

**Prescott Swim Team
“Pirates”
Member Handbook**



**Revised and Adopted by the PST Board of Directors
August 2007
updated by PST Secretary**

PST Pirates Handbook

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Prescott Swim Team

Pirates

P.O. Box 2886

Prescott, AZ 86302

www.prescottswimteam.org

Mission Statement:

Each member shall have the opportunity to develop the character traits, technical skills and intense desire necessary for maximum realization of each individual's potential.

Motto: Fitness, Fun, Friends & Excellence in Swimming

Current Information:

PST Pirates (PST) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the development of the youth of our community through the sport of swimming. PST is a year-round developmental and competitive swim program for boys and girls ages 6-18 and is sanctioned by USA Swimming. Swimmers range from entry level to state champions. We are fortunate to have a talented, certified and enthusiastic coaching staff. Many high-school aged PST swimmers participate in their High School swim teams and some have continued to compete at the collegiate level.

Organization:

PST functions with a high level of family participation. The team operations are run by a 7 member board of directors which includes 5 elected officers and 2 Board appointed standing committee members, Board members are parents/guardians of PST swimmers who serve on a volunteer basis for benefit of the team. The team is governed by bylaws adopted by the membership. The board meets monthly and elections are held at the annual fall membership. Board meeting dates are posted on the team website and are open to all members of Prescott Swim Team. We ask parents to take an active role in the development of the team and your swimmers.

Communication

In 2006, Prescott Swim Team developed a website, www.prescottswimteam.org It is important that you check the website for announcements and meet information on a regular basis. E-mails are provided for important announcements, events etc. Please provide your current e-mail address to the team registrar and check it regularly as well. The coaches prefer to discuss ideas and concerns you have either before or after practice. Please arrange a time with them by speaking to them directly, or e-mailing them. A team roster will be provided to you upon registration & renewal. Please notify the Registrar promptly of any changes in contact information including address, phone numbers and e-mail.

Important Contact Information

2007 Board of Directors

Officers

President: Karen Burchfield	778-5366	swimmom@prescottswimteam.org
Vice Pres: Keith Brown	443-8584	bubbabrown1999@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Bill Riviere	771-0592	cathy@tlcapparel.com
Secretary : Minako Miller	771-2587	minakomiller@cableone.net
Club/Meet Registrar: Kelly Haynes	778-3096	haynes@cableone.net

Committee Members

Publicity: Bill Riviere	771-0592	cathy@tlcapparel.com
Ways & Means:		
Team Apparel:		
Website: Haynes Family	778-3096	webmaster@prescottswimteam.org

Coaches

Luke Lerette	713-5442	lletette79@cableone.net
Cynthia MacInness	(818)581-5841	ccynthiamac@aol.com
Veronica Karr	420-3896	Veronica_Karr@yc.edu
Yavapai College Pool Office	776-2231	

Financial Obligations:

1. PST Registration fee per athlete \$ 20 (nonrefundable)
2. USA Registration fee per athlete \$ 44 (nonrefundable)
3. LSC (AZ Swimming) \$ 12 (nonrefundable)
4. Monthly team dues (due by the 10th of each month) \$60
Monthly team dues for each additional child in family \$ 50
5. Meet fees (see Meets & Travel)

The PST Treasurer provides monthly statements to each family and you will be billed for the month that was previously swum. Statements are sent out the 1st of each month and are due by the 10th. It is team policy that you will be billed for the month whether your child swam all available practice days or 1 practice day. There is a \$10/month late fee that can be added to your balance, for payments received after the 10th of the month. Please communicate with the Treasurer if there is a problem with getting your payment in on time. Prolonged delinquent accounts are subject to Board review & suspension from team participation.

Hold Status: Requests for hold status (a temporary break) must be made in writing/e-mail, to the Head Coach and the team Treasurer at least 2 weeks prior to the hold date. All accounts must be paid in full. The monthly hold fee is \$10. There is no pro-rating. If a swimmer swims for any portion of the month in question, the full monthly fee will be due. The swimmer will be allowed back in the water when they have notified us of the intent to return.

Resignation: Resignation from the team requires 30 days written notice to the Head Coach and Treasurer. You are responsible for the payment of all balances & unpaid meet fees.

