

Bloomington Swim Club HANDBOOK



History	4
Program Philosophy	4
Mission Statement and Values	5
Mission Statement	5
Parental Responsibilities	5
Bloomington Swim Club Values	5
By-laws of the Bloomington Swim Club, Inc.	6
ARTICLE I: NAME	6
ARTICLE II: PURPOSE	6
ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP	6
ARTICLE IV: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS	7
ARTICLE V: CHAIRPERSONS	10
ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES	11
ARTICLE VII: MEETING/NOTICE OF MEETINGS	12
ARTICLE VIII: REQUIRED RECORDS	12
ARTICLE IX: CODE OF CONDUCT	13
ARTICLE X: GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE	13
ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS	15
ARTICLE XII: DISSOLVING THE CORPORATION	15
CODE OF CONDUCT:	16
BSC Swimmer & Parent Agreement	16
Bloomington Swim Club Code of Conduct Agreement	17
Membership Dues	19
USA Swimming Registration	19
Pro-rated Dues Policy	19
Scholarship Policy	20
Swim Group Placement	20
Moving from Group to Group	28
Practice Guidelines	29
Parents' Encouragement	29
Problems with the coach	30
Swimming: The Sport	31
USA Swimming	31
USA Swimming Headquarters	31
National	32
Local	32
The Competition	32
The Skills	32
Freestyle	32
Backstroke	33
Breaststroke	33
Butterfly	34
Individual Medley	34
Freestyle Relay	35
Medley Relay	35
Rules Pertaining to Relay Races	35
BSC Relay Policy	36
State Championship Relays	36
Swim Meet Guidelines	37

Meet Entries	37
Arrival: Meet Check-ins	37
Heat Sheets	38
Camping	38
Lost and Found	39
Warm-ups	39
Before the First Race	39
First Call	39
Disqualifications (DQ)	40
Timers	41
Officials	42
Results	42
Glossary of Swimming Terms	43

History

The Bloomington Swim Club (BSC) was founded in 1955 by the legendary Dr. James E. “Doc” Counsilman as a competitive swimming program for children ages 5-21. Originally sponsored by Bloomington Parks and Recreation, the club is now an independent nonprofit organization that is run by a Board of Directors consisting of parents and other interested members of the community. The Bloomington Swim Club is a member of USA Swimming, the national governing body for the sport of swimming, and Indiana Swimming, Inc. (ISI), the governing body for swimming in the state of Indiana.

Program Philosophy

- Teach the techniques of competitive swimming.
- Develop sound stroke mechanics.
- Increase physical strength while building cardiovascular endurance.
- Provide each team member with individual attention, regardless of age or experience level.
- Promote team spirit and unity through competition and social interaction.
- Develop a sense of commitment and responsibility required for achieving individual success.
- Promote the psychological development of each athlete by providing goal achievement programs resulting in positive self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment.

Mission Statement and Values

Mission Statement

The goal of the Club is to make available the opportunity for youth in the Bloomington area to experience the sport of swimming at a variety of levels, from the beginning swimmer to the national caliber athlete.

Parental Responsibilities

Parents are the primary support group for swimmers and coaches. Without parent interest and assistance, the Club would not be able to attend or hold meets, have regular practice sessions with paid coaches, or even to exist as a team. As a swim parent, your major responsibility is to provide a stable, loving, and supportive environment for your swimmer(s). This positive environment will encourage your child through the ups and downs of swimming. Encouraging your child's attendance at practices and meets is the best way of supporting your child and showing that you have a genuine interest in what they are doing.

Although parents are not actual participants on their child's team, they often are a major contributing factor in the success experienced by their child and the team. Parents also serve as role models and their children often emulate their attitudes. If parents are not happy or complain, their child may tend to do the same and end up not enjoying their swimming experience. Please be aware of this and strive to be a positive sports role model. Show good sportsmanship, especially towards coaches, officials, teammates, and opponents.

Be enthusiastic and supportive. Remember that the child is the swimmer. Children need to establish their own goals and monitor their own progress towards them. Be careful not to impose your own standards and goals onto your athlete. Remember that all swimmers improve at different rates. Please try to avoid comparing your child's times and rate of development with those of other swimmers. Do not overburden your child with unneeded comparisons, winning, or achieving certain times. The most important part of your child's swimming experience is that he/she learns about setting and achieving goals while enjoying the sport. This healthy environment encourages learning and fun, which will develop a positive self-image in your child.

Bloomington Swim Club Values

What we, as a group, demonstrate to our children and to other communities will partially determine how they perceive the commitment and values of the Club. Parents and coaches should follow the values and mission of the Club as our shared pursuit.

1. To give every swimmer the opportunity to enjoy the sport of swimming.
2. To reinforce the values of teamwork, individual effort and self-sacrifice.
3. To promote the values of good citizenship by practicing respect for authority and one another.
4. To offer children the benefits of positive adult and peer associations.

By-laws of the Bloomington Swim Club, Inc.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The Name of the organization shall be the Bloomington Swim Club, Inc., referred to within these by-laws as "the Club".

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The goal of the Bloomington Swim Club is to make available the opportunity for youth in the Bloomington area to experience the sport of swimming at a variety of levels, from the beginning swimmer to the national caliber swimmer.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

A. Eligibility and Conditions for Membership – Membership in the Club shall include:

1. All swimmers registered with the Club during a season.
2. Parents and guardians of swimmers as defined in Article III, paragraph A.1.
3. Any individual not otherwise eligible under this Article can be extended an invitation by the Board of Directors to join the membership as a non-athlete. The invitation must be passed by a simple majority vote of the Directors attending the Board meeting at which the vote is held. The invited membership is valid for one season.

B. To be accepted as a athlete member in the club, a properly completed enrollment application, a USA Swimming Registration (for each individual swimmer), a fund raising contract, if applicable, and payment of all required fees must be submitted at registration. The term of membership will be for one season. The Executive Board, prior to the registration period, will establish fees for each season. At its sole discretion, the Club reserves the right to decline any membership application.

C. Resignation of membership

1. A member may resign at any time.
2. The resignation of a member does not relieve the member from any obligations the member may have to the Club as a result of obligations incurred or commitments made before a resignation.

D. Suspension or Termination of Membership

The Club reserves the right to suspend or terminate any member for reasonable cause which the Board of Directors has determined to be in the best interests of the Club. In the event the Board of Directors has deemed such a suspension or termination to be required, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the effective date of the suspension or termination, the member will be given written notice of the suspension or termination. Such notification will include the reason(s) for suspension or termination. Notification will be made by certified mail to the last address of the member shown on the Club's records.
2. The member will be given the opportunity to be heard, orally or in writing, not less than five (5) days before the effective date of the suspension or termination. The Executive Board will hear or review any such argument made by the member. The Executive Board will take into consideration all of the relevant facts and circumstances regarding the suspension or termination.
3. Within five (5) days of such a hearing, the Executive Board will notify the member of the results of the hearing. Notification will take place by certified mail sent to the last address of the member shown on the Club's records.
4. Any challenge to a suspension or termination must be commenced within one (1) year after the effective date of the suspension or termination.
5. Any member who has been suspended or terminated may be liable to the Club for dues, assessments, or fees as a result of obligations incurred or commitments made before the suspension or termination.

ARTICLE IV: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A. General

1. The Board of Directors will consist of both elected and appointed positions. At least one board member shall not have a swimmer currently swimming for the Club. If necessary, an additional member may be appointed specifically to fulfill this purpose. The Board of Directors shall manage the affairs, business and property of the Club. There will be additional members appointed pursuant to paragraph C of this article.
2. The Board of Directors are elected or appointed pursuant to these By-laws annually. Directors shall serve for one-year terms that begin on September 1 and continue until August 31 of the following year and may serve consecutive terms. The officers of the Board of Directors shall include: President, Vice-President, Past-President, Secretary, Treasurer(s), and Personnel Director. With the exception of the Past-President, these positions shall be filled by a vote of the membership. The officers of the Board may be elected to consecutive terms. These officers shall serve as members of the Executive Board.
3. The Executive Board will appoint all Chairpersons as specified in Article V. An individual may hold only one position on the Board of Directors. Two or more members of the same family may not hold two or more positions on the board. A Director may also serve as a chairperson of a committee.

4. The Board shall not conduct any business without a quorum (which shall be a simple majority unless otherwise specified in this document) of members present and voting.
5. The elections for the Board of Directors will be held annually at the Long Course awards celebration. All parents or guardians of athletes who are in good standing with the Club at the time of the elections will be eligible to vote. Each parent or guardian of a swimmer in the Club will be afforded one vote at such elections.
6. The Board shall cooperate with the Bloomington Parks Department, the Monroe County Community School Corporation, the Richland-Bean Blossom School Corporation, the YMCA, and Indiana University to secure facilities for Club use.
7. The Board shall conduct all business necessary to the running of a swimming program as delegated to the Bloomington Swim Club by Indiana Swimming, Inc.
8. Any vacancy on the Board shall be filled by appointment by the Executive Board.
9. To be nominated for the position of President or Vice-President, a nominee must first have completed a minimum of one year as a Chairperson or Board member. However, if no one meets these qualifications, nominations from the general membership will be accepted.

B. Club Officers/Executive Board

1. **President:** The President shall be the chief administrative officer of the organization and shall supervise and direct the Board. The President shall have the general responsibilities of the business affairs of the Club. The President should be prepared to serve as Past-President upon completion of his/her final term as President.
2. **Vice-President:** The Vice-President shall perform all duties of President at the President's request or in the absence of the President. The Vice President should be prepared to be nominated for President following the President's final term.
3. **Past-President:** The Past-President position will be filled by the President upon completion of his/her final term as President. This is not an elected position. As a voluntary position, the individual fulfilling the role of Past-President is free to step down at the conclusion of any term, leaving the position vacant for the ensuing term. If the President is not willing to serve as Past-President upon completion of his/her final term as President, the position may be left vacant. The Past-President serves to provide continuity within the Board, and is responsible to assist the President with any duties as needed. The Past-President shall be chairman of the Long-Range Planning Committee. In the absence of a Past-President, the Vice President will chair this committee.

