

NORTHSIDE AQUATICS CLUB  
TEAM HANDBOOK



REVISED 2010

**NORTHSIDE AQUATICS**  
**MUSTANGS**  
**SWIM TEAM**

**HEAD COACH:** CARLOS CEJA

**CLUB PRESIDENT:** ED STRANC JR.

**HEAD SENIOR COACH:** ED STRANC JR.

**AGE GROUP COACHES:** SHEILA STRANC  
JENNY AKIYAMA  
LIZ BUHLER  
SARAH WICKLIN  
ERICA SLATTERY  
SARAH HARTMAN  
CHRIS DUPONT

**SAFETY COORDINATOR:** SHEILA STRANC

**ISI DELIGATE:** ED STRANC JR.

**OFFICIALS:** DAVE KASTEN (REFEREE)  
FRANCIOS LaSALLE (REFEREE)  
JEFF BALL (ADMINSTATIVE JUDGE)  
ANN BALL (STROKE & TURN)  
KARI SPALLONE (STROKE & TURN)  
MICHAEL KOLAR (STROKE & TURN)

**2951 W. BELMONT AVE.**  
**CHICAGO, IL. 60618**

**HOME: 773-588-0445**  
**OFFICE: 773-534-3954 EXT. 26803**  
**FAX: 773-583-2531**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Northside Aquatics is to teach excellence that will be achieved by providing a goal oriented, developmentally appropriate program with emphasis on developing and pursuing the goals of the “whole” person. The TEAM and individual athletes are empowered to achieve success with the guidance of trained and educated coaches. Individual success is the foundation of positive TEAM dynamics.

## **SWIM TEAM OBJECTIVES**

Northside Aquatics Program is founded on the belief that age group competitive swimming offers an exciting and worthwhile experience in a young person’s life. It can be learned and enjoyed by those with little ability and by those who are of Olympics caliber; its values go far beyond that of learning proficiency in the water.

It must be understood that not every child can become a great swimmer. Some children, no matter how deeply motivated or how hard they are prodded, can only achieve limited competitive success. However, if the program is well planned and directed, every participant can gain from the experience whether or not they ever win a single race. It is for this reason that the following objectives have been adopted:

- Provide opportunities for social and emotional development;
- Furnish a wholesome physical and recreational outlet;
- Provide opportunity to learn sportsmanship and team cooperation;
- Provide educational opportunities;
- Provide training and competition to all swimmers who desire it;
- Provide a wide base of swimming experience in order to contribute to the increased skills and knowledge needed at the high school, college and advanced levels of competition;
- Develop swimmers who are self-reliant, intelligent, mature, and who will present a good personal and team image in competition; and finally,
- Strengthen the bond between the swimmer and their parents by providing a common activity they both can share.

The success of an age group competitive swimming program is not an accident. It is the result of careful planning and organization toward a clear set of objectives.

## **SWIM TEAM PRACTICE OBJECTIVES**

In many respects, age group competitive swimming is a preparation for life. The hardest worker in the pool does not always win the race anymore often than the hardest worker in a job earns the most money. Every swimmer will learn however, that in order to reach their potential, they must work intelligently and diligently. The practices are planned with the following thoughts in mind:

- Swimmers should learn to swim all recognized competitive strokes;
- The school program is centered on the development of swimmers who will be able to compete in the 500-yard freestyle and 200-yard individual medley events. By doing so, the swimmers are constantly challenged to develop versatility and to contribute to the team effort;
- Swimming competition should be fun;
- Swimmers are not cut from the squad;
- Workouts are individualized as much as possible to motivate and challenge everyone regardless of skill level;
- The success of a workout should not be measured in terms of hours or yards but in terms of intensity and enthusiasm; and lastly,
- PRACTICE DOES NOT MAKE PERFECT...  
...PERFECT PRACTICE MAKE PERFECT.

