

NAC SHARKS TEAM HANDBOOK

Fall/Winter 2014

Welcome to the North Aquatics Club (NAC). This team handbook was prepared in order to help familiarize swimmers and parents with the NAC program. The Team Handbook explains NAC terms and conditions, policies and procedures. The Parent Handbook is intended for those new to the arena of competitive swimming and is aimed to educate parents about the sport. Various sections were taken from booklets and articles published by USA Swimming and the American Swimming Coaches' Association. Please take some time and familiarize yourselves with both handbooks.

The NAC program emphasizes fun, enjoyment and excellence within the sport of swimming. The NAC Coaching Staff is committed to providing all the tools necessary for each and every athlete to reach team as well as personal goals. We believe in setting our Goals high. There is no reason to do anything in life unless you do it with a purpose and do it to the best of your ability. You have to "Believe to Achieve". NAC coaches stress the development of life-long values of sportsmanship, self-respect, respect for others, honesty and responsibility to self. I hope this handbook will provide you with some insight on what NAC and USA swimming is all about. Welcome to the Sharks!

Sincerely,

Gary DeGraff
NAC Parent Board



WWW.NACSHARKS.ORG

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NAC Mission, Objectives and Values

The North Aquatics Club (NAC) is a USS affiliated, year-round, competitive swim team offering high quality professional coaching and technique instruction for all ages and abilities.

NAC Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide every member an opportunity to develop swimming skills and achieve success at his or her level of ability, from novice to international competitor.

NAC Vision Statement

Our vision is to become the premier club in the South Suburban area based on our coaching, team values, parent volunteer dedication and swimmer performance.

NAC Objectives & Values

Our coaching staff, as members of the American Swim Coaches Association, has access to the most comprehensive training and certification program for youth coaches of any sport in the United States. They welcome swimmers of every level and provide them with the best possible environment and resources, allowing them to progress from novice to the highest level of competition. The NAC coaching staff strives to instill in young swimmers an understanding and appreciation for such concepts as high self-esteem, personal accountability, sportsmanship, teamwork, self-discipline, goal setting and goal achievement. These ideals will translate into each athlete's success in training, competition and in life as they grow and develop into adults. We strive to:

- To ensure that our swimmers acquire the skills and confidence to succeed in all facets of life..
- To sustain a highly motivated and trained coaching staff.
- To advance and promote a program that encourages attendance, develops team unity and builds life-long friendships between team members and club families.
- To operate all of our programs at the highest levels of integrity and fairness.
- To provide a positive environment that is challenging, safe, healthy and rewarding for all athletes.
- To maintain World-Class sportsmanship at all times.

- To build a solid base from which we can grow and expand our membership in the community.

Affiliations

NAC is a member club of USA Swimming and Illinois Swimming. All coaches must be USA Swimming Members, undergo a background check and have certifications in First Aid, CPR, Athlete Protection and Coaches' Safety Training. USA Swimming is the governing body for amateur Competitive swimming in the United States. For more information on USA Swimming please visit their website at <http://www.usaswimming.org>

Training Facilities

Lincoln way North High School Aquatic Center
19900 S. Harlem Avenue
Frankfort, IL. 60423

Coaching Staff

A list of current coaches and board members, including contact information, is posted on the web site at the link below:

<https://www.teamunify.com/Contact.jsp?team=ilnac>

Coaching Responsibilities

The NAC coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for youngsters that will enable them to learn the value of striving to improve oneself. Therefore, the coaches must be in total control in matters affecting training and competition.

- The coaches are responsible for placing youngsters in practice groups. This is based on the age and ability of each individual. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, she/he will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach.
- Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rest with the NAC coaching staff.
- The coaching staff will make the final decision concerning which meets the NAC swimmers may attend. The coaching staff also makes the final decision concerning which events a swimmer is entered into for conference.

- At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmer's performance. (It is the parent's job to offer love and understanding regardless of their youngster's performance.)
- The building of a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.

It is the swimmer's and parents' responsibility to make the most out of the excellent opportunity this program provides for success in swimming.

Competitive Teams

The NAC is a developmental /competitive age group program designed to develop the child physically, mentally, and emotionally in a systematic fashion. A well-defined, long term approach of gradually increasing degrees of commitment is essential to reach peak performance levels during a swimmer's physiological prime. The emphasis in the early stages of participation must be placed on developing technical skills and a love for the sport. In the later years, a more demanding physical and psychological challenge will be introduced to the training program. In the respect, "too much too soon" is more often the cause of failure to achieve maximum potential in swimming than in the reverse situation.

At each level, the goals and objectives are specific and directed toward meeting the needs of the swimmer. The long-term goal of total excellence is always in mind. As each child is different, she/he will progress at his/her own rate. The coaching staff recognizes this fact when making team assignments based on a swimmer's physical, mental, and emotional level of development.

Tiger Sharks

The Tiger Sharks are the first level of our swim club. This group is for our youngest swimmers and those just getting started in the sport of competitive swimming. Practice for the Tiger Shark are offered twice (2) per week for 30 minutes each day. We encourage swimmers to try and attend all practices when offered. The emphasis of this group is teaching the two competitive strokes and other competitive skills through drilling and fun activities. Athletes and coaches really focus on proper technique. Swimmers in this group may compete in any or all of the following annual hosted events: Pick your Poison, Time Trial Meets, Tattoo Meet and Mini-Conference Meet.

Great White Shark

Great White is the second level of our swim club. Swimmers who are ages 7-10 and just starting out in the sport typically fall into this group, as well as all our 8&U swimmers. Practice for the Great White Team is 4 days per week for 45 minutes each day. We encourage swimmers to try and attend at least three of those practices per week. The emphasis of this group is teaching the four competitive strokes and other competitive skills through drilling and fun activities. Athletes begin to learn the use of the pace clock and also begin swimming mini "sets." Swimmers in this group compete in dual meets, USS meets, and any North Aquatic Club championship meet they qualify for.

Silver Shark

Silver Tip Shark is the third level of our Team. Individuals are primarily 9-11 years of age and practice is 75 minutes per day, four days a week. Swimmers are encouraged to attend 3-4 practices per week. This

group continues the teaching of the four competitive strokes and more emphasis is placed on swimming "sets." Dry-land training is introduced during practices. Swimmers in this group compete in dual meets, USS meets, and any North Aquatic Club championship meet they qualify for.

