

Evergreen Hurricanes

Meet Philosophy

Swimming can place huge demands on families and athletes who choose to make the most of what our sport has to offer. Those demands often pay off many times over and in life changing ways for our athletes (valuable life lessons and habits, lasting relationships, college opportunities, etc.). While many families jump right in, most have conflicting interests and priorities.

In determining practice and meet requirements and recommendations our goal is twofold:

1. To identify what is required of swimmers at any given stage to retain the opportunity to reach their ultimate potential as athletes, to be clear and honest to families about it, and to provide a genuine path toward ultimate potential for those to choose it.
2. To be careful not to ask for commitments superfluous to goal number 1. For the serious athlete, going above and beyond is to be encouraged. Every family, however, has a limit to what they can and should put into swimming. We want to allocate each family's capacity for swimming as efficiently as possible towards the long term development of the athlete.

These goals have a few implications for our meet philosophy:

- General competition skills are critical for an elite swimmer, but they can be developed at any age and in much less time than the basic skills and training habits that are also necessary to get to that level. Early in a swimmer's career, competition is less important than consistent and reliable attendance and effort in practice. If you are allocating limited family resources, particularly in Categories 1-3, allocate them towards practice.
- Championship competition is critical for the establishment of a truly supportive and uplifting team environment. A championship meet where a critical mass of athletes can come together to race hard *with one another* and *for one another* will be a powerful motivating factor for future challenges in training and development. Familiarizing an entire team with this dynamic is crucial to each athlete's prospects for success.

In order to balance these priorities, we put all of our meets into three categories:

Discretionary, Team, & Championship.

Discretionary Meets will make up most to all of our early to mid-season meet schedule. We encourage all eligible athletes to attend. Attendance is absolutely a worthwhile and positive developmental experience. For many athletes, these meets are also a lot of fun and a substantial reason

why they like to swim (which is important to consider). However, if we are weighing critical activities for an athlete's development against a family's limited time resources, **these meets *do not need to be prioritized***.

Team Meets will usually take place one or two times per Winter, Spring, and Summer, typically toward the end of each season. The objective of these meets is team spirit, team building, and racing together as one. We want to bring as many athletes as possible from all categories to team meets. We hope to make these meets some of the most exciting we attend and expect some of our best results. **We ask that all Hurricanes mark their calendars and prioritize these meets for attendance.** For athletes who do not qualify for any of the meets in the next category, these meets will also serve as "Championship Meets".

Championship Meets include the Age Group State Championships, Zones, Senior Zones, Sectionals, Futures, Junior Nationals, Nationals, and Olympic Trials. All of these meets are restricted to swimmers meeting qualifying standards. Qualifying for any of these meets is a worthy accomplishment and an exciting milestone in a swimming career. Outside of unique circumstances, **we expect all qualifiers to attend these meets.**

Notes on our 2022-2023 Meet Schedule:

We attend many of our meets on an invitation basis. Because we are technically a new team this year, we do not necessarily get priority invitations. We will be working on securing this schedule in the coming weeks and expect it to work out the way we want, but there is the possibility that it could change.

We're moving away from the practice of "negative confirmation" we used in the past (we entered all eligible athletes in each meet unless they told us otherwise). From now on, we will only enter swimmers in meets who have confirmed their intention to attend by a published deadline through our calendar on TeamUnify. We will have this system up and running by registration in September and we'll be working to get everyone acquainted with this function (among others).

GO HURRICANES!