared towards challenging and developing them to the best of their abilities. For questions about which training group is the best fit please contact the BLZ coaching staff for more information. Swimmers will be placed into one of the groups below based on assessed abilities and maturity.

* **Intro to Competitive Swim I**
  + Designed for the swimmer who has completed level 3 swim lessons and is looking transition to being on a swim team
  + Ratio 1:10. Ages 5 and up
  + Objective – Stroke instruction on the four (4) competitive strokes. Practice consists primarily of drills and technique. Swimmers work on kicking, pulling, breathing and coordination for butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle. Swimmers are also introduced to starts and turns for the competitive strokes. There is also an introduction to being on a swim team
  + Goals – Prepare the swimmers for Intro To Competitive Swim II
  + Equipment: Cap, Goggles, Competitive 1 piece (female) or brief/jammer (male)
  + Requirements: Complete LTS level 3, 25 free, and 25 backstroke
  + Registration for this course can be found under "More Swimming Programs"
* **Intro to Competitive Swim II**
  + Designed for the swimmer who has completed Intro to Comp I or LTS level 4 and is looking to reinforce legal technique, turns, and finishes, as well as increase yardage.
  + Ratio 1:10. Ages 5 and up
  + Objective: Stroke instruction and refinement for the four (4) competitive strokes. Swimmers work primarily on drills, and technique. Swimmers also learn the basic principles of training, and teamwork.
  + Equipment: Cap, Goggles, Competitive 1 piece (female) or brief/jammer (male)
  + Goals: stroke improvement, enjoyment of competitive swimming. Prepare the swimmers for Age Group, learn swimming terminology.
  + Requirements: Complete LTS level 4 or Intro to comp I, 50 free, 50 back, 25 breast, 25 fly, legal free and back, working toward legal fly and breast
  + Registration for this course can be found under "More Swimming Programs"
* **Age Group**
  + Designed for the swimmer who has completed Intro to Comp II (or has completed a tryout with one of our skilled coaches) and is looking to continue to progress technique and endurance. USA swim meet participation is introduced at this level.
  + Ratio 1:15. Ages 6 and up
  + Focus: Stroke instruction and development of the four (4) competitive strokes. Principles of swim training, Preparation for competition.
  + Meet Attendance: Expected
  + Equipment: Cap, Goggles, Competitive 1 piece (female) or brief/ jammer (male), water bottle, kickboard, fins, pull buoy.
  + Goals: Master of technique, improved speed and endurance, mastery of swimming terminology, understand principles of training and how to execute a workout
  + Requirements: Intro to Comp II completion or Swim test approval
  + Practices: 3 days per week
* **Challenge Group**
  + Designed for the dedicated swimmer who has completed Age group (or tryout with one of our skilled coaches) and is looking to continue to refine their stroke and technique. USA swim meet participation is expected at this level.
  + Ratio 1:20. Ages 8 and up
  + Focus: Stroke instruction and development of the four (4) competitive strokes. Principles of swim training, Preparation for competition.
  + Meet Attendance: Expected
  + Equipment: Cap, Goggles, Competitive 1 piece (female) or brief/ jammer (male), water bottle, kickboard, fins, pull buoy.
  + Goals: Master of technique, improved speed and endurance, mastery of swimming terminology, understand principles of training and how to execute a workout
  + Requirements: Intro to Comp II completion or Swim test approval
  + Practices: 4 days per week
* **Select Group**
  + Designed for the competitive swimmer who has completed Challenge (or has completed a tryout with one of our skilled coaches) and is looking to continue to refine their stroke technique. USA swim meet participation is expected at this level.
  + Ratio 1:25. Ages 10 and up
  + Focus: Individualized training within the team environment for the purpose of competition and achievement. Stroke enhancement. Execution of training principles. Introduction to race specialization
  + Meet Attendance: Expected
  + Equipment: Cap, Goggles, Competitive 1 piece(female) or brief/jammer (male), water bottle, kickboard, fins, pull buoy, paddles.
  + Goals: Attendance based, training to develop individual strengths and mastery of stroke specialization. Familiarity of psychological skills needed to excel at competition
  + Requirements: Approval by the coaching staff

