

PATRIOT PULSE

Congratulations on an awesome showing at the Intrasquad meet this weekend!

We're excited to build on the progress we're already seeing in so many of you, and to keep growing your confidence in the water.

A big shout-out to our water polo teams for their great competition over the weekend—good luck this week!

Please welcome Chandra Riberich as an assistant to the Junior Patriot and Patriot Plus groups. She is a lifelong swimmer who earned Wisconsin State titles, swam collegiately at Fresno State and UW-La Crosse, and competed at multiple National Championships. Her athletic journey later expanded to triathlons, highlighted by racing at the 2024 Ironman World Championships in Nice, France. Now a certified Athletic Trainer, she will join the PAC team to inspire and mentor the next generation of swimmers.

Here are a few important reminders and updates:

- **Traffic:** We just want to remind everyone that with the many activities and waves of high traffic, the BEST way to quickly get in and out of parking/dropoff is to enter the Port Clinton Rd. Entrance that is north of the building.
- **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 will go out as soon as we have them....stay tuned!
- **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. With the holiday this week, the SHS games and the ISI camp this week, there are several 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!

Five Words That Will Help You Reach Your Goals

by Dr. Alan Goldberg//Contributor

For many swimmers, the holiday-training season will have a significant impact on whether they reach their goals for this season or come up short. The end-of-December, early-January training period can often be the most difficult part of your training, which can also make it the most important part of your training.

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9/23/25 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.



Far too many swimmers lose their intensity and motivation during this emotionally and physically challenging timeframe. The days are short during this winter grind, the practices tend to be brutal and most swimmers are already pretty fatigued by this point.

The key question that comes up here is ***“how do you maintain your focus and intensity so that you don't give in to the natural impulse to space out and back down?”***

Last fall, [I talked about needing to carry your personal goals](#) into these tough practices with you, your ***“big enough why.”*** The article focused on using your goals to remind yourself of why you are putting all of this effort out and why you should push yourself in practice when you might be bored, exhausted or in too much pain to continue to go hard. I also mentioned four key words that will provide you with the ultimate success strategy that will take you to success in everything you do, both in and out of the pool: ***Get comfortable being uncomfortable.***

I would like to expand on this specific success strategy in more detail, especially because if you really want to turn those dreams into a reality, then you'll need to live it during your training and into the new year.

Just to review, ***“getting comfortable being uncomfortable”*** means that you want to continually push yourself out of your physical and emotional comfort zones. Simply put, you want to push yourself to do the difficult, unpleasant and often anxiety-provoking things that many swimmers tend to avoid as if it were a plague. When you do push through those hurdles, when you practice getting comfortable being uncomfortable, you will expand the things that you can do and shrink those things that you think you can't do.

Keep in mind that if you don't stretch your limits, you'll end up setting your limits!

Pushing yourself ***physically*** is self-explanatory: when you're tired and want to back down, you simply step on the gas and go harder. Handling pain and fatigue from oxygen debt in these cases is predominantly mental. That is, you improve your ability to push through pain mentally by keeping your focus in the now, on the feel of what you're doing, one stroke at a time.

Pushing yourself ***emotionally*** requires that you go against your thoughts, doubts and anxiety about leading the lane, going into a faster lane, working on your weaknesses or trying to keep up with faster swimmers. When those negative thoughts arise, you do not want to give them space in your mind. Instead, you want to constructively distract yourself by focusing on the feel of your own movement through the water.

Whenever you question and challenge your perceived limitations, you will grow and develop both as a swimmer and a person. I say this because ***you are always limited most by what you think and believe are your boundaries.***

Something to understand is that performance is always self-fulfilling. This means that ***you'll always get what you expect.***

If you tell yourself repeatedly that you cannot do something, then your attempts at going against this self-limiting belief will always be half-hearted. Whenever you do attempt something that you think is difficult and, perhaps even “impossible” and your motivation is weak, you will be less likely to persist and keep trying.

However, if you continuously tell yourself, “I can do this,” then when you do run into difficulty, failure or obstacles, your adversity will not dampen your motivation or efforts to persist with the task. Simply put, you will likely have more motivation until you're ultimately successful.

This self-fulfilling nature of performance is important for you to keep in mind every time you attempt to step outside of your comfort zone. Why? Because every time you try to “get comfortable being uncomfortable,” you'll always be greeted by self-doubts, anxiety and feelings of inadequacy. These emotions, while hard to ignore, will then feed your negative thinking and self-doubts even more.

