

Lancer's Swim Meet parent guide

Swim meets are a new experience for many Lancer swimmers, and parents the following is information to make that experience more enjoyable.

Swim meets often have 300 to 700 swimmers entered in a meet. Our home meet has a maximum of 500 swimmers. Pool deck space is limited so we ask parents and swimmers not to “camp out” on the pool deck. A designated “Crash area” (usually a gymnasium) is more comfortable for swimmers and their families. Both the West and East gym will be reserved at Harney pool.

Swimmers are to see their coach before and **immediately** following their event. In order for corrections/praise to be effective it needs to be given while the event is still fresh in both the swimmers mind and coaches.

Coaches and Officials make every effort to see that swimmers are in the correct heat and lane. However; it is up to the swimmer to be at the correct place at the correct time and pay attention once they are behind the starting blocks. Parents are not allowed behind the blocks unless they are a timer. Some but not all swim meets have a staging area called the “**clerk of the course**”. The event name and number are announced in the gym and pool deck swimmers should then report to the clerk of the course. The Clerk of the course will organize and place swimmers in proper heat and lane.

Pictures may be taken but NO flash photography is allowed at the start.

Lancer parents and swimmers have a reputation for being one of the most supportive and polite teams in our League. We lead by example and take pride in being a positive role model for all teams.

What to bring to the meet!

- Direction to the pool/event entry sheet Posted on the web-site 1-2 days before
- Swim gear—cap/goggles/suit/2 towels/sweat suit for swimmer
- Snacks (Apples/oranges/breakfast bars/cheese stick/crackers/sandwiches)
- Drinks (Water/Gatorade)

- Sleeping bag or blanket for swimmer to lounge on in crash area between events
- Book/homework/small games/deck of card to keep them busy between events (Please secure high cost items such as I-Pods or leave them home)
- Lawn chairs (a must for parents)

Heat sheet or psych sheets are sold at the meet. If your child entered late they will not be listed in the program these are printed 3 to 5 days ahead of the meet.

Food is sold in the concession area (this is a fund raiser for the host team). Most meets have a vendor selling various swim gear, T-shirt/goggles/suits

Event results are posted in the crash area, designated hall or lobby. The times posted are usually accurate, electronic touch pads are very sensitive and are backed up with two stop watches. When there is a large discrepancy between the touch pads and stop watches an average is taken to determine the time.

Swim meet rules and etiquette

1. Good sportsmanship – no arguing with official's/throwing goggles/temper tantrums.
2. No diving in the pool during general warm-ups; during warm-up enter the pool feet first (Starts which are conducted at the end of general warm-up's are when you are allowed to dive in under coach control) **Swimmers can be removed from the meet, this is a safety issue.**
3. Disqualifications are handled by the Official's/Judges please **do not** confront or argue with an official or judge this can result in your removal from the meet. If we become "unglued" our swimmers miss the opportunity to learn from their mistake, and how to do it correctly next time.
4. Please police your trash up in the crash area and pool deck
5. Don't compare your child with another on the team or worse with a sibling (each child learns at there own pace).
6. Cheer for your child as well as their teammates and friends.
7. Avoid the temptation to coach or give your child last minute tips, the coach has specific technique tasks that they will give your child and too much coaching will only lead to confusion and failure.

8. Don't participate in negative conversations or gossiping about other swimmers/parents/coaches. If you have concerns or issues please speak to your coach after the meet or between sessions.
9. Do Not be late for warm-ups, coaches are required to turn in a scratch sheet during warm-ups (late arrivals risk being dropped from the meet with NO REFUNDS)
10. Last but not least DO NOT BRIBE YOUR CHILD, tell them you are proud of them even when they come in last or are disqualified. It is all about the journey not just one race.

Swim Parents' Survival Guide!

How can I support my swimmer?

- 1) Encourage their enthusiasm about swimming, but remember that the children are there to have fun.
- 2) Get them to practice as often as possible.
- 3) Make sure they're getting enough rest and eating well.
- 4) Volunteer to help with team events. Our swimmers work hard, so they deserve to have well-run meets, fundraisers and fun activities. These only happen when parents step-up to make them happen.
- 5) Let the coaches do their jobs.
- 6) Learn as much as you can about swimming to share the sport with your swimmer. Go to www.USASwimming.org and click on the "Parents" section for resources and tips.

How do I find out about practice schedules, swim meet dates, and other important events?

Our team relies heavily on our website and our blog for communication. All of our scheduled and last minute events (weather cancellations) are posted on our team blog. Parents are reminded to check the website daily for practice schedule updates. There is a link to the blog on FTLL.net. You can subscribe to the blog to receive new posts as they're added, or just remember to check it on your own on a regular basis.

