

# HTAC Swim Meet Entry and Scratch Policy

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure smooth, fair, and efficient competition by supporting clear communication and establishing guidelines, expectations and logistics related to swim meet participation. This will minimize disruptions and empty lanes, promote fairness by allowing others to fill vacated spots, and encourage accountability and commitment among participants.

## Swim Meet Information

- Swim meets help athletes track progress, develop racing skills, and experience competition. They offer opportunities to learn and perform in different settings. As a competitive swim club, we encourage all members to participate in meets throughout the season.
- Coaches will select appropriate meets for each swimmer, with a list of competitions available on the HTAC website under [Events](#). The location, dates, declaration deadline, meet fees, meet package and which groups/swimmers are eligible to attend the meet will all be included here before the sign up deadline. This list will be updated as new information becomes available.
- Most meets are local or within a reasonable distance, with parents handling transportation. Older swimmers will have opportunities to travel and stay with the team at some meets. Swimmers are encouraged to take advantage of this as team travel allows opportunities for growth and independence. Team travel logistics and costs will be communicated to eligible swimmers well before the sign up deadline as per the [HTAC Team Travel Policy](#).
- Coaches will choose meet events based on goals, progress, and readiness. While input from swimmers may be considered, selections may not always match personal preferences. If you have questions about event choices, please discuss these with the coach for clarity and collaboration.

## Swim Meet Sign Up

- Sign up for swim meets is done on the [Events](#) page on the HTAC website. Swimmers can sign up for the full swim meet or opt out of sessions via this platform. A reminder will be sent by email in the weeks leading up to the meet and will include the meet sign up deadline.
- Following the sign up deadline, the meet events and entry fees are sent to the host club/organization and the swimmer's fees are invoiced by HTAC to the family's account.
- If any changes need to be made after the sign up deadline has passed, please notify the club via email to [office@htac.ca](mailto:office@htac.ca) and email the head coach as soon as possible. Although the swimmer's entry fees cannot be refunded once they have been remitted, swimmers who cannot attend a meet or sessions of a meet still need to be scratched as

early as possible.

- For preliminary and timed finals events, swimmers are expected to swim all events entered for both heats and finals. If there is a pre-existing medical condition that could limit the number of events a swimmer can compete in, this must be discussed with the coach prior to the entry deadline.
- Any swimmer who is a no show at a meet (i.e. does not report to their coach by the start of the meet and does not communicate as to why they are not present) will be scratched from all sessions of the swim meet.

## Scratching

- Once a swim meet has started there may be situations where a swimmer is unable to compete in a session or must withdraw from the remainder of the meet for medical reasons (e.g. new illness or injury) or other unforeseen circumstances (e.g. family emergency, vehicle breakdowns or severe weather conditions). If this occurs the swimmer's coach must be notified as soon as possible. Unforeseen circumstances do not typically include reasons such as leaving early from a meet, unless discussed with the coach prior to the meet.
- For meets including heats and finals, all swimmers are expected to attend finals and warm up regardless of whether they are scheduled to swim finals. Swimmers are responsible to determine what events they could potentially be swimming at finals. This information may be communicated to swimmers by coaches prior to finals, depending on the meet. If and how the coaches communicate this information to swimmers (e.g. group email or request to check in with their coach before leaving a session) will be determined before the start of the meet and communicated to families.
- If there are any other reasons for a swimmer to consider scratching an event or events within a session, this must be discussed and agreed upon with the swimmer's coach, in person, before the scratch deadline e.g. scratching for strategic reasons or concerns with physical or mental readiness.
- Swim meet policies vary but typically scratches must be submitted 30 minutes before the first session of the meet starts and scratches for the following sessions must be submitted 30 minutes following the previous session. There may be a penalty fee determined by the host club/organization charged to the club for failing to scratch before the deadline. This fee will be invoiced to the swimmer if the swimmer scratches after the deadline for reasons other than new illness or injury or other unforeseen circumstances.
- In addition the swim meet policy may dictate that a swimmer who misses their swim during a finals session will not swim for the remainder of that session. Information on the scratch policy for each swim meet is found in the meet package which is available on the Events page of the HTAC website.
- Repeated non-compliance i.e. failing to scratch by the deadline without a valid reason or not showing to an event without notifying coaches may result in swimmers facing restricted entries in future meets.

## **Expectations during Swim Meets**

- All HTAC participants (swimmers, parents, coaches, volunteers and officials) are expected to abide by our [Code of Conduct and Ethics](#) at all times. In addition swimmers will abide by our [Team Travel Code of Conduct](#) when on team travel. Any violations of these policies will be managed through our [Complaint Policy](#) and [Swimmer Accountability and Corrective Action Policy](#).
- Swimmers are to report to their coach at the start of the session's warm-up period. Normally, swimmers are asked to be on deck at 15-30 minutes prior to the official warm-up start time in order to get oriented and receive instructions. On deck times will be communicated by email before the start of the swim meet.
- Swimmers shall warm up together as a group, under the direction of their coach.
- Swimmers are to stay on deck with their teammates throughout the meet. This promotes team spirit and allows the coaches to easily and readily communicate with their swimmers. Trips away from the pool deck, i.e. visits with parents, should be brief.
- Swimmers are expected to wear the team uniform at swim meets.
- Positive meet behaviour, good sportsmanship and pre- and post-race communication with their coach are expected from each swimmer.
- Where the facilities are available, swimmers should make proper usage of the warm-up/cool-down pool as instructed by their coach.
- Parents and spectators are required to watch the meet from the designated viewing area. Swimmers are, however, permitted to leave the pool deck to meet with parents elsewhere.
- Parents must avoid contacting an official or meet personnel with questions, concerns, or requests during the course of a swim meet. Rather, parents should contact the coach who will then decide on a course of action.

By adhering to this policy and upholding our values of Respect, Support, and Compete, all members of the Halifax Trojan Aquatic Club can ensure a safe, respectful, and rewarding competitive swimming experience.