## **COMPETITION**

Northside Aquatics believes that engaging in competitive swimming helps prepare participants for real world life. Competition exists in many of life's endeavors. Learning what it takes to win and learning how to lose are strong foundations for a successful and happy life. Northside Aquatics will focus on establishing a strong tradition of successful competition at all levels. To strengthen Northside Aquatics competitively, coaches will focus on providing participants with:

- Technical proficiency
- Goal oriented training and competition
- Developmentally appropriate training organization
- Individual attention
- A link from personal discipline to achievement
- An understanding of acquiring excellence through the culmination of many failures and incremental successes.
- A desire for excellence in all activities
- Developing and maintaining enthusiasm for swimming

## **MEET PARTICIPATION**

Northside Aquatics is a charter member of USA Swimming (USAS) and the Illinois Swimming Inc.(I.S.I.) LSC. It is a competitive swim team and all Age Group and Developmental swimmers are required to participate in a minimum of 6 USA Swimming sanctioned meets within a 12-month period.

## **USA SWIMMING & ILLINOIS SWIMMING**

Northside Aquatics is a USA Swimming chartered program. USA Swimming is the governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) used to govern swimming, as well as all other Olympic sports in the United States. USA Swimming was founded in 1978 with the congressional passage of the Amateur Sports Act, which states that all Olympic sports are to be administered independently. The USA Swimming Headquarters office was established in 1981 and is located at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

As the National Governing Body (NGB) of swimming, USA Swimming is responsible for the conduct and administration of competitive swimming in the United States. In this capacity, USA Swimming formulates rules, implements policies and procedures, conducts the national championships, disseminates safety and sports' medicine information, and selects the athletes who represent the United States in international competition.

USA Swimming governs local swimming of all levels through Local Swimming Committees (LSC). There are 59 Local Swimming Committees in the United States. Each LSC is responsible for administering USA Swimming activities in a defined geographical area. Our LSC is Illinois Swimming, Inc. (ISI). ISI implements USA Swimming policies in Illinois, sanctions swim meets, conducts state championship meets and sponsors swim camps and special programs in the state.

### **NORTHSIDE AQUATICS SWIM FEE**

Each athlete competing on any competitive team must pay \$60.00 to Northside Aquatics. The collected fees are used for equipment and provide charter fees where necessary.

### **TEAM SUITS**

The team has a common suit. The purchase of a team suit is recommended. Caps and goggles are encouraged, and may be purchased on the team page on the team vendor's website. Sizing for the suits will be announced. Exact prices of the suits will be published at the time of sizing.

### **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

The sports program is an integral component of your child's development. In addition to promoting physical fitness, it also develops their sense of responsibility, discipline, teamwork and peer relationships.

In order to ensure a successful program, parental participation will be mandatory. Each family will be responsible for providing a family member (parent or sibling) to volunteer at home meets. This will ensure that meets run smoothly.

You will be able to work in any of the following areas: concessions, gate, security, and cleanup at the meets or by working at any fundraisers that the sports programs sponsors. If a parent is unable to volunteer time, a designated adult or an older sibling may volunteer in their place. We **STRONGLY** encourage **ALL** swim team families to work Northside Aquatics' home meets.

## **ETIQUETTE FOR PARENTS**

As coaches we are strong believers of focusing in on the swimmers who are directly in front of us. If a parent is trying to converse with us and/or the swimmer during this time our effectiveness as coaches becomes hampered. If you need to speak to a coach for any reason, please feel free to come in before practice commences or after practice has finished.

## **YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT**

Competitive swimming programs provide many benefits to young athletes, including self-discipline, good sportsmanship and time management skills. Competition allows the swimmer to experience success and to learn how to deal with defeat, while becoming healthy and physically fit. **As a parent, your major responsibility is to provide a stable, loving and supportive environment.** Show your interest by ensuring your swimmer's attendance at practices and meets and by watching and cheering for your swimmer at swim meets. Arriving on time for practice and warm-ups for meets is of vital importance.

Parents are not participants on their child's team but instead contribute to the success experienced by the child on the team. Parents serve as role models, and children often emulate their attitudes. Please show good sportsmanship at all times toward coaches, officials, opponents and teammates.

Be enthusiastic and supportive. Remember that your child is the swimmer. Children need to establish their own goals and make their own progress towards them. Be careful not to impose your own standards and goals. Do not over burden your swimmer with winning. Learning about oneself while enjoying the sport is the most important part of the swimming experience. The swimming environment encourages learning and fun, which will help your swimmer develop a positive self-image.

