

## New Parent Helpful Information

The meet calendar is always posted on the Pacific Swimming website, [pacswwim.org](http://pacswwim.org) under “meets”. The coaches will let you know which meets we will be attending as a team. When a meet is open for signing up, it will show “meet sheet” (which tells you the schedule of events and other info. about the meet) and “online entries” (which is your link to signing up online).

The swimming year is broken into two seasons: short course (yards) and long course (meters). Sep. through March is usually short course season. April through Aug. is the long course season, with the exception of a few small team invitationals.

Sonoma Aquatic Club sells the green Sea Dragons team caps in the office for \$5. Custom team parkas will be ordered each season. Please contact Coach Jane for help with ordering team suits or parkas.

Your USA Swimming membership must be current in order to practice with the team and attend meets. You will renew this each year. For more information you can go to Pacific Swimming under the “Resources” tab and “Join Us”. The front office will have the forms you need.

Meets are usually held Sat - Sun. You can sign up for one day or both. There are team members and a coach there each day, so whatever works for you. As a team we attend one to two meets per month. (usually under a 45 min. drive)

Meets usually start at 9am (see meet sheet). For a 9 am meet, team warm ups start promptly at 8:00, so plan on getting there at 7:45 am. 8 and Unders might be advised to come later and skip the team warm up. The coach will tell you if this is the case. Go directly to the clerk of the course to sign in for the day. Some meets have pretty crowded parking so plan for that. You are done when your child has finished their last event, unless you are timing for an assigned lane. Be prepared to stay as late as 2-4pm but you may be done as early as noon. Be prepared to sit for at least 1 hour in a timing chair. Each team supplies timers for the day in order to ensure that all swimmers get a time for each event.

When you arrive at the meet:

- Look for the sign in tables; it will be separated by “boys” and “girls”. They will ask for your child’s age and name. Your child must be present to sign themselves in, a parent or coach can’t do it for them. When they tell your child

what events they are swimming you can write it on the top of your child's hand so they know what events to look/listen for (with sharpie works best).

- Look for the Sea Dragon's canopy and meet up with your team.
- Check in with the coach for warm up instructions.
- Please don't get your child there late. It helps the kids if they can do a team warm up with each other. Plan ahead and get there on time.
- Once you're there we can help you with the rest of the day. The kids have fun cheering for each other and watching the older and faster swimmers. They will be nervous, but it ends up being an exciting day once they get through the first time.

Keep a positive attitude and stay calm and relaxed for your child.

Some suggestions of things to bring to a meet:

- If it is cold weather, bring a **towel** for each event your child is swimming, plus a towel for warmup. They don't dry quickly and your child will want a dry one when they get out of the pool. If it is warm out you can hang them and maybe only need one or two.
- **Clothes:** sweats, jacket or robe and a team parka if they have one. Something dry and warm to put on after they get out of the pool, especially in cold weather. You might want to bring a change of clothes in colder weather.
- **Shoes:** socks, boots and flip flops. The socks or boots are nice to put on while waiting between events if it is cold. The flip flops are easy to put on and off going to and from the pool and in the bathrooms (floors can be dirty!).
- **Swim bag** or duffel that has sunscreen, baby powder, extra goggles (they are known to break or come off in the pool) and an extra cap (they are known to tear) shampoo and conditioner just kept in a pocket of the bag at all times. Then, you just need to add the towels, some extra clothes, flip flops, your camera and meet info. folder. Most meets have showers/locker rooms.
- Bring your receipt showing you signed up and paid for the meet. Computer errors have been known to be made and you will need proof you signed up if that happens. A **folder** with the meet sheet printed out and the email printouts showing payment and the events signed up for. Just tuck the folder into the swim bag.
- **Food:** always bring lots of healthy snacks, drinks (water is best), and lunch (stay healthy). Soup in a thermos is a great option. Your child will be hungry

and need lots of fuel. There is usually a food/snack bar available if you prefer to purchase there.

- **Games, books,** or anything to pass the time. There are long stretches of waiting time between your child's events. \*We do not allow electronics during the meet. This enables kids to socialize with each other while waiting for events.
- **A sleeping bag or big blanket to sit on or in.**
- Chairs for parents are key (especially if it is wet)

**Taking care of caps:** when you take off the cap, turn it inside out to dry. Once dry, turn it back and sprinkle powder in, put the cap between your hands and rub back and forth to spread the powder, dump out excess. This helps preserve the cap and the powder makes it easier to slide on their hair. To put the cap on, start at the forehead and stretch up and back, tuck in any remaining hair. Putting long hair in a tie helps

## **It's your job to support and encourage your child.**

Don't worry about coaching them. That's why they have a coach! Once you get through the first or second time it becomes routine. For first timers it can be overwhelming to see all the people. Just keep your child focused on the excitement and how much fun it will be. The kids get to hang out and eat, what could be better?

**Events:** an event is what your child is swimming. 50 free, 100 back, 50 breast, etc. These events are numbered throughout the day. Your child will find out what event #s they are in when they sign in.

**Heats:** These will be posted throughout the day. An event, say the 50 freestyle, can have 6-10 heats. If there are 8 lanes and 80 kids signed up they may have 10 heats of 8 kids each. The events are posted so you know what heat and lane your child will be in. So, event #4 may have your child listed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> heat, lane 5. The coach and other parents will help you out, don't worry. We are all very supportive and it is no problem to help you out. You are not on your own.

Before a child swims his/her event will be posted on a sheet. It is the child's responsibility to check this sheet and report to the coach which heat and lane they are in and get last minute race instructions.

Looking for your child's events:

Event 29      Girls 10 and Under 50 Free

Heat

Lane

Hansen, Elizabeth	8	6
Jensen, Quinn	9	4
Ladouceur, Hannah	8	3

So, Hannah is in Heat 8, Lane 3 for her 50 freestyle.

**Awards:** At some meets ribbons are given for 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, (or 8<sup>th</sup> depending on the location) place in each division. The coach collects the awards at the end of the meet or at the next meet and distributes them in the “Ribbon Box” kept in the club office. Have your child check the box for their ribbons occasionally.

**Divisions:** Swimmers are ranked into different time divisions depending on their time. Every swimmer starts out in the “C” division until they swim a time for each event that qualifies them for the “B”, “BB”, “A”, “AA”, “AAA” or “AAAA” division. Time standards can be found on the Pacific Swimming website:

[http://pacswim.org/page/times\\_standards.html#anchor1290581](http://pacswim.org/page/times_standards.html#anchor1290581)

When a child swims a time that qualifies them for Junior Olympics or Far Westerns, they are invited to go to those meets.