

# PATRIOT PULSE

Congratulations to all PAC swimmers who competed at the Jack Pettinger Invitational in Madison this past weekend! The team delivered a strong performance, earning a 3rd-place finish in a highly competitive field.

We would also like to recognize the four PAC athletes who represented Illinois Swimming at the Duel in the Pool against Texas and Indiana. Congratulations to Max Miecznikowski, Emma Kierzkowski, Jayson Clark, and Alex Phillips for proudly representing both Illinois Swimming and PAC with outstanding performances.

Best of luck to Ella Brace, Aria Grossenbach, and Jocelyn Hayashi as they travel to Vancouver to represent Illinois Swimming at the upcoming Project LA meet. We also wish our PAC divers, Jack Hansen and Knox Kruk, the best as they head to Iowa City to compete in the Zone D Championships. We are proud of all our athletes and look forward to following their success!

## Here are a few important reminders and updates:

- **CAPTYN:** Sign up is OPEN for most of the upcoming meets! You can check out the new site using the link below: <https://www.patriotaquaticclub.captynsites.com/> All posted swim meet information can be found under the Swim Team tab on our website, or directly here: <https://www.patriotaquaticclub.captynsites.com/hosted-meets>
- **Swim Team Equipment:** PAC vouchers are active in the Kiefer site! You can go into the site today to order team suits (required) and other apparel (optional). <https://theswimteamstore.net/teamlogin/index/loginpost?username=patriot&password=aquaticclub11>
- **PAC Team Shirts:** They are in and we are wearing our heart on our sleeve this season to support heart health and one of our amazing teammates. If you have not received your shirt, please ask your coach for it.
- **Google Calendar:** All practices are listed in our team Google Calendar. We highly recommend adding it to both your and your swimmer's phone to stay up to date with practice times and any potential schedule changes.
- **Parent Square:** Just a reminder that all communication for NIPC and PAC Swim and Dive are all through Parent Square. If you are not signed up, please look for your group here: <https://www.parentsquare.com/schools/39387/groups?tab=explore>
- **Locker room Access and Security Reminder:** Locker rooms can only be accessed from the pool deck. Please enter the pool area through the southeast corner near room 5044. We've had ongoing issues with people opening locker room doors, which has unfortunately led to thefts. Do not leave personal belongings unattended in the locker room — please lock them up or bring them onto the pool deck.

## WHY YOUR DOLPHIN KICK NEEDS MORE HIPS (AND LESS KNEES)

BY OLIVIER POIRIER-LEROY

**Elite underwaters aren't just the result of kicking hard—it's in the hips. Here's why you should UDK from the hips, not the knees.**

Fast dolphin kicking is our golden ticket to faster starts and turns... and speedier results on the clock.

And for many swimmers, once they decide to [develop their underwater dolphin kick](#), next steps are usually:

- Kick faster!
- Move the feet super fast!
- Be more dolphin, less potato!

And sure, those things *will* help, but here's something a little more actionable.

A recent study (Tsunokawa et al., 2025) looked at a group of competitive swimmers doing all-out dolphin kicking underwater. Researchers examined how the joints worked together and how this impacted frequency.

The swimmers who kicked more dolphin-y and less potato-y did two things with their hips that slower kickers didn't:

THE HIPS CHANGED DIRECTION FIRST

Fast kickers didn't rely on the knees to drive and change kick direction.

Instead:

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## 6/2/26 FALL/WINTER

Support all levels and abilities to their given needs, according to our vision as a coaching staff.

Provide encouragement, knowledge, and opportunity to strive for goals, e.g. goal setting opportunities, coaches meeting with athletes to discuss goals and progress.

Build success through commitment and hard work.

Use the sports of swimming, water polo, and diving to develop growth and personal accountability

We are committed to Safe Sport and providing a safe, healthy, and positive environment for all our athletes.



- The hips initiated each change of direction
- The knees followed just after
- This timing is especially important during the transition between down-kick and up-kick

The hips *first* and knees *second* timing creates a smooth, powerful wave instead of a herky jerky, stop-start kick that crushes speed.

#### THE HIPS DOMINATE THROUGHOUT THE KICK

Fast kickers started each kick with the hips—but the hips *also* remained in a leadership role throughout the movement.

In simpler terms: the hips drove the movement, not just initiated it. When the knees take over, either to try and start or to drive the kick, coordination breaks down and frequency collapses.

#### DOWNWARD TOE SPEED DOESN'T MATTER WITHOUT THIS TIMING

The whole “kick faster and harder” thing is half the answer—moving the toes and feet fast is obviously necessary.

Other studies with national-level swimmers show that vertical toe speed—particularly in the upkick—is a strong indicator of fast dolphin kicking speeds (Atkinson et al., 2014).

But *only* when you have the right timing.

You can have “fast toes” kicking from the knees, but you won’t have a fast *kick*. Combining powerful drive from the hips with quick toes is what develops legendary thrust.

Get the timing right first, and the feet take care of themselves.

#### PRACTICAL WAYS TO DOLPHIN KICK WITH THE HIPS

Instead of trying to muscle through the kick with the knees or slicing the water with your toes, work that hip-knee timing with:

- **Vertical kicking** – Do slow vertical kicking, emphasizing sequencing hips > knees > ankles. Dolphin kicking underwater presents a natural constraint—breath holding—which can make it more challenging to get the time and reps required to really focus on timing. Vertical kicking removes this limitation so that you can work on hip timing without running out of breath.
- **Dolphin kicking on your side (fish kick)** – Fish kicking is one of the best dolphin kick drills there is—it forces more undulation and better hip timing. Throw on a monofin to really highlight efficient timing. **Fish kicks are a technique tool and also a propulsive aid**—a study (Collard et al., 2008) showed that national-level swimmers kicked faster on their side versus on their front.
- **“Flick” the hips at each part of the kick** – At each phase of the kick, when the downkick starts or the upkick takes over, start the movement with a flick of the hips/pelvis to reinforce the proper timing. Dryland exercises like kettlebell swings and hip thrusts can build the hip drive for this motion.

