

HEAT PARENT HANDBOOK

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HEAT HANDBOOK OBJECTIVES

This handbook has two objectives:

- To introduce swimmers and their parents to the Hudson Explorers Aquatic Team (HEAT)
- To provide information that will affect all swimmers year after year.

It should be read by all families so that they become familiar with important information about HEAT.

WELCOME TO HEAT

The Hudson Explorer Aquatic Team (HEAT), founded in 1999, is known throughout northeast Ohio as a first-class, year-round swim program. HEAT offers a guided age-group youth program for children age 5 and up, from the beginning swimmer to the most competitive and skilled swimmer. When a young person becomes a member of HEAT, he/she learns the values of sportsmanship, character and team work. Swimming with HEAT provides physical, emotional and intellectual skills that will last a lifetime.

HEAT coaching staff does not see the first place person as the only winner. We'd rather look to see who behaves like a winner. There are certain characteristics of a winner, and every swimmer, no matter where they place, has the opportunity to develop those characteristics: concentration, listening skills, and working toward goals.

Swimmers quickly forget the medals, records, and other material benefits. They will, however, remember the development of interpersonal skills, discipline, listening skills, time management, goal setting, and enhanced self- image. These are the things that make the swimmer a more successful person with a better chance of living a life closer to their peak potential, and to contribute to the world they live in.

HEAT'S MISSION

The Hudson Explorers Aquatic Team is a USA affiliated year-round competitive swimming program. HEAT's mission is to develop highly motivated and successful individuals to maximize their potential in and out of the pool.

USA SWIMMING

The USA Swimming age group swimming program is America's largest program of guided fitness activity for children. Age group swimming builds a strong foundation for a lifetime of good health by teaching healthy fitness habits.

USA Swimming is the national governing body for amateur, competitive swimming in the United States. At its headquarters office, located at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA Swimming staff interact with 59 Local Swimming Committees (LSCs), athletes, coaches and volunteers at all levels to provide a variety of services to 220,000 registered athletes, 20,000 non-athletes and 2,500 swim clubs.

USA Swimming was conceived in 1978 with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act which decreed that all Olympic sports would be administered independently. Prior to this Act, USA Swimming was the Competitive Swimming Committee of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) located in Indianapolis, Indiana. USA Swimming headquarters were moved to Colorado Springs in 1981.

Today, with its headquarters at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA Swimming is a Group A member of the United States Olympic Committee. Independent and a model for all amateur sport national governing bodies, USA Swimming is in the vanguard of the Olympic movement around the world.

As the National Governing Body for the sport, USA Swimming is charged with the responsibility to formulate rules, conduct national championships, disseminate safety and sports medicine information, select competitors to represent this country in international competition, ensure the development of its' member clubs and age group swimmers.

USA Swimming hosts three major swimming meets each year--the Phillips 66/USS Spring and Summer National Championships, and the US Open, sponsored by Speedo America. Additionally, USA Swimming holds four Speedo/Junior National Championship meets each year— two long course (50 meter pools) and two short course (25 yard pools).

Sixty-six percent (66%) of the revenues of the USA Swimming budget come from registration dues from athletes and membership fees from non-athletes and clubs. Without the support of its membership, USA could not offer quality programs to its members. The remaining revenues are generated through corporate sponsorship, United States Olympic Committee development funds, event income, publications and promotional merchandise.

Year-round athletes pay an annual registration fee of \$48.00. Athletes receive a membership card and have both liability and secondary medical insurance coverage.

HEAT is a club member of USA Swimming by paying the national fee of \$100.00. Membership benefits include USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, membership certificate and certificate of insurance. Clubs joining USA Swimming have liability insurance coverage for approved insured activities.

USA Swimming is the ruling body of sanctioned swimming meets in the United States. USA Swimming meets are designed to protect the swimmer, provide fair and equitable conditions of competition, and promote uniformity in the sport so that no swimmer shall obtain an unfair advantage over another.

The International Center of Aquatic Research, dedicated in 1988, provides the opportunity for state-of-the-art research and testing in the sport. The information gained through this facility, which includes a swimming treadmill, will be applied to improving swimming performances.

Obviously, the "wet" side of the sport receives a tremendous amount of money and attention, but the "dry" side of the sport receives considerable study as well.

Coaches and athletes education play an important role in USA Swimming. Programs such as the successful Coaches College, presenting the most current coaching and scientific literature, assist coaches in their efforts to provide optimal training conditions for their athletes.

