

PUMA AQUATIC TEAM HANDBOOK



WWW.PUMASWIM.ORG
805- 709-SWIM (7946)



WHAT IS THE PUMA AQUATIC TEAM?

Aloha, and welcome to the Puma Aquatic Team! It is our goal for you to have a positive and fun experience with us in and out of the pool! Puma is a year round swim club that offers a unique and healthy swimming experience to the youth of our community. Our age group program is designed with emphasis on stroke technique, fitness and goal setting. The basic requirement to join Puma is to be able to swim one length of the pool (25 meters) freestyle and one length of the pool backstroke.

Puma leases the Kennedy Club Fitness pool facilities in San Luis Obispo, Atascadero, and Paso Robles as well as from the Lucia Mar Unified School District for Arroyo Grande High School and Nipomo High School. Puma operates on an independent budget supported by the non-profit group, Puma Boosters Club Inc (PBCI). Puma is affiliated with United States Swimming and is governed by all rules and regulations thereof. Our purpose is to provide a fun, safe, challenging and rewarding program that will foster self confidence and growth as an individual.

WHAT IS USA SWIMMING ALL ABOUT?

There are hundreds of USA swim teams throughout the United States and each team is assigned a specific section to compete within. We are part of the “Coastal Section” which is managed by the sanction of “Southern California Swimming.” Most of the meets that we compete in are with teams assigned within our own Coastal Section. There are 4 swim clubs in our immediate area which include the Santa Maria Swim Club, SLO Seahawks, North County Aquatics, and Puma Aquatic Team. We also will travel on occasion to meets hosted by the Santa Barbara Swim Club and the Buena Ventura Swim Club. We generally schedule 2 meets a month to attend and host 3 swim meets a year at Arroyo Grande HS. We also offer a novice meet program that we host for our own team at all of our locations.

COACHING PHILOSOPHY: Head Coach Jud Clark

Coaching is the greatest job in the world! I am able to work with swimmers of all ages and skill levels on a daily basis! I look forward to the challenges and happiness that each day of coaching brings. It is my mission to offer kids an environment in which they can become intrinsically motivated to improve as a swimmer but more importantly grow as an individual. I do not judge my success as a coach on how many championship swimmers I have developed, but on how many “first class” kids I have developed. I love swimming because it offers so much more than competition. It takes dedication, discipline, determination, and the desire to become a successful swimmer. These are the same skills necessary to become successful in life.

I stress the importance of goal setting so that my swimmers have a way to challenge themselves in a positive manner to achieve a desired result. If I have a swimmer that has the goal of becoming a national swimmer, I have the ability to coach and prepare the athlete towards that goal. However, it is up to the individual to do the work to get there. In most cases a swimmers result in a meet is a direct reflection of how the swimmer trains in practice. I have my Junior and Senior level swimmers keep a swim journal so that they can have a tangible reminder of the work that they have put into swimming. I believe this leads to a more goal oriented swimmer that tends to work harder than the swimmer that doesn't see the “light at the end of the tunnel.” I am just as happy seeing a beginning swimmer finish their first 25 yard butterfly as I am watching a championship swimmer get a personal best time in the 200 butterfly. Little goals that can be achieved throughout a swim season add up to become quite an accomplishment by the end of the



year! In swimming and in life, there are no shortcuts to success. I am grateful to take part in all of the triumphs and challenges that swimmers face on a daily basis.

SWIMMER EXPECTATIONS

The Puma Aquatic Team offers 2 novice and 4 advanced swimming groups year round. We also offer a seasonal High School program for athletes during the school year. All swimmers are placed within the group that best matches their ability. Below you will find the basic expectations from each of the 6 swimming groups. Please keep in mind that these expectations are designed so that the swimmer will get the most out of their swimming experience. I am fully aware of the many activities that kids are involved in today and will work out specific schedules for those swimmers who may have conflicts with some of expectations listed below. The bottom line is that you are always welcome at Puma!

Bronze: Swimmers may swim up to 5 times per week and are encouraged to attend at least 2. You may participate in any swim meet available only if you and your coach feel you are ready. Equipment: goggles, suit, flippers and a smile!

Silver: Swimmers can choose up to 5 practice times per week and are encouraged to attend at least 2. Swimmers at this stage are ready to start competing in at least one swim meet per month with approval from their coach. Equipment: goggles, suit, flippers, and a smile!

Gold: Swimmers can practice 5 days a week and are encouraged to attend 3. Swimmers continue to work on the basics of race technique and goal setting. Attendance at swim meets is encouraged with the Coach's approval. Equipment: goggles, suit, flippers, a happy attitude, and introduction to the swim snorkel and swim journal.

