

Lakeside Aquatic Club

Coach to Parent Articles – Issue 1

Dear LAC Parents,



LAC Coaches are excited to introduce a new monthly article that is either written or contributed by our LAC Coaches. This serves to inform and educate parents about the sport of competitive swimming. These articles are divided into sections for Novice parents, Age Group parents, and National level parents. We encourage you to read all articles and e-mail bill.christensen@swimlac.org if you have any questions. Enjoy!

NEW SWIMMER MEET QUESTIONS?

By Coach Shelley Ross -Site Head Age Group Coach -Keller – shelley.ross@swimlac.org

Q: What meets should my newer swimmer attend?

A new LAC swimmer should attend meets that have “B/C” or “BB and Below” in the title. For example, a Keller site LAC swimmer’s 1st meet will be the “NTN BB and Below.” The title means the host team is “NTN” and only swimmers with “BB” swims can swim those events. A new swimmer is a swimmer with no to little club meet experience. They do not have official results in the USA Swimming Database.

Q: What do “BB” and “B/C” mean?

“BB” and “B/C” are USA Swimming time standards. “C” times are No Times or 1st level swims. “B” times are 2nd level, then “BB” times are the 3rd level with “A” times being the 4th level. Once you achieve “BB” or “A” times then you can attend faster meets. **For now, new LAC swimmers should plan on attending “B/C” and “BB and below” meets.**

Here is a link for the time standards that they will use this fall and winter. https://www.teamunify.com/mnedi/UserFiles/Image/QuickUpload/2021-2024-national-age-group-motivational-times-scy_016124.pdf

Each event (50 free, 100 back, etc.) has their own time standard. They are sorted by course (short course yards, long course meters, and short course yards), gender (male or female) and age group (10 & under, 11-12,13-14, and 15-16). So, if the swimmer is a 10-year-old girl and she swims the 50 free in 38.00 seconds in a 25-yard pool (SCY) then she achieved a “B” time for that event only.

Q: What events should my swimmer participate in?

Most new swimmers usually swim the shorter events (50s and 100s) at the first few meets. Coaches usually place swimmers in events that the swimmer can complete legally and get a positive experience. **FYI - 500 frees, 400 IMs, 200 Flys are not good 1st events.** If you do happen to select your swimmers’ events, the coach can change events based on what they feel is best for the swimmer.

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Q: How do I sign my swimmer up for a swim meet?

You sign-up for swim meets on the LAC website under meet events.

- Go to meet events page
- Select attend the correct meet
- Select the swimmer's name
- **Select “attend” the meet.**
- Make comments in Notes box if needed
- Scroll down to the bottom of the page and select “Save Changes.”

Parents can leave important information in the comment box. Comments such as “my swimmer can only attend on Saturday” or “we need to leave by 2pm” are helpful

New swimmers should let the coach sign the swimmer up for the specific events. This is what you do when you follow the above procedure. If you do pick the events, make sure you still hit “Save Changes.”

Q: What will my swimmer need for meets?

The Team Uniform for LAC is following.

1. An Arena black LAC logo suit
2. An Arena red LAC logo cap
3. Your choice of goggles but Arena preferred

LAC wears a different color LAC t-shirt at swim meets.

- Friday - grey T-shirts
- Saturday- red T-Shirts
- Sunday - black T-shirts

The season starter pack sold by Xtreme Swim has a shirt with all 3 colors.

<https://www.teamunify.com/team/ntlac/page/program-info/equipment-store>

Other items to bring - two pairs of goggles, two towels, extra athletic type clothes to keep warm between events, water bottle, small healthy snacks, and a permanent marker. A lightweight camping/folding type chair can be brought at swim meets for the swimmers to sit in at swim meets. Sometimes chairs are not allowed on deck but there should be enough bleacher space for the swimmers. **DO NOT BRING-** Practice equipment, candy, and sugary drinks.

Q: Who can I ask questions during the meet?

LAC places “lifesavers” in the lobby during meets. They are experienced parent volunteers that can answer general questions or help get you to the right person for assistance. These volunteers are usually wearing blue shirts with a red and white lifesaver ring buoy on the back.

Each meet will have individual policies and last-minute changes. The coaching staff will always do our best to communicate this information by email the week leading up to a meet. But it is a good idea to check the meet information the day before the meet, all last-minute changes will be posted there as well.

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VOLUNTEERS - AT A SWIM MEET, WHY?

By Coach Bill Christensen -Site Supervisor and Senior Coach- Keller – bill.christensen@swimlac.org

LAC works hard at ensuring our athletes get fair, well run, and appropriate swim meets and events for our swimmers. It cannot be done without volunteers. To make volunteering as fair as possible, all families agree when registering to participate in making our events successful for our swimmers. Here is the link to the Volunteer requirements (you might need to be logged in to get to this page).

<https://www.teamunify.com/team/ntlac/page/parent-info/volunteer-obligation>.

LAC needs volunteers because USA Swimming meets require lots of planning, staffing, and coordination. Almost every person working the meet is a **volunteer**: timers, computer operators, meet referee, marshals, hospitality workers, and scoreboard operator. The running of a swim meet is large operation done mostly by volunteers. Why do we need so many volunteers?

