

# TAC Team Handbook

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**Disclaimer: Although accuracy is intended in this handbook, there may be differences between it and the TAC Bylaws or registration materials for the current or upcoming season. The TAC Bylaws shall always have precedence if there are differences. The registration materials should be considered more accurate for the current season.**

# **Welcome to TAC Swim Club!**

Trojan Aquatic Club (TAC) is a year-round competitive swim team offering instruction, training and competition to people of all ages and abilities. If this is your first experience with competitive swimming, we are sure you will find it exciting. Swimming is an outstanding physical activity for everyone and can be a lifetime sport. You do not have to be a “natural” to become a good competitive swimmer, since coordination in the water can be developed with practice over time. Because each race is timed, the progress of the swimmer can be measured exactly. Each swim can be a winning one when the swimmer improves his/her time. It should be understood that not every swimmer can become an Olympic champion; however, every participant can develop a proficiency in the water and can gain from the experience. Throughout this handbook, we have collected information about all facets of TAC and about competitive swimming in general. You will be introduced to our philosophy, history, and team policies as well as to basic information concerning your day-to-day participation in the TAC program. It is our hope that this handbook will help you better understand and enjoy the world of amateur swimming. Refer to the team Bylaws if you need additional information.

## **TAC Swim Club Mission**

The mission of TAC Swim Club is to have a nationally recognized, competitive, aquatic program that provides swimmers with the opportunity to achieve their potential as both people and athletes. To strive to instill in young swimmers an understanding of and appreciation for such concepts as high self-esteem, personal accountability, self-discipline, goal setting, and goal achievement as these ideas relate to their success in training and in competition. TAC Swim Club not only exists to provide an amateur athletic program for swimming, but a swim program which also develops character, life skills, and traits that will help with success in life.

To this end, the following objectives have been established:

### **Team Objectives**

1. To develop a teaching framework for every competitive stroke, start, and turn with a coaching staff that encourages fundamentals and allows each swimmer to achieve his/her potential.
2. To develop a TAC parent's program that enhances and supports the team.
3. To develop a team identity and build pride in the team.
4. To promote awareness of and access to this swim program.
5. To provide training and competition for swimmers at all levels, allowing everyone to develop to his/her full potential.

### **Swimmer Objectives**

1. To develop a positive self-image, self-respect, and self-confidence.
2. To develop self-reliance and self-discipline.
3. To develop self-motivation, goal setting, and achievement through practice and swim meets.
4. To participate in a wholesome, worthwhile physical and recreational activity.
5. To learn sportsmanship, cooperation, and support of team members.

## **Why Swimming?**

Swimming is considered the ideal activity for developing muscular and skeletal growth by many physicians and pediatricians.

- Swimming develops high quality aerobic endurance, the most important key to physical fitness. In other sports an hour of practice may yield as little as 10 minutes of meaningful exercise.
- Swimming does a better job in proportional muscular development by using all the body's major muscle groups. No other sport does this as well.
- Swimming enhances children's natural flexibility by exercising all their major joints through a full range-of-motion.
- Swimming helps develop coordination because it requires combinations of complex movements of all parts of the body.
- Swimming is the most injury-free of all children's sports.
- Swimming is a sport that can bring fitness and enjoyment for life.

## **TAC Program Description**

TAC Swim Club exists to provide an amateur athletic program that encourages the pursuit of excellence in competitive swimming. The program currently utilizes pool facilities at New Castle Middle School, and Baker Park Pool. There are two seasons per year, the short course season (September-March) and the long course season (April-August). The team and all swimmers are members of USA Swimming and Indiana Swimming.

The program provides both developmental and competitive swimming at several skill levels. Each swimmer is evaluated by the coaching staff and placed in the appropriate practice group. Group advancement is determined by the coaches.

## **Team Level Designations**

Swimmers are placed in team levels based on several qualifiers. In this section, the goal is to familiarize you with the various team levels, basic expectations, and an overall picture of the make-up of our team.

### **Developmental (Level 1)**

Focus: The goal of the Developmental instructional group is to introduce competitive swimming and to stimulate interest in swimming while developing basic skills. The program will be very positive and encouraging, focusing on greater ease and comfort in the water, and in using good technique in swimming lengths of the pool. Beginning swimmers will work on freestyle and backstroke technique, including starts, finishes (counting strokes on backstroke), and breathing on freestyle. As they progress, swimmers will also learn breaststroke and butterfly, including the turns and finishes. Swimmers will participate in fun meets and in competitive meets once they, their coaches, and the parents feel they are ready.

### **Bronze (Level 2)**

Focus: The goal of the Bronze training group is to refine stroke techniques and begin to teach some advanced swimming skills while developing improved endurance. The emphasis within this group is learning and having fun. While swimming is a sport that requires effort and concentration, self-discipline and commitment, having fun remains the foundation. The age group swimmers will develop goals and monitor their progress toward goal achievement. They will participate in both fun meets and more competitive meets according to their interests.

### **Silver (Level 3)**

Focus: The Silver Group is an exciting time of transition. Swimmers in this group are becoming more competitive and learning about the commitment necessary for success. We demand excellent technique in practice while we gradually increase the training and level of competitive awareness. We want our swimmers to strive for their best, enjoy their teammates, and enjoy the challenges set before them.

### **Gold (Level 4)**

Focus: The Gold is our highest level of swimming. It is made up of Senior Group members who agree to rigorous attendance and training guidelines. This team is for the very serious swimmer, and the expectations of athletes at this level are very high. A great deal of importance is placed upon not only training, but also training consistently. Abilities and aspirations of our top-level athletes are high, and we strive to create a team composed of dedicated, committed, and ambitious performers. The challenges are great; however, the rewards are priceless.

## Team Level Progressions/Entry Requirements

### Level 1: Developmental

- Legal 25 freestyle with bilateral breathing
- Legal 25 yard backstroke
- Developmental swim in some competitive meets

### Level 2: Bronze

- Legal 50 yards of all 4 competitive strokes
- Legal 100 IM
- Silver are expected to swim in competitive meets

### Level 3: Silver

- Legal 200 IM
- Legal 100 yards of all 4 competitive strokes
- Legal starts turns and finishes
- Golds are expected to swim in competitive meets

### Level 4: Gold

- Legally swim 200 Fly, 400 IM, and 500, 800, 1000, and 1650 freestyle

## Pool Facilities

TAC Swim Club is fortunate to have the support of New Castle Community Schools, and Baker Park Pool in providing pool access for our teams. Here is a brief description of each pool.

### New Castle Middle School

This facility is the main practice pools for the team. The pool entrance is on the north side of the building. Locker room facilities are available and can be accessed from the pool deck. There are rest room facilities across the hall from the pool area. **NO ADULT IS ALLOWED IN THE LOCKER ROOMS AT ANY TIME. THIS IS A USA AND INDIANA SWIMMING RULE AND WILL BE ENFORCED BY THE COACHES AND BOARD MEMBERS.** Parents are requested to remain off the pool deck to comply with insurance requirements. Parents are welcome to observe practices from the bleachers. Parents are encouraged to check the board and their family folder at the pool for announcements and information. We share this pool with the NC High School and NC Middle School Teams. It is important that our swimmers are not roaming the halls of NCMS or causing disruptions with the other teams' practices.

