

# Central Bucks Aquatics Handbook

## for

Central Bucks Swim Team - USAS



**CBST – Home of the Bull Sharks!**

Central Bucks Aquatics  
320 W. Swamp Road  
Doylestown, PA 18901

## **Introduction**

This handbook in conjunction with the team and CBSD websites and e-mails throughout the season will serve as your primary sources of information about your team. See also the Frequently Asked Questions Document posted on the team website. Please read this handbook and all other communications carefully.

## **Description: Central Bucks Swim Team (CBST)**

The Central Bucks Swim Team is made up of two separate teams: Central Bucks Swim Team – USAS (CBST-USAS) and Central Bucks Swim Team – SAL (CBST-SAL). CBST-SAL is a dual meet swimming and diving team participating within the Suburban Aquatic League (SAL) and is not the subject of this handbook. Information in this handbook pertains to CBST-USAS, which is part of the Middle Atlantic LSC (local swim committee), also known as MA Swimming, a member LSC of USA Swimming. CBST-USAS is made up of swimmers living in the Central Bucks School District and surrounding areas. (CBST-USAS swimmers who wish to also participate with CBST-SAL must sign-up during registration to do so.) The team is open to swimmers ages nine through swimmers in 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Swimmers participating in a college swim team often also return to practice with CBST during their college breaks and in the summers. Practices are scheduled most weekday afternoon/evenings, most weekday mornings (high school aged swimmers only) and many Saturday mornings. USAS meets are typically held on weekends though some meets (particularly championship meets) have sessions during the week. Practice groups are organized by ability. The club's philosophy focuses on enjoyment of the sport of swimming and the development of the skills needed to achieve the fullest potential of our swimmers. USA Swimming provides year-round swimming, with two seasons each year. The short course season involves races in 25-yard (short course) pools and begins with practices in early September, concluding with championship meets in March. The long course season involves races in 50-meter (long course) pools and begins with practices in mid-April, concluding with championship meets in July (August for some of our elite swimmers). For many reasons including safety, at least one parent should accompany their child to each meet. Participants are required to participate in our CBST-USAS hosted meets and parents are also required to volunteer at these meets. This volunteering requirement is separate from (and in addition to) volunteering required for participants also swimming in SAL meets.

## **USA Swimming (USAS)**

CBST-USAS is a member of USA Swimming (USAS), the national governing body for the sport of swimming in the United States. USAS is a 400,000-member service organization that promotes the culture of swimming by creating opportunities for swimmers and coaches of all backgrounds to participate and advance in the sport through teams, events, and education. All team members are encouraged to visit the USA Swimming website at [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org) for additional information, including a times search tool to see your swimmer's USAS times.

## **Middle Atlantic Swimming (MA Swimming)**

Middle Atlantic Swimming (MA Swimming) is one of 59 Local Swimming Committees (LSCs) of USA Swimming. MA Swimming consists of Eastern Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey, and all of Delaware. MA Swimming is among the largest LSCs in the country. The mission of Middle Atlantic Swimming is to advocate the growth and development of a diverse swimming community through education, innovation, and a commitment to excellence. All team members are encouraged to visit the MA Swimming website at [www.maswim.org](http://www.maswim.org) for additional information, including details of meets available within the LSC.

## **Communication**

The following modes of communication are used for important information including updates and changes.

**Websites:**      CBST: [www.cbswimanddive.com](http://www.cbswimanddive.com)  
                     MA Swimming: [www.maswim.org](http://www.maswim.org)  
                     USA Swimming: [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)  
                     CBSD: [www.cbsd.org/aquatics](http://www.cbsd.org/aquatics)

Please check the team website regularly and refer to the CBSD website aquatics pages for more general information and documentation.

Please see much useful information on the team website including the following:

- Advancement philosophy
- College swimming information
- Coaching staff listing and email contacts
- Frequently asked questions documents
- Goals sheet
- High school swimmer information
- Illness and injury guidelines
- Links to other swimming resources and organizations
- Meet schedule by season
- Meet entry procedure documents
- Nutrition information
- Swimming Basics
- Physical forms
- Policy documents
- Practice group descriptions
- Team calendar
- Team travel information (including permission slip)
- Safe Sport information
- Concussion information

**E-mail:** Mass and individual e-mails will be sent out as necessary (generally weekly during the season) by CB Aquatics staff. Be sure to read all messages thoroughly to be informed and meet important deadlines for your swimmer. There is a great deal of information, but we have found that the families who read and keep on top of all communications are those who have the best experience with the team.

**Remind:** Remind groups may be established for use in last minute cancellation situations (generally for morning practices but possible in other circumstances). Follow instructions in team emails to sign-up to receive these notifications.

**Swimmer Family Folders:** Each family has one folder to be used to distribute items. The family folder boxes are in the equipment room behind the blocks at CB South. Parents are permitted to enter the pool deck during CBST practices to access the equipment room and should exit the equipment room/deck as soon as done with the folders. These folders should NEVER be removed from the equipment room.

