

## WHAT TO EXPECT AT A MEET

EFSL competition follows USA Swimming rules with some modifications. A standard meet offers four strokes for swimmers (free, back, breast, and butterfly), the individual medley (IM), and both free and medley relays. Swimmers are limited to three individual and two relay events per meet, with the exception of pentathlons, and Championships. In most meets, the swimmer chooses one event to swim and their coach chooses the other events through a swim registration system, Team Unify. Families will receive an email that is sent at least 2 weeks prior to a meet. Swimmers must make a declaration regardless if they plan to swim or not. Families are encouraged to register for all the meets, but take note and plan travel accordingly (travel insurance, refundable hotel bookings, etc.) in regards to any restrictions mentioned in the meet announcements. It is rare, but some teams, due to facility size, may only allow a certain number of swimmers register per team. Other times, it can be logistical contingencies such as effects of a government shutdown. At that time, the coaching staff will prioritize based on needs, such as high school swimmers who are lettering and/or the order the declarations were submitted.

A pentathlon meet typically has a set format where each swimmer will swim five events: free, back, breast, and butterfly, and the individual medley (IM). For 12 and under, it will be 50m events with a 100m IM. For 13 and over, swimmers will complete 100m events with a 200m IM. EFSL also has optional long-distance events that may be added to the end of some meets (e.g. 400m, 800m, 1500m), which can give swimmers the opportunity to practice and qualify for the annual long-distance championships usually held in November.

### Heat Sheets:

The coach will send a verification via email of all swimmers that have registered the week of the meet. Team Unify will also provide families the ability to view their swimmer's entries under their accounts. Heat sheets are then sent via email out 1-3 days prior to the meet. The heat sheets will have event numbers corresponding to the race that one is swimming. Girls always swim ODD Events, boys always swim EVEN events. Some meets, i.e. KMC, use the app Meet Mobile that allows families to track preliminary results for their swimmers during the meet. Official results will be emailed out following the meet.

### Timeline:

Prior to warm-ups, swimmers should check in with their coaches and volunteers with the volunteer coordinator (VC) or the VC rep in their absence. Prior to the start of the meet the host team will conduct volunteer meetings for major positions and verify scratches. Any non-approved scratches will result in a penalty fee deducted from your regular season deposit.

There will normally be a 20-30 minute team warm-up prior to the start of each meet. All swimmers are expected to participate, because many of the competition pools do not have



designated warm up pools or have age requirements for use (i.e. KMC dive well), there are often no other opportunities to warm up.

In addition, prior to warm-ups, many swimmers write their heat information in a matrix/grid format on their arms or upper thighs with sharpies, as some meets parents are volunteering, or sitting away from the swimmers (sitting in the stands). Figure 1 shows “E” is the event number (i.e. Event 3 is the 50 Freestyle for 8 and under females), “H” is the heat number (i.e. 7<sup>th</sup> heat of the 50 Freestyle) and “L” is the swimmer’s lane. Swimmers should focus on the event number as heats and lanes can be changed during the meet by the officials.

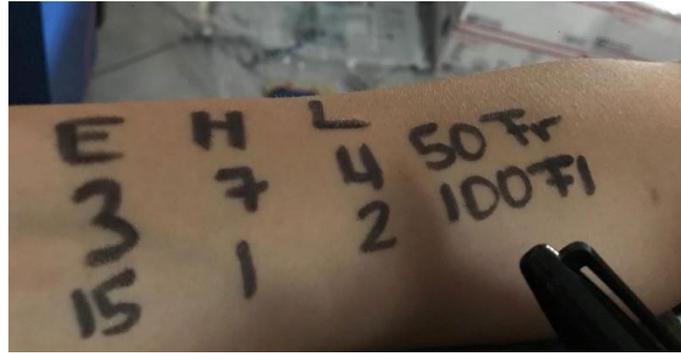


Figure 1

### **General Meet Information:**

Swim meets often last several hours. The meet announcement, which is sent out via email through Team Unify two to three weeks prior to the meet, will have an approximate timetable for the meet, as well as general information about the Meet Venue. The pool deck area is often crowded and noisy during the meet. Most pools allow folding chairs to be set up in a designated area of the pool deck, but due to space limitations, please bring as little as possible to the pool deck. The pool deck is primarily for the swimmers and coaches. During Piranhas home meets, tables/benches are set up in the lobby for additional seating.

