



## Competitive Team Handbook

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2026

A professional, family-friendly guide to the B-Town Brazadas competitive team experience.

East Side Aquatic Center | Bakersfield, California

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# About Brazadas

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B-Town Brazadas Swim Club is a community-driven 501(c)(3) nonprofit established in 2025 to bring the benefits of swimming to children and families throughout Bakersfield. What began as a vision to build a professional aquatics presence in our community has grown into a club committed to expert coaching, meaningful opportunities, and long-term athlete development.

Our journey was made possible by a Highland High School graduate who played a pivotal role in launching the brand-new East Side Aquatic Center, the state-of-the-art facility that now serves as our home. With a focus on accessibility, inclusivity, and excellence, we aim to strengthen Bakersfield's swim culture and provide athletes with top-tier coaching and opportunities.

## Our Mission

With every stroke, challenge, and teammate, we nurture personal growth and community connection.

## Our Vision

B-Town Brazadas strives to be the premier swim club in Bakersfield, empowering athletes to reach their full potential in and out of the pool while building pride, camaraderie, and a commitment to lifelong improvement and excellence.

## Our Commitment

As a nonprofit organization, our focus is on serving our community rather than maximizing profit. That commitment helps us provide accessible and affordable programs while creating opportunities for athletes from diverse backgrounds to participate and grow through swimming.

B-Town Brazadas is affiliated with [USA Swimming](#) and is a member of [Central California Swimming](#), our Local Swimming Committee (LSC). As a USA Swimming club, we follow best practices, athlete protection standards, and competition structures that support healthy athlete development.

# Team Values

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The Brazadas culture is shaped by three core values. These values guide how we train, how we compete, and how we represent the team in and out of the pool.

## Humility

*“I will take ownership of my actions, learn from my mistakes, accept feedback, and understand that no one person is above anyone else.”*

Humility helps athletes grow not only as swimmers, but as people. It strengthens the trust, accountability, and respect that define the Brazadas team experience.

- After a challenging practice or meet, reflect honestly instead of making excuses or blaming others.
- Respect competitors, officials, coaches, and teammates regardless of the outcome.
- Celebrate teammates’ successes as if they were your own.
- Own mistakes and make them right when possible.

## Discipline

*“I will be diligent in the pursuit of greatness both in and out of the pool.”*

Discipline helps athletes grow not only as swimmers, but as people. It strengthens the trust, accountability, and respect that define the Brazadas team experience.

- Show up consistently and give full effort in practice.
- Follow through on commitments made to yourself, your family, and your team.
- Prepare for meets through rest, nutrition, and mental focus.
- Stay committed to the process even when improvement feels slow.

## Resilience

*“I will be kind to myself and others and bounce back from adversity with the help of my team.”*

Resilience helps athletes grow not only as swimmers, but as people. It strengthens the trust, accountability, and respect that define the Brazadas team experience.

- Use setbacks as opportunities to learn and grow.
- Recognize that difficult practices and disappointing races are part of the sport.
- Encourage teammates when they face challenges.
- Respond to adversity with maturity, perspective, and determination.

# Long-Term Athlete Development

B-Town Brazadas is built on long-term athlete development. From a swimmer’s first competitive strokes through high school performance and beyond, our program is intentionally designed to support sustainable growth technically, physically, and mentally.

Each division builds upon the previous stage. We pride ourselves on developing swimmers the right way from the earliest stages through B-Team, preparing athletes not just for the next meet, but for long-term success in the sport.

Divisions serve as developmental guidelines, not rigid boxes. Group placements and transitions are made at the coach’s discretion based on what best supports the swimmer’s progression.

## The Brazadas Pathway

Stage	Primary Focus	Who It Serves
White Division	Technical foundation and competitive habits	Primarily 12 & under
Navy Division	Advanced training habits and race strategy	Primarily ages 11–14
B-Team Division	High-level youth training and leadership	High school athletes
Masters Division	Adult training for fitness or competition	Adults 18+ out of high school

## Team Structure & Divisions

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The Brazadas competitive team is structured into three main pathways:

- Age Group Program (White and Navy Divisions)
- Senior Program (B-Team Division)
- Masters Division (Adult Program)

The Age Group Program focuses on technical mastery, disciplined training habits, and competitive confidence. The Senior Program emphasizes advanced training, leadership, accountability, and long-term performance progression. Masters welcomes adults who want structured training in a team environment.