The best way to help your swimmer achieve goals and reduce the natural fear of failure is through positive reinforcement. No one likes to make a mistake, however if your swimmer does make one, remember that this is a learning experience. Encourage your swimmer's efforts and point out the positive things. Your role is to provide support.

## **THE PARENT – COACH RELATIONSHIP**

It is important to remember that parents and coaches share the same goals. We both care about your child, and we are both working together to give him/her the greatest chance to improve as an individual and to succeed in a team environment. As a parent, you will have questions and concerns. Please approach your child's coach privately, in a respectful manner and at an appropriate time (i.e. not on deck during practice), and s/he will be happy to address your concerns. Please do not jeopardize the swimmer-coach relationship by bringing your child in the middle of a problem; again, save your comments for a private discussion with the coach. Keeping an open and honest relationship with your swimmer's coach will benefit everyone.

## **THE PARENT – SWIMMER RELATIONSHIP**

In regards to knowledge about the sport of swimming, the coach is the expert. You, as a parent, are a cheerleader and supporter; please remember that staying positive is one of the most important things you can do for your swimmer. If your swimmer has a rough race/meet/practice/whatever, criticism is the last thing he or she needs. Instead, give a pat on the back and a positive observation. If any corrections need to be made, the coach will handle them. Even if you have been involved with swimming in the past, keep in mind that the sport has changed tremendously; any swimming advice you give may contradict what the coach has said and, consequently, only serve to confuse your swimmer.

## **THE PARENT – PARENT RELATIONSHIP**

As a parent, you are also part of a team...a team of fellow parents. You are always surrounded by a wealth of knowledge and supportive peers. Look for carpools, ask questions, share advice, etc. It behooves you to take advantage of such wonderful resources.

## **PATIENCE IN THE LEARNING PROCESS**

Learning takes time and, when you think about it, swimming is a pretty complex sport. Kids enter an entirely different realm, with new laws of physics, whenever they hop into the water. For new swimmers, it takes time to learn how their bodies move and to gain a sense of balance and control. You can do things in the water that you can only dream about doing on land, which is one reason why swimming is such an attractive sport, so kids need time to explore and have fun in this new environment.

Also, understand that kids need to internalize knowledge as their own before they can apply it and accept it into habit. This is what practice is all about--kids will just do what the coach tells them to do until, at some point, the right brain connections click together and, all of a sudden, they're doing the same skill not because it's "what coach says" but because their brain is telling them it's the right thing to do. This is sometimes a very quick process and other times a much longer process, depending upon the learner and the complexity of the skill.

Different kids learn different skills at different rates and in different ways. This requires patience and understanding from coaches, parents and also teammates. If your swimmer is feeling discouraged due to a perception that other kids are excelling at a faster rate, try to get him/her to understand the truth about the individual learning process--how it is not fair to judge your own success by how well others do--and encourage him/her to talk with the coach about those feelings. Improvement can be relative to the person doing the assessment. Oftentimes, the coach can notice progress in areas that swimmers or parents tend to overlook.

## **MOTIVATION: HOW SHOULD WE MOTIVATE OUR KIDS?**

We should find ways to allow them to motivate themselves. Passion is by far the best motivator. No matter what emotion is feeding it, motivation that stems from a passion within is a powerful driving force. We want kids to be passionate about things, and internal motivation is what pounds in the hearts of passionate people. Your swimmer has chosen to swim for his/her own reason, so let it be that way, and if s/he feels like exploring other sports and hobbies, let it be that way, too. It is perfectly acceptable to be involved in more than one sport, assuming it is not too stressful and schoolwork does not suffer.

## **NUTRITION**

As a note to parents about the current "low-carb" or "Atkins-friendly" fad that is sweeping the country; it is recommended that an athlete's diet should be about 60-65% carbohydrates. Growing, active kids need carbohydrates, as they are an essential source of energy, not to mention the only supply of energy for the brain. Effects of an inadequate supply of carbohydrates include lack of energy, muscle fatigue and breakdown, lack of concentration and an inability to work at high intensities. Kids need carbs!