- 1) ***Every LAC swim meet is sanctioned and insured by USA Swimming.*** Failure to follow meet sanctioning rules can lead to meet results not being official or loss of insurance coverage if there an incident.
 - a. Marshals are there to ensure only swimmers and certified USA Swimming officials and timers are allowed on deck.
 - b. They are also there to help ensure the safety of the swimmers
- 2) ***Every swim, at an LAC meet, has a result given to it.*** No swim goes unrecorded or gets its results posted incorrectly.
 - a. This why we ask for 2 timers per lane. They are used as back-up times if the touchpads do not work correctly. Each timer has a stopwatch and back-up electric timing button to record times for each race.
 - b. Several officials are on deck and in back room certifying the events were swum correctly and times are official. Officials are strategically placed to properly observe and ensure each event is swum correctly. Video tape cannot be used to overturn a DQ.
 - c. When results are deemed official (this can take a few days), they get posted into the USA Swimming SWIMS data base. Proof of time for future LAC meets can only be taken from this data base. High school times (except large HS meets) and summer league meets cannot be used as proof time for LAC Swim meets.
 - d. SCOREBOARDS and MEET MOBILE are not final results

Some positions require some training and experience like an official, timing operator, scoreboard operator. Others do not require experience such as timers and marshals. Here is the link to positions offered <https://www.teamunify.com/team/ntlac/page/parent-info/volunteer-jobs>. As LAC hosted meets start to become available to your swimmers, so will the volunteer opportunity. Please help the best you can because in the long run, it helps your athlete.

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WHY DOESN'T MY SWIMMER GET BEST TIMES ALL THE TIME?

By Steve Mateer – National Team Coach, The Colony

This is a question most coaches get every year, especially this time of the season. There can be many reasons but here are a few reasons to give your perspective on what might be happening with your swimmer when they do not get a best time every race.

Age and Developmental Stage - 12 & Under swimmers usually improve throughout the season. They are consistent because of gains in strength, size, and maturity just through growing up. Racing can be more trial and error, but improvement can be more consistent with them than an older, more experienced swimmer.

13 & Older swimmers, in general, need more specific and long-term training plans to achieve best times. The maturing process is changing, they cannot achieve best time by just showing up at practice and swimming. They are starting to need seasonal and multi-seasonal plans. In the early part of the season the swimmers are starting to work very hard, and frankly they are tired. Most of the older swimmers understand this and anticipate this happening. However, this can be hard on the swimmers in their mid-teens as they transition from age group swimming to "Senior" swimming. It sometimes takes them a season or two to understand the process.

Seasonal Training plan - At the beginning of the season, coaches work on technique more. Time improvement is not as important as skill improvement. Sometimes, swimmers need to change how they swim. It takes time and practice change technique to improve time later. This can be a "One step back, two steps forward" process. The coaches want to see these changes in the early meets, and this is the first time the swimmers are racing with these changes. The technique changes are happening and will help the swimmer but are not showing up at the 1st meet after the changes are made.

Tech Suits - Most swimmers have best times at the end of a season after resting and wearing a Tech racing suit. Tech suits are saved for the big meets because they do have that "special feel" and if you wear them all the time that feel is not special anymore. They are not worn this time of year. Tech suits are saved for meets where the swimmer has put together the whole training plan to swim faster.

Athletes can have bad days- This does not mean they are going backwards; it means they had a bad day. I asked a parent one time if they were better every day at work then the day before. Not every swim is a best time nor is it a poor swim that can be explained. Sometimes, swimmers just did not have it for that race or day.

Parents, it is important that you understand there are several factors that go into a swimmer getting a best time. It is important that when your child doesn't have a best time, and they are upset, that you tell them you understand. Say something loving and move on. I thought I would end this with by telling you what I say to my swimmers at the first meet. I tell them I'm not going to use my stopwatch, I'm going to "Stop and watch". Thank you for reading this and best of luck to your swimmer.

Sincerely,
Coach Steve
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HOW DOES THE ELETRICAL TIMING SYSTEM AND SCOREBOARD WORK?

- The start of each race is started with an electronic starter. The starter (the beep and flash of light) tells the swimmers to go, the timers start the manual stopwatches, and the timing system (a computer designed only for recording times) starts the recording of the race.
- The timing system activates the scoreboard and each touch pad.
 - The timing system has event number and length of race pre-programmed into before the start of the meet.
 - Timing system operator fix mistakes and reset it for the next race.
- Each lane has a timing pad is secured against the finish wall. The touchpad pad records a time every time the pad is touched (with built-in delays of 10 to 15 seconds).
- When the race is over the timing system stops the race, uploads the results, saves the results, prints the results, and send the results to the Scoreboard.
 - *If there are mistakes with the timing system. The scoreboard will not know it. It just posts what it is given. The scoreboard is a separate computer set-up. Especially in Novice meets, you will see lots of mistakes on the scoreboard because of this. Be patient when waiting for results from Novice meets.*
- When the race is over, the timing system operator lets the starter know, they can then start the next race and the process starts all over again.
- If the timing system does not work perfectly (happens all the time), then timing official will look at the back-up times from the timers and timing system.
- The timing official then use formulas to derive official times for the lanes with timing malfunctions.
- Malfunctions can be for a lane, several lanes, or a whole heat.
- Posting of results can be delayed because the timing officials are resolving all issues for an event before it is posted.