# DUNELAND

## SWIM CLUB

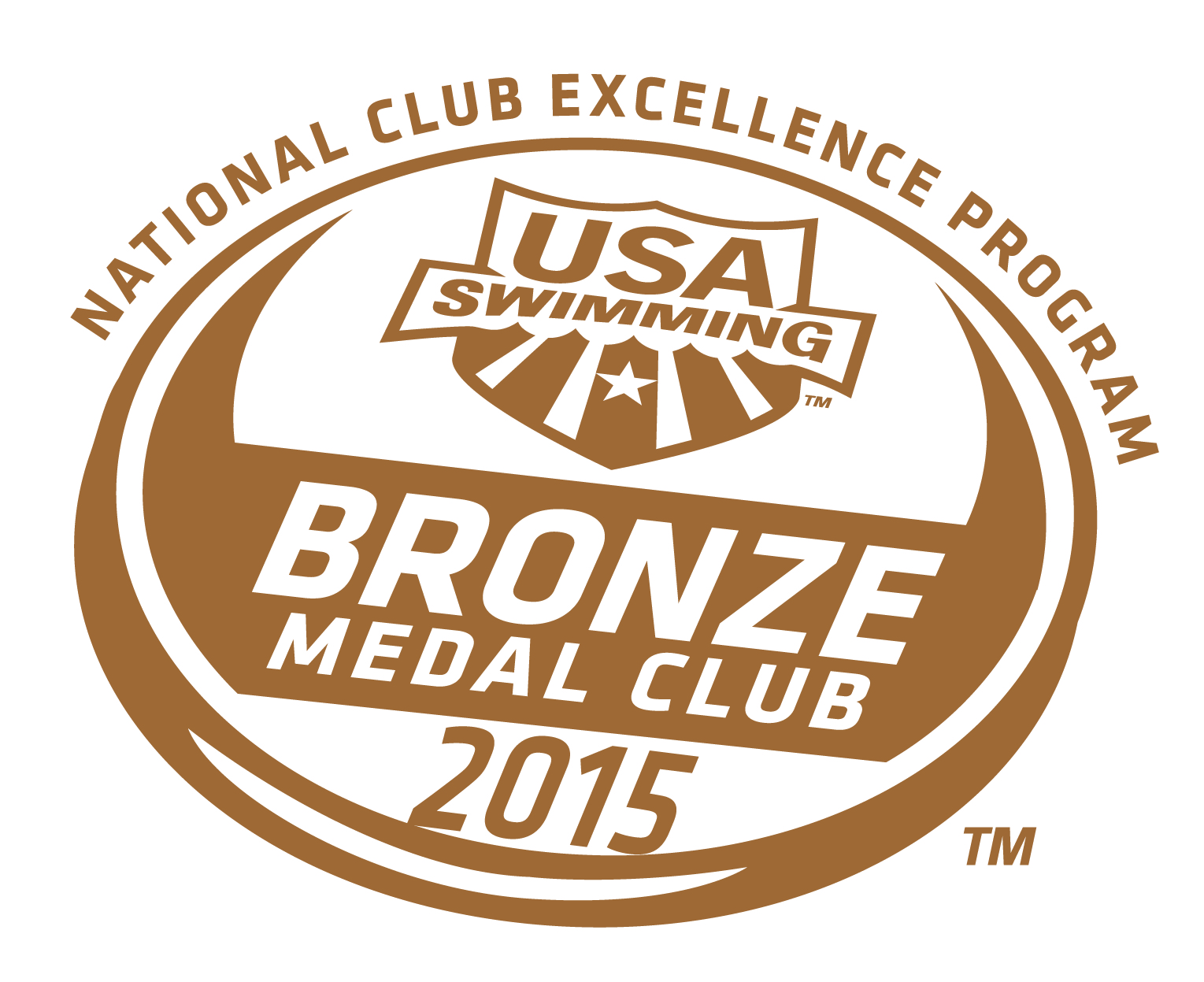
### HANDBOOK

APRIL 2015







**Section**

**1**

**The Organization**



**Certificate of Membership**

**Presented to**

**DUNELAND Swim Club**

**As a Member Club of**

**United States Swimming**

##### DUNELAND Swim Club, Inc. Handbook

Welcome to the DUNELAND Swim Club and the exciting world of competitive swimming. DUNE Inc. is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to provide any school age child an opportunity to involve themselves in a competitive swimming program. DUNE Swim Club has been serving the youth of the Town of Chesterton and the surrounding communities since 1971. We are a member of USA Swimming; one of the country’s largest and most organized youth sports organization. DUNE, Inc. is also a member of Indiana Swimming and locally, the Northwest Indiana Swim Conference (NWISC) which presently consists of eleven club teams in Lake, Porter and La Porte Counties.

This handbook will give you a good working knowledge of the sport and of the DUNELAND Swim Club, and will answer some basic questions about both. Keep in mind that this information is just an introduction. Please feel free to contact the Head Coach or one of the DUNE Board members for additional information.

The sport of swimming has many benefits, including the people you and your child will meet. The camaraderie among swimmers is unique; many swimming buddies become lifelong friends. Swimming provides one of the most beneficial forms of exercise for cardiovascular and overall fitness. This exercise can be enjoyed throughout one’s entire life. For example, there are now swimmers in their nineties setting “masters” world records.

Possibly the greatest benefits of participating in an organized swimming program are the life skills your child will develop. These skills include time management, self-discipline and sportsmanship. Your child will reap the benefits of swimming long after his or her participation ends. Most swimmers go on to be very successful and productive adults largely due to what they gain from swimming.

Age group swimming can be fun, exciting and rewarding. Many children improve rapidly during the early developmental stages due the growth and improved technique. It is difficult to avoid the tendency to push young athletes at this stage. We recommend the training schedule for developmental swimmers be flexible enough to provide time to participate in other activities. DUNE Inc. currently practices Monday through Friday evenings, with the recommendation that your child try to attend at least 3 practices a week to get the most benefit while still leaving time for other activities and school work. Since many swimmers train for ten years or more, swimming at the youngest levels needs to be fun and pressure free.

Remember not every swimmer becomes a world record holder, but everyone gains from their swimming experience. Supporting your child in swimming can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. You may soon find yourself

cheering at competitions, timing during meets, or even going on to become a USA Swimming certified official. Whatever you role, your child’s experience in swimming has much to do with your positive support.

Please keep this handbook handy as a reference. From time to time DUNE Inc. will provide you with updated material to include in it. It will be a convenient place to keep calendars, meet schedules and other timely information about the current swim season with DUNE. Please ask questions if you do not find the answer here. You can reach the head coach before and after practice or via email. We all have the same goal; to provide your child with the best possible experience in swimming.

