



TEAM HANDBOOK

www.hscswim.org

March 2009

INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

Welcome to Humboldt Swim Club! We want swimming to be a positive experience for your family and hope that this handbook will answer many of your questions and serve as a reference for you. Please feel free to ask board members, parents and coaches any other questions that you might have.

MISSION

Our mission is to provide the community with a competitive youth swim team which develops both swimming skills and positive personal qualities.

ABOUT US

Humboldt Swim Club (HSC) is a year-round swim team in Arcata, California. HSC employs a professional coaching staff certified by the American Red Cross and registered with USA Swimming. Humboldt Swim Club is a non-profit organization run by a volunteer board of directors. We have approximately 125 swimmers, from 5 years up to 18 years of age. The team participates in an average of one meet per month, throughout Northern California. Competition is not mandatory, but is encouraged. HSC is a member club of Zone 3, Pacific Swimming, a division of USA Swimming. Humboldt Swim Club does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, or creed.

PHILOSOPHY

Our goal is to encourage members to swim to their personal potential and to enjoy life-long health and fitness. We achieve this goal by giving each swimmer individual instruction, attention, and feedback.

HISTORY

Humboldt Swim Club was formed in June, 1993. Due to community interest Humboldt Swim Club and North Coast Swim Club merged to combine resources and efforts in 1998.

LOCATION

The team practices at both the Arcata Community Pool and at the Humboldt State University pool.

TEAM DUES

Please refer to our current fee schedule at www.hscswim.org

COMMUNICATIONS

Each family is assigned a file folder at the pool. Check it daily for information, awards and other handouts. Our monthly newsletter will be mailed and/or e-mailed to you along with your billing statement. The team has a bulletin board at ACP with the newsletter and current announcements posted. We may also use direct mailings, and a phone tree for special events. Board meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Jacoby Creek Staff Lounge, all parents are welcome. The team website has past and current newsletters, meet results, links to Pacific Swimming and *USA Swimming* and more, visit it at www.hscswim.org
Team phone lists are available upon request from the team treasurer.



TEAM STRUCTURE

COACHES

Humboldt Swim Club has four coaches at the present time. All coaches are certified in CPR, First Aid, and Swim Coaches Safety Training and are registered with USA Swimming. All coaches have several years of coaching experience, keep up to date with the latest swimming research, and have a special place in their hearts for teaching children.

PRACTICE GROUPS

Our program is designed as a progression from group to group. Each coach will use the same language and the swimmer's skills and training will improve and build upon one another.

The different groups allow swimmers of similar age and ability to improve together. Each group is both fun and challenging; working on stroke mechanics, starts & turns, and pacing & racing skills in all four competitive strokes.

Our team is divided into 5 groups:

The **Green** group is for 10 & under beginning swimmers who are new to the sport and developing the four strokes

The **Bronze** group is for swimmers aged 9-12 who have learned the four competitive strokes and have gained some competitive experience.

The **Silver** group has swimmers aged 9-13 and works on technique and endurance.

Our **Gold** group swimmers are 12-16 year-olds who show strength in technique and endurance.

The **Senior** group is for swimmers 13 and up who desire advanced competitive training and a commitment.

The group descriptions are basic guidelines and there are always exceptions when placing a child in a group.

The coaches will determine the best place for the swimmer. Group requirements are posted on our website

www.hcswim.org

PRACTICE TIMES, SWIM MEET SCHEDULES

Schedules for both practice times and swim meets will be updated throughout the year. Please refer to the newsletter or website.

TEAM APPAREL

Our team colors are royal blue, black, and white. We are "The Water Dogs". Team Suits can be ordered from NorCal SwimShop (www.swimshop.com) in Napa (800-752-SWIM). Other team items available from NorCal include a team parka, warm-up suit, team bags, fins, and paddles. Our team parka is blue with black polar fleece lining, "HSC" on the back and the swimmer's name embroidered on the front (they cost approximately \$110). Parkas become important when swimmers attend outdoor meets in the spring, fall, and winter. T-shirts and sweat shirts are ordered from Provolt Design (local) once a year, usually in the late fall. You will be notified in the newsletter.

Swimmers should wear a team suit and team cap at meets, this helps the coaches to spot our swimmers and also promotes team spirit! Team caps (\$5) are available at the pool and will always be available at team meets.

EQUIPMENT

It is strongly recommended that a swimmer wear a cap and goggles to each practice. The team will provide fins, kick boards, and pull buoys. Swimmers in the Gold and Senior Group will be asked to purchase other necessary equipment through NorCal Swim Shop. Each family can pick up a copy of the Pacific Swim Guide at the Arcata Pool. This guide contains all the time standards, the schedule for meets in our area and other important information.

TEAM ADMINISTRATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Humboldt Swim Club is administered by a volunteer parent board that meets monthly to plan for the ever-changing needs of a dynamic swim team. Board meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday of each month in the Jacoby Creek School Staff Lounge at 5:30 p.m. The meetings are open and all parents are welcome. Club by-laws and board meeting minutes are available at the Arcata Community Pool.

