

TEAM CHARACTER:
What Do You Do at a Swim Meet
By John Leonard

Editor's Note to Parents: The following article is written for athletes. We are sending it to you for the simple reason that you know what coaches are expecting of athletes and we are hopeful for your support.

1. Each individual needs to be self-reliant...this keeps any one person from dragging down others in any way.
2. When #1 doesn't work, the TEAM picks up and helps the person who needs it.
3. For just a few hours of a few days a year, we turn off our electronic "stuff" and focus on each other.
4. We cheer for our teammates.
5. We do all we can "realistically" to support each other.
6. Good swims get praise.
Okay Swims - we work to find the good things and learn from the bad.

Bad Swims - we help our teammates focus on the "next opportunity" which may come in minutes or a day later. Too late to mess with the past. No time.

We are ALL responsible for creating the next great, inspiring swim by a teammate. CREATE

SUCCESS, don't just "be a part of it."

7. "If it's to be, it's up to me."
8. "Speak only to good effect."
9. If you're not helping, you're hurting.
10. Take care of the basics. Warm, dry, cool enough. Let those who need to focus, focus. Stay hydrated. Eat as NECESSARY, not as wanted.
11. Take Extra goggles. Hoard extra team caps. Have both ready for when they break. Have an INDIVIDUAL PLAN to deal with these emergencies. (Examples.)
12. Don't aid "pity parties." Everyone fails sometime. Get over it. Get on with it. Don't seek attention, don't drag others down. (Including parents, this is about learning to cope with your own "stuff.")
13. Plan your races. Have a plan. Don't wait for the coaches to devise one. Discuss it with the coach. Take RESPONSIBILITY for your performance.
14. Warm-up well. Loosen down well. More "next days" are ruined by poor end of night swim downs than anything else. Don't be in such a rush that you don't warm down.
15. SHOES (not flip-flops). Energy leaves the body through the arch in your foot. Don't let it. Support the arch.
16. Be EARLY for warm-up. You never know when "stuff happens." (Parking, traffic, accidents; etc. Be EARLY.)
17. Positive speech, positive attitudes, encouraging.
18. Smiles. Fake it till you make it. You will get there.
19. Don't dwell on swims good or bad. Learn what you can, celebrate for a short period, think of next swim. Plan.
20. Mentally rehearse ONLY what you can control.
21. Mentally rehearse events a week or so in advance, once a day. Do NOT do it the day of the event. Just turn your brain off and swim. First you are MINDFUL, which you should do most of the season, then limit yourself to one key thought, and then at championship time, turn the brain off and swim. (Mindless swims...)
22. EAT simple carbohydrates at the meet. And not MUCH at all. What you eat DAYS Before the meet is what actually fuels you at the meet. There is no magic to what you eat at the meet. Just

don't upset your stomach.

23. Be extraordinarily kind and polite to everyone around you. When you are "the best you," it rubs off and it pays off. Be at your best.
24. Anyone being mean to you, is more focused on you than on themselves. You know where that leads. Don't fret it. Be cool.
25. Strive for objectivity. THINK after the meet about what you could do better next time. Write it down.
26. Nothing great was ever achieved by meekness...you have to be daring and have courage to approach races with enough bravado to be successful.
27. When in doubt, get it front. We all swim better there.
28. 200s are split, smooth fast first quarter, control the 2nd quarter, descend 3d quarter with power, descend 4th quarter with kick increase. (Haven't kicked hard enough in practice to do that? Good luck!)
29. 100s are not won on the first 50. They are won on the 2nd 50. Especially long course.
30. To combat Cranial - Rectal Insertion Syndrome, focus on HELPING SOMEONE ELSE who needs it more. If you can't find someone, LOOK HARDER. You will.
31. You can't fix yourself by being inside yourself...the view isn't nice in there.