USA Swimming National Headquarters strives to educate and inform its' membership through continued communication. Each year, USA Swimming publishes an updated version of the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations which is the final word in technical swimming rules. *Splash* is a bi-monthly publication providing current and timely information of interest to all USS members. *Lanelines*, the USA Swimming coach's newsletter, is also included in *Splash*.

The USA Swimming Headquarters provides a variety of services and programs for its membership. Some of the additional services provided by USA Swimming are fund-raising activities, sports medicine programs, video resources and general information about swimming related activities. USA Swimming staff members are available to assist in answering questions or providing additional information about USA Swimming. For information or assistance, contact: USA Swimming National Headquarters, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909-5770 (719) 866-4578.

Physical Development

Swimming is considered the ideal activity for developing muscular and skeletal growth by many physicians and pediatricians. Why do doctors like it so much?

Swimming develops high quality aerobic endurance, the most important key to physical fitness. In other sports an hour of practice may yield as little as 10 minutes of meaningful exercise. Age group swimming teams use every precious minute of practice time developing fitness and teaching skills. Swimming does a better job in proportional muscular development by using all the body's major muscle groups. No other sport does this as well.

Swimming enhances children's natural flexibility (at a time when they ordinarily begin to lose it) by exercising all of their major joints through a full range of motion.

Swimming helps develop superior coordination because it requires combinations of complex movements of all parts of the body, enhancing harmonious muscle function, grace, and fluidity of movement.

Swimming is the most injury-free of all children's sports.

Swimming is a sport that will bring kids fitness and enjoyment for life. Participants in Master's Swimming programs are still training and racing well into their 80s.

Parts reprinted from "A Tradition of Excellence" by USA Swimming.

COACHES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The job of the coaches is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. HEAT's coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for youngsters that will enable them to learn the value of striving to improve oneself and "to be the best you can be."

The coaches are responsible for placing youngsters in practice groups. This is based on the age and ability level of each individual. When it is in the best interest of a swimmer, he/ she will be placed in a more challenging training group by the coach. Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with HEAT's coaching staff. Each groups' practices are based on sound scientific principles and are geared to the specific goals of that group.

At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-up procedures for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmers performance. (It is the parent's job to offer love and understanding regardless of their youngster's performance)

The building of a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.

The coaching staff is constantly updating and improving the HEAT swimming program. It is the swimmers' and parents' responsibility to make the most out of the excellent opportunity this program provides for success in swimming.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COACHES

Swimmer's File – Each swimmer has a file folder on deck that with his or her name on it. It is the swimmer's responsibility to check their folder daily for important information.

HEAT website – Information about upcoming meets, including meet registration procedures, results, etc. is available on the website – www.hudsonheat.com.

Bulletin Boards - The bulletin boards at East Woods will also display important information throughout the season.

Email – The coaches will send emails with important information about meets, registration, changes in the practice schedule, etc. Please make sure that the team has your current email address.

The best way to speak with the coaches is to meet them after practice. They usually make themselves available for ten minutes to answer questions, provide information, etc. Sending a note to the coach with your swimmer or contacting them via email is a good way to get information to them.

HEAT DEVELOPMENTAL GROUPS

HEAT uses a "progressive" age group program designed to develop the child physically, mentally and emotionally in a systematic fashion. A well-defined, long-term approach of gradually increasing degrees of commitment is essential to reach peak performance levels during a swimmer's physiological prime. The emphasis in the early stages of participation must be placed on developing technical skills and a love for the sport. In the later years, a more demanding physical and psychological challenge must be introduced to the training program. In this respect, "too much too soon" is more often the cause of failure to achieve maximum potential in senior swimming than in the reverse situation.

In addition to emphasizing long-term rather than short-term results, it is also important that we establish training groups of swimmers who are compatible in respect to abilities, commitment levels and goals. Unfortunately, this is not always the most convenient approach to take, but it is always the most productive.

At each level, the goals and objectives are specific and directed toward meeting the needs of the swimmer. The long term goal of total excellence is always in mind. As each child is different, he/she will progress at his/her own rate. The coaching staff recognizes this fact by making team assignments based on a swimmer's physical, mental, and emotional level of development.

