

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR FIRST SWIM MEET:

A Guide for Blazer Parents



What you need to know about:

- What to Bring to a Swim Meet
- Before the Meet Starts
- As the Meet Starts
- How to Mark your Swimmer
- Ways to get involved



Welcome to the Blazers!

A note from Head Coach, George Adcock:

Your swimmer is ready for their first competitive swim meet! A swim meet is a fun and exciting time for you and your children. It's rewarding to see all of their hard work and effort pay off during swim meets throughout the season. As a parent, the health and safety of your child is of utmost importance. This includes correct sleep, nutrition, preparation, communication, rules, support, and of course, having Fun!

We have put together a few reminders of what you can expect when you first begin attending swim meets. We also have several resources available online through our [Parent Resources page](#) at [KCBlazers.com](#).

The Blazers future is looking bright and we are happy to have you along for the journey!

George Adcock
Head Coach, Kansas City Blazers

What To Bring to a Swim Meet

Parents: Swim Meets can run long and it is important to your swimmer's experience and performance to come prepared!

1. **Swimsuit, Blazers cap and goggles.** It is always a good idea to bring an extra suit, cap and goggles. These items can rip or break, usually at the most inopportune times!
2. **Towels—we encourage swimmers to bring at least 2 towels.**
3. **Something comfortable for your swimmer to sit on in the crash area.** Some meets require swimmers to crash in a gym or designated area while parents are required to sit in the stands or bleachers. It is a good idea to bring a sleeping bag, blanket or chair.
4. **Something comfortable for you to sit on in the crash area or a seat back for the bleachers.**
5. **Bring a couple changes of clothes such as sweatpants, sweatshirts or t-shirts.** Swimmers need to stay warm between events and this is more easily done with dry clothing.
6. **Bring some healthy snacks and lots of water.**
Suggestions for items to bring: WATER, Gatorade, granola bars, fruit, trail mix, sandwiches.
7. **Sharpie marker, pen and highlighter.**

Parents: We want to see your Blazers Spirit too!

We have spirit wear available for you too through our Blazers online store via SwimQuik!

There is nothing like looking in the stands and seeing our KCB families showing their Blazer Colors! Each day our swimmers will be encouraged to wear a KCB Team T-shirt and we hope you will join in and show support for both your swimmer and our team!



Parents' FAQs:

What kind of swim suit will my child need for swim meets?

Team Suits: Our team policy is that at all swim meets, swimmers are required to wear a team suit. Visit KCBazers.com and go to our [Equipment & Team Apparel page](#) for more information.

Where do Parents/Guardians sit?

Unless you've signed up to volunteer for a specific position, ALL parents need to remain in the designated crash areas for safety, insurance, and coaches purposes. This helps reduce traffic on the deck so kids can get to their races easier. Swimmers are encouraged to sit with the team. Allow the swimmer to be responsible for their own meet management and remember, it's a teaching moment and can always be improved

When can we leave??

After your last event. BUT Swimmers must check out with their Coach to be certain they are not on a relay. It is very crucial that each swimmer and parents make sure your area is all picked up and trash is thrown away for home and away meets. We are all volunteers, so please help the other parents break down tents and pack up other team equipment.



Parents' FAQs:

Glossary of Terms for Swimming:

Heat Sheet:

A list of the day's events that lists the participants in each lane, their seed time, lane, and the heat they are in. Races are arranged by event number. Swimmers can be "circle seeded" or seeded slowest to fastest.

Heat:

One flight of swimmers doing an event. For example, in an 8-lane pool, it would be eight swimmers doing the same race. An event of race can have a few or many heats.

Seed Time:

The time that a swimmer is entered into an event with. This time, usually the swimmer's personal best time in the event, is used to seed the swimmers into heats. 'NT' means No Time on Record

DQ (disqualification):

DQ's happen when a swimmer has violated one of the rules. Touching with one hand during breaststroke, or dolphin kicking past 15m, false starting, etc.

Before the Meet Starts

1. Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins.

Estimated Warm-up times are listed in the meet information and posted on the website. Coaches will email out exact warm-up times several days before a meet, as well.

2. Find a place to put your swimmer's "stuff."

The team usually sits together in a gym or commons area called the "crash area" so look for some familiar faces and then set up camp!

3. Check in with your Coach.

Help your swimmer find the coaches and check in for your session. Look for coaches on deck to let them know you are at the meet. Once you've located your coach, parents/guardians should return to the crash area.

4. Find a heat sheet to purchase, or share with another parent.

Heat Sheets list all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". This is where you will find what heat and lane your swimmer is in for each event. Heat sheets are usually available online digitally through the meet host's website or through Meet Mobile - An App that displays (unofficial) meet results in real time with the ability to display heat sheets, psych sheets, records, team scores, and time standards.

5. Write events on your swimmer.

Write each **event number, heat number, and lane number** on your swimmer's arm in "permanent" (i.e., waterproof) marker, like a Sharpie. This helps your swimmer remember what events he or she is swimming, what event number to listen for, and what lane to get lined up behind. This step is sometimes saved until after the swimmers are done with warm-ups. The coaches are happy to help swimmers write on their arms. Make sure if swimmers would like the coaches' help they let them know before the start of the meet.

6. Swimmers report to the pool and/or coach for warm-ups.

It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmers' bodies are just like cars on a cold day; they need to get the engine going and warmed-up before being able to go all out. We will end our warm-up session with a team cheer and may announce relays. This is a good time for parents to get a cup of coffee and a donut while the kids are busy!

7. Swimmers return to crash area after warm-ups.

Time to dry off, put on warm clothes, go to the bathroom, and write events on the arm if this wasn't done earlier. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.

