

Birmingham Water Festival

Hints and Tips!

Preparing for the Gala:

- 1) Check your **Costume, Hat**, and (most important) **Goggles** are all OK the day/night before.
Most problems are caused by poorly fitting goggles. (New Goggles? . . . try them out in the bath!)
- 2) Pack the above kit – with a **Towel(s), T- Shirt, Plastic drinks bottle** (water), shoes to wear on poolside (that you don't mind getting wet!) and **plastic bag(to put your wet costume into in your bag)**.
- 3) Make sure ALL your kit (and Bag) has your **NAME** on it. Don't take any valuables.

Before you leave home:

- 1) Apart from packing the above kit (and making sure it goes with you to Stechford!), the other important thing that you should do is to... **"put some fuel in the tank"**. The best fuels (= food) for swimmers are **carbohydrates** which are easily digested. **Pasta** is the best food for this. Avoid greasy fry-ups and chocolate or foods with lots of sugar.
- 2) Don't have a large meal within **two hours** of swimming. A light breakfast is fine.
- 3) **Food & Drink during the gala: Bananas or energy bars** are fine for light snacks to take with you. *Avoid sugary sweets and chocolate. Avoid fizzy drinks.* ("**Water is best – or weak squash - ...a little and often....don't wait until you are thirsty**": Bill Furniss - (GB coach of double gold medallist Rebecca Adlington)

When you arrive at Stechford by 08:15 :

- 1) Go to the Changing Rooms, change into your swimming costume/trunks, and put a T-shirt on... **and poolside shoes**. Go and find your club coach and other swimmers and sit with them in the spectators Gallery
- 2) Before the Warm-up, you may wish to take your bag containing all your clothes – not towel(s)/ drinks bottle(s)/ energy bar(s) - to leave with your parents in Spectators' Gallery.
- 3) **DON'T LEAVE ANYTHING IN THE CHANGING ROOMS. LEAVE ALL YOUR VALUABLES AT HOME OR WITH YOUR PARENTS.**
- 4) LISTEN to the announcer who will tell you when and where you are to assemble for your race(s).
- 5) Follow the instructions of officials, marshals and adult helpers who are supervising swimmers on the poolside.
- 6) Watch and encourage other swimmers and see if you can learn anything by watching older swimmers.

The swimming bit:

- 1) There will be a warm-up in the main pool will start at approx **8.30am**. One of your coaches will take you down to the pool (with your towel and shoes) for the warm-up, and tell you where to get in to swim. After the warm up, **dry off and put some footwear on, before going back into the spectators' gallery.**
- 2) The Gala will **start at 09.00am**. Your coach will tell you when to go down to poolside - and the heat and lane number you are swimming in.
 - The marshals will organise you into your heats, and they will take you to the start.
- 3) At the start of each race, you will hear **SEVERAL SHORT BLASTS of a whistle**; this means that the referee and officials (usually in white) are ready to start a race and it is the Referee's signal to tell the swimmers to remove any (non - swimming) clothes and get ready to swim. If you want to start in the water (not dive) this is your signal to get in. At this point **EVERYONE** should be **QUIET and STILL** so that the swimmers who are about to compete can hear all the instructions clearly.
- 4) There will then be **ONE LONG BLAST** of the whistle.
This informs the swimmers to **get to their starting positions**. Swimmers can start any event.....
 -**on the blocks** (except the 25m Breast / 25m Fly / 25m Free),
 -**on the poolside** (standing on the poolside alongside the blocks),
 - or.....**in the water** (**Everyone** in Backstroke events.....when there will be a **SECOND LONG WHISTLE BLAST** which tells you to get into your starting position).**If you are starting a Freestyle, Breaststroke or Butterfly event in the water, you must keep hold of the poolside/bar with (at least) ONE HAND until the race has been started.**

The 100IM (4 lengths) and 50m (2 lengths) events will start (and finish) at the deep end (where the blocks are).

All **25m (1 length) events (EXCEPT 25m BACKSTROKE)** will start at the shallow end where there are no blocks...but swimmers can start with a dive from the poolside. This means that the times of swimmers in all events – other than the 25m Backstroke – will be displayed on the electronic scoreboard. **SWIMMERS SHOULD NOT BE CONCERNED IF THEIR TIME DOES NOT SHOW ON THE BOARD – IT JUST MEANS THAT THE TIMING PADS DID NOT REGISTER YOUR FINAL TOUCH. IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DISQUALIFIED OR DON'T HAVE A TIME – AS TIMEKEEPERS WILL ALSO BE RECORDING YOUR FINISH; IT JUST MEANS THAT SPECTATORS CAN'T SEE THE FULL RESULT ON THE BOARD.**

- 5) The Referee will then **hold out an arm** (a signal to the Starter that she/he is happy for the race to start).
- 6) The Starter will inform the swimmers to '**TAKE YOUR MARK(S)**'..... **ALL SWIMMERS SHOULD NOW STAY PERFECTLY STILL** The Starter will start the race with a 'bleep' ...and spectators can then make as much noise as they like!
- 8) If your goggles (or hat) become dislodged while you are swimming, **CARRY ON SWIMMING - DO NOT STOP...OR TRY TO ADJUST THEM.** You will be disqualified in all events except freestyle if you do this.
(Remember to **turn and finish Breaststroke and Butterfly events - with TWO HANDS touching TOGETHER**).
- 7) At the end of your race – when everyone has finished - LEAVE THE WATER BY **USING THE STEPS** at the side of the pool.....Do this at the end of EVERY race ... **DON'T EVER CLIMB OUT OVER THE TIMING PADS.**
- 8) Remember – your coach is there to help you – if you are worried about anything, please tell them.
- 9) Enjoy yourself!

When you have finished all your events, get dressed, and join your parents

If you have won a medal or achieved a speeding ticket listen out for your name at the end of the competition and follow instructions

DO NOT LEAVE THE PREMISES UNLESS YOU ARE WITH YOUR PARENTS – Please tell your coach if you are leaving your group for any reason.