

# **Preteam Information And Swimmer Agreement**

## **Contents**

- I. Preteam 101
  - a. What is it?
  - b. Whos it for?
- II. Benefits of joining a preteam.
  - a. Individual benefits
  - b. Social benefits
- III. Preteam objectives.
  - a. Swimmer objectives
  - b. Team objectives
- IV. Preteam practice schedules and Swimming gear and suit requirements
  - a. Preteam practice schedule
  - b. Swimming gear and suit requirements
- V. Preteam Skill building and lesson plans.
  - a. Technique
  - b. Endurance
  - c. Training techniques
  - d. Preparation for future swim team participation
- VI. Competitive Swimming
  - a. Competitive swimming 101
  - b. High School Teams
  - c. Club Teams
  - d. Understanding the similarities and differences.
- VII. Lessons about life that you learn from swimming that make us better people.
- VIII. Links to information on competitive swimming

# Preteam 101

## I. Preteam -what and who:

- A. Ocswim4u Preteam is a group class that is run in the same manner and uses the same drills, vocabulary, racing rules, and coaching strategies as a high school or club team. Practices are held 3 times a week and are an hour long. Unlike the more formal team practices however, there is a focus on stroke technique in a more personalized way that other teams are unable to do. The coach is often in the pool to demonstrate the drills and to teach the proper techniques vs. giving drills and hoping the swimmer can figure it out. During the practice each swimmer is evaluated and given feedback about what and where they need the most correction. The course teaches proper turns, starts, and rules every swimmer who competes needs to know. It at the same time works on endurance, race strategies, strength building, stamina, and cardio.
- B. Ocswim4u Preteam is a class created for swimmers who are interested in competitive swimming. It is also a great fit for swimmers who are currently on a competitive team and need more individual attention to their technique or more familiarity with the swimming verbiage, training routine, rules of the sport, or want to improve race results. A strong foundation in body position, proper freestyle technique, a love for the sport, and willingness to try are all required before being invited to join.

## II. Benefits of joining Preteam:

- A. Swimmers who join a preteam are better equipped with the tools to join a competitive team and are less likely to be intimidated or feel discouraged by the intensity of a formal team. They are given the opportunity to improve their technique and also train with a moderate level of “yardage” that is incorporated into each practice. They are pushed to improve their swimming ability but not overwhelmed by the level of physical activity required of higher level swim teams. They are able to understand a written workout and the unique terms swim coaches often use while coaching. They learn lane etiquette, the different pieces of equipment and how

to use them in practice, the do's and don'ts of racing, the name of many drills and how to execute the drills correctly. They are also able to continue to build their love for the water and of the sport by participating in games and given time to enjoy various water activities that are not allowed at practice on a traditional competitive team.

- B. As a team the group learns about healthy competition and the rewards of hard work. They learn to encourage and support each other. They are motivated by the other swimmers and sometimes become the motivator to others. They are able to bond as teammates and there are regular activities planned intended to give the swimmers time to socialize and play. They thrive as a group and without each other would not likely enjoy the repetitive workouts and physical challenges that define what it means to be a swimmer. It is the team aspect of the sport that brings the most joy but it is the individuals performance and effort that are the biggest factors in their success as a swimmer and competitor.

### III. Preteam Objectives and goals:

- A. To learn all four competitive strokes; Butterfly, Breaststroke, Freestyle, and Backstroke..
  - 1. To use correct technique
  - 2. To execute proper turns for each stroke; flip turns, backstroke turns, two hand touches, and the correct streamline for each stroke off the wall.
  - 3. Starts; Racing starts off the blocks, relay starts, and backstroke starts.
  - 4. Dq's; what is considered a dq and how to avoid them
  - 5. The terminology heard on a pool deck during practice
  - 6. How to read and interpret a written workout
  - 7. How to increase tempo, create racing tempos, split times, racing strategies, stroke and kick counts, and breathing patterns that best fit each event.
  - 8. How to have a winning attitude and good sportsmanship
  - 9. Confidence and humility as a champion!!!
- B. Team goals;
  - 1. Team spirit and a how to keep a positive attitude when things are tough.
  - 2. Humility and the ability to accept that not everything will go as we would like in life.