Platinum: Swimmers can practice up to 6 days per week and are encouraged to attend 4. The focus is on additional race strategies, goal setting, and dry land training to aid in preparation for the Jr. Group. Equipment: goggles, suit, flippers, swim journal, snorkels, and be prepared to have FUN!

Junior: Swimmers can practice 6 days a week and are encouraged to attend 4. More challenging drills along with refined racing skills, goal setting, mental imagery and additional aerobic conditioning are the focus for the Junior group. Swimmers are encouraged to participate in the majority of the team meets throughout the swim season. Equipment: goggles, suit, flippers, swim journal, snorkels, a big happy grin, and hand paddles optional (primarily for drill work).

Senior: Swimmers can practice up to 8 times a week and are encouraged to attend 5. Swimmers meet with their coaches 1 on 1 each season to discuss goals & swimming progress. Swimmers will continue to fine tune their strokes, work on race strategies, mental imagery, and goal setting. Senior level swimmers are encouraged to participate in the majority of swim meets on our schedule.

National and Jr. National: Swimmers who achieve National or Jr. National time standards will be offered anywhere from 9-11 sessions per week. A meet schedule will be developed to optimize training for the Speedo Grand Prix Series meets and the National championships.



***High School:** Swimmers are encouraged to attend 3 practice times a week (based on the Senior swim schedule) and take part in specified meets. The HS group is only offered when school is in session. It is designed for the athlete who is preparing for a HS swim season or for the athlete involved in other sports during the school year. Swimmers will be placed with their appropriate group if swimming in the summer if they chose to swim year round.

To aid in planning with swimmers goals, I recommend purchasing a Southern California Swim Guide. These guides are a valuable tool for all levels of swimmers. You will find time standards for your swimmers age group and will be able to see a full swim meet calendar for an entire year. You will find all of the rules and regulations as well as contact information for all Southern California Swim clubs. Ask your Coach if you're interested in a swim guide. You can also complete your season goals and share them with your coach by using our online goal setting program at www.pumaswim.org.

SWIM CLUB EXPECTATIONS

- 1) Schedule to arrive 10-15 minutes prior to the start of practice so that you can stretch and get ready with your teammates for practice. Parents, please make sure that there is a supervisor or Coach on deck before leaving your kids at the pool.
- 2) Bring all necessary swimming attire: Swim suits, fins/flippers, towel, at least 2 pairs of goggles, water/Gatorade, and a great attitude.
- 3) A positive attitude towards all swim team members, coaches, parents, competitors and officials is expected. Negative behavior towards any of the above will lead to the following **disciplinary actions:**
 1. Head Coach and/or Head Age Group Coach will talk with the swimmer about the situation and what can be done to make a positive change.
 2. A second incident will result in a meeting with both the swimmer and parent. A two week non-refundable suspension may be issued at this time. Please note if any incident is damaging to the team or threatens the safety of those around, immediate removal from the team will be the result.
 3. Any additional incidents that are negative to the team or create an unsafe environment will result in removal from the Puma Aquatic Team.
- 4) All swimmers are expected to help with the clean up after practice (kick boards, flippers, etc)
- 5) Parents are encouraged to watch their swimmers practice but are asked to watch from the bleachers or designated sitting area. This includes all non-swim team members (family and friends).
- 6) Non-swimming family members must be accounted for by their parents at ALL times. Please do not allow your kids to wander onto the pool deck alone.
- 7) Any questions that a parent may have for their child's coach can be addressed either before practice begins or at the conclusion of the workout.
- 8) Parents are expected to treat all team members: Coaches, swimmers, parents, competitors, and officials with the utmost respect. Puma will not tolerate negative or damaging behavior. Failure to comply with the above will lead to the following **disciplinary actions:**
 1. Head Coach and/or Head Age Group Coach will talk with parent about the situation and what can be done to make a positive change. If the incident is



- damaging to the team or creates an unsafe environment, the family will be asked to leave the team permanently.
2. A second incident will result in a 2-week non-refundable suspension period.
 3. Any additional incidents will result in permanent removal from the Puma Aquatic Team.
- 9) Parents are required to read the Team Handbook and USA Swimmings' "Swim Parent Survival Guide" and agree to abide by all expectations before your child joins the team.
 - 10) Parents are asked to arrive 15 minutes prior to the ending of the scheduled practice time to pick up your swimmers. Swimmers please wait for your rides within the pool area or lobby (not the parking lot).

