

PATRIOT PULSE

Championship season is here!

Best of luck to our High School boys swim and dive teams as they prepare for **IHSA Sectionals** this Saturday.

Most **NIPC** groups have games this weekend—please be sure to check **ParentSquare** for schedules and details.

As we finalize entries for upcoming **Regionals, State and Sectionals**, please review your entries carefully to ensure everything is correct.

Congratulations to all of our athletes who competed last weekend! A special shoutout to the **NIPC Green Team** for winning the **Winter Futures League**—great job! 🏆🏆



Here are a few important reminders and updates:

- **Winter League Final:** This is the final meet in the Winter League Series with MMSC and RISE. More information about this event will go out soon to those signed up.
- **Championships:** Regionals is next weekend at HOME! Entries need to be finalized this weekend, so please check. State for 10U, 11-14 and Senior are also coming up. Senior swimmers that have qualifying times/best times from high school season need to double check (and put a note about this in the notes so these can be fixed).
- **Louisville Swim Camp:** We are proud to announce our partnership with University of Louisville for a swim camp June 21-June 25th. You can find more information about the camp and sign up on their website [HERE](#). The only thing the fee does not cover is transportation. Once we have our numbers and know what kind of bus we need we will then bill everyone separately for the cost of the charter bus. If you have any questions please contact Coach Kevin.
- **GOODBYE TEAMUNIFY.....HELLO CAPTYN!!!:** We are excited to share that we are preparing to launch the first wave of registrations through our new platform with CAPTYN. We are looking forward to this transition and the improvements it will bring to our programming. Our website is still being finalized as we organize content and update program information. In the meantime, we invite you to explore the new site using the link below: <https://www.patriotaquaticclub.captynsites.com/> **Registration for Spring Diving and Water Polo will open later this week. Please watch for additional communication from your coaches with specific details.**
- **Locker room Access and Security Reminder:** Locker rooms can only be accessed from the pool deck. Please enter the pool area through the southeast corner near room 5044. We've had ongoing issues with people opening locker room doors, which has unfortunately led to thefts. Do not leave personal belongings unattended in the locker room — please lock them up or bring them onto the pool deck.
- **ParentSquare:** We still have families that have not switched from GroupMe to ParentSquare. Please follow this [LINK](#), fill out the form and select all of the relevant groups you need to be a part of. This is for PARENTS and ATHLETES! If you have any questions please reach out to Coach Kevin Zakrzewski.
- **Google Calendar:** All practices are listed in our team Google Calendar. We highly recommend adding it to both your and your swimmer's phone to stay up to date with practice times and any potential schedule changes.
- **Practice like a PATRIOT Program:** Still going.....Check it out on Instagram!

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2/17/26 FALL/WINTER

Support all levels and abilities to their given needs, according to our vision as a coaching staff.

Provide encouragement, knowledge, and opportunity to strive for goals, e.g. goal setting opportunities, coaches meeting with athletes to discuss goals and progress.

Build success through commitment and hard work.

Use the sports of swimming, water polo, and diving to develop growth and personal accountability

We are committed to Safe Sport and providing a safe, healthy, and positive environment for all our athletes.



5 REASONS SWIMMERS SHOULD WRITE DOWN THEIR GOALS

BY OLIVIER POIRIER-LEROY

“Every year since I have been swimming competitively, I have set goals for myself. In writing. The goal sheet was mandatory. I got used to it and it became a habit.” – Michael Phelps

Michael Phelps, certified GOAT, wasn't just an elite athlete. He [was also an elite goal setter](#).

He had them written out, bedside, so that when he woke up for another big day of swim training, another day of doubles, he knew *why*.

Writing out your goals flat-out works.

It's not just about having ambition in the water—that's the *easy* part. Most swimmers want to go faster, smash more PBs, qualify for teams/cuts/bigger meets. But what separates the daydreams from the podium finishes is giving that ambition direction.

And that's where writing out your goals provides a crucial first step in giving swimmers structure, clarity, and momentum.

