



<http://www.kacswim.com>

KAC

TEAM

HANDBOOK

2009/2010 SEASON

Welcome to the Kirtland Aquatic Club (KAC). KAC is looking forward to meeting and getting to know you and your family this swim season.

Kirtland Aquatic Club is a USS Club Swimming team for all swimming levels, beginners to Olympic hopefuls. We strive to provide an environment for all swimmers to develop athletically and personally.

The Kirtland Aquatic Club was founded in 1981. KAC has the privilege of swimming in the Kirtland Air Force Base 50 meter, 8 lane, indoor Olympic pool.

Kirtland Aquatic Club is a volunteer parent run organization, by an appointed board of directors, which employs outstanding coaches to teach, train, and encourage our swimmers at all competition levels.

KAC is known as having a very strong volunteer support organization. As a totally volunteer organization we require all parents to help in running swim meets that KAC sponsors. These meets help maintain lower monthly swimmer fees.

Under the direction of our coaches:

- KAC swimmers are encouraged to attend meets that challenge all levels of swimming competition.
- KAC participates in selected invitational meets throughout New Mexico, with occasional trips to surrounding states.
- Qualified KAC swimmers participate in State Championships, Zone Championships, national and international meets.
- KAC younger swimmers participate in the Rio Grande League meets, which are typically, on Sunday mornings and are structured for non-championship qualified swimmers.



KAC Team Philosophies

The mutual goal of both coach and parent is to do what is best for each child; how that goal is achieved is sometimes at odds. Only through clear communication can this be accomplished. Listed below are the teams and coaches philosophies, please review them:

- Our coaching staff adheres to the USA Swimming philosophy that swimming needs to be an enjoyable experience for your child. Walking the fine line between encouraging and forcing a child is difficult. A parent's general attitude is usually very clear to a child.
- Be your child's unconditional parent, and let the coach be the swimmers' coach. Parents may be tempted to enhance what the coach is teaching, but this often just confuses the swimmers. If you have questions, discuss it with the coach first.
- Enabling a child to skip practice on a regular basis sets them up for poor race performance and practices, which ultimately leads to him/her becoming discouraged. Encourage behavior that will lead to positive experiences. Organization, punctuality, and commitment skills carry over to all aspects of their life.
- Children need time for other activities and academics. Children that not yet have reached physical maturation of puberty, should not over condition, more is not always better.
- Failure and mistakes can be a great learning experience. It is hard sometimes to accept that failure may be "good" for their child. Sometimes a Disqualification (DQ), may make the child more open to coaching suggestions or more cognizant of their swimming. When coaches and parents try to prevent or shelter swimmers from experiencing the consequences of their actions, they are denied a learning opportunity. However, arguing or yelling on deck is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure their child is registered for a suggested meet and the coaches are responsible to choose the events that are best for the swimmers at a swim meet. These decisions are always open for discussion. Over the course of the year, the swimmers will swim most events, even ones that they don't like. Choices are not made arbitrarily, but based on the swimmers practice performance, meet level, team benefit, and opportunities for improvement. Our coaching staff feels it is important to be, at the very least, proficient in all strokes.

Swimmer Expectations

- Swimmers need to make every effort to attend practices. A swimmers' progress is tied to the frequency at which they practice. At the younger age levels, this is flexible.
- Swimmers need to arrive at practices on time.
- Swimmers need to be COACHABLE. In other words, be open to the suggestions of your coach, and try your best to follow his/her instructions.
- Swimmers need to be responsible for arriving at practices and meets with all necessary equipment.
- Be courteous and respectful of your fellow swimmers. Be supportive.
- Smoking, alcohol, and drug use will not be tolerated.
- Swimmers and parents alike are expected to conduct themselves in a positive manner that is reflective of the team and its philosophies.
- It is highly recommended that swimmers wear team attire at swim meets.
- Be gracious, whether you win or lose the race.
- Arguing with the Officials is unacceptable. The coach is your advocate with the meet officials and will help resolve any issues as necessary.

Parent Expectations

As parents we all love our children very much and want them to succeed in many aspects of their life, not just swimming. This is a balancing act at best, especially when the family has multiple children to accommodate. The coaching staff understands and is faced with doing what is best for the whole team and all of their swimmers. When we work as a team made up of swimmers, coaches, and parents working together for the same goals, we can do great things!

