

The Ultra-short Race-pace Training International Association

CODE OF ETHICS FOR SWIMMING COACHES

A definition of the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for swimming coaches (referred to as "members") involved with activities representing and on behalf of the USRPT International Association (hereinafter referred to as the "Association") is provided as a description of professional policy and behavior. This Code is in effect for all activities and situations, inside and outside of the Association, while a member belongs to the Association.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to establish and maintain standards for representatives of the Association, coaches who advertize they are using the USRPT format of swimming coaching, and to inform the public using a member's services.

Ethical standards comprise such values as integrity, responsibility, and confidentiality.

Members of the Association, in assenting to this Code, accept their responsibility to athletes, colleagues, the Association, related sporting organizations, to clients and their representatives/guardians, and to society. In pursuit of these principles, members subscribe to standards in the following areas:

- i. Issues of responsibility; and
- ii. issues of competence.

This Code of Ethics is a framework within which to work. It is a series of guidelines rather than a set of instructions.

1. ISSUES OF RESPONSIBILITY

Coaching athletes is a deliberately undertaken responsibility, and members are responsible for the observation of the principles embodied in the Code of Ethics.

Humanity

1.1 Members should endeavor to respect the rights, dignity, and worth of every swimmer and their ultimate right to self-determination. Specifically, members should endeavor to treat everyone equally, within the context of their activity, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, or political affiliation.

1.2 When members are transferred responsibility for control of minors, they should endeavor to conduct and guide such individuals according to the highest standards of morality and direction.

Relationships

1.3 The well-being, health, and future of athletes should be of primary concern to members.

1.4 A key element in a coaching relationship is the development of athlete independence. Athletes should be encouraged to accept responsibility for their own behavior and performance in training, competitions, and their social life.

1.5 In conjunction with parents and officials, members should set and monitor boundaries between a working relationship and friendship with athletes. This is particularly important when the coach and athlete are of opposite gender and/or when the athlete is a young person. The coach should realize that certain situations or friendly actions could be misinterpreted, not only by the athlete, but by outsiders motivated by jealousy, dislike, or mistrust, and could lead to allegations of misconduct or impropriety.

Commitment

1.6 Members should clarify in advance with Association officials and/or parents and/or athletes the number of practice sessions, fees (if any), and method of payment for services rendered to athletes.

1.7 Members should explore with Association officials and/or parents and/or athletes the expectations of the outcome of their coaching activities.

1.8 Members have a responsibility to declare to the Association and/or their employers any other current coaching commitments.

Conflict of Interest

1.9 Members who become aware of a conflict between their obligation to other entities (e.g., employers) and/or athletes, and their obligation to the Association, or other organization employing them, should make explicit the nature of the conflict and the loyalties and responsibilities involved, to all parties concerned.

1.10 Members should declare to the Association Administration, any actual or perceived conflict of interest pertaining to any matter undertaken by the Administration and/or the Association, previous to said undertaking. Necessary action regarding conflict of interest may be determined by the Association Administration or a properly constituted committee.

Cooperation

1.11 Members should communicate and cooperate with other sports organizations and allied professions in the best interests of their athletes. An example of such contact would be the seeking of educational and career advice/counseling for athletes whose sport training impinges upon the performance of their studies.

1.12 Members should communicate and cooperate with registered medical and ancillary practitioners in the diagnosis, treatment, and management of athletes' medical and psychological problems.

1.13 Members should not endeavor to give advice and direction in matters for which they are not certified when competent professionals in those matters are available (e.g., medical or pharmaceutical advice should never be given or opinions expressed).

Advertising

1.14 Advertising by members should be accurate, devoid of deception, and conservative in nature.

1.15 Members should not display any affiliation with an organization in a manner that falsely implies sponsorship or accreditation by that organization.

Integrity

1.16 Ideally, members should refrain from criticizing fellow coaches, athletes, parents, and/or officials, particularly to and/or through the media. When public comments are made, members have an obligation to ensure that such comments are judicious, reflective of facts, supportable, and sensitive to the situation(s). Differences of opinion should be dealt with on a personal basis and more serious disputes should be referred to the Association.

1.17 Members should encourage athletes, parents, and officials to obey the rules and spirit of the rules of the sport of swimming.

1.18 Members should never advocate the use of performance enhancing substances and/or banned drugs.

1.19 Members are expected to treat officials, parents, and athletes in a courteous manner.

1.20 Members should undertake to encourage appropriate behavior of athletes, fellow coaches, parents, and officials.

Confidentiality

1.21 Members inevitably gather a great deal of personal information in the course of their professional duties. Members should be clear as to what is to be regarded as confidential information and not divulge any such information without the express

approval of the individuals/athletes involved. Approval is usually indicated on the Association's informed consent document or another like document.

