



## Welcome to Socal Aquatics Swim Team

The Coaching Staff and Board of Directors wish to welcome you and your child(ren) to an enriching personal and family activity. Socal coaches want to help each swimmer become proficient in all four competitive swim strokes plus proper starting and turning techniques. We consider competition to be healthy when handled in an intelligent manner and we consider it to be very important for swimmers to enjoy day-to-day training.

We teach our members that it is fun to challenge the body and the mind to find our limits without regard to rewards. Our overall goal is to provide an opportunity for each and every swimmer to progress as far as they are able, whether this means a best time or an Olympic Gold Medal. We look forward to helping your children become excellent and safe swimmers.

## Philosophy

The focus of Socal Aquatics are our swimmers and competitive swimming. Socal Aquatics is a non-profit (IRS 501-C-3 classification) organization dedicated to the instruction and training in the skills of swimming. Although competitive swimming represents a major commitment of time and energy, on the part of both the participant and his or her family, we feel that there are many rewards, including health promotion, the joy of winning, the strength in losing, social contacts and the excitement of competition and travel.

In addition, the values of personal integrity and commitment, as well as achievement through dedicated work and goal setting are highlighted. We hope that such activities will be both enjoyable and educational and will leave a legacy that will benefit your child for a lifetime. For swimming is a lifelong sport. Although many Socal swimmers possess the goal that they become proficient enough to represent the United States in National and International competitions, the Club strives to recognize the needs of all participants in such a way that everyone involved may fully realize their greatest potential as a swimmer.

## Communications

Our Website, [www.socalaquatics.com](http://www.socalaquatics.com), is available to all members of the club and general public. The website lists the names of the Coaching Staff and Board of Directors, lists accomplishments of our swimmers, contains information about upcoming meets and events, reviews important business matters pertinent to the Club, and frequently has newsworthy items from the coaches and board members. The website is our hub for team communications. You may email the coaches (see Coaches page), billing department ([billing@socalaquatics.com](mailto:billing@socalaquatics.com)) and all other questions ([Updates@socalaquatics.com](mailto:Updates@socalaquatics.com)) directly from the website.

## The Coaching Staff

The Coaching Staff includes one Head Coach and several assistant coaches hired by the Head Coach. Coaching Staff members are remarkable in their skill, knowledge and dedication to our swimmers. It is, therefore, important to understand their coaching philosophy and give them your support. The Coaching Staff has outlined the following guidelines for your benefit. Always feel free to contact your coach at appropriate times if any questions or concerns arise with respect to you, your swimmer or your family's participation in Socal.

Head coach is responsible for:

- Setting workout schedules
- Setting workout groups
- Determining the team's meet schedule
- Scheduling coaches at team meets
- Designing or overseeing season training plans for all groups
- Discipline as it pertains to our swimmers while representing the Team.
- Educating and supervising all coaches
- Hiring/Dismissal of coaches
- Providing monthly reports to the Board of Directors
- Attending appropriate USA Swimming meetings
- Disbursing meet information and results

## Socal Aquatics Team Handbook



In addition to the responsibilities listed above, all of Socal's coaches are committed to helping children develop healthy attitudes towards swimming, competition, and being a great contributor to the strength of our Team.

### Parental Responsibilities

Socal Aquatics is a club run by parent volunteers for our children. As an activity that is very "labor-intensive," you can expect as a parent to donate a portion of your time to Socal activities, including, but not limited to, participation in local and team hosted swim meets. It is therefore essential that all parents participate fully and share in the responsibilities associated with being a "swim club parent."