**Coach E-mail Addresses:** Coach contact e-mail addresses (one for the senior group and one for age group) are posted on the team website. Please do not interrupt coaches during or in between practice sessions. E-mails to coaches should be limited to general questions about practice content and your swimmer's progress. Unless otherwise directed, most procedural and other non-coaching questions should be addressed with CB Aquatics administrative staff. If you are unsure of who to contact, start with any member of the administrative staff and your question will be forwarded as needed. Please refer to emailed instructions regarding communications pertaining to meet entries, team travel, and other specific items.

**Billing:** All active swimmers receive a monthly email to check their invoice in their portal prior to their card on file being charged. Invoices include dues, meet entry fees, team travel, and other incidental fees such as purchased items (team caps, etc.).

### **Changes to Typical Practice and Meet Schedules**

When possible, changes and cancellations will be posted on the team website and mass e-mails will be sent. School District cancellations and early dismissals are immediately posted on the district website: [www.cbsd.org](http://www.cbsd.org). In general, the CB school district schedule affects CBST-USAS as follows:

- CB schools closed ALL day/student and teacher holiday – Usually no swim practice (practice in some instances – see team website and e-mails)
- Thanksgiving and Winter break - Special practice schedule will be provided
- CB schools scheduled for early dismissal - Regular swim and practice
- On school days -
  - If schools are closed for the full day due to weather, all aquatic programs are cancelled.
  - If schools are dismissed early (or after school activities are cancelled) due to weather all PM aquatic programs are cancelled.
  - If schools have delayed opening due to weather, AM practice cancelled and PM programs as scheduled.
- On non-school days -
  - If school buildings are closed for the full day due to weather, all aquatic programs are cancelled.
  - In the event of modified school building hours due to weather, watch for email communications regarding details for your activity.

There is no age group practice on Halloween but there is senior group practice (unless Halloween is on Sunday).

On occasion, practices have to be cancelled at the last minute because of weather or an issue other than weather, therefore, be sure to check your e-mail before leaving for practices every time and please come into the school each time you bring your child to practice to be sure there is going to be practice before you leave your swimmer at the pool. CBSD and its affiliates are not responsible for children left at the school unattended and phones are not always accessible to your child so that they can call you to come back for them.

### **How To Be A Successful Swim Parent**

The competitive swimming program allows the athlete to experience success and to learn how to deal with defeat, while becoming healthy and physically fit. As a parent of an athlete on CBST, our major responsibility is to provide a stable, loving, and supportive environment. This positive environment will encourage your child to continue participating in the sport. Show your interest by ensuring your child's attendance at practices, and by coming to meets. Get involved in your child's team. Your role as a volunteer is important to our sport and to your child's view of the future. Remember, there would be no team without the help of the parents. With a positive attitude and willingness to lend a hand, you will also have a great impact on your child's athletic environment. Successful participating families are also aware of and follow the policies and procedures, code of conduct, and commandments of swimming below.

### **General Team Policies and Procedures**

- The well-being and safety of all team members while in the pool area are very important. All safety rules of the Central Bucks School District as well as our team must be followed at all times and will be strictly enforced. Violations of these rules may result in removal from the team.
  - The following are strictly forbidden:
    - The possession or use of tobacco products or vapes of any type by any athlete
    - The use of tobacco products by any person in attendance at any CBST-USAS function (in or on district property)
    - The possession, use, or sale/distribution of alcohol or any controlled or illegal substance or any form of weapon by any athlete or any person in attendance at any CBST-USAS function (in or on district property)
    - Stealing by any athlete or any person in attendance at any CBST-USAS function (in or on district property)
- Violation of these rules may result in immediate removal from all CB Aquatics teams.
- Please use your discretion and consider the health and safety of your swimmer and others when deciding whether to send you swimmer to practice when experiencing any medical condition or other situation in which it might be best not to practice. CBST coaches will use their best judgement and if they feel there is a health concern/safety hazard they will restrict swimmers from entering the pool to safeguard themselves and/or the other members of the team.

