**Parent’s guide to swim “math” and competition.**

First and foremost our team exists for fun and personal improvement. There is nothing more exciting than to see kid’s faces when they get that best time or heat winner patch. (Sometimes even the big kids!) They love to fill their shirts and pillow cases with those and should be proud of that accomplishment. Or when they get older and can see that new best time up on a scoreboard.

It is also true that you can have more fun as you go faster and faster with each practice and meet.

Personal improvement plus participation at meets translates into something else fun which is doing well as a team, whether it is a relay, or for total team points. The Webb City meet was a great example of both. I’m not sure the last time we finished second at a meet, and this is with half of our swimmers. They should all be proud. They all contributed!

Individual swimmers get points for the top 6 or 8 swimmers depending on how many lanes. Relays get double the points and by virtue of the math have fewer entries.

Coach and the board encourage maximum participation at three meets each summer because we want our kids to have the great experience of doing well as a team, all spending time with friends, making new ones, and having lots of fun. Nevada and Joplin are the two remaining team meets. Parsons and Pittsburg are also good opportunities to compete and tend to be smaller meets.

We also want to provide an explanation of the A and B division. Tri state has established time standards. Any time faster than 10 minutes qualifies a swimmer for the B division. An A time must be obtained to qualify for A division and championships. The time standards are on our website and you can also see where your swimmer stands by logging into your account and looking at their meet results. It is also available using the OnDeck Parent App. You have to select the tristate 2015 time standards and it will display their times and where they are in comparison.

The meet at Joplin will award medals and ribbons for both divisions this year. An A/B meet (which actually will show as an A/C meet but don’t worry about that part, it is just how the meet software is set up to allow for NT swims). A swimmer with no time or a B entry time competes in the B division. That swimmer may make an A time, but will still be scored in the B division. An A swimmer will compete in the A division and will be scored in that division no matter what time they make in that event. Joplin is awarding Team trophies for A (1st-3rd) and B (first place only) which also makes these meets fun.

 Tri-state has a championship meet for both divisions. B swimmers can obtain an A time at B championships at Siloam Springs and qualify for A’s at Monett. Families that have been there will tell you that B championships are fun and a great experience for your kids! Your swimmer must compete at 3 invitational meets (one day of a two day meet counts).

 Tri-State is also inclusive for relays at A championships. Each team is allowed one relay team at A’s even if one or more swimmers does not have an A time in an event. So everyone can help at A’s on a relay and extend your swim season! Monett is a great facility, short drive and they run a nice meet.