

WST – Swim Parents’ Meet Etiquette

- The basic job of a swim parent (who is not volunteering) at a swim meet is to cheer for the swimmers.
- Remember that deck parents line the kids up to swim. **It is their job to line up the kids who are in the designated area.** They will NOT look outside of that area for your child. **It is your responsibility to tell your child to remain in the designated area for his/her age group and to ask his/her deck parent for permission before leaving that area.** If you notice that your child is not in the designated area 5 events before his/her swim, YOU need to find him/her and tell him/her to report to the deck parent immediately. If your child misses a swim, s/he will not be put in another race. If you feel that your child needs extra assistance getting lined up for races you may bring him/her to the deck parent for each race.
- Parents should NEVER enter the deck to talk to a coach during a meet. Any issue about which a parent needs to have a discussion with a coach should be brought to the coach’s attention via email and a mutually convenient meeting time should be identified so that during practice and meets the coaches can do their job effectively.
- Please remember to treat all volunteers, coaches, parents, family members, swimmers, EVERYONE with respect. Remember that the goal here is for the kids to have fun and be active. Let’s all support them in a positive way.

WST – Deck Parents’ Guidelines

Basic job description: *The deck parent has a copy of the meet events for the swimmers. The deck parent will line swimmers up at the blocks and get them motivated to swim.*

- Upon arrival at a meet the deck parents should see the coach for a copy of the list of events for our team’s swimmers.
- The deck parents should always work together – communication is key.
- Deck parents need to identify an area where they expect their swimmers to stay throughout the duration of the meet.
- Using the list of events, the deck parents should make sure that all swimmers in their age group are present at the meet (often work with coaches to do this). When doing so, tell the swimmers who the deck parents are, where the designated area for the age group is, and remind the swimmers that they are expected to be in that area for the whole meet. Let the swimmers know that if they need to leave the designated area (to visit the bathroom, see a parent, visit the snack bar, etc.) they must ask the deck parent BEFORE they do so and must be back at least 5 events (not heats) before their scheduled swim.

- The first event deck parents need to line kids up to swim is the medley relay. The order of the relay is back, breast, fly, free. For 8 & 10 and under swimmers, the back and fly swimmers need to go to the starting end of the pool and the breast and free swimmers need to go to the opposite end of the pool. For this case, one deck parent should go to each end of the pool with the appropriate swimmers. Swimmers 11 and up swim 50s so all should report to the starting end of the pool. Remember the boys and girls are mixed for relays so you will need to work with the other group's deck parents for relays.
- Deck parents should line their swimmers up in lane/heat order and make sure each swimmer knows what stroke, distance, event, heat, and lane they are swimming.
- After lining the kids up, the deck parents should go to the starting end of the pool and position each child in order in the right lane. (Except for 8u/10u relays, in which one deck parent should stay at each end of the pool.) Once all children are positioned, at least one deck parent needs to stay behind the blocks until all swimmers have entered the water. Watch the kids – make sure they get in the right lane. If there is an issue, resolve it with the lane timer and/or starter. If time seems tight to line up for the next race, one deck parent must stay at the blocks until all swimmers have entered the water and the other can go start assembling children for the next race. If there are any swimmers in the current race who will be in the next race as well, be sure to remind them to come right back to you in the designated area immediately after his/her race.
- It is NOT your job to find kids who are not in the designated area. It is your job to make sure kids in the designated area get to their swims on time.