

## **CBST-USAS REGISTRATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Visit [www.cbsswimanddive.com](http://www.cbsswimanddive.com) for contact information, instructions and deadlines related to current season evaluations and registration.

### **What are the different CBST-USAS seasons?**

There are two seasons within USA Swimming:

- Short course – September through March; typical competition pool length is 25 yards
- Long course – mid-April through July; typical competition pool length is 50 meters

### **When may I register for CBST-USAS?**

There are three membership options based on the available swim seasons:

- Short Course only (September through March) – registration information will be posted in May/June with contact deadline for new members in very early July
- Long Course only (mid-April through July) – registration information will be posted in November/December with contact deadline for new members in early-mid January
- Full year – registration occurs with short course only (see timing above)

Note that most swimmers new to USA Swimming find that joining CBST starting with a short course season is easier than starting with a long course season in terms of understanding how the program works and getting into meets (due to many meets having time standards, and the time constraints and general difficulty of getting teams into long course meets – see Long Course Basics within CBST-USAS Basics document on team website, resources page, general information section for more details), however, we understand that many winter team swimmers like to have the opportunity to join CBST-USAS starting with a long course season. Swimmers wishing to join starting with long course need to be sure to pay careful attention to all communications, ask questions as they arise, and understand that meet participation for their swimmer may be very limited (or not possible) for their first long course season. Practicing with the team will still be beneficial to the swimmer. Also be aware that high school aged swimmers new to CBST-USAS should contact the senior group head coach to arrange a brief meeting or email exchange well in advance of the season beginning (especially if joining for long course) so that the coaching staff will be aware of the swimmer's goals.

### **How are practice group placements made?**

All new swimmers to CBST-USAS attend an evaluation with a CBST-USAS coach. Group placements are made based on a swimmer's ability (stroke technique and practice speed across all strokes). Age is considered only to the extent that a swimmer must be placed in a group that is also appropriate when comparing the swimmer's age to the ages of swimmers typically in the group into which the swimmer fits based on ability.

## **What is the format of a CBST-USAS evaluation?**

Evaluations typically consist of swimmers swimming all four strokes and some mini-sets on time intervals to see into which practice group they would fit. Our coaches need to be sure new swimmers are able to legally swim all four competitive strokes (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly) and that the group a swimmer is ready for ability-wise is also appropriate age-wise so that it will be a productive and comfortable environment for everyone. After the evaluation, the coach will talk to the swimmer and parent about the best next step for the swimmer.

## **May I try a practice before joining CBST-USAS?**

Yes, if you'd like to try a practice after your evaluation, please contact the Central Bucks Aquatics administrative staff member with whom you arranged your evaluation to coordinate trying a practice.

## **Are swimmers under nine years old able to join CBST-USAS?**

Typically, swimmers eight and younger are not ready for the rigor of our USAS practices. Eight-year-old swimmers who are evaluated as ready to practice with CBST-USAS may practice with the team but will not have meets available to them through CBST-USAS until they turn nine. Our coaches believe that attending SAL team and/or summer team meets provides adequate competition opportunity for swimmers under nine years old.

## **Are swimmers who haven't been on a competitive team in the winter before able to join CBST-USAS?**

Our USAS team is not typically the appropriate placement for swimmers new to competitive winter swimming (even those who have been on a summer club team). Please read all information on the team website related to our teams and if you believe CBST-USAS would be the appropriate placement for your swimmer, make email contact per the team website (home page link to new member evaluation sign-up) to determine if an evaluation will be possible. Be sure to include your swimmer's swimming background in the email.

## **Can swimmers who are not very fast qualify for the team?**

USAS team swimmers have all different ability levels but need to be able to swim all four competitive strokes legally and almost always have prior competitive winter team experience. New CBST-USAS members will be invited to join the team regardless of speed as long as they are evaluated to be ready for this team by CB staff during a CBST-USAS evaluation.