**Baker Park Pool** This facility is one of the practice pools for the team during the summer. Locker room facilities are available and can be accessed from the pool deck. Parents are requested to remain outside the pool area to comply with insurance requirements.

## Coaching Staff Responsibilities

The **Head Coach**, under the direct supervision of the TAC Board of Directors, has the responsibility to supervise the entire competitive swim program, provide primary coaching for the more competitive groups and is responsible for the age group coaching staff. The age group coaches have an assigned group who they may coach due to their talents and/or strong points.

The **Coaching Staff** has complete control of matters relating to training and competition. The coaches are dedicated to using their considerable talents to provide a program that will enable children to learn the value of striving to improve to be the best that they can be. The coaches will strive to instill in the swimmers an understanding of and appreciation for such concepts as high self-esteem, personal accountability, self-discipline, goal setting, and goal achievement as these ideas relate to their success in training and in competition.

Coaches are responsible for placing swimmers in the various skill-based practice groups and for advancing the swimmer to a more challenging skill group when appropriate. Coaches will determine practice schedules and locations for the groups each season.

The coaching staff will have final say in which swim meets the team will attend and in which events the swimmers will participate based on the swimmer's eligibility and availability on the day of the meet. While at meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team and offer constructive criticism regarding each swimmer's performance after each race. Building of relay teams are solely at the discretion of the coaching staff, as is any necessary communication with meet officials!



## **Coaches Code of Conduct**

- \*NEVER uses humiliation or embarrassment as a coaching tool
- \*NEVER uses disparaging words or utilizes name calling
- \*NEVER expects from their athletes what they don't practice as well
- \*NEVER demeans their athletes
- \*NEVER creates a team environment based on fear
- \*Genuinely cares about the welfare and wellbeing of each athlete
- \*Is a pro at catching athletes doing things right
- \*Rarely raises his/her voice
- \*Is supportive and encouraging
- \*Builds healthy relationships with his/her athletes
- \*Is honest and trustworthy
- \*Creates a feeling of personal safety on the team
- \*Is able to celebrate his/her athletes' successes/accomplishments
- \*Is a positive person
- \*Understands that coaching is about doing what's best for the kids
- \*Has winning in perspective and defines success in appropriate ways
- \*Tends to be flexible, yet still able to set good limits
- \*Is open to constructive feedback from swimmers and parents
- \*Is friendly, non-defensive and approachable
- \*Uses hard physical conditioning appropriately
- \*Is NEVER physically or verbally abusive!
- \*Communicates displeasure directly and appropriately to athletes
- \*Coaches by generating mutual respect
- \*Maintains an open mind
- \*Is a good communicator
- \*Leaves his/her athletes feeling good about themselves
- \*Fuels the athlete's enjoyment and enthusiasm for the sport
- \*Is a wonderful role model
- \*Earns respect from players and parents
- \*Does NOT act out his/her feelings/insecurities on his/her athlete
- \*Portrays professional, sportsman-like conduct at practices and meets.
- \*Is on time and ready for practices and meets
- \*Promotes the TAC in the community and at swim meets

## Swimmer Responsibilities

Swimmers' responsibilities to the TAC Swim Club are two-fold: responsibilities to the club and responsibilities to themselves. Swimmers must remember that they are representing TAC Swim Club at practice and at all meets.

### **Responsibilities to the club:**

1. Portray professional, sportsman-like conduct at practices, meets, and all activities outside of the pool.

**If you cause problems at any swim meet, you may lose your privilege to continue in the meet!**

2. Be on time and ready to practice!

3. Give all your effort at every practice with the end result in mind.

4. Give back to the club via volunteering at meets, swim lessons, etc.

5. Display respect to the coaches, parents, officials, and other swimmers.

6. Be a good teammate – as much as this is an individual sport, this is also a team sport. How you act, swim, or train does affect others.

7. Never take electronic or recording devices into the locker rooms or bathrooms. This includes cell phones! **THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE!**

### **Responsibilities to themselves:**

1. Remember: You are a unique individual. How you progress, train and swim at meets is not always what will work for someone else.

2. Be proud of what you have done –avoid comparing yourself to someone else.

3. Remember to give your best effort each and every day, keeping your personal goals and the goals of the team in mind. Not giving 100% may seem like not a big deal at the time, but it will impact the perception that other swimmers and coaches have of you, and the perception you have of yourself at the end of the season.

4. Stay hydrated and maintain a well-balanced diet.

5. Be on time and ready to practice!

6. Maintain a healthy, drug-free life.

7. Represent TAC Swim Club in a manner which instills pride and respect for yourself and others.

8. Treat others with respect.

9. Remember, coaches have the final word and are the “professionals” of the sport. Coaches have your best interest in mind when decisions are made.

10. BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF AND WITH OTHERS!

11. BE PROUD OF WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU HAVE DONE!

# Swim Parent Responsibilities

## TAC Swim Parent Code of Conduct

As our organization grows and we continue to expand our programs, we seek to establish or clarify our policies. Our policies help to guide the organization and ensure continued success. One of the first areas to be addressed is parent behavior - specifically, what type of behavior is expected of swimming parents.

TAC Swim Club is fortunate to have highly experienced, professional coaches working to develop our children into better swimmers and more importantly, disciplined people. As parents, it's absolutely essential that we give our coaching staff the respect and authority they deserve to run our swim team. Our coaches are hired for that purpose.

### TAC, as an organization, highly encourages the following parental behavior:

- Open communication between parents, swimmers and coaches emphasizing goal setting and focusing on the performance expectations of both the swimmer and the parents
- Meeting with the coaches/swimmers/parents during normal operating hours to discuss issues
- Positive reinforcement of all swimmers in all situations - team spirit, team loyalty
- Parental involvement on the Board of Directors and in organizing and running of meets and other team events

### TAC, as an organization, will **not** tolerate the following behavior from parents:

- Coaching your children at practice or during meets, that is the coach's job
- Interrupting or confronting the coaching staff on the pool deck during practice or meets
- Abusive language towards coaches, swimmers, parents, officials, and your own children
- Any behavior that brings discredit or disruption to our swimmers and our organization

On the next page you will find the TAC Parent Code of Conduct. The Code was developed as a standard to emphasize our organization's commitment to making everyone's involvement with our club a positive experience.

## **TAC Swim Club Parent Code of Conduct**

As a parent of a swimmer and member of TAC Swim Club, I will abide by the following guidelines:

I. Practice teamwork with all parents, swimmers, and coaches by supporting the values of Discipline, Loyalty, Commitment and Hard Work.

II. As a parent, I will not coach or instruct the team or any swimmer at a practice or meets (from the stands or any other area) or interfere with coaches on the pool deck.

III. Demonstrate good sportsmanship by conducting myself in a manner that earns the respect of my child, other swimmers, parents, officials, and the coaches at meets and practices.

IV. Maintain self-control at all times. Know my role. Swimmers – Swim, Coaches – Coach, Officials – Officiate, Parents – Parent

V. As a parent, I understand that criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward the coaches, officials, and/or any participating swimmer will not be permitted or tolerated.