- Parents are responsible for supporting our Club's attendance policies and for providing transportation to and from swim practices and meets.
- Parents are responsible for running, and staffing all Socal hosted swim meets. Some of the jobs associated with holding a meet are set-up (& tear down), food service (snack bar), safety marshalling, timing, runner, computer, hospitality, results and awards, and records. (*See Swim Meet Contract*)
- Parents are responsible for working as timers at all meets.
- Parents/swimmers are responsible for registering for each swim meet in a timely and appropriate manner.
- Parents leave stroke and race analysis to the coaches. Coaches welcome inquiries about your swimmer's progress at mutually agreed upon times.
- Parents are responsible for paying the club annual and swim team fees in a timely manner. (*See Service Fees Contract*).
- Parents are responsible for participating in the club fundraising projects.

### Don't Pay a Therapist... Be a Timer!

Although it's every parent's responsibility to be a timer for at least one shift at each swim meet, "veteran" timers know some secrets about the experience that need to be disclosed (and these apply to other swim meet tasks!). Some of the benefits of fulfilling this responsibility include:

- You get a great seat! You really see the power and beauty of swimming.
- During the swim season you begin to readily recognize Socal swimmers as well as the swimmer-athletes from other teams. You get to know them, share in their improvements, and become more aware of the efforts they make. There is a good chance you may time a future Olympian if you achieve enough experience!
- You get basic needs met! The home team feeds you, shelters you from the bright sun, and you occasionally receive a cooling splash from starts, flip turns and finishes.
- Your swimmer observes your commitment in fulfilling swimmer-parent responsibility. Children learn values and behavior from adult modeling. In fulfilling your timing responsibility, you demonstrate cooperation and responsibility. Your effort in making yourself available on your own initiative is indeed noticed!
- You get to know other parents ... and this is one of the best benefits of all! Parents can "network" and become acquainted while timing. Conversations tend to be personable and practical. You expand your understanding of competitive swimming and learn how other families have adapted to the rigors of competitive swimming!
- Please sign up for your timing assignment prior to the start of the meet.



## Team Member Guidelines

- ❖ Socal members should consider themselves to be ambassadors representing our great club, community and the sport of swimming. With this in mind, conduct should be exemplary at meets, practices and other team functions.
- ❖ The Coaching Staff sets a great example to our athletes regarding the respect of both teammates and facilities and therefore takes a proactive stance on discipline. In the rare occurrence that behavior matters are deemed serious enough by the Coaching Staff, they may contact parent.
- ❖ General training rule: Come to the pool to improve your swimming, training, racing, and you will improve.
- ❖ Follow all pool and school safety rules. (*See Safety Rules*)
- ❖ Bring all necessary training equipment to every practice. (*See Team Apparel/Equipment*)
- ❖ Parent contact with the coach should be made a minimum of 15 minutes prior to or after scheduled practice sessions. Please contact the coach via email if this time does not work for your schedule.
- ❖ The coach has the final determination in selecting the events your swimmer(s) will swim in a particular meet.
- ❖ The Coaching Staff will determine all relay entries (please note that relay selections may involve factors other than "best" times).
- ❖ The coach will make the final decision in any "scratches" from event(s) during the course of a meet.
- ❖ We are a Speedo-sponsored team so swimmers must wear designated **black/yellow** Lycra Speedo Suit with Socal Logo and team caps for competition. Technical suits may be worn at senior level championship meets only. Please save team suits and cap for meets only. Suits and caps are available for purchase. (*See Team Apparel/Equipment*).

## Tips on Workouts

A good performance does not depend solely upon the desire to do well. As in any undertaking, a person needs the background and tools (mentally and physically) to do the job well. Swim practice sessions are therefore designed for the betterment of swimmers. Regardless of the kind of workout, each session can be strenuous depending upon the participant's effort.

The workouts are also designed to teach stroke and turn techniques. Merely swimming a number of lengths does not guarantee development - it is what the swimmer does when he or she is present at the session that counts.

A workout is the specific swim practice drills and distance given to the swimmers to accomplish each day. "It involves training daily, weekly, monthly and yearly. Consistent training is difficult as well as satisfying and it is essential. To gain the necessary benefit from such training, consistency is essential; a novice swimmer should practice no more than three (3) times per week. Older age-group swimmers should practice as directed by the coaching staff.

