

TRUMBULL PISCES SWIMMING ASSOCIATION HANDBOOK

Introduction

Competitive swimming in Trumbull is made up of a program sponsored by the Trumbull Board of Recreation and by the Trumbull Pisces Swimming Association, Inc. The various programs provide comprehensive, competitive swimming opportunities for girls and boys from the ages of 6 to 18. To be eligible to participate in the program, swimmers must be able to fulfill the requirements of their age group.

The Trumbull Pisces Swimming Association, Inc. manages the Trumbull Pisces Swim Team and offers additional competitive opportunities, including United States Swimming (USA) competition. The Association also provides social activities, newsletters and awards. To cover the costs of the Association's activities, fundraisers are held and a membership fee is charged.

The various programs provide opportunities for girls and boys of different abilities and interest levels to participate together but compete equally against children of like abilities and interest. No swimmer is penalized for being "too slow" or "too fast". A program of this size requires the support and involvement of all parents to work successfully. Membership participation is required at all fundraisers and meets to cover the Team's operating expenses.

Association Services

The Trumbull Pisces Swimming Association provides the following services to its members:

- Communication – Our primary vehicles for sharing communication between parents, coaches, and board members are email, Pisces bulletin board, file folders mail boxes for each family, and the Pisces website (www.trumbullpisces.org).
- Equipment – for meets and practices. Starting, PA system, lane lines and timing watches.
- Supplies – meet cards, scoring sheets, flyers, ribbons and the ability to purchase team suits and caps on site.
- Coaches – at both Nutmeg/CSSL and USA meets in addition to normal practice times.
- Parent Meetings – a forum to review the budget and discuss team matters.
- Social Privileges – Team picture, holiday party and awards banquet.
- Banquet – a time of recognition of achievements and distribution of awards.

Trumbull Pisces Coaching Qualifications

The Coaches of the Trumbull Pisces Swimming Association under mandates from Connecticut Swimming, Inc. and USA Swimming are required to have the following approved training prior to stepping onto the pool deck:

- Lifeguard Training
- CPR for the Professional Rescuer
- First Aid
- Safety Training for Swim Coaches

In order for the coaches to complete their certification requirements, they must also complete a USA Swimming Foundation of Coaching exam prior to December 31st of their first year.

These are minimum requirements for a coach to be able to step onto a pool deck. They in no way serve as an indicator of the level of experience of the Trumbull Pisces Coaching staff. The Trumbull Pisces Swimming Association is dedicated in hiring individuals that possess the utmost credentials in the sport of swimming and the ability to be successful in working with young people.

Lastly, all coaches have been fingerprinted which are on file with Trumbull Police Department.

Attendance

The coaching staff will monitor attendance. In order to maximize a swimmer's training, swimmers should swim the minimum recommended days per week as described in the group outlines.

General Operations

Board meetings are held on a regular basis. Open meetings for general members will be held three times a year during practice times. Practices will be closed to spectators while a general meeting is being conducted.

A scheduled system for swim practices is needed to coordinate lane assignments and effectively run practice. The coaches will schedule swimmers' practices so those swimmers of similar ability will practice together. Every effort is made to accommodate the needs of all swimmers on all levels. In order to minimize disruptions, swimmers are expected to remain at practice for the entire practice session. A note from the parent is required if a swimmer needs to be dismissed early. With the limited pool time available, swimmers are required to be suited and on deck five minutes prior to the scheduled starting practice. The coaches should be informed of any expected absence of one week

or more. Also, the coaches must be notified if a swimmer cannot attend a swim meet. This is crucial for setting up relay teams.

Swimmers are expected to abide by the team's policies and procedures. These policies will be enforced to insure the safety of the swimmers.

There will be no swim practice when school is canceled or dismissed early due to weather. The coach may hold special practices during school breaks or vacations. Announcements will be posted on the team website and followed up with an email.

