



## SO IT'S YOUR FIRST SWIM MEET... NO WORRIES, THIS IS WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

Attending your first swim meet is fun and exciting but can also cause a little nervousness and anxiety. Understanding how swim meets work can help to ease the anxiety and nervousness. Please read the following information and feel free to ask if you have any questions or concerns.

- 1. Where do we go when we get to the meet?** Swimmers should put their suit on (if not already in their suit) and head to the pool deck to find a coach. Parents should find a seat in the parent viewing area. There are many meets throughout the year where parents will not be sitting with swimmers during the meet. Parents are not allowed on the pool deck at any time. While swimmers are warming up it is a great idea to purchase a heat sheet. Heat sheets will tell you what heat and lane your swimmer will be swimming in. You may want to highlight your swimmer to know when and where they will be swimming. After warm ups it is a good idea to have your swimmer come see you to let you write their heat and lane assignments on their arm with a sharpie (this is not mandatory but it does help them keep up with where they should be). A veteran parent will be more than happy to help you with this.
- 2. How long will the meet take?** Most of our meets are on the weekends and some will have sessions on Fridays. When you sign up for the meet you will decide what day or days your child will participate. Meets are broken up by session. You can find out what session your swimmer is in on the meet information page for each meet. The meet information will tell you when each session will start. There will be a warm up session for swimmers before the meet starts that could be a half hour to an hour and a half before the session actually starts. You should plan for each session to last about four hours.
  - Most of our meets are set up where swimmers only swim each event once (all swims are "timed finals"). A couple of our meets are set up in a "preliminary/finals" set up where swimmers will swim in a morning or afternoon session and the top 8 or 16 will come back and swim again at night. The meet information will tell you if events will be swum as "preliminaries/finals" or "timed finals" but we try to mention that in communication leading up to the meet also.
  - Swimmers are welcomed to leave after their last event. Please have your swimmer see a coach before they leave to make sure they aren't on any relays (if they are offered at the meet).
- 3. Does my swimmer have to dive from the blocks for free/fly/breast strokes?** If your swimmer feels uncomfortable with the height of the blocks, they can start from a standing position at the edge of the pool beside their lane block. Backstroke starts in the water. When entering the water, it is preferable that the swimmer pencil dive in for their safety. Inching into the water while holding a part of the block can result in injury.
- 4. How will my swimmer know when it is their turn to swim?** The heat sheet will tell you the order of events and what heat and lane your swimmer will be in. They normally have an estimated timeline for each event. The event and heat numbers will be shown on the scoreboard.
- 5. Who is responsible for making sure my swimmer gets behind the blocks?** At swim meets swimmers must be behind the block ready to swim when it is their turn to swim. If they are not there and ready they will miss their turn to swim. Many swim meets offer a bullpen for 10&U swimmers to organize them, line them up and walk them out to the blocks. Coaches will assist with younger swimmers at

the first few meets. However, It is the swimmer's responsibility to be watching and know when they need to get up and go behind the blocks not the coaches. Our coaches have many swimmers to watch over and will try to remind swimmers to get behind the blocks but it is not always possible for them to remind swimmers. If your child misses a swim they should notify a coach but chances are they will not be able to make it up.

