

JOLIET Y



SWIM TEAM

TEAM HANDBOOK

- REVISED AUGUST 2011 -

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Philosophy, Policies & Procedures

Mission Statements.....	3
Letter from the YMCA President.....	4
Letter from the Head Coach.....	5
YMCA Competitive Sports Philosophy.....	6
Terms and Conditions for Participation.....	7
Joliet Community Swim Association (JCSA).....	8
Billing & Fundraising.....	9
Communication Methods.....	10
General Code of Conduct.....	11
Discipline Policy.....	11
Team Travel Code of Conduct.....	12

Practice Information

Practice Group Descriptions.....	13-14
Considerations for Group Placement.....	15
Attendance Guidelines.....	16
Practice Facility Policies.....	16
Equipment Requirements.....	17
Recommended Equipment Brands.....	17
Swimwear Policies & Dress Code.....	18-19

Swim Meet Information

Explanation of Swim Seasons.....	20
YMCA vs. USA Swimming.....	20
Types of Meets.....	21-22
Orientation to Swim Meets.....	23-25
Guidelines for Parents at Swim Meets.....	26
Meet Entry Process.....	27

Guidelines for Swim Parents

Ten Commandments for Swim Parents.....	28
Guidelines for a Healthy Coach-Parent Relationship.....	29
Fair Play Concepts.....	29

Miscellaneous Information

About Friends of Swimming.....	30
Friends of Swimming Scholarship.....	31
Glossary of Swimming Terms.....	32-33

YMCA MISSION STATEMENT

To put Christian principles into practice by developing relationships among all persons and providing programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body.

YMCA AREAS OF FOCUS



YMCA CHARACTER VALUES

Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

JETS MISSION STATEMENT

To develop individuals to their highest potential as athletes and leaders in life.

JETS VISION STATEMENT

The JETS will be known as the best youth sports experience in the area. The team will do this by providing professional coaches who inspire in their athletes the same passion and dedication they share for the sport; by providing a unified team atmosphere that creates fun memories, long-lasting relationships, and a sense of community and belonging; by providing the education, instruction, and training necessary for excellence in the sport; and by developing the values and character traits of individuals who will make a positive impact on the world around them.

JETS ACRONYM

Joliet's Energetic Team of Swimmers

LETTER FROM THE YMCA PRESIDENT

Dear JETS Parents,

The YMCA knows how important parents are. This handbook was written because the YMCA is about much more than producing elite athletes. The YMCA is in the people business, helping children and families develop the Christian Character Values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility. By doing so, the YMCA believes our participants will make better decisions and create a better world. We hope that this handbook will help to provide information on the YMCA philosophy and show how the JETS differ from other teams. This handbook also provides information on the organization and policies of the swim team.

We welcome you to a group of parents who can help make the Joliet YMCA Jets Swim Team a special and successful experience for all our youngsters.

Fundamental to the YMCA is an effort to provide programs for personal growth, development, and fun for youth through a group environment and committed adult leadership. The YMCA JETS are one of many programs that do this.

As a YMCA, we would like to share with parents the rewarding responsibility of helping youth grow. We are committed to creating an environment where youth can grow, develop, mature, and have fun. As parents, you play an integral part in that environment by reinforcing the program, especially between practices and meets. Youth want to feel good about themselves. They also want their parents to feel good about them. Effective involvement of parents will help meet these objectives.

Specifically, you participate when you

- ❖ Support your child's participation by praising improvements.
- ❖ Attend meets and special events as often as possible.
- ❖ Are aware of the JETS philosophy and goals and abide by them, including showing respect for officials, coaches, opposing teams, and fellow team members.
- ❖ Spend time with your child listening as he or she talks about accomplishments and feelings.
- ❖ Volunteer in ways that help the team.
- ❖ Support the YMCA staff, administration, and philosophy and keep YMCA values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility in the forefront.

Our swim team emphasizes having fun and learning to enjoy the sport. We also emphasize the development of life-long values of sportsmanship, self-respect, respect for others, honesty, caring for others and responsibility to self and others. We hope to develop healthy attitudes about winning and losing.

We hope the following pages will provide you with some insight on what YMCA competitive swimming is all about. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dave Hedden, Head Coach, at 815-726-3939 or Tom Sutter, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at 815-729-9638.

Sincerely,

Tami Sender
President/CEO
Greater Joliet Area YMCA

LETTER FROM THE HEAD COACH

Dear JETS families,

I am excited that you have chosen this program for your kids and hope you share the same excitement for providing the best possible experience for all. This handbook outlines important information that will help you along the way. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the team's philosophy and vision, expectations for swimmers and parents, and general operating policies and procedures. I believe that the more families are informed and educated, the greater our potential is to succeed. After reading through this handbook, if you have any questions or feedback, please contact me.

Swimming is a fantastic sport. It is a highly individual sport, yet centered in a team atmosphere: Each swimmer has personal goals and strives to achieve personal best times, but they do it while training alongside their peers, racing together in relays, cheering each other on, and cooperating to reach team goals. Another reason that puts swimming above other sports is that being in the water frees you from limitations on land, which is one reason why swimming is so rewarding, encouraging, and fun! Because swimming is such an accommodating sport, I have coached hundreds of swimmers over the years of all shapes, sizes, ages, and abilities who have been able to find success in swimming where they have been unable to find it elsewhere.

I have been involved with this team for many years, since 1993, and through those years the JETS have provided fantastic memories and helped shaped my character. My heart lies right here, and there are a number of things that make this team stand out over other teams.

The Joliet Y Jets Swim Team has a history of great success. Because of this, when I go to coaching conferences around the country, many other coaches know about the JETS or have heard of our Dr. Pepper meet based on our past success and the now well-renowned coaches who brought it. You can read more about our team's history in this handbook and on our website.

I also love that our team is very dedicated to training and educating our coaching staff. Each coach is certified in Lifeguarding, First Aid, CPR, AED, Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming, Child Abuse Prevention, and are members of USA Swimming and the American Swimming Coaches Association. All of our coaches attend trainings and conferences each year that inspire us and continuously expand our knowledge. As a YMCA program, our coaches are not only dedicated to building great swimmers, but also developing important character values such as Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.

Another reason our team stands out is our dedicated parents. Throughout the years and up to this very day, the JETS have had very supportive parents that go above and beyond to help our coaches give the kids a great experience. While speaking with coaches who worked with the team in the past, many still say that Joliet had the best parent group they have ever worked with. We also have a great YMCA supporting us that cares about families and community and understands how swim team contributes to their mission. Between our coaches and YMCA staff, our JCSA fundraising board, our unique parents group called Friends of Swimming, and all of our other parent volunteers, everyone works together with one thing in mind—to give the kids the best opportunity to succeed and have a good time.

I would like to thank you in advance for your support and commitment to your kids and their teammates. I hope you and your family will find this a very memorable and rewarding experience. Again, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Dave Hedden
Head Swim Team Coach

YMCA COMPETITIVE SPORTS PHILOSOPHY

The important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part. The important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle; the essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well. To spread these precepts is to build up a more scrupulous and more generous humanity.

-- Baron Pierre du Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympic games

The value of youth participation in athletics is one of the underlying principles of the YMCA. We invest much time, money, and effort in our youth sports programs, where young men and women can learn in a healthy, competitive way that sports is not just for the physically gifted and talented. There are thousands of young people in our community who will not compete in the world of high school or college athletics. But they can learn from an early age to appreciate the joy of movement, the skills necessary for daily activities and sports participation, and the development of their overall strength and fitness.

The youth programs at the YMCA are also geared to help young people develop the social skills necessary for group and team interaction. These activities help them to develop basic knowledge that will help them to live healthy lives and practice good living habits. Most importantly, it is our hope that youth sports programs at the YMCA will be an opportunity for young people to understand, practice, and even develop their own values, morals, and spiritual beliefs in interaction with other young people under the guidance of understanding and helpful adult coaches, counselors, group leaders and parents.

At the YMCA we practice a holistic approach to sports, with emphasis on positive physical, mental, and spiritual development. We believe that in our society today there is too much emphasis on winning at all costs and on special recognition for sporting ability. Our program holds other values that are important:

- ❖ Developing self-confidence, self-respect, and an appreciation of your own worth as an individual.
- ❖ Developing a commitment for daily living based on values such as Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.
- ❖ Growing as a responsible member of the family and as a citizen of the community.
- ❖ Appreciating that health of mind and body is a sacred gift and that physical fitness and mental well being are conditions to be achieved and maintained.
- ❖ Recognizing the worth of all people and working for interracial and inter-group understanding.
- ❖ Developing the capacity for leadership and using it responsibly in groups and community life.

The National YMCA has adopted these objectives. We hope that through our program each young person will gain a greater measure of life skills and a better sense of who he or she is. When this happens, the investment of time, talent, and funds has been worthwhile, making the program a valuable part of our community.