4. Secretary: The Secretary shall record all proceedings of general membership meetings, the Board of Directors and the Executive Board. The Secretary shall issue meeting notices prior to the Monthly Board of Directors meetings. The Board of Directors meeting minutes will be made available to the general membership. The Executive Board minutes will be reviewed at the Board of Directors meeting.
 5. Treasurer(s): The Treasurer(s) position may include up to three treasurers, all of whom are full Directors and Executive Board members with full voting rights. The Treasurer(s) duties may be split up as necessary to accomplish the following responsibilities (as a minimum):
 - collection and disbursement of funds
 - reporting financial position at Board meetings
 - keep the Club books
 - arrange for the Club's tax preparation (see that all tax reports and taxes are filed on time, see that all reports and fees paid to the State of Indiana for incorporation are kept current)
 - handle and record revenues from meets
 - run registration
 - see that all swimmers are registered with USA Swimming
 - serve as budget committee chairperson
 6. Personnel Director: The Personnel Director shall be responsible for making recommendations for appointment of group/parent representatives to the Executive Board. The Personnel Director will assist the head coach with the management of Club's employees. He/she will act as mediator between parents and coaches when necessary.
- C. Other Directors – The Executive Board shall appoint the following additional Director positions (Appointed Positions). The eligibility requirements for these positions and term of office shall be the same as the elected Board of Director positions
1. Meet Director: The Meet Director shall plan, schedule, organize, and conduct home meets. This shall be done by forming a Meet Committee and holding meetings as necessary to prepare. The Meet Director will be responsible for training the Assistant Meet Director (nominated by the Meet Director and appointed by Executive Board) so that the Assistant Meet Director may be prepared to assume the duties of the Meet Director in his/her absence. The Meet Director shall also serve as a full voting member of the Executive Board.
 2. Group Representatives: Group Representatives will be a parent or guardian of a swimmer in each swim group in the club. The Group Representative must have a swimmer active in the group represented (this may be waived in the junior high school or high school seasons). The Group Representatives will assist in the dissemination of information to the members in their group. The Group Representatives will also be the liaison between the parents and the Board. They will bring parent concerns and issues to the Personnel Director as needed. They may also be needed to assist with fund raising revenue collections.

- D. Removal from Office – The Board of Directors may, at its discretion, and with or without cause, remove a Director from his/her position. Such action shall take place at a duly constituted meeting with a majority of those Board members present and voting

ARTICLE V: CHAIRPERSONS

Club members may hold more than one chair position at the same time. The following list of chairpersons is a suggested, but not exhaustive list. If other chairpersons are needed, the Board of Directors has full power and discretion to create the positions. The Board of Directors will review and consider for approval any and all recommendations made by these chairpersons. All chairpersons are encouraged to attend the Board Meetings as non-voting guests. Certain Chairpersons are designated as members of the Meet Committee; others may be appointed by the Executive Board as deemed appropriate.

- A. Apparel: The Apparel Chairperson will serve on the Meet Committee. The Apparel chairperson will work with the Board of Directors, Meet Committee, and Head Coach to organize apparel nights, team shirts, and apparel sales at Club-hosted swim meets and events. The Board of Directors will make final apparel decisions.
- B. Awards: The Awards Chairperson will serve on the Meet Committee. The Awards chairperson will be responsible for ordering and preparing the awards (ribbons, etc.) for swim meets hosted by the Club. The Chair will also work with the head coach to prepare end-of-season awards which may include, but are not limited to, plaques, certificates or other awards as appropriate.
- C. Meet Concessions: The Meet Concessions Chairperson will serve on the Meet Committee. The Concessions Chairperson will be responsible for planning, procuring food and beverages, setting up, cleaning up, and working at concessions at Club-hosted swim meets.
- D. Fund Raising: The Fund Raising Chairperson will plan, organize, and execute the fund raising programs for the Club. These programs will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval. All records, funds expended and revenue generated shall be reported to / turned in to the Treasurer(s).
- E. Meet Hospitality: The Meet Hospitality Chairperson will serve on the Meet Committee. The Hospitality Chairperson will coordinate all aspects of hospitality room functions at Club-hosted swim meets. Primary responsibilities will include planning meals and procuring food for coaches, officials and meet workers.
- F. Volunteer Coordinator: The Volunteer Coordinator Chairperson will serve on the Meet Committee and work with the Meet Director to identify the positions and number of personnel needed to conduct Club-hosted meets. The Coordinator will work to secure time commitments from the membership to help in the conduct of Club-hosted swim meets and other events as determined by the Executive Board. The Group Representatives will assist the Volunteer Coordinator in gathering time commitments from the membership.

- G. **Publicity:** The Publicity Chairperson shall be in charge of arranging all publicity for the Club. This may include reporting to the local newspaper and radio stations the results of swim meets and swimmers' accomplishments. The Publicity Chairperson will also be responsible for advertising registration sessions and fund raising events.
- H. **Social:** The Social Chairperson shall plan, organize, and execute the social activities of the Club. This will include club social events and the awards celebration at the end of each season.

ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

- A. **Executive Board:** The Executive Board shall consist of the officers of the Board of Directors and the Meet Director. The Executive Board shall meet as necessary to address Club matters. The Executive Board shall have the authority to act for the Board of Directors. The Executive Board will be responsible for the management of the Club's employees. The Board will create and maintain job descriptions and do an annual review of the Head Coach. They will set the Head Coach's salary. They shall prepare agenda items for Board meetings. Actions taken by the Executive Board shall be reported to the Board of Directors. All issues before the Executive Board which require confidentiality (e.g., personnel or grievances) will be handled in closed session.
- B. **Nominating Committee:** The President shall appoint the Nominating Committee. The committee shall return a slate of officers for the annual business meeting of the general membership. The committee shall consist of four members and will include the Vice-President and Personnel Director.
- C. **Meet Committee:** The Meet Committee shall be chaired by the Meet Director. Positions on this committee may include, but are not limited to: Assistant Meet Director, Officials Coordinator, Entries Chair, Volunteer Coordinator, Head Timer, Hospitality, Awards, Clerk of Course, Concessions, Set-up and Clean-up, and Computer and Equipment Manager. The Executive Board will appoint members to fill positions on this committee.
- D. **Budget Committee:** The Budget Committee shall be chaired by a Treasurer and consist of the Executive Board and the Head Coach. They will prepare a fiscal year budget for presentation to the Board of Directors prior to the start of the fiscal year for which the budget is being prepared.
- E. **Long – Range Planning Committee (LRP):** The Past-President will chair the LRP. The Executive Board will appoint members to this committee. Their duties will be to present plans to the Board concerning the future growth and stability of the Club.
- F. **Except where membership on committees is designated, the Board of Directors will make appointments to committees consistent with their purpose, to ensure successful completion of their objectives.**

ARTICLE VII: MEETING/NOTICE OF MEETINGS

- A. General Membership Meeting: There shall be at least one meeting per year of the general membership of the Club. This meeting is typically held at the Long-Course awards celebration.
- B. Board of Director Meetings: The Board of Directors shall have no fewer than six meetings per fiscal year. Each Director shall have one vote. Chairpersons are encouraged to attend Board meetings as non-voting guests. Other interested members may also attend.
- C. Members or interested parties wishing to meet with the Board must submit their request to the President no later than ten days prior to a meeting. Upon receipt of such a request, the President shall consider adding the specific request to the agenda. The agenda, established by the Executive Board, shall be distributed in writing to members of the Board seven days in advance of the Board meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: REQUIRED RECORDS

- A. The Club shall keep as permanent records: minutes of meetings of its membership, meetings of the Board of Directors, and meetings of the Executive Board. A record of all actions taken by the Board of Directors or its members shall be documented in the minutes.
- B. The Club shall maintain appropriate accounting records.
- C. The Club shall maintain its records in written form or in another form capable of conversion into written form within a reasonable time.
- D. The Club shall keep a copy of the following records at its principle office.
 - 1. Articles or Restated Articles of Incorporation and all amendments to them currently in effect.
 - 2. Its By-laws or restated By-laws and all amendments to them currently in effect.
 - 3. Resolutions adopted by the Board of Directors.
 - 4. The minutes of all members' meeting, and records of actions taken by members without a meeting for the past three (3) years.
 - 5. All written communications to members generally within the past three (3) years.
 - 6. A list of the names and addresses of its current Board of Directors.
 - 7. Any other records required by I.C. 23-17-27-1.
- E. Any Member shall be entitled to inspect and copy any of the records described above in subsection D in accordance with I.C. 23-17-27-2.

ARTICLE IX: CODE OF CONDUCT

The Club and its membership, as members of USA Swimming and Indiana Swimming, Inc., are bound by the Code of Conduct of those organizations and its own Code of Conduct as stated in the Bloomington Swim Club Handbook. The Club grants the privilege of membership to individuals committed to those values and beliefs. The privilege of membership may, therefore, be withdrawn or denied by the Club at any time where it determines that a member or prospective member's conduct is inconsistent with the mission of the organization or the best interest of the sport and those who participate in it. It is the intention of the Club that its policy regarding discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, mirror Article 304 of the Rules and Regulations of USA Swimming (Code of Conduct), and Article 305 of the Indiana Swimming, Inc. By-laws (Code of Conduct). Any act construed as a violation of either of the aforementioned Articles will be deemed a violation of the Club's code of conduct and will not be tolerated.