## **How much does it cost to join CBST-USAS?**

- **Program fees** – these vary based upon practice group and program (full year/short course/long course) Link to specific fee amounts for the current season is available on the team website (pricing page).
- **USA Swimming membership fee** – this required annual membership is remitted directly to USA Swimming
- **Meet Entry Fees** – there are entry fees for each meet an athlete attends
- **Incidental Items** – such as apparel and caps
- **Travel expenses** – these are assessed only if your swimmer travels with the team (meaning without parents) to certain away meets (open to high school aged swimmers only when available)
- **Out of District fee** – a per season fee incurred by families who reside outside Central Bucks School District

## **How are CBST-USAS fees billed and paid?**

CBST-USAS registration payments (program fees only) are paid at the time of registration through the online portal. Subsequent fees are charged monthly through our online portal with reminder notifications sent via email. All payments must be made by credit or debit card on file through our online system.

## **Are there payment options available?**

Different payment options are available based on season(s) of participation.

- Year-round swimmers may pay in one payment with registration or in ten monthly payments July/August through May.
- Short-course only swimmers may pay in one payment with registration or in three monthly payments July/August through October.
- Long-course only swimmers may pay in one payment with registration or in two payments in December/January and May.

## **If I join after the season begins can the program fees be pro-rated?**

Late registration is often not available and in the event that it is, fees are not pro-rated. If you have missed the registration deadline, make contact per the team website right away. If space is available, the full dues amount will be charged, and a late fee will apply. Additionally, your swimmer's start date will likely be delayed.

## **What documents are required for registration?**

Upon initial contact you will be asked to fill out a New Member Portal form with basic information. The only other document required for CBST-USAS registration is the physical form. All other forms, agreements, and information are part of the online registration process. Physicals may be provided via email (readable PDF) or on paper (not preferred) and must be received by the registration deadline. Physicals must be doctor-signed and dated per the posted and emailed instructions. Any form is acceptable as long as it is appropriately dated, doctor-signed, contains the swimmer's name, and is evidence of a physical exam, but if you need a form, links are available on the team website (resources page).

It is good practice to submit photocopies of your child's physical forms and keep the original in a safe place in case you need copies for other activities or next season for CBST. High school athletes must have annual physicals (normally dated after June 1) on file with the athletic director of their high school. CB high school athletes do not need to provide a copy of their physical for CBST registration, but all age group swimmers and non-CB high school athletes must provide a physical.

## **When and where does the team practice?**

Practice details may be found on the CBST-USAS website calendar. Practice times and locations are determined based on pool availability, needs of participants as a group, and staffing considerations. In general:

- Senior Group
  - Short course outside of high school season – at CB South: most weekday mornings, Monday through Friday after school; Saturday mornings
  - Short course during high school season – some weekday mornings at CB South; some evenings at CB South (generally Senior Plus group only); Saturday mornings at CB South (see high school swimmers document for details of Senior group vs. Senior Plus group)
  - Long course until CB schools get out for the summer – at CB South: most weekday mornings, Monday through Friday after school; Saturday mornings
  - Long course after CB Schools get out for the summer – practices at a local long course pool (Monday through Saturday mornings); at CB South when possible only if weather causes outdoor practice cancellation
- Age Group
  - Short course outside of SAL season – at CB South: Monday through Thursday evenings; some Saturday mornings
  - Short course during SAL season – Monday through Thursday evenings at CB South or CB East; some Saturday mornings at CB South

- Long course until CB schools get out for the summer – at CB South: Monday through Thursday evenings; some Saturday mornings
- Long course after CB Schools get out for the summer – at CB South: Tuesday and Thursday, and some Saturday mornings, and Monday and Wednesday evenings; some groups will also have some practices available at a local long course pool
- More details are available in the “Typical Practice Timing” document on the CBST-USAS Calendar page of the team website.

### **Is there any equipment/apparel that my swimmer will need for CBST-USAS?**

Equipment needs by practice group are detailed in the “Equipment List” document on the resources page, practice group information section of the team website. Swimmers who use caps must wear a CBST cap for competition. This is the only specific apparel requirement. CBST team swimsuits and other apparel are made available at different times of the year. The team suit is optional. The coaches request that swimmers wear some type of CBST apparel to meets (and that they not wear apparel from other teams – including their SAL or summer team - to CBST-USAS meets). Caps (non-personalized silicone and dome) are usually on hand for purchase. Team suits and personalized caps are ordered once per year in the fall and there is typically at least one online apparel sale with various items available each year. Watch email for communications about purchasing these items.

