

Planning for the Swim Meet

Preparations:

- * Always make reservations as soon as you know you are going to an “away” swim meet (if you plan to stay overnight)
 - Hotels tend to fill up quickly
 - You can always cancel your reservations if something comes up.
 - Tip from Coach Donita: She loves to “bid” on Priceline. Typically can get a 3 Star for \$50-60. She always starts with 3 Stars – Great way to get a great room at great discounted price!
- * Create your own personal swim meet checklist & reuse it each time you go to a different swim meet.
 - A few items to remember are: Sleeping bag or blanket & pillow, warm clothing, flip-flops, team suit, goggles, several towels, swim caps, back-up suit & goggles, extra goggle straps, healthy snacks & drinks, ear drops, visine, ink pen & hi-liter, folding chairs (for parents) gameboy, etc.
 - Don't forget to pack items for the other siblings to occupy their time, too
 - Magazines & Newspapers are a good way for parents to relax.
- * Get Maps for trip:
 - The Internet has many places (Travelocity, MapQuest, etc.) to get maps or trip info.
 - Research the area to find places to see or visit.
 - Sometimes Maps are provided in the meet packets.

Pre-swim Meal:

- Have your child eat a healthy meal the night before they swim.
- Stick to your normal diet, and stay away from anything new or different.
- A healthy breakfast is also essential for a successful start.

Arriving at the Swim Meet:

- * Try to arrive 30 minutes before Warm-ups begin.
- * Find the SIGN-UP sheets. Follow directions if posted.
 - Your child's name will be listed under their Age Group (8 & under, 9 – 10, 11 -12, 13 – 14, and 15 & up)
 - Circle or highlight your child's name AND events listed for them. (If you don't sign in, your child won't be allowed to swim)
 - Some places won't allow parents into the sign-in area, so if you don't know how to do it, find a coach or fellow HCA swimmer to help make sure you get signed in correctly.
 - Note the event numbers that your child is entered in. (Most swimmers write them on the back of their hand)
 - Note the exact time of Warm-ups
 - Some meets will only have sign-ins for Friday night swims, not Sat. or Sun., but **always** be sure to check.
- * Find the Camping area and settle your family in. Find other HCA team members and camp together.
- * Locate locker rooms & have your child get prepared to swim.

Warm-Ups:

- * Report to the Coach 10 minutes before the warm-ups are scheduled to begin. Very important to be on time. Lateness may result in doing pushups.
 - Coach will instruct the team on what to do for the Warm-ups
 - Coach may also have the swimmers practice their starts to get used to the Starting Blocks.
- * Warm-up lanes will be packed with swimmers. (Swimmers need to pay attention to their surroundings in the pool)
- * Parents should take this time to locate the:
 - Clerk of Course, Bathrooms, Concessions, Swim vendor booths, etc.
 - Psych Sheets (Meet programs – usually sold at concession stand for about \$5) This will be a list of all of the swimmers in each event for the entire meet, but will not provide heat or lane information. You may want to wait for Heat Sheets to become available (close to the start of the 1st event). These are usually \$1 - \$2 per session & sold at the door or concessions.
- * After Warm-ups are done, swimmers should rest before the meet begins.

Clerk of Course:

- * This area is where swimmers will be lined up in preparation for swimming their event, if the meet has one.
- * The Clerk of Course will line up the swimmers in order they will be swimming.

- * This area can be a flurry of activity, so the swimmers need to be quiet and cooperative while waiting in this area.
- * Parents should NOT stay in this area unless they are working in this area.
- * Almost every Swim Meet will have a Clerk of Course for the 8 & Unders.
- * If Swim Meet does NOT have a Clerk of Course for the 9 & above, then this is how it works:
 - When your child's event is called, they need to report to the lane that they will swim in.
 - If your child swims in the 3rd heat, then they will be 3rd in line behind the starting block of that lane.

The Meet Begins:

- * Sign-up sheets are taken down approximately 30-45 minutes before the Swim Meet begins for that session.
- * Heat sheets are generated from the number of swimmers that signed in.
 - Heat sheets are posted around the pool and list the "EVENT", "HEAT", & "LANE" your child swims in.
 - This information should be noted on the back of your child's hand or in your Psych Sheet as:
= > #4 50 Fly H3 L5 (which means Event 4, 50 Butterfly, Heat 3, Lane 5) (Do this for each event)
 - Heat sheets may be for sale at concessions.
 - Do not ask the Coach to see their copy of the heat sheet.
 - "NT" in the Time column means the swimmer has "NO TIME" for that particular event, or the coach did a last minute entry without the proper time being entered.
 - Heats and lanes are decided based on past times for swimmers – usually swimmers with the fastest times will be in the last heat of the event, unless pyramid seating is used. Pyramid distributes the fastest swimmers in the last few events, in the middle lanes. (Always the swimmers with the fastest times will be in the middle lanes). Swimmers with "NT" will be placed in the first heat/heats.
- * Events are announced over the PA system. (Sometimes it's hard to hear the announcements clearly, so listen closely)
 - You will hear something like: "FIRST CALL, EVENT #1, GIRLS 8 & UNDER, 25 YARD BACKSTROKE"
 - If your child is swimming in this event, they will report to the Clerk of Course area.
 - Make sure they have everything they need to swim with (goggles, swim cap, etc.)
 - You will later hear something like: "FINAL CALL, EVENT #1, GIRLS 8 & UNDER, 25 YARD BACKSTROKE"
 - Your child must immediately report to the Clerk of Course or they will be scratched from the event.
- * Parents should find a seat in the bleachers to watch their child swim.
- * Parents are NOT allowed on Deck unless you are working the Meet.
- * Please remember there is NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY at the start of a race.
 - The reason for this is that the Timers start their Stopwatches when the strobe Flash goes off at the start.
 - You may take pictures after the race has started.
 - Swim Officials will warn the spectators if this happens.