TERMS & CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

- ❖ Participants must maintain a Full Privilege Membership at the Greater Joliet Area YMCA.
- ❖ Participants must either pay the program fee in full or set up a bank draft within one week of joining the team and before the first day of practice each season thereafter.
- ❖ In a circumstance where a swimmer is moved from one group to another in the middle of a season and after initial registration, the participant must pay the difference in the program fees if payment has been made in full, or begin to pay the monthly fee for the new group if a bank draft has been set up.
- ❖ Participants must maintain an athlete registration with USA Swimming.
- ❖ As per the Joliet YMCA Refund Policy, fees are not refundable unless the YMCA cancels a program. If you withdraw from a program for medical reasons, you will receive a credit slip for the remaining program if the request is accompanied by a physician's order.
- ❖ Each parent is responsible for reading and understanding the contents of the Team Handbook.
- ❖ Swimmers and parents must follow YMCA rules and policies. Failure to follow the rules and policies will result in the swimmer being dismissed from the team.
- ❖ The YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- ❖ Each swimmer must provide a valid Full Privilege YMCA membership card with photo identification in order to enter the YMCA facility. Failure to present membership card with photo ID will result in the swimmer not being allowed into the facility that day.
- ❖ Parents and swimmers are expected to support the YMCA staff, administration and philosophy, and to keep the values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility in the forefront. Support can include volunteering at the YMCA and/or with JCSA; it should include supporting the YMCA's mission and values at home. Expression of negative feelings about the YMCA or the JETS around swimmers will damage not only the YMCA but also the young swimmers' attitudes and growth. Parents should address their concerns to their coach, the Head Coach, or the Executive Director. Parents or swimmers who continue to display behavior that is inconsistent with the YMCA values listed above will be asked to leave the YMCA team.

JOLIET COMMUNITY SWIM ASSOCIATION (JCSA)

Behind every successful swim team is a group of individuals who raise money, arrange travel, host swim meets, organize social events, publish newsletters, and coordinate volunteers. This and much more is accomplished through the Joliet Community Swim Association (JCSA). Your interest, support, and involvement is a huge contribution to the team's success.

A board that provides administrative and financial support for the JETS represents JCSA. All parents are encouraged to get involved and take an active role in making the JETS a fun and rewarding experience for the swimmers. Because of the many hours your swimmers will spend at practice and meets, there are some things that you, as a parent, can get involved in to make it a positive family experience and build lasting memories and friendships. Some of these roles and activities are:

- ❖ Alumni coordinator
- ❖ Equipment and apparel coordinator
- ❖ Meet worker coordinator
- ❖ Publicity coordinator
- ❖ Social event coordinator
- ❖ Administrative support
- ❖ Fundraising to reduce team fees
- ❖ Supporting swimming as a sport
- ❖ Volunteering at meets

The Jets Y Swim Team is a YMCA program. The Joliet YMCA employs the coaches. JCSA is designed to support the coaches and enhance the swimming program; any coaching concerns must be referred to the YMCA coaching staff, not to other parents or JCSA board members.

JCSA does not administrate, supervise or organize the day-to-day operations of the swim team. All operations of the swim team are the responsibility of the Head Coach, who is supervised by the COO of the Joliet YMCA or his/her designate. JCSA operates as the fundraising arm of the team and does not have any administrative function with the team.

The Joliet Community Swim Association:

- ❖ Participates as a partner with the YMCA in the development of the individual and in the promotion of the YMCA Mission.
- ❖ Assures that other parents and swimmers are supportive of the YMCA, its Staff, Administration and Swim Team Philosophy and to assure that the values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility are kept in the forefront.
- ❖ Fundraises to finance quality swimming in the Joliet area.
- ❖ Pays coaches' expense reimbursement for meets.
- ❖ Provides trained meet officials.
- ❖ Provides swimmer recognition programs in coordination with the Head Coach.
- ❖ Provides lay representatives to district, state and national committees.
- ❖ Provides volunteers to aid the YMCA staff when necessary.
- ❖ Assures a positive partnership between the YMCA and the JCSA.
- ❖ Provides the head coach with support in getting meet results into newspapers, recruitment of swimmers, and the production of a monthly newsletter.
- ❖ Approves and adhere to the annual YMCA swim team budget and contract.
- ❖ Assists YMCA administration in matters of personnel administration (hiring, firing, salary) prior to a decision being made by the YMCA.

BILLING & FUNDRAISING

YMCA Membership Fees

All JETS swimmers must maintain a Full Privilege Membership to the Greater Joliet Area YMCA. Membership fees vary, depending on age and type of membership. You may view membership fees online at www.jolietyymca.org or call the YMCA at 815-729-9622. Membership fees may be paid either in full for the year or by monthly bank draft. Membership fees are non-refundable.

YMCA Program Fees

In addition to membership fees, program fees must also be paid in order to participate on the JETS. Program fees vary, depending on practice group and other factors as outlined on the registration forms. Program fees may be paid in full for the season or by monthly bank draft. Program fees may be refunded if accompanied by a doctor's order. Review the registration form for current program fees.

YMCA Financial Assistance

At the YMCA, no one is turned away for the inability to pay. The YMCA does an Annual Giving Campaign to raise funds to provide scholarships to kids and families who otherwise would not be able to afford to participate in YMCA programs. For more information on the YMCA scholarship program, call the YMCA at 815-729-9622.

USA Swimming Registration Fee

Each swimmer who participates on the JETS must register with USA Swimming. This fee covers swimmers under the USA Swimming insurance plan and enables swimmers to compete at USA Swimming and Illinois Swimming sanctioned swim meets. A subscription to USA Swimming's bi-monthly SPLASH magazine is also included. Refer to the registration form for current USA Swimming athlete registration fee.

Fundraising Methods

It is the responsibility of JCSA to raise funds to help support the Joliet Y Jets Swim Team. JCSA does this primarily through hosting swim meets, but also through various smaller fundraisers such as flower/candy sales, raffles, Swim-a-thons, or selling ads for placement in meet programs. Specific details regarding fundraising methods and amounts, swim meets being hosted and worker requirements are listed on the registration form and other documents supplied at registration each season. If you have any questions, suggestions, or ideas for future fundraisers, please contact the JCSA Board President.

COMMUNICATION METHODS

Below is a list of the various methods of communication the team will use to provide information and updates throughout the season:

- ❖ E-mail Blasts: E-mail is the most frequently used communication tool. Newsletters and quick news blasts and reminders will be sent out on a regular basis, at least once per week. Families should supply their most frequently checked e-mail address so they can receive these updates on a timely basis.
- ❖ Website: The JETS website (www.jetsyswimteam.org) is a great tool for information and updates. It is normally updated at least once per week, usually on Monday. The website has information on upcoming events and summaries of past events, a calendar of upcoming events and schedule changes, a meet schedule with links to meet packets, maps, entries, results and more, practice schedules, time standards, pictures, videos, and other information about the team. The Team Login section has frequently asked questions, team rosters, best time reports, test set results, the team handbook, and other information that only JETS team members can access with a password.
- ❖ Family Folders: Every family has a folder on file in the cabinet drawers under the JETS bulletin board at the Smith Family YMCA. Handouts, awards, and other notes will be placed in the files, so swimmers are encouraged to check their mail after every practice. Families who do not use e-mail will receive copies of newsletters and bills in their file.
- ❖ Bulletin Boards: The JETS have a bulletin board at the Smith Family YMCA that will be used primarily to post sign-up sheets for upcoming meets, such as hospitality/concession donation lists, worker sign-up sheets, and occasionally dual meet sign-ups.
- ❖ Phone Tree: In the event that a schedule change must be made, coaches will notify swimmers at practice, the website calendar will be updated and all families will be notified via e-mail. If there is less than five days notice before a schedule change, in addition to all the above methods, each family will receive a phone call from their practice group's parent representative or from the head coach notifying them of the change.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Maintaining discipline in our swimmers is a crucial step towards reaching personal and team goals. Discipline means staying on task and staying true to values and expectations. Without a disciplined mindset, focus is lost and goals are rarely achieved. With that being said, it is important to set high standards of excellence for our swimmers and constantly reinforce them to ensure all are meeting those expectations.

The following is our general code of conduct for behavior at all practices, meets, and other team functions:

1. I will conduct myself with dignity and show respect for others and their property.
2. I will practice and teach good sportsmanship, common courtesy and proper manners.
3. I will be honest with myself and others, regardless of consequence and circumstance.
4. I will be caring towards my teammates and promote positive team spirit and high morale.
5. I will be a responsible goodwill ambassador between the sport of swimming and the public, and will represent my YMCA, my team, my family, and myself in the appropriate manner at all times.

The following is a list of prohibited behavior at all practices, meets, and other team functions:

1. Use of alcoholic beverages.
2. Use of illegal drugs.
3. Smoking or other use of tobacco products.
4. Destructive or demeaning behavior, including inappropriate pranks or jokes.
5. Obscene or abusive language and gestures.
6. Theft of any kind.

These expectations are at the discretion of the YMCA and can be changed or amended at any time.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Problem-solving is an essential skill in life. Kids must be taught appropriate ways to act and how to resolve conflicts when they arise. Our coaching staff uses progressive discipline methods to correct improper behavior and, whenever possible, to proactively prevent conflicts.

Upon the first incident of minor behavioral problems, swimmers will be warned of their inappropriate or disruptive actions and given the opportunity to correct the situation by receiving instruction on ways to act properly and/or being coached through methods they can use to resolve and prevent future problems. If the problem persists, the behavior will be documented with the YMCA and a conference or phone call will be made with the parent or guardian. The swimmer will not be allowed to practice again until this conference is held. If the behavior persists after the parent conference, the swimmer may be subject to suspension or dismissal from the team.

Upon the first incident of a more serious problem, the swimmer's parent or guardian will be notified immediately and a conference will be scheduled. The swimmer will not be allowed to practice again until this conference is held. After this conference, a decision will be made about what additional actions need to be taken to correct the behavior. The YMCA and Joliet Y Jets Swim Team reserve the right to suspend or revoke all YMCA privileges and/or program participation due to unruly behavior.