As the swimmer progresses through the age group system, the workouts become harder and more extensive. The Coaching Staff determines the appropriate workout group for each swimmer.

A typical workout starts with warm-up. Each swimmer will be thoroughly and carefully warmed up before the workout begins. After warm-up, the swimmers are given a series (depending on ability and strength) of swims to swim on specified time intervals. These are called "sets". During these sets, the swimmers may be asked to kick for so many meters/yards or do stroke technique work, which are called "drills." There is usually a definite pattern to workouts, which build toward certain meets with "tapers," a period just before the meet when workouts lessen in order for swimmers to rest, literally supercharging their muscles. Athletes should never taper or rest themselves by not attending practice before a meet.



## **Additional Competitive Guidelines**

You have done a great deal to raise your child. Your child is a product of your values, the structure you have provided and the role model you have been. Human nature is such that a person loses some of the ability to remain objective in matters concerning one's own child. The following guidelines are designed to help keep your child's progress in proper perspective:

1. Every individual learns at different rates and responds differently to the various methods of presenting the skills. Coaches and parents must exercise patience and remember that a swimmer's ultimate success is achieved through complete development, regardless of speed of learning.
2. It is possible for a swimmer's performance to initially decline or plateau when he/she first joins a new practice group or when experiencing physical changes that may occur when becoming a young adult. In the case of the younger swimmers this is likely due to the emphasis placed on the development of stroke technique. The learning of these motor skills, which are the basis for later improvement, takes a great deal of the swimmer's attention to master. In senior groups this decline in performance can occur due to the adjustment of the muscles to an increased demand of work, which then leads to greater improvement in the long run.
3. Plateaus can occur at any time in a swimmer's career. It is important to realize that plateaus occur in all areas of human motor learning. The most successful athletes know how to work through these occasional delays.
4. Ten (10) and under swimmers can be the most inconsistent swimmers, and this can be frustrating for parents, coaches and swimmers alike! We must be patient and permit these youngsters to have fun and learn to appreciate the sport.
5. Moderate development of 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, develop spirit and adapt to reasonable (but not undue) levels of stress.
6. It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to provide support, encouragement, and recognition.
7. Since children pick up attitudes, either consciously or subconsciously from their parents, it is important for parents to be enthusiastic about taking their swimmer to practices, meets, fundraising events, meetings, etc.
8. Any questions concerning your child's training or team policies should be directed to the coach at an appropriate time. Criticizing the coach in front of any athlete breaks the swimmer-coach rapport necessary for maximum success.
9. No parent should behave in such a way as to bring discredit to the child, the coaching staff, the club, other swimmers, or competitive swimming.
10. Be sure your child swims because he or she wants to. People resist anything they "have to do." Self-motivation is the long-term stimulus for all successful swimmers.
11. Promote sportsmanship and goodwill during competition. Avoid comparing your child to other competitors, thereby creating unnecessary distress. Recall that the word, "competition," comes from the Latin "com petere," which means roughly "work together."
12. Keep in mind that parental attitudes and behavior toward competition have an important effect on the child. In swimming, as in life, character is built and lessons are learned by both winning and losing. Every youngster can gain from his experience in competitive swimming through the pursuit of excellence. Our goal is not only to produce great swimmers, but also to produce great people who swim.

## **How to Enter a Meet**

Two weeks prior to an upcoming meet, meet information will be posted on the Team website. The swimmer's coach may indicate the events that should be entered. Please read the meet sheet carefully - it will indicate the type of meet, the location, the date(s), and the fee information. Please complete your swimmer(s) entry on our website. Fees will automatically be added to your account.

Most meets limit the total number of swimmers so an early submission of the entry is necessary. Getting your entries done online by the deadline is important because the coaching staff also has a deadline for submitting the team entry. (*See Swim Meet Helpful Tips*)



## USA Swim Registration

All Socal swimmers must register with USA Swimming. This includes presentation of a birth certificate and payment of a fee. A specific USA Swimming form is required and may be obtained from any coach. Registered swimmers receive a registration number that is required for submitting meet entries. USA Swimming registration must be renewed annually every November. A fee will appear on your November bill.

