

Training Through the Spring and Summer

Now that the majority of our Thunder Swimmers have completed their short course competitive season, the age group coaches would like to offer our thoughts on the value of swimming through the spring and summer months.

Before we do that, however, we would like to congratulate all of the age group swimmers who achieved a SE qualifying time this season. This is a significant accomplishment which is the culmination of hard work and commitment to the sport. One of the primary goals of the team is to field as large of a team and to place as high in the final team rankings as possible. To represent Thunder at this level is quite an honor.

The Schedule: We will not have practice Thursday, February 25th through Saturday, February 27th, due to the SE meet. The following week, we will be on a "reduced schedule", most likely Tuesday, March 2nd through Thursday, March 4th. The entire team will break from Friday, March 5th – Sunday, March 14th. When we come back from break, we may begin on a reduced schedule (Monday through Friday), however, practice times for each group will remain roughly the same through the end of May as they were through the Short Course season. At the end of May/early June, we will begin an "out of school" schedule which will consist of more morning practices throughout the week.

We hope that your swimmer's experience this season was a positive one. As your swimmer continued to work hard in practice, our hope is that he/she gained confidence in his/her abilities and was happy with the meet results, coupled with performance. We hope that the social interaction was enjoyable as well.

While our hope is that all of our swimmers choose to swim through the summer, realistically, we understand that not all swimmers (or parents) are ready to make the mental, physical, or time commitment to long course swimming. Ultimately, the decision should be the swimmer's, not the parents' or the coaches'.

If you are looking for guidance, here are some factors you might want to consider:

- Whew! The short course season is something of a marathon from which your swimmer may need a mental respite. If your swimmer's enthusiasm for the sport has waned, you may want to step away and "prime the pump" for the next short course season.
- Where's the Wall?! It's named long course for a reason. While we try to make accommodations in practice (swimming ½ laps), some of the little bodies aren't ready for 50m training or competition.
- If you can't beat 'em... Those of you with country club roots probably lamented when your swimmer had to compete against the "year round" kids. Now that

you know that Thunder isn't all work, why not become the much-envied "year-round" swimmer who also swims country club?

We like to think that the quality of our practices is slightly better than that of a typical country club practice, so why not mix in both? Your swimmer will enjoy the much-improved results seen at the country club meets, and, along with your testimonials, it's great recruiting for us! While your child is accepting his/her 1st place ribbon, be sure to tell the parents of the 2nd through 6th place finishers how much fun he/she is having at Thunder!

But don't wait until the summer to recruit. If you know a swimmer who is disappointed that the Middle School Swimming season is over and/or wants to get an early start preparing for country club swimming, feel free to pass along the team's website address, e-mail or phone number. The more, the merrier!

Hopefully, this provides you with more insight as you decide your plans for the summer. Despite the rumors, your swimmer can still play other sports including country club swimming, you can still go on vacations, enjoy your summer, and swim with us. However, if you feel as if long course swimming is just one commitment too many, we will love to have you and your swimmer back in the fall.

Thanks for being a part of the Thunder family!

From,

The age group coaches