- It is important to remember that the entire school building (and in some cases the locker room) is open to the public and children are only supervised when they are on deck with the coach.
- Please note that parents are **NOT ALLOWED in the locker rooms** under any circumstances. High school students may be using the locker rooms related to high school activities. It is important that adults (including parents) not be in the locker room for the safety of all program participants and other student athletes. Coaches will be sweeping the locker rooms before, in between, and after practices. **Nothing should be left in the locker rooms. Athletes should place all belongings into their bags, zip the bag fully shut, and bring it out onto deck and leave it there for the duration of practice.** Please speak with your swimmers about appropriate locker room and practice/meet behavior:
  - No horseplay or physical contact should occur.
  - Lockers are not to be used at any time as they lock and you will not be able to retrieve any items placed into them.
  - Speak at a reasonable volume and speak respectfully to everyone.
  - Do not touch anyone else or anyone else's possessions.
  - Move with care (remember athletes and the floor are wet).
  - Locker room time should be short (10-15 minutes at the most) - children may need to be reminded often to stay focused on the task at hand.
  - Get a coach if anything inappropriate is occurring, even if they are not involved – tell them they should help stop issues before they escalate, rather than waiting for problems to happen and seeing our friends unhappy based on the consequences.
  - Remind your participants often of these behavior expectations which are required at all times – on the deck and in the locker rooms.
- The use of cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras is prohibited in locker rooms, rest rooms, and other changing areas. If a swimmer uses a cell phone in the locker room for ANY reason (making phone calls, taking pictures, etc.) the swimmer risks being removed from the team. (Parents please periodically monitor you child's social media to ensure compliance with this policy.) **Also remind your children to always use social media responsibly – taking care to be kind to everyone and remembering that those other than their currently intended audience may eventually see posts.**
- Remember that the use of the locker rooms is a privilege which will be taken away from any participant who does not follow the rules.
- If you prefer that your child not use the locker rooms with the other swimmers, please have your child dry off completely and meet you in the hallway outside of the pool before escorting them to the appropriate bathrooms located down the hall from the pool in each building.
- Please make sure your swimmers are dry and have shoes on when in the hallways of the schools.
- Please refer to the CB Aquatics Locker Room and Communications policies (accessible through the CB Aquatics Safe Sport Information document) and the CB Aquatics Action Plan to Address Bullying, all of which are on the CB Aquatics page of the CBSD website (also accessible through the team website).
- Parents/siblings should go straight to the balcony. Please do not go on deck to speak with the coaches. If you have a coaching question, email the head coach. If you have an administrative question, email the appropriate CB Aquatics staff member. If you have any concerns email the CBSD Aquatics Manager immediately.
- Parents should not coach their children from the balcony (or otherwise). We are in one of the few youth sports that provides exclusively professional coaching – please trust that the coaches are competent and leave the coaching to them. If your child looks to you for approval/attention/anything during practices, it is likely to cause them to miss important instructional information and/or disrupt the practice for themselves, other participants, and coaches. If this is an issue for your swimmer please do not remain in the balcony during practices.
- Videotaping and still photography of practices is prohibited.
- Please remember that behavior should mimic typical school day behavior. No running, climbing on tables, etc. Playing with balls and the use of wheeled shoes in the building is prohibited. Siblings of team members must stay with their parents at all times. No children should be running or roaming the halls at any time. Swimmers and their families are to be in the pool area (balcony or pool hallways) and should only go to the cafeteria area to use the restrooms or vending machines. Swimmers and their families are not to be in the gymnasiums at any time.

- Please monitor your children in the balconies. This area is extremely dangerous for unattended or small children.
- Chewing gum is not permitted on the pool deck or in the locker rooms.
- Please put all trash in the receptacles.
- Please do not park your car (whether you are in it or not) anywhere other than designated parking spaces. This is particularly an issue at CB South at the diving well door where people sometimes park along the curb behind the parked cars – please avoid fender benders by NOT parking in that area.
- The doors close to the pool at CB South will generally be open and may be used to enter/exit the building. If they are not open, please enter through the main Gymnasium doors. No doors should be propped open at any time.
- Please enter the pool hallway off Anderson Road to access the CB East pool at all times. Do not use the main/front doors.
- Participants and families are responsible to be aware of and observe all policies and procedures contained in this team handbook, posted on the websites (CBSD and team), and communicated via email or other methods. This documentation contains information on a variety of topics including action plan to address bullying, communications, locker room monitoring, photography, travel, safe sport/minor athlete abuse prevention, concussion.
- CB Aquatics strives to create a safe environment in which our participants may participate in swimming activities. Please check in with your swimmers often regarding how practice and team participation in general are going and contact Roberta Lichter, Aquatics Manager ([rlichter@cbsd.org](mailto:rlichter@cbsd.org)) right away with any issues or other observations. Concerns will be addressed within a reasonable timeframe. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent practicable given the obligation of CB Aquatics to investigate and address the matter. See information about Safe Sport on the team website.

### **Team Code of Conduct**

Central Bucks Aquatics provides quality programs that build self-confidence, self-discipline, motivation, integrity, and courage for life. We aspire to create a safe, competitive, and friendly environment for our swimmers and parents. To that end, the teams and their members follow the USA Swimming Code of Conduct and the code of conduct below in addition to all CBSD and team policies and procedures as provided on the CBSD and team websites and otherwise communicated (typically via email).

### **Parent Code of Conduct Pledge**

- I shall set an example for my children to follow by displaying proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, competitors, and the public at all times.
- I recognize that I am my child's most important teacher.
- I recognize that my behavior at a meet can negatively influence my child's development as a swimmer.
- I will leave the coaching to the coaches.
- I will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives.
- I will be aware of consequences and sanctions involving poor behavior, and I will not be an example of how they work.
- I will remember that swimming is supposed to be fun.

