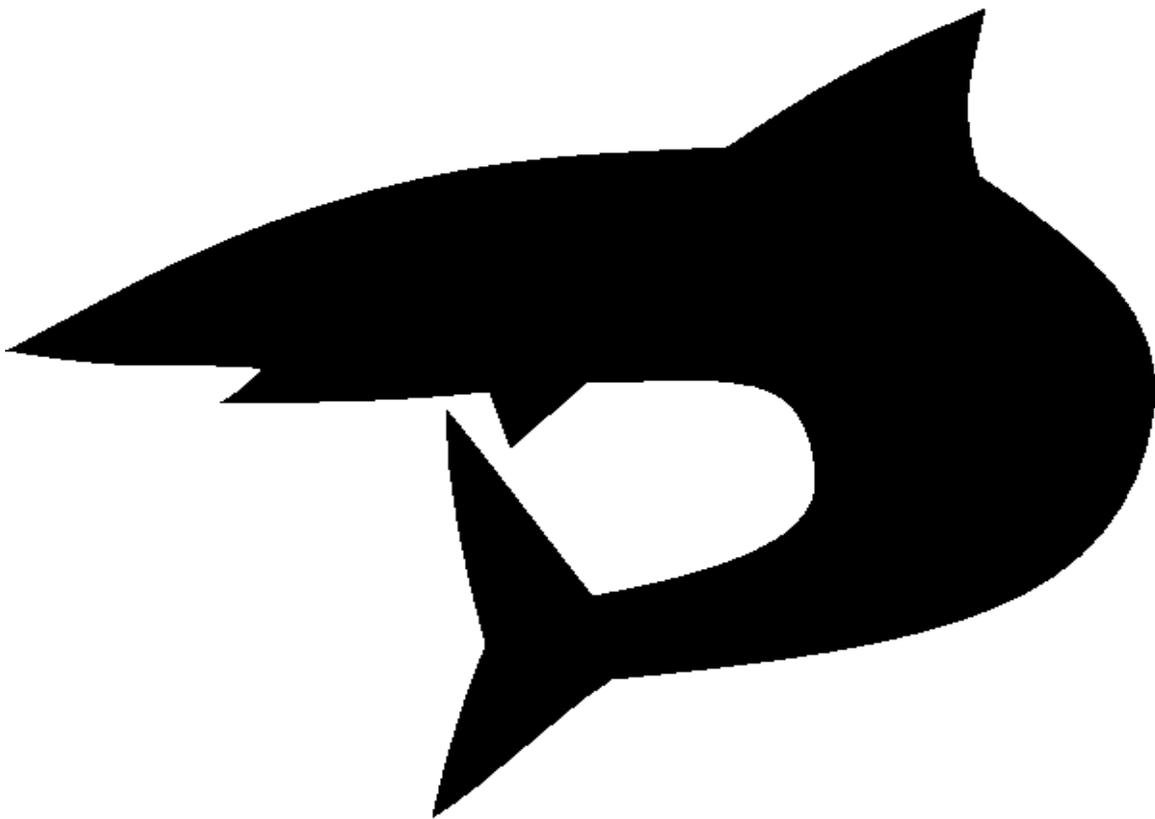


+

# **COLUMBIA SWIMMING**



# **HANDBOOK**

+

**INTRODUCTION:** The purpose of this handbook is two-fold: to explain to new members just what Columbia Swimming (CS) is and to outline various policies that affect all swimmers, year after year. It should be read by all families so that they may become familiar with important facts and rules of the team.

**WELCOME:** Welcome to Columbia Swimming! We look forward to working with your swimmer(s) as all of us progress through our swimming/coaching careers. Our team is a year-round, competitive swimming team offering instruction, training, and competition to young people of all ages and abilities. The team is financed and supported by team parents. The head coach and the coaching staff supervise the management and operation of Columbia Swimming.

Columbia Swimming has established itself as an up and coming team in South Carolina. The team competes in local, regional, and national competitions sanctioned by USA Swimming, Inc., the national governing body for amateur swimming in this country, and by FINA, the international governing body for swimming.

This handbook will help familiarize you with all facets of Columbia Swimming's program and with competitive swimming in general. As you look through the following pages you will be introduced to our history, philosophy, team policies, and to the basic information concerning your day-to-day participation in Columbia Swimming's program. It is our hope that this handbook will help you better understand and enjoy the inner workings of Columbia Swimming and the world of competitive swimming.

Columbia Swimming Community strives to reflect in each of our lives respect for the individual. The sharing of ideas, ideals, and accomplishments with one another brings mutual respect and often mutual advantage. The success of such people develops highly desirable personal values such as generosity, honesty, hard work, sharing attitudes, high ethical standards, and pride in community.

These values reflect our philosophy of moral growth: Respect for the property and opinions of others, Responsibility for our actions. Hard Work to achieve mental and physical excellence, Concern for Others, especially for those less fortunate and Pride in our community. The goal is not only to produce great swimmers, but to produce great young people who swim.

**TEAM PHILOSOPHY:** Columbia Swimming views swimming as an important part of the overall development of a young boy or girl. Besides the most obvious benefit of physical conditioning, swimming fosters the personal discipline required to persevere, the confidence building of progress in competition, the social growth from travel, learning to accept winning and losing with equal grace, and the sense of values gained from competing as both an individual and a team member. Columbia Swimming's program strives to instill in young swimmers an understanding of, and appreciation for such concepts as high self-esteem, personal accountability, constructive self-motivation, goal-setting, and goal achievement as their ideas relate to their success in training and in competition. It is our belief that the process of achieving is as significant as realizing the achievement itself. At each level of Columbia Swimming's program, swimmers are instructed to strive for excellence. Excellence in this sense represents the achievement of that level at which each swimmer knows that they have done their utmost to become the best they are capable of becoming. This philosophy is consistent throughout the program in every swimmer, novice through Senior. We want every swimmer to swim to the best of their own ability and seek the opportunity to attain the level of excellence to which their desire and ability

+

will move them. We believe swimmers and their parents alike should enjoy swimming and remember it is a positive experience.

**LONG RANGE OBJECTIVES:** Personal and Physical Development, to provide an opportunity for young people in the Columbia area to engage in a wholesome, lifesaving, lifetime sport and recreational activity. To promote physical fitness and encourage proper conditioning and health habits.

To provide opportunities for healthy social, emotional, and to encourage peer and family participation. To foster the development of high self-esteem and help cultivate positive self-images.

**Competitive Development:** To create an environment in which the desire for self-improvement and goal achievement motivates the individual to fully develop their natural abilities and help others to do likewise. To provide opportunities to learn the values of hard work, dedication, self-discipline, and perseverance. To promote the ideals of honesty, integrity, good sportsmanship, and team loyalty. To provide quality instruction, training, and competition at all peer and ability levels.

#### COACHES' BILL OF RIGHTS

1. Each coach is a professional and has a right to be treated with respect by all swimmers, parents, and other coaches.
2. Each coach has a right to expect the full support of all parents in The Columbia Swimming Program.
3. Each coach has a right to establish training programs which are safe and which will meet the needs and goals of the swimmers, and head coach.
4. Each coach has a right to be free from unnecessary interruption from parents during training sessions or meets.
5. Each coach has a right to be compensated fairly for his or her services.

**COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES:** The coaches' job is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. The Columbia Swimming coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for youngsters that will enable them to learn the value of striving to improve oneself--"to be the best you can be." Therefore, the coaches must be in total control in matters affecting training and competition.

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 their coach.
2. Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with the Columbia Swimming coaching staff. Each group's practices are based on sound swimming principles and are geared to the specific goals of that group.
3. The coaching staff will make the final decision concerning which meets swimmers may attend. The coaching staff also makes the final decision concerning which events a swimmer is entered into.
4. At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warmup procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmer's performance. (It is the parent's job to offer love and understanding regardless of their swimmer's performance.)

+

5. The building of a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.
6. Each coach has a responsibility to constantly be aware of the swimmers' safety and wellbeing.
7. Each coach has a responsibility to be a positive role model for the swimmers.
8. Each coach has a responsibility to be a technical expert on the sport of swimming.
9. Each coach has a responsibility to help construct a vision for the athlete of what is possible in the sport of swimming and the path each swimmer will need to follow to achieve that goal.