~DUNELAND Swim Club, Inc. Board of Directors

SEASONAL PROGRESSION

**Early in the season** our first goal is to set up an effective training group for all levels of our team. There may be moves up or down depending on group size and talent of the groups. **“Be Patient”** grouping adjustments take place the first month of the season. Almost all new students and age groups are initially placed in beginners however your status will change according to your skill level.

**During the middle of the season**, we will start to introduce more intense practices and start to focus on racing and achieving time standards. Dual meets and invitational swims will be more important along with practice habits.

**Our goals at the end of the season** are focused on our championship series and making cuts for the state meet tournaments. The faster you swim the more meets you can swim. Our last team effort is the age-group state meet. Individual events and relays are scored and we will be placed in the final results against all other teams in our state.

##### What is USA Swimming?

[www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org/)

Mission Statement

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. We administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Amateur Sports Act. We provide programs and services for our members, supporters, affiliates and the interested public. We value these members of the swimming community, and the staff and volunteers who serve them. We are committed to excellence and the improvement of our sport.

Vision Statement

To inspire and enable our members to achieve excellence in the sport of swimming and in life.

Core Objectives

USA Swimming has adopted three core objectives. These core objectives establish the foundation of the strategic business plan for our sport. USA Swimming encourages all members to participate in the local, regional and national efforts to ensure that these objectives are accomplished.

Build the Base

We seek to expand our membership in order to share our sport with as many other people as possible. We are especially committed to sharing the values of our sport with young people who may discover that swimming is an activity they can enjoy for their entire life.

Promote the Sport

We want swimming to receive as much publicity as possible because we believe that the more people learn about our sport the more inclined they will be to join the ranks of our membership. We are proud of our sport and we seek to celebrate it whenever possible.

Achieve Competitive Success

USA Swimming has been ranked as the number one swimming nation in the world for more than 40 years. We seek to continue this tradition of competitive excellence. When our elite athletes are successful in fulfilling their Olympic dreams our society benefits from the inspiration these athletes give us.

* USA Swimming (USA-S) decides all rules and regulations for stroke technique and swimming safety. Duneland Swim Club is an affiliated member with USA-
  1. There also is an organization, Indiana Swimming, which has state rules and regulations. Coaches, officials, timers, scorers and judges abide by these regulations.
* All swimmers must have a USS number. This number is the member’s date of birth (mmddyy), the first 3 letters of LEGAL first name, the first letter of middle name, and the first four letters of last name. If first or last names don’t have enough letters (or you don’t have a middle name), an \* will be used to fill in the blanks. Here are some examples:

Rose A. Buchman, born 05/16/76 051676ROSABUCH Thomas O’Neal, born 9/12/65 091265THO\*ONEA Ty H. Ng, born 04/05/80 040580TY\*HNG\*\*

Your USS number should never change. Your number is unique across the entire USA Swimming membership.

* A “D.Q.” is a disqualified swim due to not performing a stroke, turn or start in accordance with USS rules. Don’t worry if your swimmer is “DQed”. Swimmers of all levels get disqualified. The official will tell the child what they did incorrectly. This will help your child learn rules and techniques.

What is Indiana Swimming?

[www.INswimming.org](http://www.INswimming.org/)

As one of 59 Local Swim Committees (LSC) of USA Swimming, Indiana Swimming is the administrative organization responsible for competitive swimming in Indiana. We are proud that we are the 4th largest LSC in the United States with over 115 swim clubs and 10,500 competitive swimmers here in the Hoosier state ranging from ages 3-30. Additionally, our coaches and officials enrollment consistently rank in the Top 3 in the country.

From Angola to Mt. Vernon and from Batesville to Chesterton, we have clubs from very small communities as well as numerous club options in the larger cities. In the greater Indianapolis area, we have 18 clubs alone. Our clubs offer more than just a competitive team; many also offer lesson programs. Swimming is a life long activity!

Our Indiana Swimming clubs, not only compete against each other from the dual meet level to invitational’s, but many have individuals who qualify to compete at state championships, zone championships, sectionals, the US Open, National Championships, Olympic Trials, and even the Olympics! We are beaming with pride to claim past Olympians Lindsay Benko of Elkhart (2000 Sydney & 2004 Athens), Pat Calhoun of Seymour (2004 Sydney) and Bryce Hunt of Newburgh (2004 Athens), as “homegrown” Indiana Swimming alums!

As conditions of membership, all of our clubs and coaches must adhere to the guidelines including safety certifications, which USA Swimming and Indiana Swimming set forth. Our clubs and coaches are also encouraged to explore opportunities to extend their education and knowledge by attending workshops/clinics that are offered locally, regionally and nationally throughout the year.

Without the athletes, there would be no coaches, and without the great officials, we’d have no meets. All of our 650+ officials are VOLUNTEERS, most being parents who put in countless hours to allow our swimmers the thrill and excitement of competition. Many continue to volunteer even when their swimmer retires! We are grateful for their love and dedication to our sport and state.

Indiana Swimming is governed by volunteers who serve on its Board of Directors. We are also fortunate enough to have and Executive Director and a Sport Development Director at a permanent office in downtown Indianapolis. Their expertise enhances the communication and education our members.

Our mission: Indiana Swimming provides progressive, innovative programs that inspire excellence.

Northwest Indiana Swim Conference

(NWISC)

The Northwest Indiana Swim Conference (NWISC) is an Indiana Swimming Organization currently consisting of eleven clubs in the Northwest Indiana area. The current members are Crown Point (CPSC), Duneland (DUNE), Highland (HHSC), Hobart (HTS), La Porte (HOT), Lowell (LDSC), Michigan City (MCPS), Union Township (UTSC), Valparaiso (VSC), Merrillville (MMSC) and Portage (PPSC).

The objectives of NWISC are

* + 1. To stimulate interest in competitive swimming
    2. To provide an opportunity for high caliber competitive swimming
    3. To develop physical fitness
    4. To improve swimming skills
    5. To promote good sportsmanship

The eleven clubs participate in dual meets with each other throughout the season. The season culminates with a championship meet in which all eleven clubs participate. The championship Meets are held in February and July. Each member club takes a turn hosting the three-day event. Medals and ribbons are awarded to the top twelve places in individual and relay events. The top six places in both individual and relay events earn points for their teams. NWISC awards trophies to the top three high scoring teams and age group trophies to the teams with the highest point scores in each age group for both boys and girls.

Each member club pays dues to NWISC. This meet is free of cost at the time of the meet. This money is used to purchase trophies, medals and ribbons and to help offset expenses of the team hosting the championship meet. It also provides a college scholarship each year to one senior boy and girl swimmer who has been an outstanding athlete over their age- group career and plans to continue to swim at the college level. The scholarship is awarded only to those swimmers who are a member of a swim club belonging to NWISC. Over the years, several DUNE swimmers have been awarded the scholarship.