TRAVEL MEET CODE OF CONDUCT

1. The YMCA values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility will be placed in the forefront of all actions and decisions.
2. Team members will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, fellow competitors and the public at all times.
3. Team members and staff will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives. Additionally, it is the responsibility of team members to make every effort to avoid guilt by association with such activities.
4. The possession or use of alcohol or tobacco products by any athlete is prohibited.
5. The possession, use, or sale/distribution of any controlled or illegal substance or any form of weapon is strictly forbidden.
6. Athletes are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Athletes are not to leave the competition venue, hotel, restaurant or any other place at which the team has gathered without the knowledge and permission of the coach or chaperone.
7. When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theaters, etc. swimmers will stay in groups of no less than three persons. Athletes will always be accompanied by a chaperone.
8. Team members and staff traveling with the team will attend all team functions including meetings, practices, meals, meet sessions, etc. unless otherwise excused or instructed by the coach.
9. To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there will be no male athletes in female athlete's rooms and no female athletes in male athlete's rooms, unless the other athlete is a sibling of that particular athlete.
10. Curfews shall be established by the team each day of the trip, which will include a time at which athletes must be in their own rooms and a separate "lights out" time, at which point lights must remain off with no noise, TV, computer, or cell phone use. Athletes may not leave their room after lights out. Cell phones and other electronic devices may be collected by the coach or chaperone upon lights out and returned in the morning.
11. A team dress code will be established and all team members will be expected to adhere to it.
12. No deck changes are permitted.
13. Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct as set forth in this document may result in disciplinary action. Such discipline may include, but may not be limited to:
 - a. Dismissal from the trip and immediate return home at the athlete's expense
 - b. Disqualification from one or more events, or all events of competition
 - c. Disqualification from future team travel meets
 - d. Financial penalties
 - e. Dismissal from the team
14. All directions and decisions of coaches and chaperones are final.

I have read this Code of Conduct in its entirety and my signature below constitutes unconditional agreement to comply with these stipulations, in addition to any other rules set forth by the coach or his/her designee that are not directly expressed in this document. I understand that, through every action and decision I make, I am representing myself, my family, my team and my YMCA. I also understand the consequences of violating any team rules during this trip. My parent/guardian has reviewed and understands these rules and has granted my permission to participate.

Swimmer's Printed Name

Swimmer's Signature & Date

Parent/Guardian's Signature & Date

PRACTICE GROUP DESCRIPTIONS

The Joliet Jets YMCA Swim Team is divided into ability groups that are structured to allow smooth transitions that maximize the success of each individual as they progress through each stage of development. Each developmental stage is described below. While every group emphasizes the mastery of proper technique, each group is unique and progressive. As they learn new skills, they will move on to the next skills in order of importance and in such a way to offer a varied, enjoyable practice.

Flight School (Ages 5-12)

Flight School is a program offered through the YMCA aquatics department that is designed to be a pre-competitive introduction to the Jets Y Swim Team. Swimmers will be introduced to the concepts and skills taught by the swim team, thus preparing kids for a more fluid transition onto the team once they are ready. Most sessions will culminate with a small intrasquad swim meet with the JETS, usually held on a Saturday morning. Swimmers must be comfortable putting their face in the water and must have the endurance to swim one length of the pool without a floatation device to be eligible for Flight School. Swimmers will be evaluated on the first day to determine if they are ready or not.

Zeppelin (Ages 6-12)

The objective of the Zeppelin level is to nurture love for the sport of swimming, team pride, sportsmanship and YMCA character values while developing fundamental skills (such as streamlining, floating/balance, head/body position, proper kicking and breathing techniques, diving and somersaults) and teaching swimmers the rules and expectations they will need to follow throughout their development.

Glider (Ages 8-15)

The objective of the Glider level is to develop both a fast kick and solid framework of stroke technique in all four strokes so that swimmers can perform each with legal form, including starts, turns and finishes, in addition to developing a basic understanding of simple training concepts such as set structures, intervals and sendoffs.

Stunt Pilot 1 (Ages 9-13)

The objective of Stunt Pilot 1 is to develop good efficiency in all four strokes (measured by distance per stroke, mastery of more advanced drills, and the ability to maintain proper stroke technique over longer distances) so that athletes can begin to train at higher intensity and higher volume, and to nurture the proper practice habits, attitudes and values that will help them excel later on.

Stunt Pilot 2 (Ages 13-18)

The objective of Stunt Pilot 2 is to prepare swimmers to train and compete at a high school varsity level while improving stroke technique and efficiency and nurturing good practice habits, nutrition, goal-setting, and leadership skills.

Mach 1 Supercruisers (Ages 11-14)

The objective of the Mach 1 group is to prepare young athletes to compete at the regional, state and zone championship level through an age-appropriate training plan designed to build a strong aerobic base and improve stroke efficiency, which will allow swimmers to succeed in events such as the 500 freestyle, 400 IM, and 200's of each stroke. In addition, swimmers will be educated about nutrition, goal setting, leadership, race strategy and mental preparation that will help them excel as they get older.

Mach 2 Supercruisers (Ages 12-21)

The objective of the Mach 2 group is to prepare athletes to compete and succeed at the regional, state and zone championship level, and ultimately reaching the national level, while nurturing the right attitude, leadership qualities, goal setting habits, mental toughness and time management skills that will enable them to handle higher levels of commitment and higher volumes of training, both mentally and physically.

PRACTICE GROUP DESCRIPTIONS (...CONTINUED)

Moon Landers (Ages 12-21)

The objective of the Moon Lander group is to provide a practice environment specifically for athletes who are committed to excellence and competing at a national championship level. Guidance will be provided to help kids deal with the challenges of being an elite level athlete, helping to cultivate skills such as mental toughness, time management, decision making and goal setting, and providing assistance with their college search and healthy living.

Graduate (Ages 18-21)

The Graduate group is offered as an opportunity for JETS graduates who have gone on to college to continue to swim for the team while they are in town on holiday and summer breaks. Graduate swimmers must maintain a full YMCA membership; however, there are no program fees or fundraising requirements. Swimmers will be expected to help lead the team by methods such as coaching, helping at swim meets, or sharing their experiences at a team meeting.

Joliet Y Masters Swim Team (Ages 18 & Over)

In addition to the Joliet Jets Y Swim Team, the Joliet YMCA also offers a masters swim team. Please contact the head coach for more details.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR GROUP PLACEMENT

The JETS coaching staff puts much time, effort, and consideration into ensuring that each swimmer gets placed in the practice group that is most beneficial to their long-term development and success. Within this process, coaches review and discuss a number of criteria that affect the resulting group placement. Some of these criteria are highlighted below.

Some criteria is objective and easily measurable, such as test set results, meet performance, and practice attendance, while other criteria is subjective and left to the experienced opinion of the coach, such as attitude, maturity, and mental discipline. The coaching staff will meet after each season to discuss group moves for the following season. Group moves will ideally be made between seasons, however, mid-season transitions will be considered in exceptional circumstances when coaches feel a change needs to be made sooner rather than later.

Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns about group placements privately with the coach; do not concern swimmers with group placements. Instead, emphasis should be placed on the swimmer's overall development, regardless of which group that development takes place. Please have faith in the program and the decisions made by the coaching staff—they have educated and experienced insight and, just like parents, keep the best interest of the swimmers at heart.

JETS Group Placement Criteria and Considerations

- ❖ Stroke and skill development
- ❖ Practice performance and training ability
- ❖ Level of commitment, maturity, and self-discipline
- ❖ Meet performance and best times
- ❖ Age and previous experience
- ❖ Space availability
- ❖ Satisfactorily completes placement test/tryout (if new to team)

Practice Group Promotions

The swimmer under consideration:

- ❖ Consistently makes choices that demonstrate a willingness to make the commitment level (attendance, attitude, etc.) expected at the next level.
- ❖ Has mastered stroke and skill expectations of current practice group.
- ❖ Consistently trains above the level of the current practice group while demonstrating the ability to train successfully at the next practice level.
- ❖ Exhibits level of maturity and responsibility typical of swimmers at the next level.
- ❖ Fits age and experience parameters of the next practice group.

Practice Group Demotions

Though it is a rare circumstance, and ultimately undesirable, there may be a situation that warrants moving a swimmer back down to the previous level. The swimmer under consideration:

- ❖ Has demonstrated that he/she is not willing to make the commitment level expected of the current practice group.
- ❖ Is not meeting the minimum training expectations at the current practice level.
- ❖ Needs injury rehabilitation at a less strenuous level.
- ❖ Has seasonal sport or other activity conflict.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

With the exception of the Moon Lander and Mach 2 groups, there are no mandatory practice requirements. Each family can decide what amount of time they are able and willing to put into swimming while balancing other priorities for the best health of the swimmer. When kids are young, they should be given opportunities to explore their interests; as they grow older, they should be encouraged to set goals and discuss with their coach what level of commitment is needed to reach those goals. Obviously, the more kids practice the more they will improve, and as they become more advanced, more practice time is necessary to continue that improvement. The swimmer must be the one to decide what goals they have, and then communicate them with their parents and coaches.

Swimmers in the Mach 2 group must maintain a minimum attendance requirement of 75% to continue to practice with that group. Failure to maintain that requirement will result in the athlete being placed in a different training group.

