

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the difference between A & B Meets?

A: A Meets are generally held on Saturday mornings and are the meets that count towards our MCSL league standing points. B Meets are held on Wednesday evenings, and are not scored for MCSL points. However, ribbons are awarded in both meets and all times are recorded for our team information.

A Meet rules limit the number of entrants per event to 3 per team; therefore, our coaches tend to schedule the 3 swimmers with the 3 fastest times in each event for A Meets, with each swimmer limited to 3 events (the IM does not count as one of the 3, nor do relays) total in any given meet. Times are evaluated every week to give each swimmer an opportunity to demonstrate improvement and compete in A meets. For all ages, six freestyle swimmers will compete.

In B Meets, everyone has the opportunity to swim -- there is no limitation on the number of swimmers each team may enter in a given event.

Q: How do I know if my child is swimming in an A Meet or a B Meet on a given week?

A: The coaches will decide by Thursday evening which swimmers will be entered in the Saturday A Meet. The entries will be posted at the pool and on the website, and it is the swimmer's responsibility to check the list for their name. **IT IS VITAL THAT YOU INFORM THE COACHING STAFF BY THURSDAY MORNING IF YOU WILL BE OUT OF TOWN & THEREFORE UNAVAILABLE FOR A MEET!** In case of illness, inform the coaching staff ASAP if you feel you will be unable to attend. Lineups cannot be changed after being given to the opposing team the morning of the day before an A meet, so please do not let your child be entered in a meet they are not planning to attend. This will cause the team to lose points as we will be unable to substitute a swimmer.

Everyone is eligible to swim in B Meets and encouraged to do so. However, if you swim an event in an A Meet, you cannot enter the same event in the immediately subsequent B Meet. For example, if a swimmer swims 8 & Under Boys 25 Free, 25 Fly, and 25 Back in an A Meet, at the subsequent B Meet, he may only enter the 25 Breast, not any of the 3 events he swam the prior A Meet.

The specific entries for B Meets are not generally posted in advance although sign ups for the B meets are on Monday. Every swimmer can swim as many events as they want, as long as they are eligible.

Q: How do coaches choose among the swimmers for the A Meet Entries?

A: Generally speaking, the coaches make their choices by times. In each A or B Meet event a child enters, their times for each event are recorded in a database maintained by our team's automation representative, and the coaches consult these lists to make their decisions. The times recorded at Time Trials will be used to help make decisions for entries at our first meet. That's why it's important for all swimmers (except Pre-team) to attend the Time Trials. We need to record everyone's baseline times.

With the goal of winning meets (i.e., scoring points) we obviously want the 3 children entered in each event that have the best chance of winning at A Meets. The higher the finishing place, the greater number of points earned. However, different circumstances can also come into play, including injury, vacations and other schedule conflicts, etc., that may influence the coaching staff's decisions on A Meet entries. Never assume your swimmer will not qualify for a Saturday meet. Instead check the bulletin board every Thursday to see if your child is scheduled to swim that Saturday.

Q: What if I can't make it to a Saturday Meet?

If you cannot come to a Saturday meet, coaches should be notified in writing as far in advance as possible. Please fill out the vacation form and leave in the coaches' folder. It is crucial that the coaches know of any potential Saturday absences BEFORE Friday. This policy is necessary because the Head Coach is allowed to make only 3 line-up changes after noon on Friday. Additionally, after 8:50 a.m. on Saturday morning, the Head Coach is not allowed to make any changes in the line-up at all, which can result in lost points and lost opportunities for others to swim the meet.

Q: What exactly is a Time Trial?

A: The Time Trial (scheduled for the second Saturday in June.) is a mock meet. Only our team participates, but the meet is run according to the schedule and rules of a regular A Meet. This process has many purposes. It allows children, many of whom are new to swimming, an opportunity to see what it's like to go up to the starting line of a race, listen for the instructions of the referee and starter, and legally start their race. The swimmers will be able to record times for each event having been performed in "meet conditions" to establish their baseline entry times for future meets. In addition, this is a great opportunity for parents to learn what a meet is like and to learn or hone their skills at officiating a real meet. First-time parents are encouraged to work as timers at the Time Trials so that they too can become accustomed to meet conditions.

Q: What are Relay Carnival and Divisionals?

