



PRIMER: At the Meet

If you're reading this document, you're new to the Hinsdale Swim Club and very likely new to swimming as a club sport. Welcome!

Swim meets are a great family experience. They're a place where the whole family can spend time together. Listed here are some very in-depth guidelines geared to help you through your first couple of swim meets. Once you have attended one or two meets, this will all become routine. The HSC website (www.thehinsdaleswimclub.com) is your one-stop source for everything related to the team. Do not hesitate to ask any of your fellow HSC team parents for help or information as well. We were all new swim parents ourselves at one point!

We hope this document helps answer your questions. Should you have additional questions, check the team's website first, but please don't hesitate to contact us at info@thehinsdaleswimclub.com.

Before the Meet

What to Take to the Meet

Most important: HSC official team swimsuit, team cap and goggles. Swimmers should also pack an extra cap and goggles in case anything should happen to their primary ones.

Towels: Your swimmer will be there awhile, so pack at least two towels.

Something to sit upon: The swimmer area may be located in a gym or cafeteria. Examples include a sleeping bag, old blanket, portable chairs or anything that will be comfortable to sit upon. The swimmers will be spending a lot of time on it.

Sweat suits: Each swimmer may want to bring two because they can get wet and soggy.

Team T-shirts: Two or three. Same reason as above.

Games: Travel games, coloring books, books, (dare we say phone) anything to pass the time.

Food and drinks: Each swimmer usually brings a small cooler. It is best to bring healthy snacks. They usually have snack bars at meets, but they often only sell junk food, which doesn't make for great and fast swims.

Sharpie pen: Bring a Sharpie pen for writing events on hands.

Cash: Parents will need cash for admission to the meet, usually about \$5 per person per day. Children usually are admitted free.

What to Eat?

Healthy! Healthy! Healthy! Swimmers should enjoy a pasta dinner the night before the meet and drink plenty of liquids to ensure they are well hydrated. Swimmers should have a good healthy breakfast to get geared up for their swim meet. Snacks, drinks and other food may be sold at swim meets, but swimmers are encouraged to bring their own healthy snacks and drinks to ensure they maintain their best energy levels.

The Day of The Meet

What to Wear?

Hinsdale Swim Club swimmers are encouraged to wear HSC t-shirts, sweatshirts, warm-ups and spirit wear for each day of the meet. Team colors (red and black) are encouraged at swim meets for HSC fans in the stands as well.

When to Arrive?

Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins to check in. Swimmers must complete Positive Check-in, which involves locating a table with a list of all the swimmers competing in the meet. The age group of your swimmer will determine what session he will be in. The sessions are broken down by age groups, and they vary from meet to meet. Sometimes your swimmer might be in the morning session; other times he'll compete in the afternoon session. Please use the Meet Pages for each meet on the HSC website for information about when your swimmer will swim. The Meet Pages will also have the Meet Packet posted which is essentially an itinerary and guide for that particular meet.

What and where is "Positive Check In"?

Positive meet check-in is critical. It serves as an attendance record the day of the meet. There is a final deadline for swimmers to check themselves in, usually shortly after the first warm-ups begin or 20 minutes after the start of warm-up. You can find the positive check-in deadline in the Meet Packet. A sibling or parent cannot do this (only the swimmer can check himself in). **Note: The deadline for final check-in is final. If your swimmer has not checked in by the appointed time, he/she will**

not be permitted to swim. Note that your swimmer must check in each day of the meet.

The swimmer, upon arrival at the meet, will find a table just inside the doors. On the table will be a list with the names of the swimmers who will be participating in that session. Swimmers will need to find their name (listed alphabetically by age and gender) and highlight their name and the numbers next to their name to positively check in for that day's events. Note that swimmers are expected to check in for all of their events each day; if there is an event that a swimmer does not want to swim, he or she needs to discuss it and receive an "OK" from coach beforehand to scratch or omit that event.

Where to Stay during the Meet?

After checking in, swimmers should put their things down and stay in the swimmer area with their HSC teammates so their coaches are able to find them when needed to line up to swim when their events are called. Swimmers should not be in the stands – parents may visit in the team area.

Write Your Events on Your Hand

Once checked in with your coach, have the swimmers write each event number on the back of their hand or arm in indelible ink (Sharpie works best). This helps swimmers remember what events they are swimming and what event number to listen or watch for while sitting in the team ready area.

Warm-ups

Shortly after arrival, swimmers should put on their cap and goggles and wait for the coach to direct them to the pool for warm-up instructions. A coach will come and get the swimmers for warm-ups if they are 10 or younger (11 and older swimmers are expected to walk on deck by themselves five minutes before warm-ups). After warm-up, your swimmer will go back to the area where his team is sitting and wait there until his first event is called. The meet will usually start about 10-15 minutes after warm-ups are over.