Slurple Shark

Slurple Shark this is the fourth level within our Team. Typical athlete ages in this group range from 10-13 years of age. Practice is offered 4 days per week for 75 minutes each day. Dry land training is continued through practice. This group begins to focus on higher level aerobic training, as well as other energy systems. Stroke technique is still an emphasis within the group. Swimmers in this group compete in dual meets, USS meets, and any North Aquatic Club championship meet for which they qualify.

Purple Shark

Purple Shark is the Fifth level of our age group program. Swimmers in this group are typically 11-14 years old. Practices are offered 4 days per week for 2 hours each day. Athletes in this group typically attend 3-4 practices per week or 85% of practices offered over a month. This group is designed for athletes determined to take their swimming to the next level. A stronger emphasis is placed on the conditioning of energy systems from previous groups. Swimmers continue to incorporate dry land on a regular basis. Goal setting and end of the season focus are constantly reinforced. Swimmers in this group compete in dual meets, USS meets, and any North Aquatic Club championship meet for which they qualify.

Gold

Gold Team is for our 13 and over/high school aged athletes who are looking to continue their swimming at the next level. Practice is offered 5 days per week for 90 minutes each day. Swimmers in this group typically attend 4-5 practices per week. This group will consist of younger athletes (freshman & sophomores) taking steps towards advanced swimming and older high school athletes not yet ready for advanced training. The emphasis of this group is the continued development of the energy systems and stroke technique. Swimmers in this group compete in dual meets, USS meets, and any North Aquatic Club championship meet for which they qualify.

NAC Attack

NAC Attack Team is the highest level within the North Aquatic Swim Club. Swimmers on the Elite Team make a commitment to the sport and our club. Practice is offered 5 days per week for 2 hours each day. The focus of this group is excellence at the regional, state and national level. Athletes in this group must keep a 85% attendance to be allowed to train in the group. They must commit to Elite team meets and events. Swimmers falling below that attendance mark will be moved to Gold Team. More specific training is done based on stroke and distance (ie sprint, mid-distance, distance, IM, etc). Most athletes in this group go on to swim in college...many of them with some type of swimming scholarship. Swimmers wishing to join this group must have an 11-12 regional cut or higher according to age. All swimmers in this group are expected to compete for the North Aquatic Club in the highest level meet for which they qualify.

Swimmer's Training Responsibilities

As a swimmer's level of ability increases, so does her/his responsibilities. As swimmers improve, there is a deep commitment that requires great effort on all parts. A swimmer has responsibilities to the team, the coach, her/his parents, and most importantly to herself/himself. Swimmers are expected to support their teammates at practice as well as in competition. Working together as a team benefits all individuals in the group. Swimmers need to prepare themselves for a 100% effort each time they come to practice. Challenge yourself on a daily basis. Don't be afraid of the competition in practice and in meets. Try to become the lane leader and motivate everyone in it. Practice consistency and observe proper training habits. This includes proper diet, rest, and study habits.

Mandatory Equipment

Swimmers may be required to bring specified training equipment to practice. It is the swimmer's responsibility to come prepared. Additional equipment may also be required or recommended and, if so, will be covered at the Parents Meeting.

Equipment requirements:

All swimmers: racing suit, goggles, cap, nose clip and fins.

Silver and slurple: paddles

Gold: snorkel, (swimmers in the purple group that are going to make a commitment to swimming should get a snorkel also)

Practice and Attendance Policies

1. Swimmers must be registered with the NAC and have all fees paid in full prior to the start of the season to practice.
2. Swimmers should arrive a minimum of 15 minutes before practice so as to be on deck and ready 10 minutes before practice starts. This is time to stretch and spend some social time with teammates. Also, this allows us to start on time and make efficient use of the allocated time.
3. Swimmers should be picked up no later than 15 minutes after practice ends.
4. For the swimmer's protection, parents should make sure a coach is at practice and that there is practice, before leaving their child at the pool. Check with the team's website regularly for changes.
5. The swimmer should plan to stay the entire practice. The last part of practice is often the most important. Also, announcements are usually made at the end of practice.
6. Parents are not allowed on the pool deck during practice due to insurance considerations. Parents may observe practice from the stands at our pools. Please refrain from communicating with your swimmer during practice.
7. Swimmers are to enter the schools/facilities at the entrance closest to the pool and go directly to the locker room to change and proceed directly to the pool. Once changed, the swimmer should remain on deck until practice is over. A swimmer found in any other part of the building could damage the club's relationship with the school and jeopardize future

pool use. Swimmers should not leave anything of value in an unlocked locker in the locker-room. Bags may and should be brought onto the deck. NAC is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

8. While at practice, the swimmer is the responsibility of the coaching staff. During practice sessions, swimmers are never to leave the pool area without a coach's permission.
9. Each training group has specific attendance requirements appropriate for the objectives of that level. As a general rule, the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success. NAC encourages younger swimmers to participate in activities in addition to swimming. The coach's expectation level to attend practices increases as swimmers move to higher levels.
10. Practice schedules are posted on the website.
11. If a swimmer is late to practice or has to leave early, we ask that the coach is notified prior to the start of practice.
12. The coach should be notified in advance of an illness or injury. Regardless of how serious or trivial it may be. If your swimmer will be out of the water over a long period of time with an injury or illness, please notify the NAC board.

Communication

NAC has many vehicles for communication. Please refer to them to help you navigate through the seasons.

Please feel free to email coaches or the team e-mail

1. **Website:** www.nacsharks.org is a source for a vast amount of information and knowledge about our swim team.
2. **Mailboxes:** Each family of swimmers is assigned a file folder/mailbox that is located in the balcony outside the concession stand during practice. Throughout the year, notices of upcoming events, meet volunteer requirements, fundraising events, etc. are placed in the swimmer's mailbox. It is each swimmer's and parent's responsibility to check the files at every practice
3. **E-mail:** The NAC Head Coaches and Age Group Coaches can be reached by email. For those members who have email access, this is a good way to communicate with them.
4. **Coaches:** The best way to speak with the coaches is to meet them after practice. Periodically throughout the season they make themselves available for 15 minutes to answer questions and provide information. Sending a note to the coach with your swimmer is a good way to get information to them.

Attire, Travel and Swim Seasons

Team Attire

NAC recommends "Swimmers Edge", you can order online at www.swimmersedge.com/teams/nac.asp.

NAC Team suits and caps are required for all swim meets. Team suits & caps can be purchased through Swimmers Edge. An order for personalized caps will be placed once during each swim season. At practices, it is a good idea to wear a non-team suit and save the team suit for the meets.

