



## **We encourage all EPAC swimmers to join USA Swimming.**

### **What is USA Swimming? According to [www.usaswimming.com](http://www.usaswimming.com):**

As the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming in the United States, USA Swimming is a 400,000-member service organization that promotes the culture of swimming by creating opportunities for swimmers and coaches of all backgrounds to participate and advance in the sport through clubs, events and education.

Our membership is comprised of swimmers from the age group level to the Olympic Team, as well as coaches and volunteers. Members can get involved through our more than 2,800 clubs across the nation.

USA Swimming is also responsible for selecting and training teams for international competition including the Olympic Games, and strives to serve the sport through its core objectives: Build the base, Promote the sport, Achieve competitive success.

### **For our swimmers, USA Swimming provides opportunities to:**

- \* Swim more meets in addition to league meets.
- \* Swim more events, especially distance events not offered in league meets.
- \* Swim all strokes more frequently.
- \* Learn what type of swimmer you are - sprinter or distance.

## **How do I join USA Swimming?**

### **Membership to USA Swimming costs \$75 per year.**

Memberships run through the calendar year, expiring on December 31<sup>st</sup>. Memberships can be added at any time throughout the year, but the membership fee will not be pro-rated. Swimmers who join in the fall for the next calendar year may be granted privileges to participate in USA Swimming events during the remaining 3 months of the current year (subject to approval by USA Swimming).



## **USA Flex Membership**

USA Swimming announced that it will debut a new tier of membership called the Flex Swim Membership, which will officially become available on September 1, 2018.

Flex Membership will be available for a \$20 annual membership fee.

The Flex Swim membership offers a rate of \$20 to create an entry-level experience in the sport and sample some of the great benefits of membership in USA Swimming such as the ability to compete in meets (two meets per year – does not include championship meets), access to USA Swimming's digital personalized member account Deck Pass, insurance coverage, education materials and more. When kids fall in love with the sport and want to swim more, they can then apply that to a Premium membership\*, which offers unlimited swim meets, *Splash* magazine and more.

## **Swimmers must be registered with EPAC to join USA Swimming through our club.**

### **How do I renew my USA Swimming membership?**

Active memberships will automatically be renewed unless the member notifies the Head Coach by November 1<sup>st</sup> of the current membership year that they do not want to have their membership renewed for the following year.

### **Can I transfer my USA membership from another club?**

Yes. You are able to transfer your membership. The waiting period is 120 days from the last date of competition, in a USA Swimming sanctioned, approved, or observed meet, as a member of your old team. If you are transferring from a club to UNATTACHED status there is no waiting period, however, you may not then transfer directly to another club unless you have completed the 120 day transfer period.

Click [HERE](#) for the MA Transfer request form. There is a \$10 fee to transfer.



### **What expenses can I expect when joining USA Swimming?**

There is the annual membership fee of \$75. For most meets, entry fees are charged for each event the swimmer is registered to swim; entry fees often cost about \$5/event. Swimmers who elect to participate in overnight meets may also have the travel costs (e.g. fuel, hotel accommodations, meals, etc.).

The annual membership fee of \$75 will be charged the swimmer's EPAC Team Unify account once membership is processed with USA Swimming. Event entry fees will be charged to the swimmer's account after the Head Coach submits all meet entries to the host team. All membership and meet entry fees must be paid in accordance with EPAC payment terms included in the Team Handbook. Swimmers with open balances for these fees may not be permitted to swim USA meets until the fees are paid in full.

### **What does a USA Swimming season look like?**

USA Swimming consists of two seasons each year:

- Long Course Season runs May through August. Most USA Swimming meets during this season are held at long-course (50 meter) pools.
- Short Course Season runs September through April. Most USA Swimming meets during this season are held at short-course (25 yard) pools.

### **What are the championships for each USA Swimming season?**

Both seasons culminate with their own championship meets. Junior Olympics (JOs) are held for the 14-year and under swimmers. Senior Championships (Senior Champs) are held for the 15-year and older swimmers.

### **How many USA meets does EPAC participate in each year?**

EPAC seeks to register for one USA meet per month. This goal can be challenged by busy times of the year (e.g. summer & holiday seasons), registrations that fill early, or conflicts in our league schedules.

