

What are the rules and responsibilities?

Each swimmer is responsible for getting to the meets. Maps and directions will be provided both here and at Hastings Lake YMCA on our bulletin board.

What is a heat sheet?

A heat sheet lists the events, lane assignments and fastest time for swimmers entered. They are usually sold at the larger invitational meets (around \$2 - \$5).

Heat sheets list both individual and relay events. Relays listed in the heat sheet will sometimes show the swimmers names. Be aware that relay team members may change. You may be asked to swim a relay even if your name is not on the list.

Hastings Lake heat sheets also feature advertising by local businesses and firms in support of our team - support our advertisers.

How are events timed?

Swimmers times are collected in multiple way. At Hastings Lake YMCA, swimmers times are records by two or more timers using stopwatches. If you ask a timer for your time, be aware that the time is not an official time. Once the times for the heat have been collected, you must wait for the official results to be posted. The official results (which include swimmers' names, their times and event placing) are usually posted about an hour after completion of the event. Results are also posted on the website usually within a couple of days of the meet. All event results are computerized and retained for each swimmer for many seasons.

The start of a race is usually a beep with a strobe flash that is used by the timers. If you are timing a race from the stands, look for the strobe light.

What is a DQ?

A DQ is a disqualification from a race. YMCA Swim meets follow NCAA Swimming Rules. To ensure fair competition for all swimmers, these rules are equally applied to all swimmers, regardless of age or experience.

During competition, if a swimmer fails to comply with the stroke and turn rules, a Stroke and Turn Judge (dressed in white) will raise his/her hand, write up a disqualification (DQ) slip, and present it to the referee for approval. A swimmer is not disqualified until the referee accepts the report.

Judges always try to reach the swimmer to explain the reason he/she was disqualified, but this is not always possible.

Being disqualified is not the end of the world. Almost all swimmers have been DQ'd at some time. This should be viewed as a learning experience and not a failure.

Swimmers should discuss this with their coach after the race, and together they will formulate a plan to correct the mistake.

What is a relay?

A relay consists of four swimmers. The main relays are the Medley Relay and the Free Relay. In the Medley relay each swimmer swims a different stroke (Back, Breast, Fly, Free order). In the Free relay, all swimmers swim freestyle. Some meets have also fun relays (Intertube, Noodle, T-Shirt).

Can I take pictures at meets?

At most meets you are permitted to take pictures as long as it doesn't interfere with the meet. Flash photography is not allowed as it disrupts the starts and is a distraction to the swimmers.

What should I bring to meets?

Write your name on everything you bring

- Goggles (an extra pair just in case)
- Towels (3 or more per swimmer)
- Sleeping bag or blanket for longer invitational meets
- T-shirt & Shorts
- Sweatpants, Sweatshirt, coats (to keep those muscles warm)
- Folding Chairs (for parents), check with the coaches ahead of time, not all facilities have room in the stands or on deck
- Sharpie Marker - to write event numbers on your swimmer's hand
- Money for Concessions, heat sheets and meet T-Shirts/Sweatshirts

What should I expect at a swim meet?

Blankets, sleeping bags, chairs, towels and kids everywhere! Chilly mornings (keep swimmers warm), lots of cheering, new friends and a great time (especially if you get involved with the team and volunteer).

Plan to arrive 20 minutes before warm-ups start. This way you can check in, stake out your area, find your goggles, and report to the coaches when the announcer calls for warm-ups. Shortly after the teams have warmed up, the meet should begin.

Make sure you know your event numbers. You can get the event numbers from heat sheets that are sold at the meet or from the entry sheets handed out a couple of days before the meet (in your folder). Heat sheets are also usually posted around the pool area.

Write your event numbers on your hand, arm or leg with a Sharpie Marker. Don't forget the relays.

When your event number is called, the swimmer needs to report to the bullpen (sometimes called "Clerk of Course") or starting blocks (if there is no bullpen).

There is usually a first call and final call for each event. If you are not in the appropriate area at the last call, you may be disqualified (DQ).

Parents: Please help your swimmers report to the bullpen area. Once they are in the bullpen, the parent volunteers will ensure the kids get to the starting blocks for the appropriate heat.

How can I help?

Glad you asked. There are many needs that our team has in order to run effectively and make the experience enjoyable for the swimmers, coaches and parents. We would like all of you to contribute your talents, gifts or abilities in a small or big way to the team.

Committee members needed. Some of the committees that parents have served on are: Bulletin Board, Computers - Meet Entries, Computers - Running Home Meets, Deck Manager, Fund Raising, Maps, Newsletter, Official, Press Secretary, Ribbon Distribution, Social Committee, and Team Photos.

Some committees will be a one-time commitment, such as a home meet committee, and others are for the entire season.

If you see a need, volunteer to help. For example, some parents saw the need to vacuum the pool, brought it to the parent board's attention and offered to vacuum it.

How can I become an official?

Audrey Lindquist is our Head Official and is a Level 2 Official with the YMCA organization. If you are interested in becoming a Level 1 official, please contact Audrey at (847) 265-0758.