Swimmers wishing to represent the team at any competition beyond the state level (YMCA Nationals, Speedo Sectionals, USA Junior and Senior Nationals, etc) must maintain an 85% attendance record once the cut has been achieved. Practices missed due to participation with the swimmer's high school swim team will be excused. All other absences can be made up to receive attendance credit. Any absences must be communicated on record with the coach via note, e-mail or phone call.

Practice attendance is tracked throughout the season and, at the end of the season, the swimmer with the highest attendance is rewarded with a special gift.

Swimmers do not have any obligation to compete. Each swimmer and/or his or her parent should communicate with the coach about whether or not the swimmer is ready to compete and what swim meets are appropriate.

PRACTICE FACILITY POLICIES

YMCA Membership Cards

Upon joining the YMCA, swimmers should receive a YMCA membership card with their photo on it. In order to gain access to the YMCA, swimmers must present or scan their card at the front desk. Therefore, this card must be brought to every practice. If swimmers do not have their card, YMCA staff may reject their access to the building. Some swimmers punch a hole in their card and hook it to their swim bag so they always have it with them. If you lose your card, please talk to the front desk staff to learn how to receive a new one.

Pool Rules

The JETS will practice and compete in a number of different facilities, each with its own set of rules. Swimmers must make themselves aware of pool rules and always respect and adhere to them.

Locker Room Guidelines

Swimmers should not leave their swim bags lying out in the locker room during practice or kept in an unlocked locker. Instead, they should either bring their swim bag out on deck with them or lock their clothes in a locker. The YMCA does not hold any responsibility over lost items. When in the locker rooms, swimmers are expected to keep volume levels down, use appropriate language, and refrain from splashing or playing in the showers and other areas. All showers should be turned off after use. No swimmers under 18 are allowed in the sauna.

Locker Room Supervision

Parents are strongly encouraged to monitor swimmers in the locker rooms before and after practice. This is the only time kids are not supervised at the YMCA. If you are there before or after practice, please stop through the locker room to make sure the kids are safe and behaving.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- = Required
- = Recommended but not required
- P = Provided for use at the YMCA
- X = Not required and not recommended

	Goggles	Fins	Water Bottle	Kickboard	Pull Buoy	Snorkel	Hand Paddles
Zeppelins	●	○	○	P	P	X	X
Gliders	●	●	○	P	P	X	X
Stunt Pilots	●	●	●	○	○	X	X
Supercruisers	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Moon Landers	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT BRANDS

Below is a list of equipment that the coaching staff endorses:

Goggles: All faces are different. Swimmers are encouraged to try goggles on before purchasing. Clear or light-colored goggles are recommended for indoor use, while mirrored or dark-colored goggles are recommended for outdoor use.

Fins: Speedo Optimus Training Fins
 (long scuba fins are discouraged)



Kickboard: Champion Kick Board



Pull Buoy: Speedo Junior Pull Buoy
 (smaller buoys are encouraged)



Snorkel: Finis Adult Swimmer's Snorkel



Hand Paddles: Speedo Biofuse Finger Paddles or Finis Fingertip Sculling Paddles



SWIMWEAR POLICIES & DRESS CODE

Practice Swimwear

- ❖ Girls shall wear a one-piece swimsuit
- ❖ Boys may wear briefs, jammers, or swim trunks
- ❖ To preserve their quality, team suits should be reserved for competition and not for use at practices
- ❖ All girls and any boys with long hair shall wear a JETS swim cap at practices
- ❖ Clear or light-colored goggles are encouraged for indoor practices; mirrored or dark-colored goggles are encouraged for outdoor practices

Competition Swimwear

- ❖ A team swimsuit is encouraged but not required during the first season a swimmer is on the team; after the first season, swimmers are required to wear a team suit to competitions
- ❖ In a case where a team suit cannot be worn, it is preferred that swimmers wear a solid black suit
- ❖ Your competition suit should fit tightly. When trying on a female team suit for purchase, a general guideline is that if you can pull the straps above your ears, the suit is too loose
- ❖ To preserve their quality, team suits should be reserved for competition and not for use at practices
- ❖ All girls and any boys with long hair shall wear a JETS swim cap at competitions
- ❖ Clear or light-colored goggles are encouraged for indoor competitions; mirrored or dark-colored goggles are encouraged for outdoor competitions

Care for Suits and Caps

- ❖ Taking a shower to saturate your suit before practice allows less chlorine water to soak in and will help increase the life of the suit; similarly, rinsing your suit in fresh water after practice will also help
- ❖ Do not place your swimsuit in a clothes dryer; hang it up to air dry or use the swimsuit spinners located in the YMCA locker rooms
- ❖ Do not leave your wet swimsuit or towel enclosed in your swim bag
- ❖ Latex caps should be dried after use (sprinkling baby powder inside the cap will prevent it from sticking together and tearing); silicon caps generally have a longer life and require less care than latex caps

High Performance Championship Suits

It is the philosophy of the coaching staff that, like other principles of training and competition, a progression should be observed when it comes to championship quality swimsuits. Young swimmers should not be concerned about which swimsuit they are wearing, when things such as stroke technique, attendance, and practice habits have a much greater impact on their development. Furthermore, families should not be burdened with the cost of higher quality swimsuits until the level of their athlete's commitment and performance has reached a point where a championship quality suit is warranted to remain competitive. Therefore, the following policies will be enforced:

A Speedo Aquablade may be purchased by the following athletes:

- ❖ Swimmers ages 11-14 who have achieved an individual Age Group Championship qualifying time
- ❖ Swimmers ages 15 & Over who have achieved an individual YMCA Area Championship qualifying time
- ❖ In all cases, consult with the coach before purchasing a championship suit

A Speedo Fastskin, LZR or other top-end championship suit may be purchased by the following athletes:

- ❖ Swimmers ages 12 & Over who have qualified for the YMCA National Championships in any course
- ❖ In all cases, consult with the coach before purchasing a championship suit, as our contract with Speedo allows our YMCA National qualifiers to purchase one of these suits at a reduced cost

Note: In all cases, swimmers who have purchased a suit under the above guidelines shall only wear the suit at times approved by the coach.

Swim Meet Dress Code

In order to present a uniform appearance at swim meets, the following dress guidelines should be followed:

- ❖ JETS team warmup jacket and/or team t-shirt or sweatshirt. At certain meets, swimmers will be required to wear a specific shirt to look exactly uniform at the meet.
- ❖ Black shorts or black pants
- ❖ Sandals or running shoes. Swimmers at the championship level will be required to wear running shoes at meets, as opposed to sandals or crocs, for extra foot support, warmth and energy preservation.

Awards Podium Dress Code

When a swimmer places Top 8 or Top 16 at a championship swim meet and gets the opportunity to receive an award on the awards podium, the following dress guidelines shall be adhered to, ranked in order of preference, depending on how long a swimmer has before going to the podium and what apparel is on hand:

- ❖ 1st preference: JETS team warmup (warmup jacket with black pants or black shorts)
- ❖ 2nd preference: JETS team t-shirt or sweatshirt with black pants or black shorts
- ❖ 3rd preference: Swimsuit only
- ❖ No head gear (swim caps, hats, etc) shall be worn. Swim caps can be worn in the case where awards are presented at the blocks immediately following each final.
- ❖ No additional items (towel, goggles, iPod, previous medals/flowers, etc) shall be taken onto the podium

EXPLANATION OF SWIM SEASONS

Short Course Season (Fall/Winter)

This season runs from September through April of each year. It is called the Short Course Season because competition is mainly held in 25-yard pools, including end-of-season championship meets.

Long Course Season (Spring/Summer)

This season runs from April through August of each year. It is called the Long Course Season because competition is mainly held in 50-meter pools.

YMCA VS. USA SWIMMING

YMCA Swimming

As a YMCA team, we participate in YMCA sanctioned competitions and championship meets. The JETS compete in the Town & Country District under the jurisdiction of the Illinois-Missouri Area YMCA Swim Committee, which operates under the governance of the National YMCA Swim Committee. The National YMCA Swim Committee hosts the YMCA National Championship meets and sets rules, policies, and procedures that all States and Districts must follow. We participate in three YMCA championship meets during the short course season (Town & Country District YMCA Championship, Illinois-Missouri Area YMCA Championship, and the National YMCA Short Course Championship) and two YMCA championship meets during the long course season (Illinois-Missouri Area YMCA Summer Championship and the National YMCA Long Course Championship). For further explanation of different types of meets, review the next section below entitled "Types of Swim Meets."

USA Swimming

We also participate in USA Swimming sanctioned competitions and championship meets. USA Swimming is the national governing body (NGB) for competitive swimming in the United States and is broken down into Local Swim Committees (LSC's), such as Illinois Swimming, Inc. of which the JETS are registered under. Illinois Swimming, Inc. is the second largest LSC in the nation. USA Swimming is responsible for setting national standards of excellence as well as rules, policies, and procedures that all other LSC's must follow, in addition to hosting national championship meets and selecting the athletes for the USA teams that compete at the Olympic Games, World Championships, and other international competition. Local Swim Committees are then responsible for the governance of local swim clubs and the administration of local championship meets, such as Regional Championships, Senior State Championships and Age Group State Championships.

