

Swim Meet Survival Guide

Pre-Meet Preparation

- Eat properly before the swim meet – avoid junk food and soda.
- Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate (before, during and after)
- Get a good night's sleep before each meet.
- Have all equipment packed – usually a good idea to do this the night before.
- Check your email, the Stingrays website, or at the YMCA front desk for updated meet information, directions, schedule of events, warm-up times etc.

What to Bring

- Team competition suit, team cap, and goggles
- An extra pair of goggles and cap are always a good idea, if possible
- Sharpie marker and highlighter
- Sleeping bag or blankets
- Folding/Lawn chairs
- Games, deck of cards, books, magazines, music/mp3 player
- Flip flops / sandals (shoes are required between events and in the clerk of course, need to be easy on/off)
- 2-3 towels
- Healthy snacks and drinks (water!!!)
- Money for concessions (choose items wisely) / meet program
- Plenty of dry, warm clothes (sweats, robe, parka etc)
- Change of clothes to wear home
- Showering items

Day of the Meet

- We have a very limited time for warm-ups, so it is very important to arrive ON TIME. Be at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins.
- **IF you are unable to attend the meet or will be late, call/text the coach as soon as possible.**
- Wearing Stingray Team apparel, if available, or our team colors (Green, Silver, Black) is encouraged. Temperatures vary. Waiting areas often times will be cool, but the pool area is usually warm/humid, so dress appropriately (layers work great!).
- Upon arrival, locate the "holding area". This is where you'll put your chairs, sleeping bags, swim bags etc. – usually a gym or hallways. The team sits together in one place, so look for Team Signs and familiar faces.
- Check the event list posted in the team area (or purchase a meet program). Please make sure your swimmer writes the Event/Heat/Lane/Distance/Stroke on their hand, arm or leg before the meet starts. There will be extra sharpies in the team bag.



- Meet Programs (“heat sheets”) are available to purchase (usually a dollar or two). This is a list of the event order, event numbers and which heat/lane your swimmer will be in for each event. Each “heat” is comprised of the number of swimmers for which there are lanes available. The meet program will also have the swimmers in each event in order of “seed time”. When the team entry is sent in by the head coach, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in the event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a “no-time” or “NT” A “no time” swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. Meets usually progress by gender, event and age group. Generally, girls events are odd numbered and boys events are even numbered.
- Your swimmer should get his/her cap and goggles and report to the coach/parent volunteer (on pool deck) for warm-up instructions.
 - It is very important to do a proper meet warm-up!
 - Our team should have an assigned lane/lanes.
 - Swimmers will also practice one or two starts.
 - Backstrokers should get a stroke count from the flags to the wall, at race pace.
- After warm-up, swimmers should go back to the team area.
 - Swimmers will meet together as a team for the National Anthem.
 - Meets can last 4-6 hours, or more. Be prepared for down time between events. Choose activities that help conserve energy (play a game, listen to music, read a book...). Don’t use up energy playing around at the meet. About 5 or 10 minutes before you report to clerk of course get your heart rate up and stretch but make sure to save your energy for the race!
 - Eat properly (healthy snacks, or light meal depending on how much time you have before your next race) & HYDRATE!!!
 - Swimmers should stay in the team area when not competing or waiting for clerk of course unless cheering for teammates. Swimmers are encouraged to cheer for each other – just make sure someone (ie. your parents) is paying attention to the clerk of course and knows where you are.
 - You are expected to swim ALL of your events unless approved by a coach. Notify the coach immediately if your swimmer is sick or unable to compete.
 - If you are planning on taking pictures – keep in mind the flash may cause a swimmer to false start. *NO flash photography can be used at the start of any race.*
- Clerk of Course
 - This is the area where swimmers report before a race. Always wear shoes and bring a towel, goggles and swim cap with you.
 - The Clerk of course may have a board with event numbers to let you know which event has been called to report.
 - Swimmers need to report to this area when his/her event number is shown.
 - **Each swimmer is responsible for getting to the “Clerk of Course” for each event. Listen/watch carefully so as to NOT MISS A RACE.**
 - Volunteers will organize swimmers by heat and lane, then take them down to the pool in the correct order. Please be quiet and listen to the volunteers for instructions.



- *IF* there is no clerk of course, it is the swimmer's responsibility to report to the pool and get lined up behind the correct lane prior to his/her race.
- Before your race – stand behind the block and remind yourself of the stroke and distance. Visualize yourself getting a great start, streamlining and kicking underwater, breaking through and exploding into fast, strong strokes. Imagine perfect turns and a strong finish.
- After each swim
 - Ask the timers (behind the blocks) his/her time. Sometimes the scoreboard time is not correct and stopwatch and backup times will be used. The final time will be posted in the results outside the pool area. All questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the coaching staff. They, in turn will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
 - Also, after each race the swimmer should go immediately to their coach to discuss the swim, stroke technique, times, splits, etc.
 - Remember it is for your swimmer's benefit for officials to call stroke infractions if they happen. Learning from our mistakes is part of the process. A disqualification means the swimmer is not eligible for medal/ribbon placement and the time will not be valid. Swimmers may be disqualified "DQ'ed" from a race for a number of reasons. During a race, this includes improper stroke technique, false start, improper turns, or other rule infractions. The coaching staff will notify the swimmer immediately if an official reported a DQ. Swimmers may also be DQ'ed for unacceptable conduct during the meet relating to behavior, attitude, or facility/meet rule infringement.
- Swimmers are encouraged to stay for the whole meet and cheer for their teammates, however, when a swimmer has completed all of his/her events he/she and their parents may go home. Make sure you check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay.
- Remember that EACH one of us is representing our team, our YMCA and our town. We must display good sportsmanship and be respectful of all swimmers, coaches, officials and fans. Please help clean up the team area before leaving.

After the Meet

- Results
 - Results will be posted at the meet as they are available (usually outside the pool area). Results will also be available online on the Stingrays website (this may take a few days). Results are emailed to the head coach from the team hosts by no later than Wed. following a meet and the coach will post results as soon as possible.
- Awards
 - Swimmers that participated in swim meets may receive a ribbon (or medal) for each event. Some meets do not provide participant ribbons and only ribbons for a certain amount of places (usually 1st – 8th). All awards will be handed out at practice the following week. It can take a couple of days for our team to receive the awards from an away meet.