1.22 Confidentiality does not preclude the disclosure of information to persons who can be judged to have a 'right to know' when relevant to the following:

- i Evaluation of the athlete within the sport for competitive selection purposes;
- ii recommendations concerning athletes for a professional occupation or employment;
- iii pursuit of disciplinary action involving athletes within their sport, and
- iv pursuit of disciplinary action by the Association involving fellow coaches in alleged breaches of this Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct, or matters pertaining to the health and/or safety of an athlete(s).

Abuse of Privilege

1.23 On occasion, members are privileged to have contact with athletes and to travel and reside with the athletes in the course of coaching and competitive situations. Members should not attempt to exert undue influence over the athlete in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.

Recruiting – Athlete Poaching

1.24 The success or failure of any coach could be determined by the achievements of any athlete. Members of the Association should discourage any attempt by an athlete, parent, coach, or other interested party to:

- i Alter an existing athlete/coach relationship, unless the existing coach has knowledge of an athlete's desire for a change, or
- ii malign a coach for the purpose of changing an existing coach/athlete relationship.

[Athletes are responsible for informing the present coach of a desire to change, and in the case of minors, it is the responsibility of parents or guardians.]

1.25 Contact with any member by an individual regarding the possible transfer of an athlete from one club to another necessitates the coach of record being informed of the intention and approval of that coach should be sought for a transfer. Transgression of this protocol would be a breach of the spirit of the Code of Ethics. Once a transfer is completed, both coaches should be fully communicative and cooperative in the exchange of information in the best interests of the athlete and his/her success.

Job Applications

1.26 When any member considers applying for a position currently held by another member, an application should only be made if the position is advertized publicly. No member should actively seek to displace another member by covert means.

Personal Standards

1.27 Members are expected to consistently display high personal standards and project a favorable image of their sport and coaching to athletes, parents, officials, sporting administrators, spectators, the media, and the general public.

1.28 Personal appearance is a matter of individual taste but when in official duties for the Association, the member should project an image of health, cleanliness, functional efficiency, and wear appropriate Association apparel.

1.29 Alcohol should not be consumed while on duty as an Association coach. In situations where minors are represented in a team, neither the member nor any other team member should consume any alcohol. In representations where all team members are of legal age, minor amounts of alcohol may be taken in appropriate formal public settings. Excessive use of alcohol will warrant disciplinary action by the Association.

1.30 Tobacco products should not be used publicly during any Association representation. Recognizing that smoking is an addiction, members who must smoke should do so privately and not in the presence of any athlete or non-smoking fellow-member. No member should endorse any use of tobacco products.

1.31 No member should use or encourage others to use recreational or performance altering drugs.

1.32 A member's use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs should not interfere with any other individual's freedoms and should not prohibit any individual from functioning completely and responsibly.

Safety

1.33 Members have a responsibility to ensure the safety of the athletes with whom they work as far as possible and within the limits of their control.

1.34 All reasonable steps should be taken to establish a safe working/practice environment.

1.35 Work and the manner in which it is done should be in keeping with regular and approved practices within the USRPT model for swimming.

1.36 Activities should be suitable for the ages, experiences, and abilities of the athletes.

Association Unity

1.37 The Administration and officers of the Association are charged with its administration; establishing and maintaining philosophies, policies and procedures, and advising outside groups in the best interests of swimming and the Association. Notwithstanding, it is the right of any member(s) to speak in contradiction or support of any policy, procedure, or decision of the Administration. However, it shall be a breach of the Code of Ethics for any member or group of members to propound a philosophy, policy, or decision, in contradiction of the Association when said member(s) is/are perceived to be acting as the voice of 'coaches' and/or the Association.

2. ISSUES OF COMPETENCE

2.1 Members should confine themselves to practice in those fields of coaching in which they have been trained/educated, and which are recognized by the Association to be valid. Valid areas of expertise are those directly concerned with the sporting appointment. Training is certification at some level within a national coaching accreditation scheme or its equivalent, and also includes the accumulation of knowledge and skills through both formal coach education courses/seminars and by experience at a level of competence acceptable for independent coaching duties.

2.2 Members are expected to recognize and accept when to refer athletes to other agencies. As far as possible, it is the member's responsibility to verify the competence and integrity of the person to whom they refer the athletes.

2.3 Members should regularly seek ways of increasing their professional development and self-awareness. Coaches should demonstrate an ongoing commitment to continuing education in the field of coaching and in particular, that involving swimming.

2.4 Members should welcome the evaluation of their work by colleagues and should be able to account to employers and colleagues for their actions, when/if deemed necessary.

2.5 Members have a responsibility to themselves and their athletes to maintain their own effectiveness, resilience and abilities, and to know when personal resources are so depleted as to make it necessary for them to seek help and/or withdraw from coaching, whether temporarily or permanently.

