

WHAT TO BRING TO A MEET

After attending a few meets, you will know what you and your swimmer need at a meet. Below are suggestions to get you started:

- **Suit, Cap and Goggles:** Preferably the team suit and swim cap. Bring an extra pair of goggles and swim cap in the event the first ones break.
- **Towels:** Realize your swimmer will be there awhile, so we recommend you pack one towel per event - especially in the colder months when the towels don't dry quickly.
- **Parka:** In cold weather these can be essential, especially at outdoor pools.
- **Extra Clothes:** Depending on the weather conditions - always a SEAL shirt!!
- **Food:** Each swimmer should bring a small cooler with snacks and plenty to drink. Most meets have a snack bar, but just in case....
- **Something to sit on:** Not all facilities have bleachers.
- **Games:** Anything to pass the time - some meets can be long and there is some "wait time" between races.



SWIM MEET PROCEDURES

Before the Meet Starts:

- **Getting there:** Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up is to begin to allow for check-in and locating the SEAL area. Warm-up time will be listed on the meet form and communicated by the coaches prior to the meet.
- **Checking in:** Once you arrive at the meet location you must check-in. Check-in helps the meet run smoothly so that only swimmers that are actually at the meet are placed in heats of the events that are being swum. Races with empty lanes are avoided this way. The check-in area is usually well marked and as you walk in to the facility. **ONLY** the swimmer may check-in. Parents may not check-in their swimmer. Tell the check-in person your name and the clerk will verify the events that you are swimming for only that day. Check-in is closed for each event approximately 30 minutes prior to each race/event. If you do not check-in, you

will not be allowed to swim that event. If you decide you do not want to swim an event that you have signed up for, you may "scratch" that event at check-in time. The clerk will have you initial that event # that you have chosen to scratch. You will not be penalized for scratching an event. You will be penalized if you do not show up for a race - you will not be able to swim for the rest of the day if you miss your event and are checked-in. If you arrive after the check-in is closed, and the event is more than 30 minutes away, you can check at the "admin area" to check-in. **Swimmers must check-in each day of a meet.**

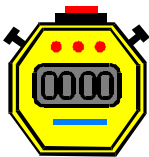
- **Tip:** Once checked-in, write each event # on your hand in ink. This makes it easier to remember what events you are swimming and what event # to listen for. Mom and dad may want to do the same!!!
- **Warming up:** Once you are situated at the meet with your team mates, get your cap and goggles on and report to your coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm up. USA Swimming requires all swimmers to warm up under the supervision of a coach. In addition it is best to warm up prior to your scheduled race and to warm down immediately after your race.
- **Waiting:** After warm up, go back to the team area and listen for events to be called. Sometimes you cannot hear the announcer, so it is very important that you pay attention to the pace of the meet. The meet generally starts on time.
- **Meet Programs:** A meet program is generally available for sale in the concession area of the pool. These programs sell for about \$3-5.00. The program lists all swimmers in each event according to their entry time. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, they will be entered as a NT - meaning "no time".

When the Meet starts:

- **Know your Event Numbers:** That's why it is a good idea to write it in ink on your hand.
- **Look for the Heat Sheets:** These should be posted by Girls events and Boys events in a central area at the meet. Before the swimmers event, the heat sheet will be posted. The heat sheet shows the heat and lane # for all swimmers participating in that event. The number of heats in an event varies depending on the number of swimmers entered and checked in. It is best to write this in ink on your hand also!!
- **Report to the Coach:** After finding your heat and lane assignment, report this info to your coach. The coach will discuss with you any last minute instructions and race strategy.
- **Listen for your event:** As mentioned before, it is often difficult to hear your event being called, even if over a loudspeaker. Sometimes there is an event #

posted on the pool deck. It is best to report early to your event - check with the timer in your lane to make sure you are in the correct lane and heat. Be sure to be on time - missing your event will disqualify you from any more races that day.

- **NOTE:** Occasionally, at lower level meets, there will be a staging area for the younger swimmers when swimming the 25 yard events. This means an official will line up all of the swimmers and take them to their starting positions in the correct order.
- **Starting Position:** When your heat is ready to start the swimmers are called to the starting position by the official starter. The starter will blow a short whistle to let swimmers know to approach the blocks - then 1 long whistle to get on the blocks - then they say "take your mark" and when the starter is sure all swimmers are motionless, and set - the starting tone or beep is sounded to start the race.
- **SWIM!!** Your best! 😊
- **After each swim:** Most times the official wants you to stay in the water (on the wall) until the next race has started - this is called a "flyover" start. Do not distract the swimmer on the block ready to race. Ask the timers your time - Report this to your coach. The coach will discuss your swim with you and give suggestions for improvement and positive comments regarding your swim. Then warm down - until the next race!!



PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Tell them what a GREAT JOB they did!!!!

- **Timing at the Meet:** At each meet we must provide timers. Generally one person will take on the responsibility to put together a "timing assignment sheet", and each parent/family at the meet is required to participate in these duties, including the one who put the sheet together. The number of timers required is normally proportioned to the number of swimmers swimming the meet. Timing is not difficult, but without volunteers, it is not possible to conduct a successful meet. It is the responsibility of all SEAL parents to participate as timers. We will be assigned a lane and chair accordingly. Each shift will last from 30 minutes to 1 hour, depending on how many parents/families attend the meet. Be on time for your shift!

- **Timing Procedure/Equipment:** Each lane has 3 chairs assigned to it. Timing procedures vary by Meet. Most facilities utilize "pickles" for each chair in a lane, one stopwatch for each lane, and a clipboard with a heat sheet to record the stopwatch time. Occasionally a team may have "touchpads" in addition to the other equipment previously noted. Normally one chair takes care of the stopwatch, one chair writes the time from the stopwatch onto the heat sheet, and all three chairs push a "pickle" button at the end of the race. It is very important to get up and watch the swimmer touch the wall when timing. **DO NOT SIT IN THE CHAIR AND WATCH!!!** Accurate times are important for swimmers that are trying to improve their times - and can be crucial to qualifying for upper level meets!!
- **Canopies:** Parents can check out a canopy from the SEAL office prior to the meet. The coaches are not responsible to do this. We have several canopies to accommodate our swimmers and their families.
- **TEAM Support for SEAL:** Cheer your swimmers fellow teammates on!! This builds camaraderie between the families and swimmers.
- **Keep track of the progression of the meet:** So your swimmer doesn't miss an event!!



WHEN ALL YOUR EVENTS ARE FINISHED

When all of your events are completed, and your timing responsibilities are over, you may go home. However, check with your coach to be sure you are not included on a relay. Also, check the final postings for your official times and record them prior to leaving. These are normally posted shortly after the event is over. If you do not get them at the meet, you can check the results on www.socalswim.org under the results section.