### **What travel can I expect to make to attend USA Meets?**

EPAC prioritizes local meets when registering for meets each season. Most meets are located within a 30-minute to 3-hour drive. The schedule often includes at least one overnight meet each season. Some of the overnight meets are championship meets or meets that have qualifying times, so not all USA-registered swimmers will be invited to attend these meets.



### **Can I select which USA meets to attend?**

Of course. However, it is important to remember that the Head Coach will reach out to all swimmers who have an active USA Swimming membership on all USA meets to check on their availability unless the swimmer declines attending a specific meet. Once a swimmer is entered for a USA meet, their EPAC Team Unify account will be charged the associated event entry fees and payment will be expected.

### **Can I select which events to swim at a USA meet?**

Yes! Swimmers may also discuss these entries with the Head Coach at any time to make a more informed decision.

## **USA SWIMMING MEET STRUCTURE:**

### **Competitive Events**

The four competitive strokes are (1) freestyle, (2) backstroke, (3) breaststroke, and (4) butterfly. Events for individual swimmers are held in each of the competitive strokes at varying distances depending on the age-group of the swimmer. In addition to the single stroke events, there is also an individual medley event in which the swimmer swims 1/4 of the race in each of the four competitive strokes in this order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.

Some meets offer relay events. Relay teams are made up of four swimmers, each of whom swims 1/4 of the race. There are two types of relays that may be swum in various lengths: (1) Freestyle relays, where all swimmers swim the freestyle stroke, and (2) Medley relays where each swimmer swims one stroke in this order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle.

### **Disqualifications**

A disqualification, or "D.Q.", is the result of a technical rule violation. Meets are conducted in accordance with the USA Swimming rules. These rules are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition. When a swimmer gets "DQ'ed", or disqualified, the swimmers performance, or time, is not recorded. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with open hand above their head. DQ's commons among newer and younger swimmers include the following. This is not an all-inclusive list. For more information, talk with you swimmer's coach.



### **Common Disqualifications of Newer and Younger Swimmers:**

#### Freestyle

- No touch at turn. (FYI: In a freestyle event the swimmer may return and touch the wall if missed and not be disqualified.)
  - Pulling on lane lines

#### Backstroke

- Shoulders past vertical towards the breast at the finish. (Shoulders must be past vertical toward the back. Encourage young swimmers to "Stay on your back the WHOLE way until after you touch the wall.")

#### 3

#### Breaststroke

- One hand touch at a turn or on the finish.
- Non-simultaneous touch at a turn or on the finish.

#### Butterfly

- Underwater recovery. (One of both arms does not fully recover (come forward) over the water).
  - One hand touch at at turn or on the finish.
  - Non-simultaneous touch at a turn or on the finish.

### **Classification of Competitive Achievement**

There are seven different age group classifications recognized by United State Swimming (the governing body of the sport): 8-Under, 10-Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, and Senior. The Senior classification includes any age registered swimmer who has achieved the prescribed qualifying time for the event. Not all age group classifications are offered at every swim meet. The swimmers age on the first day of a meet will govern the swimmers age for the entire meet.

Within each age-group there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. All swimmers begin as "C" swimmers. As they improve, they advance from "C", to "BB", "B", "A", "AA", "AAA", and ultimately "AAAA". The times required for each ability level are published each year by United States Swimming. This permits fair, yet challenging, competition on all levels. These motivation time standards are updated every four years after the Olympics. To locate a chart with the current motivations time standards, go to either [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org) or [www.swimutah.com](http://www.swimutah.com) (click on the "Time Standards" tab, then click on "Motivational Times." SCY=Times that are listed in Short Course Yards. LCM=Times that are listed in Long Course Meters. SCM=Times that are listed in Short Course Meters.)

In some cases, a swimmer may be in a different class in each stroke. An example: a "C" breaststroke time, a "B" freestyle time, and a "AA" backstroke time.

Some swim meets set certain qualification standards. In order to swim in a certain classification, a swimmer must have achieved the qualifying time for that particular classification.



