

# SWIM MEET SURVIVAL GUIDE

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**CONGRATULATIONS!** Your swimmer is ready for their first competitive swim meet. A swim meet is a fun and exciting time for you and your children. It's exciting to see all their hard work and effort pay off during the meets. As a parent, the health and safety of your child is of utmost importance. This includes correct sleep, nutrition, preparation, communication, rules, support and of course, having fun.

## What To Pack for A Meet ...

**In your Swimmers bag:** (Packing the night before saves time in the AM)

- Suit, goggles, bathing cap
- A few towels to keep swimmers dry and warm for each race they will be in (they also have warm up and cool down swims)
- It is a good idea to label your things. Parents all shop at the same stores so chances are someone else may have the same stuff.
- Flip Flops or sandals
- Sweat suit or sweat shirt to stay warm when not swimming
- Water Bottle (can usually be purchased at concession if forgotten or finished)
- Healthy Snacks such as fruit, granola bars, nuts, etc (stay away from salty or greasy snacks.)
- Activities: cards, game books, novels, etc.
- Pen / sharpie marker
- Stadium blanket to sit on/to keep warm In the bleachers

**In your Parent Bag:** Parents sit for a long time, so keep this in mind and make the best use of your idle time. You will have your swimmer(s) in warm-up for 1 hour before, and usually 30+

minutes between and after events.

- Reading material, hand held games, puzzle books, etc.
- The pool area gets hot, so dress in layers if you can. (UIW meets, parents will be sitting outside, so make sure you bring your own chair and tent)
- Drinks & snack. There are usually plenty of food & drinks available at the snack bar from the host team.
- Pen & highlighter for the program/heat sheet It is a good idea to sit with other WAVE parents to help guide you through the day. You may have a few more questions about seeding, time placement, etc. as the meet is in progress. Let your swimmer(s) know where you are sitting so they can find you.

**Before the Meet:** Your swimmer(s) needs a good night's sleep before a meet! You may be getting up earlier than normal and remember to give them a nutritious breakfast before they get to the pool.

## Getting to the Swim Meet:

Getting your swimmer(s) to the meet on time is important. Swimmers need to be on deck 15 minutes before warm up at every meet. They need plenty of time for warm-up swims, getting acclimated with the set-up of the pool including the locker room, team meeting area, staging area, where parents will be, pool, bathroom, and snack bar etc.

Swimmers should stay with their team on deck. Sitting with friends will help them through their swim meets. **KEEP YOUR CHILDREN WITH WAVE TEAM ON DESIGNATED AREA AND HAVE A GOOD SEAT IN THE STANDS!** Your swimmer needs to stay with WAVE on deck at some meets like Championship meets. Parents are to stay in the bleachers and off the deck. Coaches will be looking for swimmers for warm-ups and often 3 or more events before they will be swimming, depending on # of heats.

**RULES OF THE POOL & POOL DECK:** The pool deck is OFF LIMITS to parents & spectators If there is anything you need your swimmer to know, you will have to contact a Wave coach to relay the information. There is a designated area where the pool is roped off, and only coaches, officials, timers and

swimmers are allowed in this area.

Don't worry about your swimmer having a TOWEL when they finish. Usually they take their towels with them when lining up, and will have their towel with them when they get out of the water. Their coaches will meet with them after their heat to review their swim, stroke, performance, etc.

## **KNOW THE EVENTS YOUR SWIMMERS ARE IN!**

It is a good idea to bring the list of events that you used to sign your children up for the meet. It will help you find their events in the program.

### **Swimmers will need to know the following:**

Event Number and Event Name. Swimmers will find out from their coach or the program which heat they are in. When/if you buy a program, it will help you better identify:

- the Where which HEAT and Lane they will be swimming in
- the When - often the program will give an approximate start time for every heat Your children will ALSO need to know the sequence they are swimming in (the Event number, Heat, Lane, Event Name)

You can find the list of events your swimmers are in on the team website. Go to the meet schedule, click on "Attend This Event" much like you did when you signed up. From there it will give you the list of events and their numbers.

## **Why Do You Need a Sharpie???**

It is very important to mark your swimmer(s) before the meet! By marking your swimmer's event/heat lane on their forearm or upper thigh with a Sharpie, your swimmers) can keep track of their events.

Ask Wave parents or older swimmers for help on how to write the following: E | H | L | Event Name on an easily viewable area such as their arm, hand, palm, or wrist. • E = Event # • H = The Heat they will be swimming in (series of 6 or 8 swimmers based on NT (No Time) & their age to the fastest swim time.) • L = The Lane they will be swimming in. • Event Name = important for your children to have so they don't get mixed up on what event they are swimming,

and if it is a Relay, they should know what position they will swim for their relay.

## **The Score Board & Announcements**

Each score board can be a bit different, but should have the EVENT and HEAT listed. In some cases the scoreboard may not work, so it's important that you and your swimmer listen to announcements so they know when to line up. Swimmers should be listening to the events, and learn to line up, or ask coaches when they should be lining up for their event. If your child misses an event, it is missed! There is nothing that can be done to have them 'squeeze in'. The events are all scheduled to flow to complete the meet on time. IF they do miss an event, they can always swim the event at another swim meet, and should focus on their next swim.

### **WHAT DOES "DQ" MEAN? (No, we're not talking about Dairy Queen...)**

Meets are officiated by USA Swimming Officials. It is common for swimmers to get a DQ (Disqualified). The Official and their coach will talk to the swimmer after a DQ to let them know what they did wrong so that they can correct it. Common mistakes are if they don't do the appropriate stroke approach the wall, flip turn, etc. If your child gets disqualified, more importantly, they swam, they did a great job, they finished and there is always another meet to try again. Don't worry about a DQ, even the best swimmers DQ.

## **When is it OK to take your swimmer home?**

No, you and your swimmer don't need to stay for the entire meet. After your child has finished swimming their individual and relay events and they have finished their cool-down, and you have told the coach you are taking them home, they are free to leave. Please make sure your child cleans up after themselves and looks around to see if they have everything they brought. If they see something that belongs to another swimmer, let someone know that you are taking it, and try to make contact with that swimmer (coach, etc).

### **Why Should I Buy A Heat Sheet?**

Heat sheets are for sale at every meet. The heat sheet has events, heats, and previous times your swimmer has swam. If it is a long meet, you will know how long a wait there is between events and what time you should be back in the pool area to see your child swim. You will also be able to see when other WAVE swimmers are swimming to cheer them on too!

**Be a Good Swim Parent: Be Enthusiastic and Supportive!** Show good sportsmanship at all times toward coaches, officials, opponents and teammates. Let the Coach do the Coaching! Your role is to provide love and support regardless of outcome. Encourage your child's efforts and point out the positive. Let the coach be the one to critique your swimmer(s) performance and techniques. Have Fun!