### **Athlete Code of Conduct Pledge**

- I will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, fellow competitors, and the public at all times.
- I will not taunt, berate, or intimidate any of my teammates or competitors.
- I will shake hands with my competitor after my event.
- I will support my teammates.
- I will understand that the officials and meet workers are volunteering their time so I can swim.

- I will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives.
- I will remember that swimming is supposed to be fun.

### **Spectator Behavior at Meets**

- Persons not working a meet or competing for the team will not be permitted on deck.
- Verbal or physical aggression expressed toward an athlete, coach, official, parent, volunteer, or spectator will not be tolerated.
- I will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, teammates, competitors, and the public at all times.
- I will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives.

### **Enforcement**

- Enforcement of this Code of Conduct will be the duty of the Aquatics Manager, Meet Director, and coaches.
- Incidents will be reported to the Head Coach, who will bring the matter to the Aquatics Manager.

### **Consequences**

- First Incident: Action taken by the team/CB Aquatics can range from a written warning to and including removal from the meet and/or suspension or expulsion from the team.
- Second Incident: Likely expulsion from the meet and team.

### **It's for the Kids**

Meets are a high-stress spectator sport and getting caught up in it is one of its pleasures. Please remember that we are role models to our children, and proper behavior in the stands and on deck is a way to demonstrate good sportsmanship. **We are all accountable for our behavior.**

### **The Ten Commandments of Swimming Parents**

1. **Don't impose your ambitions on your 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 could be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to achieve a personal best.
2. **Do be supportive no matter what.**  
There is only one question to ask your child: "Did you have fun?" Your child should not be forced to participate.
3. **Don't 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. This is not your area. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent the swimmer/coach bond from forming.
4. **Do have positive things to say at a meet.**  
If you are going to attend a meet, you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize the athletes (including your child), the coach, or the volunteers.
5. **Do acknowledge your child's fears.**

Meets 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. Don't criticize the officials.**

Officials are volunteers who spend extra time outside of meets training to volunteer at meets for all of the participants, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can.

**7. Do honor your child's coach.**

The bond between swimmer and coach is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as enjoyment. Do not criticize the coach (at all but particularly in the presence of your child). It will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.

**8. Don't jump from team to team.**

The water isn't necessarily bluer at the other team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems. Children who switch from team to team often lose friendships with teammates they leave behind. Often, swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

**9. Do have goals besides winning.**

Giving an honest effort, regardless of the outcome, is much more important than winning.

**10. Don't expect your child to become an Olympian.**

Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are less than 1 in 4,300. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self-esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships. Swimming builds good people, so please be happy your child wants to participate and offer any needed support.

## **Swim Suits/Caps/Apparel**

Information about team suits, caps, and apparel will be communicated early each season. CBST-USAS swimmers should wear CBST gear at all USAS meets they attend, home or away. Those swimmers who wear a swim cap must wear a CBST cap at meets. Team suits are available but not required as many swimmers are particular about suit cut. Team suits and personalized caps are typically made available once per year at the beginning of the short course season (in the fall). There will usually be an apparel sale at least once per year through a local online vendor. Non-personalized caps are available at any time.

## **Practices**

- Practice times are posted on the team website calendar.
- Each season there are conflict dates (dates on which normal practice cannot occur due to other building usage) which will be reflected on the calendar as they are determined.
- Please be sure to check your e-mail and the website to assure practice has not been cancelled. Practices may be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances at any time.
- Practices start promptly at the time stated. Swimmers should arrive 10 minutes prior to the scheduled practice start time so they can stretch and be ready to go at the scheduled start time. Typically, swimmers should enter the pool deck upon their arrival and wait on the benches for the coach to start practice. On some occasions it may be communicated (directly at a previous practice or via email) that swimmers should wait in the hallway until invited to enter the pool deck by a coach. In these instances, please do not allow your swimmer to enter the pool area until the coach has asked them to do so. Athletes will be sent directly to the locker rooms after practice. Athletes should arrive with their swimsuit on, but athletes who need to change or use the rest room prior to practice should use the hallway or cafeteria bathrooms – at many times during the year our athletes may not enter the pool deck or locker room prior to being invited to do so by a coach so it's best not to rely on using the locker rooms before practice.
- Anticipate your child being in the pool for the entire practice. They should come prepared for each workout session with a towel, cap (if they wear one), and goggles as well as any other equipment necessary for their



practice group (see equipment list on team website). This includes sneakers and gym clothes for possible land exercises for all groups for all practices. Swimmers must also bring a water bottle to practice. To avoid having to interrupt practice, they are asked to use the bathroom prior to getting into the pool.

