

# CRYSTAL LAKE NADIATORS PARENT HANDBOOK 2018

Welcome to the Crystal Lake Nadiators family! Swim team is a great way to meet new people and make new friends! This parent swim team handbook will help answer some of your questions and allay some of your concerns. Whatever is not covered in here can be answered by a veteran swim parent or a coach.

## Coaches

Co-Head Coaches: Jeff Birdsley  
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Assistant Coaches: Cecilia Abbamonte  
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## Swim Team Requirements:

To become a member of the Nadiators Swim Team, a child should meet the requirements for their age group below. In practices they will swim in a lane with children of similar ability.

Pre-team: ages 8 and under, a good rule of thumb is that the child should be able to jump into deep water, come up treading and paddle to the wall unassisted. Swimmers must be able to be safe in the water without constant close supervision.

Nadiators I: ages 9-12, ability to swim 25 meters in freestyle and backstroke. Main understanding of breaststroke and butterfly with forward progression through coaching. Ability to swim for 1 hour at practices.

Nadiators II: ages 13-18, ability to swim all strokes proficiently. Ability to swim for 2 hours at practices.

## **Registration**

**Free Week:** Free week is a chance for swimmers to try out swim team and determine if they would like to join. This is a 'free trial'; registration is not required in order to participate this week. Come out any or all days and see what Nadiators is all about!

May 29-June 1, 2018 at the Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center

Nadiators II: 4-5pm

Nadiators I and Pre-team: 5-6pm

**Swim Team:** Swimmers must be registered prior to their first practice in the outdoor pool or they will not be allowed in the water. Registration is accepted throughout the season; typically, swimmers continue to register and join the team throughout June and even into July.

Practice is Monday-Friday, June 4-July 27, 2018\* at the Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center.

Nadiators II: 8-10am OR 5-6pm \$64/\$96NR (early bird) \$85/\$128NR

Nadiators I: 10-11am OR 6-7pm \$60/\$90NR (early bird) \$80/\$120NR

Pre-Team: 10-11am OR 6-7pm \$57/\$86NR (early bird) \$75/\$113NR

\*no practice July 4<sup>th</sup>

Meets are scheduled most Saturday mornings approximately 7am-12pm at various pools. Meets are optional, but highly encouraged as the kids have fun.

**Conference:** The last meet of the season includes all nine Central Illinois Swim Conference (CISC) teams. To participate in this meet, which in 2018 we host at our Crystal Lake Pool, swimmers must have participated in three dual meets during the season. Conference requires separate registration and an additional \$10 fee.

Registration is available over the phone, online, or in person. If your swimmer plans on participating in the Conference Meet, you can register for both Swim Team and Conference at the beginning of the season and save yourself some time!

Phone: Phillips Recreation Center 217-367-1544

Online: <http://www.urbanaparks.org/register>

In person: Phillips Recreation Center, Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center, or Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center

### **Swim Team Parent Meeting:**

We hold a parent meeting during Free Week that is very beneficial to new members. The coaches will introduce themselves, discuss team policies, equipment needs, and answer your questions. This year's parent meeting is scheduled for Wednesday May 30, 6:30 - 8:00pm at Urbana Park District Planning & Operations, 1011 E Kerr Ave, Urbana.

### **Swim Team Suits & Gear**

Swim Team suits are NOT required. Swimmers may wear any suits or trunks that fit well while diving and swimming fast. Avoid suits that are meant for recreation and backyard pools. Swim Team suits are available for purchase at Body N' Sole in Savoy. Each year a new suit is chosen, but some suits from previous years are also available at a slightly lower price. Our team colors are royal blue and yellow if you would like to get a suit with a similar look. The fit should be snug and the staff at Body N' Sole are happy to assist you to get the right fit for your swimmer.

Team swim caps (included in your registration fee) will be distributed before the first meet. Caps are recommended particularly for swimmers with long hair, but not required for practice or meets. Goggles are highly recommended. Avoid inexpensive children's goggles meant for recreation or backyard pools. Training goggles such as the Speedo Vanquisher line usually have an excellent fit. Kids won't constantly take them off and on and waste time. They cost around \$21.00 at Body N' Sole (best selection), Dick's Sporting Goods, and Meijer (toy aisle with swim pool stuff). Swimmers may find that mirrored or tinted goggles are preferred for outdoor swimming. If your child has fins they may bring them and wear them for particular parts of practice, but most swimmers will not use them. Likewise for pull buoys.

