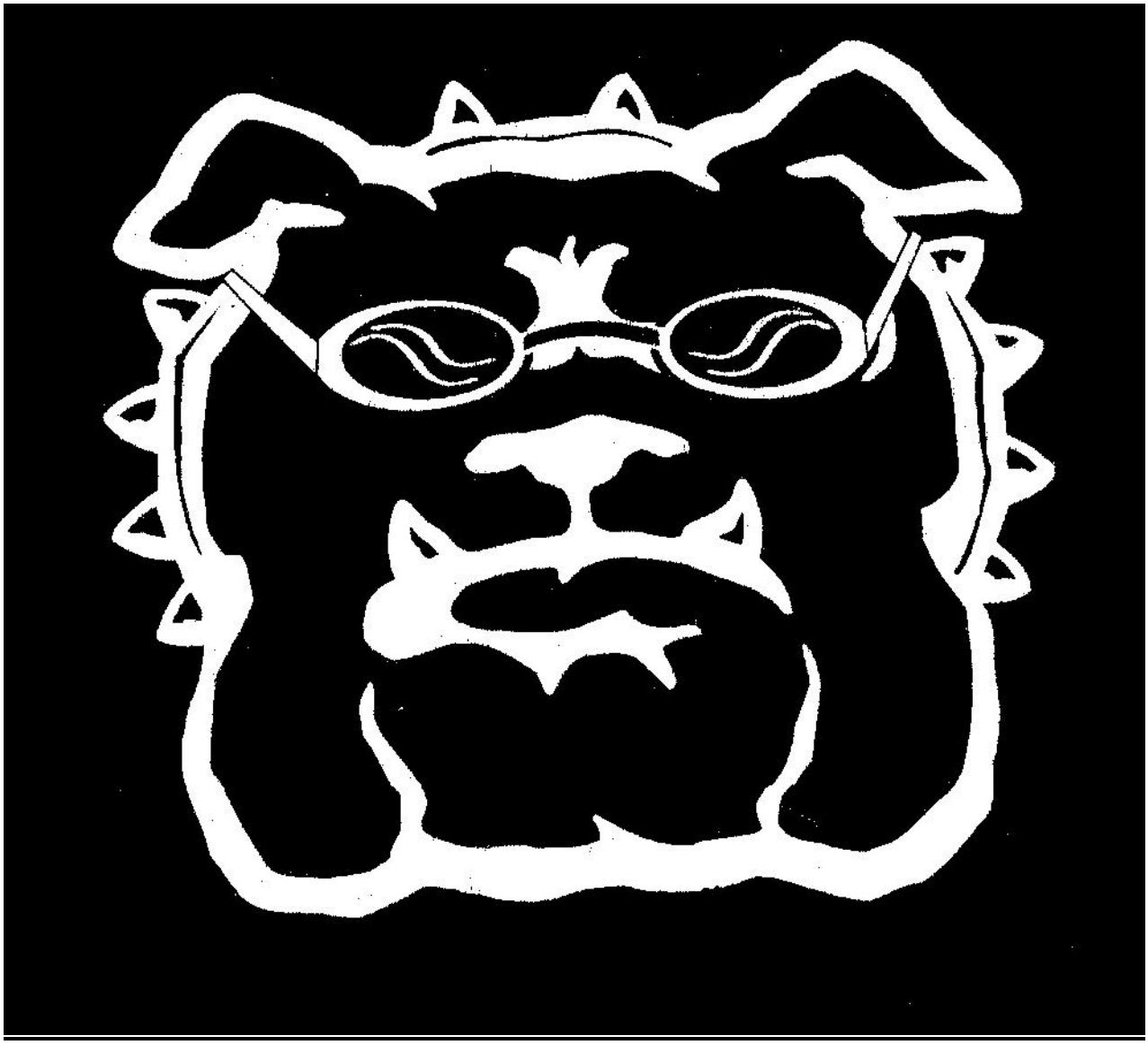
Truman State Swimming Parent Guide

2009-2010 season



TRUMAN SWIMMING PARENT GUIDE

Welcome to, (or welcome back to) the wonderful world of Bulldog Swimming. We've put together this booklet of helpful hints to make your transition to our great team of parents as free of confusion as possible. We are so glad to have you and your son or daughter on our team and we look forward to many fun and exciting moments as the year progresses. Please introduce yourselves so that we can get to know you and answer any questions you may have. Here is a run-down of the year and the traditions and usual happenings that take place with each occasion:

The First Meet

The first meet takes place on Sept 25. It is a combined Purple/White meet on Friday with an Alumni meet on Saturday. The Purple/White meet is an intrasquad meet. This is a fun meet to get the team excited about racing again, to encourage team bonding, and to introduce the freshmen to the dual meet format.

The Alumni meet has a relaxed, fun atmosphere when the Alumni swim against the current squad. The Alumni have a say in what races are swum, and usually pick silly races such as the 100 IM or the 100-yard freestyle relay. The Alumni also give themselves a crutch (i.e. fins) so they can beat the current squad members.

We plan on holding an informal parent meeting right before the Alumni meet at the pool on Saturday, September 26th.

Away Dual Meets

We are proud to say that our away meets, as well as our home meets, are very well attended by Truman parents. In fact, we get many compliments from other teams about our attendance and spirit. Our swimmers have stated over and over how much they appreciate our enthusiasm and support. I hope we can keep up the great work that has been started and maintained for years by our parent alumni.

We are not responsible for our swimmers' travel arrangements or expenses for meets. The coaches make all of these arrangements. We simply show up and cheer them on. There are times when we are allowed to take them out for meals. This happens mostly at meets that require them to spend the night. Many meets are close enough where they take a bus, swim, and then come back on the same day. You can choose to stay where the team stays, or stay somewhere else close by the meet. Meets take approximately 2 – 3 hours, depending on whether diving is included.

Winter Invitational

Our "big" winter meet will be at the University of Iowa, November 20-22. This is the first meet of the year where the swimmers are rested and tapered and ready to swim fast! This meet is a three-day prelim-final format. Many of our swimmers achieve National time standards during this meet.

As soon as we are informed of where the team will be staying, we will attempt to secure a block of parent rooms. This information will be sent to all of you via e-mail as soon as we have it. Although it is not necessary for parents to stay in the same hotel as the team, you probably want to stay near the hotel to take your swimmer out to lunch between prelims and finals, drop them off at the hotel, and be near enough to yours to rest-up for the next session of the meet.

Winter Training Trip

Each winter break the team travels to a warmer site for intense training in preparation for the upcoming championship season. The swimmers come home after semester finals, spend about a week at home over Christmas, and then meet at the training site. For several years, they have trained in Tampa, Florida. This year, they are going to San Diego, CA. The team typically stays in nice condos. They have kitchens where they prepare most of their own meals. Mark will make sure they get to the grocery store when they arrive to stock up on food, etc. They will train twice a day on most days, getting an occasional morning or afternoon off. In between the intense training sessions and running, they can rest in their condos, or frolic on the beach. They will be quite tired and worn-out, but it is definitely worth it in the long run. This trip is an important time for the swimmers to bond and build lasting friendships, as well as work very hard to prepare for the championship season.

As most of you know, this trip is financed by the swimmers/parents. There is a fundraiser in the fall by which swimmers have been known to fund the cost of their entire trip. Coach Mark will explain this to the swimmers in the fall.

This year the swimmers will meet at San Diego Internationl Airport (SAN) on December 27th by 3:00 P.M., then fly back home on January 4th after 9:30 A.M. Flights for your swimmer are your responsibility, but the rest is arranged by the coaches.

Senior Meet and Banquet

These special events take place the day of the last home meet for that year. This year it will take place on January 9th. The senior swimmers are recognized at the meet, which is then followed by a dinner. This banquet is an emotional time when the senior parents speak about their children. Many parents attend, even those that don't have senior swimmers. The senior parents have the responsibility to host this event, so it would be great to have some volunteers to help us out with this. Here is a list of areas where you all could help out:

- Securing a place for the dinner – Napolis currently reserved.
- Choosing a menu and going over it with the caterer – keeping in mind cost to each family. The family members will be responsible for the cost of their meals, but the swimmers are taken care of by the team.
- Table decorations, a display of photos of the seniors, etc.
- Taking reservations, collecting money.
- Senior gifts.
- Arranging for a microphone set-up for parent sharing

Senior parents, please let us know how you would be willing to help out! Thanks so much!