Section 2

**DUNELAND**

SWIM CLUB

Policies and Procedures

DUNELAND SWIM CLUB

Mission

The purpose of the Duneland Age Group Swim Club is to provide any school age child an opportunity to involve themselves in a competitive swimming program.

Vision

The Duneland Swim Club shall provide a quality competitive and instructional swim program for motivated young people of all ages and abilities. We believe that SWIMMING is the most outstanding activity a young person can be a part of. Through SWIMMING we will promote fitness and teach an athlete to strive for physical performances above and beyond what would be possible in other sports.

Swimming is one of the few sports, which can be judged objectively. True improvement comes fast. Not only is swimming practically injury free, but also one of the best cardiovascular efficient sports.

Many times children are reluctant to try out for the Club because they feel they aren’t good enough. Size, strength, and swimming ability are not so important if a child has a desire to improve. The Duneland Program provides training and competition at all levels from beginners through Olympic Trial qualifiers. Everyone gets a chance to swim. We encourage anyone who likes to swim to give it a try.

The Duneland Swim Club has finished in the top 10 at the state championships for 23 seasons . We are rated in the top 20 teams for 25 consecutive seasons. We have won the last 33 Northwest Indiana Conferences (17 Winter Seasons and 16 Summer Season). DUNE has had 5 Olympic qualifiers and numerous National and Junior National swimmers.

We are proud of our accomplishments and would like you to be a part of our team.

**Team Policies**

Eligibility

All children are welcome to join the program; however, children age four (4) and younger must be approved by the head coach before signing up for the team. Any balances owed from previous seasons must be paid in full prior to signing up for the next season.

Cost

The cost for the regular season will be determined by the DUNE, Inc Board, in accordance with the DUNE By-Laws. Fees will include an amount sufficient to cover the regular season operating expense of the team. The fees also include USA Registration fee and NWIC dues. A minimum payment due is at this time of sign-ups. The minimum payment and a payment schedule will be outlined in the registration packet. There will be a deadline for remaining balances to be paid. In the event registration dues are not paid by the established deadline, the swimmer(s) will not be allowed to attend practices or meets until the unpaid balance is paid. Please talk to the club’s account receivable coordinator if you have any questions regarding payments.

Multi Swimmer Discount

The following multi swimmer discount will be given to a family unit per season: 1st swimmer: Full Rate

2nd swimmer: $25 discount 3rd swimmer: $50 discount 4th swimmer: $75 discount

Multi-swimmer discount does not apply for two/three week trial or SCY (Fall/Winter) senior swimmers. Discounts only apply to full membership season swimmers.

Discounts will be applied to the second installment of payments, if using the DUNE registration payment option.

Trial Program

The Duneland Swim Club offers a trial program for beginning/new swimmers that are new to the program. This program is designed to give new swimmers an introduction into the Duneland Swim Club structure and training. Swimmers participating in this program will learn the basic skills and techniques that will be used throughout their Duneland Swim Club career. Practice times for these athletes will vary from swimmer to swimmer, depending on their individual skill level and comfort level in the water.

During the Fall/Winter seasons the three week trial program will be offered throughout the season, ending prior to the Northwest Indiana Swim Conference Championship Meet. Due to the very short Spring/Summer season, swimmers wishing to participate in the trial offer will be able to do so every two weeks. After a swimmer has

completed the trials they have the option of joining the club as a full membership swimmer or returning to the program at the start of the fall/winter season.

The Trial Program is not intended for those returning athletes on the intermediate, advance or senior teams. This program will be offered to those individuals new to the program or still developing the skills and comfort level needed to progress into the Duneland Swim Club full membership practice schedule.

Voluntary Termination of Membership and Incoming Transfer Policy

Any swimmer/member that chooses to voluntarily leave the Duneland Swim Club to join another program, within NW Indiana, must submit, in writing, a declaration stating their intent to re-join the team. The Board of Directors will have the authority to approve or decline their membership. This policy does not include extenuating circumstances that directly affect the athlete/member and their family. Incoming transfers must present a letter of intent to join the Duneland Swim Club. This letter must state the reasons for which they have left their previous club, the Board of Directors will have the authority to approve or decline their membership.

Refund Policy

During the first 2 weeks of the season, 50% of the registration fees paid are refundable *with written notification* of the swimmers intention to withdraw from the team. *USA Swimming registration fees and NWISC dues are non-refundable.*

***All refund requests must be in writing,*** with the swimmer’s intention to withdraw from the team and the reason for the withdrawal. Refunds must be approved by the DUNE Board. Acceptable reasons for refunds to be given are injury, prolonged illness, or moving. Other circumstances may be considered as appropriate as well. Refunds will be given on a pro-rated basis.

This Policy does not include the two week trial program swimmers.

Fines and Financial Penalty Policy

DUNE Payments: Any checks returned to the club for nonpayment will be subject to a $50 handling fee, in addition to the fee(s) applied to the Duneland Swim Club from our financial institution.

Birth Certificate Requirement: All Registered USA/Indiana Swimming Athletes MUST submit a “legal document” that verifies their age. Athletes that fail to submit a “Proof of Age” document, to the DUNE Administration, with-in 10 days of their first competition will be subject to the applicable $100 fine, issued by Indiana Swimming.

Championship Meet Fines and Penalties: All fines issued toward to an athlete for missed Championship Final swim on Sunday evening, will be the responsibility of the athlete and their family.

Championship Meet Late Entry Fines and Penalties: Any Late Entries that are the direct result of DUNE member/athlete failing to submit entries in prior to stated deadline, will be assessed the applicable $200/athlete and $10/event fine. ALL Applicable fines and penalties will be the sole responsibility of the member/athlete. These fines/penalties are directly addressed in ALL Indiana Championship Meet.

Membership with DUNE can be denied, suspended and/or terminated for failure to pay ANY and ALL fines that are the responsibility of the DUNE Member.

Practices

Practices will be at the Chesterton Middle School pool on Monday through Friday unless otherwise noted. Please refer to the DUNE website, monthly calendar and monthly newsletters for practice times and assignments.

Locker Room Policy

1. The use of the school’s locker rooms is a privilege.

1. Locker Room privileges may be revoked at anytime for any reason.
2. Locker Rooms are to be used for showering and changing only. There is to be NO LOITERING in the locker rooms. Once an athlete is dressed, they need to exit the locker room immediately; this pertains to before/after and during practices.
3. Food/Eating in the locker room is prohibited.
4. Swimmers are to enter and exit the Locker Rooms from the pool area ONLY. School hallways and other areas of the building are off limits and are NOT to be accessed by DUNE Swimmers or Parents.
5. Horseplay and misbehavior in the locker rooms will not be tolerated.
6. Theft or vandalism will result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal from the team. Swimmers are encouraged NOT to leave items/bags in the locker rooms during practice hours. Duneland Swim Club will not be held responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items left in the locker rooms or in the bleachers.
7. Cell phones and other forms of wireless communication devices are PROHIBITED in the locker rooms.
8. Taunting, Bullying or Harassment of ANY nature will not be tolerated in the locker rooms.
9. Coaches have the right to restrict/limit and deny locker room privileges for any individual and/or groups of individuals if locker room privileges are abused or disciplinary problems persist.

