



New Parent Handbook

2021-2022

Welcome to SwimMAC Carolina!

SwimMAC Carolina is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that offers swimming programs for people of all ages and experience levels. Established as the Mecklenburg Aquatic Club in 1977, we have grown from a small competitive team into a highly-regarded organization that provides aquatic instruction and training for nearly

10,000 people in the Charlotte region each year. Our mission is to empower young people to be champions in life through excellence in swimming.

SwimMAC Carolina is a big family with several branches that support one another:

Program	Number of Participants
Swim School	6,500
Home School/Mid Day	200
Junior Swim League	1,000
Teen Fit	600
Competitive Team	850
Masters/Adult Fitness	150
Total	9,300

Within the competitive team, each age group division (Marlin, Dolphin, Shark, and Senior) is broken into levels by experience, maturity, time commitment and performance.

Although we are a large swim club, our goal is to feel as small as possible. The information in this New Parent Handbook is intended to help you understand a bit more about the sport and SwimMAC, but it’s just a starting point. Your questions are encouraged! Parent meetings will be held in September, and you may email us any time using the addresses below. We hope you will become an engaged, enthusiastic supporter of your swimmer(s) and our organization. Thank you for choosing SwimMAC!

Who to contact with questions:

Dues/Billing billing@swimmacarolina.org Meet Squad meetsquad@swimmacarolina.org Registration registration@swimmacarolina.org



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COMPETITIVE SWIMMING 101

Governing Organizations

USA Swimming: USA Swimming is the national governing body for the sport of swimming. Participants in the SwimMAC year-round competitive swim programs must be members of this organization.

Membership, which is renewed in the fall of each year, provides limited, co-benefit accident and liability insurance for swimmers participating in supervised workouts and swim meets. Visit www.usaswimming.org for more information including rules, current time standards, and many other resources for parents and swimmers.

North Carolina Swimming: North Carolina Swimming (NCS) is a member of USA Swimming and is the Local Swim Committee (LSC) that governs our geographic area. Its responsibilities include processing memberships, scheduling competitions, training /certification of officials, athlete recognition programs, and assembling the NCS Zone Team. Visit www.SwimNC.com for more information.

Geographic Structure

USA Swimming divides the country into four zones: Western, Central, Eastern, and Southern. SwimMAC, as part of North Carolina Swimming, competes in the Southern Zone.

Seasonal Structure (Short vs. Long Course)

Swimming is a year-round sport that is divided into two seasons, with championship-level meets held at the end of each season.

The short course season lasts from September through March. All practices and meets are typically conducted in 25-yard pools. The United States is the only country that competes in 25-yard pools. High school and collegiate competition are conducted in the 25-yard format and is considered a winter sport.

The long course season lasts from April through early August. Most swim meets are conducted in 50-meter pools. Practices are held in a combination of 25-yard and 50-meter pools. All international competition takes place in either 25-meter or 50-meter pools. The Olympics are always held in a 50-meter pool.

Time Standards

USA Swimming establishes motivational time standards for each age group every four years. The current standards will be in place until August 31, 2020 and are available on USA Swimming's website here: <https://www.usaswimming.org/Home/times/time-standards>.

Time standards and age determine the type of meet in which a swimmer may participate. Age group standards progress from (slower to faster) B, BB, A, AA, AAA, and AAAA. In addition, there are specific time standards for various championship meets that will be provided as appropriate for your swimmer.

For in-season meets, 12 and under age-group swimmers are typically classified as follows:

BB swimmers – have a BB time in two different strokes

A swimmers – have an A time in two different strokes

AA swimmers – have AA times in two different strokes

Senior level swimmers are divided into two categories—Senior Development and Senior Circuit swimmers. Senior Circuit swimmers have achieved a 13-14 AA time standard in two different strokes. All other swimmers are considered Senior Development swimmers.

Unless a swimmer has previously competed in a USA Swimming meet, s/he is considered a B/C swimmer and will be entered with NT (No Time) in the event. If the swimmer has competed in a USA Swimming meet with another team, please turn in his/her best times to one of the SwimMAC coaches so the times can be entered in our database.

