
What to Expect at a Swim Meet

Swim meets are fun and exciting! They are also busy, loud and can be very confusing if you are new to swimming. This guide provides an overview of what happens at a typical meet.



What to Bring

Volunteer Jobs

Event Entries

Sportsmanship

Meet Timeline

Scoring & Ribbons



What to Bring

Swimmers should bring:

- Wahoos team suit & team swim cap (*No caps or suits visibly representing year-round or school swimming programs shall be worn while competing in GCSL meets).
- Goggles (ideally with a backup pair should one break)
- Towel (or two)
- Sweatshirt/pants (some nights get cold once the sun goes down)
- If you purchase team apparel, it's a good idea to write your name in it should it get mixed up with other swimmers' similar apparel

Parents may want to bring:

- Folding chairs. There is usually some pool deck seating available but it is limited. Teams usually have a designated spot to sit together during the meet. At our pool, we sit on the east side, near the big umbrella. Visitors sit on the side near the kiddie pool.
- Food & drinks. The concession stand is open at Wahoos home meets. Most clubs will also have concessions available. Remember to *keep your swimmer hydrated* throughout the evening.
- Printed or electronic copy of the heat sheet, with your swimmers' events/heat/ & lane assignment highlighted. Summer league swim clubs do not have scoreboards, so this is a good tool for keeping track of the meet.
- Sharpie marker. Most swimmers mark their event/heat/lane assignments on their arms to remind themselves where they need to be. This is especially helpful for the younger swimmers and those new to the rhythm and flow of swim meets. It's helpful for younger swimmers to have their last name on their back to help Clerk of Course volunteers line them up for races.
- Sunscreen.

What NOT to Bring? Alcohol

Alcohol is not permitted at any Greater Charlotte Swim League swim meet. Not in a can, not in a cup, not in a cooler, not in your car. Don't bring it!

Volunteer Jobs

Each swim meet requires between **30-40 parent volunteers** per team to execute the meet.

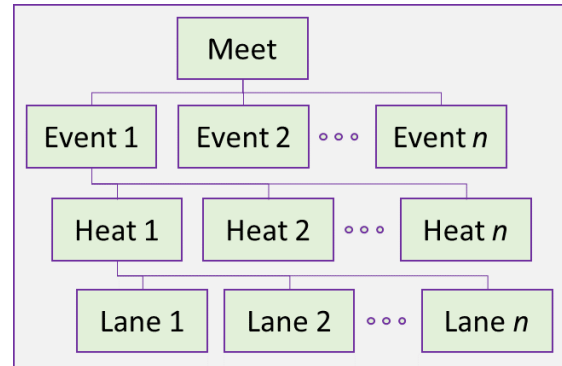
Swim meets are truly a family activity! Everyone has something to do during a meet. If you are not swimming then you are most likely working along side other parents helping run the meet.

- Swim meets cannot happen without engaged volunteers
- Volunteering is an excellent way to get to know other club members
- You are not expected to volunteer at every meet or the entire meet, but we do need your help

Our volunteer coordinator assists our parent volunteers. The Wahoos require each family to fill at least 4 volunteer jobs each season. Information about the volunteer positions is available from the [Swimtopia site](#). There are jobs for all levels of experience from including for activities other than swim meets.

Event Entries

- Coaches determine the events that your swimmer will swim during the meet. They assume all swimmers on the roster are available to swim in the meet **UNLESS THEY ARE OPTED OUT**. You can declare (confirm availability) or decline each meet via Swimtopia.
- “Event entry” reports will be sent out usually the day before the meet. This report will show what “events” your swimmer will be entered into for the meet. “Events” are portions of a meet broken down by distance, stroke, age, and gender. It will not show the exact heats and lanes.
 - Swimmers will only be entered into events for strokes that they can swim technically correct for at least 25 meters.
 - GCSL rules limit each swimmer to a maximum of 3 individual events and 2 relays per meet.
- “Heat sheets” will be emailed and posted to Swimtopia prior to the meet as soon as they are available. These reports detail each event with a breakdown by “heat” (grouping within the event) and the “lane” assignments for swimmers participating in the event.