3. Confidence comes from proving to yourself you can and are .... Fill in the blank.
4. Tasks that are easily done and things that are effortlessly acquired are not often the things we value most.
5. That if you are consistent, disciplined, and work for something you will see results and you will be rewarded by your efforts.
6. To never give up, keep trying, ask questions, dont be afraid to fail when you are still learning, not trying is the only failure.
7. That each swimmer learns they are stronger than they think and more capable than they realize.
8. Skill is noteverything, talent is noteverything, hard work is noteverything, They all work together to create the best version of each individual!
9. That they are all proud of the swimmer they become,

#### IV. Preteam practice schedule and Swimming gear and suit requirements

- A. Practices are held 3 nights a week. Mon., Wed., and Fri. from 6-7 pm. It is recommended that swimmers attend all 3 days for the best results but you can choose to attend 1, or 2 times a week if that is what works best for your schedule. The practice is designed to have 45-50 min of training and technique work. The last 10 -15 min the swimmers socialize while playing fun games or participating in group activities.
- B. Swimming gear necessary for practice include; Hand paddles, buoy, short fin fins, and a kick board. Swim suits for females must be one piece suits that do not have beads, sequins, or other decorative items. Suits for males would be speedos, or swimming shorts (jammers) that are form fitting. No street clothes are permitted in the pool.

#### V. Preteam Skill building and lesson plans:

- A. Technique training is usually scheduled week by week. Alternating each of the four strokes, the starts, the turns, and racing strategies from week to week. Throughout the summer each of those topics is covered 3 times. An Example would be; Week 1: Freestyle... Week 2: Starts... Week 3: Backstroke... etc.
- B. Endurance training is continuous throughout the season. The yardage increases as the season progresses. There are times where the swimmer will feel discouraged or struggle with the amount of physical energy necessary to complete the workout but it is recommended that you encourage and express your admiration for them stepping up to the challenge vs. sympathizing with them. They

are achieving great things by pushing themselves and that is worthy of praise for facing the challenge and giving their best vs. sympathy for the pain they are enduring. There is a difference between the experience one being that they survived ( noone wants to be in constant survival mode) vs. the other being, they thrived...( thriving doesn't mean it is easy but that you are capable.) It is in my opinion and however you choose to look at it an opportunity to teach a healthy mindset for future challenges they will face in life.

- C. Training techniques on a competitive team can be determined by the swimmer's best event, the time of the season, and the coach's style. We cover several different phases of the training season from pre season "stay in shape" workouts, mid season "strength and conditioning", to later season "tethering" workouts. There is a specific type of workout designed for sprint swimmers , distance swimmers, and IM swimmers that are unique to each respective group. There is an opportunity to experience all of the different workout types in the pre team. There are also many variations in a coaching style that can affect how a swimmer acclimates and how the swimmer will perform. To better prepare swimmers there are basic coaching styles that are explained and used just for the experience. Those styles obviously can't be exactly replicated but there are distinct differences in a coaches approach that are very common. In swimming almost none of the coaches actually get in... they don't teach ... they "coach". There are also two extremely different attitudes towards coaching... "push them as hard as you can because that's the only way they will get better" and then there is the opposite of that which is " They will learn when they are ready and they will push themselves if they want to get better." These are both correct in some ways. Finding a coach in the middle is your goal. I've worked with coaches that would belittle their swimmers thinking it was a form of motivation and I've seen coaches let swimmers sit on the wall the entire practice. Knowing your coaches style will help the pre teamers understand why and how to deal with different approaches..
- D. The ultimate goal is to give the swimmers a deeper love for swimming. The next and very important goal is obviously giving them the tools to succeed at the competitive level whether it is club or high school. To achieve this we discuss the rules of swim meets and run through mock meet races. We cover all the things a swimmer needs to know about racing and work on improving the swimmers event times. We run routine practices where we learn and practice the drills coaches use and talk in " swim " language while doing it.

## VI. Competitive Swimming

- A. Competitive swimming is an elite sport. It is harshly competitive and while swimming is considered the favorite sport for kids 14-16, participation and level of competition is often drastically different between school districts and even within the districts from school to

school. The reasons are more complicated than just skill and ability but that's a very different conversation.

Within the competitive swimming world there are two organizations that you will become familiar with as you progress on your journey. High school (HS) swimming competes up to the state level. Swimmers who compete at higher levels than state will do so in college. In California, all school related rules, regulations, competitions, and championships are under the supervision and organization of CIF or California Interscholastic Federation. College is regulated by NCAA, NAIA, and NJCAA. Outside of the HS competition is club swimming which is all regulated by USA Swimming. USA Swimming works in cooperation with and under the USOC United States Olympic Committee which works with FINA (Federation International De Natation under the IOC International Olympic Committee. There are many different subdivisions under these top authorities that i will discuss below.

So how do Swimming competitions work? Swim meets have events like 50 freestyle or 100 backstroke etc. The events are held in the same order for both HS and club Swimming competitions. There 6 ( sometimes 8) lanes with the fastest swimmers in the middle in lanes 3 and 4 while the higher times ( slower swimmers) will be placed in the lanes toward the outside. There are heats for each event and the swimmers compete individually against the other. Swimmers are awarded points for the team depending on what place they finish for each event and heat . Swimming competitions are almost always a team event however the swimmers compete individually except in relays. Points are added up to determine a winner but in both high school and club swimming individuals can advance on their own representing their team.

