



# ***SWIMMER'S GUIDE TO COMPETITIONS***

## **PLAN YOUR YEAR**

At the start of each season, you should look through the club calendar, highlight competitions which you think you should attend and consult with your coach. You

must give yourself the opportunities to gain accredited times in as many events as possible and should aim to attend as many appropriate competitions as possible. **Speak to your coach** if you have any queries. Remember, results at one competition can open up other opportunities.

## **GET YOUR PARENTS ON BOARD**

You cannot do this without the support of your parents, and the last thing they want sprung on them is that you have to get to the other end of the country for a meet the following day. Show your parents what you hope to do during the year, make sure they sign your meet acceptance slips and know about the meets coming up. You need your parents to help with transport, team managers, officials and as supporters.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

- As a representative of Upper Deeside A.S.C. you are expected to maintain a high standard of behaviour.
- Upper Deeside t-shirt should be worn at poolside, if you wear a cap it must be a club one. **You will not be allowed to attend a medal presentation unless you are wearing club kit.**
- You should not leave poolside without the coach's permission.
- Be a good competitor and congratulate your opponents either at the end of a race or at a presentation.
- You will be expected to attend finals in order to support your team-mates.
- If you are selected to represent South Aberdeenshire Squad (SAS) at competition, you will be expected to wear SAS kit. Upper Deeside kit should not be worn when representing SAS. SAS kit is not acceptable when competing for Upper Deeside.
- If the team is staying away from home, you are not allowed to leave the accommodation without the permission of the coach in charge/team manager
- You are expected to observe the curfew set by the coach in charge/team manager. This is for your own benefit. Remember, you are at the competition in order to **compete**.
- The use of alcohol, illegal substances and smoking are prohibited.
- Any swimmer in breach of the Code of Conduct will be disciplined, in accordance with the club's disciplinary procedures.

## **WHAT TO TAKE WITH YOU**

- **YOU** should always pack your bag the night before
- For **each session** in the meet you will need at least 1 costume, towel & t-shirt
- Always have 2 pairs of goggles & 2 caps.
- Use plastic bags inside your holdall to keep dry and wet things separate.
- Your t-shirt is to keep you warm – don't use it as a towel.
- Food (see below) and water bottle
- Magazines or a book, to relax & pass the time between races
- Change for telephones, lockers etc
- Medication i.e. inhalers

Please note that any valuables and medication should be handed to the coach at the start of the meet, or safely **locked** away.

## **ALWAYS MAKE SURE YOU HAVE CHECKED**

- For which events you have been accepted
- In which sessions you are swimming
- The warm-up times

## **ON THE DAY**

- Always arrive in good time. You should be poolside 15mins before each warm-up. At the beginning of the day, check the meet rules with the coach i.e. one start, over the top starts etc
- Know which swims are in which session and be aware of when & where to report for marshalling or racing
- Know your warm-up routine for these events & use all warm-up time effectively
- Report to your coach before the race to discuss goals & race plan. Report back immediately after your race to discuss technique and splits. It is your responsibility to check results posted to see if you have qualified for a final/medal
- In between races, stay warm and prepare for your next event.
- If you are selected for a relay or qualify for a final, you are expected to compete in it.
- If you withdraw from a race after the cards have been posted you may have to pay a fine. If you withdraw late from a final the organisers may bar you from competing in the rest of the competition.

## **YOUR PERFORMANCE**

Your training programme gives you every opportunity for improvement in terms of fitness, technique and race skills. From your performance in training you should have the confidence to know that you are prepared for a good competition. However it is up to you to maximise your chances of a good performance on the day.

- Go to bed earlier than usual
- Know your goals for the meet
- Plan your warm-up in advance
- Prepare for your race in good time : stretch your body, focus your mind
- Eat well
- Be positive

Even with the best preparation, disappointing swims do happen, and it is important that you do not let it badly affect your next event. You should never dismiss a swim as “rubbish” but should discuss key points of the race with your coach.

## **AFTER THE COMPETITION**

- After the competition you should write up your logbook, with details of splits, PB's gained, coaches comments and your own thoughts about your performance. It is a time to review your goals and perhaps set new ones.

## **NUTRITION FOR COMPETITION**

It is very important that your body is given the fuel it needs to perform well. Make sure you take enough food to last you through the whole competition and follow the following guidelines

- Eat a good carbohydrate meal the night before the meet.
- Eat a good breakfast 2 hrs before the start of the meet
- You should “graze” throughout the day on healthy food & snacks. Don't think about lunch-time & teatime for eating
- Have a drinks bottle to sip throughout the day
- Eat a good carbohydrate meal as soon as possible after the end of the day's competing – especially if you are competing or training again the next day.

### ***What to eat***

- Bananas, raisins, apricots
- Low fat sandwiches – honey, jam etc
- Muffins, bagels, hot cross buns
- Cereal & fruit bars, jaffa cakes,
- Fresh fruit
- Pasta salad, pot rice

### ***When to eat***

You should aim to snack after each swim, but do be aware of the time before your next event. If you have a short time before your next swim you should have some isotonic drink and perhaps just half a banana or cereal bar. If you have 1 – 2 hour before your swim you could have a light snack such as a sandwich or cereal bar. If it is more than 2 hours you could have a high carbohydrate meal.

### ***What to drink***

The body is 65% water and has a very high requirement for water. On competition days you should aim to drink fluid every 15mins to ensure that you remain hydrated.

- Water will keep you hydrated and is absorbed slowly into the body but is not as good as :
- An isotonic sports drink gives you both water and carbohydrate energy and is absorbed more quickly i.e. SIS or Isostar
- A home-made sports drink

### ***When to drink***

- You should drink regularly throughout the day. If you feel thirsty – then it's already too late
- Continue drinking after the competition until you are fully re-hydrated

### ***Important***

- Make sure that your drink is not too strong otherwise your body cannot absorb it effectively. Many ready-made sports drinks are too concentrated – it is better to make up your own.
- Don't try new foods at a competition – eat what you know is good for you.

