

LMT SWIM AND DIVE TEAM PARENT ORIENTATION MANUAL

Revised April 2009

VISION STATEMENT

We are a competitive community swimming and diving program which develops physical skills for children of all abilities, fosters positive social interactions, and instills a life-long appetite for exercise in our youth, in a fun-filled atmosphere.

MISSION STATEMENT

Inherent in our vision statement is the core belief that the LMT Swim & Dive Team is preparing its youth to not only be members of a successful swim team, but responsible members of our society.

Membership

Membership is open to any boy or girl from 5 through 18 years of age who is a member of the Lower Makefield Township (LMT) Pool or is an employee of the pool. A member can be 19 years of age if they are a graduating senior in high school. A member that is 18 years of age and has completed one year of college, is still eligible to swim as long as they did not swim competitively in college. Some swimming or diving ability is required, but competitive experience is not necessary. Upon joining, the child must be able to meet the following minimum requirements:

- Completing one length of a 25 yard pool crawl stroke, unassisted. Crawl stroke is a racing stroke in which the swimmer propels across the pool flat on his stomach, face in the water (except while taking a breath), using alternating overhand strokes, while legs are moved up and down at the same time alternately. AND
- Completing one half of the length of a 25 yard pool on their backs, unassisted.

Fees

Upon registration, an annual individual swim team fee is assessed. The Lower Bucks Swim League (League) requires insurance for all swimmers and divers, which is included in the registration fee, as well as USS dive insurance for divers. Those participating in the LMT Invitational Meet (our major fundraiser) and/or other non-dual meets will incur some minimal additional expense. A late fee, as determined each year by the Board, will be charged to those who do not register by the registration deadline.

Practices

Monday through Friday afternoon practices begin the Tuesday after Memorial Day and continue until Pennsbury schools are dismissed for the year. Morning practices begin for all swimmers and divers following Pennsbury's closing. Practices usually aren't cancelled unless there is lightning and thunder or very heavy rain, which would close the pool. Call the pool after the lightning stops in your area if you have a question. If lightening, thunder, and/or rain is happening before or on the way to the meet, proceed to the meet. Sometimes a delayed start may occur, and LMT would risk a forfeit if all team members are not there. If a cancellation decision is made prior to 4:00, you will be notified via phone or email.

Attendance

All swimmers and divers will be encouraged to practice prior to meets. If your child is ill or will be away for any of the meets, you must provide this information in writing to Coach Heather as soon as possible to eliminate unnecessary last-minute changes.

Attendance forms are available by Coach Heather's mailbox at the pool. Place the written note or form in the mailbox. Any last minute (8 hours prior to the meet) absentees must be called in to Coach Heather as soon as possible. This is especially important as last-minute changes to meet lineups cause significant problems for coaches, table workers, officials, and are unfair to teammates.

Competitive Divisions (Swimming)

The LMT Swim Team fields two traveling competitive teams. This enables our children to have competitive opportunities with children on other teams with similar skills. The Alligator and Crocodile schedules are set based upon the prior year's standings. Movement between each of the League's three divisions ensures each team will enjoy a high level of competition. Age group for the summer season will be determined by the child's age as of June 30.

After time trials, the coaches will assign each child to one of the teams. Due to League requirements, no child can change teams or swim in more than one division in the same season. The coaches will keep children with different ability from the same family on the same team unless parents wish otherwise. All athletes will continue to practice together with the whole coaching staff.

Organizing Into Swim Teams

One goal of the Lower Makefield Swim Team is to field viable teams for the purpose of competing in the Lower Bucks Swim League. The Head Coach will use his/her discretion in making team assignments. The following factors will be among those considered as part of the team assignment process:

- Athlete times
- An athlete's prior competitive experience
- The number of swimmers in an age group and on the team
- The opportunity for older swimmers to gain experience as peer leaders for their teams
- Special family considerations e.g. car pools etc.

To request a specific family for carpooling situations, please fill out a Swim Meet Car Pool Request Form and place it in the coaches mailbox by the competition pool before June 5. Forms are available by the mailbox.

Diving Division

The Lower Bucks Swim League has two Diving Divisions. LMT has one team that competes in Division I.

Team Suits

Prior to the beginning of competition, the swim suit distributor will come to the Pool to sell suits and other swim supplies such as caps, goggles, fins, etc. Suits may be tried on then and will be available to purchase and take home that same day. Suit prices will be announced in advance. All swimmers and divers are encouraged to wear the team suit when competing for LMT.

Time Trials

During the last week of afternoon practices, time trials will be held. This involves timing swimmers in each of the four competitive strokes: freestyle, breast, back and butterfly. This information is used to determine team assignment, and as a baseline for individual record-keeping for the season. Parents will be asked to help with timing during the trials. If your child has winter times in the LBSL distances, please submit them to the coaches mailbox prior to June 5. The LMT coaches have the times from children that swam on the Pennsbury Aquatic (PAC) and Pennsbury Varsity swim teams.