The coaching staff is constantly updating and improving. It is the swimmer's and parents' responsibility to make the most out of the excellent opportunity this program provides for success in swimming.

**COMPETITIVE PROGRAMS:** In keeping with our philosophy of providing a well-rounded, quality, competitive swimming program for athletes of all ages and abilities, Columbia Swimming offers progressive levels of professional technique, instruction, and training.

**Columbia Beginners:** The Beginners Group are composed of the youngest competitive swimmers in Columbia Swimming's program. The main emphasis of this group is teaching the basic fundamentals of the competitive strokes. This consists of kicking, drilling, streamline, and the development of the skills necessary for competitive swimming.

**Columbia Beginners II:** All swimmers within this Group must be able to legally swim each of the four competitive strokes. Furthermore, sharpening of the competitive strokes through drills and kicking will be emphasized. Starts, turns, and mental skills for training for the next level will also be emphasized.

**Columbia Jr I:** It is at the Jr. Group level in which swimmers move from primary stroke and technique instruction to more emphasis on training. Drill work and kicking will continue to make up a large portion of the practices; however, swimming sets will be added. At this level, goal setting will be introduced and swimmers will be expected to be more accountable for their swimming progression. Consistent practice attendance is necessary for continued improvement and advancement to the next group.

**Columbia Junior II:** The Juniors II take on a much more rigorous training load than the Black Group, while continuing to build upon the skills acquired at the Black Group. Practice times are longer in conjunction with higher yardage requirements. The increases in physical demands require that swimmers regularly attend practices. Swimmers will be expected to understand interval training and will learn how to train at different effort levels and speeds. There will also be a greater emphasis on race strategies. The Junior Group represent the final step in the 13/under age group program.

**SENIOR PROGRAM:** The Senior Program provides training to athletes beginning at 14 and in the 9th grade. Swimmers are typically placed into a group based upon age and ability level. Columbia Swimming strives to ensure that there is a place for all athletes who have a desire to swim competitively, whether the swimmer is new to year-round swimming or is preparing to compete at the national or international level. The coaching staff is also careful to maintain a swimmer-to-coach ratio that allows for an optimal teaching environment. While the Senior Program is designed to train athletes in the 9th grade and up, not all of these athletes will train together.

**SWIM LESSON PROGRAM:** Columbia Swimming Swim Lesson Program combines the expertise of the coaching staff with the innovative concept of a swimming school, where students attend a weekly or

+

biweekly swimming class designed to teach them the fundamentals of both water safety and swimming. These programs are available only at certain times during the year; therefore please check the team website at: [columbiaswimming.com](http://columbiaswimming.com), under the —Swim Groups tab for up to date availability.

### **PRACTICE ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

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

1. Each training group has specific attendance requirements appropriate for the objectives of that group. As a general rule, the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success. The expectation level of the coaches' that each swimmer attends practices increases as swimmers move to higher groups.
2. Beginners I: Encouraged to attend two practices per week Beginners II: Encouraged to attend three practices per week, Jr. I need to attend four practices a week, and expected 80% of offered practices per month Jr. II Encouraged to attend five-six practices per week and expected at 90% of practices offered per month SENIOR Expected to attend ALL offered practices unless otherwise directed by coach
3. For the safety and protection of the swimmers they should arrive at the pool no more than 10 minutes before the start of practice and be picked up immediately after practice. It is imperative that the swimmers arrive on time so that the coaching staff can efficiently use the allotted time; however it is also extremely important that children not be left unsupervised at the pool prior to or after practice. The coaching staff is NOT responsible for supervising athletes either prior to or following a practice session.
4. Each swimmer should plan to stay the entire practice as each practice is designed to be most beneficial when completed in its entirety and coaches often make announcements at the end of practice. In the event that your child needs to be dismissed early from practice, please notify the coach prior to the beginning of practice.
5. All practice groups are expected to be at their designated starting place with their practice equipment ready to start practice on time.
6. Swimmers must notify their coach if they leave the pool and/or pool deck at any time during the practice.
7. Occasionally some or most of a practice group may be at a meet, in which case your swimmer will be notified of a practice change or cancellation. Such notice will be provided through email or posted on the [columbiaswimming.com](http://columbiaswimming.com) .
8. In accordance with the governing body of USA Swimming, Inc., parents may observe practice from the bleachers or a designated area per the coach on duty. At no time are parents allowed on pool deck for liability reasons. Please do not sit in an area where you will be a distraction to the swimmers and coaches.
9. Swimmers and parents are discouraged from disrupting the coach or other swimmers with unnecessary communication, unless of course, an emergency.

+

Swimming requires discipline, persistence, integrity, respect, and trust. Your child can only learn these values if you live them yourself. With the assistance of your coach and a positive, supportive atmosphere, your child could achieve dreams which he/she did not think capable.

### **PARENTS...YOUR ATHLETE NEEDS YOU**

A successful swimming program requires understanding and cooperation among the coaches, swimmers, and parents. This relationship can be critical to your child's successful development on the team. The coaching staff understands your commitment to your child. Many of the coaches are also mothers and fathers. The coaches understand that you will always be looking out for your child's best interests. While the coaches are also committed to ensuring that your child's best interests are served, their responsibility is to serve each athlete on the team. Your perspective and the coaches' perspective may differ when it comes to your child's development. Patience, understanding, and most importantly, communication are the cornerstones of this relationship. With this in mind, please review and consider the following guidelines.

1. Individuals learn at different rates and in different ways. Some athletes will quickly pick up a skill while others may require more time to learn the same skill. Please be patient with your child and his/her development. Direct any questions to the coach.
2. Progress is rarely immediate. New team members will always go through a period of adaptation, no matter their age, that may impede immediate progress. This could be caused by greater training demands, a stronger emphasis on technique, or simply nerves. Patience, trust, and communication among coaches, swimmers, and parents will help any struggling swimmer through such a period.
3. Plateaus can occur at one time or another in every swimmer's career. Plateaus can be both in competition and training. A plateau signifies the swimmer has mastered lower-order skills, but they are not yet sufficiently automatic to leave the attention free to attack newer, higher order skills. It is important to explain to the athlete that plateaus occur in all fields of physical learning. The more successful athletes are those who work through this momentary delay in improvement and go on to achieve greater performance to approach their personal potential.
4. Swimmers ten years and younger are the most inconsistent swimmers. This can be frustrating for parents, coaches, and swimmers alike! We must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport.
5. Parents must realize that slow development of the competitive drive at an early age is normal and perhaps more desirable than precocious or forced early development. It is important that everyone learn to compete and develop some competitive spirit. It is also important for children to learn to adapt to reasonable levels of emotional stress. Small disappointments we must learn to handle as youngsters prepare us for the larger ones we are certain to experience as adults<sup>6</sup>. It is the coaches' job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parents' job to supply love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to help the young athlete feel good about him or herself.

+

7. Parents' attitudes often dictate those of their children. A child might not be consciously aware of what is taking place while subconsciously absorbing powerful messages about his/her parents' desires. For example, be enthusiastic about taking your child to practice and meets, fund-raising projects, meetings, etc. – don't look at these functions as chores.

8. If you have any questions about your child's training or team policies, contact the coach. Criticizing the coach in front of the child undermines the coach's authority and breaks the swimmer-coach support that is necessary for maximum success.

9. No parent should behave in such a way as to bring discredit to the child, the team, or competitive swimming. Any disagreement with a meet official should be brought to the attention of the coach and handled by the coach.

10. Children should swim because he/she wants to. It is natural to resist anything they —have to do. Self-motivation is the stimulus of all successful swimmers.

11. The etymology of the word "competition" goes back to two Latin words: "com" and "pet ere," which means —together to strive. Avoid "playing" your child against his nearest competitor, thereby creating friction within the team and swimming community. Close competition provides two great services for the athlete: it brings out the best in him/her and shows where improvement is needed.