**Swim Meet Participation**

**Philosophy of competition**

The Johnston Blaze Swim Club engages in a multi-level competition program with United States Swimming that, like our training program, attempts to provide challenging, yet success-oriented competitive situations for swimmers of all ages and abilities. The following policies outline our philosophy: We emphasize competition with oneself. Winning ribbons, medals, or trophies is not our main goal. Even if the swimmer finishes first, but has swum poorly in comparison to his/her own past performances, he/she is encouraged to do better. The individual's improvement is our primary objective. Sportsmanlike behavior is of equal importance of improved performance. The coaches teach swimmers how to behave like a champion when the swimmer has both a "good" and a "disappointing" swim. Respect for officials, congratulations to other competitors, encouragement to teammates, determined effort, and mature attitudes are examples of behaviors praised and rewarded by the Johnston Swim Club coaching staff. Swimmers are taught to set realistic, yet challenging goals for meets and to relate those goals to practice to direct their training efforts. Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances, and strokes. This policy promotes versatility and encourages the swimmer to explore his potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming. Oftentimes, a swimmer’s "best" stroke changes as he/she matures and his/her body goes through physical changes.

*Swim Meet Schedule*

* Meet schedules are posted on the website. Our team hosts two meets each year and attends many others, both in Iowa and out-of-state. During meets, we encourage our athletes to focus on improving their times, achieving goals, and developing a championship attitude.
* All the meets we host/attend are sanctioned by USA Swimming, which ensures that consistent standards for meet conduct, officiating and safety are observed. Most meets take place on weekends and typically last 1-3 days. Meets are usually divided into two sessions per day, with specific age groups participating in each session.

*Information about meets*

some meets are open to all swimmers while others require specific time standards to enter. The state swim meet would be an example of a meet that requires a specific time to participate. Swimmers work during each season to achieve the time standards for our state meets. There are also regional and national level meets with specific time standards for entry. Examples of those types of meets are;

* Central Zones – Regional level meet open to swimmers 14 and under.
* Speedo Sectionals – Regional level meet open to all swimmers with qualifying times.
* Futures – Regional level meet open to all swimmers with qualifying times.
* Junior Nationals – National level meet open to all swimmers with qualifying times.
* Nationals/Olympic Trials – National level meet open to all swimmers with qualifying times.

The coaching staff encourages swimmers to attend one to two meets monthly. They can recommend meets that will provide a positive yet challenging experience for individual athletes. Although parent/guardians/swimmers select the events to enter they can also discuss this with any of the coaches. Team members are strongly encouraged to participate in all home meets.

To help swimmers become their best, BLZ encourages families to participate in the most competitive level of swimming available. Travel meets provide swimmers with experience competing against swimmers from other areas and are typically at a higher level of competition. Other benefits include:

* Gaining experience in prelims/finals competition
* Team bonding
* Learning responsibility and independence

*Signing up for Meets:*

When a meet invite is available, an email notification is sent once registration is open on the website. Meet information is posted on the BLZ and meet sponsor website. The meet invitation explains the rules of a meet, entry limits and events offered so review the invite carefully before selecting events. If you have any questions, please reach out to a veteran parent or you can contact any of our coaches or Anchor club members.

Relays are an important part of competitive swimming. Relays can be a source of great teamwork because four swimmers must work together. Coaches determine the composition of the relays based on who has signed up for the meet. Relays are not listed on the preview info but on the meet info. If your swimmer is on a relay, please make sure they attend the meet because three others are relying on your athlete. Coaches determine the relays based on times and performance at practice.

Meet entry fees are automatically calculated and appear on your next electronic invoice. The meet entry fee includes a prevent charge for individual and relay events, ISI Splash fee, and BLZ processing fee. The BLZ processing fee covers relay fees and some meet-associated coaching costs. Some meets also charge a facility fee. If you enter after the meet deadline, late entry fees apply and are usually double the "per event" rate.

*Uniforms and Team Apparel*

The team uniform is Speedo branded for Age group, Challenge, and Select groups. Caps with the BLZ logo help the coach identify the swimmers so they can follow their progress in the water. To reduce team/meet suit wear it is recommended that swimmers only use them for swim meets. Generally, tech suits should only be worn for taper meets (state level meets or higher). BLZ logo swim caps are available for purchase through Elsmore. Team swimsuits, personalized BLZ swim caps, warm-up suits, T-shirts, and other apparel are periodically available by special order through Elsmore.