VI. Enjoy involvement with TAC Swim Club by supporting the swimmers, coaches and other parents with positive communication and actions.

VII. During competitions, questions or concerns regarding decisions made by meet officials are directed to a member of our coaching staff. Parents address officials via the coaching staff only.

**Sanctions:** Should I conduct myself in such a way that brings discredit or discord to TAC Swim Club, or USA Swimming, I voluntarily subject myself to disciplinary action.

TAC maintains the right to terminate any membership with/without cause in the interest of our vision, mission, and objectives.

### **Responsibilities to the Team**

TAC Swim Club is a not-for-profit corporation run entirely by volunteers with the exception of our coaches. It requires hundreds of hours to keep the team running, and all parents are encouraged to contribute a significant amount of time to the team. The team cannot operate without volunteers. There are many opportunities to help. Find something you enjoy from the list below and get involved! We believe TAC can offer our swimmers the best experience possible, but it will require every parent to contribute to the cause.

### **Volunteering Responsibilities: Hosted (Home) Swim Meets**

TAC normally hosts two meets per season. For the short course season, one meet is typically scheduled during the last two weeks of November, and the other is typically scheduled the Sunday following IHSAA Boys Sectional Finals

We host these meets for several reasons:

- First, TAC strives to provide quality competitive opportunities for our swimmers and to provide our parents with many opportunities to become involved with the sport of swimming, our organization, and to continue to support their children
- Secondly, these meets are a significant source of revenue for the club, thus enabling the club to maintain a reasonable fee structure for its members.

***Each TAC parent is expected to volunteer for 2 working sessions at each TAC hosted meet.*** This expectation is your responsibility is yours even if your swimmer is not competing in the meet. Sign-up opportunities for the specific jobs and times will be available online in the months leading up to the event. If you know prior to the posting that you will be unable to participate or volunteer in the meet, please contact the club president ahead of time as there are usually ways to help and fulfill your requirement ahead of time

Some of the meet volunteer positions (and the minimum number of people required to fill those positions for each session at the meet) are outlined below:

- Head Timer: (1) to oversee the timers.
- Timers: (12) use a stopwatch to record times for swimmers.
- Relief Timers: (2) to relieve the timers for breaks
- Clerk of Course: (2) to assemble and assist 8 & under swimmers to report for their heats.
- Awards Workers: (2) to sort and label ribbons/awards.
- Concession Workers: (4) sell food items from the concession stand.
- Hospitality Workers: (2) provide food and beverages to coaches and officials.
- Administrative Workers: (4) announce events, operate the computer, operate the timing system and a runner to assist.
- Officials: (8) make sure all swims are legal and the meet is run according to USA Swimming regulations.
- Clean-up: (4) to clean up after the meet.
- Note: TAC is also expected, and sometimes required, to provide assistance at away meets. We ask that you help as needed during these meets. Timers and officials are usually needed.

## **Committee Participation**

A lot of work is done behind the scenes. Please find a way to help other than just at the meets. A lot of administrative tasks, planning and preparations are needed. There are several committees listed below that can use your help and ideas.

### **Meet Coordinator**

- Responsible for the appointment of a Meet Director
- Responsible for a meet committee

### **Officials**

Officials run the swim meets. Swim meets cannot be held without officials. Officials must complete training and be USA Swimming/Indiana Swimming certified and registered. TAC sponsors periodic clinics to certify officials, and we encourage those interested to attend other clinics. Levels of certification include administrative, technical, starter, and referee. Administrative officials' duties include operating the timing system and the computer. With the number of swimmers we have, the number of meets attended, and the quality of competition of these meets, it is essential that we have a contingent of well-qualified officials. Talk to a coach or Board member to get details about how you can become an Official.

### **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors consists of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and Head Coach. Members are elected for two-year terms with alternating annual elections. Elections are held during the annual meeting of the TAC General Membership which is usually held in March, or after the conclusion of Championship season.

## **Team Communication**

- Our Website: <https://www.teamunify.com/team/inncsc/page/home> is where you can find current team information, meet schedules, practice schedules, team handbook, and links to valuable resources. Our club website also has current board members, the club by-laws, coaches' bios, email & contact information, photo galleries, and all other information to keep you up to date on TAC Swim Club. Check it often to stay informed!
- Make sure we have your correct email so you will receive updates and announcements in a timely manner.
- Text Updates: Please follow us on Remind.
- Like Us on Facebook: Trojan Aquatics is the name of the Facebook page where we make announcements and share good news about the club and our swimmers.

## **Responsibilities to Your Swimmer**

1. Provide good health habits at home with well balanced meals and adequate sleep.
2. Encourage regular and prompt attendance at practices.
3. Provide transportation to and from practices and meets.
4. Encourage good sportsmanship at all times.
5. Please leave "coaching" to the coaches! It is the job of each coach to offer constructive criticism. You can help by being there for your swimmer to supply love, recognition, and encouragement.
6. Praise him/her for a good swim and offer support and understanding after a disappointing effort. You are your child's best supporter! The coaches and swimmers will put enough pressure on one another to perform in the pool. Try to make life outside of swimming easier on your child, not more stressful.
7. Be supportive of the coaches and other team members when speaking to your swimmer. Criticism of either can be detrimental to their rapport and to the team.
8. Avoid playing your swimmer against his/her competitors.
9. It is better if a child swims because he/she wants to rather than because you alone may want him/her to swim. Self-motivation is the biggest stimulus for the most successful swimmers.
10. Do not send swimmers to practice too early, and please pick them up promptly after their practice is over. Swimmers who are on deck outside their practice times distract other swimmers. Coaches need to concentrate on the swimmers in the water. Out of respect for our coaching staff, please do not make them wait unnecessarily after practice is over with swimmers who do not yet have rides.
11. Escort younger swimmers directly to and from the pool area for their protection.
12. Please promote responsible locker room behavior to your swimmer! Coaches are not often in the locker room area to monitor activity. Insist on respectful use of our pools (both NCMS and Baker). Misuse of school facilities or misbehavior while on school property could jeopardize the team's access to the pool and may result in expulsion from the team for any swimmer proven responsible! The parents may also have financial liability for any damages.
13. We all need to keep life balanced! Help your child avoid overly hectic schedules, overload, over commitments, etc. which may cause stress, disappointment, confusion, low self-esteem, low confidence, etc.

**A Note Regarding Parent Expectations of their Swimmer(s):** Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to various methods of teaching. Mastering new habits and retraining muscles takes time and effort. Plateaus can and do occur at one time or another in every swimmer's career, as they can in all fields of physical learning. The more successful athletes' work through this delay in improvement and go on to achieve greater performance. Similarly, all swimmers' careers will have high and low points.

It would be a mistake to expect children who are constantly undergoing changes, both physically and emotionally, to perform well consistently. So don't be upset when your swimmer does not do as well as expected. A failure is a step toward success when handled correctly.

Slow development of competitive drive at an early age is normal and perhaps more desirable than forced development. It is important that each swimmer learn to compete and develop some competitive spirit. It is also important for children to learn to adapt to reasonable levels of pressure and stress through participation in swim meet situations. Small disappointments they learn to handle as children prepare them for the larger ones they are certain to experience as adults.