Team t-shirts (included in your registration fee) will be distributed on team picture day, probably during the second week of July. Additional Nadiators gear such as sweatshirts, tank tops, sweat pants, and t-shirts are available for purchase as a team fundraiser at the beginning of the season. Information about this fundraiser will be sent to all members.

Swimmer's ear: occasionally swimmers get a quite painful infection of the outer ear canal known as 'swimmer's ear'. Sufferers experience pain when the ear is gently tugged. They should see a doctor for prescription medication.

To prevent swimmer's ear one should get in the habit of using alcohol drops every time they leave the pool. Many swimmers keep a bottle of Swim-Ear® or Auro-Dri® in their swim bag. You put a few drops in each ear, then immediately drain it out. The alcohol removes water from the ears. Do not use these drops if you have ear pain; they are only meant to prevent infections. Do not use these drops if you have ear tubes or a hole in your eardrum.

## **Staying Informed**

The primary method of communicating with parents is via email so make sure that the head coach has your email address. If you are not receiving team emails, please email [nadiators.swimteam@gmail.com](mailto:nadiators.swimteam@gmail.com) right away. Information about upcoming meets, changes in practice schedules, team events, and other important team information is provided via email from the head coach and volunteers.

Another method of communication is our website, <http://nadiators.weebly.com/>. Here you can find this Handbook, FAQ's, contact information, the meet schedule, meet results (from this and past years), pictures, and other information.

### **Cold or rainy days:**

If storms or cold temperatures (less than 67 F) are forecast, we will, at 7:30 am, make the decision to hold morning practice at the Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center at the scheduled times (8-10 am and 10-11 am). If these conditions are forecast for evening practice times, those practices will be canceled, NOT moved indoors.

If light rain is forecast, we will decide to swim outdoors in the rain, as scheduled.

If practice at the outdoor pool is in progress and lifeguards detect thunder or lightning, they immediately tell us to exit the pool. In the morning we will cancel the remainder of BOTH practices and children will need to be picked up. In the evening we will also cancel the remainder of BOTH practices and children will need to be picked up.

**Important:** These decisions will usually NOT be communicated by email. Rather, see below for details on the RainoutLine app and text messaging system that Urbana Park District uses.

An easy way learn of practice relocation or cancellation is to download the free RainoutLine app and search for Urbana Park District. There are many extensions for different UPD programs; Nadiators Swim Team is extension 4. You can check this extension for updates on the status of Nadiators practices.

In addition, we highly recommend that you sign up to receive texts and/or emails from RainoutLine about practice changes. There may be clear mornings when you aren't suspecting a practice change and don't check the RainoutLine app, but a temperature less than 67F will cause us to hold morning practice at the indoor pool. In such cases it is helpful to receive a text or email. To receive texts and/or emails from RainoutLine, go to [rainoutline.com](http://rainoutline.com) and set up a free account. (Don't be concerned about the '30-day free trial' or the '\$399/year'; that is for groups like Urbana Park District that are setting up a Rainoutline system. Participants in Park District programs use the system for free). Search for Urbana Park District and, on the screen that has all of the UPD extensions, click the 'Email & Text Alerts' link on the left side of the screen. You can also call Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center at 217-384-7665 to see if we will practice there on cold or stormy mornings, or the Crystal Lake outdoor pool 217-239-7946 to see if we have cancelled mid-practice.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

Swim Team is often referred to as a family because it is so much more than just swimming. Swim Team members and parents help each other out, cheer each other on, and perhaps most importantly, work together to run meets and plan events. The coaches are busy coaching the swimmers- it's up to our dedicated parent volunteers to do the rest. While volunteering is not a requirement to participate in Swim Team, it is highly encouraged. The more volunteers we have, the less work for all! Plus, volunteering is very rewarding and a great way to get to know other Swim Team families better. We are happy to train you so don't be afraid to jump in and get your feet wet!

**IMPORTANT NOTE!** When volunteering at a meet, you are encouraged and welcome to watch your child swim their event(s). If you need to take a break from the volunteer position you are working, please coordinate with your fellow workers so that the position is not left unattended. When your child is done swimming, please resume your post.

The volunteer coordinator will send out a Sign Up Genius email to parents the week of a home meet. Sign Up Genius is a free site that does not require account registration. Simply sign up for the volunteer position of your choice so we can be sure all positions are filled prior to meet day.

