

The night before...

- Pack your bag.
- Check the club website for gala information and race entries details.
- Before a competition eat plenty of carbohydrate (rice, pasta, potatoes, bananas, porridge) the day before, and stay hydrated.
- Get a good night's sleep

What to bring to a Gala...

- Make sure all belongings have your name on it.
- At least 2 swimsuits. It's not a good idea to spend the day in wet togs.
- 2 club hats (a spare hat at least).
- 2 sets of goggles. Goggle straps fatigue with time so it's a good idea to have separate goggles for racing. And make sure your **goggles are tight** enough so that when you dive in, they don't come off.
- Club t-shirts (if you don't have a club t-shirt... all swimmers must wear a t-shirt).
- Shorts, tracksuit - you need to keep warm between races, even in the pool.
- Water bottle already filled (write your name on it!).
- At least 2 towels (if there for a full day).
- Flip flops, pool shoes or runners (for around the poolside). Floors and stairs become slippery during the day and can be a hazard for those in bare feet.
- Plastic bag to keep your dry cloths in.
- Bring as little as possible. Valuables should be left at home.

On the day...

- Eat something for breakfast, even if it seems too early to be hungry. Don't experiment with new foods on the day of a gala – choose something you know you like and you know agrees with you.
- Arrive on time.
- Report to your coach/team manager.
- We encourage parents to sit together if possible once they drop their swimmer off (the pool deck is normally for officials, coaches, team managers and swimmers only).

- If you are going to be late, please let the team manager & coach know prior to the gala (remember, coaches will be busy organising swimmers the morning of a gala, so its best practice to reach out to the team manager and squad rep as well on the day to make sure messages are received).
- If on the morning your swimmer can't swim (sick etc) please contact the team manager. Coaches prepare a "scratch sheet" for the day, normally about 15 or 20 minutes into the warm up session. Coaches will scratch swimmers that are not able to attend. This ensures a smoother and quicker running gala, so in everyone's best interest.
- Often a programme of events can be purchased on the way into the venue. For each event, this will list all swimmers taking part and the order in which they have been seeded.
- Warm Ups are **compulsory** and swimmers must attend.
- Swimmers, speak to the team manager to figure out when your race is. They will have heat sheets with event number, heat number and lane number.

For your race...

- The team manager will have told you your event number, heat number and lane number.
- Your race will be called. You will report to the Call Room where a call steward will line you up for your race by heat and lane number. **Listen** for your name.
- As you wait for your race, listen to the starters whistle and watch the heats before you.
- Focus on your race starts, turns and finishes and anything else your coach has told you.
- When your heat lines up behind the blocks, give your name to the timekeeper to make sure you are in the correct lane.
- Leave your gear on the chair in front of the time keepers while you swim.
- The starter will blow their whistle 3 times, 2 short bursts and a long whistle. On the long whistle stand on the block (enter the pool if BC) and get ready to dive/start your race.
- The starter will say 'Take Your Marks' then either blow a whistle or sounds a beeper to start the race.
- Always finish strong into the finish, especially if there is electronic timing (yellow pads at the finish); don't be soft with the finish as you need to make sure you stop your electronic lane clock.
- Wait till the last person in your heat finishes before you get out of the pool. **Always** leave by the side of the pool. Sometimes the starter will start the next heat before you leave your lane, if so, just move to the side of the lane rope so as not to disturb the next swimmer starting.
- Once out of the pool, get your time from the time keeper. Don't forget your gear.
- **Report back to the coach** with your time and for feedback on your race. Do not go back to your parents first.
- Dry off, and put some warm clothes on, plus shoes.

- Focus on your next race. If you think its your last race and wish to leave make sure you check with your coach or the team manager before going.

Food and Drink...

- Our swimmers are encouraged to eat healthily.
- Bring pasta, rolls/sandwiches, bananas, breakfast/snack bars. Pancakes are also a great energy food. After racing you have used up energy and need to replace it with something.
- Bring water (write your name on your bottle) with you for sipping during the gala, as most pools are very warm and it's easy to get dehydrated.
- Pasta followed by fruit makes a good lunch and try to eat as soon as the lunch break starts so your body has a chance to start digesting your food before the afternoon session begins. Lunch break will be around 30min to an hour. If you leave the pool deck ensure you know when the next session starts and keep an eye on the time.
- Keep eating healthy snacks throughout the day and drink plenty of fluids.
- Try not to eat greasy foods (burgers, chips and doughnuts) and fizzy drinks, keep treats to a minimum.

Nerves are good, and swimming fast is important but most of all **HAVE FUN**.

Any further questions please reach out to your squad coaches.