

News For

SWIM PARENTS

Published by The American Club Swimming Association
2101 North Andrews Ave., Suite 107
Fort Lauderdale FL 33311

Mini-Meet!

There are several objectives we strive to accomplish in our Mini-Meets. The primary focus is on teaching young swimmers what to do, where to be, and what to think about at a swimming meet. It is also a good opportunity for new swim parents to find out what a swim meet is all about.

What a thrill to watch your child swim! We ask that you sit in the bleachers and stay clear of the sides of the pool. (Unless, you would like to be a timer – no experience required and the best seats in the house!) Your child will be under the care of the coaching staff during the whole time. All the swimmers will be in the same general area waiting for their next event. It is very important that children speak with their coach before their event and immediately afterwards in order to provide reminders and then to provide feedback. After children speak to the coach about their event they may visit with their parents but will need to return to the team fairly shortly if they have another event to prepare for. When you visit with your children tell them how much you love them and how proud you are of them. Please refrain from providing critical comments on your child's performance as this is the role of the coaching staff.

What's going on?

Children should first find their coach who will conduct a warm-up prior to the start of the meet. The purpose of the warm-up is to

loosed up muscles and tendons, get the capillaries opened up for improved blood flow, and to review skills. The amount of warm-up varies depending on training background. After warm-up the children will gather in an area with the coaching staff. A good role for parents at this point is to be sure their children have a warm towel. The general order of events is younger swimmers first, and girls before boys. Age groups are 8 & under, 9-10, 11-12, and 13 and over. There may be several "heats" of one event. For example, there may be fifteen 9-10 girls so we would run several heats of 5 or 6 girls at a time. In each heat there may be swimmers much faster or much slower than your child.

It is natural for parents to want their child to win the heat. There are three things coaches look for and at this level winning the race is the LEAST important. The first thing we look at is technique — starts, stroke, turns, pace, and finish. The second thing we look at is their time. Is it a best time? Finally we look at "racing." Racing means being competitive WITH other swimmers. Perhaps the race is for 5th place or perhaps it is for 1st place. In any case we like the swimmers to have fun racing. Losing is not a big deal – effort is.

We hope you have a good meet experience along with your children. Please visit with the coach if you have any questions.