Consider volunteering on deck during the meet in order to have a good view of the races. If volunteering in a position that will not allow you to see the pool you can coordinate with the volunteer coordinator or volunteer peers to swap out during your swimmer’s events. Please plan to watch your child’s races and then exit the pool deck to allow other parents the opportunity to watch their swimmer’s races.

Many of the pools do not allow food/drink in the pool area but do provide a lobby area to eat. Many teams provide concessions as fundraisers in the lobby areas and will detail whether Euros or dollars will be accepted in the meet announcement. The pool area is very warm so dress accordingly. Street shoes are not allowed on deck. Most parents bring flip flops or sandals to wear on deck. At meets you will see shoes lined up outside the locker room area. **It is recommended to label your child’s shoes and clothing (i.e. team gear) for easy**

**identification.** When the meet concludes, please ensure trash is disposed of and you leave your area clean. You will find German pools are very clean and well maintained. As guests in these facilities, we are expected to cooperate with the rules and leave the pool area at least as clean as we found it.

Swimmers should not wear any jewelry or have written/drawn body markings outside of heat information.

### **During the Meet:**

Swimmers are marshalled for their events and upcoming events are clearly marked throughout the pool deck so parents can determine when their children will swim. In EFSL, swimmers in all age groups are marshaled. While this is different from many swim teams in the U.S., please remind your older swimmer that it is important to follow the marshaling system. A swimmer will receive a heat slip (to keep dry) that will give that particular swimmer's heat information. The swimmer will hand this slip to the head timer in their lane to verify their information. Many swimmers are nervous so ensure your swimmers are listening to their names being called.

During the meet, depending on location, different timing systems will be used. Examples include stopwatches, Dolphin systems, plungers and touchpads maybe used. **If touch pads are used, ensure swimmers, especially smaller swimmers, touch the pad as they complete their race.** A swimmer may ask the head timer his or her unofficial average time once they complete their race. After a swimmer completes their race they should meet with their coach to receive feedback. Unofficial results are usually printed out and submitted as races are completed and posted in the common areas and on Meet Mobile.

Families can leave after their swimmer's events are completed but it's highly encouraged to stay and cheer for their teammates if possible. If not, families must check out with their coaches. Sometimes if a relay team scratches a swimmer for various reasons (i.e. sickness, injury) the coach may add your swimmer as a last-minute replacement.

### **Meet Awards:**

During regular season heat ribbons are given out as races conclude and individual event ribbons by age category are given to a team representative to be handed out at a designated time (i.e. the first practice after the meet). At pentathlons medals are awarded in a small ceremony directly after the meet. Team cumulative points in regards to Individual Championship awards are accrued during the meets and will be seen at the end column of posted individual swimmer heat results.

## **Disqualifications (DQ)**

If a swimmer is judged to have broken a rule during the race, an official may determine that the swimmer is disqualified. Under ESFL, the official will make every effort to inform either the swimmer or the coach of the DQ. The coach has the opportunity to discuss the ruling with the Head Referee if the coach disagrees with the ruling. If parents would like to discuss any DQ's they should do this as soon as possible with the coach, and NOT with any officials.

Parents are expected to volunteer at both home and away meets. Although some of the positions require special training (which we provide), most do not. For specific information concerning volunteering with our team contact the volunteer coordinator or read the volunteer guidelines provided at registration and located on the team website, <http://www.stuttgartpiranhas.org/>.

## **Other Resources**

There is more information on EFSL run meets at:

<https://www.teamunify.com/team/efsl/page/about/efsl-league-documents>

**Thank you for being a part of the Piranhas Family!!**