

Central Iowa Aquatics: Swim Meets

Swim Meet Overview

CIA participates in many different types of swim meets. A meet schedule for the team is available for all swimmers and may be picked up at registration, at practice, or by asking a coach. CIA hosts several meets a year. CIA will also attend other in-state meets as well as out of state meets. Swim meets provide an opportunity to show off the skills learned and perfected at practice. Meets also provide motivation and incentive for practice. Individual improvement, goal achievement, and the development of a championship attitude are the goals of CIA swimmers at meets. USA Swimming sanctions all meets CIA participates in. This ensures certain standards of officiating, safety, and fairness are observed. All swimmers attending these meets are members of USA-Swimming.

Philosophy of Competition

Central Iowa Aquatics attempts to provide challenging, yet success-oriented competitive situations for swimmers of all ages and abilities. The following policies outline CIA's philosophy:

- CIA emphasizes competition with oneself. Winning ribbons, medals, or trophies is not our main goal. Even if a swimmer finishes first, but has swum poorly in comparison to his/her own past performances, he/she is encouraged to do better. The individual's improvement is CIA's primary objective.
- Sportsmanlike behavior is of equal importance of improved performance. All the coaches teach swimmers how to behave like a champion when the swimmers have both a "good" and a "bad" swim. Respect for officials, congratulations to other competitors, encouragement to teammates, determined effort, and mature attitudes are examples of behaviors praised and rewarded by the CIA coaching staff.
- A swimmer is praised for improving his/her stroke or time. It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's responsibility to provide love and encouragement that bolster the swimmer's confidence along the way.

Meet Schedule

Most meets take place on weekends. These meets may be one day, two days, or two and a half day meets. Some meets have all age groups participating in one session. These are usually the one day meets. Some meets are divided into two sessions per day, with specific age groups participating in each session. These meets are usually the two day meets.

Types of Meets

- ☞ Some meets are open to all swimmers and some meets have time standard requirements in order to participate. The open meets allow any ability of swimmer to participate. The meets that have time standard requirements are more selective in what swimmers may be eligible. These types of meets set time standards and in order for a swimmer to participate in the meet, the swimmer must have the required time standard in the event that he/she would like to swim.
- ☞ Some meets are timed finals and others are preliminaries/finals. At a timed final meet, all events are final. Each event is seeded from slowest to fastest and the order that the swimmer finishes each race is the place that the swimmer receives. At a prelim/final meet, swimmers need to develop a strategy to their swimming. Points and standings are only awarded to those swimmers that make it back to swim at finals. So at prelims, a swimmer must swim fast enough to make it back to finals, but still have a reserve left to swim again at finals. At finals, each event has 2 heats, consolation finals and championship finals. At prelims, if a swimmer finishes in the top 8, he/she will swim in the championship final. If a swimmer, at prelims, finishes 9th-16th, he/she will swim in the consolation final. The best that a swimmer can finish if he/she is in the consolation final is 9th. The worse that a swimmer can finish if he/she is in the championship final is 8th. So it's a goal of every prelim/final swimmer to make it to the championship final. During the prelims, the results are posted within ½ hour of the conclusion of the event. If a swimmer does not wish to swim in a final swim he or she may "scratch" the event and not be penalized. This must take place within a half hour of the posting of the preliminary results. Therefore, within approximately 1 hour of the end of an event, a swimmer should know if they have made finals. A swimmer should never leave the meet without making sure if they are a finalist or an alternate. United States Swimming rules dictate that if a swimmer makes a finals event and fails to show up they are bared from participating in the remainder of the meet (individual events and relays). Alternates should check with his/her coach about attending finals.
- ☞ The CIA coaching staff works to match up swimmers with the different types of meets in order to both challenge swimmers and to increase the likelihood of a positive meet experience. It is recommended that swimmers participate in at least one or two meets per month. For a swimmer going to a particular meet, it is a joint effort between coach, athlete, and parent in deciding which events a swimmer will swim. Swimmers are expected to participate in all CIA-hosted meets. For out of town meets, a coach will be present if there are more than 8-10 swimmers participating in the meet. The head coach will determine what coaches go to which meets.

- ⌚ The season, which runs from September through March, is considered the short course (25 yard) season. All meets are swum in a 25 yard pool. The season that runs from April through August is considered the long course (50 meter) season. Most of the meets in the summer are swum in a 50 meter pool. Throughout both seasons there are many meets to choose from. Both seasons culminate in a state championship meet.
- ⌚ In the short course season, there are separate 12 and Under Championships and 13 and Older Championships. These are held on different weekends, and hosted by different clubs. During the long course season, there is a single State Championship meet. In order to swim at these meets, each swimmer must have a qualifying time, "Q" time, in any event that he/she wants to swim. These "Q" times are available from the coach. Throughout the seasons, each swimmer's goal is to try and make a "Q" time. Once a swimmer achieves a "Q" time, this time is good for the entire time that a swimmer is in that specific age bracket. If a "Q" time is not achieved in an event throughout the season, the week before both short course and long course competition is the Regional Meet. The Regional Meet is a Q- meet which means that a swimmer can only swim the events that he/she does not have a "Q" time in. If a swimmer achieves a "Q" time at the Regional Meet, this event can be swum at the state meet. All swimmers who have qualified for the state championships are expected to attend these meets and represent CIA. This is beneficial for both the team and for the individual, for it is at the end of the season, when swimmers are best prepared for the final competition of the season. The 12 and under meet is held on one weekend and the 13 and older meet is held on the next weekend.
- ⌚ In both the short course and long course state meets, the 12 and under meet is a timed final meet. Each event that is swum has points determined by how a swimmer finishes. At the end of the meet, the top 3 swimmers for each age group are awarded with a trophy.
- ⌚ In both the short course and long course state meet, the 13 and older meet is a prelim/final meet where each swimmer can swim up to 6 events. It is a 3 day meet. Each day has prelims in the morning with finals each evening.
- ⌚ In addition to state meets, there are other meets which require tougher time standards than "Q" times. Zones is the highest age group meet with a time requirement of AAA in any event swum at Zones. The Zone Meet is only offered in the summer the weekend after Long Course State. The Zone Meet is swum in a 50 meter pool. Sectionals and Nationals are non-age group meets that have even higher time standards than Zones. A swimmer would need to check the USA-S calendar to determine the dates of these meets.