1. Parents are always welcome at practice. **The coaches are always happy to talk to you before or after practice**, but please do not distract coaches or swimmers during practice.
2. **No on-deck coaching by parents.** This type of behavior is not fair to your swimmer, the other swimmers, or the coaches. If you have questions about the instruction your child is receiving, please discuss them with the coach before or after practice or by phone.
3. Parents are **expected to pick up swimmers immediately after practice.** Please be on time, if for some reason you are running 10-15 minutes late either the coach or a board member will stay with your child until you arrive. Remember, parking in the fire lane in front of the building to wait for swimmers is not permitted. This is for the safety of young children who may dart between the cars and out into the street in front of on-coming cars.
4. **Coaches are responsible for discipline at practice and at meets.** Please bring any disciplinary problems to the attention of the Coach or a Board Member. We want to keep the swimmers safe, and if we do not exercise appropriate behavior, we risk losing the use of the pool.
5. **Dues are payable on the first of the month made payable to Kirtland Aquatic Club.**
You, the parent must notify, **BY THE FIRST OF THE MONTH AND IN WRITING**, either the coach or treasurer if a swimmer stops swimming. If you fail to notify the coach or treasurer, you are still responsible for those dues. Please read the section on Dues and Operating Expenses for more information on this policy. Please pay by check if possible, by the 10th of each month, place it in the Treasurer's box at the pool, or mail it to the Team Address:

Kirtland Aquatic Club
P.O. Box 5598
Albuquerque, NM 87185.

6. All swimmers must be registered with USA swimming. This is done on an annual basis. Swimmers not holding a current registration are NOT allow to swim at practices, meets, or any other USA Swimming sponsored event.
7. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their swimmer is entered in the swim meets in which he/she wishes to swim. Meet information will be posted at the

mailboxes by the coaches prior to team-attended meets. **All entry fees are the responsible of the swimmer.** The club does not pay entry fees for swim meets. A meet entry form, located in the swim team cabinet, and meet fees are required from all swimmers, **prior to being entered in a meet.**

8. **Parents are required to work at KAC-sponsored meets. They are also expected to help at other meets when we are asked to provide workers.** Without support from all swimmers and parents, we cannot sponsor swim meets for our swimmers, or for other swimmers in the state. We have a reputation for hosting super meets. Please help us maintain our reputation by helping us run future meets (setting up, timers, computer operators, runners, helping Clerk of Course and concessions).
9. **EVERYONE** is expected to help with fundraisers. These activities are the only way we have to earn money for new equipment, swimmer incentives and operating expenses. If a fundraising activity causes you any financial difficulties, please discuss those difficulties confidentially with the Treasurer or President.
10. Parents are responsible for getting their swimmer(s) to swim meets and helping chaperone at those meets held out-of-town. If you want your swimmer to attend a meet held out-of-town, but you cannot travel to the meet yourself, you should arrange transportation with other team members. You will be expected to contribute your fair share of money for gas, lodging, and food expenses.
11. Although it is the swimmer's responsibility to get important material that is distributed at practice or put into the mailbox assigned to each swimmer back to you, please keep checking with them from time to time to make sure you are receiving newsletters, meet information, etc. It is easy for them to stuff papers in the bottom of their swim bags and forget about them by the time they get home. KAC utilizes both email and posted messages at the pool to distribute information about the team.

Dues and Operating Expenses

Kirtland Aquatic Club strives to keep fees affordable to all. Special discounts are provided for military families E-5 and below. But this also means that we operate on an extremely tight budget and small cash flow. Therefore, your prompt payment of dues and other fees is very important for the smooth operation of this club. We cannot meet our expenses if you do not meet your obligations. Some important facts to keep in mind are:

