

PATRIOT PULSE

Our first away meet is this weekend! Go in ready to see what your hard work can accomplish and to support one another. We'll be competing at the Northwestern University facility — an exciting opportunity for everyone. Show your team spirit by wearing your **new blue Lightning shirt on Saturday** and your **new red PAC shirt on Sunday**. Good luck to the Black, Green and White NIPC teams over the weekend at SHS. Show them what we've got!



Congrats to all of our PAC swimmers today who were recognized for their amazing season at the @illinoiswimming banquet!

Here are a few important reminders and updates:

- **Fun in the WILD:** Our first away meet is this weekend at Northwestern University. More information, to those attending, will go out from Coach Kevin. Enjoy the elimination events on Sunday!
- **ParentSquare:** Patriot Aquatic Club is joining Parent Square (GroupMe will no longer be used). Many of you may already be involved with this communication software. We are transitioning to make sure we have safe and improved communication throughout all programs. 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.
- **Swim Team Equipment:** PAC vouchers are active in the Kiefer site! You can go into the site today to order team suits (required) and other apparel (optional). Team shirts have arrived. If you have not gotten your team shirts for this season, talk to your coach to pick them up.
- **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. There is a home SHS swim meet Tuesday night and the NIPC games over the weekend.
- **Locker room Reminder:** Locker rooms can only be accessed from the pool deck. Please enter the pool through the southeast corner by room 5044. Also, do not leave personal belongings unattended in the locker room...lock it up or leave it on deck.
- **Practice like a PATRIOT Program:** Still going.....Check it out on Instagram!

Tips for a Successful Swim Meet Performance

By Graham Bodner (Swimming World)

As a coach, I always get asked the age-old swimming question: "How do I best prepare for a swim meet?" Meet preparation comes in many forms, and many different time tables. The best swimmers don't wait until the day before the big swim meet. They spend the months and weeks before the championship getting ready to race.

Here are a few of my tips I give my swimmers for adequately preparing for their championship meet.

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10/7/25 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.



At the start of the season

You coach should have a season plan laid out that maps the team's season, including your peak target meets and the taper period. Here are some things you can actively do to prepare months before a meet.

- Any and every coach would be happy to sit down with you to hear your goals and ambitions. Be specific with your goals, listing times down to the hundredth. Mentioning long-term and short-term goals are also important. This gives the coach the tools to effectively guide you on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.
- Have these goals you and your coach laid out handy every day. I tell my swimmers to hang them on their mirror at home or somewhere they look daily.

As you can see, planning is key in the early stages of meet prep. If you plan out what you want to see, it gives you a purpose for doing what you do.

Six to seven weeks before the big meet

By this point in the season, regardless of when the meet is, you should have a solid base of training. Even though it feels like that big meet is light years away, it is right around the corner. This can be a crucial time in the preparation timetable for you and your coach.

Sit down with your coach once more to check in with your progress. BE ENGAGED in the conversation, since this is about *your* swimming. You owe it to yourself to do everything in your power to make this experience worthwhile. Ask questions, seek advice, get feedback. Most importantly, put what your coach has to say into your practice.

The key here is to **put what your coach has to say into practice!** Remember they are in your corner. They want you to succeed as much as you do.

One week before the big meet

This is by far the most important time in meet preparation. At this point in the season, you have put in the hours and the hard work, so make it count!

- Sharpen your skills, get sleep, eat properly and take care of your body.
- HAVE SOME FUN! You put in all this work. Enjoy yourself and enjoy the process.
- Keep a light environment leading up to the meet, as it can help reduce you and your teammates' stress levels. A happy swimmer is a fast swimmer!

The key to this phase is FUN. You deserve some fun! Enjoy yourself and enjoy the time you have in the pool. Your teammates will pick up on your energy and mimic it. These teammates have been with you since the beginning. Support them and they will support you.

The night before the first race

As a young child, much to my mother's chagrin, I wasn't the most organized or prepared. If she taught me anything, it was to always pack the night before. I now find myself packing for events two to three days before they take place. It may sound crazy, but it works!

- Get your swim bag packed the night before. That way, you can get some extra time to sleep, and won't be stressed and rushed in the morning.
- Do whatever you want that keeps you stress-free. Play with your pet, watch a movie, read a good book. If it makes you happy, do it – as long as it is not physically strenuous.
- GET SOME SLEEP! I cannot stress this point enough. Sleep is the body's way of healing itself. The average teenager should get a minimum of eight to nine hours of sleep each night.
- Try to keep the big meet off your mind as much as possible. It is completely natural to have the "what ifs" creep in. Acknowledge those thoughts and find a way to replace them.

The day of the meet

OK, this is it, the big day. The day you and your teammates have worked for tirelessly. Those 5 a.m. practices, followed by school, followed by another workout, will be rewarded today. All those Saturday practices when you wanted to be in your bed will be paid off with a lifetime best. Countless yards you never thought would end will seem trivial after you take home that first-place medal. Now is the time to make it count.

- Show up to the meet 15-20 minutes before your warm up and find a space. Make it a place where your teammates can congregate. After all, you are all in this together.
- Find your coach, and let him or her know you have arrived. We get nervous, too!
- Make sure you get in right when warm up starts. Warm ups are crowded. However, if you play the game right, you can get in an effective warm up.
- The first few minutes and the last few minutes are when it is the least crowded. Operate under what I call the FILO principle: First one In – Last one Out.