Swimming Dual Meets

On Tuesday and Thursday evenings in late June and throughout July, each team will compete with each of the other teams in their division. Teams will swim against each other once. Boys and girls participate in the same meets, although children of the same sex and age compete in the same individual events. Parents are responsible for getting the children to the appropriate pool prior to the warm-up time designated by the coaches. Directions to the various pools are provided on the Team Website.

A typical meet lasts 2 1/2 - 3 hours, including warm-ups. Although the LMT pool has eight lanes, only six are used for scoring purposes, three for each team per event. The outer two lanes may be used but do not count toward meet scoring. The first three places in each event are scored with 5, 3 and 1 point respectively. One team can only gain points in two of the three top places per event.

Each swimmer may be entered into a maximum of four official events. Events include a maximum of three individual events and one relay, or the combination of two individual events and two relays.

Swimmers and divers are encouraged to practice good sportsmanship at all times. The coaches strongly urge all swimmers and divers to stay until the end of their meet to help cheer for fellow teammates and help with clean-up chores.

Very Important - Swimmer must be present at the meet no later than 5:45 PM for check in with the coaches. Warm ups will begin shortly after.

Dual Meet Events

Girls & Boys 14 and Under 100 Free
Girls & Boys 18 and Under 100 Free
Girls & Boys 8 and Under 100 Medley Relay
Girls & Boys 10 and Under 100 Medley Relay
Girls & Boys 12 and Under 200 Medley Relay
Girls & Boys 14 and Under 200 Medley Relay
Girls & Boys 18 and Under 200 Medley Relay

Girls & Boys 6 and Under 25 Free
Girls & Boys 8 and Under 25 Free
Girls & Boys 10 and Under 50 Free
Girls & Boys 12 and Under 50 Free
Girls & Boys 14 and Under 50 Free
Girls & Boys 18 and Under 50 Free
Girls & Boys 8 and Under 25 Breast
Girls & Boys 10 and Under 25 Breast
Girls & Boys 12 and Under 50 Breast
Girls & Boys 14 and Under 100 Breast
Girls & Boys 18 and Under 100 Breast
Girls & Boys 8 and Under 25 Back
Girls & Boys 10 and Under 25 Back
Girls & Boys 12 and Under 50 Back
Girls & Boys 14 and Under 100 Back
Girls & Boys 18 and Under 100 Back
Girls & Boys 8 and Under 25 Fly
Girls & Boys 10 and Under 25 Fly
Girls & Boys 12 and Under 50 Fly
Girls & Boys 14 and Under 50 Fly
Girls & Boys 18 and Under 50 Fly
Girls & Boys 8 and Under 100 Free Relay
Girls & Boys 10 and Under 100 Free Relay
Girls & Boys 12 and Under 200 Free Relay
Girls & Boys 14 and Under 200 Free Relay
Girls & Boys 18 and Under 200 Free Relay

Diving Meets

The League format allows for diving to be held separately from the traditional dual meet. The League will allow diving events at pools which meet U.S. Diving Association standards and where more than two teams may be participating. Diving dual meets will be held on Monday and Wednesday evenings.

Diving Meet Events

D1 Girls 8 & U D2 Boys 8 & U
D3 Girls 9, 10, 11 & U D4 Boys 9,10,11, 12 & U
D5 Girls 12, 13, 14, & U D6 Boys 12, 13, 14 & U
D7 Girls 15 to 18 & U D8 Boys 15 to 18 & U

Each team may enter a total of 12 male and 12 female divers. Each team may have no more than 3 scored divers per event.

LMT Swimming Invitational

As our major fund-raising event, LMT sponsors an invitational meet for all swimmers from the 24 teams in the League. This gives the children an opportunity to swim individually against a larger number of other children and to win individual medals or ribbons. Each child may swim up to five events of their choice.

The meet is held over a two-day period. Friday night the 11 through 18 year age groups swim. Saturday morning the 6 through 10 year age groups compete. All entries are based on your child's age as of June 30th. A program will be available at the meet which will list all the heats of each event. A "ready area" will be used for all swimmers for all events. The swimmers will be called to this area over the public address system prior to their event time, so it is important to pay attention to the announcements.

Final overall results of each event will be posted during the meet. Awards are given to the top eighteen swimmers in each event, rosettes to the top three swimmers in each event, and ribbons to the remaining fifteen places.

Diving Invitationals

The Diving Invitational is similar to the swimming invitational. Details will be provided later in the season.