12. The communication between coach and swimmer is very important. A two-way relationship must exist daily at practice. It is imperative that the coach has the swimmer's full attention at these times. For this reason parents are allowed to watch practice only from the designated bleachers in the pool area. They are NOT permitted to participate or instruct. Parents who attempt to coach their child during a practice may be asked to leave the pool deck. Please leave all coaching to the coaching staff. If you have questions about technique or coaching strategies, we encourage you to arrange a time (NOT during practice) to speak to your child's coach. Remember, particularly in the case of younger swimmers, that attitude and behavior of the parents in regard to their outlook on the sport has an important effect on the child. In swimming, as in life, nobody can —win or succeed all the time – there will always be some disappointments. Every child can gain from his experience, whether or not he/she ever wins a single race. The important thing is to keep on striving to do better next time.

### **GUIDE TO BEING A GOOD SWIM PARENT**

**The parent's primary role is that of unconditional love and support for their swimmer. There are many ways to fulfill this role:**

1. The first is to remind your child that you love them, no matter how they perform either at practice or at a meet.
2. Support your child's goals by first allowing them to make goals of their own in consultation with their coach.
3. Remember that this is your son's or daughter's childhood and not your own: Recognize their dreams and support their ambitions, but don't create them for the child.
4. Make sure that your child is having fun as well as working hard — If there isn't some fun, then why do it?
5. Do not let your child's performance affect your attitude towards them. If your child swims poorly it will not make them feel better to see disappointment in their parents. Before they race

+

encourage them to have fun and after they race tell them you love them. Simple words can have a drastic impact on a child's outlook.

6. Do not pay your child or provide material rewards for swimming well. Children must learn that doing a thing well is worthwhile in its own right. Through swimming they should earn respect because of their commitment and not money for their accomplishments.
7. Understand that swimming can be daunting, especially to new swimmers or younger swimmers. A fifty meter pool looks awfully long to an eight year old! If your child is afraid to swim an event remind them that the coach would only suggest it or enter them in it because they believe in your child.
8. It is imperative that your swimmer believe you support the coach, even when you disagree with him/her.
9. Disagreements are natural and when they exist everyone wants resolution, but there is a time and a place to discuss disagreements. The pool deck is not the place to argue or confront the coach about any disagreement. All coaches are available away from the pool deck and will respond to either email or telephone calls.
10. During practice a coach's attention must be focused on the group. If you wish to meet in person with your child's coach please schedule a time to do so; do not arrive at practice assuming that either the coach will be available to meet with you or that it is the appropriate time and place to meet.
11. Support the coach by understanding they do have a life outside of the pool. This sport requires long hours of work. Respect the coach's desire to go home to his/her family after practice.
12. Support the team at practice, at away meets, and at home.
13. Supporting the team means everything from making sure your child wears team apparel at meets to volunteering your own time at any of our home meets. Do not leave it to others to do this work. Our team extends beyond the coaches and swimmers and we need everyone's involvement to be successful.
14. Supporting the team also means being a positive influence at any meet from the sidelines. There are often instances where parents from opposing teams do not get along, which only creates more tension for the child. We want each swimmer to be a good sport, which means we need our parents to be good sports.
15. In order to support the team one must be an active member, beyond just dropping your child off before practice and picking them up afterwards.
16. Attend parents meetings.
17. Volunteer at meets
18. Become an official
19. Make donations for meets
20. **Pay all bills promptly and in full.**
21. Be punctual for practice and meets and plan for your child to spend the entire practice at the pool. It is disruptive to have a child arrive late or leave early. It also diminishes the value of teaching a child the value of commitment.
22. Do not coach from the sidelines or stands.
23. Leave the racing strategies to the coach.
24. Allow the coach to discuss technical issues with the swimmer and do not second-guess them either with or in front of your child. If you have questions please discuss it with the coach.

+

25. Do not criticize officials. Most times officials are parents just like you, committed to their children and committed to their sport.
26. Winning is NOT everything. The most important things a child can do in a race are: • Have fun! • Try to employ the coach's technical instructions and racing strategy. • Give their best effort and RACE!
27. Congratulate the other competitors no matter what the outcome.
28. Encourage healthy eating. Make smart eating decisions for your child and for yourself. Your children will emulate the people they respect and love most, their parents. Allow their desire to swim to make a positive influence on your own life and health by using it as another reason to make good eating decisions.
29. Do not compare your child to anyone else on the team. Your child is unique, wonderful, and full of potential. Remember: *The goal is not only to produce great swimmers, but to produce great young people who swim* and everyone achieves potential in different ways and at different times.
30. Don't time your child from the stands. There are enough timing devices around at meets and at practice. When a parent times from the stands it simply adds pressure on the child.

**SWIMMER TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES:** 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 this 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 for a 100% effort each time they come to practice. Swimmers have the following responsibilities:

1. To treat his or her coach with respect at all times and to use proper channels to address any problems or complaints.
2. To adhere to the coach's rules governing training sessions and to focus on the training program.
3. To take his or her commitment to swimming seriously at whatever his or her training level may be.
4. To support Columbia Swimming, fellow swimmers, and his or her coach by encouragement and attendance at practice and meets.
5. To make the minimum number of training sessions set by the coach and strive for the recommended attendance percentage.
6. To train and race as hard as he or she can.

Swimmers will be required to bring specified training accessories (i.e., goggles, flippers, etc.) to workouts. It is the swimmer's responsibility to make sure these items are properly adjusted and that spares are readily available. Equipment adjustment and repair will not be accepted as excuse to miss part of a training session.

**TEAM UNIFORM AND EQUIPMENT:** Columbia Swimming swimmers are required to wear an official CS swim suit at practices (2015-2016) and meets (unless otherwise specified by their coach, i.e., a senior

+

level championship meet). Furthermore, it is mandatory that all swimmers compete in a team suit and cap that is designated by the coach. Failure to comply may result in a swimmer not being allowed to practice or compete in a meet, even if the swimmer has already signed up for the competition. Please understand that coaches will enforce this requirement.

Each September, on a specified date, our swim suit vendor will send try-on suits to the pool for a suit sizing and to take orders for warm ups, bags and equipment. Please watch the team website for more information regarding the date. Otherwise, all items will be available for purchase through Augusta Swim Supply.

**LOST AND FOUND:** There are Lost & Found bins located in the bleachers. Each evening the pool deck is cleared of leftover items and put into the corresponding bucket. Any items not claimed by the last Friday of each month will be donated to Good Will.

It is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that all members of any age group program also label their belongings.

## **BECOME A USA SWIMMING INC. OFFICIAL!!!!**

Five Reasons to Become an Official

1. You'll be working with the greatest group of volunteers in all sports.
2. You'll be close to the action. The bleachers aren't comfortable anyway!
3. High satisfaction; low pay.
4. It's a great way to meet future Olympians—unless you already have one in your home
5. Great food in hospitality and you can't beat the price!

Contact SC Swimming or the Swim Office to begin this incredible and valuable service for your team. Steps will include:

1. Registering as a non-athlete member of USA Swimming.
2. Attend a local clinic, usually at one of the local pools.
3. Take an official's test available on line. 4
4. Apprentice to get on the job training at either a local sanctioned meet.
5. Then ... have fun!

### ***Characteristic of any business,***

Columbia Swimming expenses begin the first day of every month. A positive cash flow is required to assure payroll requirements and various other expenditures. It is, therefore, imperative for all Columbia Swimming members to pay their swimmer's monthly account balance on the first of each month. If fees are not current, your swimmer will not be allowed to participate in practice.

+

## **TYPES OF FEES**

**Coaching Dues:** The training fees are based on the program group a swimmer is enrolled.

**Annual Family Registration Fee:** Each family, regardless of number of swimmers on the team, will be charged an annual registration fee that is used for the purpose of equipment, facility rental, and general operating expenses.

**New Member Registration Fee:** This fee is due at the time of registration of new members to Columbia Swimming.

**Re-Activation Fee:** Fee to reactivate a swimmer upon returning to Columbia Swimming team.

**USA Swim Registration Fee:** Due at the time of registration, this will establish the swimmer's amateur status as a competitive swimmer, as well as provide insurance coverage during swim practice and meets.

**Meet/Entry Fee:** A swimmer is charged for each event they swim in at a meet. This may also include a facility surcharge per swimmer by the hosting team. Columbia Swimming will pay this fee ahead of time to the hosting team and Shark's accounts will be billed when entries are made.

**Meet Coaching Fees:** Coaching fees will be applied to each swimmers account in the amount of \$10.00/per day for USA Swim sanctioned swim meets.

