

## Swim Meets and other Events

Meets, which in the context of competitive swimming mean swim racing events, are a great way to measure personal progress, and so play a crucial role in swimmer development. They can be exciting to watch—particularly so as, over time, you become more involved in the club, get to know more of the swimmers, and (perhaps) learn more about swimming. Watching swimmers' skill and strength increase is exciting. Achieving new personal-best times can be hugely motivating for many athletes.

Most of the meets hosted by ROW, or to which ROW athletes travel to compete, are sanctioned by Swim Ontario and Swimming Canada, the governing bodies of competitive swimming in Ontario. The exceptions are team-building events, such as the Black and White meet, which ROW often holds early each fall, and the informal meets put on by ROW and other local clubs throughout the year. These meets (for example, "Series" meets) are designed to be fun for new swimmers, and to provide an opportunity to learn about racing in a more relaxed environment.

### Why attend Meets?

Meets are very helpful in getting the most value out of ROW swim programs. People join swim clubs for a variety of reasons; not everyone is planning to go to the Olympics—especially initially. Even if the swimmers in your family aren't planning to continue in competitive swimming to the highest levels, they should plan to attend at least some of the meets throughout the swim year. Meet results are an objective measure of individual progress. Meets also help teach participants how to achieve peak performance under pressure—a valuable life skill.

Except perhaps for the very youngest swimmers, setting personal swimming goals and working towards them during practices is a great strategy. Most people underestimate what can be accomplished with sustained effort over time. Setting reasonable, but difficult goals and learning how to achieve them brings most all athletes immense personal satisfaction. The resulting sense of accomplishment is part of what makes swimming rewarding!

Because attending meets is so important to success in swimming, a portion of your estimated **meet fees** are included in the fees if you arrange to pay throughout the year via pre-authorized debits (PADs). The monthly debit amount is calculated so as

to cover your swimmer's predicted participation in meets. These pre-paid fees may cover only a **portion** of the meet costs for the year.

Depending on how many meets your swimmer ends up attending, you may have additional meet fees payable in the spring. Expect an **additional invoice** near swim-year end. Alternatively, you may be left with a (usually small) credit that can be applied towards future club fees. It **doesn't matter whether your swimmer attended** the meet, or on which days. Whether you owe fees for a meet depends on whether you Accepted it, or (failing that) whether your coach Accepted it on your behalf.

### Qualifying for Meets

Some higher-level meets have qualifying time standards, meaning your swimmer can't go (even if others in their group are going) unless they previously achieved a published time at a previous sanctioned Meet. Time standards vary by Event (freestyle, backstroke, etc.), by age, and gender, and are adjusted from time-to-time. They are used primarily to keep the number of swimmers to a manageable number.

Qualifying time standards are published online for events such as Regional or Provincial Championships. Current time standards for Regional, Festival, and Provincial championships can be found on the Swim Ontario web site, **www.swimontario.com**: on the Swim Ontario site, open the **Meets** menu and select **Provincial Standards**.

Other events may have time standards, too. In this case the qualifying times are typically published in the Meet Package.

Conversely, be aware that if your swimmer has achieved the qualifying times in a previous Meet, your coach by default may enter them in such events. If you have any doubt, check with the Coach well prior to the entry deadline.

There's no guarantee any swimmer will achieve personal-best times on any given day. Attending more meets provides more opportunities—in particular, to get qualifying times for higher-level racing events. On the other hand, attending frequent meets is exhausting and may reduce training time. It is best to strategically plan, with your coach, which future events your swimmer should attend.

As a rule of thumb, even in the first year of competitive swimming, it is possible to qualify for Western Ontario Swim Association (WOSA) "Regionals" (championships

for clubs in South-Western Ontario), and quite possible to reach higher levels in subsequent years as a swimmer's technique and training improve.

## Fun and “Series” Meets – for new swimmers

Generally when you hear talk of swim Meets it will mean events sanctioned by the governing bodies for swimming such as Swim Ontario. These meets are great, and the way to post official times; however, for young swimmers in the Bronze 2 or TOP programs, they can be a bit too much at first. To avoid disqualification, swimmers must observe a number of rules. It's pretty easy for young or new swimmers to get disqualified—particularly when swimming in events with a lot of rules, such as breaststroke.

