



COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

The coaches' job is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. The PWAC coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for youth that will enable them to learn the value of striving to improve oneself--"to be the best you can be."

1. The coaches are responsible for placing swimmers in practice groups. This is based on the age and ability level of each individual. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, he/ she will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach.
2. Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with the coaching staff. Each group's practices are geared to the specific goals of that group. Please realize that some technique errors may be temporarily overlooked at a practice in order to focus on another area of technique.
3. At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmers performance. (It is the parent's job to offer love and understanding regardless of their child's performance)
4. The building of a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.

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

PRACTICE AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Practices are the most important part of competitive swimming. Consistent training is needed to progress through the practice groups, develop stroke technique and drop time. Therefore, it is important that each swimmer regularly attends practice in order to derive the full benefits of the program.

The following guidelines are to inform parents and swimmers of the coaches' policies regarding practice. These policies have been designed to provide the best possible practice environment for all.

1. As a general rule, the least possible interruption in the practice schedule will produce the greatest amount of success. The club does, however, encourage swimmers to participate in other activities in addition to swimming.
2. Swimmers should arrive at the pool no earlier than 15 minutes prior to their workout time. They should also be picked up no later than 15 minutes after their practice is over. Swimmers should be ready to swim 5 minutes prior to the start of practice.
3. Occasionally, most of the team may be attending a meet, in which case you will be notified of a practice change or cancellation.
4. Parents are not allowed on the pool deck during practice unless it is an emergency.
5. Parents are encouraged to observe practice from the stands. Do not try to communicate with any swimmer from the observation area. This is not only distracting to the swimmer, but can also be distracting to the entire team as well as the coach.

SWIMMER RESPONSIBILITIES & CODE OF CONDUCT

As a swimmer's level of swimming ability increases so does his/her responsibility. A swimmer has responsibilities to the team, the coach, his/her parents, and most importantly to themselves. Swimmers need to prepare themselves for a 100% effort each time they come to practice.

As an athlete member of PWAC, I will abide by the following guidelines:

Practice Conduct

- I will do my best to arrive to practice in a timely manner.
- When I arrive at practice, I will have all required equipment with me, ready to be used at any time.
- I will be respectful to all coaches, swimmers, and adults involved with the Plymouth Whitmarsh Aquatic Club.
- I will respect the facilities used by PWAC to hold practice, understanding the privilege we are provided with the use of the facilities.
- I will give full attention when a coach is speaking; this includes eye contact and full mental involvement in the instruction or workout.

Meet Conduct

- I will do my best to arrive at a meet for warm up in a timely manner.
- I will be sure to check myself in by the required time.
- I will not scratch any events until first speaking with a coach.
- I will give my best effort in every event I participate in.
- I will maintain good sportsmanship in victory or defeat.
- I will act in a way that does not bring discredit to myself, my team, or USA Swimming

Team Conduct

- I will be a good teammate at practice and at meets, displaying team spirit and team loyalty.
- I will take ownership in my performance and understand that my effort will be the cause for my success.
- I will respect the knowledge of the coaching staff and openly receive their input about stroke technique, training, and race strategy.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to attend practice and meets, and my progress will be directly affected by my level of attendance and participation.
- I will provide myself limitless opportunities by maintaining positive self-esteem, and using self-motivation, self-discipline and efficient time management skills to maximize my training experiences.
- Above all I will HAVE FUN, and allow myself to benefit from all the lessons and joys brought through age group swimming

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES: YOUR ATHLETE NEEDS YOU

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 relationship. It is with this in mind that we ask you to consider this section as you join PWAC and reacquaint yourself with this section if you are a returning parent.

Please make every effort to have your swimmers at practice on time. Realize that your child is working hard and give all the support you can. Encourage good diet and sleeping habits, they will serve your children well. The greatest contribution you can make to your swimmer's progress is to be a loving, supportive parent.

You have done a great deal to raise your child. You create the environment in which they are growing up. Your child is a product of your values, the structure you have provided, and the model you have been. Human nature, however, is such that a parent loses some of his/her ability to remain detached and objective in matters concerning his/hers children'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.