*Disqualification*

Most parent/guardians have watched their athlete be disqualified during a swim event. Swimmers can be discouraged and embarrassed when they are disqualified. A few tears are normal, but swimmers and parent/guardians should not allow the incident to ruin the whole meet. Being disqualified can be a valuable lesson and it happens to the best of swimmers. The coaching staff will be notified of the disqualification and will talk with the swimmer about what happened and how to improve.

**Swim Meet Policies and Procedures**

*General Swim Meet Procedures*

Swim meets are run on a strict timeline for warm-ups and events. These procedures are to make sure our swimmers are set-up to do their best.

*General Recommendations*

* Put swimmers to bed at a reasonable hour the night before the meet. Competition is emotionally and physically draining for swimmers.
* Bring money for food or pack a small cooler with healthy treats.
* Be courteous of other people at the meet. Meets are often crowded so you might want to consider giving your place to another parent/guardian after your athlete competes.

*Before the Meet*

* Please arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time and check in with a coach.
* Only swimmers are allowed on the pool deck, so we recommend finding a place in the stands with other BLZ parents/guardians since the team usually sits together in one area.
* Programs are sometimes for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. These include heat/lane assignments for each event as well as seed times. There are also several apps available. Meet Mobile is an extremely popular app used at most of the meets and in place of paper programs. This app provides excellent information for both swimmers and parents. When team members swim an event for the first time, they are entered at “no-time” (NT).
* Use the meet program or an app to verify the events and times your athletes will be swimming.
* Swimmers should collect their cap and goggles and report to the coach for warm-up instructions. A swimmer's body is just like a car on a cold day - warming up the engine is required for optimal performance!
* After warm-ups are over, swimmers need to prepare for the meet. This is a great time for them to use the bathroom and/or get a drink. During the Meet
* Swimmers should talk with a coach before each race, to review technique, strategy, and race plans. Athletes should also visit with a coach immediately after each event, to review their swims. Coaches are usually located at one of the pool-side coaching tables.
* During swim meets swimmers report behind the blocks to their assigned lane 5 to 10 minutes before their event. Some meets will ask swimmers to report to the clerk of course rather than behind the blocks. The clerk of course then lines up all the swimmers and escorts them to the blocks.
* If you have questions about meet results, disqualifications, or meet conduct, please discuss them with one of the coaches. They will then investigate and clarify any issues. After the Meet
* Once swimmers have completed all their individual and relay events, they are free to leave after checking out with one of the coaches.
* Encourage your athlete after they swim and leave suggestions and advice to the coaches.

*Away Meet Coaching and Supervision*

BLZ member parent/guardians will be responsible for arranging and paying for all travel, accommodations, meals, and all related expenses for their swimmers for all non-chaperoned meets and will be responsible for the supervision of their swimmers at all such meets.

Alternate Supervision. Parent/guardians of a swimmer may have the parent/guardian of another swimmer attending the away meet to supervise their swimmer. In such a situation, the parent/guardians of both families shall notify the head coach of the arrangements that have been made. Any such arrangement will be strictly between the families involved. The parent/guardian acting as supervisor of another family’s swimmer will not be deemed to be a BLZ chaperone.

*Away Meet Coaching Expenses*

The head coach is responsible for determining which coaches will attend meets. These following guidelines can be amended on a case-by-case basis.

* BLZ will pay coaches meet fees and travel expenses for meets where 10 or more swimmers are in attendance.
* BLZ will pay for an additional coach if 25 swimmers are in attendance and an additional coach for each increment of 25 additional swimmers.
* If fewer than 10 swimmers attend, the swimmers will agree to pay for coaching expenses which include transportation, hotel, and a daily per diem rate.. The total will be divided equally based on the number swimmers and will be added to the next monthly bill. No refunds are offered except in rare unforeseen circumstances and only after AQ Director approval. Any refund will be offered as a credit towards future monthly bills only. o NOTE: This minimum does not apply to Junior National and National/Olympic Trial meets (see below).

*Team Travel Meets*

Team travel meets are different than away meets where swimmers travel and stay with their families. These meets are attended by swimmers, coaches and adult chaperones that travel, dine and lodge as a team. Team travel meets will strive to bring one chaperone for every eight swimmers on the trip. Chaperones, under the direction of the head coach will be responsible for the care of all athletes on the trip including meals, curfews, transportation and any other issues that may arise. Coaches will be responsible for all meet related aspects of the trip, including meet administration and coaching.