**Team Travel:** When team members travel as a group, the costs of transportation, accommodation, and meals are split between the swimmers. This fee is due prior to leaving for the meet. A separate confirmation form will be sent home or emailed to the swimmers guardians for payment.

**Late Fees:** If a member's account is not paid by the 5th of the current month an extra fee of \$20.00 will be applied to the account. **Insufficient Funds/Denied Credit Card:** a fee of \$30 will be applied.

+

**PHILOSOPHY OF COMPETITION:** Columbia Swimming engages in a multi-level competition program with USA Swimming, Inc. that, like our training program, attempts to provide challenging, yet success-oriented competitive situations for swimmers of all ages and abilities.

1. We emphasize competition with oneself. Winning ribbons, medals, or trophies is not our main goal. Even if our swimmer finishes first, but has swum poorly in comparison to past performances, they are encouraged to do better. The individuals' improvement is our primary objective.
2. Sportsmanlike behavior is of equal importance to improved performance. Respect for officials, congratulations to competitors, encouragement to teammates, determined effort, and mature attitudes are examples of behavior praised and rewarded by the coaching staff.
3. Swimmers are taught to be realistic, yet set challenging goals for meets and to relate these goals to practice and direct their training efforts.
4. Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances, and strokes. This policy promotes versatility and encourages the swimmers to explore their potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming.

**AGE GROUPS:** There are seven different age group classifications recognized by USA Swimming Inc.:

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 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.

**MOTIVATIONAL TIMES:** Within each age-group there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. These times are designed to help age group swimmers to better understand their times and to set realistic goal times for their future.

The classifications are "B", "BB", "A", "AA", "AAA", and "AAAA". The times required for each ability level are published each year by USA Swimming Inc. This permits fair, yet challenging, competition on all levels.

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 an "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.

**TYPES OR LEVELS OF SWIM MEETS:**

Dual Meets - Occasionally, we will compete with one other team in a dual meet, this will promote team unity, but usually limit the number of events a swimmer may enter.

Invitational Meets – Most competitions CS participate are invitational swim meets. These competitions may be open to any USA Swimming registered team from anywhere in the United States, while others may be limited to only teams that are specifically invited. These types of meets typically range from 1 to 3 days and can feature a prelim-final format or just timed finals.

+

South Carolina State Championships are held twice a year; February in a 25-yard pool, July in a 50-meter pool. Participants must be 14 years old or younger and have achieved at least one qualifying time to participate in an individual event. FLAGS is the fastest 14&under competition in which our team participates.

Southern Zone Sectionals – This meet is also held twice a year. Swimmers who qualify will represent SC Swimming in a competition against swimmers from different southern zones of the US.

Junior National Championships - This is the highest level meet for 18 & under swimmers in the United States. A short course championship is typically held in December with a long course championship held in August. This is a very competitive and exciting meet. Any swimmer with a qualifying time for this meet is encouraged to attend.

National Championships (Senior Nationals) – Other than the Olympics Trials and World Championships, each of which is held once every four years, the highest level of competition for our senior swimmers is the US National Championships. Swimmers meeting the national time standards travel to various cities in the US to compete against America’s best swimmers. This meet often serves as a selection meet for athletes striving to make US National teams, such as the Pan American Team, World University Games, and Pan Pacific team.

1. The meet schedule has been established with the expectation that swimmers will attend every meet available at their classification level, both locally and out of town. We do not schedule a meet unless we feel it is important to participate, however, it is not mandatory to attend all scheduled meets.
2. The coaching staff reserves the right to make the final decision concerning meets CS swimmers will attend.
3. All CS swimmers, regardless of age or ability level, will train with the intention of competing in a season-ending championship meet. We highly encourage all athletes to make the commitment to participate at the highest level meet for which they have achieved qualifying times.

HOW TO ENTER YOUR SWIMMER INTO A MEET The meet entry process typically begins online at [www.columbiaswimming.com](http://www.columbiaswimming.com). Each CS family is provided with a user-name and password to access their personal account. Once logged into the website, simply click on the EVENTS tab and click the —Edit Commitment|| under the meet date. Certain championship meets require that the coaching staff utilize USA Swimming Inc. Online Meet Entry system; therefore swimmers will not need to enter on the team website.

The coaching staff will designate a meet sign-up deadline. We ask that ALL SWIMMERS and PARENTS abide by this deadline. The deadline is established to provide the coaches an opportunity to review the meet entry for any mistakes or potential changes. In the event a swimmer forgets to enter a meet in which they should participate please notify the coach immediately. If space is available and the meet director is willing, a late entry may be permitted, but there are no guarantees. The fee is usually double the normal entry fee and must be paid to the meet administrator on the pool deck by the swimmer.

ULTIMATELY THE CS COACHING STAFF RESERVES THE RIGHT, AT ALL TIMES, TO ALTER ANY SWIMMER’S MEET ENTRY. The coaching staff is best equipped to understand the competitive needs of the athletes and will make all decisions based on what is in the athlete’s best interests.

+

**ENTRY FEES AND SURCHARGES:** Each event/race a swimmer enters at a swim meet carries an entry fee, also known as meet fee. Swim meets sanctioned by SC Swimming, in accordance with the governing rules of USA Swimming, Inc., may determine the amount that may be charged for each event. This fee can range from \$3 to \$10 per race. In addition to the meet fee for each individual event, the hosting team may require a surcharge or facility fee for each swimmer participating in the meet. Meet entry fees and surcharges are due to the hosting team prior to the start of the swim meet. Therefore, CS on behalf of its entered swimmers, pays the fees upfront and ahead of each individual member's account being charged. Each swimmer's meet fees are charged to their account before the actual swim meet. It is absolutely imperative that accounts are paid on time so that members may continue to have this benefit. Once the entry and payment has been sent to the hosting team there will be NO refunds for meet fees for any reason.

**EXPECTED BEHAVIOR AT A SWIM MEET:**

1. Athletes and parents alike, wearing CS apparel represent our team. Please let your actions reflect your pride in your team.
2. As a matter of courtesy to the officials and meet host, it is strongly encouraged that swimmers and parents stay off the deck and out of the competition area unless they are competing or serving in an official capacity.
3. Similarly, as a matter of courtesy, all questions swimmers or parents may have 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.
4. As a matter of pride, leave the team area and the pool in a neat and clean condition at the conclusion of each session of the meet.
5. Please consult with the coaching staff prior to scratching an event or deck-entering an event. The coaching staff will always make the final decision on any scratches or deck-entries.
6. Swimmers who qualify for championship finals in prelim-finals meets are expected to compete in the finals. ALWAYS consult your coach if, for some reason, a swimmer would need to scratch from a final.
7. Swimmers are expected to offer encouragement and support to all members of the team. Positive comments and team spirit are beneficial to everybody. Negative thoughts and comments should be kept to yourself.

Educating yourself by utilizing the wealth of information available on [usaswim.org](http://usaswim.org), [sc-swimming.org](http://sc-swimming.org), and [Columbiaswimming.com](http://Columbiaswimming.com) will not only empower you as a swim parent; it will be the evidence of support and confidence you have in your swimmers hard work and determination.

**SWIM MEET PROCEDURES:**

1. Review the Meet Announcement found by clicking the Events tab, name of the swim meet attending, and the Meet Info link. The who, what, and where of any meet will be found in the pages of the Meet Announcement.
2. Verify your swimmers meet entries prior to the meet and report any mistakes to Coach.

+

3. The warm up schedule will be emailed or posted. The time shown is the time swimmers have to be on pool deck ready to have feet enter the water, therefore plan ahead! It is important that swimmers and parents alike understand that a good warm-up is an essential part of a successful performance. All warm-up rules must be adhered to such as, feet first entry, circle swimming, etc.

4. Swimmers should sit in the designated team area with their teammates, wearing the mandatory team suit, cap, and uniform. Parents are recommended to pack healthy snacks for their swimmers along with plenty of WATER for hydrating.

5. It is recommended that parents purchase or acquire a Heat Sheet and verify the event, heat and lane your swimmer is signed up for. Each swimmer will be responsible for knowing which events they are swimming and report to the blocks on time and prepared. It is often helpful to write event, heat, and lane numbers on a young swimmer's arm or thigh for their reference.

