

General Questions

How big is the swimming pool? The swimming pool at the college is a 25-yard pool divided into 8 lanes. The coaches often refer to the number of lengths to swim in multiples of 25 yards. For example one length = 25 yards. 2 lengths = 50 yards.

Is there a locker room and lockers for the swimmers? Yes, the swimmers can get their suits on in the locker room and put their clothes in the lockers. There are no locks provided for the lockers, but swimmers may bring their own.

What does my child do when he/she gets to the pool? Once they have a suit on, and goggles and cap in hand, they should be on deck and wait for the coach to instruct them as to the practice schedule. **NEVER GO NEAR THE WATER UNLESS THE COACH TELLS YOU TO DO SO!!!**

What does our child do during practice? Each swimmer will be assigned a level by the coach, depending on ability. Typically, daily workouts begin with a warm-up set, go on to stroke work and/or conditioning sets, and conclude with a cool-down set. Periodically, work outs will include practice for starts and turns.

Where do parents go during practices? We encourage parents to watch practices from the upstairs seating area. However, we ask that siblings **NOT** run around the pool or building without their parents.

What is an IM? IM stands for individual medley. This is an event in which the swimmer swims all four strokes in a specific order, without stopping. The order of the strokes is Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle. There is also an event called a **medley relay** in which four swimmers participate, each swimming a different stroke.

What are those flags over the pool for? These flags are above the pool for the swimmers to see when swimming backstroke. The swimmer counts their strokes from the flags to the wall, so they know when to either flip turn and continue, or end their race.

As a parent, how can I help my swimmer? Encourage, compliment, and be positive. Get them to practice (on the deck) on time, and make sure that your swimmer has his/her suit and equipment. Make sure that the swimmers are having fun!!! Don't put too much pressure on them. Try to get them to focus on improving themselves rather than comparing themselves to others.

How do we sign up for meets? Periodically, swimmers will be asked to sign up for upcoming meets. Swimmers may be scheduled to swim as many as four events in a meet, or as few as one, at the discretion of the coaches. **All swimmers who sign up for a dual/tri meet will be scheduled to swim in that meet.** Swimmers should not sign up for meets that they cannot attend. If you are signed up for a meet and find that you will be **unable** to attend, you must let the coaches know **immediately**.

What does DQ mean? DQ stands for disqualified. Each stroke in competitive swimming has certain technique requirements and rules. If the stroke judge observes incorrect technique, the judge may disqualify (DQ) the swimmer. No points will be awarded for that swim. Young swimmers and new swimmers are often disqualified. This should not be viewed as a negative outcome, but as an opportunity to correct technique. If possible, the stroke judge will speak briefly with the swimmer to explain the problem. In any case, the coaches will talk with the swimmer about what led to the DQ and will help the swimmer to work on specific improvements in practice. If your child is DQ'ed at a meet, don't worry about it. Remember that even experienced swimmers are occasionally disqualified; if you can view it as a learning experience, so will your child.

What about traveling to swim meets? According to the program's schedule there are meets that will be held out of town and may require overnight accommodations. All expenses related to travel to and from swim meets are the personal obligation of the swimmer and family. No travel expenses are covered by the team. Car-pooling is always an option for swimmers whose parents can't attend.

General Questions

Clerk of Course: The person who arranges swimmers in their proper heats and lanes during a meet.

Exhibition: A heat or lane in which the swimmer(s) are swimming to achieve a best time, but whose times will not count towards the team's score.

False Start: When a swimmer is moving too early at the start of the race, it results in a re-start or disqualification.

Gold, Silver or Bronze Times: Time standards set by the USA Swimming Organization that classifies swimmers into ability groups. This allows all swimmers to compete in a championship meet against swimmers of similar capability.

Niagara District: A large group of swim clubs that participate with USA Swimming.

Niagara Swim League: A group of local swim clubs from Western New York that are part of the USA Swimming organization. HHSC is one of the 16 clubs in the NSL.

Scratch: To withdraw from an event in competition. In championship meets, a swimmer who qualifies for the finals must notify meet officials if they intend to "scratch" from the finals. **Failure to do this within a set time usually results in a fine.**

Short Course: USA Swimming competition taking place in a 25 yard pool.

Long Course: USA Swimming competition taking place in a 50 meter pool.

Speeding Ticket: A highly desirable award given at championship meets to acknowledge a swimmer that has swum faster than the qualifying time range. The swimmer now qualifies for the next level of competition in that event.

Streamline: The position used to gain maximum distance during a start and push-off from the wall in which the swimmer's body position is as tight and efficient as it can be.

Swimming Up: This slang expression refers to a younger swimmer competing in an older age group during a meet. A swimmer may not "swim down" in a lower age group.

Touch Pad: A large touch-sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer's touch is registered and sent electronically to the timing system. Touch pads are used at all USA Swimming meets.

USA Swimming: This is the national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States.

Some tips on care of equipment:

- **Suits:** Rinse out your child's suits in COLD water after each use, whether in practice or a meet. Hang the suit to dry. DO NOT have the child wear the team suit to practice! When a suit is worn out, stretched out, or see through, don't throw it away; instead, layer it with other suits for practice. Be sure to put your child's name, in permanent ink, on the labels of all the child's suits.
- **Caps:** DRY swim caps thoroughly every time they get wet and put a little baby powder in it to keep it from getting sticky. Be sure to put your child's name, in permanent ink, on your child's caps!
- **Goggles:** Save old goggles for spare parts; one can use extra nose-pieces, straps, etc. Be sure to put your child's name on goggles in permanent ink.

Additional swimming information at websites:

www.niagaraswim.org www.usaswimming.org