**GSSSL Swim Meet Best Practices**

It takes a village to run a Summer League Swim meet, here are some best practices to help it run as smoothly as possible.

**Pre-Season:**

* Hire your coaches
* Select your key volunteers and check to see if they are in to help again.
* Finalize your suit with Sylvia’s and set up fitting/purchasing date
* Order big items for post-season meets (see below ex. bleachers, buses, touchpads, whatever you can get done early)
* Order your seasonal and post seasonal ribbons (if necessary)

**Beginning of the season:**

* Conduct a parent meeting to set expectations. Go over the season schedule, practice times, cadence of emails, how to sign up for meets, contact info for you and the coaches, how and when to approach coaches and set volunteer expectations.
* Update your website with the season schedule and coaches info.
* Finalize your leads for volunteers:
  + Meet Referee
  + Announcer
  + Lead Timers
  + Computer
  + Concessions
  + Ribbons
  + Party planners

**Regular season swim meets**

**Meet Sign up:**

* Signing into a meet usually done through your team website. Most teams are on Team Unify or have a Meet Manager program they use.
* As an example: “Sign up closes at 9PM 2 days prior to the swim meet” (Sunday night for a Tuesday meet and Tuesday night for a Thursday meet). This gives the coaches a day to plan the meet with the signed in swimmers.
* The morning of the meet, the meet line up is posted at practice and sent around by email to the parents. This will allow time for last minute changes during the day.
* There inevitably will be swimmers who forgot to sign up, swimmers who are sick, swimmers who are out of town, but signed up by accident. If you post early and send around to parents, this usually flags any errors that can be remedied before the meet starts.

**Meet Line up:**

* By 2PM, the day of the meet, the coaches should have an official meet line up and the coaches/or team rep should send it to the computer person/team representative with the hosting team.
* Do not send this to the hosting coaches.
* All contact information is located on the GSSSL website.

**Computer**:

* Once at the meet, the computer person will make any last-minute changes from the coaches and merge the two line ups together and make a heat sheet.
* When meet ends the Meet manager file and results are emailed to both teams and a GSSSL rep who will post the results to the GSSSL website.
* If a record is broken: …
* Computer person is a very key volunteer. They can be the difference in a smooth running meet.
* Make sure they get food during the meets.

**Heat Sheets:**

* As soon as the heat sheets are created, post them at several places around the pool. This will help the kids know what they are swimming and help the meet run smoothly.
* Each official gets a heat sheet (Referee, Announcer, Stroke and Turn Judges, Computer, Coaches (hosting and opposing)) approximately 15 copies

**Timers/Timing sheets:**

* Timing sheets are then printed and sorted by lane. One copy per lane with clip board.
* It is best to have 3 timers per lane with at least 2 per lane with three timing devices.
* Head timers manage the timing volunteers and make sure that everyone is trained and ready to work. They function as back up when there are timing watch mistakes.
* Timers switch out half way through the meet (after event 36 8&U backstroke). Note: This does not happen at all pools.

**Communication:**

**Team to Team Communication for each meet:**

* The host team should send a courtesy email out 2 days prior to visiting team welcoming them to the meet. This email alerts them to their warm up time, meet start, when they will allow visitors on deck, where the opposing team will sit, info about concessions, any neighborhood parking restrictions and any other important info.
* They will also ask for any handicapped parking requests and coaches reserved spots.
* They should also add the computer person on the email string in order to highlight to whom the meet line up should be sent.

**Staffing:**

* Requirements for regular and post season meets are listed in the GSSSL operating rules

**Meet Set Up:**

* Set up usually begins around 3:30PM for a 4:30 team’s arrival.
* Block off parking and reserved spots for key volunteers, coaches, hosting team coaches and handicapped needs.