Elite: This group is by invitation only by the Head Coach. Swimmers that participate in this group will be **REQUIRED to attend at least 6 practices per week including dryland and weights**. Swimmers in this group will also participate in specified USA meets with events being selected by the coaching staff. Membership in this group is a privilege and designed for swimmers that are serious and committed to the

growth and development of their swimming careers. If a swimmer fails to meet the practice and meet requirements for the Elite group, they will be removed from the group.

Senior: High School age swimmers. Swimmers in this group are expected to attend at least 5 practices a week and at least 1 meet a month. This group will run until the beginning of the HS Varsity season and swimmers will be expected to swim at a USA Championship meet in March.

Gold: Advanced level age group swimmers. These swimmers are highly committed and attend practices regularly. Their training will consist of fine tuning their stroke mechanics and racing strategies. Practices will also focus on endurance training to help reach maximum potential in all events. Most swimmers in this group will have NAG "A" times in all four strokes. Admittance in this group must be approved by the head coach and any swimmer not attending practices and meets will be removed. Gold swimmers are required to attend 5-6 practices a week mandatory meets for Gold.

Silver: Advanced level age group swimmers. This group is comprised of mostly but not limited to swimmers 12-14 year olds. Practices are designed for more intense training but still with focus on stroke development and learning racing strategies. Swimmers in this group should have NAG "B" – "BB" Time Standards in all 4 strokes and various distances. Silver group swimmers are expected to swim at least 4 practices a week and mandatory meets for Silver.

Bronze: This group is comprised of mostly but not limited to swimmers 10-14 year olds. Bronze swimmers will start to learn racing strategies and be introduced into more endurance training. Swimmers in this group should have NAG "B" Time Standards in all 4 strokes. Bronze group swimmers are expected to swim at least 4 practices a week and mandatory meets for Bronze.

Blue: Blue swimmers continue to build endurance with continued focus on stroke technique. Practices will be geared towards skills and fundamental development and also begin to learn proper racing strategies. Swimmers advance based on coaches discretion and fulfilling practice requirements. Blue group swimmers are expected to swim at least 3-4 practices a week and mandatory meets for Blue.

White: White swimmers start to build endurance with continued focus on stroke technique. Practices will be geared towards skills and fundamental development. White group swimmers should be able to swim all 4 strokes legally for at least 25 yards. Swimmers advance based on coaches discretion and fulfilling practice requirements. White group swimmers are required to attend 3 practices a week and mandatory meets for White.

Red: Red swimmers are generally new to USA swimming and need to develop proper stroke technique. These swimmers will focus solely on stroke technique along with learning starts, turns, and finishes. Red group swimmers are expected to attend 2 practices a week. Swimmers advance based on coach's discretion.

Green: This group will practice in the morning before school and is designed for but not limited to kids in 4th and 5th grade attending East Woods Elementary School. This is for swimmers who might have some summer league experience and would like to develop better technique on all 4 strokes.

SWIMMERS' TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES

As a swimmer's level of swimming ability increases so does his/her responsibility. The program is designed to encourage all swimmers to swim for the high school team. As swimmers improve this is a deep commitment that requires great effort on all parts. A swimmer has responsibilities to the team, the coach, his/her parents, and most importantly to themselves. Swimmers need to prepare themselves for a 100% effort each time they come to practice.

Swimmers will be required to bring specified training accessories (i.e., goggles, flippers, etc.) to workouts. It is the swimmer's responsibility to make sure these items are properly adjusted and that spares are readily available. Equipment adjustment and repair will not be accepted as excuse to miss part of a training session.

PRACTICE AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

The following guidelines are to inform parents and swimmers of the coaches' policies regarding practice. These policies have been developed over many years and are designed to provide the best possible practice environment for all.

Each training group has specific attendance requirements appropriate for the objectives of that group. As a general rule, the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success. The club does, however, encourage younger swimmers to participate in other activities in addition to swimming. The coaches' expectation level of the swimmers increases as they move to higher groups.

For the swimmers' protection, they should arrive on the school grounds no earlier than 15 minutes prior to their workout time. They should also be picked up no later than 15 minutes after their practice is over. Swimmers should be ready to swim five minutes prior to the start of their practice.

In case a youngster is late for practice, it is our hope that the parents will send a note with the child explaining the reason for tardiness.

Plan to stay the entire practice. The last part of practice is very often the most important. Usually, there are also announcements made at the end of each practice. In the event that your child needs to be dismissed early from practice, a note from the parent for each dismissal is required.