### **Important Team Safety Policies**

The following policies have been adapted to TAC based on model policies that are currently required by USA Swimming. We have always strived to protect all of those involved in our programs by following these policies, however, by adding these to our handbook we are ensuring you are aware of these policies.

### **Bullying Policy**

**PURPOSE** Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at TAC Swim Club (the "Club") and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Club is committed to providing a safe, caring, and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member or athlete/mentor.

#### **Objectives of the Club's Bullying Policy and Action Plan:**

1. To make it clear that the Club will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents, and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers, and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that TAC takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.



## WHAT IS BULLYING?

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data, or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- I. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
- II. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- III. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- IV. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- V. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

**REPORTING PROCEDURE** An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents;
- Talk to a Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Write a letter or email to the Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff. There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled, and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

## HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED and SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED using the following approach:

### **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED**

1. First, we get the facts.
  - a. Keep all the involved children separate.
  - b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
  - c. Listen without blaming.
  - d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
  - e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.
2. Then, we determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.
  - a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
  - b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
    - ♣ What is the history between the kids involved?
    - ♣ Have there been past conflicts?
    - ♣ Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
    - ♣ Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
  - c. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
  - d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all the kids involved.

### **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED**

3. Support the kids who are being bullied
  - a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
  - b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
    - i. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
    - ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
  - c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.
4. Address bullying behavior
  - a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
  - b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.

- c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
    - i. Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
    - ii. Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may need additional support.
  - d. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
    - i. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
    - ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others in your community.
    - iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
  - e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
    - i. Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
    - ii. Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
  - f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.
5. Support bystanders who witness bullying. Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.
- a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
  - b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;
  - c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."
  - d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
  - e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

Source: [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov) – a federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

## Electronic Communication Policy

### PURPOSE

TAC Swim Club (the “Club”) recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While the Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Club also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

**GENERAL CONTENT** All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection.

For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- drugs or alcohol use;
- sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity
- the adult’s personal life , social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and • inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures
- Note: Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship, or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible, and professional. Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: “Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to face meeting?” or “Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient’s parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?”

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is Transparent, Accessible and Professional.

**Transparent:** All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

**Accessible:** All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club’s records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

**Professional:** All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that models the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the T.A.P. criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

## **FACEBOOK, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES**

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept any “friend” request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “private message” each other through Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “instant message” each other through Facebook chat or other IM method.

The Club has an official Facebook page (Trojan Aquatics) that athletes and their parents can “friend” for information and updates on TAC swim team-related matters.

Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

## **TEXTING**

The Club uses Remind to send messages out to members regarding practice and meet reminders, updates, and cancellations. Please sign-up for these as well as email.

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 7am until 9pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities. And only through the Remind App.

## **EMAIL**

The Club uses email as its main form of communication regarding team events and updates. Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 7am and 9pm. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member must also be copied.

## **REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

## **Locker Room Policy**

### **PURPOSE**

The following guidelines are designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas.

### **FACILITIES**

The following is a description of our practice and competition facilities to allow athletes and their families to plan their use:

We practice at: New Castle Middle School and Baker Park Pool

Baker Park Pool has a changing area that is shared with the public. As such, there are likely to be people who are not associated with TAC Swim Club in the changing area around the time of practice.

New Castle Middle School has athlete (student) locker rooms that are strictly used for athletes only. No adults are allowed in these locker rooms. There are bathrooms in the school that parents and siblings may use.

### **MONITORING**

#### **General Policy Considerations**

Coaches and staff make every effort to recognize when an athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, we will check on the athlete’s whereabouts.

Parents are barred from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is truly necessary. In those instances, it should only be a same-sex parent. If this is necessary, parents should let the coach or administrator know about this in advance.

If an athlete needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear (for example, a child under the age of eight), or an athlete's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach or an administrator know beforehand that he or she will be helping the athlete.

TAC Swim Club has predictable and limited use of locker rooms and changing areas (e.g., immediately before and following practices and meets). This allows for direct and regular monitoring of locker room areas. While constant monitoring inside of locker rooms and changing areas might be the most effective way to prevent problems, we understand that this would likely make swimmers uncomfortable and may even place our staff at risk for unwarranted suspicion.

We conduct a sweep of the locker rooms and changing areas before athletes arrive, post [staff, coach, parent, other adult] directly outside of the locker rooms and changing areas during periods of use, and leave the doors open only when adequate privacy is still possible. [Staff, coach, parent, other adult] conducts regular sweeps inside locker rooms as well, with women checking on female locker rooms, and men checking on male locker rooms.

#### **USE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER MOBILE RECORDING DEVICES**

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas.

The USA Swimming Athlete Protection Policies prohibit the use of such devices in the locker room or other changing area: 305.3 Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms.

## **Photography Policy**

### **PURPOSE**

There has been much talk about whether it is safe to have images taken of children participating in sports.

The TAC Swim Club (Club) and its members occasionally take photographs of groups of team members during practice, competitions, and other events to promote the Club and to share through the team's website, social networking sites, and personal social networking sites.

The publishing of a photograph of a specific swimmer under 18 either in an advertisement or in a published article or video recording (including video streaming) of swimming competitions ("publication") should only be done with parents' consent per the attached form.

While the great majority of images are appropriate and taken in good faith, it is a fact that images can be misused and children can be put at risk if commonsense procedures are not observed. All photographs and video recordings must observe generally accepted standards of decency in particular:

- Action shots should be a celebration of the sporting activity and not a sexualized image in a sporting context.
- Action or still shots should not be taken or retained where the photograph reveals a torn or misplaced swimsuit.
- All photographs taken by the club will be in good taste and demonstrate the ideals of the Club.
- Photographs and video recordings should not be taken from behind swimming blocks at the start of a race or exhibit a child climbing out of the swimming pool.
- Photographs or video recordings should not be taken in locker-rooms or bathrooms.

## **Transportation Policy**

Parents and/or guardians are responsible for transportation of swimmers to and from all Club practices, Club meets, and other Club events.

*It is hereby the stated policy of the TAC Swim Club, 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 TAC Swim Club as a purely private agreement between the parties involved and that neither the TAC Swim Club, nor the TAC Swim Club 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 Travel Policy**

The TAC Swim Club has adopted the USA Swimming Model Team Travel Policy to adhere to USA Swimming requirements and Codes of Conduct.

Purpose: Athletes are most vulnerable to misconduct during travel, particularly overnight stays.

This includes a high risk of athlete-to-athlete misconduct. During travel, athletes are often away from their families and support networks, and the setting – new changing areas, locker rooms, workout facilities, automobiles, and hotel rooms – is less structured and less familiar. Team Travel is defined as overnight travel to a swim meet or other team activity that is planned and supervised by the club or LSC.

