

**WELCOME
TO THE
KANSAS CITY
BLAZERS
SWIM TEAM**

2008-2009

K.C. BLAZER FAMILY HANDBOOK

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Dear New Blazer Swimmers and Parents,

On behalf of the Kansas City Blazer Coaching staff, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome each of you to our team. I am very excited that you have selected the Blazers!

I have been the Head Coach and General Manager of the Kansas City Blazers since 1975. It has been a very rewarding experience. I take great pride in developing “world class citizens”. Our team is comprised of beginning novice athletes to World Ranked Athletes and Olympians. We have had many accomplished swimmers over the years, but our greatest accomplishment is challenging young people to **be the best that they can be**. Our swimming program is more than a sport for today – it is an education for tomorrow. There is a place for everyone on the Kansas City Blazers Swim Team.

I am very fortunate to work with a dedicated, professional coaching staff. They are talented leaders of young people. They are both enthusiastic and highly experienced.

Please get involved with this sport and team that your child has selected. I can guarantee that your child will benefit from your support and participation. Our parents are enthusiastic and very supportive.

I hope that you will find this information valuable to your family. We pride ourselves on excellent communication. I would also invite you to check our website www.kcblazers.com for more information. Other valuable resources include bulletin boards at each practice pool, monthly newsletters and Board Members. We also have numerous Parent Nights at each pool thru the year to keep you up to date. Please feel free to contact your Head Site Coach or our Business Manager with any questions that you may have.

Please remember that “life is a journey, not a destination”, and it is “the journey” that makes life so special!

Sincerely,

Peter D. Malone
Head Coach/General Manager
Kansas City Blazers

VISION STATEMENT

WE, THE KANSAS CITY BLAZERS, ARE COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE AND DEDICATED TO DEVELOPING WORLD CLASS CITIZENS AND WORLD CLASS ATHLETES.

MISSION STATEMENT

THE KANSAS CITY BLAZERS SWIM TEAM IS A COMPETITIVE PROGRAM SUPPORTED BY VOLUNTEERS WITH THE PURPOSE AND COMMITMENT TO:

- ADVANCE THE SPORT OF SWIMMING
- RECRUIT INDIVIDUALS WHO SHARE OUR VISION
- PROVIDE SWIMMERS WITH THE HIGHEST QUALITY COACHING
- CREATE AND MAINTAIN AN ENJOYABLE AND PRODUCTIVE SWIMMING ENVIRONMENT
- RECOGNIZE EACH INDIVIDUAL AND VALUE HIS OR HER ROLE IN THE SUCCESS OF OUR ORGANIZATION
- ENCOURAGE POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDES AND MUTUAL RESPECT
- TEACH AND DEVELOP LIFE SKILLS THROUGH OUR SWIMMING PROGRAM
- ENCOURAGE FAMILY PARTICIPATION
- PROVIDE SWIMMERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO GROW AND SUCCEED TO THEIR HIGHEST LEVEL, INCLUDING THE OLYMPIC DREAM

VALUES

- EXCELLENCE - REACH MAXIMUM POTENTIAL INDIVIDUALLY AS ATHLETES AND FINANCIALLY AS AN ORGANIZATION
- STRONG WORK/GOAL RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE BALANCED AND REALISTIC
- EDUCATIONALLY SOUND AND ETHICAL PROGRAM
- STAND UP TO THE ELEMENT OF TIME

**“CAPABLE OF PROVIDING AND FULFILLING
THE OLYMPIC DREAM”**

KC Blazers Team Objectives

Blazer Program objectives are based on the belief that a swimmer can only approach his/her potential by giving 100%. In a well-planned and directed program, all athletes can gain from their experiences, whether they win a single race or not. It is with this belief that the following objectives have been set:

- To provide opportunities for social interaction and emotional development
- To furnish a wholesome and worthwhile physical and recreational outlet
- To provide an opportunity to learn sportsmanship and make winners aware of team cooperation
- To provide a learning environment for both mind and body
- To provide training and competition to all swimmers who desire it
- To develop an elite team that is nationally and internationally geared to the top of our spectrum

Team Philosophy

The Kansas City Blazer Swim Team strives to instill in young athletes an understanding of and appreciation for such concepts as high self esteem, personal accountability, constructive self motivation, goal setting, and goal achievement as these ideas relate to their success in training and competition. It is our belief that the *process* of achieving is as significant as realizing the achievement itself. "Life is a journey, not a destination".

At each level of the KCB program, athletes are guided to strive for excellence. Excellence in this sense represents the achievement of that level at which you know that you have done your utmost to become the best you are capable of becoming. This philosophy is consistent throughout our program.

WHY YOU SHOULD BE GLAD YOUR CHILD SELECTED SWIMMING

Sports are supposed to be good for kids. In theory, a sport should build strong bodies, not tear them down. A sport should promote sportsmanship, self-discipline, and perseverance. Unfortunately, not all sports live up to these ideals. Swimming, however, does it quite well.

According to many authors of articles on sports for children, the fact that swimming uniquely develops the cardiovascular system to the maximum makes it an ideal sport for children since an efficient cardiovascular system is the key to life-long health. This is in addition to the fact that children run so little risk of injury in swimming. Swimming is rated as a "most desirable" sport on insurance company premiums.

Swimming is a "sport" in the true sense of the word. It is a pursuit or a striving for excellence. Its very nature demands self-discipline and great strength of purpose. It is not merely an athletic "contest" which requires a minimum of training and maximum luck. There can be no teammates or bad luck to blame in swimming. There is only the swimmer, the water, and the watch. Swimmers, more than most, learn early the relationship between work and results. Exceptional size and ability are soon overshadowed by hard work.

The striving for excellence, absent in so many sports, is what the ancient Greeks revered as being that which brings out the finest qualities in humankind. And, supposedly, the development of these qualities is the reason for a sports curriculum in schools.

It is also worth noting that the growing national prestige of swimmers is paralleled by a rapidly increasing number of college scholarships for both men and women. This makes swimming a practical sport as well.

Swimming makes sense.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this publication is to prepare parents of children who have just joined the K.C. Blazer Swim Team for the complexities and promises of the world of USA SWIMMING. We hope that you will find the time to read this handbook in its entirety, for it is an established fact that the positive influence of a swimmer's parents is essential for success. There are virtually no swimmers who have been successful without supportive parents

From the beginning, you should know that your children's involvement in the Blazers will necessitate your assuming certain responsibilities and will require a substantial investment of both your time and money. But the amount of this investment, when compared to the benefits to your child, will seem small, in the long run.

However, as a "swimming parent", you will not only have responsibilities, you will also have opportunities - opportunities to really "get to know" your children in pressure situations; opportunities to praise and applaud their achievements; and even more importantly, opportunities to help them deal with their non-achievements - to redirect them - to learn from them - and in the end, to gain from them. In today's fast-paced society, there are few chances for parents to interact with their children on this kind of level. We feel these opportunities alone will make their career in swimming worthwhile.

Additionally, USA SWIMMING will offer both you and your children the opportunity to meet and make friends with people from all over the Missouri Valley (Kansas and Missouri). Because of these friendships, as well as for the love of the sport itself, many parents will stay in swimming in some official capacity or another even after their children have retired.

OBJECTIVES OF YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAMS

1. To have fun.
2. To develop motor skills and fundamentals of sports.
3. To teach children how to cooperate.
4. To develop a sense of achievement leading to positive self-esteem.
5. To develop interest in and a desire to continue participation in sports in later years.
6. To help develop independence through interdependent activities.
7. To promote and convey the values of society.
8. To contribute to moral development.
9. To develop social competencies.
10. To help bring the family together.
11. To develop speed, strength, endurance, coordination, flexibility, and agility.
12. To develop leadership skills.
13. To develop self-reliance and emotional stability by learning to make decisions and accept responsibilities.
14. To teach sportsmanship.
15. To develop initiative.
16. To teach children how to compete.
17. To teach goal setting and goal achievement.

ORGANIZATION

The K.C. Blazer Swim Team is a USA SWIMMING club with affiliations to the Missouri Valley Local Swimming Committee (LSC). In Kansas it is a program of Johnson County Park and Recreation District, while in Missouri it is overseen by an elected Board of Directors.

It is essentially a program for kids who really want to become competitive swimmers. That is to say, it is for kids who are willing to dedicate a generous amount of time and effort to the pursuit of a difficult goal - swimming excellence. To that end, the program offers year-round training, (from 2 to 6 days a week) depending on where we are in the season, all in conjunction with individualized stroke instruction. Swimmers compete in USA SWIMMING-sanctioned meets.

As mentioned, the Blazers are a USA SWIMMING Club. USA SWIMMING is the nationwide governing body for amateur swimming. Its authority is from the United States Olympic Committee. In order to compete in USA SWIMMING one must purchase a yearly USA SWIMMING membership.

USA SWIMMING is headquartered in Colorado Springs, CO, at the Olympic Training Headquarters. The country is divided geographically into LSCs very much like leagues. We reside in the Missouri Valley. The Missouri Valley LSC extends to Columbia, Missouri in the east, to the northern border of Oklahoma in the south, to the Nebraska and Iowa borders, in the north, and to the western border of Kansas.

The national rules and government of USA SWIMMING are detailed in the USA SWIMMING Code Handbook. This publication is more pertinent to the technical side of swimming. The local rules and government of the Missouri Valley local committee are detailed in the Missouri Valley Aquatic Handbook and are posted at www.missourivalleyswimming.org.

We provide exposure to local, regional, national, and international competitions. USA Swimming affords individual opportunities to compete at the highest levels available in amateur athletics.

The Kansas City Blazers are a USA Swimming Gold Medal Club !

The Blazers have a proud tradition of excellence and have achieved the highest level of club recognition provided by USA Swimming. The award is based upon the FINA Power Points Rating System method and club structure.

KC BLAZER

Accomplishments since 1975

- Won the Missouri Valley District Championship -short course 1977-present.
- Won the Missouri Valley District Championship -long course 1978, 1980-present.
- *Blazers* Team won Region VIII championship 1982-1995 and 1997-1999, 2001-2003.
- *Blazers* swimmers have represented the U.S.A. in international meets 1978 through present.
- *Blazers* swimmers have qualified for every Olympic trials since 1976.
- *Blazers* swimmers traditionally rank in the top ten in the nation and in the top twenty in the world.
- Placed in Top 10 Teams at Junior Championships, 1983-1986, 1988-1995, 1998, and 1999-2000.
- Blazer Women Placed fourth at 1999 Phillips 66 National Championships.
- Placed in Top 20 Teams at Senior Nationals 1980 & 1982-1986, 1989, 1996, 1999 and 2000-2002.
- *Blazers* swimmers have broken and hold National Age Group Records.
- *Blazers* have qualified swimmers for Senior Nationals and Junior Championships every year since 1975.
- Debbie Risen-first *Blazers* National Champion, 1982, 100 yard backstroke.
- Nadia Kruger - first *Blazers* Olympic competitor Swiss Olympic Team, 1984, in the 400 & 800 meter freestyle.
- Mark Dean - first *Blazers* U.S. Olympic Team Member in the 200 Butterfly in 1988.
- Janie Wagstaff - Member of the 1990 U.S. World Championship Team and member 1992 U.S. Olympic team, 100 & 200 Backstrokes and **gold medalist** 400 Medley Relay, and American Record Holder 100 and 200 Backstroke and 400 Medley Relay.
- Catherine Fox - Member of the 1994 U.S. Pan Am Team and 1996 U.S. Olympic Team; **gold medalist** 400 Freestyle Relay, 1998 U.S. World Championship Team member and American Record Holder, 100 Backstroke.
- Katie Yevak - 1998 National Champion 200 Breaststroke; Bronze Medalist, 1999 Pan Am Games.
- Bobby Bollier- US Open Champion 2008 200 Butterfly, 2008 Olympic Trials Top 8, World University Games 2009

TEAM COMMUNICATION

Good communication is vital to the success of any organization, and the K.C. Blazers is no exception. We have set up various systems to help with the disbursement of information to our swimmers and families. Our website www.kcblazers.com is the most valuable communication tool that we have. Please bookmark it and check it regularly.

