

Lake Central Barracudas

Pursuing Perfection, Achieving Excellence



2015 Season Parents and Swimmers Manual

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Introduction

Welcome to the Lake Central Barracudas (LCB)! You are on your way to becoming a part of one of Indiana's most successful and respected swimming clubs. Founded in 1977, we offer a guided age-group youth program for children ages 5 and up, from the beginning swimmer to the most competitive and skilled swimmer.

The objective of the Lake Central Barracudas is to provide expert assistance to young swimmers so that they may have every opportunity to develop to their potential. When a young person becomes a member of the Lake Central Barracudas, he/she learns the value of sportsmanship and teamwork. Swimming, through the Lake Central Barracudas, provides physical, emotional and intellectual skills that will last a lifetime.

In addition to joining the Barracudas, your swimmer will become a member of USA Swimming, which is America's Swim Team. From the local club pool to the glorious Olympic podium, the 300,000 members of America's Swim Team come in all ages, sizes, speeds, and backgrounds. USA Swimming is one of few sports for young children which requires that its coaches maintain certification and continually educate themselves with the evolution of the sport. Age group swimming builds a strong foundation for a lifetime of good health.

The purpose of this manual is two-fold. It will explain to new members just what the Lake Central Barracuda swim club is about, as well as outline various policies that affect all swimmers, year after year. We have selected pertinent information relating to swimmers and parents. We hope that you will find it both informative and interesting, with the eventual goal being that our parents become educated about the sport of swimming.

We are eagerly anticipating the start of another season and are very excited that you have chosen to be a part of it.

Please note that this manual, as well as a host of other current information, is all available on our website at lcbswim.com. Please consult our website regularly for updates on meets, practices, LCB news, and other information.

Getting to Know the Barracudas

Contained in this section, you will find all sorts of useful information on our club. We have provided a history of our team and a basic description of the different levels of our team. In addition to these, we have also provided an outline of our practice schedules and a description of what to expect during a swim season.

Team Philosophy

LCB is dedicated to improving swim skills, providing an excellent source of exercise, and developing individuals beyond the swimming pool. Embedded in our foundation are the following beliefs:

- We believe in structuring practices according to a swimmer's ability and letting each individual swimmer progress at his or her own rate.
- We believe in letting swimmers have different priorities and goals. Some swimmers may swim for the exercise; some for a social activity; some strictly for fun; while others set their sights on the competition aspect of the sport. The majority of swimmers encompass a combination of the above. Our club caters to all levels of swimmers.
- We believe swimming should be fun—at all levels. We do strive to encourage swimmers to be the best they can be, but we should not lose focus that we are an age group swim club that should include fun in the equation.
- We believe in providing a positive environment for children to learn and develop. Goals, respect, courage, discipline, teamwork, and social interaction are key components of our swim club.
- We believe a strong club is developed and maintained through strong communication between parents, coaches, and board members. Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns or questions through appropriate channels. It is through a strong communication process that misunderstandings and misconceptions are minimized and a positive environment is built.
- We believe to provide our swim club with a positive and strong foundation and participation from parents is extremely critical. As a professionally coached swim club, the need is important and the benefits are abundant for all.

Team History

The Lake Central Barracudas Swim Club was founded in 1977 by parents of the Lake Central School Community in conjunction with Mr. Jim Walsh, Lake Central High School's first swim coach. The club's purpose at that time was to provide a feeder system for the high school swim team. This remains one of the club's major concerns today.

The Lake Central Barracudas take pride in the fact their program has produced many swimmers that not only went on to receive college scholarships, but also continue to swim today. This certainly proves that the Lake Central Barracudas are committed to keeping people involved in the sport for a lifetime.

Our Coaches

The swimmers in LCB are trained by a group of professional coaches who are on staff to help our swimmers and LCB achieve their goals.



Head Coach Jeff Kilinski (email: coachjeff@lcbswim.com)

Coach Jeff has been with LCB since 2003. His previous coaching experiences are with Crown Point and Lansing swim clubs. Jeff is also the Head Coach of the Lake Central High School boys swim team. Jeff was All-American swimmer in his high school days at Lake

Central and began coaching swimming shortly after high school. Jeff's passion is to help swimmers achieve their goals whether it is completing their first race or achieving a state cut. Jeff lives in St. John with his wife, Susan, and has two sons who are both active in swimming.



Head Assistant Coach Dale Ramsey

Coach Dale has been with LCB for nearly 10 years and is also an assistant coach with the Lake Central High School boys swimming team. Growing up afraid of the water, Dale got started in swimming after losing a bet with a friend during his sophomore year in high school. He went on to become a highly decorated swimmer during his time at Lake Central High School, achieving All American status and setting several school records during his time. He went on to swim for four years at Indiana University where he was an NCAA qualifier and record holder.

Assistant Coaches: Emily Tobias, Molly Tobias, Josh Kilinski, & Gabbi Rapin.

Getting to Know the Sport of Swimming

Competitive Strokes

The four competitive strokes are: Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Butterfly. Events are held in all of the competitive strokes at varying distances depending on the age-group of the swimmer. In addition, there is a combination of strokes swam by one swimmer called the Individual Medley (swam in the order of Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle). Other swimming events include relays, which are a group of four swimmers who either all swim freestyle (freestyle relay) or where each swims one of the competitive strokes in the order of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and freestyle (medley relay).

Basic Swimming Rules

STARTS:

Each Event begins with a "start" where the swimmer leaves the blocks and begins swimming down the lane. In age group swimming, swimmers are disqualified after one false start. A false start is generally defined as an attempt by the swimmer to gain an unfair advantage by releasing from the blocks before the starting signal. A false start must be confirmed both by the starter and the recall judge. If both judges do not agree on which lane false started, no one is disqualified.

