

PATRIOT PULSE

PAC Swimming & NIPC Highlights

Congratulations to all our swimmers who competed at the **Fun in the WILD Meet** this past weekend! A special shout-out to our Elimination 25 winners: **Annie Ma, Alex Phillips, Arjun Shinde, and Ronav Chakraborty!** Great job!

Good luck to all our swimmers competing at home this weekend in the **Fall League Meet on Saturday** and the **Senior Circuit on Sunday**. We're excited to see you race!

NIPC also had a weekend full of exciting competition at home, including a few nail-biters! Keep up the great work, and way to compete!

Here are a few important reminders and updates:

- **MEETS:** We have the Fall League meet this weekend at HOME on Saturday, while Sunday is the PHASE 1 Senior Circuit at HOME. Upcoming-Halloween weekend is the Patriot Fall Classic at HOME. More information can be found here: <https://www.patriotaquaticclub.captynsites.com/hosted-meets>
- **USAS SWIM REGISTRATION:**
Returning Members - Coach Kevin will handle your registration
Transfers - Please make sure you submit your transfer on USAS account and then coach Kevin can take care of it.
NEW MEMBERS: Please follow this [LINK](#) to sign your swimmer up for USAS.
- **CAPTYN:** Meet are in the process of being posted, so keep checking. Some of the declines have changed, so make sure to sign up early when you get the chance! You can check out the new site using the link below: <https://www.patriotaquaticclub.captynsites.com/>
- **ParentSquare:** ParentSquare is our primary communication tool. NEW families follow this [LINK](#), fill out the form and select all of the relevant groups you need to be a part of. This is for PARENTS and ATHLETES! Make sure to change your group if you have moved up. If you have any questions please reach out to Coach Kevin Zakrzewski.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Events:** Stevenson High School girls swim/dive have been at it for a month already. Pay attention to changes in the google calendar/ParentSquare notifications for changes in practices.

Mental Toughness Is What Swimmers Do On The Bad Days

BY [OLIVIER POIRIER-LEROY](#)

Ask swimmers and coaches what they think mental toughness is, and you'll get a variety of answers.

Grit. Determination. Commitment. No quit—not today, not ever, baby!

Fundamentally, mental toughness is the ability to better cope with the demands of training and competition compared to other swimmers.

It can be natural, it can be developed, and when we have it we are determined, focused, confident, and thrive under pressure (Jones et al., 2002).

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10/13/26 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 way that mental toughness reveals itself varies by athlete, but there is one symptom of mental toughness that rings especially true for swimmers... How they respond to a poor swim practice.

MENTAL TOUGHNESS IN THE POOL

Researchers (Driska et al., 2012) surveyed a group of 13 elite American swimming coaches to list the behaviors that made a swimmer mentally tough. They were looking beyond the general characteristics and looking for specific actions and behaviors.

Lots of the usual answers, with things like:

- Staying focused and not getting distracted by short-term gains that jeopardize long term gains
- Knowing when to switch on and off
- Not being afraid of hard work and tough sets
- Bringing their A-game under pressure

And so on.

But there was one that popped up that was really relevant to the day-to-day grind of our sport:

“Retaining psychological control on poor training days.”

Basically, when a swim practice was not going their way, mentally tough swimmers could:

- **Find a way to keep moving toward their goals.** They were persistent and adaptable.
- **Identify something specific to work on.** Instead of dwelling or throwing away the workout, they found other problems/challenges to improve.

It's no surprise that some of the best swimmers on the planet use this outlook.

On days when practice isn't going super swimmingly, Caeleb Dressel leans on his kick count and a clean catch to find something productive to build on:

- “If I'm doing super bad that day, I can at any point do five kicks off every wall. And how hard can it be to focus on the correct catch, not slipping my arm to the outside. Just two things.”

And Katie Ledecky, one of the fastest and most consistent swimmers ever, also has days when things aren't clicking:

- “I try to make the good days great and take something positive from the days I'm not feeling good—work on technique or something like that.”

THE BAD DAYS ARE WHERE MENTAL TOUGHNESS MATTERS

It's pretty easy to be mentally tough when things are going your way.

The real test is what you do when they aren't.

Instead of:

- My stroke feels like a moldy pull-buoy and I couldn't catch water if you paid me = Practice is ruined

It becomes:

- This practice is not going well = How can I still get better today?

This little switch isn't as obvious as gritting through a monster main set or being unflappable in finals at the Big Meet.

But it says a lot about how well you handle adversity, latch onto the things you control, and keep moving forward when the inevitable setbacks happen.

For swim coaches looking for a structured way to build mental toughness team-wide, ***Conquer the Pool: The Swimmer's Ultimate Guide to a High-Performance Mindset*** gives you a practical blueprint to do just that. Learn more below.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PAC:

- TBA

SWIM:

- **Oct. 17:** Fall League Meet #2 @HOME (14 and unders and PAC only) Entries are closed.
- **Oct. 18:** Senior Circuit #1 @HOME. Entries are closed.
- **Oct. 24-25:** Josh Church Meet at Libertyville High School. Entries are closed.
- **Oct. 31-Nov. 1:** Patriot Fall Classic at HOME. Entries close Oct. 24th.
- **Nov. 8:** Senior Circuit #1 @HOME. Entries close Oct. 22nd.
- **Nov. 20-22:** Patriot Premier meet @HOME. Entries close Oct. 20th.
- **Dec. 5-6:** NASA Winter Blast-Off at Northwestern University. Entries close Oct. 26th.