Determination of an Athlete's Age at Competition

An athlete's age for USA Swimming competition is determined by their age as of the first day of the meet. For example, if a meet is held from June 19-21 and an athlete turns 11 on June 16, he will compete as age 11; if he turns 11 on June 20, he will compete as age 10 throughout the entire duration of the meet. An athlete's age for YMCA Swimming competition, with exception of the YMCA National Championships, is determined by their age as of December 1. For example, if a Y meet is held from October 26-28 and an athlete turns 9 on December 1 or earlier, he will compete as age 9, even though he is still 8 at the time of the meet; if he turns 9 on December 2 or later, he will compete as age 8 for that meet. In another example, if the Y Area Champs meet is held on March 10-12 and a swimmer turns 13 on December 1 or earlier, he will compete as 13; if he turns 13 on December 2 or later, he will still compete as a 12-year-old at Y Area Champs even though he will be 13 by then.

TYPES OF MEETS

YMCA Swimming Competition

YMCA Closed Invitational – This is a swim meet open only to YMCA teams. These meets usually last two or three days and play host to several different YMCA teams.

YMCA Dual or Triangular Meet – This is a swim meet between two (dual) or three (tri) different YMCA teams. These meets are held in one day and usually last only three to four hours. These meets are ideal for beginners as they last only a short time and are not as intimidating as bigger meets.

Town & Country District YMCA Championships (or Y Districts) – The Illinois Area is divided into five Districts, each of which hosts a District Championship meet that determines who will go on to compete in the Illinois-Missouri Area YMCA Championship. Our district (Town & Country) is made up of seven local YMCA's: BR Ryall, Elgin, Fox Valley, Joliet, Kankakee, Naperville, and Oak Park. Swimmers must compete in three closed YMCA meets throughout the season in order to compete at the Y District meet.

Illinois-Missouri Area YMCA Championships (Y Area Champs or Y State) – This meet is the state level competition for Illinois-Missouri area YMCA swim teams. Because parts of Missouri are included in one of our southern districts, we cannot technically call it the Y State meet, however, coaches sometimes refer to it as the Y State meet for simplicity. This meet is considered a continuation of the District meet, as in a series. Swimmers must achieve Y Area Champs qualifying times *at their District Championship meet*. To ensure that each District is represented in every event at Y Area Champs, the top finisher in each event at Districts automatically qualifies for Y Area Champs, regardless if the qualifying time was met or not. Y Area Champs is a prelims/finals format in which the top eight finishers in Prelims in each event swim in Finals to determine the top eight places.

YMCA National Championships – Each year, two YMCA National meets are held: The YMCA National Short Course Championship (sometimes referred to as Y Spring Nationals) is held at the beginning of April, typically in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and the YMCA National Long Course Championship (or Y Summer Nationals) is held at the beginning of August, typically in College Park, Maryland. The short course meet has faster qualifying times and, thus, is considered a higher level of competition than the long course meet. However, both meets are two of the most highly attended meets in the United States. Approximately 1,200 to 1,600 athletes from over 250 YMCA's gather for four days of high-level competition and life-long team bonding. Y Nationals is a prelims/finals format in which the top 24 finishers in prelims in each event swim in finals to determine the top 24 places.

USA Swimming Competition

ISI Invitational – Similar to a YMCA Invitational meet, this type of meet is held over the course of a weekend, generally two or three days. It is open to any team or unattached athlete registered with USA Swimming. These meets generally host around 400-800 swimmers. The JETS host four ISI-sanctioned invitational meets per year: Dr. Pepper meet in June, Ghostly Gathering in October, Jingle Bells in December and Fabulous Fifties in February.

ISI Regional Championships – Illinois Swimming hosts five different Regional Championships throughout the state. These meets occur twice per year at the end of February and the end of July, typically one week prior to the Age Group Championship. The Regional Championship meet is offered as an opportunity for those swimmers who are not yet able to achieve State times to compete in an end-of-season championship meet. In fact, swimmers who have achieved a State cut in an event are not eligible to swim that event at Regionals. Qualifying times for Regionals are slower than Y Area Champs.

ISI Age Group State Championships – This is Illinois Swimming’s state-level championship for the 14 & Under age groups. Short Course Age Group State is held in March and Long Course Age Group State is held in July. These meets both last three days and are prelims/finals format in which the top 16 finishers in prelims in each event swim in finals to determine the top 16 places. The 10 & Under events are all timed finals. Qualifying times for ISI State meets are faster than qualifying times for Y Area Champs. This meet is sometimes referred to as JO’s, which stands for Junior Olympics, which is the old name for the meet.

ISI Senior State Championships – This is Illinois Swimming’s state-level championship with open age group events, in which a swimmer of any age who achieves a qualifying time may compete. Short Course Senior State is held in March and Long Course Senior State is held in July. These meets both last four days and are prelims/finals formats in which the top 24 finishers in prelims in each event swim in finals to determine the top 24 places. Qualifying times for ISI State meets are faster than qualifying times for Y Area Champs.

Central Zone Championships (or Zones) – USA Swimming is divided into four zones (Eastern, Western, Central, and Southern). The primary responsibility of each zone is to host the Zone and Sectional Championship meets. Illinois Swimming is grouped within the Central Zone, which contains 15 LSC’s. The Central Zone Championship is a four day meet held in August, and any 18 & Under swimmer who achieves a Zone qualifying time (AAA time) in any event qualifies to participate on Illinois Swimming’s Zone Championship Team. Must like an all-star team, all of the Illinois swimmers, regardless of which club they swim for, compete as one team (Team Illinois) against the other LSC’s within the Central Zone.

USA Speedo Sectionals – A few years ago, USA Swimming elected to discontinue the Junior Nationals meet and, in its place, began hosting the Sectional Championships, currently sponsored by Speedo, in order to provide a competitive championship meet for swimmers in between the State and National Championship level. Junior Nationals has since been reinstated and the Sectional Championships continue to be held as well. Each zone is responsible for hosting at least one Sectional meet per year but, unlike the Zone Championship meets, swimmers compete for their individual club rather than as representatives of their state. Qualifying times are very difficult, most of which are comparable to YMCA Nationals.

USA Grand Prix Series Meets – USA Swimming holds eight grand prix meets each year in various locations throughout the country. This series of meets was set up to offer elite athletes the ability to compete with other elite level competition around the country at times other than the national championships. Each grand prix meet has its own format and qualifying criteria, and any swimmers registered with USA Swimming who meet the qualifying times may compete. Standings are kept for swimmers who compete in each of the grand prix meets, and a Grand Prix Championship is awarded to the swimmer who racks up the most points throughout the series.

USA Junior National Championships – This is a five-day championship meet held each summer, similar to the USA National Championships, however, it is only for 18 & Under swimmers and, hence, the qualifying times are not as fast.

USA National Championships – In non-Olympic years, this is the highest level national competition. USA Spring Nationals are held in December and USA Summer Nationals are held in August. Both meets take place over five days in a prelim/semi-final/final format. Outside of Olympic Trials, these qualifying times are the toughest that exist within USA Swimming.

Olympic Trials – Olympic Trials are held every four years, several weeks before each Olympic Games, and qualifying times are the fastest used for any competition. It is held as a prelim/semi-final/final format and generally the top two finishers in each event will make the USA Olympic Swim Team.

ORIENTATION TO SWIM MEETS

Do not be overwhelmed! There is a lot of information here but you will soon find that everything on these pages will become habit after the first couple of meets. Swim meets are fun and they offer great opportunities to meet people from other teams, make friends, play games, and build confidence. Each swim meet is only one small step in the overall developmental process—successes will be used for encouragement while failures will be used as motivation to keep moving forward. Remember to stay positive and relaxed, have fun and, if you have any questions or concerns, please talk to your coach.

How do I learn about the meet location, start time, and what I am swimming?

The website has all that information on the meet schedule page (www.jetsyswimteam.org/meets). For each meet, the facility's address and warmup times are listed, and you can link to the meet packet, entries, host team's website, and a map to the pool. In addition, the Team Binder will hold a hard copy of the meet packet, entries, maps (if available), and hotel information (for travel meets). After the meet, results will be posted on the website and in the Team Binder. If you have questions, ask an experienced parent or coach.

How long will the meet last?

Most invitational meets (two to three day swim meets) are divided up into two sessions per day (morning and afternoon); each session lasts approximately four hours. Swimmers only compete in one session per day. Be sure to find out which session your gender and age group will be swimming in by looking in the meet packet or on the meet schedule page of the website *for every meet*, because meets vary (e.g. sometimes 8 & Unders swim in the morning, other times in the afternoon).

Most dual meets (single-day competitions between two teams) last no longer than two or three hours.

What should I bring?

- ❖ Swimsuit
- ❖ Goggles
- ❖ Team swim cap
- ❖ Towels – Bring a few! You will be getting in and out of the water several times throughout the meet.
- ❖ Warm clothes to wear over your swimsuit, such as sweatpants/sweatshirt, t-shirts, parka, etc.
- ❖ Shoes, sandals or other footwear – As a safety precaution, and to minimize the loss of body heat, please do not walk around barefoot.
- ❖ Sleeping bag, blanket, or chair to sit on
- ❖ Games, books, things to do with your teammates between events
- ❖ Food – There is a concession stand at most meets, however, it is better to bring your own nutritious, carbohydrate-rich snacks. During the meet, stay away from "heavy" foods, i.e. high-fat or high-protein. Rather than eating a single large meal, have several smaller high-carbohydrate snacks throughout the meet. Some good ideas include cereal, bagels, pasta salad, fruit, veggies, and crackers.
- ❖ Drinks – It is essential to stay hydrated at swim meets, especially outdoor meets under the sun. Water is the best choice, but other good choices include Gatorade, Powerade or other sports drinks, as well as fruit juices. Stay away from soda and other carbonated/cafeinated drinks.
- ❖ For outdoor meets, additional items should include sunscreen and a source of shade (the team usually sets up a canopy for swimmers to stay under).
- ❖ When in doubt of what else you should bring, ask an experienced parent or coach.

