

PATRIOT PULSE

Congratulations to everyone who competed in our first Fall League Meet! There was lots of fun swimming, and it was a great opportunity to see where we are as we begin the season. We're excited to continue building and see how everyone progresses throughout the fall!

Good luck to all of our NIPC teams this weekend! Our teams will be heading to Lyons, Lincolnway West, Niles North, and Loyola for their games. We'll be cheering you on!

BOILER UPDATE: We are getting a new boiler! While the new boiler is being installed, we will be unable to use the pool. **Tonight, September 22, all groups will have dryland only.** Please keep an eye on ParentSquare for the latest updates regarding practices and when we will be back in the pool.

Here are a few important reminders and updates:

- **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.
- **Swim Team Equipment/Vouchers:**

We're happy to announce that the vouchers to use at Kiefer Aquatics have returned for the fall! Here's all the info:

- Vouchers are worth \$75 per swimmer
- Vouchers are 1 time use, and will expire on 12/31/2026
- Vouchers must be used on Speedo brand items.
- Vouchers are only good at the Kiefer Aquatics store, [830 Seton Ct., #8](#) in Wheeling
 - Open Monday – Thursday 10 am to 5 pm + Saturday's 10 am to 3 pm
 - E: wheeling@kiefer.com
 - P: [224-676-0344](tel:224-676-0344)
 - In store Speedo items: practice suits, goggles, equipment, bags, tech suits & more!
 - Vouchers are not good online, only in store!!
- Want some Speedo logo'd swag? No problem, see the flyer attached!
 - We can take your order at the store (or over the phone)
 - Orders will be customized at our warehouse, then ship directly to you!
 - Items available to order ([see flyer here](#)):
 - Parkas
 - Warm up jackets
 - Backpacks & mesh bags
 - Speedo apparel

- **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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 1.) Aquatics Coordinator Message
- 2.) Featured Articles
- 3.) Group Updates & Social Media

9/22/26 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.



A Daily Mental Toughness Checklist for Swimmers

by [Olivier Poirier-Leroy](#)

How often have you caught yourself wondering what separates the top athletes in the pool from the mere mortals? Sure, genetics have a part to play, as does the environment and support system they are surrounded with. But very frequently it's as a result of a blinding and burning internal fortitude.

In other words— mental toughness.

It is one of the most often cited factors behind athletic success, with **83% of a group of intercollegiate coaches** ranking mental toughness as the critical aspect to determining success in sport.

Does that sound like something you might be interested in?

Here is a 7-question checklist that you can use for you or your athletes to keep them focused on being mentally tough on a daily basis (you can also download the list as a pretty little PDF further down):

Did I manage my own swimming and not worry about what others are doing?

Swimming being a competitive endeavor and all, it is a bit natural to get caught up in what your fellow swimmers are doing. That being said, problems develop when we place too much attention on the efforts of others, or allow someone else's swimming dictate how we are going to swim that day.

I will never forget the deflating feeling of my coach telling us all about how a 15 year old named Ian Thorpe was crushing world records across the globe. To hear about someone so young going so fast was the opposite of motivating. It only served to highlight where I was in comparison. It took me about half of warm-up to stop feeling sorry for myself and to remember that I couldn't control what someone quite literally across the world was doing.

Did I smartly bounce back from any setbacks?

You and I both know that sadly not every workout will go down as the best one ever. You'll have a bunch of good ones, a few great ones, and a few stinkers.

For those moments that you don't exactly light up the pool, where your workout appeared otherwise wasted, did you struggle through regardless? And more importantly, did you emerge from it smarter and better informed for the future?

For example, if you can draw any reasonable conclusions for why the practice was not good? And no, "Because I didn't feel like it" isn't a suitable enough reason, or at least not good enough to insure that it won't happen again down the road.

Did I stay focused on the stuff that matters?

Life has a way of distracting us. Things will always come up that we cannot possibly foresee to shatter our attention. And then there are the things that we do to take our own eyes off the ball. Getting caught up in the melodrama of friends. Spending time and energy on distractions and unforeseen circumstances. Or simply wandering off mentally while working out.

Mentally tough swimmers (and people in general) don't allow the distractions to get in the way of the task at hand.

Did I work my butt off?

Mentally tough swimmers don't look for excuses to not work hard. They feel the soreness, sense the fatigue, acknowledge all of the excuses—and then proceed to work their butts off anyway. Even if the results weren't perfect, did I give a killer effort at practice?

Did I display heaps of perseverance?

Mentally tough swimmers don't give up. They simply don't. They continue pushing and prodding past what others think possible, which only serves to reinforce the notion that they are indeed imbedded with this characteristic. (So that is good news—the more you display it, the more you will believe that you are actually mentally tough, and thereby be more inclined to use it. Nice little self-feeding loop there!)

In what you were asked to do today did you find yourself calling it quits prematurely? Did you pull back early, even though you could have gone further? Possibly one of the most rewarding aspects of being mentally tough is continuing on long after the swimmers in your lane have quit or dropped out.

Am I trusting the process?

Even though the ultimate goal is still a ways off, remember to have faith in your abilities, your training, and the plan set forth with your coach. You understand that while not every step will go perfectly, that your trust in the overall direction you are headed in is still correct.

And perhaps most importantly...

What do I have to be grateful for today?

Sure, this might not seem like it fits in this little checklist, but a little bit of gratitude can go a long way. Especially on those days when it feels like we need to summon every last ounce of willpower and motivation in order to get ourselves psyched up to hammer down on a workout.