Cell Phone/Wireless Communication Device Policy

1. All swim club member’s cellular telephones and/or wireless communication device (WCD) must be turned off and secured in members swim bag or jacket, once they have entered the Chesterton Middle/High School pool area.
2. The use of Cellular Phones or any other wireless communications device (WCD) is prohibited in locker rooms, bathrooms and/or swimming pool areas.
3. No expectation of confidentiality will exist in the use of wireless communication devices on pool premises/property.
4. Members are prohibited from using a WCD in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated.
5. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the WCD. The coaching staff may also refer the matter to law enforcement if the violation involves an illegal activity. Discipline will be imposed on an escalating scale ranging from a warning to termination of membership based on the number of previous violations and/or the nature of or circumstances surrounding a particular violation. If the WCD is confiscated, it will be released/returned to the swimmer's parent/guardian after the swimmer complies with any other disciplinary consequences that are imposed. Any WCD confiscated by the DUNE Coaching Staff will be marked in a removable manner with the student's name and held in a secure location in the coaching staff office until it is retrieved by the parent/guardian.
6. Swimmers are prohibited from using WCDs to capture, record or transmit the words (i.e. audio) and/or images (i.e., pictures/video) of any swimmer, coaching staff member or other person in the pool area or while attending a DUNE Swim Club Sponsored event. Using a WCD to take or transmit audio and/or pictures/video of an individual without his/her consent is considered an invasion of privacy and is not permitted.
7. Possession of a WCD by a swimmer is a privilege that may be forfeited by any swimmer who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of this privilege.
8. Any club member who discovers a swimmer in possession of or using a WCD in violation of this policy is required to report the violation to a member of the coaching staff immediately.
9. Swimmers are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their WCDs. The Coaching Staff and DUNE Board assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, damage, or vandalism to WCDs brought onto its property, or the unauthorized use of such devices

E-mail

One of the most cost-effective and efficient means of communication is via e-mail. Please make sure the club website has your up-to-date e-mail address. All swimmers should be registered through the club website, to ensure they are receiving all important club news and notices. Please reference the DUNE Electronic Communication Policy, located on the club website, for e-mail guidelines.

DUNELAND Website ([www.duneswim.com](http://www.duneswim.com/))

All Club information will be posted on the DUNE website. We encourage parents to check the site regularly. Newsletters, club calendars, meet schedules, meet entries; meet results and a lot more are available on the website.

M*ail Boxes*

Every DUNE family will be assigned a mailbox. All club correspondence will take place through your mailbox, club’s website and via email. It is a goal of DUNE to keep all of our families informed of new and up-to-date information. The mailboxes are to be checked by parents only. Please do not let your swimmer check your mailbox for you. We want to ensure that you are receiving all the essential information.

Cancellation

We try to adhere to the Practice and Meet Schedule whenever possible. As in any organization, however, changes do occur. We are at the mercy of the school and its facilities, and we ask you for your patience and understanding if the schedule has to be changed because of pool shut-downs, conflicting schedules or other emergencies. You will be notified in writing or by email of any changes as soon as we are made aware of them. Cancellation information will also be posted on our website.

Here are our guidelines:

1. If Duneland Corp. schools are canceled for the day due to emergency reasons, practice will be canceled. No phone call will be placed in this case. This does not include regularly scheduled days off.
2. If after-school activities are canceled, practice will be canceled. Since this information is not easily communicated at all schools, a message will be placed on the DUNE website and an email will be sent out to all families that have signed up to the website email blast.
3. If weather conditions turn too severe to hold practice, a message will be placed on the DUNE website and an email will be sent out to all families. Please make sure we have your current email address on file.

Parent Responsibilities

Have your swimmer at the pool 10-15 minutes before their scheduled practice time. Park permitted in the pool parking lot only. **Never** park in the school bus driveway. It is a Tow away zone. Parents must pick up their swimmer(s) promptly at the end of practice. Consequently, parents should arrive at the pool at least ten

(10) minutes before the scheduled end of practice. Transportation to an away meet is the parent’s responsibility.

Attention: When bringing your swimmer(s) to practice, please be sure that a member of the Coaching Staff is present before you leave. Do not leave your child unattended. When picking your swimmer(s) up, please come into the pool area to get them. Children will not be permitted to leave the pool area unattended. These rules are for the safety of all our swimmers.

New parents can become more involved by watching your child and learning what they are learning. Ask questions. Keep track of their times and be encouraging about them. Check your mailbox for practice changes, meetings, swim suit sales, dual meet sign-up sheets, invitationals, etc. We always need new parents to become officials as kids move on to the senior program.

Parents are expected to help at home meets. Sign-up sheets for volunteering will be posted in the pool several days before a meet.

All Club questions should be directed toward Coach Voss. **If a coach/parent meeting is needed call Coach Voss and set up an appointment, during non- practice times.**

Swimmer Responsibilities

Swimmers are expected to take responsibility and maintain discipline before, during and after all team sponsored events. Remember you are a reflection of our CLUB and Organization in the community. Your actions, words and behavior are a direct reflection of the programs past and future. Athletes are encouraged to behave in a responsible manner, even when not at club events

We recommend and encourage swimmers to arrive 15 minutes prior to their designated times at both meets and practices. No swimmer is allowed in the water before the Coaches’ instructions. There is to be no running on deck, obscene language, or horseplay permitted. Any misconduct, fighting, vandalism, stealing, or destruction of school property can lead to dismissal from the Club, with no refund of fees.

If discipline becomes a problem during practice, a parent will be asked to attend the entire practice. If a child’s behavior warrants they will remain in the pool area until a parent comes to pick up the child. If discipline problems become consistent, the coach will recommend a meeting with the parents.

It is expected that the swimmers attend practice with a serious attitude towards swimming and to be attentive and cooperative with their Coaches. Disruption of practice due to misbehavior or rule violation will not be tolerated. If the Coaches

feel that the swimmer has a negative attitude towards competitive swimming, the parents will be contacted. All swimmers are required to stay in the pool or on the deck area until practice is over. Everyone will be dismissed to the locker room at that time. Leaving the pool area during practice without knowledge and permission of the Coaching Staff is forbidden. DUNE will not be liable for anyone in an undesignated area.

Swimmers are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner both in and out of the pool. Locker rooms are to be kept neat and orderly, and all rules of conduct apply to the locker rooms as well. A monitor may be assigned if behavior becomes a problem.

