

Lancaster Summer Swim League

Rules & Regulations

April 2026

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Lancaster Summer Swim League is to foster a friendly yet competitive swim environment that encourages a collaborative spirit of sportsmanship shared by Swimmers, Coaches, Parents, Officials and Spectators, alike and to enable local swimmers to represent their community pool, intended for a healthy dose of competition that fosters growth and enjoyment for all involved.

I. AUTHORITY

A. Meets

1. Meets shall be conducted in accordance with United States Swimming age group short course rules unless otherwise defined herein.
2. The home team is responsible for having a current USS rule book and a copy of the current Lancaster Summer Swim League rules available at all meets.

B. Protest Board

1. The Protest Board shall consist of the League President, a representative of the Lancaster Officials Club, and one additional representative from each division.
2. Violations of rules and regulations, disputes, and protests will be reported in accordance with protest procedures.
3. Final authority in all disputes, violations, and protests will rest with the Protest Board.
4. The Protest Board may give a consequence for a league rule that is broken. A list of possible consequences include, but not limited to, the following: a warning, the loss of athlete points in a meet, a team forfeit of meet, an athlete suspension, and a coach suspension.

C. Protest Procedures

1. All protests must be made first to the referee of the meet in question. If his/her decision is not acceptable to either coach, an appeal must be made.
2. All appeals must follow the procedure below:
 - a) The protest must be phoned to the League President within 24 hours after the incident and then be submitted in writing to the League.
 - b) The League President will attempt to settle the matter.
 - c) The League President may call for a hearing before the Protest Board in the event that the matter cannot be settled individually.

D. Rule Changes

1. Recommendations for changes in the rules and regulations of the League should be presented to the Rules Committee for consideration.
2. All final changes in the rules and regulations of the League must be accomplished through action by the league.
3. All rule changes proposed by the Rules Committee must be voted on and approved by at least 51% of the teams in the League.

E. Meetings

1. Meetings shall be conducted using Robert's Rules of Order.
2. The Start-Up Meeting should be held each year to begin the new year.
3. The Dual Meet Meeting that is held each year will include a session to update all teams on the league rules for the upcoming season. This session will be mandatory for all teams – at least one coach or parent representative must attend.
4. The Wrap-Up Meeting should be held each year at the end of the season to conclude the year and discuss any proposed changes for the following year.
5. Annual Officials Meeting

- a) All certified officials interested in officiating any LSSL sanctioned events should attend the annual officials meeting scheduled by the League.
- b) The League will schedule this meeting after the Dual Meet Meeting and no later than one week prior to the first League sanctioned meet (dual or invitational, whichever comes first).
- c) The purpose of the meeting will be to review the rules for the upcoming season.

II. ORGANIZATION

A. Composition

1. The League will be divided into three (3) divisions: 1, 2, and 3.
2. Each year the composition of the divisions will change based on the final standings of the previous year. The top team in Division 2 and 3 will move up to the next higher division. The bottom team in Division 1 and 2 will move down to the next lower division.
3. Teams facing a division change may negotiate the move with the team with whom they would exchange places. If both teams do not agree to remain in their respective divisions, then both teams must exchange places.
4. If a tie occurs in the determination of the division champion, the tie will be resolved in the following order:
 - a) The result of the dual meet between the teams involved.
 - b) The team with the greatest number of points scored in the Divisional Championship Meet.
5. The team with the worst dual meet record will finish at the bottom of that division. If a tie occurs in determining the bottom team of a division, the tie will be resolved in the following order:
 - a) The result of the dual meet between the teams involved.
 - b) The team with the fewest number of points scored in the Divisional Championship Meet.
6. Dual meet dates will rotate from season to season according to the following:
 - a) The last meet date from the previous year moves to the first meet date. All others move down one date.
 - b) The home/visitor teams will rotate.

B. New Teams

1. Application for league membership must be made before the League Championship Meet of the year prior to the new team's provisional year.
2. Upon satisfactory completion of the provisional year, the league will vote on full membership for the applicant team.
3. New teams accepted into the league will be entered into the lowest division.