WATER POLO:

- **Oct. 17:** 10U have games at Fenwick.
- **Oct. 25:** Premier boys, NIPC White/Green and 10U all have games at HOME.

DIVING:

Nov. 7-8: Schroeder Fall-Back Invite in Brown Deer, WI.

- **Schroeder Winter Invite**

GROUP UPDATES

SWIMMING

ELITE - Coach Kevin
zkakrzewski@d125.org

This weekend is our first Senior Circuit meet. Looking forward to the meet and to see how we attack this meet. We are slowly approaching our peak week next week. Recovery is more and more important.

PATRIOT PLUS - Coach Carolyn
cgrevers@d125.org

We finally had a meet to gauge where we are! Overall, we had some great racing at Northwestern....but new goals are being made as we move forward. Looking forward to getting into a new gear with training and our underwaters. The bridges are out and being used!

PATRIOT - Coach Kee
keehng@gmail.com

A small group of Patriot swimmers was at the Fun in the WILD meet and garnered some good swims! Attending meets is the best way to gain racing experience and to note down areas to work on. While we are in the last week of the general training phase, we will start adding speed and pacing elements to the practices. Continuing to show up at practices is essential to making steady progress.

JR PATRIOT - Coach Thomas
tschwingen@d125.org

What a fun one-day meet this past Sunday at Northwestern. We had a few of our PAC swimmers that won the 25FR eliminations. Several Jr Patriots made it into the final heat with Annie Ma winning the 10&U girls and Arjun Shinde the 11/12 boys— congratulations! This weekend we will be hosting our second Fall League meet; hope to see a lot of you there. Make sure you are attending all the practices that you can and come ready to work hard!

LIL & MINI PATRIOT - Coach Megan
mosullivan@d125.org

Great job to those that attended the NASA meet, it was a test of race endurance. This week we are continuing our push for perfect details. Proper streamlines & underwaters are the most important part of every swim and we are going to really focus on them everyday! Remember perfecting strokes and learning to hold good details now will make them an unstoppable swimmer for their swim career.

WATER POLO

HS Polo - Coach Rose
rwimer@d125.org

Monday, 10/12: NO PRACTICE-Holiday
 Tuesday, 10/13: 7:30-8:30pm Dryland 8:30-10pm Pool
 Wednesday, 10/14: 7:30-8:30pm Dryland 8:30-10pm Pool
 Thursday, 10/15: 7:30-8:30pm Dryland 8:30-10pm Pool

Sunday 10/18: Elite Team Practice 11:45am-1:15pm

Missing Practice Form LINK

*Please fill out when you will be missing practice. Please use in place of messages or email.

14u WATER POLO:

Monday 10/12: NO PRACTICE HOLIDAY

Tuesday 10/13: 7-8:30pm Pool

Wednesday 10/14: 6:30pm Dryland, 7-8:30pm Pool

Thursday 10/15: 7-8:30pm Pool (dryland 7-7:30 due to swim meet)

10u WATER POLO:

Thursday 10/15: 6:30-7:30pm (later due to swim meet before)

Saturday 10/17: Games at Fenwick High School: 1pm & 1:40pm
 505 Washington Blvd, Oak Park, IL 60302 ([info sheet](#))

Sunday 10/18: Practice 10:45-11:45am

DIVING

COMPETITIVE DIVING

Coach Jonathan - jroby@d125.org

We are halfway through October as we head towards our first meet of the season up at Schroeder In Brown Deer, Wisconsin. If you plan on competing please make sure your [DiveLive](#) and [AAU](#) registrations are completed and you register for the Meet on the DiveLive App. Practice wise we will not be having practice on Saturday, but all other practices are on at our normal times. Excited to see

MOTIVATION OF THE WEEK:

"With self-discipline, all things are possible."

Theodore Roosevelt

Patriot's Nutrition Corner with Coach Chandra:

Nutrition Tip: Fuel Before Practice!

Don't show up to practice running on empty! Try to eat a balanced meal about 2-3 hours before practice and grab a light snack 30-60 minutes before getting in the pool. Planning ahead can keep you feeling good, ready to go, and avoid snacking on added sugars or processed foods that contain unhealthy chemicals and preservatives.

Easy pre-practice fuel ideas:

- Banana or apple with peanut butter
- Toast with peanut butter, honey, or jam
- Yogurt with fruit or granola
- Applesauce and pretzels
- Crackers with cheese
- Oatmeal with fruit
- Granola bar and a banana
- Cereal with milk
- Half a turkey sandwich
- Graham crackers and a glass of milk
- beef jerky and dried fruit
- eggs and toast
- trail mix
- veggies and hummus or dip

Remember: Carbohydrates are your body's main source of energy during exercise. Learn what foods sit well for you when practicing hard and have them available. Don't skip snacks because you're worried about feeling too full or sluggish just choose something easy to digest, adjust the portion to your hunger and timing, and give your body the fuel it needs to perform its best!

PAC Social Media

INSTAGRAM:

@patriotaquaticclub

@nipc_wp

@pac_diving

FACEBOOK:

Patriot Aquatic Club -
 Lincolnshire, IL

YOUTUBE CHANNELS:

Patriot Aquatic Club
 Northern Illinois Polo Club