Invitational Meets

Throughout the season, team members are provided the opportunity to participate in several "invitational" meets in addition to the LMT Invitational. Information is provided to those eligible participants as it becomes available to our team. Participation in these invitational meets is encouraged as they provide a different competitive atmosphere than do the dual meets. Participants can receive individual recognition and compete against athletes from different League divisions.

Championships

During the last week of the season, championship competitions are scheduled. They are: boys' diving, girls' diving, boys' and girls' 8 & U swimming, and boys' and girls' 9 & Up swimming in each swimming division. Competitors in these meets must have participated in at least 40 percent of the dual meets. In addition, divers must have participated as a diver in at least one League-sanctioned meet to qualify for the diving championship.

The 9 & Up swimming competition is held over two days. Each team swims with their division. The sixteen fastest times and ties and alternates from all the divisions combined qualify to swim in finals. Final seeding times shall be the time attained in the division championship.

The events swum in all swimming championships will include the four competitive strokes and the I.M. Each swimmer may enter three events of his/her choice and compete in his/her own age group. Relays will also be swum at Champs and will be put together by the coaches, depending on entries and times. Swimmers will be notified if they are chosen to be on a relay team. See the diving coaches for diving entries and the required dives.

Family Picnic

Near the end of the season, LMT holds a family picnic/parents' meeting as a celebration for the end of the season and also for the approval of the slate of new officers for the following year. Hot dogs and beverages are provided, and each family brings a salad or dessert to share.

Parent Participation

Unlike many other sports, competitive swimming requires much involvement from all parents to successfully run meets and carry out the League and parent organization responsibilities. Each family is REQUIRED to work at least 4 dual meets during the season, PLUS the LMT Invitational. A sign-up sheet (noting the required number of meets to be worked) is posted at the Parent Social, then the pool after the social, so that each family may volunteer for the tasks they wish to do. If a family neglects to sign up for duties, the meet director will assign them positions. A listing of the various jobs involved in each meet and a brief description of what each entails can be found below:

WORKERS AT MEETS

STARTER/REFEREE (1 for home meets) - The chief official of the meet. Initiates every event using a starting gun or an electronic starter. Requires League training and certification. Signs the meet sheet.

LANE MARSHALS (4) - The meet director or starter/referee will instruct the marshals in lane requirements for warm-up sessions. The marshals will remain on deck during the entire warm-up session and ensure all safety guidelines are followed by all swimmers during this period.

STROKES & TURNS JUDGE (1-2) - Determines that all swimmers are executing the proper strokes and turns as set forth by the LBSL rules. A disqualified swimmer earns no points. Two judges are needed if a diving well divides one side of the pool. Judges also judge the relay starts to ensure no early starts. Requires League training and certification.

PLACE JUDGE (1) - Visually determines the finishing order of all swimmers in individual events and relays. Completes place judge cards for each event.

DIVING JUDGES (2-3) - Using United States Diving rules, determines the score for each dive using a 10 point scale.

ANNOUNCER (1 for home meets) - Announces event numbers and the names of all the participants. Makes other general announcements.

HEAD TIMER (1 for home meets) - Is the back-up timer in case of timing failures in any lane.

LANE TIMERS (9-12) - Three timers are assigned to each lane to time the swimmers in each event. One of these timers from each lane will be designated as the one to record the swimmers times on a time slip.

RUNNER (1) - Collects the timers' slips from each lane, any disqualification slips from the Strokes & Turns Judge, and the Place Judge's cards to the scoring table after every event.

SCORING TABLE WORKERS (4-5) - Tabulates and records diving and swimming scores on three copies of meet sheets.

COMPUTER WORKER - Receives the times and places from the table. Inputs the swimmers names and times using the Team Manager program, so that proper stats can be kept for all swimmers.

RECORD KEEPER (1 per team) - Identifies any pool or League records set during a meet and maintains a record board in breezeway at pool entrance.

SET-UP/CLEAN-UP CREW (4-5) - Sets up scoring tables, lane lines, spectator seating, and amplification system before each meet and puts them away after the meet. Ropes off deck areas which are off limits to parents and swimmers during the competition.

Generally makes sure pool area is cleaned up and ready for use the next day.

MOUSE PARENTS (3-4) - Makes sure that the “8 & Under” and “10 & Under” swimmers know their events and are at the starting blocks at the appropriate time. Keeps them rounded up in the Mouse House during meets.

INVITATIONAL MEET

In addition to several shifts of the workers listed above Invitational specific jobs also need to be done. These can be found on a sign up sheet at the pool or online.

OTHER INVITATIONAL & CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS - WORKERS

We will be asked to provide some assistance in the areas of food, scoring, awards and officials for the Championship meet and for other team’s Invitationals that your child attends.