Here are the basic positions that require volunteers:

### Meet Volunteers

Set Up  
Timers  
Runners  
Announcers  
Bullpen  
Officials  
Computer  
Ribbons & Results

### Additional Volunteers

Volunteer Coordinator  
Event Planning  
Treasurer  
Fundraising

**SET UP:** Set up volunteers make the Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center lap pool area ready for a swim meet. This involves setting up tables for the computer area, bringing down the bins of supplies from the storage unit, arranging the bullpen chairs, and clearing the deck of all the lounge chairs. Set up volunteers complete this task the evening before the meet, usually from 7:45-8:15pm.

**TIMERS:** Timing is a very easy job and gives you the best possible view of the meet. There is also very little pressure since the job is done in pairs. While both timers keep time, only one records the time from both watches on the time sheet for your lane. Timers will use our Wireless Dolphin Stopwatches, which operate a little differently than a usual sports watch. These watches have a synchronized start - automatically started by the Starter device. Your job is simply to stop the watch when you see any part of the swimmer's body touch the wall or to "blank" the watch when there is no swimmer in your lane. Timing data is sent directly to the computer and the Starter will reset the watches prior to the next race. Really easy! There is always a Timer's meeting before each meet, where you will receive instructions and complete a practice run so that you are comfortable with the watch. Timers make a commitment to a specific time slot.

**RUNNERS:** Runners take the timing sheets from the timers and the DQ (disqualification) slips from the Officials to the computer table where they are recorded. Please make sure you check with the officials on the sides of the pool. Runners make a commitment to a specific time slot.

**ANNOUNCERS:** If you're comfortable using a microphone and you have an engaging personality, this could be the job for you! The Announcer is responsible for making announcements throughout the meet, most important of which are calling events to the bullpen and announcing the current event. The announcer generally commits to the entire meet.

**BULLPEN:** If you are enthusiastic, organized, and love kids, the bullpen is the place for you! Bullpen volunteers have the extremely important task of organizing the swimmers by event into their heats and lanes. Swimmers for several events sit in numbered seats in the bullpen until their heat is next. One volunteer guides the next heat of swimmers over to the blocks (or opposite end of the pool for 8&U relays). Bullpen volunteers must be able to read the heat sheet, talk to swimmers to get their names and events, and maintain order in the bullpen. Bullpen volunteers commit to a specific time slot.

\*A reminder to parents: the coaches and bullpen volunteers do their best to make sure all the swimmers get to their designated lanes for each event; however, it is the responsibility of the swimmers and their parents get the younger swimmers to the bullpen on time. This allows the coaches to focus their time and attention on swimmers in the pool.

**OFFICIALS:** One official starts each event with the starting equipment. Other officials watch the swimmers to make certain they are performing strokes and turns legally and fill out DQ slips as necessary. It takes a little training, but we have parents who can teach you, so if you're interested, please don't hesitate to ask the head coach for more information! We want to be sure there are several people trained as officials so we always have at least two at each home meet. Plus, you cannot beat

the great view of the meet you get when you're an official! Officials generally commit to the entire meet, or to half of the Conference meet.

**COMPUTER:** Computer volunteers receive the time sheets and DQ slips from the runners and enter the results into the Meet Manager software. They score the meet and print out result sheets and ribbon labels. This job takes some training and experience to become familiar with the software, but if you are interested please do not hesitate to ask the head coach for more information. We want to be sure there are several people capable of doing this job so the same people do not have to volunteer every single meet. Computer volunteers generally commit to the entire meet.

**RIBBONS & RESULTS:** The parents working this task sit at the computer table and take the ribbon labels and result sheets printed by computer volunteers. Result labels are printed in several batches of events throughout the meet. Ribbon volunteers affix the labels to the appropriate ribbons. These volunteers also post the result sheets in a designated area. Ribbon volunteers generally commit to the entire meet, but may have breaks between batches of ribbons.

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** This volunteer is in charge of creating the Sign Up Genius site for each home meet and Conference and keeping track of what positions have not yet been filled. The volunteer may need to send out follow up emails to get additional volunteers.

**EVENT PLANNING:** We plan several events throughout the swim season. Event planning volunteers are in charge of organizing the 4<sup>th</sup> of July party, team picture day, and the end of season party. This involves choosing a date, reserving a location, sending out informational emails to parents, organizing food (if present), collecting money (if necessary), and making other necessary arrangements.