Because the actions of each Member reflect upon the entire Club, expectations are that our members will act in accordance with the values, missions, and By-laws of the Club. Inappropriate conduct may include, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- A. A member's verbal threat to intimidate another member.
- B. Causing harm to the Club or its members.
- C. A member places another's safety at risk.
- D. A member who brings adverse action against the club or its members, legal or otherwise.
- E. Actions which result in financial liability or monetary expenditure by the Club in response to any adverse action.

Actions outlined in paragraphs A through E above or violations of the Code of Conduct, as determined by the Executive Board in its sole discretion, may result in revoking membership in accordance with Club By-laws and applicable law with or without a pro-rated refund of membership fees.

ARTICLE X: GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- A. Grievance by a Swimmer
 - 1. The swimmer should first attempt to resolve the issue with their group coach.
 - 2. If the swimmer does not feel the issue was adequately resolved, they may request a meeting with the Head Coach.
 - 3. If the problem remains unresolved after meeting with the Head Coach, the swimmer may take the issue to the Personnel Director.

4. The Personnel Director will attempt to resolve the problem. The Personnel Director will promptly notify the Executive Board of the grievance and request assistance in resolving the issue if warranted.
5. The Executive Board will have the authority to approve the resolution of any grievance brought to its attention that has followed the aforementioned steps. The decision of the Executive Board will be final.
6. Should any party fail to willingly cooperate with the decision of the Executive Board, for the sake of the organization at large, the Executive Board shall consider whether disciplinary action is appropriate as a last resort. For members such action may ultimately include revoking membership with or without a partial, pro-rated refund of membership fees, or refusal to admit as a member.

B. Grievance by a Parent

1. The parent should first attempt to resolve the issue with their swimmer's Group Coach.
2. If the problem is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, the parent may request a meeting with the Head Coach. The Head Coach will notify the Personnel Director of a grievance reaching this level.
3. The Head Coach will make every attempt to resolve the issue. If unable to do so, the issue shall be referred to the Personnel Director.
4. The Personnel Director will then attempt to resolve the issue(s) and will promptly notify the Executive Board of any grievance reaching this level.
 - a. The Executive Board will have the authority to approve the resolution of any grievance brought to its attention that has followed the aforementioned steps. The decision of the Executive Board will be final.
 - b. Should any party fail to willingly cooperate with the decision of the Executive Board, for the sake of the organization at large, the Executive Board shall consider whether disciplinary action is appropriate as a last resort. For members, such action may ultimately include revoking membership with or without a partial, pro-rated refund of membership fees, or refusal to admit as a member.

C. Grievance by a Coach

1. The coach should attempt to resolve the issue with the Head Coach.
2. If the problem is not resolved it shall be referred to the Personnel Director.
3. The Personnel Director will attempt to resolve the issue and will promptly notify the Executive Board of any grievance reaching this level. Those issues that remain unresolved shall be referred to the Executive Board.

4. The Executive Board will have the authority to approve the resolution of any grievance brought to its attention, which has followed the aforementioned steps. The decision of the Executive board will be final.
5. Should any party fail to willingly cooperate with the decision of the Executive Board, the Executive Board will consider all actions necessary to maintain good order within the Club. Such action may ultimately include dismissal.

ARTICLE XI: AMENDMENTS

To amend the Club By-laws, the amendment must be approved by a two-thirds vote of all Board members at a regular Board meeting. Any proposed amendment must be given to the Board members in writing, at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which a vote on the amendment will occur.

ARTICLE XII: DISSOLVING THE CORPORATION

If the corporation is dissolved, the assets of this corporation will be distributed to another not-for-profit organization with similar goals and objectives as the Club's.

Approved on 3/31/99, corrected 7/01

**CODE OF CONDUCT:
BSC Swimmer & Parent Agreement**

The Bloomington Swim Club Handbook contains helpful information about the club and the sport of competitive swimming. The handbook has a section on the BSC values including:

- To give every swimmer the opportunity to enjoy the sport of swimming.
- To reinforce the values of teamwork, individual effort and self-sacrifice.
- To promote the values of good citizenship by practicing respect for authority and one another.
- To offer children the benefits of positive adult and peer associations.

Article IX of the BSC Bylaws, pertaining to the Code of Conduct, states:

The Club and its membership, as members of USA Swimming and Indiana Swimming, Inc., are bound by the Code of Conduct of those organizations and its own Code of Conduct as stated in the Bloomington Swim Club Handbook. The Club grants the privilege of membership to individuals committed to those values and beliefs. The privilege of membership may, therefore, be withdrawn or denied by the Club at any time where it determines that a member or prospective member's conduct is inconsistent with the mission of the organization or the best interest of the sport and those who participate in it. It is the intention of the Club that its policy regarding discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, mirror Article 304 of the Rules and Regulations of USA Swimming (Code of Conduct), and Article 305 of the Indiana Swimming, Inc. By-laws (Code of Conduct). Any act construed as a violation of either of the aforementioned Articles will be deemed a violation of the Club's code of conduct and will not be tolerated.

Because the actions of each Member reflect upon the entire Club, expectations are that our members will act in accordance with the values, missions, and By-laws of the Club.

Inappropriate conduct may include, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- A. A member's verbal threat to intimidate another member.
- B. Causing harm to the Club or its members.
- C. A member places another's safety at risk.
- D. A member who brings adverse action against the club or its members, legal, or otherwise.
- E. Actions which result in monetary expenditure by the Club in response to any adverse action.

Actions outlined in paragraphs A through E above or violations of the Code of Conduct, as determined by the Executive Board in its sole discretion, may result in revoking membership in accordance with Club By-laws and applicable law with or without a pro-rated refund of membership fees.

Bloomington Swim Club Code of Conduct Agreement

To indicate that each BSC swimmer and parents have read the Club values and Code of Conduct and discussed it together, signatures are required and the form submitted to the coaches after the two-week probationary period. Failure to comply will result in termination of club membership.

I, _____, swimmer for BSC, have read the BSC policy on values and Code of Conduct. I agree to the following:

I will conduct myself in an appropriate manner at all times as a member of the Bloomington Swim Club. I am a proud representative of BSC at practices, at all home and away swim meets, at special functions such as awards banquets, and in hotels and restaurants during away meets. I will act in a responsible manner and show respect toward other BSC swimmers, coaches, parents, and meet officials. I understand that the following behaviors are against the Code of Conduct. These behaviors are not acceptable and will not be tolerated by BSC:

- A. Physically striking out at another swimmer or adult in anger or with intent to harm.
- B. Physical violence of any kind such as pushing, shoving, kicking, slapping, punching, hair pulling, touching private body parts, wrestling, or otherwise endangering the safety of another person.
- C. Horseplay that humiliates or endangers others.
- D. Vandalism or destruction of property at a pool, hotel, restaurant, or any other facility containing a BSC practice or event.
- E. Bullying, threatening, or malicious teasing of another swimmer.
- F. Disrespectful language or defiant attitudes toward another swimmer, coach, or meet official.
- G. Sexually inappropriate behaviors or language.
- H. Use or threat of use of a weapon.
- I. Use, possession, or distribution of illegal substances such as cigarettes, drugs or alcohol.

Furthermore, I understand that consequences for violating BSC values and the Code of Conduct can include the following.

- A. Verbal warning from a coach, meet official, or parent to stop the inappropriate behavior.
- B. Removal from practice, swim meet, or event for failure to heed a verbal warning to stop inappropriate behavior.
- C. Written notice of repeated violations sent to parents.

- D. Parents requested to attend practices to observe inappropriate behaviors and provide supervision for a probationary period.
- E. Suspension from practices, meets, events or from the Club.
- F. Expulsion from practices, meets, events or from the Club.

Immediate expulsion from BSC may be requested for incidents of extreme endangerment. The Bloomington Swim Club has zero tolerance for the following behaviors:

- A. Assault and battery
- B. Sexual assault
- C. Use or threat of use of a weapon
- D. Use, possession, or distribution of illegal substances such as cigarettes, drugs or alcohol

Reported incidents of violent, aggressive, or sexually inappropriate behaviors and verbal threats or intimidation will be investigated by the coaches and BSC Board of Directors. A decision will be made in regard to appropriate disciplinary action(s) at the conclusion of a thorough review of the facts. The offending club member and their parents will be duly notified of the allegation and involved in the investigation. The Board of Directors will notify the club member and family of its decision following the investigation. The BSC family will have 15 days to respond to or appeal the decision.

Bloomington Swim Club Swimmer	Date
Bloomington Swim Club Parent	Date
Bloomington Swim Club Parent	Date
Coach Bloomington Swim Club	Date received

Membership Dues

Dues are a necessary part of the organization. Without dues the Club could not hire coaches or pursue the goals of the Club. Each season the Board prepares a budget to cover necessary expenses while analyzing expenses and conserving resources to keep dues as reasonable as possible. As a result, in order for the Club to function effectively, it is mandatory that dues be paid in a timely and conscientious manner.

- The following is required of every family on the final Friday of the two-week trial period in order to become a member in good standing:
- Completed registration form
- USA Swimming registration form
- Payment of all registration fees in full or partial payment in accordance with the registration contract.

Paying dues in a timely manner is not only a financial necessity for the club, but also a legal requirement to maintain good standing within the Club. The Club's activities are sanctioned by USA Swimming and as such swimmers are covered under the USA Swimming liability insurance policy. Proof of coverage for swimmers is their USA Swimming registration card bearing their registration number. However, if a swimmer is not current with their dues, and therefore not in "good-standing", it may adversely affect their eligibility for coverage under the policy. In order to limit Club liability, **INDIVIDUALS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR INSURANCE COVERAGE CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY CLUB SPONSORED, MONITORED OR CONTROLLED ACTIVITIES.** Parents should be aware of the Withdrawal policy stated on the Registration Contract and note that dues are not refundable after 30 days have elapsed since the date of registration.