Coaches' Responsibilities

The job of the Coaches is to guide and supervise the entire competitive swim program. DUNE is dedicated to providing a program for children that will enable them to learn respect, responsibility, cooperation, commitment, teamwork, and the value of striving to be the best you can be.

Coaching Staff controls matters relating to training and competition. It is the Staff’s responsibility to place swimmers into practice groups based on their individual ability. Stroke instruction should be given by the Coaches at the pool, not by parents, to avoid confusing swimmers. At meets, Coaching Staff will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmer's performance. The Coaching Staff will have sole responsibility for putting together relay teams for all competitions.

Discipline Policy

Most behavior problems can be addressed during practice with verbal warnings, or a swimmer may be given a time-out to think about their behavior and how it is disruptive to team goals. If, however, the swimmer does not respond to these measures, and it becomes necessary to implement further action, the following policy will be implemented:

First Formal Warning: The swimmer will be warned about the inappropriate behavior and that it will not be tolerated. The swimmer's parents will be notified of the problem in a prompt manner. The swimmer will be encouraged to evaluate his or her commitment to the team. Warning will be documented with date and incident.

Second Formal Warning: The swimmer will be warned about the problem behavior and incident, and a meeting will be arranged with the swimmer, the parents, the Coach, a Board member and others who may have valuable input into the situation. Communication will focus on limit-setting and what can be done to help the swimmer improve behavior. Warning will be documented with the date and incident. The swimmer and family will be informed that a third warning will constitute a dismissal from the team without a refund.

Third Formal Warning: This constitutes a dismissal from the team. The swimmer will be told, and the parent will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented with the date and action taken.

If a swimmer exhibits behavior that is dangerous and poses a threat to his or her own safety or the safety of another swimmer, the swimmer may be immediately dismissed without formal warnings and with no refund.

Any unruly or unsportsmanlike conduct by a **SPECTATOR, PARENT**, or **PARTICIPANT** that disrupts any practice or meet, or diminishes the reputation of the Duneland Swim Club, can result in immediate dismissal of the swimmer from the Duneland Swim Club without any reimbursement for the remainder of the season. Any spectator, parent, or member can be banned from future practices and/or competitions associated with the Duneland Swim Club.

Attendance Policy

1. Swimmers do not need to attend every practice. However, the more practices your swimmer attends, the more improvement they will see.
2. Swimmers are encouraged to attend all scheduled practices.
3. Families planning vacations during the season are asked to notify the Coaching Staff prior to the vacation or a planned absence.
4. Swimmers who have any medical condition are required to notify the coaching staff ASAP. If certain medications, i.e., inhalers are required, a written note from the doctor along with usage directions is required to be given to the Head Coach.

Equipment

Each swimmer is responsible for providing his or her own equipment necessary for practice and competitions. Each swimmer must have:

Proper swimsuit (see explanation below) Goggles

Swim cap (for swimmers with long hair) Towel

Advise your swimmer to carefully check to make sure he or she has all of his or her belongings after practice. Do not bring valuable items to practice or competitions as they can easily be lost or stolen. Parents are also advised to check your swimmer’s bag **before leaving practice** to make sure he or she has all of his or her belongings.

Swimmers may wear any swimsuit for practice; except, girls must wear a one- piece swimsuit. Two-piece swimsuits or bikinis are not appropriate for practice.

Official Uniform for Team Competition Team, maroon or black suits

Team cap (for swimmers with long hair) Team shirt

Divisional and State Caps are available for purchase by those swimmers who have met the required time standard to attend said meets. We offer a white cap for Divisional swimmers and a gold cap for State swimmers. If a swimmer wears a cap at either of these championship meets it is required to be a white cap for our Divisional meet and a gold cap for the State meet.

All swimmers are “highly encouraged” to wear the team outfit at all competitions. Wearing the uniform displays pride in the program and promotes each individual who participates in the program. Wearing the team uniform enhances "team spirit" and has an effect on the competition. It is a privilege to wear the DUNELAND Swim Club uniform.

Spectators

Parents and children are allowed to observe practice, provided they remain quietly in the bleachers. Unless approved by DUNE and the Head Coach, parents are not permitted on the deck area at any time during practice. This is a distraction to the Coaches and swimmers and also violates our insurance policy.

Non-swimmers (siblings or friends of swimmers) may not be left unattended at the pool during practice.

Dual Meets

A dual meet is a swim event that is held between two, or more, swim clubs who are members of the Northwest Indiana Swim Conference or other USA Swimming member clubs. Each swimmer can race in up to four events. This atmosphere is ideal for beginning swimmers to try out competition.

Dual meet fees are included in the registration fees. All swimmers are expected to participate unless otherwise instructed by the Head Coach. A sign-up sheet will be put out approximately two weeks before the meet.

Invitationals

An invitational is an additional and optional opportunity for a swimmer to compete. The Head Coach will decide, with the collaboration of the DUNE Board, which invitationals DUNE will enter as a team each season. DUNE will provide a coach for ALL scheduled invites that DUNE swimmers will be attending. A meet schedule will be posted at the pool and on the DUNE website.

Sign-ups and deadlines for all team scheduled lnvitationals will be announced in advance. Invite On-line registration or sign-up sheets must be filled out, paid for and turned in to the DUNE Meet Entry Chair before posted deadlines. Invite sign- up sheets are available in the Invite folder at the pool or on the DUNE website.

Please fill out the form completely, include payment to DUNE, and turn in during practice times to Meet Entry mailbox. Each meet has a different cost per event. Parents may choose the individual events they wish to enter their swimmer in accordance with the specific rules of the invitational. **Complete payment is due before the sign up deadline.** No late entries or fees will be accepted. Any swimmer who has not paid for the invite will be scratched from the meet.

DUNE will designate one or more invitationals per season as a Team Effort. Entry information and deadline will be distributed to the members as soon as it becomes available. All invitationals are optional, including those designated as a Team Effort.

If a swimmer would like to compete in a non TEAM scheduled event, it is the responsibility of the parent to obtain the Meet Entry/Information off the Indiana Swimming website. Invite Sign-up sheets are available in the Invite Sign-up Folder of the Invitational Box located on the Parent table near the starting blocks of the pool. Fill-out the information requested, if you our unsure of the events you would like your swimmer to compete in, contact one of the coaches for help. On-line meet registration will not be available for Non Team Scheduled meets. Return completed form and full payment, checks made out to Duneland Swim Club, to the Meet Entries folder of the Invitational Box. **Entries not accompanied by full payment will not be entered, until full payment is received, No Exceptions.**

Entry deadline will be 5 days prior to the scheduled Invite Deadline, stated in meet information letter. An individual event entry form will be placed in your mailbox, upon DUNE confirmation of acceptance into invite. DUNE will not provide a coach for Non Scheduled Team Invites, the DUNE meet entry coordinator will notify the meet host that DUNE swimmers will be without a coach, per USA Swimming Rules, it is the meet host responsibility to assign unaccompanied swimmers a qualified coach to monitor the swimmers during warm-up procedures at the meet. It is the responsibility of the parent/swimmer to know the sessions and time in which they will be competing in.

