

# Cool Dell Swim Team Survival Guide

The Cool Dell Swim Board thought it would be helpful to write this guide for people coming into swim team to better prepare them for the swim meets and to help them understand the volunteer positions. You may want to hang onto this and refer to it over your first season as you figure out the Cool Dell Swim program.

## Cool Dell C-Dragons FAQ

### **Q. What is a swim meet, and how many are there?**

**A.** A swim meet is an organized competition between swim teams. In our Spitz Division, each swim team participates in five regular season meets, each one against one other swim team (these are called dual meets), and the end-of-the-season Gateway Conference meet that includes all teams in our division.

### **Q. How is a swim meet organized, and how long does it last?**

**A.** A swim meet consists of 78 events. For example, event 1 is the 9-10 girls 100 SC Meter IM. Individual events may have several heats (races) since there are often more kids swimming than there are lanes. In our pool, we have six lanes, so if 10 kids are swimming in an event, there will be two heats. It usually takes about 4 hours to complete a swim meet.

### **Q. What events will my child swim in?**

**A.** The coaches will place swimmers in various events once they are proficient with their strokes. Your child will swim in races with other children of the same gender, in the same age group. The only exception to this is when a child “swims up,” or participates in a race with older children in order to fill a spot to gain more points for the team. A swimmer is not allowed to “swim down” for obvious reasons.

### **Q. Does it matter what order the medley relay or the IM go in?**

**A.** Yes. For the medley relay the order is back, breast, fly then free. For individual medley it is fly, back, breast then free.

### **Q. How can we tell who wins the meet?**

**A.** In each event, coaches pick swimmers (determined by past times) who are competing for points. They swim in the last race of an event (called a heat), which is the “scoring” heat. All other swimmers in the event are swimming “exhibition.” The timers for each lane wait at the finish line and track the times of the swimmer in their lane. Points are assigned based on place and tallied up by the scorekeepers as the meet progresses. At the end of the meet, the team with the most points wins.

### **Q. How can I tell what event we are on?**

**A.** Make sure to print out a Heat Sheet prior to the swim meet. The official (usually the person with a bullhorn that starts each race) will announce the event and heat before each race. You will catch on to the flow after the first few events.

### **Q. Why do we have exhibition swimmers?**

**A.** Over the swim season your swimmer will improve a lot, so the exhibition times are important in that they help the coach’s track their progress. Please help your child understand that they should watch for and celebrate their “personal best” times, which are their fastest times in each stroke. Their times will be on the ribbons that are given out the day after each meet. If swimmers in exhibition heats swim faster than those in the scoring heats, they will be moved to the scoring heats in the next meet.

### **Q. My child got DQ’d. What is that about?**

**A.** For some of the strokes there are technical things that they legally can and can’t do. For example, in butterfly, their feet must stay together and they must touch the wall with 2 hands at the same time. If the official notices that a child is doing something illegal for that stroke, they can get disqualified or DQ’d. The coach can find out exactly what they did wrong so they can work on it for next time.

**Q. What is the Bullpen and Staging area?**

A. At the meets, we have a team bullpen and a staging area. The area where the kids hang out for most of the meet is the team bullpen area. There are parent volunteers for each age group who help the swimmers make sure they don't miss their events. A few minutes before their race, the kids move up to the staging area and wait for the volunteer to line them up in the right spot. Please help your child understand that they should stay in the team bullpen area during the meet so that they will not miss an event. If your child needs to leave the bullpen for any reason, they should inform the age group bullpen volunteer as to where they are going.

**Q. Why are they writing on my child with a permanent marker?**

A. As the kids get older, they will be responsible for getting to their own races. They need to be aware of how the meets work and what events they are swimming. Before the meet, parents/volunteers/coaches may write "E", "H" and "L" with numbers on their hand, oriented to the swimmer so that they can read it themselves and know what they are swimming. These letters stand for Event, Heat and Lane.

**Q. What happens if it is raining; do they cancel the meet?**

A. No. The meets are rarely cancelled--rescheduling is a nightmare. Please show up at the scheduled time unless you get an email telling you otherwise. Thunder will delay a meet, but it will be run eventually, rain or shine. If a meet is interrupted by a thunderstorm, the swim team representatives from each team will meet and agree how to proceed. If the meet is over the halfway point, they may decide to stop and call a winner. If it looks like rain, be sure to bring umbrellas, rain slickers and extra towels for your swimmer as well as yourself.

**Q. What if there is an emergency and my child will miss the meet?**

A. In order to put together a meet with a team as large as ours, it is important for the coaches to know if your swimmers will be there. You must declare your child's commitment for each meet on Team Unify by the Wednesday prior to the upcoming meet. If an emergency or sickness comes up after the commitment deadline, please email the coaches. You should contact the coaches directly by cell phone if the emergency is the day of the meet.

**Q. I have other small children. Do I really have to volunteer?**

A. Yes, we must have volunteers. Swim meets cannot happen without parent participation. Each family is required to fulfill at least three work assignments during the season and must work during conference meets if you have a conference swimmer. This year, we will again be using Team Unify to manage job duty signups. Signups will open for all families on May 1st. Additional policies include: If you cannot fulfill a work duty, it is your responsibility to find a suitable replacement. For the Green and White Meet, families can sign up for only one work duty. Families with swimmers 10 & U MUST work at least one (1) bullpen duty during the regular season. Job duty descriptions are included in the registration packet and can be found on Team Unify when signing up for duties. If you have questions about job duties or the policies above, please contact Thao Spoerle at [CDswimsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:CDswimsecretary@gmail.com).

**Q. What about dinner? When should I feed my child at the meet?**

A. That is a little tricky. There is always junk food around the meet no matter how much we try to avoid it. Try to feed your swimmers a healthy protein snack (bananas and yogurt or something like that) right before the meet and bring or buy them something to eat during the meet. Please check with the bullpen volunteers if you are taking your child away from the bullpen to buy them food to make sure they will not miss their events. Also, use common sense here. Please do not feed your child right before they swim an event, especially an IM.

**Q. What about good sportsmanship?**

A. This is a great place for parents to help. Talk with your children about this issue. The coaches are so proud of Cool Dell kids not only when they win, but also when they shake hands with the other team's swimmer, telling them "good race." Please help make this important to our kids. Also, during the meets, be friendly to the other team's parents and complimentary whenever possible. It creates a positive environment for everyone. Our most fun meets have been with teams that have this same attitude.