



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What advice do you have for freshman parents?

A: ENJOY! There is nothing more exciting than seeing your athlete in her/his Minnesota suit and cap the first season. It is a wonderful accomplishment for your student athlete to be part of a nationally recognized team and college. Congratulations!

It is also a big transition for parents. You have gone from managing many aspects of your athlete's career ... to just showing up at meets and cheering! Embrace it and trust that your athlete, with support of coaches/teammates/athletic staff, will have an amazing season in and out of the pool. The hardest thing for you (speaking from experience) - let them manage their own college career (in and out of the pool)!

Q. What is Fast Lane Fans (FLF) and why do I have to become a member?

A: Every varsity sport at the University of Minnesota has a booster club. Fast Lane Fans is the swimming and diving booster club associated with Golden Gopher Athletics. The sole objective is to support all our student athletes throughout the season. This is done through many activities including (but not limited to) meals at home meets, funds for athletic training staff, etc. Your membership is critical in providing these services. Your athlete directly benefits from your membership. Candidly, if you don't contribute other families are supporting your athlete during the season.

Q: Do I need to provide my athlete with any special apparel or equipment?

A: At the beginning of the season, athletes receive a variety of super cool Gopher stuff (aka swag) and are well outfitted for the season! At the pool, goggles, team suits, towel, and training gear is provided. There may be a need for a competition suit for non-collegiate meets (e.g. Minnesota Grand Prix), but your athlete will be informed if that is needed. In addition, travel team members are required to have black slacks (women) and khaki dress pants (men) for the travel uniform. These are not provided. NO cargo, sweat/yoga pants or jeans permitted.

Q. What kind of communications can I expect during the season?

A: FLF is responsible for general parent communications. We will email information like schedule changes, parent hotel data, meet updates, family ticket information ... but we will not share team specific information unless directed by the coaches. Generally, coaches rely on the athletes to communicate with their families - after all, they are now in college!

Q: Can I chat with my athlete at meets?

A: Basically, no. Coaches request that parents respect the focus of the team during warm-up and during the meet. This includes parents in the stands and those on deck volunteering as timers. At the conclusion of the meet, there may be a brief opportunity after the team meeting. However, at away meets the athletes need to change and catch transportation - home meets they are scurrying to the food! The best thing is to take a clue from your athlete - s/he will let you know!

Q: Where do I get that awesome Gopher swimming and diving apparel?

A: Swimming and Diving apparel is available at very reasonable costs through Fast Lane Fans. Beginning this season, we will be making a transition in how we manage apparel. Basically, we will no longer carry an inventory. Items will be designed and pre-ordered at the beginning of the season. This assures you will get the size(s) needed and allows FLF to deliver orders versus sell apparel. We will continue to sell the inventory we have, but once it is gone it's gone. Photos of the gear we currently have in inventory is posted on the FLF website along with instructions on how to place an order. All proceeds go directly to FLF to help support the team.

Please note this apparel is different than what is available via Goldy's Locker Room and the merchandise window at the pool. Regardless of where it is purchased, we like our fans to wear Gopher gear at meets to show proud support of our team!

Q: Are there meals provided to the athletes after home meets?

A: Yes! It is important for athletes to have a nutritious meal immediately after competition. Fast Lane Fans ensures this opportunity is provided through your membership. The meal is coordinated by the Swim & Dive office and is served in the Aquatic Center immediately following home meets. It is for the athletes and coaches only. The team LOVES it and is very appreciative that great food is conveniently available!

Q: Will my athlete be hosting recruits?

A: Most likely, yes! The entire team helps host potential new Gophers during the recruiting season (typically through September). They receive information each week regarding their assignments. This is a super fun activity for all the athletes! As you can imagine however, it is also a very busy time because it coincides with the start of classes and practices. Be aware athlete's should not have other activities scheduled during the weekend they are expected to host. Also, this activity may conflict with the University's Parents weekend. If your athlete happens to be a host that weekend, there will be no time for parents!

Q: How are dual meets organized?

A: We are a combined program, so men and women compete at the same meets. Typical dual meets are organized with one heat of a women's event followed by the same event for men. Diving occurs during the meet (if scheduled). There may be exhibition heats and the events at each meet can vary. Points are given for the top 5 places in swimming and diving (9,4,3,2,1) and to the top 3 relays (11, 4, 2). Invitationals and conference meets are scored differently.

Q: Can I take my swimmer/diver out to eat after a meet?

A: Possibly ... always check with your athlete. However, at home meets there is a meal provided for the team immediately following the competition. Beside the fact that it is a great meal with teammates, it is also nice because s/he get to eat immediately versus going to a restaurant and waiting for an order. Also, you paid for that meal with your FLF membership! At away meets, under no circumstances are you allowed to take anyone except your athlete(s).