Non team scheduled invitationals do not excuse a swimmer from participating in a DUNE team scheduled dual meet or in the NWISC Championship Meet.

The coaching staff encourages 3-4 weeks between invitationals so the swimmer can work on flaws and improve with time. It is very hard to compete at a high level every weekend and not have a lot of peaks and valleys. DUNE coaching staff will be happy to consult with any parent regarding the readiness of a swimmer to attend invitationals, the appropriate number of invitationals to attend, the number and specific events a swimmer is considering. Please make arrangements via e-mail to speak with the Coach before or after practice.

Conference

Attendance at Conference is highly encouraged for all DUNE swimmers, except in cases of illness, emergency, or family or school commitments. The conference meet is rotated among the thirteen NWISC teams. The date and location of Conference is listed on the

Meet Schedule. . The cost of this meet is included in the membership fee. An athlete must be a full member of the Duneland Swim Club to compete in this championship meet.

Indiana Swimming Divisional and State Meets

These are time standard qualification competitions. The time standards are set by the Indiana Swimming technical Committee and voted upon at the annual Indiana Swimming House of Delegates meeting, held at the beginning of each fall/winter

season. To enter one of these competitions a swimmer must achieve a minimum time standard established. DUNE coaches or entry chair cannot enter an athlete does not meet the required time standard. All sanctioned invites, duals and time trials will be registered in the team’s data base, as well as the USA Swimming website. If a swimmer achieves a time at a non sanctioned event the time does not qualify them for the competition. A “DQed” swim that achieves the time standard does not count, the swimmer has to complete the event under the time standard without getting “DQed”.

State Relay Selection Policy

For age-group state relays, **the qualifying period will include the prior season and the current season through the end of the Northwest Indiana Swim Conference Meet**. Make sure that all final results at ALL MEETS swam are turned into the Coaching Staff so the computer can be updated. Relays that have the state cut at this time are set in stone. Any relay not qualified after the NWISC meet is still open and can be qualified after all time trials and divisionals up to the age group state entry deadline.

The top four times in the 50 free as of the posted due date will be in consideration for the 200 Free Relays. If all four swimmers can attend then they will be the 200 free relay.

The 200 medley relays will be made up of the fastest time of the 50s of each of the four strokes. Qualified medley relay positions may change within the relay order.

If there is an exact tie for any relay position, the fastest time of the next longer distance of that stroke will determine the position until there is no longer a tie. If, still a tie after all distances of that stroke are considered, the coach will make the best decision for the team.

If you say yes to a relay position, you will swim the position unless sickness or injury prevents you from swimming. In cases where a swimmer will not be attending the A-State meet, but have qualified for a relay position, it is the swimmers responsibility to notify the coaching staff no later than the Tuesday following the NWISC Championship meet of their intent NOT to participate at the A-State meet.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Please let the coaches know if you do not intend to swim the state | | |
| meet for any reason, including prior commitments, planned vacation, or financial | | |  |
| reasons, ASAP. This will allow the next qualifying swimmer to make appropriate | | |  |
| plans in a timely manner. | |  | |

13 and 14-year-old high school swimmers are eligible for relays in the winter season.

The 13 & 14 year old 200 and 400 free relay positions will be determined by the 50's and 100's of freestyle times.

The 13 &14 age group need to swim 50’s of stroke during the dual meet season and at NWISC to qualify for the 200 medley relay positions. This is especially important during summer season for all swimmers when the meets are in long course meters, as relay times are selected only by yard times. In this age group the 100 time of back, breast, fly and free will determine the placing of swimmers for the 400 medley relay. Orders of medley relays positions of qualified relays may change."

If an age group can make an “A” and “B” relay, the same qualification will be in effect. If a swimmer does not want the relay spot the next swimmer will be notified and so on until the relay is full or we cannot make a relay standard. After the NWISC meet the qualified state relays are set in stone. Individual swimmers that are close to qualifying a non-qualified relay can attend time trials and (winter divisional) to improve on their individual time to achieve a position on a newly qualified relay for the state meet. The computer will be used in the process after ALL time trials, invites and (winter divisional) are swam. The BEST relay('s) will be posted and the positions will be entered into the state meet if a new relay becomes qualified. If any adjustments need to be made at the state meet for injury and or illness, the coaching staff will make a decision that provides the best scoring opportunity for the club. All previous rules will be considered as well as all times up to and including the current state meet. One or two alternates will be chosen as long as the team can still make the qualifying time. An alternate should attend all swim workouts and attend the state meet with the understanding "you might swim today." An up-to-date time sheet will be posted in the pool area. Check all times for accuracy to **know where you stand in relays and on the big board inside the pool area.** If you need a time or you can better your current time, sign up for that event at a dual meet or invitational. In all cases the best for the TEAM will be the most important factor. A relay spot on this team is important but so is sportsmanship. A decision is never made without the TEAM benefiting from the decision. The coaching staff can discipline behavior problems with removal of relay positions if the swimmer shows a negative or toxic attitude that could affect the relay team or team as a whole. Note: The Team Manager computer searches the times and ranks them fastest to slowest

Swim Meet Policy

All swimmers who are entered in a given meet are required to participate in warm- up. Swimmers should arrive at the meet location15 minute prior to their scheduled warm-up time and are expected to be dressed, stretched and ready to get into the water at the start of their warm-up session. Warm-ups are very important for increasing the chances for success.

All swimmers are expected to swim the events in which they are entered. A note from a parent before the start of the meet regarding a medical reason is the only exception. Swimmers may not request changes. If you would like to swim other events, discuss with your Coach via e-mail to schedule a meeting.

All swimmers are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner. Displays of temper and self-indulgences are unacceptable and could lead to a disqualification by officials.

All relay assignments will be accepted with grace and courtesy. Complaining about a relay assignment or another relay member is unsportsmanlike and will be addressed accordingly.

Swimmers are not allowed in the unused area of the pool. This is for safety reasons. Address questions or concerns about a swim meet to the Head Coach after the meet is over or via e-mail.

We are a swim team! Remember, there is no “I” in T-E-A-M. The Coaches have many decisions to make regarding whom will swim in each event. In order for us to be successful as a team, we must have swimmers in as many events as possible. This means that you may be entered in an event you do not like or an event at which you feel you are not particularly good. Remember that each swimmer has different abilities and talents. No one has the right to make another swimmer feel bad by complaining that he or she is not "good enough" to swim on a relay or in a particular event. If you want to talk to the Head Coach about this, please e-mail him to discuss or schedule a meeting.