Finances & Fundraisers

Team expenses include coach's salaries, employment taxes, insurance, pool rental, club registration, accounting, equipment, and travel costs associated with out-of-town meets. Our costs typically exceed our membership dues. In order to keep our monthly dues to a minimum, it is imperative that we fundraise to supplement our treasury. **All families are strongly encouraged to participate in the following fundraisers.**

Swim-A-Thon is PST's top yearly fundraiser involving swimmers receiving pledges for lengths they swim. This event is generally held in March/April annually. Swimmers are allowed to swim for a total of 2 hours or 200 lengths max. Pledges are either flat donations or \$ per length. Prizes are given to the top fundraisers for this event. USA Swimming Pins are earned for swimming a minimum of 100 lengths & another for 200 lengths.

Corporate Sponsorship: In 2007, the PST Board of Directors developed a sponsorship program in which an individual or business can "sponsor" PST by donating money to the program. All families will be asked to assist in attaining sponsors each year. At this time, there is no minimum or maximum required per family, but an effort is expected from each family.

Gold Sponsor \$1000 and above
*Sponsor logo & link on Team website
*Appreciation Plaque
*Team T-shirt

Silver Sponsor \$ 500- \$999
*Sponsor link on Team website
*Certificate of Appreciation
*Team T-shirt

Bronze Sponsor up to \$500
*Sponsor link on Team website
*Certificate of Appreciation

Individual Sponsor
* Sponsor name on Team website

A sponsorship letter packet has been developed and will be provided to you with instructions. Please ask a board member for assistance with this if you need to. We will be happy to help any way we can!

PST Dinner night: is another fundraiser that takes place in a local restaurant that is willing to donate a % back to PST for dining in their restaurant. Details will be provided to each family when these events are scheduled.

PST Carwash: a fundraiser typically held during the spring or summer months at various locations. This has been a fun and successful event in the past and a good way to let others in the community know about us!

Team Structure:

PST Pirates train in an indoor 6 lane 25 yard (short course) pool at Yavapai College, Building # 2 in Prescott, Arizona. Swimmers are arranged in lane groups depending on their ability level and knowledge of the sport. These groups are made up of all age-group swimmers ages 6-18. Swimmers advance in levels at the discretion of the coaches.

Stroke Development Group (B Team): Training in this group emphasizes fun, while learning proper stroke & kick techniques in freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly. The swimmer will also develop endurance, flip turn and diving skills. It prepares the swimmer for meet competition and higher level swimming.

Advanced Training Group (A Team): Training in this group emphasizes dedication, specialized drills, sets & refinement of strokes, starts and turns. These swimmers compete regularly, stressing qualification times for Regional, State, Far Westerns, Juniors and Senior National Championships. This group also focuses on the goal of swimming at the collegiate levels.

PST Pirates Coaching Staff

HEAD COACH: LUKE LERETTE

Coach Luke grew up in Cottonwood, AZ and began swimming for the Cottonwood Clippers Swim Team in 1985 at the age of 6. He founded his High School Swim Team at Mingus Union High School in 1995 and swam successfully to the Regional and State levels. He participated in summer swim camps all through Arizona and at the University of San Diego, perfecting his favorite event, the Individual Medley. He was privileged to have been chosen to participate in an international swim meet in France in 1996. Luke possesses quality leadership skills through his years of dedication to the sport of swimming and also from his years of service in the United States Army. He demonstrates a strong knowledge & love of all aspects of the sport. Luke currently trains the advanced group of swimmers at PST, emphasizing individual and team goals of advancing through the high school and collegiate levels. He is a certified lifeguard, enjoys coaching PST and living in the Prescott area.

ASSISTANT COACH: CYNTHIA MACINNESS

Coach Cynthia has been swimming her whole life, learning to love the water as an infant. She learned and improved her strokes through YMCA & Red Cross Instruction. She joined swim teams, synchronized swimming and Jr. Lifeguard. After swimming competitively on a US Swim Team in California and qualifying for Jr. Olympics, Cynthia continued swimming for both high school and college swim teams. She learned leadership skills by becoming Team Captain and coaching various teams. She competed internationally in Master's Synchronized Swimming. She has 13 years of experience teaching swimming and 11 years with life guard certification. Cynthia has her BA in

Child Development and is experienced in working with children with special needs. She currently coaches the stroke development group at PST and shares her knowledge and love of the sport with each swimmer.