- B. One of the biggest distinctions between HS and club is that at a dual meet (HS A vs HS B) Each swimmer is only allowed to swim 4 events AND only 2 can be an individual event. A swimmer can swim 3 relays and 1 individual or 2 individual events and 2 relays or 1 relay etc...but they can not swim more than 2 individual events. Why is this important? If you consider the points system you can see the obvious advantage to having a strong swimmer swim 3 relays vr. 2 individual events assuming they can score first place in either but not both. The points are much higher for relays and therefore important to a teams overall score. A good coach is thought to have a balanced playing field of talent and can recognize the strengths of swimmers and train them for where they best fit vs. what the swimmer thinks they want to swim. Starting off with a great technique will obviously increase a swimmer's chance of being able to swim and train for the stroke they want but the best swimmers can swim when and whatever is needed for the team. There are eleven events per meet. One heat is held for each event; one for girls, one for boys, and usually a JV and Varsity for a total of forty four events. There are no

second heats in any event with the exception of multi-team championship meets.

The eleven events are:

200 Medley Relay  
200 Freestyle  
200 IM  
50 Freestyle  
100 Butterfly  
100 Freestyle  
500 Freestyle  
200 Free Relay  
100 Backstroke  
100 Breaststroke  
400 Free Relay

During the season most meets will be dual meets against another school. End of season playoffs are determined by teams submitting their meet results for the two meets in which they scored the most power points. Note that the order of each event above will go to a heat of JV Girls, JV Boys, V Girls, and then V Boys.

Here is how a meet is run and scored.

To start each event, swimmers are called to the starting position by the starter (usually a whistle) who visually checks that all swimmers are motionless. When all swimmers are set, the starting horn or gun is sounded to start the race. If the starter feels that one of the swimmers has moved, left early or achieved an unfair advantage, the guilty swimmer may be disqualified after the race for a false start. Should a swimmer inadvertently enter the water before the starting signal, they may be disqualified at the discretion of the officials. Scoring is for the team with points awarded by finish place in each event.

Point values are: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th  
Individual events scoring 6 4 3 2 1  
Relay events scoring 8 4 2 - -

In dual meets (two teams head-to-head) there are 14 points available for each of the three relays for a team total of 42 possible points. Each of the eight individual events has 16 points available for 128 points. The total meet has 170 points available. Ties do occur. Note that the only place to not score points individually is 6th so every swimmer's swim is important to the team score.

Missing your event is a guarantee of the team losing points. Scoring in multi-team events, such as the county championships, is much more complex.

First, there are multiple heats per event. Swimmers are seeded in advance by meeting qualifying times. Swimmers are placed in heats from highest qualifying time to lowest. The fastest swimmers

swimming last. The lowest event times determine the finish order. In multi-team meets the top twelve finishers receive points. The points system shown in the table below:

Individual Events	16	13	12	11	10	9	7	5	4	3	2	1
Relay Events	32	26	24	22	20	18	14	10	8	6	4	2

Each of the three relays is worth 93 points and each of the eight individual events is worth 186 points. The total meet has 1,767 points available. The team with the largest number of points is the winner.

Trophies are awarded to the top two girls teams and top two boys teams. Medals are awarded to the top six finishers in individual events and to all members of the top three relay teams.

You may also hear Power Points mentioned. Power Points are determined for each swimmer in each event based on their finish time (either yards or meters). The NJSIAA has charts of Power Points for boys and girls on the Swimming page of their web site. Power Points are tallied throughout the meet and are also tracked for individual swimmers for the season by the coaches. Power Points are one of the tie breaking criteria.

## Events

### FREESTYLE

In freestyle events, the competitor may swim any stroke, but the fastest is what is often called the crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the water surface and an alternating (up-and-down) flutter kick. On turns and finishes, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. Most swimmers do a flip turn.

### BACKSTROKE

Backstroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may turn onto the stomach and do a flip turn (they cannot glide into the wall and then turn). Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall at the turn. The swimmer must finish on the back.

### BREASTSTROKE

The breaststroke requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pushed forward from the breast. In the return of the arms, the hand cannot go past the waist. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously. One of the hardest parts of the breaststroke is the start. After the dive, while still underwater, the swimmer can (but doesn't have to) do one arm pull where the hands can go past the waist, one dolphin kick, and then another arm pull-with a breaststroke kick - to bring them to the surface.



## BUTTERFLY

Some consider the butterfly to be the most beautiful of the strokes. It features a simultaneous movement of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissor or breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish.

## INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY (I.M.)

The individual medley, commonly referred to as the I.M., features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle. The rules of each stroke apply to that leg of the IM.

## MEDLEY RELAY

In the medley relay, all four strokes are swum. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly, and the final swimmer anchors the relay with freestyle.