A: The Relay Carnival meets consist entirely of relays. All six teams in the Division enter one team in each event. There are a total of 22 events. The 2009 "A" A tentative line-up is posted one week before Relay Carnival, and it is finalized the Sunday before. The line-up is made in a similar manner to line-ups for "A" meets. As in all sports, coaches must sometimes make subjective decisions. The final meet line-up and make-up of relay teams is at the coaches' discretion. Please consult the Head Coach regarding any questions you might have about line-ups. There is also a "B" Relay Carnival, The final meet line-up and make-up of relay teams is again at the coaches' discretion. Please consult the Head Coach regarding any questions you might have about line-ups.

In the Division Championships, dubbed "Divisionals", two swimmers per event per age-group are entered in the meet. All six teams in the division compete. Since there are 2 heats of each event, the meet begins at 8 a.m. rather than 9 a.m. Although swimmers who qualify for Divisionals are among the fastest in their age-group, it is never wise to assume your child will not swim in Divisionals. Swimmers' times tend to change frequently as the season progresses, and vacation schedules or unexpected illnesses also change line-ups. When in doubt, it is always best to consult a Head Coach.

Q: What are Long Course and All Stars?

There are 3 league invitational meets. The first, the Coaches' Invitational Long Course Meet, is run by the league's coaches. The fastest 8 swimmers in the county in each event are invited to swim twice their event's distance in a long course (50 meter) pool. Qualifying for the meet is quite difficult and is considered an honor. The two other invitational meets are the Individual All Stars Meet and All Star Relays Meet, held the last weekend of the swim season. Generally, the first place relay team in each event at each division's relay carnival is sent to the All Star Relays Meet. All Star Individuals are based on All Star nominating times. The fastest 16 swimmers and 3 alternates with All Star nominating times are chosen for each event from the entire MCSL. The nominating times are listed in the MCSL Handbook as well as the MCSL website at (www.mcsl.org).

Q: How will I know if practice or a swim meet is canceled due to weather?

A: Safety of our families is of the utmost importance. In case of inclement weather, it is the job of the pool operator to determine the safety of entering the water. Meets and practice are not usually cancelled because of rain only. Generally speaking, if thunder is heard or lightening is spotted, there is a mandatory delay of 30 minutes in pool activities and all in attendance must seek cover and the pool operators close the pool. In case of a meet, the Meet officials and Team Representatives will determine whether a meet is to be delayed or called off due to bad weather.

Q: What if my child does not want to swim in meets?

There are some children, especially young or newer swimmers, who do not want to participate in any meets. This is fine. The coaches will encourage swimmers to try a meet when they are ready for it. Usually, for developmental team members, this happens for the last couple of 'B' meets.

Q: How does my child get a swim ribbon?

Your child will get a place ribbon if he or she finishes in the top six in an "A" meet or in a "B" meet. "A" meet ribbons are given out at the team lunch after the meet. "B" meet ribbons are given out at the pep rally on Friday morning. Beginning with the second meet of the season, your child may also get a "Personal Best" ribbon if they improve their time from the first meet. No "Personal Best" ribbons will be issued in the first "A" or "B" meets. Ribbons will be given out at the team pep rally or placed in your family folder at the pool for pick-up by Monday or Thursday after a meet if you are not at the pep rally.

Q: What is an IM?

IM's are Individual Medleys which are comprised of all four individual events. For example, a 100M IM consists of 25 meters of butterfly, back, breast & freestyle in that order. A 100 M Medley Relay consists of our swimmers each swimming one of the four strokes.

Q: Can my child leave the meet after his/her events are completed?

Everyone should try and stay until the end of the meet to cheer on their teammates. In addition, the three fastest freestyle swimmers in each age group swim a relay at the very end of the meet. Please do not leave because your child may be asked to swim in the relay.

Q: How are the age groups determined?

The cutoff date for determining the age groups is June 1. If a swimmer was born June 1 or before, he/she will swim with the older group. If the swimmer was born on June 2 or after they swim with the younger group.

Q: What if my child has to miss a practice or meet?

It is our hope that all swimmers will come to every practice and be available for every meet - then reality sets in!!! Of course families take vacations during the summer. As your child advances on the team, you will find that you'll be scheduling your get-aways for August, when the season is over. But in the meantime, it's not the end of the world if you are going away during the season. Remember, however, that your coaches and teammates are counting on you to come to practice and meets if you are in town. Be sure to communicate VERY CLEARLY with the coaches if you are going to be absent on a meet day.