6. Before a swimmer reports to the blocks prior to their race they must confer with a member of the coaching staff to discuss strategy and goals.

7. At the conclusion of each race, the swimmer should ask the lane timer for their watch time, and then warm down per the coach's instructions. Following warm down, the swimmer should report to the coach to discuss the race.

8. Between races, swimmers are asked to stay in the designated team area to rest and stay warm. All energy should be focused on racing.

9. As the official results are posted please record your time in the event there is a mistake.

10. It is very important that the athlete check with the coaching staff prior to leaving the swim meet. Swimmers will often be counted upon to participate in relays which are generally the last events of a session. If a swimmer leaves without notifying the coach the result could be three other swimmers losing their chance to compete.

**SWIM MEET DAY NECESSITIES:** Tradition T-shirt(optional) CS Team Swim Suit, CS Silicone/Latex cap Goggles, Towels, Sunscreen (outside) Book/Playing Cards, Blanket/Sleeping Bag, Water, water, water Fruit/Veggies

SOURCE "Everything you always wanted to know about swim meets...but, was afraid to ask." Reprinted from the Carmel Swim Club, Team Handbook – SEE APPENDIX F

**AWAY MEETS:** CS compete in meets locally, regionally, and nationally. While swimmers often look forward to attending out-of-town meets, these competitions entail logistical challenges that affect the swimmer, their family, and the coaching staff. The coaching staff may provide transportation, arrange lodging, and serve as chaperones depending on the meet. Team Travel is typically offered for senior level meets only. Parents of Age Group swimmers are responsible for arranging and providing travel and lodging for out-of-town Age Group meets, including the State Championships. The coaching staff may reserve blocks of rooms at discounted rates, making those rooms available to swimmers and their families. However, the coaching staff will not provide transportation or lodging and will not chaperone swimmers at Age Group meets.

+

TEAM TRAVEL Located at the end of this handbook is APPENDIX G; "Team Travel Commitment Policy" Please carefully read this form for information on possible CS swim meet Team Travel.

**NUTRITION:** Reprinted from "Training Agenda", a USS Sports Medicine and Science Series Everything you do influences your performance, but your food choices have the most effect due to the long term and short term benefits. A proper diet, including proper selection of foods, will help your training and performance while also achieving a healthy lifestyle once you stop competing.

To help ensure a balanced diet, remember that there are no magical nutrition remedies. So forget the fads and eat a variety of wholesome foods from the four food groups--milk, meat, fruits & vegetables, and grains. Foods in these groups provide protein, fat carbohydrate, fiber and all the necessary vitamins and minerals.

This nutrition series is designed to help you better understand good nutrition and to provide guidelines for ideal food choices. Within sports, there are four major periods that nutrition will impact:

1. During Training - Training represents the period in which athletes spend most of their time. Therefore, this category represents the most critical period. During this time, a diet high in carbohydrates is important. This is important since it is not uncommon for athletes training 4-6 hours a day to burn 2500 to 4000 calories a day. The best way to replenish these calories is with a high carbohydrate diet. By being conscious of this and by taking high carbohydrate foods or drink in the first 30 minutes following a workout, you can minimize depletion of energy stores.
2. Pre-event Nutrition - The major purpose of the pre-event diet is to ensure sufficient energy and fluid for the athlete. Two to three days before competition, a high carbohydrate diet with plenty of fluids should be emphasized. The pre-event meal should include a light, high carbohydrate meal three to four hours before the event.
3. Nutrition During Competition - Provided that good nutrition practices were followed during training, middle distance and sprint events will not be limited by nutrition-related factors. During a three to four day competition, make sure you consume plenty of fluids and each meal should include high carbohydrate, low fat selections.
4. Nutrition After Competition - High intensity work will deplete the muscle's energy supplies. Therefore, carbohydrates play an important role after competition to make sure energy stores are maintained.

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

1. The New Member Registration Fee and the USA Swimming Inc. registration fee are not refundable and must be paid prior to new swimmers joining the team. The Annual Family Registration Fee (FRF) and USA Swimming Inc. renewal registration are also non-refundable.
2. Monthly Coaching dues are to be paid by the first day of each month. They will not be prorated. If a swimmer swims even one day during a month they are responsible for that month's coaching dues.
3. Accounts carrying a balance past the 5th of each month will be charged a late fee. If the balance remains unpaid by the 15th of the following month the swimmer will not be allowed to swim until the balance of the Sharks account is paid in full.

+

4. Any payments returned for insufficient funds or credit cards denied will be charged a \$30.00 fee to that members Sharks account.
5. In the event a swimmer is —moved-up|| into a new group, they are then responsible for that groups monthly coaching fees.
6. Meet entry fees, office item charges, meet coaching fees, and team travel are in addition to the monthly dues. Nonpayment of any of these fees will also necessitate non-participation for the swimmer(s) until payment is made.
7. Should a swimmer decide to discontinue participation in the program with CS, the monthly dues for the term of contract and any other outstanding fees are considered an obligation to CS, and are payable upon termination of participation.
8. In the event a swimmer is going to re-enroll in CS, a reactivation fee of \$25.00 will be charged.
9. Each parent, guardian, and swimmer is responsible for reading and understanding the contents of the Team Handbook.
10. Each parent, guardian, and swimmer will be required to read and abide by the —Parents Code of Conduct, — and —Swimmers Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with the appendices of the team handbook may result in penalty fees and/or expulsion from the team.

I understand and agree to the above terms and conditions of CS exchange for the privilege of my child (ren) to participate in the activities and swim program.

Signature of Parent/Guardian as indicated 2014-15 registration form will stand as agreement to the above conditions.

#### SWIMMER CODE OF CONDUCT

1. The CS rules are to be followed at all times, in all facilities.
2. The consumption or purchase of alcohol, smoking or chewing tobacco, or use of any other illegal drug or substance of any kind is prohibited. Any team member found or suspected to be in the presence of others (regardless of team affiliation) partaking in any of the above activities will be subject to expulsion from the CS team.
3. Disrespectful, indiscreet or destructive behavior will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of each swimmer to make every effort to avoid guilt by association with such activities at any time.
4. Use of proper language is expected at all times.
5. All athletes are expected to treat team members, coaches, staff, and competitors with respect, support, and kindness.
6. Any person guilty of thievery, on and off of Columbia College School campus, will be subject to expulsion from the team.

+

7. Each swimmer is responsible for replacing accidentally lost or damaged equipment.
8. Each swimmer must have the required team gear: swim bag, warm up, T-shirts, caps, suits and equipment as determined by the coaches at the beginning of each swim year. These items can be found at Augusta Swim Supply.
9. All athletes are expected to abide by the dress code determined by the coaching at all practices, competitions, and during team travel.
10. Be on time and prepared for each practice, competition, and team event.
11. ALWAYS represent the team positively in your behavior, appearance, and sportsmanship.

To achieve our goals, we must work together as a team. Those who cannot follow the rules stated above will not be welcome as part of our program. Failure to comply with these codes of conduct may result in financial penalties, suspension or dismissal from CS Team.

Signature of Parent/Guardian as indicated on official 2018-19 registration form will stand as agreement to the above conditions, on behalf of the swimmer.

#### PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Practice teamwork with all parents, swimmers and coaches by supporting the values of Discipline, Loyalty, Commitment and Hard Work.
2. Do not coach or instruct the team or any swimmer at a practice or meet (from the stands or any other area) or interfere with coaches on pool deck.
3. Demonstrate good sportsmanship by conducting oneself in a matter that earns the respect of your child, other swimmers, parents, officials and the coaches at meets and practices.
4. Maintain self-control at all times. Know your role.
  - a. Swimmers - Swim
  - b. Coaches - Coach
  - c. Officials - Officiate
  - d. Parents - Parent
5. Criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials, and/or any participating swimmer will not be permitted or tolerated.
6. Enjoy involvement with CS by supporting the swimmers, coaches and other parents with positive communication and actions.
7. During competitions, questions or concerns regarding decisions made by a meet official are directed to a member of our coaching staff. Parents may address USA Swimming Officials via the coaching staff ONLY.

+

To achieve our goals, we must work together as a team. Those who cannot follow the rules stated above will not be welcome as part of our program. Failure to comply with these codes of conduct may result in suspension or dismissal from CS swim team.