1. Swimmer Mailboxes
Each swimmer will have a file folder at their practice pool. Swimmers will have access to these files before and after practice. Meet lists and information, schedule changes, newsletters, flyers, and meet awards are distributed through these files. Please remind your swimmer to check their mail box at every practice. **WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO CHECK IN THEIR SWIMMERS BAGS FOR INFORMATION. IF YOUR FILE IS MISSING, PLEASE TELL YOUR COACH!**
2. Posters/Bulletin Board
We will post meet lists, meet entries, newsletters, flyers, schedule changes, etc. at each pool. Try to take a look at the bulletin board **AT LEAST** once per week.
3. Phone Tree
In the event of a last minute schedule change or cancellation, we will rely on the team roster phone tree to call all swim team members who are affected.
4. Mailings
We will mail especially important information, such as new season schedule information and end of the season swimmer reports.
5. www.kcblazers.com
Our website is a wealth of information. Meet schedules, lists, maps, results, and much more is available there. Last minute schedule changes and cancellation information will be posted on the front page. **THIS IS OUR MOST VALUABLE COMMUNICATION TOOL. PLEASE CHECK REGULARLY.**
6. E-Mail
The fastest and most efficient form of communication for us is e-mail. Please provide us with an email address that you check on a regular basis. Last minute practice changes and other timely information will be handled this way. **ALSO-** one of the best ways to communicate with our Coaches is email.
7. Verbal
Our Coaches make announcements before, during and after practices. Please ask your swimmers about the daily announcements.
8. Monthly Newsletter – A monthly newsletter will be available to all families. It is posted on our website and emailed to each family.
9. Parent Meetings – Meetings will be conducted several times a year to provide parents more information on the sport of competitive swimming, upcoming events and much more. Your attendance is required.
10. An **outgoing** message line- **BLAZER HOTLINE** will be available to members for last minute messages of practice cancellation, pool schedule changes, etc. Please call (913-362-2127 X 1215) This is for outgoing messages only.

Not only do the coaches need to communicate with the team, but the team needs to communicate with the coaches. Communication between swimmer and coach is rarely a problem since they spend so much time together. For parents, however, time is limited. While we do not currently have a closed deck policy, which means our team parents may watch our swim practices if they choose to, we do ask that parents refrain from approaching a coach with questions, etc., during practice. It is distracting and, therefore, unfair to the swimmers in the water. All coaches are available for very brief issues after practice. The preferred time to speak to a coach is via phone or email to schedule a mutually convenient time. The coaching staff maintains the following office hours:

Monday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Evenings & Weekends By appointment

NOTE: Coaches will occasionally miss office hours due to swim meets, etc.

BLAZER TRAINING PROGRAMS

SWIM SEASON

The Blazer swim year runs from mid-September through the first week in August. We break our swim year into three “Phases”. Phase I runs from September to December and ends with either the Level I or Level II Championship Meet. Phase II runs from January to March and ends with Short Course Division I or Division II. Phase III runs from April to August and ends the year with Long Course Division I or the Zone Championship Meet.

Fall through Spring

Blues and Gold - Shawnee Mission North High School, Blue Valley North High School, Blue Valley West High School, Olathe- California Trail Junior High School, and Roeland Park Aquatic Center

Elite - Roeland Park Aquatic Center

Summer

Blue and Gold - Roeland Park Aquatic Center, Lenexa- Indian Trail Park, Blue Valley

Elite – Lenexa- Ad Astra Pool

Blazers East

Gold, Senior, Blue and Novice –Longview Community College, Lee’s Summit, MO

SWIMMER EQUIPMENT

Each swimmer will need practice suits, goggles, towel and a WATER BOTTLE and sneakers for each practice. Practice suits may be of any brand but “meet suits” must be Speedo. We are a Speedo sponsored team and only compete in Speedo. Suits and Goggles may be purchased anywhere. Swim Quik is the official dealer of Blazer apparel. Swim Quik carries Blazer shirts, sweats , parkas, and caps and offers a team discount on these items. Blazer swim caps are required at meets and are available for purchase from your coach for \$3.00 at meets or at practice.

The Blazers provide kickboards, pull buoys, and paddles for all blue swimmers. They are kept at the pool and used when necessary. If swimmers wish to purchase their own equipment and carrying bag they may do so through Swim Quik.

GROUP DESCRIPTIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

To help you understand what our expectations will be, we have developed these guidelines. We will use these to help us determine what group you will swim in. These are not rules and they can be adjusted to suit your individual needs and goals in swimming. These guidelines will assist us in promotions from group to group and setting direction in each group. They help the athlete determine the objectives and responsibility of the group they are entering.

NOVICE

Age Requirements – 6 and older

Attendance Requirements – twice weekly, either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday

Practice Requirements – Must be able to swim 25 yards of freestyle with bilateral (on both sides) breathing and 25 yards of backstroke. Proficient form is not required. Swimmer should be able to pay attention to coach instruction.

Time Standards – None

Group Emphasis – The main focus in this group will be on increasing the efficiency of freestyle and backstroke and teaching breaststroke and butterfly. Start and turn technique will be taught with an introduction to interval training and clock reading.

BLUE

Age Requirements – 6 and older

Attendance Requirements – at least twice weekly, either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday

Practice Requirements – Swimmers should be able to legally swim freestyle, backstroke, butterfly and breaststroke.

Time Standards – Swimmers should strive to achieve Division II time standards

Group Emphasis – This group's primary concentration will be on advancing stroke technique in all four strokes with the addition of interval sets to better prepare them for the next level. A continuation of start and turn work will also be emphasized. Flip turns should be implemented at every wall for freestyle and backstroke and perform legal turns for butterfly, breaststroke and individual medley transitions. Swimmers should begin developing leadership skills in the pool (lead your lane) and during stretching and exercises. Blue swimmers should become familiar with their body's operating habits (sleeping, eating, and time management). Swimmers should learn to adjust productively to the working conditions in their land, including set intervals using the pace clock, interactions and lane etiquette with teammates, various water conditions, and equipment problems (*e. g.*, leaky goggles) during sets. Swimmers should be able to make 10 x 50 freestyle on 1:15 holding under 1:00 on each swim.

ADVANCED BLUE

Age Requirements – Ages 8 and older

Attendance Requirements – two to five practices per week

Practice Requirements – 10x50 freestyle on 1:00 holding under: 50 on each swim, and proficiency in four competitive strokes.

Time Standards – Swimmers should strive to make Division I or II times.

Group Emphasis – The emphasis of this group will be stroke mechanics with further introduction to competition, training, starts and turns, and dry land exercises. Flip turns should be implemented at every wall for freestyle and backstroke and perform legal turns for butterfly, breaststroke and individual medley transitions. Swimmers should be able to make 10 x 50 freestyle on 1:00. You should be learning to be a leader in the pool (lead your lane) and during stretching and exercises. Swimmers should be willing to learn about themselves and their potential capabilities by working towards achieving the challenges set before them. They should have the desire to improve their swimming. Swimmers should encourage themselves and others to work hard, listen carefully to instructions, and demonstrate a positive attitude about swimming. The concepts of mental training and race preparation are introduced in this group.

GOLD

Age Requirements – Ages 11 through High School Swimmers

Attendance Requirements – four to six practice attendance per week

Practice Requirements – 5x200 freestyle on 3:00, 5x200 IM on 4:00 (all held under 3:30).

Time Standards – Swimmers 11 – 12 years should have all Division I times. Swimmers 13 and older should have all Division II times and be striving for Division I times.

Group Emphasis – The Gold Group is a “bridge” group between the Blue Program (Novice, Blue, and Advanced Blue) and the Elite Group. Gold swimmers are generally age groupers 11 through 18 years of age who have attained Division I time standards and who are committed enough to the sport to practice at least four times (out of six practices available) for a period of two and a half hours per practice (with at least an hour and 45 minutes in the pool). Gold swimmers are expected to participate in LSC championship meet competition. The priorities in the Gold Group are skill development and physical conditioning, along with the development of mental training and race preparation concepts. You should be willing to be a leader in the pool (lead your lane) and during stretching and exercising. You should demonstrate good sportsmanship by encouraging younger or less experienced Blazers to work hard towards their goals and support the goals of your teammates. You should demonstrate healthy eating and sleeping habits and manage your time wisely. You should be able to set short-term and long-term personal and swimming goals, and from these develop daily “mini-goals”. Swimmers will begin to work more with race strategy. Conditioning takes on a greater importance to the athlete. All previous technical instruction will be continued and advanced.

SENIOR

Age Requirements – High School Swimmers only

Attendance Requirements – Same attendance expectations as Gold Swimmers

Time Standards – Swimmers should have all Division II times and be striving for Division I times.

Group Emphasis – You should demonstrate good sportsmanship by encouraging younger or less experienced Blazers to work hard towards their goals and support the goals of your teammates. You should demonstrate healthy eating and sleeping habits and manage your time wisely. You should be able to set short-term and long-term personal and swimming goals, and from these develop daily “mini-goals”. Swimmers will begin to work more with race strategy. Conditioning takes on a greater importance to the athlete. All previous technical instruction will be continued and advanced. Swimmers should be positive representatives of the Blazers Swim Team when representing their high school team. Swimmers are expected to maintain attendance requirements up until and upon conclusion of their high school swimming seasons.

ELITE

Age Requirements-Should be a freshman in high school or beyond

Attendance Requirements- 90 % of all practices offered minimum of six times per week.

Practice Requirements – 15 x 100 on 1:20, averaging 1:15 or faster, 10 x 200 on 2:45, averaging 2:30 or faster

Time Standards Sectional /Region VIII standards

Group Emphasis-Swimming is a very high priority in your life, striving for personal excellence and Elite level performance. You should be able to handle time management of your swim schedule and schoolwork. You should demonstrate good teamsmanship by helping your teammates reach their goals by your positive encouragement and actions. You should have the support of your family to help you reach Elite level performances. This includes providing you the opportunity to be a responsible and dedicated member of the Elite Group. You should be motivated to operate in the proper training environment as a young adult and be responsible for yourself and in control of the factors that operate your body (sleep, nutrition, and psychological preparation). Elite swimmers are those with Sectional/Region VIII qualifying times in events they practice between six and eleven times per week, including significant cross training with dry land activities. Elite swimmers strive to participate at the National level.

PARENTS WATCHING PRACTICE

The BLAZER coaching staff encourages parents to watch practice from time to time. It's probably not best to watch practice everyday nor is it healthy to never come to the pool. The reality of transporting young athletes and carpools is that many parents are present every day; however you don't necessarily need to watch every minute of practice. Here are some important guidelines to keep in mind when observing a practice.

First, young swimmers want their parents' approval more than anything. If they know you are watching practice, it's only natural for some of their attention to be directed at you. However, for the swimmers to learn as much as possible, it is imperative that the coaches have your child's undivided attention during practice. We ask that you not communicate with your child during practice and compete with the coach for his/her attention.

Second, we insist that parents **do not interrupt the coaches on deck while they are coaching**. If you need to communicate with a coach, please do so before or after practice (if they are not coaching another group) or during their office hours (M-F 10-2). This is a safety issue.

Third, our coaches spend a considerable amount of time planning weekly training sessions for each of their practice groups. Each training set or instructional drill has a purpose and one practice and/or practice set often builds on another throughout the week. If you have not attended all practice sessions, you may not understand the purpose of what the swimmers are doing on any given day.

Finally, please do not try to coach your child based on what you see (or think you don't see) him/her do. Many times when teaching stroke skills, the coaches ask our swimmers to do things that might not look correct or might actually be illegal according to the rules, but does have an important purpose in teaching skills (i.e. swimming one-arm fly or breaststroke with a flutter kick).

With these various reasons in mind, we ask parents to stay off the pool deck during practices and not attempt to interfere with your child based on what you observe at practice. Please leave the coaching to the coaches of the team of which you have chose to be a part. Parents whose swimmers practice at **Roeland Park Aquatic Center** should watch practice from the zero depth area to the right of the revolving door. Please avoid sitting on the end of the pool, past the corner at zero depth. Parents of the **S.M. North** site may sit in the bleachers near the deep end (diving board) of the pool. Parents at **B.V. North** are asked to remain in the bleachers. Parents at the **California Trail** site are asked to observe practice sessions from the bleacher area. During our summer schedule at the **Lenexa pool**, parents may watch practice from anywhere outside the fence or may sit in the picnic/concession area on the south side of the pool

Thanks for your cooperation and support. Please contact your child's coach if you have any questions.

GENERAL NUTRITION GUIDELINES

The USA Swimming website, www.usa-swimming.org, offers a tremendous nutrition tracker that is available and applicable to swimmers of all abilities and ages. Check it out, and make use of it!

SWIM CAMPS AND PRIVATE COMPETITIVE STROKE INSTRUCTION

There is a good deal of confusion over the place that summer swim camps and private stroke instruction have in the Blazer Program. Our positions on these issues have changed over the last 27 years, but the basic philosophy is the same. One unified coaching philosophy is necessary to have continuity in the program from year to year and from swimmer to swimmer.

The summer swim camps, as advertised in *Swimming World* or even in some of our own heat sheets, are camps run at colleges and universities, by the local college coach. Their primary purpose is to raise money for that particular swim coach. It is not the intent that the camp be an addendum to a current program or that it meet needs specific to individual swimmers involved in a long-term, forward-looking program like the Blazers.

The positive of these types of camps is the same as any other type of summer camp. There are fun and offer new faces and friends that share swimming in common. The negative aspect is that since these camps are not a part of a planned program, they are often run to meet the needs of the basic level swimmer. Therefore swimmers coming from upper level programs like the Blazers may end up out of shape after a one- or two-week camp. We caution parents from sending swimmers to these camps and always warn swimmers of the danger of coming back one or two weeks behind the training and learning curves of their teammates. This is especially difficult during our abbreviated summer season where two weeks can amount to 25% of the training time for a Division I level swimmer and 30% for a Division 2 swimmer.