Minutes before the big race

Here it is. The big race has arrived. I always tell my swimmers to talk with me before their race, and this is crucial for every athlete, no matter the experience level. Your coach can impart some final wisdom or corny joke to lighten the mood.

When behind the blocks, do whatever it takes you to get into the zone. Some swimmers like to be silent and still, others like to chat it up, and some like to dance around to music. Whatever works for you, do it. This is your moment!

On the blocks

Nothing more you can say or do at this point will matter. You trained with purpose, you listened to your coaches (hopefully), and you have fully prepared. Let all that take hold. Swim the race to the best of your ability.

After the race

You finally reach the wall, and that's it. It's all over. Regardless of the outcome, always display good sportsmanship. Shake your competitor's hand as a sign of respect, not only for them, but for the sport you all work so hard to be a part of.

- Go directly to your coach. Do not pass Go, do not collect \$200. Talk about your race – the good, the bad and the ugly.
 - If there is a warm down pool available, use it. Your body just exerted a huge amount of energy and expended large amounts of lactic acid. Keep swimming a little longer after you feel like you've recovered.
 - Once you properly warm down and feel you have returned to a stable place, relax. Go find your bag, throw on some clothes and just be a part of the team.
- Months of swimming and planning with intent leads to a successful swim meet. The next time you are struggling during a huge set, think about that big meet months away. Get into the mindset of swimming fast now!

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PAC:

- TBD

SWIM:

- **Oct. 11-12** - Fun in the WILD @Northwestern University. Entries open until Sept. 19th.
- **Oct. 17-19** - World Aquatics Swimming World Cup (Stop #2) @FMC. Entries are closed.
- **Nov. 1-2** - Fall Classic @HOME. Entries one until October. 7th.
- **Nov. 21-23** - Patriot Premiere Meet @HOME. Entries are open until Nov. 2nd.
- **Dec. 10-15** - Winter Junior Nationals in Austin, TX.
- **Dec. 12-14** - FOX Holiday Classic in Hobart, IN. Entries close on Nov. 11.

WATER POLO:

- **Oct. 11** - Green and White Team games (Futures)
- **Oct. 12** - Black Team games (Premier)
- **Oct. 18** - 14U Games and Green and White Team games (Futures)
- **Oct. 19** - 12U and 14U Games, and single games for Green and White Teams
- **Oct. 26** - 12U Game, Black, Green and White Teams games (Futures and Premier)

DIVING:

- TBA

GROUP UPDATES

SWIMMING

ELITE - Coach Kevin
kzakrzewski@d125.org

We are getting closer and closer to the end of our Fall season. It is important that we make the most of our opportunities. Also, as a reminder, the Elite group is our highest level group that has the highest level of expectations. One of those is practice attendance. Mornings, Evenings, and Dryland! 95+% attendance rate!

PATRIOT PLUS - Coach Carolyn
cgrevers@d125.org

PATRIOT - Coach Kee
keehng@gmail.com

We had a productive meeting focused on self evaluation and goal setting; they are now putting it into practice by filling out a form. With great attendance rate and improvements, the group is moving to the next phase of training with higher level aerobic swim and distance training as an option. Some Patriot swimmers will attend the Fun in the WILD meet which includes short distance events; therefore we will include some sprint work and race details.

JR PATRIOT - Coach Thomas
tschwingen@d125.org

Jr Patriot will start getting into our normal routine for the season. Drills will always be included in practices; they are very important in fixing and maintaining correct stroke technique. We will start to add in more anaerobic/aerobic sets to build up swimmers' endurance and speed. Also, we'll be getting prepared for some short, fast swims at this weekend's meet; make sure to wear your team suit & cap.

LIL PATRIOT - Coach Megan
mosullivan@d125.org

We are continuing to focus on overall technique in the water while throwing in a challenge set a couple times a week. We will also be adding more start and turn focus each week. New team shirts are being distributed at practices, please make sure to label them.

WATER POLO

HS Water Polo - Coach Rose
rwimer@d125.org

Games this weekend @SHS for Black, Green and White teams!

Also, please make sure to join Parent Square to receive the weekly schedules for your group!

Age Group WATER POLO:

Please make sure to join Parent Square to receive the weekly schedules for your group!

10u WATER POLO:

Please make sure to join Parent Square to receive the weekly schedules for your group!

PAC Social Media
INSTAGRAM:

@patriotaquaticclub

@nipc_wp

@pac_diving

FACEBOOK:

Patriot Aquatic Club -
 Lincolnshire, IL

YOUTUBE CHANNELS:

Patriot Aquatic Club
 Northern Illinois Polo
 Club

DIVING

COMPETITIVE DIVING

Coach Jonathan - jroby@d125.org

Shortened week due to swim meets and polo tourneys, We'll see you Wednesday and Friday this week!

DEVELOPMENTAL DIVING

No practice Tuesday due to a SHS swim meet, feel free to come Friday to make up your board time.

LEARN TO DIVE

No Practice this weekend, if you want stop by the pool and Cheer on the NIPC water polo team!!!

**MOTIVATION OF
 THE WEEK:**

**"I can accept
 failure, everyone
 fails at
 something. But I
 can't accept NOT
 TRYING AGAIN."**

Michael Jordan