

## **Why Should You Go To Meets?**

“Swimming is simply a game for me.”

This was said by Canadian Olympian and Surrey resident Brittany Riemer. Swimming is exactly that - a game. We prepare for the game of swimming at practice by developing fitness and learning how to swim more efficiently.

But then there is what is really exciting about our sport, the game, the meets! Could you imagine joining a hockey or soccer team and then only going to practices? It just doesn't happen, yet when joining a swim club many people decide to not participate in meets.

Swim meets are times where athletes can experience a tremendous sense of accomplishment and learn a great deal both about themselves and how they can improve as athletes.

Some athletes will be very competitive, other athletes will be not be, that is okay and we understand that, all we ask you to do come to the meets and give 100% effort.

Coaches look for three things when at a swim meet: attitude, proper technique and improvement.

Attitude is something that an athlete can take with them to all other areas of their life. If an athlete learns how to approach challenges with a positive attitude, learns how to approach mistakes in a constructive manner and learns how to value the result of an honest effort, they will have a much better chance of succeeding in every area of life. These are the attitudes that are taught at meets.

Proper technique is something that coaches are looking at teaching at every practice everyday, but sometimes swimmers don't achieve this until they are in a meet environment.

This is for many reasons; they may want their parents and friends to see just how much better they have become, they may want to see how much they can improve on their best times or it might just click on that day. Quite often the coach will think that an athlete isn't learning the skills that they are teaching very well and when they get to a meet, the skill amazingly appears.

One of the great things about our game is that results are objective and measurable, allowing swimmers to learn the importance of self improvement. The feeling that an athlete has when they improve on their swims can be seen on the look on their face. The excitement of doing something they have never done before is awesome.

These valuable experiences can only be had if athletes become involved in the game of swimming and become involved in swim meets. Remember to ask yourself, would you join a hockey or soccer team and then only going to practices?