TWIN LAKES PENGUINS SURVIVAL GUIDE

 **Welcome to the Twin Lakes Penguin Summer Swim Season!**

The Twin Lakes Swim Team is a great opportunity for the whole family. Our swimmers receive excellent coaching, learn to be good sports, and have a lot of fun. Twin Lakes also provides a chance for families in our community to get together and have fun while providing our kids a great program.

**Volunteering**

We Need Your Help! Twin Lakes will be hosts three or four swim meets each summer. Hosting a meet requires lots of parent help, but many hands equals light work! If everyone pitches in, our meets will be efficient, successful and fun. Every family is **required** to volunteer at each meet where you have a swimmer swimming. There are many ways to volunteer with varying levels of time commitment. Please see the job descriptions below and carefully consider which position will best suit you for each meet. Bottom line, Twin Lakes operates primarily by volunteers to make each season a success!!! Thank you to all the great volunteers that we have!

**Information**

There is always new and changing information during the summer swim season. Fortunately, there are many places to find information. Here are the best places to go to get your answers:

1. **Read Your Survival Guide!** We try to include all the information you will need during the swim season in this guide.
2. [www.twinlakespenguins.com](http://www.twinlakespenguins.com) - Our website should have most of the info you seek.
3. **Parents** - There are plenty of helpful parents around to answer any of your questions. If you are new, please contact a mentor family.
4. **Email** - Important announcements and updates will be sent to your email address. Make sure we have your current email address.
5. **Facebook** - The Twin Lakes Swim Team Facebook page is a great place to find up to date information.
6. **Files** - Each family has a file in the pool office. Ribbons earned during the meets are put in the files after every meet. Be sure to check you’re a few times during the season.

**Practice Schedule**

Tentative Practice Times – Tuesday after Memorial Day through morning after local schools are out for the summer:

15-18 years 3:30-4:25pm

13-14 years 4:25-5:10pm

11-12 years 5:10-5:45pm

 9-10 years 5:45-6:15pm

7-8 years 6:15-6:45pm

Speedy Sixers 6:25-6:50pm

**Beginning the morning after the local schools are out for the summer:**

15 -18 years 7:30-8:25am

13-14 years 8:25-9:10am

11-12 years 9:10-9:45am

 9 & 10 years 9:45-10:15am

8 years & under 10:15 - 10:45am

Speedy Sixers 10:25-10:50am

\* Swimmers need to be able to swim a full length of the pool in order to be on the team. Swimmers will be evaluated during the first week of practice. By the end of the first week of practice, the coaches will determine if the swimmers need any further swimming development and would benefit from swim lessons.

Any variation in practice time other than your appropriate group must be approved by the coaches prior to entering the water. We understand that it can be simpler for families to have kids swim in different age groups swim at the same time. However, the coaches have found it more beneficial for the swimmers and relay coordination to have swimmers swimming with their own age group.

**Practice Attendance**

In swimming as in any other sport, practice is important. The more practices a swimmer attends, the better they become and the quicker they improve their technique. We encourage every swimmer to attend as many practices as they can. Club Swimmers should attend their club practice, but also attend team practices as often as they can.

That being said, we do realize that there will be times when swimmers cannot attend practice. When you know in advance that your swimmer will have to miss practice, it is appreciated if you let the coaches know. If you are going on vacation, let the coaches know when you will be gone and for how long.

**Swim Meets**

Swimmers who are 6 & under, “Speedy Sixers” will only compete at home meets, plus the Speedy Sixer Meet at the end of season.

The coaches will be setting the lineups for the meets based on the swimmers that have declared for the events through the website [www.twinlakespenguins.com](http://www.twinlakespenguins.com). This often starts 3-5 days before the actual meet. Therefore, it is imperative for you as a parent (or swimmer) to declare for the meets whether you will attend or not. While it may seem easy to tell a coach or email a manager yes or no for your child(ren), keep in mind that expecting them to track information for many parents is not practical. The website is easy to use, and we are happy to help you learn how to get logged on and declare your child(ren) as a yes or no.