## **SUPPORT AND NOT UNDUE PRESSURE**

We expect parents to provide what their youngster needs in order to internalize motivating forces. Some youngsters have no problem motivating themselves; others need our (coaches & parents) help to support those positive efforts that are made between the lane lines. At Northside Aquatics, we look towards the long-term character growth of a youngster. Remember there are no "drive-thru" results in competitive swimming. We live in a time where we hear of horror stories of overly competitive parents taking away from the thrill of competition a youngster can be apart of. The coaching staff encourages good sportsmanship within the team as well as with the competition. It is not uncommon for swimmers to congratulate the competition or cheer on their friends from other teams. Let us not stoop to the level of some other sports; rather, we need to hold a high standard in regards to sportsmanship, both on the team level as well as the sport as a whole. We ask parents to please do not second guess our program and coaching staff, refrain from seeking glory of your own child at the expense of the team concept and character building we are trying to attain.

## **TEAM DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Our team's discipline philosophy revolves around this principle: Coaches will not allow an individual swimmer(s) to hamper the implementation of our program on a per practice basis. Disruptive behavior that does not allow the coaches to effectively teach and train nor allow other team members to effectively learn and train will result in the following sanctions:

- A coach will give a verbal correction to the swimmer concerning his/her disruptive behavior, as well as a verbal warning.
- If the disruptive behavior is repeated, then a “time out” period of up to 10 minutes time will be implemented. The disciplined swimmer will not be allowed to leave the bench adjacent to the area where the group is training.
- If the disciplined swimmer leaves the area, a written incidence report will be made concerning that swimmer situation. The swimmer's parent/guardian will be notified of the particular incident during the practice that caused that swimmer to be put in 'timeout' as well as that swimmer's refusal to abide by the 'time-out' policy.
- If a swimmer is put into a time-out situation for over 3 times in a 1-week period the swimmer will be placed into a 1-week suspension period. This situation will also be noted with the particulars of the situation accompanied by the dates of, and the reasons for, the time-out period.
- If a swimmer is placed into a 1-week suspension period and the disruptive behavior continues, we will call for a parent/coach conference to attempt to rectify these problems.

## **SWIMMING, NUTRITION & DEVELOPING AN ATHLETE'S MENTALITY**

The coaches at Northside Aquatics can not see athletic prowess developed in a youngster if what we say at practice is not reinforced at home. Nutrition plays a huge role in a youngster's moods, energy levels, and athletic accomplishments. We highly encourage our swimmers to avoid those foods with nonnutritive value. One of the greatest detriments to athletic performance is the over use of processed sugars and fats. We highly discourage the use of carbonated soft drinks which lead to bloated bellies, false energy release, and a greater dependence on processed sugars and caffeine in order to feel normal. Water (which makes up 65-75% of our body) is by far the best athletic drink available. A well rounded meal of proteins, carbohydrates, fruits, vegetables, and grains is our best advice. The stomach, which takes approximately 1.5-2 hours to empty, should not be full during competition. Plenty of water and fruit should be available throughout the competition. Our coaching staff will not tolerate carbonated sodas in our presence. It is up to you, the parent, to carry on these healthy eating habits at home.

## **Ten Commandments For Swimming Parents**

by Rose Snyder, USA Swimming

**I. Thou shalt not impose your ambitions on thy child.** Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push your child based on what you think s/he should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is that every person can strive to do his or her personal best.

**II. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what.** There is only one question to ask your child: "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

**III. Thou shalt not coach your child.** You have taken your child to professional coaches. Do not undermine the coaches by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to support and love your child no matter what. The coaches are responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. This is not your area. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent that swimmer/coach bond from developing.

**IV. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet.** If you are going to show up at a swimming meet, you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coaches.

**V. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears.** A first swimming meet, 500 free or 200 IM can be a stressful situation for your child. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell at or belittle him/her. Just assure your child that the coaches would not have suggested the event if s/he was not ready to compete in it.

**VI. Thou shalt not criticize the officials.** If you do not have the time or the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can.

**VII. Respect thy child's coach.** The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child. It will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.

**VIII. Thou shalt not jump from team to team.** The water isn't necessarily bluer at the other team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long time by the teammates they leave behind. Often times, swimmers who switch teams never perform better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

**IX. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning.** Giving an honest effort, regardless of the outcome, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else did it too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. This does not make me a failure, in fact, I am very proud of that swim."