**TREASURER:** These parents are in charge of the Swim Team bank account. They make deposits and withdrawals, sign checks, and maintain accurate records of the team's finances.

**FUNDRAISING:** While the Urbana Park District is able to purchase certain supplies to maintain the program, any extra equipment is the responsibility of the team. Fundraising volunteers are in charge of organizing 2-3 fundraisers per season including swim-a-thons, Go Fund Me pages, the sale of Nadiators gear, and community restaurant days (e.g. Monical's, El Toro, AppleBees, etc.). Funds raised will be used to purchase upgraded or new equipment such as Dolphin stopwatches.

## **SIGNING UP FOR MEETS**

Participation in meets is optional and each summer many team members choose not to. However, those that do participate have a lot of fun, so participation is encouraged! To participate in meets, swimmers age 8 and under must be able to swim the

length of the pool (25 meters) and swimmers age 9 and up must be able to swim two lengths of the pool (50 meters).

**Age Groups & Events:** swimmers are placed into age groups based on their age as of June 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. The age groups and events are as follows.

6 and under (6&U): only contains the 25 Meter Freestyle and 25 Meter Backstroke. However, swimmers 6&U usually swim other strokes and relays in the 8&U group.

8 and under (8&U): contains 25 Meter Breaststroke, Butterfly, Backstroke; 25 and 50 Meter Freestyle; 100 IM; and 100 Meter medley and freestyle relays.

10 and under (10&U): contains 50 Meter Breaststroke, Butterfly, Backstroke, and Freestyle; 100 IM; and 200 Meter medley and freestyle relays.

12 and under (12&U): contains 50 Meter Breaststroke, Butterfly, Backstroke, and Freestyle; 100 IM; and 200 Meter medley and freestyle relays.

14 and under (14&U): contains 50 Meter Breaststroke, Butterfly, Backstroke, and Freestyle; 100 IM; and 200 Meter medley and freestyle relays.

18 and under (18&U): contains 100 Meter Breaststroke, Butterfly, Backstroke, and Freestyle; 200 IM; and 200 Meter medley and freestyle relays.

**Signing Up:** Five or six days before a meet, we will send parents an online form to enter their child's name(s) in the upcoming meet. Until last year, the swimmers chose the individual events they wished to enter at a meet and coaches configured the relays. To encourage the development of more well-rounded swimmers, and because we are emphasizing the teaching of all four competitive strokes, we changed our meet entry system in 2017. We will use the same system in 2018. Coaches will choose events that they believe the children are ready for, usually entering them in the maximum allowed 3 individual events and one or two relays. Coaches take seriously their responsibility to prepare swimmers for the events they swim. Anxiety and feeling unprepared will serve the child no purpose (and are not fun). If we enter a swimmer in an event they have rarely or never swum before, our goal is to have them comfortable and confident on meet day.

Parents will be emailed the Entries Sheet containing individual events by Tuesday afternoon. If you entered your child in the meet, please check the Entries Sheet to be sure they are entered in events. By Wednesday afternoon, an updated Entries Sheet including relays will be emailed to parents. If families make a late decision to enter the meet, last minute entries can be made until 4:00pm Thursday. Coaches must send entries to the host team by 5pm Thursday and no further additions can be made. Swimmers can drop from events as necessary and relays may be altered up until the event itself, but no additions can be made after Thursday afternoon.

***\*\*IMPORTANT: if your child signs up to swim, PLEASE show up on meet day. If your child does not show up, coaches must reconfigure relays at the last minute. In case of illness, notify the coach as soon as possible that your child won't swim.***

## **Swim Team Code of Conduct**

There are some simple rules of etiquette that help make the experience better for everyone on the team:

Swimmers need to come to practice regularly. Coming every day isn't mandatory, but it's encouraged. If a swimmer wants to drop time they need to practice. Coaches don't take attendance so there is no need to contact them if your child is going to miss a practice or several. We'll see them when they get back. If your child has been injured or sick, talk to coaches about any necessary accommodation when they return to practice.

Swimmers should attend the appropriate age group practice. If you have more than one child swimming, this may mean dropping off and picking up kids at different times. Often 9 - 12-year-olds are encouraged to attend first practice (Nadiators II) because there is usually more room, but in other cases it is better that swimmers practice with their age group. If you need to have your swimmer practice at a different time, please discuss it with the coaches to make sure there is space available.