PARENT ROLE AT SWIMMAC

Parent-Athlete Support

It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's role to provide love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to help a young athlete feel positive about him/herself. Be the person that your swimmer can look to for constant, positive reinforcement.

Strive to provide your swimmer with the basic opportunities s/he needs to have a positive swimming experience. Make sure your swimmer regularly attends practice and swim meets.

Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to the various methods of skill presentation. Some swimmers take more time to learn; this requires patience on the part of the coach and the parent, both of whom must remember that the swimmer's ultimate swimming potential may be as great or greater than that of a faster learner.

Avoid comparing the skill, courage, determination, attitude, performance, or improvement of your swimmer to other swimmers. Swimmers mature physiologically and psychologically at different ages; the weakest swimmer in a practice group this year could be leading practices in the future.

The etymology of the word "competition" goes back to the Latin words "com" and "petere," which mean "together to strive." It is important to teach young swimmers to compete with, not against others, and to use competition to help them strive to be their own best self.

"Your child's success or lack of success in sports does not indicate what kind of parent you are. But, having an athlete that is coachable, respectful, a great teammate, mentally tough, resilient and tries their best, IS a direct reflection of your parenting." Author Unknown

Guidelines for Watching Practice

Parents will be encouraged to watch practice from time to time. Here are some important guidelines when observing practice.

First, young swimmers want parental approval more than anything in the world. For swimmers to learn as much as possible during practice, it is important that coaches have each swimmer's undivided attention.

Communicating with your swimmer in any manner during practice will distract your swimmer as well as their teammates when being provided feedback or instructions from their coach.

Second, we ask you to communicate with a coach 15 min prior to beginning of practice or once the coach ends their practice and all swimmers are out of the pool safely. If you need to communicate with a coach on a subject matter that needs more than a simple answer please schedule an appointment with the coach so it can be answered in the most appropriate way.

Third, our coaches spend a considerable amount of time planning weekly training sessions for each of their practice groups. Every training set or instructional drill has a purpose. One practice and/or practice set often builds on another during each week. Remember what you may be seeing is a snapshot of the bigger progression, you may not understand the purpose of what the swimmers are doing on any given day. Take

your child's lead and having a good / positive conversation on the ride home may help you better understand and may also provide a stronger relationship that can encourage your swimmer to continue to grow in the sport.

Lastly, to help continue to build positive relationship moments with your swimmer, when observing practice there should be no video recording or filming of any kind. Please do not coach or advise your swimmer based on what you see (or think you don't see) him/her do during practice. Many times when teaching stroke skills, coaches ask their swimmers to do things that may not look correct or actually might be illegal during competition. However, the drills have an important purpose in teaching skills. Swimming a one-arm butterfly stroke or using a flutter kick with breaststroke are examples of drills with a specific purpose.

To comply with USA Swimming Insurance coverage anyone on the pool deck must be a USA Swimming member coach or a USA Swimming athlete member. USA Swimming's Insurance is void if the rules are not followed. Therefore, parents should watch practice from the following areas:

- Davidson College: the balcony overlooking the pool
- Huntersville Family Fitness & Aquatics (HFFA): the hallway outside of the pool area or in the first section of bleachers on the right side of the entrance doors. Parents should stay in the top 5 rows.
- SwimMAC Swim Center: the glass viewing room
- Novant: From the lobby window or just inside the workout area on one of the benches against the wall.

Note: Please make sure siblings are safe, courteous, and well-behaved at all facilities. Also, please make sure the area is clean before leaving.

Parent-Organization Support

Be a G.R.E.A.T. SwimMAC parent!

G - Get Involved! Volunteer to do more than just be a timer at meets. If you're not sure what you might want to do, email meetsquad@swimmaccarolina.org and we'll get you headed in the right direction!

R - Read the Emails! Emails will come from coaches, the business/billing office, Meet Squad, the webmaster and others. They wouldn't be emailing if it wasn't important for parents to know!

E - Educate Yourself. Ask questions. Make friends with other parents. Use the substantial online resources available to you:

SwimMAC	http://swimmaccarolina.org/
SwimMAC's Team Unify	https://www.teamunify.com/ncmac
North Carolina Swimming	http://ncswim.org/
USA Swimming	http://usaswimming.org/

A - Attend meetings and ask questions. Coaches meetings, parent meetings, parent coffees, college information meetings, volunteer committee meetings to name a few.