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:

- **Sept. 27** - 14U Games
- **Sept. 28** - Black Team games (Premier)
- **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

Your job, whenever you hear this kind of internal negativity, is to push through it by focusing even more on what you're doing in the moment. You should stay focused on what you're doing, one stroke at a time, and ***suspend your judgment about whether you think you can or cannot.***

As you get to the other side of this challenging holiday-training season and you're feeling tired, bored or burnt out, embrace the ***“get comfortable being uncomfortable”*** strategy and, when you start hearing that negative loop running in your head, have a positive attitude to fight through the doubts.

Remember, if you think you can or you think you cannot, you're absolutely right!

As a Sports Performance Consultant, Dr. G works with swimmers at every level from Olympians right down to age groupers. A popular presenter at coaches clinics and clubs around the country, Dr. G specializes in helping swimmers get unstuck and swimming fast when it counts the most. Dr. G. is the author of [Swimming Fast When It Counts The Most](#), [DMTS \(Developing Mentally Tough Swimmers\)](#), and his newest mental toughness training program, [Swimming With The Competitive Edge](#).

Interested in more tips?

<https://www.competitivedge.com/mental-toughness-tips-swimming/>

GROUP UPDATES

SWIMMING

ELITE - Coach Kevin
kzakrzewski@d125.org

This week we have transitioned to our peak training plan. Dryland has reintroduced the TrainHeroic app so we can track their progress in dryland. In the pool, we are peddle to the metal and don't look to pull our foot off the gas any time soon. Make sure you are taking care of yourself, especially as the weather starts to change

PATRIOT PLUS - Coach Carolyn
cgrevers@d125.org

Great job to those that swam at the Intrasquad over the weekend.....we can see the progress already! Try to make a commitment to improve on one thing that you don't love to do, or is hard. I want to continue to build up endurance and power as we ramp up on the harder sets, but continue to work on your other committed goals while doing that. Wednesday will be the day that goal sheets get handed out. It is up to you if you want to fill them out and talk to me about these.

PATRIOT - Coach Kee
keehng@gmail.com

Almost all Patriot swimmers participated in the fun Intersquad meet this past weekend. There were many good swims as swimmers tried out and adjusted to newly learned skills. The group completed the first training phase which concentrated on technique with simple aerobics and kicking. The next stage will raise the aerobics and kicking level. Pulling training will be included in this stage as well. Swimmers are encouraged to come to practices often to continue their progress.

JR PATRIOT - Coach Thomas
tschwinger@d125.org

What a fun and exciting meet this past Saturday! Swimmers did well and now have an idea of some things to start working on moving forward. Jr's still has a couple more weeks of focusing mainly on covering each stroke's drills and making sure to execute them properly. We've also been slowly adding to our main set, building up endurance in preparation for when we really start adding yardage. As always, make sure to get your swimmer to practice as much as possible. Each day we build on the last, so we don't want anyone falling behind.

LIL PATRIOT - Coach Megan
mosullivan@d125.org

What a fun and great meet to kick off the season! The LILs had a lot of excitement and raced hard, even as they got tired. This week we are doing our first interval split, we will still do activities together each week. We will also be re-starting our beads for the season. Beads are given out each practice to a couple swimmers that demonstrate the spirit of being a Patriot teammate and put forth a Patriot practice.

WATER POLO

HS Water Polo - Coach Rose
rwimer@d125.org

Reminder No Elite Girls Practice Sunday due to the PAC Meet.

Age Group WATER POLO:

Our 14u team continues with games this weekend at Naperville North and York. Reminder NO Practice this Thursday 9/25 due to the HS girls swim meet.

10u WATER POLO:

Our 10u team had another great weekend of games! Lots of learning and growth. Reminder NO Practice this Thursday 9/25 due to the HS girls swim meet. Next practice is Sunday 9/28 12-12:45pm.

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

This past weekends meet was a first for many of our minis. It provided a great first experience and sets the stage for whats to come. While we saw some disqualifications, each one showed us exactly what to focus on in practice. We're proud of the effort and energy our swimmers brought to the pool. We look forward to seeing their hard-work translate into even stronger performances for our next meet.

DIVING

COMPETITIVE DIVING

Coach Jonathan - jroby@d125.org

Short week for the Competitive kids; Practices Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. See you there!

DEVELOPMENTAL DIVING

No practice Friday through Sunday this week!

LEARN TO DIVE

The L2D squad has the weekend off! Enjoy your weekend!

MOTIVATION OF THE WEEK:

“If you want to be the best, you have to do things other people aren't willing to do.”

-Michael Phelps