

More FAQ's - for FIRST YEAR SWIM PARENTS - from VETERAN PARENTS

Understanding swim team functions can be confusing for first year parents and children. A compilation of helpful hints and swim "lingo" is listed below to calm your nerves before that first big meet in October.

Q: What is the difference between a "dual" meet and others we've heard like "USA Swimming", "Districts" and "States" and when are there additional entry fees?

Dual league meets are the dual YMCA meets. They are held on Saturdays. A schedule will be posted around the 2nd week of practice. These meets typically start near the very end of October. They are head-to-head meets, one team against another, for teams from the Central New York YMCA league. In essence, they are the "regular season" for YMCA swimming. **All Stinger swimmers** are expected and encouraged to participate in the scheduled dual meets. Our swim league is comprised of teams from Cortland, Norwich, Auburn, Oneonta, Watertown, Oswego and Fulton. **There are no entry fees for dual meets!**

USA Swimming meets are those of another "league" called "USA Swimming." USA-Swimming is comprised of non-YMCA swim teams, for the most part. Because swimming under the USA Swimming flag is important to individual and team development, all Stinger swimmers are strongly encouraged and expected to register and participate in USA Swimming. The Stingers participate in the Niagara District under USA Swimming and are affiliated the Southern Tier Swim League. There is a separate registration fee for USA Swimming and when swimmers participate in USAS meets **there might be entry fees per event entered** & swimmers are required to find their own transportation to these meets.

"Y-Districts" takes place in early/mid February and is comprised of all YMCA swim teams in our league. It is an ALL day event in which ALL swimmers participate. Did we mention it was an ALL day event? It is an ALL day event. **Unless we host the meet, there are entry fees.** The date and location for Districts is determined sometime early in the dual meet season and will be announced as soon as we know. **All swimmers are expected and encouraged to swim at this meet. There are no "cut" times.**

"Y-States" is comprised of all New York State "Y" swim teams. This includes teams from New York City, Buffalo and Rochester. For most of our kids this is considered their "Super Bowl." To make "States," swimmers need to qualify with specific times. **The 2009 State Meet is March 20, 21, 22 and is being held in Buffalo. Qualifying times will be posted on the team bulletin board when they are available. Unless we host the meet (which we are not in 2009), there are entry fees for this meet.**

OTHER MEETS (like the Goodwill Meet): We occasionally attend other invitational meets. **There are typically entry fees for these meets** and people provide their own transportation.

Q: Competitive swimming is comprised of what strokes?

A wrong answer in December could mean being barred from the pool. The answer is four...freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly.

Q: What are "warmups" before every meet?

This simply means that your swimmer(s) must be at the pool one hour prior to the beginning of the meet or the wrath of the coach may be bestowed upon you! During warmups the swimmers do exactly that...warm up!

Q: How long are the league meets?

Long enough for husbands never to see another Saturday afternoon college football game again! League meets last between four and five hours, without travel time being considered for the away meets.

Q: I've been told that my child will be sometimes swimming "exhibition" events. What is that?

Exhibition events are held in Y-league meets only. To make a long story short, a swimmer swimming in an exhibition event can not earn points for the team but they give every swimmer the chance to "strut their stuff" and improve their times. And believe us, the coach will be watching!

Q: How long does my son/daughter have to wait between their events at a meet?

It varies. Expect an average of 30-45 minutes between each of your swimmer's events. Small, nutritious snacks during this time is a must!

Q: What "helpful hints" can be given to enjoy an entire meet?

1. Get your swimmer and yourself to the warmups on time. This will keep the coaches off your back and get you a good seat. The Cortland "Y" pool becomes VERY small at meet time.
2. Do not wear heavy clothing inside the pool area unless you want to pass out from heat exhaustion.
3. Volunteer as a timer. It is the best seat in the house, bar none.
4. Get into it! These kids swim 4-5 miles a week so a little support goes a long way. Go STINGERS!

Q: Will we know how to get to the sites hosting our "away" meets?

For parents of younger children, caravans behind the bus are the norm...Most times, parents will car pool and tail the bus to the away site. For those parents that cannot follow the bus and plan on meeting at the away site later, maps are provided during the week. Maps are also available at our Web site: <http://www.thestingers.org/> We haven't lost a parent yet!

Q: What's the scoop concerning the bus and away meets?

All swimmers MUST TAKE the team busses to away meet sites and are strongly encouraged to return the say way. Each bus is chaperoned by two, calm, even-tempered, understanding, patient, volunteering parents along with the coaches. Swimmers may eat and drink on their way to the away site.

The return to the "Y" after the meet makes a pit stop at McDonald's, so slip your swimmer a "fiver" for a burger and fries. Coaches will collect money prior to the trip to keep it all together.

Q: What is the "BOARD" and the "Web"?

The bulletin board, located inside the pool area is THE MOST IMPORTANT AVENUE FOR KEEPING UP TO DATE WITH SWIM TEAM ISSUES, SCHEDULES, EVENTS AND EVERY OTHER BLESSED THING ASSOCIATED WITH CORTLAND SWIMMING!

Also, please read the e-mails sent out and check the Web page:

<http://www.thestingers.org/>