USA Swimming Registration

All swimmers are required to register with USA Swimming when they join BSC. USA Swimming is the governing body of amateur swimming in the United States and provides insurance for all swimmers during scheduled practices and USA Swimming sanctioned meets. An annual fee is required for USA Swimming registration and will be paid with BSC registration.

Pro-rated Dues Policy

If a family moves into the Bloomington area or a local resident wants to join BSC after the beginning of the season, that family's dues (except USA Swimming fees) are pro-rated according to what month the swimmer(s) start swimming with the Club. If the swimmer(s) start before the 15th of the month, dues are pro-rated starting from the 1st of that month. If the swimmer(s) starts after the 15th, the dues will be pro-rated from the 1st of the following month. The pro-rating includes the fund raising requirements.

When a swimmer leaves the team in mid-season (i.e. greater than one month remaining) due to circumstances beyond the control of the athlete, and will not return in that season, their dues may be pro-rated as above. If it is at all conceivable that this may occur, (e.g. participation in Junior High or High School swim program) this policy must be implemented at the time of registration. Should a planned absence later NOT occur, fees pro-rated under this provision will be due and payable. Should an unforeseeable event occur preventing the athlete from participating in team activities, pro-rating of dues may be appealed to the Executive Board for a ruling.

Scholarship Policy

Any BSC swimmer has an opportunity to apply for a scholarship from BSC. The swimmer's family must fill out an application form explaining the need for a scholarship, their current income and references. The Executive Board will review the application in confidence, and render a decision. When a scholarship is granted, the swimmer's family is asked to sign a BSC Scholarship Agreement where the terms of the scholarship are outlined.

The scholarship recipient is responsible for 25% of the dues in addition to USA Swimming registration. To avoid out of pocket expenses, the recipient is encouraged to raise money for BSC sponsored activities up to or beyond the 25%. The Club grants the remaining percentage as the scholarship. The scholarship cannot exceed the amount of money the club has available in the scholarship fund.

The Treasurer(s) will keep track of the scholarship fund balance. The scholarship fund may receive a donation from an individual outright, or from an individual who designates excess fee assistance to the fund or from the percentage of sales generated by merchandise sold at Club hosted swim meets (ex. Kast-A-Way). The Board of Directors will endeavor to seek out funds from all possible sources in order to sustain the scholarship fund.

Swim Group Placement

The BSC Age-Group Swimming program is divided into seven (7) levels of instruction as follows: Beginning Competitive (B-Comp), Bronze, Silver, Gold, Junior High Prep (JrHP), High School Prep (HSP), and Senior. There are two basic criteria for the placement of a swimmer into each of the seven groups: age and ability. When a new swimmer registers with the Club, they will be evaluated by the coaching staff and placed in the appropriate group according to age and ability. As the swimmer progresses there will be opportunities to move up to the next appropriate group each season. Age and ability are the criteria used because experience has shown that these best serve both the swimmer's social and physical development.

Beginning Competitive Group

The Beginning Competitive Group meets twice a week for 75 minutes each time. The major emphasis is on stroke development and competitive swimming concepts.

Criteria for entering B-Comp

- Must be 5-10 years old.
- Must be able to swim 20 yards of front and back crawl.
- Must have had an introduction to the Breaststroke.

Seasons Goals and Priorities:

- FUN!
- Stroke mechanics
- Continue improvement on front and back crawl mechanics (breathing, body alignment, head position, shoulder roll, etc.)
- Introduce and improve breaststroke technique.
- Introduce butterfly and its components.
- Improve endurance.
- Introduce stroke drills.
- Introduce and improve streamlining and push-offs.
- Introduce and improve starts and turns.
- Meet participation is optional but encouraged especially in BSC Invitational

Training and Practice Guidelines

- Make practice FUN!
- Promote group unity with activities for group and team involvement. Teach team cheers.
- Encourage group structure with repetition in practice structure (stretching, warm-up, group rules, etc.)
- Get them into a routine.

- Introduce stretching and warm-up and why that is important.
- Teach lane etiquette (listen while coach talks, learn to circle swim in the lane, feet first entry at all times, etc.)

Bronze Group

The Bronze Group meets four times a week for 90 minutes each time. The emphasis is on stroke development and improvement, increased endurance, and continued development of concepts learned in the B-Comp Group. Within the Bronze Group there may be different groups according to ability levels.

Criteria for entering the group:

- Must be at least 8 years old.
- Must be able to swim two lengths of the pool freestyle and backstroke.
- Must have a working knowledge of the breaststroke.
- Introduction to the butterfly would be helpful, but not required.

Seasons Goals and Priorities:

- Stroke Mechanics
- Continue improvement and development of front and back crawl (bilateral breathing, improved shoulder roll, etc.)
- Improve breaststroke technique (timing, legal kick).
- Introduce and improve butterfly technique.
- Broaden stroke drill capacity.
- Improve streamlining and push-offs.
- Learn to read the pace clock for intervals and leave 5 seconds apart.
- Introduce and improve turns, including IM transitions.
- Improve starts.
- Improve and increase endurance in four competitive strokes.
- Meet participation is optional but encouraged especially in BSC Invitational

- Introduce dry land training (crunches, other sports, or games).

Training and Practice Guidelines:

- Make practice FUN!
- Promote team and group unity. Teach team cheers.
- Encourage group structure and the importance of routine.
- Emphasize stretching and warm-up.
- Reinforce and improve lane etiquette (listening while coach talks, circle swimming, feet first entry at all times, proper turns and finishes into walls, etc.)
- Interval training and pace clock reading.
- Gauge improvement with sets and timed swims.

Silver Group

The Silver Group meets five times a week for two hours each time. Emphasis continues to be on stroke development and improvement, as well as increasing training capacity and endurance.

- Criteria for entering Silver:
- Must be at least 9 years old.
- Must have a legal breaststroke and fairly proficient butterfly.
- Must be capable of swimming 5 x 100 IM on 2:00 and 8 x 100 free on 1:45.

Seasons Goals and Priorities:

- FUN!
- Stroke mechanics
- Continue to work on skill development on front and back crawl, and breaststroke.
- Improve butterfly stroke (endurance, timing, etc.)
- Increase use of interval training (ability to send off on correct intervals).
- Increase endurance and stamina in all four competitive strokes.
- Improve streamlining and push-offs.

- Improve starts and turns.
- Meet participation is optional but encouraged especially in BSC Invitational
- Continue and broaden dry land training (crunches, other games) and practice Guidelines

Training and Practice Guidelines:

- Make it FUN!
- Promote team and group unity. Teach team cheers.
- Increase use of interval training.
- Reinforce positive habits (lane etiquette, reading the pace clock, feet first entry at all times, etc.)
- Continue to emphasize stretching and warm-up/warm-down.
- Develop outside swimming concepts (nutrition, sleep, etc.)

Gold Group

The Gold Group meets six days a week for two hours. The emphasis is on continued stroke development and refinement, race strategies and preparation, and increased endurance and speed training capacities.

Criteria for entering Gold:

- Must be at least 11 years old.
- Must be proficient in all four competitive strokes.
- Must be able to swim 5 x 200 IM on 3:45 and 10 x 100 on 1:30

Seasons Goals and Priorities:

FUN!

- Stroke mechanics for all four competitive strokes
- Improve start and turn techniques.
- Learn race strategies and preparation (goal setting).
- Improve endurance and speed-training capacity.

- Continue and broaden dry land training.

Training and Practice Guidelines:

- Make it FUN!
- Promote team and group unity. Teach team cheers.
- Continue to emphasize stretching, warm-up/warm-down.
- Improve overall conditioning with dry land 3 days/week.
- Continue to emphasize lane etiquette, feet first entry at all times
- Continue to use pace clock and interval training.
- Develop outside swimming concepts (nutrition, sleep, etc.)

Jr. High Prep Group

The Jr. High Prep Group meets four times a week for 90 minutes each time. Emphasis is placed on stroke development, increased endurance, and race stratagems. Within the Jr. High Prep Group there may be different groups according to ability levels.

Criteria for entering Jr. High Prep:

- Must be at least 11 years old.
- Must be in grades 6-8 or about to enter in the fall.
- Must be able to swim two lengths of the pool freestyle and backstroke.
- Ability to swim breaststroke and butterfly is helpful, but not required.

Seasons Goals and Priorities:

- FUN!
- Stroke mechanics.
- Interval training.
- Improve starts, turns and IM transitions.
- Increase endurance in all four competitive strokes.

Training and Practice Guidelines

- Make it FUN!
- Promote team and group unity.
- Encourage group structure and the importance of routine.
- Reinforce and improve lane etiquette (Listen while coach talks, circle swimming, feet first entry at all times, proper turns and finishes in to walls, etc.)
- Interval training and pace clock reading.
- Gauge improvement with sets and timed swims.

High School Prep Group

The High School Prep Group meets three days a week for 90-120 minutes each time. The emphasis of this group is on increased endurance and training capacities, and proper techniques for strokes, starts, and turns. The main goal of this group is to prepare for the next high school season.

Criteria for entering High School Prep:

- Must be at least 13 years old
- Must be in high school or going to attend high school in the fall.

Seasons Goals and Priorities:

- FUN!
- Stroke mechanics of the four competitive strokes.
- Improve start and turn technique.
- Introduce race strategies and preparation (goal setting).
- Improve endurance and speed training capacities.
- Continue and broaden dry land training.
- Develop outside swimming concepts (nutrition, sleep, etc.)

Training and Practice Guidelines:

- Make it FUN!

- Promote team and group unity. Teach team cheers
- Continue to emphasize stretching, warm-up/warm-down.
- Improve overall conditioning with dry land training 3 days/week.
- Continue to emphasize lane etiquette, feet first entry at all times
- Interval training and pace clock reading.