1. Swimmer fees are billed on a seasonal basis, Short Course (September thru March) and Long Course (April thru August). Full payment can be made at the beginning of the season or equal payments on a monthly basis. Swimmers joining in mid-season are prorated for the remaining portion of the season.
2. You are considered a participating member of Kirtland Aquatic Club until your coach or the treasurer is notified in writing of your withdrawal from the team. Swimmers withdrawing from the team in mid-season are still required to fulfill their club fee obligation to the team. Exceptions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
3. Non-payment of 3 months will result in removal from active status and swimmer will not be allowed in the pool until account is brought up to date.
4. The coaches are contracted on an annual basis, and the coaching staff must be paid all year long, even when the team is not swimming. For example, many swimmers do not swim during the month of August (the New Mexico Swimming summer season culminates late in July or early in August). Members of the staff are still at the pool coaching age group swimmers who have qualified for the Western Zone Championships and Junior National meet or the Senior National meet. Therefore fees are due for the entire season.
5. Fundraisers and hosted swim meets are our main source of funds outside of dues. These allow us to increase the cash flow of the club so we can replace equipment; purchase awards, trophies, and special gifts; fund any social functions we have during the year; and most importantly, send our coaches to clinics so they may better coach our swimmers. Your participation at fundraising events is a must!

6. The KAC Treasurer's job is a demanding position in the Club. Every effort is made to ensure that all billing is correct. There might be instances when a problem arises with your bill. When this occurs, please promptly discuss it with the treasurer.
7. All KAC swimmers **are required** to be registered on an annual basis with USA Swimming and New Mexico Swimming. This provides liability insurance to the club and swimmers. These fees are the responsibility of the swimmer. Our registration chairman maintains contact and emergency information on each swimmer for use by our coaches and club. Please keep the registration chairman advised of any changes in contact or emergency information

TEAM SUITS

The “Team” plays a significant role in enabling athletes to reach their maximum potential – as such, our “Team” is a very important part of our program. To help develop this “role” of our “Team”, we would prefer that KAC swimmers (when representing KAC) compete in our team suit. Our team caps will have the KAC logo on them.

TEAM ITEMS:

- Team suit
- Team cap
- Team warm-ups
- Team bag
- Team shirt
- Team jacket

Team items can be ordered by contacting any member of the board -
See website for current contact info.

<http://www.kacswim.com>

INFORMATION PLEASE

Several methods are used at KAC to distribute current team information to prospective and current members. They include:

- **Email:** This is used to communicate urgent information on an immediate basis. The subject header should be "KAC" on all updates- please check them without delay.
- **KAC website:** The team website at <http://www.kacswim.com> is updated as often as possible. It contains basic team information, meet results, and past newsletters.
- **Posting:** upcoming meet information and sign up sheets are posted on the mail center doors at the Kirtland pool. Meet information is also usually emailed to all members as well.
- **Calendar:** A team event calendar is maintained on the web site. Please ensure that you check it often.
- **Team meetings** are conducted at practice on an informal basis. Everyone is welcome, and it is your opportunity to ask questions, air grievances, and help make plans for future meets and team functions.
- **Board meetings** are held on a quarterly basis by the parent run board of directors that governs KAC. Business items that are requested to be included on the agenda are required to be approved by the board chairperson- see website for current chair contact information.

ITEMS TO BRING TO MEETS

The following is a list of items that are helpful to bring to swim meets, both summer and winter:

SWIM BAG

(team suit, goggles, swim cap, extra towels, dry clothes, extra sweats, bar soap, shampoo and conditioner)

HIGHLIGHTING MARKER

READING MATERIAL

GAMES

COPY OF US SWIMMING REGISTRATION CARD

ICE CHEST

(drinks, fruit snacks, sport drinks and water)

(NO GLASS CONTAINERS ARE ALLOWED ON POOL DECKS!)

HATS

SUNTAN LOTION

LAWN CHAIRS

OFFICIAL BADGES

STOP WATCH

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EATING AT COMPETITIONS ARE:

3-4 Hours Before: Fresh fruit, fruit and vegetable juices, and breads, bagels, baked potatoes, cereal and low-fat milk, low-fat yogurt, sandwiches with small amount of peanut butter or lean meats and cheese and plenty of water to be well hydrated, if you feel thirsty you're already dehydrated.

2-3 Hours Before: Fresh fruit and vegetable juices and breads/bagels, English muffins with small amount of butter, margarine, cream cheese, peanut butter, plenty of water to remain hydrated.

1 Hour or Less Before Event: Fruit or vegetable juice and/or fresh fruit and enough water to remain hydrated.

WORKOUT GROUPS

In order to provide appropriate levels of competition and training for members of the KAC, the Head Coach will assign swimmers to one of the groups described below, based on their assessment of the swimmers skills, endurance, and competitive level. Swimmers are encouraged to progress to the group at their desired level of competition and involvement. The Head Coach determines when any move from one group to another is appropriate.