### **White Team Division** | *Primarily 10 and Under*

The White Team Division establishes the technical and cultural foundation of Brazadas swimming. This division is not simply about learning strokes. It is about building technically sound swimmers who understand how to practice with focus, discipline, and purpose. Athletes begin developing confidence in competition while reinforcing efficiency, body control, and racing awareness.

#### **Development Focus**

- Technical development of all four strokes
- Legal and efficient turns and finishes
- Diving fundamentals and underwater skill progression
- Kicking strength and body alignment
- Drill progression and coordination
- Introduction to pace awareness and practice discipline
- Building confidence and competitive habits

#### **Equipment**

- Kickboard
- Pull buoy
- Fins
- Cap
- Goggles
- Gear bag

## Navy Team Division | *Primarily Ages 11 to 14*

The Navy Team Division bridges foundational development and advanced training. Athletes are expected to train with increasing independence, accountability, and focus. Training intensity and volume increase while technical precision remains the priority. Swimmers learn how to manage intervals, understand pacing, and take ownership of their improvement.

### Development Focus

- Efficiency and stroke consistency at increased intensity
- Advanced race strategy and execution
- Pace clock proficiency and interval discipline
- Aerobic development with technical control
- Introduction to structured dryland training
- Goal setting and season planning
- Ownership of daily performance standards

### Equipment

- Kickboard
- Pull buoy
- Fins
- Snorkel
- Paddles
- Cap
- Goggles
- Ankle strap
- Mesh gear bag

## Senior Program

The Senior Program represents the highest level of youth development at Brazadas. This stage emphasizes advanced training, leadership, accountability, and long-term performance progression. Athletes in the Senior Program are expected to model team values while preparing for high school and potential collegiate environments.

## B-Team Division | *High School Athletes*

The B-Team Division falls under the Senior Program at Brazadas and represents the culmination of our long-term athlete development pathway. This division is for high school athletes who are committed to training with purpose, consistency, and leadership. B-Team is not simply about swimming more yardage. It is about training at a higher standard and understanding what it takes to improve over an entire season and across multiple years.

### Development Focus

- Advanced technical refinement under fatigue
- Race-specific training and event strategy development
- Aerobic and anaerobic conditioning for championship-level competition
- Individualized event progression and intelligent specialization
- Goal setting and measurable season benchmarks
- Dryland integration and physical literacy development
- Mental performance and competitive resilience
- Leadership within team culture

### Equipment

- Kickboard
- Pull buoy
- Fins
- Snorkel
- Paddles
- Cap
- Goggles
- Ankle strap
- Mesh gear bag

B-Team training is structured around season-long planning rather than meet-to-meet performance alone. For swimmers who aspire to continue beyond high school, the habits built here prepare athletes for collegiate-level training environments.

## **Masters Division | Adult Program | Ages 18+ and Out of High School**

Brazadas Masters welcomes adults of every background, from fitness-focused swimmers to former competitors who still love structured training and racing. High school athletes, even if 18, should remain in B-Team if appropriate.

### **Development Focus**

- Stroke refinement and efficiency
- Structured aerobic and speed development
- Goal-oriented fitness and performance training
- Optional competitive opportunities
- Team accountability and culture

### **Equipment**

- Equipment varies by athlete and training goals

## **Division Structure & Practice Alignment**

Each division includes swimmers at slightly different stages within that level. Within each division, practices are structured so swimmers train in groups and sets that match their current ability, experience, and developmental needs. Coaches regularly adjust intervals, expectations, and training focus to ensure every athlete is challenged appropriately and encouraged to reach their full potential.

All transitions remain coach directed and are based on long-term development.

# Practice Expectations

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Practice is the most important aspect of a successful swimming season. Regular, consistent attendance is the best way to get the full training experience. Each group has a training plan for the season, and each practice is purposeful, planned, and important.