Team Travel Meet Code of Conduct - The head coach or designated head coach will have full authority over all trip participants. They will also handle any decisions required during the trip and ensure the travel policy is enforced during the trip. In addition to the Swimmer Code of Conduct, the following Traveling Code of Conduct applies when participating in team travel meets:

* Individuals are expected to behave appropriately and represent BLZ in a mature manner.
* Athletes are not allowed to leave either the hotel or the pool without permission from the head coach or chaperone.
* Athletes are required to be in their rooms with lights out at a time specified by the coach or chaperone.
* No long-distance phone calls are to be made from hotel rooms.
* No pay movies are to be ordered from hotel rooms.
* Treat hotel facilities, guests and staff with respect. No damage will be tolerated.
* No individual is allowed in a room of the opposite gender unless approved by the head coach or chaperone. If approval is given, room door must always remain wide open.
* Individuals are responsible for their own wake-up calls (or bring an alarm). The team will leave the hotel at the time specified by the coach.
* Any additional guidelines for the team will be established as needed by the coach and chaperones.
* If a coach also participates as an athlete, he/she will be considered a coach for purposes of this policy. 11. Any individual that is found to have violated any team rules will be subject to disciplinary action by the team and/or local authorities. An individual may be sent home at the expense of the individual, their parents or legal guardians.

**Communication**

Several methods are used to keep club members informed of team events.

* Anchor Club Meetings: monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month. Reminders of these meetings will be email notification that will be sent at least one week prior to the meeting. An agenda is emailed in advance. Parents are encouraged to attend and ask questions concerning the operation of the team.
* Email: Club email distribution is often used as a communication tool. If you are not receiving periodic emails from the club please notify a coach or Anchor Club member.
* BandApp: Any last-minute changes or immediate communication will be sent out via BandApp. We will also use for team news.

**Volunteers**

The success of our club is largely due to the support of our family volunteers. Family volunteers fill vital roles from Anchor Club members and committee members to assisting at our swim meets. Without the support of volunteers, we simply could not host meets or function as a club. Therefore, we have a volunteer requirement each family must satisfy. Volunteer hours are based on the two seasons. Each family that has at least one swimmer practicing with BLZ for more than one month during the season must provide volunteer hours at meets hosted by BLZ.

Volunteers must sign up online under “job sign up” by midnight prior to the start of the event. Volunteers must also ensure they check-in as required to receive credit for participation because this is how your participation is verified.

Volunteers must be 14 years of age or older. If a 13 & under wants to volunteer special permission must be obtained from the meet director or the head of the committee in the case on non-meet events for the family to receive credit for those volunteer hours.

When volunteering at meets the volunteer must remain during the entire length of the volunteer slot. For non-meet events unless excused by the head of the committee the volunteer must remain during the entire length of the slot they are working.