General Rules

1. Swimmers should plan to arrive at Hillcrest in the locker room, 15 minutes before the scheduled practice.
2. Swimmers should be on the pool deck at least 5 minutes before the scheduled start of practice so that equipment can be issued and attendance can be taken.
3. Swimmers must walk on deck. No running or diving off of the deck. No one is allowed to leave the pool area during meets or practices without permission from the coach.
4. With several swimmers per lane, swimmers must pay strict attention to instructions from the coaches. Swimmers need to be courteous and attentive to the needs of others. Swimmers must follow the rules of lane swimming.
5. Swimmers must respect the right to use the facilities and to respect other people's property. There shall be no loitering in the locker rooms. No swim bags or personal items should be left in the locker rooms during practice. The locker rooms are off limits during practice sessions.
6. Swimmers with long hair are required to wear bathing caps. Team caps are to be worn at all meets. Team suits must be worn at all meets. Swimmers must wear goggles when in the pool.
7. Swimmers will be warned of violations of practice policies. Refer to the Team Rules and Personal Code of Conduct within this handbook and on the team website. Repeated warning or violations will result in suspension from the team with no refund of the membership fee.
8. Our refund policy is stated as follows: A full refund will be received if the swimmer terminates within 3 weeks of the first practice. A termination within the fourth week after the first practice will result in a partial refund. Beyond the fourth week after the first practice, no refund will be given. Notification of termination must be made in writing to the Trumbull Pisces Board of Directors.

9. The bulletin board at the pool, the website, email, and the file folder mail boxes are to be checked daily for updates and schedule changes.
10. All swimmers must leave their swim bags on deck and not in the locker rooms during practice or meets. Please do not bring valuables such as jewelry, cell phones or cash to practice or meets.

Policies and Procedures

The Trumbull Pisces' goal is to develop the highest level of competition excellence possible for all swimmers, while simultaneously encouraging spirit, honesty, team pride, personal commitment and individual growth. In order to achieve our mission and assure the safety of our swimmers at practice and meets, we strictly enforce the following rules and guidelines. The following policies and procedures must be read and fully understood by both parent(s) and swimmer(s).

Team Rules

1. Swimmers are to be dropped off no sooner than 15 minutes before practice and to be picked up immediately at the end of the practice session.
2. Swimmers are to go directly to the pool area to find the coach to start dry land activities. If no dry land activities are being done then swimmers are to go directly to the locker room, change, and go to the pool area directly from the locker room. All swimmer personal belongings and swim bags are to be kept on the pool deck. Nothing should be kept in the locker rooms.
3. Running or disorderly behavior on deck, in the locker rooms and anywhere else on the premises will not be tolerated.
4. Swimmers may enter the pool area only after the coach has arrived.
5. Swimmers are expected to be on deck and ready to work at the designated times for practice sessions and for warm-ups at the meets; team caps and team suits are to be worn at all meets.
6. Swimmers should swim the minimum recommended days per week as described in the group outlines. Coaches take attendance on a daily basis. If practices are not met, it will affect participation in upcoming meets.
7. If you are more than 10 minutes late for a practice, you will not be allowed to practice and it will count as a missed practice. Late excuses must be provided by a parent in writing and addressed to the coach.

8. Any swimmer, who does not attend practice during the week of a scheduled meet, will not be allowed to swim in that meet.
9. Use of the entire Hillcrest facility, especially the pool and the locker rooms is to be treated as a privilege. The privilege can be taken away from us. Therefore, it is imperative that every swimmer make every effort to treat the building with respect and care. **Any behavior seen as defacing or damaging to this facility will not be tolerated and will result in immediate termination from the team with forfeiture of all fees.**
10. No food is allowed in the locker rooms or on the pool deck during practices or meets.
11. Swimmers will help keep the lockers rooms and pool deck neat and clean by picking up and throwing out trash.
12. Swimmers are expected to respect the privacy of others that may be changing in the locker rooms. Swimmers are not to touch the belongings of team members or others using the locker rooms.
13. Swimming equipment is to be properly maintained and returned to its rightful place when it's no longer being used.
14. The team is organized by age and ability levels. A swimmer will swim with his/her practice group according to the schedules times.

