

JSL 2012 Survey Summary

Thanks go out to the 966 parents, swimmers, coaches and volunteers who took the time and effort to take part in the first JSL survey. All teams were well represented. Because of the high response rate, the JSL Board considers these results to be very reliable. There were no IP addresses that showed above normal participation in the survey.

The original purpose of the survey was to gather opinions on the Championship location. The 2012 Championship could not be held at the UVa Aquatics and Fitness center because of construction. Going into the Championship, the Board and Champs Committee thought that the move to Fork Union Military Academy (FUMA) would only be for one year. However, there were so many positive comments on the FUMA location, that it was determined that a survey might clarify the location preference. After the decision was made to conduct a survey, other questions were added to gather opinions on a variety of topics important to the JSL Board and its member teams.

As the survey results are viewed, please remember that the survey contained many examples of “question logic” and “page logic”. That is, depending on how certain questions were answered, participants were directed towards certain other questions and pages. No one saw every question, except questions #1, #17, #49, #50, and #51. This helps explain why so many questions were “skipped”. However, participants could actually skip most questions or not complete the survey. If they did not complete the survey, all of their submitted answers were recorded.

1. Mostly parents (85%) took part in survey.
2. About 87% of parents have been involved in JSL for 2 or more years with over half involved for 4 years or more, so only 13% were “rookies”.
3. Exactly 72% of parents have two or more children swimming in JSL.
4. Almost 95% of parents are willing to share their email address with JSL.
5. Almost 94% report that they volunteer at swim meets.
6. The most common reason (40%) parents can't volunteer is that they have to watch their small children at meets.
7. Consideration should be given to providing child care at swim meets because 28% say this might make it easier for them to volunteer although the same percentage say a lack of training is a problem. There were no significant suggestions within the comments other than one suggestion to pay volunteers.
8. It should not be a surprise that “Timer” is the most common (41%) position.
9. Almost half of the parents volunteer in other ways besides swim meets.
10. Of the swimmers who took part in the survey (84), almost half were seniors.
11. A little over half of the swimmers who took part in the survey were girls.
12. A little over 65% of the swimmers who took the survey have been in the League over 5 years.
13. About 68% of swimmers are willing to share their email address.
14. About 10% of swimmers also serve as assistant coaches.
15. All but two head coaches took part.
16. About 77% of coaches have 2 or more years of experience with 27% having over 5 years of experience in JSL.
17. Among ALL respondents, almost 72% have attended JSL Championships at both UVa and FUMA. These were the only respondents who were allowed to compare both facilities and vote for a preference of one over the other.
18. The most common reason (44%) for not attending the Championship in 2012 was “on vacation or out of area” although 15% said FUMA was “too far away”.

Questions #19 through #31 could only be answered by those who attended the 2012 Championship at FUMA (they may have also attended a Championship at UVa):

19. Email (91%) was the most common way participants received information about the Championship at FUMA, but over half (52%) also cited the JSL webpage.
20. A clear majority (74%) felt the parking and shuttle were convenient at FUMA.
21. A clear majority (76%) did not watch the live video at FUMA. This was likely due to location.
22. It is not clear whether the live video at FUMA is worth the expense, but possibly moving it to a better location is worth a try. There were also a few comments about poor video quality.
23. While the team tent area at FUMA got a 57% approval rating, there were a number of comments complaining that their team tent was “too small” or it was “too hot”.
24. The Clerk-of-Course tent location was very successful with almost 90% rating it “easy to access”.
25. The Champs Committee knew in advance that the spectator stands were likely to be a problem, but slightly over half (51%) still thought they were adequate. In addition to the 33% who did not think they were adequate, most comments were various complaints (saving seats, too crowded, etc.).
26. Over 79% thought the restrooms were adequate at FUMA.
27. Slightly over half (54%) thought the food concessions were adequate at FUMA which likely represents an opportunity for some improvement.
28. Most (40%) liked having the awards ceremonies after each session rather than at the end on Saturday night (5%) and most thought they were about the right length (22%), but 8% thought they were too long. The most common suggestion for improvement was “did not know there was an awards ceremony.”
29. It is very clear that JSL has to do a better job of publicizing the “Charity Relays” as 60% didn’t know about them, although 33% would not enter no matter what. Some of the comments made it clear that parents were not willing to drive back on Saturday night to do this.
30. It is very encouraging and a tribute to Jann Balmer and the Champs Committee that 85% thought champs “ran well” at FUMA. There were a few suggestions for improvement that will be passed to the Champs Committee for consideration.
31. While a slight majority (53%) thought “it was fine just the way it was” at FUMA, there were a number of suggestions for improvement that were passed to the Champs Committee for consideration

