



What to Expect at Your First Swim Meet:
~ A Guide for New OCC Orca Swim Team Parents ~

Swim meets are a great opportunity for the whole family to spend time together as well as with all the other families on the team.

Below are some guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets.

What To Take To A Swim Meet

1. Swimsuit, Oakhurst cap, and goggles. Having an extra suit, cap, and pair of goggles packed is always a good idea. These items seem to rip and break at the most inopportune times!
2. Towels – wet bodies everywhere so pack at least two
3. Something comfy for your swimmer to sit on in the team area, such as a sleeping bag, old blanket, or chair.
4. Something comfy for you to sit on in the team area. Most parents bring camping chairs.
5. Several changes of clothes such as sweatpants, sweatshirts, and t-shirts. Swimmers need to stay warm between events and there is nothing worse than pulling on cold, soggy sweatpants.
6. Entertainment for the whole family such as travel games, cards, coloring books, books, iPods, Gameboys, etc. Especially important if you are bringing youngsters who are not swimming!
7. Small cooler of healthy snacks and drinks. Suggestions for items to bring: Water, Hi-C, fruit juice, Gatorade, granola bars, fruit, yogurt, cereal, trail mix, sandwiches.
8. Sharpie marker, pen, highlighter. (Write your child's stroke, lane, and heat on their back or hand)
9. For day meets sunscreen & hats are good for kids and parents alike.

***Special Parents' Note**

The pool area is usually very warm. Make sure you dress appropriately. Nothing is worse than being hot at a swim meet. It makes the time pass very slowly!

Before the Meet Starts

1. Arrival times are based on whether our meets are at home or not. Please arrive at the designated pool 45 minutes early for an away meet. Please arrive 1 hour and 15 minutes early for home meets. This will allow for proper warm-up before the races begin.
2. Find a place to put your swimmer's "stuff." The team usually sits together in a designated area so look for some familiar faces and then set up camp.
4. Write on your swimmer. Write each stroke, heat, and lane on your swimmer's back or hand in permanent (i.e., waterproof) marker, like a Sharpie. (i.e. FR $\frac{3}{4}$, Fly $\frac{1}{4}$) 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.
5. 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. This is a good time for parents to get a cup of coffee and a donut while the kids are busy!
6. Swimmers return to team area after warm-ups. This is time to dry off, put on warm clothes, go to the bathroom, and write events on their back or hand if this wasn't done earlier.
7. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.

The Meet Starts

1. Know what strokes your swimmer is competing in. It is important for swimmer to know what event numbers he is swimming. Again, a heat sheet and sharpie are a swim parent's best friends!
2. Listen for event announcements. Upcoming events are usually announced over the loud speaker.
3. For 8 & under swimmers check in with shepherd before each race. You will hear a bell coming from shepherd to signal the start of 6& under round-up for the next event. Shepherd parents will help get your child to the block at the appropriate time.
4. Report to the blocks: 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 grass area or deck above the pool.
6. Swimmers, swim your race. Time to see how all that hard work in practice is going to pay off!

7. Check in with the coaches. 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. **Ask for help!** If during any of this you feel lost or confused, be sure to ask other OCC Orca 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.

Congratulations!

**You are now ready to be a real Oakhurst Country Club Orca swim parent
Welcome to the Orca Family!**

Key Contacts:

- Head Coach – Jasmine Castillo swimcoach@oakhurstcc.com
- Meet & Team Director – Kristy Smith kristinsmith@yahoo.com
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