Fins are required for every swimmer. Additional equipment will be required at the coaches discretion throughout the season.

Team Logo apparel can be obtained through our apparel chairman. Apparel order forms will be available at various times throughout every season.

Team Travel

Whenever possible, the NAC will travel together to out-of-town swim meets. For these meets the Head Coach will secure a block of rooms at a local hotel. Parents/swimmers are responsible for all travel expenses including hotel, meals, and incidentals. Also refer to the "Team Travel" Policy in this document.

Swim Seasons

Competitive swimming is divided into 2 seasons. The Fall/Winter or "short course" season runs from mid-September until mid-February or early March. Meets are held in 25 yard pools. The Spring/Summer or "long course" season runs from mid-April through mid-July or early August. Most dual meets are held in short course (25 yard) pools. USS meets are mostly held in long course (50 meter) pools.

Types of Meets

SSSC (Dual and Conference)

North Aquatics is part of the South Suburban Swim Conference (SSSC), which is a conference made up of anywhere between 18 and 24 teams. These teams, for the most part, are also feeder programs into various high schools. The conference is divided into 3 or 4 divisions, depending on the number of teams. The divisions, in descending order of team rank are Gold, Blue, Red and White. During each season, each team swims a dual meet against all teams within their division. A couple more meets may be added at the team's discretion. At the end of each season, mid-February for the winter season and mid-July for the summer season, each division holds a conference meet where all teams in the division compete at one location. The winner in each of the divisional conference meets moves up a level to the next division; the loser moves down a level.

DUAL MEETS

The dual meet schedule will be posted on the team website. About half are swum at home and the other half away. Sign up for the dual meets is as follows: Find the meet on the "Event" page on the website. Click on "attend this event" and commit. **YOU MUST REPLY BY THE DATE PROVIDED, OR YOUR SWIMMER WILL NOT SWIM.** The swimmer will be placed in events and relays chosen by the coach. There are typically 2 different relays and 5 individual events, to which the swimmer will swim in 1 to 2 relays and 1 to 3 individual events. The swimmers will be placed according to their ability in all different strokes/races throughout the season to give them experience. There are no additional fees to swim in dual meets.

Upon entering the pool area, swimmers are to find the team and check in on an attendance sheet. Usually this sheet is posted to a wall and the swimmer needs to highlight his/her name. Then the swimmer needs to get a "number" from either a coach or parent helper. The swimmer will be directed where to go for this. After receiving the number, the swimmer is to sit with his/her age group until they are directed to a pool for warm-ups. After warm-ups, they are to remain on deck unless a coach excuses them. During the meet, swimmers need to line up in their respective lanes behind the starting blocks 3 to 5 races prior to theirs. Younger and new swimmers will be assisted with this.

Coaches are assigned a lane per meet for swim observation. After completing a race, the swimmer is to find the coach assigned to the lane that in which the swimmer competed to discuss the race. The swimmer is then to return to the deck to wait for his/her next swim. Once a swimmer is done with all his/her races, he/she may leave after checking with a coach. Sometimes relays need to be adjusted and a swimmer may be needed.

Please note that a typical dual meet offers races in a medley relay, a free relay, and 1 race of a particular distance in each of the butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle and individual medley. Dual meets are typically held on weeknights.

SSSC Conference Meet

The conference meet is held at the end of the dual meet season. Each team is allowed only 1 relay and 2 individual entries per age group per race. The minimum number of swimmers needed to fill out a complete entry per age group is 5. With upwards of 15 to 20 swimmers in some age groups, it becomes evident that not everyone will make the conference team. This is not to diminish any efforts and improvements of other swimmers- it's the design of the meet. Coaches will select conference swimmers. Criteria on which the selections are made include performance (both all-time best and seasonal best times), trends (if the swimmer is stepping up and improving), attendance at meets and practice. Swimmers must compete in at least 2 swim meets (at least 1 of which is a dual meet) to be eligible for conference. If swimmers don't have times from meets, there is nothing from which to judge. Also swimmers whom have not been at practice for any length of time prior to the conference meet may not be in good enough shape to swim well. Results from this meet determine which division NAC is placed the following year. The winter and summer seasons are separate, so the finish in the winter season determines the division of the next winter season; summer finish determines the division of the next summer season.

USS MEETS (United States Swimming/ Illinois Swimming)

To be a member of North Aquatics, each swimmer is required to be a member of United States Swimming. This allows the swimmer to participate in sanctioned swim meets ranging from local USS meets to Nationals, Olympics and other international meets. Obviously, some meets have more restrictive time standards for entry or selection.

The USS meet season is run simultaneous to our dual meet seasons. Whereas dual meets are usually swum against 1 or 2 other conference teams on weeknights and events are limited, USS meets are swum against 8 to 30 other teams on weekends with many more events of various distances of the strokes offered. Most USS meets are offered on Saturday and Sunday. The days are divided into sessions, so that each age group would swim in the morning or afternoon. Entries are limited so that each session does not exceed 4 hours. Swimmers may choose which day/days they wish to attend and which events they wish to swim. There is a charge to enter these meets, usually based on the number of events swum. This charge would be billed by North Aquatics and invoiced to the member.

North Aquatics attends about 4 to 7 USS meets per season. A complete list of the meets we attend are posted on our website.

USS meets vary in many ways. There are different events offered, different prizes awarded, different charges, etc. All information pertaining to the meet is put into a "meet packet" provided by the host team. This "meet packet" is/will be posted as a .pdf on our website by following the link for the particular meet on the "Event" page. All information regarding location, fees, events, awards and procedures are listed in the packet. To enter a meet, review the packet to decide if this meet is for you. Click on "attend this event" on the "Event" page. A list of events offered along with the swimmer's best times are listed. Put a check in the box next to the events chosen. Any notes or questions may be emailed to Coach Gary or put in the note section of the particular meet. PLEASE MAKE A NOTE IN THE "NOTE" SECTION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE SWIMMER WISHES TO PARTICIPATE IN RELAYS. All you need to do is enter events; the team will send in all forms and payment to the host team. REFER ALL INQUIRIES TO SHARK COACHES; DO NOT CONTACT THE HOST TEAM. You will be billed for your entry by North Aquatics. Once the entry is submitted to the host team, all fees are non-refundable.