Signature of Parent/Guardian as indicated on the official 2014-15 registration form will stand as agreement to the above conditions.

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 very 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 and as detailed as we possibly could. Before the Meet Starts 1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warmup time begins. This time will be listed in the Meet Announcement and emailed to you by the coach.

2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags and/or sleeping bags. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces.

3. Once "checked in" with Coach, write each event-number on your swimmer's hand, arm, or thigh in ink. This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen for.

4. 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.

5. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the team 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.

6. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.

7. According to USA Swimming Inc. 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.

8. Heat Sheets. A heat sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. Heat sheets generally sell for 2-5 dollars per day. It lists 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 "notime" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event.

### **Meet Starts**

1. It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers he/she is swimming (again, why they should have the numbers on their hand). He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile if the wait is over 45 minutes the swimmer should warm up again.

+

2. A swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker, and he/she will be asked to report to the area behind the starting blocks. Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggle. Generally, girls' events are odd-numbered and boys' events are even-numbered.

3. The announcer or referee will signal the swimmers to get on the starting block with a series of whistles. The Starter will then ask the swimmers to —take their mark|| and a buzzer will sound when to take off. You can expect at least 4-8 heats of each event.

4. The swimmer swims their race.

5. After each swim:

A. He/she is to ask the timers (people behind the blocks at each lane) his/her time then go and cool down immediately.

B. He/she should go immediately to their coach. The coach will ask him/her their time and discuss the swim with each swimmer.

C. Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims: a. Positive comments or praise  
b. Suggestions for improvement  
c. Positive comments

6. Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim if they visit you:

A. Tell him/her how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with them. You need to tell him/her how proud you are and what a great job he/she did.

B. Recommend they go back to sit with the team and relax.

C. This is another good time to revisit the bathrooms, get a drink or something light to eat.

D. The swimmer now waits until his/her next event is called and starts the procedure again.

7. When a swimmer has completed all of his/her events he/she and their parents get to go home. Make sure, however, you, as a parent, check 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 Happens If Your Child Has a Disappointing Swim** If your child has a poor race and comes out of it feeling bad, talk about the good things. The first thing you say is, "Hey that is not like you. You're usually a top swimmer." Then you can go on and talk about the good things the child did. You never talk about the negative things.

If your child comes up to you and says, "That was a bad race, don't tell me it wasn't," there is nothing wrong with a swimmer negatively evaluating a race. The important thing is for the child not to dwell on it. You should move the swimmer on to something good. "All right, you have had a bad race. How do you think you can do better next time?" Immediately start talking about the positive things.

**What to Take To the Meet**

1. Most important: Swim Suit and CS 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. Chairs if allowed.

4. Team shirts/sweatshirts/warm ups: Swimmers and their clothes get very wet and soggy. Even if it is warm out be prepared with dry clothes.

5. Games: travel games, coloring books, books, anything to pass the time.

6. Food: 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.

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

These meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! He/she gets to visit with his/her friends, play games, and meet kids from other teams. He/she also gets to "race" and see how much he/she has improved from all the hard work he/she has put in at practice.

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! That is another great reason to get involved and volunteer in some capacity.

#### **Team Travel Commitment Policy:**

CS swimming team hopes to participate in competitions for which the team provides a Team Travel service. Athletes who elect to Team Travel to any of these competitions will be under the direct supervision of the coaching staff and any designated chaperones from the time the team departs for the competition until the time the team returns from the competition.

This Team Travel service will come at a cost to those who elect to participate. This cost will always cover travel (flight, bus, and/or rental car) and hotel accommodations. It may also cover food expenses and any related meet fees. When coordinating Team Travel, the coaching staff will:

Arrange all travel and hotel accommodations

Provide a Team Travel Commitment Form

Provide a commitment date by which all athletes who wish to Team Travel must turn in the Team Travel Commitment Form to the coaching staff

Provide the estimated cost of Team Travel in advance of the competition

Provide a final cost once all expenses have been finalized

Team members who elect to Team Travel will be required to pay all Team Travel expenses by the date provided on the Team Travel Commitment Form. Members will have the option of 1) Having all Team Travel costs charged to their account, 2) Paying by cash or check. Members who elect to pay by cash or check and fail to do so by the date designated on the Team Travel Commitment Form will have the full cost of Team Travel charged to the account.

+

Team members who qualify for meets such as Junior/Senior Nationals after the Team Travel Commitment Form due date will be given the option to Team Travel understanding that they may incur additional costs because of higher travel expenses.

Members who wish to utilize the Team Travel service but cannot pay the full expense by the designated date must make written arrangements with coaching staff before turning in the Team Travel Commitment Form.

Some competitions qualify for Athlete Support funding from SC Swimming. Only athletes who have been members of SC Swimming for more than one year may qualify for Athlete Support. An Athlete Support Form will be provided for qualifying meets. Athletes applying for Athlete Support and electing to Team Travel must turn in their Athlete Support Form along with their Team Travel Commitment Form.

## GLOSSARY

A Glossary of those strange and wacky words we use in the sport of swimming. Parents! You may or may not find these words in the English Dictionary, and if you do, their definitions will probably be radically different than the ones listed in this Glossary. Relax and take your time reading. Soon you'll be understanding and maybe even speaking some "SWIMSLANG".

A Finals - The top 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. Big Finals is the fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held.

Admission - Certain swim meets charge for spectators to view the meets. These are usually the larger more prestigious meets. Sometimes the meet program (heat sheet) is included in the price of admission.

Age Group - Division of swimmers according to age. The National Age Group divisions are: 10-under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Some LSC's have divided the swimmers into more convenient divisions specific to their situations: (i.e.) 8-under, 13Over, 15-Over, Junior, Senior.

Alternate - In a Prelims/Finals meet, after the finalists are decided, the next two fastest swimmers other than the finalist are designated as alternates. The faster of the 2 being first alternate and the next being second alternate. If a finalist cannot participate, the alternates are called to take their place, often on a moments notice.

Anchor - The final swimmer in a relay.

Approved Meet - Swim meets conducted by organizations (other than USS member clubs or LSC's) that have applied to USS or the local LSC for approval. If approval is granted, swimmers may use times achieved as USS qualifying times. A USS official must be present at all sessions of the meet. Approval does not mean Sanctioned.

ASCA - The American Swim Coaches Association - the professional organization for swim coaches throughout the nation. Certifying coaches and offering many services for coaches' education and career advancement.

+

**Backstroke** - One of the 4 competitive racing strokes, basically any style of swimming on your back. Backstroke is swam as the first stroke in the Medley Relay and second stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds./m., 100 yds./m., and 200 yds./m. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd back)

**Banner** - A team sign that is displayed at swim meets. Banners are usually made from nylon material and carry the Team Logo and possibly the name of a popular team sponsor. Some size restrictions are enforced at certain meets.

**Beep** - The starting sound from an electronic, computerized timing system.

**Bell Lap** - The part of a freestyle distance race (400 meters or longer) when the swimmer has 2 lengths plus 5 yards to go. The starter fires a gun shot over the lane of the lead swimmer when swimmer is at the flags.

**Blocks** - The starting platforms located behind each lane. Some pools have blocks at the deeper end of the pool, and some pools have blocks at both ends. Blocks have a variety of designs and can be permanent or removable.

**Bonus Heat** - The heat held during the finals session of a Prelims/Finals meet, which is slower than the swimmers participating in Big Finals. The Bonus Heat may refer to Consolation Finals or an extra heat in addition to Consolation finals.

**Bottom** - The floor of the pool. Bottom depths are usually marked on the walls or sides of the pool.

**Breaststroke** - One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Breaststroke is swam as the second stroke in the Medley Relay and the third stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds./m, 100 yds./m, and 200 yds./m. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd back)

**Bull Pen** - The staging area where swimmers wait to receive their lane and heat assignments for a swimming event. Area is usually away from the pool and has rows of chairs for the swimmers to sit. The Clerk of the Course is in charge of the Bull Pen.

**Butterfly** - One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Butterfly (nicknamed FLY) is swam as the third stroke in the Medley Relay and first stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yd./m, 100 yd./m, and 200 yd./m. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd back)

**Button** - The manual Timing System stopping device that records a back-up time in case the touch pad malfunctioned. The button is at the end of a wire, plugged into a deck terminal box. There are usually 3 buttons per lane. It is the timers responsibility to push the button as the swimmer finishes the race.

