



Swimming is a FAMILY Sport
www.SwimDogs.net

2009 SWIM DOGS' SURVEY RECAP

Thanks to all of you who completed the recent survey of your experience with Swim Dogs. While this was a more formalized method of expressing your opinion, please feel free to communicate directly with Dana or me via phone, e-mail or the old fashioned method: face to face!

Forty-seven responded to our survey out of ninety-three families.

Swim Dogs Demographics

As of January 1st, we have 143 “active” swimmers. An active swimmer is defined as someone who is currently swimming on a weekly basis. We have more on our roster, but several of them are high school swimmers who do not practice with us regularly.

In 2007, we had only 40 swimmers. We attribute this growth to several factors:

- *The Michael Phelps Effect* – USA Swimming expects to grow by 15% during Olympic years. This year may be more than normal due to all the coverage this last summer.
- *“Family” aspect of Swim Dogs* – We are the only team I know that encourages parents to swim with their children. This offers us two more chances per family to gain membership.
- *Under-served Area* – The southeast Denver area is underserved with year-round swimming teams.
- *Good Value* – Our pricing is less than comparable teams.
- *Good Coaching* – Since everyone on our coaching staff also swims competitively, it give us a unique perspective to our training methods. We actually practice what we preach.
- *Flexibility* – While our practice groups are intended for certain levels, we try to accommodate any level of swimmer at any time. This does not happen 100% of the time, but it is significantly better than any other swim team.
- *Lack of Demands* – We do not require that our membership swim every day or three times per week, etc. to be a part of our team. We welcome well-rounded swimmers with other things on their plate.

Swim Dogs initially grew out of the Hampden Heights Hurricanes summer league team (a part of the Rocky Mountain Swim League).

Today, however, we are comprised of swimmers from all over:

Hampden Heights: 39
Preserve: 23
Eastmoor: 17
Cook Park: 9
South Park: 9
Lowry: 3

There are 44 swimmers who we are unsure where they swim in the summer or how they found us, and we get two to three new people per week asking to join Swim Dogs.

We have approximately 110 age-groupers and 30 masters swimmers. We are 60% female and 40% male (masters are 50/50).

Each group; Green (Beginner), Purple (Intermediate) and Black (Advanced) have about fifty swimmers each.

Importance Factors

According to our survey, the two most important factors in the swimming experience are the Coaching Staff and the Instruction and Feedback. 100% of the respondents listed them as “Most Important.”

“Swimming technique” was more important than “speed work” and “endurance.”

Flexibility and workout times were both significant.

Lowest on the list were “Youth Competitions” and way down on the list was “Masters Competitions.”

“Water temperature” is important, but it seems people have been dealing well with our up-and-down temperatures.

Swim Dogs’ Report Card

Our overall satisfaction rating was 91.14 (out of 100). We rated highest in the aspects related to “knowledge” (96) and “communication” (97) and lowest in perceived “technique improvement” (83.5) and “endurance improvement” (85.75).

In general, we are very happy with the report card, but we would like to improve.

As the coach on deck, I can see vast improvement in our team as a whole. I believe the lower rating in the “technique and “endurance” area is due to two factors:

- It is difficult for the swimmer to access their own improvement
- Many swimmers come twice per week (or less), and it is difficult to improve with sporadic practice

Typically, swim meets are used to measure improvement, but only about 30% of our swimmers participate in the meets making tracking difficult.

Dana and I are discussing a couple of ways to help convey how well you are doing in the water. We expect to implement a Conference-Evaluation program for swimmers to discuss their goals and accomplishments. A video option may also be added whereby swimmers are video-taped at the beginning and the end of the season. Finally, timed “test sets” are a good measuring tool.

Other Factors

- Our costs are generally seen as fair.
- We have a good meet schedule.
- It would be nice to have earlier practices.
- Several would like more intense practices.
- 20% would like to swim on Saturday mornings.
- Many are interested in swim lessons.
- 70% would consider moving to GW.
- Fundraising is seen as a negative.
- We should publish a Member’s Directory (on-line).
- Family dinners are great, but the timing can be tough for many
- Special events are fun and a good break from swimming
- MORE MUSIC AND MORE FUN!!!

Summary

There were not any big surprises in the survey, and Dana and I are happy that the overall experience with Swim Dogs is positive.

We have shared the results with our Advisory Board (Kimberly Turnbow, Jamie Sarche, Chloe Briney, and Stacey Shigaya), and we received additional feedback from them. We would like to add members to the Advisory Board in the future to get a more rounded opinion from our membership.

At this point, we are not going to make any dramatic changes to the direction of our team. We want to stay flexible and family-oriented, and we want to continue to focus on technique first and conditioning second.

Our dual meets are a hit and unique in year-round swimming: They will continue.

I thought of a new positioning statement:

“Year-round Swimming; Summer League Fun”

Finally, please contact Dana or me if you have any comments or concerns. You can also contact anyone on the Advisory Board to express your thoughts. We need your opinions to keep Swim Dogs a great experience for everyone!