Sign up for meets on time- *no additions can be made after Thursday afternoon*. A lot of work goes into submitting meet entries to the host team and even more work goes into organizing a home meet. Numerous reminders are sent via email about deadlines for signing up for meets.

Arrive at the meet on time - this means get to warm-ups on time. The very first event is a relay and three other swimmers may be getting very nervous if their teammate hasn't arrived by the time the meet starts. If you know you must leave a meet early, request not to be entered in the freestyle relay (the last event).

Parents are not allowed behind the blocks (unless you are a timer!). Please wait for your child to exit the finish area. It can get really crowded at end of the pool after a race, especially at smaller swim clubs, and it needs to be kept clear for swimmer and timer safety.

Photography is encouraged, but please respect other parents around the racing pool so they can get their shot, too, and be sure to follow rules regarding spectator areas.

Display good sportsmanship at all times. Cheer on your teammates whenever possible! Congratulate the other team's swimmers. Be encouraging and helpful to younger swimmers. If it looks like someone needs assistance, offer to lend a hand - we're all in this together!

## MEETS

### Meet Schedule:

June 16	at Lincolnshire Fields Country Club vs Lincolnshire and Tuscola
June 23	vs Sholem at Crystal Lake (home)
June 30	vs Shelbyville and Monticello at Crystal Lake (home)
July 14	at Effingham
July 21	at Indian Acres
July 28	Conference Meet at Crystal Lake (home)
August 4	All Star Meet at Millstadt, Illinois

**Dual Meets:** There are 5 dual meets each swim season where we swim against one or two other teams. Usually three of these meets are at home and two will be at another pool. In general, the top 8 places in individual events receive ribbons as do the top 3 relays.

**Conference:** At the end of the season, all nine CISC teams compete at the Conference Swim Meet. These teams include the Sholem Sharks Champaign Park District, Crystal Lake Nadiators, Lincolnshire Fields Country Club, Indian Acres Swim Team, Shelbyville Lakers Swim Team, Charleston Swim Club, Tuscola Torpedoes, Effingham Swim Team, and, new to our conference in 2018, the Monticello Marlins. Four of the larger teams take turns hosting, so the meet is at Crystal Lake every four years. We host the meet in 2018! To participate in Conference, swimmers must have participated in 3 dual meets during the season. The large Conference meet lasts all day, split into two sessions- morning for the 6&U, 8&U, and 10&U age groups and afternoon for the 12&U, 14&U, and 18&U age groups. There is a break in the middle for parent and coach relays and warm-ups for the older swimmers. The top 3 places in individual events receive medals, places 4-6 receive rosette ribbons, and places 7-16 receive ribbons. The top 3 places in relays receive medals, places 4-6 receive rosette ribbons, and places 7-8 receive ribbons.

**All Star Meet:** If your swimmer places in the top 6 of an individual event (no relays) at Conference, they are eligible to swim at the All Star Meet in Millstadt, IL. This large, all day meet includes top swimmers from six conferences in central and southern Illinois. It is a 3 hour drive down to Millstadt, usually making a Friday hotel stay necessary. However, this meet gives swimmers the chance to experience touch pad timing, competing against top swimmers in the state, and bonding with teammates. The events and order of events is different for the All Star Meet and additional fees apply. More information about the All Star Meet will be sent out after Conference. Meet website: <http://allstarswimmeet.com/>.

\*\*Effingham Swim Team has planned a similar meet this year, scheduled for the same day as the Millstadt meet. We will choose to go to one or the other. More information later.

## **TEAM EVENTS**

Look for more information about these team events via email. If you'd like to volunteer to help out, please let us know!

**4<sup>th</sup> of July Party:** on Friday July 6, we will have a potluck party during swim practice. Parents and siblings are invited! No practice on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Picture Day:** on or about July 12, team t-shirts will be handed out during practice and a professional photographer will take team and individual pictures. Order forms will be distributed prior to picture day.

**End of Season Party:** join us Tuesday, July 31, to celebrate the end of another great swim season! We will have a potluck dinner at the Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center from 7:00-8:30 pm. Every swimmer is recognized with a certificate and Conference ribbons are handed out. Swimmers that participated for the first time in at least 3 dual meets will receive a plaque, and all swimmers receive a '2018' sticker to add to their plaque.

**Fundraisers:** help us raise funds by participating in fundraisers. Typically we have one community restaurant day during the season. Look for the flier via email and join other Swim Team families for a meal while earning money for the team!