PLEASE NOTE THE DEADLINE DATE ON OUR WEBPAGE. IT WILL NOT BE THE SAME DATE AS LISTED AS ENTRY DATE IN THE PACKET. Most USS meets fill within minutes (if not seconds) after the host team begins accepting entries. The North Aquatic entry chair needs a couple days to accept team entries and put them in a correct computer format for the host team. This entry is then submitted at the precise allowable entry time. Entries are typically due about 4 to 6 weeks prior to the meet, so a little planning is necessary. The web based entry section has a cutoff where no new entries will be accepted. If you wish to try to enter after the deadline, please email Coach Gary.

A couple notes regarding event selection:

You are there – you may as well swim. Don't be afraid to challenge yourself and swim outside your comfort zone. Don't ONLY pick the first and last race. There will be a lot of boring down time in the middle. You do not have to swim the entire meet. You may swim on 1 day or 2 or 3 if offered. You may leave the meet upon completion of your last swim.

USS Meet Pros and Cons:

- Whereas dual meets have limited events, USS meets offer more events
- More and different swimmers to race against. At a dual meet, you may race against only 5 other swimmers; at a USS meet there may be 40-60 entered. You will be swimming against more swimmers with a time similar to yours.
- You get to know more swimmers from around the area and state. Sitting in bullpens is a great way to meet new friends. Lots of swimmers have friends from all over the state that they met at competitions.
- Bigger meets mature swimmers quicker. There's a maturity and a confidence that appears in swimmers who have competed in larger meets. After a few jitters from the early stages, swimmers are more relaxed in pressure situations.
- Prizes. Most meets give out prizes to the winner of each heat along with an award for top swimmers.

Some Cons:

- More swimmers may mean longer meets. Most sessions run from 2 to 4 hours. We try to select meets on the shorter side, but that's not always the case.
- Costs can add up. There is a fee per each event (usually \$3 to \$4) and a fee to Illinois swimming (\$2-\$3 per swimmer). Host teams charge admission fees (about \$5-\$6 per person). If you wish to purchase a psych or heat sheet, teams charge \$2 to \$6. If the meet is in Chicago, there are parking charges.

CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

USA Swimming categorizes age groups and times for events. These are called motivational standards and are posted on our website in the "document" section. Categories begin at novice or "all times", continue to "C", then "B", "BB", "A", "AA", "AAA", "AAAA" and so on. Most USS meets swum during the REGULAR season have no time standards. To attend any championship meet, certain time standards must be met. At the end of each season, usually in early March and mid to late July, Illinois hosts some championship meets. The first is known as regionals. To qualify for regionals, a regional cut for the swimmers age group must be met. Regional cuts are usually a bit faster than the "A" standards (see standards in the "document" section of the website). After regionals there are 2 separate state meets; "senior champs" (for those attaining the time standards) and age group state (under 14) championships. Both senior champs and age group state have qualifying standards that are a little faster than AA time standards. The exact time standards are posted on the website. In the summer, there are zone championships. Illinois swimming is part of the Central zone, about 15 states in the Midwest. Qualifying times for zones are AAA standards. Beyond zones, there are junior nationals, nationals and US open champs. These time standards are also on the website. When swimmers achieve any of the above time standards, they qualify for the championship meet. These should be the goals of all age group swimmers. Not everyone makes them, but they are goals none the less.

About Meets

What to take to a Meet:

1. Most important: Team swim suit, team cap, and goggles. Having an extra swim suit and pair of goggles is a good idea.
2. Towels: Realize your swimmer will be there awhile, so pack at least two (or pack as many as he/she has events).
3. Something to sit on: Often times the swimmer area may be located in a gym or Cafeteria. Examples: waterproof picnic blankets or sleeping bags.
4. Sweat Suits or Team apparel to wear between events.
5. Team T-shirts: Pack 2-3 in case one gets wet.
6. Games: Travel games, cards, etc. to pass the time "be sure to leave nothing valuable unattended or unlocked.
7. Food: Bring some healthy snacks. Concessions are available at meets, but sometimes the lines are long and junk food is sold. Examples: Water, Water, and Water! Fun fruits, granola bars, cereal. Most pools do not allow eating on deck, so any snacks would have to be consumed in an eating area. Please limit drinks to water and non-staining juices (red and blue gatorade stain pool tiles)
8. Flip-flops or Crocs: He/she should wear something on their feet when walking around the pool deck or outside in hallways.

9. Parent`s Special Note: The pool is very warm. Therefore, "you" should dress appropriately. Nothing is worse than being hot at the swim meet.

Before the Meet starts:

1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet packet posted on the website.
2. Find Positive Check-In. Most meets require the swimmer to check in. There is usually a table set up near the entrance. Check for instructions. You will be asked to highlight the swimmer`s name and events. A swimmer who misses Positive Check-In will not be allowed to participate in the meet. Check-in usually closes 20 minutes after warm-ups begin. A swimmer cannot scratch him/herself from an event unless he/she has their Coach`s approval.
3. Your swimmer should then find a place to put their backpack, towel, etc. Our team sits together, so find some familiar faces.
4. Put on his/her cap and goggles and report to the pool for warm-ups to hear any instructions from the coach.
5. After warm-ups, your swimmer will get his/her towel and wait until their first event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom, if necessary, gets a drink or just gets settled in.
6. The meet usually starts about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups end.
7. According to the USA Swimming rules (because of insurance reasons), parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an official capacity.
8. Psych Sheets: A psych sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. A psych sheet lists all the swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming a particular event for the first time, the swimmer will be listed as a "no time" or "NT". A no time swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. A heat sheet may be available close to the start of the meet that lists the actual heat and lane a swimmer will be competing in for a small fee.
9. Relays are decided upon by the coaching staff.

Meet Starts

1. It is important for any swimmer to know what event number he/she is swimming (again, that is why the swimmer should have the event numbers written on their hand). He/she may swim right away after warm-ups or have to wait awhile.
2. A swimmer`s event number will be called over the loudspeaker, and he/she will be asked to report to the starting blocks or 'bullpen' which is a staging area. Example: "Event #1, 8 & under girls 25 yard freestyle please report to the bullpen". The bullpen volunteers will line up the swimmers and take them to the starting blocks. At some meets, there is no bullpen and the swimmer must get him/herself to the starting blocks on time.

3. The swimmer swims the race.
4. After each swim:
 - The swimmer should then go immediately to their coach. The coach will ask him/her their time and discuss the swim with the swimmer.
 - Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims.
 1. positive comment or praise
 2. suggestions for improvement
 3. positive comments
5. Things you can do as a parent after each swim: Tell your swimmer how great they did!! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with them. You need to tell them how proud you are of them. This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get drinks or something light to eat. Of course, always cheer on the other NAC swimmers. Your swimmer will now wait for his/her next event.
6. When a swimmer has completed all his/her events, there is one more thing to be done before the swimmer can go home. Check with the coach to see if your swimmer is in a relay.