United States Swimming runs a series of swim camps at the national and LSC levels. The length of these camps can vary from one day to one week. They are aimed at the development of swimmers trying to reach the highest levels in the sport of swimming. Swimmers qualify for the camps based on time performance and recommendation of the home club coach. These camps conform to the rigorous standards of our National Teams. Swimmers and coaches must sign codes of conduct and conform themselves to the highest standards. All of the Blazer swimmers who have made Olympic teams have attended USA-Swimming camps, and *none have ever felt the need to attend private summer type camps or to take private stroke instruction on the side.*

In past years parents have sent their swimmers to take private stroke instruction. Again, the problem we run into is that most private instructors learned their strokes through the American Red Cross or from another aquatic background. While the Red Cross has just recently recognized butterfly as a legitimate stroke to teach, instructors are not required to keep up on changes in competitive techniques, as are the members of the Blazers coaching staff. The constant changes in backstroke and breaststroke techniques alone make it necessary to update coach's education on a continuing basis. The teaching of stroke techniques is a regular part of each practice due to these constant changes. Swimmers who apply the information received from their coaches will have the necessary techniques needed to progress through the many levels of successful competitive program like the Kansas City Blazers.

If you wish to have your children attend a summer swimming camp or to take private swimming lessons, the first thing you must ask yourself is "Why?" Will the camp coaching staff or the private teacher be as well educated as the Blazers coaching staff or be consistent with the Blazer program philosophies? Will the coaches be working towards your season and career goals? Why do top swimmers from all over the country contact us to join us for the summer?

There is no magic bullet. There is no magic powder to sprinkle on someone to make him or her become a faster swimmer. The only magic is in the day-to-day pursuit of excellence at the individual, family and team level. It is crucial that you communicate with your coach and be up front with them. Telling your coach you are going on vacation when you are really sending kids to a camp only serves to build distrust between parents and coaches. If you feel that we are not meeting your child's needs tell the coach then we can fix the problem or the perception. We may have missed something or the swimmer may not be getting what we are presenting. These are all correctable problems.

SWIM MEETS

K.C. BLAZERS ATTENDING MEETS

While swimmers train for many reasons – to improve their strokes, their health, and their level of conditioning – ultimately, most swimmers train in order to compete. The coaching staff firmly believes in the value of competition for all levels including novice. Racing is fun, and most swimmers will eventually NEED this motivation to work hard. For this reason, we encourage parents to encourage their swimmers to participate in meets as soon and frequently as possible.

All Blazer swimmers MUST be registered with United States Swimming regardless of whether they choose to compete or not. USA Swimming provides the Blazers with insurance for REGISTERED swimmers. REGISTRATION EXPIRES ON DECEMBER 31st EACH YEAR. If you were registered for a seasonal program, you will need to register for the following year before you can enter the water for fall practice (seasonal registrations expire on August 31).

This chapter explains the procedures for entering swim meets and what to do once you get there. While it may seem complicated at first, after you have done it once or twice, it will all become routine - honestly.

1. USA SWIMMING Membership - As mentioned above, in order to participate in USA SWIMMING swim meets, a swimmer must be a USA SWIMMING member. The team renews memberships every Fall if you previously swam with the Blazers. You will receive a form at tryouts that will be filled out and the appropriate funds taken from your escrow to register.

Those swimmers that are new to the Blazers and have competed within the Missouri Valley LSC must check with the local USA SWIMMING office for their card number when they change teams. We must then calculate 120 days from their last competition date and apply for a new USA SWIMMING registration. The swimmer will be unattached (not able to swim on Blazers relays, or score Blazer points) for that 120 day waiting period. Swimmers that come to the Blazers from another LSC must bring their USA SWIMMING number and card with them, as well as a release form from their former LSC. They also must wait 120 days after their last day of competition to become attached to the Blazers. The USA SWIMMING membership will provide them with insurance coverage at practices and meets. This is a very inexpensive method of providing additional insurance and liability coverage for your child. It is highly recommended that all parents and required of the officials to become USA SWIMMING members to take advantage of this coverage as well as supporting the sport your child is in.

2. Swim Meets - A USA SWIMMING swim meet is a lot like a party in that a particular club decides to host a meet and then sends out invitations to each team. These invitations are called “Meet Information” and are posted at the pool you swim at and on our website. Each individual swim meet has a particular format which restricts entries in some way. Each meet will have either an “age-group” format where each event is broken down into age group, i.e. 9 - 10 50 yard freestyle, where only those swimmers who are 9 or 10 years old may enter that event; or a “senior” format where anyone can swim those events, no matter how old, as long as they have previously swam a fast enough time to meet the “senior time standard” for that event.

Some meets are designed to accommodate only the slower swimmers. These meets will be either “B” standards or “C” standards swim meets where a swimmer must not have swam faster than the time standard. “C” time standards are usually where beginners start out. As they swim faster, they will progress with B, BB, A, AA, AAA, AAAA time standards. Then there are those meets that are designed to accommodate the largest number of swimmers. They are called combination meets. An example of this would be an “A-B Senior Combination Meet”.

The coach will often require a swimmer to swim a particular event or encourage the swimmer to swim another event. The coaches pick certain “team meets” which everyone is *strongly urged* to attend. Team competition where team scores are kept are an important part of the Blazer competition. Individual performances do affect the winning of team championships, such as Division I and Central Sectional/Region VIII. All relay efforts are especially important. B, C, & D relays are often the ones that help the point situation out the most.

3. Meet Procedures - It is important that you understand meet procedures and how it relates to you.

- A. Approximately 3-4 weeks prior to any meet, USA SWIMMING Invitational, Dual or Intrasquad, meet information and a meet list is posted on the pool bulletin board and placed in your swimmer’s mailbox as well as posted on our website. It is your responsibility to check all 3 places for your name. In addition, each meet list has a rejection deadline with complete instructions on how to reject at the bottom of the page. If a rejection is not received, your child will be entered in the meet and will be counted on, and charged, for his/her participation and will be responsible for any entry fees. It is very important that the rejection be

received in the event of non-participation by the deadline. The Coaches must complete an entry for each swimmer attending a meet and submit these to the meet director of the hosting team with entry payment about 10 days prior to the meet. These payments are non-refundable therefore we are unable to issue you a refund.

- B. The coaches determine what events the swimmer will swim in the meet. We follow the philosophy that each swimmer will participate in all events that he is capable of doing. Sometimes a swimmer will be entered in an event that he doesn't feel is his strongest, but the Coach still wants him to have the experience of trying. Parents should try to support the Coaches and encourage their swimmer to do his best. The ten-year-old breaststroker with an illegal fly could very well become a National Champion flyer years later. Early experience in all strokes and events is an important part of the swimmer's total development both in terms of skills, and in terms of developing positive attitudes towards difficult tasks. We do not allow scratching except in special circumstances determined by the coach.
- C. Swimmers should only swim in meets that the coaches recommend. Swimmers or parents are not allowed to enter in meets outside the Blazers schedule without prior approval of their head site coach and Head Coach Peter D. Malone. This is to insure that a swimmer is not run too hard on competition and also to keep us together as a team.
- D. All meet entries, either invitational or dual meets, are posted on the pool bulletin boards and www.kcblazers.com, so a swimmer may write down what they are going to swim at the meet (catch potential entry mistakes by the coach) and also get the location and starting time. Remember, swimmers are to report to coaches for warm-up in their suits at the time stated on the meet list ready to go for a short team meeting.
- E. All swimmers should have a navy blue team suit (Speedo), yellow Blazer swim cap, and a Blazer T-shirt for meets. We want to be the sharpest and best team in the Midwest and show our *Blazer pride!*
- F. The coaches create relay line-ups. When possible, relays are put together by our computers to make the fastest combination of swimmers available. Exceptions could occur if a swimmer is late to warm-up, hasn't made all of the practices that week, etc. Parents need to support these coaching decisions. Of course, it's not easy to look at your "baby" with tears in his eyes and support the coach. It's hard, but try to encourage team spirit, help him cheer for his friends, and let him know that with hard work he too can earn a relay spot. If your child has a problem with swimming, encourage him to take the responsibility of talking to his coach. This can be a positive learning experience and a real step toward growing up.
- G. Each swimmer should keep a current record on a chart posted in his or her room, or a log book, showing times in every meet, best present times, and cut-offs. This is very beneficial to get a visual picture of the swimmer's progression through a season and from season to season.

Transportation to Out-Of-Town Meets - Swimmers are responsible for arranging their own transportation to out-of-town meets, as well as hotel reservations unless it is a "team trip".

Showing Up At The Meet - Your swimmer will have already been informed as to what time to be at the pool to warm-up. These times appear on the meet list that you received and are also available on our website. Swimmers should arrive at the time stated on the meet list for stretching and a short team meeting. It is essential for a swimmer to have a proper warm-up and be on time to avoid being "scratched" from the meet. Some meets last one day; some run the entire weekend. If you wish, you can car-pool with another family to cut down on the time that you must spend at a meet. However, you should make the effort to attend as much as possible. Your child will appreciate it, and you may even get to like it. Many lasting friendships have been established with parents at swim meets.

Planning For The Meet: You should receive directions to the pool either on the bulletin board, in the mailboxes, or a map will be available on our website. In addition you should know the warm-up time and plan on being to the pool early so your swimmer can calmly change into his or her suit, speak with friends, greet the coach, and participate in team stretching before the actual in-water warm-up time begins.

When packing for the meet, be sure your swimmer includes team swimsuit, extra suit for warm-ups or emergencies, 2 team caps, 2 pair of goggles, waterproof sun screen if outdoors, several towels, dry clothes for after the meet, and a water bottle. Other items include books, games, cards, radio/headset, blanket or sleeping bag, shampoo, and soap. Healthy snacks of

fruit and grains will help maintain energy levels throughout the session. If your swimmer is swimming in the morning session, have him pack his bags the night before. Parents, too, need to plan ahead. Some things you will appreciate having include money, map, cooler, book, pen/pencil, highlighter, lawn chairs, sun glasses, and sun block. Dress appropriately as it can be very warm in indoor pool areas.

Most USA Swimming meets have concessions that serve anything from doughnuts and coffee to nacho chips, pizza, hot dogs, sandwiches and salads – snacks for parents but usually not suitable for swimmers. Bring “swimmer food”.

Heat sheets (program) will also be available at an additional cost. Some sheets will cover all weekend, every session, some will be mornings or afternoons for the whole weekend, and others may be for just one session. The price will vary depending upon how much is included. It is a good idea to buy one so you can see what events your swimmer is in, where she is seeded in her event, and to help you to keep track of what's happening.

Some meets offer apparel sales such as goggles (when the emergency ones from home are lost or broken), swim suits (sale and expensive), t-shirts, bags, and an assortment of swimming paraphernalia. Some shops take bank cards, some only checks and cash. Come prepared. Setting some spending guidelines at home before the meet might help avoid clashes with your swimmer at the meet.

What to expect during the meet: During the warm up you can study the heat sheet and find your swimmer's events. Use your highlighter to mark your child's heat and lane and other Blazer swimmers. You will note that there could be 50 or more other swimmers in the same event. Since everyone cannot possibly swim at the same time, the event will be swum in heats of six to ten swimmers, depending on the number of lanes in the pool. Heats are swum from slowest seed time to fastest in timed final meets. Hopefully your swimmer will be in a heat with other swimmers who swim approximately as fast as she does. In a timed final meet, swimmers swim only once in each event. The final result of the event is based on the times for everyone who swam the event. It is possible for a swimmer to win his heat (a neat accomplishment!) but not place in the top six or ten. Final results for the event will be posted somewhere (ask!) so your swimmer can check his official time and place.

In a prelim and finals meet the fastest six, eight, 12, 16, or 24 swimmers from the preliminary heats in each event return for the finals, usually in the evening. In the finals there will often be two heats, the final heat consisting of the fastest six or eight swimmers, and a consolation heat with the next six to eight fastest swimmers. In some senior meets a third final heat called the “bonus final” is also offered. Swimmers cannot move up in place beyond their heat regardless of time. A swimmer who wins the consolation final with a time faster than the last place finisher in the final heat cannot move ahead of the finals swimmer. Confused? Ask the coach!

And finally, the best advice of all: As parents, try to stress your swimmer's personal accomplishments - best times, first time, and so on. Don't make too big a deal about awards one way or another.

What to Watch at a Swimming Meet

The following is a brief summary of the rules governing competitive swimming to help convey a better understanding of the sport.

The Racing Course

The length of a short course pool is 25 yards (or sometimes meters). Most racing courses have six to eight lanes and rules require the diving or starting end of the pool to be four feet deep or deeper. The temperature should be between 78-80 degrees Fahrenheit. The long course pool is 50 meters long.

Freestyle Events

In a freestyle event, competitors may swim any stroke they wish, the usual stroke being the Front Crawl, characterized by the alternate overhand motion of the arms.