## What Is USA Swimming?

USA Swimming is the national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. The USA Swimming Headquarter office, located at the Olympic Training Center, was established in Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1981.

As the National Governing Body for the sport, USA Swimming is responsible for the conduct and administration of swimming in the United States. In this capacity, USA Swimming formulates the rules, implements policies and procedures, conducts the national championships, disseminates safety and sports medicine information and selects the athletes to represent the United States in international competition.

### USA Swimming is organized as follows:

*International* - The international federation for aquatic sports is the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA). USA Swimming is affiliated with FINA through United States Aquatic Sports (USAS).

*National* - USA Swimming is a group A member of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and has voting representation in the USOC House of Delegates.

*Local* - Within the United States, USA Swimming is divided into fifty-nine (59) Local Swimming Committees (LSC), each one responsible for administering USA Swimming activities in a defined geographical area.

*Southern California Swimming* - (SCS) is the largest Local Swimming Committee (LSC) in USA Swimming. SCS stretches from Paso Robles to San Clemente to Las Vegas. SCS is the membership and sanctioning body for USA Swimming and is organized into 4 sections. Socal Aquatics belongs to the Orange Section of SCS.

## Classes of Competition

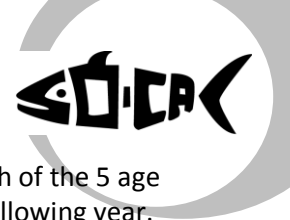
*(Please consult the (SCS) Website for specifics-SCS link available on the Socal website)*

In order to equalize the competition, swimmers are divided by age group and gender. The age groups are currently classified in two year blocks: ages 5-6, 7-8 (usually grouped as 8 & under); 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, and 17-18 (usually grouped as 15 & up). Senior swimming is a step beyond age group competition and is normally structured for those at or close to national championship levels.

Age group skill classifications range from White to Sectional levels. Advancements are determined by meeting nationally established time standards at sanctioned meets. Such time standards are revised and published annually in the Southern California Swimming Swim Guide.

Brief descriptions of various time standards are provided below:

- White Beginning level for all age group swimmers.
- Red Begins with the 8 & under age group swimmers who meet the minimum time standard to qualify.
- Blue Begins with the 8 & under age group swimmers who meet the (higher) minimum time standard to qualify.
- JAG/WAG June Age Group and Winter Age Group Championship Meets. Begins with the 10 & under age group and goes up to the 17-18 age group (5 age groups). Swimmers must meet the minimum time standards to attend these meets
- Junior Olympic (JO's) - Junior Olympics. An age group championship meet conducted by the LSC.
- NACC- This is an elite Southern California Swimming All-Star Team that competes against Canada, Mexico, and another invited LSC from the USA. Begins with the 10 & under age group and goes up to the 17-18 age group (5 age groups). The time standards for this meet (held in rotation: USA, Canada, Mexico) vary from year to year so that SCS can put together the most competitive team possible. Further information on this competition can be found on the SCS website([www.socalswim.org](http://www.socalswim.org))



- SCSRT Southern California Swimming Reportable Time - Top 16 swimmers in each event, in each of the 5 age groups, for each sex (10&U, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18) make up the qualifying times for the following year.
- NRT National Reportable Time – Top 16 swimmers in each event (same as SCSRT but for the whole nation). SCS athletes that are ranked in the national top 16 are invited to the annual banquet.
- Senior Meets are all classified as “Open” events.  
Open Available for 11 & over age group swimmers who meet the minimum time standards that are set by SCS and USA Swimming annually. "Open" events are sometimes part of age group competition where all swimmers, ages 11 & over swim together based on entry time. The following is a list of USA Swimming Open Senior Events, in order from the least to the most challenging qualifying times:
  1. Senior Development
  2. Senior “Q”
  3. Sectional Champs
  4. Junior Nationals
  5. Senior Nationals
  6. U.S. Open
  7. World Championships (every 2 years) and Olympic Trials (held every 4 years)
- Masters Available to swimmers 19 years and older, who want to participate in an organized, coached swim program for health & fitness, and / or for competition.  
All masters meets are sanctioned by United States Masters Swimming (USMS) nationally, and Southern Pacific Masters Association (SPMA) regionally.

