

**Parents Meeting
September 18, 2014**

**Scarlet Aquatics
Elite Division**

"Cultivating Excellence in Academics, Character & Swimming"

Welcome to the Parents Meeting for Scarlet Aquatics-Elite Division. I appreciate your taking time from your busy schedule to attend.

In Sept 1995, I started the Elite Swim Club which had 22 swimmers tryout for our first team. 20 years later, we are Scarlet Aquatics-Elite Division, which division is part of the largest and strongest team in New Jersey Swimming. This past summer, in a power point system created by USA Swimming, Scarlet Aquatics was ranked 10th in the country out of 2900 teams.

If you would like to stay after the meeting, I will be happy to discuss the vision of Scarlet Aquatics. But I would like to start with what is truly important to you, a discussion about Scarlet-Elite that includes how & why we do the things we do.

The Division's name is Elite. Our swimmers know that Elite means best of the best. I attend the 1st practice of each training session, and I explain that MY definition of Elite Swimming includes: 1) Academics 2) Character and then 3) Swimming. I expect swimmers on Scarlet-Elite to try to be the best of the best in all three areas in their lives: 24 hours a day/7 days a week/52 weeks a year.

We provide motivation for our swimmers to excel in each aspect.

Academics:Scarlet-Elite's highest award, presented at the annual awards dinner, is the Scholar/Athlete Award. There are 4 different levels:

- 1) USA Swimming's Scholastic All-American Award. Last year, we had 2 swimmers win this award, a 3rd miss it due to the swimming aspect missing by .01 and a 4th swimmer who had both the grades and the times but was too young!
- 2) Elite's Platinum Award. Qualification: All A's and 1 B; 1 Sectional Qualifying time (Regional Meet from Maine thru Virginia). Last year, Elite had 12 Platinum Award Winners, up from up from 5 the year prior!!
- 3) Elite's Gold Award: All A's and 1 B; 1 Junior Olympic Qualifying time (NJ Swimming's top competition level). Elite had 32 Gold Award Winners this year
- 4) Elite's Teal Award: All A's and B's; 1 Silver Qualifying time (NJ Swimming's 2nd highest competition level). Elite had 26 Teal Award Winners this year

College:

In the last several years, we have graduated swimmers from Scarlet-Elite who are attending: U Penn-Wharton School of Business, Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, Northwestern,

Georgetown, Vanderbilt, Boston College, Colgate, Cornell, U of Vermont, Northeastern, Boston University, NYU, Bowdoin, Bates, Vassar, Connecticut College, Villanova, Washington & Lee.

This year, our Seniors (Senior Swimmers that are Seniors in high school) are looking at: Army, Navy, Case Western, Duke, Swarthmore, Rice, Wake Forest, University of Rochester, Grinnell, Washington & Lee, Franklin & Marshall & even Lafayette College!

While there is no statistics as how we are doing on this front verses our swimming competition, it would seem that we have been very successful in encouraging the academics!

Character: At the 1st practice, we read as a training group Scarlet-Elite's Code of Conduct. I explain that this Code of Conduct is a swimmer's ticket into Elite; if they can not sign it and try to live up to it, they are not welcome at Elite. The Code calls for high standards of behaviour, for a high standard of cooperation when there is an issue & a high standard of respect for our coaches, fellow swimmers and our facilities.

At practice, swimmers are expected to follow directions; this is crucial training as at the higher levels of competition, when swimmers travel as a team. Last year, we traveled to Fullerton, Ca, Ithaca-NY, Orlando, Florida, Webster-NY and Richmond, Va.

I know, literally, I know our swimmers will behave properly on these trips because of the way they behave at practice and at meets. If they follow directions, they will do fine-they will stay in their rooms when we put them there, they will remain on the hotel floor because we have told them to, etc.

If you want proof of my seriousness regarding good behavior, last year I did not take a swimmer to Florida when she refused to follow my directions in practice in NJ.

Swimming: How do we do what we do?

- 1) **Attendance:** While there is no attendance policy, a swimmer can come and go as they please, we highly encourage high attendance. We tie attendance to promotion (you are only considered for promotion into the next higher training group if you have 70% attendance during a training cycle. Attendance stats are updated & posted on the NA wall each Monday.
- 2) **Training Competition:** swimmers in all training groups except Marlin Teals perform a timed swim or set. Based on the timed swim/set, swimmers are placed in the training lane where they placed (if 6 swimmers in a lane & 6 lanes, fastest 5-6 in lane 1, next 6 fastest in lane 2, etc.). From there, if a swimmer trains at a higher level than their lane (over a period of time such as 2 weeks), they are moved to a higher lane. If they train at a lower level, they are moved down. Each Swimmer is highly encouraged to train at the highest level of they can. Timed Swim/Set: Let me say this about the timed swim: It is a starting point; the very next day, the swimmer must prove they belong in that lane or prove they don't (both up or down).
- 3) **Stroke Technique:** virtually every practice, one of the two coaches-known as the Stroke Technician- reviews stroke technique with a lane of swimmers. If things go well, the Stroke Technician reviews 2-4 lanes each practice. All strokes, starts, turns and underwater work is

reviewed.

Since we employ technique review on a regular basis club wide, our swimmers are expected to have better stroke technique than other swimmers. Please note the Stroke Technician does not "fix" a swimmers stroke; only the swimmer can fix their stroke; the Stroke Technician only provides the advice and the encouragement to change. It is the swimmer needs to own the changes.

We are also experimenting with IKKOS swim system. IKKOS are video glasses that display great swim stroke technique which the swimmer watches. The swimmer then puts on blackened goggles so they can't see and they swim "blind" seeing & hopefully using the stroke great stroke technique they just watched on the video goggles.