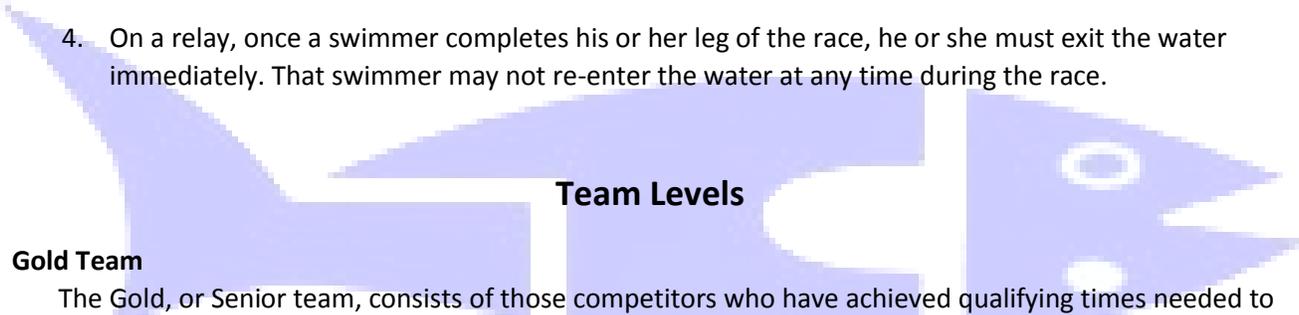
TURNS AND FINISHES:

1. On freestyle flip turns, some part of the swimmer (typically the swimmer's feet on a flip turn) must make contact with the wall.
2. On Backstroke turn, there are two styles: beginners get to the wall on their back, then turn. More experienced swimmers flip turn. Backstroke flip turns aren't necessarily as easy to explain. The swimmer must roll over to the breast and must proceed directly into a somersault and push off the wall on his/her back. Swimmers may be disqualified for a 'non-continuous' turn, which means that there was a significant pause between the stages of the turn. On the backstroke finish, some part of the swimmer's body must be above the water as a swimmer can not be submerged at the finish.

3. On breaststroke and butterfly, the swimmer must touch each wall with two hands simultaneously and the hands must not overlap.

GENERAL RULES:

1. Swimmers are not permitted to make contact with the bottom of the pool or the lane lines. Accidental contact with the lane lines is usually overlooked, but these rules are designed to prevent swimmers from propelling themselves forward by either pulling on the lane lines or pushing off the bottom.
2. Each swimmer must start and finish the race in the same lane. During the race, a swimmer is permitted to enter another lane provided that they do not interfere with another swimmer. This rule is helpful for younger swimmers who may push off the wall and enter another lane, as it keeps them from getting disqualified, assuming they return to their lane eventually.
3. On a relay, the swimmer in the water must touch the wall before the next swimmer leaves the block. A swimmer on the block can be moving while the swimmer in their lane is in the water, but they must have contact with the block until the swimmer in their lane makes contact with the wall.
4. On a relay, once a swimmer completes his or her leg of the race, he or she must exit the water immediately. That swimmer may not re-enter the water at any time during the race.



Team Levels

Gold Team

The Gold, or Senior team, consists of those competitors who have achieved qualifying times needed to compete at the United States Senior and Junior National Championships, the Lake Central High School swimmers, and some other swimmers that exhibit a high level of swimming and workout ability.

Silver Team

Silver swimmers are well-versed in technique and race strategy. They are also a full-fledged training group. They generally have a skill level commensurate with Indiana Age Group State time standards or divisional time standards.

Bronze Team

These swimmers have started to exhibit good swimming skills and will be introduced to some training skills and processes. There is still a great emphasis on stroke mechanics, as more advanced aspects of the sport are introduced.

Copper Team

This is a beginner group with a heavy emphasis on stroke technique. This group will be introduced to low levels of competition, such as intrasquad, dual and invitational meets. This group will cover all fundamentals of starts and turns in detail.

Swim Seasons

The swim year is divided into two seasons. The winter or "short course" season, runs from mid-September to mid-March. The meets are held indoors in 25 yard pools. The summer or "long course" season runs from mid-April to late July. Meets are generally held in 50 meter pools, but some local clubs will host 25-yard course meets in the summer season.

Training Sessions

Training sessions are the most important aspect of competitive swimming. Consistent training is needed to progress through the classes of swimmers. Training schedules are designed to provide only slightly more time than is required for a swimmer to accomplish this. Therefore it is important that each swimmer attends as many practices as possible to derive the full benefits of the program.

LCB trains at the Lake Central Aquatic Center (Lake Central High School) nearly year-round. The High School teams have priority in scheduling of practices and meets, but LCB makes every effort to schedule practices around the times that the high school is using the pool. Practice schedules are published at the beginning of each swim season on our website and any cancellations are communicated both on our website and through via email.

Barracuda Practice Schedule

Winter Practice Schedule

COPPER	Mon, Wed, Thu and Fri (No Tuesday Practice)	4:45 to 5:45 pm
BRONZE	Mon, Wed, Thu and Fri Tue	5:30 to 7:00 pm 4:45 to 6:15 pm
SILVER	Mon, Wed, Thu and Fri Tue	5:30 to 8:00 pm 4:45 to 7:00 pm

Occasionally practices are changed or cancelled due to events at the high school. Always reference the practice calendars on the lcbswim.com for the most up to date practice schedule.

Barracuda Policies

It is important for each swim family to become familiar with the policies that our club abides by. Contained within this section are practice policies, responsibilities of both parent and swimmer, our procedure for entering meets, and our means of keeping our club members informed on what's happening with the Barracudas. This is definitely the most important section in the book, and all swim families should familiarize themselves with our club policies.