ASSISTANT COACH: VERONICA KARR

Coach Veronica was born in Santiago, Chile and moved to the US in 2005. She has a BA in graphic design, a BA in Business Administration and an AA as a Trilingual Executive Secretary. She speaks English, German & Spanish! She swam on 2 swim teams for more than 8 years. She competed in Nationals and took 4th place in the 200 meter IM. She coached the YMCA swim team until 2007. Veronica is currently a swim instructor at Yavapai College, a certified lifeguard, lifeguard instructor and water safety Instructor. She works with all levels of swimmers & is available to fill in for other coaches when necessary.

PROBLEMS WITH THE COACH?

One of the traditional swim team communication occurs when parents choose to discuss disagreements about coaching philosophy with other parents (or even their swimmers) rather than with the coach. Not only are the issues not resolved, but this approach often results in the creation of new problems. Listed below are some guidelines for a parent raising some difficult issues with a coach:

- Try to keep foremost in your mind that you and the coach have the best interests of your child at heart. If you trust that the coach's goals match yours, even though his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy good rapport and a constructive dialogue.
- Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group, but in the long run the benefits of membership in the group compensate for occasional short term inconvenience.
- If your child swims for an assistant coach, always discuss the matter first with that coach. If the assistant coach cannot satisfactorily resolve your concern, then ask that the head coach to join the dialogue as a third party.
- If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach. He/she is the only one who can resolve the problem.

Practices:

PST has practices for all levels available 6 days per week.

Mondays – Thursdays 3:30-5:30

Fridays- 3:30-600

Saturdays 8:00-10:00

Attendance:

PST Pirates should attend practice as often as possible. This will insure that they receive the full benefit of the practice sessions and our weekly/monthly practice plan. Improvement in swimming, as in any other activity, is directly tied to regular practice attendance and the amount of effort expended during each and every practice session. Swimmers will arrive on time, change and be ready for dry-land stretching before pool training begins. Discuss your child's swim schedule with their coach to determine what schedule is best for them. The coaches work very hard creating appropriate workouts for your swimmer(s), so they need to know when they will attend and when they won't. Let the coaches know ahead of time, if possible, when not attending a practice.

What to bring: practice suit, towel, goggles, water bottle and a good attitude. All training equipment such as kick boards, fins, zoomers, paddles are provided by Yavapai College. Specialized items may be required for A Team swimmers and will be determined by the coach. Swimmers are responsible for putting back equipment after practice and reporting to the coach if there is a problem with any piece of equipment. Showers are required before entering the pool. Swimmers are allowed to be in the locker rooms and on the pool deck of Yavapai College. They are not permitted to loiter around other areas of the campus. Swimmers enter the pool area through the locker rooms only. Respecting the YC campus is of utmost importance. Damages to YC property is the responsibility of the swimmer/family.

Practice Conduct:

- Swimmers are expected to support their teammates at practice. Working together as a unit for the benefit of all individuals in the group is an important part of the PIRATE spirit.
- No locker room horseplay. Respect the privacy of others and their belongings.
- Socializing at the wall is not appropriate and disrupts other swimmers that are circle swimming in your lane and in the lanes next to you. There is time for talking with your friends before and after practice!
- PST swimmers are expected at all times to follow the verbal directions of the coaching staff. At no time will disrespectful attitudes be tolerated from any swimmer. You will be asked to leave the workout if this occurs.
- Gossiping, inappropriate language, swearing, derogatory comments, lying, stealing, vandalism is not acceptable and won't be tolerated. These behaviors are detrimental enough to the group to warrant disciplinary action, which can include suspension and/or termination from the team.

- Swimmers will not use any substances identified as banned by USA Swimming. The use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs is likewise prohibited for all swimmers. Parents and coaches may not use these substances while acting in an official capacity for the club, i.e. chaperone or driver.

Harasment policy (applies to all PST swimmers, families and staff)

Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to the following:

- Verbal or physical conduct that threatens or insinuates harm or sexual advances.
- Unwelcome sexual advances, gestures, touches, or requests for sexual favors.
- Unwelcome comments, remarks, or threats, including but not limited to comments about an individual’s body, personal or private life, use of sexual words to describe an individual, offensive jokes, comments or compliments of a sexually suggestive nature, innuendoes, inappropriate terms of endearment such as “doll”, “honey,” “babe,” “hottie” etc.
- Teasing or insulting another person.
- Comments about ethnic, racial, or religious stereotypes.
- Inappropriate body language or gestures.
- Any act of harassment that may be construed as inappropriate to a reasonable person.

