



A Guide to Your First Swim Meet!

So your swimmer is signed up for his/her first meet. Here are some things you need to know:

- 🏊 Swim suit, cap and well-fitting goggles are a must! It is best to have a pair of goggles just for meets if possible.
- 🏊 Swimmers should also bring their team warm up suits or other clothes to wear when they are not racing. This will help them to stay warm between events.
- 🏊 Flip flops or non-slip deck shoes are a good idea too!
- 🏊 It is also a good idea to bring 2 to 3 towels depending on the length of the meet.
- 🏊 A plastic or metal water bottle. Glass will not be permitted on deck.
- 🏊 Nutritious snacks (i.e. oatmeal bars, raisins, fruit and veggies, cheese and crackers, etc.), nothing too heavy to digest and nothing fatty (junk food is not recommended!)
- 🏊 \$\$ for the swim meet program. These may cost \$5-\$10 and are available at the pool. They show all the races and you can check which events, heats and lanes your swimmer is in.
- 🏊 Colourful highlighter pen so you can mark off your child's and your team's races.
- 🏊 As a spectator keep in mind that the indoor pool can get very hot inside so dress accordingly! Many pools do not allow outdoor footwear in their pool area. Space in the viewing area is often limited – arrive early.
- 🏊 Lunch for all day meets or money to purchase lunch. Some meets have food available for purchase.
- 🏊 Please leave home in plenty of time to be on deck and stretching the at least 15 minutes before the start of warm-ups.

When you arrive at the pool:

- 🏊 Ensure your swimmer is changed and on the deck. A NCA coach will already be there.
- 🏊 Look for other NCA swimmers/parents. Parents will not be allowed on deck. Swim Canada only permits registered coaches and volunteers on deck.
- 🏊 Buy a program and look for your child's and your child's teammates' names. Highlight the races he/she will be swimming in while he/she is in warm ups.
- 🏊 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.
- 🏊 Encourage your child to cheer for their team mates!

- 🏊 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.
- 🏊 If your swimmer comes off the pool deck, keep an eye on the meet progress and make sure that they don't miss their race. Young swimmers often get distracted and miss races! Meets marshal swimmers prior to each event and they will need to line up at least 2-3 heats in advance of their swim.
- 🏊 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.

Meet Results

- 🏊 Encourage your swimmer to do their best and to have fun. For young swimmers a best race will not necessarily be a best time. They may have a specific technical goal to achieve such as great streamlines.
- 🏊 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 NCA website (www.ncaswimming.ca).
- 🏊 Awards and/or points are given at championship meets or some invitationals 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 offer positive experiences for your child. Focus on learning the sport and getting his/her personal 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. Getting a DQ should be an experience to learn from.

Scratches (a.k.a. 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/she has to be scratched from the races

ahead of time. Please make scratches before the scratch deadline date. Failing to do so will result in the meet fees being charged to your account even though your child didn't swim. This is because NCA has to pay fees to the host club for late or unscratched swimmers.

Meet fees/costs

- Meet fees differ from meet to meet and your account will be billed for each event that your swimmer is registered in. The meet fees are charged, whether the swimmer swims or not, unless the swimmer is scratched before the scratch deadline.

Questions during the meet?

- Questions/concerns about the meet need to be directed to one of the NCA coaches. The coach(es) will speak with either the Referee or the Meet Manager if required.

When NCA Hosts a Meet

- Any questions about NCA home meets and what is expected of NCA parents can be directed to the Meet Manager. The meet manager is responsible for planning, organizing and executing every aspect of the meet. This individual makes sure it runs without a hitch.
- Remember swim meets are run completely by volunteers. Without them, our swimmers would not be able to compete. Please consider taking clinics (where applicable) and volunteering for any of these various tasks:

Setup:

Prior to the start of the meet, setting up around the pool area is required including the marshalling table and area, swim lanes, timing / data entry area, kitchen and sales areas.

Kitchen:

Before the meet, our club will be responsible for the purchase and preparation of food to be sold. During the meet, volunteers are needed to prepare / serve and to sell the food. Following the meet, help with kitchen cleanup is greatly appreciated!

Team Packages:

Prior to the start of the meet, as the competing teams arrive, volunteer(s) is/are needed to receive the meet fees and to distribute information packages. *If any visiting team have any concerns about the meet, they are to be directed to the Meet Manager.*

Sales – Programs and/or Raffle Tickets:

When we host, the programs will need to be created and printed prior to the meet. Just prior to the start of the meet, the sales of the programs and raffle tickets begins. The sales continue either until the programs and raffle tickets are sold out or until the demand has

been met. No programs are to be given away. If additional programs are requested by visiting teams, direct them to the Meet Manager who can provide them with additional copies formatted for the coaches.

Officiating:

Different roles are needed to help the swim meet run smoothly. Officials are needed to run the meet. More details are available on the NCA website under Volunteers. Here is a brief description of the volunteer opportunities available during a meet:

<u>Role:</u>	<u>Description:</u>
Timer	This is the first level of officiating and is a great way to start out your official's career.
Marshalling	This gets the swimmers lined up in order of the events and ready to swim.
Safety Marshall	Watching that swimmers behave well during warm up. <i>Just common sense!</i>
Strokes and Turns	This is usually the next level of officiating and is a great way to appreciate what your swimmer has to do to execute a legal race.

Please note that training is required for these roles and is available through the club – just ask one of the coaches! Also, meets hosted by other clubs may, at times, request assistance with some of these tasks.

Clean Up:

After the meet, the pool area, kitchen, gym and foyer all need to be tidied up and put back to their original state. Having many volunteers available allows for everyone to head home sooner than later!

One final note about NCA hosted meets...

For many of the tasks, volunteering for shifts is a great way to get to help out and to allow for all parents to have the opportunity to watch at least part of the meet. We can never have too many volunteers!

In Conclusion

- 🏊 If you have ANY questions about swim meets, please don't hesitate to speak to one of the coaches or find the other NCA parents – we have all had our “first meet” and are more than willing to answer any of your questions.
- 🏊 And finally, **HAVE FUN** and enjoy the journey with your swimmer. Swimming is a wonderful sport with so many great benefits.

Enjoy your 1st meet!