The Head Coach will discuss any changes in swimmers group with the swimmer and parents if appropriate, prior to a group change. If a swimmer would like to change groups they may request consideration of the change by talking to the coach. The coach will consider the change and render their decision at the next regular practice.

BLUE GROUP 1:

This group is made up of the most competitive swimmers who typically maintain National "B" Times or better in at least four events.

GOALS:

- Stroke Refinement
- Start Refinement
- Race Strategy
- Advanced Race Conditioning
- Consistent Race Time Improvement
- Qualifying times for State, Zone, and National Championships

SWIM MEETS:

Invitationals, Championships

BLUE GROUP 2:

This group is made up of the competitive, and exercise conditioning swimmers

GOALS:

- Stroke Development
- Breathing Technique Development
- Race conditioning for age appropriate events

SWIM MEETS:

Rio Grande League and selected Invitationals

SILVER GROUP:

Basics of the competitive strokes are taught, along with turns, and beginning endurance building.

GOALS:

- Competency in all four competitive strokes (Butterfly, Breast, Back, Free)
- Swim Starts off of blocks
- Basic Conditioning for swim event participation

SWIM MEETS:

Selected local meets

Ten Commandments for swimming Parents

By Rose Snyder

(Adapted from Ed Clendaniel's "Ten Commandments for little League Parents")

1. **Thou shalt not impose your ambitions on thy child.**
Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do their personal best.
2. **Thou shalt be supportive no matter what.**
There is only one question to ask your child, "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.
3. **Thou shalt not coach your child.**
You have taken your child to a professional coach, do not undermine that coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to support, love and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. That is not your area.
4. **Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet.**
If you are going to show up a swimming meet, you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coach.
5. **Thou shalt acknowledge the child's fears.**
A first swimming meet, 500 free or 200 IM can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child was not ready to compete in it.
6. **Thou shalt not criticize the officials.**
If you do not have the time or the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can.
7. **Honor thy child's coach.**
The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one. And one that contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child, it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.
8. **Thou shalt not jump from team to team.**
The water isn't necessarily bluer at the other team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long, long time by the teammates they leave behind. Often times swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.
9. **Thy child shalt have goals before winning.**
Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else did it too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. This does not make me a failure, in fact, I am very proud of that swim."
10. **Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian.**
There are 225,000 athletes in United States Swimming. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are 1 in about 4,300. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask your coach why he coaches. Chances are, he was not an Olympian, but still got enough out of swimming that he wants to pass that love for the sport on to others. Swimming teaches self discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they may have won. Swimming builds good people and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

A Sporting Parent

(Source: YTO Team handbook)

When your child was born, you were thrust into a role of nurturing, teaching, disciplining, caring, and loving that child. As your child has grown and matured physically, emotionally, and psychologically, you have tried to do the best job you can to provide a quality education, surround your child with excellent role models, steered them toward good friends, tried to show them great moral values, and gave them all the love they needed to have a great self-esteem.

Sports play a major role in the development of children. The sport of swimming is one of the healthiest sports both physically and psychologically for children as they mature. So, you bring your child to the pool, sign them up, pay your money, and then what? Well, a lot of parents wing it at this point. Usually no one tells them the best way to provide the support their child needs for success.

That's when things can sometimes go wrong. That's when well-intentioned, well-educated people can become.... SPORTS PARENTS! Often this is not a positive change. Coaches of all sports experience this phenomenon. Part of it is human nature. Let's take a moment to look at how we might classify them. Do you see anyone you know? Do you see yourself?

"The PRESSURE Parent"



This type of parent constantly talks about swimming. They take their child running at 5:00 A.M. on Sunday morning, the only day their child has off from practice. No matter what the child achieves, it is never enough. They are easy to find because they are usually the ones saying, "I never put pressure on my child!" Well, sometimes we as parents put pressure on our children without even knowing it. Swimmers of pressure parents tend to have less fun, don't want to go to practice at times, are afraid of both failure and success – if they fail they get yelled at, but if they succeed, then more is expected out of them by the parent. Pressure parents almost always equate bad swim with bad swimmer and good swim with good parenting. Their children swim because they "have to" and not because the "want to."