T - Think fun and be positive! Your child will enjoy the sport so much more if it is fun! Yes, they will lose their goggles three times in the first two months, and yes, there will be moments when they are frustrated or tired, but if you do all you can as a parent to make it fun you will ALL have a better time!

Meet Squad & Volunteering

SwimMAC Carolina hosts a number of competitions throughout the year to provide our athletes opportunities to hone their skills without the expense and inconvenience of travel. Meet Squad is the SwimMAC name for all of the volunteer work that goes into making these events successful. Every SwimMAC family should pitch in, but unfortunately, not everyone does. Required Meet Squad minimums help spread the workload and are detailed in the Registration Packet. The requirements and Meet Squad job descriptions are also available at www.SwimMACCarolina.org and on Team Unify at www.teamunify.com/ncmac in the documents section.

There are lots of other ways to support the team besides working at meets. Volunteers are always needed for a variety of functions including securing sponsorships, marketing support, community relations, and more. If you're interested in helping or have a business that might be able to provide services, please send an email to meetsquad@swimmaccarolina.org to let us know.

Communication

Great communication between athletes, parents, and coaches is one key to a successful experience in the SwimMAC program. SwimMAC lead coaches work to communicate all the information you need for you and your swimmer to be in the know, have a good experience, and be excited about our program and all the opportunities we offer. There are several critical paths that coaches can communicate with you, aside from direct communications and interactions:

- You will receive **weekly emails** from your child's lead coach that are your primary source of information. Please read them carefully.
- You will also receive **team emails** to help keep you informed on SwimMAC opportunities and items of interest. These are often from the head coach and contain program wide information.
- Please familiarize yourself with the "**Parent Resources**" tab on this site. It contains a wealth of information. SwimMAC also has an active presence on Twitter (@swimmacc), Facebook, Instagram (swimmac_1977), and YouTube.

We encourage you to communicate with your coach. It is important that parents ask questions and engage in the process to support their swimmer by developing a healthy relationship with their swimmer's lead coach. This starts with communication. When you have a specific question or concern regarding your swimmer, please email your swimmer's lead coach directly. Most questions are answered quickly at this level. If you need additional help, please reach out to the appropriate Division Lead. If you feel that your question has not been answered satisfactorily, you may consult the leadership coach at your site. Staff roles and email addresses are listed below and on the website, and you may look for a response within 24 hours of reaching out with either a direct answer or with a time to meet for further discussion.

You may have the personal phone number of your child's coach. Reaching out using text should only be used when immediate solutions are required, such as time sensitive meet communication like a late warmup arrival,

injury preventing participation, etc. If you need to set up a meeting with your coach, please set up a time for a face to face meeting rather than discuss the concerns by text or phone call.

PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

Goals & Objectives

SwimMAC strives for continuity across all of our programs, so that children can enter swim lessons, continue learning with our Junior Swim League, progress into a competitive team member, and return as a masters swimmer. Similarly, we strive for continuity and developmental progression through our competitive team divisions. A summary of the information below is available under Parent Resources on www.SwimMACCarolina.org and on Team Unify at www.teamunify.com/ncmac in the documents section.

Just like a new school year, the beginning of a swimming season is a great time to review the foundation we've built and look forward so we can set goals for the future. SwimMAC coaches are talking with your student athletes about expectations for their practice groups and going over some of the basics to establish (or reestablish) good habits. For parents, it's a good time to review the structure of the SwimMAC competitive program, the purpose of each division, and the role of the coaches that lead those divisions.

At SwimMAC, we offer practice groups to fit your swimmer's level and desire. We offer the following divisions to support progressive development through our program. Each division has a specific purpose and an assigned division leader.

Marlin - Fundamentals of Swimming

SwimMAC athletes ages 10 and under will learn the fundamental skills of swimming while developing an athletic mindset of coachability, maturity, and sport knowledge through a competitive team environment meant to foster teamwork, comradery, and connection.