Section 1 - USA Swimming Required Team Travel Policies These items are Code of Conduct

stipulations in the USA Swimming Rulebook. a. Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches, and other adults traveling with the club. (305.5.D) b. Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming and have successfully passed a USA Swimming

administered criminal background check. (305.5.B) c. Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete). (305.5.A) d. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his/her parents' (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach. (305.5C)

Section 2 – Additional Team Travel Policies a. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep (1 coach and at least 1 adult over the age of 18 should be supervising at all times) leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained. b. Athletes should not ride in a coach's vehicle without another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete, unless prior parental permission is obtained. c. During overnight team travel, if athletes are paired with other athletes they shall be of the same gender and should be a similar age. Where athletes are age 13 & over, chaperones and/or team managers would ideally stay in nearby rooms. When athletes are age 12 & under, chaperones and/or team managers may stay with athletes. Where chaperones/team managers are staying in a room with athletes, they should be the same gender as the athlete and written consent should be given by athlete's parents (or legal guardian). d. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, at the competition the coach and athlete should attempt to establish a "buddy" club to associate with during the competition and when away from the venue. e. To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there will be no male athletes in female athlete's rooms and no female athletes in male athlete's rooms (unless the other athlete is a sibling or spouse of that particular athlete). f. A copy of the Club Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian for the athlete to travel with the team. g. Team or LSC officials should obtain a signed Liability Release and/or Indemnification Form for each athlete. h. Team or LSC officials should carry a signed Medical Consent or Authorization to Treat Form for each athlete. i. Curfews shall be established by the team or LSC staff each day of the trip. j. Team members and staff traveling with the team will attend all team functions including meetings, practices, meals, meet sessions, etc. unless otherwise excused or instructed by the head coach or his/her designee. k. The directions & decisions of coaches/chaperones are final. l. Swimmers are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Swimmers are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant, or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission/knowledge of the coach or chaperone. m. When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theatres, etc. swimmers will stay in groups of no less than three persons. 12 & under athletes will be accompanied by a chaperone. n. The Head Coach or his/her designee shall make a written report of travel policy or code of conduct violations to the appropriate club or LSC leadership and the parent or legal guardian of any affected minor athlete.

Section 3 - Miscellaneous Travel Policies Safety a. Additional guidelines to be established as needed by the coaches based on the trip; b. Supervised team room provided for relaxation and recreation; c. Respect the privacy of each other; d. Only use hotel rooms with interior entrances; and e. Must wear seat belts and remain seated in vehicles; Behavior a. Be quiet and respect the rights of teammates and others in hotel; b. Be prompt and on time; c. Follow cell phone usage guidelines; d. Follow computer use guidelines and electronic media policy e. Respect travel vehicles; f. Follow team dress code; g. Use appropriate behavior in public facilities; h. Establish two different curfews – in own rooms and lights out; i. Must stay in assigned hotel room; and j. Needs and wellbeing of the team come first.



Financial a. No room service without permission; b. Swimmers responsible for all incidental charges; c. Swimmers responsible for any damages or thievery at hotel; d. Must participate in all group meals and activities; and e. Communicate travel reimbursement information and policies. General a. Trip eligibility requirements will be provided to all athletes and parents; b. Trip age guidelines for travel trips will be provided to all athletes and parents; c. Parent(s) responsible for getting swimmer(s) to stated departure point; and d. Requirements for families to attend "Team Travel Meets" will be disclosed

#### **Code of Conduct / Honor Code**

All TAC Swim Club team members, team staff, and parents of minors are apprised in writing of this Code of Conduct and the attached USA Swimming Code of Conduct. A signature on this document constitutes unconditional agreement to comply with the stipulations of both documents. It is further stated that: a. Failure to comply with the Honor Code as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action. Such discipline may include, but may not be limited to: i. Dismissal from the trip and immediate return home at the athlete's expense; ii. Disqualification from one or more events, or all events of competition; iii. Disqualification from future team travel meets; iv. Financial penalties; v. Dismissal from the team; and/or vi. Proceedings for a LSC or USA Swimming National Board of Review. b. Team members will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, fellow competitors, and the public at all times. c. Team members and staff will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives. d. The possession or use of alcohol or tobacco products by any athlete are prohibited. e. The possession, use, or sale/distribution of any controlled or illegal substance or any form of weapon is strictly forbidden. f. No "deck changes" are permitted. Athletes are expected to use available change facilities. g. Team members are reminded that when competing in meets, traveling on trips, and attending other meet-related functions, they are representing both themselves and TAC Swim Club. Athlete behavior must positively reflect the high standards of the club (or LSC). h. Swimmers are to refrain from inappropriate physical contact at team activities and events. i. Swimmers are to refrain from use of inappropriate language.

## **USA SWIMMING CODE OF CONDUCT (EXCERPTED FROM 2021 USA SWIMMING RULEBOOK)**

**PLEASE VISIT THE FOLLOWING LINK TO REVIEW USA SWIMMING'S CODE OF CONDUCT:**

<https://www.usaswimming.org/about-usas/governance/rules-policies>

**Financial Responsibilities (Payment of team Fees)**

TAC Swim Club is a not-for-profit corporation that operates on a fixed budget. Operating expenses for the team include team fees, facility rental fees, coaches' expenses, meet expenses, equipment costs, team communication, resources needed to host a meet, team activity expenses, ribbons, awards, etc. Revenue is generated by fees and through fundraising activities.

As a swimming family, we all play a part in assuring that TAC continues to enjoy a solid financial footing. This is accomplished through several sources of funding.

Fee Payment Terms: Monthly Billing through Team Unify

**Payments**

Monthly Billing through Team Unify – Preferred.

Any payments may be mailed to TAC Swim Club, PO Box 6, New Castle, IN 47362

Please list your swimmers name on the payment.

**Statements**

Statements are generated by the 5th of each month and are sent by email. All amounts billed are due when the bill is received. Overdue balances and/or past season balances are due prior to or as part of registration for the current swim season. Swimmers will not be allowed to participate in any practices and/or meets until family accounts are current. Treasurer will report delinquencies to the swimmer's parents to notify them that their child cannot participate until the account is up to date. Coaches will be responsible for prohibiting the swimmer from getting into the water until notified (by Treasurer) that fees are considered current.

**Registration Fees**

- The USA Swimming Registration Fee of \$81 is paid by TAC to USA swimming for your swimmers' annual registration and insurance. TAC Swim Club is a member of USA Swimming and as such; all training and/or competing athletes must register with USA Swimming. Usually, at the registration of each Fall/Winter season the swimmers will register and pay USA Swimming for an Annual membership that is valid until the end of the next full calendar year. The Annual membership allows the swimmer to compete in any USA sanctioned meet provided the swimmer has met the entry qualifications for the meet. Or, as an option, the swimmer may register as a Seasonal member but, as such, they must compete below the Zone, Sectional and National levels during that season
- The TAC Coaching Fee is based on your swimmer's team assignment at the beginning of each swim season. The assignment of your swimmer to a particular team is based on your swimmer's age and but ultimately it is determined by the coaching staff's assessment of your swimmer's current ability. Coaches continually review your swimmer's progression and will, as they determine, assign your swimmer to the appropriate team level(s)
- Meet Entry Fees: When swimmers are registered for a meet with entry fees, TAC must send a payment for each swimmer's events to reserve his/her place at that meet. Payment is due prior to the meet, and the club must pay these fees for the entire team. Your invoices throughout the season will reflect the fees the club has paid for your swimmer. For this reason, you are still responsible for the meet entry fees even if your child does not participate for any reason. The club is required to pay for meet entries in advance.
- Other Fees/Charges: There may be other fees and charges which are incurred throughout a swim season. These could include meet entry fees, training trip fees, caps, shirts, etc. These fees will be added to each month's statement and will be due by that statement's due date.

