

A Step-by-Step Meet Guide

The Night Before The Meet

A good night's sleep before each meet is essential to swimming fast. Meet day will begin very early (for Saturday meets) and requires both physical and mental alertness. It is recommended that all gear packing be completed before going to bed the night before. Here is a list of items that you may want to pack:

- Team suit and a spare
- Team swim cap and a spare – Only team caps can be worn at meets.
- Towels
- 2 pairs of goggles (back-ups are essential)
- Warm clothing
- A water bottle
- Sunscreen
- Favorite book or music or cards

At The Meet

For home and away meets, arrival time can be found on the team bulletin board the day before the meet. This is usually an hour or more before the meet starts to allow time for warm ups.

For away meets, the coaches require the swimmers to be at our pool early to check in. We will decorate our cars and then caravan to the meet.

Check In

For home meets, the first thing to do upon arrival is to report the coach on the deck near the Clerk of Course. This area is located next to the diving well. Then go to the team area. If you'd like to purchase a program (lists all events that will be swum, the names of the swimmers and their entry times), now would be a good time to do so!

For all away meets, we will meet at the pool at the designated time and caravan to the pool. You **MUST** check in at Tanterra. A coach will be in the parking lot checking in swimmers as the parents drive up. Please make certain that the coach sees you and then proceed to the back of the caravan line.

Unpack

Go to the Tanterra team area (where the team tent is displayed) and find a chair or area to set up camp. Swimmers **must** stay in this area throughout the meet unless they are cheering or swimming. This makes it easier for the coach to locate swimmers for their events or if a pre-meet substitution needs to be made. This also helps develop friendships, team spirit and sportsmanship among our swimmers. Should personal items be forgotten or misplaced, the chances of recovery are much better when they are left around friends and teammates.

Warm-Up

A swimming warm-up period is scheduled for all teams before the actual meet begins. The purpose of these warm-ups is to raise the temperature of muscles and loosen joints for the upcoming races. Other benefits include getting familiar with the water temp, the backstroke flags, the walls and the color changes of the pool depths and the lane ropes. Feet-first entry into the water is the rule for every USA Swimming meet warm-up. No horseplay is

allowed. Circle swimming is required. After warming up and after each swim, swimmers need to stay dry and warm.

Competition

The meet is organized into events. The events are paired into a boys event and then a girls event for a given stroke and distance. The order and description of events is listed on the back cover of the MCSL handbook, the Tanterra handbook, meet program and will be posted in the team area at each meet. These can also be found on the Tanterra Tarpons website.

Clerk of Course

As the meet progresses you will hear the announcer announcing the race that is currently getting started as well as which events should be reporting to the Clerk of Course. The Clerk of Course is where you will get instructions for lining up and you will be given your heat number and lane. This area is located next to the diving well. In most "A" meets there are no cards handed to swimmers, and it is imperative for the swimmers to double check with the timers in their lane before they swim to make sure their name is on the timing sheet. In "B" meets, you may be given a card with all this information and you will hand it to your lane timer. The swimmer will report to the clerk of course three events before the event to be swum. The swimmer should be standing in the appropriate lane line one to two events before the one to be swum. When walking to the starting end of the pool, please remember to stay out of the way of officials, coaches and the starter. Do not walk near the starter when he or she is in the middle of starting a race.

The older swimmers or Clerk of Course will help the younger swimmers get to the right place.

Upon approaching the starting end one event before the one to be swum, you will hand the timer your card or ask them if your name is on their timing sheet. They will verify that the swimmer is in the right location.

Once the correct location has been verified, the swimmer should pay close attention to the announcer and the starter. The announcer will announce the event number and the heat. It is essential that the swimmer know the number of the heat before the one to be swum. When the swimmer is in the first heat of an event, he must know the number of the last heat of the previous event. When the heat before the one to be swum is in the water, the swimmer should step onto the deck and stand behind the timers, cap and goggles on and *ready to swim*. This signals to the starter, the referee, and the coach that the swimmer is ready for his event.

The Start

Officially, the first signal to get into place will be a series of short whistles. Then the starter will announce the event. Then one long whistle will announce that the swimmers must step up to the edge of the pool [or enter the water for a backstroke event]. The starter will then say, "Take your mark!" The swimmers must quickly assume their starting positions and hold very still; then, the starter will cause an audible horn to sound that starts the clock and the swimmers.

The Swim

Officials will observe the actions of the swimmers in the pool. If any infractions are observed, a stroke and turn judge will write out an

explanation on a DQ (disqualification) card and confer with the Referee. The Referee will tell the coach. Before leaving the deck, the swimmer may check with the timers to see what they have recorded as the swimmer's time. This should also be shared with the coach.

The Waiting

Swim meets usually have long stretches between a swimmer's events. Sometimes there is almost no time at all between events. Swimmers need to be prepared for both situations. The long boring periods can be easily filled with a book or a video game. Card games can become social events. Conserving energy is important: activities that involve sitting and lying around are excellent choices. Standing, walking, running, playing ball, etc. should be avoided. Relax, but stay in the team area, and listen for your events to be called.

Checking Results

Times and rankings get posted anywhere from 10-20 minutes following the event. When there are multiple heats for a given event you may not know how the swimmer placed. Usually the times and rankings are posted in a common area. At home meets, we post results on the swim team shed near the snack bar.

Ribbons

Any swimmer, who has earned a ribbon as a result of placing as a top finisher in their event, has the opportunity to have their name called out among their teammates and receive their ribbon. Thursday after each age group practice is the designated time for 'B' meets and Saturday immediately following the meet at the team lunch is when we will distribute the 'A' meet ribbons. If swimmers are not present at that time, ribbons will then be placed in the family folders.

NO Ribbons are given out at time trials.