



PARENT'S GUIDE TO COMPETITIVE SWIM MEETS

A guide to understanding and enjoying your child's swim meet.

WHICH MEETS SHOULD MY CHILD ATTEND?

Due to the depth of our pool, we are not able to host meets in Sandpoint. This means we have to travel to Spokane, Moses Lake, Lewiston, Moscow, etc. to compete. Some meets have time standards you have to meet to participate. Some meets are directed toward beginners. Your coach will let you know of upcoming meets and whether or not you should plan on attending.

Each parent is responsible for their child's travel to and from swim meets as well as for overnight accommodations. Hotel reservations are the individual's responsibility. At some meets, there is a team hotel listed with the travel information that may offer a discount. You are not required to stay in this hotel. Many hotels fill early, so check your schedule and make your reservations early.

If you are new to the sport and unsure if your athlete is ready to compete, please discuss it with your coach.

THE DAY OF... WHAT TO BRING TO A MEET:

1. You may compete in any suit you feel comfortable in that meets the guidelines set for USA Swim. If you are not sure if your suit is in compliance, please ask a coach prior to the meet. Girls need to wear one-piece swimsuits at a meet.
2. Team Swim Cap - Sandpoint Sharks swim caps are available for purchase in both latex and silicone.
3. Goggles and spare goggles - some swimmers may have racing goggles that they only use for competition. Please bring a spare set of goggles in case one breaks or a strap snaps.
4. Towels - at least three!
5. Team tshirts, sweatshirts, and/or parka to wear between events. Sandals are also recommended.
6. Camp chairs - some meets provide seating, but most do not. Each meet will have different regulations as to what chairs are allowed. Please read the meet information you receive from your coach before leaving home.
7. Drinks and snacks - your swimmer will get both hungry and thirsty. Make sure you have plenty of water and snacks your child is happy to consume. Some meets have concessions, but never plan on them being there.

8. Highlighter- to be covered later.
9. Sharpie pen and ballpoint pen - to be covered later.
10. Entertainment - books, iPad, card games, etc. There may be a long wait between events and you don't want your swimmer to get bored.
11. I highly recommend downloading the app Meet Mobile. This app will keep track of your swimmer's events and times.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT A MEET

1. Look for other team members to establish informal team areas.
2. Purchase heat sheets from the clerk of course. This usually requires cash. (Average cost \$5-10) Some meets have been sending them out to coaches before the meet and you can print them on your own. Print double sided.
3. Send your child to the coach to warm-up. Look for the coach to be behind one of the starting blocks. The heat sheet will also list what lane your team has for warm ups.
4. While your child is warming up, locate your child's events in the heat sheet.
5. Highlight event, heat number, and lane number your child will be swimming.
6. Your child will report behind the blocks to their assigned lane two to three heats prior to their race.
7. It is the swimmer's responsibility to be at the starting block for each event on time. **RACES WILL NOT BE HELD IF YOU ARE LATE!**
8. Your child may want to write their events, heat number, and lane number on their arm or leg. This is done prior to the start of the meet and done with the Sharpie mentioned earlier.
9. The meet announcer will make announcements for each event. They will also announce the last call for a particular event. Make sure your athlete is listening. Some facilities also have a board that will display what event and heat that are currently in process.
10. Have your child check in with their coach both before and after they swim. Make sure they report to their coach in enough time to briefly talk to them before they report to the starting block. Remember, it is their responsibility to be on the block on time, so leave plenty of time to meet with the coach and if the coach is too busy with other swimmers – get to the block.
11. Parents are not allowed to talk directly to an official. If you have a problem understanding an infraction you should communicate with the coach as long as it doesn't interfere with the coaching of an athlete.

THE MEET

1. Check meet entry sheet for warm up times. Coach will also be sending meet details (location/times) out before the meet. Please arrive 15 minutes prior to warm up so your child will be ready to get in the water by warm up time.
2. If you are registered for a meet and cannot attend, please notify the coach by phone or email.

3. There is no refund for not attending a meet. If you decide to “scratch” or not swim the entire meet or one event you do not get your money back.
4. Timers will give your child their time and at most meets the times will be electronically posted.
5. Immediately after they have swam, the swimmer needs to talk to the coach first.
6. When your child talks to the coach after their swim, the coach will discuss their performance and offer constructive criticism, positive encouragement, and technical advice.
7. DQ or Disqualification- when a swimmer does not swim the stroke technically correct, they can be disqualified. Parents and children should look at this as a learning experience. As their stroke technique improves, the frequency of disqualifications will drop. Even the most experienced swimmers occasionally get disqualified.
8. Remember your responsibilities as a parent is to make sure your child knows that win or lose, you love him/her, appreciate their efforts and are not disappointed in them. This will allow them to do their best without fear of failure. Be the person in their life that they can look to for constant positive reinforcement.
9. Allow the coach to coach. The relationship between the swimmer and the coach is important. When a parent interferes with the coach’s opinion as to how the swimmer should swim or train, it causes considerable confusion for the swimmer as to whom they should listen to. Remember, the coach is a trained professional in the sport and holds the knowledge necessary to allow your child to become the best athlete possible. If you have a problem or concern, please contact the coach away from the meet so you can discuss your concern.

BEFORE LEAVING THE MEET

1. Clean your area.
2. Thank your coach.