Volunteering

With the exception of our professional coaches, the NAC is a volunteer organization. The club's success is directly dependent of the commitment of its members. Therefore, parents are required to donate time, services, and to help in various aspects of team operations. The amount of time each family will be required to work is dependent on the number and length of meets the club hosts, events scheduled, and team size.

Most volunteer jobs are available online. Sign up early as these sometimes go very quickly. In an effort to accommodate the needs of our volunteers, if you find that you cannot for some reason fulfill your obligations through the online signup, please contact the volunteer coordinator or a board member. There are opportunities to help at NAC sponsored events or performing a service to the club that will count. **We don't want your money, we want your time!**

Once assignments have been made, volunteers will be notified. It is then your responsibility to switch or find a replacement if you are unable to work your shift. Please report all changes to the Volunteer coordinator. Once you arrive to work a meet, all job assignments are at the discretion of the volunteer coordinator. You will need to have your volunteer card signed by a current board member and turned in to the volunteer coordinator in order to get credit for your volunteer sessions. Please be courteous if you are asked to switch jobs. Volunteers represent the NAC and need to be appropriately dressed at all times.

Parents who fail to fulfill their obligation will forfeit their deposit to fulfill their obligation.

Volunteering at away meets is required at times, but as of now, it cannot be used as a required session for the NAC volunteer requirement.

It is important to remember at all times that these events are run and managed by parents. As you will see, these events are very large and quite busy. Changes and adjustments made to volunteer assignments before and even during the meet are inevitable.

Team Fees and Payment Policies

Team Fees

USA Swimming Registration Fee

Because NAC is a USA Swim Team, all members of our team must be registered with USA Swimming. Non-registration of even one swimmer could result in cancellation of insurance for the NAC. USA registrations are based on a calendar year (Jan.-Dec.). Swimmers who join NAC during the year must either have a current USA Swimming registration transferred from another swim club or complete a USA Swimming form and pay the current fee. For fall/winter seasons, this fee is included in your swimmer fees. For summer seasons, you will be charged the \$60 USAS fee if you need to be registered.

Swimmer Fees

Swimmer fees are the primary revenue source for our club. They are used to pay for operational expenses such as pool rental, coaches' salary, and team events.

Swimmer fees vary by residency, number of swimmers registering per family, and type of swimmer registering. Fees for upcoming seasons are posted in the registration flyer produced before the season registration begins. NAC is proud to have kept fees unchanged for the last three years.

Volunteer Fee

This fee is used as an incentive for families to complete their volunteer commitments. It is refunded at the end of the season when commitments are met.

Fundraising Fee

Currently NAC charges a raffle ticket fee. Sell your tickets to recoup this fee.

Payment Policies

Registration dues and fees are to be paid in full prior to the first day of practice. NAC Sharks reserves the right to bar any swimmer from practice and team activities until all fees and dues are paid.

All other charged registration fees and dues will be non-refundable after the first day of practice.

NAC Sharks reserves the right to require proof of District Status and to adjust fees as necessary, without prior consent, for any discrepancy or incorrect information submitted during registration.

Refund Policies

- The \$60.00 USS Card fee is a non-refundable fee.

- Requests for refunds after the first day of practice or payment arrangements will be considered in cases of hardship when the request is received in writing by the NAC Board. The decision of the NAC Sharks Board concerning any full or partial refund shall be final.
- Any unclaimed account credit balance remaining after two consecutive inactive swim seasons will become property of North Aquatics Club Sharks.
- Refunds will be paid, to the extent possible, in the same manner the original payment was received. If you paid by credit card, expect any refunds to go back on your card.

Hardship requests

The NAC board, upon receipt of a written request from a member, may provide the following assistance regarding payment or refunds. The decision of Board shall be final. Under no circumstances will the Board provided assistance that reduces the prorated amount of a full registration.

- Provide pro-rated membership or refunds due to certain life events including, but not limited to, moving, extended illness or injury, or circumstances beyond the control of the family. NAC reserves the right to require proof of hardship. Under **no** circumstances will refunds be given because a swimmer no longer desires to swim.

Code of Conduct for Parents and Swimmers

NAC Code of Conduct

- Any swimmer who is known to use alcohol, drugs or tobacco is subject to suspension or dismissal from the team.
- Never interfere with the progress of another swimmer during meets, practice or otherwise.
- At all NAC functions (practices, meets, social gatherings), we expect each member to behave in such a way that their actions reflect positively on the team.
- All members of the NAC (parents, swimmers), continue to protect and improve the excellent reputation the NAC maintains throughout the state and country.
- Swearing, spitting, pushing, towel snapping, walking out of practice and/or disrespectful attitude toward any adults and/or other swimmers will not be tolerated.
- Undesirable conduct that may harm another team member can constitute immediate dismissal from the team.
- Good sportsmanship is a must. All teammates and Parent Members should encourage each other at all times.
- Abide by USA swimming rules and regulations.
- Abide by the rules and regulations set by the NAC Sharks as stipulated during registration and as contained in the 2014 Fall/Winter Parents Handbook located on the web site.
- Purchase team suits and gear as determined by the NAC Sharks and coaches.
- Follow appropriate code of conduct as set by the NAC Sharks and Lincoln-Way North High School.
- Follow LWN rules while in their facility and/or at any NAC team function or event either home or away.

- Understand unsportsmanlike conduct will be penalized and the swimmer will be at risk for dismissal from the team with no refund in money. Agree to attend the NAC Parents Meeting (unless otherwise stated) at the beginning of the season.

The following action may be taken in the event of inappropriate behavior by a member:

- 1st offence: Parents will be contacted and the swimmer will be dismissed from the meet, practice or applicable event.
- 2nd offence: Parents will be contacted and the swimmer will be dismissed from the team.
- Other actions, as deemed appropriate the NAC Parent Board, may also be implemented.

Inappropriate behavior by a parent member will not be tolerated. NAC Parent Board will review all incidents involving parent/member violations of the NAC Code of Conduct. Violations of the NAC Code of Conduct by a Parent may be subject to the families' dismissal from the team with no refund given. Parent Board decision will be final.