Even though swimming is an “individual” sport, Summer Swim League is very much a team sport. The team lineup is greatly affected by even one missing swimmer. Relays may have to be scratched and other swimmers may miss out on swimming in events if your swimmer is on the schedule and fails to show. Please don’t be the cause of other children being disappointed that they can’t swim because your swimmer is not there.

There are always last minute illnesses, emergencies etc. that are unavoidable. When these situations arise, please notify the coaches immediately. If you cannot get in touch with the coaches, then please email the managers at tlstmanager@gmail.com to pass along the word. This keeps confusion to a minimum when we get to the meet and have to make changes. It is expected that all swimmers compete in meets as they are available.

We swim at meets rain or shine! We do not cancel meets for inclement weather. If there is lightning in the area, the meet will be held for 30 minutes after the last lighting strike.

**Parent - Kid Swim Meet and Swim Team Meeting**

The first meet of the season is the toughest meet of the year (at least for the moms and dads) and will be held prior to the first meet. This is a meet for the kids to swim against their parents and a time for parents to show their kids what they are made of! Parents should start practicing now so they are ready!

Actually, this meet is a great opportunity for the team to experience what a meet is all about. We set up the pool for a meet; have an announcer, starter and timers and simulate a real meet. Even though we want to give the feel of a real meet, this is all done for fun. We strongly encourage you to participate as a swimmer, volunteer or enthusiastic spectator.

Dinner is “bring your own,” and the dinner/social time will be from 5-6pm. Please remember there is no glass allowed on the pool deck. There will be a brief meeting at 6:00 before the start of the meet to explain how the meet will be run and any information for the new summer season. After the meeting the meet will begin.

 If you have any questions regarding this meet please ask a new member mentor, one of the managers or anyone that has swam for Twin Lakes in the past. It is really a lot of fun and always a lot of laughs. Even if you aren’t going to get in with your kids, we look forward to seeing everyone at this meet.

**Team Pictures**

Team pictures will be taken by Twin Lakes’ very own Kelli Hodges Photography on Friday, June 24th. There will be various packages that you can purchase that will include individual and group pictures. Order forms will be available in the pool office during the week leading up picture day, they will also be sent out via email.

Swimmers should wear their team suits and team T-shirts to pictures, no caps or goggles are needed for the pictures.

Pictures must be paid for on the day they are taken, so be sure to bring cash or a check with you. Visa and Mastercard will also be accepted.

There will **NOT** be practice on picture day. But we really hope everyone shows up for the picture that will hang outside the pool entrance for years to come.

**Annual Penguin Breakfast**

In the middle of our busy July meet schedule, we will take a break on a Wednesday morning to have a Pancake Breakfast. Breakfast will be served after every practice for the kids.

We ask that every family contribute in some way to make sure that all of our hungry swimmers are fed! This is a fun event that the kids love! Sign-ups will happen a few weeks before the event to make sure all of the supplies are purchased and prepared at home or on-site.

**Awards Banquet**

 When: Wednesday night after All-City Meet – August 3rd

 Where: Twin Lakes Pool Deck

 Why: Because we have a terrific group of swimmers and that deserve to be recognized!

 Schedule for the evening:

 Dinner: 6:00-7:00

Awards: 7:00-8:00

Dessert and free swim: 8:00-9:00

 We hope everyone can attend our annual dinner and free swim. We will have dinner followed by the awards presentation. After the awards, everyone is invited to have dessert and enjoy the pool! This is always a lot of fun, so mark this on your calendar now!

**Annual Penguin Overnighter**

We are proud to announce that plans for the annual penguin overnighter will continue! The overnighter will follow the awards banquet. Pick up will be at 7am on Thursday morning. At this event swimmers watch movies, play games, swim and truly bond with other penguins.