The Heat Race: (Here is how most Officials Start a Heat Race)

- * Official ONLY announces 1st Heat of each Event: "EVENT #1, GIRLS 8 & UNDER, 25 YARD BACKSTROKE"
- * 1st Whistle Blows. (Swimmer should stand behind the Starting Block)
- * 2nd Whistle Blows. (Swimmer gets on the Starting Block or in the Pool for the Backstroke Events)
- * Official announces: "Swimmers take your mark: (Swimmer gets into their Diving Stance & should remain still. Moving is grounds for disqualification.)
 - Please remember there is NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY at the start of a race.
- * Starter Gun or Beep sounds. (Swimmer dives in)
 - Swimmers should remember they are racing the CLOCK.
- * When a swimmer finishes a race, they should:
 - Get their race time from the Timekeeper as they get out of the pool.
 - Go directly to the Coach for any feedback, instructions, or praise for their swim.
 - Coach sometimes has the swimmers do a "Cool-down swim" in the Cool-down/Warm-up lane.

- * Go back to the campground/team bleachers to get rest for their next event.

Disqualifications:

- * Don't be discouraged if your child gets DQ'd (Disqualified)
 - It is a part of the learning process and helps them remember what to do (or not to do) in future meets.
- * A Swim Official will explain to your child the reason they were DQ'd
- * Some reasons for DQ's:
 - False start (Swimmer moves before the Starter gun or beep goes off)
 - Leaving too early on Relays
 - Did not use a 2-hand touch for the Breaststroke & Butterfly on a turn or at the Finish.
 - Illegal Strokes, Illegal Kicks, wrong stroke used, or wrong kick used.
 - Pulling on the lane lines (You can touch them, but not use them to move yourself forward)

Before Your Next Event: (Please see Coach)

- * Coach may have you do a mini Warm-up in the Cool-down/Warm-up lane before each event.
 - If this applies to you, then report to the Coach about (2) events BEFORE your event
 - Coach will give you Pre-Race Instructions

Congratulations!!!!

- * Now that you've successfully survived that FIRST Event, it's time to do it all over AGAIN!!
- * Swim Meets are set up to allow your Swimmer approximately 20-30 minutes rest between their scheduled events
- * Please remember to listen closely to the PA announcements!!!
- * Please remember to praise your child, provide positive encouragement, & support them 100%!!!
 - It is a little overwhelming to a young swimmer.
 - Please do NOT criticize your swimmer. Coaches will correct any mistakes at practice.
- * Please do NOT get mad at the Officials, they are doing their jobs. (NO tolerance Policy exists)

Relays:

- * Relays consist of (4) swimmers of the SAME Age Group and SAME Gender.
- * Swimmers may be assigned to swim in a Relay (Coach will notify you of this)
- * Coach will let your child know what stroke they will swim.
- * Please do not leave the meet until you check with a Coach to see if you will be swimming a Relay.

Posting of Results:

- * Results of each event are usually posted near where the SIGN-UP sheets were located.
- * Results are usually posted about 20 minutes after the Event has finished.
- * Each Event is posted individually under the corresponding Age Group and Gender of that Event.
- * Don't worry if you leave before you get all the results of your swimmer.
 - HCA will post all the results on our WEB Site and on the Bulletin board by the Pool.
- * If there are High Point Awards for your Age Group, they will be awarded after your Session of the Final Day.
- * All other Awards/Ribbons will be picked up by the Coaches and placed in your folder on the table by the Pool.

Timed Finals vs. Preliminary / Finals Meets:

- * Meets will either be "Timed Finals" or "Preliminary / Finals" meets.
 - Timed Finals is exactly as it sounds. Places are determined by the fastest times regardless of which heat the swimmer was in and that is the final ranking. This is always used for 8 & unders, and usually for 9 – 10. Some meets will use this for all age groups.
 - Preliminary / Finals is used for the older age groups at some meets. Swimmers will swim in the morning to earn a placement in the Final and the Consolation Heats that will be swam in the late afternoon. The top 16 or 20 (depending on # of lanes - 8 or 10) will qualify to come back to swim for places. However, the Final Heat will determine the top 8 or 10 places and the Consolation Heat will determine the 9 – 16 or 11 – 20 places, again dependent upon the number of lanes. If you are in the consolation heat, you will only place in the "consolation" places – you cannot move up in placement (into the first 8 or 10 places). There will also be 2 alternates named in case someone does not show up for either final.

- Scratching a final event – If you qualify for Finals in either case, you must decide if you will return in the evening to swim. You should discuss this with your coach and parents. If you decide not to come back, you must scratch from the evening finals within 30 minutes of the morning results for that event. If you do not scratch and you do not come back for the finals, the swimmer is assessed a fine and the swimmer/parents are responsible for paying the fine.

Before You Leave:

- * Make sure you don't forget anything (Especially goggles, towels or swimsuits left in the locker rooms)
- * Clean up your camping area / bleachers before you leave.

The Drive Home:

- * Please drive home safely.

HCA Team Suits & Caps:

- * Team Swim Suits are NOT required.
- * Team Swim Caps ARE REQUIRED.
 - Please make sure you are wearing the current team cap.

Miscellaneous Helpful Hints:

- * All Swimmers should know the Coaches Hand Signals.
 - If you do NOT know them, please ask the Coach to show you.
- * Do not let you child over-snack during the meet.
- * PLEASE REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN!!!