Before the Meet Weekend...

There are a few things you should take note of before the meet weekend, all of which can be found on the website. First of all, find out where the meet will take place and how to get there. Secondly, find out when warmups start for your gender and age group. Plan to be there at least 20 minutes beforehand so you have time to check in, set up, and get on deck for warmups 10 minutes early, as expected. Finally, look to see what events you will be swimming in the meet. If you have any concerns regarding the events you are entered in, talk to your coach as soon as possible.

When You Arrive...

Positive Check-In – The first thing you should do when you arrive at the swim meet is check in. There should be a table set up somewhere with sheets of paper listing all of the swimmers who are entered in the meet as well as what events they will be swimming. The pages are divided by gender and age group. Find your name and use the highlighter to highlight your name and events, or else circle with a pen. This is to declare that you are there, ready to swim. It is a good idea, especially for young swimmers, to write your event numbers down on the back of your hand so you don't forget which events you are swimming. Some meets, such as most dual meets and championship meets, do not have positive check-in. In this case, you only need to check in with your coach to let him/her know you are there.

The Team Area – Usually, there is a designated area for swimmers to stay between events (e.g. cafeteria, gymnasium, some portion of the deck, etc.). After you check in, find the area where all of your Jets teammates are staying.

Warmups – You have arrived at the meet, highlighted your name at the positive check-in table, and set up your stuff near your teammates. Now it is time to head down on deck. Swimmers are expected to be ready on deck 10 minutes before the scheduled start of warmups. Think of warmups as a short practice session that allows swimmers to get accustomed to the pool and prepare their bodies for racing. It is important that swimmers do not miss warmups. Also, the coaches determine relays according to who is at warmups. Swimmers who are late or do not show up for warmups are generally last to be considered for placement in a relay. You can read more about relays below.

Throughout the Duration of the Meet...

Bullpen / Clerk of Course – A bullpen is offered at most meets to help 12 & Under swimmers get to their events. Announcements are made in the team area throughout the meet for each event. Swimmers should know what event numbers they are swimming (the easiest way is to write it on the back of their hand with a marker). When a swimmer's event number is called, he/she should go to the bullpen area (the exact area depends on the venue). In the bullpen, swimmers are lined up and told what heat and lane they will be swimming in. They are then directed to the pool area to swim their event. Swimmers who are 13 or older usually do not have a bullpen. They are responsible for getting behind the block, in the correct heat and lane, on their own. Therefore, older swimmers must pay attention to what event is in the water so as not to miss their own event. Heat and lane assignments for each event are posted on the walls in the team area and on the pool deck. These sheets are straightforward but, if you are confused about anything, ask an experienced teammate for help.

Down Time - During the down time between your events, be sure to stay warm and keep hydrated. You can eat snacks, but avoid eating anything "heavy" that will sit in your stomach. Have fun with your teammates and, if you want to, find time to chat with swimmers from other teams—they are not the enemy; they are in the sport for the same reasons you are.

When You Swim...

Try your best and remember the things you worked on at practice.

Disqualifications (DQ's) - Swimming, like every other sport, has rules. Examples include false starts and specifications about stroke form, turn technique, etc. Practice time is dedicated to learning these techniques, but *every* swimmer in *every* stage of development gets disqualified at times. This is especially true for beginning swimmers because it is part of the developmental process. If you are disqualified (DQ'ed), an official will usually inform you after your race. Be sure to thank the officials; they are volunteers who work at swim meets because they love the sport and because they want to help.

After You Swim...

After every race, before you run off to your parents or head back to the team area, *talk to your coach!* We are excited about watching you swim, so come see us after every event so we can share our thoughts about your race and give you feedback to improve your next race. Older swimmers will generally be asked to swim a warmdown after each race, if appropriate pool space is available. Once you have talked to your coach, you may return to the team area and wait for your next event to start the whole process over. *After your final race, double-check with you coach to see if you are in a relay.* If you are not needed for a relay, you are free to go home.

Relays

Relays are generally the first events of each session or the last events of each session (sometimes both). They are lots of fun, because you get to compete with a group of three of your fellow teammates, and the crowd really gets into them. There are two types of relays: In a Freestyle relay, each member swims Freestyle one-fourth of the given distance, and in a medley relay each member swims a different stroke in the following order: Back, Breast, Fly, Free.

Attendance is taken during warmups at every meet and those swimmers who miss warmups, or are otherwise late, are typically last to be considered for relay spots. I say "typically" because one possible exception to this practice is at championship meets where our highest priority is to put together the fastest relay we can. Otherwise, we think it is fair to say that those swimmers who have taken care to be on time, and who have completed the entire warmup, have earned the first right to relay spots. Now, because relay teams consist of four swimmers, there are times when we do not have even numbers and some kids must be left out. In these cases, we do our very best to place those swimmers in relays the next day or at the next meet they're entered in. I usually tell people to automatically assume you will be in a relay until you are informed otherwise. This generally solves the problem of swimmers leaving early and possibly causing their relay team to scratch. If you will not be able to stay until the end of a session to swim a relay, please inform your coach as soon as possible so we can arrange for an alternate.

Finally, relays are usually the most exciting part of swim meets. I love to see teammates cheering each other on, straining their vocal chords to motivate their peers. It really helps, too! So, just as you would like your teammates cheering you on, make sure you are screaming for them as well, and do not forget to come talk to your coach as a foursome once everybody is done.

Before You Leave...

Check with your coach to see if you are needed in a relay, if you have not done so already. While packing up your things in the team area, double-check that you have everything and clean up the area the best you can, even if it means throwing out some garbage that is not yours. Be proactive at keeping the team area clean throughout the meet so less work needs to be done on your way out the door.

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AT SWIM MEETS

- ❖ Come prepared. Check the website to make sure you know where the meet is, when warmups begin, and what events your swimmers are entered in, and then double check that you have everything you need before you leave.
- ❖ Come early. The warmup time listed on the website and in the meet packet is the time the kids will hit the water. You will need to be at the meet about 20 minutes earlier than that to ensure kids have time to check-in, get changed, and be ready on the pool deck before warmups actually begin.
- ❖ Make sure your child is...
 - Eating healthy: Rather than eating large, infrequent meals during a meet, swimmers should have several smaller snacks throughout the day. Try to bring healthy snacks, rich in simple carbohydrates, such as fruits and veggies, crackers, cereal, granola bars, etc.
 - Staying hydrated: Keep them drinking. Water is the best choice, followed by Gatorade or other sports drink, and then fruit juice. Avoid all “energy” drinks (such as Red Bull, 5 Hour Energy, etc), as well as soda and other beverages with caffeine or carbonation.
 - Staying warm: Swimmers should wear clothes on top of their suit, plus a sweatshirt or warmup jacket if needed, to make sure their muscles stay warm. Constant shivering will drain their energy and keep their muscles tight. They should also always wear something on their feet.
 - Getting rest: If swimmers constantly run around and stand on their feet at meets, they will see an impact on their results. Likewise, at outdoor meets, staying out in the sun will drain a swimmer’s energy and dehydrate them quickly. We want kids to play and have fun with their teammates at swim meets, however, the main reason they are there is to swim fast. Occasionally, they may have to be reeled in and reminded to settle down a bit and stay off their legs.
- ❖ Parents are not allowed on the pool deck unless they are working in some official capacity (such as a timer, official or other meet worker).
- ❖ All questions regarding meet results, officiating calls, or overall conduct of the meet should be referred to and handled by a coach. Do not approach the officials or computer room with these issues.
- ❖ If your child has a disappointing swim, try to redirect their focus on the positive elements of their race. There is nothing wrong with a swimmer negatively evaluating a race; the important thing is that they don’t dwell on it. Say something like, “So you didn’t get the result you wanted, how can you make your next race better?” or “This isn’t usually like you, what can you learn from this?”
- ❖ Swim meets are great opportunities to meet new people and get to know other parents. Enjoy your time at the meet and encourage your swimmer to meet other people and spend time with their teammates.
- ❖ Offer to volunteer as a timer if needed. Sometimes when we go to meets and there are not enough timers, an announcement will be made that more timers are needed to get the meet started. Or other times, our team will be assigned to supply timers for a certain lane throughout the meet. In this case, rather than a couple parents timing for the entire time, we usually set up a schedule so that as many parents as possible work in short shifts. Please volunteer to make the meet run smoother for all.
- ❖ When your swimmers have completed all of their individual events, remind them to check with their coach to see if they are swimming in a relay. It is important that all swimmers stay for their relay swims, or at least give as much notice as possible if they cannot stay so that a substitute can be arranged.

MEET ENTRY PROCESS

How the Meet Schedule Is Planned

When the coaching staff puts together the meet schedule, we consider the timing, location, and format of the meet, in addition to our past experience and, to a lesser extent, which team is hosting it. We try to attend one meet every three to four weeks that will offer good competition, and then fill in the rest of the schedule with smaller dual or triangular meets, so that swimmers are offered about two competitions per month. Some months (February, March, July) get pretty hectic when there are multiple championship meets in a row. We try to mix in a variety of competition, so that we offer some meets with challenging competition for our more advanced swimmers, along with some lower key meets for our beginners.