Practice Policies

The following guidelines are to inform parents and swimmers of the coach's policies regarding practice. These policies have been developed over many years and are designed to provide the best possible practice environment for swimmers, parents, and coaches.

1. The Lake Central Barracudas do not have a set attendance policy. As a general rule, the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success (i.e., attending 60% of the practices will provide the swimmer 60% of what the program has to offer). We do, however, encourage swimmers to participate in other activities in addition to swimming. As a general recommendation, Copper swimmers should attend 2-3 practices a week, Bronze swimmers should attend 3-4 a week, and Silver swimmers should aim for 4-5 practices per week.
2. Swimmers should arrive on school grounds no earlier than 15 minutes prior to workout time. They should also be picked up no later than 15 minutes after practice is over. Please come in to the school to pick-up your swimmer. We discourage swimmers from waiting outside for their rides. This is especially true for the Copper swimmers.
3. Swimmers are to enter the building at the doors labeled the new main entrance on the far south end of the school facing US 41 and go directly to the pool area or to the locker rooms to change. No swimmers are to wander the halls of the school or enter the gym. Violation of this rule will not be tolerated as it may damage our current good-standing with the high school administration.
4. While on school grounds, the swimmers are the responsibility of the coaching staff. During practice sessions, swimmers are never to leave the pool area without a coach's permission. Please write a note to accompany your swimmer or talk to a coach in the event that he or she must leave early or be excused from certain activities.
5. We have an obligation to act as guests while in the High School (both swimmers and parents). Since we are the guests at the High School, we need to remember that we should do everything possible to respect this privilege.
6. Parents are not allowed on the pool deck during practices as this is a USA Swimming rule. No exceptions can be made. Coaches are responsible for swimmers in the water and cannot spend time conversing with parents during practice times. Parents are encouraged to observe practices from the pool balcony. Please do not communicate with your child during practice as this can disrupt the coach and the practice.
7. The LCB coaching staff is only responsible for those swimmers who are in attendance at practice. We are not responsible for the siblings or relatives of these swimmers. Please keep an eye on any other children you bring with you to practice, ensuring that they are not on deck during practice or roaming the halls of the high school.
8. While this isn't a rule, as a swimmer's level of swimming ability increases, so does his/her responsibility. The program is designed to encourage all swimmers to be Senior Swimming bound. As swimmers improve, there is a deep commitment that requires great effort on all parts. A swimmer has

responsibilities to the team, the coach, his/her parents, and most importantly to themselves. Swimmers need to prepare themselves each time they come to practice.

Code of Conduct

In order to enable our coaches to provide the quality practice time all parents want for their children, the Board has adopted the following Code of Conduct. The coaching staff has been instructed to enforce this policy. The purpose of this notice is to inform both swimmers and parents of this policy.

Please remember the following are general rules:

Parents must not be on deck or speaking with coaches during the training portion of the practice. The children in the water deserve the coaches' undivided attention. If you need to speak with a coach, do so before or after practice times. You may email Coach Jeff if you wish to meet with him before or after practice at coachjeff@lcbsswim.com.

Swimmers must not be on deck or talking to the coaches unless it is their training group's practice time. Swimmers arriving early must wait in the stretching area on deck. Parents should reinforce this rule any time they bring their children to practice early. During practice, all swimmers are to follow the coaches' workout instructions and refrain from any disruptive behavior.

The coaches will apply the following progressive discipline for general misbehavior:

1. Initially, the swimmer will be warned by the coach as to what he/she is doing wrong and be requested to stop.
2. If after being warned the swimmer continues to misbehave, he/she will be removed from the pool for a period of 15 minutes.
3. If the misbehavior still continues, the swimmer will be dismissed from that practice and escorted to a telephone to call home. The swimmer must then wait poolside until their ride home arrives.
4. Dismissal from a second practice will result in the swimmer being suspended for a period of one week, during which time the swimmer and parents must meet with the coaches and Board to discuss probationary details. The swimmer will not be permitted to return to practice until this meeting has taken place.
5. If after suspension a swimmer is excused from another practice, the matter will be brought to the Board's attention for a decision regarding a longer suspension or expulsion from the team.

Please note that the discipline policy is aimed primarily at the upper level training groups. It is not the Club's intention to discipline young children acting like young children. Older children acting like young children, however, are another story.

All of our children have bad days, and it is possible that your swimmer may be sent home. You are encouraged to discuss the incident first with the coaches and then with the Board, if necessary.

Your Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Swimmer

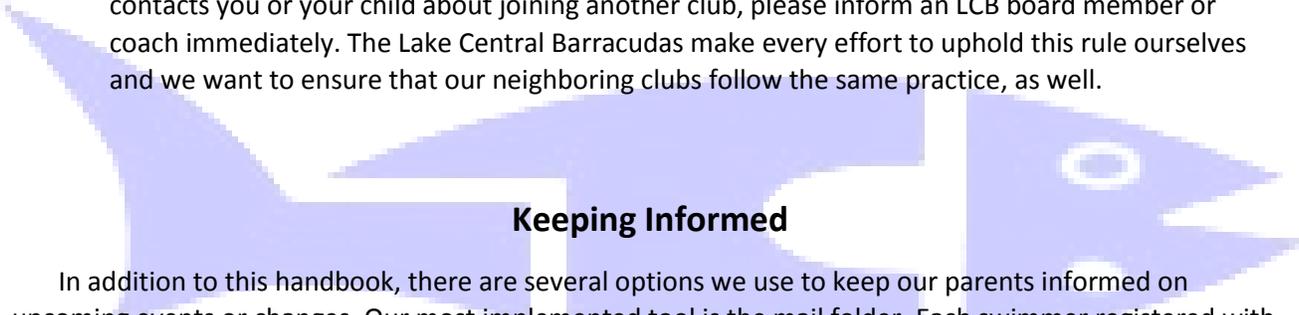
1. A Lake Central swimmer is a substance-free swimmer. Any swimmer who is known or admits to use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco is subject to suspension from the team.
2. Never interfere with the progress of another swimmer, during practice or otherwise.
3. At all club functions, whether practice, meets, or social gatherings, we expect each swimmer to behave in such a way that their actions reflect positively on the team.
4. All members of the club, whether parents or swimmer, continue to protect and improve the excellent reputation the club has throughout the area and the state.