### **Team Equipment List**

The following items are suggested for equipment for the swimmers to have at each level. Items can be purchased from a variety of retailers, including Elsmore Swim, and websites like swimoutlet.com. Some of the equipment will wear out or become too small and must be replaced over time and not all items are needed for each level. As the swimmer progresses additional equipment will be needed.

Developmental & Bronze • Goggles • Team Swimwear • Fins • Equipment bag (net)

Silver • Goggles • Team Swimwear • Fins • Equipment bag (net) • Kickboard • Pull buoy • Paddles

Gold • Goggles • Team Swimwear • Fins • Equipment bag (net) • Kickboard • Pull buoy • Paddles

### **Guidelines for Swim Practices**

1. Check the club website and email daily. With our many swimmers, email, text alerts, and the TAC website is our primary means of communication. Board members are sometimes around during practice if you have any questions as well.
2. Demonstrate respect for all coaches and swimmers on deck and in the water, and for parents who choose to stay during practice.
3. Never interrupt the coaches while they are actively working during scheduled practices. They are available before and after practice, or by appointment.
4. No parents or siblings are allowed on deck during practice for insurance reasons. There are bleachers in the pool area for any spectators who want to watch the practice.
5. All siblings of swimmers must be supervised 100% of the time. It is a privilege for TAC to be allowed to use the NCMS pool facilities. Children, who are not participating in the swim practice cannot be free to run in the hallways, cafeteria, bathrooms or locker facilities. In addition, swimmers must not horseplay, loiter, or damage anything in the locker rooms.
6. Please make sure that a coach is present at the pool before you leave when dropping your child off at practice. Sometimes a practice time may have been changed, a practice may have been moved to another date, a practice may have been cancelled, or the coach may be late. Also, please pick up your child promptly at the end of his/her scheduled practice time. Come into the building to pick up younger swimmers since the coaches cannot see who is being picked up in the parking lots.
7. Demonstrate a positive attitude that is reflected in your behavior and communication with your swimmer, the coaching staff, and parents of other swimmers.
8. Know who your swimmer's coach is

## **All About Swim Meets**

Swim meets are a great family experience where the whole family can spend time together! Listed below are some guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming at first, but we feel it is important for this handbook to be as specific and as detailed as possible. If you have any questions, please ask a coach or another experienced parent who would be glad to help you.

### Types of Meets during the Regular Season

*Invitational Meets:* These meets are one, two, or three-day meets. Invitational meets are usually for all age groups: 8 & Under, 10 & Under, 11/12, 13/14, and 15 & Over. Within each age group, there are three different ability levels; A, B, and C. Time standards, established each year by USA Swimming, are set for each ability level. Developmental or invitational meets generally do not have qualifying time standard requirements, so all TAC swimmers are usually eligible for these meets. Coaches decide which events each swimmer will swim.

### *Championship Meets*

**Divisional Meet:** This three-day meet is for swimmers who have achieved minimum time standards, usually BB cuts, but not state times. The meet is held at the end of the short course and long course season. It is run in a championship format with preliminaries in the morning and finals in the afternoon/evening. Qualified swimmers will be notified and will be expected to participate.

**Age Group State Meet:** This is the exciting climax to each season for all swimmers aged 14 and below who have achieved qualifying times. This meet is a three-day meet run in championship format with preliminaries in the morning and finals in the afternoon/evening. Qualified swimmers will be notified and are expected to participate.

**Senior State Meet:** This meet is open to any age swimmer who meets the qualifying times. Usually these are older swimmers as this meet represents the conclusion to their season.

**Zone Age Group Meet:** This championship is held at the end of summer (long course) season. Swimmers from several states who have achieved AAA times compete in this meet.

**USA National Junior Olympics (Junior Nationals):** There are two Junior Nationals at the end of each season; one for swimmers East of the Mississippi River, and one for swimmers West of the Mississippi River. Swimmers meeting qualifying time standards for this meet travel to compete against the best young (under 18) swimmers in the nation.

**USA Nationals (Senior Nationals):** Other than the Olympic Trials and the World Championship Trials, each of which is held once every four years, this is the highest level of competition in the United States for Senior swimmers.

### **Signing up for a Meet**

The Coaching staff has developed a Meet Schedule for the season. If a swimmer wishes to attend a meet that is not scheduled as a team meet, he/she must first get approval from his/her coach. Although it is expected that each swimmer will participate in all of the developmentally appropriate meets, we realize that there may be conflicts which prevent your child from participating. Therefore, we encourage parents to sign up their swimmer for all of the meets in which they are able to participate. To sign up for a meet, you must visit the club website and follow the "Meet Registering" procedure. The deadline will typically be several weeks before the meet. You may make changes to the signup sheet until the deadline. Because swim meets are typically two to three days in length, you will need to indicate on the website which day(s) you are able to participate. The meet will be removed from the site after the deadline has passed.

From the website, the coaches will generate a list of swimmers, and the events in which they are entered, which will be sent to the host swim club. We try not to swim on two consecutive weekends, if possible, to give swimmers adequate rest between meets. Try to review the meet entries for each meet as soon as they are posted to check for correctness.

Any errors that are caught early may be able to be corrected. A few of the meets are limited to Senior swimmers or swimmers who have achieved a certain time standard. The Meet Schedule notes a few of these restrictions. However, if you have any questions about the appropriateness of a meet, please contact your swimmer's coach.

### **Meet Day Procedures Before the Meet Starts**

1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information posted on the website.
2. Find the check-in place and either you or your swimmer will need to check the swimmer in on the list of swimmers who are signed up for the meet.
  - a. This is usually posted on a wall or on a registration table.
  - b. Check for special posted instructions in the area. Usually, you will need to circle the swimmer's name or highlight the swimmer's name. This is done so that the people running the meet know who is at the meet.
  - c. If scratching a swimmer or events, do not just mark through it. Write "scratch" next to it and initial it. Make sure you scratch the right name or event.
  - d. Most meets have positive check-in which means the swimmer must check-in before the deadline. If this is not done, the swimmer may not be allowed to swim that day.
  - e. If you miss the check-in time, there may be an option to deck register (when you arrive) if there are spaces available, but this is difficult and not all meets allow this. Talk to your coach as soon as possible.
3. Once "checked in", write each event-number on your swimmer's hand or arm in ink (in a convenient, easy-to-see location). This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and which event number(s) to listen for when number(s) are announced over the P.A. system.
4. Find a place to put your swimmer's blanket/towel, swim bags and/or sleeping bag. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces.
5. Swimmers who are 8 & Under should locate the "Clerk of Course", a person who will help these kids line up correctly for their events. They will need to report there for each event when it is time.
6. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmer's bodies are just like cars on a cold day-they need to get the engine going and warmed-up before they can go "all out."

