

# How to survive a swim meet

Plan on arriving at least 10 minutes BEFORE warm up starts: to check in, find the team, to stake a claim on a piece of real estate for yourself, check the line ups and write them on your child's arm, and check out the concessions.

Your Athlete's Swim Bag should contain: (label everything: bags, goggles, towels, etc. look alike)

- **TEAM SUIT:** Bring your swimmer's competition suit and, if possible, a spare.
- **TEAM CAP:** Bring a competition swim cap plus an extra (they tear easy and are easily misplaced!)
- **GOGGLES:** Bring two pairs! Have your child "break in" a new pair of goggles in the warm-up pool prior to an event to make sure they are adjusted properly! Prior to an event, make sure the goggles fit snugly or they will end up around your swimmer's neck!
- **DECK SANDALS:** Make sure your swimmer wears deck sandals for protection.
- **TOWELS:** Bring one towel per event plus two extra (for warm-up and showers after the meet).
- **WARM CLOTHING:** Pack your swimmer's bags with at least a couple pairs of sweat pants/shirts, socks. Night meets will get chilly sometimes!
- **SUNSCREEN:** Apply waterproof sunscreen BEFORE your child suits up. Sunscreen needs time to penetrate and get to work.
- **WATER:** Especially when the weather is hot, make sure your swimmer has plenty of water bottles and/or Gatorade. Even though they are immersed in water, swimmers dehydrate easily!
- **FOOD:** Bring plenty of nutritious snacks: Ritz bits w/ peanut butter, goldfish, fruit, jerky, power bars, cheese sticks, yogurt, dry cereal in Ziploc bags, etc.
- **MISCELLANEOUS:** A black sharpie (for marking events, heat and lane numbers on your swimmer's arm; Baby powder (for dusting swim caps); Swim shampoo/conditioner, hairbrush, comb, toiletries, deck of cards, board games, game boys, etc.
- **INHALERS:** If your child is asthmatic, this is the most important thing they own. Different environments have different triggers that can set off an attack. Be sure to tell the coach(es) if your child has asthma!

## Other necessary items:

- Blankets and tarps (especially if you're setting up camp on a damp lawn)
- Tents and/or an EZ-up (during the summer, it's very important to keep swimmers out of the sun; in the winter, tents/EZ-ups keep out the chill and rain)
- Sleeping bags are a good way to keep bodies warm in-between events.
- Lawn chairs (parents need to be comfortable, too!)

## **What to do when you arrive at the meet?**

1. Positively check-in! Look for a few tables staffed by weary looking parents with sheets of paper taped down. These sheets are usually divided by ages and by girls and boys. Some clubs only allow the swimmer to check in not the parent. So it is a good idea to get your child in the habit of checking in by themselves. Find your coach! As soon as your swimmer has checked in, have them find their coach to tell them they are there and ready to swim. Depending on the meet venue, they will either begin warm-ups immediately or wait until a designated time. Have your swimmer ready to go with cap, goggles and towel.

## **Your role as a parent:**

Clerk of course: Look for a table near the bullpen (rows of chairs where swimmers meet before their event) and help your child to check in before each event and get their event card. Deck monitors will lead 8 and unders to the blocks for their event.

Parental Guidance: Cheer them on, congratulate, and console if necessary.

Remind your child that their behavior reflects on their team: they must behave like a champion with grace and humility and a smile on their face no matter the outcome of any one race. After their event, make sure they check back in with their coach for tips to improve their next race.

**BE A VOLUNTEER!** Remember that all parents have a responsibility to help out at any meet at which their child is swimming by volunteering for a few hours. There are a variety of different jobs to do, so try out a few! If you are unsure about how to perform a job, see the volunteer coordinator.

**RELAX!** Swim meets are not known for their brevity. If you've done your duty as a timer, bring something to occupy your time while you wait for your swimmer to swim again. Sit with other Barracudas parents and get to know each other. Some of the best relationships are cultivated at swim meets!

## **Volunteer positions**

1. Each family is asked to provide volunteer help at every meet that your child swims.
2. Most jobs will be divided into 2 shifts so you should indicate whether you prefer 1st shift, 2nd shift, either shift (or for the really dedicated or easily bored) both shifts.
3. A volunteer sheet for each meet will be posted in the shed a few days before the meet so you can check your assignment. (Just for those of us who cannot remember in July what we signed up for in April.)
4. We will be counting on your help to make our meets run efficiently. Thank you in advance for all your help this season.

**PLEASE SIGN BELOW FOR THE JOB(S) AND SHIFT YOU PREFER.  
FLEXIBIITY IS APPRECIATED.**

**SET-UP**

**ANNOUNCER** Makes all meet announcements and announces each event's winners etc. - starts the meet for the audience with the National Anthem or Pledge of Allegiance.

**BULLPEN**

**CLERK OF COURSE** Maintains order in 'holding area' for swimmers. Assigns swimmers to their lane. Distributes Event Entry Cards to swimmers.

**CONCESSIONS** Sell food and drink items at concession stand.

**RIBBONS** The awards table receives individual event results from the Scorer and prepares swim meet ribbons based on that information.

**SAFETY**

**TIMER** 3 per lane. Brief instruction is provided prior to the start of the meet. Uses stopwatch to time heat. Records finish times on swimmer's Event Card.

**RUNNER**

**CLEAN-UP**

**DUTY AS NEEDED**

**TRAINING REQUIRED FOR THE FOLLOWING**

**COMPUTER ENTRY**

**SCORING** Records the order of finish and the times, notes all DQs for all events. Compiles team scores. Directs information to the awards table. Responsible for ensuring info is passed to PMSL Data Manager immediately after the meet.

**TIMING OPERATOR**