USA Swimming Code of Conduct

USA Swimming implemented a Code of Conduct in the late 1990s. Any member or prospective member of USA Swimming may be denied membership, censured, placed on probation, suspended for a definite or indefinite period of time with or without terms of probation, fined or expelled from USA Swimming if such member violates the provisions of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct. Sections applying specifically to Safe Sport are below

304.3

The following shall be considered violations of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct:

.4 Violation of any of the Athlete Protection Policies set forth in Article 305

.5 Violation of any of the Sexual Misconduct Reporting Requirements set forth in Article 306.

.6 Conviction of, imposition of a deferred sentence for, or any plea of guilty or no contest at any time, past or present, or the existence of any pending charges, for (i) any felony, (ii) any offense involving use, possession, distribution or intent to distribute illegal drugs or sub-stances, (iii) any crime involving sexual misconduct, or (iv) any criminal offense against a minor.

.7 Bullying is prohibited. For the purposes of the Code of Conduct, the term "Bullying" shall mean, regardless of when or where it may occur, the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members ("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 that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of: (i) causing physical or emotional harm to the other Member or damage to the other Member's property; (ii) placing the other Member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creating a hostile environment for the other Member at any USA Swimming activity; (iv) infringing on the rights of the other Member at any USA Swimming activity; or (v) materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC). Allegations of Bullying of an athlete by a coach shall be investigated under 304.3.13.

.8 A Any inappropriate sexual conduct or advance, or other inappropriate oral, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed towards an athlete by (i) a coach member or other non-athlete member, or (ii)

any other adult participating in any capacity whatsoever in the activities of USA Swimming (whether such adult is a member or not).

B Any act of sexual harassment, including without limitation unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate oral, written, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature in connection with or incidental to a USA Swimming-related activity by any person participating in the affairs or activities of USA Swimming (whether such person is a member or not) directed toward any member or other person participating in the affairs or activities of USA Swimming.

.9 The sale or distribution of illegal drugs or the illegal sale or distribution of any substance listed on FINA's recognized list of banned substances.

.10 The use of illegal drugs in the presence of an athlete, by a coach, official, trainer, or a person who, in the context of swimming, is in a position of authority over, that athlete.

.11 The providing of alcohol to an athlete by a coach, official, trainer, manager or any other person where the athlete is under the legal age allowed to consume or purchase alcohol in the state where the alcohol is provided.

.12 The abuse of alcohol in the presence of an athlete under the age of 18, by a coach, official, trainer, or a person who, in the context of swimming, is in a position of authority over that athlete.

.13 Abuse

A Physical abuse of an athlete by any person who, in the context of swimming, is in a position of authority over that athlete. "Physical abuse" is defined as a non-accidental injury and/or an injury primarily caused by the gross negligence on the part of the person in a position of authority over the athlete.

B Bullying of an athlete by a coach member or other non-athlete member who is in a position of authority over that athlete.

Article 305 – Athlete Protection Policies

The following policies related to Athlete Protection are mandatory components of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct:

.1 Inappropriate touching between an athlete and an adult non-athlete member or Participating Non-Member (as defined in 401.1) is prohibited, including, but not limited to, excessive touching, hugging, kissing, sexually oriented behavior, sexually stimulating or otherwise inappropriate games, and having an athlete sit on a non-family member adult's lap.

.2 Any rubdown or massage performed on an athlete by any adult member or Participating Non-Member, excluding the spouse, parent, guardian, sibling, or personal assistant of such athlete, is prohibited unless such adult is a licensed massage therapist or other certified professional. Any rubdown or massage performed at a swim venue by a licensed professional must be conducted in open/public locations and must never be done with only the athlete and licensed massage therapist in the room. Even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach shall not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstances.

.3 Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms.

.4 Employees and volunteers of USA Swimming, LSCs and member clubs who interact directly and frequently with athletes as a regular part of their duties and individuals with any ownership interest in a member club must be non-athlete members of USA Swimming and satisfactorily complete criminal background checks as required by USA Swimming. This does not apply to volunteers such as timers, marshals, computer operators, etc. who only

have limited contact with athletes during a meet.

.5 Travel

.1 Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete.

.2 Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming and have successfully passed a USA Swimming-required criminal background check.

.3 When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his/her parent's (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach.

.4 Clubs and LSCs shall develop their own travel policies. USA Swimming will provide a model club travel policy as an example. Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the club. Please consult the NAC travel policy, found at www.nacsharks.org.

.6 Clubs shall establish their own action plans for implementing USA Swimming's anti-bullying policy. USA Swimming shall provide a model plan as an example which shall serve as the default for any club that fails to establish its own plan. Club anti-bullying plans must be reviewed and agreed to annually by all athletes, parents, coaches and other non-athlete members of the club.

.7 Clubs shall establish their own electronic communication/social media policy. USA Swimming shall provide a model policy as an example, which shall serve as the default for any club that fails to establish its own policy. Club electronic communication policies should be reviewed and agreed to annually by all athletes, parents, coaches and other non-athlete members of the club.

Article 306 – Sexual Misconduct Reporting Requirements

.1 It is every member's responsibility to promptly report any incident regarding sexual misconduct by a member as described in Article 304.3.8 to USA Swimming's Director of Safe Sport. Reporting must occur when an individual has firsthand knowledge of misconduct or where specific and credible information has been received from a victim or knowledgeable third party. Various state laws may also require reporting to law enforcement or to a designated child protection agency.

.2 No member shall retaliate against any individual who has made a good faith report under 306.1.

.3 False reporting of sexual misconduct made in bad faith is prohibited.

ATHLETE PROTECTION POLICIES & RULES

Action Plan of the North Aquatics Club (NAC) to address bullying

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at [North Aquatics Club] (the “Club”) and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Club is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member or athlete/mentor.

Objectives of the Club’s Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that the Club will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that (North Aquatics Club) takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of 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 that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member’s property;
- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

REPORTING PROCEDURE

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents;
- Talk to a Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Write a letter or email to the Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED** using the following approach:

1. **Then, we determine if it's bullying.** There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.
 - a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
 - b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
 - What is the history between the kids involved?
 - Have there been past conflicts?
 - Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
 - Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
 - c. Remember that it may not matter “who started it.” Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
 - d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. *First, we get the facts.*

- a. Keep all the involved children separate.
- b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
- c. Listen without blaming.
- d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
- e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.

SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED

2. Support the kids who are being bullied

- a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
 - i. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
 - ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
- c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

3. Address bullying behavior

- a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
 - i. Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
 - ii. Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
- d. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
 - i. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.

- ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others in your community.
 - iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
 - e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
 - i. Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
 - ii. Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
 - f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.
- 4. **Support bystanders who witness bullying.** Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.
 - a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
 - b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;
 - c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."
 - d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
 - e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

PURPOSE

The [North Aquatics Club] (the “Club”) recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While the Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Club also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

GENERAL CONTENT

All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection.

For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- drugs or alcohol use;
- sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity
- the adult’s personal life , social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and
- inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures
- Note: Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: “Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?” or “Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient’s parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?”

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is **Transparent**, **Accessible** and **Professional**.

Transparent: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club’s records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the **T.A.P.** criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept any “friend” request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “private message” each other through Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “instant message” each other through Facebook chat or other IM method.

The Club has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can “friend” for information and updates on team-related matters.

Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

TWITTER

Best Practice: As of this publication, The Club does not have an official Twitter page that coaches, athletes and parents can follow for information and updates on team-related matters, but reserves the right to implement one in the future. Coaches are not permitted to follow athletes on Twitter. Likewise, athletes are not permitted to follow coaches on Twitter. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.

TEXTING

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 7am until 9pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

EMAIL

All email communication shall be done between a coach and parent of the athlete. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member must also be copied.

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

Team Travel Policy for [North Aquatics Club (NAC)]

Purpose: Athletes are most vulnerable to misconduct during travel, particularly overnight stays. This includes a high risk of athlete-to-athlete misconduct. During travel, athletes are often away from their families and support networks, and the setting – new changing areas, locker rooms, workout facilities, automobiles and hotel rooms – is less structured and less familiar.

Team Travel is defined as overnight travel to a swim meet or other team activity that is planned and supervised by the club or LSC.

Section 1 - USA Swimming Required Policies

Club and LSC travel policies must include these policies. These items are Code of Conduct stipulations in the USA Swimming Rulebook.

- a. Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the club. (305.5.D)
- b. Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming and have successfully passed a USA Swimming-administered criminal background check. (305.5.B)
- c. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete). (305.5.A)
- d. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his/her parents' (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach. (305.5C)

Section 2 - Recommended Policies

- a. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained.
- b. Athletes should not ride in a coach's vehicle without another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete, unless prior parental permission is obtained.
- c. During overnight team travel, if athletes are paired with other athletes they shall be of the same gender and should be a similar age. Where athletes are age 13 & over, chaperones and/or team managers would ideally stay in nearby rooms. When athletes are age 12 & under, chaperones and/or team managers may stay with athletes. Where chaperones/team managers are staying in a room with athletes, they should be the same gender as the athlete and written consent should be given by athlete's parents (or legal guardian).
- d. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, at the competition the coach and athlete should attempt to establish a "buddy" club to associate with during the competition and when away from the venue.
- e. To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there will be no male athletes in female athlete's rooms and no female athletes in male athlete's rooms (unless the other athlete is a sibling or spouse of that particular athlete).

- f. A copy of the Club Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian.
- g. Team or LSC officials should obtain a signed Liability Release and/or Indemnification Form for each athlete.
- h. Team or LSC officials should carry a signed Medical Consent or Authorization to Treat Form for each athlete.
- i. Curfews shall be established by the team or LSC staff each day of the trip.
- j. Team members and staff traveling with the team will attend all team functions including meetings, practices, meals, meet sessions, etc. unless otherwise excused or instructed by the head coach or his/her designee.
- k. The directions & decisions of coaches/chaperones are final.
- l. Swimmers are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Swimmers are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant, or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission/knowledge of the coach or chaperone.
- m. When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theatres, etc. swimmers will stay in groups of no less than three persons. 12 & Under athletes will be accompanied by a chaperone.
- n. The Head Coach or his/her designee shall make a written report of travel policy or code of conduct violations to the appropriate club or LSC leadership and the parent or legal guardian of any affected minor athlete.

Section 3 - Other Policies to Consider

The following, organized by topic, is a bullet-point list of additional travel policies to consider. Teams and LSCs may want to utilize some of these policies based on their individual preferences and needs.

Safety

- a. Additional guidelines to be established as needed by the coaches;
- b. Supervised team room provided for relaxation and recreation;
- c. Respect the privacy of each other;
- d. Only use hotel rooms with interior entrances; and
- e. Must wear seat belts and remain seated in vehicles;

Behavior

- a. Be quiet and respect the rights of teammates and others in hotel;
- b. Be prompt and on time;
- c. Develop cell phone usage guidelines;
- d. Develop computer use guidelines including social media;
- e. Respect travel vehicles;
- f. Establish travel dress code;
- g. Use appropriate behavior in public facilities;
- h. Establish two different curfews – in own rooms and lights out;
- i. Must stay in assigned hotel room; and
- j. Needs and wellbeing of the team come first.

Financial

- a. No room service without permission;
- b. Swimmers responsible for all incidental charges;
- c. Swimmers responsible for any damages or thievery at hotel;
- d. Must participate in contracted group meals; and
- e. Communicate travel reimbursement information and policies.

General

- a. Establish fair trip eligibility requirements;
- b. Establish age guidelines for travel trips;
- c. Parent(s) responsible for getting swimmer(s) to stated departure point; and
- d. Requirements for families to attend "Team Travel Meets."

Code of Conduct / Honor Code

The Club Development Committee strongly encourages teams and LSCs to create a Code of Conduct or Honor Code as a companion document to the team travel policies.

Required:

All team members, team staff, and parents of minors are apprised in writing of this Code of Conduct and the attached USA Swimming Code of Conduct. A signature on this document constitutes unconditional agreement to comply with the stipulations of both documents.

Recommended:

- a. Team members will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, fellow competitors and the public at all times.
- b. Team members and staff will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives.
- c. The possession or use of alcohol or tobacco products by any athlete is prohibited.
- d. The possession, use, or sale/distribution of any controlled or illegal substance or any form of weapon is strictly forbidden.
- e. No "deck changes" are permitted. Athletes are expected to use available change facilities.
- f. Team members are reminded that when competing in meets, traveling on trips, and attending other meet-related functions, they are representing both themselves and the (NAME OF CLUB). Athlete behavior must positively reflect the high standards of the club (or LSC).

For Consideration:

- a. Failure to comply with the Honor Code as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action. Such discipline may include, but may not be limited to:
 - i. Dismissal from the trip and immediate return home at the athlete's expense;
 - ii. Disqualification from one or more events, or all events of competition;
 - iii. Disqualification from future team travel meets;
 - iv. Financial penalties;

- v. Dismissal from the team; and/or
 - vi. Proceedings for a LSC or USA Swimming National Board of Review.
- b. Swimmers are to refrain from inappropriate physical contact at team activities and events.
Swimmers are to refrain from use of inappropriate language

NAC Locker Room Policy

PURPOSE

The following guidelines are designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas.