How to Enter Swim Meets

A swim meet sign-up form will be distributed at registration, or soon after, at the beginning of each season. The form will include all of the meets we have planned on our schedule. Please fill out the form and return to the head coach as soon as possible.

To fill it out, simply go through and circle which days you would like your swimmer to compete. When choosing meets, keep in mind that competition is optional, and swimmers do not have to attend all meets, or any for that matter if they are not ready yet. It is also acceptable to sign up for only one day of a swim meet. There are usually notes under each meet which provide some general details (i.e. if a meet is appropriate for beginners, if it is a YMCA meet, if it has qualifying standards, if it has parent worker requirements, etc.).

Please note the entry/scratch deadlines listed on the form. Typically, coaches must submit entries five to six weeks in advance of the meet. Once entries are sent in, fees cannot be refunded and there is no guarantee that additional entries can be made. If you are unable to predict your family's schedule far enough in advance to fill out the form for the entire season, you may initially fill out the form for the first few meets and then make amendments and additional entries later on, provided that the changes are made before the posted deadline. If you must make changes to your meet sign-up form after you turn it in, make sure you submit changes to the Head Coach in writing.

How Coaches Choose Events for Swimmers

All swim meets have a limitation on the number of events a swimmer can compete in on a given day. Therefore, even if a swimmer is physically capable of swimming every event that is offered, some choices must be made as to which he/she will actually compete in. The coaching staff will choose appropriate events for swimmers based on a number of factors.

Most importantly, we will only enter swimmers in an event if we are confident that they will (1) have a reasonable chance to complete the event legally and (2) be physically strong enough to complete the entire distance. When swimmers first join the team, they will most often swim only freestyle and backstroke events until they are competent enough in the breaststroke or butterfly to begin competing in those strokes.

Because our coaching staff strives to develop complete swimmers, we also choose events with the intent of placing swimmers in a variety of events, making sure that each swimmer is given at least one or two opportunities throughout every season to compete in every event they are capable of completing. Even if swimmers feel they are weak in a certain event, they will still be encouraged to improve every aspect of their swimming and to perform in that event to the best of their ability.

For championship meets, swimmers have more involvement in the decision of which events they will compete in. In most cases, it is simply a matter of entering every event the swimmer is qualified for. However, when choices must be made, the swimmer and coach will work closely together so that both are happy and confident that the decisions made will produce the best possible outcome at the meet.

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR SWIM PARENTS

- I. Thou shalt not impose one's own 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 what others do. Be patient and stay positive; your child will progress at the rate they are supposed to.
- II. Thou shall be supportive no matter what.**
The most important question to ask your child: "Did you have fun today?"
- III. Thou shalt not coach thy child.**
You have taken your child to a professional coach; do not undermine that coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to support, love and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job.
- IV. Thou shall have only positive things to say at a swim meet.**
If you are going to show up at a swim meet, you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child, other children, the coach, or officials.
- V. Thou shall acknowledge thy child's fears.**
It can be stressful for children during their first swim meet or first time swimming a difficult event. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle; just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child was not ready.
- VI. Thou shalt not criticize the officials.**
Don't criticize those who are doing the best they can do.
- VII. Thou shall honor 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 front of your child.
- VIII. Thou shalt not jump from team to team.**
The water is not necessarily bluer at the other team's pool. Plus, team fees will not be refunded and you will not be able to rejoin the Jets for 12 months. (See "Terms & Conditions for exceptions")
- IX. Thy child shall have goals besides winning.**
Giving an honest effort, regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning.
- X. Thou shall volunteer.**
The dues that each of you pay for YMCA membership, program fees, USS registration, and meet entry do not keep the "doors open". These raise only a small amount of the money needed to offer the caliber of team that we provide. JCSA, the Parents Group, is the fundraising arm of the YMCA swim team. Their purpose is to provide fundraising in order to raise the remaining fees to offset the costs needed to balance the Swim Team Budget. All parents are expected to participate in fundraising events.

A HEALTHY COACH-PARENT RELATIONSHIP

Parents have an important role in providing a supportive atmosphere for swimmers and the coaching staff. Parental involvement and encouragement are essential ingredients in a successful swimming program. Have a positive attitude and remember that swimming is only a small part of life, not the central issue.

The coach has the responsibility and authority for conducting swim practice, maintaining discipline and motivating swimmers. Parents should not interfere in these matters. They should bring concerns to the coach by phone or by sending the coach a note or e-mail. Do not tell your swimmers that you have a concern.

If you have a pressing problem with your child's swimming, you should resolve that problem directly with the coach as soon as possible, rather than discuss it with other parents or swimmers.

Some guidelines for contacting the coach:

- ❖ Do not discuss problems with the coach during swim practice or during a swim meet.
- ❖ Parents cannot be on deck or any other area designated for coaches during meets.
- ❖ Problem resolution is part of growing up. Let your swimmer try first, if possible.
- ❖ Be polite, do not raise your voice or use foul language.
- ❖ Please send a note to the coach if leaving practice early or arriving late.

Discipline and performance at practice and swim meets are swimmer-coach matters and should be handled that way. The coach will bring any problems to the parent's attention if required. Parents should try to show a healthy interest in their child's participation in swimming and avoid comments on stroke and training performance.

FAIR PLAY CONCEPTS

Competing against others can be an exciting and enjoyable struggle, both with yourself and others. But the feelings of being excited and having fun are closely tied to your attitudes—what you think and feel about the meet, the other team, and yourself. Top athletes have a set of attitudes that we call "fair play." But what exactly is fair play? Here are some of the key points:

- ❖ **Respect for Other Teams:** You need the other teams. Without the other teams you can't compete. So you need to show respect for the other teams by treating them as needed partners, not as enemies.
- ❖ **Respect for Yourself:** We know that how people look at things influences what they do. So, if you think of yourself as an important part of the team, you are more likely to be one.
- ❖ **Cooperation with Officials:** The rules of swimming help everyone to compete fairly. Fair play means you go along with the rules and cooperate with and support the officials, who are there for one main purpose—to make sure the sport is properly represented. The coach will deal with all officiating issues. Parents are not allowed to approach or question the officials.
- ❖ **Cooperation with YMCA Coaches:** To be an effective team member, you need to accept and support the Philosophy and direction of the YMCA, the YMCA Administration, and the YMCA Swim Team. The coach is the representative of the YMCA and acts to implement the philosophy of YMCA swimming.
- ❖ **Building the Team:** To be an effective team member, you need to know all of your teammates and coaches and to let them get to know you. Swimmers are different in ability and skills. Fair play is listening to each other, learning from each other, sharing ideas and helping each other to understand the Swim Team Philosophy and its goals. Encouraging and cheering the team members will not only help them swim faster but will help you grow.

ABOUT FRIENDS OF SWIMMING (FOS)

Some time ago, a group of very insightful Jets parents encouraged the team to buy its own Colorado timing system. This equipment is expensive enough that very few other teams have their own, so over the years a group of JETS parents collectively known as Friends of Swimming (FOS) have volunteered their time to run the timing equipment for other teams who host meets throughout the Chicagoland area. The money FOS earns from running these meets comes back to the team in the form of scholarships for graduating high school JETS swimmers, maintaining the timing equipment and purchasing new equipment, and donating things such as computer equipment and swimmer awards.

Friends of Swimming is always interested in recruiting more volunteers to help run meets. During the winter, FOS usually runs a few home meets for the Lewis University team and, during the summer, helps with some summer club meets. This is a very worthy cause for our team and our sport, and FOS deserves a lot of praise for its service and commitment to our swimmers.

If you are interested in helping in any capacity (no experience with timing equipment is needed to help—on the job training is provided), or simply wish to learn more about the cause, please contact George Galounis at 815-726-5723 or e-mail gagalounis@comcast.net. To view a more detailed description of what Friends of Swimming does and how meets are run, go to www.jetsyswimteam.org/FriendsOfSwimming_WhoAreThey.pdf.

FRIENDS OF SWIMMING SCHOLARSHIP

The 'Friends of Swimming' desires to offer to the Joliet Y Jets Swim Team and the Joliet Community Swim Association opportunities to provide an exemplary swim team program. To that extent, the 'Friends of Swimming' raises funds to be used to:

- ❖ Maintain and upgrade the Colorado Timing System
- ❖ Underwrite JCSA social activities
- ❖ Periodically provide swimmer awards
- ❖ Help purchase practice session equipment
- ❖ Help purchase electronic equipment for practice sessions and swim meets
- ❖ Repair electronic equipment used for practice sessions and swim meets

To augment the above areas of the 'Friends of Swimming' involvement in the swim team program, the 'Friends of Swimming' wishes to recognize the dedication and commitments that the swimmers and their parents must make throughout the swimmer's career. The 'Friends of Swimming' is providing a "stepped-scholarship" program to all JETS swimmers. Listed below are the regulations and stipulations of that scholarship.

1. Amount of Scholarship

The scholarship is for a stipend of \$75 per year for each year that the swimmer is an active member of the JETS swim team. The year that the swimmer swims with the JETS is defined as the winter swimming season - basically from September until after the YMCA season concludes with the championship series, i.e., District/Area and/or Spring Nationals (not Summer Nationals). The Swim Team Banquet/Awards Dinner usually culminates this length of the swim year.

