

SWIM MEETS 101

Swim meets are where our athletes learn the value of hard work, setting and chasing goals, and other life skills including teamwork and sportsmanship. Here is a great article on why kids should participate in swim meets: <https://swimswam.com/7-reasons-every-swimmer-go-swim-meets/>

We hope **this document will help you navigate swim meets** – from signing up and how to find out what your swimmer is racing, to what to pack and finding their results. If you have any questions, please reach out to our Registrar, Parent Liaison, or coaches.

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR MEETS?

1. Coach Matt will send out an email when a swim meet has been added to the calendar. **Click on the link in the email OR go to the website, log in and click on the event name under the Meets/Events tab.** There you will get more details on the meet date(s), the signup **deadline** and a link to the meet packet. This meet packet will include where the meet is taking place, what the meet fees will be (for more on meet fees, see below), the events that will be offered and, more.
2. **To sign up, click on the Attend/Decline button** (see example below):

King & Queen of Sprints
Nov 12 2022 - Nov 13 2022

 Attend/Decline

3. On the next screen, **click on swimmer's name**. If you have more than one swimmer, you have to sign up each one individually.
4. Go to **Declaration** drop down menu and select **Yes OR No**.
5. You may enter a **note** to the coach in the text box. For example, your swimmer can only attend one day and not both. The coaches will select the events your swimmer should compete in at the meet.
6. **Save Changes**.
7. Repeat this process for each swimmer you have.

NOTE: If you need to change your commitment **BEFORE** the deadline, click the Edit Commitment. If the deadline has passed, you will not be able to change your commitment.

WHAT ARE MEET FEES?

Meet entry fees vary by the type of meet, but generally run about \$30-\$80 per meet. Meet fees are always listed in the meet packet, which is posted on the event page on our website. An example of these fees can be found here:

ENTRY FEES: Electronic entries: **\$4.00 per individual event and \$6.00 per relay**

- Swimmer Participation Fee is \$5.00 per swimmer
- Athlete Travel Fee: \$1.00 per swimmer.

Meet fees are added to your account right after the swim meet deadline. You can find the amount by going to **My Account, Invoices & Payments**. These meet fees are passed onto the team hosting the swim meet and are non-refundable.

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT MY CHILD IS SWIMMING?

At least one week (sometimes more) before the swim meet, you can find the events your swimmer is competing in. Just follow these steps:

SWIM MEETS 101

1. **Log into the Maine Gators website** and **click on the Meets/Events** tab at the top of the page.
2. When you find the swim meet you have signed up for, click on the **Edit Commitment** button.

 Edit Commitment

3. Below is an example of what you will see. To the right of your swimmer's name, you'll find the events they are competing in and their entry time, which is their previous best time in that event. You will see an NT, meaning no time, if they have never competed in the event before. The (d1/s1) notation means this swimmer is competing on the first day of the meet (d1) and the second session (s2). Most meets have multiple sessions during the day and they can be broken up in various ways. The most common is by age group, such as 12&Under (meaning kids 12 years and under) and 13&Over (13 years old and up).
4. **RELAYS:** If your swimmer is entered into a relay, you will see this under **Relay (Entered by Admin)**. If your swimmer cannot participate in the assigned relay, please let the coach know at least one week before the meet so they can try to find another swimmer to fill their spot. It's a disappointment to the rest of the relay when a swimmer simply doesn't show up.

Member Name	Member Commitment	Coach Approved
<u>Jane Doe</u> *Active	✔ Committed	# 106A (d1/s1): G 13-14 200 Breast (3:01.70L Approved) # 108B (d1/s1): G 13-14 200 Free (2:31.25L Approved) # 112B (d1/s1): G 13-14 100 Fly (1:08.65L Approved) # 219B (d2/s3): G 13-14 100 Breast (1:23.03L Approved) # 221B (d2/s3): G 13-14 50 Free (29.23L Approved) # 225C (d2/s5): F 13-14 400 Medley (5:41.67L Approved) # 325B (d3/s6): G 13-14 200 Medley (2:36.70L Approved) Relay (Entered by Admin): # 103A (d1/s2): F 14 & Under 400 Free Relay (Team A) # 214A (d2/s5): F 11-14 400 Medley Relay (Team A) # 314A (d3/s8): F 11-14 200 Free Relay (Team A)

