

# Preparation for Competitions

Attending your first competition can be a little intimidating. What should you bring? Where to go? What do you do when you get there?

## Equipment

First off you need to make sure that you've packed the right equipment for the meet.

- **Swimsuit** – Racing suit and Training suit for Warm up
- **Goggles** – two pairs in case one breaks
- **Swimming Hat** – two in case one breaks
- **Towel** – two towels
- **Clothing** – Team clothing to put on in between races
- **Water Bottle** – Filled with Water
- **Pool Shoes** – non outdoor shoes
- Something small and portable (such as a book or pack of cards) to pass the time in between races

## Food & Drink

It's important to make sure that you have enough food and drink to keep you well-nourished and hydrated at the competition. So what should you bring with you?

- **Water** - Make sure you drink plenty of water before during and after the competition. Don't wait until during the competition to start drinking. Drinks such as powerade & Lucozade sport are good but are usually too concentrated to hydrate properly
- **Snacks**
  - Fruit:
    - Bananas are a fantastic source of energy
    - Oranges
    - Apple
    - Most soft, squishy fruits are great as they digest quickly and without much effort
  - Cereal Bars
    - Nutrigrain bars
    - Granola Bars
    - As above, the softer types of cereal bars are better to have as they are faster to digest
  - Jelly/Jelly Babies/Dried fruit
    - Fantastic sources of energy & tasty!
  - **AVOID EATING FOODS SUCH AS PIZZA, CHIPS, SWEETS, & FAST FOODS. ABSOLUTELY NO ENERGY DRINKS**

## The Day of Competition

### Arriving at the pool

- Make sure you arrive with good time before warm up. **You need to be on poolside at least 10 minutes before your warm up time.** This gives enough time to check in, and let your coach know you have arrived.
  - Some events require you to sign in. Please check beforehand if you need to do this. If you do, make sure you sign in in good time before the cut off time.
  - For warm up you need to be wearing your **TRAINING** costume, not your Racing costume. Make sure you come from the Changing Rooms in the right suit.
  - Let your coach know you have arrived AS SOON as you get on poolside. This way they will know you have arrived. Do this before doing ANYTHING else
- Know your races. You need to arrive knowing what you are swimming. That way you can prepare yourself before you arrive and won't have to worry about asking your coach. If needs be get your parents to write down what you're swimming beforehand. It is your responsibility to know what you're racing.

### Warm Up

- Your coach will provide you with warm up instructions and tell you when to begin your warm ups. It is vital that you are on poolside before warm up, so that you know what your warm up will be.
- Warm up will be in your training costume, not your racing costume.

## Pre-Race

- Make sure you know your heat & lane assignment for your race BEFORE you race. Your coach will have this information
- When your race is called you should go to the designated calling area and await your race. During this time you should start a dry side warmup, doing some light stretches to prepare yourself for the race. Your coach can provide you with guidance before you go to the calling area.
- You will then be moved to a position behind the blocks where you should go through your final preparations before your race. And await the announcement for your heat.

## The Race

- When your race is announced you will hear a series of preparation whistles followed by one Long whistle. Upon hearing the LONG whistle take your place either in the water (for backstroke) or on the blocks (for butterfly, breaststroke or freestyle)
- Once you are in your starting position the starter will command "*Take your marks*" at which you will assume and hold your starting position at this point you must not touch your goggles or change position.
- The "*Take your marks*" command will then be followed by the starting signal at which point you will start your race.

## Post-Race

- When you have finished your race and exited the pool, the **FIRST** thing you must do is to go and see your coach. They will provide you with feedback from your race, and give you areas where you could improve on.
- If you have done something incorrectly, you might get a DQ (Disqualification) if this happens, your coach will inform you and give you feedback with how to avoid this the next time.
- Although it's nice to go and sit with your parents, we would like it if you stayed with the team until you have finished all your swims. This way we are more a team and you can cheer for your friends and teammates.
- When you are leaving the meet, ensure that you tell your coach so that they know you have gone home, and haven't just wandered off!

## Entering Competitions

- You will receive an email with the selected events from Competition Secretary who would have checked the coaches' selection to confirm that you have qualified for the events selected, you must reply by the date specified in the email to confirm if you will be attending the meet or are unable to attend the meet. Once you confirm that you will be attending the meet you are liable to pay entry fees due. If you are not happy with the coaches' selection of event's, please speak to your coach who will be happy to let you know why those events have been selected.
- You can find entry forms on the above website by clicking on the open meet you wish to enter, or by contacting the fixtures secretary

**AT TEAM MEETS (i.e. Galas) NOBODY IS TO LEAVE UNTIL THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED AND YOUR COACH TELLS YOU THAT YOU CAN GO. FAILURE TO DO THIS MAY LEAD TO YOU NOT BEING SELECTED FOR FUTURE GALAS**