Marlin swimmers:

- Attentively listen to and follow directions regarding why and how to swim
- Find balance and control in the water, can maintain balance through the breath cycles stroke
- Learn about the Pace Clock and how it helps them gauge their success
- Know the names of teammates and coaches, show pride in being a team member by encouraging teammates and wearing the team uniform.
- Become competent in basic stroke fundamentals, functionally effective in all four competitive strokes, including starts, turns, and underwater understanding.

Marlin rosters are typically no more than 20 athletes per group with the average group size ranging from 12 to 16 swimmers. Beginning swimmers are placed primarily based on skill, and intermediate swimmers are placed on skill and evaluation criteria. Advanced swimmers are placed on evaluation and basic performance criteria involving PowerPoint totals in the 100 or 200 IM and 2 events in different strokes.

Marlin Orange, Skill Development

This group is the introduction to competitive swimming and technique for younger swimmers and/or those who are still working on developing Swim IQ. Swimmers will learn the basics of competitive swimming including the different turns and race distances, as well as how to follow intervals using the clock. This group's focus is on developing technical skills in balance, body & head position, and kicking for each stroke.

Marlin Blue, Athlete Development

This group builds upon the foundational skills worked on in the Skill Development groups. There will be a strong technical focus in this group to enhance swimmers' balance, body & head position, and kick, while also introducing them to the concepts of distance per stroke and varying speeds.

Marlin White, Advanced Development

This group has a daily technical focus that builds upon skills learned in the Athlete Development groups. Particular emphasis will be on the catch & pull phase of each stroke as well as factors affecting distance per stroke. Swimmers will explore different speeds and pacing strategies within the practice setting which they will begin using in race settings.

Marlin Black, Challenge

This group continues to focus on technique while also challenging swimmers. These challenges may be in implementing and holding new technical skills during various speeds and distances, reaching and maintaining certain speeds at practice, and acting as a leader within the Marlin Division. Swimmers will also work on developing and evaluating their own race plans through conversations with their coach.

Dolphin - Enthusiasm and Engagement

We encourage SwimMAC athletes ages 11 and 12 to dream and get excited about swimming while embracing the challenges of the sport together as they refine their skills and grow to thrive in increasing levels of physical, mental, and emotional intensity.

Dolphin swimmers:

- Develop work ethic and self-discipline through consistent attendance and commitment
- Exhibit curiosity and eagerness to learn about the sport, and how to do it well
- Understand the role of failure in the long-term success
- Understand the difference between individual and team goals and how each benefits the other
- Become competitive and technically proficient in the IMX/IMR event program

The Dolphin rosters will range from 24 to 30 swimmers with the average group size at 24-25 swimmers. Selection will be based on USA Swimming IMX scores, the swimmer's evaluation, consistent attendance at practice, and the ability to complete levels and layers of training sets. Effectively completing the training sets includes making the intervals throughout practice with enough space to maintain technical skills and development.

Dolphin 1: Develop their work ethic and self-discipline through consistent attendance and commitment. We will encourage each swimmer to exhibit curiosity about the sport and how to do it well. They will experience and understand that momentary failure occurs on the path of long-term success. Swimmers will come to understand the difference in and the importance of individual and team goals and how each will benefit the other. Each individual will continue to develop the competitive and technical proficiency to excel in the USA Swimming IMX event program as part of an IM-based development process.

Dolphin 2: Athletes focus on consistency and engagement as each swimmer progresses in their swimming involvement. Learning becomes more interactive, and we encourage swimmers to ask more questions and become more curious about the process. Athletes support each other and strive to be good teammates. We continue to build our fundamental skills in all four strokes and measure proficiency in technique and in the USA Swimming IMX event program.

Dolphin 3: Athletes develop technical proficiency and skills mastery while increasing their endurance and swimming IQ. Swimmers are challenged to hold their form in longer swims or repeats and on gently decreasing intervals. We emphasize coming to practice as that is where we experience the water and feel how our bodies react to the water and how the water reacts to our bodies. Proficiency will continue to be a focus through the development of all 4 strokes using the base events of the USA Swimming IMX program. Performance will be evaluated while continuing to execute skill work in practice to attain and sustain technical proficiency.