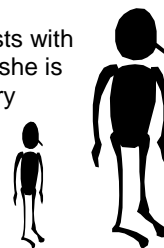
While every parent at one time or another send messages to their children that could be received as pressure, it is the parent who constantly causes undue stress to their child when it comes to swimming. These parents tend to make the atmosphere tense and uncomfortable for the people around them. Others want to say something, but usually don't. So, how do you avoid being a pressure parent?

- Let your child enjoy his/her activity.
- Remember that while you are paying for the sport, it is your child's sport.
- Try to let your child experience failure. It is the greatest tool used in building success.
- Communicate with your child. Don't let a swim determine if they are a good or bad kid.
- Try not to compare your child to anyone else. Swimmers all develop differently.
- Enjoy your child's efforts even if they aren't what you expected.
- Talk to your child about what he/she thought about his/her swim. What did you think about it? What did the coach say? I'm proud of you. Hey, you'll get 'em next time.
- Try to never punish your child by using swimming for leverage.
- Give your child some space so he/she gains ownership of his/her sport.

- Separate swimming as an activity that is “part” of your child’s life – not his /her whole life.

The “LIVING VICARIOUSLY THROUGH MY CHILD” Parent

Have you ever seen those parents at swim meets that proudly puff out their chests with 100 gold medals pinned to their shirt? How about the parent who thinks that he/she is more important to the team just because his/her child is a faster swimmer? Every team has a few of these types of parents. It’s easy to get caught up into your child’s successes. Also, the opposite happens. Sometimes parents walk around the pool deck at a meet with their heads hung low, like they just lost the biggest race of their lives! It’s as if, the success or failure of their child is a direct reflection of the parent’s worth.



So, how do you avoid becoming one of those parents?

- Separate yourself from the end result of your child’s swim. “Good for you!” “you did it!” or “We are proud of you no matter how fast you swim.”
- Avoid boasting on your child. Focus on encouraging others on the team.
- Actively cheer for others just as loud as you would for your own child.
- Teach your children good sportsmanship by being their best example.
- Let your child accept the rewards and the defeats. Teaching children responsibility is the only way to get them to truly be the best they are capable of being.
- Avoid thinking that just because your child is now one of the faster children, you are more important to the team than any other family with children who are not as fast.
- Try to be excited for your child, not for yourself.
- Let your child set his/her own goals, not your goals for your child. The only expectation you should have is that your child enjoys the experience of competitive swimming.

The “I’M NOT THAT KIND OF PARENT” Parent

Have you ever noticed with some parents that no matter how hard you try to explain things to them they give you a stock answer: “I’m not that kind of parent.” Well, we all hate to tell you, but YES YOU ARE! These parents worry about their child never getting enough attention, they call the coaches for lengthy conversations on subjects ranging from biomechanics of swimming to their child not being able to swim today because of a hang nail, they never take the blame for any problem on the team, but are usually up in the stands stirring the pot of dissension, the pressure their kids into being something they’re not, always threaten to leave the team if things don’t change, are usually never found when it’s time to help at swim meets, never fund raise, but are first to criticize that we have no new equipment, and will tell you what you want to hear and then tell someone else the complete opposite. Whew! While this may be a little exaggerated, a lot of these things actually do occur by parents who will be the first to tell you “they’re not this kind of parent.”

A lot of times you will find these parents making excuses for their children no matter what rational, well-thought out, and objective logic you use to explain it to them. Another case of parental denial. So, how can you avoid or even help parents stay away from evolving into this type of parent?

- Try to avoid hanging around the water cooler and dwelling on problems or concerns that just can’t be fixed.
- Try to support any and all decisions made by the directors of the team. You may not always agree with what is done, but once a final decision is made you have two choices:

- Support it in a positive way, or deal with it.
- Reinforce to your friends who are parents on the team to become actively involved in a positive way and not focus on unneeded energy on the trivial things in the program.
- If you feel someone is complaining too much, just tell him or her that we don't do that here at KAC. Tell them that you don't want them to be "One of those" parents.
- If you have a parent friend or even yourself as a parent that has a problem, go to the source that can fix it. Getting upset at something and venting to friends may be good for your peace of mind, but it doesn't do anything positive for the team.

The PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE Parent

This is the parent that scares coaches and programs the most. It is this parent who can really do harm to a positive program going in the right direction. The passive-aggressive parent is the camouflaged parent, lying in wait for the right opportunity to do the most damage to a team or a career. This type of parent usually never presents his/her concerns directly to a coach, but would rather let problems fester. Usually, this parent goes from person to person polluting the program. This is a parent with an agenda that wants to get their way and will stop at nothing until that goal is achieved. Once a passive-aggressive parent knows that you are on his/her "side" you have then become part of the problem and not the solution.

The best way to eradicate parents like this from a program is to continually have them meet with positive resistance on the part of other parents. You can stop a passive-aggressive parent with comments such as, "We don't do that here." "Well, I've never seen that before." Or, "Why don't you talk to the coaches; I'm sure they'd love to help you solve this."

The INVISIBLE PARENT

The "COACH" Parent



How to spot a parent who does the coaching for the coach. Stopwatch in hand, all best times from their child ever achieved in back pocket, ASCA's hotline number tattooed on left forearm, clipboard hanging from back of paid coach's chair, copy of 101 Way to Swim Fast, pirated copy of stroke videos on top of cooler, "Win one for the Gipper" speech penciled in at top of heat sheet, whistle around neck, two more stopwatches tied around side belt loops, suggestions for paid coach scribbled on back of grocery list which contains bread, milk, and a variety of supplemental vitamins for their 6 year old, and pointer finger ready to blame coaches if child does not perform well. Have you seen this person? Just go to any swim meet and scan the crowd. If you see a parent huddled with his/her child and they are giving specific swimming or race instructions then you've spotted it: The Coach Parent.

Most coaches in programs like ours have swum competitively for several years, coached for several years, and have gone to school and trained like any other profession. Can you imagine taking your child to the doctor, the doctor saying we have to do emergency surgery, and then you saying to your child – "Here, just take some Tylenol, it will go away." Sounds a little ridiculous doesn't it? So does a parent telling their child to go out fast the first 50 of a 200 when the coach has been working with the child for months on smart race strategies and has told the child to go out controlled. This scenario has confusion all over it. My point being, it's not easy!

Here are some tips to help.

- Get into the habit of having your child talk to his/her coach before and after each swim.
- Avoid commenting on technical things like stroke corrections, breathing patterns, race strategies, goal times, starts, turns, etc. If you have a specific concern, address it to the coach not the swimmer.
- Let your child be the one to educate you as he/she learns. It makes it a lot more fun. After all, they are doing it every day, chances are you are not. So, who is the expert? Makes sense.
- Always ask your child, "What did your coach say?" Not, "You should have had a better turn.
- Never give race instructions to your child. That had already been done.
- Let your child tell you about his/her goals. Don't tell them what you expect from a performance standpoint.
- Let your child keep track of his/her best times. Ownership is vitally important.
- Remember that coaches share in your child's success. As swimmers get better, they make coaches better. So, if you think about it. It is in the coach's best interest to make good decisions and work with every child.
- Try to avoid "Pump up" speeches. If they've already talked to their coach, they've already gotten one. Try not to overkill it. This will take the child out of is/her optimum arousal level, which is the level of peak athletic performance. Wishing them luck or a simple "Go get'em!" is the best way to get tem going.
- Never disagree with a coaching decision or question why a coach has done something in front of your child. This undermines the coach in the child's eyes and can lead to bigger and more damaging problems down the road. Talk to the coach personally.
- Provide support for your child. Failure is not the result of poor coaching.
- Openly show your support of the coaching staff to everyone. This will help you from wanting to coach. A lot of times parents fell their child is not getting adeque coaching and decide to take matters into their own hands. If you are not happy with the coahing, then tell the coach directly.
- Avoid critiquing your child's swim. The coach is the only figure that can accurately critique your child's races and workouts. After all, he/she is much more objective when it comes to your child.
- Sign your child up for clinics that the team puts on. This is a great way for your child to get more one on one and attention with the paid coach. It also reinforces your support of the coaching staff.

The COACH'S DREAM Parent



You ever wonder why the coach seems to be closer to come parents than others? What's up with that? Is their child getting special attention? Are those parents taking the coach out to dinner every Friday night? What is going on? Well, the answer is rather simple. Coaches are just like everyone else. They are human. It is only human nature that people like some people better than others. Well, a good coach tries his/her best to treat every person equally, but you've got to admit it is hard to do that when one person is helping you all they can and the other is trying to take away from the program you are trying to build. So, what are some of the common qualities that productive parents share in competitive sports programs?