VOLUNTEERS

Our club is always in need of parent volunteers. There are many things that you can do to help the team. Each family is required to volunteer at least 12 hours each year. We need parents qualified to officiate at meets. Clinics are offered from time to time to train parents to become stroke and turn judges, timing system operators, computer operators, meet marshals and meet directors. Please get involved...it is rewarding and fun! Because one of our priorities is to keep dues affordable, fund raising is a necessary part of the team's activities. Each year we host at least two swim meets, several fundraisers, a Sponsorship Drive, and a lap-a-thon. Each family is required to raise at least \$150 per year for the team. To keep membership dues low we need energy and creative fund raising ideas from our swim club families. Please contact a coach or board member if you have fund raising ideas!

PACIFIC SWIMMING & USA SWIMMING

Pacific Swimming (www.pacswim.org) is the name of our LSC (Local Swim Committee). The LSC is an administrative division of *USA Swimming* (www.usaswimming.org) responsible for supervising certain geographic boundaries. Pacific Swimming (PC) governs Northern California and parts of Nevada. Pacific Swimming is a very large LSC with over 130 teams from Crescent City to Reno to Monterey. Because PC is so big it is divided into five zones. HSC is in Zone 3.

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. From its headquarters office in Colorado Springs USA Swimming staff interact with 59 Local Swim Committees, athletes, coaches and volunteers at all levels to provide services to over 300,000 registered athletes, 20,000 non-athletes and thousands of swim clubs.

SWIM MEETS

Many meets we attend involve travel out of the area, as close as Crescent City and Redding but also as far away as San Francisco and the East Bay. Sometimes we camp but often stay in hotels or stay with family and friends. Many families carpool and share hotel rooms to cut costs.

Swim meets usually last several hours so bring chairs, sleeping bags, nutritious snacks and drinks, extra towels, games, music, etc. to make your stay (and your child's) as comfortable as possible.

THE SWIMMING SEASONS

One swimming year (12 months) is broken into two seasons, short course and long course. The short course season is seven months (September - March), while the long course season is 5 months (April - August). During the short course season we swim only in 25 yard pools. In long course season we try to swim in as many long course meets (50 meter pools) as possible. In both seasons we average one swim meet per month. Both seasons end with final or championship meets designated for different swimming levels, so all team members can work towards a season finale. All Championship meets have their own qualifying times. Far Westerns is the highest level of competition that recognizes different age groups. Nationally ranked swimmers will compete at the California/Nevada Sectional Championships and/or Nationals. These meets are open to swimmers of any age who achieve the qualifying times.

SWIM MEET ORGANIZATION IN PACIFIC SWIMMING

Age group meets in Pacific are mostly administered at the zone level, which is to say that each of the five geographic zones in Pacific sets its own year-round program of meets for age group swimmers at all levels. (There is, however, no limitation on swimmers entering meets hosted by clubs outside of their team's zone.) In addition, Pacific Swimming, through member clubs, offers short course and long course championship meets, the Junior Olympic age group championship meets, the regional Far Westerns short course and long course championships, as well as a variety of pre-championship and special holiday weekend meets. Here are some common meet classifications, with an idea of what they mean:

Events in a B meet or an A meet would be limited to swimmers who had made that standard in the events they want to enter but not the next one above it. Swimmers could enter an event in a B meet if they had achieved a B time but not an A time in that event. Since Far Western meet standard is the highest meet qualifying standard currently used in Pacific, Far Westerns would be open to any swimmer who had made the Far Western meet standard.

A plus sign next to a time standard means "or higher." For example, events in an A+ or JO+ meet would be open to any swimmer who had made the indicated standard or any higher standard in that event.

Multiclass meets have separate results and awards for swimmers with different time standards. For example, a very common meet format used in Pacific is C/B/A+. Events in this meet would be open to any age group swimmer. C swimmers, B swimmers and A+ swimmers would compete together, but separate results would be prepared for the three groups, and the groups would receive separate awards.

Age Group Open meets and Invitational meets do not have time standards. Invitational meets are limited to members of invited clubs, while Age Group Open meets are open to any age group swimmer registered with USA Swimming.

Zone or league championship meets are open only to swimmers affiliated with teams in that zone or league. The time standards used in these meets vary.

The Junior Olympic and Far Western meets, and other meets using these time standards, normally use a preliminaries and finals format.

For more information about Pacific Swimming meet organization go to www.pacswim.org and click on FAQ.



TIME STANDARDS IN PACIFIC SWIMMING

Pacific has established age group time standards for the following age groups: 8/under, 10/under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18. The time standards are described below roughly from slowest to fastest.

C, B, BB, A, AA, AAA, and AAAA: age group swimming is where virtually all swimmers begin, and the B, BB, and A standards are the basic developmental and meet entry time standards used in Pacific's age group program. B is the entry level standard (a C or Novice time is any time slower than the B time standard), and an A time is everyone's first big goal. AA, AAA, and AAAA times are higher-level motivational standards (Note: 8/unders do not have all of these standards.)

JO MEET STANDARD: The JO meet standard is the qualifying time standard for the Junior Olympic meets that are offered in Pacific in March, July, and December. (There are no separate JO times for 8/unders -- they must qualify for JO meets at the 10/under standard.)