Occasionally, most of a practice group may be attending a meet, in which case you will be notified of a practice change or cancellation.

While on school grounds, the swimmers are the responsibility of the coaching staff. During practice sessions, swimmers are never to leave the school grounds without their coach's permission.

The club has an obligation to act as guests while in the high school (both swimmers and parents). Every member of the club needs to do everything possible to respect this privilege. Any damages to school property may result in financial liability of the swimmers parents. Any damage may also result in the swimmer being asked to leave the team permanently.

Parents are not allowed on the pool deck during practice unless it is an emergency.

Parents are welcome to observe practice from the bleachers near the pool.

ILLNESS AND INJURY

Whenever possible, the coach should be informed in advance of an illness or injury. If your swimmer will be out of the water over a long period of time with an injury or illness, please notify Head Coach Matt Davis at (330) 653-1386 or davism@hudson.edu so the coaching staff is aware of the problem.

TIME STANDARDS

There are seven different age group classifications recognized by United States Swimming (the governing body of the sport): 8-Under, 10-Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, and Senior. The Senior classification includes any age registered swimmer who has achieved the prescribed qualifying time for the event. Not all age group classifications are offered at every swim meet. The swimmers' age on the first day of a meet will govern the swimmers' age for the entire meet.

Within each age-group there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. All swimmers begin as "C" swimmers. As they improve, they advance from "C", to "BB", "B", "A", "AA", "AAA", and ultimately "AAAA." The times required for each ability level are published each year by United States Swimming. This permits fair, yet challenging, competition on all levels.

In some cases, a swimmer may be in a different class in each stroke. An example: a "C" breaststroke time, a "B" freestyle time, and a "AA" backstroke time.

Some swim meets set certain qualification standards. In order to swim in a certain classification, a swimmer must have achieved the qualifying time for that particular classification.

MEET EXPECTATIONS

PARTICIPATION

All HEAT swimmers should plan to compete in as many meets as required by his or her developmental group. See the website for more information.

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SWIM MEETS, BUT WERE TOO AFRAID TO ASK

Swim meets are a great family experience! They're a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as we possibly could.

Before the Meet Starts

Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information on the website (www.hudsonheat.com).

Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags and/or sleeping bags. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces or the team suit.

Find the check-in place and either you or your swimmer will need to check-in with a volunteer from the host team or circle-in by circling your swimmer's name on a posted list for all events. This is done so that the people running the meet know who is actually at the meet.

Once you are checked-in, write each event, heat, and lane number on your swimmer's hand in ink – a Sharpie works great. This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen for.

Your swimmer should then get his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team.

After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her towels are and sit there until the next event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary, gets a drink, or just gets settled in.

The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.

According to USA Swimming rules (because of insurance purposes), parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the coaching staff. They will pursue the matter through the proper channels.

Heat Sheets

A heat sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. Heat sheets generally sell for two to three dollars per day. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event.

Meet Starts

It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers he/she is swimming. He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile.

A swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker, and he/she will be asked to report to the "clerk of course". Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggle. Generally, girls events are odd-numbered and boys events are even-numbered. Example: "Event #26, 10-Under Boys, 50 freestyle, report to Clerk of Course."

The "Clerk of Course" area is where all swimmers checked in before the warm-up. The clerk will line up all the swimmers and take them down to the pool in correct order. Depending on the meet, either the people at clerk will give the scoring card to the timers at the end of each lane or the people at the clerk will instruct the swimmers to hand their cards to the timers when it is their turn to swim. These cards are important because they tell the people running the meet who actually swam each event. You can expect at least 4-8 heats of each event.

The swimmer swims his or her race.

After each swim race, the swimmer should

- Ask the timers (people behind the blocks at each lane) his/her time.
- Go immediately to their coach. The coach will ask him/her their time and discuss the swim with each swimmer. Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing the results: positive comments or praise and suggestions for improvement.

Things parents can do after each swim:

- Tell him/her how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with each swimmer. You need to tell him/her how proud you are and what a great job he/she did.
- Take him/her back to the towel area and relax.
- This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or something light to eat.
- The swimmer now waits until his/her next event is called and starts the procedure again at the "Clerk of Course".

When a swimmer has completed all of his/her events, he/she and their parents get to go home. Make sure that you check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and he/she is not there. (The coaches speak from experience on this issue).