The Coach is the Coach: 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 best results. When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim or train, it causes considerable, and oftentimes insurmountable, confusion as to whom the swimmer should listen to. If you have a problem, concern, or complaint, please contact the coach.

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.

Ten and Under Swimmers: Ten and Under athletes are the most inconsistent swimmers and 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.

Not Every Time: Even the very best swimmer will have meets where they do not do their best times. These "plateaus" are a normal part of swimming. Over the course of a season times should improve. Please be supportive of these "poor" meets.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS....MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE!!!

Plymouth Whitemarsh Aquatics Club is a non-profit organization made up of very dedicated volunteers. Without their dedication and hard work, we would not be able to operate as a swim team and serve our community. Our swim team parents donate their time, energy and expertise at every level to provide these opportunities our local youth.

While we do require team member families to volunteer and support the team at meets, we try to make it as fun and entertaining as possible. We will be using an online volunteer management system to aid in the coordination of volunteering. Should you have any questions about any of the volunteer positions or the system itself, please contact a member of the PWAC board.

Please note that each team is required to provide a specific number of volunteers for each meet by the league and repeated refusal to support PWAC could result in penalties.

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Home Team:

- (1) Finish Judge
- (1) Stroke and Turn Judge
- (1) Timing Judge (Electronically Timed Meets)
- (1) Announcer
- (1) Scorekeeper
- (1) Runner
- (9) Timers
- (2) Deck Parent

Visiting Team:

- (1) Finish Judge
- (1) Stroke and Turn Judge
- (1) Scorekeepers
- (9) Timers
- (2) Deck Parent

It is really important that we have our volunteers ready to go at each meet. Without the required number of volunteers for the official roles to run the, we are unable to conduct the meet.

VOLUNTEER DESCRIPTIONS

Announcer

This is a great job for someone with a strong voice and an ability to correctly pronounce names. You announce the names of the swimmers in each event, and work with the Starter/Referee to keep the meet moving quickly and smoothly.

Deck Parent

The deck parent helps the coaches organize the swimmers scheduled for upcoming events and get them psyched up for their swim.

Timer

This is the most popular meet job among both new and experienced swim parents. You use a stopwatch to time the swimmer in your assigned lane. There are three timers per lane, and the median of the times is used as the official time (or as backup for electronic timing systems). It's cooler on the pool deck than in most observation balconies, and you get a much better view of the action.

Runner

After each race, the runner collects the times from the timers in each lane, finish slips from the Finish Judges and disqualification slips from the Stroke& Turn Judge and takes them to the scoring table. You stay on the move throughout the meet, so you get to see the meet from several perspectives.

Scorekeeper - Meet Manager

Scorers from each team record the results following each race, and track the team scores. There can be some pressure at the table, and the job requires knowledge of the computer program (Meet Manager) used for the computerized scoring system. The scorekeepers are critical to the success of the meet, and they are often the only ones who know which team is winning the meet. For newer volunteers, the league runs clinics each fall to train new scoring table workers, and the team will also be very happy to show you and have you apprentice for this essential job.

Timing System Operator

This job is for someone who likes to play with electronic gizmos. The timing system uses an electronic signal from the starter's device and the touch-pads in the pool to determine the swimmers' times and order of finish. This information is displayed on the scoreboard and is fed into the computer program used by the scorekeeper that keeps track of the official results. This job requires a couple sessions of on-the-job training, which the team will be very happy to set-up.

Stroke & Turn Judge

These judges determine whether a swimmer touched the end of the pool during a turn and whether the technical aspects of the swimming stroke were legal. It requires knowledge of the US Swimming stroke regulations, and a willingness to fairly disqualify swimmers when appropriate. Those who are interested in this job "apprentice" with someone who has done it before. We provide a copy of the rules, and someone with experience, with whom you can apprentice. There is also a training program available from the league.

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SWIM MEETS...BUT, WERE AFRAID TO ASK

Swim meets are a great family experience! They're a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some 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 and as detailed as we possibly could.