#### THE BOTTOM LINE

Fast dolphin kicking is such a challenge because swimmers can’t just muscle through it.

There’s a smooth and precise sequencing that needs to happen to allow vortices to form, the body wave to roll down the body, and for thrust to explode off the feet.

So if your underwaters feel:

- Clunky and knee-driven
- Powerful but like you aren’t displacing any water
- Gasses you out fast without meaningful speed

It’s likely not a power or strength problem...

But a coordination problem.

So work those hips (they don’t lie).

Faster underwaters await.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### PAC:

- TBA

### SWIM:

- **June 12-14:** RISE Endless Summer meet at Libertyville HS. Entries are closed.
- **June 26-28:** North Shore Open at HOME. Entries are closed.
- **June 27-28:** RISE Summer Splash at Libertyville HS. Entries are closed.
- **July 9-12:** Summer Sectionals at the FMC Natatorium in Westmont, IL. For qualifiers only.
- **July 10-12:** North Suburban Splash at HOME. Sign up by June 30th.

### WATER POLO:

- TBA

### DIVING:

- **June 5-7:** Zone D at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, IA.
- **June 13-14:** Patriot Diving Summer Invite at HOME.
- **June 25-28:** USA Diving Central Championships at the University of West Virginia, Morgantown, WV.
- **July 14-24:** AAU Nationals in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.
- **July 29-Aug 4:** Junior Nationals at the University of West Virginia in Morgantown, WV.

## Patriot’s Nutrition Corner with Coach Chandra:

When you're looking for an energy boost, food, hydration, and sleep are far more effective than energy drinks. While energy drinks may provide a temporary boost from caffeine and sugar, they can also lead to jitters, upset stomach, dehydration, difficulty sleeping, irritability, and an energy crash later on. For swimmers, consistent energy comes from eating balanced meals and snacks throughout the day, staying well hydrated, and getting enough sleep each night. Foods like fruit, oatmeal, yogurt, whole grains, nuts, and lean proteins provide a steady source of energy that supports both training and recovery. If you're feeling tired regularly, it may be a sign to take a closer look at your fueling, recovery, sleep, hydration, and nutrition habits rather than reaching for an energy drink. Consistent healthy habits will help your performance much more than any quick fix.

# GROUP UPDATES

## SWIMMING

## WATER POLO

## DIVING

ELITE - Coach Kevin  
[kzakrzewski@d125.org](mailto:kzakrzewski@d125.org)

What a great weekend in Madison! Looking forward to how we wrap up of mid season meets this weekend in Vancouver. We will be adapting the weekly schedule starting on Tuesday next week.

HS Water Polo - Coach Rose  
[rwimer@d125.org](mailto:rwimer@d125.org)

Make sure you are connected on Parent Square to stay up to date with practices, games and changes.

COMPETITIVE DIVING  
Coach Jonathan - [jroby@d125.org](mailto:jroby@d125.org)

Good luck to our divers Jack Hansen and Knox Kruk this weekend at USA Zone D Championships hosted at University of Iowa!

PATRIOT PLUS - Coach Carolyn  
[cgrevers@d125.org](mailto:cgrevers@d125.org)

Congratulations to everyone who competed this past weekend! We saw some strong performances and, just as importantly, gained valuable insight into areas where we can continue to improve. As we begin the Summer Long Course season, we are building a strong foundation both in the pool and through dryland training. Remember, progress comes from consistently working on the skills and habits that challenge you the most. Commit to improving those areas, trust the process, and the results will follow. Keep up the great work!

Age Group WATER POLO:

Make sure you are connected on Parent Square to stay up to date with practices, games and changes.

DEVELOPMENTAL DIVING

Normal schedule for those not still in school!

PATRIOT - Coach Kee  
[keehng@gmail.com](mailto:keehng@gmail.com)

Congratulations to our swimmers who swam at the Jack Pettinger Invitational - great efforts resulting in awesome swims! We are moving into the summer schedule where all swim practices are in long course meters. So please refer to the ParentSquare group chat and the practice calendar for any schedule changes. The training will focus primarily on stroke technique and race pace for LCM events.

10U WATER POLO:

Make sure you are connected on Parent Square to stay up to date with practices, games and changes.

LEARN TO DIVE

Normal Friday and Saturday practices in our new summer schedule! See you in the board!

JR PATRIOT - Coach Thomas  
[tschwingen@d125.org](mailto:tschwingen@d125.org)

Jr swimmers did an amazing job this past weekend at both Madison and Duel in the Pool meets, great job everyone! With the summer schedule starting Wednesday and it being a short season, make sure to get to all practices you can. And when you are here, hard work and that extra effort go a long way.

MOTIVATION OF THE WEEK:

**"Your talent determines what you can do. Your motivation determines how much you are willing to do. Your attitude determines how well you do it."**

*Lou Holtz*

LIL/MINI PATRIOT - Coach Megan  
[mosullivan@d125.org](mailto:mosullivan@d125.org)

Summer is here. Beginning Wednesday we are switching our schedule to the Afternoon. We are at the season midpoint and will begin to really build and prep for upcoming competitions. Your LILs will also get to enjoy some more LCM practices.

PAC Social Media

INSTAGRAM:

[@patriotaquaticclub](#)

[@nipc\\_wp](#)

[@pac\\_diving](#)

FACEBOOK:

Patriot Aquatic Club -  
Lincolnshire, IL

YOUTUBE CHANNELS:

Patriot Aquatic Club  
Northern Illinois Polo  
Club