**X. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian.** There are over 225,000 athletes in USA Swimming. There are only 52 spots available for the U.S. Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are about 1 in 4,300. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask your coach why he coaches. Chances are, s/he was not an Olympian, but still got enough out of swimming that s/he wants to pass that love for the sport on to others. Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self-esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they may have won. Swimming builds good people and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

## **DRYLANDS WARM-UP and COOL DOWN STRETCHING and EXERCISE**

### Stretching Before and After Practice

1. Side and Shoulder Stretches – Stand with one arm extended straight up, then tilt the upper body to the opposite side, reaching the hand up and across the head. Repeat the stretch on the other side. For the shoulder stretch, extend one arm across the chest, grasp the raised elbow with the opposite hand, and pull the elbow in the direction of the hand. Repeat the stretch on the other side.
2. Triceps Stretch – Sit or stand upright with one arm bend and raised overhead next to the ear, hand resting on the shoulder blade. Grasp the elbow with the opposite hand and pull it behind your head. Switch arms and repeat this stretch.
3. Shoulder Circle Stretch – Stand upright and make slow circles with one arm, with the hand passing directly over the shoulder. Keep the arm straight. Slowly increase in speed, using the fist as an “end weight.” Do four forward and four backward circles. Repeat with the other arm.
4. Lower Back Stretch – Sit with legs crossed, extend arms straight up in the air. Slowly lean forward, touching the floor with your hands. Repeat three to five times.
5. Hip Flexor Stretch – Assume a kneeling lunge position, with left leg and top of the foot against the floor and the right knee bend and the sole of the right foot on the floor. With hands on hips, lean forward, pressing the left hip toward the floor; keep chest and shoulders upright. Repeat stretch on the other side.
6. Hamstring Stretch I – Sit upright on the floor. Bend the right knee and slide the heel toward the buttocks until it is against the inner side of the left thigh (90-degree angle should be formed between the extended left leg and bent right leg). Keeping the left leg straight, bend toward the straight leg. Switch legs and repeat the stretch.
7. Hamstring Stretch II – Face a wall with right leg about 4 feet from the wall and the left about 2 feet from the wall. Keep right knee straight, and transfer your weight to your left leg. Keep stretch for about 10 to 30 seconds and switch legs. Repeat two or three times.
8. Quadriceps Stretch – The quadriceps stretch stretches muscles in front of thighs. Lie on your left side, on the floor. Your hips should be lined up so that the right one is directly above the left one. Rest your head on a pillow or your left hand.

Bend your right knee, reach back with your right hand, and hold onto your right heel. If you can't reach your heel with your hand, loop a belt over your right foot.

Pull slightly (with your hand or with the belt) until the front of your right thigh feels stretched. Hold the position for 10 to 30 seconds. Reverse position and repeat with other leg. Repeat 3 to 5 times on each side.

9. Hip Stretches – Done with the assistance of a rope.
  - a. Hamstring – bent knee
  - b. Hip adductors
  - c. Hip abductors
  - d. Quadriceps
  - e. Piriformis
10. Calf Stretch – Stand about a foot from a wall, then extend one leg behind you, keeping both feet flat on the floor, toes pointed straight ahead, and your rear knee straight. Move your hips forward, keeping lower back flat. Lean into the wall until you feel tension in the calf muscle of the extended leg. Hold for 10 to 30 seconds, and then stretch other leg. Repeat.

### Exercise on Your Own

1. Push Ups – Start out on your knees, and then progress to your toes. Do in sets of five or ten, resting between sets. Build on the number of sets. Don't overdo push-ups, as they are not best for swimmers' shoulders.
2. Sit Ups – Do with your knee bent, or your lower legs on a chair or medicine ball. Do in sets similar to push-ups.
3. Spring Jumps – Make sure you have enough overhead room. Start with arms straight overhead. Progress to touching your toes, and then spring your body, extending your arms straight up. Point your toes when you leave the ground.
4. Jump Rope
5. Cycling

## **Swimming Terminology**

Below are some common terms that are used in the sport of swimming. Some terms relate more to USA Swimming than to High School Swimming, but most of the terms are relative to both and include official terms and slang terms commonly used in the sport.

