

PATRIOT PULSE

We're heading into our **third week of practices!** By now, athletes should be starting to feel stronger in the water and more confident focusing on technique and building muscle memory. Remember, **consistency is key**—the more practices you attend, the more progress you'll see.

Here are a few important reminders and updates:

- **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 personalized caps (optional). We are ordering team shirts for this season....PLEASE go into your family account and make sure the shirt size is correct for your swimmer.
- **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.
- **Locker room Reminder (AGAIN!):** 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!
- **Events:** Games and meets have started. PAC meet deadlines are coming up, so please check. NIPC BLACK team is already on a roll and are 2-0 for the season so far!

New Season, New Habits: Starting the Year Off Strong

by [EDIE SAWYER](#)

In many of my previous articles, I have emphasized the importance of change. You are never going to improve by constantly doing the same things all the time. It is so important to reflect on your past season and think about the things that went great, as well as the things that could have been done better. As you enter a new season, think about what you want to do a better job of. Is it getting to bed earlier? Improving your strength or flexibility? Or maybe it's getting to practice

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9/16/25 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.



early so that you can warm your body up before getting in the pool. Whatever it may be, take some time to think about how you can change your old habits for the better. Read below to learn about the common bad habits that swimmers tend to have, and how you can change them before entering your new season!

Sleep

Many swimmers, especially student-athletes, fall victim to not getting enough sleep at night. As we all know, sleep is an integral part to success. Balancing your classes and workload with training is a difficult task, and often, sleep is the area that gets neglected. It is so important to utilize open time during your day for schoolwork so that you have less to do in the evening after practice. Staying on top of your work and not procrastinating will not only help with swimmers' sleeping habits, but it will also keep stress and anxiety levels low. Having a set time each night where you have to shut your laptop down and close your books is a way for swimmers to hold themselves accountable to getting to bed early enough every night.

Recovery

On top of swimmers' sleeping habits, their recovery habits are also usually put on the back burner. Between the several hours spent in the pool and weight room each week, swimmers are bound to feel their bodies start to break down. There are so many recovery methods out there that swimmers may find to be very beneficial, especially when they are in the heart of their season. Take a few minutes every day to stretch and foam roll after practice. This will help loosen your tense muscles and relax your body. Make time in your schedule to sit in the ice bath for 10 minutes once a week. This will help prepare you for the next training session. Fuel your body appropriately after training. Whether it is a morning practice or an afternoon practice, make sure to eat a healthy and balanced meal so that you gain your energy back.

Practice Preparation

The easiest good habit for swimmers to form is showing up to practice early. Many swimmers might ask themselves, "Why is that so important?" The reason why getting to practice early is beneficial is that it gives swimmers time to prepare. Whether you need to prepare for practice physically or mentally, showing up early gives yourself the time to do so. Take time to create good habits such as foam rolling or performing a dry

warmup before getting in the pool. Doing dynamic exercises outside the water will warm your body up before your practice really starts. Make this a habit every day, not just when it comes time to race at a meet.

Once you have taken the time to reflect and think about the habits that you want to create, write them down. The best way to hold yourself accountable to your expectations is by writing down your goals and rules to live by. Your new habits/expectations are a part of how you will achieve your goals. Connect them and understand why each of them is important.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PAC:

- TBD

SWIM:

- **Sept. 20** - Patriot Intersquad Meet @HOME (14 and unders and PAC only) Entries are closed.
- **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 open until October. 7th.
- **Nov. 21-23** - Patriot Premiere Meet @HOME. Entries are open until Nov. 2nd.
- **Dec. 12-14** - FOX Holiday Classic in Hobart, IN. Entries close on Nov. 11.

