

PATRIOT PULSE

Good luck to all our swimmers competing at the NASA Blast-Off at Northwestern University this weekend! We're excited to see everyone race and kick off the meet strong.

Best of luck as well to the NIPC Green and White Teams as they open their winter games on Sunday. Go teams!

Here are a few important reminders and updates:

- **GOODBYE TEAMUNIFY.....HELLO CAPTYN!!!:** Today we are officially announcing our transition from Teamunify to CAPTYN for our team management software. We will continue to use TeamUnify until the end of our Winter season. More information will come over time but here is the timeline...
 - January 2026 New site published.
 - February 2026 Spring Registration opens on the new site!
 - April 1st 2026...Goodbye Team Unify completely.
- **NASA Blast-Off:** This meet is this weekend at Northwestern University. More information will be send out to those attending this event.
- **Holiday Hustle and Bowling Party:** Our Holiday Hustle meet will be at home (afternoon) on December 20th, while the Ugly Sweater Bowl will be on December 21st. You can sign up for the **Bowling Event** here.
- **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.
- **ParentSquare:** We still have families that have not switched from GroupMe to ParentSquare. Please 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! 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.
- **Practice like a PATRIOT Program:** Still going.....Check it out on Instagram!

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12/2/25 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 Power of a Positive Mindset: How Your Thoughts Can Change Your Swimming

by [SUMMER FINKE](#)

You can train harder than anyone else in the pool, but if you don't believe in yourself, it's tough to reach your full potential. The truth is, your mindset matters just as much as your physical strength. What you tell yourself before, during, and after a race shapes how you swim, how you recover, and how much you improve.

Having a positive mindset doesn't mean pretending everything is perfect. It means choosing to believe in yourself, even when things feel uncertain. It means knowing that your thoughts can either lift you up or hold you back. The best swimmers in the world don't just have great strokes; they have great attitudes. Your mind can be your best friend or your worst enemy, and I don't know about you, but I'd much rather have a friend on my shoulder.

When you train with confidence, you give yourself room to grow. You start to see every practice as a chance to get better instead of something to get through. Each lap becomes a step toward your goals. Instead of thinking, "I can't make that interval," try saying, "I'm going to give it everything I've got." That small change can completely shift how your body reacts. When you focus on what you can do instead of worrying about what might go wrong, you swim with more energy, focus, and trust in yourself.

Positivity also helps you bounce back faster. Every swimmer has rough days. The kind where the set feels endless, the race doesn't go your way, or the time on the board isn't what you hoped for. It happens to everyone. What makes great swimmers different is how they handle those moments. Instead of getting stuck on what went wrong, they look for what they can learn. They remind themselves that one swim doesn't define them. Every race, every practice, and every challenge is another chance to grow stronger.

Confidence isn't something you're just born with; it's something you build. It grows when you show up on the days you'd rather sleep in. It grows when you push through a tough set, when you support a teammate, and when you decide to reset after a mistake. The more you practice positive thinking in those little moments, the easier it becomes to bring that same mindset to big races.

Try this at your next practice: when a negative thought pops up, swap it for something better. Instead of "I'm tired," say "I'm getting stronger." Instead of "This is too hard," try "This is making me better." It might sound simple, but those small shifts matter. Your brain believes what it hears most often, so make sure it's hearing things that help you.

And here's the best part: positivity spreads. When you show up with a good attitude, your teammates feel it. The energy in the pool changes. Everyone starts working a little harder and smiling a little more. Being that swimmer who lifts others up doesn't just make you a better teammate; it reminds you why you love this sport.

At the end of the day, swimming is just as mental as it is physical. The pool will always test you, but your mindset determines how you respond. You can't control everything, not the lane you're in, not the weather, and not even the clock. But you can always control your effort, your attitude, and your thoughts.