### **What are the practice attendance requirements?**

Practice requirements by group are detailed in the practice group descriptions document on the team website resources page. In general coaches understand that CBST swimmers have other commitments but request that they make every possible effort to attend at least the minimum number of practices recommended for their group. Swimmers who consistently are unable to attend the minimum number of recommended practices often lag behind others in their group and become frustrated with their lack of progress.

### **How is practice group advancement determined?**

Training group advancement occurs when a swimmer shows the coaching staff that they have trained and performed beyond the level of their current group. Our swimmers are encouraged to give their best efforts within their training groups to make the necessary improvements that will ultimately maximize their swimming abilities. Throughout a CBST-USAS swimmer’s career the coaching staff will advance them through the groups when we believe they are ready. Swimmers with a question about advancement should talk to their coach. Please see the “Advancement” document on the resources page of the team website for more details.

### **My high school swimmer just wants to swim with CBST-USAS outside of high school season – is that possible?**

Yes, the typical Central Bucks high school swimmer will swim with CBST-USAS during September, October, and the first half of November then will swim with the high school team from mid-November through the final high school championship meet that the swimmer attends (championships, districts, or states). During high school season (through states) these swimmers are also invited (and strongly encouraged) to attend all morning CBST-USAS practices as well as Saturday practices. These swimmers usually also swim long course with CBST. The fact that during the short course season these swimmers often practice exclusively with their high schools starting in mid-November is factored in when determining the pricing for the senior group.

*See the “High School Swimmer Information” document on the team website (CBST-USAS Resources page, Practice Group Information section) for more details about the various CBST-USAS participation levels for high school swimmers.*

### **Is there a CBST-USAS participation option for high school students who do not swim with a high school team?**

Yes, the CBST Senior Plus group is for high level swimmers who either do not have a high school swim team or have a high school team, but their training needs cannot be fully met by that team. See the “High School Swimmer Information” document on the team website (CBST-USAS Resources page, Practice Group Information section) for details of this practice group and information about the various CBST-USAS participation levels for high school swimmers. Be aware that the CBST coaches strongly encourage any swimmer with access to a high school team to swim for that team as well as CBST.

### **What are the USA Swimming meets like?**

Description: Many of the meets CBST-USAS attends are A/BB/C meets (a meet which has no qualifying standard) meant for swimmers with a wide range of abilities. Swimmers may select their events. Awards are won in each of the brackets (A, BB, or C) based upon the time provided for the swimmer’s entry. A swimmer may achieve a time which will move the swimmer up to the next bracket, but for that meet, the swimmer will be awarded based upon the lower (entered) bracket. CBST-USAS also competes at several championship style meets where swimmers must qualify to participate.

Location: Many meets are close enough that swimmers do not stay overnight for two-day meets. Middle Atlantic Swimming (our LSC or Local Swimming Committee – which is the regional division of USA Swimming in which CBST operates) is comprised of teams in central and eastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, and Delaware. For our typical meets that most of the team members will attend, our coaches try to choose meets that are fairly close and/or popular with our team. As swimmers advance, they become more likely to attend meets that are further away (outside of our LSC).

Duration: Most meets are two days long with different events available on the different days. Swimmers may attend one or both days of these meets depending on the events they would like to swim and their availability. Meet sessions (not including warm-up) should be four hours or less.

### **What are the meet attendance requirements?**

CBST-USAS swimmers are expected to attend all meets that the team hosts at CB South (typically two two-day meets per year during the short course season). Some swimmers find that in their first season with CBST-USAS, home meets are sufficient for them. Most of our swimmers do, however, attend away meets as well. Each season our coaches carefully choose the meets CBST-USAS will attend as a team and those are the meets they recommend for our swimmers. Swimmers who would like to attend meets CBST-USAS is not attending as a team should refer to the team website and email communications for instructions.

### **What are the volunteering requirements?**

Parents are required to volunteer at CBST-USAS hosted meets. Parents normally work the sessions their children are swimming, so one session each day. Parents must fulfill their volunteer requirement regardless of whether their child swims at our meets or not. Parents with more than one child swimming on the team will be required to work additional sessions. Families who have only high school swimmers or only a swimmer who is under nine years old for all or part of the season have modified requirements. There is an option to buy-out of the home meet volunteering, but it is substantial, and families are strongly encouraged to volunteer as they are truly needed. See details in the “Volunteering Requirements” document on the team website (meets page) and watch for team emails regarding volunteering throughout the season.