Senior Group

The Senior Group meets six days a week for 2 hours each time. The emphasis is on providing challenging training techniques and the refining stroke, start, and turn mechanics. Seasonal and long range goals are set.

Criteria for entering Senior:

- Must be at least 13 years old.
- Must be proficient in all four competitive strokes.
- Must be able to swim 5 x 200 IM on 3 :30 and 10 x 100 on 1 :20

Seasons Goals and Priorities:

- Stroke mechanics of all four competitive strokes.
- Improve start and turn technique.
- Continue to develop race strategies and preparation (goal setting)
- Improve endurance and speed training capacities.

Training and Practice Guidelines:

- Promote team and group unity. Teach team cheers.
- Continue to emphasize stretching, warm-up/warm-down.
- Improve overall conditioning with dry land training 3 days/week.
- Continue to emphasize lane etiquette, feet first entry at all times.
- Interval training and pace clock reading.

Moving from Group to Group

When swimmers start improving, they should move up to the next appropriate group. BSC has two criteria for moving up to the next group: 1) Age* and 2) Ability. To move from the Beginning Competitive Group to the Bronze Group a swimmer must first meet the age requirement and then be able to satisfy the Bronze Group requirements. Fees will be prorated when a swimmer moves up. Below is the list of the requirements for each group in BSC:

Bronze

- Must be at least 8 years old.
- Must be able to swim two lengths of freestyle and backstroke.
- Ability to swim breaststroke and butterfly is helpful, but not required.

Silver

- Must be at least 9 years old.
- Must be able to swim 5 x 100 IM on 2:00 and 8 x 100 free on 1:45.

Gold

- Must be at least 11 years old.
- Must be able to swim 5 x 200 IM on 3:45 and 10 x 100 free on 1:30.

Jr. High Prep Group

- Must be at least 11 years old.
- Must be in Jr. High or entering when school starts.

High School Prep

- Must be in High School or becoming a freshman when school starts.

Senior

- Must be at least 13 years old.
- Must be able to swim 5 x 200 IM on 3 :30 and 10 x 100 free on 1 :20

Three to four weeks into the season test sets are given in each group for those who are interested. If successful that swimmer moves up to the next group the following Monday. If a swimmer is not able to attend practice on a test set day, that swimmer will be allowed to try at the next

practice that they can attend. Test sets will be held once during the summer season and twice during the winter season. As a coaching staff, we feel that this is the best way to go about moving swimmers from group to group. These guidelines address both the social aspects of our swimming groups as well as their ability levels.

Age determination for moving from group to group is as follows:

Long Course: When a swimmer's birthday is before the end of the season, and they have passed the test set, the swimmer can move up to the next group at the beginning of the season.

Short Course: When a swimmer's birthday is before December and the swimmer has passed the test set, the swimmer can move up to the next group level at the beginning of the season. When a swimmer's birthday is after December and the swimmer has passed the test set, then the swimmer can move up to the next level in December.

Practice Guidelines

Early Drop-off Policy

Coaches are expected to arrive at the pool 15 minutes prior to the start of practice as well as remain for 15 minutes after the practice ends. Therefore, it is highly unsafe for parents to drop off their swimmers at the pool any earlier than 15 minutes prior to the start of practice. Doing so risks the swimmer being unsupervised for a period of time until the coach or coaches arrive. We are guests of the various facilities that allow the Club to use their pools and facilities for practices. The safety of your swimmer is our number one concern, however, respect for the facilities and limiting Club liability is equally important. Parents are expected to be responsible for staying with their swimmer until a coach arrives, not only to watch out for their safety around a pool area, but also to ensure that the swimmer is behaving appropriately and not abusing the privileges afforded to the team by the facilities. Because of a growing concern for the safety of your swimmer, bleachers are off-limits for children to climb on at any point during practice. Use of the bleachers should be reserved primarily for adults during practices. Past abuses of the bleachers involving horseplay and trash left behind have necessitated this policy. Please assist the coaches by supporting this policy. Swimmers are to stay off the bleachers at North and South High School pools. They may stow their bags on the deck and remain there until the practice begins. Appropriate behavior is required at all times, and your assistance in this matter is greatly needed.

Parents' Encouragement

You have done a great deal to raise your child. You create the environment in which they are growing up. Your child is a product of your values, the structure you have provided, and the model you have been. Human nature, however, is such that a parent loses some of his/her ability to remain detached and objective in matters concerning his/hers children's athletics. The coach is the coach! BSC wants your swimmer to relate to his or her coach as soon as possible concerning swimming matters. The relationship between coach and swimmer produces the best results. When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim or train, it causes considerable, and often times insurmountable, confusion as to whom the swimmer should listen. If you have a problem or complaint, please contact the coach.

The coach's job is to motivate and constructively critique the swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to make the child work harder in practice, which in turn gives him/her the confidence to perform well in competition. Swimmers ten and under are the most inconsistent and this can be frustrating for parents, coaches, and swimmers alike! Parents and coaches must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport. When a young swimmer first joins BSC, there may be a brief period in which he/she appears to slow down. This is the result of the added concentration on stroke technique, but this will soon mean much faster swims for the swimmer. Even the best swimmers have meets where they do not swim their best times. These "plateaus" are a normal part of swimming. Over the course of a season, times should improve. Please be supportive of these "poor" meets. The older swimmers may only have two or three meets a year for which they will be rested and tapered.

Parents are part of the BSC TEAM! You are welcome to stay at practices. Parents keep the club operating! So, please, attend the board meetings, work the BSC swim meets, and attend the BSC social activities. Volunteer! To coin a familiar phrase, "Ask not, what BSC can do for you, but ask what you can do for BSC!"

Problems with the coach

One of the traditional swim team communication gaps is that some parents seem to feel more comfortable in discussing their disagreements over coaching philosophy with other parents rather than taking them directly to the coach. Not only is the problem never resolved that way, but in fact this approach often results in new problems being created. Try to keep foremost in your mind that you and the coach have the best interests of your child at heart. If you trust that the coach's goals match yours, even though his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy good rapport and a constructive dialogue. Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team or training group that can range in size from 6-135 members. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group, but in the long run the benefits of membership in the group compensate for occasional short-term inconvenience. Competitive swimming is an individual effort in a team sport. The goals of each swimmer and coach are to be "out there trying," working to improve his/her swimming skills and attitudes, developing the feel for competing, and having fun. If your child swims for a Group Coach other than the Head Coach, please communicate directly with him/her about your concerns. If you feel the problems are not being dealt with in an appropriate or timely manner, ask the Head Coach to join the dialogue as a third party. If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach. He or she is the only one who can resolve the problem. Remember, direct communication works!

Swimming: The Sport

USA Swimming

USA Swimming is the national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. USA Swimming was conceived in 1978 with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act that specified all Olympic Sports would be administered independently. Prior to this act, USA Swimming was the Competitive Swimming Committee of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) located in Indianapolis, Indiana. The USA Swimming headquarters office was established in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1981 and is located at the Olympic Training Center. As the National Governing Body for the sport, USA Swimming is responsible for the conduct and administration of swimming in the United States. In this capacity, USA Swimming formulates the rules, implements policies and procedures, conducts the national championships, disseminates safety and sports medicine information and selects the athletes to represent the United States in international competition. USA Swimming is a nonprofit organization made up of very dedicated volunteers. Interested individuals donate their time, energy, and expertise at every level from the national Board of Directors to the local swimming clubs. All policy decisions are made through a chain of committees that report to elected vice presidents. The USA Swimming House of Delegates meets once a year at the annual USA Swimming convention and determines the rules and regulations for swimming for the following year. In between yearly meetings of the House of Delegates, an elected USA Swimming Board of Directors is charged with the responsibility for making decisions for the corporation.

USA Swimming Headquarters

The USA Swimming headquarters provides a variety of services and programs for its membership. Among the many services are publications, educational programs, fundraising activities, sports medicine programs, video resources, and general information about swimming related activities. USA Swimming staff is available to assist you in answering questions or providing additional information about USA Swimming.

USA Swimming Bill of Rights

- Right of opportunity to participate in sports regardless of ability level.
- Right to have qualified adult leadership.
- Right to participate in safe and healthy environments.
- Right to play as a child and not as an adult.
- Right to proper preparation for participation in the sport.
- Right to participate at a level that is commensurate with each child's developmental level.
- Right to be treated with dignity by all involved.
- Right to equal opportunity to strive for success.
- Right to have fun through sport.

International

The international federation for the aquatic sports is the Federation Internationale de Natiation Amateur (FINA). USA Swimming is affiliated with FINA through United States Aquatic Sports (USAS) made up of the four aquatic sports: swimming, synchronized swimming, diving, and water polo.

National

USA Swimming is a Group A member of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and has voting representation in the USOC House of Delegates.

Local

Within the United States, USA Swimming is divided into fifty-nine Local Swimming Committees (LSCs) each one responsible for administering USA Swimming activities in a defined geographical area. Each LSC has its own set of by-laws under which it operates. A House of Delegates consisting of the LSC Board of Directors and representatives for athletes, coaches, and clubs are responsible for managing the business affairs of each LSC.

The Competition

Each swim meet offers a variety of events and distances, depending on the age group and classification (See Age Group Swimming in the glossary). The number of events per day each swimmer may enter depends on how the host team has structured the meet and whether it is a “timed finals” or a “prelims / finals” type of meet. Swimmers twelve and under who have not achieved national "A" times participate in meets in which the sessions are four hours or less. The technical rules for each stroke are published the first quarter of each year in the USA Swimming rulebook that becomes effective on or about the 15th of May for the current year. These rules are reviewed annually and updated to keep pace with new techniques and advances in swimming mechanics, so the rulebook for the current year should be consulted for the most current requirements. The following paragraphs describe the technical rules for the 4 basic strokes effective 15 May 2009.