Swim Team Board Members

President - Acts as a liaison between the township, the Pool Board, Pool Manager, the coaches, the team Board and the team families. Presides at board meetings and general membership meetings. Appoints committee chairpersons and oversees all team activities. (Elected)

Vice President - Acts in the absence of the President. Assists the President as requested. (Elected)

Registrar - Oversees registration of members and retention of membership records. (Elected)

Secretary - Records minutes of all official organization meetings. (Elected)

Treasurer - Keeps team financial records and receives and disburses funds. (Elected)

League Representatives - (3 - one for each of the teams and diving.) Attend all League meetings as a voting team representative and act as liaison between the League and the teams. (Appointed)

Technical/Web Manager – Designs and updates website and team computers

Parks and Recreation Representative – Acts as the liaison between the township supervisors and swim and dive team.

Head Coach - Represents swim team staff at Board meetings.

Special Committees/Chairpersons

Publicity Chairpersons (1-2) - Maintains communication with local newspapers and provides them with meet and activity information for publication. Posts upcoming team special events on the bulletin board.

Picnic Chairpersons (1-2) - Coordinates and plans for the picnic, including food requirements.

Invitational Chairpersons (1-2) - Coordinates all the Invitational activities including: sending invitations, seeding entries, preparing program, securing equipment, soliciting workers and preparing a final report.

Meet Directors (1 for each team) - Obtains and organizes meet workers for the following jobs.

Training Sessions - League Sponsored

To improve the quality of officiating at meets, the L.B.S.L. is requiring officials to be League sanctioned. The following officiating positions shall require League sanctioning:

Diving Referee, Swimming Starter/Referee, Strokes and Turns Judge, Head Score Keeper and Diving Judges. Sanctioning process is as follows: attending League-sponsored Officials Clinic, obtaining verification of successfully participating as an apprentice official at a minimum of two meets under the supervision of a previously sanctioned official who shall sign off on a League-supplied sanctioning form.

The League will schedule training sessions, and it is in the team's best interest to have as many parents attend as possible. Even if you do not feel comfortable tackling one of these official positions, these sessions are an excellent opportunity for parents to get exposure to these officiating jobs. LMT hosts a training session early each season. Check the website schedule for the specific date.

Parents' Meetings

The team by-laws require three annual general membership parents' meetings. The first meeting is held in April at the Lower Makefield Library. The second meeting is held at the Pool just prior to the start-up of meets. The last parent's meeting is held at the picnic in August, when election of officers for the following year takes place. Additional general membership meetings may be held as necessary. Further communication occurs at registration and throughout the season by bulletin board notices, email, and the website.

Coaches' Role

Our talented and experienced coaches are responsible for teaching strokes and techniques, designing daily practice sessions, making team assignments and keeping records of times, representing LMT at League meetings and sharing their love and enthusiasm for swimming. They are available after practice to discuss your child's progress.

Children's Role

The children's "role" is to come to practice regularly, listen to the coaches, work their hardest, do their best, make new friends, and HAVE FUN. Joining the Swim and Dive Team is a great way to enjoy yourself and get into good physical shape.

GLOSSARY

D.Q. - Disqualification - when a swimmer is disqualified by a meet Official for a stroke violation, early/false start or inappropriate conduct.

DUAL MEET - Competition between two clubs.

EVENT - Any race defined by age, sex, stroke and distance. May also be a series of dives 'in one division.

HEAT - A divided segment of an event in which there are too many swimmers to compete at one time.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY (IM) - An event in which one person swims a series of specified distances in each of the four competitive strokes: back, breast, butterfly and free.

LANE - The specific area in which the swimmer is assigned to swim, i.e., Lane 1, Lane 2, etc.

LAP - One length of the pool, which is 25 meters or yards. Two laps is 50, four laps is 100 etc.

LBSL - Lower Bucks Swim League, the League in which LMT competes.

LEG - The part of the relay event that is swum by a single team member.

SCRATCH - Withdraw an individual from competition or an event.

SEED - Distribute the swimmers among the required number of heats and/or lanes according to their submitted times. During Invitationals, the swimmers with the slowest times swim in the first heat, and subsequent heats progress to the swimmers with the fastest times.

THINGS TO BRING TO PRACTICE

1. A POSITIVE ATTITUDE
2. Water container approximately 1 quart
3. Sneakers/running shoes (for land drills)
4. Exercise pad or thick towel (for land drills)
5. Towels (big ones)
6. Warm clothes
7. Swim fins - may be purchased at a local sporting goods store or bought used from older team member
8. Swim cap for swimmers with longer hair
9. Goggles
10. Tote bag to store and carry all of the above.

Some other considerations:

All equipment, towels, clothing, etc., should be clearly marked with the swimmer's name so that lost items may be returned.