2. Swimmer/Family Obligations

The swimmer will have met all financial obligations to the team by the time the swimmer finishes his/her last year of eligibility with the JETS. The last year of eligibility with the JETS is identified as the winter swim season when the swimmer is a senior in high school, or the winter swim season that the swimmer is 18 years old.

3. Awarding of Scholarship

The scholarship will be in the form of a check. The scholarship monies will be awarded without any restrictions. The monies will be awarded at the Swim Team Banquet/Awards Dinner.

4. Swimmer Eligibility

The swimmer, in order to be eligible for this award, must be an active member of the JETS winter team during their senior year of high school or upon turning 18 years old. If a swimmer does not participate for the entire length of the winter season during their senior year of high school or turning 18 years old, they forfeit their eligibility for this scholarship. Exceptions are as follows:

- a. If a swimmer, during his/her swim career, swims with the JETS and then decides to swim with another team, but returns to the JETS for the start of the winter season before or during their senior year in high school or as an 18 year old, then the swimmer is eligible for the scholarship for all the years they swam with the JETS but not for any years that the swimmer swam with another team.
- b. If a swimmer swims for the JETS and then decides to terminate participation in the sport, but returns to the JETS for the start of the winter season before or during their senior year in high school or as an 18 year old, then the swimmer is once again eligible for the scholarship for all the years he/she swam with the JETS.
- c. If a swimmer, anytime during their swimming career, decides to participate in one school-sponsored sport, whose season overlaps part of the JETS winter season, i.e. high school swimming, junior high school volleyball, high school cross country, grade school cheerleading, etc. and then returns to swim the rest of the winter season with the JETS, that will still be construed as a full year of participation with the JETS.

5. Determination of Number of Eligible Winter Seasons

The Joliet Community Swim Association will be the governing body in determining the exact number of winter seasons that the swimmer swam with the JETS. Their decision will be final.

6. Duration of Scholarship Program

The 'Friends of Swimming' reserves the right to discontinue this scholarship at any time.

GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS

- "A" Cut – The time standard in a given age group/event for the USA Swimming "A" classification level.
- Age Group Meet – All USA Swimming registered swimmers, 18 years of age and younger who have met the qualifying time standard for a specific event(s) are eligible to participate in their age category. A swimmer's age on the first day of competition shall govern for the entire meet.
- American Swimming Coaches Association (ASCA) – The national coaches association which provides education, training, safety information, journals, and annual clinics for coaches. Visit www.swimmingcoach.org.
- "B" Cut – The time standard in a given age group/event for the USA Swimming "B" classification level.
- Backstroke (Back) – One of the four competitive strokes. Swimmers start in the water and may not roll onto their stomach, except during a continuous turning motion.
- Blocks – The starting platform swimmers dive off of to begin each race.
- Breaststroke (Breast) – One of the four competitive strokes best characterized by the simultaneous pulling motion with a frog-like whip kick.
- Bullpen – Area adjacent to the Clerk of Course in which swimmers are assembled and assigned to a heat.
- Butterfly (Fly) – One of the four competitive strokes best characterized by the simultaneous arm recovery over the surface and dolphin kick.
- Championship Seeding – See Circle Seeding.
- Circle Seeding – This is the seeding system used in Prelims where the final three heats of an event are arranged so that the three fastest swimmers occupy the middle or fastest lane in their heat; the next three fastest swimmers occupy the next fastest lane, etc.
- Classification of Meets – A swimmer's ability level determines his or her class of competition at USA meets. A, B, and C meets are sanctioned by ISI. Each class has USA time standards for each stroke at each age group. Swimmers new to competition are classified as "C" swimmers in the first meet. Thereafter, swimmers must check their meet result times against USA time standards to determine what class of competition to enter for each stroke and each distance. Quite often, a swimmer will be a "B" swimmer in one stroke at one distance and a "C" swimmer in another stroke at another distance. The levels are as follows: C, B, BB, A, AA, AAA, and AAAA.
- Clerk of Course – The person responsible for assigning heats and lanes to swimmers.
- Course – Designated distance over which the competition is conducted. Examples are 25 Yard, 25 Meter, or 50 Meter.
- Cuts – Qualifying times for specific types of championship meets.
- Deck Seeding – A procedure for assigning swimmers to the proper lanes and heats immediately before each event in the bullpen.
- Declared False Start – A procedure used to withdraw from an event. The swimmer must declare a false start prior to the announcement of his/her heat and must be present behind the blocks at the start of the race.
- Disqualification (DQ) – Swimmers who break a technical or procedural rule will be disqualified by an official. Examples may include a false start or improper stroke technique. Swimmers should not be discouraged by a DQ; they should learn from them.
- Dual Meet – Meets conducted between two teams. Dual meets sometimes have a limitation on the number of entrants per event from each team.
- Event – A race or series of races in a given stroke and distance. Usually swimmers are entered in three to four individual events and one relay per day at meets.
- Finals – The session of a meet where qualifying rounds (Prelims) were held previously to determine the finalists (usually 6-16 depending on pool size and whether or not consolation finals are conducted). Results of the finals determine the ultimate placements in a given event. Most prelim/final types of meets are at the championship level.
- Fly – See Butterfly.
- Freestyle (Free) – One of the four competitive strokes in which any means of propulsion may be used, except for pulling on lane lines, walking on the bottom, etc.
- Freestyle Relay – Four swimmers on each team, each swimmer swims one fourth of the distance using any desired stroke.
- Heat – A division of an event into a series of races. Each race is one heat. Heats are needed when more swimmers enter an event than there are lanes available in the pool.
- Heat Sheet – A list of swimmers entered in each event with their entry times, heats, and lanes.
- Illinois Swimming, Inc. – The Illinois administrative organization for USA Swimming. It is one of fifty-nine Local Swim Committees that make up USA Swimming. See www.ilswim.org.
- Individual Medley (IM) – In an IM, all four of the competitive strokes are swum by one swimmer. Each swimmer completes ¼ of the given distance using each stroke in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle.
- Invitational Meet – A sanctioned meet sponsored by a team with two or more teams invited to participate. Invitational meets are classified according to the level of competition.
- ISI – Abbreviation for Illinois Swimming, Inc.
- JCSA – Joliet Community Swim Association. The parent group that fundraises for the JETS.
- JETS – The official abbreviation and team code for the Joliet Jets YMCA Swim Team for use at all meets. Stands for Joliet's Energetic Team of Swimmers.
- Age Group State Championships – A meet held at the end of each season for 14&U's to determine the Illinois Age Group state champions. Qualifying times are faster and more events are offered than at the YMCA state level meet.

GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS (...CONTINUED)

Long Course (LC) – A type of competitive pool that measures 50 meters in length. The standard size for all International competition and all world record swims is the 50 meter course.

Medley Relay – A relay where the swimmers swim in the following order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Freestyle.

National Reportable Time (NRT) – A time that meets the criteria for reporting to USA Swimming for possible inclusion in that year's Top 16 list.

No Show (NS) – A case where a swimmer does not show up for a race and has not officially withdrawn from the event.

Prelims (Preliminary Heats) – In certain meets, the qualifying rounds held for each event to determine the finalists.

Proof of Time – A requirement at some meets to make certain that all entered swimmers have met the time standards. Swimmers who place in an event but don't swim fast enough to make the qualifying time must show proof of time before they will be given their award and points. At some meets like the Age Group Championships there are fines if you can't prove that you previously swam the qualifying time.

Psych Sheet – A meet program usually available for sale before deck seeded meets. The swimmers in each event are listed from fastest to slowest.

Referee – The official who has authority over all other officials at a meet. He enforces all rules, decides all questions about conduct of the meet, and is responsible for the efficient running of the meet.

Relay – An event where four swimmers swim one after the other for a total time.

Sanction – Official or authorized approval from USA Swimming or YMCA Swimming to sponsor a meet.

Scratch – Official withdrawal from an event.

Seeding – The process by which a swimmer is assigned a certain lane and heat in an event. Competitors in each heat are assigned to lanes based on their seedtime as follows:

6-lane pool – lane 3, 4, 2, 5, 1, 6 (fastest time in lane 3).
8-lane pool – lane 4, 5, 3, 6, 2, 7, 1, 8.
10-lane pool – lane 5, 6, 4, 7, 3, 8, 2, 9, 1, 10.

Short Course – A competitive pool that measures 25 yards or 25 meters in length. Fall & Winter competitions are generally held in short course pools.

Split – A per lap time that coaches often track to help swimmers learn how to swim a race more efficiently.

Starter – The official at a meet responsible for the proper, legal start of each race.

Stroke Judge – A certified official who determines the legality of swimmer's strokes and DQ's those who do not conform to the USS or YMCA rules.

Timed Finals – Competition in which individuals swim only one time. Final placements are determined by the times performed in all of the aggregate heats. Swimmers are seeded from the slowest to the fastest times.

Time Standards – Qualifying times which have been set up by the Y, ISI, and USA Swimming for all events in all levels of meets to insure that all competitors are of about the same speed.

Top 16 – A tabulation of the top 16 times in every age group and every event of all USA Swimming competitions from the previous season.

Touch Pad – The part of an electronic timing system that rests in the water at the end of each lane. Swimmers times are automatically recorded when the swimmer touches the pad.

Unattached – Swimmer's must swim unattached when switching from one club to another. A swimmer will be unattached for 120 days.

USA Swimming – The national governing body for amateur swimming in the United States, headquartered in Colorado Springs, CO.