Board Meeting

As per the Duneland Swim Club By-Laws, members that wish to have an item put on the Board meeting agenda must send notification to the Board President and Secretary a minimum of 10 days prior to the scheduled board meeting. The Board of Directors will acknowledge the member’s request within 48hrs, of the request, with a response.

DUNE Committee Volunteers

In accordance with our By-Laws, DUNE will be asking family members to commit to serving on one of the three standing committees. The purpose of these committees is to help spread the workload of running a swim club, particularly home swim meets. We are a parent supported organization and the stronger support we have from our parents, the more outstanding our club will be.

Membership Committee: Meet Entry

Club Sponsorships Registration Support

Volunteer Committee: Officials

Meet Personnel

Senior and Age Group Parent Liaisons

Booster Committee: Team Outfitting Community Projects Alumni Organization

Duneland Swim Club Training Groups

Each group is designed to have a progression for the start of one level and ascend to the next level. However, each group level is a very big step up in intensity and language. Therefore the coaching staff will ALWAYS make the decisions when an athlete is really ready to move groups. Not only the time is longer but the yardage and intensity are greater in the higher group.

**Two and Three Week Trial:** Kicking and body position in backstroke and freestyle are emphasized, but FUN is the main focus for this group. Basic skills and DUNE rules are stressed.

**Beginner: Guppy or Shark/Maroon and Gold:** Swimmers have demonstrated a level of water safety and skill comfort level. Competitive breaststroke and butterfly are introduced. Basic rules of competition are introduced. FUN and learning are still the main focus for this training group.

**Intermediates**: Swimmers have demonstrated all four competitive strokes. Rules and regulations of competitive swimming are enforced. Aerobic training, dryland training, pace clock management and race strategies are introduced.

**Advanced** is an intense cardiovascular training group with daily goals of completing posted yardage and maintaining proper technique throughout practice. Dryland training, race strategies and advanced training philosophies are expanded.

**Seniors** is a summer program for swimmers preparing for the next high school season. Weights and cruise intervals are introduced to allow for individual development. Head Age Group and Head Senior Coach reserve the right to include anyone else whom they feel has the physical and mental ability to handle this practice regardless of age.

Section

3

**DUNELAND**

SWIM CLUB

Competitions

###### Running a Meet

For any swim club to be successful, parents need to take an active role in running the organizational part of the program. For DUNE, this includes invitationals, community service projects and our dual meets.

Staffing our home meets takes a lot of manpower. The more parent volunteers we have, the less time each person has to work. Some of the jobs are:

Timers: Two timers per lane (12 total at middle school and 16 at high school), one with a stop watch and one working the electronic button, sit at the end of each lane. Timers start their watches at the starter’s signal and stop their watches when any part of the swimmers body touches the wall. The watch time is then recorded and used as a back-up time.

Head Timer: The head timer starts a watch on every race and acts as a back-up timer if a timer’s watch fails. They are also responsible for the training of lane timers before the meet.

Awards: This area requires 2 to 3 people to attach labels to the appropriate ribbons earned by the swimmers

Deck Chaperones: Parents are needed to pass out the seed cards and get the swimmers ready for their events and help maintain order on the pool deck

Announcer: The announcer has the important role of maintaining interest throughout the swim meet. They work in coordination with the starter to keep the meet moving in a timely fashion. Some duties are to announce warm-ups, call for volunteers, and announce the events and any other pertinent information.

Meet Administrators: Requires 2-3 volunteers. These individuals are responsible for running the computer and timing systems.

Deck Marshals: One of the most important responsibilities of the meet, Safety Enforcement, is the job of the marshals. This includes controlling swimmers behavior in and out of the pool and maintaining order on the pool deck, in the locker rooms, and the hallways.

Concession Stand: Parents organize, prepare, and sell food and beverages during the meet.

Set-up and Clean-up: This crew of parents is responsible for setting up the equipment in the pool and the tables and chairs needed in the pool and the concession area. After the meet, everything needs to be put away and the pool deck, bleachers, locker rooms, and concession area needs to be cleaned.

**The Basics**

Skills

The five competitive swimming events are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and individual medley.

Competition

Each swim meet offers a variety of events and distances, depending on the age group and classification. Each swimmer will have a limit to the number of events he or she may swim each day, depending on the meet rules.

In **freestyle** events, the competitor may swim any stroke. The stroke most commonly used is sometimes called the crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the water surface and an alternating (up and down) flutter kick. On turns and finishes, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. Most swimmers do a flip turn.

**Backstroke** consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flut•ter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may rotate to the stomach and perform a flip turn and some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. The swimmer must finish on the back.

The **breaststroke**, which is the oldest stroke dating back hundreds of years, 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 similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously at, above or below the water surface.

Some consider the **butterfly** to be the most beautiful of the strokes. It 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 butterfly is the newest stroke and was developed in the early 1950s as a variation of the breaststroke. It became an Olympic stroke in 1956 in Melbourne.)

The **individual medley**, commonly referred to as the I.M., 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.

In the **medley relay**, all four strokes are swum. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly, and the final swimmer anchors the relay with freestyle.

The **freestyle relay** events consist of four freestyles, each swimming one quarter of the total distance of the event.

Starts

In the start, the swimmer is called to the starting position by the starter who visually checks that all swimmers are motionless. When all swimmers are set, the starting horn is sounded to start the race. If the starter feels that one of the swimmers has moved, left early or gotten an unfair advantage, the guilty swimmer may be disqualified after the race for a false start. Under USA Swimming rules, one false start disqualifies the swimmer.

Rules

The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer. Read more...

The Course

Competition pools may be short course (25 yards or 25 meters), or long course (50 meters). The international standard (as used in the Olympics) is 50 meters. World records are accomplished in 25 and 50 meter pools. USA Swimming maintains records for 25 yard, 25 meter and 50 meter pools.

Teams

USA Swimming is made up of approximately 2,800 teams from all over the country. Of these clubs, nearly half have 80 swimmers or less, and a handful of teams have over 500 swimmers. A team may be comprised of any number of swimmers, parents, and coaches.

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. Team practice groups are usually determined by age and/or ability.

Officials

Officials are present at all competitions to enforce the technical rules of swimming so the competition is fair and equitable. Officials attend clinics, pass a written test and work meets before being certified. All parents are encouraged to get involved with some form of officiating. If you would like more information on becoming an official, contact a Board Member.

**Becoming an Official**

As the parent of a USA Swimmer, you have the opportunity to become involved with your child and their sport. One way of contributing to the success of your club is by volunteering your time and effort as an Official. There are many levels of officiating that require different degreed of involvement and time, one which just might be right for you.

