

Coaches' Meet Management Responsibilities

Pre-Meet Readiness (1 week+ out)

- Review and select meet entries and double-check cut times for any important/special events.
- Print out relays to make edits as the swim meet gets closer.
- Communicate with parents any necessary updates.
- Follow up with the Head Coach about the coaches scheduled for the meet, ask questions and concerns, and share your level of preparedness.

Pre-Meet Prep (Week leading into the meet)

- Prepare a coaching strategy specific to this swim meet on Monday before the swim meet.
 - Develop core skills to look at for this swim meet based on program goals.
- Hand out **optional** athlete goal sheets for the specific meet for Gold and up swimmers.
- Email out swim meet details **the Wednesday before the meet** at the latest with Warmup times, etc.
 - Remind parents that you will respond/discuss competition concerns at least 24 hours after the conclusion of the swim meet but not during.
- 2 practices before the swim meet, do a pre-meet warmup for Gold and down. If this is a championship meet, do this for all groups.
 - Review with swimmers the Meet Cheat Sheet For Swimmers, competitiveness indicators, coach expectations, and racing strategies

Pre-Meet Last Minute (Within 24 hours of the Meet)

- Double-check timer/volunteer needs
- Review team goals and any reminders to be aware of for the meet.
- If it is a championship meet – speak with athletes who will be on the relay for the next session in the meet. “I might be making a mistake here, but I think this is the best team for today.”
- Review the “Components of Effective Meet Coaches” doc. under Coaching Resources.

During The Swim Meet

- Arrive early enough to find some time to focus on your thoughts and quiet your mind.
 - Coaches should be there roughly 20 minutes before they expect swimmers to be there (30-45 minutes before warmup).
- Briefly review the Post Meet Coach Reflection and the Post Meet Team Reflection on the Coaches Hub to prime your thinking.
- Do a team meeting/speech with swimmers immediately before the meet officially starts (share when and where to meet with the swimmers at the appropriate time)
 - The team talks should be theme-based and can be different for each swim meet, but it is always focused on the swimmers' expectations, belief in themselves, and team trust. Draw inspiration from a range of sources i.e. (music, politics, history, business, and of course, sport).
 - Be sure the message is delivered with genuine emotion.
 - Be sure you have specific references to the team's core values.
 - Be sure it is short and meaningful
 - (Have an athlete give it sometimes!)
- Make brief general notes on core components as opposed to detailed written notes on each event unless it is the 200-400 IM. This allows you to focus on the flow of the swim meet.
 - You can utilize goal sheets that swimmers bring to you for the meet to provide individual meet feedback if you would like.

Observations During the Competition

- Watch swimmers from all teams in a relatively calm and dispassionate manner even under intense pressure.
- Discern patterns in a race or on deck and identify the contributions of the individuals at the swim meet.
- See whether the team and swimmers are attempting to carry out the team plan and/or race plan– and if not, why? (Maybe parents are telling them something different?)
- Remain composed and decide what changes can be made to improve performance.

Swimmer Pre-Race Feedback

- Be consistent and specific. Work to teach your athlete how to prepare for their race. Utilize the team's meet sheet cheat to teach them habits.
- Be careful of teaching a training mindset going into racing versus a free-spirited competitive mindset. If you provide technique, keep it to 1 thing.
- Remind swimmers to shake their competitors' hands at the end of their race.

Swimmer Post-Race Feedback

- Wait for the big celebration. Make sure the swimmers can rely on your emotional energy to be supportive and consistent regardless of performance.
- Start preparing postrace talk in the last seconds of the swimmer's race.
 - If great swim: emphasize concentration on the small details to sustain success and avoid getting complacent.
 - If bad swim: emotional talk to make an impact (fill the tank but don't lie and say a bad performance was good)
 - If morale is low switch to the "Fake it till you become it" strategy. "A bombardment of positive little actions to become who you want to be.
 - If it's a big disappointment focus on Reset and talk about it 24 hours later. Get through the swim meet and give them time to digest and process.
 - Always recognize quality effort regardless of the outcome
 - Encourage physical activity of some kind, some kids prefer to flush it out a little more to work out frustrations (cooldown). Teach them this.

Swimmers' Final Checkouts Feedback

- Identify and discuss mistakes with athletes right away so they can move on and focus on the next competition.
- Allow time and space for athletes to cool down physically and mentally.
- Remind athletes about appropriate post-comp behavior.
 - Congratulate opponents/teammates on their effort (and victory).
 - Thank and recognize officials.
 - Ensure that the competition area is clean (bench, warm-up area, and so on)

Post-Session/Meet

- Quick pause for coaches to calm down.
- Quickly debrief with coaches to ensure that the staff gives a consistent post-comp message.
- Perform quick walk-around to check the post-comp needs of athletes (e.g., anyone in need of special attention regarding physical or emotional distress)

- Attended admin responsibilities.
 - Gather all notes on swimmers/team.
 - Complete post-meet and coach reflection as needed.
 - Complete post-meet reporting as needed (e.g., report injuries and a paragraph or two blurb on performance highlights and notes on athletes that modeled behavior and effort).
- Do a final check-in with the coaching staff and athletes for any remaining items that require immediate attention.
- Perform a personal cool-down and get the swim meet out of your system (e.g., light physical activity, social time with coaches, family, or friends).

Day or Two Following The Meet

- Review and archive notes for swimmers/groups.
 - Send notes to the coaching staff if you were the primary coach at the meet/session.
 - Summarize a draft for individualized post-meet feedback of swimmers in Champs and up. Gold and down get a general list.
- Prepare your post-meet message for your group (typically the Monday or Tuesday after a meet)
 - Execute your special post-meet ritual for the groups (i.e. top 3 role models pick a treat)
 - Utilize the meet results.
 - **Recognize model behavior and effort.**
 - Identify strengths if the meet did not go well.
 - Identify weaknesses if the meet went really well.
 - **Allow athletes to address teammates and share their competition reflections.**
 - Use the post-meet message to start playing the “second game” (to motivate athletes for the next meet before it starts)