III. ELIGIBILITY

A. Team Membership

1. All swimmers must be current members of the team they represent.
2. The swimmer's team membership must conform to the established policy of the pool and/or recreation center they represent.
3. A swimmer may only compete for one summer swim league during any one season. A swimmer may compete with only one team in the League during any one season. Except when a swimmer changes place of residence, he/she may swim for the pool he/she joins. Ineligible swimmers will be disqualified and meets in which they swam forfeited.
4. A certified swimmer on a LSSL team may not swim for any additional team(s) in other meets beginning the first day of LSSL practices and concluding with the League

Championship Meet, unless they are competing for a traditional club team in a USA Swimming or YMCA-sanctioned event.

5. Teams may not begin practice before the Monday before Memorial Day.
6. Any preseason clinic sponsored or sanctioned by a team must be advertised and open to all swimmers. Prior to any spring clinics, teams will send notice to the League board at least two weeks before the clinic. The League will then post information on the LSSL website. Otherwise, it will be determined to be a preseason practice in violation of the league starting date rule. This violation will result in a forfeit of the team's first meet.

B. Certification of Swimmers

1. All teams must submit a digital copy of their roster to the League and all teams in their respective Division at, or before, the Dual Meet meeting, prior to the start of the current season. Only swimmers appearing on the League roster may compete in dual meets, Divisional Championships, and the League Championship.
2. Rosters must be organized according to age and sex groups giving name and date of birth for each swimmer. Rosters must be submitted on the appropriate electronic form provided by the League or age group printout from scoring/team management software. Head coaches must certify their roster is in accordance with the Lancaster Summer Swim League Rules by completing the Team Certification Form at, or before, the Dual Meet Meeting.
3. June 1, of the current season, is the date that determines the age group in which a swimmer will compete for the current League season. Exception is given to graduating seniors who are over 18 years of age June 1. Regardless of their age, swimmers may not compete in the league after the summer following their graduation from high school.
4. Additions and deletions must be made to the roster on the Roster Change Form supplied by the League. All changes must be date stamped one week prior to any meet during the progress of the season. Roster additions can be scanned and sent to the League President/Secretary to notify teams of additions.

C. Background Checks

1. All teams are responsible for background checks for all coaches who are in contact with the swimmers. Background checks should include at least the criminal record and child abuse clearances.

IV. DUAL MEET PROCEDURES

A. Contestants

1. Only certified swimmers may compete.
2. A swimmer may advance one or more age groups in any particular meet, but must remain in that age group for the entire meet.
3. A swimmer may enter only three scoring events in any one meet including relays. A scratch in any event shall not affect a swimmer swimming in a later event. However, a scratch does count as one of the three allowed entries. Exhibition swims do not count as one of the three allowed swims.
4. Swimmers wearing caps must wear either their summer team cap or a generic cap for meets. Caps and suits with club team logos or high school team logos will not be allowed.
5. Swimmers must compete in the correct event for their gender.
6. Swimmers must be able to complete at least one 25-yard length of the stroke they are entered to swim without assistance from a coach, lifeguard or anyone else entering the pool to assist the swimmer.
7. The league neither prohibits nor encourages the use of kinesiology tape during swim meets.

B. Events

1. The list of events and their order will be approved by the League at the Start-Up Meeting.
2. The visiting team coach must be informed prior to the first event when distances do not conform to those in the list of events.
3. Optional non-scoring events may be added, time permitting, through the agreement of both coaches. Live heats will be swum before exhibition heats. Exhibition heats will swim fastest to slowest.