What Happens If Your Child Has a Disappointing Swim

If your child has a poor race and comes out of it feeling bad, talk about the good things. The first thing you say is, "Hey, that is not like you. You're usually a top swimmer." Then you can go on and talk about the good things the child did. You never talk about the negative things.

If your child comes up to you and says, "That was a bad race, don't tell me it wasn't," there is nothing wrong with a swimmer negatively evaluating a race. The important thing is for the child not to dwell on it. You should move the swimmer on to something good. "All right, you have had a bad race. How do you think you can do better next time?" Immediately start talking about the positive things.

What To Take To The Meet

1. Most important: team suit, HEAT cap, goggles, and towel – good idea to pack two.
2. Baby or talcum powder--To "dust" the inside of swim cap. This helps preserve the cap and makes it easier to put on.
3. Something to sit on. Example: sleeping bag, old blanket, or anything that will be comfortable to sit on. The swimmers will be spending a lot of time on it.
4. Sweat suits: bring one. Each swimmer may want to bring two because they can get wet and soggy.
5. T-shirts: Two or three. Same reason as above.
6. Games: travel games, coloring books, books, anything to pass the time.

7. **Food:** Each swimmer is usually allowed to bring a small cooler. It is better to bring snacks. They usually have snack bars at the meet, but the lines are long and most of the time they only sell junk food. Suggestions for items to bring: drinks like, bottled water, Hi-C, Fruit juice, Gatorade; snacks like granola bars, fruit, yogurt, sandwiches, etc.

Once you have attended one or two meets this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask any other HEAT parent for help or information!

These meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! He/she gets to visit with his/her friends, play games, and meet kids from other teams. He/she also gets to "race" and see how much he/she has improved from all the hard work he/she has put in at practice.

Special Parent's Note The pool area is usually very warm. Therefore, you need to make sure you dress appropriately. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes the time pass very slowly! At some of the meets, the parents are allowed to sit with the swimmers at the blanket area. If you don't think that a gym floor is comfortable, feel free to bring folding chairs to sit on. You may also want to bring something for you to do between races.

MEET REGISTRATION

Meet information will be available on the HEAT website (www.hudsonheat.com).

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

HEAT has a reputation throughout northeast Ohio and of hosting swim meets of the highest caliber. HEAT typically hosts three large swim meets each year at the University of Akron's Ocasek Natatorium or Kent Roosevelt High School. It takes over 100 volunteers to run each session of every meet we host. The participation of our parents as volunteers guarantees a successful, well-run meet. We also host a Swim-A-Thon, social events for the swimmers, and an awards banquet in the spring.

The HEAT Parent Council will determine the number of volunteers needed for each HEAT-sponsored event and communicate these needs to the parents. Typically, each family will donate four hours of time to each swim meet hosted by HEAT.

HEAT SWIMMER AWARDS

Swimmers are recognized for their swimming and academic achievements at spring Awards Ceremony.

Super Swimmer The HEAT Super Swimmer Awards are also given at this banquet. Super Swimmer requirements are different for each age group and a Super Swimmer is someone who successfully meets all of the requirements during the season.

Report Card Awards HEAT encourages our athletes to also be good students. Students who achieve As or Bs, or the equivalent, will earn the HEAT Report Card Award.

Coaches Awards Each year the coaches choose swimmers in each developmental group who display outstanding sportsmanship, dedication, effort, and enthusiasm for the sport of swimming.

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS...YOUR ATHLETE NEEDS YOU

To have a successful program there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress your youngster makes depends to a great extent on this triangular relationship. It is with this in mind that we ask you to consider this section as you join HEAT and reacquaint yourself with this section if you are a returning HEAT parent.

We want your swimmer to relate to his or her coach as soon as possible concerning swimming matters. This relationship between coach and swimmer produces best results. When parents interfere with opinions as to how the swimmer should swim or train, it causes considerable, and oftentimes insurmountable, confusion as to whom the swimmer should listen to. If you have a problem, concern, or complaint, please contact the coach.

Best kind of parent: The coach's job is to motivate and constructively criticize the swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to make the child work harder in practice, which in turn gives him/her the confidence to perform well in competition.

Ten and Unders: Ten and Unders are the most inconsistent swimmers and this can be frustrating for parents, coaches, and the swimmer alike! Parents and coaches must be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport. When a young swimmer first joins HEAT, there may be a brief period in which he/she appears to slow down. This is a result of the added concentration on stroke technique, but this will soon lead to much faster swims for the individual.