FAR WESTERN MEET STANDARD: The Far Western meet standard, also known as the Q time standard, is the qualifying time standard for the two Far Western Championship meets that Pacific hosts each year in late March and late July. (Again, there are no separate Far Western meet standards for 8/unders -- they must qualify for these meets at the 10/under standard.) The Far Western meet standard is currently the fastest time standard in Pacific used for meet entry purposes.

PRT (PACIFIC RECOGNITION TIME): For 8/unders, PRTs are the time standard used for compiling the top times each year for this age group. For the other age groups, PRTs are a recognition time standard between Q and National Reportable Times.

WZCT (WESTERN ZONE CONSIDERATION TIME): a long course time standard established by Pacific Swimming which is used in the selection process for the team that represents Pacific Swimming at the annual Western Zone Championships in August. (What's the Western Zone? Follow this link for more information).

NRT (NATIONAL REPORTABLE TIME OR TOP 16 REPORTABLE TIME): the national age group time standard established by USA Swimming to compile the top 16 USA Swimming age group times each season.



THE SWIMMER'S ROLE

- To give your best at all times.
- To practice good sportsmanship in every situation.
- To be the best teammate you can be.
- To listen when the coach is talking and do as they ask.
- To have respect for your coaches, your teammates, your opponents, the equipment, the locker rooms, and pool staff.
- To challenge yourself in any and all situations.
- To use caution and common sense at the pool so as to avoid injury.
- To love the sport of swimming!

THE PARENTS' ROLE

- Get your child/children to practice on time.
- Stay informed by reading the newsletter and picking up your mail in your file folder.
- Review with your child the roles and rules the swimmers are to follow.
- Attend as many team meets as possible.
- Pay dues on time and make sure paperwork is current.
- Let the coaches coach. They are the experts and know what is best for your child and the team when it comes to swimming.
- Don't interrupt coaches during practice. Save your questions and comments for after practice so that the coaches can concentrate on the swimmers.
- Be an active member of the team by volunteering when needed.
- Communicate with the coach and the board.
- Consider serving on the board of directors or becoming a swim meet official

MEET ENTRIES

Many of you have noticed the option for meet entries online via Swim Connection (www.swimconnection.com). It is recommended that you use this option when available (as it will be 99% of the time). For those who have not yet entered a meet online, it is fast, easy, accurate and reliable. One of the benefits of using this system is that all of your swimmers' times are accessible with the click of a button (provided they have already swum in a meet previous to entering) at the time you do your entries. The cost of using Swim Connection is \$1.00 + 5% of the entry fees. If you have any questions regarding this system, or meet entries in general please feel free to contact the coaches.

To help make things more cost effective and less resource intensive you can download and print your own meet sheets from www.pacswim.org. It is also possible to enter swim meets by filling out the downloaded entry form and mailing it by the deadline.

If you need help with a meet entry, please ask a coach, group liaison person or an experienced parent - they are glad to help!

HUMBOLDT SWIM CLUB

CODE OF CONDUCT

Humboldt Swim Club is a community of swimmers, coaches and parents. Our goal is to foster a cooperative atmosphere, working together to make this the best team it can be. Please remember that it is a privilege, not a right, to be a member of Humboldt Swim Club.

It is Humboldt Swim Club's policy that the following behaviors are unacceptable:

1. Disrespect to coaches.
2. Disruption of team activity, willfully disobeying coaches, officials or authority.
3. Disregard for basic safety for self or others.
4. Verbal harassment or use of profanity.
5. Causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical injury to another person.
6. Purposefully damaging or stealing team property, Humboldt State University property, Arcata Community Pool property, or that of other swimmers.
7. Possession or use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco or weapons.

Discipline will be handled by the coaches and the board of directors, in accordance with the Humboldt Swim Club Discipline Policy. Consequences will include, but are not limited to:

1. Warning of inappropriate behavior.
2. Time-out on the bleachers (swimmer is not to leave the pool area).
3. Removal from the pool for the remainder of practice - parent will be notified.
4. Probationary period or suspension followed by probationary period.*
5. Dismissal from the team.*

* An appeal may be made to the Board of Directors; however, the decision of the board will be final.

Note: Parents need to know that they are responsible for their swimmers during swim meets and while camping or traveling. Coaches are paid to coach and are not responsible for monitoring swimmers at meets. Parents are expected to treat coaches and officials with respect and to abide by the team code of conduct.

“TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR SWIMMING PARENTS”

by Rose Snyder, adapted from Ed Clendaniel’s “Ten Commandments for Little League Parents”)

1. Remember that swimming is your child’s activity.

Improvement and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don’t judge your child’s progress against 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. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent the swimmer/coach bond from forming.

4. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swim meet.

If you are going to show up at a swim meet, you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coach.

5. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child’s fears.

A first swimming meet, a 500 Free or 200IM 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 he/she were 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, do not 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. Oftentimes swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

9. Thy child shall have goals besides 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 USA Swimming. There are only 52 spots on the Olympic Team every four years. Your child’s odds of becoming an Olympian are 1 out of 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.