- Note that wearing competition (team) suits or other special competition items (such as dome caps) during practice is not appropriate as these items are more effective and last longer if just used for meets.
- It is your (parent/guardian) responsibility to make sure your child enters the building and goes directly to the pool area, attends practice, and exits the building promptly after practice. CBSD and its affiliates are not responsible for children who are dropped off or waiting to be picked up after practice concludes. Due to the possibility of unforeseen cancellations and other possible emergencies, it is required that you escort your child into the building for each practice, be available by phone during practice, and further that you return to pick up your child promptly at the end of practice. Be sure to tell your child that athletes are to wait inside the building for their own safety if their parent/guardian is not there at the conclusion of practice. Be sure to be aware of practice schedules and any communicated changes and escort your child into the building for each practice as CBSD and its affiliates are not responsible for a child in the school building or on the grounds when there is no practice. Repeated late pick-ups may result in charges and/or removal from the team.
- During the first couple weeks of swim practice, it will take the coaches longer to get everyone organized while they get to know any new swimmers and the swimmers learn their practice routines. By mid-September (end of April for long course) everyone should be in the swing of things and swimmers will be in the water for their full practice times.
- Attendance at every practice is not required. Swim team members should refer to the practice group descriptions document on the team website for requirements for their group. Coaches understand if some weeks attendance is more difficult than others – do not make swimming a source of stress. Just understand that participants who routinely attend fewer than the minimum recommended number of practices may not progress as they would hope, may not be able to keep up with their assigned group, may become discouraged, and may feel less a part of the team.
- All swimmers should follow their appropriate practice schedule. In other words, CBST-USAS swimmers may NOT attend CBST-SAL practices. CBST-USAS swimmers may ONLY attend CBST-USAS practices even if they are also registered with CBST-SAL.
- Check your family folder often when at practice.

## **Meets**

Competitive swimming utilizes 4 strokes: freestyle, breaststroke, backstroke, and butterfly. Meets are comprised of multiple events - each one being a particular stroke, distance, and age group. During USAS meets, each event includes multiple heats, (i.e., the same race swum several times with different swimmers). Heats are grouped by seed times (each swimmer's previous best USAS time in that particular event) so that swimmers are competing with others of similar speed. Swimmers race in their heat to improve their times and for placement within the overall group for that event. Swimmers are divided by age group (age as of the first day of the specific meet). The typical groups are 9/10, 11/12, 13/14, and senior (15 and over). Most meets are comprised of multiple sessions over two (or more) days. Each session typically takes three to four hours to complete. Swimmers pay a fee per event (and sometimes also an additional flat meet surcharge). Parents are required to be present throughout the entire meet and are also required to volunteer at all home meets (and many away meets as well).

Note that sign-up is required for ALL meet attendance. See below for general information and watch email communications for specifics of meet sign-up procedures.

Meet information sheets (including dates, times, locations, event cost, qualifying times, and other details) will be posted on the team website.

Meets are often local and sometimes are out of the area. For meets that are not local, swimmers generally travel with their family. High school aged swimmers may have the option for some non-local meets to travel with the team. Please see the team travel policy on the team website for general information about this process and watch emails during the season for details about any specific travel meets. Typically, the team provides team travel only for a training trip if a trip is possible in the given season and all travel to meets is with parents.

Team records are posted on the team website and the record boards at CB South High School. Records are typically not fully updated until after the end of any given season. While online updates will be made more often, the physical record boards are usually updated once per year.

## **Description of Types of Swim Meets**

USA Swimming meets are typically short course yards (SCY) during the short course season, meaning they are swum in 25-yard pools. During the long course season, meets are typically swum in long course meters (LCM) pools of 50 meters. Occasionally there may be a short course meters (SCM) meet, swum in a 25-meter pool.

Meets can either be closed (available only to specifically invited teams/swimmers) or open (available to any USAS registered swimmer who wishes to enter).

Meets can either be qualifying (specified time standards per event must be met to participate) or non-qualifying (any USAS registered swimmer may participate even if the swimmer has not ever swum a particular event before). Swimmers entering an event they have not previously swum in a USAS competition will be entered without a seed time (NT for no time). Meets may be restricted to swimmers within certain pre-defined time categories (see USA Swimming Motivational Times link on the team website, meets page). Most of the meets CBST-USAS attends (and all of our hosted meets) are A/BB/C meets which include the vast majority of USAS swimmers.

Meets may be run in a prelim/final format in which each event is swum by all competitors in a preliminary set of heats from which the fastest swimmers advance to swim in finals and placement is determined during finals. Alternatively, meets may be run in a timed finals format in which there is only one set of heats for each race and placement is determined during those heats. Most of the non-championship meets that CBST-USAS attends are in the time finals format.

A distance meet is a meet in which the events are longer distance races (for example the 1000 Freestyle or the 200 Breaststroke). These meets typically have only a few events and are either freestyle or stroke.