Signing up for a Meet

When CIA receives a meet invitation, copies are made available to swimmers and can be picked up at practice. Each meet entry form consists of a cover sheet which explains the specifics and a schedule of events which explains the events taking place at specific sessions of the meet. Generally, there are entry limits as to how many events each swimmer can swim per day and for the whole meet.

To enter a meet:

1. A swimmer needs a meet entry form and a CIA meet envelope. Both of these are available at practice.
2. At the top of the envelope, the swimmer's USA-S ID, last name, first name, middle initial, and age should be filled out.
3. After looking at the schedule of events and the required number of events that a swimmer can swim, decide what events the swimmer wants to swim.
4. Using the schedule of events, place the number of the event that the swimmer wants to swim by the event on the envelope. Make sure you have put this under the Event # column on the envelope.
5. Then if the swimmer has swum the event before, place the swimmer's best time next to the event. Make sure that this time is put under the Time column on the envelope. If the swimmer has never swum that event before, put NT in the time column. This stands for "no time". If you forget your swimmer's time, CIA maintains a swimmer/performance database. CIA asks that the envelope be filled out as a means of double-checking the database. CIA maintains in its database only those times achieved at USA-S sanctioned meets.
6. Next, fill out the name of the meet.
7. On the entry form, there is a due date for the sign up for the meet. Place this date on the envelope. This date is very important. Getting the entry envelope in by this date assures your chances of getting into the meet. Also, this gives the coach ample time to enter your swimmer's times accurately into the meet. When the due date is missed, there is a late fee and a possibility of not getting into the meet.
8. There is a fee for each event entered at a meet. On the entry form, the fee of each event is listed. This fee should be written on the envelope and multiplied by the number of events chosen to get a total.
9. There is also a splash fee for entering the meet. This is also listed on the entry form right below the fee for each individual event. This fee should be written on the envelope. CIA also charges a processing fee. This fee is \$7.00 and should be already written on the envelope. If it isn't, please write \$7.00 in the space by Processing Fee.
10. Sometimes, CIA takes a team trip. This is only offered to swimmers 13 years and older. When there is a team trip, there are more fees. If there is no team trip, just leave this blank.
11. Once the total meet fee is calculated, please place payment for the meet in the envelope and seal it. Fees must be paid at the time of entry.
12. There is a meet entry drop box at Central Campus. Please place meet entry envelopes in this mailbox. Please do not hand the envelope to the coach.

13. If there is ever a question about how to enter a meet, please either ask a coach or call Mary Studer at 964-4778 or email her at maryteach@mchsi.com. CIA will be providing a mentor for both new swimmers and families.

Swim Meets

Before the meet starts:

- Arrive at the pool at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time begins. This time will be listed in the meet information handed out to all CIA swimmers
- Upon arrival, find a place to put your stuff. The team usually sits in one place together, so look for some familiar faces.
- Find the coach and let him know that you have arrived at the meet.
- Check to see what events you are swimming. Some swimmers write each event-number on their hand. This helps him/her remember what events he/she is swimming and what event number to listen for.
- Get your cap and goggles and report to the coach for warm-up instructions. It is very important for all swimmers to warm-up with the team. Swimmer's bodies are just like cars on a cold day-he/she needs to get the engine going and warmed-up before he/she can go all out.
- After warm-up, go back to where your towel is and prepare for the meet. This would be a great time to make sure that you go to the bathroom and/or get a drink.
- According to USA rules, parents are not allowed on deck unless they are serving in an official capacity. Similarly, all questions concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the coaching staff. They, in turn, will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
- A heat sheet is usually available for sale in the lobby or concession area of the pool. There is a fee for the heat sheets. The heat sheets list all swimmers in each event in order of "seed time". When the team entry is sent in, each swimmer and his/her previous best time in that event is listed. If the swimmer is swimming an event for the first time, he/she will be entered as a "no-time" or "NT". A "no-time" swimmer will most likely swim in one of the first heats of the event.

During the Meet

- A swimmer's event number will be called, usually over the loudspeaker. A swimmer will either be asked to report behind the blocks or to the clerk of course. The clerk of course will usually line up all the swimmers and take them down to the pool in the correct order. Swimmers should report with his/her cap and goggles. Generally, girls events are odd-numbered and boys events are even-numbered.
- The swimmers swim their race.
- After each swim, the swimmer should go immediately to the coach. The coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer.

After the Meet

- When a swimmer has completed all of his/her events, he/she and their parents get to go home. Make sure, however, you, as a parent, check with the coach before leaving to

make sure your swimmer is not included on a relay. It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim on a relay where your swimmer is expected to be a member and he/she is not there.