Shark – Ownership and Desire

SwimMAC athletes ages 13-14 are encouraged to take the lead in creating what they want for their swimming experience by understanding the cause and effect of their consistent actions over the course of the season both in and out of the pool. Shark Swimmers:

- Accept constructive criticism from coaches and use the feedback to improve their skills
- Create long-term plans to reach their goals and adhere to the plan through adversity
- Understand the impact of drag on the development of speed and the importance of creating the most efficient body lines to help produce their most efficient strokes and highest speeds
- Use practice time to prepare and practice specific aspects of their intended race strategies
- Use mental and physical preparation and recovery strategies to produce their best performance under the most intense circumstances

Shark rosters will range from 20 to 29 swimmers with the average group size at 24-25 swimmers. Shark swimmers will continue to be evaluated in Athletic Mindset as they grow into leadership at SwimMAC, and as they continue their physical growth, we will evaluate their performance on their best 6 events rather than a specific list of events as they did in Dolphin. However, one of those 6 events must be the 200 or 400 IM to reflect overall fundamental swimming skills at this stage of development.

Shark 1: This group will teach each swimmer how to accept constructive criticism from coaches and use the feedback to enhance their self-awareness and improvement. Swimmer and coach will work together to create long-term plans to reach the desired goals. Individuals will understand the difference between the various energy systems, how they apply in training, and their impact on developing individualized pacing strategies to show mature race control. This group will also learn how to use mental rehearsals to create a calm mind for racing skills and overall well-being. Performance measures will include a 6 event PowerPoint total using their best events in the sum, but 1 of the events must also be the 200 or the 400 IM.

Shark 2: This group continues to grow in self-awareness and the ability to respond to corrections and feedback from coaches. As swimmers become more aware of their desired goals in swimming, they will communicate more with their coaches to set goals and the plans to work towards their achievement. Swimmers will experience different training sets and how to prepare for various types of races with "active learning" in practice sets with training consistency of their race quality pacing and strategies. We will introduce visualization. Performance measures will include a 6 event PowerPoint total using their best events in the sum, but 1 of the events must also be the 200 or the 400 IM.

Shark 3: This group helps swimmers grow in awareness, work ethic, and consistency with more ownership in coach-athlete interaction. We will focus on learning within individual self-discipline and overall technique and how efforts and concentration in practice can lead to results in competition. Swimmers will set into goal setting by setting practice and set goals that involve both the individual and the team's success. Each individual will continue to develop competitive and technical proficiency in all four strokes and performance measures will include a 6 event PowerPoint total using their best events in the sum, 1 of the events must also be either the 200 or the 400 IM.

Bridge (South Location) / North Breakout Group, Commitment and Challenge

SwimMAC South Freshmen and high performing 7th and 8th graders will 'bridge' their development from age group to senior swimming as they learn about Bridge Swimmers:

- Commit to their individual and sport development through steadfast attendance and attention to the process of each practice
- Seek out challenges that allow daily progress to become optimal habits under increasing levels of strain
- Understand energy systems, their importance and impact in training and their applications in race settings
- Promote an atmosphere of high-level learning and development while consistently pushing competitive boundaries for themselves and others
- Raise the standard of the group and enhance the learning opportunities for all

Swimmers in their freshman year of high school will be evaluated based on their attendance, athletic mindset evaluation, and a 5 event PowerPoint total comprising their best events. 7th-8th graders will be evaluated on these factors and their highest level of Senior level time standards.

South Performance Bridge: This group will teach each swimmer how to accept constructive criticism from coaches and use the feedback to enhance their self-awareness and improvement. Swimmer and coach will work together to create long-term plans to reach the desired goals. Individuals will understand the difference between the various energy systems, how they apply in training, and their impact on developing individualized pacing strategies to show mature race control. This group will also learn how to use mental rehearsals to create a calm mind for racing skills and overall well-being.

South High School Bridge: This group is designed to 'bridge' the development of each swimmer from the Shark Division into a swimmer's freshman year of high school prior to entering groups in the remainder of the senior division. Qualification is based on a five-point power point score. In the High School Bridge group, collaboration with coaches is essential but also individual self-evaluation to create honest feedback about past, current and future needs to improve. Swimmer and coach will work together to create long term plans to reach the desired goals. Energy system education, it's impact in training and how to apply in racing settings will be emphasized. This group will also learn how to utilize mental rehearsals to improve calm of mind for racing skills and overall well-being.

