



**GALA
GUIDELINES**

Galas Procedures

Here are a few guidelines as to what happens, and how you are expected to behave.

1. You must swim events and galas that the Coaching team has entered/selected you for, unless agreed otherwise by prior agreement with the relevant club official. Each competition is carefully chosen for specific reasons and training adjusted accordingly.

2. It may seem obvious, but before you set out to your gala please check you know:

- ◆ Where the venue is—What time you are supposed to meet
- ◆ What time the sign-in is—What time the warm-up is, and what time racing starts.

3. At all Open Meets, on arrival check in with your Team Manager (normally a parent) or Team Coaches.

4. After getting changed, you will then go poolside to get ready for the warm-up. This is to prepare yourself for the racing ahead. First there will be a poolside warm-up, to limber up and get the body ready. The coaching team will give you advice and help you during the warm up.

5. Then you will start the warm-up in the pool. Use this time to warm-up properly by concentrating on your swimming, not playing about or stopping in the lane. You should get the opportunity to practice turns and then starts from the blocks. Again, the coaching team will tell you when.

6. Be part of the team. Stay with the team on poolside. If you leave for any reason you must tell the Coach or Team Manager where you are going.

7. Listen for your race to be announced. Go to the marshalling/checking in area in time and report in. Take your **hat, goggles and a drink with you**. Your team manager should instruct you to do this. You will then be told which lane you are swimming in, and when the time is right, told to take your position behind the blocks. This is generally done just after the race before has started.

. The procedure to start a race is as follows:

- ◆ The Referee will blow the whistle 3 or 4 times. This is to warn everyone that a race is about to start, and that EVERYONE **should be quiet** and still. If you are a swimmer, this is the time to check your goggles & hat, and take off your tracksuit or other clothing and be ready for the race (if you haven't already done so!)
- ◆ The Announcer will introduce the race on the PA system, and then hand back to the Referee.
- ◆ Next, the Referee will give one long blast on the whistle. This is the signal for you to either stand onto the racing blocks, for Freestyle, Breaststroke and Butterfly races. If it's a Backstroke race, then you get into the water. For Backstroke only, the Referee will give another whistle to get you to hold onto the blocks and be ready.
- ◆ When everyone is on the blocks (or in the water) and the Referee is happy, they then hand over to the starter. Everyone should by now be concentrating on the start of their race,
- ◆ and be still (no fidgeting or adjusting goggles).
- ◆ The Starter will say "Take your marks" which is the signal to get into your take off position, and blow the whistle, which is the signal to start your racing dive.
- ◆ You must concentrate on your race at the start – and everyone else should respect this by being quiet and still until after the race has started. Once the race is underway then everyone can cheer their swimmers on.

9. Support your team mates.

THE DAY BEFORE

When competition time comes round, you'll have plenty on your mind. So the day before the event keep exercise to a minimum – if anything at all – and eat meals and snacks high in complex carbohydrates. You need to keep those glycogen stores topped up.

- Drink fluids little and often to stay properly hydrated.
- Eat little and often – every two to four hours to keep your blood sugar levels steady and fuel your muscle in preparation for your event.
- Avoid big meals or over-eating in the evening – this will almost certainly make you feel uncomfortable and lethargic the next day.

Try to stick to familiar foods. Curries, spicy foods, baked beans and pulses (unless you are used to eating them) can cause gas and bloating, so avoid eating anything that may cause stomach discomfort the next day. It's best to stick to foods that you are familiar and compatible with!

THE MORNING OF THE EVENT

Don't swim on empty.

Even if you feel nervous, make breakfast happen. Stick to easily digested foods – cereal with milk, porridge, banana with yoghurt, some fruit or toast with jam.

If you're really struggling, try liquid meals such as milkshakes, yoghurt drinks or a smoothie.

It's a good idea to rehearse your competition meal routine in training so you know exactly what agrees with you.

SNACKS BETWEEN HEATS

Try to eat as soon as possible after your swim to give yourself as long as possible to recover if you have to swim again.

High fat and simple sugar foods will do you no favours in competition. Instead search out complex carbohydrates again.

If you can't stomach anything solid try sports drinks, flavoured milk or diluted juice that will help replenish your energy supplies and assist the recovery of aching muscles.

The list below offers great food options to be snacking on in and around training for a competition. Remember to keep eating healthy foods from your regular diet though, such as fresh vegetables, nuts and fruits.

- ◆ **Water**, diluted fruit juice with a pinch of salt or a sports drink
- ◆ Pasta salad / Plain sandwiches e.g. chicken, tuna, cheese with salad, banana, peanut butter
- ◆ Bananas, grapes, apples, plums, pears
- ◆ Dried fruit e.g. raisins, apricots, mango
- ◆ Smoothies / Crackers and rice cakes with bananas and/or honey
- ◆ Mini-pancakes, fruit buns / Cereal bars, fruit bars, sesame snaps
- ◆ Yoghurt and yoghurt drinks / Small bags of unsalted nuts e.g. peanuts, cashews, almonds
- ◆ Prepared vegetable crudité's e.g. carrots, peppers, cucumber and celery

Items To Take To A Gala

Get yourselves prepared before you go to the gala

The night before the gala is the time to pack YOUR OWN bag, not your parents. If you get to the pool to find something is missing and you haven't packed your own bag, then more fool you-it is your responsibility! Get all that you need together, warm up and race costumes/trunks, towels and food; enough for the whole day.

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. Both boys and girls need to take separate warm up costumes/trunks to the ones they will be racing in.

Club tracksuit / t-shirt should be worn. You may want to bring 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. Club hats will be available to buy from the Team Manager on duty at each gala. cost €8.00. (1) - €15.00 (2) OR €20.00 (3)

Poolside shoes must 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!

Mobile phones should be kept in your bags & only used when necessary as some swimming pools have very strict rules on mobile phones being banned on poolside.

Check List for day of Gala

1. Enough warm up AND racing costumes/trunks
2. Club Track suit - Club t-shirt - Towels...and plenty of them!!
3. Poolside shoes - Goggles...At least two pairs
4. Healthy Food / snacks to last the whole gala
5. **Plenty of water.**
6. Leave early to get to pool on time
7. Positive attitude

Parents Input at Gala

A smooth running gala depends on the input of parents, so please make sure to make yourself available.

It is common practice for parents of families entered to give a commitment of one adult to help out on the day of gala. Roles that need to be assigned on the day are as follows:

- **Team managers:** 2 parents required
- **Stroke Judge:** Officials
- **Referee and starter:** Official
- **Line-up:** 2 parents required
- **Timekeepers:** HOME GALA AWAY GALA
5 parents from CSSC 2/3 parents
5 parents from visiting clubs
- **Results table:** 2 parents (Home Gala only)
- **Refreshments:** 5 parents (Home Gala only)
- **Sales of hats:** 1 Parent
- **Programmes :** 1 Parent (Home Gala Only)

As you can see from above there is plenty of help required, so if you are available on the day please let us know, otherwise jobs will be assigned to cover all positions.