Championship meets are season culminating, time qualifying meets. There is a championship meet for most swimmers: Senior Champs, Junior Olympics, Silver Champs, and 10 & Under Champs are the typical championship meets in which CBST-USAS swimmers participate. There are additional meets (such as Junior and Senior Nationals, and Olympic Trials for the more elite swimmers).

Dual meets are meets in which two teams compete against each other to determine a winner. Swimmers are also competing to improve their times. CBST-USAS does not typically participate in dual meets, but our swimmers are encouraged to participate in dual meets with their SAL team.

Mini meets are meets for swimmers eight years of age and younger. CBST-USAS does not participate in mini meets as our swimmers under the age of nine primarily participate with CBST-SAL rather than CBST-USAS, and those few eight-year-old swimmers who are ready to practice with CBST-USAS should swim meets with their SAL team.

## **Meet Expectations**

All team members are expected to attend our hosted meets. Each season the coaches carefully review meets available to our team and choose a schedule to provide options for our swimmers. Attendance at all of the meets on the CBST-USAS schedule in any given season is not required. Our coaches believe attending roughly one USAS competition per month is reasonable for most swimmers.

## **Disqualifications (DQs):**

The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer. Trained officials observe the swimmers during each event to ensure compliance with these technical rules. If a swimmer commits an infraction of the rules, a disqualification will result. This means that the swimmer will not receive a USA Swimming recognized time and will not be eligible for an award for that event. Disqualifications may result from actions such as not getting to the starting blocks on time, false starting, advancing themselves by walking on or pushing off the bottom of the pool, or pulling on the lane lines. DQs are also a result of technical violations specific to each stroke. See the most common infractions for each stroke listed in the description of each stroke in the swimming glossary and the USA Swimming rulebook for the complete set of rules.

If your child is disqualified in an event, be supportive rather than critical. A DQ should be treated as a learning experience, not as a punishment. Further, we do not blame the official for the disqualification, rather, a disqualification results from an infraction of the rules committed by the swimmer and, when observed by the official, must be reported in order to keep the competition fair for everyone and to help the swimmer make necessary corrections. Swimmers should ask their coach for clarification if they have any questions about a DQ. Parents who have a question about a DQ should speak with their coach after the meet for clarification and never approach an official.

## **Indicating Availability for Meets**

Email communications will provide details regarding deadlines for participation in each meet. Swimmers will indicate availability for meets (and specific days of meets) in their portal and provide information regarding preferred (or undesirable) events. Based on this information and any meet restrictions (such as qualifying times or daily event limits) the coaches enter the swimmers into events. There will also sometimes be meet entry communications that must occur via email to a member of the administrative staff AND a coach. Please follow all emailed instructions carefully to ensure your swimmer's desired participation.

## **Volunteering at Meets**

Swim meets cannot happen without the help of MANY parent volunteers. Every family on our team is required to help. We are sure that every parent will find a meet job that is enjoyable. Given the size of our team and the many, many jobs that must be filled to run a meet, age group swimmers must provide a volunteer for a specified number of sessions for each meet hosted by CBST-USAS (regardless of the swimmer's participation in the meet or lack thereof). High school aged swimmers must provide a volunteer for each CBST-USAS hosted meet session in which they swim. For away meets, the hosts often ask for help and if CBST-USAS is required to provide volunteers they will be assigned. Volunteers are always required for championship meets and, again, will be assigned by CBST-USAS administrative staff. The parent meet volunteering and payment agreements are part of the online registration process. These documents are available for review on the team website. For our home meets, email notification will be sent when the volunteer sign-up is available through the portal and parents will sign-up for the sessions during which they would like to volunteer. Specific assignments will be made at volunteer check-in on meet day by the volunteer coordinator. 35 to 60 volunteers are needed to run each session of a meet. Typical job assignments are: security, meet marshal (training may be required), snack bar, announcer, timer, runner, awards, hospitality, and sales. Instructions will be provided for each job during volunteer check-in at the meet. Note that for timing there will typically be two timers per lane. Often, we are able to have student volunteers cover this job with some experienced parent volunteers as supervisors. Sometimes, this is one CBST-USAS parent and one student volunteer. One timer in each lane will be responsible for timing each race with a stopwatch and operating a back-up button (plunger) while the other timer in each lane will be responsible for operating a back-up button (plunger) and writing the times down after each race. Because fly-over starts are utilized, each timer will have two stopwatches. All timers will attend a pre-meet meeting during which they will receive instructions and any necessary training. Additional details regarding volunteering will be communicated via email prior to each meet for which volunteers are required.

**Clearances:** In compliance with PA state law, clearances must be provided for Volunteers who have direct volunteer contact, meaning they have care, supervision guidance or control AND routine interaction with children. On this basis, individuals routinely filling the volunteer role of meet marshal must provide clearances and follow other USA Swimming guidelines regarding training, etc.

