

## **Aulea Swim Meet Basics**

Listed below are some very in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. It may seem a little overwhelming, but we tried to be as specific and as detailed as we possibly could. If you have any questions, please ask the Aulea Coaching Staff.

### **Before the Meet Starts**

- Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information which is posted on the Aulea website 24-48 hours before the meet begins.
- Upon arrival, swimmers should find a place to put their things. The team sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces. Swimmers should say hello to both their teammates as well as their coach. Parents are not allowed on the pool deck. Aulea will provide tent space for both swimmers as well as one separate tent for parents. The swimmer tents are exclusively for swimmers.
- Swimmers now gets their cap and goggles and reports to their coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. A swimmer's body is just like a car on a cold day-he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out. Most of the time we start warm ups at the same time. Occasionally the coaches may have a different plan for different swimmers. This plan will be communicated to the swimmers if this situation arises.
- Swimmers can find their heat and lane assignments by purchasing a heat sheet. Heat sheets normally come out at the conclusion of warm-ups. The coaches will also have these and will help the swimmers. Often they are posted on the pool deck somewhere as well. Swimmers are encouraged to learn how to read one of these and understand what it means. Writing "Event #23, Heat # 4, Lane #6" on your arm doesn't cut it. **READING** and **UNDERSTANDING** the program is key. If swimmers are confused they should always ask a member of the Aulea Coaching Staff.
- After warm-up, swimmers will go back to the area where his/her team is sitting and wait there until their first event is called. Swimmers should be staying warm while they are waiting.
- The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.
- According to USA Swimming rules (because of insurance purposes), parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to a coach. He or she in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels if necessary.
- A heat sheet is usually available for sale in the concession area of the pool. It lists all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time (up to the date that the entry was submitted) in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. This heat sheet lists the actual heat and lane a swimmer will be competing in.

## **Meet Starts**

- It is important for all swimmers to know what event numbers he/she is swimming. They may swim right away after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile. Paying attention to their surroundings will be important. They will have to learn how to read the heat sheet to help them figure out when to get ready to race. Part of being on the swim team is learning how to do this. Even 6 year olds can do this! Sure, swimmers will miss a race or two over their lives, but teaching the swimmers to be responsible for themselves is a skill that we wish to help them learn.
- Generally, girls events are odd-numbered and boys events are even-numbered. Example: "Event #26, 10-Under Boys, 50 freestyle". In classified meets, the 200 events are typically combined for boys and girls so if the 200 back was event 11, they would skip to event 13 once it is completed.
- Most meets are computerized. The pre-race procedure is that a swimmer usually reports directly to their lane for competition a number of heats before they actually swims. Swimmers should check with their coach for specific instructions before their race. Sometimes the coaches may remind them of something, sometimes it's just a "have fun!". It depends on the situation.
- You can expect at least 2-8 heats of each event.
- The swimmer swims his or her race.

## **After each swim:**

- Swimmers should ask the timers his/her time.
- The swimmer should then go immediately to his or her coach. The coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer.
- The swimmer may be asked to do some recovery swimming if a "warm down" pool or lanes are available.

## **Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim or after the meet is over:**

- Relax!
- Tell them how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique, speed, and racing skills with them if appropriate. You need to tell him how proud you are and what a great job they did. This shows your support and also helps build their confidence that you are proud of them regardless of technique or speed. A good rule of thumb is not to say too much or to ask questions instead. Great questions are: "How was it?", "What do your coaches say?", or "What was your favorite part?". These questions should help get the conversation started and let the swimmer "take charge" of the conversation. After all, it is THEIR sport and THEIR experience.
- This is another good time to check out the bathrooms, get a drink or something to eat.
- The swimmer now waits until his next event is called and starts the procedure again.

- When a swimmer has completed all of their events they get to go home. Swimmers should check with their coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and she is not there. Parents should double check with the swimmers and make sure they have said goodbye to their coach and made sure they are all finished for the day.
- Results are usually posted somewhere in the facility as well as online. Awards are often gathered for a team and given to the coach at the end of the meet. The coach will give the awards to the swimmers at a later time.

### **What Happens If Your Child has a Disappointing Swim?**

If your child has a poor race and comes out of it feeling badly, talk about the good things. The first thing you say is, "Hey, that is not like you. I know you are disappointed, but it's not the end of the world!" Then you can go on and talk about the good things the child did. Don't talk about the negative things and don't keep talking about the race. Drop it and get your child to focus on the next race or something enjoyable coming up after the meet! Limit the "post mortems!" If your child comes up to you and says, "That was a bad race, don't tell me it wasn't," there is nothing wrong with a swimmer negatively evaluating a race. The important thing is for the child not to dwell on it. You should move the swimmer on to something good. "All right, you have had a bad race. How do you think you can do better next time?" Immediately start talking about the positive things.

### **What To Take To The Meet:**

- Most important: Wear Aulea Team swim suit and bring goggles and Aulea team cap.
- Towels-your swimmer will be there awhile, so pack at least two.
- Something to sit on. Some meets will have seating available however, most of the time swimmers will need to bring a chair.
- Team T-shirt: This helps the swimmer show pride in THEIR team and THEIR racing. GO AULEA!
- Games/Music: travel games, coloring books, books, playing cards, anything to pass the time. Some swimmers like to have music between races to help them focus and psych up for the next race!
- Food: It is better to bring snacks. They usually have snack bars at the meet, but the lines are long and most of the time they only sell junk food. Swimmers should be sure to drink a lot (Gatorade and water) as well as having some healthy low sugar snacks. Once you have attended one or two meets this will all become very routine. Please do not hesitate to ask the Aulea Coaching Staff for suggestions!

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These meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! They gets to visit with their friends, play games, and meet kids from other teams. Swimmers also get to "race" and see how much they have improved from all the hard work they have put in at practice. Swimmers like to get BETTER at things. Swim meets are a chance to find out what skills they have improved on.