**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 19-18. Local meets include an 8 and under and 9-10 age group. In the state of Illinois, age group swimmers are all swimmers age 14 and under. Swimmers age 15 and over compete on the senior level.

**Anaerobic Interval Training** - Consists of repeated rounds of super high-intensity activity separated by long periods of rest.

**Anaerobic Training** - Training that improves the efficiency of your body's energy producing systems that do not require oxygen and can increase your muscular strength and tolerance for acid-base imbalances (such as the production of lactic acid) during high intensity effort.

**ASCA** - The American Swimming Coaches Association (<http://www.swimmingcoach.org>) is the professional organization for coaches in the United States. ASCA certifies coaches, offers educational opportunities, assists coaches in a number of areas and is a strong political organization in United States Swimming. To be an ASCA member coaches must sign a code of ethics, continually work on their education and provide service to the swimming committee.

**Backstroke / Back** - One of the four competitive strokes. The swimmer must stay on his or her back, except during the turns. Swimmers must finish the race on their backs.

**Breaststroke / Breast** - One of the four competitive strokes. Swimmers must touch the wall with both hands at the same time before executing a turn. After the start and turns, swimmers are allowed to take one underwater pull and one underwater kick before surfacing.

**Bulkhead** - A wall constructed to divide a pool. For instance, many 50 meter pools have moveable bulkheads that allow the pool to be used for a 50 meter competition or a 25 yard/meter competition. By moving the bulkhead, the length of the pool can be changed.

**Butterfly / Fly** - One of the four competitive strokes. The butterfly features the simultaneous overhead stroke of the arms combined with the dolphin kick. The dolphin kick features both legs moving up and down together. Swimmers must touch the wall with both hands at the same time before executing a turn.

**Cap** - A latex or lycra swim cap used during a race and/or workout to reduce the water resistance from a swimmers' hair. A cap also helps protect a swimmers' hair from the effects of chlorine in the water and helps identify the team for which s/he is competing.

**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. Circle swimming is used during practices and meet warm-up.

**Clerk of Course** - At certain meets, the area where swimmers are organized before each event.

**College Swimming** - Many colleges and universities throughout the country have swimming & diving teams. Athletes have four years of eligibility in which they may compete. Collegiate athletics is sanctioned by the NCAA. (<http://www.ncaa.org>)

**Code of Conduct** - An agreement signed by a swimmer and parent, stating that the swimmer will abide by certain behavioral guidelines.

**Competition Suit** - A racing suit used only for big competitions. This suit is often a smaller size than the practice suit to reduce water resistance. The material is usually either lycra or nylon. These suits are often expensive and need to be treated with great care to sustain longer usage.

**Cut** - Slang for qualifying time which is a time standard necessary to compete in a particular meet or event. For example, "Did you make the JO cut in the 100 free?" is translated as: "Did you achieve the Junior Olympic qualifying time in the 100 freestyle?"

**Deck Seeding** - Usually at "A" and above meets but also at some "B/C" meets, the longer events (400 IM, 1000 free) will be deck seeded. Swimmers will be given lane assignments just prior to the event. Check-in will be held early in the meet to determine who is present so that full heats will be swum with no empty lanes. Swimmers must check-in for these events. An announcement is usually made over the public address system notifying swimmers of check-in procedures.

**Distance Events** - Term used to refer to the following freestyle events: 800 meters, 1500 meters, 1000 yards, and 1650 yards.

**DQ, Disqualified, Disqualification** - This occurs when a swimmer commits an infraction of some kind (e.g. freestyle kick in butterfly). A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive awards nor can the time be used as an official time.

**Drag Suit** - A second, loose fitting swimsuit worn by swimmers to add a certain amount of weight and resistance to the flow of the water around the swimmer usually done during practice. The concept is similar to a batter swinging two or three bats (or using bat weights) while on deck in a baseball game. These suits are usually loose fitting and many swimmers train wearing several suits for the purpose of creating drag.

**Drill** - An exercise involving a portion of a stroke, used to improve technique.

**Dry Land Training** - Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance. This often includes lifting weights, running, plyo-metrics and medicine balls.

**Entry Form** - Form a swimmer completes to enter a competition. Usually includes USA Swimming Number, age, gender, event numbers, and entry times (seed times).