North Breakout Group: This group identifies high performing 7th and 8th graders in the North location who have shown the ability and desire to compete on the Senior high performance level. This is measured by selecting those swimmers who have achieved Senior Sectional time standards or above. This affords these swimmers the opportunity to train with their more advanced peers while also exposing them to the challenges they will face at senior level meets.

Senior – The Pursuit of Excellence

SwimMAC Freshman (North location only), Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors will work to align their values to their actions, both in and out of training, and to actively strive for their best performances in peak competitions. SwimMAC provides the resources and programming to support athletes in becoming the best they can be in their program of events to showcase their skills on the highest platform they can achieve. Senior Swimmers:

- Use their ultimate goal in sport to maintain intensity and work ethic in practice
- Utilize time management skills to keep their lives in balance and their training protected
- Understand their position as role models and the impact of their public behaviors

- Are able to employ supreme concentration and situational awareness in peak states
- Are steadfastly optimistic about their potential and ability to get better

Attendance (as a measure of engagement) and evaluation criteria weigh heavily on athletic mindset, and leadership will be considered alongside a 4 event power point total and the highest senior time standard achieved.

Each division has two leaders: one assigned to the North and one assigned to the South. SwimMAC Division leaders are crucial to our curriculum and the quality of our program. It is their responsibility to provide leadership and to ensure the SwimMAC curriculum, philosophy, and policies are being followed by providing day-to-day management to insure alignment and accountability to SwimMAC standards.

Practice Facilities

SwimMAC is fortunate to have its own training center in south Charlotte on the campus of Charlotte Latin School. We rent space at a number of other pools and must follow the rules and regulations in place at each facility. Please be respectful at all times and help us maintain positive relationships with these important partners. Addresses for each location and detailed facility use policies can be found on www.SwimMacCarolina.org. Go to the Contact Us tab and click on Locations.

Practice Schedules

Seasonal practice schedules are available on Team Unify in the Parent Resources section. Coaches will send weekly emails to the families in each practice group that will detail any updates or changes. If you have questions, please contact your coach. Keep in mind the more consistent practice is attended the more improvement swimmers will see.

Inclement Weather

SwimMAC uses a number of different facilities and each has its own inclement weather policy. Coaches will notify families of changes to practice schedules by email.

Please be sure to keep your contact information correct on our Team Unify account. If you need to make changes to your account (i.e. you have a new phone number, email address), follow SwimMACCarolina.org website and sign in with the username and password you set up.

Required Practice Equipment

All practice equipment can be purchased from the Carolina Swim Shop, located at Huntersville Family Fitness & Aquatics and the SwimMAC pool at Charlotte Latin School. Items are also available 24/7 at www.CarolinaSwimShop.com. Please mark all equipment with your swimmer's name. The full equipment list for all divisions is available on Team Unify under the Parent Resources tab.

Practice Behavior

Swimmers are encouraged to support their teammates at practices and during competition. Working together is an important part of the “SwimMAC Spirit.” Swimmers are expected to follow the directions of the coaching staff, be respectful at all times, and may only leave practice with the coach’s permission.

Abusive language, lying, stealing, or vandalism will not be tolerated.

SWIMMAC GROUP PLACEMENT PHILOSOPHY

SwimMAC coaches work toward a common goal of continuity and developmental progression. Each season, swimmers are evaluated for the best placement within our team structure, and may be assigned to a different group as they age and/or evolve. Swimmers may move to a different level within their division (i.e. from Marlin 3 to Marlin 2) or transition to another division (i.e. Marlin 2 to Dolphin 3), which is generally driven by age. Divisional advancements often require a change in level as well, since those swimmers will be among the youngest and least experienced in their new division. As an example, a Dolphin 1 swimmer who just turned 13 may be moved to Shark 2 the following season.

Swimmers will be assigned to groups based on their personal evaluations and their chronological age for the upcoming season. SwimMAC coaches are guided by our team’s Development Model defining our overall vision for the program and a systematic process of progression. Each group is working towards the mastery of specific skills and abilities that pave the way towards our ultimate goal of creating “Champions in Life through Excellence in Swimming.”