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section is written by parents who remember all the questions they had when their children first started swim team. There is more information in the various sections of the team website. Please ask the coaches or other parents if you have further questions! We are all happy to help you navigate your first summer Swim Team experience!

## **What do all these swimming terms mean?**

**Back:** short for backstroke

**Blocks:** the platforms from which the kids enter the pool (optional). They always have a choice to dive from the blocks or from the edge of the pool.

**Breast:** short for breaststroke

**Bullpen:** a designated area with chairs or benches where the swimmers are organized into their events, heats, and lanes prior to swimming.

**Combined Event:** when two different age groups or boys and girls of the same age group swim a race together.

**DQ:** acronym for Disqualification. Swimmers may be DQ'd for improper stroke, start, or turn.

**Entries:** list of what each swimmer is swimming at a meet.

**Event:** gender, age, distance, and stroke of a race. E.g. Girls 18&U 100 Meter Freestyle.

**Flip Turn:** when swimming longer than one length of the pool, swimmers may execute a legal flip to touch the wall and change direction.

**Fly:** short for butterfly stroke

**Flyover Start:** when swimmers start their race by diving over the head of the swimmer that just finished a race in their lane. The finished swimmers stay close to the wall. The next heat dives over their heads and then the finished swimmers climb out. This moves the meet along more quickly and is desirable in large meets like Conference.

**Free:** short for freestyle stroke

**Heat:** when there are more swimmers in an event than there are lanes, there will be more than one group swimming the same event. Each group is called a heat.

**Heat Sheet:** the timeline for the entire meet. It lists all the events in order and the swimmers in each event arranged by heat and lane.

**IM:** Individual Medley. The swimmer will swim EACH of the 4 strokes in one event in the following order- fly, back, breast, free.

**Lane Assignment:** the lane in which the swimmer is swimming an event.

**Legal Stroke:** when the swimmer is positioning and moving his/her arms and legs correctly for the stroke.

**Medley Relay:** relay event with 4 swimmers, each swimmer does a different stroke in the following order- back, breast, fly, free.

**NT:** on the heat sheet, a swimmer's best time (seed time) is listed next to their name. If there is no seed time available for that swimmer it will list NT, which stands for no time.

**Swim Up:** when a younger swimmer swims in an older age group.

**Two Hand Touch:** swimmers must touch the wall with two hands simultaneously to legally execute turns and to finish the butterfly and breaststroke races.

### **How many events are there and what order do they go in?**

Dual meets in the CISC have 76 events and they always go in the same order (Conference is different). For each event, girls swim before boys and the age groups go youngest to oldest.

Medley Relay  
IM  
Freestyle  
Breaststroke  
Butterfly  
Backstroke  
Freestyle Relay

### **What time does each event start?**

It is not possible to determine the exact starting time of events as the timing depends on how many swimmers are participating and how many heats are needed for each event. The medley relay will start as close to 8:30 am as possible and meets are generally over by noon.

### **Why do swimmers write on their hands at meets?**

To help your kids remember what events they will be swimming, it is common to write the information on the swimmer's hand with a sharpie pen. The information is typically written in the following format: Event# - Heat # - Lane # or if preferred, just the event numbers. You will see swimmers decorating their backs with pictures and phrases as well.

### **How do I find out what events my kids are swimming?**

You will be sent the Entry Sheet via email, which lists the events your child is swimming. On meet day, you can check the Heat Sheet, which will be taped to a nearby wall or fence. This will list the events in order and the swimmers organized into heats and lanes. For relays, the swimmers will be numbered 1-4, indicating which leg they are swimming. In the Medley Relay: 1) Back, 2) Breast, 3) Fly, and 4) Free. If there is more than one relay team they will be given A, B, C designation.

### **My child just turned 9, why is she in the 8&U age group?**

If your child turned 9 after June 1<sup>st</sup>, she will still participate in the 8&U age group for this swim season. The same applies for swimmers turning 11, 13, and 15 after June 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. It actually gives them an advantage as they will be the oldest swimmers in their age group!

### **Why is my 6 year old swimming in the 8&U age group?**

The 6&U age group only has 25 Meter Free and 25 Meter Back. If a younger child wants to try breast, fly, or the relays, they will need to swim in the 8&U category. In addition, swimmers will sometimes be asked to swim up an age group when we are short on swimmers for a relay in an older age group.