Not every time: Even the very best swimmer will have meets where they do not do their best times. These "plateaus" are a normal part of swimming. Over the course of a season times should improve. Please be supportive of these "poor" meets. The older swimmers may have only two or three meets a year for which they will be rested and tapered.

Please make every effort to have your swimmers at practice on time. Realize that your child is working hard and give all the support you can. Encourage good diet and sleeping habits. They will serve your children well. The greatest contribution you can make to your swimmer's progress is to be a loving, supportive parent.

HEAT PARENT COUNCIL

The administrative functions of HEAT are performed by the HEAT Parent Council. The Parent Council coordinates meets hosted by HEAT, extracurricular activities for the team, registration, volunteer recruitment, and publicity. For a list of the current members and their contact information, please see the list located in the back of this handbook.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

TEAM UNIFORM

Each year the HEAT coaching staff will select a team uniform. Swimmers are expected to wear the current official HEAT swimsuit. Throughout the season, other apparel (warm-ups, sweatshirts, etc.) will also be sold. Please put your swimmer's name on his/her suit, cap, t-shirts, etc.

COMPETITIVE STROKES

The four competitive strokes are (1) freestyle, (2) backstroke, (3) breaststroke, and (4) butterfly. Events are held in all of the competitive strokes at varying distances depending on the age-group of the swimmer. In addition, there is a combination of the strokes swum by one swimmer called the individual medley. Other swimming events include relays, which are a group of four swimmers who either all swim freestyle (freestyle relay) or each swim one of the competitive strokes in the order of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle (medley relay).

SWIM SEASONS

The swim year is divided into two seasons. The winter, or "short course", season runs from mid-September to mid-March. The meets are held in a 25-yard pool. The summer, or "long course", season runs from early April to mid-August. Meets are generally held outside in 50 meter pools (Olympic size).

TYPES OR LEVELS OF SWIM MEETS

Dual Meets. This type of meet is when two teams compete only against each other. These meets help promote team unity, but usually limit the number of events a swimmer may enter.

Developmental Meets. These meets generally do not have any qualification time standards. Most of the time these meets offer each one of the competitive strokes in the two distances offered for each group. Each swimmer is usually allowed to enter from 3-5 events per day.

Qualification Meets. These meets have some type of qualification time standard(s) that a swimmer must meet in order to enter the meet.

Silver, Bronze Championships. At the end of the end of each short course (winter) and long course (summer) season, there are championships based upon qualifying times. HEAT hosts the Bronze Championships at the end of the short course season.

State Championships. At the end of each short course (winter) and long course (summer) season, there is a state championship meet. The state swimming association sets the qualifying time standards for these championship meets. Generally, the standards fall between the national "A" and "AA" time standards. There are two championships held each season: the Age Group Championship for swimmers 14-Under and the Senior Championship open to any swimmer in the state who has met the qualifying standards regardless of age.

VERY BASIC SWIMMING RULES

Starts

The swimmers are not allowed a false start. If they jump the start and the starter thinks they are trying to get an advantage (whether intentional or not - it does not matter), they may be taken out of the race.

Turns and finishes

- Freestyle: feet have to touch the wall
- Backstroke: swimmers have to be on their back when they touch the wall. After he/she touches, he/she can then turn around, but he/she must push off on their back. At the finish a swimmer must finish on his/her back. A swimmer may not roll over and grab the wall until they have first touched it.

- Breaststroke and Butterfly: swimmers have to touch with both hands at the same time; swimmer may not freestyle kick off the wall in either breaststroke or butterfly; when swimming butterfly, both arms must move at the same time.

OUT OF TOWN MEETS

Occasionally, HEAT will plan to attend an out-of-town meet. Trips to meets in other cities become an important aspect of a swimmer's career while advancing through the age group ranks. Special information will be provided via email and/or on the website as needed.

DIRECTIONS TO OCASEK NATATORIUM AT UNIVERSITY OF AKRON

From Hudson, take Route 8 south towards Akron. Take the Carroll Street/Exchange Street/Buchtel Avenue exit. Merge onto Goodkirk Road and make a right onto Carroll Street. Please be sure to obey all posted parking regulations. There will be a parking pass available for all HEAT hosted swim meets. Depending on traffic, it should take about 20-25 minutes to get here from Hudson.