## Athlete Expectations

- Arrive on time and come prepared with all required equipment and a water bottle.
- Cell phones, tablets, and similar devices should not be brought on deck or used in locker rooms. Photos and videos in locker rooms are strictly prohibited.
- Respect teammates, coaches, and facility staff. Keep hands to yourself and take care of shared spaces.
- Follow all facility rules, including no running on deck, no glass, no hanging on lane lines, and appropriate locker room behavior.
- When a coach is speaking, athletes listen with their eyes and ears and face the coach.
- Do not leave the water or pool area during practice without coach permission.
- Clean up personal equipment and belongings before leaving practice.

## Parent Expectations

- Families are responsible for the information provided in the handbook and weekly newsletter.
- Parents and guardians are not allowed on the pool deck during training. Please remain in the stands or designated spectator area.
- Videotaping and taking pictures are not permitted during training at our facilities.
- Parents should not distract swimmers during practice or attempt to coach from the stands.
- Questions or concerns should be addressed by email or through a scheduled meeting, not during practice.
- Allow coaches to critique, correct, and coach without interference.

## Attendance & Absences

Our coaches take attendance at each practice. If your swimmer will be absent, please email the group coach in advance whenever possible. Consistent attendance helps coaches plan effectively and gives athletes the repetition needed for technical and competitive growth.

For older athletes, consistent attendance becomes increasingly important because group training, interval progressions, dryland, and meet preparation are built with continuity in mind. Practice schedules are not negotiable, and make-up sessions are not offered simply because a different practice time would be more convenient.

## Swim Meets

Swim meets are held one to two times per month. Meets are essential for tracking progress, building team culture, and giving athletes the opportunity to showcase the work they do in practice. We encourage swimmers to attend as many Brazadas-scheduled meets as possible.

### What to Bring to a Meet

Essentials	Team Gear
Healthy snacks and water bottle	Brazadas team suit
Towels (1–2)	Brazadas cap
Dry clothes	Brazadas t-shirt/apparel
Goggles	Warm clothing for between races

### Meet Uniform Expectations

- Brazadas athletes are required to wear a Brazadas Team Suit all in-season meets.
- Swimmers 10 & under are never permitted to wear a tech suit.
- Athletes 11 & over should consult their coach before purchasing and wearing a tech suit. Tech suits may be permitted at championship meets and select in-season meets when specifically approved by the coaching staff.
- All Brazadas swimmers are required to compete in a Brazadas team cap.
- All Brazadas swimmers are expected to wear Brazadas apparel on deck. Specific shirt guidance may be communicated in the weekly newsletter.

### Call Times & Check-In

- Swimmers should arrive at the designated call time posted in the meet fact sheet or team communication.
- Upon arrival, swimmers should immediately check in with a Brazadas coach.
- If a swimmer arrives late or fails to check in with a coach, the host team may remove them from the meet.
- If you are running late and expect to miss the call time, email a coach as soon as possible to help avoid an unnecessary scratch.

### During the Meet

#### Swimmer Expectations

- Participate in team warm-up and team cheer.
- Limit cell phone use and stay engaged in the meet environment.
- Do not leave the pool deck or designated team area without informing a coach.
- Treat officials, coaches, meet staff, competitors, and teammates with respect and gratitude.
- Check in with a coach after each race for feedback.

#### Parent Expectations

- Ensure swimmers arrive on time and fully prepared.
- Offer positive, encouraging support from the stands.
- Parents are not allowed on the pool deck or in the designated team area during swim meets.
- Do not call, text, or distract swimmers during the session, and do not contact meet host personnel directly.
- Parents may be asked to help as timers, officials, or volunteers, especially during home meets.

### Meet Entries

- Parents and swimmers must register for meets through [brazadas.captyn.com](http://brazadas.captyn.com) by the assigned deadline.

- To register, sign in, click “Events,” then “Events Sign-up,” and choose “Attend” or “Decline” for each meet.
- Coaches are responsible for selecting and entering events once swimmers are committed to the meet. Swimmers may suggest preferences, but final event entries are at the discretion of the coaching staff.
- Once entries are posted, families have 48 hours to review them for errors or request changes. After that window closes, changes are typically no longer possible.

### **First Meet: What New Families Should Expect**

- The first meet can feel busy and overwhelming. That is normal.
- Each race has an event number, heat, and lane that tell swimmers where and when to race.
- Coaches help newer swimmers navigate their events, but over time athletes are expected to learn how to read the meet information more independently.
- After all events are complete and the swimmer has checked in with a coach, the family may leave unless otherwise instructed.

