

A Guide For Competitors And Parents Attending Their First Swim Meet

Entries

You will be given a swim meet flyer and an entry sheet. Simply check off the events you wish to swim by writing in the event number and the type of event in the appropriate spaces provided on the entry form. Check your swims with your coach. Save the flyer so you and your swimmer will know what events they will be competing in. Times are computerised and will be added automatically. (If you have not swam an event before you must arrange a time trial) Put the entry fee in the envelope provided and return to the recorder.

Race Day Preparation

Make a check list of items that will be required on race day, these may include

- ❑ Togs (include spare pair)
- ❑ Goggles (include a spare pair)
- ❑ Towels (allow one towel for every two races plus one more)
- ❑ A bag to put the gear in – take something off- put it in the bag
- ❑ Swim cap
- ❑ Something to eat to maintain the ‘fuel in the tank’. Snacking becomes a swim meet past time and high glycaemic Index foods are best but need to be eaten within 30 minutes of the completion of each event. Try to eat white or wholemeal bread; water crackers, rice crackers, potato, pumpkin or even jellybeans.
- ❑ Something to drink is important sports drinks and water are best. Avoid smart drinks, V drinks or power drinks that can have adverse effects.
- ❑ A fold up chair/ or directors chair.

During the winter at some pools there is often limited seating, bringing your own overcomes that problem. In summer we tend to sit on the grassed area of the 50m pool and a chair comes in handy.

Race Day

Your flyer will tell you what time the warm up begins. Aim to be at the pool no later than 15 minutes before the stated time. This will give you time to settle down and get ready for warm up.

All swimmers will sit together as a club group. Look for the club banner. The person who has arrived early to put the banner up is the team manager- let them know you have arrived and whether you will be swimming all the events you have entered.

Warm Up

At the allotted time all swimmers from our programme warm up together. We do some easy swimming, some harder swimming, some starts and some turns in preparation for the meet. Swimmers are encouraged to wear old costumes and not necessarily the costumes they will compete in.

At the completion of the warm up swimmers change into their race costumes, put something on their feet and their heads, the two areas that lose heat the quickest.

Pre Race

Somewhere between four and six events before you are due to swim the team manager will send you up to the marshalling area. Before you go see the coach for some advice on what you should be doing during the race. Make sure you keep your warm clothes on. Once you get there listen carefully for your name to be called out. You will be seated with the other swimmers in your heat, make sure what lane you are in. Don't take any of your clothes off just yet.

The Race.

From the marshalling area you will be told to move behind your starting block.

Now it's time to take your clothes off and get ready for your swim. Fold your clothes and

put them in a neat pile on the seat or in the boxes provided.

Move forward behind the starting blocks and when the whistle goes you climb up to the back of the block.

When the starter says, “take your marks”, you move forward and get into the starting position. When the gun or hooter goes off, it over to you!

We emphasise setting a personal best that means you race against your previous best time. The other people in your race are doing the same thing if you win anything it’s a bonus.

We are also trying to beat the qualifying time for Firstly the Bay of Plenty Championships and Secondly, the National Championships. At the completion of your swim, you are required to get out at the side of the pool and not over the end.

Go straight back to the timekeepers in your lane and ask them your time. Ask them nicely, say please and thank you.

Grab all the clothes and shoes you wore down to marshalling and go back and see the coach. He will make some comments on your swim and may tell you to do a swim down which is just easy swimming so you don’t get sore muscles.

After Race.

Once you have finished your swim down, dry off and get your warm gear back on again- don’t forget something on your feet.

Snack on some of your energy food and make sure you have something to drink.

Sit down and rest up – don’t run around like a headless chook. You need to save your energy for racing, not playing. This means staying out of the water unless you are warming up, racing or swimming down.

When it’s over you can play as much as you like!

Start thinking about your next race while you watch and learn from the other competitors especially the older ones who have had plenty of experience and who race fast.

Follow the same pattern for the rest of the competition.

If there are relays you will be told whether or not you are in a team and what number you will be swimming.

Congratulations, if you have done all this, and achieved a personal best you have done a great job.

Find out when the next meet is on and decide whether you are going to enter.

Before you enter talk to your coach, he might want to see you swim some different events or he might point out a qualifying time he would like you to try for.

Your first goal is to qualify for the Bay of Plenty Championships – give it your best shot!

If you have any questions at all don’t hesitate to talk to your coach either at the pool or give him a call on the phone.