Officials attend a clinic, pass a written test, and work at meets with an experienced official before being certified. Officials are present at all competitions, to implement the technical rules of swimming and to ensure that the competition is fair and equitable to each stroke.

**Turn Judges:** Observe the swimmer from each end of the pool and ensure that the turns and finishes comply with the rules applicable to each stroke.

**Stroke Judges:** Observe the swimmers from both sides of the pool, walking abreast of the swimmers, to ensure that the rules relating to each stroke are being followed. The positions of Stroke Judge and Turn Judge may be combined into one position called the Stroke & Turn Judge.

**Relay Takeoff Judges**: Stand beside the starting blocks to observe the relay exchange, ensuring that the feet of the departing swimmer have not lost contact with the block before the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool.

**Started:** Assumes control of the swimmers from the Referee, direct them to "take you mark" and sees that no swimmer is in motion prior to giving the start signal.

**Referee:** Has overall authority and control of the competition, ensuring that all rules are followed; assigns and instructs all officials, and decides all questions relating to the conduct of the meet.

A Clinics schedule will be post throughout the season when the information becomes available.

All DUNE parents are encouraged to look into the Officials Program. It will allow you to help you club in a very valuable area, as well as helping you learn more about the sport that your child is involved in.

Section

4

**DUNELAND**

SWIM CLUB

Parents

**"10 Commandments for Swimming Parents" by Rose Snyder**

1. Thou shall not impose thy 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 him based on what you think he should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do his personal best and benefit from the process of competitive swimming.

1. Thou shall 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.

1. Thou shall 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 love and support.

The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. 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.

1. Thou shall only have positive things to say at a swimming meet.

You should be encouraging and never criticize your child or the coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made. Remember “yelling at” is not the same as “cheering for.”

1. Thou shall acknowledge thy child's fears.

New experiences can be stressful situations. 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 or meet if your child was not ready. Remember your job is to love and support your child through all of the swimming experience.

1. Thou shall not criticize the officials.

Please don't criticize those who are doing the best they can in purely voluntary positions.

1. Honor thy child's coach.

The bond between coach and swimmer is special. It contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child.

1. Thou shall be loyal and supportive of thy team

It is not wise for parents to take 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 find that it can be a difficult emotional experience. Often swimmers who do switch teams don't do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

1. Thy child shall have goals besides winning.

Most successful swimmers 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.

1. Thou shall not expect thy child to become an Olympian.

There are 250,000 athletes in USA Swimming. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are about 0.0002%.

**Sticking With Sw imming….What Can a Parent Do?**

The Unfortunate Path that Many Swimmers Follow:

The swimmer’s career often starts with 8/under success and high parental enthusiasm. The child is encouraged by parents and others to excel and a big deal is made out of every accomplishment. As the child changes age groups and moves into the 9/10 group, even the most successful child may struggle because he or she has a harder time finding success against 10 year olds. What successes are achieved may not be as noticeable. Unfortunately, as much as one-third of the young swimmers and their families do not make it past this point.

By the time swimmers are10 or 11 years old they (or their parents) may realize that twice a week practices or summer only swimming is not enough to compete with others who are practicing more frequently. Physical ability and natural coordination can still help athlete to stay competitive and have success but it is getting harder to stay on top. More big changes and rude awakenings are lurking in the future.

The first Big Change: From 10 & under to 11 - 12

* + Events become longer going from 25’s and 50's to 50's and 100's and even some 200's and distance freestyle events.
  + Competition changes from sprint competition to race/pace/competition.
  + In some programs, one half of the athletes and their families do not make this change. They never give the coaches or the program a chance to help the athlete adapt to the changing nature of swimming competition.

The second Big Change: From age 12 to 13&14/Senior swimming.

* + Events change again. Now it is all 100's & 200's along with 400/500 and 1000/1650.
  + The athlete must develop a work ethic and intensify the training aspect of swimming.
  + Physical changes affect both male and female athletes. Athletes get bigger and stronger, but many, especially the girls, may struggle to cope with their “new bodies.”
  + This can one of the most rewarding phases of an athlete’s career, yet many will give up.

The third Big Change: A focus on college swimming

* + Swimmers who remain in the sport start to look at the possibility of swimming in college.
  + Questions arise concerning the choice of colleges, the level of swimming, the possibilities of scholarships, and the willingness to compete and train for another four years.

Let’s put these changes into “real” numbers: Suppose a team has 12 Novice swimmers.

* Only 8 will remain in swimming past the first Big Change
* Only 4 will remain in swimming past the second Big Change.
* Only 2 will remain in swimming past the third Big Change.

The Role of the Parent in Navigating the Big Changes:

Sometimes, unfortunately, it is the parents who are responsible for their child leaving the sport. For example:

* Parents who are former athletes, especially former swimmers, may have unreasonably high expectations.
* Parents believe that they are in charge of the athlete’s happiness and that only “winning” can bring happiness.
* Parents believe that early success equates with long term success. The 8/under star will, of course, become an Olympian.
* Parents may not understand the need for technical and skill development before “swimming fast.”

Parents must examine their own motives. Form a philosophy that emphasizes the process, not the outcome. Be the guides on the “fun path” not the “victory path.” When parents use these words, their emphasis is misplaced:

We - Beat - Win - Fast - Lost - Try - Only – My What Can Parents Do to Reverse the Trend?

Parents must develop progress and grow the just as athletes do. Experience is the key and communication is the mode. Swimmers already have coaches, friends, and teammates. They need a parent to fill the parental role. “Coaches coach children, parents raise children. “

Here are some of the benefits your child will garner if he or she sticks with swimming:

**Life Lessons:** Only one swimmer can win the race. Does this mean everyone else is a loser? Of course not! Swimmers need to constantly be reminded that a top-notch effort on their part will result in personal satisfaction and a contribution to their team. Most USA Swimming clubs design a program of competitive training and competition for our younger swimmers based on long term development. Therefore, we may not stress early competitive success with a great deal of fanfare. Remember that swimmers under the age of 12 are very inconsistent which can be frustrating to a parent or to the swimmers themselves. Fun and patience are the keys here.

**Leadership:** In many cases, our team leaders and successful senior swimmers were not outstanding age group swimmers. Those, who “stick with it” often develop into outstanding leaders, having learned patience, dedication, and commitment. Steady progress and understanding the meaning of various accomplishments will make a motivated, well adjusted senior swimmer.

USA Swimming clubs go to great lengths to provide opportunities for all swimmers equally, although sometimes it may seem that more emphasis and time is spent on senior swimming. An 8/under will swim no more than 45 minutes two or three times a week, while a Senior swimmer may be in the water 18 hours per week! Both swimmers are having their needs met as part of a long term progression. Understanding the long term benefits and the long term progression will help parents navigate the waters of a swimmer’s career. If you associate “time” with “attention,” the longer a swimmer stays with swimming the more attention he or she will receive.