Responsibilities of the Parent

1. Please make every effort to have your swimmers get to practice on time. Realize that your child is working hard and give all the support that you can. Encourage good diet and eating habits. They will serve your child well.
2. The greatest contribution you can make to your swimmer's progress is to be a loving, supportive parent.
3. Lake Central Barracudas have a reputation in the area and in the state of hosting swim meets of the highest caliber. Over a quarter of our operating budget is generated from the Club hosting several swim meets each year. One of the commitments made when you joined the Lake Central Barracudas was to help work our own swim meets. We host meets usually during the summer season in May and June. In the winter season, we typically host meets in December and February. Based on the number of meets hosted by LCB in a season, the board will set a number of meet volunteer sessions that each family is expected to work for that season.
4. The following is a transportation policy that is in effect for all functions related to the club: It is hereby the stated policy of the Lake Central Barracuda Swim Club, effective immediately and until either revoked or restated by the Lake Central Barracuda Board of Directors, that transportation of swimmers and/or coaches to practices, meets or any other event considered to be a club function by any non-public conveyance, as defined to include privately owned vehicles, is recognize by the Lake Central Barracudas as a purely private agreement between the parties involved and that neither the Lake Central Barracudas, nor the Lake Central Barracudas Board of Directors, separately or as a group, except for the parties directly involved can be or will be considered as a

party to such arrangement and that any liability in any form arising from such arrangement is purely and completely the responsibility of the parties involved.

5. While we hope that each parent is so satisfied enough with our club and its functions that they speak highly of it to parents or swimmers of other competitive swim clubs, be aware that there are vague rulings against “recruiting” swimmers from other swim programs. Please do not make any effort to encourage swimmers from other teams to leave their club and become a member of the Lake Central Barracudas. If such a parent on another club is dissatisfied with their own club and wishes to ask you questions about LCB, feel free to answer them completely and honestly. Encourage them to address these issues with their own board or coach. Once they have done this, if they still would like more information on LCB, have them contact a board member or coach. Our Board thoroughly examines the reasoning behind swimmers changing clubs, in an attempt to protect the integrity of our club. Our club makes it a point not to admit families or swimmers which have a history of switching clubs or alienating themselves from their previous clubs and contacts.
6. Conversely to the previous rule, if any parent or coach from another swimming organization contacts you or your child about joining another club, please inform an LCB board member or coach immediately. The Lake Central Barracudas make every effort to uphold this rule ourselves and we want to ensure that our neighboring clubs follow the same practice, as well.



Keeping Informed

In addition to this handbook, there are several options we use to keep our parents informed on upcoming events or changes. Our most implemented tool is the mail folder. Each swimmer registered with the club has one and they are contained within a large filing cabinet on wheels, which is located in the hallway on the farthest end of the pool from the entrance doors. It is behind a set of double blue doors just beyond the girls’ locker room. This is where awards from meets are placed in addition to other pertinent handouts and sometimes, items are left for your swimmer, as well. It is important to check your swimmer’s mail folder on a regular basis.

Our main source of information related to the club is our website at lcbswim.com. To begin, swimmer registration is available on the homepage and once approved, swim families have access to a user account which they can use to sign their swimmer(s) up for meets and volunteer for work sessions, for example. In addition, parents can find meet information, deadlines, meet packets, practice calendars, and many other important items there.

With a great number of swimmers filtering through practice, coaches have limited time to meet with parents during or between practice times. If you should need to speak with the coach, please email your specific group representative (Copper parents should speak to the Copper rep, etc.) and address your concern to him or her. Our reps will serve as a liaison, while trying to represent both parties fairly and accurately. The group reps will also assist in setting up times for parents to meet with the coaches.

Meets

Much of the time in practice is spent preparing our swimmers for competition. Meets are a great experience because they provide a means to measure improvement in a rewarding and relaxing atmosphere, while still under coaching supervision. Meets can be fun and exciting for new swimmers but also a little scary as they try something new. The coaches are always on deck with the swimmers and they, along with parent volunteers, ensure that new swimmers know where to go and have a successful meet.

There are a few different kinds of meets that the Barracudas participate in throughout the year: *Intrasquad*, *Dual*, and *Invitational*.

An *Intrasquad* meet is simply a meet for LCB swimmers only. These meets will have one session and all LCB swimmers will be eligible to participate. They are usually much shorter than other meets as there are less swimmers participating.

Dual meets are similar to Intrasquad meets except they will include a second swim club. Dual meets will also be just one session for all swimmers. We currently have one Dual meet scheduled for Summer season with Munster's swim club in July. Generally, we have a second Dual meet with Munster during Winter season, as well.

Invitational meets (or "Invites") are much larger meets, usually involving many other swim clubs from our area and, at times, from areas farther away in Indiana and from neighboring states. Most of the meets LCB participates in are Invitational meets. This type of meet will usually have a Friday night session, two sessions on Saturday and two more on Sunday. Friday night sessions will usually involve all ages, but will be for distance events and will typically involve some of our more experienced swimmers. The Saturday and Sunday sessions are usually broken down by age group (8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15 and older). Each meet is different in terms of which age groups swim in which sessions, but typically a single age group will swim at the same time on both days.

