

## Helpful Hints on How to Put on a Meet

Putting on a swim meet or open water swim can be a lot of work, but like most major undertakings is easier if you have a few people working together, dividing up the tasks that need to get done.

Let us assume that you've got a pool with the necessary lane lines, starting blocks, appropriate depth, etc., and that you've got the sanction stuff handled. That means you have meet information ready to distribute.

### Getting Word Out

Getting word out is the first thing you need to do. If you hold a meet or open water swim every year around the same time, people will start putting it on their mental calendars. Even so, you still need to publicize your event. This is in fact one of the requirements of our LMSC's incentive system.

A good way to publicize your meet or open water swim is to send an electronic copy of your meet information to Dick Brewer who runs the Dixie Zone website which publicizes meets. He has a regular distribution list that goes out across the region. There is also a site on the USMS homepage for submitting your meet to the USMS calendar of events.

If you want to mail out meet information, you might ask meet directors from our LMSC for a copy of their mailing list. You also could go to our Southeastern LMSC website to find contact addresses for team representatives in our area, and send them copies of your meet information. In addition, you should send your information to our Southeastern Splashes newsletter editor, Katherine Clark, who can help publicize your event.

### Getting Organized

There are a number of things you need to do to get ready for the meet, and you should do these well in advance.

#### First the basics:

- You need officials and timers. Your local USA Swimming club might be able to help you out.
- You need somebody to
  - mail out the meet info
  - receive entries
  - deposit entry fees to your team account
  - enter entries into the computer system
  - print heat sheets
  - print timers' sheets (names of every swimmer swimming in a particular lane with a space for the timer to record stop-watch time)

- You also need somebody to supply food and drink to your timers and officials. Well fed workers are happy workers. This is a cost of doing business, and factor that into your meet registration fee.
- You need to have somebody at the registration desk to check swimmers in, give them copies of heat sheets, and answer questions.
- You need lifeguards, though in all likelihood the facility you are using will provide lifeguards as part of the fee for using the pool.

### Beyond the basics

- You might want to run a concessions stand to sell food and drink to swimmers, or invite your local age group team to do so.
- You might want to invite a swim gear company to set up shop and sell suits, goggles, and other essentials. If your meet becomes popular, such companies will pay 10% of their proceeds to the host team.
- You might want to design, print and sell t-shirts
- You might want to host a social. Some teams do this at the home of one of their swimmers, and cater the food and drink. Others use restaurants.
- You probably need to order ribbons and trophies. These are surprisingly expensive. Some meet directors provide ribbons for 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> place, others through 8<sup>th</sup> place. If you provide ribbons, do not print them with a specific year so that ribbons can be re-used the next time you host a meet.
- It is becoming increasingly common for meet entries to be posted on the web in advance of the meet as “Psych sheets.” This has the advantage of having people identify mistakes in entries that can be corrected before the heat sheets are printed.