Before the Meet Starts

1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's swim bag. The team will sit on deck together, so look for some familiar faces.
3. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmer's bodies are just like cars on a cold day-he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out.
4. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her towels are and sit there until the next event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary, gets a drink, or just gets settled in.
5. According to USA Swimming rules (because of insurance purposes), parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the coaching staff. They, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
6. Heat Sheets gives heat and lane assignments for all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. A heat sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. Heat sheets generally sell for around \$5.
7. When a swimmer has completed all of his/her events he/she and their parents can go home. Make sure, however, your swimmer checks with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and he/she is not there.

What To Take To The Meet

1. Most important: Swim Suit, team swim cap and goggles.
2. Towels-Realize your swimmer will be there awhile, so pack at least two.
3. Something to sit on. Example: sleeping bag, old blanket, or anything that will be comfortable to sit on. The swimmers will be spending a lot of time on it.
4. Warm Ups: Sweat shirt and pants. Each swimmer may want to bring two because they can get wet and soggy.
5. T-shirts: Two or three. Same reason as above.
6. Games: travel games, coloring books, books, anything to pass the time.
7. Food: Each swimmer is usually allowed to bring a small cooler. It is better to bring snacks. They usually have snack bars at the meet, but the lines are long and most of the time they only sell junk food. Suggestions for items to bring: Drinks: Fruit juice, Gatorade, WATER! Snacks: Granola bars, dry cereal, sandwiches, bagels, nuts, pretzels, Cheez-It's/crackers.

Once you have attended one or two meets this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask any other PWAC parent or coach for help or information!

Special Parent's Note

The pool area is usually very warm. Therefore, you need to make sure you dress appropriately. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes the time pass very slowly!

BASIC RULES & TERMINOLOGY

Basic 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. Trained officials observe the swimmers during each event to ensure compliance with these technical rules. If a swimmer commits an infraction of the rules, a disqualification will result.

Disqualification: This means that the swimmer will not receive an official time and will not be eligible for an award in that event. Disqualifications may result from actions such as not getting to the starting blocks on time, false starting, advancing themselves by walking on or pushing off the bottom of the pool, pulling on the lane lines or unsportsmanlike-like conduct. A disqualification should be treated as a learning experience, not as a punishment. Disqualifications are also a result of technical rules violations. They include but are not limited to:

- Freestyle: Walking on the bottom, Pulling on the lane rope, Not touching the wall on a turn, Not completing the distance
- Backstroke: Pulling or kicking into the wall once a swimmer has turned passed the vertical onto the breast, Turning onto the breast before touching the wall with the hand at the finish of the race.
- Breaststroke: Illegal kick such as flutter (freestyle), dolphin (butterfly), or scissor (sidestroke), Shoulders not level, Alternating movements of the arms, Taking two arms strokes or two leg kicks while the head is under water, Touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.
- Butterfly: Alternating movements of the arms or legs, Pushing the arms forward under instead of over the water surface (Underwater recovery), A breaststroke style of kick, Touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.

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. Officials may be Timers, Turn Judges, Stroke Judges, Relay Takeoff Judges, Clerk of Course, Starter, or Referee. All parents are encouraged to get involved with some form of officiating.

Swimming Terms

Age Group Swimming: Provides fair and open competition for its younger members. It is designed to encourage maximum participation, provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning, and develop a rich base of swimming talent. Nationally recognized age groups are 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, and 19-18. Local meets may also include events for 8 and under, and single age categories.

Block: The starting platform

Bulkhead: A wall constructed to divide a pool into different courses, such as a 50 meter pool into two 25 yard courses.

Circle Swimming: Performed by staying to the right of the black line when swimming in a lane to enable more swimmers to swim in each lane.

Code of Conduct: An agreement signed by a swimmer/coach/parent stating that the swimmer will abide by certain behavioral guidelines.

Cool Down: SEE WARM DOWN

Swimming Terms (cont)

Cut: Slang for qualifying time, a time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.

Distance: Term used to refer to events over 400 meters/500 yards.

DQ: Disqualified. This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind; e.g., freestyle kick in butterfly. A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive awards, nor can the time be used as an official time. Trained officials observe the swimmers during each event to ensure compliance with these technical rules.