Let's breakdown why writing out those fancy-pants goals of yours is the first step in achieving Big Things™ in the pool.

1. CLARIFIES THE BIG GOAL

We all have vague daydreams and fantasies about the things we would *like* to achieve in the water.

I want to final at Nationals. I want to drop time like an age grouper again. I want to close out the meet-winning relay for my team with a golden finish.

But until those goals are clearly defined and written out, they remain fuzzy and foggy, like an unchlorinated outdoor pool on the first day of public swim.

Writing out your goal(s) forces clarity. What exactly are you trying to do? By when? Under what conditions?

Instead of wandering, decide where you want to go. “I have my goals somewhere I can see them, so when I get out of bed I know I'm waking up to work on what I'm trying to achieve.” – Michael Phelps

2. MOTIVATES ACTION

Writing out the goal is the first (easy) step. It's what happens next that is the magic sauce.

Building a process for success. Executing. Showing up daily. Especially on days when you aren't feeling so motivated to head to the pool.

Those written goals give you a sense of urgency that leads to action. They are a daily reminder to the CPU between your ears: *This is what we're doing. This is what matters.*

The process and daily action are what propel the success, but the written goal is your north star, guiding the behaviors and actions necessary for excellence.

3. FILTERS THE NOISE

Each day we are presented with a buffet of things to work on (or not). Technique. Cannonball skills. Underwaters. Race pace. Dryland. Doubts. Distractions.

Without a clear, written goal, it's easy to bounce around aimlessly and lose focus when things get tough. **See also:** [8 Goal Setting Tips for Swimmers](#)

Written goals sharpen your focus and filter the noise so that you stay focused on what matters most.

4. GIVES US MILESTONES

Swimming is a hard, unforgiving sport. Even harder when we aren't seeing progress. Nothing quite saps our motivation faster than a plateau (coach adding another round to a long main set is a close second).

Written goals allow you to break up the Big Goal into smaller milestones. Each one you hit gives you a shot of confidence, not only in the real-world proof of your ability to follow through, but of *real* progress.

Short term goals and the milestones they represent are crucial for reminding us that we are actually making progress, even when it doesn't always feel like it.

5. BOOSTS CHANCES OF SUCCESS

And of course, writing out your goals can improve your chances of actually achieving them!

In a study by Dr. Gail Matthews at Dominican University found that individuals who wrote down their goals were significantly more likely to achieve them compared to those who merely thought about them.

Writing them down makes them real. It creates commitment. It signals to your brain: *This is what I do!*

WRAPPING THINGS UP

Dreaming big goals in the water is fun. It's easy. It's safe. But if you want to pull those dreams out of the fog, you should consider doing what Phelps did...

Write it down.

Put it somewhere visible. Revisit it. Adjust as necessary. But put your goal front and center.

So take five minutes today. Grab a pen, open your logbook, and write out what you want from this sport. It might just be the spark that turns your next dream into your next personal best.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PAC:

SWIM:

- **Feb. 27-Mar. 1:** ISI Regionals @HOME. For qualifiers, entry deadline is Feb. 22.
- **Mar. 5-8:** ISI Senior Championships at UIC in Chicago, IL. For qualifiers, entry deadline is Mar. 1.
- **Mar. 7-8:** ISI 10 and under State Championships at Glenbrook North High School. For qualifiers, entry deadline is Mar. 1.
- **Mar. 12-15:** ISI 11-14 State Championships at the RecPlex in Pleasant Prairie, WI. For qualifiers, entry deadline is Feb. 28.

WATER POLO:

- **Feb. 21-22:** 14U Midwest Middle School Championships at Fremd or Palatine.
- **Feb. 22:** Premier Games at Stevenson. 10U Game at Stevenson.

