

New Swim Parent Survival Guide

Welcome to Swim Team! Below you will find some tips and tricks to get you a little more familiar with the ins and outs of being a swim parent. This is by no means an all-inclusive list, but does have some valuable information to keep handy as you begin your swim team journey. Veteran parents and swim board members are always willing to answer questions as well, don't be afraid to ask. We all remember those first couple years of swim and how many questions we had! We hope you are excited for your journey and we are all looking forward to a great season!

Swim Practice Gear:

- One piece suits (girls) Jammers (boys) any print or color.
- Goggles
- Towel
- Swim cap (will get one from the club)
- Water bottle

Swim meet registration:

- Coaches will e-mail invitation for meet registration when registration opens.
- You will choose your child's events through the active parent portal (if you have questions regarding which events to choose, talk to the coaches).
- Fee's will be listed on the portal and will be charge to your save credit card.
- There is generally a 3-4 event per day limit depending on the meet. The limit will be listed on the meet registration portal page. The site will not let you over register.
- Coaches will determine relays, those will not show up on your parent portal until the registrations are declared.
- Once registration closes and coaches declares entries, you will receive another email indicated events have been declared.

Swim meet gear for kiddos:

- Competition style swim gear- Recommend wearing team colors of Green and Black. Competition suits are usually a little tighter for less "drag". *don't be shocked by the price, one year's competition suit generally becomes the next year's practice suit, so you can many times get two years use out of a suit. Swim outlet (link on page 3) is a great place to find reasonably priced suits.
- Goggles (one for the meet and one back-up pair). Check with coaches or other parents if you need help with sizing.
- Sharpie markers- To write schedule on arm/leg
- Healthy snacks, water, Gatorade
- Towels (at least 2)
- Toiletries for after the meet
- Swim Cap (doesn't hurt to have an extra)
- Flip flops or crocks for the deck

- Clothes to cover up and keep warm. Temps can vary on deck. Competition pools are very cold, so swimmers will want dry clothes to wear over their suits when not in the pool. Preferences vary from dry towels, to sweatshirts/t-shirts, light athletic zip ups, to swim parkas.

Swim meet gear for parents:

- Towel (for wet hugs post-race)
- Sharpies (for writing schedule)
- Highlighter for program
- \$5-10 cash for program (there is generally no admission fee but there is a fee for programs, generally cash only)
- Snacks (concessions are generally available as well)
- Bleacher seats are nice for long meets
- Books/electronics for down time (meets can get long!)
- Dress in layers. It can be very hot and humid in the pool area, the goal is to keep swimmers comfortable, not necessarily the spectators. You will see spectators in shorts and t-shirts to stay cool.

Swim meet day!

- Coaches will send out info a day or two prior to the meet with arrival times and reminders.
- Arrive at time indicated by coaches. Warm-ups are required to partake in the meet.
- Parents are not allowed on deck.
- Please write schedule on swimmer's arm (see example attached).
- Reading the program (see example attached).
- The meet time from first event to last is generally 4 hours.
- Seating is often limited. Get there early.
- Swimmer times and places will be posted somewhere at the venue. You can also get updated times and place information from an app called Meet Mobile. There is a yearly fee.
- If your child is DQ'd (disqualified) during a race, please don't be discouraged or disappointed. Disqualifications are common among young and seasoned swimmers alike and can happen during any stroke (most common in fly and breast). You and your swimmer will probably not know during the race that it has even happened, but may see "DQ" for a time on the posting or app. Please ask the coach if you have questions following the race.
- The timing pads are touch sensitive, but sometimes are difficult for the younger swimmers to touch hard enough to stop the clock (especially on the backstroke). That is where the manual timers come in. Don't worry, there are safeguards to ensure an accurate time is recorded.
- Remind your swimmer to cheer for teammates. If all swimmers are engaged in the competition, it raises the energy level for the entire team!

State Qualifying

- Age standards are posted on the www.ndswimming.org website under the “Times & Records” tab. The age your swimmer will be at the time of the state meet will determine what age group they are in.
- If your swimmer qualifies for state, you will receive additional information closer to the state meet. Only swimmers with qualifying times will participate in the State Meet.

General Tips

- Swimmer’s hair- swimmer specific shampoo is helpful in keeping hair in good shape. Ultra swim and Malibu swimmers wellness are two popular kinds.
- Swimmer’s skin- chlorine is very drying, good moisturizer if helpful.
- Wear to purchase items.
 - Kiefer is a great place to order swim supplies and suites. Team code is DDST. www.kiefer.com
 - Swim Outlet is another option to order swim supplies and suits. <http://www.swimoutlet.com/ddst>
 - Scheels
- Swimmer nutrition and hydration- You may see a spike in your grocery bill! Swimming burns a tremendous amount of calories! USA swim has some great resources for nutrition on their website. www.usaswimming.org just type nutrition into the search bar and you will find some great tips and tricks. Just make sure your swimmer is fueled up before swim practice/meet and recovers after with a healthy meal. Also, even though the swimmers are in water, they can easily become dehydrated. Drinking water during practice and at the meets is essential. The coaches can also provide additional tips on nutrition!
- Swimmers often like to write on themselves at swim meets. Some is acceptable (a fun message on their back). Coaches ask that it not be excessive. Please explain to your swimmer that sharpie stays on for multiple days, so whatever they write, they are stuck with for a while. Sunscreen lotion sometimes takes sharpie off skin.
- Chlorine is hard on suits and jammers. To make your suit keep its color longer, prior to first use, soak for 30 minutes in a vinegar water solution (1T white vinegar per quart of water). Rinse the suit with water right after practice/meet and avoid wringing it manually or in the wringer machine. Hand wash.
- Water in the ear/ swimmer’s ear. There are over the counter drops to help with water in the ear, if the feeling persists or there is pain, you may want to have a physician look at it to see if there is an infection.

Contact info/websites

- ND swimming site www.ndswimming.org
 - Information on the state swim organization, state swim meet information, state board members and contact information.
- USA swimming site www.usaswimming.org

- Additional tips, articles, and education on swimming and USA swim policies and guidance.
- Dickinson Dolphin's www.dickinsondolphins.com
 - Meet information, updated announcement, board members contact information etc. Also follow the Facebook page!

Now, what do I need to write on my swimmer's arm again...?

Event Number Heat Number Lane Number Stroke

#23 Girl 15-18 50 Meters Freestyle

Lane	Name	Age	Team	Seed Time
Heat 1 of 2 Finals Starts at 07:30 PM				
1	Kennedy Ezzell	16	PRC-GA	NT
2	Jenny Herbert	17	CSP-GA	32.42
3	Erin Hodell	15	PRC-GA	34.53
4	Emma Nelson	15	CSP-GA	30.20
5	Sarah Knapp	15	PRC-GA	42.49
6	Elizabeth Capen	17	CSP-GA	33.62
Heat 2 of 2 Finals Starts at 07:32 PM				
2	Caroline Dekle	15	CSP-GA	NT
3	Magpie Kate Mosley	15	CSP-GA	35.37

What should it look like on my swimmer's arm?
Be sure to write *all* of your swimmer's events on his or her arm!

E | H | L | S
23 | 1 | 2 | FS
10 | 2 | 4 | BR

***The example on the right is the expected format that the DDST coaches prefer. Another swim parent or the coaches will certainly help the first couple times if you need help!**