* **Computer/Timing equipment and management**: The computer operators will be responsible for the set-up and take down of the computer systems. When the system is up and running the computer operator will work closely with the Entry in meeting their responsibilities.
* **Hospitality**: This committee is responsible for serving refreshments (soft drinks, snacks and meals) to meet workers, officials and coaches. Meet workers will probably perform more efficiently and cooperatively if they are provided with a meal and refreshments throughout the day. This committee may also be responsible for making sure that water is readily available in self-service type containers at various places on the deck. This can be particularly important if your meet is held during hot weather, indoors or out. The hospitality committee works closely with the snack bar committee and should be staffed by courteous and outgoing personnel. They are responsible for soliciting local restaurants for food donations and works with volunteer outreach for club donations.
* **Meet Director**: The meet director is usually appointed by the meet host and is the organizer and coordinator of all meet activities. The meet director's main responsibilities include, but are not limited to: securing an appropriate meet facility, obtaining a meet sanction, preparing and distributing meet invitations, organizing meet committees, printing meet program and distributing final results. The director should remain the overseer of activities, avoiding direct involvement in any one committee or activity. It is also essential that the meet director consult regularly with committee chairpersons to ensure that each committee's assignments are being handled thoroughly and expediently.
* **Advertising and Sponsorship**: Hosting a swim meet is an expensive undertaking. Meet costs can be partially defrayed with advertising and sponsorship revenue. The advertising and sponsorship committee often functions on a year-round basis. It takes a great deal of time and effort to solicit funds, but a small, dedicated committee with quality leadership can be very effective. Code Book Section J Page: J-13 Iowa Swimming, Inc. MEET DIRECTOR’S HANDBOOK Revised: 12/2006 Camera-ready copy and advertisements should be given to the program committee as early as possible prior to the meet date. Many corporations can provide camera ready materials, eliminating some typesetting costs for the committee, but sponsors should be forewarned of any copy, logo or photo restrictions for the meet program. If a contract is signed for in-kind services, special sponsor needs (e.g., free tickets, banners, public address acknowledgements, etc.) should be reviewed carefully with the committee, meet director and facilities manager.
* **Awards**: This person/committee is responsible for organizing and presenting the meet awards. Awards can be the single largest expense for a swim meet. Careful consideration should be given to the level of competition and to any specific LSC guidelines when selecting the awards. A common practice is to award medals or ribbons first through the # of lanes in your pool (6 lane-1st-6th, 8 lane-1st-8th). Sufficient lead-time for ordering awards is essential. A minimum of six weeks is usually required from the time of the order to the actual delivery. Extra awards should always be ordered to allow for ties or errors. For senior meets, hosts and swimmers should be aware that the cost or value of any prizes may affect high school or college eligibility. Preparing awards for distribution takes time; pre-planning and organization are essential. Awards can be sorted by event into labeled paper lunch bags before the meet. Awards not collected by swimmers should either be forwarded to the swimmer's club coach or representative at the meet or by mail.
* **Snack Bar and Concessions**: The snack bar committee should begin planning early. The chair (or co-chairs) should be selected six to eight weeks before the meet. This committee is responsible for menu planning, shopping, food preparation and staffing the snack bar during the meet. The meet director or a member of the committee should check local ordinances regarding the preparation and sale of food. Soliciting food donations and shopping for advertised specials can save a great deal of money. The meet concessions may be organized by the snack bar committee or may be offered to a professional swim shop for a percentage of sales. The host club and locale of a meet will often dictate stocking of a concession stand.
* **Clerk of Course (if needed):** (USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 102.18) The Clerk of Course is responsible for much of the pre-competition paperwork at the meet, and is the custodian of the scratch box and relay forms, when these are used. The Clerk of Course should have a protected, but easily accessible, work location on or adjacent to the pool deck during the meet. The functions described in the following sections under Check-in, seeding and Relay forms are the responsibility of the Clerk of Course.
* **Meet Marshal**: Meet marshals must be selected for every meet and must be USA Swimming members. They should be responsible individuals who can actively monitor warm-ups and maintain order and safety in the swimming venue. They are assigned by and report to the Meet Director and/or Meet Referee. The marshal shall warn, order to cease and desist, or, with the concurrence of the Referee, remove from the venue, anyone behaving in an unsafe manner or whose actions are disrupting the orderly conduct of the meet. To indicate their authority, marshals should be provided with an easily identifiable uniform clearly visible to all in the venue. Bright orange vests or armbands, or other brightly colored means of identification can be used.
* **The Chief Timer and Timers:** (USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 102.17) Timers are the key volunteers at all swim meets. The purpose of a competitive meet is for each swimmer to achieve times; therefore, these workers must be diligent and dedicated to ensure success. Another key worker at any meet is the chief timer, who is responsible for recruiting both the timers (three per lane) and runners prior to the meet and then supervising these people during the meet. The chief timer ensures that all timers and their watches are functioning properly throughout the meet, replacing timers or watches when necessary. The chief timer's watch is started for each heat and is used to replace any watch that may malfunction or that did not start during any given heat. The chief timer delivers all times recorded by the lane timers to the meet recorders.
* **The Announcer:** (USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 102.21) Meet announcers must be selected with great care. An announcer should have a clear, pleasant voice and be able to function under pressure in the midst of a noisy crowd and a demanding referee. A knowledgeable swim-parent with a pleasing "radio" voice and a willingness to help can be an invaluable asset as an announcer, but must be forewarned to remain impartial. At most age group meets, the function of an announcer is to state the facts (i.e. event, heat, swimmer's names, etc.), not to commentate. Unnecessary comments or announcements merely add to the confusion at such meets.
* **Entry Chair**: The first step in data entry is to generate the Meet Information document and master entry forms. The computer operator should obtain the required information from the Meet Director. When sending out team entry packets, the host club should include an entry form for each age group and each sex. These entry forms should be pre-printed with event names and event numbers. This will save many errors during the entry process. If individual, rather than team, entries are to be submitted, forms for this purpose can also be designed and included in the meet information to make the data entry process as easy and error-free as possible. While waiting for entries to start coming in, the computer operator should enter qualifying times (for higher level meets) and records that apply to the upcoming meet.
* **Runners:** Runners, often the host club's age-groupers, shuttle material (e.g., seed cards, results) from station to station during the meet. These workers are literally "runners”. It is helpful to have one person coordinating the efforts of all runners to avoid confusion and lost material. Courtesy, praise and a small reward (e.g., a meet T-shirt) are all that is needed to promote dedication in this invaluable group of volunteers.