## Types of Meets

The most common type of meets and are usually categorized as White, Red , Blue , Invite and JO levels. The color or name categories indicate the minimum time standards required for entry and they are normally sanctioned by Southern California Swimming (SCS).

## USA Swimming unique ID number for all members

Every member of USA Swimming is given a unique ID number that will rarely, if ever, change. This number is issued to athlete and non-athlete members. The ID number will be easy for you to remember: your date of birth (mmdyy), the first three letters of your legal first name, the first letter of your middle name, and the first four letters of your last name. If your first or last names don't have enough letters (or you don't have a middle name), a \* will be used to fill in the blanks- Here are some examples:

Rose A. Buchman, born 05/16/78 051678ROSABUCH

Thomas O'Neal, born 09/12/65 091265THO\*ONEA

Ty H. Ng, born 04/05/80 040580TY\*HNG\*\*

If Rose prefers to be called "Sissy", the registration procedure will accommodate her. Her membership card will be issued with her preferred name and she will be entered in meets as Sissy Buchman.

Once assigned, your ID number should never change. What is crucial is that, once assigned, your ID is unique across the entire USA Swimming membership. It is therefore very important that you provide accurate information on your registration form for your new unique ID number. It is also very important that you remember your new ID number and always include it on forms when asked to do so. If there is a duplicate number, which should be rarely, USA Swimming's computer will let USA Swimming know and they will change the number of the second individual. If this happens to you, USA Swimming will send you a new membership card as well as notify your registration chair and swim club.

## The Competition

Each swim meet offers a variety of events and distances depending on the age group and classification (see "age group swimming" in the glossary). Usually, each swimmer may enter up to four individual events per day in a timed finals meet, or up to three individual events at a prelims and finals meet.

## Strokes

Freestyle: The competitor may swim any stroke he/she wishes. The usual stroke used is the "crawl"; the alternate overhand motion of the arms and an alternating up-and-down flutter kick characterizes -which.



**Backstroke:** The swimmer must stay on his /her back at all times, except at the turn. The usual stroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick.

**Butterfly:** Is perhaps the most beautiful stroke. It features a simultaneous overhand stroke of the arms combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissors or use the breaststroke kick. The butterfly was developed in the early 1950's as a variation of the breaststroke. It became an Olympic stroke in 1956 in Melbourne. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously.

**Breaststroke:** It is perhaps, one of the most difficult strokes to master. It requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pulled from the breast in a heart-shaped pattern and recovered under or over the surface of the water. The kick is a synchronized, somewhat circular motion, similar to the action of a frog. No flutter, scissors or dolphin kick is permitted. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously.

**Individual Medley:** It is commonly referred to as the "IM," and features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke, and finally freestyle.

**Medley Relay:** All four strokes are swum. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second, breaststroke, the third, butterfly, and the final swimmer, the freestyle.

**Freestyle Relay:** This event consists of four freestylers, each swimming one quarter of the total distance of the event.

**Starts and Turns:** Many races are won or lost by the swimmer's performance in the start and turn. In the start, the swimmers are asked to step up onto the starting blocks (or into the water for backstroke) by the blow of one long whistle. The starter then commands the field to "take your mark." When all swimmers are set (motionless) the starting horn is sounded to start the race. If the starter feels that one of the swimmers has moved, left early or obtained an unfair advantage, the race will be recalled. Under USA Swimming rules, one false start disqualifies the swimmer.