**Cap** - The latex or silicone covering worn on the head of swimmers.

**Cards** - A card that is either handed to the swimmer in the bull pen or given to the timer behind the lane. Cards usually list the swimmers name, seed time, event number, event description, and the lane and heat number the swimmer will swim in. Backup times are written on these cards. Each event has a separate card.

**Championship Meet** - The meet held at the end of a season. Qualification times are usually necessary to enter meet.

+

**Championship Finals** - The top 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals.

**Check-In** The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck seeded meet. Sometimes referred to as positive check in, the swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host.

**Circle Seeding** - A method of seeding swimmers when they are participating in a prelims/finals event. The fastest 18 to 24 swimmers are seeded in the last three heats, with the fastest swimmers being in the inside lanes. See USA Swim rule book for exact method for seeding depending on the lanes in the pool.

**Club** - A registered swim team that is a dues paying member of USA Swimming and the local LSC.

**Code** - A set of rules that have been officially published.

**Code of Ethics** - A Code of Conduct that both swimmers and coaches are required to sign at certain USA/LSC sponsored events. The Code is not strict and involves common sense and proper behavior.

**Colorado** - A brand of automatic timing system used at swim meets.

**Consolation Finals**- After the fastest 6 or 8 swimmers, the next 6 or 8 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. Consolations are the second fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held and are conducted before the Championship heat.

**Course** - Designated distance (length of pool) for swimming competition. Long Course = 50 meters / Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.

**Deadline** - The date meet entries must be "postmarked" by, to be accepted by the meet host. Making the meet deadline does not guarantee acceptance into a meet since many meets are "full" weeks before the entry deadline.

**Deck**- The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches. No one but an "authorized" USA Swimming member may be on the deck during a swim competition or practice.

**Deck Entries** - Accepting entries into swimming events on the first day or later day of a meet.

**Deck Seeding** - Swimmers report to a bull pen or staging area and receive their lane and heat assignments for the events.

**Disqualified** - A swimmers performance is not counted because of a USA Swimming rules infraction. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with open hand above their head.

**Dive** - Entering the water head first. Diving is not allowed during warmups except at the designated time, in specific lanes that are monitored by the swimmers coach.

**Diving Well** - A separate pool or a pool set off to the side of the competition pool. This pool has deeper water and diving boards/platforms. During a meet, this area may be designated as a warm-down pool with proper supervision.

**Division I-II-III** - NCAA member colleges and universities are assigned divisions to compete in, depending on the schools total enrollment.

+

Drag - Resistance created by an extra suit, body hair, or device as part of the training process.

Draw - Random selection by chance.

Dropped Time - When a swimmer goes faster than the previous performance they have "dropped their time".

Dryland - The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.

Dry Side - That part of the Code book (rule book) that deals with the "Administrative" Regulations of Competition.

Dual Meet - Type of meet where two (2) teams/clubs compete against each other.

Entry - An Individual or Relay event list into a swim competition.

Entry Chairperson - The host clubs designated person who is responsible for receiving, and making sure the entries have met the deadline. This person usually will find discrepancies in the meet entries and notify the entering club to correct any errors.

Entry Fees - The amount per event a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the LSC and type of meet.

Entry Limit - Each meet will usually have a limit of total swimmers they can accept, or a time limit they cannot exceed. Once an entry limit has been reached, a meet will be closed and all other entries returned.

Electronic Timing - Timing system operated on DC current (battery). The timing system usually has touchpads in the water, junction boxes on the deck with hook up cables, buttons for backup timing, and a computer type console that prints out the results of each race. Some systems are hooked up to a scoreboard that displays swimmers time.

Eligible to compete - The status of a member swimmer that means they are registered and have met all the requirements.

Equipment - The items necessary to operate a swim practice or conduct a swim competition.

Event - This is a label for a race over a given distance. An event equals one preliminary race with a final to be swum at another session, or 1 timed final.

False Start - When a swimmer flinches or leaves the starting block before the horn or gun. One false start will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team.

Fastest to Slowest - A seeding method used on the longer events held at the end of a session. The fastest seeded swimmers participate in the first heats followed by the next fastest and so on. Many times these events will alternate one girls heat and one boys heat until all swimmers have competed.

Fees - Money paid by swimmers for services. Practice fees, registration fee, USA membership fee, etc.

FINA - The international, rules making organization, for the sport of swimming.

Finals - The final race of each event.

+

Final Results - The printed copy of the results of each race of a swim meet.

Fine - The monetary penalty assessed a swimmer or club when a swimmer does not achieve the necessary time required to swim in an event, and cannot prove they have done the time previously.

Flags - The colored pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool approximately 15 feet from the wall.

Format -The order of events and type of swim meet being conducted.

Freestyle - One of the 4 competitive racing strokes. Freestyle (nicknamed Free) is swam as the fourth stroke in the Medley Relay and fourth stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yds./m, 100 yds./m, 200 yds./m, 400 m/500 yds. 800 m/1000 yds., 1500 m/1650 yds. (LSC's with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd free)

Gallery - The viewing area for spectators during the swimming competition.

Goals - The short and long range targets for swimmers to aim for.

Goggles - Glasses type devices worn by swimmers to keep their eyes from being irritated by the chlorine in the water.

Handbook - A reference manual published by teams/clubs and LSC's or other swimming organizations.

Heats - A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by swimmers time swam, after all heats of the event are completed.

Heat Award - A ribbon or prize given to the winner of a single heat at an age group swim meet.

Heat Sheet - The pre-meet printed listings of swimmers seed times in the various events at a swim meet. These sheets vary in accuracy, since the coaches submit swimmers times many weeks before the meet. Heat sheets are sold at the admissions table and are used mainly to make sure the swimmer has been properly entered in all the events they signed up for. Parents enjoy looking at the seeding prior to the race plus swimmers can tell the order the events will be conducted and get a rough idea how long the meet sessions will last.

High Point - An award given to the swimmer scoring the most points in a given age group at a swim meet. All meets do not offer high point awards; check the pre meet information.

Illegal - Doing something against the rules that is cause for disqualification in a race.

IM - Individual Medley. A swimming event using all 4 of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle. Equal distances must be swum of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yds., 200 yds./m, 400 yds./m.

Insurance - USA Swimming Inc. offers "accident insurance coverage" which is automatic when swimmer, coach, official, pays their USS membership fee. Many restrictions apply so check with your club for detailed information.

Interval - A specific elapsed time for swimming or rest used during swim practice.

Invitational - Type of meet that requires a club to request an invitation to attend the meet.

+

Jump - An illegal start done by the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th member of a relay team. The swimmer on the block breaks contact with the block before the swimmer in the water touches the wall.

Jr. Nationals - A USA National Championship meet for swimmers 18 years old or less. Qualification times are necessary. National Meets are conducted both short course (in April) and long course (in August).

Kick Board - A flotation device used by swimmers during practice.

Lane - The specific area in which a swimmer is assigned to swim.

Lane Lines - Continuous floating markers attached to a cable stretched from the starting end to the turning end for the purpose of separating each lane and quieting the waves caused by racing swimmers.

Lap - One length of the course. Sometimes may also mean down and back (2 lengths) of the course.

Lap Counter - The large numbered cards (or the person turning the cards) used during the freestyle events 500 yards or longer. Counting is done from the end opposite the starting end. The numbers on the cards are "odd numbers" only with the final lap being designated by a bright orange card.

Late Entries - Meet entries from a club or individual that is received by the meet host after the entry deadline. These entries are usually not accepted and are returned to sender.

Leg - The part of a relay event swam by a single team member.

Length - The extent of the competitive course from end to end.

Long Course - A 50 meter pool.

LSC - Local Swim Committee. The local level administrative division of USA Swimming, Inc. with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by USA Swim.

Mark - The command to take your starting position on the block.

Marshal - The adult(s) who control the crowd and swimmer flow at a swim meet.

Medals - Awards given to the swimmers at selected meets. They vary in size and design and method of presentation.

Meet - A series of events held in one program.

Meet Director - The official in charge of the administration of the meet.