If your swimmer falls into this category, pay particular attention to the “Series Meets” and other fun meets. You will see that they are open only to the younger or less experienced swimmers. Although run superficially like sanctioned meets, they're more informal, and the rules are decidedly more relaxed. More swimmers come home with prizes.

Series Meets, as well as other fun events, such as the ROW Black and White team building event held early in October each year, are great ways to introduce young swimmers to what happens at swim meets, and to bond with other swimmers. They're for having fun, gaining experience, and developing team unity.

Group or club **breakfasts**, dinners, climbing events, and other events are also held throughout the year. Swimmers have a lot of fun at these events, and find it easier to interact and make new friends without their heads under water. Coaches may organize some events, but frequently lack the time. Parents can make valuable contributions to the club by volunteering to organize them.

## Selecting Meets

Look to the coach to provide direction on which meets are appropriate for your swimmer. They will not need to attend every meet. At the lower levels, attending one meet every four to six weeks is suggested.

Each meet has a particular focus in terms of ages and abilities. To a certain extent, attending more meets is better; however, some meets may occur just when you need to be training to reach peak performance for a more important race. In addition, some meets are logistically much easier to attend than others.

Meets are held in both 25 meter and 50 meter pools. Those run in 25 meter pools are called “**short course**” (SC) and are typically run in the first half of the swim year; **Long course** (LC) events in the second half, from February onwards. The same distance is often swum in pools of both lengths; for example, a 100 meter freestyle may be 4 lengths in a 25 meter pool, or 2 lengths in a 50 meter pool. Times for short course and long course Events are recorded separately and marked “LC” or “SC”; however, a good time in a short-course Event may qualify a swimmer for a corresponding long-course Event.

ROW hosts several meets throughout the season right where we practice, at the WLU Athletic Complex. Not only are these meets convenient, but also they’re slightly cheaper because there are no team travel fees. For meets in more distant cities, expect modest team travel fees, plus personal travel expenses, and sometimes hotel bills.

Also, at ROW-hosted Meets anticipate that a **parent may need to Officiate**; for example, be a Timer. When accepting ROW-hosted meets, be sure you or your spouse will be free to help out during the sessions your swimmer attends.

Of course, you will need to factor in other personal or family commitments, but early in the season it is best to start planning out which meets you want to attend. There are quite a few meets held within roughly 100 km of Kitchener/Waterloo.

To facilitate your planning, the club tries to maintain a complete list of upcoming events and meets on the club website. It isn’t perfect, as some event details aren’t planned as far ahead as you might think. None-the-less, meets are added to the ROW website as information becomes available.

Ultimately, choosing which meets to attend needs to involve a conversation with your coach. Your coach will help your swimmer set personal goals for the year. A part of measuring progress towards these goals is times achieved at meets.

## **Meets and the ROW web site**

Meet information is located on our club web site, and it is here you Accept or Decline meets. Unfortunately, accessing meet information on our web site can be a bit tricky—at least until we upgrade our web platform (which we’re working on).

Follow the instructions carefully!

There are two meet web pages you need to find:

1. **Meets/Events -> Meet Schedule** — this page provides a list of upcoming events (at least the ones we currently know about). More meets are added, and sometimes changes made, as the year progresses. However, if you're trying to get an overview of coming meets, or perhaps planning a vacation, this is where you need to go.
  - Open the **Meets/Events** menu on the ROW web site ([www.rowswimming.ca](http://www.rowswimming.ca)), then select **Meet Schedule**. The Meet Schedule appears as a table with alternating grey and white rows. Basic information is displayed, one meet or event per row.
  
2. **Meets/Events**—this page provides *detailed* information about events in the next month or two—but not a long-range view of upcoming meets. Importantly, an **“Accept/Decline”** button is included under each event, so you can say whether your swimmer is going. For each meet or event, this page has little calendar icons to the left of the event name, and the start of the description of the event. The name of each event contains a link to an **Event Details page**, which in turn has links to the Meet Package (official document describing the event), Meet Entries (which swimmers are going, and in which events they're swimming), and other details.
  - Open the **Events/Meets** sub-menu, then—and this next part is important—**click the Events/Meets heading *again***.
  - From the Meets/Events page, click an event name to view the corresponding **Details** page.

