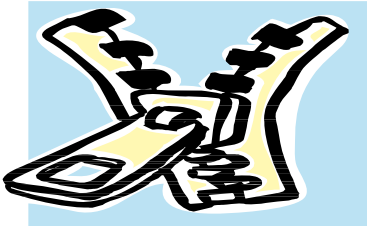


# Preparing For Your First USA Swim Meet

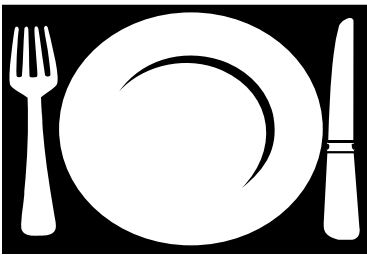
This handout is meant to help swimmers attending their first USA swim meet. It offers guidelines and information, as well as some USA rules and regulations

## NIGHT BEFORE THE MEET



**Pack your bag** the evening before the actual meet as then you won't forget something important. Pack two pairs of goggles, two suits, two towels, and two sweatshirts to stay warm between events. Also pack a deck of plastic playing cards for fun. **MAKE SURE EVERYTHING HAS YOUR NAME ON IT! EVERYTHING!**

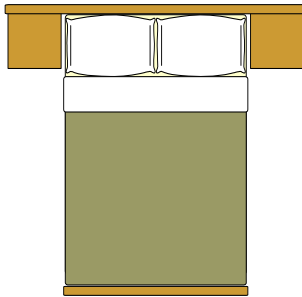
You may pack some snacks, but **NO GLASS CONTAINERS MAY BE BROUGHT INTO THE POOL AREA!**



**Eat smart** the night before, so stay away from foods high in fat, sugar, or protein -- so **DON'T** eat steak, eggs, bacon, whole milk, sausage, cookies. Instead, for dinner have a pasta dish (spaghetti, ravioli, lasagna) with vegetables and/or fruit. Chicken is ok, but stay away from all fried "fast food"

**Stay safe** the night before the meet, meaning no horseplay, wrestling, running around, or roughhousing. Think of all the time

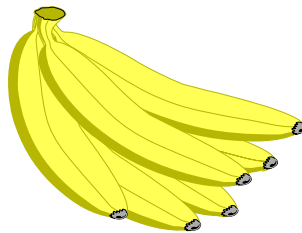
you've spent getting ready for this meet -- don't blow it all the night before!



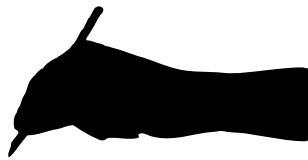
## **Go to bed at your usual time!**

Don't stay up late watching a scary movie or playing. Also, it's not a good idea to go to a sleepover the night before a big meet.

## MORNING OF THE MEET



**Eat smart again**, which for breakfast means pancakes, French toast, waffles (easy on the butter and syrup), unsweetened cereal (use skim or 1% milk), toast, bagels, fruit, and 100% fruit juices.



**Write your events** on the back of your hand the morning of the meet. Write it in ink or waterproof marker, and include the event number, stroke, and the distance.

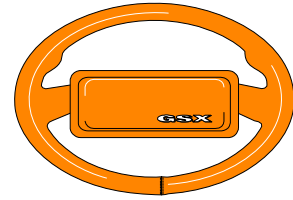
For example:

#7 -- 50 free

#15 -- 100 IM

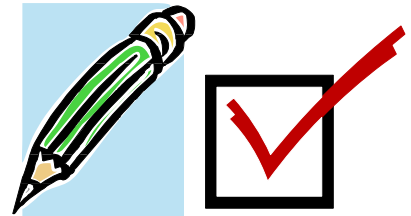
#23 -- 50 Fly

This way both you and your coach know what events you are going to swim, and you won't miss any of them!



**Leave a little early** for the meet as traffic, construction, and little emergencies may make you late. Try to arrive ten to fifteen minutes before the scheduled meet warm-up. Remember, some meets have split boy and girl warm-ups; arrive ten minutes before **YOUR** warm-ups.

