

Hi Everyone:

I hope everyone is enjoying the last few precious weeks of summer before the (dreaded) school year begins. The 2010-2011 LMAC season is right around the corner, practices for returning team members begin Tuesday, September 7th. I am ecstatic to begin a new season of working with our swimmers and I am happy to report that currently the entire coaching staff is returning for what I am sure will be another great season.

Last year I felt we made great strides as a team. We had inspiring team spirit during competition, team unity and work ethic during training sessions like I hadn't seen in my entire tenure at LMAC and I am proud to say we had the tremendous success as a team (our dual meet record) and as individuals (more personal bests).

We have been making plans for the new season through the late spring and summer and I would like to take this opportunity to let you know what is going on at LMAC...

1. Communication is key. I would like to remind the entire LMAC community that I am available and happy to communicate with parents and swimmers as much as possible. If there is anything in this email, any subsequent email, something that I (or another coach) say at practice or a meet or a meeting, etc... that you have a question or comment about, please do not ever hesitate to send me an email at Lepster04@verizon.net and we can communicate electronically or set up a time to speak in person.

2. Please take a moment to poke around our website, www.lowermerionaquaticclub.org. Katie Orange has done excellent work updating and modernizing the space--I hope you will find it informative and helpful.

3. Fall Practice Schedule and Practice Group Lists attached. The coaches have looked at our roster from last season and assigned practice groups for this coming year. We are again lucky enough to have use of Maguire Pool at Saint Joseph's University from 5:00pm onward each weekday evening as well as weekend hours!

4. 2010-2011 Registration begins now. Swimmers must register before they begin practice. Here you will find a three page registration packet featuring program descriptions and fees, a registration form and a payment sheet. Please read the directions carefully--LMAC has instituted some new payment policies. Payment for returning team members is due

via mail by September 1, 2010 or registration is in person the first night of practice. If you do not register by September 8th we will assume you are not returning for this season and open up spots for new team members. You will see in the packet that an installment payment plan is available.

5. USA Swimming returns to LMAC!! We are restarting our USA Swimming program this season. LMAC is still committed to the Suburban Aquatic League and will continue to compete in SAL dual and championship meets, however we are also offering membership into USA Swimming for the first time in several years. This program offers several benefits to swimmers of all ages and abilities. I encourage ALL families to consider signing up. While there is an extra cost to participate in this program, there are several benefits, which are listed below:

§ For swimmers of any age who consider swimming their sport of choice and who love to swim as much as possible, our USA Swimming program runs through mid-late March, which means your season is at least 6 weeks longer than the traditional SAL season.

§ For younger swimmers who are interested in more fully preparing themselves for swimming as an adolescent. USA Swimming offers many more events, particularly to younger swimmers, than they can swim in the SAL. For example, a 12 year old can compete in the 200 Freestyle, a 10 year old can compete in a 100 of their prime stroke or a 14 year old can compete in the 400 I.M.

§ Invitational meets as opposed to dual meets. We all love the rush of dual meets, it's fun and invigorating to compete as a team and race to touch out our opponents at RAC, UMAC, PVAC, etc... However, there are also advantages to invitational meets—swimmers and/or parents choose events as opposed to the coach putting together a line up, swimmers can focus strictly on beating the clock (their personal best) instead of only racing the swimmer next to them, there is more opportunity for rest between events at invitational meets, swimmers and coaches have more collaboration time at invitational meets, the list goes on. LMAC will compete in 3-5 invitational meets this season between October and March.

§ High School aged swimmers with any interest in swimming in college should most definitely begin competing in USA Swimming invitational

meets. Neither the SAL nor the area high school leagues afford swimmers the opportunity to swimmer 200s of strokes besides freestyle, the 400 I.M. and the distance (1000, 1650) freestyle events. These events are featured in all college dual and championship meets and coaches will be looking for times/competition experience in them.

§ Competing against yourself and focusing on times. I touched on this when explaining the difference between dual meets and invitational meets, but there are time standards associated with each event in each age group in USA Swimming. These times can be seen on LMAC website under “Time Standards”. As your swimmer drops time, they can achieve “B” times, then “BB” times, then “A” times all the way through “AAAA” times. These times are like built in goals for each swimmer and achieving these times can qualify swimmers for different meets. One example is Junior Olympics in mid March—swimmers can compete in the events for which they have “A” times at this meet.

As the season gets closer we will circulate this year’s parent handbook, a meet schedule for both the Suburban Aquatic League and a list of USA Swimming Invitational Meets and a complete list of coaches for this coming season. I look forward to working with each of you and your swimmers very shortly in September!

Thanks very much.

Kathryn