FACILITIES

The following is a description of our practice and competition facilities to allow athletes and their families to plan their use:

We practice at: Lincoln Way North High School.

This location has a changing area and locker room dedicated to our swimmers. As guest of the school, we demand our athletes treat the locker room facilities with respect. Please clean up after yourselves. Horseplay, foul language, and any behavior that can compromise the general safety of our athletes will not be tolerated. Use of Locker room facilities can be revoked!

MONITORING

General Policy Considerations

Coaches and staff make every effort to recognize when an athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, we will check on the athlete's whereabouts.

We discourage parents from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is truly necessary. In those instances, it should only be a same-sex parent. If this is necessary, parents should let the coach or administrator know about this in advance.

If an athlete needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear (for example, a child under the age of eight), or an athlete's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach or an administrator know beforehand that he or she will be helping the athlete.

USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE RECORDING DEVICES

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. The USA Swimming Athlete Protection Policies prohibit the use of such devices in the locker room or other changing area:

305.3 Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms.

Parent Responsibilities and Resources

Support the team and coaches, not only by what you do but also by what you say. The swimmers pick up very quickly on statements that are negative and many of the younger swimmers stop working if their parents are not happy. If you do not understand what is going on, contact a head coach or board member as soon as possible and resolve the situation away from the swimmers. The longer the problem continues, the worse it becomes.

Do not try to coach your swimmers. The best advice a parent can give is to tell their child to do their best and do what the coaches say. We will be trying new methods constantly. Some may work and others may not, but innovation and change is good. Make your kids see their coach after each race. Post-event analysis is most effective within 60 seconds of their completing their event.

Parents are not permitted on the pool deck during any swim team practice or swim meets, but are encouraged to observe from the stands. If you should need to contact your child during practice or at a meet, please go through the coach.

Be a Role Model for Your Child !

Children learn behavior from many different people, including coaches, teachers and peers, but the people they learn the most from are their parents! You'll have many opportunities as your child participates in sports to model good behavior and attitude. For example, if you tell your child that he must respect others, your message will be lost unless you also model respect for others. Don't forget, nonverbal messages, like a look of disgust or disappointment, often speak louder than words. Here are some other tips to keep in mind as you sit at swim meets:

Model good sportsmanship. Being a „good sport“ is much easier said than done. You can model good sportsmanship by encouraging and supporting all swimmers, controlling your emotions when upset or frustrated, and abiding by coaches“ and officials“ decisions even if you disagree.

Model team spirit and loyalty. Cheer for your team and have only positive things to say about the team and coach.

Let go of your own ego. Put your child's development and desires ahead of your own. Examine your motives for your child's participation.

Have fun. If you are enjoying the swimming experience, it is more likely that your child will do the same. If you complain and don't enjoy yourself, your child will pattern that behavior also.

Volunteer! Your role as a volunteer is crucial to our sport. You can be actively involved in your child's activity, meet new people, have fun, and be instrumental in strengthening swimming in the U.S. Ask the coach or the volunteer coordinator for your team what you can do to help.

10 Commandments for Swim Parents

-Rose Snyder

1. Thou shalt not impose your ambitions on thy child.

Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is people can strive to do their personal best and benefit from the process of competitive swimming.

2. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what.

There is only one question to ask your child after a practice or a competition - "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

3. Thou shalt not coach thy child.

You are involved in one of the few youth sports programs that offer professional coaching, do not undermine the professional coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to provide unconditional love and support and a safe place to return at the end of the day. Love and hug your child no matter what. Tell them how proud of them you are. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy or any other area that is not yours. And above all, never pay your child for a performance. This will only serve to confuse your child concerning the reasons to strive for excellence and weaken the swimmer/coach bond.

4. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet.

If you are going to show up at a swimming meet, you should be encouraging, but never criticize your child or the coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made. And remember "yelling at" is not the same as "cheering for". You also may want to consider being positive anytime you are around the pool.

5. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears.

A first swimming meet, 500 free or 200 IM can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child was not ready to compete in it. Remember your job is to love and support your child through all of the swimming experience. Most of their fears are one's you have given them.

6. Thou shalt not criticize the officials.

If you do not care to devote the time or do not have the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can. You too can be trained to be an official in an afternoon.

7. Honor thy child's coach.

The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child, it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.

8. Thou shalt be loyal and supportive of thy team.

It is not wise for parents to take their swimmers and to jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer in another team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long, long time by the teammates they leave behind and are slowly received by new team mates. Often times swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

9. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning.

Most successful swimmers are those who have learned to focus on the process and not the outcome. Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else did it too, just a

little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. Does this make me a failure? No, in fact I am very proud of that swim." What a tremendous outlook to carry on through life.

10. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian.

There are 280,000 athletes in USA Swimming. Only 2% of the swimmers listed in the 10 & Under age group make it to the Top 100 in the 17-18 age group and of those only a small percentage will become elite level, world class athletes. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are about .0002%. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask your coaches why they coach. Chances are, they were not an Olympian, but still got so much out of swimming that they wanted to pass the love for the sport on to others. Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self-esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they may have won. Swimming builds good people, like you want your child to be, and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

Additional Resources

Here are some websites for more information:

North Aquatics Club: www.nacsharks.org

Illinois Swimming: www.ilswim.org

USA Swimming: www.usaswimming.org

Swimming World: www.swiminfo.com

Swim News: www.swimnews.com

International Swimming Hall of Fame: www.ishof.org

Suggested Reading for Swim Parents:

The Parent`s Guide to Competitive Swimming

By: Fred Cruciger

The Swim Parent`s Newsletter

By The American Swimming Coaches Association
1 Hall of Fame Drive
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316

Parent, Coach, and Athlete

By Ronald E Smith, Frank L Small, Nathan J Smith
AAHPERD Publications

PO Box 704
Waldorf, MD 20604

The Parent`s Guide to the Proper Care and Feeding of the Competitive Swimmer

By Dr. Keith Bell

The Swim to Win Playbook

By Dr. Keith Bell

You Only Feel Wet When You`re Out of the Water

By Dr. Keith Bell

Winning Isn`t Normal

By Dr. Keith Bell

The Nuts and Bolts of Psychology for Swimmers

By Dr. Keith Bell
Keel Publications
PO Box 160155
Austin, TX 7871