

IV. Post-Season

A. Post-Season Booklet

One of the best ways to motivate your team for the next season is to publish a post-season booklet. It is also extremely useful when preparing scouting reports for next year's early season meets.



The booklet takes a lot of pre-planning. It is very helpful to involve several of your parents on this project. They can collect meet results, take photos, and collate the book.

Start out simple – with a roster of the team, the award winners, a "best times" list for each swimmer, and meet results. From there it can grow as big as your imagination will let it. The booklet is most effective when distributed at your post-season banquet. This way the parents will be able to see it and will leave the banquet with a positive impression of your organizational skills.

Ask other coaches in your area for a copy of their team booklet to get ideas. Every booklet has unique features. Do not be shy about "stealing" ideas from other programs. It is likely that they "stole" it too!



Topics for a table of contents could include:

Cover page	Coaches letter	Captain's letter
Team roster	Coaching Staff	Award winners
Meet results	Overall record	State qualifiers
All Americans	Class records	School records
League/Region records	Time standards	Best Times list
Photos	Newspaper articles	Motivational quotes
Alibi plate (list of your favorite excuses offered during the season)		
Team history (past captains, State Champions, All Americans, etc.)		
Championship meet team scores.		
Recognition of volunteers who helped during the year		

B. Team Video

Taking pictures of the team throughout the year and then putting it together in a video or DVD presentation can create lasting memories of the season for the team. With the convenience of digital cameras, scanners, and the like, the task has become easier to create a team video. But, this is another job that is overwhelming for one person to do alone unless you have a lot of free time on your hands; ask the parents and swimmers to help or form a committee to take on the project.



C. Season Evaluation

After the season has ended, ask the team to fill out an evaluation survey for you. Do not make the swimmers identify themselves if you want the truer perspective of your program.

Questions to help get you started may include:

- What was your most favorite practice during the season?
- What was your favorite social?
- What teams do you want to swim against next year?
- What three things did you like best about being on the team?
- What three things did you like least about being on the team?
- What would you wish we could do that we didn't?
- Did you use the meet evaluations during the season?
- What improvements would you like to see for next year?
- Did you feel that you were treated fairly as a member of the team?
- If no – please explain



The list can go on and on, but try to ask questions with short answers; however, allow the questions to be answered with more than a yes or no. This will make it easier for you to read and track the evaluations. Questions will change from year to year, but this will offer you a new insight into your program.

D. Awards Banquet

It is always nice to end the season with a banquet to honor the team members. It can be anything from pot luck to a catered banquet.

Have a display set up with the awards.

In your program make sure to include:

- A team roster – everyone on the team needs to be mentioned
- Region / League / State Champions
- State Qualifiers

In addition to the presentation of the awards, some of the things you might consider to do could include:

- Comments from the school administration, coaches, etc.
- A quick review of the past four years (one or two highlights from each year along with comments from the seniors (what is your most memorable experience from swimming, words of advice for the underclassmen, etc.)
- The role and responsibilities of being a team captain and the announcement of the captain(s) for the following year
- Distribution of your post season booklet
- Showing of the team video



Try to keep the entire affair to 1 ½ to 2 hours in length

V. Conclusion

The information provided in this chapter will assist both the experienced and novice coach to better navigate the swimming waters. A head coach must constantly nurture relationships with all the constituents that make up the world of swimming.

The list of potential ideas is endless but they will only happen if you plan ahead. Make notes during the current season for implementing ideas next year. It is too easy to forget a great idea if it is not written down.

The methods of communication are changing rapidly due to the widespread use of computers. The internet, e-mail, and web pages are being used more and more as people become comfortable with the technology.

Coaching is a very rewarding experience. Swimmers and their parents truly appreciate a coach who is constantly trying to provide them with the best possible program.

Not everyone will win a championship, but everyone can enjoy their participation in high school swimming. The relationships and friendships you and your team develop will last a lifetime if you take the time to prepare for each season.

Remember to learn from the coaches and programs you respect. We are all students of the sport no matter how long we have been coaching. NISCA and your state coaches association provide a great opportunity for all of us to learn from each other.

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