## **Swimming Glossary**

**Aerobic:** In the presence of oxygen; aerobic metabolism utilizes oxygen.

**Age Group:** Typical swimming age groups are 8 & under, 9/10, 11/12, 13/14 & under, and senior (15 and up).

**Ascending Set:** Training set in which repeat times get slower each time as the set progresses.

**Anaerobic:** In the absence of oxygen; nonoxidation metabolism. (See also lactate).

**Backstroke:** This stroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick. On turns, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. (Most common backstroke DQs are for pulling or kicking into the wall once the swimmer has turned passed the vertical onto the breast during a turn; turning onto the breast before touching the wall with the hand at the finish of the race.)

**Block:** The starting platform.

**Breaststroke:** This stroke requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pulled from the breast in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water with hands not brought back past the hipline except during the first stroke after the start and each turn. The elbows remain under the surface of the water except for the final stroke before a turn, during the turn, and at the finish. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands separated and simultaneously. (Most common breaststroke DQs are for an illegal kick such as flutter (freestyle), dolphin (butterfly), or scissor (side stroke); hands brought past the hipline; alternating movements of the arms; taking two arm strokes or two leg kicks while the head is under water; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.)

**Broken Swims:** Interval training in which a race is separated or broken into parts with a specified rest interval between each segment. This allows the swimmer to swim at race speed.

**Butterfly:** This stroke features a simultaneous overhand stroke of the arms combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissor, or use the breaststroke kick. Swimmers must touch simultaneously with both hands at turns and finish. (Most common DQs for butterfly are for alternating movements of the arms or legs; pushing the arms forward under instead of over the water surface (underwater recovery); a breaststroke style of kick; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.)

**Circle Swimming:** Performed by staying to the right of the line on the bottom of the pool in each lane when swimming in a lane to enable more swimmers to swim in each lane.

**Clerk of Course:** At an invitational meet or championship meet, the person who arranges the swimmers in their proper heats and lanes. (Sometimes instead of or in addition to a clerk of course there will be a **lane marshal** for each lane or group of lanes to perform the same function.)

**Cut:** Slang for qualifying time. A time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.

**Descending Set:** Training set in which each repeat time gets faster as the set progresses.

**Distance:** Term used to refer to events over 400 meters / 500 yards. (There are not distance events in SAL competitions.)

**DQ:** Disqualified. This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind; e.g. freestyle kick in butterfly. For any given event, a disqualified swimmer is not eligible to score points, receive awards, nor can the time be used as an official time.

**Drill:** An exercise involving a portion or part of a stroke, used to improve technique.

**Dryland Training:** Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance; usually includes stretching, calisthenics and/or weight training.

**Endurance:** The ability to persist, to resist fatigue, usually a result of increasing yardage as the season progresses.

**Even Split:** Swimming at the same pace throughout a race or swim.

**Event:** In a swimming competition, an event is the total of all the heats of competition for that age group, for a particular stroke and distance.

**False Start:** Occurs when a swimmer is moving before the start signal is sounded. In accordance with USAS rules, a swimmer who false starts is disqualified for that event.

**Finish:** The final phase of the race; the touch at the end of the race.

**Flags:** Backstroke flags placed 5 yards from the end of the pool (5 meters for meters pools). The flags enable backstrokers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently.

**Fly-Over Starts:** In order to move meets along as quickly as possible, swimmers remain in the water once they finish their race until the next heat starts (hence the next heat “flies-over” the previous heat when diving in for their race). Fly-over starts may be used for all strokes except backstroke.

**Freestyle:** A swimming competitor may swim any stroke, but most commonly the forward crawl is used. The crawl is characterized by the alternate overhand motion of the arms and an alternating (up and down) flutter kick. (Most common freestyle DQs are for walking on the bottom; pulling on the lane rope; not touching the wall on a turn; or not completing the distance.)

**Freestyle Relay:** Event consists of four freestylers, each swimming one quarter of the total distance of the event.

**Goal:** A specific time achievement a swimmer sets and strives for. Can be short or long term.

**Gutter:** The area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows and is recirculated through the filtration system.

**Heat:** In a swimming competition, one group of swimmers competing at the same time. A number of heats may comprise an event. Only the first heat is used for scoring. All subsequent heats are for times only and are referred to as unofficial heats.

**Holding Time:** Time a coach wants a swimmer to maintain on an interval practice set such as 10 x 100 on 2:00 minutes holding 1:30 (meaning the swimmers swim 10 repetitions of 100 yards with each rep starting exactly 2 minutes after the previous rep and with 30 seconds rest so swimming the 100 yards in 1:30).

**I.M.:** Short for Individual Medley, an event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes to complete one quarter of the total distance in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle.

**Interval:** Send-off for swims; such as 10 x 100 on 2:00 minutes. The interval is 2:00 minutes.

**Lactate:** Lactic acid that forms in the muscle with the onset of exercise. Reduces muscle contraction when accumulations exceed certain levels. Is produced in most anaerobic sets.