**Officials**

Officials are required at all competitions to observe the swimmers complying with the rules of each event and stroke. Here is a link to the [USA Swimming Rules and Regulations](https://www.usaswimming.org/swimmers-parents/learn-the-basics/rulebook). Anyone interested is encouraged to become certified and part of the USA Swimming Officials team regardless of swimming knowledge. For more information, contact any coach or Anchor Club member. Timers are also required to ensure accurate times are recorded. Without officials and timers, the meets cannot happen which is why parent/guardian volunteers are essential.

**Cancellation**

We require a 30 day written cancellation notice handed into the Aquatics office or emailed to the Aquatics Coordinator. Forms can be found in our office or on the website.

**Release of Liability**

By registering my child(ren) with Johnston Blaze Swim Club, I agree to participate (or allow my child(ren) and family members to participate) in the Johnston Blaze Swim Club, and hereby release Johnston Blaze Swim Club, its directors, officers, agents, coaches, and employees from liability for any injury that might occur to myself (or to my child(ren) and family members) while participating in the Johnston Blaze Swim Club program, including travel to and from training sessions, swim meets or other scheduled team activities. I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the above mentioned organizations and/or individuals, their agents and/or employees, against any and all liability for personal injury, including injuries resulting in death to me, my child(ren) and/or other family members, or damage to my property, the property to my child(ren) and/or other family members, or both, while I (or my child(ren) or family members) participating in the Johnston Blaze Swim Club program.

**Extended Absence Because of Injuries and Illness Policy:**

Swimmers who cannot participate in any practices for more than four (4) consecutive weeks because of an illness or injury will be provided relief of dues on a pro-rated basis for some of the time missed, because of illness or injury. The relief from dues will begin thirty (30) days after the date the swimmer cannot participate because of illness or injury. The obligation to pay dues will resume when the swimmer is medically cleared to return to a practice on a regular basis as set below. The obligation to pay dues resumes once a swimmer is medically cleared to return to a practice on a regular basis, even if practices are modified or reduced to accommodate the swimmers’ rehabilitation, and even if the swimmer returns to a reduced number of practices per week for limited period of time. This policy is intended to provide relief for the time period when the swimmer is unable to participate in any practices at any level. If, as part of a rehabilitating plan, the athlete attempts to return to practice and learns that she/he is not ready to resume workouts, the swimmer will not be penalized. For example, assume the swimmer is recovering from respiratory illness and tries to return under medical supervision and finds out after one or two practices that she is not ready to practice on a regular basis. In this situation, dues will not resume simply because the swimmer tries unsuccessfully to return. The obligation resumes once the swimmer can return to practice on a regular basis. BLZ will require medical validation of any illness or injury, as well as medical clearance that the athlete can return safely to practice. In this situation, it is important that the family communicate regularly with BLZ to ensure that our coaches fully understand the needs of the swimmer. The health of our athletes is our number one priority, and we will work with the family to best accommodate the swimmer's recovery. Throughout this process, it is important that the family coordinate closely with the medical providers and BLZ coaches to monitor rehabilitation and recovery. This policy only applies to extended absence because of illness or injury, and is not intended to apply to other absences such as camps or vacations.

OFFICIAL GLOSSARY

Swimming Words and Terms

AMATEUR SPORTS ACT — the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act (1998) (or as applica- ble, the Amateur Sports Act of 1978), as amended from time to time.

APPROVAL — a permit issued by an LSC for meets conducted in conformance with USA Swimming technical rules in which both members and non-members may compete.

ARM — that part of the body that extends from the shoulder to the wrist.