**Escrow Account** - Individual account administered by the team into which swimmers deposit funds to be used for meet entries. The escrow account must have an adequate positive balance in order for a swimmer to be entered in a meet for which s/he has signed up to swim.

**False Start** - Occurs when a swimmer leaves the starting block, or is moving on the starting block, before the starter officially starts the race. In USA Swimming and High School Swimming, one false start results in an automatic disqualification from the race.

**FINA** (Federation Internationale de Natation de Amateur) - The international governing body of competitive swimming, diving, water polo, and synchronized swimming. (<http://www.fina.org>)

**Final** - The championship final of an event in which the fastest swimmers from the preliminaries compete.

**Fins** - Flippers that are worn on the feet and used for stroke technique and speed assisted training.

**Flags** – (Backstroke flags) Located 5 yards (in 25 yard pools) or 5 meters (in 25 and 50 meter pools) from the ends of the pool. The flags enable backstroke swimmers to execute a turn more efficiently by being able to practice how many strokes from the flags to the wall it is for turns and finishes.

**Freestyle / Free** - One of the four competitive strokes. The alternate overhand motion of the arms and a flutter kick characterizes this stroke.

**Freestyle Relay** - Consists of four freestylers, each swimming one-quarter of the total distance of the event.

**Goal** - A specific time achievement for which a swimmer strives. It can be short term or long term.

**Goggles** - Eyewear worn by swimmers in the pool to enhance vision and to protect swimmers' eyes from the effects of chlorine in the water.

**Gutter** - The area at the edges of the pool in which water overflows during a race and is recirculated through the filtration system. Deep gutters catch surface waves and don't allow them to wash back into the pool and effect the race.

**Heat Sheet** - Listing of all swimmers in a meet by event, heat and lane assignments.

**High School Swimming** - The swimming program run through the athlete's high school. In Illinois the IHSA (<http://www.ihsa.org>) is the governing body for high school swimming. In Illinois, if an athlete is competing for his/her high school, s/he must practice with his/her high school's team during that season. In Illinois the girls' season is in the fall (Aug-Nov) and the boys' season is in the winter (Dec-Feb).

**Hypoxia Training** (breath control) - Training with a decreased concentration of oxygen that causes the constriction of blood vessels, which, in turn, help muscles work more efficiently with what oxygen is available.

**IM** - Slang for "Individual Medley," which is an event the swimmer uses all four competitive strokes in this order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle.

**Interval Training** - Consists of repeated rounds of moderate- to high- intensity activity separated by brief rest periods of approximately 20-40 seconds.

**Kick Board** - A device, usually made of plastic or styrofoam, used to isolate the kick portion of a stroke.

**Lactate Acid** - In the absence of oxygen, as with anaerobic training, a body will breakdown muscle sugar (glycogen) using a process that produces an acidic by-product waste called lactate acid. Muscles may start to burn or ache as lactate acid accumulates and the body cannot keep up with removing it from muscle stores. This process occurs during races and intense practices. Warming down is the way to remove lactate acid from the muscles allowing your body to recover.

**Lane Lines** - The dividers used to delineate the individual lanes in the pool. These are made of individual finned disks strung on a cable, which rotate on the cable when hit by a wave. The rotating disks dissipate surface tension waves in a competitive pool.

**Lap Counter** - A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. This term also refers to the person who counts the laps. This person is stationed at the opposite end of the pool from the starting end and they dip the display numbers in for the swimmer as they approach. This is done so the swimmer in the water can concentrate on the race and not have to worry about losing count.

**Logbooks** - A book designed so that each swimmer can keep records of their own times and keep track of their improvement

**Long Course** - A pool 50 meters in length. World records may be set in long course and short course competition. The main long course season in the United States is during the summer months. The Olympic Games, as well as all major international competitions, are conducted in long course.

**LSC (Local Swimming Committee)** - Governing body for swimming at the local level. There are 59 LSC's in the United States. In Illinois, the LSC is Illinois Swimming, Inc. ([www.ilswim.org](http://www.ilswim.org))

**Medley Relay** - Relay in which all four strokes are swum. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly and the final swimmer, freestyle.

**Meet** - Competition designed to be a learning experience. By implementing what has been learned in practice, the swimmer tests himself/herself against the clock to see how s/he is improving.