C. Scoring

1. All teams are limited to two entries in a 4-lane pool, three entries in a 6-lane pool or four entries in an 8-lane pool.
2. The finish judges will decide the order of finish.
3. If the finish judges disagree, the meet referee will make the final decision in accordance with the following: He/she may declare:
 - a) A tie splitting the points
 - b) A winner
 - c) Call for a swim-off, with the agreement of both coaches
4. The scoring of place shall be: Relays 7-0; all other events 5-3-1-0.
5. A team may sweep an event and score all 9 points.
6. Total team points will be used to determine a winner of the dual meet.
7. Score table personnel should include: announcers, host scorers, visiting scorers, and awards personnel. At no time during the meet should swimmers, parents, and/or spectators interfere with scoring procedures.
8. A coach (not a parent, swimmer, or spectator) may at any time during the meet request the running score, official times, or order of finish from the opposing team's scorer.
9. Scoring personnel (both home and visiting team) shall share the responsibility for copying or electronically combining and printing both home and visiting team lineup information on event cards, including exhibition events, for each age group.
10. Running score should be tabulated at the completion of each stroke. When the scorers agree, the results shall be announced.
11. All scorers must agree before the outcome of the meet is announced. Starter/referee for the meet shall sign all original score copies at the conclusion of the meet.
12. By mutual consent of both head coaches, Meet Manager or Touchpad software may be used to score a meet. Live heats will be scored using the Team Score Sheet in addition to the computer scoring. Exhibition heats can be combined and seeded by the computer software.
13. Disqualifications will be recorded by the stroke and turn official on the heat provided and notify the finish judge of the disqualification. The finish judge will note the disqualification on the timesheet so the head table can officially record the disqualification. Stroke and turn officials must notify the meet official of any disqualification. The meet official then can notify the correct head coach of the disqualification.
14. In order to increase parent and spectator engagement, Meet Mobile is highly encouraged to be used during meets and invitationals if possible.

D. Officials

1. Each team should conduct or have parent volunteer stroke and turn officials attend an instructional clinic or view the online recorded session on officiating prior to the first meet.
2. Coaches, parents, and swimmers may not ask the finish or stroke and turn judges any questions regarding rulings, disqualifications and/or order of finishes.

3. Only head coaches may ask the head official questions about the meet.
 4. If there are any placement questions, they will be directed to the meet official by the head coach.
 5. Each team should supply officials as designated below:
 - a) One referee (home team). The referee can also act as the starter. The referee should NOT be the take-off judge or a stroke and turn judge for either team.
 - b) One starter (home team). The starter may also act as the meet referee if he/she can witness all finishes.
 - c) Two take-off judges (one from each team). The home judge will be on the side of the pool that corresponds with the visiting team's fastest swimmer and the visiting judge will be on the side with the home team's fastest swimmer. The finish judges can act as the take-off judges.
 - d) Stroke and turn judges (one or two from each team). Stroke and turn judges must judge the entire length of the pool from both sides. If a side of the pool allows the judge to freely walk the entire length, only one stroke and turn judge is needed. If a side of the pool does not allow the judge to freely walk the entire length, two stroke and turn judges are needed. The home stroke and turn judge(s) will be on the side of the pool that corresponds with the visiting teams fastest swimmer and the visiting judge(s) will be on the side with the home teams fastest swimmer.
 - e) Two finish judges (one from each team). The visiting team's finish judge will be on the same side as the head official and the home team's finish judge will be on the opposite side of the head official.
 - f) Two timers on each lane (one from each team)
 - g) One head timer/recorder (home team)
 - h) Two scorers (one from each team)
 - i) One announcer (home team) who should use a PA system
 6. Officials shall be paid \$85 for dual meets and \$135 invitationals. The league will revisit this every 2 years.
 7. Members of the Lancaster Officials Club may be invited to serve in any of the officiating capacities at the option of either coach. The coach desiring the outside official, must notify the other coach five days prior to the meet of his/her intent to secure an outside official. The coach must confirm one day prior to the meet.
 8. If either team cannot fill all positions, the meet referee will fill them from spectators. No protest on this basis will be honored.
 9. Teams using a non-certified starter/referee must utilize only the most experienced person available at this position as agreed upon by both head coaches. When using a non-certified referee (team parent, etc.), make sure that particular team's finish judge is on the opposite side of the pool from the referee.
 10. Any individual holding active PIAA, USA Swimming, YMCA, or similar officiating credentials may serve as a referee for any LSSL dual or championship meet.
- E. Conduct of the Meet
1. All meets will be held in accordance with the League schedule beginning at 6:15 pm. Both coaches may agree on another date and time for a scheduled meet.
 2. An entry file will be submitted to the scorer's table by 5:00pm through email or USB.
 3. Entry changes must be submitted in writing to the scoring table. Coaches may make changes up to 4 events prior to the event they are changing.
 4. An official's meeting will be held 15 minutes before meet time.
 5. A standard event card will be used to record the results of each race. Cards (event) will be printed using the Meet Manager or Touchpad software and placed in proper event

order. The head timer/recorder will record the results of each race on the event card and forward the cards to the scoring table. The use of an electronic timing system does not alleviate the above requirement. More than one person may record times.