DIVING:

Patriot's Nutrition Corner with Coach Chandra:

Championship Week & Meet Day Nutrition Reminders

- *Eat clean and consistent in the weeks leading up.
- *Prioritize carbohydrates to top off glycogen stores.
- *Stay very well hydrated starting 1-2 weeks out.
- *Do NOT calorie deficit the week of competition.
- *Limit or avoid heavy, greasy, or fried foods as well as excessive sugar and highly processed foods.
- *Keep fats and high-fiber foods lower the night before and day of competition.

Meet Day Timing

3-4 hours before event:

Eat a balanced meal high in carbs, moderate in protein, low in fat and fiber.
Example: Oatmeal with fruit and peanut butter, eggs and toast, rice with grilled chicken.

1-2 hours before:

Small, easy-to-digest carb snack if needed.
Example: Banana, granola bar, applesauce, bagel.

30-60 minutes before (if needed):

Quick carbs only.
Example: Sports drink, pretzels, small piece of fruit.

After competing:

Refuel within 30-60 minutes with carbs + protein to begin recovery. Very important for multiple session and day events to be able to perform well the next session.

Example: Chocolate milk, smoothie, turkey sandwich, yogurt with fruit.

GROUP UPDATES

SWIMMING

ELITE - Coach Kevin
kzakrzewski@d125.org

Only a couple more weeks until we get our first chance to see how our training has been progressing. Last week was our peak week and now we have made an adjustment to get our speed up more frequently. Keep up the great work!

PATRIOT PLUS - Coach Carolyn
cgrevers@d125.org

We had a challenging couple of weeks to start to prepare for the Championship season. Because of this, the BDSC meet became a opportunity to push our mental game....compete while being tired both physically and mentally. We are now moving to let our bodies recover as we ramp up speed, power and tempo. Stay focused now.

PATRIOT - Coach Kee
keehng@gmail.com

Our Patriots swam in the last regular meet at RecPlex applying their skills with good performance. We are extremely proud that everyone is advancing to the championship weeks with regional cuts through hard work, fast swims, and support of each other! This week, we will elevate the intensity and volume levels of the swim training and include areas our swimmers need to work on for the regional meet.

JR PATRIOT - Coach Thomas
tschwingen@d125.org

We had some great swims this past weekend up at Rec-Plex. This is where the 11-14 Age Group State will be held, so it was a good opportunity for many to get some first-time swims in that pool. Reminder that this is the last week of our regular season. Starting next week, practice is for everyone with regional or state cuts. Make sure to attend every one you can and come ready to work hard!

LIL PATRIOT - Coach Megan
mosullivan@d125.org

This is the last official week of the season. Those below Regional time cuts will end at the Winter League Champ meet this Saturday. Schedules for all Regional and Up and have been updated on the Calendar. As we come to the end of the season be sure your swimmer is eating well balanced meals and snacks, drinking plenty of water, and getting rest.

WATER POLO

HS Water Polo - Coach Rose
rwimer@d125.org

Congratulations to the GREEN team on winning the Winter Futures League over the weekend!

Age Group WATER POLO:

Check you practice schedule, good luck at your weekend games!

10u WATER POLO:

Check you practice schedule, good luck at your weekend games!

ParentSquare: Please follow this [LINK](#), fill out the form and select NIPC Age Group (yes, same as age group).

DIVING

COMPETITIVE DIVING
 Coach Jonathan - jroby@d125.org

No practice Wednesday or Saturday due to Sectional warm ups and the Sectional meet respectively.

DEVELOPMENTAL DIVING

Regular week of practice for the Devo group this week, we'll see you on the boards!

LEARN TO DIVE

No practice this weekend due to Sectionals at SHS, reach out to Coach Roby for make up dates.

PAC Social Media
INSTAGRAM:

[@patriotaquaticclub](#)
[@nipc_wp](#)
[@pac_diving](#)

FACEBOOK:

Patriot Aquatic Club -
 Lincolnshire, IL

YOUTUBE CHANNELS:

Patriot Aquatic Club
 Northern Illinois Polo
 Club

**MOTIVATION OF
 THE WEEK:**

**"You don't have
 to be great to
 start, but you
 have to start to
 be great."**

Zig Ziglar