Resolving Issues

As mentioned above, it is up to the individual swimmer, parent and coach to attempt to resolve issues directly with the parties involved. It may seem difficult to confront a problem, but is the best course of action. If a coach, swimmer or parent cannot successfully resolve an issue, they may contact the PST President and formally request mediation. The PST Board of Directors will act only in circumstances where mediation is requested. Mediation will involve at least 2 Board Officers and ALL parties involved shall meet together. All parties shall have the right to & will be required to present their case if mediation is requested. The Board will investigate and evaluate the circumstances and take appropriate action or make appropriate suggestions. All mediation will be documented and kept private. The Board has the right to suspend and/or terminate members & coaches. The goal of the Board is to retain happy coaches, swimmers & parents!

Meets & Travel:

During the year, PST swimmers have the opportunity to compete at several levels around the state. All members of PST are eligible to compete in both US sanctioned meets and non-sanctioned meets. The coaches help swimmers and parents determine when a swimmer is ready for competition. Most meets are held away from our home pool at this time, due to limited deck space at Yavapai College. All meet information is provided to the families through the website meet information page. There you are able to print out the meet flyers and submit your entries to the meet registrar through an E-mail link. The coaches will typically choose 1 meet per month to attend and all swimmers are encouraged to participate. Announcements are made after practices regarding upcoming meets. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from meets, and for the swimmer's conduct and safety off the pool deck. Carpooling is encouraged. Typical meet fees include an entry fee (typically \$5) and event fees (typically \$3 per event). Meet fees are submitted to the meet registrar along with entry forms. Meet fees are payable to PST and are not refunded if you are not able to attend the meet. Parent volunteers make hotel accommodation arrangements when necessary and get discounted group rates. PST swimmers, parents and coaches stay together in hotels as a group.

What to bring to a meet:

Team suits and caps are required for meet competition. Team T-Shirts or other team apparel are worn to all meets. Please put the swimmers name on everything. Goggles and towels are a must. Concessions are usually available, however it is recommended to bring plenty of water, snacks etc to away meets. Chairs & sunscreen when necessary are also recommended. The team provides a shade canopy for the coaches and swimmers.

Meet Conduct:

- All PST family members are expected to conduct themselves in a positive way at all meets. No tempers, foul language, or badmouthing of other swimmers, teams or coaches is allowed.
- Locker room behavior expectations are the same as at our home pool. Respect others' belongings, personal space etc. No horseplay in the locker rooms.
- Swimmers are encouraged to shake hands with their competitors, at the wall, after finishing each of their events.
- All PST families have and display team spirit, by cheering for each participant.
- Let the coaches do the coaching! Coaching your own kids when you're pulling into the parking lot is discouraged! The swimmers are welcome to ask their coach for some pre-event advice if so desired. After their events, the coaches will give feedback to the swimmer that shall include what went well, and what needs improvement. Parents are there to give positive support to the swimmer after both success and disappointment.

- All questions that parents or swimmers have concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet should be referred to the PST coaching staff only. Our coaches, in turn, will pursue the matter through the appropriate channels.
- Swimmers should notify their coaches when leaving a meet.
- The PST area of any meet will be left in a clean and neat condition at the conclusion of each session of the meet.

PST Travel Policy

The following is a transportation policy that is in effect for all functions related to PST.

It is hereby the stated policy of Prescott Swim Team, effective immediately and until either revoked or restated by the Prescott Swim Team Board of Directors, that transportation of swimmers and/or coaches to practices, meets, or any other event considered to be a club function by any non-public conveyance, as defined to include privately owned vehicles, is recognized by the Prescott Swim Team as a purely private agreement between the parties involved and that neither Prescott Swim Team, nor the PST Board of Directors, separately or as a group, except for the parties directly involved can be or will be considered as a party to such arrangement and that any liability in any form arising from such arrangement is purely and completely the responsibility of the parties involved.

Team Suits

Members of PST are to obtain a team suit & cap for use at competition. Our suits are black and gold and our caps are yellow customized with our team crest. Visit **TEAM CENTRAL** on our website for ordering your suits & optional items such as parkas, bags etc. This is our team shop where you may purchase all items in our store at a significant team discount. Custom caps, T-shirts and sweats are available through the team apparel chairperson. Contact the Team Apparel chairperson if you need assistance.

