

# Respect the ROOTS

One important thing we will work on all season is Honoring the Game. To help us remember exactly what that means, we will talk about respecting ROOTS. Each letter in ROOTS stands for an important part of swimming that we must respect.

**R stands for Rules.**

Rules keep the game fair. I want you to play by the rules, even when you think you won't get caught if you break them.

**O is for Opponents.**

Without opponents, we could have no game. A good opponent pushes us to do our best, so we should be grateful for our opponents. I promise that I will show respect for opposing coaches and teams, and I expect you to do the same.

**O is for Officials.**

Respecting officials can be the most difficult part of Honoring the Game. Officials have a very hard job, keeping the game safe and fair for all swimmers. Officials are not perfect (just like coaches, athletes and parents!) and sometimes they will make calls that are not in our favor, but I want you to show respect for officials, and I promise that I will, too.

**T is for Teammates.**

A big part of being a swimmer, is being part of a team. Later in life you will often be part of a team, and it is important to learn to work together. When you are on a team, your words and actions – before, during and after practices and games – reflect not only on you, but also on your teammates and coaches. So treat them as you would want them to treat you. I want you to encourage and support each other on and off the deck

**S is for Self.**

Some people only Honor the Game when their opponents do, but I want us to Honor the Game no matter what the other team or its fans do. We set our own internal standards, and we live up to them no matter what.

If you do these five things, you are Honoring the Game. You and your teammates will get the most out of swimming.