Invitational weekends can be long weekends for parents and swimmers if you choose to participate the entire weekend. However, some swimmers may choose to swim just one session in a meet if he/she has other obligations that weekend which is perfectly acceptable. At the same time, there will be many swimmers who will choose to swim a session on Friday (if eligible), Saturday and Sunday. That is entirely up to you and your swimmer to decide.

There are certain Invitational meets that set up just for certain age swimmers. In January and February, Munster hosts an Invitational meet just for 10 and under swimmers and another just for 11 and older swimmers. There are also some meets that are labeled "Swim Your Own Age" or SYOA which are particularly appealing to beginning swimmers. In most meets, swimmers compete within the age groups indicated above (8 and under, 9-10, etc.). In SYOA meets, swimmers only compete with other swimmers that are the exact same age. There will be less swimmers to compete against and it gives a better chance to place in the meet for the 6 and 7 year old swimmers (who won't compete against the 8 year olds), the 9 year old swimmers (who won't have to compete against the 10 year olds), etc.

All of the above meets are *timed finals* which means that overall, final placements in an event are determined by times recorded in the heats. In a *PrelimFinals meet*, all swimmers initially swim in

preliminary heats to qualify for finals swam later in the day. Only participants in the finals will receive final placements in the meet. *Championship* meets, such as the Divisional and State meets, use this format.

Swimmers can qualify for two different championship meets at the end of the winter season and/or one at the end of the summer season. The Divisional meet takes place in early March at one of seven different locations throughout the state of Indiana. Swimmers must have a qualifying time to swim an event at the Divisional meet (often referred to as a Divisional cut time). Swimmers who meet a more rigorous time standard can qualify for the Indiana State meet which is held one to two weeks after the Divisional meet. If a swimmer qualifies for the State meet, he/she can not swim that event at the Divisional meet.

A schedule of meets LCB will be participating will be made available on our website prior to the start of the season. For each invitational meet, the host club will create a meet packet which will contain all of the information needed for that particular meet, including the event schedule, session start times, event costs, etc. These can be found as they become available under the Events tab on our website.

Meet Sign-up

Meet sign-ups are handled through our website using the following procedure:

1. Sign in to our website and click on the "Events" tab at the top. (Nothing can be done if you don't sign in.)
2. Click on the meet you are signing up for. You will see where you can click "here" to view and print the appropriate meet packet. Then, click the "Attend/Decline" button (which will change to "Edit Commitment" once you have saved any info).
3. Choose your Athlete to sign up for the meet.
4. Choose your "Declaration" from the pull-down menu (Yes, please sign [child's name] up for this event).
5. A list of the events your swimmer is allowed to participate in will then become displayed at the bottom. Click on each event you and your swimmer have chosen. I will try to always include this in the notes section, but if you need to, cross reference the packet for the number of events allowed each day.
6. When you are done, click on "Save Changes." You can continue to go in and make additional changes (removing or switching events, for example) until the deadline (this is supposed to be MIDNIGHT on deadline day, so finalize everything the day BEFORE the deadline to be safe).
7. Calculate your entry fees, using the notes section OR the meet packet if I forgot to add that part, write your check - always to LCB - and put it in the blue Entries box (we're working to get the folders ready again and the box will sit on top of the filing cabinet, as usual).

8. After the deadline has passed, a meet entry report will be generated, as usual, for you to VERIFY the events you have signed your swimmer up for.

A Typical Swim Meet – What to Expect

Swim meets are a great family experience! They are a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific as we possibly could. If you have any questions, please contact your swimming rep or speak to some of the veteran parents that have been attending these meets for years.

Before the Meet Starts

1. Arrive at the pool at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet packet posted on our website.
2. Many meets will be referred to as "Positive Check-in". This means that the meet hosts want each swimmer to indicate that he/she is in attendance and ready to swim. Unfortunately, a small percentage of swimmers sign up for meets and then do not show up, and this creates many delays in the meet. Positive check-in sheets are usually well marked and easy to find. Traditionally, the swimmer simply needs to highlight his/her name on a sheet and then he/she is ready to proceed to the locker rooms. If this is not completed, the host club will assume the swimmer is not present and will remove him/her name from the meet, and he/she will not be permitted to swim in the meet.
3. Once checked in, you can write each event number on your swimmer's hand in ink. This can help your swimmer remember what events he/she will be swimming.
4. Once this is completed, the swimmer will report to the pool deck with his/her cap and goggles to await warm-up instructions. Parents are not permitted to accompany their swimmers into the locker room or onto the pool deck per USA Swimming regulations. Swimmers should not enter the pool without supervision from their coach. It is very important for all swimmers to warm up with the team, as most meets designate certain lanes for specific teams. Warming up is extremely important, as swimmer's bodies are just like cars on a cold day. The swimmer needs to get his/her engine going and warmed up before he/she can perform.
5. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her towel is waiting until the next event is called. If he/she is young, this is a good time to remind him/her to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom, keeps hydrated, and settles in.
6. The meet will usually begin approximately 10 - 15 minutes after warm-up is over.
7. According to USA Swimming rules and due to insurance purposes, parents are not allowed on deck or in the locker rooms unless they are volunteering or officiating. Parents on deck without proper credentials can and will be removed by meet officials. Most pools will have family restrooms

available outside of the pool deck for swimmers who need assistance changing before or after the meet. If you have any questions regarding order of finish, disqualifications, deck entries, or anything else, go directly to the coach. They are the only people who are allowed to speak with the officials on certain matters, so contact them immediately during meets to ensure your concerns are resolved.

