

What to Expect at a Meet

Below is a general overview of what to expect at meets & what is expected of our parents and any family/friends that attend. As a COLA parent, it is your responsibility to ensure you share this with your guests.

1. What do we need to bring?
 - a. At a minimum: COLA cap, goggles, COLA swimsuit (or tech suit **IF** instructed by the coaches to have one), towel, and a good attitude. Some swimmers pack an extra pair of goggles and a cap just in case.
 - b. Snacks & Water: Pack snacks & a water bottle for your swimmer. Some meets have snacks that can be purchased at concessions, but it is always best to bring some with you.
 - c. Optional: sharpie (to write event on your swimmer), highlighter & pen (to mark the heat sheet), cash for concessions & heat sheet, camping chair (see more information below on spectator seating).

2. When do we arrive?
 - a. Plan to have your swimmer to the pool 15 minutes BEFORE their warm-ups begin.
 - b. Warm-up and meet start times are sent out via email a couple days before the meet.

3. Timing:
 - a. If you have a swimmer competing, you are expected to sign up for a couple timing sessions or volunteer in another capacity. A sign-up link will be sent out prior to the meet.
 - b. If there isn't a sign-up link sent out prior to the meet, parents will need to ensure no parent times for more than 1.5 hours at a time. Parents will need to organize themselves and rotate out.
 - c. If you've never timed, talk to one of the COLA coaches & they will pair you up with someone that can teach you. Without timers and other volunteers, these meets cannot function.
 - d. If you are unable to time, please contact Coach Sarah or Coach Jen.

4. USA Swimming/LA Swimming Officials
 - a. These are the officials in the white shirts & name tags that officiate the meets.
 - b. Please do not walk in front of the officials while an event is in session or try to talk to them. If your child was DQ'd, please do not ask the officials why. The coach will go over it with your swimmer.
 - c. Do not walk in front of the main official calling the events. There are multiple wires that could be unplugged if people walk through the area. At the COLA pool, this area has the raised platform to the right of the back office double doors.

- d. Meet Marshal: Some meets will have Meet Marshals. They are there to help the meet run smoothly, have on orange vests, and are parent volunteers. Please listen to their instructions.
 - e. Clerk of Course: This is the area where swimmers report before their event to be arranged into their heat and lane assignments. Throughout some meets you will hear event numbers being called to go to the Clerk of Course.
5. Blocks: The raised platform at the end of the pool where the events begin.
- a. Parents are not allowed behind the blocks, unless they are timing.
 - b. Absolutely **NO** electronic devices, cameras, or recording equipment is allowed behind the blocks at anytime during the meet. This also includes the other end of the pool where swimmers will start for 25 yard or 50 meter events.
 - c. When a heat is about to start, it is important to make sure it is quiet behind the blocks. This allows the swimmers to hear and cuts down on false starts.
6. Swimmer Changing Rooms & Bathrooms:
- a. Adults/Parents/Spectators are not allowed into the swimmer changing rooms or bathrooms.
 - b. There are separate bathrooms for adults. Swimmers are not allowed to change in or use the spectator bathrooms.
7. Team Seating:
- a. Our swimmers generally sit as a team together. This cuts down on missed events & coaches having to hunt down our swimmers.
 - b. When there is bench/bleacher only seating for the swimmers, allow the swimmers to sit together as a team. Please do not take their seats.
8. Spectator Seating:
- a. Plan to bring a camping chair to the meet. A few meets allow chairs inside, but most ask you to set them up outside.
 - b. At large meets, you will need to come inside only for your swimmers' events and then head back outside. This allows everyone to have a chance to see their swimmer.
 - c. Many COLA families will bring tents to set up outside and we all try to sit together.
9. Sportsmanship:
- a. Encourage your swimmer to be a good teammate and practice good sportsmanship. Our swimmers are a team & one of the ways they show this is when they are cheering one another on during their events. A strong team encourages and builds one another up.
 - b. Understand that criticizing, name calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward the coaches, officials, and/or any participating swimmer will not be permitted or tolerated.

- c. How we (including parents & our guests) act at meets reflects on our entire team. One Team, One Family.
- 10. Coaching during the meets:
 - a. Before and after each of your swimmer's events, the coaches will want to speak to them. Please don't interrupt, let the coaches coach.
- 11. Heat Sheets:
 - a. These are either online or hard copies are for sale at the meet.
 - b. Most places only take cash for concession and heat sheet sales.
- 12. Swim Apps
 - a. Meet Mobile is an app that will have the meet results posted. This app can be purchased via your smartphone's app store.
- 13. The following documents can be found on the COLA website colaswim.org
 - a. COLA Parent Code
 - b. COLA Handbook
 - c. Glossary of Swimming Terms
 - d. First Meet Info