

# Swim Meet 101

Parents, if this is your first season or first swim meet, there are some things that will be helpful to prepare for the meets.

**ARRIVE EARLY:** Warmups will start at a certain time. It is your responsibility to know this time and it is usually posted in the meet flyer or sent in an email from your coach prior to the meet. Please DO NOT pull into the parking lot at the warmup time. Allow for travel time, traffic, and parking. Always check your emails because sometimes these warmup times change.

**Bring cash and purchase a heat sheet:** It is good to have cash in case you need to purchase snacks and to purchase a heat sheet. KEEP your heat sheet for the entire weekend. It will have all of your athletes events in it(event, heat, and lane). See How to Read a Heat Sheet. Some teams use Meet Mobile (see info below about Meet Mobile app) as their heat sheet as well. It is at the hosting team's discretion how they will display their heat sheets. Not all teams do the same thing.

**HIGHLIGHTERS & PERMANENT MARKERS:** are helpful and you will always want them for a swim meet. Highlight your swimmer's name. Go through the heat sheet and find your swimmer listed under the events your coach has put them in. Please check the events they are swimming in on the website or on the On Deck app before the meet. If you have trouble finding your swimmer listed, please ask a coach or another parent for help.

**You or your swimmer will write their events for the day on his/her arm or leg ... it's a swimmer thing:** Use a sharpie. It should be written as E/H/L/S (that is the event #, heat #, lane#, and stroke). Example: under each corresponding letter you will write the number. 2/3/4/50free (this is event #2, heat #3, lane #4, 50 free).

**Your swimmer should talk to their coach before and after each of their races.**

**Your swimmer will need to pay attention to the meet and know when they need to get behind the blocks:** They should be behind the block 3-4 heats PRIOR to their heat. 25's and 50's go fast, so they might want to be there earlier. It is helpful to find a friend who might be swimming in the same event or ask your coach for help. If you are playing or not sitting in the team area with your team, you might miss your race.

**Vipers (athlete & parents) are encouraged sit with the team:** At all meets, Viper athletes & family members are strongly encouraged to sit together in a predesignated team area. This is good for athletes & parents alike as we build friendships and a strong team structure.

**Volunteer (Please)!** Not only is it easy, but it is required. All volunteers will still be able to watch their athlete swim. Job signups are posted under the event page on the website.

**Be kind and courteous to the timers, officials, meet marshals, and volunteers:** They are volunteers. Refrain from using inappropriate language with the volunteers or officials. Officials reserve the right to have you removed from deck and your swimmer kicked out of the meet if they feel it is inappropriate.

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**Don't panic when your swimmer misses a race:** This does happen and is a learning experience. They will learn from this. Remember they are new to the sport, everyone has missed a race before. This is important because your swimmer needs to pay attention to when they need to be behind the blocks. The meet will not stop if the athlete is not behind the blocks. Most of the time the coaches will not come looking for the swimmer who is not behind the blocks ... it is the athlete's responsibility and we are encouraging them to learn at a young age to be attentive at a swim meet.

**Don't get mad at your coach, your swimmer, or the officials when they get disqualified:** It happens to everyone at some point and at all ages. 1st DQ? Take them to Dairy Queen to help them move on (only the first time they DQ though 😊).

**You can leave after your swimmer's last race:** Sometimes your swimmer will swim the last event or you will be volunteering for the session. It can take the swimmer some time after their last event ... they will need to speak with their coach, warm down, clean up their area, and sometimes change clothes.

**When your swimmer competes any race, whether it was good, bad, or ugly ... say "GREAT JOB" or "How'd that feel?" And that's it:**

- Send them to speak with the coaches.
- Please refrain from "coaching" behind the blocks, behind the coaching table, in the car, or in the stands.
- Trust your coaches

## **CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS:**

- Extra towels
- Cash for heat sheets and snackbar. Kids love going to the snack bar ... it's fun plus anything spent supports the team hosting the competition
- Snacks
- Water ... it's important to stay hydrated
- A book or magazine
- Credit Card. If a swim vendor is at the meet you might want to go shopping
- Chairs

## **CHECKLIST FOR SWIMMERS:**

- Leave your mesh bag at home. It is only for practice
- Towel(s)
- Swimsuit,
- Goggles, and VAST swim cap. Always have backups of these in their bag. Fun swim caps are for practice ... VAST caps are for meets.
- Things to do in between races: card games, coloring, books, small toys...but PAY ATTENTION TO WHEN YOU SHOULD BE BEHIND THE BLOCKS
- Snacks and Water!