Event Number	Gender	Age Group	Distance	Stroke
				#8 Boys 11-12 50m Freestyle
Heat				Heat 1 of 1
				Est Start: 6:42 PM
				1 Warren, Beckett 12 WW
				2 Lyons, Sam 12 WW
				3 Lanoue, Drew 12 WW
				4 Guy, Jaden 11 WW
				5 Waldrop, Caiden 11 WW
				6 Sandbo, Cole 11 WW
				7 Martinson, Nathan 11 WW
				8 Vessels, Brody 11 WW
Lane				

Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship is a huge part of our team. We want our Wahoos kids to be competitive AND celebrate everyone's individual success, both among fellow Wahoos and competing teams. We encourage our swimmers to:

- Wish their competitors good luck
- Wait in the water until the last swimmer in the heat arrives at the wall
- Congratulate fellow competitors at the end of a race
- Mark their bodies only with writing that is swimming related and positive in nature ("Go Wahoos!" is positive whereas "Eat my bubbles!" is not)
- Be gracious hosts at home meets and well-behaved guests when away



Meet Timeline

GCSL Meets start at 5:00 with home team warming up first. Races begin at 6:00.



GCSL meets start at 5pm and finish between 9:30-10:30 pm. The duration varies depending on several factors, including the size of the teams, the efficiency of the starter/timers/time writers/clerk of the course and of course, number of swim lanes and the weather. Rain will not stop a meet, but thunder/lightening will cause a delay. Weather delays are a part of summer league swimming. The coaches and team reps will make decisions to cancel/reschedule a meet only if necessary based on GCSL rules.

5:00-6:00	Warm-ups. Plan to be at the pool a half hour before the meet starts. Home teams warm-up first in GCSL meets. Volunteer check-in. All volunteers should check in with the Wahoos volunteer check-in person when they arrive at the pool. Timer meeting. The head timer will hold a meeting about 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the meet to review procedures. Both 1st and 2nd shift timers, time writers and runners should attend this meeting.
6:00	Meet starts. The flow of swim events are as follows: <i>[First volunteer shift]</i> ▪ 6 & Under Freestyle (their only race unless coach has promoted them) ▪ Medley relay ▪ Freestyle ▪ Backstroke <i>[End of first volunteer shift, swap with second shift]</i> ▪ Individual medley (IM) ▪ Breaststroke ▪ Butterfly ▪ Free relay
Meet ends	After the last relay, the team gathers to thank their competitors for a good meet, the score is announced and the meet ends.

* If you plan to leave after your swimmer's last event, please check with the coach first, to make sure that they are not entered in the fee relay event or listed as an alternate. Sometimes, there are last minute changes that are not reflected on the heat sheet.

Help your swimmer - Listen to the **Starter** (Announcer). The start not only starts each race but gives other important instructions throughout the meet.

The **Clerk of Course** is the area where swimmers line up before their event. At our pool, the Clerk of Course is set up behind the slide. The Starter will call groups of swimmers to the Clerk of Course several races before their event begins. The Clerk of Course volunteers and coaches will help swimmers organize, line up and progress towards the blocks and find their lanes for their events & heats. Swimmers should only head to Clerk of Course once the Starter calls for them. Swimmers should only enter Clerk of Course by walking around the right side of the Wahoos pool by the diving boards.

Scoring and Ribbons

Scoring

Each meet is scored based on points awarded for 1st - 4th place for each individual event. In the relay events, 1st & 2nd place are awarded points. If a team enters an "A" relay and a "B" relay, they can only score first or second place, not both. Scores for each individual event and relays are tallied for each team. The team with the most points wins the meet. The team with the best record in the regular season wins the division and moves up to the next division in the proceeding season. The team with the fewest wins in the division moves down to the next division in the proceeding season.

Ribbons

Heat Winner ribbons are awarded during the meet to the individual heat winners for all 10 & under.

I Did my Best ribbons are awarded to all 6 & under swimmers at the completion of their freestyle race.

Wahoo Best Time (purple) ribbons are awarded for personal best times throughout the season.

1st-4th place ribbons are awarded for each event from each meet (only 1st and 2nd place for relays).

Ribbons will be filed and distributed at the end of the season to each swimmer.