**Lap Counter:** A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. (Also, the person stationed at the opposite end from the start who uses the numbers to counts for the swimmer.)

**Long Distance:** Term used to refer to events of 800 meters / 1000 meters / 1650 yards in lengths. These races require swimmers to constantly be aware of where they are in the heat. Starting too fast can sap a swimmer's strength for the finish, while starting too slowly can separate the swimmer from the heat and make catching up impossible. Swimmers may elect to swim the race evenly, (holding the same pace throughout the race, sprinting the last 100), or they may negative split the race. (There are not long distances events in SAL competitions.)

**Meet:** Competition designed to be a learning and team experience. By implementing what has been learned in practice, swimmers tests themselves against the clock to assess improvement.

**Medley Relay:** All four strokes are swum. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly, and the final swimmer freestyle.

**Middle Distance:** Term used to refer to events of 200 yards / meters to 400 meters / 500 yards in length. To swim these events a swimmer is required to have a sense of pace as well as an ability to swim a controlled sprint. In the 400 and 500 events, some swimmers negative or even split. (There are not events over 200 yards / meters in SAL competition.)

**Negative Split:** Swimming the second half of the race faster than the first half.

**Official:** A judge on the deck of the pool who enforces the rules. There are stroke and turn judges, starters, timers, and referees.

**Pace Clock:** Large clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain internals in practice; may also be digital.

**Pitch:** Angles used by the hands and arms as they scull through a stroke pattern.

**Positive check-in:** An event for which the swimmer or the coach must go to a check-in table and follow instructions to indicate that the swimmer will be swimming a particular event for which the swimmer is registered. If a swimmer is not checked-in by the cut-off time, that swimmer will be scratched from the event. The purpose of this is to allow meet officials to reduce the length of the meet by removing registered swimmers who will not be participating.

**Race Pace:** Training which allows the swimmer to train at racing speed. Usually done with shorter distances or broken swims, and simulates race conditions.

**Referee:** The person who has overall authority and control of the competition, ensuring that all the rules are followed; assigns and instructs all officials, and decides all questions relating to the conduct of the meet. The position of Referee and Starter may be combined into the position of Starter/Referee.

**Relay:** An event in which 4 swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time. (See Freestyle Relay and Medley Relay).

**Relay Takeoff Judge:** A person who stands beside the starting blocks to observe the relay exchange, ensuring that the feet of the departing swimmer have not lost contact with the block before the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool.

**Repeat:** The actual distance used in a set, e.g. 10 x 50, in the 50 (yards or meters) would be the repeat distance. A repeat time to hold may also be given.

**Scratch:** To withdraw from an event in a competition.

**Seed Time:** The time entered for a meet for each swimmer by event; seed times are used to arrange the heat and lane assignment for each swimmer in each event. Competitors enter their lowest (best) legally swum time.

**Set:** A specific segment of a daily practice; e.g. 10 x 100 on 2 minutes would mean 10 repetitions of 100 yards (or meters) swum on two minute intervals. Some sets may be repeated several times in a major set.

**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.

**Sprint:** Describes the shorter events (50 and 100) and in a race is an all-out effort from start to finish. In training, to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.

**Starter:** The person who assumes control of the swimmers from the Referee, directs them to “take your mark,” and sees that no swimmer is in motion prior to giving the start signal. The position of Starter and Referee may be combined into the position of Starter/Referee.

**Streamline:** The position used by swimmers when starting or pushing off the walls designed to reduce water resistance.

**Stroke Judges:** The persons who observe the swimmers from both sides of the pool, walking abreast of the swimmers, to ensure that the rules relating to each stroke are being followed. The positions of Stroke Judge and Turn Judge are typically combined into one position called the Stroke and Turn Judge. The positioning on the deck of the judges varies based on the number of judges available at any given meet.

**Taper:** The final preparation phase sometimes referred to as “rest,” in the practice routine before a competition. Tapering is the practice of lessening the work load for the athletes in the days just prior to a championship meet so that the swimmers are not as tired and their bodies will recover, causing them to have more energy for their races.

**Time Trial:** A time-only swim, which is not part of a regular meet.

**Timers:** Operate timing devices (stopwatches or automatic timing systems) and record the time for the swimmer in their lane.

**Touch Pad:** A large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer’s finish is registered and the registered time sent electronically to the timing system.

**Turn Judges:** Observe the swimmers from each end of the pool and ensure that the turns and finishes comply with the rules applicable to each stroke. (Often combined with stroke judges, see above.)

**USAS:** USA Swimming is the national governing body for amateur competitive swimming.

**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 decrease heart rate and respiration.

**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 and respiration and helps to prevent injury.

**Watches:** Stopwatches used to time swimmers during a competition. When totally automatic timing equipment is used, watches serve as a back-up method.

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