Q: I don't know the Minnesota Rouser - do I have to learn?

A: It would be nice! Parents and fans do actively cheer along, especially at the conference meets. The words can be found on the FLF website or the new parent packet. If you are hard core, you can download it from iTunes!

Q: Can I help time at home meets?

A: YES PLEASE! It is very important that we are able to support the team by providing timers. In addition, FLF receives a donation for every timer we provide. Many families are not able to attend home meets, so please consider volunteering when you are able. We are a parent team and support our athletes and the program. Non-dual meets are especially challenging to fully staff (i.e. Jean Freeman Invite, Minnesota Challenge). Remember, no experience required and you just may get a quick hello from your athlete!

Q: How can I follow the results of meets?

A: There are a variety of ways to track down meet results. Most meets do seem to be available via Meet Mobile. Also, watch the Gopher Swim & Dive website for links to live results and a recap after the meet. If you are a Facebooker, you can 'like' the Minnesota Swimming and Diving page for information. Tweeters can also follow. Athletes are not allowed to have cell phones on deck, so don't expect an immediate text from your son/daughter after their swim!

Q: How does team travel work?

A: The coaches determine travel teams and how they will travel - either via bus or plane. The travel athletes are informed of the arrangements by the coaches and it is very well organized by the team. A per diem is given to the athletes for food when needed. If an overnight stay is required, the team manages all reservations/transportation. You are never allowed to travel with the team.

The travel team athletes are determined by the coaches before each away meet. The team is usually informed the week of the meet and it can certainly change depending on circumstances. Yes, this can make it difficult if you are trying to decide if you want to fly to Florida, but it does get easier as time passes. Also, ask your athlete - s/he will have a good sense of this topic.

Important! Every travel athlete is required to have the travel uniform - black slacks (women) and khaki dress pants (men). These are not provided and NO cargo, sweat/yoga pants or jeans are permitted.

Q: How do I make hotel reservations for away meets I want to attend?

A: A FLF volunteer reserves blocks of hotel rooms for most away meets. However, it is your responsibility to book your own reservations. It is okay if you choose to stay at a different hotel than the reserved block, but *you are NOT ALLOWED to stay at the team hotel*. Selecting the block hotel ensures this will not happen. If you choose to find your own hotel, please ask when making the reservation if the team is staying there. Please respect the coaches wishes on that topic so the team retains focus. We strongly suggest making reservations for B1G/NCAA early, even though the Championship Team will not be known. It is easier to cancel a reservation than make one once all the hotels get booked!

Q: Can our travel athlete accumulate Frequent Flyer miles or hotel reward points?

A: No ... per NCAA rules.

Q: What can you tell me about the training trip?

A: The training trip is fully managed by the coaches and the Swim & Dive office. All information will be provided to the training team by the coaches at the appropriate time. Families should be aware they will be responsible for food and incidentals for their athlete, in addition to any supplemental costs requested from the coaches. FLF will send a communication with more information as it is available. However, we will not communicate anything before it is announced/provided to the team.

Q: Is there a recognition of senior athletes?

A: Yes! The first home dual meet is considered the Senior Meet. The parents of our senior athletes will be on deck - it is a special and sentimental event. All of us are guaranteed to experience that emotion!

Q: Is there anything special I should know about the conference meet?

A: Big Tens (aka B1G) holds separate conference meets for men and women. They are held at different locations a week apart (noted on the schedule). Once the B1G championship team is announced, parents will receive information regarding activities, tickets, etc. Hotel block information will be provided at the beginning of the season. Please note - local hotels book up quickly!

Q: What about NCAAs?

A: The last meet of the season is NCAA's. Similar to B1G, they are held separately for men and women. Athlete's must make the A cut or be invited to attend. Please note this a very difficult and elite meet. It is held in March and more information will be provided to those families at the appropriate time.

Q: Is there a year-end banquet?

A: Yes, there is an annual award brunch that is held post season. It is typically held at a restaurant near campus in April. You will receive an invite and more information from the Swim & Dive office after the end of the season. There will be a cost per person for the buffet, including your athlete.

Q: How will I ever get to know everyone?

A: For sure, this is not easy! We are a team from all over the country and everyone cannot attend every meet! FLF will provide new parents with name badges once the season starts. Parents try to wear them at meets to assist in getting to know each other. Most parents attend B1G and that is the most fun and exciting place to get to know each other!

Q: I am confused, excited and a bit overwhelmed - who can I talk to?

A: Any veteran parent is happy to share information and be there for new parents! It is a journey we have all been through. Also and at any time, contact your FLF Parent Representative - Deb Houser (make her feel needed)!

Don't forget to follow Gopher Swim & Dive on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram!

fastlanefans.com
gophersports.com

