



## BASIC MEET INFORMATION

**What are the Meet Announcement and Meet Update?** The Announcement is any information families need to know about the meet. Like what to bring, shirt order, order of events, how much the meet costs, the pool's address, and more. The Update usually goes out on the Monday the week of the meet as a reminder and includes important updates. Links for these can be found on the event page.

**What do we do when we arrive?** Athletes find the team tents and set up their stuff. Parents sit in the stands surrounding the pool. If there are not bleachers or they are full, the team will provide extra tents for parents. It is important to recognize that swimmers and parents sit in separate tents. It's like how baseball players sit in a dugout, basketball players are on a sideline, and hockey players are on the bench. Parents don't sit in those areas with their athletes.

If we are assigned the first warm-up, your swimmer needs to get ready for activation with the rest of the team. Then they warm-up. After warm-up, they check-in for their events while other teams are in the second warm-up session. If we are second warm-up, swimmers should check-in first, then get ready for activation with the rest of the team before hopping in to warm-up.

**What is a heat sheet?/How do I find my swimmer's heat and lane?** There will be boards or designated areas where admin posts which heat and lane your swimmer will be competing in for each race. Swimmers need to check these boards and let coaches know their heat and lane so coaches know where to look for them so they can watch their race. Otherwise coaches will not know that your swimmer is in the water. It's good practice to have your swimmer write their heat and lane on their arm in permanent marker so they remember. Parents, you can also look at these boards to find out where your swimmer will be. However, we would like for the swimmers to find out for themselves, not you going to the board and telling them.

**Is there an app for that?** There is an app that some meets will use which will sometimes provide the heat/lane. However, make sure your swimmer double checks with the posted sheets too because sometimes they do not match up. The app is called Meet Mobile and you do have to pay an annual fee, but it's relatively inexpensive for how much you use it per year.

**What should parents be doing during warm-up?** Socializing with each other. Grab coffee while your kids are in the pool. Get to know the parents of swimmers in your child's group. They will likely be the parents you will go through the team with until your swimmer leaves for college.

**What should parents be doing during the meet?** Cheering! Not just for your own kid, but all Swim Torrance swimmers. Network with other parents. Get to know them because your kids are friends, and down the line you could carpool. If you see a new family, introduce yourself. Nobody likes to feel alone or not connected to the team, even parents. If you notice English might not be a person's first language, help connect them with someone else in our program that may be able to help make them feel included as well.

**How long should I expect a session to last?** It depends on the amount of entries into the meet. Usually, a session is between 3-4 hours. Sessions with 12&Unders is not supposed to last longer than 4 hours, not including warm-up. A longer, 13&Over session can be 5-6 hours.

**What areas are off limits to parents?** Behind the blocks (unless you're timing), the admin area, the coaches' area, hospitality, and if an official has to walk the side of the pool for officiating, stay back enough so they can walk.

**What are the deck rules?** No glass containers. No taking photos behind the starting blocks or in the locker room/changing areas. No interrupting your swimmer during warm-up/warm-down. If you have a question for an official, ask your coach to talk to the officials/admin. No drones.

**What should my swimmer be doing besides swimming their race?** If your swimmer is sitting around for more than 20 minutes between events, they need to warm-up again before their next race. Then they should talk to their coach pre-race. After the race, they should immediately warm-down. Then talk to their coach for feedback. After all of that, they can come back to hang out in the team area. Remember they need to stay fed and hydrated.

**What is a DQ?** It stands for disqualification. It means the swimmer did an illegal move during their swim. Right after their swim, usually an official will approach the swimmer and explain what they did to cause the DQ. It's like an error in baseball, swimmers learn from it so next time they don't repeat it again. So while the time doesn't count, it's still good that they swam the race to get comfortable with doing the distance or overcoming a fear of that event/stroke. If an official does not speak to the swimmer immediately following their race, coaches will get a DQ report Monday after the meet and can talk to swimmers individually about the DQ at practice.

