

# Swim Meet Survival: 101

Welcome to Kanawha Swimming. Take it from us, you haven't lived until you've spent a sultry Monday night (or a blazing Sunday afternoon) at a JRAC swim meet. Best described as organized chaos, swim meets include many thrilling moments and much longer blocks of time waiting for same. But it's worth it. Really.

General advice is to get to meets on time, be ready for all sorts of weather and be prepared to help out. Befriend seasoned swim families who can help you figure out the ins and outs – and enjoy the swim team excitement.

## OVERVIEW

### Aquatics Handbook

Get acquainted with the Kanawha Aquatics Handbook you received at registration. (If you need one, please see a swim representative.) This book is full of useful and important information. It includes a meet schedule, daily practice times, schedule of all meet events and so much more.

### What events will my child be swimming?

Check the swim team bulletin board on Friday afternoons before a meet. Look up your child's name and write down the event numbers. *Note: don't be confused when you see Event #1 under your child's name. Please ignore it. This event number is computer generated and is only a place holder.*

### Be Rested and Ready

Swimmers should leave the pool after morning practice the day of the meet and spend a quiet afternoon. Eat an early dinner and bring nutritious snacks to the meet.

### What about rain/storms?

Swimmers should come to the meet venue even if there is rain. The meet referee decides whether to delay or postpone the meet. In the event lightning is seen or thunder is heard, the pool will be evacuated immediately and everyone must leave the pool area. According to JRAC policy, no meet may be cancelled or postponed prior to a one-hour delay. (For example, a meet scheduled for 6:30 p.m. cannot be cancelled before 7:30 p.m.)

### Parking

Parking is at a premium during home meets. Please respect one-way and no parking signs. Be respectful when parking in the neighborhoods around Kanawha.

## MEET EXPECTATIONS

1. Arrive early for swim meets. Arrival times will be announced by the coaches and will be posted online. Park in designated areas only.
2. Long-haired swimmers should wear a swim cap. Kanawha sells silicone caps for \$10 at both practices and meets. Bring an extra pair of goggles in case your child's pair breaks.
3. Get familiar with the structure of meets – the Aquatics Handbook is invaluable for this. Hint: each race is identified by the same event number in every meet. Girls' events have even numbers; boys' events have odd numbers. Mite relays are always the first races at every regular season meet (event 70 and event 80).

4. Bring a Sharpie pen to meets. Use it to write your child's event numbers on his/her hand. Label towels, goggles, swim team shirts, and swim caps so that you can find your child's belongings at the end of the night.
5. Pretend you are going camping. Bring extra clothes and towels to keep your swimmer(s) warm in the evening. Bring sunscreen to protect them from the hot afternoon sun. Folding chairs are also a good idea.
6. Bring extra food and drink, and money for the snack bar. Many teams also sell more substantial food at swim meets.
7. Younger children get restless between their races. Bring coloring books, electronic games, cards, board games, etc., to keep them occupied (but leave anything valuable at home).
8. Parents also get restless waiting at meets. Bring a book, newspaper, crossword puzzle, etc. Volunteer to help out at meets – the meets go by much faster when you have a job to do. Plan on being at a swim meet for 4-5 hours.
9. Please be friendly and welcoming to our guest swim teams. Remind your swimmers to be on their best behavior. Cheer for all the kids on all teams – they have all worked very hard!

#### **FLOW OF THE MEET**

**Warm-ups:** have your swimmer(s) arrive on time for the warm-up session. Warm-ups are especially important at away meets so your swimmer has a chance to get adjusted to a different pool.

**Card Table:** locate the KRA Card Table and listen to the announcer. When s/he calls your child's event number, have your child pick up his/her card and take it to the Clerk of Course. *Note: at home meets, the KRA Card Table will be next to the dive pool.*

**Clerk of Course:** when you hear the appropriate event announced (e.g.: "First call for Event #10"), help your swimmer find the Clerk of Course. The swimmer should remain in the Clerk of Course/Holding Area to await further instruction.

**Holding Area:** once a swimmer's card has been picked up at the card table and delivered to the Clerk of Course, swimmers will need to stand in a holding area while they wait for their event to be called. ***This is when your child most needs to behave well. If they are goofing off with other swimmers and not paying attention, they can easily miss their race. They have come too far to miss their event!***

**Benches:** volunteers will read the names of swimmers in the Holding Area. Swimmers proceed from the Holding Area to benches and remain there until they are directed to the blocks.

**Blocks:** there are usually two heats of swimmers at the blocks at one time to keep the meet moving. Volunteers will direct your swimmer through this area and onto the blocks. Before you know it, the race is over!

***Important: when your child is not swimming or in the holding area, s/he should be supervised by an adult.***

## **SWIM MEET NUTRITION SUGGESTIONS**

(From Nutritional Cheat Sheet Part II by Mike Mejia, M.S., C.S.C.S.  
Mike is one of the top strength-training writers in the country.)

### **What to bring:**

1. At least 32 oz. of water to drink during and after the meet.
2. No more than 16-20 oz. of sports drinks
3. Energy bars: try to stick with bars that have less than 10 grams of fat, and less than 35% of their calories from sugar (the lower the better). To calculate this: multiply the number of grams of sugar by 4 and then divide that number into the total calories. Some recommended brands include: Kashi TLC Bars and Odwalla Bars.
4. Whole grain pretzels, crackers and cereals.
5. Nuts, seeds and dried fruit (in limited quantity due to the relatively high sugar content).
6. Lower sugar fruits: strawberries, apples, cantaloupe, blueberries, raspberries and peaches.

### **What not to bring, or bring less of:**

1. Chips of any type. Most are loaded with fat and calories.
2. Goldfish, cheese nips, or any other types of crackers made with white, enriched flour.
3. White bagels and breads.
4. High sugar fruits: bananas, raisins, pineapple and grapes.
5. High sugar energy bars: many types of power bars fall into this category.
6. Fruit juices: too high in sugar and don't clear the gut as rapidly as sports drinks, possibly leading to stomach cramping.
7. Soda. This one's an absolute no-no!
8. Cookies, candy, gummy bears, or anything else along those lines.