**Note:** Why this unintuitive click-twice thing? Well, depending on the device you're using, it's quite easy to inadvertently land back on the Meet Schedule page (see above—alternating grey and white rows), which has **no** links to event details and **no** “Accept/Decline” buttons. The above instructions seem to work reliably, independent of device.

## Accepting/Declining

The first thing you need to know about Accepting and Declining meets, is that you should make a decision and do it. Generally three or so weeks ahead of an event, you will be able to sign onto the club website and click buttons to either Accept a meet (meaning you are committing your swimmer to going) or Decline it.

If you don't Accept or Decline yourself, your coach will make the choice for you. If the meet is a ROW meet or a reasonably local or a championship for which your swimmer has qualified, the usual default is that your swimmer will attend. There are several problems with defaults, however, the most important one being if you Accept, or if the coach assumes you are going and accepts on your behalf, you will be committed to going and **you will be expected to pay** for the meet, whether or not your swimmer attends.

Sometimes reminder e-mails are sent just prior to deadlines, but not often. When the initial (automatically generated) e-mail goes out announcing that detailed meet information has been posted, it's best to **mark a date a few days prior to the deadline on your own calendar.**

If you Decline an Event, your swimmer won't be entered. Accepting, in contrast, is a request to your Coach to enter your swimmer. The Coach is free to ignore your request if there is a good reason. For example, the groups going to each Meet are listed on the web site. The web site may let you Accept other events, but such Acceptances will be ignored. If you think truly extraordinary circumstances exist such that it makes sense your swimmer attend a Meet to which their group isn't going, ask your Coach well ahead of time.

Coaches typically post a **preliminary Entries List** on the Meet Details web page approximately a week prior to the Accept/Decline deadline for the event. If you have neither Accepted or Declined the meet, your coach will choose whether to enter your swimmer. By checking the preliminary Entries a few days prior to the deadline, you leave time to discuss or change plans for the meet.

The Accept or Decline web page for each meet provides a **Notes field**. Your coach will see whatever you type in this box. You can use this field in multiple ways. For example, you can type, "We currently plan to attend, but please check with us prior to the deadline." or "Attending only if qualifying times for Regionals are still needed."

Your coach will provide direction as to whether particular meets fits with your swimmer's training plans and personal goals. Generally, going to quite a few meets is going to be best, but we all have lives beyond swimming and there may well be some important personal events that conflict. Ultimately, it's up to you and your coach to decide.

If a meet, such as a Regional Championship, has qualifying time standards, and you are unsure if you swimmer has qualified, you can find out by contacting the coach. Do so at least a few days prior to the entry (Accept/Decline) deadline.

In either event, please understand that your swimmer can attend meets only with your **coach's approval**. You must also be a **Member in Good Standing**.

### Meet Packages and planning for Meets

When going to meets, you need to merge information from two documents. The first document is the list of swimmer **Meet Entries**. This list is usually posted on the meet information page (link on the Meets/Events web page), and is also sometimes sent via e-mail by your coach. Note that all the Female entries appear first, so if your swimmer is male, keep scrolling down!

The entries list tells which swimmers have been entered, and in which particular Events they are to swim. Each Event has a set distance ("100 meter") and swimming stroke ("backstroke") and age group ("12 and under"). Events are generally further divided into Male and Female.

Also on the Event Details page, there will be a link to something called the **Meet Package**. This is typically a PDF document, perhaps a dozen or so pages in length that contains all sorts of information about the Meet. The club hosting the Meet prepares the Meet Package, and it is a good read. Of particular interest, however, are the **days, times, and Sessions** during which each swimming Event will be held.

Some meets are one-day events—sometimes comprising only one morning or one afternoon Session—but many are multi-day events. For example, a meet may start on Friday afternoon and continue through Sunday evening (although the younger swimmers usually don't attend on Fridays, and evening sessions are typically finals for 13-year-olds and over). Meets are further sub-divided into Sessions—typically morning, afternoon, and evening. The Meet Package contains all this information.

Furthermore, the Meet Package lists which Events and ages **swim during each Session**. By opening the Meet Entries and the Meet Package at the same time, you can see in which events your swimmer is entered, then look in the Meets Package to find out on which days and at what times they need to be there.