The Skills

The four competitive strokes are freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly.

Freestyle

Start: The forward start shall be used.

Stroke: In an event designated freestyle, the swimmer may swim any style, except that in a medley relay or an individual medley event, freestyle means any style other than butterfly, breaststroke, or backstroke. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and each turn. By that point the head must have broken the surface.

Turns: Upon completion of each length the swimmer must touch the wall.

Finish: The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his person touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance.

Backstroke

Start: The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips. Standing in or on the gutter, placing the toes above the lip of the gutter, or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter, before or after the start is prohibited.

Stroke: The swimmer shall push off on his back and continue swimming on the back throughout the race. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it is permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn, at the finish and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water.

Turns: Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. During the turn the shoulders may be turned past the vertical toward the breast after which a continuous single arm pull or a continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn. The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall.

Finish: Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back.

Breaststroke

Start: The forward start shall be used.

Stroke: After the start and after each turn when the swimmer leaves the wall, the body shall be kept on the breast. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time. Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order. All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane, without any alternating movement.

The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast, on, under, or over the water. The elbows shall be underwater except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish. The hands shall be brought back on or under the surface of the water. The hands shall not be brought beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn.

During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer's head shall break the surface of the water. After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.

Kick: After the start and each turn, a single butterfly kick, which must be followed by a breaststroke kick, is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull. Following

which, all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.

The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick. A scissors, flutter or downward butterfly kick is not permitted except as provided herein. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward butterfly kick.

Turns and Finish: At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. The head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch. Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired.

Butterfly

Start: The forward start shall be used.

Stroke: After the start and after each turn, the swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast. The swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water, which must bring the swimmer to the surface. It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface. The swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish. From the beginning of the first arm pull, the body shall be kept on the breast. Both arms must be brought forward over the water and pulled back simultaneously.

Kick: All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other. A scissors or breaststroke kicking movement is not permitted.

Turns: At each turn the body shall be on the breast. The touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired. The shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall.

Finish: At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.

Individual Medley

Start: The forward start shall be used.

Stroke: The stroke for each one-fourth of the designated distance shall follow the prescribed rules for that stroke in this order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.

Turns: Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for the stroke. The turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed, and shall be as follows:

Butterfly to backstroke: The swimmer must touch as described in Butterfly finish above. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner, but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the back when the swimmer leaves the wall.

Backstroke to breaststroke: The swimmer must touch the wall while on the back. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer's feet leave the wall and the prescribed breaststroke form must be attained prior to the first arm stroke.

Breaststroke to freestyle: The swimmer must touch as described in the Breaststroke finish above. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired.

Finish: The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his/her person touches the wall after the prescribed distance.

Freestyle Relay

Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance using any desired stroke(s). Free style finish rules apply.

Medley Relay

Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance in the following order: First, backstroke; second, breaststroke; third, butterfly; and fourth freestyle. Rules pertaining to each stroke used shall govern where applicable. At the end of each leg, the finish rule for each stroke applies in each case.

Rules Pertaining to Relay Races

- No swimmer shall swim more than one leg in any relay event.
- When automatic relay take-off judging is used, each swimmer must touch the touch plate or pad in his/her lane at the end of the course to have finished his/her leg of the relay race.
- In relay races a swimmer other than the first swimmer shall not start until his/her teammate has concluded his/her leg.
- Any relay team member and his/her relay team shall be disqualified from a race if a team member other than the swimmer designated to swim that leg enters the pool in the area where the race is being conducted before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race.
Exception: When an in-the-water start is required or such start is approved by the Referee.
- Each relay team member shall leave the water immediately upon finishing his/her leg, except the last member.
- In relay races the team of a swimmer whose feet have lost touch with the starting platform (ground or deck) before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified.

- In relay races involving in-the-water starts, the team of a swimmer who has lost touch with the end of the course before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified, unless the swimmer in default returns to the original starting point at the wall.

BSC Relay Policy

The coaches will determine relay teams at each meet for each age group using the following criteria:

- The four swimmers in each age group that have acquired the fastest times in a previous sanctioned meet will be slated for the A Relay. The B Relay will be composed of the next four fastest swimmers and so on.
- Some meets have Open Age Group Relays, which allows any swimmer from any age group the opportunity to qualify and to be placed on those relays.
- Relays will be set before each meet from the completed meet entry forms that are turned in on time.

Changes in the relay line-up will occur given the following circumstances:

- A slated swimmer must leave before the relay is swum, becomes ill, does not come to the meet or does not want to swim the relay.
- On the day of a meet, prior to the relay, a swimmer attains a time that is faster than the qualifying time of a swimmer already slated. This must be in an event specific to the relay.
- A swimmer has not swum the event before but the coach of that swimmer is confident that he / she is fast enough to be on the relay. Coaches attempt to have as many relays as possible in order to allow swimmers the opportunity to compete.
- Relays are scheduled at the end of the meet session at many meets. Coaches do their best to let swimmers know ahead of time that they may swim on a relay. Please have your swimmer check with their coach prior to leaving a meet to ensure your swimmer is not slated on a relay.

State Championship Relays

Swimmers' times achieved before the entry due date of the State meet entry will be used to determine the State relay teams. When BSC has more than one relay entered in one age group, the above cases for making changes in the relays will apply.

Swim Meet Guidelines

The following information will help parents and swimmers get the most out of the competitive swimming experience. All the information comes from BSC parents and officials who have participated in many swim meets over the years. These guidelines should answer many questions regarding swim meets.

Meet Entries

Meet entries, and meet entry deadlines, are controlled by the host team. As soon as the meet information is made available to the coaches, meet entry forms are created for each swimmer and placed in your swimmer's folder in the team file box. Your swimmer's events will either be scheduled in the morning or afternoon sessions which will be clearly indicated on the meet entry forms. It is imperative to fill out the entry forms completely and return them promptly with your entry fees. Missing the deadline risks your swimmer not being able to participate in the meet, or at the very least, in the events they want to swim. As soon as all the entries are collected a report will be generated showing all the events in which your swimmer was entered. Any errors or omissions must be brought to the coach's attention immediately.

Arrival: Meet Check-ins

It is important to arrive at the swim meet at least 15 minutes before your swimmer's warm-up begins.

Meet entries are generally handled in one of two ways. In pre-seeded meets, all swimmers are assigned to heats and lanes for their events prior to the beginning of the first day of competition. Heat sheets are made available to coaches, athletes and spectators that show the order of events, the number of heats and the seeding of swimmers in each heat. Checking in for each session of the meet may or may not be required, or may only be required for long distance events. For these types of meets, a "scratch and add" period is typically provided where coaches may inform the meet director of swimmers not in attendance or those deciding not to participate in an event. The coach may also attempt to add swimmers to events where open lanes are available, subject to the daily limit on individual entries.

The other method of handling meet entries is by a process called "deck seeding." In this situation, swimmers are not assigned to heats and lanes until after a check-in period. Swimmers are listed by event in Psych sheets, ranked in order fastest to slowest based on their entry time. In the pool facility, an area will be designated for checking in for each session of the meet. Your first priority will be to locate the check in area and ensure your swimmer is checked in. This indicates their presence at the meet and their intention to compete in the events in which they are entered. Following the posted instructions, clearly indicate that your swimmer is present and the events in which they intend to participate. Always do what they instruct and mark your swimmer's name only! While you are there, check to see that they have all your swimmer's events correctly listed for that day. Each day you arrive at a meet, and for each session your swimmer is in, repeat this procedure. If an event is not listed for your swimmer, make sure the coach knows immediately. Check-in or sign-up sheets are usually taken down before warm-ups are over with an announcement given when check-in is closing. If your swimmer has not checked-in (signed-in) they will be "scratched" and will not be able to swim in that session's

events! Sometimes the coach can try to get them back in, but this takes up a lot of the coach's time before the start of a meet when they need to be supervising warm-ups or attending to many other last minute items. If your swimmer needs or wishes to scratch an event or an entire session, notify the coach as soon as possible.

While you are at it, use a black permanent marker to write your swimmer's events and event numbers on his/her hand, arm or leg. Don't worry, contrary to the name, the marker will eventually wear off. Many swimmers view this as a badge of honor and having the information on their person will greatly increase the chances of your swimmer being behind the blocks at the right time.

Heat Sheets

After your swimmer has checked-in, it's time to enter the venue. Spectators are sometimes required to pay an admission fee. This will vary depending on the size of the meet, the club hosting the meet, and the facility. Meet programs, either heat sheets or psych sheets, are almost always sold somewhere near the entrance. The best way to keep track of your swimmer's progress is to purchase a meet program, but it is not required. A highlighter pen is also very helpful when trying to keep track of your swimmer's name in the program as some events can have 100 or more swimmers. The meet program will help you know approximately when your swimmer will be in the water.

As described previously, psych sheets are given out or sold at meets that are deck seeded. They list all the events with the entered swimmers ranked in order fastest to slowest, but heat and lane assignments will be absent. Heat sheets on the other hand are provided where the meet is pre-seeded and show the heat and lane assignments for each swimmer in each event. In either case, the meet program may include all sessions or may only include those events for a particular day or session.

If a swimmer has competed in a particular event in their current age group, they will have a "seed" time which is usually the fastest time they have achieved in competition. BSC updates each swimmer's fastest times after every meet so that they are as current as possible. A swimmer with "NT" after his/her name simply means the swimmer was entered with no time in that event.