6. **PARENTS:** For the first couple of swim meets, parents who have been with the team for a number of years are great to answer your questions. Find them in the Delta area and they can help you while the coaches are working with the swimmers.
7. **THE SUIT:** Your swimmer needs to wear their competition swimsuit for meets. Jammers for boys and one piece performance suits for girls. Please do not have your swimmer wear their competition suit to practice so the suit holds up well for the entire season. Also, swimmers should be aware of where they are sitting. If they sit on rough concrete, their suits may snag or tear.
8. **How early does my swimmer need to get to the meet?** Swimmers should be at the pool ready to jump in the pool (with cap and goggles) 15 minutes BEFORE warm ups are scheduled to start. Please allow for ample time to park and get changed. Many of the pools have limited parking and seating so keep this in mind when you are planning.
9. **PRIORITIZE FOR YOUR SWIMMER:**
  - a. **SWIMMER:** will need to report to the deck, check in with a coach and be ready to warm up.
  - b. **PARENTS:** can find a seat, get settled and then check the final heat sheet. Heat sheets are available for sale and are posted typically 10 minutes before the meet starts.
10. **WARM-UPS:** Warm-ups occur for the first hour. Each team gets designated time and lane space to warm-up. Warm ups are organized by practice groups, i.e., advanced, developmental, etc.. Be ready to hit the water and pay attention for when your group is called to warm up. Your swimmer should report to warm ups before tending to which races they are in.
11. **OUR COACHES, OFFICIALS & COMPETITORS COACHES:** Coaches do an amazing amount of work with swimmers during a meet. After your child swims, they should report to a coach for a check in. Take time to notice the coaches giving feedback. On that note, the deck is a lively place and should remain free of non-swimmers and parents. DQ's or Disqualifying happens and will be noted on the meet results posted in the hallways.
12. **GOAL TIMES:** Each swimmer is racing against their last best time. Help your child know their swim times are and celebrate with them when they improve and have a PB (Personal Best)!
13. **DURING A RELAY RACE:** When your swimmer swims in a relay or 4 person race against other lanes, they should remain with their relay team, cheering on their teammates until the final person swims. The swimmers form important bonds when encouraging their fellow Delta team members. A note about the lead off swimmer on any relay: When a swimmer is lead off in a relay, their time counts towards their personal bests as long as the relay is not disqualified. (Sweet!)
14. **POOL ORGANIZATION: the swim meet has an organized system for competitive racing;**
  - a. **ANNOUNCER:** – The announcer will make periodic announcements throughout the meet. One important note: In order for the starter to do their job for the swimmers, the pool will need to be QUIET for any start of a race. This is especially true for the youngest swimmers – who need extra concentration to know when to start.
  - b. **SCOREBOARD & COMPUTER TABLE:** The computer table handles race results that appear on the scoreboard. Our scoreboard is in use every meet. It does not display swimmer names, but does track times accurately when swimmers finish strong by hitting the underwater time pad. If a swimmers stop time does not register, the computer table will pull stopwatch times taken by lane timers. Lane hand timer's results are only used in the event of a malfunction.
  - c. **TEAM AREA:** Swimmers may be asked to sit away from their families in a designated "team area". This is because many pools have limited bleacher seating. Having swimmers in a team area allows for additional seating for swim fans. If there is a team area, please know that you

should bring a blanket for swimmers to spread out and sit on, a card game or other quiet play board game and make sure they have a sealed drink.

- 15. WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING:** This is up to the family, and every family has its own routine and bring differing items to the pool. This is a culminated list of ideas for new families – again it is up to you.
- a. Check out the printable Swim Meet Checklist on the Meet Information page of our website.
  - b. A blanket to pad the bleacher seats with.
  - c. A fold-up chair like you would use at a soccer game or a campfire (It may not always be allowed, so you may not always need it but bring one in case)
  - d. A couple of dry fresh towels.
  - e. An extra or back up pair of goggles. Straps break, goggles take on water etc. Help your swimmer avoid panic by having a spare.
  - f. Some cash money, for heat sheets, swimwear, t-shirts and or snacks. All meets have a concessions stands where you can purchase typical concession food, pizza, tacos, and hotdogs. Many also try to also include veggie snacks, fruit and snack bars.
  - g. The events for your swimmer and purchase a meet Heat Sheet to know when they are swimming.
  - h. A highlighter and pen for the heat sheet.
  - i. Several SHARPIE markers. When you and your swimmer have confirmed their race numbers, you can write on their forearm so the swimmer can read it their events. Swimmers arms should be DRY or Sharpies will not work. We prefer that the child does not write all over themselves or others. And dark color Sharpies work the best.
  - j. Additional snacks or hydration drinks.
  - k. Dress in LAYERS – as it gets hot with a large crowded pool. Swimming pools are normally very warm. Please dress appropriately.
    - i. Swimmers: Something warm to put on over a wet swimsuit (top and bottoms), Delta team jacket & pants works well. A swim parka if you have one.
    - ii. Parents: Normally a short sleeve shirt is very comfortable no matter what the season but you may want to bring a light jacket or sweatshirt for those days they decide to crank up the air.
  - l. Are you noise sensitive? Think on what works for you.

**16. Can I take pictures at meets?** Pictures/Video can be taken at meets but can NEVER be taken from behind the blocks or in the locker rooms. This includes parent seating areas that may be behind the blocks even if the seating is raised from the pool area. This is a USA Swimming rule put in place for the safety of all swimmers as you can sometimes see through a suit when swimmers are on the blocks. You also cannot use flash photography at the start of a race.

**17. WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT BRING:** Do not have your swimmer bring electronics, phones etc. without accepting the fact they could be broken or stolen. Anything glass, goes without saying. Flip flops as they are slippery and can be dangerous on a wet pool deck.

- a. **A NOTE ABOUT SMOKING:** ALL school grounds are non-smoking campuses. You should set a good example for all athletes and refrain from breaking this rule.

**18. WHEN YOU GET HOME:** Swimmers are tired when they get home. Depending on your swimmers age, you may want to make sure the suits are rinsed in cold water and left to dry out. No wringing of suits as it wears them out faster.

**THANKS FOR BECOMING A PART OF OUR AMAZING TEAM – GO DELTA!!**