

Keystone YMCA Swim League Dual Meets

Meet season is great fun for swimmers. It's what they have been preparing for. However, if swimming is new to you and your swimmer it can be a bit overwhelming. We have prepared this information in order to get you somewhat prepared for what will occur at meets. If you are new to swimming now, by February you will be a pro and this information will be old news. However, in the mean time the name of the game is ask questions, any coach or experienced family will be willing to offer you information and support.

Attending swim meets requires some advance planning for what will make you and your swimmer(s) most comfortable. Our dual meets generally last between three to four hours, depending upon the number of swimmers participating and the speed of meet operation. The following information will give you some guidelines you can use to prepare.

Generally, swimmers gather in the pool area for the dual meets. On occasion there are separate areas, usually large rooms or gyms where swimmers gather before the meet and after each event. These areas tend to be rather chilly, so warm clothing is advised. Parents are welcome to stay or visit their swimmers in the gym. The natatoriums are often crowded and hot (not our new, wonderfully ventilated natatorium though), so parents should dress accordingly. If a separate area is provided for swimmers, then events are announced there and swimmers then move to the seeding area, and then proceed to their lanes when directed. If swimmers gather on deck during the meet, events are announced in the pool area. Waiting for events, whether on deck or in a separate room, is a fun time for team members to be together.

How you know what your swimmer will swim:

1. Coaches will post a meet line-up prior to the meet. It will be posted by age, boys and girls. The line-up will then list who will swim each event. You scan down each event in your swimmers age group to find your swimmer's events.
2. Each event will have an event number. Girls swim odd numbered events and boys swim even numbered events.
3. Each swimmer should write down their event numbers in order. Often swimmers write this on their hands - you can lose a piece of paper, but your hand...
4. Events are divided into heats, only six or eight swimmers can swim at one time and each time the same event is swum it is called a heat. The first heat of each event is swum for points, and the remaining heats are called

exhibition. A swimmer's time in an exhibition heat counts for personal goals and for future competitions, such as league championships, but it does not count for the total meet points.

5. Events run in order from event 1 to event 88. The meets begin with the Medley Relay and end with the Free Relay. These are important events since each member of the relay is an important part of the team. Swimmers must be present at the beginning and end of the meet if they are assigned to swim in a relay. It is encouraged that all swimmers remain at the entire meet to support their team. For various reasons a swimmer may need to come late to a meet or leave a meet early, they need to notify the coach prior to the meet so that they will not be included in a relay and then their absence would hurt the other team members.

How a swimmer gets to the blocks on time:

1. Events are announced ahead of time in the pool area or in the gym.
2. Swimmers should listen for announcements of what events are currently being seeded (lined-up in preparation for the upcoming events).
3. When a swimmer hears (or when the parents hears, in the case of new or young swimmers) their next event announced, he/she should get an event card, from the person(s) in charge of handing out the cards. SCAY cards are pink for girls and blue for boys. Each card contains the swimmer's name & the number and name of the event that he/she will swim. This card must be kept by the swimmer until the swimmer gets to the starting block and hands the event card to the timer of that lane. A new card is needed for each event being swum.
4. Once a swimmer gets their event card from the card holders, they proceed to the seeding area. This is the area where swimmers will take seats in the order in which they will swim. An adult will place the swimmers in the proper order for each event.

Here are some items that will make the meet more enjoyable:

For Swimmers:

1. team swim suit (required)
2. goggles
3. team cap (requires), if a cap is worn
4. extra goggles or suit (in case of emergency - broken goggles, etc.)
5. flip flops/swim-type shoe - may be needed to go out of the natatorium area to concessions

6. towel on which to sit
7. warm clothing; swimmers can get cool between events and it is a good idea to have sweats or other comfortable clothing
8. two or three towels - wet towels make for cold swimmers
9. cards, games, music and books to entertain swimmers *
10. snacks - there will be a concession area but you can bring your own food
11. money for concession stand - food is generally reasonably priced, and each team runs the concession stand to raise funds for their team
12. dry clothing to be worn after the meet

* Items are your own responsibility, so keep that in mind when bringing valuable or small items.

For Parents:

1. Pen to write down the events your swimmer will be swimming
2. Folding Chair (in case swimmers are in a separate area & you want to join them)
3. Willingness to "dive in" to one of the many jobs that must be filled to successfully run a meet such a timer, official, etc.