Age Group & Senior Swimming **AGE GROUP SWIMMING**

The Age Group swimming program in the United States is conducted by United States Swimming, Inc. This program has been in operation for over 25 years and has helped to develop the United States into the pre-eminent swimming power in the world.

The Age Group program of United States Swimming, Inc. is constructed so that swimmers will compete against swimmers their own age and ability. The program is split into five different nationally recognized age groups: 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16 and 17-18. (In Arizona the Local Swim Committee also recognizes a special age group for 8 and under and Senior Development.) The age groups are further divided into ability classifications which are labeled A, B and C (the C classification is for those swimmers who have not yet swum an event or achieved a B time standard). These

ability classifications are based on time standards which are established by United States Swimming, Inc. and are called "national motivational time standards".

Arizona Swimming divides its competitions into "Q+" and "Q-" classifications. The Q time is determined by the State Championship Qualifying Standard. Those with the standard, or faster, compete in the "Q+" meets. Those who have not yet met the standards compete in the "Q-" meets.

The Age Group program is designed to provide interested swimmers with the opportunity to improve their swimming so that they can become the best swimmers possible.

SENIOR SWIMMING

The Senior Program is designed for the swimmer who has decided to totally commit to becoming the best swimmer he/she can become. This commitment to personal excellence in swimming must be such that a swimmer is willing to make sacrifices to attain his/her best possible performance.

The demands of senior swimming revolve around the amount of time and effort that the swimmer is willing to train in order to attain his/her goal. The time commitment can be considerable with practices, meets and for a swimmer to bring out his/her talent to the fullest degree possible. These demands are difficult for some swimmers to meet because of their interests outside of swimming.

The effort is also considerable since it takes daily practice at near maximum effort. Senior swimmer must organize his/her time in order to keep up swimming, school and family commitments. A swimmer needs to keep firmly in mind the things that he/she wants from swimming in order to have control of what he/she is doing.

Time Standards

Time improvement is stressed over winning. Swimmers should learn to compete against "themselves." A time improvement means more to a seasonal swimmer than a first place ribbon. This is the real advantage of being a swimmer; personal time improvement is possible for everyone. PST encourages swimmers to do their best at practices and to participate in meets so they can see what all the hard work is doing for them!

There are several time standards that are posted on the PST website for your review. Each meet flyer will specify which time standards, if any, are applicable. Please familiarize yourself with the following. Note there is time standards set by age, gender and pool size-- Short Course Yards (SCY), Short Course Meters (SCM) and Long Course Meters (LCM).

[Arizona Regional Qualifying Time Standards](#)

[Arizona State Qualifying Time Standards](#)

[National Age Group Motivational Times](#)

[FarWesternTimeStandards](#)

It is highly recommended that you and your swimmer(s) keep track of each event & time that they've accomplished at each meet they attend. This will help you and your swimmer to be able to enter the next meet with greater ease in knowing what their previous times were. It is extremely helpful in assisting the swimmer to see how they are improving over time. If they have never swum an event before, they will be entered in that event with NT (no time) and be placed in an appropriate "heat" in the meet.

MY EVENTS & TIMES is a link to USA Swimming, on the PST website time-standards page that allows a USA Swimming registered parent or swimmer to enter the swimmer's name and find all of their swim events & times that occurred at USA sanctioned meets for the year and for previous years. It's a great tool to use so check it out! Please ask the webmaster for help if needed.

Event Descriptions

FREESTYLE -- Any competitive technique may be used. However, swimmers usually use the crawl stroke during freestyle events since this is the fastest of the swimming styles. The crawl stroke has the swimmer lying on his/her stomach, moving his/her arms in an alternating fashion and kicking in an alternating or flutter kick. The swimmer must touch the wall upon completion of each length with any part of his body. To finish a freestyle race, a swimmer must touch the end wall with any part of his body.

BACKSTROKE -- The swimmer must stay on his/her back while swimming this event and use his/her arms in an alternating fashion while using a flutter kick. During the turn the shoulders may turn past the vertical toward the breast. If the swimmer turns past vertical, such motion must be part of a continuous turning action and the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the back when the feet leave the wall. Further, the swimmer must finish the race on his/her back when any part of his/her body touches the end wall.