Backstroke Events

In backstroke, swimmers must stay on their backs except during turns. The stroke is an alternating motion of the arms. Rules allow a swimmer to turn over and do flip turns as in freestyle, before touching the wall with their feet. Backstroke turn rules are a source of continuous confusion for the inexperienced.

Breaststroke Events

Perhaps one of the most difficult strokes to master, the breaststroke, requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pushed forward from the breast on or under the surface of the water and brought backward in the propulsive stage of the stroke simultaneously. The kick is a simultaneous thrust of the legs. No flutter or dolphin kicking is allowed. At each turn a swimmer must touch with both hands at the same time.

Butterfly Events

The most beautiful and physically demanding stroke, the butterfly features the simultaneous overhead stroke of the arms combined with the dolphin kick. The dolphin kick features both legs moving up and down together. No flutter kicking is allowed.

Individual Medley Events

The individual medley, commonly referred to as the "IM," features all four competitive strokes. The swimmer begins with the butterfly, then the backstroke, the breaststroke next and finally the freestyle.

Medley Relay

In the medley relays different swimmers swim all four strokes. The relay begins with the backstroke, then the breaststroke, followed by the butterfly, and finally the freestyle.

Freestyle Relay

There are three freestyle relays that compete over 200, 400 or 800 yards. Four swimmers each swim a quarter of the race.

Starts and Turns

In the start, the swimmer is called to the starting position by the starter who visually checks that all swimmers are down and still. Once the starter is satisfied, the race is started by gun or electronic tone.

If the starter feels the one of the swimmers has jumped early, the offending swimmer will be disqualified.

Quick turns are essential to a good race. In all events, the swimmer must touch the wall. In the freestyle and backstroke, the swimmer may somersault as she reaches the wall, touching only with the feet. In the other two competitive events, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands before executing the turn.

Strategies

The sprint races (50 or 100 yards) are an all-out effort from start to finish. The 200-yard events require a sense of pace as well as the ability to swim a controlled sprint. Distance events (500 or 1650 yards) usually are either swum holding the same pace evenly throughout the race or negatively split (where pace gets faster as the race progresses).

DIVISION I AND DIVISION II MEETS

These are the two most confusing meets to swimmers and parents. They are our LSC championship meets and for most of our age groupers the culmination of the short course and long course seasons. First, you must achieve a time standard in any event to qualify for the DI or DII Championships. If you enter a race and do not swim the qualifying time, we are asked to produce the meet result showing where the time standard was swum. If a coach and swimmer cannot prove the swimmer's time, we are assessed a \$25.00 fine and the athlete may be precluded from further competition. The coaches cannot be flexible at all when entering swimmers in these meets.

The **Division II Short Course (Winter)** meet is prelims/finals. This means everyone will swim the events in the morning (Prelims). The fastest eight in each event will return at night to swim again and determine their place (Finals). This is an important meet because for the majority of swimmers this will be their first chance to compete in a finals session. The intensity at finals is higher and often leads to huge time drops. Any Swimmer who qualifies in at least one event will be allowed to compete in two "Bonus" events in which they have not yet achieved time standards. **Division II Long Course (Summer)** is a timed final meet, where each event is swum only once during a single session.

The **Division I Short Course (Winter)** meet is also Prelim/Final. One difference between DII and DI is at the DI meet the top 16 return at night to swim in Finals. A Second difference is the Division I short course meet does not offer **all** events for age groups. There are two reasons for this. First, if all events were offered the meet would have to start a day earlier, and swimmers would have to miss more school. Second, by limiting the events offered you make the best swimmers swim every event against one another. **Division I Long Course (Summer)** meet offers ALL events in a three day, timed final format (like Long Course DIIs).

ACCOMODATIONS FOR OUT OF TOWN MEETS

TEAM TRIPS –

- During these trips, swimmers and coaching staff travel as a group by vans, busses, or airplane.
- A selected number of parents serve as chaperones. Chaperones are selected several months prior to the meet by the coaching staff.
- Swimmers, coaches, and chaperones stay at a pre-selected hotel that is in close proximity to the pool location.
- Swimmers are assigned to hotel rooms (usually four swimmers to a room – within similar age ranges) by the coaching staff.
- Swimmers remain with the team throughout the trip and will travel to and from the pool/restaurants as a group.
- Parents are welcome to travel to out-of-town meets; but they are encouraged to stay in a different hotel than the team. This action creates the opportunity for your swimmer to develop independence, travel responsibility, and team spirit.
- **We encourage parents to review the Blazers' Code of Conduct with swimmers prior to each team trip. Team trips will only continue if our swimmers uphold the responsibilities outlined within the Code of Conduct. Failure to uphold the Code of Conduct may result in the swimmer being sent home from the trip at the parent's expense, potential forfeiture of the swimmer to participate in future team trips and/or loss of membership with the Kansas City Blazers.**

FAMILY TRIPS –

- During these trips, families make their own travel plans to and from the meet – usually driving in personal automobiles.

Please note, not all swimmers attend all out of town meets. Swimmers qualify for meets based on achieved race times. If you have a question concerning which meets your swimmer will attend, please inquire with the coaches prior to signing up for a hotel room.

K.C. BLAZERS HOSTED MEETS

Introduction

Swim meets are an integral part of competitive swimming, the athlete's sole chance of demonstrating his or her accomplishments, representing the "team", and being part of a "special" fraternity or brotherhood that swimming encompasses. Many times, the fact that a swim meet takes place is taken for granted, while in actuality, a tremendous amount of time, preparation, and labor go into planning and staging of the competition. Without this effort, the athlete (your son or daughter) would not have a chance to compete and the swimming program would fall by the wayside.

While we often think in terms of "going to a meet" at a meet sponsored by another club, the Blazers also have a responsibility to the sport of swimming to host a representative number of meets throughout the year. This means providing the necessary time, preparation, and labor required to effectively stage successful meets. In addition to our responsibility to the sport of swimming and our obligation to provide the swimmer with a competitive outlet, a Blazers meet also serves as a moneymaking function for the club. Since club fees only pay for a limited portion of the swimming program, these meets are essential to the financial stability of the club.

The Blazers have traditionally sponsored seven meets during the course of the year:

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| Swim Quik/Future Stars Meet | mid-October |
| Ann Ketterer Intrasquad Meet | early November |
| Polar Bear Invitational | early January |
| MAL Championships | mid-February |
| Blazer Bucks Intrasquad | early May |
| Early Bird Junior/Senior Meet | mid May |
| Division I Championships | early August |

These meets each require a large working staff, both from a preparation standpoint, the actual running or operation of the meet, and the clean-up and paper work required after the meet. This working staff of approximately 120-170 people is the responsibility of the Blazers and requires the active participation and support of all Blazer families, whether or not your swimmer is participating in the meet.

If everyone does their share and pulls their portion of the load, the results will be a successful meet with no undue burden on anyone.

Profile of A Meet

A meet is more than a suitable pool, waving flags, competing swimmers, cheering parents, and the triumphs and tribulations that go with the sport of swimming. The prime ingredients are the officials and the parents that do the planning and work the meet, to provide the swimmer with the opportunity to compete. The jobs involved are numerous, requiring various abilities and/or skills, some requiring training and some requiring nothing more than a strong back and/or the willingness to participate. The following will be a thumbnail sketch of the various positions and the duties or responsibilities that go with the job.

Meet Director - Starts with preparing meet information; sending out invitations; arranging for all physical facilities, equipment, supplies and key personnel; and ordering awards. Responsibilities for the physical operation of the meet and preparing the final results of the meet and the paperwork required by USA SWIMMING. This is one enormous job without the cooperation and support of the entire parent organization.

Entries Chairman - Responsible for receiving and checking entries for adequacy and accuracy, importing them into the meet data base, seeding the meet by event, and preparing the heat sheet for the meet.

Concessions - Responsible for obtaining necessary food supplies, both from outside donors/suppliers and parents for the meet, arranging for concession personnel, and handling the "host" responsibilities for visiting coaches and officials.

Referee - Has full authority for officials during the meet and the application and interpretation of all USA SWIMMING rules and regulations governing the actual conduct of the meet.

Starter - Works under the referee. Responsible for controlling swimmers on blocks until a fair start has been achieved. Includes providing necessary instructions to swimmers, the starts, and false start recall.

Stroke Judges (usually four) - Responsible for watching swimmers stroke and kick for technical infractions of the applicable governing rules. Reports any stroke violations to the referee for necessary action.

Across the Board Judges - Record the finish position of the swimmer for all lanes. This is a position of considerable responsibility in case of failure of electronic timing equipment and back-up system.

Head Timer - Responsible for supervising adequate personnel (three timers per lane for six to ten lanes) and equipment for timing the finish of all swimmers. Presents instructions to all timers, follows up on the accuracy of times, and makes sure that all lanes are covered with adequate staff and back-up.

Lane Timers (18-30) - Responsible for verifying that the proper swimmer is in the lane, timing the swimmer in the his or her lane, and recording and submitting times. Can also have the added responsibility of one lane timer assuming responsibility for judging “relay take-offs”.

Electronic Timer (two) - Responsible for proper operation of electronic timing equipment and necessary paperwork for proper recording of event and heat.

Computer Operator (two) – Manipulates data entry at Blazer meets, including late entries or seeding changes, and generates scores and results. May also assist with the timing system at Blazer meets.

Clerk of the Course (two to four) - Responsible for calling swimmers for events, organizing the swimmers into predetermined heats, providing them with their entry cards, and having them report to the pool for their event. Requires someone that enjoys handling or working with the kids and capable of maintaining a fair level of discipline.

Score Table – In some cases they have responsibility of scoring all races and ascertaining and recording finish position of all swimmers.

Awards - Responsible for filling out awards and distributing them to swimmers.

Announcer (one) - Responsible for calling swimmers for events and announcing results and other pertinent information.

In addition, an adequate number of people must be available for set-up activities, relief during the meet, the numerous activities that may not be covered in the aforementioned job areas, and the clean up each night and after the meet. The support and effort of the *coaching staff* is also required to supplement the preparatory activities of the Meet Director, the physical set-up and arrangements for the facility, etc. In summary, it takes the *whole team* – coaching staff and parent’s organization – to put on a successful meet.

Training

Depending on the job involved, various degrees of training are desirable. Clinics are held regarding responsibilities of timers, across the board judges, and stroke judges. In order to perform the activity in a professional manner and comply with USA SWIMMING requirements, individuals performing in this area should participate in the training sessions available.

Areas like the Clerk of the Course and the Scoring Table are primarily learned on the job. The Meet Director gains his knowledge and/or experience from a continued exposure to the sport of swimming.

The Kansas City Blazers always need certified USA Swimming Officials in order to run our swim meets. The Blazer Officials Chairperson assists Officials trainees in completing the certification process.

Requirements for Stroke and Turn Judges:

1. Become a member of USA Swimming.
2. Attend a training clinic at which instruction is given in the various swimming rules.
3. Take an on-line exam following the training clinic.
4. Gain on-deck experience with an experienced Official for a total of 6 meet sessions.

Requirements for Starters and Referees:

1. Maintain membership in USA Swimming.
2. After serving one year as a fully certified Stroke and Turn Judge, an Official can begin training to become a Starter.
3. Similarly, after a year as a fully certified Starter, an Official can begin to train for Referee.

Requirements for Safety Marshall:

1. Become a member of USA Swimming.
2. Participate in brief training in order to help maintain a safe environment at swim meets and to enforce warm-up procedures.

Conclusion

In summary, swim meets are a necessary part of the sport of swimming, providing your swimmer with the opportunity to compete, and to demonstrate his/her achievements. As Blazers, we have a responsibility to host a proportionate number of meets, both as a responsibility to the sport and our swimmers, and as a fund raising project of the club to supplement swimming fees. These meets require a tremendous amount of time and effort and only through the interest and participation/involvement of *all families* will the effort be equitably distributed throughout the club. Your cooperation and assistance as a parent is essential to the success of the Kansas City Blazers.

BLAZER PARENTS

YOUR ROLE AS PARENT

Competitive swimming provides many benefits to young athletes such as self-discipline, good sportsmanship, time management skills and physical fitness. Competition allows the swimmer to experience both success and defeat in a positive environment. Parents, while not participants on their child's team, contribute to the success of both the child and the team.

- **Be Enthusiastic and Supportive**
As parents, you can make a major contribution to your child's success by providing a stable, loving and supportive environment and by serving as positive role models. Always show good sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, other parents, opponents, and teammates. Supply the love, the support and the encouragement necessary to help your young athlete always feel like a winner. Encourage your child to establish his or her own goals and make progress towards them. This will help your child develop a positive self-image. Be careful not to impose your own standards and goals. NEVER overburden your child with winning or achieving best times.
- **Let the Coach Do the Coaching**
The best way to help your child achieve his or her goals is to remember that you are the parent and the coach is the coach. It is important that swimmers receive all the technical information and constructive criticism of their performance at meets and during practice from only one source – their coach. Too much input, from too many sources will only confuse and overwhelm your swimmer.

