



Swim Meet Guidelines 4.0 (August 2015)

Long vs short course: the first 2/3 of the season are focused on a short course competition schedule, meaning the swim meets we attend are all in 25 meter pools. The last third of the swim season hosts swim meets in 50 meter pools. This means the number of lengths in each race will be halved. For example, 200 Free short course is 8 lengths and 4 lengths in the long course pool. This seems obvious but when swimmers start talking about their races the differences can get lost in translation. As a side detail, 50 meters is also Olympic length so, as the swimmers progress long course becomes increasingly important.

Race Selection: when we go to a meet all of the swimmers need to be entered into events. This selection of events is done by the coach (es). Events are selected for various reasons. Depending on what is being done in training, how the improvement curve is progressing and whether the swimmer is emotionally and physically ready. At the beginning of a swimmer's career the event selection will start with events that they are capable of completing. After that it is about completing all events in the event roster.

Entry Fees: Some competition hosts charge a flat rate for entry into a competition. Some hosts charge per race. There is also a charge for each relay entry (4 swimmers). Once you've committed to a competition (on Team Unify), Flatland Sport Centre will pay your entry fees. Flatland Sport Centre is very proud of our swimmers for representing our program in relay events. We cover the cost of relay entries and only charge your online account for individual entry fees accordingly. If for some reason, you have to withdraw due to injury, please get a doctor's note so that we can request a refund. Please note: Some hosts do not provide refunds, even with a doctor's note.

Relays: at this level, there are two different relays that the swimmers could be on: 4x50 F.R. and 4x50 M.R. Relay selection usually depends on the performance of the swimmers at the meet in question. Those who are stepping up in their races and putting on impressive performances will earn a relay spot. Relay selection is not guaranteed. It is a good motivation for swimmers to push even harder in all of their races.

Deck clothing: when the swimmers are on deck before and after races they should always have clothing on. Preferably this will be a Flatland shirt and a pair of shorts or sweat pants. One thing that swimmers tend to do is think that because they aren't cold, they don't need clothes. However, even if they aren't shivering their bodies are still exposed to the very inconsistent temperatures of a pool deck and a higher core temperature is better than, and actually preferred over a lower temperature. The swimmers should also have a pair of deck sandals or clean running shoes, as a lot of heat is lost through the feet.

Warm Ups: Swim meet warm ups can be very crowded and a mash of all kids in the meet (different ages, male/female, different clubs) and there is no getting around it. This is a good test and lesson in toughness for all of the swimmers. It can be an intimidating experience for the smaller swimmers but they quickly learn how to fend for themselves and not let the bigger kids swim all over them. It is a matter of experience and perseverance as they attend meet after meet. We try to prepare the kids in training but in the end it really comes down to just doing it.

Meals/ Snacks: food choices at swim meets should be centered around good energy sources. Specifically, food at the pool should sustain the swimmers throughout their long days of racing. Sandwiches, vegetables, fruits, granola bars, nut mixes, and juice boxes are some suitable options. Heavy items, such as those high in fibre or dairy, usually do not sit well when eaten before races. These are items that should be saved for after

the swimmers are done for the day or they have a long break between events. If there are any uncertainties the swimmers can ask their coach for clarification on their snacks.

Hydration: swim meets, and every practice for that matter, require constant hydration. The swimmers should always have their water bottle close at hand. Frequent bathroom trips at a swim meet are not a bad thing.

Boredom: when swimmers are waiting for their races they should remain on deck, watching and cheering for their teammates. If the wait time is especially long, the swimmers must ask their coach first before doing another activity. This includes visiting parents in the stands because it is easy to lose track of time and races can come faster than one realizes. Swimmers should have a book, deck of cards, homework, music, etc. with them for these times.

Team meals: team meals will occur at either restaurants or at the team hotel. As frustrating as these can be to organize, especially when other teams are competing for reservation space, they provide very important time for the team beyond the pool. This is an opportunity for some Q&A if anything was unclear at the pool. It is also good bonding time and a chance to talk about NON swimming related things.

Team Travel: Occasionally, we will offer the swimmers the option to travel to swim meets as a team. The swimmers travel by air, train, bus, van or car with the coaches/managers and will stay in a hotel or other rental accomodations with each other. Parents and family members are welcome to attend the event on their own. Sometimes we sell seats in a vehicle to parents and family members if there is room. All team travel costs (except food!) are covered by Flatland Sport Centre and then invoiced back to the swimmers who travelled together. All swimmers who attend will still be required to cover the coach/manager cost share portion.

Hotel etiquette: The most important thing to remember is that you are a representative of Flatland Swimming. Therefore your actions do not just reflect yourself and your family but the whole team. Respect, discipline and self-control are the keys. Most swim meets are multi day events and they will almost always require at least one night in a hotel, especially with how unpredictable the weather and highway conditions can be. We usually try to have everyone stay in the same hotel, to aid organization, communication and team unity. Some of the hotels we will stay in may have water slides and/or hot tubs. While these seem like a great way to wind down after a day of racing, they actually take a huge toll on the body. Fatigue, sore legs and potential injuries are some of the side effects often seen the next day of racing. The biggest request in this situation is that swimmers ask their coach for permission to engage in these activities and then strictly abide by the time limit the coach allows, if they say yes.

DQ's: disqualification, or "rule infractions", occur when swimmers break specific rules for each stroke. As upsetting as these can be, they are a very valuable tool for learning experiences and future training guidelines. Some of the most common DQ's are a result of improper turns, false starts, wrong kick, and missed races.

Qualifying Standards ('A' times, 'AA', etc.): most swim meets at this level will be "open", meaning there are no qualification times required to attend. As swimmers progress, they will start achieving times that will allow them to compete in higher level swim meets against other swimmers at a similar level. The first set of qualification times are called 'A' times. The main meet that these times allow swimmers to attend is called 'A' Provincial. Beyond 'A' times, are 'AA' times, followed by Age Group National times, and Senior National times. As swimmers near these times, their coach will inform them of how close they are and what they mean. These also provide excitement and motivation for hard work and effort. There is a tab on the club website that has these times posted.

Coach/Manager Cost Share: The cost of the coaches/manager attending a swim meet will be divided among all the swimmers who attend the competition. These costs include a per diem (\$55 per day), airfare/bus/train/mileage (\$0.40/km), ground transportation and accomodations. Sometimes, we reduce this amount to a flat rate depending on the number of swimmers attending a competition and the provision of services/gifts in kind for the coaches/managers.

Pre & post-race talk to coach: swimmers must talk to their coach before and immediately after their races, unless instructed otherwise (they may be told to cool down first). This provides direction and feedback for the swimmers but it also helps the coach keep track of their swimmers both physically and mentally. Dealing with areas that are identified in a race immediately after the race provide the best 'teaching moments.' If the swimmers wander off without talking to the coach, important lessons may not be taught, races might be missed, or important comments may not get passed on. Swim meets are not only a 'showcase' of the swimmer's hard work and improvement but vital opportunities to test, learn and refine skills that they are working on in practice.

Ultimately, if there are ever any questions, please do not hesitate to ask for any clarification you may need. As well, the website has a two tabs, 'articles' and 'links,' that can be valuable resources to help answer any questions.

"Be Nice, Swim Hard, Have Fun"

Below is the contact information for any swimming and/or billing/administration questions you may have:

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