8. A "psych" or "heat" sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area for a few dollars per day (or the entire meet). A psych sheet will list all swimmers entered in an event, with rankings based on their entered time. A heat sheet is more useful to the swimmer as it indicates which heat and lane the swimmer will be swimming in for his/her races. A "NT" by the swimmer's name indicates that he has no time for that event, probably because he or she has never successfully completed it before. The time next to the swimmer's names is their best performance at the time the entry was sent in.
9. Many meets will utilize an app called Meet Mobile to publish heat sheet information and event results. This app is available for free through iTunes or through the Google Play store. Once you have downloaded the app, search for the meet name or location to find the meet information. LCB utilizes Meet Mobile for all of its meets.

Once the Meet Starts

It is important for your swimmer to know what event numbers he/she is swimming. He/She may swim immediately after warm-ups end, or he/she may swim at a later time. After warm-ups, the host club will post heat sheets on the deck for swimmers to reference the heat and lane for each event they are participating in. The LCB coaches typically expect most experienced swimmers 9 or older to be able to find their lane and report to the correct starting block without prompting. Please be certain your swimmer knows how to determine his/her heat and lane and if necessary, ask a coach for assistance. Most swimmers will write their heat and lane information on their hand or arm next to the event number to make it easier to remember.

Younger swimmers (typically 8 and under) will have additional help at most meets called a "Clerk of Course." The Clerk of Course will stand in a designated spot on or near the pool deck and younger swimmers will report to them. Host club parent volunteers will then assist the swimmers by lining them up in order of heat and lane assignment to ensure the swimmer is in the right place at the right time when his/her event is competing. LCB coaches will usually escort the swimmers to the Clerk of Course when an announcement has been made to do so. However, please let your swimmer know to pay attention to the event number and be ready to go once the announcement is made. Swimmers should report to the Clerk of Course ready to swim, including having their swim cap and goggles with them.

After the swimmer finishes his/her race, he/she should proceed to the coaches. The coaches will briefly discuss the race with the swimmer and explain any disqualifications or technical aspects that the swimmer does not understand. Generally the coach's discussion with the swimmers revolves around both praise and suggestions for improvement.

After your child speaks with the coach following a swim, he/she should return to his towel area and prepare for his/her next event. Again, if your swimmer is young, you might remind him/her that immediately after a race is a good time to use the bathroom and/or get a drink of water.

During the course of the season, your child may experience a few disappointing races. When your child comes to you and starts feeling bad, make an effort to focus on the positive aspects of his race. While it is certainly acceptable for a swimmer to negatively evaluate a race, it is even more important for the swimmer not to dwell on it. Encourage your child to focus on the next race.

Once your swimmer has completed all of his or her events, you may go home. **Always check with the coach before you leave to make sure your child is not participating on a relay.**

What to Take to a Meet

1. Team swim suit, team cap, and more than one pair of goggles. If you do not have a team suit, our team colors are royal blue and white. Most parents will provide their swimmers with something conforming to these colors, although it is not necessary. All swimmers wearing a swim cap must wear an LCB team cap. These are available before or after practices from Coach Jeff or you can locate a Board member or group representative for help.
2. Two towels. These things get wet in a hurry, and no swimmer likes drying off with a damp towel.
3. Sweat suits, t-shirts, shorts, etc. for your child. Anything to keep the swimmer warm and comfortable between events.
4. Books, iPod, or other game(s) to help pass the time. Remember, your swimmer will be on a wet deck, so send whatever you feel comfortable they can be responsible for.
5. Food. Bring plenty of fluids and some snacks. Large meals weigh the swimmers down in the water and lead to stomach cramps. We recommend crackers, fruit, granola bars, and vegetables. Please note that food is not typically permitted on deck. At most meets, swimmers can leave the deck to eat something.
6. Many swimmers bring a blanket to sit on while waiting to swim, although please note that it will likely get wet.

Understanding Disqualifications – A Coach’s Perspective

More commonly referred to as the “DQ”, disqualifications are a very much misunderstood aspect of competitive swimming. Unfortunately, many attribute negative characteristics to the DQ. Some feel that swimmers only get DQ'd when the coaches aren't doing their jobs. Others feel that DQ's only occur when the swimmer simply didn't try. As a coaching staff, we strongly disagree with these notions.

DQ's are as much a part of our sport as the balk is to baseball, or the personal foul is to basketball. Like any other sport, swimming is very structured. You must complete the race in a specific manner in order for

your effort to be official. DQ's are very helpful, as swimmers whose strokes or turns do not conform with the rulings quickly learn what to address and focus on. Coaches spend a great deal of practice time correcting swimmers on technical flaws and a DQ can often serve as another form of critiquing a swimmer. Take football, for example. If a player is off sides before the ball is snapped, an official throws a flag and signals the infraction. Certainly the player knows that it is against the rules to be off sides before the ball is snapped, but mental lapses occur and this is what makes penalties very much a part of a football game.

The same can be said for swimming. Roughly 75% of all DQ's can be attributed to a mental lapse on the part of the swimmer. A competitive swim meet can be very intimidating to some and, in these situations, it is difficult to always concentrate and focus on technique. While it is difficult for both parent and coach to understand these lapses, we need to remember that these are still just kids. Applying any negative criticism to a DQ can only hinder a child's appreciation for the sport. In all our years of coaching, we have yet to come across a swimmer that deliberately DQ'd. No one wants to get disqualified. Thus, how the coach and parent address a DQ can be critical.

