

Meet Etiquette

Most of us have read the horror stories of poor sportsmanship prevalent in other youth sports. In an effort to keep swimming the fun, clean sport that it is, here's a friendly reminder of about good sportsmanship at swim meets.

1. Volunteer! Every meet needs volunteer help.
2. Volunteer to time! Timers are very important people! In case of a timing equipment malfunction, the watch times are important in determining the official time. Don't make the meet manager beg for timers – volunteer and enjoy the action up close.
3. Swimmers, remember to tell the timers thank you after you find out your time.
4. Swimmers, remember to talk to your coach before and after your races.
5. We are here for the swimmers. We have all seen the parent who thinks every meet is a warm-up for the Olympics. In truth, Montana will send very very few swimmers to the Olympics. Putting pressure on a swimmer to perform takes the fun out of the meet. Relax and have fun. Your swimmer will have more fun and probably swim better too.
6. Cheer for all the swimmers on your team!
7. Safety is important. If you see an unsafe situation, notify the meet management. Encourage safety among your swimmers – walk on the deck, no glass containers on the deck.
8. No flash photography at the start of a race. The flash photography interferes with the race start and may cause a swimmer to false start. Also, no laser pointers should be used during the meet.
9. Be quiet at the start of each race. Sometimes everyone is cheering loudly – so loudly that the swimmers can't hear the starter. Be considerate of the swimmers by being quiet at the start of the race.
10. Don't recruit or encourage a swimmer from another team to join your team. This especially true in cities with more than one team. This can be a recruiting violation.
11. Don't scream, yell, threaten, push, touch, swear at, or harass meet officials for the calls they make. The USA Swimming rules state that "any non-consensual physical contact, obscene language or gesture, or other threatening language or conduct directed towards any meet official and which is related to any decision made by such official in connection with a USA Swimming sanctioned competition" is a violation of the USA Swimming code of conduct. Such behavior may result in the person being removed from the meet venue for the remainder of the meet and/or other sanctions

may be given to the person and possibly the club. Officials are all volunteers. It's easy to sit in the balcony and second guess an official, but remember you don't see what the official sees. Please don't criticize the officials.

12. If you have a question about a disqualification, talk to your coach first. The coach may be able to explain the disqualification. If not, the coach may protest, question, or ask about the call by talking to the meet referee. If your team doesn't have a coach at the meet, a parent may ask the referee about the call. While referees don't mind talking to parents about a disqualification, please understand that the referee may not have the time to talk to every parent about every disqualification. Try to work through your coach if you have questions.
13. Remember to tell the officials thank you for volunteering their time to work the meet. The officials work the deck all day in the heat, the rain, the cold, whatever the weather conditions are at the meet. They go home with tired sore feet and soaking wet shoes. They pay to join USA Swimming, pay to purchase their uniforms, and sometimes would rather just sit in the stands and watch. While you may not always agree with a call made by an official, encourage the swimmers and parents to tell the officials thank you.
14. Remember to tell your coach thank you! Coaches work many hours with your swimmer often with low pay. Encourage your coach. If you are at a meet without a coach and another coach offers to coach your swimmers, remember to say thank you to that coach too.
15. Clean up the area where you are sitting before you leave the meet each day.
16. Have fun! Swimming is a great sport. Let's all be good sports at the meet.