BREASTSTROKE -- The body shall be kept on the breast. The arms shall move simultaneously and in the same horizontal plane without any alternating movement. The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast. A part of the head must break the surface of the water during each arm cycle. The swimmer may take one arm stroke and one leg kick while wholly submerged.

All vertical and lateral movements of the legs shall be simultaneous. The feet must be turned outward during the propulsive part of the kick movement. A scissors, flutter or downward butterfly kick is not permitted.

On both turns and finishes, the swimmer must be on the breast and touch the wall with both hands simultaneously at, above or below the water surface.

BUTTERFLY -- After the start and turns, the swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast. The swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water which must bring the swimmer to the surface. Both arms must be brought forward over the water and pulled back simultaneously.

All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other. A scissors or breaststroke kicking movement is not permitted.

At each turn and the finish the body shall be on the breast. The touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. Once a touch as been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired. The swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the feet leave the wall.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY -- The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: the first one-fourth -- butterfly; the second one-fourth -- backstroke; the third one-fourth -- breaststroke; and the last one-fourth -- freestyle.

1. The stroke and turns for each stroke shall follow the prescribed rules for each stroke.
2. The turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed and shall be as follows:
 - a. Butterfly to backstroke -- once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner, but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the back when the feet leave the wall.
 - b. Backstroke to breaststroke -- once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the feet leave the wall and the prescribed breaststroke form must be attained prior to the first arm stroke.
 - c. Breaststroke to freestyle -- once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner. The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his body touches the solid wall or pad at the end of the pool after the prescribed distance.

The Swim Seasons

There are 2 main seasons for swimming. The short course season begins in September and runs through March. Competitions are held at short course pools, either 25 yards or 25 meters in length. In Arizona, there is a Regional Championship, a State Championship and Far Westerns Championship following this season.

The Long Course Season is held from April through August at long course pools that are 50 meters in length. There are state championships held after the long course season.

Swimmers strive to reach a regional or state Q time during the season meets they attend, to qualify for the championship meets. Participation in practices and meets is important for the swimmer to achieve their age group Q-times. Beyond the State Championships are out of state competitions such as, Far Westerns, Junior Nationals, Senior National Championships, Jr. Olympic Time Trials and Olympic Time Trials. All of the current time standards are listed on our website.

*** High School aged swimmers that choose to swim for their High School Team are not allowed to participate in PST practices or meets until after their HS State Championships are complete. This is state High School regulations. If you will be swimming for your HS, please e-mail the treasurer and put in a written request to be placed on "hold" status.

10 COMMANDMENTS FOR SWIMMING PARENTS

1. Thou shalt not impose your ambitions on thy child.

Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what **you** think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do their personal best and benefit from the process of competitive swimming.

2. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what.

There is only one question to ask your child after a practice or a competition - "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

3. Thou shalt not coach thy child.

You are involved in one of the few youth sports programs that offer professional coaching, do not undermine the professional coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to provide unconditional love and support and a safe place to return at the end of the day. Love and hug your child no matter what. Tell them how proud of them you are. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy or any other area that is not yours. And above all, never pay your child for a performance. This will only serve to confuse your child concerning the reasons to strive for excellence and weaken the swimmer/coach bond.

4. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet.

If you are going to show up at a swimming meet, you should be encouraging, but never criticize your child or the coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made. And remember "yelling at" is not the same as "cheering for". You also may want to consider being positive anytime you are around the pool.

5. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears.

A first swimming meet, 500 free or 200 IM can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child was not ready to compete in it. Remember your job is to love and support your child through all of the swimming experience. Most of their fears are one's you have given them.

6. Thou shalt not criticize the officials.

If you do not care to devote the time or do not have the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can. You too can be trained to be an official in an afternoon.

7. Honor thy child's coach.

The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child, it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.

8. Thou shalt be loyal and supportive of thy team

It is not wise for parents to take their swimmers and to jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer in another team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long, long time by the teammates they leave behind and are slowly received by new team mates. Often times swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

9. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning. |

Most successful swimmers are those who have learned to focus on the process and not the outcome. Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else did it too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. Does this make me a failure? No, in fact I am very proud of that swim." What a tremendous outlook to carry on through life.

10. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian.