To this end, we are looking to develop coachable, mature athletes who are knowledgeable about what it takes to succeed in the sport and then harness these attributes to deliberately strive for performance excellence. At the younger end of our program, we are more concerned about building an athletic mindset than we are about their performances in competition, but as the swimmers become older, we are looking to see character driven results that reflect their efforts.

The factors that drive group placement come directly from the swimmer’s evaluation rubric and include Performance, Engagement, Coachability, Maturity, Swim IQ, and Readiness. These factors are weighed based on the priorities of development within each division and which group will allow the swimmer to develop and shine while continuing to progress at SwimMAC. Finding the appropriate group for each swimmer will allow for the greatest opportunities for growth, learning and connection as they are immersed in an environment that will help them succeed.

We understand that group moves can introduce turbulence as they affect schedules, coach relationships, and peer groups. We will make an effort to help your families create new connections and support systems that widen your circle of friends within the team and allow for greater influence in leadership as you progress. As parents, you play a critical role in the culture of SwimMAC, so your investment in the connections with and support of families in your swimmer’s group along with the support you give your child’s coach is paramount to the overall success of the team. Your swimmer’s group is also your group,

and the people who will be sharing and cocreating this experience with you, so take care of each other as we dive further into this sport and the upcoming season together.

If you'd like to learn more about your swimmer's assigned group, please reach out to your current group coach regarding the evaluation process or the values for that stage of the program.

COMPETING FOR SWIMMAC

SwimMAC's Competition Philosophy

In preparing for your swimmer's meets, the following are some basic fundamentals of competition that SwimMAC coaches stress.

1. Each swimmer should compete with him or herself. It is more beneficial to improve one's time and/or technique than to win a ribbon or medal.
2. In addition to earning best times, the coaches praise swimmers for working on technique and/or racing strategies. Swimmers may not improve their time when trying something new (i.e. flip turns, underwater dolphin kicks, etc.), but if a swimmer continues the skill or technique, the time will improve more in the long run.
3. Swimmers are taught to set realistic goals, and as they get older, they are taught to relate performance in practice to their goal times.
4. The coaching staff encourages age-group swimmers to compete in every event they are eligible for. This helps to promote versatility since swimmers are continuously switching best events as they grow, mature, and change body shapes and sizes.
5. Sportsmanship is a MUST at SwimMAC. We expect all swimmers, parents, and coaches to respect the officials, competitors, and the facilities we use. We also want swimmers to encourage and support their teammates.
6. SUCCESS = Improving one's own, best self.

Competition Schedule

The competition schedule for each season is available on Team Unify under the meets and events tab. Coaches will send weekly emails to the families in each practice group that will include any updates or changes. If you have questions about which meets your child should attend, please contact your coach.

Entering Meets

SwimMAC families are required to commit to competitions through their account in Team Unify. Coaches will notify families when the event becomes available on Team Unify and the deadline for committing their swimmer.

The process to indicate your swimmer will be able to participate in the meet (or any portion of the meet) is as follows:

1. Go to www.teamunify.com/ncmac and sign in to your Team Unify account.
2. Click on the Event tab and open the assigned meet for your child.

3. Click on the Attend/Decline button (upper right part of the page).
4. Click on the name of the athlete you want to commit to the event.
5. The athlete sign up page appears.
6. Commit the athlete by using the Signup Record and selecting "yes please (swimmer's name) will attend this event."
7. Always remember to click on Save Changes!

Once the deadline has past, you will NOT be able to commit your swimmer. At this time the entries are processed. Declaring for a meet will turn off on midnight the day of the deadline.

After you've committed to the event, your coach will select the events your swimmer will compete in and will notify parents by email that entries are complete. Check the entries for your swimmer and let your swimmer's coach know as soon as possible if there are any problems.

All meet fees will be billed through TeamUnify and will be posted to your account the week following the meet. The fees will be drafted at the same time as your dues, which is the first of every month. This can only be accomplished by setting up credit card or ACH payment (which is setup by entering your checking account information). You will be notified by email when meet fees have been posted to your Team Unify account.