### **Why are boys and girls swimming in the same heat?**

Sometimes events are combined. When there are only one or two swimmers in an event, it will usually be combined with another event so those swimmers do not have to swim alone and to save time. Occasionally, when two smaller teams are competing, most of the meet is made up of combined events. These meets will go much faster. There are two kinds of combined events: mixed age group and mixed gender. Mixed age group is when two age groups swimming the same race are combined (e.g. Girls 8&U 50 Meter Free and Girls 10&U 50 Meter Free) and mixed gender is when boys and girls swimming the same race are combined (e.g. Girls 8&U 100 Meter IM and Boys 8&U 100 Meter IM). When events are combined, they will still be scored separately and points and ribbons awarded as usual.

### **Are all the pools the same length?**

No. Our pool is 25 meters, but other pools are 25 yards and, in the case of Tuscola, 30 meters! It is important to remember these differences when comparing times. A yard time will be faster than a meter time. You can find conversion calculators online that take into consideration gender, distance, and stroke. Also, some pools have 8 lanes, like ours, and others only have 6 lanes. Pools with less lanes will likely require more heats per event.

### **Who decides what events my child will swim at the meet?**

Swimmers can be in as many as 3 individual events and 2 relays. Coaches choose swimmers' individual events and configure the relays. For more information, please see the "Signing Up for Meets" section in the Parent Handbook.

### **How does my swimmer know when to swim?**

Once your swimmer knows their event numbers, listen for the announcer to call each event to the bullpen. When your swimmer's next event is called, make sure s/he makes it to the bullpen and can tell the bullpen volunteers his/her event number and name. So that coaches can concentrate on the pool, they depend on parents and swimmers to make this run smoothly. Coaches shouldn't have to track down swimmers that are tardy to the bullpen. Once your swimmer is seated in the bullpen, the volunteers will make sure s/he gets to the starting blocks at the right time.

### **Where can I find meet results and get ribbons?**

During the meet, results will be posted periodically on a nearby wall or fence. In the recent past we experimented with handing out ribbons at our meets, but a small army of volunteers would be necessary to make it work. This year, *ribbons are not distributed during dual meets or at Conference*. Ribbons will be handed out at Monday practice. After the meet, results will be sent out via email and posted to the web-

site. This may take a day when another team hosted the meet. Conference medals and ribbons will be handed out at the end of year award party on July 31.

### **Why was my swimmer disqualified and what can I do to prevent it from happening again?**

If you see a “DQ” next to your child’s name after a race, it means they were disqualified for some reason. Race officials watch for legal starts and finishes, legal strokes, and legal flip turns. Breaststroke and butterfly are difficult strokes to master and even world-class swimmers DQ sometimes! Don’t worry about it! The coaches will find out why and will work on that at practices. Two great goals for new swimmers are to not get DQ’d (that means they’ve learned a lot!) and to get a Personal Record time (PR). Setting reasonable, personal goals is a great motivator and keeps swimming fun!

### **What should I bring to the meet?**

Suit and goggles are the most important. A spare pair of goggles is a good idea. It’s useful to have at least 3 towels per swimmer- one will be pretty wet after warm-ups, the second will be wet after the first event, and that leaves the third towel dry (or relatively dry) for the end of the meet. Depending on the weather, long pants and sweatshirts may come in handy. Other things to bring: sunscreen, water bottles, snacks, sharpie pens, folding chairs, and a camera. Some meets have concession stands, so bring along cash if you think you might want to buy a snack. Shade can be hard to come by at outdoor meets- many families bring their own in the form of pop-up tents or large umbrellas. If you don’t have a tent, don’t worry! Swim Team families are usually happy to share!

### **What are the best things to eat and drink at a swim meet?**

Water, water, water! Swimmers may also like a hydration drink like Gatorade, Powerade, Vitamin Water, Nuun tablets, etc. Popular snacks include: peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, pretzels, power bars, string cheese, fruits and vegetables, trail mix, and crackers. Swimmers often share their snacks, so bring along a little extra if you can.

### **Can we leave the meet when our swimmer is done?**

While we encourage everyone to stay until the end to cheer on their teammates (and participate in the freestyle relay if possible), a lot of families do leave when their swimmer is done. The summer is full of other engagements and families often have very young children that have trouble lasting the entire time, so we understand if you need to leave before the meet is finished. If you signed up for a volunteer position, however, please be sure that your task is completed or covered by another parent.