Parents on Deck?

According to USA Swimming rules (because of insurance purposes), parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an Official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to a coach. He or she in turn will pursue the matter through the proper channels.

Psych Sheets, Timelines (Session Reports), and Heat Sheets

A Psych Sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. It lists all swimmers in each event in order or seed time. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he will be entered as a “no time” or “NT.” A “no time” swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event. Psych Sheets for meets will be posted on the Meet Page following the entry deadline. These are often useful for families to ensure their swimmers entries are correct.

Timelines, also called Session Reports, are a detailed timeline of how long the meet is anticipated to take and when Heats and Events are anticipated to start. These will usually be posted on the Meet Page following the entry deadline and can be really useful for planning purposes (i.e. – whether a swimmer will be able to make a last event or not if they have another activity after the meet).

Heat Sheets are lists of the actual heat and lane each swimmer will be competing in. These are extremely important at the meet and is what is followed. Heat Sheets typically only come out about 10 minutes prior to the start of the meet as the Administrative Officials take the positive check-in and remove all swimmers not checked in from the meet. This is to reduce the amount of empty lanes in the meet and also shorten the Timeline. Heat Sheets are usually available at a front table in the facility, but more nowadays are most available on an App called “Meet Mobile”.

Once the Meet Starts

How Long Do Meets Usually Last?

Meets run in sessions: a morning session and an afternoon session (sometimes there is a midday session for the very long events, like the 1,000 yard freestyle. The older athletes swim these long events.). No session typically lasts more than 4 hours for the younger swimmers. For example, a morning session that starts at 8 a.m. will be over by noon, but some meets start at 8 a.m. and end at 10:30 a.m., so you're a bit at the mercy of how large the meet is and how many teams are participating. Families can typically expect 4-8 heats of each event, sometimes more for more popular events such as the 50 freestyle.

What is the “Bullpen” and how does it work?

Parents can sit with their kids in between events in the team waiting area but we ask that parents be mindful of the Bullpen announcements. The Bullpen is located in the team ready area. It is an area of chairs run by meet helpers who will usher kids into the order of their heat and lane for their events and will then walk them onto the pool deck so that a swimmer does not miss an event and is in the right position when getting to the block. As long as a swimmer knows his event numbers, he can listen to be called in the Bullpen. Swimmers should report to the Bullpen with cap and goggles.

Bullpens are normally used only for 10 and unders and are not used at every meet. In the case that there is no Bullpen, the Coaching Staff will help get the swimmers to their events.

After Each Race

After each swim, the swimmer should ask the timer (people behind the starting blocks in each lane holding stopwatches) for their time. The swimmer should then go immediately to their Coach. The Coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer. Depending on the Coaches' instructions, the swimmer may be asked to do some recovery swimming if a "warm down" pool or lanes are available. It is imperative that the swimmer visit the Coaching Staff. The swimmer will not receive feedback on how to improve if they don't talk to the Coaching Staff after their races.

Things You as a Parent Can Do After Each Swim

- Tell your swimmer how great he/she did. The Coaching Staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with the swimmer. You need to tell him/her how proud you are and what a great job he/she did.
- Take your swimmer back to the team area and relax.
- Swimmers should focus on their own technique, individual improvements, and performance but most of all, **THEY SHOULD HAVE FUN!** Unlike some recreational swim meets, meet awards such as ribbons and trophies are only awarded to the top 6 finishers in the event for each age group. Some meets do award "heat winner" awards to the winner of each individual heat.

Relays

When swimmers have completed all of their events, they should check with their Coach before leaving to make sure they are not entered to swim a relay. If a swimmer knows that they can't stay at the meet for a relay, they should let their Coach know at the beginning of the Meet Session.

The Coaches will generally make up the relays the day of the meets. The relays are made onsite as some swimmers will not be able to make the meet and there would be a ton of open spaces if the relays were pre-planned. The only meets the relays will be made up ahead of time are at the State Championship meet and beyond.

Please respect the Coaching Staff's decision on relays. The Coaching Staff will do it's best to put the right swimmers in the right position for individual and team success.

Meet Results

Results are usually posted somewhere in the facility (often taped to a wall). Awards are often gathered for a team and given to the coach at the end of the meet. The coach will give the awards to the swimmers at a later time. Final meet results will be posted on the HSC website within a day or two of the meet's end. To see meet results, log in and locate the Results/Standards tab and click Meet Results.

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