

What to Expect from Practice

Days 1-3 – Pandemonium (aka DefCon 1)– The first 3 days are always the most chaotic. Why? Cause the kids are excited about swim team starting and parents have lots of questions and they all descend upon practice at the same time. Plus, hardly anybody misses the first few days of practice. For the kids, all that is expected of them is show up ready to work and learn. This is the first chance the coaches get to see the swimmers so they are evaluating abilities and trying to get them closely matched in lanes. For the parents, we ask that you leave the coaches alone. Seriously. If you have a question for them, feel free to send them an email. The coaches need to concentrate on the 40-50 kids in the pool not a parent asking 20 questions. Board members are also a good resource if you feel that your question is of super importance and can't wait for an email reply.

Days 4-10 – DefCon Status goes down to a 3. Practices thin out as the schedules of activities gel and the newness of swimming laps wear off on the kiddos. Gone are the days of them begging you to go to practice, now you have to ask them to get in the car. For the kids, they should be building some stamina and learning to get the different strokes down (new swimmers). For the parents, you still should be emailing the coaches any questions and not bothering them during practice. I know I sound like a broken record, but I guaranty that there will still be at least 4 parents who feel their question will “just take a sec” and that their time is more important than the 40 kids in the pool and the coaches trying to teach them. Please resist the urge to be that parent. I know you are busy. We all are. Thing is, if other parents see you asking questions and the coaches answering them then they will do the same. And then “just a sec” becomes the first 15 minutes of practice. So fully expect to be told by the coaches to just shoot them an email and not to get an answer right then. It's not that they are rude. They are only doing what they have been told to do to maximize their practice time.

Weeks 3-8 (aka Meet Season) – DefCon 5. Practices are in full swing and everyone has it down to a science. Now we are in the part of the season where practice focuses on meets, and the kids go bi-polar on whether they want to go or not. One day you have to drag them to the car and into the pool area, the next they are wondering why you aren't ready to take them when they are ready. I'm sure you'll avoid telling them you weren't in the mood for another nuclear meltdown. For the kids, they will continue on the stamina and perfecting the strokes. If they DQ during the meets, the coaches will be working on what they were doing wrong according to the DQ slips. If you have a 6 & under who swims butterfly or breaststroke don't worry, 95% of the kids DQ for most of the season and some never get it down. Their bodies really aren't built for those strokes and I'm not sure why this league swims them. For the parents, at this point all your questions are answered you are strictly a taxi during the week and a volunteer for the meets on weekends.