New South Intercollegiate Swim Conference Championships or "Conference"

This is a 4 day meet at the beautiful Delta State Aquatic Center. The first day begins in the early evening and usually features a relay and a distance event. Delta State University is located in Cleveland, MS. We parents have found a few restaurants that have tasty food and accommodate us by staying open a little later. This is a great meet to attend because the swimmers who have not achieved their National cuts are tapered, rested, and ready to swim their best times! We fans pull out our pom-poms, signs, Bulldog attire, and other fun stuff to cheer the team. Delta State hosts theme nights where we wear Hawaiian shirts and grass skirts; Mardi Gras night with beads and cake; and school colors galore!

The Holiday Inn Express has a block of rooms reserved for the parents. The town is small and all of the hotels are close by, however some are not very desirable. Here are the ones we would recommend: Hampton Inn and Holiday Inn located on the north end of the city.

NCAA National Championships

This meet is attended by swimmers who have achieved at least one '**A'** National cut in an individual event or a relay during the current collegiate swimming year. The swimmer can also swim in the events that they achieve '**B'** cuts in, as long as they have an 'A' cut in something else. Each team is allowed to bring up to 18 women and 18 men. The swimmer can swim in up to 4 individual events and 3 relays. In the event that more than 18 men or women are qualified, it is up to the Coach to make the difficult decision of who gets to attend and represent the team.

The meet takes place in a different location each year. The team may fly or take a bus, depending on the distance. This very exciting meet is 4 days long with prelims and finals each day. This year, Nationals is being held in Canton, Ohio.A parent block of rooms is secured at the Fairfield Inn.

If you attend this meet be prepared to get crazy in the stands. We break out all of the heartfelt cheers and methods to put smiles on our swimmers faces and motivate them to swim as fast as they possibly can!

Truman's Midterm break is during Nationals

Other Thoughts and Tips

1. Parents have the opportunity to purchase t-shirts during the season. There are team t-shirts, the same ones that the swimmers have, as well as separate ones that the parents arrange just for us. If you have any ideas for t-shirts please let us know. We like to have ones that are black, white, purple, or gray – that way on certain meet days we can all wear the same color and look unified.

2. It is nice for parents to "adopt" a swimmer that has no family members present when they are away at long meets. It's nice to take them out for a meal, and make sure they are doing okay. The coaches will give the swimmers permission to leave meets with their parents or the parents of another swimmer. They, the coaches, need to know who is with whom however. There are times when the swimmers are expected to stay with the team and not leave with their parents. Your swimmer will communicate with you during the meet concerning when they can join you and when they can't.

3. We encourage parents to help us decorate the room the swimmers have meals in at the hotel they are staying at during Nationals. Signs and banners are great additions to the dining room. We also like to decorate their room doors with encouraging signs, quotes, etc. We try to avoid putting anything on their doors with their name on them for safety reasons. We make sure that anything we do in the hotel is approved by the management beforehand.

End of Year Banquet

There is a banquet at the end of the school year, usually one or two weeks before graduation, and the end of the semester. The coaches make the arrangements for this. Swimmers meals are paid for by the team, but the family members pay for themselves. This is a time when Coach Mark speaks, the senior swimmers themselves speak, a few awards are given out, a meal is shared, and a slide show capturing all the special moments of the year is shown. It is a time to say goodbye to parents and swimmers who may not be seen again. This is a sad but important time. A lighter moment of the banquet is when the seniors give "gag" awards to the rest of the team, a time when parents find out some little secrets that their kids have not shared with them before. It can be pretty amusing.

Summer Training

Please encourage your son/daughter to continue to train hard during the summer months. Swimmers arriving in the fall who have not swum much during their break will struggle to get into the shape required to be a successful Bulldog.