**The Course:** Competition pools may be "short course" (25 yards or meters), or "long course" (50 meters). The International standards used in the Olympics is 50 meters. USA Swimming maintains records for 25 yards, 25 meters and 50 meters.

**Hydration:** Everyone (coaches and parents) should take an active role in seeing that the swimmers learn and support proper hydrated methods throughout their training and competition days. For an article on proper hydration: see the team website, under *About*.

**Fees:** *See Service Fees Contract*

### **Fundraising**

Our team does not do any official fundraising (i.e. Selling of products etc.)

1. Socal funds its activities from two main sources. The first source is the yearly registration and monthly dues you have agreed to pay. The second source is the hosting of three to four swim meets per year. (*See Parent Responsibilities Above*)
2. We also have an annual Swim-A-Thon, where swimmers collect pledges to swim a number of laps. The impact of this event is evident on the swimmers faces when they discover how many laps they can actually do in a 2 hour period. This also generates some revenue for the team.



### Glossary of Terms

**Age Group Swimming:** The program through which USS provides fair and open competition for its younger members. It is designed to encourage maximum participation, provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning, and develop a rich base of swimming talent.

**Block:** The starting platform.

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

**Buttons –** Also called “pickles.” Buttons are a direct line to the fully automatic timing system usually used at meets. When pushed by “timers” upon a swimmer’s finishing a race, they send signals to stop the clock. For the most accurate time possible, three “timers” with three buttons are used per lane and times are averaged.

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

**Coach:** A person who trains and teaches athletes in the sport of swimming.

**Code of Conduct:** An agreement signed by a swimmer prior to travel stating that the swimmer will abide by certain behavioral guidelines.

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

**D.Q:** Disqualified. This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind: e.g., freestyle kick in butterfly competition. A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive awards, nor can the time be used as an official time.

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

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

**False Start:** Occurs when a swimmer is moving at the start. In USA Swimming, one false start will result in disqualification.

**Final:** The championship heat(s) of an event in which the top six or eight swimmers from the preliminaries compete, depending on number of lanes in the pool.

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

**Flags:** Backstroke flags placed 5 yards (short course) or 5 meters (long course) from the end of the pool. They enable the backstrokers to execute a backstroke turn or finish more efficiently by counting their strokes from the flags to the wall.

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

**IM:** Acronym for the Individual Medley, an event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle.



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**Lap Counter:** A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race (500, 1000, 1650 yards or 800, 1500 meters). The person who counts for the swimmer is stationed at the opposite end from the start.

**Long Course(LC):** A pool 50 meters in length. USA Swimming conducts most of its summer competition in long course.

**LSC:** Local Swimming Committee. Governing body for swimming on a regional level.

**National Age Group Time Standards:** Time standards derived from the previous years' results that are broken down by age and sex as well as B, A, and AA divisions. These designations are NATIONAL and may be used for entry or qualifying purposes. Many LSCs have their own standards as well.

**National Age Group Top 16 Times:** Time standards set for both short and long course based on previous year's achievements. Only times meeting these standards may be submitted for consideration each year.

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

**Pace Clock:** Large clock, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice.

**Prelims:** Short for preliminaries, also called Heats or Trials. Races in which swimmers qualify for the finals in the events.

**Relay:** An event in which 4 swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

**Scratch:** To withdraw from an event in a competition.

**Senior Swimming:** The program through which USA Swimming provides fair and open competition in National Swimming Championships. It is designed to afford maximum opportunity for participation, provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning and develop a pool of talented athletes for International Competition. There are no age restrictions on Senior competition.

**Short Course(SC):** A pool 25 yards or 25 meters in length. USA Swimming conducts most of its fall and winter competition in short course.

