



## Going to Your First Gala?

Congratulations! You have received an email from the coaches saying that you are eligible to swim in a development gala ... so what's next.....

### **SIGNING UP**

- There will be an eligibility report on the website. Look for your name and your races. Sometimes you are too fast for an event, and sometimes your times are just not fast enough. It all depends on how the organiser has decided to run the event.
- Eligibility reports and event schedules are found on the website:  
<http://www.cswimming.com/competitions/meet-entries>
- Swim in what you love and swim in events where you want to improve. Development meets are just that - so you can **“develop”** your swimming skills and competition experience.
- When you sign up, decide why you want to swim certain races. Do you want to get a personal best (pb); try something new; have a great time; or just challenge yourself. Then pick the races that meet your objectives – and don't be afraid to go for something new or something you think might be a little bit hard. You might surprise yourself!
- When you sign up, think about your objectives and your own schedule on that particular day. You should feel challenged and excited to swim! Do not feel obligated to swim in every single race for which you are eligible.
- If you would like to swim in a race for which you are not listed; just ask the coaches if you can swim.
- For development meets, there are generally not a maximum number of races you can swim. For CWSC club galas, however, there is usually a maximum number of races in which you can compete due to time constraints.
- Sometimes you may sign up for an event, but the meet becomes too full, so the organisers will tell CWSC that we cannot send as many swimmers as we would like. This is an administrative issue in that the gala is over-subscribed, NOT an issue that CWSC does not want you to go.

### **GETTING READY**

- Read the coach's tips – <http://www.cswimming.com/about-us/coaches-tips>
- Check website to confirm your events - <http://www.cswimming.com/competitions/meet-entries>
- You will NOT always receive a confirmation email – it is up to you to check the website for your confirmed entries
- Be sure you know the rules of the strokes you are swimming – two handed touches, proper stroke technique. Swimmers should speak to their coaches in the days leading up to the gala if they have any questions.
- Check your bags the night before
- Bring second pair of goggles & cap
- Bring two towels
- Bring healthy snacks. NO CANDY! NO SUGAR! These kinds of snacks give short energy bursts and will lead to more tiredness.
- **Bring lots and lots of drinks**



## THE BIG DAY

- **Have fun!**
- If you have signed up for an event, you are expected to swim.
- Arrive in plenty of time before warm-up. 15 minutes before warm up is a good time
- If you find that your name is not listed for a race you are registered to swim, see your coach and/or an official right away.
- **ALWAYS REMEMBER TO BE QUIET AT THE START OF EVERY RACE**
- **Stretch** before your race.
- Before your race, you will go to the **“whipping area”**. Don't worry, it's not scary. It is just the area where you get in line for your race. Your coaches will let you know when you need to get to the whipping area. Before you go you should speak to your coach to get some last minute advice about your race.
- **Support your fellow CWSC swimmers** during their races. Even though swimming is an individual sport, we are all members of the **CWSC** team. Team spirit will always help us go faster!
- **Relax and swim your best!**
- **Speeding Tickets:** If you are at an event that has “speeding tickets”, this means you swam faster than the maximum qualifying time. **CONGRATULATIONS!**
- As a general rule, if you **false start**, you cannot swim in that race.
- If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask your coach or the officials who are there to help.

## AFTER YOUR SWIMS ARE FINISHED

- After you swim, first go to your coach for feedback. This is the most important time to speak to your coach as you will be able to learn about what you did right and wrong and what you can improve upon in your next swim.
- **The best part of swimming is to have fun. If you get a PB as well, then even better!**
- **PB:** A pb (personal best) is when the time of your race is faster than any previous time you have achieved for that race. When you look at your time, it will have a negative sign in front of it (-) meaning you finished the race in less time than your entry time (which is normally your best time for any event.) **CONGRATULATIONS!**
- **DQ:** A DQ (disqualification) is when you infringe upon the rules.
- If you have DQ's (disqualified), that's ok. Be sure you understand what you did and how you can learn not to do it again. The earlier you get your strokes right, the more fun the next competition will be. DQ's are very common for swimmers under the age of 13 and should not be seen as a failure. Learn from your mistakes and then focus on your next race.
- Check the results sheets at the event to see if you won a medal, if they are given out at the event.
- Races are normally swum in time order, not in age groups. Results and medals (if awarded), however, are given out by ages. So remember to swim your fastest, even if you think you are “last”. Don't be disappointed if you didn't get a medal even if you came “1<sup>st</sup>” in your heat as swimmers your age may have swum in other heats.
- **Be sure to TELL THE COACH WHEN YOU LEAVE.**
- **Results** are generally posted 3-5 days after the event on the website. Don't forget to check and see how you swam. <http://www.cswimming.com/competitions/results>
- Check the fixtures list (<http://www.cswimming.com/competitions/fixtures-list>) for the next development meet.



## SOME TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Remember parents, sessions can last up to 4 hours – be prepared, relax and let your swimmer enjoy being with their friends.
- Bring along a cushion for comfort.
- If you get lost or are sick on the day of the event, please email [headcoach@cswimming.com](mailto:headcoach@cswimming.com) and try to reach another parent whom you know is at the event.

### **COSTS**

- Costs are generally £5 for a Club gala and around £5 *per swim* for a development meet. *If you are concerned as to how to manage the costs for these events, please get in touch with our Treasurer.*
- If you do not think you can make a particular session, then it might be better not to sign up for that session. Not only will you have to pay for a race in which you did not swim, CWSC can be fined for no-shows and this cost will be passed on to the swimmer.
- Sometimes parents will be asked to help defray the transportation/lodging expenses for the coaches.
- Parents will need to purchase a program when entering the venue – it generally ranges from £5-10.

### **TRANSPORATION**

- Parents generally have to provide **transportation**.
- **Directions to the event:** Middlesex County provides maps to all of the venues for its events: <http://www.middlesexswimming.com/calendar/competition/>
- Sometimes there is a bus/coach to take the team, and in those cases, each swimmer will pay for his transportation cost