4) **Conditioning:** The body has 3 energy systems: explosive, sprint and aerobic. From the Wavebuster Teals up (and to some degree, at the Marlin Black level), we train each energy system each day, in percentages that Doc Councilman (the Isaac Newton of Swimming) prescribed. We have 6 sub-training seasons within each training season (Sept to March & April thru July). Each sub-training season focuses on one of the energy systems but we still train the other two (just in smaller dozes) every day.

5) **Stars for Stars:** At every practice, swimmers compete for "Stars." The coach usually announces what the Star Competition is, and a select number of swimmers earn stars for their performance within the Star Competition. After a swimmer has earned a set number of Stars, they are awarded with a prize (pencils, pens, glasses, silly bands, water bottles). The Stars for Stars program is meant to have each child just a bit more heightened in their concentration on a specific topic (bringing a water bottle and drinking water, streamline off their walls, good behavior such as cleaning up, breathing patterns, etc).

The goal of the Stars for Stars Program is to motivate swimmers into a deeper practice.

Why do we do what we do?

Attendance/Training Competition/Stroke Technique/Conditioning/Stars are intertwined. to provide a highly competitive program that is positive motivation based.

Younger swimmer grow bigger and stronger. Younger swimmers who grow and train improve because of both development engines. When swimmers get older, they stop growing and thus lose one of their development engines. If a swimmer was not trained to train, they lose their only development engine. Also, a swimmer who trains builds upon the aerobic and anaerobic development already built-so an older swimmer who has learned how to train has 2 distinct advantages over a swimmer who did not train.

Thus, a swimmer who comes to practice, trains hard every day, works on their stroke technique, trains all their energy systems and has a heightened awareness to what they are doing (and rewarded for this heightened awareness) are more likely to be fast swimmers when they are 13-19.

If they are fast swimmers, have great character and have great grades, it is likely they will receive entrance into such schools as Bowdoin, Northwestern, Georgetown...

Other items:

Coach enters swimmers into meets. I view it as my job to enter our swimmer into meets (I am baffled by other swim coaches who leave it up to the parents/swimmers. Even pee-wee soccer & baseball teams, coached by volunteers, have coaches who make these decisions).

My method is as follows: get the swimmers into as many different events as possible-rather than specialize. A swimmer who knows they are swimming a particular stroke at an upcoming meet is more likely to work on that stroke. Swimmers grow and change; they may develop different strokes as they grow IF they are encouraged to do so.

I actually chart out the events per swimmer per meet so I can see what they have swum and what they need to swim. High level swimmers will swim their best events at the most prestigious meets we attend (I want them to do well at the big meets). But they swim their secondary events at secondary meets.

Parential Obligation

Part of having your child train at Scarlet-Elite (and most other sporting events) means that we need your help. We host or co-host 4 meets during the calendar year (Distance Derby in Nov) where we do most of the work. When we attend meets we do not host, parents from the host team are doing jobs so your child can swim. When it is our turn, we need you to step up (or find a suitable replacement) and perform a task (timing, admissions, concessions, marshalling). We can not host these meets without your help.

At meets where other teams host, we will be asked to supply a timer or two to cover a lane. You will be asked occasionally to time at those meets (this is rotated around the parents).

Teams also need to supply **officials**. Being an official is the best way to give back while participating in the sport. Any functioning person can be an official; there are only a few rules you need to know to start; from there you will learn the nuances of the sport. In addition, you will have the best seat in the house plus you get to interact with the swimmers and coaches on the pool deck.

Questions???

Explanation of Merger; Vision of Future

As you are aware, we merged with 3 other NJ swim teams on April 7, 2012. While most of the NJ Swimming world presumes this was done for competition ("wet side") reasons (we won the last 5 Junior Olympics by more than 2000 points, more than double the 2nd place team), I actually merged because of the dry side. To create a business that could control a large portion of its destiny.

In NJ Swimming, there are two types of teams: YMCAs and Club teams. YMCAs are businesses that have many "lines" of business: such as youth swim teams. But Y'sy also have "learn to swim classes, soccer teams, spin classes, yoga classes, etc.

YMCA's probably derive 5% or less of their revenues from swimming membership fees.

Club teams are competitive swim teams that have about no other resources except club memberships and funds raised from running meets. About 85-90% of a club's revenues derive from membership fees. This is the structure Elite Swim Club followed; and with pool rental, coaches salaries, taxes, meet entry fees, it is impossible to make a club financially viable under this structure. Which is why most club coaches are part time (having other jobs) and are doing a good but not great job (they can't because they don't have time).

I was still struggling with how move Elite forward when I was approached by the 3 other teams to merge. Thru the merger, which now includes a 5th division and totals about 850+ swimmers (10% of registered NJ Swimmers) we now have a platform to build a company.

Now that we are merged, we are focused initially on a "swim dollar" businesses:

2) Ultimate Athletic Performance purchased on August 13, 2012 the existing Ultimate Swim Shop ("USS") located in Metuchen, NJ. Although we have successfully maintained USS's existing business thru the 1st two years, we are just getting an handle on how to run this business successfully. As all of you understand, there are many nuances to running a successful company. While we are rapidly approaching understanding the nuances, we are not yet where we will be as a company. In 1 year, we rented out warehouse space, implemented a POS system and upgraded the website.

Personally, I am asking you that when you purchase swim items such as suits and goggles, to strongly consider buying thru USS. In addition to me, Brandy, Tad, Coach Krystal and Coach Sherri are involved in this venture so your swim dollars will help us build this company.

Questions??