**Split:** A swimmer's intermediate time in a race. Splits can be taken every lap and are used to determine if a swimmer is on record pace. Under certain conditions, splits may also be used as official times. In a relay, a split is the time for one of the four individuals. *Negative split* means the second half of the race was faster than the first half and *even split* means times were equal.

**Sprint(s):** At meets, describes the shorter events (50 and 100 meters or yards).

**Streamline:** The position used to gain maximum distance during a start and/or push-off from the wall in which the swimmer's body is as tight and tall as it can be.

**Time Trial:** A time-only swim that is not part of a regular meet, typically swum between heats.



### SAFETY INFORMATION

Use of the Tustin High School pool is a privilege. Therefore we must follow all facility safety rules and strive to leave the facility in order at the end of the practice.

#### Facility Safety Rules:

1. Spectators must stay in the bleachers or on the bleacher side of the pool.
2. Swimmers need to stay **off all pool equipment**; cover reels, lane line's lifeguard stands and water polo goals.
3. Swimmers need to stay out of the pool office and weight room unless in the company of a coach.
4. Swimmers must be under the direct supervision of a parent or coach when using the locker rooms. Lockers are for high school use only. Swimmers should limit showers to 5 minutes. Please leave the locker rooms and bathrooms clean.
5. Food and treats should be eaten outside the pool facility.
6. **Always walk.**
7. Always enter the pool feet first unless instructed to dive by a coach.
8. Never stand or hang on the lanelines.
9. Obey all send off times and do not crowd swimmers in front of you.
10. Swimmers must refrain from pushing or pulling each other into the pool.
11. Always wear shoes to and from workout.
12. Children on the deck, other than swimmers, must be under the direct supervision of a parent.
13. Swimmers should wait inside the pool fence for pickup. No swimmers outside the pool deck waiting for ride. Coaches cannot see kids outside the fence.



## Swim Meet Helpful Tips

**Parents** – welcome to the world of competitive swimming. This is a list of helpful tips and hints we parents have encountered during our swim meet experiences. We hope it will make things a bit easier for you and your swimmer.

### What to wear/bring:

**CAP:** Swimmers need to wear a Socal Cap (provided)

**Suit:** Should be a Socal Team suit or all black suit. If they decide to continue competing in swim meets, we can get them outfitted in the proper team suit.

**Extra goggles/extra cap/extra suit:** You never know when things will break.

**Warm ups:** For winter or colder months- bring lots of war clothing (sweats, jackets, snow boots, knit caps, etc.) to keep the shivers away in between events.

**Towels:** Bring at least 2-3 towels. (Some bring one towel per event.) Especially when it's cold.

**Food:** Make sure they have a good breakfast before coming to the meet. Bring healthy, carbohydrate snacks to munch on between events. Dry cereal, peanut butter crackers, granola bars, juice boxes and plenty of water. There is usually a snack bar that provides these items as well. NO candy or soda.

**Activities:** Bring some games, cards, etc. The kids have lots of fun playing games with each other in between events.

**Chairs:** For you and your swimmer.

The team will provide easy-up tarps to sit under for the swimmers. (These are brought by a parent volunteer.)

### Swim Meet Basics:

**Arrive:** Get to the meet at the time the coaches request. Go to “check-in” with your swimmer to let the officials know your swimmer is there. Get ready for warm up. The kids will warm up for about 30 minutes.

**Before Event:** Each event is posted in the posting area. As the meet progresses you will see your swimmer's event posted with the heat and lane assignments. Look for their heat and lane. This will tell you where they should be when the event number is announced. (For first time swimmers, they will usually be in the first heats of each event.) Check in with the coach-tell them your event heat and lane assignment.

**\*For 25 yard events:** Kids 8 and under will be in events that are 25 yards. These events are swum from the opposite side of the pool. They swim towards the timers. They have a staging area to place your swimmer in the heat and lane they will be in. Take your swimmer to the staging area and leave the area. (It gets very congested with parents.) Meet your swimmer after the event at the other end of the pool. Instruct your swimmer to leave any clothing in the staging area. You can retrieve it after the event.

