

June 2009 Bleacher Talk
Swim Meet 101

I. Sign Up Deadlines

We do our meet sign ups online from www.spartansharks.com. Go to meet info tab, and sign up. Please note if your child will not be able to attend the meet all days! This is very important to know when signing up for events and registering the team for relay events. Please be aware of the deadline to sign up. Your child is not guaranteed an entry into the meet if you miss the deadline!

Swimmers can request to swim certain events, but final decisions for individual events and relays are at the discretion of his/her coach. We make a big effort to communicate with the swimmers why we would like to see him/her swim certain events. The coaches look at event sign-up as a collaboration between swimmers and respective coach.

II. Transportation, Hotel

For away meets, swimmers either ride with parents or carpool with other swimmers. Please let the coaches know if your swimmer needs a ride to the meet or a place to stay, and we can help accommodate that. We reserve a block of rooms at designated hotels for a group rate. Check the website ahead of time for hotel info.

III. Meet Session Overview

a.) Warm Up Times

Coaches inform the swimmers 5-7 days before the meet when team warm up times are for the weekend. We also send reminder emails with warm up times. Please email stuschaefer@spartansharks.com if we do not have your email address. It is very important to arrive at the pool 15min before the start of warm ups!! A full warm up at meets is a crucial component to swimming fast, and shows a commitment to team unity. If you have a conflict with arriving on time, please let the coaches know so that we can help arrange other transportation.

b.) Order of Events/ timed final vs. prelim/final sessions

3 day meets are usually split up into 3 sessions per day. Most of the time, 9-10 & 11-12 age groups will swim a timed final session in the afternoon, while 13&overs usually swim prelims in a morning session, and the top 16 to 24 swimmers in each event qualify to swim their event again in an evening final session. At meets where there is an 8&under age group, they generally swim with the 13&overs in the morning session as timed finals. As far as order of events go, it varies from meet to meet. One consistent tip: distance events are always swum as the last event of the session, fastest to slowest alternating men and women. If your swimmer is entered in distance events, plan for a possible late session.

c.) Swimmer Conduct

A few notes about swimmer conduct as meets- Swimmers should sit with their teammates in the team designated area. This allows the coaches to keep an eye on them & lessens the possibility of them missing their event. It is also fun for the kids to sit with their teammates! 13&overs are responsible for getting up to the block for their event, but we will make reminders for the 13&unders. We also require swimmers to talk to their respective coach both before and after their race (but only after they warm down!).

IV. Parent Role @ Meets

Parent attendance at meets is by no means required and is understandably not always possible, but it can be fun for the kids and you to partake in your child's success. A few important tips to consider when attending meets—You are at the meet to **support** your child, not to coach them or analyze/criticize his/her swim. Their coach sees them practice every day, and that is their job, not yours. It is quite challenging to understand the progress a swimmer makes throughout a season. Older swimmers will most likely not get a best time at every meet. They will get tired and broken down in the mid part of the season, but will respond to taper at the end of the season and swim fast with consistent hard work! Hopefully, you don't have an enormous amount of interest in the details of setting up seasons...that would be another full-time job! Enjoy spending time with your child, supporting them, and celebrating with them when they achieve their goals. Please avoid negative talk, and do not complain about having to stay for the evening session if they make it back to finals. If scheduling/logistics become a problem, please talk to the coaches and we will do our best to accommodate them.

V. Nutrition/Rest

Healthy snacks to pack for meets—powerbars, fruit, trail mix, bagels, etc.

Meals at meets --- grilled chicken, pasta, rice, turkey sandwiches—nothing out of the ordinary or heavy such as red meat.

Rest—stay off your feet between sessions. Go see a movie, rest at the hotel, or if you have restless legs—stretch, play cards, listen to music, go for a short walk.