

SUCCESSFUL MEET PREPARATION

Below is an article from the Dynamo Swim Team. I thought it was most fitting for this time of the season.

Successful Meet Preparation

*"Before anything else, preparation is the key to success."
Alexander Graham Bell*

Having a successful meet is rarely something that just happens. Generally, the swimmer that prepares the best for the meet enjoys the best results. There are several things that go into successful meet preparation: 1) Training, 2) Mental preparation, 3) Nutrition and Rest, 4) The Nuts and Bolts

Training: The most important way to ensure success at a swim meet is to put in the work in practice. Make sure that your swimmer is attending practice the prescribed number of times each week for their group. Also, stay in touch with the coach to keep up on your swimmer's progress.

Mental Preparation: Of equal importance to training is mental preparation. I read a research article recently that stated: "the subjects with a more favorable attitude... performed significantly better." The power of the mind is amazing. You can do things you never thought possible when you simply put your mind to it. Even the best-trained swimmer in the world won't get far if they don't believe they can do it.

Nutrition and rest: Most swimmers, especially inexperienced swimmers, experience some level of anxiety or excitement as a meet approaches. This anxiety or excitement affects eating and sleeping patterns if it goes unchecked. Make sure your swimmer gets plenty of sleep the night before the meet, and every night if it is a multi-day meet. Also, swimmers may significantly change their eating patterns during swim meets. Make sure that they have adequate food and water available before, during, and after the meet. A variety of fruits and vegetables are good, as well as, low fat chocolate milk and low fat yogurt. For hydration, water or any kind of sports drink is fine. At times, you may almost have to force them to eat or drink during the meet. Be persistent!!

The nuts and bolts: There are many other things that can be done to limit stress and ensure optimal performance. (1) Make sure you get to the meet early. Your swimmer will feel much more comfortable and prepared if they are early rather than late and running into warm-up. (2) Bring the following: *at least* 2 towels, 2 pairs of goggles - they will inevitably lose 1, 2 caps - one will rip right before the race, I promise, team apparel, a water bottle, a lawn chair, and something to do between events ó small games, etc. (3) Check your swimmers events online well ahead of time, if available, to make sure they are entered in the proper events. (4) Bring enough warm clothes, shoes and socks. (5) Have fun!! Swim meets are supposed to be fun, not stressful. If you are prepared, your swimmer can focus on the meet, and not everything else.