WATER POLO:

- **Sept. 20-21** - Black Team games (Premier), 14U and 12U Games
- **Sept. 21** - Green and White Team games (Futures)
- **Sept. 27** - 14U Games
- **Sept. 28** - Black Team games (Premier)

DIVING:

- TBA

GROUP UPDATES

SWIMMING

ELITE - Coach Kevin
kzakrzewski@d125.org

Now that we have started mornings, it is extra important to make sure you are getting ahead on your homework and your recovery. I know many have college trips organized but please plan accordingly so you don't miss ANY practices. We are now in the heart of the season so consistency is important as we target our meet in November.

PATRIOT PLUS - Coach Carolyn
cgrevers@d125.org

We have had a great first couple of weeks of "real" practices. We are working to keep building endurance and power in freestyle and strokes. Be thoughtful to work on things that are hard and new. Now is also the time to start making goals for this season and the future. As we get into the school year, work to figure out your schedule and schoolwork load so you can stay committed to your extracurricular activities.

PATRIOT - Coach Kee
keehng@gmail.com

It is fantastic to see all Patriot swimmers attending practices with an enthusiastic level for learning these past weeks! We are beginning to build the volume of aerobic training but the emphasis is still on technique. Almost all Patriot swimmers will attend the Intersquad meet, swimming short distance events; therefore sprint work will be included along with race details. We look forward to seeing them compete and having fun at the first meet of this season.

JR PATRIOT - Coach Thomas
tschwigen@d125.org

Jr Patriot will continue working on drills and focusing on technique for each stroke. We've begun adding sets for building a strong base before the season really kicks off. So, make sure to attend all the practices you can to stay on track with the training schedule. This is also a great opportunity, while things are slowed down, to correct stroke technique and not continue old, bad habits. Looking forward to the PAC inter squad meet this Saturday, always a fun event!

LIL PATRIOT - Coach Megan
mosullivan@d125.org

Great start to the season LILs! We are getting through quite a bit of drills and practice every day. We will continue on our technique focus but will begin to split off into interval groups. Drylands will continue to be outside as long as the midwest weather allows it. Just a reminder LILs should have a water bottle for every practice.

WATER POLO

HS Polo - Coach Rose
rwimer@d125.org

Our Green and White Futures teams start league play this Sunday at Stevenson High School.

The Elite Team is playing Saturday and Sunday for an action packed weekend.

14u WATER POLO:

Our 12u team travels to Munster, IN on Saturday for games and then is in Evanston High School on Sunday for a busy weekend.
 Our 14u team has games at Stevenson High School on Sunday.

10u WATER POLO:

This group had a great weekend of games last week! it was great to see all the new players out there learning the game! 10u has 2 games this Sunday at Evanston High School.

PAC Social Media
INSTAGRAM:

@patriotaquaticclub
 @nipc_wp
 @pac_diving

FACEBOOK:

Patriot Aquatic Club - Lincolnshire, IL

YOUTUBE CHANNELS:

Patriot Aquatic Club
 Northern Illinois Polo Club

MINI PATRIOT - Coach Ashley
ashgarner4@yahoo.com

Patriot Aquatic Club is excited to introduce a new level to our programing. Our MINI Team is designed for swimmers under 9 who are ready to take the next step in swimming. This beginner-level program focuses on developing strong fundamentals and good habits by breaking down each stroke into manageable steps to gradually increase stroke proficiency. Swimmers will learn proper techniques, build confidence in the water, and get comfortable with the structure of a competitive swim environment in a supportive and encouraging setting.

DIVING

COMPETITIVE DIVING

Coach Jonathan - jroby@d125.org

The Competitive group is honing in and making big changes as we run through more fundamental work outs, breaking bad habits and pushing extra hard in the weight room before our first meet of the season in October!

DEVELOPMENTAL DIVING

We're starting to get back into the groove of things with our Developmental group divers, a couple more weeks of basics and we'll be ripping and roaring through some new dives!

LEARN TO DIVE

First two weeks in the books for the L2D crew and our little ones are crushing it! Excited to see where these little flippers go this session!

MOTIVATION OF THE WEEK:

"Don't put a limit on anything, The more you dream, the further you get."

-Michael Phelps