

Everything a Parent Needs to Know About Home Swim Meets

You might have wondered: What happens at a home swim meet? This guide will help you to understand what to expect - and how you can help run a great meet.

A Quick Summary

It takes about 64 volunteers to run a meet - yes, 64! We need 52 (2 shifts of 26) volunteers on deck and another 12 (2 shifts of 6) to handle concession sales. We take tremendous pride in how our meets are run. When everyone does their part, jobs are shared, and volunteers typically only work 2 - 3 hours instead of the entire meet. **Every family is required to have someone volunteer for home meets.** This can be a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, family friend or sibling, age 14 and over. We will have 2 home meets throughout the season.

If you'd like to work on deck you can:

- be a timer, operating a stop watch (26)
- be a kid wrangler who organizes swimmers before races (8)
- be a monitor who checks locker rooms and keeps areas safe (4)
- distribute heat winner ribbons (2)

No experience is necessary for any of these jobs; we'll teach you everything.

You can also become a Certified YMCA Official and work on deck judging strokes and turns, keeping score, being a starter, head timer or head official. (12)

All others can help in the concession area, (no parent misses seeing their child swim with the use of walkie talkies to communicate to concession volunteers). We also need help setting up and dismantling the concession area and pool deck.

What Swimmers Need to Bring:

- Team suit and a spare suit - unexpected wardrobe malfunctions do happen
- Goggles - including a back-up pair
- Team Swim Cap
- Flip Flops or Sport Sandals - footwear is required outside of the pool area
- 2 - 3 towels
- Parka, warm-ups or shirt and pants - important to keep muscles warm in-between events
- Cards, games, etc to share with teammates - lots of time for team bonding
- Books and homework are also good choices but please avoid electronic games
- Healthy snacks, water, Gatorade and money for concessions
- A sleeping bag or blanket to "camp out" on between events

What Parents Need to Bring:

- Parents need to sign up to bring items to sell at the Concession Stand. The list is posted at least 2 weeks prior to the meet on the Team Unify site. Yes, you may be buying back your own donations, but revenue from concession sales is what pays for trophies, our end of season banquet and defers the cost of other activities.
- Bring a folding camp chair to sit with your swimmer in the gym. (Please make sure the feet of the chair are clean.). Our team has the far half of the gym, closest to concessions.
- If you can, print the Meet Program that is emailed the night before the meet and highlight your swimmer's events. You'll be able to keep track of where we are in the meet and ensure you won't miss an event.

Before the Meet

- Should your child become ill and unable to attend, text the head coach asap so necessary line-up changes can be made.
- **All swimmers need to be on-deck, with suit and goggles by** for attendance and a brief team meeting before getting in for warm-ups. Warm-ups are 20 minutes.
- **The gym will be available at 11:45 am** on Saturdays, to drop off concession items and set up. There is programming in the gym until 11:30 am and they need time to break down equipment.
- The concession stand needs volunteers prior to the start of the meet to stock everything. Please sign up to help with ~~set~~-up.
- All on-deck volunteers should check in on deck at 30 minutes prior to the start of the meet for a quick meeting. **All on-deck volunteers should be in position on the pool deck 15 minutes prior to the start of the meet and 2nd shift should arrive 10 minutes prior to their start time.**
- There are 50-60 events in a tri/quad meet. Most events have multiple heats (races). Your swimmer's events can be found on the Team Unify site and typically the coach will email them the day before the meet. Events should be written on your swimmer's hand as follows; *event number, event name, heat and lane*. This is repeated for each event they are scheduled to swim. Swimmers should check in with their coach as soon as they arrive to see if any last-minute changes to the line-up affect them.

The Meet

- The meet will begin with relays immediately after the National Anthem.
- The event currently "seeding", (lining up) will be announced and written on the white board in the gym.
- Please follow the meet carefully. Swimmers, as well as their parents and coaches are never happy when an event is missed. Parents are responsible to ensure their swimmer gets to the seeding area on time with their cap and goggles.
- Heats are run very quickly. The starter will begin the next event/heat immediately after the previous event/heat is completed. This helps get through the events as quickly as possible.

- Parents should **not** stay on the bleachers during the meet. After your swimmer's event, you should return to the large gym. This assures there is room for everyone to see their child swim.
- Swimmers and parents are expected to adhere to the Y's core values of CARING, HONESTY, RESPECT and RESPONSIBILITY at all times during the meet. Teammates, fans, opponents, officials and coaches should all be treated in a way that makes us proud to be part of the Sewickley Y Sea Dragons Swim Team.
- The most important job of a parent during a meet is to provide unconditional love and support to their child. Please be positive about their performance and let the coaches coach.
- The opposing teams generally have around 40 to 100 swimmers each. This means we'll have 200 + swimmers in and around the pool deck for about 5 hours. Please make sure your swimmer is not roaming the halls or in a place they should not be during the meet.

After the Meet

- It is common to have no idea what the Total Score of the meet is until well after the meet. Do not be alarmed if the coaches play down the total score. Results will be posted as soon as they are reviewed and finalized.
- It takes about an hour to clean up and dismantle the pool deck and concession area. This goes faster, of course, with many helpers. Please stay after the meet to help with the tear down.
- Swimmers **MUST** clean up their 'camp out' area and locker rooms after the meet. This includes throwing away all trash.

Finally

A well-run meet will be completed in about 5 hours. Add in the set-up time and the clean-up time after the meet and, well, it's a long day. But, oddly, running a meet can be a lot of fun. It's more fun when everyone pitches in to help. You'll meet lots of great people and your kids will be very proud of you! Thanks in advance for doing your part!