Questions #32 through #44 could only be answered by those who attended the 2012 Championship at FUMA and at least one Championship at UVA:

32. Those who have attended a Championship at UVA also received their information primarily via email (84%) and/or the JSL webpage (50%)
33. While 33% thought that parking at both facilities was about the same, UVA parking was perceived at least somewhat better by 41% to 24%.
34. The live video was viewed by far more participants (65%) who have been to UVA than those who have only been to FUMA (24%). Again, as noted in question #21, location of the video is likely the reason.
35. Even though more have watched the video at UVA (question 34), some (37%) still don't think it is worth a "significant expense".
36. The team tent area at FUMA was rated higher (51%) than at UVA (25%), and 22% thought they were about the same.
37. The Clerk-of-Course area at FUMA was rated higher (38%) than at UVA (29%), and 11% thought they were about the same.
38. Participants clearly preferred the spectator stands at UVA (50%) to those at FUMA (13%), although 27% thought they were about the same.
39. Restrooms at UVA were preferred by 60% to those at FUMA (7%) and 25% thought they were about the same.
40. Food concessions at UVA were preferred by 48% to those at FUMA (16%), although a significant number (36%) thought they were about the same.
41. A clear majority (72%) prefer the awards ceremonies to be held after each session. There were several suggestions to improve communication about the awards ceremonies. One good suggestion was to video the ceremony and post it on jsl.org. There were several criticisms of the organization of the awards ceremony and that JSL doesn't recognize record-breakers.
42. As with those who attended only at FUMA, a significant number (51%) did not know about the charity relays, but 28% would not enter no matter what. There were many comments that also cited better and earlier publicity as well as numerous other suggestions that will be passed on to the Champs Committee.
43. A large number (46%) thought the meet ran as well at FUMA as at UVA while 27% thought it ran better at UVA and 27% thought it ran better at FUMA. Clearly Jann Balmer and the Champs Committee are capable of running it at either location.
44. A significant number (40%) thought that Champs at FUMA was overall just as good as at UVA and 20% thought it was better, although 40% thought it didn't measure up to previous Champs at UVA.

Questions #45 and #46 were based on "hearsay". That is, they were only answered by those who attended Champs at UVA, but not FUMA and had heard about Champs as determined in question #45.

45. Among the respondents who did not attend Champs at FUMA, 57 heard about Champs from someone else.
46. Of the 57 who heard about Champs at FUMA, but did not attend, 31% heard it was better or at least as good at UVA while 56% heard it was not as good.

Questions #47 and #48 could only be answered by those who attended Champs at UVa and FUMA.

47. Almost 3 times as many respondents think Champs should be at UVa (52%) as at FUMA (19%), but for 26% it doesn't matter. JMU was the only alternate site mentioned under "Other".
48. A clear majority (61%) do not think alternating sites is a good idea.

All respondents could answer Questions #49 through #51, but did not have to answer.

49. All teams were reasonably well represented in the survey relative to team size, but 7 teams had higher response rates and 10 teams had lower response rates relative to their team size.
50. This open-ended question asked "*If you could change ONE thing about JSL, what would it be?*". Almost half who answered this question selected "Nothing, I like JSL just as it is.", but 360 left comments. The suggestions have been divided as to subject and are being viewed by a sub-committee. Some of these suggestions have already been considered by the JSL Board.
51. This open ended question asked, "*Lastly, please take a few minutes and tell us anything else that is on your mind about JSL. It could be another suggestion or comment, a criticism or praise, or anything you want the Board to know. Your reply is anonymous and will go only to the Board of the JSL.*" There were 371 responses to this question of which about 1/3 were compliments. The responses have been divided as to subject and are being viewed by a sub-committee. Some of these suggestions have already been considered by the JSL Board.