ROLE OF THE PARENT

1. Try to get the swimmer to practice regularly and on time. Try to attend meets to watch your child swim.
2. Become familiar with various officials' duties at meets. Make yourself available for meets if you hold a USA Swimming Officials Certification badge.
3. Become an active volunteer to show your child that you support their team.
4. Give credit to the swimmer when an improvement is made, whether it was the winning time or not.
5. Set an example of a healthy attitude toward competition that your child would like to see and follow.
6. Check with the coaches whenever you have a question pertaining to the team and your child's participation. Please try to avoid such inquiries during practice.
7. Please have the swimmer at the meet on time! It is unfair both to the swimmer and to the coaching staff to have the swimmer show up after instructions have already been given and administrative adjustments made.
8. Check with coaches before you leave a meet to make sure the swimmer is really finished and not in a relay.
9. Parents should conduct themselves in an orderly manner while attending meets. They are there to offer support as a booster of their swimmers and their whole team, and the staff. It is the function of the coach to advise swimmers how to swim their events and to review the results with them.
10. Give encouragement to the swimmer when needed.
11. Treat all swimmers, parents, coaches and officials with respect and consideration. (The way you and your swimmer want to be treated.)
12. Register all complaints and criticisms along with suggestions for improvement to coaches.
13. Remember, the attitudes and behaviors of the parents in regard to their outlook on the sport, has an important effect on the child. Every child can gain from his experience whether or not he ever wins a single race. The important thing is to keep on striving to do better next time. The secret is not to produce great swimmers, but to produce great young people who happen to swim.
14. Parents are not to be on the pool deck during practices or meets.
15. Giving encouragement does not mean making stroke corrections. Leave the stroke work and training to the coaches; they are the trained specialists.
16. Do not try to talk to or communicate with your child during practice. The entire attention of the swimmer should be given to the coaches. A parent remaining on the deck during practice does not help the swimmer at all.

17. Don't discipline your child for poor performance as a swimmer. This causes a dislike for swimming and a crash in self-esteem.
18. Don't try to evaluate a swimmer's performance or the program on general remarks made by one or two other parents or swimmers. Many facts must be available for any accurate evaluation, so you should seek out advice and answers from coaches.
19. Don't expect swimmers to swim best times every time. They won't!
20. Don't assume that a swimmer doing a stroke incorrectly has not been told to correct it (and how to correct it) by the coaches, or that the swimmer is not consciously trying to correct the stroke. Some habits are difficult to break, and may take time.
21. Avoid giving materialistic rewards for good performances. It will set you up for the rest of the child's life to always "owe" them something for the things they do. It also de-values the accomplishment itself, and puts all the emphasis on the prize.
22. Avoid participating in negative conversations about any swimmers, opponents, parents, facilities or coaches.
23. Don't approach or argue with officials when they make a decision against your child or team. Let the coach handle such problems and always be ready to accept the possibility that every child may get disqualified sometime—even yours

The Ten Commandments For Parents of Athletic Children

Reprinted from The Young Athlete by Bill Burgess included in "The Swim Parents Newsletter"

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| 1 | Make sure your child knows that - win or lose, scared or heroic -- you love him/her, appreciate their efforts, and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without a fear of failure. Be the person in their life they can look to for constant positive reinforcement. |
| 2 | Try your best to be completely honest about your child's athletic ability, his/hers competitive attitude, their sportsmanship, and their actual skill level. |
| 3 | Be helpful, but don't coach him/her on the way to the pool or on the way back, or at breakfast, and so on. It's tough not to, but it's a lot tougher for the child to be inundated with advice, pep talks and often critical instruction. |
| 4 | Teach them to enjoy the thrill of competition, to be "out there trying," to be working to improve his/her swimming skills and attitudes. Help him/her to develop the feel for competing, for trying hard, for having fun. |
| 5 | Try not to relive your athletic life through your child in a way that creates pressure; you lost as well as won. You were frightened, you backed off at times, you were not always heroic. Don't pressure your child because of your pride. Athletic children need their parents so you must not withdraw. Just remember there is a thinking, feeling, sensitive free spirit out there in that uniform who needs a lot of understanding, especially when his world turns bad. If he/she is comfortable with you -- win or lose -- he/she is on their way to maximum achievement and enjoyment. |
| 6 | Don't compete with the coach. If the coach becomes an authority figure, it will run from enchantment to disenchantment, etc., with your athlete. |
| 7 | Don't compare the skill, courage, or attitudes of your child with other members of the team, at least within his/her hearing. |
| 8 | Get to know the coach so that you can be assured that his/her philosophy, attitudes, ethics, and knowledge are such that you are happy to have your child under his/her leadership. |
| 9 | Always remember that children tend to exaggerate, both when praised and when criticized. Temper your reaction and investigate before over-reacting. |
| 10 | Make a point of understanding courage, and the fact that it is relative. Some of us can climb mountains, and are afraid to fight. Some of us will fight, but turn to jelly if a bee approaches. Everyone is frightened in certain areas. Explain that courage is not the absence of fear, but a means of doing something in spite of fear or discomfort. |

Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds. - Albert Einstein

Problems with the coach?

One of the traditional swim team communication gaps is that some parents seem to feel more comfortable in discussing their disagreements over coaching philosophy with other parents rather than taking them directly to the coach. Not only is the problem never resolved that way, but in fact this approach often results in new problems being created. Listed below are some guidelines for a parent raising some difficult issues with a coach:

- Try to keep foremost in your mind that you and the coach have the best interests of your child at heart. If you trust that the coach's goals match yours, even though his/her approach may be different, you are more likely to enjoy good rapport and a constructive dialogue.
- Keep in mind that the coach must balance your perspective of what is best for your child with the needs of the team or a training group that can range in size from ten to fifty members. On occasion, an individual child's interest may need to be subordinate to the interests of the group, but in the long run the benefits of membership in the group compensate for occasional short-term inconvenience.
- If your child swims for an assistant coach, always discuss the matter first with that coach, following the same guidelines and preconceptions noted above. If the assistant coach cannot satisfactorily resolve your concern, then ask that the Head Site Coach or Head Coach join the dialogue as a third party or the team business manager.
- If another parent uses you as a sounding board for complaints about the coach's performance or policies, listen empathetically, but encourage the other parent to speak directly to the coach. He/she is the only one who can resolve the problem.

Why Do Kids Quit?

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Takes Too Much Time | 18% |
| 2. Coach Was Negative | 15% |
| 3. Enjoy Other Activities More | 15% |
| 4. Swimming Was Boring | 9% |
| 5. Lack Of Fun | 8% |
| 6. Parents' Emphasis On Winning | 6% |

-Kids who quit thought winning was more important to their parents that it was to them; kids who stayed thought their parents were supportive regardless of the outcome.

-Kids who quit were always tired - diet, boredom, and lack of interest were all factors; kids who stayed were energized by the opportunities offered in practice and by the chance to see friends and have fun

-Kids who quit enjoyed other things more - a *good* reason to quit - swimmers who stayed enjoyed swimming

-Kids who quit thought the coach was not flexible or too stern - those who stayed felt wanted and valued by the coach as people, even if he had rules and discipline

-Kids who quit thought it took too much time away from things they really enjoyed - the kids who stayed enjoyed swimming and the time it took to become successful was acceptable

Kids say they stay involved in swimming because.....

- My swimming skills are improving.
- My friends are other swimmers.
- I like my teammates.
- Getting my best time is not crucial.
- My coach is concerned about school and other things I am involved in.

Parents Meetings

Attendance at all parents meetings is required. These meetings are a vehicle for communicating the plans of the season, the direction and goals for the swimmers, and the constant re-evaluation of the direction and needs of the program.

Fund Raising

The club's philosophy has been to keep the fees as low as possible to allow as many athletes as possible to participate in these programs. The fees charged only cover about two-thirds of the cost of running the club. Most of the remaining club income is generated by fundraising and profit from Blazer sponsored swim meets.

SWIM-A-THON

Our club's largest fundraiser is the annual Swim-a-thon. We use these proceeds to purchase equipment for pools (lane ropes, pace clocks, bulletin boards, etc) and swimmers (kick boards, paddles, pull buoys, etc.), to supplement team trip and chaperone expenses, and to fund social activities for the swimmers (holiday parties, end of season parties, pizza parties). Basically the program works similarly to a "walk-a-thon", in that swimmers gather pledges for each lap swum in a two-hour period. Be Careful! Our nine-year-olds have been known to go the maximum of 200! This program is so well supported by our families that we ranked in the top five for USA Swimming in the country for the past ten years. Elite and Gold swimmers have a responsibility of a minimum of \$150 and non-new Blue swimmers have a responsibility of at least \$100. The Blazers have generally placed three swimmers among top individual earners in the U.S.A. for the last ten years.

PARENT SERVICE HOUR PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Kansas City Blazers Swim Team is a non-profit organization that is entirely supported by volunteers. A major emphasis for the club is to secure needed workers for club sponsored events. Whether you are a longstanding or new member, you know that the fees you pay cover only a portion of our expenses. It takes approximately 7,000 volunteer hours to run our Kansas City Blazer (KCB) sponsored events and maintain an enthusiastic and efficiently managed swim team. Our primary events are KCB sponsored swim meets and two KCB sponsored Triathlons and program sales at the Kansas Speedway. Your assistance is crucial to the success of these club activities. By participating you have an opportunity to meet other swim team families, get to know KCB team members and show active support for your child's swimming efforts. We have developed a program that will fill the clubs needs to run all of the above events more efficiently. In addition to monthly dues, each swim team family is required to provide service hours each swim year to support the team. These hours will need to be fulfilled between September and August. Your family may complete their hours by working at meets, triathlons or completing other jobs that can be done either partially or entirely at home. Please read and complete the attached "Service Program Agreement" and return it with your registration forms. **This form must be completed for your child (ren) to participate.**

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

| | |
|--|---|
| Novice and Blue (NEW 1 st year) | 10 hours per family |
| Novice and Blue (returning) | 15 hours per family |
| Advanced Blue (New AND returning) | 20 hours per family |
| Gold and SR Gold | 30 hours per family, mandatory participation at LC Division 1 meet |
| Elite | 35 hours per family, mandatory participation at LC Division 1 meet, November Dual meet and all Triathlons |

Families with swimmers in multiple groups are responsible for fulfilling the obligation of the highest-ranking swimmer. **Upon enrollment families are required to declare their intention to satisfy their service requirement.** This will allow the team time to help families choose the best method for them to satisfy their commitment. There is a financial option to this plan in lieu of service hours. Since we are in need of volunteer hours, we would prefer families **not** take this option. We value each service hour at \$12.00/hour. If your family chooses to pay the fee, the year's obligation would be *\$120.00 for new novice/blue* and *\$180.00 for returning novice/blue Swimmers* and *\$240.00 for advanced blue* and *\$360.00 for gold/sr gold* and *\$420 for elite*. If this is your choice, a check for the full amount should be received within 30 days of enrollment in the KCB swim program. Any family who fails to satisfy their annual service hours' commitment will be billed \$12.00 per un-worked hour at the end of their swim season. **Please remember, it is the obligation of each family to keep the Volunteer Tabulator informed of all hours they have worked thru our web site at www.kcblazers.com.**

We hope that all families will choose to fulfill their service hours; this is a great way to get involved with our team.

Points may be earned as follows:

1. Filling a job position at one of the KCB sponsored meets or events.
2. Working as a timer at meets hosted by other clubs (in a KCB designated lane).
3. Additional Needs - The club has additional needs throughout the year. **If you have a particular skill you feel may benefit the club, please let us know.**

In Summary, This is How It Works:

- Sign-up and indicate your job preferences on the registration form.
- You will be contacted prior to a meet/event to work if you child is participating in the meet/event.
- You are responsible to report all hours worked regardless of the event/job.

Thank you for all your help! Your cooperation is needed and very much appreciated. Your swimmer(s) will benefit from your energetic participation with our club. We look forward to working together this year.

TO VOLUNTEER- CONTACT kcbvolunteers@yahoo.com

TO REPORT YOUR HOURS AND CHECK YOUR HOURS REPORTED SEE www.kcblazers.com

OUR PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

The KC Blazers Parent Organizations are the "support force" for the KC Blazer Swim Team. In Johnson County, Kansas the name of the organization is the Santa Fe Trail Blazers Parent's Association, Inc., and in Jackson County, Missouri it is the Blue Springs Swim Parent's Association, Inc. The parents assist in the direction and management of the Blazer Swim Team affairs. For every swimmer in the water there is a parent on the side providing support through participation in many KC Blazer functions, including Blazer hosted meets, fund raising projects, and social and fun events.

Competing with many local and out of town teams, swimmers and parents meet many new and interesting people. The close association that parents develop with their children is worth the time and money. Time spent training helps in organization of life in general. Free time is valued; therefore, you learn to use time more constructively in all activities. Discipline is another valuable lesson; to be a good swimmer one must have self-discipline. Swimming is a fun way of accomplishing all of these and many more objectives. We invite you to try our program as a means of meeting this goal.

