

Your First Swim Meet

What to do? What to Wear? What to bring?

First of all: Relax!

Swim meets are a fun learning experience. Getting nervous is normal, but don't let it ruin the meet. You're probably the most nervous because you don't know what to expect. Once you go and do a meet, it gets easier and easier and you won't be so nervous. Just have fun and go hard. Give your best effort, and you can be proud of your results.

I'm at the meet, now what do I do?

The first thing you do is check in. Then, look for the SCSC EZ-Up and SCSC swimmers. You will find that most of the swimmers and parents share a common area. The coaches will be poolside under a smaller tent.

- Check in - Find the area where all the kids are lined up and they will help you through the process.
- Talk to your coach - After you check in and put your stuff down near the team, go find your coach and let them know you are at the meet.
- Warm-up - Your coach will tell you where and when to warm up. They will also tell you what they want you to do. Typically you will warm up, then do push pace if you are swimming 200's and up, then do a few sprints with a coach. Please be aware that for the most part during warm ups, push pace, and sprints the coaches are interchangeable. Please do your sprints and push pace with the coach that is there when you are. Waiting for a specific coach except when directed will hold up the whole process.

Why do I have to check in?

When you entered the meet 2 weeks ago, you said you were coming, but on every meet day you must let the officials know that you are planning to swim. Sometimes things come up and you may not be able to stay the whole day. Or maybe you and your coach have decided that you're not ready to swim every event you entered, so you don't want to check in for those events.

How do I check in?

Go to the tables. The tables are divided girls and boys, and by age group. Get in the right line. When you get to the front of the line, tell the worker your name. Once you find your name they (or you) will circle the event numbers you are going to swim. Don't circle anything that you're not going to swim. Make sure you watch everything get circled, and then initial the paper right by your name. It's a good idea to have the meet sheet with you when you check in so you can see what the event numbers mean. Be sure you are checking in for the correct events. Sometimes the check-in people make mistakes. When you initial the paper, make sure you use big distinct initials. You may need to prove you checked in later and it is much easier if you know what your initials look like. You are your own fail-safe. If you get it wrong it rests on your shoulders.

Don't scratch (when you don't circle something you scratch it) unless you and your coach have talked about it first. Your coach will be upset if you do.

Once you check in, it's time to talk to your coach and get in for warm-up. Usually your coach will ask, "Did you check in?" Be able to say, "Yes!"

Checking your event postings

As the meet goes on, the events are seeded with everyone checked in being assigned a heat and lane. You need to check the postings to see where you are supposed to swim. Usually the events are posted on a wall or signboard in plain view. Find out from your coach, or go with other swimmers the first time. The swimmers' names are listed in alphabetical order, so find your name and go across to your heat and lane.

Go directly to your coach and tell her/him your heat and lane.

After you swim a race

When you've finished racing you need to do 3 things, and the order depends on the weather:

- Always warm down after you swim. Usually you warm down until your heart rate returns to normal, and you're not breathing hard. Sometimes your coach tells you exactly how much warm down to do.
- Talk to your coach. Your coach has things to tell you about your swim.
- Get dressed, with shoes and socks. If the weather is bad do #3 then #2.

STAY WARM!

Tip: Most meets have timing systems and you can check what event and heat they're on by looking at the board after a heat has swum. After it runs through the times, it'll say 23 7 (event 23 heat 7).

What do I wear?

Dress warmly, and be prepared for everything! You can always take layers off, but if you didn't bring enough your body is wasting energy before you race.

Wear your Team T-shirt, sweatshirt, sweat pants, parka, shoes and socks, hat, and maybe mittens. Because your stuff looks like everyone else's be sure to have your name on all tags.

What do I bring?

In your swim bag you should pack:

- At least 2 dry towels
- Racing suit
- Racing goggles

- Team Cap
- Extra suit
- Extra goggles
- Extra team cap
- Extra clothes in a ziplock bag
- Shirt
- Pants
- Underwear
- Water, sports drink (ex. Gatorade, Powerade) and/or fruit juices
- Snacks (ex. pretzels, goldfish, crackers, bagels, fruit, peanut butter, granola bars, cereal, yogurt, sandwiches)
- Sunscreen (even when it's cold outside!)
- Deck of cards (optional)
- Book (optional)
- Homework (optional)
- Handheld videogames (optional)

Do I have to wear a Team Cap?

Team Cap - If you wear a cap – Yes! It helps us see you in the pool!

Things to remember

The coaches are there to watch every swim, so our first priority is to the swimmers in the water. Please be patient when you come over with heat and lane information. If we can, we'll talk to you right away, otherwise we'll ask you to wait. For the coaches, the meet is like a 3-ring circus with people coming to give heats and lanes, people in the water, and people coming after swims to get feedback. We can't go into long discussions about everything, so if we are short with you please understand and maybe ask another swimmer a general question. The coaches aren't the only ones with the answers.

Leaving the Meet

After your last event of the day you are welcome to leave the meet. Please make sure you tell your coach before you leave. If the meet ends in relays, make sure you are not swimming in a relay before you go. It is very disappointing to the other 3 swimmers to be ready for a relay only to find that the fourth swimmer went home already.