

EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SWIM MEETS...BUT, WERE AFRAID TO ASK (or didn't know what to ask)

CCAT Note: This is from the USA Swimming website, from their sample club handbook, obviously this is only a guideline – if you have any specific questions, talk with your child's coach! It has been slightly modified.

Swim meets are a great family experience! They're a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed below are some very indepth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as possible.

Before the Meet Starts

1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warmup time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information handed out to all CCAT swimmers.
2. Upon arrival, find a place to put your swimmer's blankets, swim bags and/or sleeping bags. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces.
3. Write each event-number on your swimmer's hand in ink. This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen for.
4. Your swimmer now gets his/her cap and goggles and reports to the pool and/or coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmer's bodies are just like cars on a cold day-he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out.
5. After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his/her towels are and sit there until the next event is called. This is a good time to make sure he/she goes to the bathroom if necessary, gets a drink, or just gets settled in.
6. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.
7. According to USS rules (because of insurance purposes), parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the coaching staff. They, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
8. Heat Sheets. A heat sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. Heat sheets generally sell for four or five dollars. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "notime" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event.

Meet Starts

1. It is important for any swimmer to know what event numbers he/she is swimming (again, why they should have the numbers on their hand). He/she may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile.

2. A swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker. Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggle to the area behind the blocks, unless your child is an 8&under. If your child is an 8&under, you must find out from your coach which end of the pool the 25yd events will start from. Generally, girls events are odd-numbered and boys events are evennumbered. Example: "Final Call, Event #26, 10-Under Boys, 50 freestyle."
3. The swimmer swims their race.
4. After each swim:
 - A. He/she should ask the timers (people behind the blocks at each lane) his/her time.
 - B. He/she should go immediately to their coach. The coach will ask him/her their time and discuss the swim with each swimmer.
 - C. Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims:
 - a. Positive comments or praise
 - b. Suggestions for improvement
 - c. Positive comments
5. Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim:
 - A. Tell him/her how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with them. You need to tell him/her how proud you are and what a great job he/she did.
 - B. Take him/her back to the towel area and relax.
 - C. This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or something light to eat.
 - D. The swimmer now waits until his/her next event is called and starts the procedure again.
7. When a swimmer has completed all of his/her events he/she and their parents get to go home. Make sure, however, you, as a parent, check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay, if relays are at the end of the 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 he/she is not there. (The coaches speak from experience on this issue).

What Happens If Your Child has a Disappointing Swim

If your child has a poor race and comes out of it feeling bad, talk about the good things. The first thing you say is, "Hey, that is not like you. You're usually a top swimmer." Then you can go on and talk about the good things the child did. You never talk about the negative things.

If your child comes up to you and says, "That was a bad race, don't tell me it wasn't," there is nothing wrong with a swimmer negatively evaluating a race. The important thing is for the child not to dwell on it. You should move the swimmer on to something good. "All right, you have had a bad race. How do you think you can do better next time?" Immediately start talking about the positive things.

What To Take To The Meet

1. Most important: Swim Suit and CCAT Swim Cap--and goggles (if your swimmer uses them).
2. Baby or talcum powder--To "dust" the inside of swim cap. This helps preserve the cap and makes it easier to put on.

3. Towels-Realize your swimmer will be there awhile, so pack at least two.
4. Something to sit on. Example: sleeping bag, old blanket, or anything that will be comfortable to sit on. The swimmers will be spending a lot of time on it.
5. Sweat suits: bring one. Each swimmer may want to bring two because they can get wet and soggy.
6. T-shirts: Two or three. Same reason as above.
7. Games: travel games, coloring books, books, anything to pass the time.
8. Food: Each swimmer is usually allowed to bring a small cooler. It is better to bring snacks. They usually have snack bars at the meet, but the lines are long and most of the time they only sell junk food. Suggestions for items to bring:

Drinks: Hi-C, Fruit juice, Gatorade

Snacks: Granola bars, Fun fruits, yogurt, cereal, jello cubes, sandwiches

Once you have attended one or two meets this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask any other Clearfield City Aquatics Team parent for help or information! These meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! He/she gets to visit with his/her friends, play games, and meet kids from other teams. He/she also gets to "race" and see how much he/she has improved from all the hard work he/she has put in at practice.

Special Parent's Note

The pool area is usually very warm. Therefore, you need to make sure you dress appropriately. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes the time pass very slowly! At some of the meets, the parents are allowed to sit with the swimmers at the blanket area (those are most of the meets). If you don't think that a cement floor is comfortable, feel free to bring folding chairs to sit on.