



## PARENTS' GUIDE TO GRAT SWIM MEETS

Below are guidelines listed to help get you through your first couple of swim meets. It may be overwhelming at first so please if you have any questions don't be afraid to ask!

Please visit our team's website regularly for new information and changes: [www.gratswimming.com](http://www.gratswimming.com)

### Signing up for a meet:

- Most often you will receive an email inviting you to sign up for a meet. These emails are generated from TeamUnify, our software management system, and will come with general instructions on how to declare your swimmer's intention to attend a meet or not.
- All meets we plan on participating in will be listed on the "General Calendar" under the Calendar tab of our GRAT website.
- When you receive the email invitation, click the link provided or use the On Deck app to log in to your account.
  - Go to the Meets/Events tab
  - Click on the event and scroll down to select your swimmer by tapping on his or her name
  - Select "No Thanks" or "Yes Please" to attend the event
- Families should declare "intent to swim" for each athlete eligible to attend the meet.
- In the area for comments/notes, enter the day or days your swimmer can attend or any other special requests for that meet that you would like our coaches to know. Don't forget to save changes!
- To select specific events for your committed swimmer:
  - Scroll down and the events your swimmer is eligible for will be listed in chart format. Simply click the check boxes next to the event(s) of interest. Coaches will review and approve/recommend changes prior to submitting our final team registration for the meet.
- You must enter the meet by the deadline that is posted. Most meets will need to be entered by coaches about one week in advance, which means athletes must declare 7-10 days ahead of a meet. Please pay attention to sign-up deadlines! 😊

### What to bring to a meet:

- Spare goggles, suit and a swim cap (We have GRAT swim caps for sale at the pool, \$3.00 each, if you would like to purchase one.)
- Towels – more than one - to keep dry and warm between events and for changing after
- Healthy Snacks – pack some snacks for your swimmer to have in their bag on deck. Great choices: crackers, granola bars, string cheese, fruit, protein bars, etc.
- Water bottle and/or sports drink for your swimmer

*Note: Most of the time a concession stand is provided, however they sell mostly junk food. It is safer to pack healthy snacks and beverages for your swimmer (and yourselves!).*

- Down-time activities - for both you in the stands and your swimmer (books, magazines, deck of cards, notepad, etc.)
- Some cash for Programs and/or concessions. Programs will list each event split up into heats.

*Note: Programs generally sell for \$3 to \$6. They list all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "NT" no time. An "NT" swimmer will usually swim in one of the first heats of the event.*

- Directions/Map to the pool
- Highlighter or pens for your program
- Your camera or phone for photos of your swimmer's races

#### **At the meet:**

- Please arrive at least 5 min before warm-up are scheduled to start. Warm-up time is usually one hour prior to the first event.
- Once you arrive at the pool, send your swimmer to locate our team. The team will sit together in one place, either on deck or in the cafeteria/gym/designated waiting area for that particular meet location, so look for familiar faces.
- Your swimmer should check in with their coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team, regardless of when in the program they are scheduled to swim.

#### **After warm-up:**

- Swimmers will return to our team "holding" spot, where they left their belongings, and sit until their event is announced. Your swimmer may swim right after warm-up or they may have to wait awhile.
- Swimmers should stay on the deck or at the designated area so they can be accessible to the coach and to cheer for their teammates. The area around the pool is called the "deck" and is most often off-limits to parents.
- A swimmer's event will be announced, usually over the loud speaker, and he/she will be asked to go to the starting block area.
- For 8 and under swimmers there is often a staging area they will report to where the "Clerk of Course" will help get the swimmers in order of their lanes and heats.
- Swimmers should check in with their coach before and after each race.
- Once your swimmer has completed all of their events you are free to go, but please make sure your swimmer checks out with the coach before you leave.

#### **Things to keep in mind:**

- Most pool buildings are warm and very humid, especially once they are packed with people and wet swimmers, so dress accordingly. Once you have attended a couple of meets all of this will become routine!
- Please feel free to ask our coaches or other GRAT parents any questions you may have.

**Most important: HAVE FUN!**