Drill: An exercise involving a portion or part of a stroke, used to improve technique.

Dryland Training: Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance; usually includes stretching, calisthenics and/or weight training.

Entry Form: Form on which a swimmer enters a competition. Usually includes USA Swimming number, age, sex, event numbers and entry times.

False Start: Occurs when a swimmer is moving before the start of the race is sounded. In USA Swimming, one false start will result in disqualification.

Final: The championship heat of an event in which the top swimmers from the preliminaries compete.

Finish: The final phase of the race; the touch at the end of the race.

Flags: Backstroke flags placed 5 yards (short course) or 5 meters (long course) from the end of the pool. The flags enable backstrokers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently.

Gutter: The area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows during a race and is recirculated through the filtration system.

I.M: Slang for Individual Medley, an event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.

Junior Nationals: National level meets held in both short course and long course seasons, one of each in the East and in the West, limited to swimmers ages 18 and under. There are qualifying standards, and swimmers are limited to four individual events and three relays.

Lap Counter: A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. (Also, the person who counts for the swimmer, stationed at the opposite end from the start.)

Long Course: a pool 50 meters in length. USA Swimming conducts most of its summer competition in long course pools.

Long Distance: Term used to refer to events of 800 meters/1000yards to 1500 meters/1650 yards in lengths

LSC: Local Swimming Committee. Governing body for swimming at the local level. There are 59 LSC's in the country

Meet: Competition designed to be a learning experience. By implementing what has been learned in practice, the swimmer tests himself against the clock to see how he is improving.

Middle Distance: Term used to refer to events of 200 yards/meters to 400 meters/500 yards in length.

Swimming Terms (cont)

National Age Group Time Standards (NAGS): Time standards derived from the previous years' results that are broken down by age and sex as well as C, B, A, Champ, Zone. The designations are National and should be used as motivational times.

National Reportable Times/Top 16: Time standards set for both short and long course based on previous years' achievements. Only times meeting these standards may be submitted for consideration each year. The Top 16 submitted times in each event are recognized.

Negative Split: Swimming the second half of the race equal to or faster than the first half.

Officials: A judge on the deck of the pool at a sanctioned competition who enforces USA Swimming rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, timers, and referees.

Open Water Swims: Any freestyle event over 1500 meters, normally conducted in a natural body of water, such as a lake, river, or ocean.

Pace Clock: Large clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice; may also be digital.

Prelims: slang for preliminaries, also called Heats or Trials. Those races in which swimmers qualify for the championship and consolation finals in the events.

Q-time: Qualifying time necessary to compete in a particular event and/or competition.

Relay: an event in which four swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

Scratch: to withdraw from an event in competition.

Short Course: A pool 25 yards or 25 meters in length. USA Swimming conducts most of its winter competition in short course yards.

Split: A time recorded from the official start to the completion of an initial distance within a longer event. Also the time for one of the four individuals in a relay. Under certain conditions, splits may also be used as official times, for example, the lead off swim in a relay, or the lead off portion of an event.

Sprint: describes the shorter events (50 and 100). In training, to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.

Streamline: The position used by swimmers when starting or pushing off the walls designed to reduce water resistance.

Taper: The final preparation phase, sometimes referred to as "rest" Prior to major competitions, older, more experienced swimmers shave their entire bodies to reduce resistance and heighten sensation in the water.

Time Trial: A time –only swim which is not part of a regular meet.

Touch Pad: A large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer's finish is registered and sent electronically to the timing system.

USA Swimming ID: A number assigned to a swimmer upon joining USA Swimming. The membership card with this number may be required at any given competition.

Swimming Terms (cont)

Warm Down (Cool Down): Low intensity swimming used by swimmers after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid, and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

Warm Up: Low intensity swimming used by swimmer prior to a main practice set or race to get muscles loose and warm. Warm up gradually increases heart rate, respiration and helps to prevent injury.

Watches: Stopwatches used to time swimmers during a competition. When totally automatic timing equipment is used, watches serve as a back-up method.