6. All times, including exhibition lanes, exhibition heats, losing relays and disqualifications, must be recorded.
7. All cards will be kept at the scoring table until the meet is concluded.
8. The home team will swim in the odd-numbered lanes and the visiting team will swim in the even-numbered lanes.
9. Pool records should be kept and displayed in hundredths of a second.
10. The home team is required to provide complete meet results electronically to the league and to all division teams for all dual meets and invitationals by 12:00pm the day following the meet. Results may be scanned as a PDF or HTML file. A \$10.00 fine may be levied on any team which fails to comply.
11. Meet results shall be made available for inspection by other coaches.
12. The host team is required to submit meet results to the news media (phone #291-8666).
13. Mandatory warm-up times shall be:
 - a) Home Team: 5:30 to 5:45 pm
 - b) Visiting Team: 5:45 to 6:00 pm
14. In an 8 lane pool, all 8 lanes are "live." The only exhibitions would be the full exhibition heats, or individual swims specifically designated by coaches as "exhibition."
15. The Lancaster Summer Swim League will follow a sportsmanship policy adopted April, 2004 (See separate handout for specific details).
16. Full Heat Sheets are given to the following:
 - a) Head Official
 - b) Stroke and Turn
 - c) Scoring Table
 - d) Announcer

F. Postponement

1. The host team will cancel meets due to weather conditions at the last possible moment prior to the time the visiting team must leave to attend the meet.
2. Meets already in progress will be postponed at the discretion of the referee. The referee may call for a delay not to exceed 30 minutes.
3. Meets that have been postponed will resume with the next scheduled event.
4. Coaches may mutually agree to cancel postponed meets if there is a clear winner at the time of postponement.
5. Meets must be rescheduled on the next available agreed upon date. The date of rescheduling should be decided as soon as possible. In a situation where the two teams cannot agree on how to make up a postponed meet, the league president will be asked to make a final decision.
6. If a team is unwilling to reschedule a postponed meet, that team will automatically forfeit the meet.
7. The home team is required to inform the league by 12:00pm the day following the meet if the dual meet has been cancelled or postponed and when it will be made up.
8. When a meet already in progress must be postponed, the meet official shall hold the original lineups until the meet resumes at a rescheduled date, unless both coaches agree to have the lineups held by the home team scorer or unless both coaches agree to have the meet official sign each team's lineup after the last event swum and each team will hold their own lineup.
9. The following rules shall apply when a postponed meet in progress resumes on a rescheduled date:

- a) Any swimmer who is eligible to swim as of the date of the rescheduled meet may be entered.
 - b) Because the meet had to be rescheduled, a coach is permitted to make changes in the lineup, including changes in entries for the events that will occur immediately upon resumption of the meet. A coach shall submit entry changes in accordance with the provisions of Article IV, Section E of these rules, except that any entry changes for the stroke in progress as of the time of postponement must be submitted to the scorers' table at least one-half hour before the start of the resumed meet. In the alternative, a coach may submit a new lineup for the resumed meet, in which case the new lineup must be submitted to the scorer's table at least one-half hour before the start of the resumed meet.
- G. If a team is using electronic timing, the following procedures will be followed:
1. Electronic timing, which includes a pad and a plunger time, are sent to a timing system. This is the official time for a swimmer. This time will be given to the scorer's table to be entered into the Meet Manager or Touchpad software as the official time.
 2. Official times will determine the place and finish of swimmers, which will be sent to the scorer's table.
 3. Two timers will still be required for each lane. Timers will write down their times at the end of each heat.
 4. Finish judges will still complete cards with the order of finish in the event that the electronic timing system fails.
 5. All coaches should have a backup copy of their lineup in the event the computer does not work.
 6. In dual meets where an automatic timing system is used, Finish Judge rankings shall only be used to change the results produced by ranking the official times generated by the touch pads if times obtained from the properly operating automatic timing equipment are not available for any swimmer in the scoring heat.
 7. In dual meets where a semi-automatic timing system is used, the official time shall be the average of the two button times. Finish Judge rankings shall only be used to change the results produced by ranking the official times generated by the buttons if times obtained from the properly operating semi-automatic timing equipment are not available for any swimmer in the scoring heat.