**What happens if my swimmer misses a race?** The first thing they should do is see the starting official and let them know. If they can fit a swimmer into a later heat that may have an empty lane, sometimes they do. This is not guaranteed. If they cannot or will not do that, then the swimmer is DQed from that race and they miss their next race as well. Officials do this to reinforce that swimmers should be paying attention so they do not miss their race. Sometimes though, officials will allow a swimmer to still compete in their next race. That's why it's important for the swimmer to immediately talk to the starting official in these instances. If your swimmer misses their last race of the meet, you will be fined by the host team or admin. If your swimmer misses a race in a finals session, they are out of the meet.

**What are prelims, finals, and timed finals?** Most meets are timed finals, which means they swim their events once and that's it. When a meet has both prelims and finals, the swimmer could swim their event twice. Once during prelims in the morning, and if they qualify, again during finals in the early evening. This is a good thing (although swimmers may not think so sometimes). It gives them another opportunity to improve on the morning swim. If a swimmer qualifies for finals, the expectation is that they come back to compete again. This is for the experience and because their swim will count as points for the team.

**How can I earn volunteer hours at a meet?** There are two main ways at an away meet: 1) bringing canopy tents from team storage or taking them back after the meet, and 2) being a timing coordinator. If it's a team hosted meet, there are many ways you can earn volunteer hours at a meet. In fact, some families earn all of their hours working 1-2 meets. See the Guardian Education section on our website for more specific details on each position.

**What does being a timer entail?** You get to sit behind the blocks, so you have a great view of the meet. All you have to do is start your stopwatch at the beginning of each race when the starter begins each heat, stop the watch at the end of each race, and press the pickle button at the same time. The pickle is a device that is connected to the touchpad in the water. The touchpad registers the swimmer's time to the computer system at the admin table behind the starter. Shifts usually last around an hour.

**What if I miss starting my watch or mess up?** If you forget to start your watch, there is a head timer who starts two just in case that happens. All you have to do is raise your hand and s/he will bring you one of their watches. Keep in mind that you're not the only one timing; there are 2-3 per lane. So it's not the end of the world if you mess up. The kids' times are all backed up by the touchpads and computer. Only if the computer system messes up, will they actually use the times the timers got. And even then, the final time will usually be an average between them.

**Is there a penalty if I cannot be present for a job I signed up for?** Yes. We do charge your account \$40 for each missed job that you committed to doing for the program.

**What are coaches looking at during swims?** It depends on the level of the swimmer and what they have been working on in practice. For the 12&Unders, mostly holding technique under the pressure of racing. For the 13&Overs, mostly race plans, pace, and executing practice skills.

**What should my swimmer take away from meets?** Meets are indicators of practice. Results help show progress. If a swimmer isn't happy with their performance, then when they return to practice, the focus and attention to detail should increase. If a swimmer is happy with their performance, then they should continue to make improvements based on seeing the results of their hard work and dedication.

**Why do some meets have relays and others do not?** If a meet has relays, it usually is because there was not an overload of entries, so there is time to have relays within the session. Sometimes relays will be listed in the meet information, and then they get cut from the meet at the last minute. It has to do with keeping the whole session timeline reasonable.

**Why are relays important?** They are important for three reasons: First, they score double the amount of points as individual swims. So if Johnny wins an event and gets 20 points, if his relay wins, they get 40 points! That can make or break a team's standings in the meet. The second reason is it promotes teamwork. It's four people competing on behalf of the team, not just one. The third reason is they're a lot of fun! The team expectation is that all swimmers stay for relays unless otherwise earlier determined by a coach.

**How are relays chosen?** It depends on the meet. If we can get all the swimmers in, we will. It's about experiences and learning from them. Sometimes only one relay per team is allowed. We want all swimmers to have an opportunity to experience a relay. So if it's an in-season meet and a swimmer may not get an opportunity at PAC Champs or JOs, then we may have that swimmer be in a relay as opposed to someone who will have a chance at those later meets. Sometimes the purpose of the relay is points. If that's the case, we will swim our fastest relay. Sometimes a swimmer may be faster on paper technically, but someone else may be having a better meet. Coaches could go with the swimmer having a more consistent meet. Someone who is more consistent in practice attendance could be considered over someone who only goes the minimum. Someone who is consistent in practice effort or skills could be considered over someone who only tries on certain sets/strokes. There are a lot of factors for coaches to consider.