## FREESTYLE RELAY

The freestyle relay events consist of four swimmers, each swimming one quarter of the total distance of the event.

HS meets are held within a district or league during the swim season and are almost exclusively dual meets. The Yorba Linda, Anaheim Hills, Placentia and Orange high schools, with exception to Valencia, all belong in the century conference which is 3 leagues grouped together.

When swimmers qualify for CIF it is because they meet the time standards of their CIF Division in a particular event. Not all schools in the same league will be in the same CIF division. There are 4 divisions in CIFSS swimming with DIV 1 being the fastest swimmers.

Swimmers themselves are not placed in their own division based on their best times but are grouped with the designated division of their team. Each team is able to move up or down one division from one year to the next based on the past seasons performances.

CIF is divided into sections and in YL we are in the (CIFSS) Southern Section. CIF SS is one of the largest sections. When HS swimmers qualify for CIF it means they are invited to compete in CIF prelims of their designated division. Prelims can be up to 8 heats per event. From the prelims they determine who goes to the CIF SS finals. The first place finalist and the runner up as backup usually are invited to compete in CIF state championships. This is where the HS teams journey ends and most definitely if you are a CIF state champion you will likely be swimming in college and recruited for scholarships. If you're not an upperclassmen you will likely be recruited and join a club team until you graduate highschool.

CIF standard times are almost equivalent to National time standards in DIV 1.

<https://www.swimtopia.com/high-school-swim-experience/>

<https://www.pacswim.org/resources/faq>

- C. Club teams are much more complicated in their structure but follow the same basic format and rules as HS swimming competitions.

Club teams are designated by area. Orange County is part of the SOCAL USA Swimming. There are club teams in almost every city, some having as many as 3 (Irvine). The Teams themselves are divided by age groups. 5-8, 8-10, 10-11, 11-12, 12-14, 14- and up. Within the age groups are different levels. For example; one team may organize a swimming program as such ... Age group- Which is anyone from 5-13. In the Age Group are the bronze 5-10, silver 10-12, and gold groups 12-13. 14 and up are senior swimmers. They are then divided into groups of levels according to their performance. IE; bronze group 1, group 2... etc.

Here's where it gets complicated.. Each of those groups competes at a different level or time standard. Red, white, and blue are the labels used to group the swimmers into different time brackets for competition. Blue being the highest or fastest of the age group swimmers. Swimmers who have a blue standard time for a particular event at a meet can only swim that event at a "blue" meet in future meets, until they "age up" and then their times are subjected to the new time standards of that age group and put into the fitting group.

The meets are organized and held for swimmers from all the club teams unless it is invite only. They are according to your time in an attempt to make competition fair. So they blue and white meets, blue only meets, red and white meets etc. Red is anything above the white time standard. Sadly there are not many red meets held for the 11 and up group. This is likely because few swimmers join club teams past the age of 12. Sadly even fewer stay on and actually train long enough to catch up to the swimmers who started at a younger age.

Club swimmers can pick themselves or the coach can recommend which events to swim but the entry into an event is based on a swimmer's previous and best time for that event. Club swimmers can swim in as many as 6 individual events.

Swimmers in clubs have big meets that include zones, junior olympics, nationals, and the olympics. They are competing most often individually instead of as a team. In fact there are often swimmers who never attend a meet together but swim at practice together everyday. The sport does calculate team points but As they go through the qualifying ranks higher and higher it becomes less and less of a team sport and more of an individual sport.

The meets have 16 events in total and the point system is slightly different. These are the best of the best swimmers. Every swimmer invited to the Olympics goes through USA swimming. The chances are .2% of making it that high in the program but some

swimmers just love swimming they don't want to be the best of the best they only want to be THEIR BEST. That is true love of the sport!!

- D. The HS and club path to championship are similar but very different at the same time. The two do not cross but they are equally dependent on each other. Club swimmers during HS swimming season must swim club meets as unattached. Which means they do not earn points for their team at meets but they can compete to achieve time standards for the more competitive and higher ranking club meets. HS swimmers can still practice with their club team during the swim season at the high school coaches discretion. A qualifying Swim time or time standard is used for both HS CIF and club championship meets. Time standards are a minimum time a swimmer must achieve. Minimum meaning the highest time and anything lower being better. They are designed to set a benchmark for the elite athletes.

High School competition pools are short course pools, almost all being 25 yards but a few are 25 meters. Interesting fact... The USA is the only country that swims in yards. It was adapted during the industrial revolution and has since been the measuring system used here in the US while the rest of the world uses the metric system. The competitions that cross over to the international level are all done in 50 meter pools which in the states we call a long course pool. In club swimming the year is divided into training in a long course pool and a short course pool. There are competitions for both which are also seasonal offering long courses in the spring and short courses in the fall and winter. Less walls mean less flipturns and glides add the extra few feet in length and it all does make a difference.