All swimmers attending the overnighter must have a parent sign the “Sleepover Release and Code of Conduct” to participate. The form is available on the website and will be available at the banquet. In addition, all swimmers must be signed in and out of the event by a parent. In order to encourage interpersonal interactions we ask that all phones and electronics be left at home.

If you are interested in chaperoning, please contact the swim managers at tlstmanager@gmail.com.

 **Twin Lakes Swim Team Parents**

You have a very important job as a part of the swim team. First and foremost, we need you to be sure your swimmers get to and from practices and meets!

We also depend on parents to cheer and encourage the entire team when we are at meets. It is a lot of fun and it is a way to get to know other swimmers and parents on the team. We also want swimmers to cheer for each other, so tell your swimmers not to be shy about cheering for any and all Twin Lakes swimmers.

When we are at meets, parents need to know where your swimmers are and when they should be going up to swim their events! This is not always as easy as it sounds. There are lots of children running around in suits and caps and it is not hard to misplace your swimmer from time to time. Make it a practice to establish a routine with your swimmer as to where they will be. Don’t forget the bathroom break before going up to the blocks. Remember it is not the coaches’ responsibility to get the swimmers up to their events; this is up to the swimmers/parents. Also, if a swimmer misses their event, do not assume that they will be able to be entered into another heat/event.

When we host meets, your jobs are a little more demanding. We need lots of help to run a smooth meet at Twin Lakes. None of the jobs are hard and people enjoy being part of the action. You will be able to sign up for specific jobs for each home meet through sign-up genius. Twin Lakes has always put on great meets in a confined area and the reason we are so successful is because we have wonderful parents helping out. With everyone helping in various areas, you are still able to pull away to watch your swimmer’s events.

Also, as the hosting team please take time to welcome the opposing team. These are our guests for the evening and with the limited space on our deck it is important that we make them feel welcome.

Finally, as a parent on the team, you are responsible for deciding if you want to take your swimmers to Pizza Pizzaz after each of our home meets, except for the last home meet. It has become a tradition for the families to go out for pizza to unwind after the home meets. This is a great opportunity to get to know more people and to have fun. In fact, the late night pizza is one of many reasons people want to be a part of Twin Lakes! So plan on staying out a little late on those home meet nights! You can call ahead to order your pizza, 253-661-6161.

**PARENTS AND SWIMMERS: Responsibilities at Twin Lakes Pool**

You have a very important responsibility as part of the swim team. It is to take ownership of the pool area, changing rooms, and tee box area when you are there. Treat it as you would your own home. The country club wants us to stress and monitor these rules to our swimmers and others. If you see someone making a mess in the bathrooms or changing room or being destructive on deck or in the tee box area say something to them. Sometimes just a word will be enough to prevent a “Trashing” of the area. Let a Parent, Coach or Life Guard know if the behavior continues.

**Important Practice Concerns**

The coaches need to devote all their attention to the kids in the pool in order to insure all the swimmers are safe at all times. We are sure you will agree that swimmer safety needs to be the coaches’ #1 priority. Parents and siblings need to stay behind the white lines during practice sessions so as not to distract the coaches. The coaches are available and able to answer any of you questions at the transition times between practices, or after practice. Also, our coaches all have swimming and/or coaching experience. Please let them do the coaching during practices. Feel free to email the team managers at any time if you have questions.

**Twin Lakes Swim Team Code of Conduct**

 As a member of the Twin Lakes swim Team, we (swimmers and parents) agree to:

* 1. Abide by the Twin Lakes Survival Guide and the Greater Seattle Summer Swim League (GSSSL) Operating Plan.
	2. Consistently display respect, honesty and sportsmanship towards the coaches, teammates, officials, volunteers, parents and competitors including:
		1. Being supportive of all swimmers and coaches. Remember that every swimmer is contributing to the team.
		2. Never badgering the opposition or arguing with their supporters. Be appreciative of good competition from both sides.
		3. Never harassing or badgering the officials.
	3. Consistently display a positive attitude towards all teams, coaches, swimmers and competitors including:
		1. Showing appreciation of all swimmers’ efforts
		2. Supporting the team by volunteering your services when needed.
		3. Winning with grace and losing with dignity. You, your team and swim club will be judged by your behavior.
	4. Refrain from inappropriate or unacceptable behavior such as:
		1. The display or use of aggressive behavior or intentional contact.
		2. The use of offensive language, including derogatory reference to any persons race, sex, ethnicity, ability or other characteristics.
		3. Any activity which would detract from the positive image of the SSSL, Twin Lakes, or the Twin Lakes Country Club. This includes “tagging” or other intentional property damage.
1. Twin Lakes Swim Team Head Coaches will have the authority to penalize swimmer, parent or pool member whose actions willfully violate this code of conduct, or are detrimental to the purposes of the Twin Lakes Swim Team. Penalties may consist of warnings, or temporary or permanent exclusion from the activities of the Twin Lakes swim team. In addition, any infraction of this code may result in, but is not limited to, the following actions of the GSSSL Board:
	1. Restriction from future competition for a designated period of time.
	2. Placement on probation for a designated period of time.
	3. Restriction from participation in championship competition.
2. The Twin Lakes Country Club Management will review all incidents and may take additional actions as s/he deems appropriate. Any of the parties involved in the action who are dissatisfied with the decision of the Coaches may appeal in writing to the Twin Lakes Country Club Management.

**10 Commandments for Parents of Penguins**

1. Thou shalt not impose thy ambitions on thy child. Remember that swimming is your child’s activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don’t judge your child’s progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push him/her based on what you think he should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do his personal best and benefit from the process of competitive swimming.
2. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what. There is only one question to ask your child after a practice or competition - “Did you have fun?” If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.
3. Thou shalt not coach thy child. You are involved in one of the few youth sports programs that offers professional coaching. Do not undermine the coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to offer love and support. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. Never pay your child for a performance. This will only serve to confuse your child concerning the reasons to strive for excellence and weaken the swimmer/coach bond.
4. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet. You should be encouraging and never criticize your child or coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made. Remember “yelling at” is not the same as “cheering for”.
5. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child’s fears. New experiences can be stressful situations. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don’t yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event or meet if your child was not ready.
6. Thou shalt not criticize the officials. Please don't criticize those who are doing the best they can in purely voluntary positions.
7. Honor thy coach. The bond between coach and swimmer is special. It contributes to your child’s success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in front of your child.
8. Thou shalt be loyal and supportive of thy team. It is not wise for parents to take swimmers and to jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer in another team’s pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team find that it can be a difficult emotional experience.
9. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning. Most successful swimmers have learned to focus on the process and not the outcome. Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, “My goal was to set a world record. Well I did that, but someone else did too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. Does this make me a failure? No, in fact I am very proud of that swim.” What a tremendous outlook to carry on through life.
10. Thou shalt not expect they child to become an Olympian. There are 250,000 athletes in USA Swimming. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every 4 years. Your child’s odds of becoming an Olympian are about .0002%.

**Postseason and More**

On the website ([www.twinlakespenguins.com](http://www.twinlakespenguins.com)), under the Documents tab, you will find documents that show the qualifying times needed for Preliminaries for boys and girls by age. And you will also find the records for each event since the league started in 1965.

**Addresses of the Southern Division Pools**

In the day and age of smartphones and mapping apps, we have removed the directions and left just the full name and address of the pools.

**Arbor Heights Swim and Tennis Club –** 11003 31st SW, Seattle 98146

**Gregory Seahurst Swim Club –** 16700 19th Ave SW, Seattle 98166

**Kent Swim and Tennis Club** – 25821 Woodland Way South, Kent 98030

**Lakeridge Swim Club –** 11433 76th Ave S, Seattle 98178

**Marine Hills Swim Club** – 29958 6th Ave South, Federal Way 98003

**Normandy Park Swim Club** – 17655 12th Ave SW, Normandy Park 98166

**Olympic View Swim and Tennis Club** – 19660 4th Ave SW, Normandy Park 98166