POOL RULES

- 1) Swimmers may not enter the water unsupervised. Please wait for your Coach to give you permission to enter the water.
- 2) No running or rough play on the deck or in the water.
- 3) Absolutely no swimming under the bulk head or under the swim covers.
- 4) No food on the pool deck.
- 5) Please do not sit on the pool cover reels as you can easily become injured.
- 6) The diving boards are off limits for our swim program.
- 7) Kennedy Club members are permitted to use the Hot Tub.
- 8) The use of any inappropriate language or behavior will not be tolerated and will lead to disciplinary action.
- 9) Please use the dressing rooms to change. Deck changing is not permitted.

SWIM MEET ENTRY PROCEDURES

Puma generally participates in two swim meets a month. To enter a meet, you must fill out the appropriate Puma entry form that will be available 3-4 weeks prior to the date of the meet. You will also be able to specify which events are your child prefers to swim or if you can only attend one day of the meet etc. All registered swimmers will receive an e-mail about upcoming meets and the deadline to enter. Puma also will make available a swim meet calendar and entry deadlines via the web at www.pumaswim.org. Once the deadline to enter has passed, Puma electronically enters all verified swimmers into the meet and sends the appropriate fees. Puma will post a printout of the meet entries at all pool locations for your convenience. It is your responsibility to write a check to "PUMA" for your meet expenses with your meet entry. If payment is not received, then you will not be permitted to swim in the meet or future practices until fees are paid. Puma will not take responsibility for swim meet entry verifications received after the team entry deadline.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT A SWIM MEET

Swimmers are expected to be at the meet at least 15 minutes prior to the listed warm up time to help set up the PUMA tent, check in, and stretch. Swimmers need to wear team attire including racing suits and caps. We want to represent PUMA in a first class manner so



it is important to wear the PUMA colors and take pride in our team. It is expected that all swim team members stay with the team. This means that while the swim meet is going on, you are supporting and cheering for your team mates and sitting with them under the PUMA tent.

It is the swimmers responsibility to check the “posting” to see what heat and lane they are swimming in. Your coach will help you find the posting while you are at the meet. After the swimmer finds out their heat and lane for their event, they must check in with their coach to give them the information and receive any pre-race strategies. If you miss your event, you are typically disqualified from your next event as well. It’s a good idea to listen to the meet announcer to find out what event number and heat they are on. When in doubt, ask your coach or another swimmer with more meet experience.

Parents must be prepared to help “time” depending on how many “timing chairs” we are assigned by the host of the meet. How many chairs we have to fill depends solely on the number of entries we have in the meet. All parents are expected to help time. This means that you may need to time even if your child is finished for the day. Typically, one of the parents will start a “timing sheet” with blocks of timing intervals ranging from 30 minutes to an hour. You can sign up for a block of time under the PUMA tent. It may sound like work but actually being able to time is having the opportunity to have the best seat in the house! You’ll still have the opportunity to watch your child swim. Also, parents are advised to bring healthy snacks to the meet along with sun block, plenty of fluids, and weather appropriate clothing for your little swimmers. Be supportive of your child and every PUMA that takes to the starting block. We want to create a positive and safe environment for our children to succeed so please bring only your smiles and compliments to all meets and practices.

HOSTING A MEET

PUMA typically hosts 3 swim meets a year. Puma has a meet director who plans and maps out the necessary jobs that need to be filled to make each swim meet run smoothly. Look for updates at the pool or check your e-mail for available positions for these meets. All Puma swimmers that participate in meets that we host are responsible to have a least one parent, relative, or friend volunteer to ensure we run a smooth meet. Since we are the hosts of these meets, I would like it if we could have 100% participation from our swim team. We need swimmers to compete and volunteers to make the meet happen. To give you an idea of some of the jobs to run a meet, here is an abbreviated list of jobs: Meet announcer, awards, concessions, hospitality, timers, runners, check in attendants, meet set up, meet break down, timing system, computer input etc. You can use our online volunteer portal to sign up for positions for meets that we host.

We also have fun Novice meets that we will offer to our team at a variety of our sites. These meets are not “official” but offer a fun and non-threatening environment for swimmers that are interested in starting to compete. Novice meets are intra-squad and are very low key and fun. You will receive additional information and a schedule of upcoming meets by e-mail.

GROUP MOVE UPS

It is within the best interest of the swimmer to be swimming in the appropriate skill level for that child. There is no set date that group move ups take place but rather when the time is appropriate for the swimmers. Our coaching staff will take into consideration the



following criteria: age, maturity level, skill level, physiological development, and attitude. Coaches will talk with both the parents and the swimmers about a possible group move up and the opportunity to start transitioning into the next group. For example, when a silver swimmer is ready to make the move to the Gold group, we have the swimmer swim with the silver group for the first hour and then spend the additional 15 minutes with the Gold group. This will give the swimmer a gradual transition into the next group. Usually this transition period lasts a month and then the swimmer is ready to make the transition to Gold full time the following month.

