

HILLSBORO SWIM TEAM



WHAT TO DO AT A SWIM MEET

Welcome to the Hillsboro Swim Team! We hope this document will answer some of the questions you may have about the first few swim meets you and your swimmer attend.

What should we pack to bring to a meet?

Essentials: **a swim suit** We are proud to be a Nike sponsored team. If you already have a suit that is not Nike, that is OK. The next time you buy a suit though, it should be Nike. There will be opportunities through the team for ordering suits.

A towel (or two)

Goggles. If it is an outdoor meet in the summer, you might want to consider goggles that have tinted or reflective lenses to protect against sun glare.

Water. Indoor meets are hot and humid and the kids can lose a lot of body fluid just by being in the environment. Replacement fluids are important! A water bottle they can refill at the drinking fountain is fine. Sports drinks are fine, as are juices. Try to stay away from soda pop.

Snacks. At most meets, there are concession stands that have drinks, bagels, and other snacks. Be aware that sometimes there is a line for these food items, and your swimmer doesn't want to miss their next event by waiting in the concessions line. If you are looking for ideas to pack your own snacks, granola, a sandwich, fruit, nuts, or dried cereal work well. Your swimmer will get hungry!

Cap. Many caps are Latex. If your swimmer has any problems with Latex, you should get Silicone caps. Many swimmers choose silicone caps because they are a little easier to get on, and tend to be more durable. Silicone is more expensive. Have your swimmer ask his/her coach to demonstrate the correct way to put on a cap!

Other. Some swimmers like to bring a collapsible deck chair to sit on in between events, or a pad or sleeping bag to lay on the concrete deck. There are usually bleachers for the swimmers to sit on as well. Some swimmers bring a book or cards to play to pass the time, but the best activity is to watch and cheer for your team mates.

Extras As you accumulate them, an extra suit or goggles are always a good idea, just in case of loss or surprise rips or tears. Remind your swimmers to sit on a towel or other surface on the deck, and not just the concrete... it will snag and rip their suits! Some kids bring shorts to put on in between events for that reason.

If your swimmer gets cold, throw in a sweatshirt or fleece for when they get out of the water

What do we do when we first arrive at the meet?

The first thing to do is have your swimmer go onto the pool deck and check in with the Coach, and find where the team is sitting. Your coach will tell you if there will be stretching on deck before warming up in the pool, and where to go.

During this time, parents can either buy a heat sheet (just ask where they are being sold) Or locate the wall where the hosting team has posted the sheet.

What is a heat sheet?

The heat sheet is provided from the hosting team. It contains the order of events, and a time line, as well as dividing the swimmers into different “heats” or groups that swim at the same time with similar times in a given event.

The major divisions of a heat sheet are;

EVENT **HEAT** **LANE** for both boys and girls events.

The **EVENT** will have a number, a stroke title, and an age demarcation.

For example;

“EVENT 3- Girls 8 and under - 25Y Freestyle.”

The **HEAT** will be which group of swimmers go first, second, third etc. These groups or heats can either be grouped from slowest times (heat 1) to fastest times (last heat) or in championship meets there can be “circle seeding” where the swimmers are evenly distributed throughout the heats with regards to time.

The **LANE** will be assigned to each swimmer, so that they know which set of blocks to get up on, and where to swim. The timers in each lane have a pre printed sheet with each swimmers event, heat and lane, so they can double check to see that the swimmers are at the correct blocks at the correct time.

Many parents mark on their heat sheets their swimmers names in all their events so that they know which event, heat and lane their child is in.

You can also just write this information down on a piece of paper, copied from the wall where the hosting team has posted the sheet.

Often for younger or new swimmers, we write on their hands to remind them when they are swimming. (it doesn't have to be a “sharpie” or water proof ink, just a regular pen will work.)

You can write something like this on the back of their hand;

<u>E</u>	<u>H</u>	<u>L</u>
3	3	7
7	4	4
11	2	8

Meaning, their first event is event 3, in heat 3, in lane 7. (Reading across, left to right)

Their second event is event 7, in heat 4, and in lane 4.

Final event is event 11, heat 2, and lane 8.

How do we know which event we are on?

The announcer will announce each event, and also when there is a “first call” and “last call” for swimmers for in any given event. Most pools also have a scoreboard to watch with the event number listed.

Teach your swimmers from the beginning to know what events they are swimming, to watch the board and check the heat sheets to know where they are in the meet. It seems overwhelming at first, but it is one of the great things that kids in swimming learn, is how to be responsible for where they need to go, and how to monitor the meet progress.

Until that time though, there will be plenty of help from coaches and the bull pen to help your swimmers.

What is the Bull Pen?

The Bull Pen is for swimmers 8 years old and younger. It is an area set aside on the pool deck at a meet, where the young swimmers for a given event are gathered and seated in order of when they swim, and what lane they will be in. A volunteer then leads them as a group (usually in a line holding hands) and places them at their correct block and lane and according to which heat they swim in.

The announcer at the meet will broadcast when it is “first call” for the Bull Pen for a given event. Your child’s coach will send them to the Bull Pen at the appropriate time.

Can my child sit with me in the stands?

Your swimmer can be with you in the stands if that is where they feel most comfortable at first. However, you will want to encourage your swimmer to sit with the team, cheer for their teammates, learn more about the sport and the meet process, and spend time with their coach. Sometimes it is helpful to encourage your swimmer to “check in” with you in the stands and then return to sitting with the team

Can I be on the swim deck with my swimmer?

Unless you have a specific job on the pool deck, it is not possible for you to be there.

The deck gets very crowded, and it is hard for meet officials, swimmers and coaches to do their jobs if too many people are there. Also, for the safety of all swimmers, you must be cleared to be on deck, either with a current USA Swimming nametag, or a specific meet job.

What jobs could I do to be on deck?

It just so happens that timing is the perfect job to be on deck, see the action and fulfill our team's obligation to time. Each team is assigned a lane of two at the start of a meet where it must provide 2 timers/lane. Timing involves using a stopwatch and writing the numbers on a piece of paper. It is not difficult, and whoever is on deck with you will be happy to show you how it is done. It does count towards your volunteer share hours for the team.

What is a DQ?

It is a disqualification from an official, indicating that there was some element of the swim that did not meet the USA swimming rules for that given stroke. It means that the time your swimmer got in that event will not count, as the swim is invalidated.

DQ's are a learning tool, and designed to help all swimmers become proficient in their sport. There is not a swimmer anywhere that has not had many DQ's!

It helps swimmers know what they need to work on, and should be viewed in an entirely positive light. You can still focus on the good things your swimmer did even if they got DQ'ed. Help your swimmer to be proud of their new accomplishments! Starts off the blocks, turns, mastering new strokes like butterfly and breaststroke, maintaining consistent kicking and breathing, cheering for a team member, getting to the blocks on time.....there are many things to be proud of and to support your child in,.

As questions arise, don't hesitate to ask other parents, check in with your "parent buddy", Or email Lori Ringquist or your coach.

We are happy to have you as members of the HEAT!

