**SWIMMERS GUIDE TO GALAS**

**Swimmers - get yourself prepared before you go to the gala!**

The night before the gala is the time to pack YOUR OWN bag, not your parents, too prevent you getting to the pool to find something is missing. Get all that you need together, warm up and race costumes/trunks, towels and food; enough for the whole day (see check list below).

If you are unable to attend the gala at the last minute due to illness, please ensure your parents contact the Team Manager via email (nstteammanagers@gmail.com) to let them know so that they can withdraw you from the races.

**What you need!**

*Racing costumes/trunks* should fit you like a second skin, which means for the girls, you should not be able to pull up the straps two or three inches above the shoulders!! Boys’ trunks should be small at the sides and tight fitting. No baggy bottoms, as these will cause drag which will slow you down. At a young age separate costumes/trunks should be taken for the morning and afternoon sessions so you are not sitting during lunch in a wet costume. Both boys and girls need to take separate warm up costumes/trunks to the ones they will be racing in especially when they start to compete at higher level galas.

*Club t-shirt and hoody* should be worn. Please wear *black* bottoms with your club t- shirt. Jeans are not allowed. Spare t-shirts, if you only have one club t-shirt, please purchase a spare as they do get wet – these are available from your squad rep. You may want to bring *black* shorts to wear over your swimming costume in between races.

*Club hat* should be worn at all galas, by both boys and girls. Whatever gala you compete in, you are there representing your club and if you are all wearing the same hat, it indicates the team you are proud to be part of.

*Poolside shoes* should be worn. Most poolside floors can be very cold and you lose very valuable heat through your feet, therefore it is essential to wear poolside shoes…and make sure they are clean! Do not leave poolside without wearing poolside shoes.

*Goggles*. Take at least two pairs of goggles with you. *Before* you go down to the start of the race, make sure your goggles are fitting properly. Try not to fiddle and keep playing with the straps while you are waiting to be called. If you keep changing the fitting of them, you run the risk of them not fitting as you want them to, or worse, them breaking!

*Snacks/drinks* – enough for the full session you are attending. There is information under SWIM PARENTS – NUTRITION on our website.

**Poolside**

Ensure you arrived 20 minutes before the published warm up – it is your responsibility to check the warm up time for the gala, normally on the host club’s website.

It would be preferred that ipads/phones etc were not brought on to poolside. Swimmers should not leave poolside during a session unless it is in the case of emergency. You come to a gala to compete and as such you are expected to sit with your own team, not someone else’s and especially not your parents on the balcony. Before leaving the pool for the lunch break or end of the session inform a Team Manager you are leaving so they can mark you from the register as having left.

Team Managers will inform you when it is time to go to see your coach ready for your race and then direct you to marshalling. However, it is good practice for swimmers to learn to be aware of when their race is coming up.

After every race, you should immediately see your coach for feedback and then straight to swim down. Swim down is to recover after a race, not to play in the pool or disappear to speak to your parents.

When on poolside ensure that your belongings are kept in your bag (either your kit bag or your marshalling bag), looking for goggles at the last minute and not being able to find them will put you in a panic right before your race!

**Check List:-**

1. Enough warm up AND racing costumes/trunks
2. Club t-shirt and Hoody and black shorts/tracksuit bottoms to be worn on poolside
3. Towels…and plenty of them!!
4. Poolside shoes eg crocs or flip flops
5. Goggles…At least two pairs
6. Club hat and spare
7. Food and drink to last the whole day
8. Leave early to get to pool on time
9. Positive attitude

**Remember, when you get on the block the most important things to have with you are a positive attitude and the confidence that you are going to do a good swim. Think negatively and you have lost before you have dived in!!! Go out, swim and enjoy!!!**