

Advice for Parents and Swimmers at Open Meets

Preparation

Most meets start early so bags should be packed the night before. Swimmers will need their swimming costume, goggles and Monnow hat. Monnow t-shirts should also be worn along with jogging bottoms. It is worth packing a spare pair of goggles if you have them. Two towels are recommended as the one used on poolside does get very wet. You should also take spare dry clothes to travel home in. Outdoor shoes can't be worn on the side of the pool so flip flops may also be useful.

A healthy packed lunch such as pasta and fruit and enough drinks for the day (squash or water) should be taken.

Parents you will usually have to pay for entry and programmes so you should make sure you have enough cash with you. There are often opportunities to purchase swim equipment and photographs also.

Parents will find a pen and a highlighter come in useful for marking off programs and noting down times.

Arrival

It is a good idea to arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before your warm up time to allow time to get changed and find your Coach and team mates.

Warm-Ups

Warm-ups take place at the start of every session. You would normally be notified of warm-up start times by our Competition Secretary prior to the meet. Warm-ups are useful for swimmers to familiarise themselves with the pool and the diving blocks. Girls and boys usually warm up separately at different times, as do the different ages. Warm-ups can be busy so it is important to listen out for any instructions as to lanes to warm up in.

Swimmers need to keep warm so after the warm up they should always have a towel on poolside with them. Swimmers should dry off and put on their Monnow t-shirt and a pair of jogging bottoms. Some swimmers also like shorts/ tracksuit bottoms to wear at the side of the pool.

Marshalling

Swimmers are expected to go to marshalling several heats before their own heat. The pool side Coach will let swimmers know when they should go to marshalling. If you are at a meet without a Coach then it is important to familiarise yourself with the heat number you will be swimming in, you will need a program for this. The timing board will usually show you what number the current heat is. You should aim to go to marshalling approximately fifteen minutes before your race.

Some events do ask Swimmers to register at the start of a session so please make sure you have checked the competition pack for instructions.

Once in Marshalling swimmers give their name to the Marshal and the Marshal will then direct them to the relevant seat. Swimmers will be organised into the correct heat and lanes by the marshals. Swimmers will then be told when to go up to their lane.

Whilst waiting in Marshalling swimmers should start doing some stretches. Hats and goggles should be put on before swimmers are sent forward for the race.

There will usually be a box by the starting blocks to leave t-shirt's. Please remember to collect it at the end of a race.

The Official on the Lane will check your name again.

Racing

The referee blows a short series of whistles to signal that swimmers should stand behind the starting block. At this point all swimmers and parents should be quiet so as not to put the Swimmers off.

When the referee blows a long blast on the whistle you should either stand on the block or jump into the pool if it is a backstroke start.

When the starter give the command "Take your marks" you must take up your position on the block and remain completely still until you hear the start signal.

If swimmers move on the block or dive too soon it will be deemed a false start. This may lead to disqualification if the meet has a one start rule.

At the end of the race swimmers should first collect their t-shirt before reporting back to their Coach. The Coach will give their observations on the race and offer tips and advice for future races. Coaches will always be encouraging and supportive of the swimmers. Swimmer's can then return to their team mates. It's important to dry off and put on your t-shirt and jogging bottoms. Make sure that you drink after a race.

Disqualification

Disqualification can happen for a number of reasons. A false start, delaying the start, a faulty stroke, turn or finish can all lead to disqualification. Every swimmer will experience being disqualified at some point so try not to get too upset. It is part of the learning experience so it is important to find out why you have been disqualified and then work on that point.

Finals

Some events are heat declared winners others may have finals where the fastest swimmers from the heats go forward. Always check the result sheets as they get put up to see if you have made the final. The results sheets will also show the official time you have achieved.

Medals

You probably won't win medals at every race. It is more important to try and target beating your own personal best. Make sure that you know your times. Swimming is much more interesting when you set yourself time goals. You won't get a PB every time but if you keep training hard you will see your times improving.

ASA Website

The times gained in licensed meets can be seen on the ASA website under your WASA number. You can see what your ranking is in the country, county and club. You can also see your personal best times for each stroke.