HOW TO MARK YOUR SWIMMER AT A MEET

Bring your Sharpie to the Meet!

Event Number/Event
#1 Girls 200 Yard IM

Lane	Name	Age	Team	Seed Time
[Heat 1 of 5] Prelims Starts at 09:00 AM				
1	Rehbein, Annemarie L	17	EKC-MV	2:21.59Y
2	Hervey, Lindsey	15	CSC-MV	2:12.67Y
[3]	Poulsen, Sydney N	16	RPLX-OZ	2:12.01Y
4	Hood, Josie R	15	GOAL-MW	2:11.65Y
5	McLeay, Maddie E	16	GOAL-MW	2:11.83Y
6	Tasic, Nina N	18	EKC-MV	2:12.10Y
7	Howell, Paige M	18	CSP-OZ	[2:14.13Y]

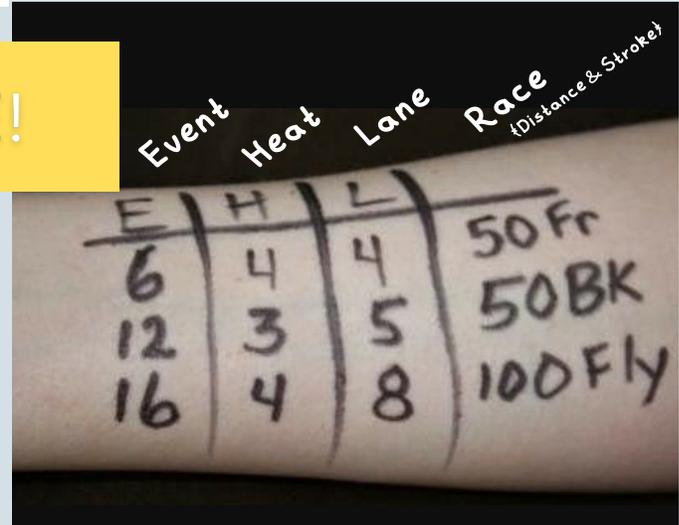
Heat → [Heat 1 of 5]
Lane → [3]
Seed Time → [2:14.13Y]
the fastest time a swimmer has swum an event prior to the submission of entries for the meet. 'NT' means No Time On Record.

KNOW YOUR EVENTS!

Know what events your swimmer is competing in. It is important for swimmer to know what event numbers they are swimming. Again, a heat sheet and sharpie are a swim parent's best friends!

GET YOUR SHARPIE!

Write each event number, heat, and lane on your swimmer's arm in "permanent" (i.e., waterproof) marker, like a Sharpie. This helps your swimmer remember what events he or she is swimming, what event number to listen for, and what lane to get lined up behind.



YOU'RE RACE READY!

After warm-ups end, the meet will begin. Listen for announcements and allow your swimmer to check in with their coach and then report to the starting blocks (or bull pen) before their race! Swimmers will then report back to their coach after their race for high-fives and feedback!

The Meet Starts!

1. Know what events your swimmer is competing in.

It is important for swimmer to know what event numbers he/she/they is/are swimming. Again, a heat sheet and sharpie are a swim parent's best friends! Events can usually be found under the swim meet event on the website

2. Listen for event announcements.

Upcoming events are usually announced over the loud speaker, asking swimmers to report to the starting blocks or to the "bullpen" (a staging area used at very large meets or for swimmers 8 years and younger). Swimmers should report with cap and goggles. Example: "Event #26, 10-Under Boys, 50 freestyle, first call to report to the starting blocks."

3. Check in with the coaches.

Blazer coaches ask their swimmers to check in with them before each race. This is when coaches give last minute reminders and encouragement to the swimmers about their upcoming race. Swimmers should allow enough time when reporting to the blocks for this important step!

4. Report to the blocks or the bullpen.

The timers behind the starting blocks often check to make sure that swimmers are lined up in the right order. However, it is always a good idea to have your swimmer check in with the lane timers to make sure they are in the right lane and heat.

5. Parents, find a seat.

According to USA Swimming rules, parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an official capacity. Parents must sit in the spectator area, usually bleachers on the side of the pool.

6. Swimmers, swim your race!

7. Check in with the coaches...again!

After each race, your swimmer should go immediately to their coach.

Generally, the coaches follow these guidelines after a race:

- a) Positive comments or praise
- b) Suggestions for improvement

8. Check in with parents.

Parents should follow these guidelines after your swimmer's race:

- a) Tell your swimmer how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with them. You just need to tell your swimmer how proud you are of their effort.
- b) Take your swimmer back to the crash area and relax, find something to eat, and wait for next event to be called.

9. Repeat steps 6, 7, & 8 until all events have been completed.

10. Final check in with the coaches before heading home.

When a swimmer has completed all his events for the day, he is able to go home. Be sure, however, to check with the 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 he/she is not there.

11. Ask for help!

If during any of this you feel lost or confused, be sure to ask other Blazer parents for help! We have all had our "first meets" and know it can be overwhelming. Once you have attended one or two meets, it will all become very routine and enjoyable.

Want to Get Involved?

Click the links below to find out how to best volunteer your time during swim meets!

Become a USA Swimming official

Refer to our [KCB article about what, why & how to become a USA Swimming official!](#)

KCB Volunteering

Refer to our [KCB Volunteer page](#) to see how to sign up to help at swim meets to fulfill your volunteer hours!

Six No-No Phrases for the Swimming Parent

swimintelligence.blogspot.com | 13 July 2009

Parents often ask what to say to their swimmers to help them succeed. The conversations that happen between a parent and child can have a dramatic impact in shaping a swimmer's attitudes toward swimming. Take a moment to read this short article for the phrases coaches have heard before, and we just cringe when we hear them. Each is an example of what not to say to your swimmer.