Trumbull Pisces Relay Team Policy

It is the Coaches' jobs to supervise the Trumbull Pisces Swim Program. By doing so, the coaches provide an environment that will enable children to learn the values associated with striving to improve one's self. This being the case, the Head Coach must be in total control of matters affecting training and competition. Therefore, the coaching staff is solely responsible for the building of the relay teams representing the Trumbull Pisces Swim Team. Any swimmer or parent of a swimmer that refuses to swim on a selected relay team will not be allowed to compete in individual events at the same competition. Swimming is a TEAM sport and competing in all events, individual and relay, as planned by the coaching staff, is important to the success of the Trumbull Pisces Swim Team.

Personal Code of Conduct

1. It is each swimmer's responsibility as a member of the Trumbull Pisces Swim Team to give his/her best effort in practice and in competition and to encourage

- teammates to do their best performance to enable individual and team achievement as well as good sportsmanship.
2. Swimmer's who are asked to participate on a team relay **must do so** unless they were not planning on attending that meet at all. This applies to all championship meets as well.
 3. All swimmers who do participate in a relay must put forth their best effort or will be given a formal warning and cannot participate in the next USA or Nutmeg/CSSL meet. A second occurrence of not putting forth a best effort as part of a Pisces relay, and the swimmer will be terminated from the team with forfeiture of all fees.
 4. Team members will not use obscene language and/or actions, which would reflect poorly on the swim program, coaches or teammates.
 5. Swimmers will present a positive approach to practice both in their dealings with the coaches as well as in dealings with their teammates.
 6. Behavior that disrupts practice or a swim meet will not be tolerated.
 7. Swimmers will abide by the team rules outlined above.

Failure to comply with the above policies will result in the following:

If a swimmer is given one formal warning during one practice session, the swimmer will be asked to come out of the pool and their practice will end for that session. The swimmer will call his/her parents/guardian to be picked up. A written report to the parent/guardian from the coaches describing the incident will be recorded and kept on file by the head coach. After receiving another warning, the swimmer will be suspended from all team activities for a period of one week. After one week, the swimmer may return to practice. If any further problems occur, the swimmer will be terminated from the team with forfeiture of all fees.

Parental Code of Conduct

Parents are the most important part of a swimmer's success. For the large majority of the athletes, success starts at home in the form of encouraging feedback from the parents. It is in no way acceptable for parents to assume that they are the coaches.

If a parent wishes to consult with the coaching staff over their swimmers goals, meets events, college opportunities, and long term planning for his/her child please notify the coach by a note in their file folder or an email and an appointment to meet can be made.

Parents will not be allowed to interrupt practice and/or swim meets to discuss an individual matter with the coaches. Any concerns or problems should be brought to the Head Coaches attention. Please contact the Head Coach through email to arrange a meeting before or after practice. Detrimental conduct on behalf of the parent will result in expulsion from the Trumbull Pisces Swimming Association with no refund of the membership fee.

Trumbull Pisces Swim Team

The Trumbull Pisces Swim Team encompasses all ages and levels of ability from beginners to those swimmers participating in Connecticut Regional Championships, Connecticut Swimming State championships and Eastern Zone Championships as well as Nutmeg and Connecticut Summer Swim League Championships. The program will provide careful development and continued progression through the stages of competitive swimming. Team swimming will develop healthy, physically fit kids who know how to work hard and how to have fun. Team swimmers develop time management skills and a disciplined life style, which leads to improved academics and a more focused life in general. Swimmers enjoy many long-term friendships with their teammates.

Our swim team is a fully sanctioned USA program. The program includes long and short course training, advanced skill development, and participation in Nutmeg, CSSL, and USA meets.

The coaching staff will evaluate each swimmer according to skill level, age, and commitment. Appropriate goals will be set within each group with all swimmers.

Group One

This group is for swimmers who need a lot of focus on technique and drills. A basic practice will start with 4 x 50's. Some kicking and pulling may be done. To move from Group One to Group Two, swimmers must show that they can perform all the strokes legally.