WHAT SWIMMERS SHOULD BRING TO A MEET

Your swimmer should bring a backpack that includes the following:

- 2 sets of goggles (in case one breaks)
- 2 team caps (in case one breaks)
- 1-2 towels
- Team suit and extra suit (just in case)
- T-shirt, sweatshirt or team parka to wear on deck (you will be hot in the bleachers but swimmers sometimes get cold between races – it depends on the facility)
- Water or Gatorade and some healthy snacks
- Any emergency medication such as an epi-pen or inhaler (just in case)
- Cell phones are only permitted so your swimmer can contact you, if needed. Otherwise, phones should remain in their swim bag. We encourage swimmers to socialize with their teammates and cheer each other on.

PARENT EXPECTATIONS AT A SWIM MEET

- It takes a village to run a swim meet and **we can't run them without volunteers**. A week before a swim meet, there is often a job sign up form. We need parents to be timers, serve as safety marshalls, and work at the admissions table or concessions. All of these jobs are very easy to learn. Your swimmer will love seeing you on deck and most importantly, you're helping the club run a successful meet.

SWIM MEETS 101

- **If you are interested in becoming a trained Swim Official or what it entails, please reach out to mainegatorboosterclub@gmail.com. We really need more officials!**
- No parents are allowed on deck unless volunteering. These are USA Swimming rules.
- You are welcome to take pictures or videos of your swimmer but not from behind the blocks. This is a USA Swimming rule.
- Most meets charge an admission to help raise money for their club. You can also purchase a heat sheet that lists the events, swimmers in each heat and their entry times. See below for more info on heat sheets.
- Sitting with other swim parents is a great way to navigate through your first few meets, get to know one another and cheer for the team together.
- Dress as if it's summertime – it will be hot - and minimize what you bring because there is often limited space.
- It is expected that your child will be present on deck with the team during the swim meet, not in the stands or hanging at concessions. Some swimmers have missed their races because of this. If your swimmer does have to leave the pool deck, make sure they inform a coach first.

WHAT A TYPICAL SWIM MEET LOOKS LIKE

- A day or two before the meet, the coaching staff will send out an email with the warmup times for each session and day. You should have your swimmer at the pool 10-15 minutes before their scheduled warm-up time. This should give your swimmer enough time to get acclimated to the facility, find their teammates, get their cap and goggles on, etc. Send your swimmer off with a smile, words of encouragement and “have fun!” (All swimmers are expected to attend warmup, even if they are not swimming until later in the session.)
- If your swimmer needs help putting on their cap, the coaches and other swimmers will be happy to help. Eventually they will learn how to do it themselves.
- Coaches will bring swimmers to the appointed lanes for warm-ups. It is very important that all swimmers, regardless of age, warm up. Warmup generally last between 15-20 minutes. Coaches will give them instruction on what to swim and then they will practice some starts. When warmup is complete, the swimmers return to the team area to wait for their events and cheer on their teammates.
- Coaches will inform swimmers of their heat and the appropriate block to go to. This is also on the heat sheet, which the team and coaches will have a copy of. Swimmers should stay on deck with their team so coaches can easily locate them for their race. If your swimmer does leave the pool deck, they should inform their coach before doing so.
- After their race, swimmers should check in with their coach for guidance and feedback. Development of the athlete/coach relationship is very important.
- You and your swimmer may leave after their last event, but your swimmer must check in with the coach before leaving.

HOW TO READ A HEAT SHEET

Meet programs, also called heat sheets, are available for purchase at swim meets and generally sell between \$1-\$3 per session. (Twelve and under swimmers generally swim one session per day.) These programs will list all swimmers in each event in order of “Seed Time” (meaning their fastest time to date). If a swimmer has not yet competed in a particular event, they will be listed as “NT” or No Time. A NT swimmer will likely swim in one of the first heats of the event.

(See next page)

SWIM MEETS 101

Here is an example:

Lane	Name	Age	Team	Seed Time
Event 16 Mixed 12 & Under 100 Yard IM				
Heat 1 of 6 Finals				
2	Kopytnik, Veronika B	W11	LRSC-ME	NT
3	Griffie, Lucas S	M9	LRSC-ME	2:01.26
4	Shields, Pierce S	M11	PPSC-ME	2:03.87
5	Morse, Anna G	W9	CMA-ME	NT

Heat 1 of 6 means this is the first out of six groups of swimmers competing in 100 Yard Individual Medley (IM).