### **Competition Seasons**

<b>Season</b>	<b>Pool Length</b>	<b>Typical Time of Year</b>
Short Course	25 yards	September to March
Long Course	50 meters	April to August

## Parent, Athlete & Coach Roles

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The healthiest team environments are built on clear roles. At Brazadas, athletes train and compete, coaches coach, and parents provide support that reinforces confidence and consistency.

### Athlete Role

Take ownership of attendance, effort, attitude, and communication. Older athletes should increasingly communicate directly with coaches about schedule conflicts, meet entries, and questions, with a parent copied when appropriate.

### Parent Role

Provide encouragement, logistical support, and perspective. The parent role is not to coach races from the stands or evaluate every practice and meet result. The best support is consistent, positive, and grounded in long-term development.

## Communication

- The B-Town Brazadas weekly newsletter is the primary source for schedule changes, meet deadlines, and important announcements.
- The team website, [brazadas.org](http://brazadas.org), includes meet schedules and other important information.
- If a question cannot be answered through the newsletter or website, please contact the appropriate division coach by email.
- For meet recaps and season highlights, families can follow [@swimbrazadas](https://twitter.com/swimbrazadas) on social media.
- All online conduct must be respectful, inclusive, and appropriate. Cyberbullying and cyberstalking are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

For athletes in upper groups, communication regarding schedules, missed practices, and meet entries should increasingly come directly from the athlete, with a parent copied to remain MAAP-compliant and protect both swimmer and coach.

## USA Swimming Overview

USA Swimming is the national governing body for competitive swimming in the United States. Brazadas is a registered USA Swimming club and competes within Central California Swimming, our Local Swimming Committee (LSC), which operates within the Western Zone.

- USA Swimming provides competition rules, athlete protection standards, time standards, and championship structures.
- Central California Swimming manages local meet schedules, membership processing, officiating, and recognition programs.
- Time standards often appear as B, BB, A, AA, AAA, and AAAA and help categorize performances and qualify athletes for certain meets.

## FAQ for New Swim Families

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### Can my child make up practices if their practice time is inconvenient for my schedule?

No. Practice schedules are not negotiable, and we do not offer alternate group attendance simply for convenience. Swimmers should attend their assigned group practices.

### My swimmer loves the sport. Why can't they just swim more?

Each group is designed around age-appropriate training volume and progression. More swimming is not always better. Too much extra swimming can create confusion, early injury risk, and burnout.

### What if we miss the meet registration deadline?

Once the deadline has passed, entry is not guaranteed. Contact your group coach as soon as possible to see whether an entry is still feasible.

### Why do coaches choose events instead of letting swimmers pick all of them?

Coaches select events to build well-rounded swimmers and evaluate progress across all four strokes, distances, and racing situations.

### What is a DQ?

A DQ, or disqualification, occurs when a swimmer breaks a USA Swimming rule during a race, such as a false start or an illegal touch or turn.

### What is a tech suit?

A tech suit is a specialized competition suit designed to compress muscles and reduce drag. Swimmers 12 & under may not wear tech suits, and older athletes should wear them only when permitted by coach guidance and meet policy.

### How does my child get placed on a relay?

Relay selection is made by the coaching staff based on performance, event needs, and overall team strategy. Fastest times are important, but they are not the only factor.

### Are finals mandatory?

Yes. At meets with prelims and finals, swimmers who qualify for finals are expected to swim finals unless excused by a coach under an appropriate circumstance.

## Competitive Swimming Glossary

Term	Meaning
Heat Sheet	A schedule listing swimmers, events, heats, and lanes.
Timed Finals	A format in which final placements are determined from one race session.
Prelims / Finals	A format in which swimmers race in a preliminary session and the top finishers return for finals.
Scratch	The official withdrawal from an event, handled by the coaching staff.
Check-In	A required confirmation that a swimmer intends to race a deck-seeded event.
Power Points	A points system used to compare swim performances across strokes and distances.
Psych Sheet	A meet document listing swimmers by seed time, from fastest to slowest.



***BRAZADAS***