Camping

After checking-in, it's time for your swimmer to stow their "stuff" at the BSC camp area. This location will vary depending on the layout of the facilities, but it is usually in a nearby gymnasium, cafeteria, hallway or sometimes on or around the pool deck. Just a reminder, parents are not allowed on the pool deck at either indoor or outdoor meets, so if your swimmer can't carry it, you probably should think twice about bringing it. Another good rule to remember is: don't bring anything to a meet that would upset you or your swimmer if it gets lost or stolen! Put their name on everything! Personal items should be kept zipped up in bags whenever possible. Coolers, sleeping bags or blankets, etc. are usually not allowed in the spectator bleachers as space is usually limited. Since many swimmers have long periods of time between events, the camp area should be utilized as a meeting and rest area for swimmers comfort (and parents / sibling comfort if not on the pool deck). Small children are encouraged to play in the camp area if off the pool deck, or in other designated areas and must be supervised at all times.

Most meets sell food and drinks, so unless you or your children have special dietary needs, you may not need to bring tons of food. It is up to you what you want to bring, but please clean up your area before you leave.

Lost and Found

If you only have one day left to live, make it a swim meet day. They last forever! This being understood, at the end of your swimmer's day it is time to collect all your stuff and go home. Double-check before you leave the facility that your swimmer has all his or her belongings. Remember to put your swimmer's name on everything even though it is no guarantee that you will recover lost items. The most frequently forgotten items are towels, caps and goggles. If anything is missing, check lost and found. Try to find out where this will be located as soon as you enter the facility and check it immediately if something is missing. If it hasn't been turned in, try to leave your name and contact information in case it turns up later. Coaches usually collect all the ribbons (awards) at the end of a meet, but DO NOT expect coaches to pick up other items you might leave behind.

Warm-ups

Each swimmer needs to be on time for warm-ups wearing their team suit, team cap, and goggles. Towels, shoes, jackets, or parkas are optional, but each swimmer is responsible for his or her things brought on deck. Coaches can not take care of individual items of clothing during a meet. Swimmers may be required to enter the pool deck through a separate swimmers' entrance. This may be either through a locker room or other separated entryway. Each swimmer should go directly to his or her coach and follow the coach's directions for warm-ups. Warm-ups are usually very crowded and it is easier to put everyone in the same lane at the same time. If everyone arrives at the warm-up lane together as a team, the warm-up procedure will run much more smoothly.

Before the First Race

During warm-ups and just prior to the beginning of the first event of the session, there are usually many announcements that are either informational in nature or to announce meetings for coaches, officials, or timers. The meetings are organizational and brief, intended to provide instruction, address concerns, or make administration of the meet go more smoothly. Announcements may also include those that call for the swimmers to assemble behind the blocks or at the Clerk of Course area. Listen to each announcement to ensure it doesn't pertain to your team or your swimmer.

First Call

Once warm-ups are over it is close to time for the meet to begin. Usually during the first session of the day, prior to the first event, the National Anthem will be played or sung. Swimmers, even those preparing for the first event, should pay attention and show respect during this time. The meet announcer will then call for the first event of the session. For example, "This is first call for event 7, Girls 11 and 12, 200yd Individual Medley."

There are essentially two different ways the individual heats of an event are organized. One is by utilizing a Clerk Of Course. Generally used for the youngest age groups, the Clerk of Course area, located on the pool deck usually near the starting blocks, is where the swimmers are instructed to gather when their event is called. Cards may be handed to the swimmers to indicate the heat and lane they will be swimming in for that particular event, or they may be arranged on bleachers or in chairs. Once all the swimmers are identified and properly arranged, they are lined up with the other swimmers in their heat, guided to the starting area and instructed to wait for their turn. It is very important that each swimmer pay attention to what is going on around them so they don't miss their chance to swim. When it is his or her turn, each swimmer steps up behind the blocks and, if provided, gives the card to the timers. When called to step up on the blocks, the swimmers must listen to the starting official for the commands and the start signal.

The other way events are organized is the "card-less" meet. Generally for the older, more experienced swimmers, the Clerk of Course area is not used. Rather, the swimmers must listen to the announcements and assemble behind the blocks when their event is called. It is the swimmer's responsibility to be behind the blocks and in the correct lane by the time of "final call" for their event, and ready to swim prior to his or her heat being called to the starting blocks.

Disqualifications (DQ)

By this time, you are ready to cheer on your swimmer and his or her teammates! So what can go wrong now? Disqualifications (DQ's, pronounced Dee-Que). This happens to all swimmers sooner or later and it is often upsetting to both you and your swimmer. Officials are there to make sure that all swimmers do the correct strokes, turns, starts, finishes and distances. When an official raises a hand above their head, this means a swimmer has been observed violating one of the technical rules and may be disqualified. The swimmer will be told about the DQ at the end of the race.

If a swimmer's goggles come off during a race, he or she will be disqualified if they stop to fix them in all the strokes except freestyle or backstroke. A swimmer should make sure goggles are on good and tight before each race. Coaches and other swimmers can help make the goggle adjustments. Swimmers can also get DQ'd for moving prior to the start signal. The starter and recall official watch the swimmers on the blocks. If a false start occurs, these two officials write down the lane number where they saw the violation. They then show each other the number they wrote down. If they match, that swimmer is notified of the disqualification at the end of the race. If the lane numbers do not match, no swimmer is DQ'd. Disqualifications mean that the swimmer's time for that race will not count. At some meets, especially championship meets, if a swimmer misses his/her heat, they will not only be disqualified for that event but the next event he or she is entered in as well.

Officials are volunteers who have been trained to officiate and are certified by USA Swimming. Officials sometimes make mistakes but rarely are their decisions overturned. Only coaches can make appeals to the head referee to protest disqualifications, rule interpretations or other issues. If your child is DQ'd in an event, be supportive rather than critical. For beginning swimmers, a disqualification should be treated as a learning experience, not as punishment. A disqualification alerts the swimmer and coach to what portions of the swimmer's stroke need to be corrected or improved. They should be considered in the same light as an incorrect answer in schoolwork- they point out areas that need further practice. The technical rules are necessary to keep the

competition fair and equitable for all competitors. A supportive attitude on the part of the official, the coach, and the parent can also keep it a positive experience for the disqualified swimmer. DQ also stands for Dairy Queen. This is a good way to put a smile on a swimmer's face after a learning experience such as a disqualification.

Timers

At some meets the announcer may ask for volunteers to be timers. Since a meet cannot begin until each pool lane has the required number of timers, this can be a cause for delays. If you have never been to a swim meet before or have never timed you may want to watch to see how it is done, then consider volunteering. Timing is not difficult once you get the hang of it, and there is no way to get closer to the action. Timers attend the timers' meeting where the Head Timer provides instructions and hands out equipment. Typically, there are two timers assigned per lane with the more experienced individual designated the head lane timer. That individual is responsible to write down the finish times on the forms provided in addition to operating one of the stopwatches and in some instances operates a backup button for the electronic timing system. The other timer operates a second stopwatch and a backup button for the electronic timing system. Watches are started at the beginning of each race (either by the flash of a starting strobe or at the sound of the starting signal) and are stopped, along with simultaneously pressing of the backup button, when the swimmer in the lane completes their race. If a malfunction of the electronic timing system occurs for a lane, or all lanes of a heat, a "runner" may be sent to collect the written watch times and turn them in to the timing table. These backup times become critical to insure that each swimmer has an accurate time.

Prior to the beginning of each race the timers should make every effort to identify the swimmer in their lane so that the correct swimmer is swimming in the correct event in the correct heat and the correct lane. It is the swimmer's responsibility to be at the correct place at the correct time, and the timers can play an important role in helping to make this happen. Some meets are very strict about this; others will try to insure every swimmer gets to swim even if they miss their heat. Because it slows the meet down, if a swimmer misses their event they may not get another chance. Timers can greatly reduce the chances of this happening but it does happen. If a swimmer shows up in your lane when none is expected, rather than delaying the start it is better to get their name, let them swim, and record their backup times. The meet officials are responsible to ensuring the swimmer is properly identified and credited for the swim, and will check with the lane timers if there is a doubt as to the swimmer's identity.

Timers must pay attention to the start of every race. The starter will provide instructions to each heat prior to the start of the race, instruct them to "take your mark" then sound the starting signal (usually a buzzer or horn). A strobe is usually designed to provide a visual indication of the start as well. The timers start their stopwatches with the flash of the strobe, or if there is no flash, with the sound of the start signal in order to be as accurate as possible. If there is a malfunction with a stopwatch or if a timer misses the start, the Head Timer should be called upon to provide a backup stopwatch. Timers must pay attention to the number of laps for each heat/event, and how many the swimmer has completed, so they will know when the swimmer is finishing their race.

Needless to say, timers "work" the meet. Breaks are few and even though you are on deck to get a close up view of the swimmers as they race, you have to pay attention! If you are the only parent in attendance for your swimmer(s) you may wish to reconsider being a timer unless they

are experienced or self-sufficient. Please keep in mind, however, that swim meets are run by volunteers (mostly parents) for the kids! Timing is kind of like jury duty; like your community, your swim club and your kids need you! Give it a try the next time you can.

Officials

Officials are present at all competitions to enforce the technical rules of swimming and to ensure that the competition is fair and equitable. Officials attend clinics, pass a written test and work in an apprentice capacity at meets before being certified. All parents are encouraged to get involved with some form of officiating.