**Event:** Have them check with the timers to be sure their name appears on the lane paper.

**During Event:** Cheer and yell like crazy.

**After Event:** Praise your swimmer for the great job they did—regardless of their performance. Get your swimmer's time from the timers. Check back in with the coach and tell them your time. Then go warm down in the warm down area.

**After your last event:** check with the coaches before you leave. Sometimes we do relay events and the coaches may have included your swimmer in a relay. This is the highlight of the day – the kids really love this part of the meet.

\*\* If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask another parent!! We are here to help.



### Watching Your Child at Swim Lessons or Swim Practice

By Guy Edson

For many years I watched my daughter swim under the direction of other coaches. I have also watched her at basketball practice and games, and dance, and figure skating. I know the joy of watching her in these activities. I also know and understand the overwhelming desire to direct, correct, encourage, and sometimes scold her at practice. But these are not proper parental behaviors once I have released her into the care of a coach or teacher. As a parent, I am not to interfere with the practice or attempt to talk to my child during the practice session.

At swim practice coaches want the children's attention focused on the coach and the tasks at hand. Occasionally children miss an instruction, or have a goggle problem, or are involved in some other distraction, or are simply playing and having fun – which are all normal behaviors for young children. Coaches view these little difficulties as opportunities for the children to develop good listening skills, ability to reason, and self discipline. Sometimes we allow failure on purpose -- a missed instruction leaving the child confused often results in the child learning to pay better attention the next time. We endeavor to provide an environment for the children to develop these skills. A well-intentioned and over-enthusiastic mom or dad sometimes has difficulty allowing their child to miss something and wants to interfere. It's understandable.

We know it is common in many other youth sports for parents to stand at the sidelines and shout instructions or encouragements and sometimes admonishments to their children. However, at swim practice coaches ask parents not to signal them to swim faster, or to tell them to try a certain technique, or to offer to fix a goggle problem, or to move away from some other “menacing” swimmer, or even to remind them to listen to the coach. In fact, just as you would never interrupt a school classroom to talk your child, you should not interrupt a swim practice by attempting to communicate directly with your child.

What's wrong with encouraging your child during practice? There are two issues. First we want your child to focus on the coach and to learn the skill for their personal satisfaction rather than learning it to please their parents. Secondly, parental encouragement often gets translated into a command to swim faster and swimming faster may be the exact opposite of what the coach is trying to accomplish. In most stroke skill development practices we first slow the swimmers down so that they can think through the stroke motions. Save encouragements and praise for after the practice session! This is the time when you have your child's full attention to tell them how proud you are of them.

What's wrong with shouting or signaling instructions to your children? When I watched my old daughter play in a basketball league I felt an overwhelming desire to shout instructions to my child and so I understand the feelings that most parents have. But those instructions might be different from the coach's instructions and then you end up with a confused child. Sometimes you might think the child did not hear the coach's instruction and you want to help. Most of us do not want to see our own kids make a mistake. The fact is that children miss instructions all the time. Part of the learning process is learning how to listen to instructions. When children learn to rely on a backup they will have more difficulty learning how to listen better the first time.

As parents, many of us want our children protected from discomfort and adversity and we will attempt to create or place them in an environment free from distress. So, what's wrong with helping your child fix their goggles during practice time? Quite simply, we want to encourage the children to become self-reliant and learn to take care of and be responsible for themselves and their own equipment. Swimming practice is a terrific place to learn these life skills. Yes, even beginning at age 6 or 7.

If you need to speak to your child regarding a family issue or a transportation issue or to take your child from practice early you are certainly welcome to do so but please approach the coach directly with your request and we will immediately get your child out of the water. If you need to speak to the coach for other reasons please wait until the end of practice.

Thanks for bringing your children to swim practice. Every swim coach I know coaches each child with care for their safety and concern for their social, physical, learning skills, and life skills development.