The numbers under Heat indicate the lane each swimmer is in. The starting blocks will have the lane number on them.

Under the Age column, the W means Women and M means Men. As you see at the top, the event says "Mixed" meaning both boys and girls can swim in this event.

AFTER A SWIM MEET

As a parent, you can support your child by telling them how well they did, how proud you are how much you enjoyed watching them swim. Coaches will discuss stroke technique but that's not your job. IF your child has a disappointing swim, talk about the good things they did. Never talk about the negative things. There is nothing wrong with a swimmer negatively evaluating a race, but it is important for them not to dwell on it. Parents can re-focus the discussion by saying, "OK, you had a bad race. How do you think you can do better the next time?"

If you are interested in finding your swimmer's times (aka meet results), here are a couple different ways:

1. **On our website:** It may take a couple days for the upload to be completed but you will find your swimmer's results under My Account, Account Info and then click on your swimmer's name. You will then see a tab called Meet Results. This will show results by swim meet.
2. **Meet Mobile App:** This is a subscription app that displays meet results within several minutes of a race being completed.
3. **OnDeck App:** A free mobile app that connects to your account information in TeamUnify (our website's platform) and will display past meet results. Use your Maine Gators website login information and the Team Alias is meppsc. You can find other cool tools in the OnDeck app.

SWIM MEET TERMS

Short Course (SC): This term is used to describe the length of a pool - 25 yards (scy) or 25 meters (scm). Our Reiche pool is a 25-yard pool (scy) and our Riverton pool is a 25 meter pool (scm). The fall/winter session is called the "short course" season because we compete in 25 yard pools.

Long Course (LC): This term is used for pools that are 50 meters in length, like an Olympic size pool. There is currently only one 50-meter pool in the state, at Colby College. The spring/summer session is called the "long course" season because most clubs compete in 50-meter pools.

USA Swimming: The national governing body of competitive swimming. USA swimming offers a broad-based Age Group Program that is managed by local swim committees. Visit USA swimming website for more information and valuable resources. www.usaswimming.org

Maine Swimming (MESI): MESI is our Local Swimming Committee (LSC), which is a separate and independent corporation to whom USA Swimming has delegated certain governing and supervisory responsibilities. Each state or group of states has an LSC. You may also hear of New England Swimming, which governs NH, MA, VT and RI swim teams. To learn more about MESI, go to: www.maineswimming.org

SWIM MEETS 101

Age Group: Division of swimmers according to age. The Maine Swimming Age Groups include: 8 & Under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 and 15 & over. The National Age Groups are: 10 & Under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18

IM (Individual Medley): A swimming event using all 4 of the competitive strokes. Order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle. Equal distances must be swum of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yds, 200 yds/mtr, 400 yds/mtr.

Relays: A swimming event in which 4 swimmers participate as a relay team, each swimmer swimming an equal distance of the race. Relay Teams are determined by the coaches and often decided on the day of the meet. There are two types of relays:

- **Medley relay** - One swimmer swims backstroke, one swimmer swims breaststroke, one swimmer swims butterfly, one swimmer swims freestyle, in that order. Medley relays are conducted over 200 yard/meter and 400 yard/meter distances.
- **Freestyle relay** - Each swimmer swims freestyle. Free relays are conducted over 200 yard/meter, 400 yard/meter, and 800 yard/meter distances.

Disqualifications (DQ): Swimmer's performance time is not counted because the swimmer did something "illegal" in their race. This could be a false start (leaving the starting block too early), or a stroke and turn was done incorrectly. A DQ is shown by an official raising one arm above their head. The official then fills out a DQ slip, it's turned into the Meet Referee and a copy is given to the head coach. Don't worry if this happens - it is a learning experience and it's common for new swimmers until they have mastered a particular skill. Every swimmer has done it!

These are the terms you are mostly to hear but a more complete list of swim meet terms can be found here:

<https://myswimpro.com/blog/2018/03/16/swim-meet-terminology-faqs/>