

GOLD MINDS

PREPARING FOR PERFECT, POWERFUL PERFORMANCES

BY WAYNE GOLDSMITH AND HELEN MORRIS

Swimming a great race starts with packing a great case!

*If you pack your bag
With what you need,
When it's time to race,
You'll have the speed.*

Preparing to win is about training hard, eating the right foods, getting plenty of rest, perfecting your dives/starts/turns/finishes, improving your underwater stroke...and packing. Yes, *packing!*

An important part of preparing to have a successful meet is to pack your swim bag with all the things you'll need to swim fast and to have an enjoyable day.

Packing comes down to two broad areas:

- What do I need in the water?

- What do I need out of the water?

The “in-the-water” stuff is pretty obvious. You are not going anywhere without your goggles and your suit!

The “out-of-the-water” stuff is just as important—because it helps you to prepare physically and mentally for racing and to recover between events.

Here are a few ideas to help you pack your bag for perfect, powerful performances:

1. FOOD

Be sure to bring these with you to your next meet: fruit, sandwiches with low-fat, highly nutritious fixings, rice cakes, fruit muffins, pre-cooked rice or noodles. Taking your own healthy, nutritious food also helps you avoid

the fast-food temptations that come around lunchtime and early afternoon! Don't put low-performance fuel in a high-performance engine!

2. DRINKS

Try packing these drinks: water, sports drink, sports supplement drink made with low-fat milk or water, weak cordial or fruit juice.

3. GOGGLES

Three pairs of goggles are a good idea—one older pair for warm-ups and cool-downs plus two good pairs for racing. Also, pack a small plastic box filled with goggle “spare parts.” You never know if a strap will snap or the nose-bridge might break.

4. SWIM CAPS

Four will do nicely—two club caps for warm-ups (and team spirit) and two silicon caps for low-resistance, fast racing.

5. SWIMSUITS

Pack two racing suits for fast swimming and two sludgy, old, comfortable “favorites” for warm-up.

6. ENTERTAINMENT

When you pack your bag for a swim meet, be sure to include whatever keeps you relaxed and smiling—items such as books, comics, CD player, iPod or a portable game player.

7. TRAINING DIARY

Training diaries are invaluable, allowing you to write down times and coach comments after each race. You can also record warm-up details and



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make important notes.

8. BANDAIDS

You can never be too prepared—pack some bandaids for those little mishaps and accidents.

9. VASELINE

...for rubs and chaffing (*ouch!*).

10. WARM CLOTHES

...to keep warm between events, after warm-up and after the meet for the journey home. Hey, you gotta look COOL to swim HOT!

11. PROTECTION FROM THE SUN

If you're at an outdoor meet, being "sun smart" is part of being "swim smart"! Find some shade—and put on sunscreen and a hat!

12. TOWELS

Bring towels—one for drying off after warm-up plus some extra towels for all sorts of reasons: sitting on, lying down on, folding up to use as a pillow. Towels are the most useable items in the universe. Keep one towel in a large plastic bag (along with some warm clothes) so you'll always be able to put on warm, dry gear. And keep the plastic bag for your wet clothes and soggy suits!

13. MONEY

...for all kinds of things: food, drinks, phone calls (make sure you have plenty of change), spare swim gear, souvenir meet T-shirts. And make sure your money is safe—it might be a good idea to ask your team manager to keep your money.

14. SHOES

It helps to pack some gym shoes or running shoes to keep your feet safe, dry and warm. Also, just in case you don't have time to finish your pool warm-up, you could use your shoes to walk or jog to get yourself ready to race.

15. RACE ENTRIES

Having a copy of your meet entry form with you is a good idea just in

case there is a mix-up with the entries and you need evidence to support your claims.

16. TRAINING GEAR

Bring along your fins, kickboard, pull buoy, paddles—any kind of training gear that you might need for warm-up. Keep them in a separate bag just for wet items. You don't want the things in your main swim bag to get wet. There's nothing worse than putting on cold, wet clothes at the end of a meet for the long drive home—not to mention eating a soggy sandwich!

17. WATCH

...so you know what time it is! Make sure the time on your watch is the same as the meet referee's or meet director's, so you are always on time for warm-ups, breaks and races.

18. PENS AND PENCILS

...to mark entries and to write down interesting stuff about your swims in your training diary.

19. MEET PROGRAM

...to check your events, seedings and lane assignments. You can also read about the meet and find out if there are any rule changes or things unique to the meet.

20. WATERPROOF PERMANENT MARKER AND HIGHLIGHT PEN

Use the marker to write your race numbers on your arm or hand. Use the highlighter to mark your events in the program.

21. MEDICATIONS

...legal, of course! For example, you might need asthma medications that have been checked and approved by your doctor, team manager and coach. ♦

Wayne Goldsmith is a leading high-performance sports professional who has worked with many of the leading coaches and athletes in Australia and around the world. Helen Morris, Wayne's wife, is a former swimmer who won a silver and bronze medal at the 1990 Commonwealth Games and a silver medal at the 1991 Pan Pacs.

“The opportunity is greatest to those who have thoroughly prepared for it.”

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For 37 years, the City of Commerce has worked to reduce the number of drownings among its inner-city children through a remarkable program run in a state-of-the-art aquatics facility.

Bobby Contreras, the head coach of the USA men's water polo team, talks to SwimmingWorld.TV about the program at the City of Commerce Aquatorium that gives inner-city kids a place to learn to swim at no charge.

The program is completely funded by the city's government, and Contreras says "99.99 percent" of the children are Hispanic or Latino, and the water polo teams are competitive at the regional and national level. The financial aid by the city government is what Contreras says helps the kids participate.

"There is no barrier in Commerce," Contreras says. "Every single resident in the City of Commerce has the opportunity to come to our Aquatorium facility and start in the aquatic program through swim lessons."



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