



BELLEVILLE BEAST SWIM TEAM

A Guide to Your First Swim Meet!

So you have signed up and are ready for your first meet. Here are some things you need to know!

1. All athletes **MUST** be in team attire. This means a team shirt or jacket and swimsuit. It is preferred they have a suit in team colours (PURPLE!, black or silver). It is important to know that there are rules surrounding swimsuits and your athlete's suit must be approved for racing. If you are unsure, check with your coach for information on approved suits.
2. Extra warm clothes. We may be warm in the stands, but the athletes are swimming in cool water and may need extra clothes to stay warm between events.
3. Team swim cap – available for \$20 from the BBST equipment manager
4. Well-fitting goggles (an extra pair is a good idea too in case one pair breaks)
5. Towels (take 2 – 3 towels depending on the length of the meet)
6. Flip flops or non-slip deck shoes
7. A plastic or metal water bottle. Glass will not be permitted on deck.
8. Nutritious snacks (i.e. oatmeal bars, raisins, grapes etc), nothing too heavy to digest and nothing fatty (no junk food!) Remember, food is **NOT** permitted on deck for athletes so they will have to eat in other areas.
9. \$\$ for the heat sheets. These generally cost \$2 – \$4 (could be more depending on the meet) and are available at the pool. They show all the races and you can check which races your child is in (and what lanes). *Usually they are available online for free.*
10. Colourful highlighter pen so you can mark off your child's races.
11. A marker or Sharpie - newer swimmers like to have their heat numbers written on their arms to help them keep track of their races (13 & over swimmers **DO NOT** need to do this). Once you have purchased your heat sheets, you can assist your athlete with this.
12. As a spectator keep in mind that the indoor pool can get very hot inside so dress accordingly! Viewing is often limited – arrive early.

13. Lunch for all day meets. Some meets have a shop with food – and others don't.

14. A camera, particularly at away meets if you want pictures. For home meets, we are incredibly lucky to have a team photographer that captures amazing images of all our athletes and provides digital copies at no charge to the parents. If you are using your own camera, please do NOT use the flash. This may interfere with the start of the race which uses a strobe light.

15. Teams warm up in the pool, usually an hour before the first race begins. Please leave home in plenty of time to be on deck and stretching the at least 15 mins before the start of warm-ups. The schedule for the meet can be found in the meet package which is always posted on the BBST website under the tab for each meet.

When you arrive at the pool:

1. Ensure your swimmer is changed and on the deck. A BBST coach will already be there.

2. Look for other BBST swimmers/parents. If seating permits, sit together as a team. Parents will not be allowed on deck. Swim Canada only permits registered coaches on deck. Plus, it's so much more fun to cheer on our athletes together!

3. Buy a heat sheet (program) and look for your child's name. Highlight the races he/she will be swimming in while he/she is in warm ups. Notify your child's coach if you find that your swimmers name is unexpectedly not listed in a race. At most, events are swum slowest to fastest. New athletes with no times (NT) will usually swim in the first or sometimes second heat. Once they have swum they will get an official time and the next time they swim that event they will be seeded accordingly.

4. Encourage your child to cheer for their team mates!

5. Your child must talk to his/her coach before and after each race. This allows the coach to give plans and encouragement before the race and to provide feedback after the race for next time. Remember, let the coach coach. As a parent, we are here to encourage and be positive.

6. Keep an eye on your swimmer and make sure that they don't miss their race. Young swimmers often get distracted and miss races! Some meets marshal swimmers prior to the event. Make sure your athlete is listening for announcements. If there is an electronic timing system, the current event will be on the large digital board. Athletes should be by the blocks ready swim at least 2-3 heats in advance of their swim.

7. When the meet is over, please ensure that your swimmer helps to clean up any garbage around the team area. It's a lot of work for the meet organizers to clean up the mess left at the end of a meet. Our team has a good reputation in terms of keeping our area clean.

Meet Results:

Encourage your swimmer to do their best and to have fun. Results are usually posted on a wall at the meet as they become available. These will show their official time and place for each event. At some meets results can also be found on a phone/tablet app called Meet Mobile (available for iPhone and Android) Results are not official until they are uploaded to the Swim Canada web site at www.swimming.ca This web site shows not only all the results of all the meets nationwide but will show you provincial and national rankings. In the days following the meet the Head Coach will also post official results on the website.

Awards are given at meets for those who place 1st – 8th (or 1st – 6th in 6 lane pools). Some meets offer medals for 1st – 3rd. Encourage your child to have fun and not to worry too much if they don't get a ribbon. These early meets should be positive experience for your child and about learning the sport and getting best times.

DQ - This is a disqualification. Sometimes, the swimmer may be disqualified and an official will tell the swimmer at the end of the race. Although this is done to help the swimmer learn the rules of the strokes, it is often a very emotional event for the young swimmer so it is important to let them know that this happens to most swimmers when they are starting out - even some of the world champions get disqualified. The coaches will also help athletes understand why they have been disqualified so they can learn from the experience.

Cancellations - If for any reason your child is no longer able to attend a meet you had previously signed up for please be sure to let the coach know ASAP as he has to be scratched from the races ahead of time. There are scratch deadlines. Please make scratches before the sign up deadline date which is on the website. Failing to do so will result in your having to pay meet entry fees even though your child didn't swim.

Meet fees/costs - Meet fees are identified on the website and differ from meet to meet. There is usually the option to attend and pay for the full meet or just one day. Meet fees should be paid by cheque payable to 'Belleville Swimming' and placed in the BBST locked box in the upstairs spectator area of QSWC.

If you have ANY questions about swim meets, please don't hesitate to speak to the coach. Any questions about BBST home meets and what is expected of BBST parents can be directed to the Meet Manager at bbstmeetmanager@gmail.com @gmail.com On the day of, find the other BBST parents – we have all had our “first meet” and are more than willing to answer any of your questions.

Remember swim meets are run completely by volunteer parents. Without them, our athletes would not be able to compete. Please consider taking clinics and volunteering in the various roles at both home and away swim meets.

And finally, HAVE FUN and enjoy the journey with your athlete. Swimming is a wonderful sport with so many great benefits.

Welcome to the BBST family!