[Click here to download this little list as a printable PDF that you can use as a daily reminder to swim mentally tough. Woop woop!](#)

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PAC:

- TBA

SWIM:

- **Oct. 11:** Fun in the WILD @Northwestern University. Entries close Sept. 24th.
- **Oct. 17:** Fall League Meet #2 @HOME (14 and unders and PAC only) Entries close Oct. 10th.
- **Oct. 18:** Senior Circuit #1 @HOME. Entries close Oct. 10th, but must qualify to participate.
- **Oct. 24-25:** Josh Church Meet at Libertyville High School. Preliminary entries close Sept. 21st.
- **Oct. 31-Nov. 1:** Patriot Fall Classic at HOME. Entries close Oct. 24th.

WATER POLO:

- **Sept. 26:** 14U is at Lincolnway West.
- **Sept. 27:** Premier boys are at Loyola. NIPC Green/White are at Niles North. 12U and 10U are at Lyons.
- **Oct. 4:** 14U have games at York. 12U are at Lyons.

DIVING: (no dates yet)

- **Nov. 7-8:** Schroeder Fall-Back Invite in Browndeer, WI.
- **Schroeder Winter Invite**

GROUP UPDATES

SWIMMING

ELITE - Coach Kevin
zkakrzewski@d125.org

This week will be our final week as we build up to the peak weeks of our season. Final pieces of our foundation will be set this week so we can attack the next 4 weeks the right way. Stay consistent and stay healthy!

PATRIOT PLUS - Coach Carolyn
cgrevers@d125.org

Goal sheets are going out this week. If you want a goal meeting, please fill out the GREEN sheet and hand it back to me. I will go through sheets in the order that I receive them.
 With goals in mind.....think over the last year and the conversations we have had and the work you put in. Apply the criticism and think about what your new goals should be. We will work on commitment to these throughout the season.

PATRIOT - Coach Kee
keehng@gmail.com

This past weekend was our first meet; there were many good swims as swimmers tried out and adjusted to newly learned skills. The group's training will now transition to the next stage – we will be increasing aerobic intensity and introducing pull sets. Kick strength and technique refinement is still a large focus during this phase. Swimmers are encouraged to come to all practices to continue their progress.

JR PATRIOT - Coach Thomas
tschwingen@d125.org

Jr Patriot has been going over stroke technique and our PAC drills for each stroke during the beginning of the season. We will continue with these drills during practices as we add on more to each stroke. We have also started to add both kicking-specific and anaerobic/aerobic Free sets to the workouts. Please remind your swimmers to make sure they are attentive, focused, and working to their potential during every practice.

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

Nice job to all those that swam this past weekend. Thank you to all the parents that were officials and volunteers. This week we are focusing on streamlines and kicking.

WATER POLO

HS Polo - Coach Rose
rwimer@d125.org

Regular practice Monday-Thursday (NEW-Tues. 7:30-8:30p dryland ONLY)
 Sunday: 9/27: GREEN TEAM Games @Niles North (9:40am, 1:50pm)
 WHITE TEAM Games @Niles North (11:20am and 1pm)
 BLACK TEAM Games @Loyola (8:10am and 12:45pm)
 *please arrive 45min before each game for warm up
[Missing Practice Form LINK](#)
 *Please fill out when you will be missing practice.
 Please use in place of messages or email.
[Game Roster Link](#) [GAME SCHEDULE LINK](#)

14u WATER POLO:

Monday 9/21: 6:30pm Dryland, 7-8:30pm Pool
 Tuesday 9/22: NEW! 7-8p Dryland
 Wednesday 9/23: 6:30pm Dryland, 7-8:30pm Pool
 Thursday 9/24: NO PRACTICE: SWIM MEET
 Saturday 9/26 14u TEAM: Games @ Lincolnway West (1:30p & 6p) *Please arrive 30 minutes before each game)
 Sunday 9/27: 12u TEAM: Games @ Lyons. (9:20am & 12:40pm) *Please arrive 30 minutes before each game)

10u WATER POLO:

Thursday 9/24: No Practice Swim Meet
 Sunday 9/27: Games at Lyons Township High School, South Campus (4900 Willow Springs Rd, Western Springs, IL 60558) 11:20am and 12pm

PAC Social Media

INSTAGRAM:

@patriotaquaticclub
 @nipc_wp
 @pac_diving

FACEBOOK:

Patriot Aquatic Club -
 Lincolnshire, IL

YOUTUBE CHANNELS:

Patriot Aquatic Club
 Northern Illinois Polo Club

DIVING

COMPETITIVE DIVING

Coach Jonathan - jroby@d125.org
 Happy week 4! The divers are turning and burning as we head towards our first month of practice ending. Check your emails as Coach Roby has sent out info about billing as the month starts to come to an end! A friendly scheduling reminder that there will be no practice 9/25-26 due to a swim meet and clinic, but we will be back on the boards Sunday the 27th. In Competition news, The Schroeder Fall back Invite has been moved from halloween weekend to Nov 7-8 up in Brown Deer, Wisconsin. If you plan on diving please make sure that your AAU Diving Registration is up to date and you register for the meet on Divelive.com. If you have any questions about registration for the meet or AAU, please reach out to Coach Roby at jroby@d125.org. Stay Frosty!

MOTIVATION OF THE WEEK:

"It's discipline that turns dreams into reality, not talent."

Kobe Bryant

Patriot's Nutrition Corner with Coach Chandra:

Why Do I Need Electrolytes?

Water is important, but sometimes your body needs more. When you sweat, you lose electrolytes such as sodium, potassium, magnesium, and calcium. During longer or harder practices, especially when you are a heavy sweater, replacing some of those electrolytes can help you stay hydrated and maintain performance. If you are regularly experiencing cramping, unusual muscle tightness, headaches, or a big drop in energy during practice, electrolytes may be something to consider. A good starting point during intense training is around 300-750 mg of sodium per hour, depending on your age, size, sweat rate, and the intensity of practice. Check the label on your electrolyte drink or packet to see how much sodium it provides.