- The parent finds out what needs the program has and then gets involved with assisting with those needs.

- The parent allows their child to get the most out of the experience.
- The parent speaks highly of the program to others outside of swimming and in the community.
- The parent volunteers to help with any and all team hosted functions (swim meets, banquets, monthly activities for all the swimmers, fund-raisers, etc.)
- The parent allows the coach to coach and is supportive.
- The parent always seems to see the glass as being half full instead of half empty.
- The parent stays away from negative conversations.
- The parent take a “How can I help?” approach.
- The parent compliments other swimmers and their child's coach often.
- The parent uses his/her own professional talents and connections to aid in the progress of the program.
- The parent has fun! This sport is just as much a social opportunity it is for parents as it is an athletic one for the children.

What Type of Parent Are You?

Perhaps while reading about these different types of parents, you thought to yourself, “Oh, that’s Mr. So-and-So,” or “That’s So-and-So’s mom.” But to be honest, don’t you agree that there is probably a little bit of these people in all of us? We inherently want what’s best for our child and will do anything and everything in our power to get it. We, as coaches, know this and want you to know that we, too, want what’s best for your child and any decision we make is in their best interests. So, as we struggle to learn about the sport of swimming, our children and ourselves, we all hope that we can become great swim parents, and ultimately, a great, and well-unified team.

GLOSSARY

Like any sport, swimming has its own unique language. People new to the sport may wonder what everyone is taking about from time to time, so here are a few definitions to help you.

"A" "B" "C" TIMES: Time standards set by USA Swimming for each age group. Slowest swimmers have "c" times, and world class swimmers have "AAAA" times. Meets may specify "B=C" times only or "A" times only. These times are at the pool, or you may check your Red Book .

ASCENDING SET: Training set in which repeat times get slower each time as the set progresses.

BLOCK: The starting platform

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

DQ: Disqualified. 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.

DESCENDING SET: Training set in which each repeat time gets faster as the set progresses.

FALSE START: Occurs when a swimmer is moving before the start gun is sounded.

FINA: The Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (International Federation of Amateur Swimming) sets rules and standards for swimming worldwide.

FLAGS: Backstroke flags placed 5 yards (short course) or 5 meters (long course) from the end of the pool. The flags enable backstrokers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently.

JUNIOR NATIONALS: A national level meet held twice a year, once in the spring and once in the summer. The meets are divided East and West, and swimmers must be 18 or under. There are qualifying time standards and swimmers are limited to four individual events.

LOCAL SWIMMING COMMITTEE (LSC): USS Administrative Division ours is New Mexico Swimming (NMS).

LONG COURSE: Long Course season is April to August with events held in 50 meter pools.

NATIONAL AGE GROUP TIME STANDARDS: Time standards derived from the previous years results that are broken down by age and sex as well as B, BB, A, AA, AAA, and AAAA divisions. These designations are National and may be used for entry or qualifying times.

NATIONAL AGE GROUP TOP 16 TIME: Times set by the 16 fastest individuals within an age group. Consideration time standards are published in the USS Red Book.

NEGATIVE SPLIT: Swimming the back half of the race faster than the front half.

QUALIFYING TIMES: Minimum time standard to be eligible for certain meets. "Q" times are usually included in the meet information, published in the Red Book or posted on the KAC bulletin board.

SHORT COURSE: Short Course season is September to March with events held in 25 yard or meter pools.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS: Held twice a year (long and short course), swimmers must achieve the qualifying time set for that year to be eligible. NMS sets times based on averages from championships the previous year.

THE "RED BOOK" - The "Bible" of NMS: Each swimmer registered with USS/NMS will get one (when they are published). It contains a NMS meet schedule, qualifying times, and national time standards.

USA SWIMMING: Our governing body and a member of FINA, USS sets rules and national time standards and provides insurance for swimmers. Each swimmer will receive a USS number which must be on the meet entries and forms.

Rio Grande LEAGUE: A New Mexico organization to promote swimming events for younger athletes. Meets are usually for ages 14 and under.

ZONE CHAMPIONSHIPS : All-Star competitive age group competition held within each of the four zones: Eastern, Western, Central and Southern,. Swimmers compete as a team member for their LSCs, not their clubs.