7. After warm-ups, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her towels are and sit there until his/her first event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the restroom, if necessary, gets a drink, or just gets settled in.
8. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.
9. According to USS rules (because of insurance purposes), **parents are not allowed on deck** unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conducting of a meet should be referred to the coaching staff. They, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
10. Heat Sheets.
  - a. A heat sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool.
  - b. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time" – slower times are placed in the earliest heats.
  - c. When the team entries were sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed.
  - d. A swimmer without a time in an event will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "notime" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. The heat with the fastest seed times will usually swim last.

### **The Meet**

1. It is important for any swimmer to know which event numbers he/she is swimming (again, why they should have the numbers written on their hand or arm). He/she may swim right away after warm-ups or he/she may have to wait awhile. The lane and heat assignments are posted shortly before the meet starts. The swimmer should check his/her assignments for each event he/she is scheduled to swim.
2. When a swimmer's event number is called (usually over the P.A. loudspeaker), he/she will be asked to report for the event. Swimmers who are 8 & Under should report to the "Clerk of Course". Older swimmers should report to the end of the pool by the starting platforms. Swimmers should report with their cap and goggles.
3. The "Clerk of Course" area is set up for all swimmers who are 8 & Under.
  - a. The people running the "Clerk of Course" may give a card to each of the swimmers who are swimming that event. This card will tell each swimmer his/her heat and lane number.
  - b. The clerk will usually line up all the swimmers and take them to the pool in correct order.
  - c. Depending on the meet, either the clerk will give the card to the timers at the end of each lane or the clerk will instruct the swimmers to hand their cards to the timers when it is their turn to swim. These cards are important because they tell the people running the meet who actually swam each event.
  - d. You can expect at least 2-10 heats for each event depending on the number of swimmers at the meet.
4. Swimmers should have their caps and goggles on before their heat is ready. The swimmer swims his/her race when it is time.
5. After each swim:
  - a. He/she should go immediately to his/her coach. The coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer.
  - b. Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims:
    - 1) Positive comments or praise
    - 2) Suggestions for improvement

6. Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim:

- a. Tell him/her how great he/she did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with him/her if needed. You just need to tell him/her how proud you are and what a great job he/she did.
- b. Take him/her back to the towel area and relax.
- c. This is another good time to check out the restrooms, get a drink or something light to eat.
- d. The swimmer now waits until his/her next event is called and starts the procedure again at the "Clerk of Course" for 8 & Under swimmers.

7. When a swimmer has completed all his/her events, he/she and his/her parents get to go home.

Make sure, however, you or your swimmer check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included in a relay event (always the last events of a meet). It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim in a relay with your swimmer as part of the relay team, and he/she is not there.

**What to Take to the Meet**

1. Most importantly: Swim Suit--cap and goggles (if your swimmer uses them).
2. Baby or talcum powder--To "dust" the inside of swim cap. This helps preserve the cap and makes it easier to put on.
3. Large towels and/or chamois- realize your swimmer will be there awhile, so pack at least two.
4. Something to sit on. Example: sleeping bag, old blanket, or anything that will be comfortable to sit on. The swimmers will be spending a lot of time on it.
5. Sweat suits: bring at least one. Oftentimes, swimmers may want to bring two because they can get wet and soggy.
6. Sandals, flip flops or water shoes.
7. Duffel bag large enough to carry gear.
8. T-shirts: Two or three. Again, everything gets wet.
9. Games: travel games, coloring books, reading books, anything to pass the time. Something to amuse the swimmer quietly between events: books, cards, video games. (Note: bring something to do for everyone attending the meet. Swim meets start early and can last all day.)
10. Food: Each swimmer is usually allowed to bring a small cooler if desired. It is better to bring nutritious snacks. Nutritious snacks such as: fresh or dried fruit, sport drinks, fruit juice, water, yogurt, muffins, bread, crackers, granola bars, ready to eat dry cereals, low fat lunch meat/cheese, Jell-O cubes, fresh vegetables, sandwiches. A concession stand is usually available at the meet, but the lines may be long and most sell junk food which is difficult to resist. Concession stand, higher-fat, fast-food and junk food should be eaten in moderation during the meet.
11. A change of clothes for the trip home.
12. A sweatshirt/jacket for the trip home if it is cool weather outside.
13. A coat and gloves/mittens for the trip home if it is cold outside.
14. Notebook to record your swimmer's times

Please do not hesitate to ask another parent for help or information if you are uncertain about a particular procedure or facet of the swim meet. Meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! They get to visit with friends, play games, and get to know swimmers from other teams. They also get to "race" and see how much they have improved after all the hard work put in at practice. The pool area is usually very warm. Therefore, parents need to make sure they dress appropriately. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet; It makes the time pass very slowly!

Some meets have special "camping" areas for the swimmers that are not part of the pool and may be cool in temperature (especially for the wet swimmers). If you do not think that a gym floor is comfortable, feel free to bring folding chairs to sit on.

### **Basic Swimming Rules**

**Starts:** The swimmers are not allowed a false start. If they jump the start and the starter thinks they are trying to get an advantage (whether intentional or not-it does not matter), they may be taken out of the race.

#### *Turns and finishes*

**Freestyle:** feet or hands must touch the wall

**Backstroke:** swimmers must be on their back when they touch the wall. After they touch, they can then turn around, but they must push off on their back. At the finish a swimmer must finish on his/her back. A swimmer may not roll over and grab the wall until he/she has first touched it.

**Breaststroke and Butterfly:** 1. Swimmers must touch with both hands at the same time. 2. A swimmer may not freestyle kick off the wall in either breaststroke or butterfly. 3. When swimming butterfly, both arms must move at the same time.

#### **What is a Parent's Role at a Meet?**

1. Support and encourage your child.
2. Be sure that he/she reports on time to the "Clerk of Course" for each event for 8 & Under events and to the starting blocks for 9 & Over events.
3. Help to calm your child's fears and anxieties.
4. Avoid the temptation to coach your child.
5. Above all, don't hesitate to ask questions of a knowledgeable parent. Rely on other parents, rather than on busy coaches or meet officials.
6. You may want to sit with your swimmer for a few minutes for support.

#### **Additional Meet Prep Considerations**

1. At winter indoor meets, pool bleachers or balconies for spectators are normally hot and stuffy while gyms where swimmers may have to wait for events can be cool, so be prepared for both.
2. At summer outdoor meets, expect hot, cold, or wet weather! Sun block lotion, sunglasses, bug spray, deck chairs, and hats are good ideas.
3. Take the time to write your swimmer's name and the team name (TAC) on all of your swimmer's gear, goggles, cap, suit, towels, etc.



### How Will My Child React to His/Her First Meet Experience?

Any of the following are very common, normal reactions for children who are taking part in their first swim meet:

1. He/She may be nervous, may cry, act sick, or complain about being cold.
2. He/She may not want to swim or may want to quit entirely.
3. He/She may not feel ready to perform.
4. He/She may see a meet as a very busy swim practice and thrive on all the action!

### What Happens If Your Child has a Disappointing Swim?

If your child has a poor race and comes out of it feeling bad, talk about the good things. The first thing you say is, "Hey, that is not like you. You usually swim well." Then you can go on and talk about the good things the child did. Don't talk about the negative things. If your child comes up to you and says, "That was a bad race, don't tell me it wasn't," there is nothing wrong with a swimmer negatively evaluating a race. The important thing is for the child not to dwell on it. You should move the swimmer on to something good. "All right, you have had a bad race. How do you think you can do better next time?" Immediately start talking about the positive things.