Blue Springs Swim Parent's Association, Inc.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

To reach the KC Blazers East Head Coach, Mike Lewellyn e-mail him at kccoachmike@hotmail.com

Board Positions

CHAIR:

FINANCIAL OFFICER:

SECRETARY:

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER:

AGE GROUP SWIMMER ADVISOR:

SENIOR SWIMMER ADVISOR:

POOL REPRESENTATIVE (BLUE SPRINGS):

POOL REPRESENTATIVE (LEE'S SUMMIT):

Committees

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

AUDIT COMMITTEE

BUDGET COMMITTEE

CONCESSIONS/HOSPITALITY

SWIM-A-THON

WAYS AND MEANS

MEET DIRECTION

GOLF TOURNAMENT

ADVERTISING SPONSORSHIP

VOLUNTEER

Santa Fe Trail Blazers Parent's Association, Inc.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

CHAIRMAN: The Chairman oversees all operations of the Parents Association and works directly with the Head Coach and representatives of Johnson County Parks and Recreation.

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION: Responsible for the recruitment of members for vacancies of job positions throughout the association. In the absence of a Chairman, will assume the duties of Chairman.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE: Responsible for Associations' fiscal affairs and policy. Administers Associations' treasury and inventory. Issues checks, balances escrows, pays all bills, develops budgets of revenues and expenses.

DIRECTOR OF MEET OPERATIONS: Directs the Associations' swim meets. Coordinates with USS and swim organizations and established swim meet schedules. Ensures correct swim meet entries, organizes concessions and handles host responsibilities.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS: Responsible for the Associations' publicity, the Associations' newsletter and communications between coaching staff and members.

DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS: Supervise, coordinate, and plan any special events required by the Association. All official functions and social events will be managed by the Director.

DIRECTOR OF WAYS AND MEANS: Responsible for sales and promotions as well as solicitation of donations and contributions necessary to balance revenues and expenditures of the Association.

SECRETARY: Responsible for the minutes of the Board and Associations' meetings. Responsible for preparation of all correspondence for the Association.

CONCESSIONS:

DUATHLON/TRIATHLON:

SWIM-A-THON:

BUSINESS MANAGER: DENISE Holm (913) 533-2461.

THE SANTA FE TRAIL BLAZERS PARENTS ASSOCIATION

QUALIFICATIONS FOR DIRECTORS:

1. We ask our swimmers to be the best they can be, we as parents, should set an example by doing the best job we can do in supporting this program.
2. A Director should ensure a superior, quality program and ensure financial stability of the team.
3. A Director should understand the sport of swimming and endorse the Blazers' philosophy and values.
4. A Director should be able to dedicate up to 20 hours per month and attend all meetings and training.
5. A Director should be an objective thinker and be able to make decisions that are best for the PROGRAM five years down the road. A Director should check their "parent hat" at the door.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF THE
SANTA FE TRAIL BLAZERS ASSOCIATION
Revised 8/31/98

PREAMBLE

The Santa Fe Trail Blazers Association is incorporated as a non-profit organization. It is as such by the State of Kansas and the Internal Revenue Service.

The Association's purpose is to promote swimming for amateurs and create an educational swimming program to serve the general community. It is dedicated to developing a program that will allow a swimmer of any caliber to participate in his or her maximum ability.

ARTICLE I

OFFICES AND REGISTERED AGENT

The principal office of the Association shall be in the State of Kansas and shall be located in the City of Merriam, County of Johnson. The Association may have such other offices, either within or outside the State of Kansas, as the Board of Directors may determine or as the affairs of the Association may require from time to time.

The Association shall have and continuously maintain in the State of Kansas a registered office and a registered agent whose office is identical with such registered office. The registered office may be, but not need be, identical with the principal office. The address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE II

SECTION 1 : MEMBERS

PARTICIPATING MEMBER: A participating membership in this Association shall be limited to a family with members participating in the swim program of the Santa Fe Trail Blazers who are current in their membership dues as established by the Board of Directors. A "family" is defined a husband, and/wife, or guardian and the dependents of said husband and / or wife or ward of the guardian.

SECTION 2 : VOTING

Voting rights shall be limited to participating members. Each family shall have one vote. Voting rights shall be limited to those present at official meetings. Voting by proxy may be approved by the Board of Directors for special occasions.

SECTION 3 : TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Directors, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, may suspend or expel a participating member for just cause and after an appropriate hearing.

SECTION 4 : RESIGNATION

Any member may resign by filing a written resignation with the Secretary, but such resignation shall not relieve the member of any obligation to pay any dues, assessment or other charges accrued and unpaid prior to resignation.

SECTION 5 : REINSTATEMENT

Upon written request of a former member filed with the Secretary, the Board of Directors may, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, reinstate such former member to membership upon such terms as the Board of Directors may deem appropriate.

SECTION 6 : MEMBERSHIP YEAR

Membership in this Association shall be on an annual basis from October 1 of one year to September 30 of the following year.

ARTICLE III

MEETING OF MEMBERS

SECTION 1 : MEETINGS

An Annual Meeting of the Association shall be held in November. Special meetings of the membership may be called by the Chairperson of the Board, or by written request of thirty percent (30%) of the participating members of the Association.

SECTION 2 : NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Written or printed notice stating the time, date and location of any meeting of participating members of the Association shall be delivered to each participating member not less than seven (7) days and not more than 50 (fifty) days before the date of such meeting. In the event of a special meeting, the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called shall be stated in the notice.

SECTION 3 : QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of a majority of the participating members present at a meeting.

SECTION 4 : ORDER OF BUSINESS

At the meetings of the Association, the following shall be the order of business:

Roll Call
Reading and Approval of the Minutes
Chairman's Report
Treasurer's Report
Reports of Standing Committees
Reports of Special Committees
Old Business
New Business
Adjournment

ARTICLE IV

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECTION 1 : AFFAIRS

The affairs of the Association shall be managed by the Board of Directors (hereafter referred to as the "Board").

SECTION 2 : ELECTION

The Board of Directors shall be elected at the annual meeting of the participating members. One-half (1/2) of the Board shall be elected each year, except to fill vacancies that arise. The order of election shall be Chairman, Director of Finance, Secretary, Director of Meet Operations and Director of Hosted Events in even years and all other Directors in odd years.

SECTION 3 : LENGTH OF TERM

Each elected Director shall serve a two-year term. Any director may be elected to serve more than one term.

SECTION 4 : NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A Nominating committee of five (5) participating members of the Association shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board ninety (90) days prior to the Annual Association meeting in November. Two (2) of the members shall be current Board members and three (3) of the members shall be active participation members of the Association. The Nominating Committee shall select a slate of candidates to fill vacancies on the Board for the upcoming term. The slate of candidates shall be presented for election at the annual fall meeting of the Association. The slate of candidates shall be printed and distributed with the notice announcing the annual meeting.

SECTION 5 : VACANCIES

Vacancies on the Board will be appointed by the Chairman and approved by the Board. Their tenure will be for the unexpired term.

SECTION 6 : MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held monthly or as designated by the Chairman.

SECTION 7 : SPECIAL MEETINGS

A special meeting of the Board may be called by the Chairman or at the request of at least three (3) Board members. Notice of any special meetings of the Board shall be given at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail. Purpose of the meeting need not be specified in the notice.

SECTION 8 : QUORUM

A majority of the elected Board must be present to constitute a quorum and to transact business.

ARTICLE V

DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE BOARD

SECTION 1 : OFFICERS

The Officers of the Board of the Association shall be:

Chairman
Vice Chairman (s)
Director of Administration
Director of Finance
Director of Hosted Events
Secretary
Director of Public Relations
Director of Meet Operations

Director of Special Operations
Director of Ways and Means

SECTION 2 : CHAIRMAN

The Chairman shall be the principal Officer of the Board. He/She shall preside at all meetings of the Board. He/She may sign for the Board contracts or other instruments that the Board has authorized to be executed. The Chairman will be the liaison between the Board and the County.

SECTION 3 : VICE-CHAIRMAN (S)

The Vice-Chairman(s) serve at the request of the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman(s) is appointed by the Chairman. The Chairman can appoint up to three (3) Vice-Chairmen. The Vice-Chairmen will have no vote on the Board.

SECTION 4 : DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

The Director of Administration shall be responsible for recruitment of members for vacancies of job positions throughout the Association. He/She is responsible for the preparation of the annual calendar. In the absence of the Chairman, the Director of Administration shall assume the duties of the Chairman.

SECTION 5 : DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

The Director of Finance shall be responsible for the Associations fiscal affairs and policy. He/She will administer the Associations treasury and inventor and maintain the Associations properties. He/She will issue checks for expenditures authorized by the Board, prepare and distribute monthly checks, balance and maintain escrow accounts, pay all bills authorized by the Board, prepare financial and tax statements and develop a budget of revenues and expenses. The Director of Finance shall oversee/be responsible for preparation of monthly billing statements, collection of fees and the issuance of delinquent statements. These functions may be accomplished by contractual work authorized by the Board or a special assistant may be appointed by the Board.

SECTION 6 : DIRECTOR OF HOSTED EVENTS

The Director of Hosted Events shall be responsible for hospitality and concessions at swim meets and functions sponsored by the Board and the swim team.

SECTION 7 : DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Director of Public Relations shall be responsible for the Associations publicity, the Associations newsletter and communications between coaching staff and participating members and swimmers.

SECTION 8 : SECRETARY

The Secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of the Board and Association meetings. The Secretary is responsible for preparation of any and all correspondence for the Association.

SECTION 9 : DIRECTOR OF MEET OPERATIONS

The Director of Meet Operations will direct the Associations swim meets by being in charge of the overall planning and operation. He/She will coordinate with USS and other swim associations and organizations and establish swim meet schedules. He/She will ensure correct swim meet entries and handle host responsibilities for visiting teams, officials and coaches.

SECTION 10 : DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS

The Director of Special Operations will supervise, coordinate and plan any special events required by the Association. All official functions and social events will be managed by this director.

SECTION 11 : DIRECTOR OF WAYS AND MEANS

The Director of Ways and Means shall be responsible for sales and promotions as well as solicitation of donations and contributions necessary to balance revenues and expenditures of the Association.

ARTICLE VII

STANDING COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 : STANDING COMMITTEES

The Board will designate and appoint Standing Committees, each of which shall consist of one or more Chairmen. They will act as working bodies only and will not make policy that has not been set forth by the Board. All Chairpersons are responsible to an appropriate officer of the Board.

SECTION 2 : TERM OF OFFICE

Each committee Chairperson shall serve a two-year term. Each committee Chairperson shall continue as such until his or her successor is appointed, unless the committee is terminated or the member ceases to qualify as an active participating member.

ARTICLE VIII

CONTRACTS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS AND FUNDS

SECTION 1 : CONTRACTS

The Board may authorize any officer, agent, or agents of the Association in addition to the officers so authorized by these By-laws to enter into any contract in the name of and/or behalf of the Association.

SECTION 2 : CHECKS AND DRAFTS

All checks and drafts for the payment of bills, notes or other forms of indebtedness issued in the name of the Association, shall be signed by such officers, agent(s) in such a manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board. In the absence of such determination by the Board, such checks, notes and other evidence of indebtedness shall be signed by the Director of Finance.

SECTION 3 : DEPOSITS

All funds of the Association shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Association in such banks, trust companies or other financial institutions as the Board may determine.

ARTICLE IX

DUES

SECTION 1 : DUES

The Board may determine the amount of annual dues that may be necessary. The Board may determine the amount of monthly swimming fees, dues, escrow fees, travel funds, concession charges and other charges necessary to ensure the financial integrity of the Association.

SECTION 2 : PAYMENT OF DUES

The annual and monthly dues are payable during the fiscal year on a regular scheduled basis as established by the Board. The Board may establish and enforce a delinquency policy.

SECTION 3 : DEFAULT AND TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

When any participating member shall be in default in the payment of dues and assessments in violation of the delinquency policy of the Board, that member may be temporarily or permanently removed from active participation in the program at the discretion of the Board.

SECTION 4 : WAIVING OF FEES

The Board may, at its discretion, waive, or reduce any and all fees and dues of any participating member.

ARTICLE X

WAIVER OF NOTICE

Whenever a notice is required to be given under the provisions of the Kansas Non-Profit Corporation Act, or under the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or the By-laws of the Association, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent of such notice.

ARTICLE XI

AMENDMENT TO THE BY-LAWS

These By-laws may be amended at any meeting of the Board of Directors or any meeting of the Association. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board or the Association is required.

SECTION 1 : AMENDMENT BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Each proposed amendment at the Board level must be submitted to the Secretary of the Board to be placed on the agenda. It must be read at one Board meeting and acted upon at the next scheduled Board meeting. The written proposed amendment must be distributed with the announcement of the meeting.

SECTION 2 : AMENDMENT BY THE ASSOCIATION

Thirty percent (30 %) of the participating members of the Association may call for a meeting to amend the By-laws. The proposed amendment must be distributed to the membership 30 days prior to the meeting. A quorum of the Association must be present at the meeting to review the amendment and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Association members present is required to amend the By-laws.