There are 280,000 athletes in USA Swimming. Only 2% of the swimmers listed in the 10 & Under age group make it to the Top 100 in the 17-18 age group and of those only a small percentage will become elite level, world class athletes. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian is about .0002%. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask your coaches why they coach. Chances are, they were not an Olympian, but still got so much out of swimming that they wanted to pass the love for the sport on to others. Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self-esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they may have won. Swimming builds good people, like you want your child to be, and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS

Age Group Swimming -- The program through which USA 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. Nationally recognized age groups are 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. Local meets may also include events for 8 and under and Senior Development.

American Swimming Coaches Association ("ASCA") -- Professional organization for swim coaches, providing educational and support services to all swim coaches. ASCA is also responsible for certification of swim coaches.

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.

Circle Swimming -- Performed 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.

Consolation -- (Finals) competition for the top 9 – 16 place finishers from the Prelims.

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

Distance -- Term used to refer to events over 400 meters/500 yards.

DQ: Disqualified -- This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind, i.e., freestyle kick in butterfly. 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.

Entry Form -- Form on which a swimmer enters a competition, usually includes USA number, age, sex, event number and time.

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

Finals -- The concluding session of each day of the meet in which the top 8 qualifiers from the Prelims compete.

Finish -- The final phase of the race -- the touch at the end of the race.

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

Goal -- A specific achievement a swimmer sets and strives for. This can be a short- or long-term goal.

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

I.M. -- Slang for Individual Medley - an event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle.

Lactic Acid -- By product of muscle function formed in the absence of O₂ (or insufficient O₂); the end products of glycolysis - pyruvic acid and Hydrogen atom combine to form lactic acid.

Lap Counter -- A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. Also, the person who counts for the swimmer is stationed at the opposite end from the start.

Long Course -- A pool 50 meters in length. USA conducts most of its summer competition in long course.

Long Distance -- Any freestyle event over 1500 meters, normally conducted in a natural body of water, such as a lake, river or ocean. Also known as Marathon Swimming.

LSC -- Local Swimming Committee is the governing body for swimming on a local level.

LSC Racing Camp -- A one-day camp held within the LSC for the top 9-10 year old boys and girls, which involves water sessions, videos and group talks.

Meet -- Competition designed to be a learning experience. By implementing what has been learned in practice, the swimmer tests himself/herself against the clock to see how he/she is improving.

Middle Distance -- Term used to refer to events of 200 yards/meters to 400 meters/500 yards in length.

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, AA, AAA and AAAA divisions. These designations are **National** and may be used for entry or qualifying purposes. Many LSCs have their own time standards as well.

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

Negative Split -- Swimming the second half of the race equal to or faster than the first half.

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

Official Verification Card ("OVC") -- Official verification for a national level time standard. In order for a swimmer to compete in a National level meet, they must have an OVC for each event they are to swim.

Pace Clock -- Large clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice; may also be digital.

Prelims - Slang for preliminaries, also called Heats or Trials. Those races in which swimmers qualify for the championship and consolation finals in the events.

Psyche Sheet - A listing of all events in a meet with a ranking of all swimmers from fastest to slowest. It is from this list that swimmers are seeded into their heat and lane for each event.

Q-/Q+ Time -- Qualifying time necessary to compete in a particular event and/or competition.

Relay -- An event in which four swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

Safety -- The condition of being safe. Safety procedures are designed to prevent accidents. Pelican Pete is USA's safety mascot.

Sanctioned Meet -- A meet sanctioned by a LSC of United States Swimming, Inc. The sanction requires the host club to conduct the meet according to the current United States Swimming Code. Also, only times from sanctioned meets may be used for seeding purposes.

Scratch -- To withdraw from an event in a competition.

Seeding -- Swimmers are assigned to their heat and lane based on their submitted times.

Senior Swimming -- The program through which USA 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 in Senior competition.

Senior National Championships -- These meets are open for any swimmer except Masters who achieve the qualifying standard in a particular event. There are two National Championships each year. Currently, all Senior Nationals are conducted in long course meters.

Short Course -- A pool 25 yards or 25 meters in length. USA conducts most of its winter competition in short course.

Split -- A swimmer's intermediate time in a race. Splits are registered every 50 yards or meters 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, the time for the first swimmer can be used as an official time.

Sprint -- Describes the shorter events (50 and 100). In training, to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.

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 as it can be.