**Middle Distance** - Term used to refer to events of 200 yards/meters, 400 meters, and 500 yards.

**Negative Split** - Swimming the second half of a race faster than the first half.

**NISCA** (National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association) The national association that most high school coaches are members of. (<http://www.niscaonline.org>)

**Official** - A judge on the deck of the pool at sanctioned competition who enforces the rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, timers, and referees.

**Open Water Swimming** - Swimming in an open body of water (such as a lake, ocean, or bay) as opposed to a swimming pool. Open water swims are conducted in distances of over 1500 meters.

**Pace Clock** - A clock used during practice to check pace, maintain intervals and time rest periods.

**Paddles** – A piece of training equipment used in practice that is worn on the hands and helps to increase shoulder and arm strength and improve technique.

**Prelims** - Short for “preliminary.” Those races in which swimmers qualify for the championship finals and consolation finals in the events at a swim meet.

**Pull Buoy** - Usually made of styrofoam, this device is placed between the legs to restrict their use and helps swimmers to isolate the use of their arms. The pull buoy is used to strengthen the arms and is sometimes used for stroke work.

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

**Relay Exchange** - The exchange between the swimmer in the water and the next swimmer on the relay team. A perfect exchange will simultaneously have the finishing swimmer’s hand on the touch pad and the starting swimmer’s toes just touching the starting block with the rest of the starting swimmer’s body extended over the water.

**Relay Split** - The time for one of the four individuals in a relay race. Each swimmer in a relay will have a ‘relay split’ and the four times combined will be the relay time. Under certain conditions, the lead swimmer’s time in a relay may be used as an official time for an event.

**Scratch** - To withdraw from an event or competition.

**Shave** - Prior to a major competition, a swimmer will shave his/her entire body. The removal of hair and the top layer of skin provides less resistance between the swimmer’s body and the water. This also heightens the swimmer’s sensations in the water.

**Short Course** - A pool 25 yards/meters long. USA Swimming conducts most of its winter competition in 25 yard pools. NCAA swimming competitions use the 25 yard format but conducts its national championship meet every four years in the 25 meter format. Most of the world swims short course meters (using 25 meter pools) in the winter. The fastest times swum in a 25 yard pool may only gain US Open and American Record status. World records are recorded for short course and long course meters only.

**Split** - A swimmer's intermediate time in a race. Splits are registered every 50 yards/meters and are used to determine whether or not a swimmer is on pace. Splits are very useful in planning future race strategy.

**Sprint** - Describes the shorter events (50 and 100 yards/meters). In practice, this refers to swimming as fast as possible for a short distance.

**Starting Block** - The starting platform used by swimmers at the start of each race and for relays.

**Streamline** - The position used by swimmers under water when starting or pushing off the walls after a turn. A streamlined body position is used to reduce water resistance.

**Taper** - Reducing training volume and intensity to allow the swimmer's body and mind a break from the rigors of intense training. This coupled with quality rest allow the swimmer's body time to repair itself and to restore its energy reserves to prepare for competition. Studies have found tapering to produce a marked increase in muscle strength.

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

**Time Trial** - A time-only swim that is not a part of a regular meet. Swimmers usually compete in a time trial or attend a time trial meet in order to attempt to achieve qualifying times for a championship meet.

**Touch Pad** - A large sensitive board at the end of the lane where a swimmer's finish is registered and sent electronically to the timing system to register the swimmer's official time for that race.

**Unattached** - The status a swimmer receives when s/he changes from one USA Swimming club to another. Swimmers must be "unattached" for 120 days from their last competition with one club before they can compete for their new club. During this time they may swim for a club in individual events but may not score or swim on relays for their new team.

**USA Swimming** - The national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. (<http://www.usaswimming.org>)

**USA Swimming Number** - A number assigned to a swimmer upon joining USA Swimming. The membership card with this number may be required at any given competition.

**Warm/Cool Down** - Easy swimming or calisthenics used by swimmers after a race or anaerobic practice set to rid the muscles of lactic acid and gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

**Warm Up** - Easy swimming or calisthenics used by swimmers prior to a race or practice to get the muscles loose and warm. Warm up gradually increases heart rate and respiration and helps prevent injuries.