ARTICLE XI

RULES OF ORDER TO GOVERN ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order – Revised shall govern all deliberations except when they are in conflict with the Articles of Incorporation or these By-laws.

FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS

F.A.Q.'S

My swimmer wants to compete but doesn't know all four competitive strokes.

In the Blazer Novice Blue group, we teach the four competitive strokes (as well as starts and turns) to swimmers generally above the age of six. To qualify to swim in this group a swimmer should be able to demonstrate the ability to swim 25 yards of freestyle with rotary breathing (on the side) and backstroke. Competitions are always offered based upon the ability of the swimmer where they may be challenged with new experiences, but not overwhelmed.

Which of your programs are non-competitive?

The Kansas City Blazers is a competitive swimming team and we encourage all of our athletes – from Novice to Elite – to compete. Generally we offer two competitive opportunities for an athlete each month. Participation in meets is elective, and some swimmers/families choose to “reject” meets, but it is our hope to draw all of our athletes into competitive swimming. It is a huge part of our sport and a primary means of evaluating progress.

What are the minimum requirements to make the team?

The swimmer should be able to swim one length of the pool both freestyle (with rotary- or side-breathing) and backstroke and be a minimum of six years of age.

Do you have to be a fast swimmer to make the team?

No. The Blazers are open to anyone with an interest in swimming who can meet the minimum requirements described above. Although some swimmers will go on to swim in college and at national meets, many others will simply have a lot of fun, get great exercise and compete against other swimmers at the same level as themselves. Unlike some sports there are no "bench warmers" in swimming. Meets are held throughout the year for swimmers at all levels.

What if I can't decide whether my swimmer belongs on the team?

Many times this is a question of desire rather than ability. The Blazers are known for our many elite swimmers, but all of them had to start somewhere! We love to have new swimmers join and we promise to develop them in a positive, nurturing environment. Please call the head coach at the site nearest you and ask for a meeting for you and your swimmer. You will be invited to try us out for a couple weeks (a grace period conveyed by USA-Swimming, our National Governing Body) and the coach will help you in your decision. Of course, there is no initial cost or obligation.

Which “group” should my swimmer participate?

The Kansas City Blazers are divided into several practice groups according to both age and ability level. Within each practice group, swimmers may be grouped by level of development and frequency of practice attendance at the discretion of the coaching staff. Each practice group has distinct objectives and goals, which help swimmers develop their skills to their full potential and move from one practice group to another with ease. Group moves are made by coaches on an as needed basis when changes are deemed beneficial. For each group, a typical practice involves a combination of stroke technique and physical conditioning, with stroke instruction emphasized for the younger swimmers and conditioning becoming more important for more experienced swimmers.

Beginning Swimmers Groups: Novice and Blue

These practice groups are designed for the younger and less experienced swimmers. Since all new swimmers begin in one of these groups, the groups have a wide range of ages and abilities. The major priorities of these groups are to introduce swimmers to training concepts (the do's and don'ts of practices) and the development of swimming skills. A large percentage of practice time is spent working on stroke technique and development. It is important to teach proper technique at an early stage of a swimmer's development, so as he or she progresses, less time can be spent on technique and more time on conditioning. Novice swimmers concentrate on learning the four competitive strokes and developing conditioning necessary to begin “interval training”. Blue swimmers are competent in the four strokes and learn the basics of training using a pace clock, but the emphasis remains on skill acquisition.

Intermediate Groups: Advanced Blue

The Advanced Blue Groups consist of swimmers who have achieved proficiency in their strokes. Swimmers are grouped within Advanced Blue based on ability to perform the basic mechanics of the four strokes on established “working intervals” and the pursuit of Division II and/or Division I qualifying times. The Advanced Blue Group spends a significant amount of time working on technique, with an emphasis on physical conditioning. The concepts of mental training and race preparation are introduced in this group.

Advanced Groups: Gold and Elite

These groups are designed for older and more experienced swimmers. The Elite Group represents the top of the competitive pyramid, with swimmers of high school age who have demonstrated a willingness to commit to serious pursuit of their potential. Elite swimmers are those with Sectional/Region VIII qualifying times in events who practice between six and ten times per week, including significant cross training with dry land activities. Elite swimmers strive to participate at the National level.

The Gold Group is a “bridge” group between the Blue Program (Novice, Blue, and Advanced Blue) and the Elite Group. Gold swimmers are generally age groupers 11 through 18 years of age who have attained Division I time standards and who are committed enough to the sport to practice at least four times (out of six practices available) for a period of two and a half hours per practice (with at least an hour and 45 minutes in the pool. The priorities in the Gold Group are skill development and physical conditioning, along with the development of mental training and race preparation concepts.

What if I think that my swimmer is ready to move up to a higher training group?

The Blazers have published “group expectations”, and when a swimmer has mastered the skills and attained the conditioning necessary to meet the expectations of the next group, he or she is “moved up” to the next group. Part of the developmental process involves learning leadership skills, so a swimmer is not immediately moved up as soon as they are capable of meeting the requirements of the next group. However, we understand the importance of progress to hard working swimmers, so good work and dedication is rewarded mindfully and in a timely manner. As a rule of thumb, we move a swimmer to the next group when he/she has “swum him/herself out of their present group”.

How long is the “team” season?

The Blazer swim year runs from mid-September through the first week in August. We break our swim year into three Phases. Phase I runs from September to December and ends with either the Level I or Level II Championship Meet. Phase II runs from January to March and ends with Short Course Division I or Division II. Phase III is from April to August and ends the year with Division I or the Zone Championship Meet.

When are the meets held and how long do they last?

For our Blue Program swimmers we offer the Blue/Gold Series. These meets are intrasquad meets with our developing swimmers. They are held on a Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning. They last approximately three hours. Most Advanced Blue and Gold Swimmers go to “Invitationals”. Teams from all across the region compete at these meets. They are held on Saturdays and Sundays (with some meets having events on Friday night). At an invitational you can expect warm-up to last one hour and the competition to last four hours.

Can I use my best summer league times when I enter a meet?

No, you can only use times from a sanctioned USA Swimming meet. You are allowed to enter a meet without an entry time if you've never swum the event at a USA Swimming sanctioned meet. It's referred to as entering with a "no time" (NT).

How much does it cost to enter a meet?

Our in-house Blue/Gold Meets offered to the Novice and Blue will cost \$15.00. An Invitational meet will usually cost \$5.00 Blazer Coaching Fee, and then \$3.50 per event entered.

Where do my seed times come from that are in the heat sheet?

The team keeps a database of all times swam by each swimmer. When the coach selects an event the database and computer select your best time for that stroke and distance as your seed time.

What's the difference between a pre-seeded meet and a deck seeded meet?

In a pre-seeded meet all of the swimmers will swim their events in a lane and heat determined by their entry time as submitted prior to the meet. If a swimmer doesn't show up for his/her event then the lane they were assigned to will be empty. That is allowable. In a deck seeded meet the heats and lanes are not determined until about 45 minutes before the event. This allows swimmers to enter and scratch from events on the day of the meet. The main purpose of this is to prevent having empty lanes in a heat that slows the meet down. It can also be a disadvantage to swimmers who have to swim next to empty lanes or even in a heat by themselves.

What is meant by "Short Course" and "Long Course"?

These terms refer to the length of a pool. Short Course is a 25 yard (or meter) pool and Long Course is a 50 meter pool. However, the names are also used for the two seasons in USA Swimming. September to March is the Short Course season when meets are held in 25 yard (or meter) pools. April to August is the Long Course season, as meets usually are held in 50 meter pools. .

What is an “I. M.”?

The Individual Medley is a race that includes all four strokes. There is the 400 IM, 200 IM, and 100 IM for young swimmers. The 400, 200, and 100 refers to the length of race in yards or meters. In the case of the 200IM a person must swim 50 yards of Butterfly, 50 yards of Backstroke, 50 yards of breaststroke and 50 yards of freestyle in that order. On each “leg” of the IM, one must follow legal turn and finish rules that apply for the stroke being swum.

Where are your meets held?

Novice and Blue swimmers can expect meets to be held at pools in the Greater Kansas City area. On occasion there will be meets offered in Lawrence or Topeka.

Advanced Blue and Gold will attend meets in the Greater Kansas City Area but will also travel throughout our LSC including Columbia, Lawrence, Topeka, and Wichita.

How often are meets held?

Most swimmers can expect to be offered the opportunity to swim in two meets per month.

How often should my swimmer attend meets?

Swimmers should attend at least one meet per month or as directed by their coach.

How often should my swimmer attend practice to get faster?

Novice: two to three times per week (depending upon his or her age)
Blue: two to three times per week
Advanced Blue: three to five times per week
Gold: Four (minimum requirement for Gold swimmers) to six times per week.

What is the pool temperature?

The schools we rent pool time from are in control of water temperatures. The pools are kept between 80 and 85 degrees.

How do I register my swimmer for a meet?

A month before a meet you will receive a meet list in your mailbox. This list will tell you 1) the meet location, 2) what time to be there, 3) approximately how much it will cost, 4) who is invited, and 5) goals for the meet. At the bottom of the page is a Rejection Slip. If you do not wish to attend the meet you follow the instructions to either e mail or U. S. Mail your rejection, and we will *not* enter your swimmer in the meet. If you wish to attend the meet you do nothing. The coaches will chose you swimmer’s events and you will be billed for the meet expenses on your next monthly statement.

How do I find out what events my swimmer is swimming at a meet, and when to be where?

Your swimmer’s events for a meet can be found in two places. Every pool has a bulletin board that has all meet entries posted on it. You may also find your child’s events on the Kansas City Blazer web page ww.kcblazers.com under the meet entries section.

What equipment does my child need?

Practice Suits and Goggles

Suits and Goggles can be purchased at Swim Quik in Old Overland Park. They are the official dealer of Blazer apparel. Swim Quik also carries Blazer shirts, sweats , parkas, and caps.

Fins, Kickboards, Pullbouys, and paddles.

The Blazers provide fins, kickboards, pull buoys, and paddles for all there swimmers. They are kept at the pool and used when necessary. If swimmers wish to purchase their own equipment and carrying bag they may do so through Swim Quik.

Are meets required?

All Blazers have the option of rejecting a meet, but it is highly recommended to attend at least two in each phase. But most swimmers enjoy measuring their progress by swimming in meets once they get over the initial anxiety. The Blazers have always looked at competition like a test in school. After attending classes all week you have a test to find out what you know and what you don’t know. This means you can move on in your learning away from things you have acquired and towards new challenges. You also know which skills are weak and need more attention. It is also a great social time for the swimmers and parents – a time to celebrate all of their hard work and to bond as a team.

What should my swimmer do before the meet starts?

Arrive at the pool at least 20 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be posted *on your meet list*. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags and/or sleeping bags. The team tries to sit in one general area, so look for some familiar faces. Have the swimmer check in by highlighting their name on the roster sheets located at the coaches table then check in with your coach, let them know you are "ready to GO!"

What should my swimmer do during the meet?

Depending on the swim meet, swimmers may have anywhere from 20 to 60 minutes between events. This time can be filled with school work or extra credit. We pride ourselves in having swimmers with good grades. Reading a good book or listening to music is a good way to relax as well. Swimmers are discouraged from running around wasting energy. This is a good time to sit and have conversations with friends and family.

What should my swimmer do after a swim?

The first thing a swimmer should do after a race is ask the timer for their time. Then they should gather all of their stuff from behind the blocks and go "warm down". Then they report to the coach. It is critical that they see the coach before anyone else, even Mom and Dad! A delay of ten minutes might mean that the coach has seen three to eight swimmers swim since then, and they may not recall all of the details of the swim and therefore not be able to properly instruct the swimmer. The swimmer should then go and record the time, splits, and coaches comments in their log book.

What should the parent do before the meet?

Once the swimmer is "checked in", purchase a heat sheet. A heat sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. Heat sheets generally sell for \$5 to \$10 per competition. It lists all swimmers in each event, heat and lane. When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. Look through the program and make sure your child is in each event he or she was scheduled. Use your highlighter to mark their place in each event so you can follow the meet. Please report any discrepancies to your coach immediately. Be aware that sometimes most recently achieved best times will not be in the heat sheet because entries were due prior to the last swim meet.

What should a parent do after a swim?

Tell your swimmer how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique and race strategies with them. You need to tell him/her how proud you are and what a great job he/she did. You must also be there and be supportive in case the swimmer did poorly. Never show disappointment in your child due to a swimming performance, and never let your child think that your love is based on something as flimsy as a swimming race.

What should my swimmer eat and drink during a meet?

Your swimmer should be drinking water. If they are thirsty they are already dehydrated. In large part stay away from sugared "energy drinks" like Gatorade and the like. Your swimmers have been told to read the labels of foods and two to three of the top five items in these drinks are usually forms of sugar. The only people who will tell you that these things are good for you are the people who sell them. Good food is always the best bet. If you wouldn't serve "Sugar Coated Frosty Bombs" for dinner, it is probably not a good meet food. In this day and age most meets will sell veggies and bagels in concessions. You can also bring along any snacks your swimmers really likes, like my personal choice, celery and crunchy peanut butter.

