



What the heck is a swim meet?

Hello swim families! With the Nelson swim meet coming up quickly (May 28th & 29th), the coaches thought it would be best to provide a little information regarding swim meets for new families, nervous swimmers, and families who may have forgotten exactly what a swim meet entails.

So, what is a swim meet? A swim meet is a competition where placements are determined by how quickly the swimmers swim their races. All swimmers race against other kids their own age from Castlegar, Nelson, Kimberly, Colville, Grand Forks, Creston, and sometimes other clubs from around the area, like the Revelstoke Aquaducks. Age groups are separated by divisions, which is why it is likely you will hear “div. 1, div.2,” etc.

Swim meets are a full-day activity and they can sometimes get confusing - which is fine! Coaches are always available to answer questions and so is the region. Chances are if you have a question during the swim meet, you can turn to your neighbour and they will most likely have an answer for you!

General Info:

Before the meet starts, swimmers will have warm up. Warm is typically a 20 minute session where the swimmers will get a chance to get a feel of the pool and warm up their muscles before a long day of racing. Also before racing starts, all teams will get together around the pool deck to do team cheers.

When the meet starts, you will hear a voice over dozens of speakers throughout the venue calling out event numbers and races. An example of what you will hear is: “Now marshalling event number 201, girls division 5, 50 butterfly.” What this means is swimmers in that event need to head to marshalling. There will also be a second and final call to ensure that swimmers don’t miss their races.

Marshalling is an area in the pool, in Nelson it will most likely be in the hallway that goes out from the change rooms to the pool, where swimmers wait for their race to come up. The area is directly across from the starting blocks of the pool, coaches will make sure to point it out to swimmers at warm up. At marshalling, the swimmer will find a volunteer who is holding a clipboard. The swimmer will wait in line with the other swimmers in their event and when it is their turn, they will politely state their first and last name and the volunteer will tell them which set of chairs to go to and which lane they will be racing in. From the time they enter marshalling and from the time they will be behind the blocks starting their race, the swimmer will move up the different sets of chairs until it is their turn. Basically, every time they move up a set of chairs, another race has started.

You can find your swimmers event number in a program. A program is a booklet which has organized lists of every event and every swimmer in that event. A super good

idea would be to bring a highlighter and a sharpie to the swim meet. In the program you can highlight your swimmers' races and then write their event number on their hand so they know what to be listening for on the speakers. Programs will be for sale at the swim meet, they typically cost around 5 dollars.

A race is started by 2 whistle blasts and a buzzer. The first whistle is for swimmers to get up on the starting block (diving board), the second is for the swimmers to prepare themselves to start. After the whistles, one official will say, "Take your marks!" and the other official across the pool will press the buzzer. At the buzzer, swimmers will dive off of the block and the race will begin!

An official is a volunteer that watches swimmers making sure that their strokes are legal. There are multiple rules in swimming relating to each stroke. If an official sees that a swimmer has made a technical error in their race, the swimmer will be disqualified. When a swimmer is disqualified (commonly people will say "DQ" or "DQ-ed"), they will not place in their event and the time that they swim will not be recorded in results.

★ https://teampages.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/548855/BCSSA_digi.pdf?X-Amz-Algorithm=AWS4-HMAC-SHA256&X-Amz-Credential=AKIA3I4H7LHCS7W4D36P%2F20220518%2Fus-east-1%2Fs3%2Faws4_request&X-Amz-Date=20220518T012150Z&X-Amz-Expires=21600&X-Amz-SignedHeaders=host&X-Amz-Signature=5ff536686f85443a386175e00008dd470c323506d990349f0f903a631a30f7a2 → this link will take you to the rule book that the BCSSA follows, if you're interested to learn the rules of speed swimming!

Results are posted by division and gender sometime after the races end. In Nelson, the results will most likely be posted in the area right before the door to the pool downstairs. Here, you are able to see how the swimmer placed in their event.

At the end of each day (Saturday and Sunday), there will be 200m relays. A relay is a team of four that each race a 50 in the pool. It's just like a relay in track, but of course, without the baton. When the first person touches, the second person will dive in the water and start their swim and so on and so forth. On Saturday there is the **medley relay.**

The medley relay order → 50m backstroke, 50m breaststroke, 50m butterfly, and 50m freestyle.

On Sunday there is the **freestyle relay.** Every member of the relay team swims 50m freestyle.

At the very end of the Sunday (after all relays) there is an award ceremony, usually outside. At award ceremonies, the top three swimmers in each division are awarded medals. Top three swimmers are determined through points. Swimmers earn points based on what place they get in their races; the higher the place, the more points they'll receive.

At awards they also will give ribbons for those who break meet records and also rank each team based on the total amounts of points they accumulate from each swimmer. Award ceremonies are not mandatory to attend, but it always helps to have the team there to cheer on their fellow teammates!

We hope to see a lot of you at the Nelson Swim Meet this weekend! It will be a super fun weekend and an awesome opportunity to see what competitive swimming looks like.