Group Two

This group works with more advanced drills and works on Individual Medleys and turns. The practice starts with a 200 warm up. The swimmers in this group will work on drills everyday like Group One, but will do them for longer distances and will perform sets. To move from Group Two to Group Three a swimmer must show they can perform all the strokes and drills properly with no problems. They must be able to perform an Individual Medley with proper technique. Also, a swimmer must be able to perform all starts and turns with proper technique.

Group Three

This group is for swimmers who have proper stroke technique, drill technique as well as knowledge, and can perform all starts and turns as well as the Individual Medley. This groups swimmers start off practice with a 400 and will do a regular practice with the focus less on technique and more aerobic.

Nutmeg/CSSL League Competition

League competition refers to the meet schedule provided by the Nutmeg Swim League. This league is organized and run by participating team coaches. All rules and regulations are established by a majority vote for the participating teams and may vary between leagues or from USA or high school programs. The competition follows USA rules and procedures closely. A league championship meet is held at the end of the winter season. Individual winners of each event, as well as winning team in each age group of each division, are presented trophies.

It is entirely the coaches' decision as to specific strokes and events that each swimmer is entered. Nutmeg League rules require swimmer participation in at least two meets during the season in order to qualify for the championship.

Nutmeg/CSSL Swim Meets

Swimmers should be on deck at the announced warm-up time, which is generally 5:00 p.m. The meets begin at 5:40 p.m. and can last as long as two hours. If there is a change of time or location, it will be posted at the pool. The pool bulletin board should be the primary source of information. The bulletin board and swimmers' files should be checked frequently.

Due to time limitations and league rules, individuals are limited to entry in two individual events and a relay. The coaches strive to place everybody in as many events as time and rules permit.

Some events may have several heats. The heat a swimmer is placed in is determined by his/her best time for that event. Only the swimmers in the first heat per event can score points for their team. Scoring is determined by finishing times. Individual events are scored as follows: First place, second place, and third place receive 5, 3, and 1 points respectively. Only the first place relay team is awarded 7 points. For individual events, no team can sweep an event. They score for first and second place and the opposing team's fastest swimmer for that event is scored for third.

Only first-place finishers in the relay and the first three finishers in individual events of the first heat are awarded place ribbons. These ribbons are awarded to those swimmers who score points for their team. Only swimmers in the first heat are capable of scoring. Therefore, if a swimmer finishes first in the second or subsequent heats, he/she does not score team points or receive a place ribbon. All other swimmers will receive at least one participation ribbon for the meet.

Most teams in the Nutmeg League use manual timing, parents with stopwatches. There are three times assigned to each lane, one of whom being designated the head timer for the lane. When a swimmer touches at the end of the event, the three times are entered on the time card. The middle time is circled as that swimmer's official time. A runner

delivers the heat cards to the scoring table where the meet results are recorded and verified.

Each team is required to provide timers for a meet. Generally, the home team provides 12 timers; the visiting team provides 6 timers. In addition to the 18 timers, two or three backup-timers are needed in the event of watch malfunction or human error. One or two runners are needed to collect time cards after each event. Each team provides a scorer and ribbon writer. In all, about 25 parents are needed for each meet. In addition, meet officials for starting, recall, and stroke and turn judging are needed for each meet.

Parent participation is required at all meets. Our coaches cannot run a swim meet without your help. Parents are also needed to supply food and beverages for the concession stand at home meets. This is a great fund-raiser for the team. Volunteer sign-up sheets will be made available throughout the season on the bulletin board. No parents are permitted on deck unless they are scheduled as a volunteer or an official.

USA Swimming Competition

USA Swimming is the national amateur, athletic federation that oversees all competitive swimming in the United States beginning with youth programs, such as Pisces, as well as seniors, Olympic, and masters programs. The program for young people is known as “Age Group Swimming” and competition for boys and girls is divided in six groups beginning at the ages eight and under and advancing in two-year increments up to 17 and 18 years old.