So the next time you dive in, remember that your mind is one of your strongest tools. Believe in your training, trust your preparation, and stay positive no matter what. You'll be amazed at how far that mindset can take you.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PAC:

- Dec. 21 - Team UGLY SWEATER bowling party.....sign up here, [Bowling Event](#).

SWIM:

- Dec. 6-7 - NASA Winter Blast-Off at Northwestern University. Entries are closed.
- Dec. 10-15 - Winter Junior Nationals in Austin, TX.
- Dec. 12-14 - FOX Holiday Classic in Hobart, IN. Entries are closed.
- Dec. 20 - Holiday Hustle @HOME. Holiday fun with competitive racing!
- Jan. 16-18 - Patriot Pride Meet @HOME. Entries are open until Dec. 15th.

WATER POLO:

- Dec. 7 - Green and White teams have games!

DIVING:

- Nov. 24 - Winter Diving Registration is OPEN!

Patriot's Nutrition Corner with Coach Chandra:

Hydration is a crucial but often overlooked part of performance, especially for swimmers. Even in the water, you lose fluids and electrolytes through sweat during long practices and intense sets. Staying hydrated keeps your muscles loose and working smoothly, supports endurance, and helps you stay mentally focused and motivated in the pool. The right balance of electrolytes—like sodium, potassium, and magnesium—is just as important for preventing cramps and maintaining steady energy. Sip water throughout the day and use electrolytes during longer or harder sessions to stay strong from your first lap to your last.

GROUP UPDATES

SWIMMING

ELITE - Coach Kevin
kzakrzewski@d125.org

We are just over a week away from our journey to Austin TX for Winter Juniors. We have 6 athletes attending this event. Aria Grossenbach, Claire Wang, Jocelyn Hayashi, Nellia Sandor, Brooke Eliacin, and Allan Zhu. Excited for this opportunity at a great facility!

PATRIOT PLUS - Coach Carolyn
cgrevers@d125.org

This week, we're returning to the fundamentals—reviewing stroke technique while continuing to build endurance. Our training focus for the month is the FOX Holiday Classic, and as we prepare, swimmers will be challenged with faster paces and increased endurance work.

Morning practices also begin this week! These sessions provide two additional opportunities for swimmers to sharpen their skills, regain speed, and get more focused stroke work.

PATRIOT - Coach Kee
keehng@gmail.com

For the past week, our swimmers worked hard on aerobics and pulling to build endurance and power. We also spent time reviewing and perfecting stroke technique and race details which will continually be a large focus. Most of our swimmers will attend the last meet of the year at Northwestern University. The meet features short distance events only; therefore, we are adding speed and short race pace training to prepare them for the meet.

JR PATRIOT - Coach Thomas
tschwingen@d125.org

Hopefully, everyone had a great holiday and enjoyed those extra couple of days off. We will be getting back into things this week, so come ready to work hard. Practices for Jr's will be focusing on the Fox meet in Hobart in two weeks. As always, your swimmer needs to have all their equipment and a water bottle every day. Attendance is important, so make sure to come to all the practices that you can.

LIL PATRIOT - Coach Megan
mosullivan@d125.org

Welcome back, I hope everyone had a great break! This week we will work on just building back up endurance and holding technique.

WATER POLO

HS Water Polo - Coach Rose
rwimer@d125.org

Green and White team start winter games on Sunday!

Age Group WATER POLO:

Game Schedule will be out this week, make sure your USA water polo memberships are up to date!

10u WATER POLO:

Winter Season Begins TODAY, December 2nd!

Winter Practice Schedule:
 Sundays 12:15-1:00pm
 Tuesdays 6-6:45pm

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

First full week of the winter session!
 We'll see you on the boards!!

DEVELOPMENTAL DIVING

First practice is Tuesday from 5:30-8pm. Make sure you bring athletic wear for dryland after the pool.

LEARN TO DIVE

Practice this Saturday from 4-5, see you all there!!

MOTIVATION OF THE WEEK:

"If you aren't going all the way, why go at all?"

Joe Namath