V. STARTS/STROKES/FINISHES

- A. False Starts - one false start will be allowed by a swimmer per event.
- B. In-Water Starts - a forward start shall be used for in-water starts and is defined as the swimmer having one hand on the deck or coping edge and one foot on the wall.
- C. Non-continuous backstroke turns will be legal. The LSSL will follow the PIAA rule stating: After the swimmer's head has passed the backstroke flags prior to the turn, the swimmer's upper shoulder may rotate past the vertical toward the breast before the touch is completed, provided the rotation is accompanied by an initiation of the turning action or continuation into the wall. The initiation of the turning action shall be accomplished by one single-arm stroke, or one simultaneous double-arm stroke, and/or an upward or downward, underwater movement of the head. Kicking and/or gliding actions are permitted. The swimmer must assume a position on the back before the feet leave the wall.

VI. CHAMPIONSHIP MEET PROCEDURES

- A. Site Selection

1. The selection for host sites for all championship meets will be made by the league at the Wrap-up Meeting prior to the next season.
 2. In selecting a site for the League Championship Meet, pool facilities will be of primary importance.
 3. When choosing a host for the League Championship Meet, priority will be given to a team that has not hosted the meet for the longest period of time.
 4. The League Championship Meet will be awarded on a two-year bid basis. Teams desiring to bid on hosting this meet must do so at the Wrap-Up Meeting prior to the next season.
 5. The League may withdraw the rights to host the League Championship Meet the second year at the Wrap-Up Meeting prior to the next season.
 6. When choosing a host for a Divisional Championship Meet, priority will be given to a team that has not hosted the meet for the longest period of time regardless of division.
 7. Teams expressing an interest in hosting a Divisional Championship Meet must indicate their interest at the Wrap-Up Meeting prior to the next season.
- B. Dates for Championship Meets
1. The Divisional Championship Meets will take place the weekend immediately following the conclusion of the regular dual meet schedule.
 2. The League Championship Meet will take place one week following the Divisional Championship Meets.
 3. For the League Championship Meet:
 - a) Relays will be held on Friday night.
 - b) Individual events will be held on Saturday with one session for all ages.
 - c) The host team will develop a rain schedule for a one-day League Championship Meet and publish the schedule by the Start-Up Meeting league meeting.
- C. Entries
1. All entry times must be reported in hundredths of a second and accomplished by any of the following ways:
 - a) The dual meet time of a swimmer recorded in a 25-meter pool.
 - b) The dual meet time of a swimmer recorded in a 25-yard pool where the time has been converted from an official conversion chart.
 - c) The time is recorded in an official time trial at a 25-meter pool where these times have been recorded by three watches and substantiated by the presence of a member of the Lancaster Officials Club.
 2. If any entry times are in question, the questioning coach must bring this to the attention of the meet director. The meet director will then contact the appropriate head coach to substantiate all challenged times.
 3. All entries must be submitted via an accepted electronic format.
 - a) A contestant who is not on the meet roster is ineligible to compete.
 - b) All relay participants must be listed on the meet roster.
 4. League Championship Meet relay and individual entries must have an entry time submitted.
 5. Entry times must be included in all championship meet heat sheets.
 6. Swimmers must participate in at least two dual meets to be eligible for the Divisional and League Championship Meets.
 7. Entries close at 8:00 pm the Monday prior to the date of both the Divisional and League Championship Meets. Changes to this date and time may be made by the meet host to accept entries on any day and/or time later than Monday at 8pm.
 8. Championship Meet entry fees will be \$5 for individual events and \$15 for relay events.
 9. Additions and scratches to team entries in the Championship Meets can be made until Thursday 8am. No changes will be allowed to the previous entries.