Each group is further divided by competitive ability. The slowest swimmers in each even are classified “C,” indicating that they have not yet swum that particular even faster than a national time standard for that age group. Once a swimmer has met the time standard in that even, they are classified “B” until they each an even faster time and become “A” times. Time standards at the national level go on up to AA, AAA, and AAAA.

At the state level, meets are held at various locations on Saturdays and/or Sundays, sponsored by local USA Swimming clubs. Various awards are given at these meets (i.e. ribbons, medals, heat winner ribbons).

The Trumbull Pisces Swimming Association, Inc. sponsors a USA Swimming swim team. USA meet fees are additional and are collected when the swimmer signs up to enter a meet.

USA Swimming is a very important part of the competitive swimming program because it gives swimmers a chance to swim events and develop strokes that may not be possible if they swam only in local league competition. All swimmers are encouraged to actively participate in the USA Swimming program.

Meet Entry Procedures

The Trumbull Pisces Swimming Association strives to provide its athletes with the best possible opportunities for competition. It is the responsibility of the parent to choose what meets their child can attend. This is done electronically on the Pisces website (www.trumbullpisces.org) under USA Registration.

It is the responsibility of the coach to choose what events the athlete will be swimming. If a parent has a question about what events their child should be swimming or wishes to swim, then they should contact the Head Coach through email or arrange a meeting before or after practice and prior to the meet cutoff date to discuss their concerns. However, the coach has the final decision over all swimming related matters.

Scratch Policy

If a swimmer is unable to attend a swim meet due to illness or personal reasons, they are to notify the Head Coach as soon as possible. If it is the day of a meet, please call the coach on the cell phone number listed below. Swimmers that are unable to attend a meet that they have signed up for are responsible for the meet entry fees. In addition, if a parent is scheduled as a timer for a meet and will not be present because their child is unable to attend, they must find their own replacement prior to the meet. The hosting team must be notified of scratches 20 minutes into the warm-up session. If a swimmer is late for a meet, they will be scratched and cannot be put back in.

USA Swimming Meets

Listed below are some reminders for USA Swimming:

- Coaches are responsible for choosing which events each swimmer will be swimming at each meet.
- It is each swimmer's responsibility to be at the designated pool and ready to swim at least 10 minutes before the warm-up time stated on your sign-up sheet.
- If on the morning of the meet a swimmer realizes that they cannot attend for whatever reason, it is their responsibility to contact a coach on his or her phone or cell phone. This should be done at least 30 minutes before warm-up begins.
- Coaches are required to make all scratches no later than 20 minutes before the start of the meet. If a swimmer is not on the pool deck, or the coach has not already seen them, they will be scratched from all events that day. Once a swimmer's name has been scratched, they will not be re-entered into the meet. So, please let the coach know if a swimmer will not be there or it will be late.
- If there are enough swimmers in a particular age group (i.e. Boys 10/U, Girls 11/12), relays will be entered at the time our meet entry is mailed. If a swimmer cannot stay until the end of the meet, they need to notify the coach before warm-up begins. This

way, another swimmer can be assigned to the relay or the relay can be scratched if necessary.

- It is the swimmer's responsibility to make sure they are not assigned to swim in a relay before they change clothes or decide to leave the swim meet.
- If a swimmer signs up for a swim meet, and does not (or cannot) attend that meet, their account will still be charged.
- Swimmers must wear their team suit and cap to all meets. This shows team spirit and also makes it easier to find a "Pisces" swimmer whether they are in or out of the water.
- Parents are expected to time at these meets on a rotating basis. No parents should have to time two days in a row! A timing assignment can be shared by two or more parents.
- No parents are allowed on deck for any reason, unless they are a timer or working official. Our team can be fined for having unauthorized parents on the pool deck. This is a USA Swimming rule.
- Swimmers may attend a meet "unattached" only with the coaches' written consent.
- Finally, and most importantly, have a great season and enjoy yourself!

GO PISCES!

**TRUMBULL PISCES SWIMMING ASSOCIATION
2007-2008 Board of Directors**

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Assistant Head Coach	Megan Loock
Coach	Dan Freddino
Coach	Marcus Cantu