## **MEET FORMAT**

### **Timed Finals**

Most meets below the State Championship level are run in the "Timed Finals" meet format. This means that the swimmers compete once in each event they are entered and receive their final placing, including points if awarded, according to the results of that swim. If multiple heats are swum in an event, the final placing is determined solely by time and any disqualifications (if applicable) not by heat placement.

### **Prelims/Finals**

In a preliminaries and finals meet format, the object of the preliminary swim is to qualify for the evening finals session. If a swimmer places among the top 8 (in an 8 lane pool) after his/her morning swim he/she then qualifies to swim in the Championship finals in the evening session.

Some meets also swim a Consolation final. If a swimmer places from 9th-16th place from preliminaries, he/she qualifies to participate in the Consolation finals in the evening session. In the evening finals session, the Consolation heat is swam first followed immediately by the Championship heat. During the prelims, the results are usually posted within 1/2 hour of the conclusion of the event. If a swimmer does not wish to swim in a final swim he or she may "scratch" the event and not be penalized. This must take place within a half hour of the posting of the preliminary results. Therefore, within approximately 1 hour of the end of an event, a swimmer should know if he or she has made finals. A swimmer should never leave the preliminary session of the meet without making sure if he/she is a finalist or an alternate. USA Swimming rules dictate that if a swimmer makes a finals event and fails to show up he/she is bared from participating in the remainder of the meet (individual events and relays). Alternates (the 17th & 18th place swimmers) should check with a coach about attending finals.

### **Circle Seeding**

Circle Seeding is used only in the prelims of "prelims & finals" meets. This affects only the top 24 seeded swimmers (8 lane pool) which compete in the last 3 heats. All other heats are regular seeding. Circle seeding works as follows: The fastest seeded swimmer will be in the last heat in lane 4. The second fastest swimmer will be in the second to last heat lane 4. The third fastest swimmer will be in the third to last heat lane 4. The fourth fastest swimmer will be in the last heat lane 5 and so on. For an event with 60 swimmers, the seeding would look like this:



| <b>Example of Circle Seeding</b>                                    |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 8 lane pool, 60 competitors in event, # = swimmer's seed in prelims |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|   | Lane 1 | Lane 2 | Lane 3 | Lane 4 | Lane 5 | Lane 6 | Lane 7 | Lane 8 |
| Heat 1  |        |        | #59    | #57    | #58    | #60    |        |        |
| Heat 2  | #55    | #53    | #51    | #49    | #50    | #52    | #54    | #56    |
| Heat 3  | #47    | #45    | #43    | #41    | #42    | #44    | #46    | #48    |
| Heat 4  | #39    | #37    | #35    | #33    | #34    | #36    | #38    | #40    |
| Heat 5  | #31    | #29    | #27    | #25    | #26    | #28    | #30    | #32    |
| Heat 6  | #21    | #15    | #9     | #3     | #6     | #12    | #18    | #24    |
| Heat 7  | #20    | #14    | #8     | #2     | #5     | #11    | #17    | #23    |
| Heat 8  | #19    | #13    | #7     | #1     | #4     | #10    | #16    | #22    |

### **Finals Seeding**

The finals seeded like a regular meet as are any events that are swam as timed finals such as relays, distance freestyles and other events most often held on Friday evening as a timed finals session.

### **Awards & Placing**

The swimmers who participate in the finals receive awards as listed in the meet information. Sometimes the swimmers who participate in the consolation finals do not receive awards, but do score points for the team. One very important note: Once a swimmer has made the championship final, the worst they can place is 8th regardless of how slow they may swim in the finals. The swimmers who participate in the consolation finals may place no better than 9th (the winner of the heat) regardless of how fast they swim. It has been known to happen that the winner of the consolation finals swims a time that would have placed him/her 2nd or 3rd in the championship finals, but the highest he/she can score is 9th. That is why it is important to swim very fast in the morning prelims session to make the championship finals. If a swimmer is disqualified in finals, they do not score points, or get awards, however a non-championship finals swimmer cannot be moved up to score. The place simply is not awarded. Alternates occasionally get to swim and can score the same as any other swimmer in the consolation finals.