- 1) Timers: observe from the start/finish end of the pool and operates assigned timing devices.
- 2) Turn Judges: observe from each end of the pool and ensure that the turns and finishes comply with the rules applicable to each stroke.
- 3) Stroke Judges: observe from both sides of the pool, walking abreast of the swimmers, to ensure that the rules relating to each stroke are being followed. The positions of Stroke Judge and Turn Judge may be combined into one position called the Stroke and Turn Judge. In that instance the judge will observe from the end of the pool.
- 4) Relay Take-off Judges: stand beside the starting blocks to observe the relay exchange, ensuring that the feet of the departing swimmer have not lost contact with the block before the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool.
- 5) Clerk of the Course: arranges the swimmers in their proper heats and lanes.
- 6) Starter: assumes control of the swimmers from the referee, gives the starting command and sees that no swimmer is in motion prior to giving the start signal.
- 7) Referee: has overall authority and control of the competition, ensuring that all the rules are followed; assigns and instructs all officials, and decides all questions relating to the conduct of the meet. Violations of the rules are reported to the Referee, and the rules require that every reasonable effort be made to notify the swimmer or his/her coach of the reason for the disqualification.

A swimmer's behavior at a meet is very important. Be polite and respectful of coaches, officials, other swimmers, and the facility. Swimmers and or spectators should never interfere with an official during a race. Swimmers should never walk across the bulkhead or behind the blocks at the start of a race or during a race without first getting permission from a nearby official. Cheering your fellow swimmers is fine as long as you do not interfere with an official, a coach trying to coach, or the timers.

Results

The official results of all the races are posted in areas around the pool and are clearly labeled by age and gender. They may also be announced on the public address system.

Give Me a T * E * A * M !

BSC competitive swimming allows for individual successes in a team environment. Our swim club takes great pride in the fact that we are growing and improving every season! Everyone benefits when there is full participation and positive attitudes from both children and parents. If you have any other questions about swim meets or the club, don't hesitate to ask any coach, veteran parent, or club officer. We are all part of the team!

Glossary of Swimming Terms

Age Group Swimming: The program through which USA Swimming provides fair and open competition for its younger members. It is designed to encourage maximum participation, provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning, and develop a rich base of swimming talent. Nationally recognized age groups are 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18 and 15-18 age groups. Local meets may also include events for 8 and under.

Block: The starting platform.

Bulkhead: A wall constructed to divide a pool into different courses, such as a 50-meter pool into two 25-yard courses.

Cap: A latex or Lycra swim cap used during a race or practice to cut down resistance and to protect swimmer's hair from the effects of chlorine.

Circle Swimming: Performed by staying to the right of the black line when swimming in a lane to enable more swimmers to swim in each lane.

Clerk of Course: A person who arranges the swimmer in their proper heats and lanes.

Coach: A person who trains and teaches athletes in the sport of swimming.

Code of Conduct: An agreement signed by a swimmer prior to travel stating that the swimmer will abide by certain behavioral guidelines.

Competition Suit: A team-racing suit may be required for competition. This suit is usually 2 to 3 sizes smaller than the practice suit to reduce resistance. The material is usually Lycra.

Cut: Slang for qualifying time. This is a time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.

Distance: Term used to refer to events over 400 meters/500 yards.

DQ (Disqualified): This occurs when a swimmer commits an infraction of the technical rules; e.g., alternating kick in butterfly. A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive awards, nor can the time be used as an official time.

Drill: An exercise involving a portion or part of a stroke, used to improve technique.

Dry Land Training: Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance; usually includes stretching, calisthenics and/or weight training.

Entry Form: Form on which a swimmer enters a competition. Usually includes USA Swimming number, age, sex, event number and time.

False Start: Occurs when a swimmer is moving at the start. In USA Swimming, a false start will result in disqualification.

Fins: Flippers worn on the feet, used for stroke technique and speed assisted training.

Final: The championship heat of an event in which the top six or eight swimmers from the preliminaries compete, depending on number of lanes in the pool.

Finish: The final phase of the race, the touch at the end of the race.

Flags: Backstroke flags placed 5 yards (short course) or 5 meters (long course) from the end of the pool. They enable swimmers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently by counting their strokes.

Fly-over Starts: After the completion of each heat, swimmers remain in the water at the wall until the next heat of swimmers takes off. Used to quicken the pace of the meet.

Goal: A specific time achievement a swimmer sets and strives for. Can be short- or long-term.

Goggles: Lenses worn by swimmers during practices and competition to enhance vision and protect their eyes from the effects of purifying chemicals in the water.

Gutter: The area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows during a race and is recirculated through the filtration system.

IM: Slang for Individual Medley, an event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.

Kickboard: Device usually made of plastic or Styrofoam, used to work the kick portion of a stroke.

LSC: Local Swimming Committee. Governing body for swimming on a local level.

LSC Racing Camp: A one-day camp held within the LSC for the top 9-10 year old boys and girls; Involves water sessions, videos, and group talks.

Lap Counter: A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. Also, the person who counts for the swimmer, stationed at the opposite end from the start.

Long Course: A pool 50 meters in length. USA Swimming conducts most of its summer competition in long course.

Long Distance: Any freestyle event over 1500 meters, normally conducted in a natural body of water such as a lake, river, or ocean. Also known as Marathon Swimming.

Meet: Competition designed to be a learning experience. By implementing what has been learned in practice, the swimmer is tested against the clock to see how he is improving.

Middle Distance: Term used to refer to events of 200 yards/meters to 400 yards/500 meters in length.

National Age Group Time Standards: Time standards derived from the previous years' results that are broken down by age and sex as well as B, A, AA, AAA and AAAA divisions. These are national designations and may be used for entry or qualifying purposes. Many LSC's have their own time standards as well.

National Age Group Top 16 Times: Time standards set for both short and long course based on previous years' achievements. Only times meeting these standards may be submitted for consideration each year.

Negative Split: Swimming the second half of the race equal to or faster than the first half.

No Recall Starts: Swimmers shall not be halted after the start of a heat. A false start disqualification will be reported to the swimmer after the completion of the heat. (There may be a recall of swimmers if there is a major technical problem with the starting system.)

Official: A judge on the deck of the pool at a sanctioned competition who enforces USA Swimming technical rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, timers and referees.

Pace Clock: Large clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice; may also be digital.

Practice Suits: Suits worn by swimmer during practice sessions. They are generally made of nylon, Lycra, or stretch nylon. These suits are usually loose fitting, and many swimmers train with several suits on for the purpose of creating drag.

Prelims: Slang for preliminaries, also called Heats or Trials. These are races in which swimmers qualify for the championship and consolation finals in the events.

Pull buoy: Usually made of Styrofoam, this device is placed between the legs to isolate the use of the arms. The pull buoy is used to strengthen the arms and is sometimes used for stroke work.

Q-Time: Qualifying time necessary to compete in a particular event and/or competition.

Referee: A person who has over authority and control of the competition, ensuring that all the rules are followed; assigns and instructs all officials, and decides all questions relating to the conduct of the meet.

Relay: An event in which four swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

Relay Take-off Judge: A person who stands beside the starting blocks to observe the relay exchange, ensuring that the feet of the departing swimmer have not lost contact with the block before the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool.

Safety: The condition of being safe. Safety procedures are designed to prevent accidents. Pelican Pete is USA Swimming's safety mascot.

Scratch: To withdraw from an event in a competition.

Senior Swimming: The program through which USA Swimming provides fair and open competition in National Swimming Championships. It is designed to afford maximum opportunity for participation, provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning and develop a pool of talented athletes for International Competition. There are no age restrictions on Senior Competition.

Short Course: A pool 25 yards or 25 meters in length. USA Swimming conducts most of its winter competition in short course.

Split: A swimmer's intermediate time in a race. Splits are registered every 50 yards or meters and are used to determine if a swimmer is on the desired pace. Under certain conditions, splits may also be used as official times. In a relay, the time for one of the four individuals.

Sprint: Describes the shorter events (50 and 100). In training, to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.

Starter: The person who assumes control of the swimmers from the Referee, gives the starting command, and sees that no swimmer is in motion prior to giving the start signal.

Streamline: The position used to gain maximum distance during a start and/or push-off from the wall in which the swimmer's body is as straight and tight as possible.

Stroke Judge: The person who observes from both sides of the pool, walking abreast of the swimmers, to ensure that the rules relating to each stroke are being followed.

Sweats: Some type of warm-up or sweat suit; should be worn at meets and to and from practice during cool weather to keep muscles warm and flexible.

Taper: The final preparation phase of reduced practice routine. Prior to major competition, an older, more experienced swimmer will shave his/her entire body to reduce resistance and heighten sensation in the water.

Team Uniform: A team uniform is usually made up of one or more of the following: suit, cap, T-shirt, sweat suit, and parka. Each club has a uniform which is usually a requirement, and unique to the team.

Time Trial: A time only swim that is not part of a regular meet.

Timer: A person who operates a timing system or timing devices (watches or automatic timing system) and records the official time/times for the swimmer in his/her lane.

Touch Pad: A large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer's touch is registered and sent electronically to the timing system.

Towel: Thick absorbent cloth. A large beach towel is usually preferred by swimmers. A minimum of two towels is recommended for meets, or one towel per event.

Turn Judges: A person who observes from each end of the pool and ensures that the turns and finishes comply with the rules applicable to each stroke.

USA Swimming: The national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States.

USA Swimming Card Number: A unique number assigned to a swimmer when (s)he joins USA Swimming. The card may be required at any given competition.

Warm Down: Low intensity swimming used by a swimmer after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid, and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

Warm-Up: Low-intensity swimming used by swimmer prior to a main practice set or race to get muscles loose and warm and gradually increase heart rate and respiration.

Watches: Stopwatches used to time swimmers during a competition, usually electronic. When automatic timing equipment is used, watches serve as a back-up timekeeping method.

Whistle start: A series of short whistles by the referee that indicate that the swimmers should be behind their pre-assigned blocks ready to swim the next heat. These short whistles also mean that the swimmers who just completed their heat should begin to exit the pool unless fly-over starts are used. When the referee blows a long whistle, swimmers must step up on the blocks and be ready to race. The starter then gives the starting command and sounds the starting device.