INSURANCE/ USA SWIMMING MEMBERSHIP

All swimmers participating with a USA swim club are required to have the appropriate insurance. If you do not have the insurance, you will not be eligible to swim in meets or in practice. Before you can turn in your insurance form, you must have the Head Coach verify a government issued birth certificate or passport. Your coach will then sign the form and give it back to you to send to “Southern California Swimming” with the appropriate fees attached. Once you have turned in your insurance information, you will receive an insurance card that will have your child’s LSC # or Swimmer identification #. On certain occasions you may need this number and if for some reason you lose it, this is how you can figure out what your swimmers LSC # is.

Example Name: Sally May Schwimmer, DOB: 04/12/1987

Example LSC # 041287SALMSCHW

Here is the formula:

mm/dd/yy + 1st 3 letters of 1st name + 1st letter middle initial + 1st 4 letters of last name.

MONTHLY DUES

Payment for swimming is due the first of the month and will be considered delinquent after the 8th. A \$10 late fee will then be billed to you. Please make your checks payable to the “Puma Aquatic Team” and give to any of the PUMA coaches or send to the following address:

PUMA
PO BOX 3117
SLO, CA 93403

Please note that if your child swims one day in a calendar month, you are responsible for full payment of that month. There are no “discounted months” based on holidays or scheduled breaks.

SWIMMER DISCOUNTS

- 1 swimmer: full price
- 2 swimmers: \$10 discount
- 3 swimmers: \$15 discount
- 4 swimmers: \$20 discount
- Receive a 10% discount if you pay for 6 months or 15% if you pay for a full year.



WHAT IS THE PUMA BOOSTER CLUB?

The Puma Booster Club Inc. (PBCI) is a non-profit organization founded solely for the purpose of supporting the PUMA Aquatic Team and all of the functions that are needed to operate the swim club. The PBCI Board of Directors is made up of both volunteers and parents associated with the swim club. The mission of PBCI is to follow the Head Coach's vision for making the kids of the Puma Aquatic Team the number one priority. Fundraising efforts make it possible for the swim team to rent pool space, pay for lifeguards, travel to away meets, purchase dry land equipment, tents, office supplies, pay phone bills, hire assistant coaches, and to pay for all pool related fees for meets that we host.

As the Head Coach for PUMA, I would like to see at least one parent representative from each swim group on the Board of Directors. By doing this, I feel that our entire team is well spoken for and that any and all concerns can be addressed. PBCI was designed to help the swim team not to run it. PBCI meetings are open to anyone who wants to attend so please check your e-mail, or the puma website, www.pumaswim.org, for the date and time of the next PBCI meeting. Your suggestions and help are encouraged! Meetings run 1-2 hours at least once a month. Current positions on the Board are: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Fundraising Chair, and Special Activities Coordinator. Talk to your Head Coach if you are interested in serving on the Board.

FUNDRAISING EXPECTATIONS

Each family is expected to participate in at least one fundraising activity per quarter. If you are a seasonal swimmer that only swims in the summer, it is expected that you partake in the summer fundraiser. PBCI will supply the team a list of the different fundraisers throughout the year. If you are a year round swimmer, you are expected to participate in 4 fundraisers throughout the year, 1 for each quarter.

Volunteering for a job at one of the meets that we host will count as one of your fundraisers for that quarter. If you absolutely do not want to participate in our fundraisers, you can opt out by writing PBCI a check for \$200.00 per quarter.

Common Fundraisers:

1. The PUMA Swim Challenge: mandatory participation
2. Swim meets that we host: mandatory participation
3. Basket raffles
4. Fair Ticket sales
5. Car washes
6. Garage Sales
7. Raffles

SEASONAL SWIMMERS AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

When joining the PUMA Aquatic Team please let your Head Coach know your intentions for swimming. We take great pride in servicing both year round and seasonal swimmers. Just let us know what you are planning on and we can accommodate your needs. If you are heading out of town on a big trip or just need some time off, please let your Coach



know 30 days prior to your absence. This will help your coaching staff plan for upcoming meets and scheduled PUMA activities.