D. Awards

1. Awards for all Championship Meets will be determined by the Rules Committee, but the purchase of those awards will be the responsibility of the host team.
2. The League will establish a "standard" for which Divisional awards should meet. Host teams will be responsible for ordering their own awards using these "standards" as guidelines.
3. The League is responsible for purchasing the following team awards:
 - a) Trophy for the winner of each Divisional Championship Meet.
 - b) Trophy for the team scoring the highest points in the relay events at the League Championship Meet.
 - c) Trophy for the team scoring the highest points in the individual events at the League Championship Meet.
 - d) Trophy for the top three teams at the League Championship Meet.
4. Individual and relay awards for the Divisional Championship Meets are as follows:
 - a) Individual awards:
 - (1) Trophies for places 1-3
 - (2) Medals for places 4-8
 - b) Relay awards
 - (1) Awards for places 1-8 (medals or ribbons; up to the meet host).
5. Individual and relay awards for the League Championship Meet are as follows:
 - a) Individual awards:
 - (1) Trophies for places 1-3
 - (2) Medals for places 4-8
 - (3) Ribbons for places 9-12
 - b) Relay awards
 - (1) Medals for places 1-3
 - (2) Ribbons for places 4-12
6. Scoring for the League and Divisional Championship Meets is as follows:
 - a) Individual events: 1st-13 pts; 2nd-11 pts; 3rd-10 pts; 4th-9 pts; 5th-8 pts; 6th-7 pts; 7th-6 pts; 8th-5 pts; 9th-4 pts; 10th-3 pts; 11th-2 pts; and 12th-1 pt.
 - b) For relays, the above point values for individual double for places 1-12 (e.g., 1st-26 pts).
 - c) Swim-offs: To eliminate swim-offs, a tie will be scored by adding the place points together and dividing them equally among each team. The highest ribbon award will be given to each swimmer.

E. Scratch Rule

1. A swimmer may be scratched from an individual event in order to replace a swimmer on a relay. The scratch must be made prior to the start of the meet. The swimmer must be listed on the master sheet and cannot exceed the allowed number of events swam.

F. Meet Mobile

1. In order to increase parent and spectator engagement, Meet Mobile is highly encouraged to be used during Championship Meets.

VII. DIVISIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS

A. General Information

1. Individuals are limited to three (3) events.
2. There are no limits to team entries in an individual event or relay event.
3. Events will be the same events approved for the dual meet season.
4. No exhibition swimmers will be permitted in any event.

5. Certified officials are to be used at the Divisional Championship Meets. This includes the referee, starter, and two (2) stroke and turn officials.
6. The Divisional Championship Meet host may run the meet as either a single session or as a split session.
7. For Divisional Championship Meets, automatic timing system is not required. However, there must be two finish judges at these meets.
8. Three timers are required for each lane unless automatic timing is used.
9. Official times will determine the place and finish of swimmers.

VIII. LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP MEET

A. General Information

1. Swimmers must qualify to compete in the League Championship Meet as per the approved time standards. Beginning at the end of the 2022 season, and no longer than every two years thereafter, the Rules Committee will review and propose to the membership for approval any changes to these time standards.
 - a) Time standards may be changed by submitting a written request to the Rules Committee.
2. Swimmer times used to qualify for the League Championship Meet can only occur during the current season and attended by your LSSL swim team.
3. Eligible times must be established as written in VI.C.1.
4. Each contestant is limited to four events, at least one of which must be a relay.
5. Each team may submit unlimited entries in each event as long as the swimmers meet the qualifying standards.
6. Teams are limited to two relays per event.
7. In addition to the regular dual meet events, there will be a medley relay for each age/sex group. The medley relay will swim after the free relay.
8. No exhibition swimmers will be permitted in any event.
9. For the League Championship Meet, the host team must use an automatic timing system (touch pads) and two timers per lane are required. However, if there is an unresolvable malfunction with the automatic timing system, the meet is allowed to continue using three timers per lane.
10. Official times will determine the place and finish of swimmers.