Swim Meet Procedures

1. Arrive at the pool 15-20 minutes prior to the scheduled warm-up time, and locate the SwimMAC team area where all team members sit. The meet warm-up time will be listed in the meet information provided by your coach, as well as within the event listing on Team Unify.
2. Warm-ups are always conducted by the SwimMAC coaching staff. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team.
3. All SwimMAC swimmers are required to wear the team suit and SwimMAC team cap during both warmups and actual competition. Swimmers also are asked to wear their team t-shirts. All other team apparel is optional but encouraged to promote team unity and pride.
4. Each swimmer is responsible for knowing which events s/he is swimming and for being on time to swim his/her event. It is customary to write event numbers, heat and lane assignments on a swimmer's hand, arm, or leg. You can get that information by purchasing a heat sheet.
5. At the conclusion of each race, younger swimmers are expected to go immediately to their coach. Older swimmers should warm down first, if possible, and then see their coach. The coach discusses the race with each swimmer individually and gives positive comments concerning splits, stroke technique, and race strategy.
6. Electronic timing is used at most meets. Generally, the official time is the one recorded in the computer when the swimmer touches the touch pad. This time appears on the scoreboard, however, if a swimmer misses the touch pad, or if there is a mechanical failure, various back-up times may be used. The timing and score keeping personnel analyze all times to determine the official times, which are then posted as final results.
7. According to USA Swimming rules, parents are not allowed in the immediate competition venue unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet should be referred to the SwimMAC coaching staff. They, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.

8. In between races, swimmers are asked to rest and stay warm. All energy should be stored up and used in competition. Stay hydrated and eat light, nutritious snacks as needed.
9. It is very important that parents and/or swimmers check with the coaching staff prior to leaving the swim meet, making certain that their swimmer has not been placed on a relay.

What to Bring

1. Team swimsuit
2. Two team swim caps
3. Two pairs of goggles
4. SwimMAC team t-shirts
5. Two towels (minimum)
6. Old blanket or sleeping bag
7. Quiet games or books
8. Food—nutritious snacks
9. Water bottle

Be sure to put your swimmer's name on all belongings and equipment. Please do not hesitate to ask any veteran parent on the team for help or for information.

Competition Apparel

Swimmers are expected to wear the assigned SwimMAC t-shirt for each session of a swim meet. All other SwimMAC apparel is optional, but encouraged.

Typical SwimMAC T-Shirt Schedule for Meets*

*This order could change so please watch for information in the swim meet notice that will be provided by your coach.

Thursday – Assigned SwimMAC T-shirt

Friday – Navy T-shirt

Saturday – Registration T-shirt

Sunday – Orange T-shirt

Competition Suit Policy

All SwimMAC swimmers are required to wear the SwimMAC team suit and navy SwimMAC cap during meets attended by SwimMAC. Please refer to the SwimMAC Competition Suit Policy in the Documents section of Team Unify for details.

SWIMMAC POLICIES

All SwimMAC members must adhere to the following policies and waivers on the Team Unify website in the documents section. Note that you must be logged in to your account to access these documents:

- SwimMAC Carolina Code of Conduct and Travel Policies

- Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policy
- SwimMAC Carolina Safe Sport Policy and Bullying Action Plan
- SwimMAC Swimwear Policy
- SwimMAC Carolina Medical Waiver

Violations of team policies posted on Team Unify may result in suspension or termination of membership at SwimMAC Carolina. These policies and releases have been created to ensure the safety of SwimMAC Carolina members and staff and promote the betterment of SwimMAC Carolina as an organization.

SWIMMING TERMINOLOGY

If your family is new to competitive swimming, there are a lot of commonly used terms that may be unfamiliar to you. We've put together a swimming glossary as a resource for our families. It is available on Team Unify at www.teamunify.com/ncmac under the resources tab. The resources tab will be added to the Team Unify site in the next few weeks.

Still have questions?

Ask your coach, an experienced SwimMAC parent, or email any of the following departments. Thanks again for choosing SwimMAC and welcome to the family!

Dues/Billing billing@swimmacarolina.org Meet Squad meetsquad@swimmacarolina.org Registration registration@swimmacarolina.org