An Introduction to High School Competitive Swimming

Welcome to the Seacrest Country Day School Swimming & Diving team! We are thrilled to have you and your child as part of the team. We understand that being new to this sport can be very intimidating and overwhelming. Our goal in this publication is to help you better understand the sport and what you can do as a parent to help your child succeed as an athlete. Please feel free to ask the coach or any of the assistant coaches any questions you may have.

Order of Events

Each swim meet that your child will participate in will have the same order of events. It is their responsibility to know what events they are swimming and when that event will be held. Below you will find the order of events. Please keep in mind that the girl’s events will precede the corresponding boy’s events. So girls are the odd numbered events and boys are the even numbered events.

Events #1 and #2: 200-yard medley relay

Events #3 and #4: 200-yard freestyle

Events #5 and #6: 200-yard individual medley

Events #7 and #8: 50-yard freestyle

Swimmers will now take a break to watch any diving that may be taking place. It is mandatory that all swimmers watch and support their fellow Seacrest divers.

One-meter Diving

Events #9 and #10: 100-yard butterfly

Events #11 and #12: 100-yard freestyle

Events #13 and #14: 500-yard freestyle

Events #15 and #16: 200-yard freestyle relay

Events #17 and #18: 100-yard backstroke

Events #19 and #20: 100-yard breaststroke

Events #21 and #22: 400-yard freestyle relay
**Entries by individual:**

A competitor will be permitted to enter a maximum of four (4) events, no more than two (2) of which may be individual events. The coach will make final decisions as to what events and/or relays each swimmer will race.

**Stroke Rules**

Each stroke in swimming has specific rules for starts, turns, and finishes. These specifics will be taught and reinforced during practice.

**Freestyle**

Start: From the starting block

Turn: Flip turn (similar to a somersault)

Finish: One hand touch on the final wall

**Backstroke**

Start: From the water (on back)

Turn: Roll from back to front, flip, and push off on your back.

Finish: One hand touch. **MUST** be on your back.

**Breast**

Start: From the starting block

Turn: Simultaneous two hand touch

Finish: Simultaneous two hand touch

**Fly**

Start: From the starting block

Turn: Simultaneous two hand touch

Finish: Simultaneous two hand touch

During meets such as FSPA, Tarpon Invitational, Shark Relays, Districts, Regionals, and States there will be officials who will be watching for the correct starts, turns, and finishes. If a swimmer does not complete any
of the above elements correctly during these meets, it will result in the swimmer being disqualified (DQ). Any athlete who is disqualified will not be awarded points or allowed to participate in finals. Throughout the remainder of the meets, there will not be officials and coaches will be watching for any incorrect elements and address them specifically with the swimmer so they can be corrected during practice.

**Districts, Regionals, and States**

Each school in the state of Florida is placed into either Class 1A, 2A, or 3A based on the schools size. Within each class, schools are then placed into one of 12 Districts. Finally, the 12 districts are placed into 4 Regions. This system is how athletes for the State competition are determined.

*Seacrest is in Class 1A, District 9, Region 3.*

Therefore, during the district meet we will compete against other schools in District 9 and during Regionals we will compete against schools in Region 3. States competition will then be against the swimmers who qualified from the 4 regions from Class 1A only.

**Districts**

All swimmers will be allowed to participate in the District meet. They will swim their assigned events in the morning first which is called prelims. The top 8 from the morning will compete again in the evening which is called finals. All swimmers whether they make finals or not are expected to be in attendance to cheer on their fellow swimmers.

There are 3 districts that make up Seacrests region. The times from the 3 districts will be put together to determine who qualifies for Regionals. They take the top 24 times and therefore, any swimmer who qualifies for finals at Districts is guaranteed a spot at Regionals.

Relays only take the top 16 times from the 3 districts. Therefore, if a relay qualifies for finals at Districts, they are not guaranteed a spot at Regionals unless they are in the top 16 from the 3 districts.

**Regionals**

Swimmers who qualify for Regionals will compete in those events only. Again the swimmers will compete in prelims and the top 8 will compete in finals.

There are 4 regions that make up Class 1A. The times from the 4 regions will be put together to determine who qualifies for States. Again, only the top 24 times for individual events and 16 times for relays will qualify.

**States**

States is the final step in a swimmers season. They will compete only in the events they qualified for against all Class 1A swimmers. It is a great honor and a wonderful experience to qualify for states. It also is very difficult and requires a lot of hard work.

As a first year or new swimmer, do not feel discouraged if your child does not qualify for any of the above meets. They should focus on improving their strokes and times during this first year of swimming.
Volunteer

During the season we will be needing parents to volunteer for different positions to help meets run smoothly. Here is a list and description of some possible ways you can help at our home meets.

- **Timers** - Each lane will need a minimum of 1 preferably 2 timers. You will be provided a stopwatch, clipboard, and pen. There will be a brief meeting prior to the meet starting for all timers so as to instruct use of the stop watches. You will start watch when the swimmers are started and stop when they touch the wall. Then record the time you have on the swimmers card, 00:00.00.
- **Scorers** - Each place finish receives a specific number of points. Your job will be to take the times for each event and determine the places each swimmer received. Then calculate the points each team competing in the meet received for that event.
- **Runners** - Your job would be to collect the event cards from the timers and deliver them to the scorers.

How You Can Help Your Athlete

1. Be on time. On time means 15 minutes before warm-up begins. Coach Lindsey will let you know what time to be at the pool.

2. Bring folding chairs to most outdoor pools. Also, bring drinks and snacks as appropriate.

3. Encourage your child to get immediately to the coach for warm-up.

4. Be a parent. Help them keep track of heats, events, etc. But remember that the main idea is to teach them to handle the environment of a swim meet themselves.

5. Let the coach coach. Unless you’re the coach. Then let someone else coach your child. So you can parent.

6. Sometimes a child will “miss an event”. This happens, it’s a learning experience. Don’t handhold them to the next event. Expect responsibility. Let them rely on teammates and coaches for help.

7. Sometimes a swimmer will false start and DQ a relay. Similarly, it’s a learning experience. The appropriate response by the swimmer to their teammates? “Sorry guys.” Everyone does it. Everyone needs to forgive.

8. Sometimes a swimmer DQ’s for swimming an event incorrectly. Do not address the official. You may ask the coach what they did wrong. The coach will make sure the swimmer understands how to do it correctly. The swimmers will learn from it.

9. The child should have a goal for every swim. Sometimes a time, sometimes a technique. You may ask what their goal is. Don’t help set it. That’s for the coach and swimmer.

10. The coach will likely speak to your child before and after the event. The “before” is to remind them of their goals and needs, and the “after” is to review the successes and weak spots of the swim. Great feedback is great coaching.
11. Make sure they drink in hot weather. Drink in all weather. Water, Gatorade, etc. NOSUGAR. NO CANDY.

12. If you have questions, ask the Coach. Try to do it when the Coach is not coaching. Before and after practice is best.

13. When the meet is over, the meet is over. Forget it on the way home. Help the swimmer remember the lessons for the next time, but don’t dwell on the meet.

14. Most coaches will say “it’s not about winning, it’s about improvement.” Know what is being improved, and measure it and help your child focus on the process and not “just” the result. Any improvement in time is a success and should be celebrated no matter what place they came in.

We are very excited to have both you and your child on the Seacrest team this season and we are confident your experience will be a positive one. Please do not hesitate to contact Coach Lindsey if you have questions.