We tell families to:

* Be at the meets at 4:30-4:45
* Warm-up for home team is 4:45, team meeting at 5:15 (this is how the South does it)
* Away meets: team meeting at 5:00 with warm up at 5:15 PM
* 5:45 pool is cleared, team cheers ensue
* 5:57 National Anthem
* Competition begins at 6 PM

All pools have 6 lanes except: Marine Hills (5); Twin Lakes (4); Sheridan Beach (4) & View Ridge (8)

**Post season meets:**

All post season meets begin at 4PM

Arrive for warm up and team meeting at 2PM unless directed otherwise

**When hosting a post season meet**

**Internal Communications:** If you are in charge of a post season meet. it is important to communicate with your parents early and get advanced meetings on the books for volunteer needs.

**External Communications:**

You need to send out information to all the teams at least a week ahead of time. You need two letters: (examples attached)

1. Rep and Coaches info
2. Parent info (condensed Rep and Coach letter)

From these letters, you need to collect the following official info from each team a few days prior to the meet:

* Collect (3) committed timers from each pool who are experienced and available to attend a 3:40 timers meeting.
* Collect (1) experienced official from each team to work the full meet and arrive for a 3:40 timers meeting.
* **Coaching Staff** ~ have the teams provide your coaches’ names & positions.
* Based on space, tell them how many parking spots they can have. It usually is 2-3 + handicapped requests.
* Tell them **who and by when** they need to send this information.

**Heat Sheets:** Distribute heat sheets to teams prior to the meet (as soon as they are ready). The team reps will distribute to the parents circling like vultures. Print out a few to sell**. This is true for all post season, except for Divisional….see below**

**Parking** is usually really bad at these meets, please warn the parents where they can and cannot park in your parent letter. It is also nice to have a swimmer drop off zone, where parents can unload swimmers and then drive to a far-off parking spot. Please mark this in your parent letter.

**Different things to think about for each meet:**

**BChamps –**

* Estimated: X people at this event.
* This one sneaks up on you.
* Make sure you get Rep and Parent letters out to the league a week prior. (While all the normal season is still going).
* Have fun with this one.
* Order ducks or something fun for each heat winner.
* We’ve done the parade of champions the last couple of years where each team parades around the pool in alpha order with signs and spirit gear on.
* This meet also has a spirit award.
* Everyone gets a participant ribbon with their swim info on it.
* If a swimmer gets a prelim time at B Champs they are eligible and automatically entered into their respective prelims. Coaches need to scratch them if they are not going to swim.

**Girls Prelims** –

* Estimated: X people at this event.
* Usually the biggest meet.
* Need to block off both bathrooms for girls and order porta potties for men’s bathrooms.
* No ribbons at this meet, top 6 advance to Divisional championships.

**Boys Prelims**

* Estimated: X people at this event.
* No ribbons at this meet, top 6 advance to Divisional championships.

**Northern Division/Mark Prothero Southern Division meet.**

* Estimated: X people at this event.
* This one you sell T-shirts, you need to get a design going early and logos from each team. Please coordinate with the other host club to avoid similar designs and keep costs relatively similar.
* You also can sell space in the meet program (1/4 page, ½ page and full page) Usually you contact the club swim teams (KING, CAAT, Cascade, YMCA) and local businesses. If they purchase a full page they can also hang a banner at the meet.
* Heat Sheets are not distributed early to the teams, as this is a money maker for the hosting team. You can sell this with highlighters and Sharpees at check in.
* You also have to purchase ribbons specifically for this event which is reimbursable through GSSSL. Budgeted amounts listed in “Are you Hosting a Post Season Meet”
* Touchpads are rented for this event. Invoice to league.
* You are not allowed to post results to OnDeck app at this meet.
* You are also in charge of the coaches planning dinner after the meet. You need to order extra Pizzas or tacos or something to host them as they plan for All City. The results from the other division come in and they know who is advancing to All City
* Trophies are ordered by the League.

**All City**

* Estimated: X people at this event.
* Please see the GSSSL rules for how to staff this event.
* This one is the parking nightmare. In the past people have hired shuttle drivers to manage the parking in far off lots, and shuttling parents and kids into the area safely.
* Bleachers need to be ordered
* Medals are ordered by the League.
* Timing Systems are rented for this event.