### Disqualification (DQ)

Disqualification can be tough to experience, but it doesn't have to be. It happens to swimmers at every level of ability. The officials on deck are in charge of enforcing all start, stroke, and turn rules. When your child has demonstrated an infraction of one of those rules, an official will raise his/her hand, and when the child exits the water, the official will explain the infraction to the swimmer, and encourage him/her to try again next time. Some children take this in stride, others get very upset. Smiles, praise, and a hug from Mom or Dad can do a lot to help ensure that a DQ ends up being the learning experience it is meant to be.

Transportation Parents and/or guardians are responsible for transportation of swimmers to and from all Club practices, Club meets, and other Club events. It is hereby the stated policy of the TAC Swim Club, 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 TAC Swim Club as a purely private agreement between the parties involved and that neither the TAC Swim Club, nor the TAC Swim Club 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.

**Withdrawal Procedures**

In the event that a swimmer desires to be withdrawn from the team, for any reason, notice must be provided to a coach.

Withdrawal makes the swimmer ineligible for team membership until the next swim season.

**Trial Period for New Families**

TAC currently does not offer a formal FREE trial period for new families, but we offer a chance to be released from your agreement. When you start at the beginning of the season, you must pay your initial registration fees up front. However, if after two weeks you decide that the program is not for you, we will allow you to be released of all further financial obligations. There will be no refunds of the initial registration. This is for families who are new to Trojan Aquatics ONLY.

NOTE: TAC cannot release a swimmer from payment of Registration Fees or Meet Entry Fees since these are fees that the team must pay to other organizations. After the first two trial weeks of the season (new swimmers only), release of payment of season team fees will be considered upon written request to the TAC Board of Directors and are intended only for extraordinary reasons beyond the control of the swimmer and parents (relocation, lengthy illness, or injury that prevents participation for a period of time).

Refund of Team Fees will be at the discretion of the TAC Board of Directors and will be prorated.

## **Glossary of Swimming Terms**

**BACK:** Backstroke

**CLERK OF COURSE:** Person(s)/place where swimmers report to when their event is called. The clerk arranges swimmers into heats and lanes by their entry times for that event, with the fastest swimmers assigned to the middle lanes. A clerk is generally used for 8 & Under swimmers.

**CONSOLATION HEAT:** In a championship meet, and in certain invitational meets, where prelims and finals are held. This is the competition for the fastest swimmers who failed to qualify for the top heat of finals.

**COURSE:** Designated distance over which the competition is conducted. Long course (LC) - 50 meters, Short course (SC) - 25 yards or meters

**CUT:** Minimum time standard for a USS designated level, such as A, B, or C.

**DQ:** Disqualified. USA Swimming adopts specific rules for starting, turning, and swimming the four competitive strokes. At each meet, officials observe the swimmers. If a swimmer does not swim the event according to USA Swimming rules, he/she may be disqualified. The swimmer's posted time/place for that race will not count. This does not mean that the swimmer cannot swim that event at the next meet. The rules are to protect the swimmer who performs a legal swim, and to develop the swimmer appropriately for high school and college.

**DUAL MEET:** Competition between two teams to determine a winner based on points earned in the individual meet races.

**EVENT:** Any race or series of races in a particular stroke or distance.

**FALSE START:** When a swimmer starts before the starting signal, or a relay member leaves before the previous swimmer touches the wall.

**FINAL:** Any single race which determines final places and times in a meet.

**FINAL RESULTS:** A listing of all events, swimmers and their swim times in a meet. Each team which participates in the meet receives a copy of the final results for that meet.

**FLY:** Butterfly

**FREE:** Freestyle. This means that you may swim any stroke. However, most swimmers use the front crawl, which is generally the fastest stroke.

**FREE RELAY:** Four swimmers, each swimming one leg of a freestyle relay.

**HEAT:** If there are too many swimmers in an event to compete all at the same time, the event is divided. Each division is called a heat.

**HEAT SHEET:** The printed list available at invitational and championship meets, of all swimmers entered in that meet. The list orders swimmers in each event by their entry or seed times.

**IM:** Individual medley. The race in which each swimmer swims all four competitive strokes: butterfly, back, breast, and freestyle - in that order.

**INDIANA SWIMMING, INC. (ISI):** Local Swim Committee governing Age Group and Senior swimming in Indiana.

**LANE:** The specific area of a pool in which a swimmer is assigned to swim, i.e. Lane One, Lane Two, etc.

**LANE LINE:** Continuous floating markers stretched from one end of the pool to the other for the purpose of separating swimmer lanes.

**LEG:** The part of a relay an individual relay team member swims.

**LENGTH:** The distance of the course from one end to the other. In competitive swimming, a length can be 25 yards, 25 meters, or 50 meters.

**LONG COURSE:** 50 meter pool.

**LSC:** Local swimming committee, an administrative division of USA Swimming. The LSC for our team is Indiana Swimming, Inc.

**MEDLEY RELAY:** Four swimmers, each swimming one leg of the relay in the order of back stroke, breast stroke, butterfly, and freestyle.

**PRELIM:** Preliminary heats. The session of some meets in which heats are held to determine which swimmers will swim in final heats.

**SCRATCH:** Remove a swimmer from an event in which he/she is entered.

**SEED TIME:** A time established by the swimmer in some type of officially timed situation, usually a meet. This time is used for entry into meets and then to distribute the swimmers at that meet among the heats and lanes.

**SESSION:** Any portion of a meet distinctly separated from other portions by locale, time, type of competition, or the age groups of eligible swimmers.

**SHORT COURSE:** 25 yard or 25 meter pool.

**SPLIT TIME:** Usually recorded by the coaches, this is a time taken on a yard/ meter interval during a race. These times enable a coach to give the swimmer an idea of how he/she is swimming the race. Relay splits are the times in which each swimmer swam his/her leg of the relay.

**START SIGNAL:** This is a combination of two things, the strobe light start signal and the horn signal. The timers officially start their stop watches when the strobe light flashes. For this reason, flash cameras are not allowed to be used during the start of a race as they may distract both swimmers and timers.

**TIMED FINALS:** Competition in which only final heats are swum and final places are determined by the times achieved in those heats.

**TIME STANDARDS:** These are cut-off times used to provide equal competition for the wide variety of swimmers throughout the country. They are established at a national level and are progressively faster cuts for each stroke and distance each swimmer works for. A "C" swimmer has not yet achieved the first level of the national standards, which is the "B" cut, in a given event. A "B" swimmer in an event strives for "A" cuts. And so on up the line from A to AA, AAA, and AAAA times, each cut being a progressively faster time standard. The national time standards are based on the tenth fastest time in the United States in each event from the previous year for each age group. Percentage of deviation from those times determines the different cuts for that year. A chart of standard times is published each year by Indiana Swimming.

**WARM-UPS:** The time before all competitions start when swimmers should get ready for their swim(s). The warm up period may include stretching, exercising, and swimming in the pool. The warmup is important to become physically and mentally ready for a good swimming performance in the race.