A coach will take the time to explain to the swimmer any aspects of the disqualification that he or she may not understand. These rules are the same rules that apply at Collegiate Championships and the Olympics, so some of these rules can get rather complex. We will offer both praise for effort and suggestions for correction of the technical flaw. Every swimmer has had his or her share of DQ's. Rather than viewing DQ's as a failure, we attempt to view them as a vehicle to help our swimmers grasp the rules and the sport itself. Taken in this positive context, it seems hard to imagine how the DQ acquires such a negative reputation within the sport of swimming.

The Parent - Swimmer Relationship

Success as a Swim Parent

To have a successful program, there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress your swimmer makes depends to a great extent on this triangular relationship. It is with this in mind that we ask you to consider this section as you join the LCB and reacquaint yourself if you are a returning LCB club parent.

You have done a great deal to raise your child. You create the environment in which he/she is growing up. Your child is a product of your values, the structure that you have provided, and the model that you have been. Human nature, however, is such that a parent loses some of his/her ability to remain detached and objective in a matter concerning his/her child's athletics. The following guidelines will help you keep your child's development in the proper perspective and help your child reach his/her full potential as an athlete.

1. LET THE COACHES DO THE COACHING

We want your swimmer to relate to his or her coach as soon as possible concerning swimming matters. This relationship between coach and swimmer produces the best results. When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim, it causes considerable and often insurmountable confusion as to whom the swimmer should listen to. If you have a problem, concern, or complaint, please contact the coach.

2. BE THE BEST KIND OF PARENT

The coach's job is to motivate and constructively criticize the swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply the love, recognition and encouragement necessary to make the child work harder in practice which, in turn, gives him/her the confidence to perform well in competition.

3. PATIENCE, PATIENCE, PATIENCE!!!

One of the most misunderstood aspects of this sport is the inconsistency in performance, as this can be frustrating for parents, coaches, and the swimmer alike. Parents and coaches must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport. Even the very best swimmer will have meets where they do not receive their best times. These "plateaus" are a normal part of swimming. As a swimmer progresses through the program, there may be brief periods when they appear to slow down. This is the means of added concentration on stroke technique, but the end result is much faster performances for the swimmer.

While there are instances of young children learning to swim naturally, it literally takes years of development and practice for a child to become a great swimmer. No one is going to master this sport overnight. Everyone has to start from the bottom and work their way up. If a parent is pushing or becoming frustrated with a child's performance, this only impedes the progression of the swimmer.

4. CONCERNS WITH THE COACH

One of the traditional swim team communication gaps occurs when parents seem to feel more comfortable in discussing their disagreements over coaching philosophy with other parents rather than taking them directly to the coach. Not only is the problem never resolved that way but, in fact, this approach often results in new problems being created. Here are some guidelines for a parent raising some difficult issues with a coach:

- A. Try to keep foremost in your mind that you and the coach have the best interests of your child at heart. If you trust that the coach's goals match yours, even though his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy good rapport and a constructive dialogue.
- B. Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the perspectives of hundreds of other parents and club members. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group but, in the long-term, advantages compensate for the occasional short term issue.
- C. Make use of our group reps. Speak with your group rep over any concerns, as these reps are often veteran club parents that may have been through the same situations that you are going through now. They possess valuable experience and advice for handling situations. If the group rep cannot or does not satisfactorily resolve your concern, then arrangements will be made to speak with the head age group coach with the group rep serving as a third party.
- D. If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to a rep or the coach. He/she is the only one who can resolve the problem.

Getting Involved

As the saying goes, you can never have enough help. Such is the case with swimming. In order for all parts of the club to run efficiently, we rely on the generous help of volunteering parents. While becoming more involved with the club can seem intimidating at first, many first-time volunteers find the experience very rewarding and a large percentage of these parents go on to become officials, group reps, and members of the board.

The Lake Central Barracudas offer many opportunities to get involved. The simplest way is to volunteer to help at home meets. Whether helping run concessions, working the computer, or timing a lane, every position is vital to keeping the meet running smoothly. Working a sessions at a meet will also fulfill a volunteer work obligation. Brief descriptions of meet volunteer jobs are listed at the end of this section.

One great way to volunteer at meets is to become an official (either "On Deck" or Administrative). The number of swimming officials nationwide is far from what it was ten years ago. Less and less volunteers are becoming officials, simply because the position is perceived as too difficult and cumbersome to attain. This is not the case at all. Becoming an official is very simple, and it is a great way to expose yourself to some of the more technical aspects of the sport. Your help at meets is rewarded with complimentary food and drink and you get to watch the meet (and your swimmer) from the best seat in the house – right on deck, poolside. If you are interested in becoming an official, speak to one of the board members and he or she will be able to direct you to the officials chairperson of our club.

Another great way to get involved is to volunteer for the Board of Directors or some of the other positions that are tied to the club such as Meet Director, apparel coordinator, trophy representative, and many others. All of these positions evolve over time, but our chairpersons' and Board members' goal is always to simply find the most efficient method to keep swimmer, parent, and coach happy. Fresh minds are often the best addition to problem solving and we hope that you will consider offering your time and creative thinking to become a volunteer to our club.

Work Session Descriptions

These are descriptions of jobs we've had available in the past. The intention is to help you understand what your duties would be should you sign up to work any of these positions, if they are made available, during a meet. Opportunities may arise to include different positions in the future, as well.

50/50 Raffle volunteer walks around the foyer and through the bleachers asking guests if they'd like to participate in our 50/50 raffle.

The *Announcer* announces the start of the meet by beginning the Pledge of Allegiance, announces each event & heat, along with a variety of other items, dependent on what is needed at the time.

The *Awards volunteer* labels ribbons and sorts them according to team, as well as hands out heat awards to the winning swimmer of each heat.

Baker – When needed, this volunteer will have a specific list of several items to bake for a meet along with packaging instructions and drop off time.