How do I speak with the coach about my swimmer?

We all have questions for the coaches from time to time, and it's important to get information about how your swimmer is progressing. If you've been at the pool during

practice lately, you've seen how busy the coaches are with ALL of the swimmers on deck. Please contact your child's coach to arrange a meeting time other than during practice. The coaches' e-mail addresses can be found on FTLL.net. No parents on the pool deck during practice unless you are volunteering to help.

How do I pay the monthly coaching fee?

Monthly payments are due by the 5th of the month. You may drop your check in the payment box at the pool, mail it to FTLL, PO Box 174, Leavenworth, KS 66048, or set up an automatic electronic transfer with your on-line banking ability. A \$10 late fee will be assessed after the 10th of each month.

My child will be out of the water most of the month for other activities. Why can't I just pay for part of the month?

Our coaches are paid a contracted amount, no matter whether every swimmer is there or not. The team relies on consistent monthly income to meet our contractual obligations to our coaches. Monthly payments should be paid on time, in full, unless other arrangements have been made with the team treasurer.

Swim meets are a new experience for many Lancer swimmers, and parents the following is information to make that experience more enjoyable.

SWIM MEET SURVIVAL GUIDE

How do I enter my child in a swim meet?

The coaches will enter each swimmer in the events best suited to that swimmer's goals and abilities at the time of the meet.

- 1) The team will post an "entry report" on FTLL.net about a week prior to the meet.
- 2) It is the parents' responsibility to review the entry report for their child and either accept or decline to swim in a particular meet.
- 3) Most meets begin Friday evenings and run through the weekend. If a swimmer can't participate on one of the days of the meet, just select the entries for the day they are able to make it.
- 4) Pay the entry fees PRIOR to the meet (the deadline will be posted on the website). These can be placed in the black "Lancer" payment box in the observation room at the pool. You pay an entry fee per event entered, plus a meet fee, which covers coaches' travel expenses.

How do I prepare my swimmer for their first meet?

Swim meets are very busy and exciting, but they can be overwhelming for young swimmers and those who are new to competition. Here are some pointers to help get them (and you!) through the first one.

Before the meet –

- 1) Practice pays off. Encourage your swimmer to get to practice as often as they can and work hard during those practice sessions.
- 2) Get enough rest. Some of the meets begin early in the morning and are some distance from Ft. Leavenworth. Make sure your swimmer gets enough sleep before a meet.
- 3) Feed those “fish.” Our swimmers are working hard and burning lots of calories in the water. Make sure they eat well before and during the meet.
- 4) Know where and when you need to be for the meet. The team will post maps to the pools and coaches will let swimmers know about warm-up times. Make sure to check these before you’re heading out the door to the meet.

At the meet –

- 1) Set the scene – We compete in a variety of pools around the Kansas City metro area. At each meet, the host team will set up a “Crash Area” (usually a gym) for swimmers and their families to park their gear (lawn chairs, blankets, pillows, coolers). Pool deck space is usually limited, so we ask parents and swimmers not to “camp out” on the pool deck. There can be anywhere from two to forty teams at any given meet, which means there are lots of people. Our team tries to sit together in the crash area, so look for familiar faces when you arrive.
- 2) What to bring – Team suit, cap, goggles, extra goggles, towels, something to sit on, something to do between races (books, video games, cards, music, homework), warm clothes to wear between races, healthy snacks and drinks. Most meets will have a concession area selling snacks and drinks.
- 3) The races – Swimmers will compete against others of the same age and be “seeded” into heats with those who have similar times. New swimmers with “no times” (NT), will all swim together, usually at the beginning of each event. The events alternate boy/girl throughout the meet. There’s usually an emcee letting people where to be when, but parents can help make sure their swimmers get where they need to be prior to their event. Swimmers need to see their coach before and immediately following each event they swim. In order for corrections and praise to be effective, they need to be given while the event is still fresh on their minds.

- 3) Do your best – Swim meets are competitive, but the main purpose is to show the swimmers that all their hard work at practice is paying off for them personally. The best thing parents can do for their child is support them, no matter how they perform at a meet. Some will get great times, others not so great, and everyone gets disqualified at least once in their swimming career. Just hug them and be proud of them for getting out there and doing their best.
- 4) Ask another parent or coach – If you have questions about what's happening at the meet, please ask a "veteran" parent or one of the coaches. They'll be happy to try and help.

After the meet

- 1) Focus on the positive – Imagine you're the swimmer in the back seat on the way home from a meet and imagine what you'd like to hear from your parents. "Wow, you really had a great start in that backstroke event!" or "I can tell you've been working on your flip turns at practice."
- 2) Help with setting goals for the next meet.
- 3) Milkshakes on the way home are a good treat for everyone!