ATTACHED — status of an athlete member who represents a member club in competition after having met the requirements of Article 203.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS — unless otherwise noted, shall mean the USA Swimming Board of Directors.

BODY — the torso, including shoulders and hips.

BULLYING — the severe or repeated use, regardless of when or where it may occur, by one or more USA Swimming members of an oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member or Participating Non- Member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of: (i) causing physical or emotional harm to the other person or damage to the other person’s property; (ii) placing the other person in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creating a hostile environment for the other person at any USA Swimming activity; (iv) infringing on the rights of the other person at any USA Swimming activity; or (v) materially and substantially disrupting the train- ing process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club, LSC or Zone).

CLUB — an organization which has been accepted for membership in USA Swimming.

COMPETITION CATEGORY — stated as male or female for the purpose of athlete swimming eligibility, competition, selection and records. An athlete’s stated competition category shall be referred to as “gender.”

CONFORMING TIME — time achieved in a course that corresponds to the meet competition course. COURSE — designated distance over which the competition is conducted.

LONG COURSE — 50 meters.

SHORT COURSE — 25 yards or 25 meters.

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DECK CHANGE — changing, in whole or in part, into or out of a swimsuit when wearing just one suit in an area other than a permanent or temporary locker room, bathroom, changing room or other space designated for changing purposes.

DECK PASS — the official mobile application of USA Swimming.

DRAW — random selection by chance.

DUAL COMPETITION — competition between two teams.

END OF COURSE — designated wall for racing turns and finishes.

EVENT — any race or series of races in a given stroke and/or distance. For competitive limits, one event is inclusive of preliminary heat(s) plus its related final(s), or one timed final, or one time trial.

FINALS — a session of a meet in which the concluding heats of an event are contested which may include championship, consolation, or bonus finals.

* Championship (A) Final — the fastest heat of swimmers competing in Finals
* Consolation Final(s) — the second fastest and subsequent heats of swimmers competing in Finals for which team selection, scoring points and/or prize money are awarded
* Bonus Final(s) — any finals heat in which no points or placement prizes are awarded FINISH — the instant that a swimmer touches the wall at the end of the prescribed distance. FINISH POINT — the physical location where an open water race terminates.  
  FIRST DAY OF MEET — day on which the first competitive swimming event is conducted.

FORWARD START — an entry made while facing the course.

FOUL — an instance of obstruction, interference, collision, or equipment malfunction which prevents the successful completion of a race.

HEATS — a division of an event in which there are too many swimmers to compete at one time. (See Preliminary Heats and Timed Final Heats)

INTRA-SQUAD MEET – a competition exclusively among members of a single club.

LANE DIVIDER — continuous floating markers attached to a line stretched from the starting end to the turning end of the course for the purpose of separating each lane.

LENGTH — extent of the course from end to end.

LSC (LOCAL SWIMMING COMMITTEE) — an administrative division of USA Swimming with supervi- sory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by USA Swimming.

MANUAL START — the start of any timing device by an individual in response to the same starting signal given to the swimmer(s).

MEET ANNOUNCEMENT — document setting forth information of the meet events, schedule, and procedures.

MEET COMMITTEE — Unless otherwise specified in the meet announcement, the Meet Committee shall consist of the Meet Director, Meet Referee, and coach and athlete members as appropriate.

MIXED CLASSIFICATION — meet in which events of Age Group and Junior, Senior, or any other clas- sification are offered.

NATIONAL AGE GROUP (NAG) RECOGNITION TIME — an official time that qualifies as one of the fastest for a given age group as defined in the SWIMS portion of the Policy Manual.

NON-CONFORMING TIME — entry time achieved in a course which does not correspond to the course in which the meet will be conducted.

OBSERVED SWIM — a swim observed by assigned USA Swimming officials for conformance with USA Swimming technical rules in a meet conducted under other than USA Swimming rules.

OFFICIAL TIME – a time achieved in a USA Swimming sanctioned or approved competition or in an observed swim in accordance with USA Swimming technical rules.

ON THE BACK — position of the body when the shoulders are at or past vertical towards the back.

ON THE BREAST — position of the body when the shoulders are at or past vertical towards the breast.

OPEN COMPETITION — competition that is not otherwise defined as a closed competition in which any qualified club, organization or individual may enter.

OPEN EVENT — an event in which any qualified individual may compete, regardless of age.

