

RIPTYDE SWIM MEET 101

What to Expect at Your First Swim Meet:

Swim meets are a great opportunity for the whole family to spend time together as well as with all the other families on the team. Below are some guidelines geared to help you through your first few swim meets.

WHAT TO TAKE TO A SWIM MEET

1. Swimsuit, RIPTYDE cap, and goggles. Having an extra suit, cap, and pair of goggles packed is always a good idea. These items seem to rip and break at the most awkward moments!
2. Towels – swimmers will be in and out of the water, so pack at least two (it's nice to have a dry one at the end of a meet).
3. Something comfy for your swimmer to sit on in the team area, such as a sleeping bag, old blanket, or chair (at home meets, we will use the bleachers and swimmers will not need chairs).
4. Something comfy for you to sit in on deck. Most parents bring camping or "soccer" chairs. This applies only to away meets or if you will be sitting outside at the Kernersville Y.
5. Several changes of clothes such as sweatpants, sweatshirts, and t-shirts. Swimmers need to stay warm between events and there is nothing worse than pulling on cold, soggy shorts.
6. Entertainment for the whole family such as travel games, cards, coloring books, books, iPods, Gameboys, etc. Especially important if you are bringing youngsters who are not swimming! Pool decks are hard, wet and not secure, so it's best to leave expensive electronics at home
7. Small cooler of healthy snacks and drinks. Suggestions for items to bring: Water, fruit juice, Gatorade, granola bars, fruit, yogurt, cereal, trail mix, sandwiches. (See Fueling for Nutrition)
8. Sharpie marker, pen, highlighter.

*Special Parents' Note: In summer, and at the Y, the pool area can be very warm. You'll want to dress accordingly. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes time pass very slowly.

BEFORE THE MEET STARTS

1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins.

Warm-up times are listed as the event start times on our team calendar.

Away meet warm ups start at 5:30 pm and home meet warm ups are at 5:00 pm.

2. Find a place to put your swimmer's "stuff." The team usually sits together in a common area called the "crash area" so look for some familiar faces and then stake your space.

3. Help your swimmer find the coaches. Look for coaches on deck or sometimes in the crash area to let them know you are at the meet.

4. Find the heat sheet on the Swimmably app. Printed copies of Heat Sheets at our summer meets will be very limited. A Heat Sheet lists all swimmers entered in each event by heat and lane. This is where you will find what heat and lane your swimmer is in for each event.

5. Write on your swimmer. Write your swimmer's Swimmer# number (assigned by Swimmably) on their back right shoulder and, for each event they are entered in, event number, heat, and lane number on your swimmer's arm in "permanent" (i.e., waterproof) marker, like a Sharpie. This helps your swimmer remember what events he or she is swimming, what event number to listen for, and what lane to get lined up behind. This step is sometimes saved until after the swimmers are done with warm-ups, but can also be done before going to a meet.

Abbreviations:

FR, BK, BR, FL = freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly

E=Event number, H= Heat number, L= Lane number

EXAMPLE:

E	H	L	
26	3	5	25 FR
38	1	3	25 BR
48	2	4	25 BK
58	1	6	25 FL

The event number refers to

distance/stroke/age/gender for each race

The Heat number is used when there are more swimmers than can swim at once within one event (example: 20 9-10 girls in a 6 lane pool would require 4 heats).

Placement of lane numbers can vary by pool

6. Swimmers report to the pool and coach for warm-ups. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmers' bodies are just like cars on a cold day; they need to get the engine going and warmed-up before being able to go all out. This is a good time for parents to check and see if extra timers are needed while the kids are busy!

7. Swimmers return to crash area after warm-ups. Time to dry off, put on warm clothes, go to the bathroom, and write events on the arm if this wasn't done earlier. * Swimmers should check to see if they are in a relay at the meet start and not go too far away if they are in a relay.

THE MEET STARTS

1. Know what events your swimmer is competing in. It is important for a swimmer to know what event numbers s/he is swimming. Again, a heat sheet and sharpie are a swim parent's best friends! The Swimmingly app has a feature to notify you of your swimmer's upcoming events.
2. Listen for event announcements. Upcoming events are usually announced over the loudspeaker, asking swimmers to report to the starting blocks or to the clerk of course, a staging area for swimmers. Swimmers should report with cap and goggles. Example: "Event #27, 10-Under Boys, 25 freestyle, report to clerk of course."
3. Check in with the coaches. Riptyde coaches ask their swimmers to check in with them before each race. This is when coaches give last minute reminders and encouragement to the swimmers about their upcoming race. Swimmers should allow enough time when reporting to the blocks for this important step!
4. Report to the blocks or the clerk of course. It is a good idea to have your swimmer check in with the lane timers to make sure they are in the correct lane and heat.
5. Parents, find a seat. Parents must sit in the spectator area, usually along sides and at the turn (shallow) end of the pool.
6. Swimmers, swim your race then...
7. Check in with the coaches...again! Time to see how all that hard work in practice is going to pay off! After each race, your swimmer should go immediately to their coach.
8. Check in with parents. Parents should follow these guidelines after your swimmer's race:
 - a) Tell your swimmer how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with them. You just need to tell your swimmer how proud you are of their effort.
 - b) Take your swimmer back to the crash area and relax, find something to eat, and wait for next event to be called.
9. Repeat above steps until all events have been completed. Don't forget the relays at the end! Don't leave until you have confirmed with the coach that it is OK to go.
10. Final check in with the coaches before heading home. When a swimmer has completed all of his events for the day, s/he is able to go home. Be sure, however, to check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay at the end of a meet. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and s/he is not there.
11. Ask for help! If during any of this you feel lost or confused, be sure to ask other Riptyde parents for help! We have all had our "first meets" and know it can be overwhelming.