What do I do if my swimmer has a disappointing swim?

If your child has a poor race and comes out of it feeling bad, talk about the good things. The first thing you say is, "I still love you. The next race will be better." Then you can go on and talk about the good things the child did. You never talk about the negative things. If your child comes up to you and says, "That was a bad race, don't tell me it wasn't," the next words out of the parent should be, "What did the coach tell you? What is your plan to make the next swim better?" There is nothing wrong with a swimmer understanding that they had a bad race. The important thing is that the child not to dwell on it. Remember winning and losing are different sides of the same coin. There is a lot that should be learned by both. The parent can ask, "All right, you have had a bad race. What did the coach say that could have fixed it?" If the child can't answer that they may have emotionally blown off the coach's advice and they may need to go back to the coach and ask for the information again so they can record it in their log books.

What do I do after my swimmer is finished swimming for the day?

When a swimmer has completed all of his/her events he/she and their parents can go home. **PLEASE Make sure, however, you, as a parent, check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay.** It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay to find that a member of his or her relay has departed. Check the results so your child can record their official times and check for errors. Also, some meets feature preliminary heats and then finals heats. Be sure that your swimmer is or is not in the finals. The penalty for missing a final is being disqualified from the rest of the meet!

Where did the club name come from?

The Kansas City Blazers name came as a result of simplifying the Parents Association name and maintaining a separate identity for the Swim Team and Parents Association. The Parents Association 's official corporate name is The Santa Fe Trail Blazers Association on the Kansas side and Blue Springs Parent Association on the Missouri side. The swim team is part of the Johnson County Park and Recreation District program. The word Blazers identified the team's logo- the half sun, which represented the rising sun in the Heart of America.

Is the club associated with the school district?

The swim team is not associated with any particular school district. We do have, on the Kansas side, cooperative relationships between the Shawnee Mission School District, Olathe School District and Blue Valley School District for the majority of our pool time. We have cooperative relationships with the City of Lenexa Kansas for summer long course pool times. We also work with the City of Roeland Park for both winter and summer pool time. On the Missouri side, we work with the Longview Community College for pool time year round.

Can I join a club like KC Blazers if I'm already swimming for my high school and/or neighborhood summer league team?

Absolutely! The Kansas City Blazers is a U.S.A. Swimming club and is open to all swimmers who register as members of U.S.A. Swimming. U.S.A. Swimming has no rules that prohibit swimmers from participating in high school swimming or summer league swimming. Both Kansas and Missouri Activities Association have rules that limit or completely prohibit participation in outside activities while participating in High School sports. Many of the summer leagues in the Kansas City area have various rules that might restrict or prohibit joint participation.

I've heard people refer to terms such as "B & Under" or "A & Up" meets. What does that mean?

USA Swimming publishes time standards for boys and girls by age group that can be used as a scale to gauge a swimmer's level of achievement in each event. They are, from slowest to fastest, B, BB, A, AA, AAA & AAAA. Trying to reach the next level in a particular event can be motivational to swimmers. Meets are often restricted to swimmers above or below a certain level to limit the number of entries. For example, to enter an event at an A & Up meet you must have an A time or better in an event. Some times age is used to limit entries to a manageable number. (11 & Up, 10 & Under)

What is USA Swimming and why do I have to join?

U.S.A. Swimming is the National governing body for the sport of swimming in this country. It gets its authority from the United States Olympic Committee. U.S.A. Swimming is in charge of the National team program for this country and also the grass roots development of the sport of swimming. All members of all U.S.A. Swimming Clubs must be members of U.S.A. Swimming to protect the integrity of the competitions and the rules that govern our sport. With this membership the clubs, the athletes, the officials and coaches all get medical and liability insurance protection while participating in the sport.

Are the Blazers too competitive?

The Blazers are designed to provide the opportunity for all interested swimmers to participate in competitive swimming at whatever level they choose. It is the goal of this program to provide the opportunity and the motivation to get the swimmers to reflect our team mottos- "Commitment to Excellence" and "Be the Best You Can Be. The Blazers program strives to provide the opportunity for those who want to be recreationally competitive and also the opportunity to pursue the Olympic Dream.

SWIM PARENT EDUCATION... WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE TIME STANDARDS??

Are you ready for your next lesson in swim-parenting?? Good! We're glad you're enjoying the team so far, and we're excited to keep educating you about our program and our sport. As your child progresses through the system, they will encounter a variety of new challenges and experiences. Many of which will happen at the meets they attend, and we're hoping to shed some light on some frequently asked questions...

If you just glanced at our meet schedule, you'd notice a TON of meets, but in reality most of our swimmers are only invited to 1-2 meets per month. The competitions are broken up based on speed so that each swimmer can compete at their own ability level- getting enough challenge to push them forward, but not getting so overwhelmed that they become discouraged.

The way that we divide up different speeds and ability levels is by using Time Standards, a system used both nationally and locally. Our most commonly used Time Standards are distributed to the kids via "bag-tags" which they can attach to their swim bag so they have it easily accessible, but they're also published and discussed from time to time at meets. They can ALSO be found online at <http://www.missourivalleyswimming.com/standards/index.asp>. As you can see, there are a variety of different standards (and we'll get to that in a bit), and most are broken down by age group. We use the swimmer's age on the FIRST DAY of each meet that they participate in, so their age group may change throughout the year, but it will never change within a single meet.

How you qualify for different time standards is by swimming a time EQUAL TO OR FASTER THAN the time listed for each different stroke. This is different from many summer and high school teams, where sometimes only the top 2-4 swimmers can compete per event. For us, we can send as many swimmers as possible, as long as their times meet the required standard for that specific meet.

Many times we use the "National Age Group Motivational Times," which from slowest to fastest rank: B/BB/A/AA/AAA/AAAA. They're based on specific percentiles and estimates nationally, and we will have various meets throughout the year where a swimmer may need an "A" or a "AAA" time to attend. If they have swum that time, then they're eligible to swim that event at the meet.

Other standards we use are specific to our region, or LSC, called "Missouri Valley." This is our main realm of competition, spanning across Kansas and about halfway through Missouri to Columbia, Springfield, and a few others. All the teams in that area get together for seasonal championships, so we create our own time standards for those meets. In the winter, we have Level II and Level I meets with their own time standards, and in the spring and summer we have Division II and Division I meets which operate very similarly.

For example: Imagine 11 year-old Sally joins the team and swims her first ever 50 Freestyle in 44.00 seconds in the October Blue/Gold meet for our new swimmers. It's a great swim, and she will be eligible for our November Wheels-or-Worms meet, but she doesn't meet any new time standards. So Sally goes to Wheels-or-Worms, nails her turn and improves a ton and drops her time down to 39.00 seconds. Awesome! She's eligible to swim that event at our Level II championships in December because she was faster than the time standard. At Level II, Sally catches fire and drops her time down again to a blistering 35.00. Not only does she do extremely well at the meet, but she also qualifies for our Division II championships in March. She has the rest of the spring to swim in more meets, improve her time before Division II, and potentially qualify in more events. She goes and has a great time, then next fall Sally decides that she wants to do even better, so she sets a goal to go qualify for Division I Championships.

It is important to have a basic understanding of the system so that you know what your child is eligible for and what may lie ahead in the very near future. These also become a great tool for goal-setting, no matter which ability level they're at! As always, if you have questions about any of the above, you're welcome to call or email your coach, or you may ask them before or after practice when they're free. Just please don't ask while they're coaching and giving their attention to your children! Thanks so much for your commitment to the sport and the team so far, and we help this information aids you in your child's progress to higher (and faster) achievements in swimming! GO BLAZERS!!

COMMON SWIMMING TERMS

Swimming Terms

1. Age Group Swimming: The program through which USA Swimming provides fair and open competition for its younger members. It is designed to encourage maximum participation, provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning, and develop a rich base of swimming talent. Nationally recognized age groups are 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18 and 15-18. Local meets may also include events for 8 and unders, and single age categories.
2. Approved meet: An officially sanctioned USA meet.
3. Backstroke flags: Lines of flags placed above the lanes at each end to signal the backstroker that he is five yards or meters (depending upon the course) from the wall.
4. Block: the starting platform.
5. Bulkhead: A wall constructed to divide a pool into different courses, such as a 50-meter pool into two 25-yard courses.
6. Course: Designated distance over which the competition is conducted.
7. Cut: Slang for “qualifying time”, or time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.
8. Distance: Term used to refer to events over 400 meters/500 yards.
9. Disqualification (DQ): This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind; e.g., freestyle kick in butterfly. A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive awards, nor can the time be used as an official time.
10. Dry land Training: Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance; usually includes stretching, calisthenics and/or weight training.
11. Event: Any race or series of races in a given stroke or distance.
12. False Start: Occurs when a swimmer is moving before the start gun is sounded. In USA Swimming, one false start will result in DQ after the event concludes.
13. Finals: The concluding session of a prelim/final meet in which the fastest swimmers from preliminary heats return to race again, usually in the evening.
14. Gutter: The area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows during a race and is circulated through the filtration system.
15. Heat: A single race in an event in which there are too many swimmers to compete at one time.
16. Heat Sheets: The swim meet program that includes information such as the name of the events, heats, lanes and swimmers.
17. I. M.: Slang for Individual Medley event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle.
18. Lane: The specific area in which the swimmer is assigned to swim, i.e., lane 1, lane 2, etc.

19. Lane markers, lines or ropes: Continuous floating markers extending from one end of the pool to the other.
20. Lane markings: Guide lines on the bottom of the pool and in the center of each lane extending from one end of the pool to the other.
21. Lap Counter: A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. (also, the person who counts for the swimmer, stationed at the opposite end of from the start.)
22. Leg: The part of a relay event that is swum by a single team member.
23. Local Swimming Committee (LSC): An administrative division (e.g. Iowa Swimming, Inc.) of the National Governing Body (USA Swimming) with the supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by USA Swimming. Our LSC encompasses all of the state of Kansas and Missouri east of St. Louis.
24. Long course: 50-meter pool.
25. Long Distance: Term used to refer to events of 800 meters/1000 yards, to I 5 00 meters/ 1 6 5 0 yards in lengths.
26. Medley Relay: A group of four swimmers each swimming different strokes in an event; back, breast, butterfly, and free.
27. Meet: A series of events held in one program.
28. No Time (NT): Seed time is entered as "No Time" if a swimmer has never swum an event before.
29. Official: A judge on the deck of the pool at a sanctioned competition who enforces USA Swimming rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, and referees.
30. Open competition: Competition any club, organization or individual may enter.
31. OVC (Official verification card): A three copy form for certifying a national qualifying time made by a swimmer and issued by a verification official of the area in which the meet was held.
32. Preliminaries/Prelims: Races (usually held in the morning) in which swimmers attempt to qualify for the championship and consolation "finals" in the events.
33. Q-Time: Qualifying time necessary to compete in a particular event and/or competition. A "cut".
34. Qualifying heats: Another name for preliminaries - a number of heats are swum to qualify the fastest swimmers for the finals where final placing for the event will be determined.
35. Relay: An event in which 4 swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.
36. Scratch: To withdraw from an event in a competition.
37. Seeding: Swimmers are arranged in heats in events according to submitted times and heat sheets are prepared prior to the day of competition.
38. Short Course: A pool 25 yards or 25 meters in length. USA Swimming conducts most of its winter competition in short course yards.

39. Split: A time recorded from the official start to the completion of an initial distance within a longer event. Also the time for one of the four individuals in a relay. Under certain conditions, splits may also be used as official times, for example, the lead off swim in a relay, or the lead off portion of an event.
40. Sprint: Describes the shorter events (50 and 100). In training, to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.
41. Starter: Meet official who fires gun or sounds horn that begins each heat of an event.
42. Starting blocks: Platforms from which the swimmer enters the water at the beginning of an event.
43. Streamline: The position used by swimmers when starting or pushing off the walls designed to reduce water resistance.
44. "Take your mark": The starter's command to swimmers to which they must respond by at once assuming a starting position.
45. Taper: The final preparation phase, sometimes referred to as "rest". Prior to major competitions, older, more experienced swimmers shave their entire bodies to reduce resistance and heighten sensation in the water.
46. Time Trial: A time-only swim, which is not part of a regular meet.
47. Timed final heats: Each swimmer swims that particular event one time and final placing is determined by the times performed in those heats.
48. Timers: Volunteers who time swimmers in a specific lane during a swim meet.
49. Touch Pad: A large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer's finish is registered and sent electronically to the timing system.
50. Unattached: An athlete who competes but does not represent a club.
51. Warm Down: Low intensity swimming used by swimmers after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid, and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.
52. Warm Up: Low intensity swimming used by swimmer prior to a main practice set or race to get muscles loose and warm. Warm up gradually increases heart rate, respiration and helps to prevent injury.