Mile - The slang term referring to the 1500 meter or the 1650 yard freestyle, both of which are slightly short of a mile.

NAGTS - National Age Group Time Standards - the list of "C" through "AAAA" times published each year.

Nationals - USA senior or junior level meets conducted in March/April and August. See Senior or Junior Nationals.

Natorium - A building constructed for the purpose of housing a swimming pool and related equipment.

NCAA - National Collegiate Athletic Association

+

Non-Conforming Time - A short course time submitted to qualify for a long course meet, or vice versa.

Novice - A beginner or someone who does not have experience.

NT - No Time. The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swam that event before.

Officials - The USA Swimming certified, adult volunteers, who operate the many facets of a swim competition.

Olympic Trials - The USA sanctioned long course swim meet held the year of the Olympic Games to decide what swimmers will represent the USA on our Olympic Team. Qualification times are faster than Senior Nationals.

OT - Official Time. The swimmers event time recorded to one hundredth of a second (.01).

OTC - Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Open Competition - Competition which any qualified club, organization, or individual may enter.

Parka - Large 3/4 length fur lined coats worn by swimmers. Usually are in team colors with logo or team name.

Pace Clock - The large clocks with highly visible numbers positioned at the ends or sides of a swimming pool so the swimmers can read their times during warmups or swim practice.

Paddle - Colored plastic devices worn on the swimmers hands during swim practice.

Positive Check - In The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck seeded or pre seeded meet. The swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host.

Practice - The scheduled workouts a swimmer attends with their swim team/club.

Prelims - Session of a Prelims/Finals meet in which the qualification heats are conducted.

Prelims-Finals - Type of meet with two sessions. The preliminary heats are usually held in the morning session. The fastest 6 or 8 (Championship Heat) swimmers and the next fastest 6 or 8 swimmers (Consolation Heat) return in the evening to compete in the Finals. A swimmer who has qualified in the Consolation Finals may not place in the Championship Finals even if their finals time would place them so. The converse also applies.

Pre-seeded - A meet conducted without a bull pen in which a swimmer knows what lane and heat they are in by looking at the Meet heat sheet, or posted meet program.

Proof of Time - An official meet result or other accepted form. Swimmers/Coaches must supply proof of time with some meet entries, and other meets it is not required unless a swimmer misses a cut of time at the meet.

Psych Sheet - This booklet lists the swimmers in a meet based on fastest to slowest in each event.

Pull Buoy - A flotation device used for pulling by swimmers in practice.

+

Qualifying Times - Published times necessary to enter certain meets, or the times necessary to achieve a specific category of swimmer.

Ready Room - A room pool side for the swimmers to relax before they compete in finals.

Referee - The head official at a swim meet in charge of all of the "Wet Side" administration and decisions.

Registered - Enrolled and paid as a member of USA Swimming and the LSC – Florida Swimming.

Relays - A swimming event in which 4 swimmers participate as a relay team each swimmer swimming an equal distance of the race. There are two types of relays: 1.) Medley relay - One swimmer swims Backstroke, one swimmer swims Breaststroke, one swimmer swims Butterfly, one swimmer swims Freestyle, in that order. 2.) Freestyle relay - Each swimmer swims freestyle.

Rest Area - A designated area (such as a gymnasium) that is set aside for swimmers to rest during a meet.

Ribbons - Awards in a variety of sizes, styles, and colors, given at certain swim meets.

Sanction - A permit issued by an LSC to a USA Swimming registered team to conduct an event or meet.

Sanction Fee - The amount paid by a USA Swimming registered team to an LSC for issuing a sanction.

Scratch - To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if not followed, swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events.

Seed - Assign the swimmers heats and lanes according to their submitted or preliminary times.

Seeding Deck Seeding - swimmers are called to report to the Clerk of the Course. After scratches are determined, the event is seeded. Pre Seeding - swimmers are arranged in heats according to submitted times, usually a day prior to the meet.

Senior - Any swimmer over the age of 14.

Senior Meet - A meet that is for senior level swimmers and is not divided into age groups. Qualification times are usually necessary and will vary depending on the level of the meet.

Senior Nationals - A USA National Championship swim meet for swimmers achieving qualifying times. National Meets are conducted both short course (in April) and long course (in August).

Session - Portion of meet distinctly separated from other portions by locale, time, type of competition, or age group.

Shave - The process of removing all arms, legs, and exposed torso hair, to decrease the "drag" or resistance of the body moving through the water. Only recommended for certain senior swimmers.

Short Course - A 25 yard or 25 meter pool.

Splash - USA Swimming Inc. newsletter that is mailed bi-monthly to members.

+

**Split** - A portion of an event, shorter than the total distance that is timed. Stations Separate portions of a dryland or weight circuit.

**Start** - The beginning of a race. The dive used to begin a race.

**Starter** - The official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have a fair takeoff.

**Still Water** - Water that has no current caused by a filter system or no waves caused by swimmers.

**State** - A meet held twice a year (Short Course and Long Course) sponsored by the LSC. It is common to hold a Championship Senior meet and Age Group meet separately. Qualification times are usually necessary.

**State Qualifier** - A swimmer who has made the necessary cut off times to enter the State meet.

**Stand-up** - The command given by the Starter or Referee to release the swimmers from their starting position.

**Step-Down** - The command given by the Starter or Referee to have the swimmers step off the blocks. Usually this command is a good indication everything is not right for the race to start.

**Stroke** - There are 4 competitive strokes: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle.

**Stroke Judge** - The official positioned at the side of the pool, walking the length of the course as the swimmers race. If the Stroke Judge sees something illegal, they report to the referee and the swimmer may be disqualified.

**Submitted Time** - Times used to enter swimmers in meets. These times must have been achieved by the swimmer at previous meets.

**Suit** - The racing uniform worn by the swimmer, in the water, during competition.

**Swim-off** - In a Prelims/Finals type competition, a race after the scheduled event to break a tie. The only circumstance that warrants a swim-off is to determine which swimmer makes finals or an alternate, otherwise ties stand.

**Taper** - The resting phase of a senior swimmer at the end of the season before the championship meet.

**Team USA** - Swimming registered club that has the right to compete for points.

**Team Records** - The statistics a team keeps, listing the fastest swimmer in the clubs history for each age group/each event.

**Timed Finals** - Competition in which only heats are swum and final placing is determined by those times.

**Timer** - The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks/finish end of pool, who are responsible for getting watch times on events and activating the backup buttons for the timing system.

**Time Standard** - A time set by a meet, LSC, or USA Swimming that a swimmer must achieve for qualification or recognition.

+

**Time Trial** - An event or series of events where a swimmer may achieve or better a required time standard.

**Top 10** - A list of times compiled by the LSC or USA Swimming that recognizes the top number of swimmers (boys & girls) in each event and distance.

**Touch Out** - To reach the touchpad and finish first in a close race.

**Touch Pad** - The removable plates (on the end of pools) that are connected to an automatic timing system. A swimmer must properly touch the touchpad to register an official time in a race.

**Transfer** - The act of leaving one club or LSC and going to another. Usually 120 days of unattached competition is required before swimmer can represent another USA Swimming club.

**Trophy** - Type of award given to teams and swimmers at certain meets.

**Unattached** - An athlete member who competes, but does not represent a club or team until the 120 days have passed since representing another team.

**Uniform** - The various parts of clothing a swimmer wears at a meet. (Parka, Warm up outfit, swim bag, bathing suits, cap, goggles, T-shirts, etc.)

**Unofficial Time** - The time displayed on a read out board or read over the intercom by the announcer immediately after the race. After the time has been checked, it will become the official time.

**USA Swimming Inc.** - The governing body of USA swimming.

**USA Swim Number** - A 14 digit identification assigned to a swimmer after they have registered and paid their annual dues. The swimmers date of birth, then first three letters of swimmers first name, middle initial, then last four letters of last name.

**Watch** - The hand held device used by timers and coaches for timing a swimmers races and taking splits.

**Whistle** - The sound a starter/referee makes to signal for quiet before they give the command to start the race.

**Yardage** - The distance a swimmer races or swims in practice. Total yardage can be calculated for each practice session.

**Zones** - The country is divided up into 4 major zones: Eastern - Southern - Central - Western. At the end of the long course season (in August) the Zone Administration sponsors a championship age group meet.