The *Balcony Traffic Manager* stands at the top of the stairs in the balcony, guiding traffic to the main exit, preventing adults from entering the locker room hallway for the safety of all swimmers.

The *Clerk of Course* is very important to our 8 & Under swimmers (sometimes 10 & Under, dependent on how the meet is run). He/she will organize and prepare these swimmers and help them to their proper lanes for their events.

Concessions – These volunteers assist one another in selling items from the concession stand. A register is run there, as well.

The *Deck Door Monitor* makes sure that only credentialed adults (coaches/officials/volunteers) and swimmers enter the pool deck. He/she also makes sure food is not brought on deck.

The *Deck Traffic Manager* is basically a crossing guard who prevents swimmers from crossing the path of the scoring table at the beginning of each event, clearing the way for the starting officials to be able to do their own job.

The *Head Timer* should have experience timing because he/she conducts a timers' meeting prior to each session, then supports our timers by keeping back up stopwatches and collecting the time sheets at the end of each event.

The *Locker Room Hallway Monitor* stands at the locker room hallway door making certain only credentialed adults (coaches/officials/volunteers) and swimmers enter for the safety of all swimmers.

Officials are a trained and credentialed volunteer who helps run the meet by doing a variety of jobs, including watching the swimmers to ensure they are swimming technically correct strokes. Any parent may become an official. Please see a member of the coaching staff or board if you become interested at any time in being trained and credentialed.

Raffle Table volunteers monitor and collect money for our raffle baskets which are a major fundraiser at any given meet.

The *Runner* collects results from the scoring table and posts them at a particular location in the foyer. He/she also does a variety of other tasks including delivering water to our on-deck volunteers.

Scratch Table – During a Preliminary-Finals meet, this volunteer works with the scoring table and, within given time frames, keeps track of which swimmers will be returning for finals, should they qualify after the preliminary session of the day.

Timers use a stopwatch and backup button to time swimmers' events and records them for the scoring table.

Wristband Checkpoint – stands at the doorway to the main stairwell and verifies that guests have paid admissions by checking wristbands.

In addition to the above, sometimes we request volunteers for preparing specific food items for the concession stand. Examples include purchasing and preparing (cleaning, cutting, and packaging) vegetables or cooking taco meat for nachos. When listed, descriptions will accompany each available position.

Club Management

Being a non-profit organization, the Lake Central Barracudas rely entirely on specific forms of income to cover the enormous expenses that are a part of every swim club. Contained within this section is an explanation of our Board of Directors, the people who make the decisions that ultimately shape the direction of our club.

Also in this section is a breakdown of how your fees are formulated, different fundraising methods we implement from season to season, and an introduction to the variety of apparel our club offers to its members.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The administrative functions of the club are overseen by the Board of Directors. The board consists of the Head LCB Coach, the Head High School coaches and several elected positions. The four representatives are elected for a 1 year term (Copper Representative, Bronze Representative, Silver Representative and Gold Representative) and the 4 officers are elected for 2 years (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer). There is also a Fundraising Chairperson, Meet Director, and Meet Entry Chairperson which are also elected members of the board. The elections for board members are held annually in April. For a listing of this season's board members, please refer to the web page.

FEE STRUCTURING

Upon registering for the Lake Central Barracudas, you were asked to pay one fee which can be broken down into two parts:

1. USA SWIMMING MEMBERSHIP

The first part is a membership to USA Swimming. This is mandated by the sport, as this enables your swimmer to be insured during any supervised LCB practice time for any unfortunate incidents that may occur. Each swimmer is also covered at every competition that is USA Swimming sanctioned. A summary of the coverage is available from one of the club officers. This membership to USA Swimming also provides the swimmer with a monthly publication, Splash, which is designed to expose age group swimmers to the many exciting facets of the sport.

2. CLUB OPERATING EXPENSES (a.k.a. “dues”)

The dues that our members pay to the club are entirely what keeps our club operating at the level it currently enjoys. In addition to coaching salaries and expenses, dues help pay for trophies for each swimmer at the banquet, relay entry fees at meets, any pool rental fees, and many other related expenses. All clubs are faced with these expenses and rely upon dues to help dilute these costs.

The club also requires each family to provide a work check at the beginning of each season that will be returned or destroyed if the family meets its work session requirements. Each meet hosted by LCB will have many volunteer opportunities as referenced above. Each session of a meet worked counts as a work session and are typically about 3-4 hours. Instructions on how to sign up for sessions are available on our team website.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is an important part of the club, as there are many expenses for its proper operation. Fundraising takes many forms. The biggest form of fundraising are the Invitational Meets that the club sponsors. It is at these that we collect donations for advertisements in the Heat Sheets (Programs) sold during the meet.

Epilogue

Congratulations!

If you've made it this far, you've either read our team manual cover to cover, or you just wanted to skip to the back to see how it ends. Either way, we hope you have taken the time to read the information contained in this book. This manual will probably be most useful during your initial membership in LCB, but we hope that you will refer to this manual and be a part of our club for many seasons to come.

Please be aware that a website does not operate this club, people do. In this fast-paced world where cell phones and e-mail replace handshakes and face-to-face conversations, we want to make every effort to be available for our team members. Many of the families that have been with the club for several seasons have most likely figured out the most efficient means of being part of a swim club and are always happy to offer advice to new parents. After all, we all begin as freshmen.

If you have any suggestions or additions you would like to see to this manual, feel free to approach any of our club board members and voice your opinion. All governing bodies are not entirely efficient unless they consider all the opinions of those they represent. A swim club is no different. The best means of operating the Lake Central Barracudas is feedback from our club members.

Thank you again for becoming a part of our (your) organization.