OPEN WATER SWIMMING — any swimming competition that takes place in rivers, lakes, or oceans.

OUTREACH MEMBERSHIP — a reduced-fee category of athlete membership for under-represented and/or economically disadvantaged swimmers.

PLACE JUDGE — official assigned to record the order of finish of all swimmers by lane in each heat.

POLICY MANUAL — document adopted by the USA Swimming Board of Directors that specifies poli- cies and procedures not contained in Rules & Regulations.

PRACTICE — the instruction of swimming techniques, skills, knowledge, conditioning, aptitude and motivation.

PRELIMINARY HEATS OR PRELIMINARIES — competition in which a number of heats are swum to qualify the fastest swimmers for the Finals.

PROGRAM — the order of events, including starting times and intermissions in a meet or portion thereof (See Session), sequentially listed by class of competition, sex, age group, distance, and stroke as set forth in the meet announcement.

PROPULSIVE — having power to propel.

RELAY — a race in which four eligible team members each swim a specified portion of the course. RELAY LEG — the part of a relay event that is swum by a single team member.

SANCTION — a permit issued by an LSC to a USA Swimming group member to conduct a meet in conformance with all USA Swimming rules in which all participating swimmers are athlete mem- bers of USA Swimming, except as provided in Article 202.5.1.

SCISSOR KICK — use of the top of the instep of one foot and the bottom of the other foot in the pro- pulsive part of the kick.

SCRATCH (from an event) — withdraw an entry from competition.

SEASONAL ATHLETE MEMBERSHIP — an individual athlete membership in USA Swimming which may be offered at the option of the LSC for one or two periods of not more than 150 days in a reg- istration year pursuant to the Corporate Bylaws Article 2.4.

SEASONAL CLUB — an organization which has been accepted for membership in USA Swimming and which operates within a period of time specified by the LSC.

SEED — to distribute the swimmers among the required number of heats and/or lanes, according to their submitted or preliminary times.

DECK-SEED — swimmers are required to check in for their events on the day of the meet. After scratches are determined, events are seeded.

PRE-SEED — all entrants are seeded prior to the day of competition.

SESSION — any portion of a meet distinctly separated from other portions by locale, time, or type of competition, i.e., preliminaries and finals; morning and evening; Senior and Age Group, etc.

SHALL — mandatory.

SHOULD — recommended but not mandatory.

SIMULTANEOUSLY — occurring at the same time.

SWIMS (SWIMMING WEB-BASED INTERACTIVE MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM) — a single integrated database system which includes USA Swimming membership data and a databank of achieved times that are considered official and are recognized for proof of entry and recognition programs.

TEXTILE MATERIALS — natural and/or synthetic, individual and non-consolidating yarns used to con- stitute a fabric by weaving, knitting, and/or braiding, or as further defined under current FINA swim- wear rules.

TIME STANDARD — the time a swimmer must have previously achieved in order to compete in that event at a designated competition.

TIME TRIAL — an event conducted within or independently of a meet where the swimmer races against the clock to establish an official time.

TIMED FINAL HEATS OR TIMED FINALS — competition in which only heats are swum and final plac- ings are determined by the times achieved in the heats.

TOUCH — contact with the end of the course.

TRYOUT — practices where a swimmer who is not a member of USA Swimming participates with a USA Swimming member club for a period not to exceed thirty (30) consecutive days in a twelve (12) month period to determine the swimmer’s interest in becoming a member of USA Swimming.

TURN — a point where the swimmers reverse or change direction.

UNATTACHED — status of a member who does not represent a club or FINA member Federation in competition.

USA SWIMMING — USA Swimming, Inc., a Colorado corporation.

VENUE — the area located on the sides and ends of the pool, spectator area, team areas within the pool facility (e.g., portion of the building designated for teams and swimmers, or fenced area around an outdoor pool), locker rooms, and such other areas as may be specifically designated by the host club or organization, meet director, or referee. In open water competition, the geographical area and environs where the meet is conducted.

VERTICAL — perpendicular to the water surface.

VIRTUAL MEET – a competition held at multiple venues.

WALL — vertical portion of the pool, contiguous surfaces of the deck and overflow gutter, the front por- tion of the starting block or platform, or the touchpad at the end of the course.

WEBSITE — the official site maintained by USA Swimming on the internet (usaswimming.org).