COMMUNICATIONS

Our primary method of communication is by e-mail. If you do not have access to a computer, a copy of all e-mails sent to the team will be available at the pool. A team newsletter will also be distributed on quarterly schedule. You can also check out our awesome website www.pumaswim.org for all program information. If you need to reach the Head Coach by phone, the number is 709-7946. Puma's e-mail is judclark@yahoo.com

SWIMMER INCENTIVES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the course of the year PUMA offers a variety of fun events for all of the swimmers to participate in. Look for information from our Activities Coordinator for all future events. Swimmers will receive special awards for a number of programs that run throughout different times of the year. Our "Cool Cats" program offers a special prize to all swimmers that attend 80% of all scheduled workouts from December-February. Our top fundraisers for the Puma Swim Challenge also receive some cool gifts as well!

Each year the swimmers on our Senior Team have the opportunity to fundraise for a special travel meet. Possible destinations for future Senior travel meets include Las Vegas, Oregon, Arizona, Colorado, San Diego, San Francisco, or Hawaii! The bottom line is that we have a great time on the Puma Aquatic Team!

PUMA SWIM BREAKS

Puma takes 1 scheduled break during the year. Puma plans on taking the last week of August and the first week of September off for two reasons. First of all, we would like our swimmers to get their new school schedules dialed in and second of all, Puma sends coaches to a coaching clinic the first week in September. Please check the website or your e-mails for all updated information regarding our scheduled break. PUMA may offer a special rate for breaks that aren't planned for.

APPARELL

Puma offers various times throughout the year to order team apparel which includes t-shirts, sweatshirts, and beanies. You can order team swim suits, parkas, and bags anytime from our website at www.pumaswim.org. Look under the heading, "Puma Gear" to find more information on how to order.

NUTRITION

Nutrition plays a huge role in helping a swimmer "recover" from their workouts. Swimmer's lose a lot of fluid during a regular swim workout and can burn well over 1,000 calories! It is important that swimmers hydrate themselves frequently throughout the day with water and supplement with something like Gatorade as need be. As a rule of thumb, if you feel thirsty, then you are probably dehydrated. I recommend finding an alternative drink other than soda. When choosing a drink, find one that is free of "high fructose corn syrup,"



low in sugar, and minimal in calories. Dehydration can be attributed to the onset of cramps so make sure you bring plenty of healthy fluids to practice.

Making good choices when it comes to food is also important. You must have a balanced diet that includes complex carbohydrates, and protein. Cereal such as Kashi Go Lean Crunch or Total Raisin Bran are great breakfast choices along with a variety of fresh fruits. If it's a cold morning, Green Tea will warm the soul and provide your body with some excellent antioxidants. Turkey sandwiches, spinach salads, chicken, fresh fish, tofu and lean red meat are all good choices for lunch and dinner. Veggies such as broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots are incredible antioxidants for your body and should be consumed on a regular basis. It's a good idea to "fuel" your body many times throughout the day with healthy small snacks. Keep the tank "full" so your body and mind can perform with high energy for the entire day. You'll also have that extra energy for a great swim practice in the afternoon.

It is a good idea to stay away from food that have "partially hydrogenated oils" in it as the FDA has stated that no amount is good for you. Items that may have partially hydrogenated oils may include the following; bread, potato chips, candy, granola bars, cereals etc. If you look hard, you will be able to find that most stores offer an alternative brand that is made without partially hydrogenated oils. Trader Joe's and New Frontiers offer healthy foods but it is still advised to read all labels before you buy anything. Here's what I have found to be healthy snacks for swimmers: Cliff Bars, fruit leathers, banana chips, walnuts, almonds, raisins, veggie bootie, raw veggies, and of course fruit.

PUMA AQUATIC TEAM CHEER

"Mahee Mahi Mahoe"

Coach: "Mahee Mahi Mahoe"

Team (repeats after coach): "Mahee Mahi Mahoe"

Coach: "Romp stomp poopernickel"

Team: "Romp stomp poopernickel"

Coach: "Nini cat nini cat"

Team: "Nini cat nini cat"

Coach: "Soaked out rat"

Team: "Soaked out rat"

Coach: "Hobba gobba ricker racker"

Team: "Hobba gobba ricker racker"

Coach: "Hobba gobba firecracker"

Team: "Hobba gobba firecracker"

Coach: "Hobba gobba razoo"

Team: "Hobba gobba razoo"

Coach: "Johnny plays the bazoo"

Team: "Johnny plays the bazoo"

EVERYONE:

"Shish Sham boo, shish sham boo"

"Puma Rocks Puma Rocks Roar Roar Roar!"



This cheer is a summer swim team cheer that I grew up with in Colorado. I think it is the coolest swim cheer ever! It was written by my English teacher Louise Mann when her kids were swimming. I'm guessing the cheer has been around since the 1960's!