At away meets, hosts appreciate help and CBST is sometimes assigned volunteer jobs (particularly at championship meets). When the team has jobs assigned, parents are required to help. There is not a buy-out option for away meet volunteering.

### **How do I become an official?**

Please view information at [www.maswimofficials.org](http://www.maswimofficials.org) and contact team leadership with any questions.

### **Are there any fundraising requirements for participation on the team?**

There are no fundraising requirements beyond the volunteering requirement at this time.

## **Are CBST participants able to be involved with other activities in addition to CBST?**

Yes – most (if not all) of our CBST swimmers are involved in activities in addition to CBST. As with all sports, as swimmers advance the commitment increases, so participants need to make choices about which activities they will continue and which they need to scale back.

## **Are swimmers able to participate with CBST during long course season and also swim with a summer club team?**

Yes – CBST swimmers are able to continue swimming with their summer club teams. During the summer club meet season CBST runs age group practices in the mornings on the typical summer club meet days, so swimmers are able attend those meets, and also offers afternoon/evening practices on other days so that age group swimmers are able to attend some summer club practices. How to balance CBST long course and summer club participation is a family decision.

## **Are swimmers able to participate with CBST-USAS during short course season and also swim with an SAL team?**

Yes – CBST-SAL swimmers who want to have the more rigorous USAS practices of CBST-USAS may also elect to continue swimming club meets with our SAL team. Many of our Central Bucks School District swimmers choose to participate with both CBST-USAS and CBST-SAL. Swimmers who do this practice with CBST-USAS only (practicing with CBST-SAL is not allowed) and participate in meets for both teams. They also participate in any other CBST-SAL team functions such as the team party. Swimmers participating with both the USAS and the SAL teams pay all CBST-USAS fees in addition to the CBST-SAL athlete recognitions/support fee. Such swimmers do NOT pay the club (CBST-SAL) program fee. Swimmers who swim with another SAL team need to make arrangements directly with the leadership of that team.

## **May I practice with CBST-SAL if I'm on CBST-USAS?**

No, our USAS swimmers attend USAS practices and may not attend SAL practices. This is the case for ALL CBST-USAS swimmers even if they also swim CBST-SAL meets. The practices are different, the coaches are different, the groupings of swimmers within the practices are different, and (based on years ago experience) practices will not be manageable if everyone is allowed to go wherever they choose each night as some practices will be too full and others not well attended, and the right coaches will not be there for the right practice groups. Additionally, in order to meet insurance requirements, swimmers may only practice with their assigned team. The CBST-USAS athletes pay for the CBST-USAS program - that means CBST-USAS practices - and have the courtesy extended to them that they may pay just the CBST-SAL athlete recognitions/support fee and participate in the CBST-SAL meets, but they are not paying the

CBST-SAL program fee so are not eligible to go to those practices. Swimming with a different team or practice group is not allowed even for one practice and regardless of conflicts (CB or personal).

### **What are the differences between CBST-SAL and CBST-USAS?**

Some of the basic differences between our SAL swim team (CBST-SAL) and our USAS swim team (CBST-USAS) are:

- CBST-USAS is part of USA Swimming which is a national swimming organization providing swimmers competitive opportunities at the local, regional, national, and international levels. Qualified swimmers may compete at Junior and Senior Championships, Zone/Sectional meets, Olympic Trials and other high-level meets.
- CBST-SAL competes within the local Suburban Aquatic League (SAL) through dual meets, invitationals, and a series of season culminating championship meets
- CBST-USAS has more rigorous practices
- CBST-USAS has two seasons which provide for year-round swimming while CBST-SAL has one season in the fall/winter
- CBST-USAS practice groups are determined by ability while CBST-SAL practice groups are determined by age
- Age for competition for CBST-USAS is determined on the first day of any given meet while age for CBST-SAL is determined as of 10/31 of the current season
- CBST-USAS meets are not dual meets – they are “invitationals” style while CBST-SAL has dual meets and invitationals
- Most CBST-USAS meets do not have relays – relays are often available in championship meets while all CBST-SAL dual meets have relays

See also the team website: [www.cbswimanddive.com](http://www.cbswimanddive.com).

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