## ARRIVING AT THE MEET



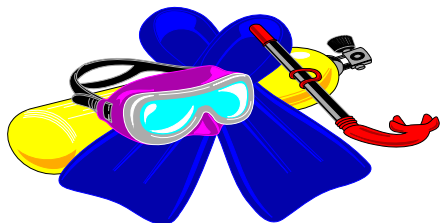
**Find the sign-in and check in:** At many meets there are "Sign in" or "Check in" areas. These are often simply the heat sheets spread out on a large table or taped to a wall. Follow the directions given to sign in, which may include **CIRCLING THE NUMBER NEXT TO YOUR NAME FOR EVERY EVENT THAT YOU ARE GOING TO SWIM**. If you don't sign in, you won't swim your events. Sign in only for yourself and not for a friend (you can get in trouble for that). Sign in for all the events you have written on the back of your hand -- if an event seems to be missing, let your coach know about it.

# Preparing For Your First USA Swim Meet



## Find the Clerk of Course area.

Since girls' events are usually first, this is especially important for girls. Usually the Clerk of Course is just a number of chairs or a set of bleachers set up near the pool. Swimmers go here to line up before their events. Usually the Clerk of Course runs 2 to 4 events ahead of the rest of the meet, so if event #1 is in the water, events 2 thru 5 are at the Clerk of Course!

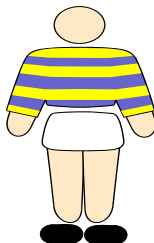


Find the team area with all the LESD bags and stuff, and put your stuff there. This is the place you go after you swim your events, waiting for your next one. It's also the place the coach will go when looking for everyone for relays. Remember to keep your bag zipped up so that nothing gets lost. When you are not swimming you should stay in the team area (NOT with your parents up in the stands). You can play cards or read or eat a snack or talk. If you need to see your parents in the stands, make it a short visit please.

## Parents, a special note to you:

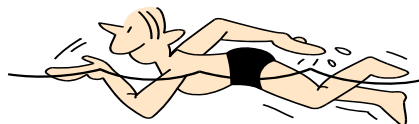
We'd like YOU occasionally walking through the bathrooms making sure that everyone their looks like they are supposed to be at a swim meet - - no suspicious characters! -- Especially at Cleveland State and Akron U.

The coaches also suggest that every swimmer "pair up" with another swimmer when leaving the team area to go to the bathroom, get something from concessions, or going to the swim shop area.



Find your coach! The coach will let you know what lane the team will be warming up in. You can also let him/her know of any problems (missing events, have to leave the meet early, etc.). Let your coach know then! Please!

## WARMING UP

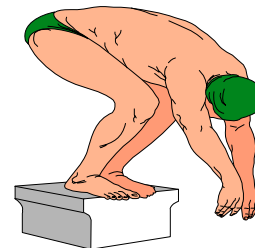


Warm up for your events with the team when it is announced that the pool is open for warm-ups. You **MUST** enter the water **FEET FIRST!** Do the meet warm-up that the coach has told you to do. Swim on the **RIGHT** hand side of the lane! If you get to warm-ups late, be prepared to start at whatever point the rest of the team is at in the warm-ups. The last 10-12 minutes of warm-ups is usually sprints from the blocks. These sprints are **ONE WAY ONLY!** When you finish a sprint you climb out of the water & walk back to the starting block.

After warm ups are over, get all your stuff and be ready to report to the clerk of course if your first event is on call.

The American national anthem will play at the start of the meet. Please stand at attention for it.

## THE SWIM MEET



Swimming your events: When you go to the clerk of course, take only your sandals, a sweatshirt, your goggles, and a towel -- **NO GAMEBOYS!** When you walk behind your starting block to get ready to swim, take off your sweatshirt, towel, and sandals. When you hear the **ONE LONG WHISTLE**, step up and onto your starting block. When the starter says to "take your mark", come down and **HOLD IT**. At the starting signal, swim your race.

After your race, get your time from the timer, get all the stuff you walked to the block carrying (sweatshirt, towel, sandals, goggles) and see your coach. **YOU NEED TO SEE YOUR COACH RIGHT AFTER YOUR RACE.** Your coach will tell you how to swim even faster next time you race that event. **LISTEN**, and try to do this next time you swim!

After you've swum your last individual event and before you leave the meet: **find out if you are on a relay, clean up the team area, and tell the coach that you are leaving.** If you **MUST** leave the meet early, **TELL A COACH!** **Remember, have fun but stay focused on your swims!**