For example, by looking in the Meet Entries you might see that your swimmer is entered in a “50 meter backstroke” event, which is Event number 117A. Next, by looking in the Meet Package you might see this Event will be run during the Saturday afternoon Session, for which warm-ups start at 12:30 pm. Now you know your swimmer needs to arrive at Saturday at noon to get on deck with time to spare.

If for any reason you can’t get your swimmer to any of the Events in which the coach has entered them, you **need to tell the coach right away**. This situation might arise, for example, if you can attend on Saturday, but really can’t come on Sunday afternoon.

Depending mainly on weather and distance, you may wish to book a local hotel for the night, particularly if your swimmer needs to be there early in the morning and freezing rain is expected. Doing so may give your swimmer a better chance to rest-up before the event—unless you’re unlucky and end up sharing your hotel floor with a hockey team or a rowdy wedding party.

### Last-minute considerations and the Official Meet Package

Sometimes clubs **change warm-up times** or other important details at the last minute. Watch **your e-mail** the night before, and the morning of the event. The coaches will try their best to let you know.

Another option is to look at the **official copy** of the Meet Package. While the version on the club website is convenient, it may become outdated. The official copy of the Meet Package is located on the Swimming Canada website.

1. Visit the Swimming Canada website: [www.swimming.ca](http://www.swimming.ca)
2. Open the menu using the button at top right. Select **Events & Results**.
3. Select **Upcoming Meets**.
4. The meets are listed by date. If there are too many, try selecting only those in Ontario. Select the Meet that interests you.



5. The Meet package is located at the bottom of the page for that meet, under **Resources**.

## Packing for the meet

Now that you've Accepted a Meet and used the Meet Package and Meet Entries to figure out which Sessions your swimmer is to attend, you need to pack.

First, your swimmer needs a **race-legal, black bathing suite**—for boys, above the knees and below the navel; for girls, above the knees and not extending beyond the shoulders or onto the neck. At the lower levels, including Regional championships and Festivals, the swimsuit used during practices is usually fine.

At National-level competitions, swimmers generally elect to wear race-specific swimsuits, but these are very expensive, are very fragile, waterlog and stretch easily, and must be made from approved fabrics. Wait until your swimmer gets at least to Provincial-level competition before even thinking about buying one, and even then ask your coach for advice first; a racing swimsuit makes little difference.

Your swimmer also needs to wear a **white ROW swim cap**. Any white ROW swim cap is fine. Optionally, at specific times during the swim year you may purchase caps with your swimmer's name on them.

**Back-up equipment** is a must. Your swimmer needs to focus on the races, not worry about finding a replacement item if something gets lost or breaks. Bring at least two of essential items, including goggles, ROW swim caps, and bathing suits. (At the lower levels, the backup swimsuit doesn't need to be black, but must adhere to other rules—see above.)

Your swimmer won't, however, need fins or hand paddles; these items are not permitted during warm-ups or races.

**Food** is something else your swimmer *will* need, and it won't be provided. Think simple, fairly light, and healthy snacks—apples and granola bars, for example. The snacks need to be things that are nutritious (not candy) and won't sit like a stone in your swimmer's stomach. Eating is not always permitted on pool decks, so anticipate that your swimmer may need to duck out (after asking the coach) to eat. Simple non-breakable packaging is good, so no valuable containers get lost.

**Comfortable clothing** such as sweatshirts, sweatpants, pajamas, or anything similar will keep your swimmer nice and warm. Muscles work much better when

warm. While waiting on the deck, often while wet, your swimmer needs to be warm and comfortable. ROW-branded items such as hoodies and jackets are a nice touch, but not mandatory. Labeling items with your swimmer's name improves the odds lost items will make their way back to you. Flip-flops or similar non-slip footwear can protect feet from cold pool decks.

Warm clothing can be (and probably should be) worn right up to the starting blocks. It is all too easy to start cooling off and stiffen up while queuing for races.

**Parents** should plan to wear or bring a white shirt for themselves if they have been asked to Officiate. They should also plan to wear or bring shoes that won't be harmed if they get splashed with pool water.

### Expect to Officiate at Meets

Unless you are a coach or a swimmer participating in a Session, there's only one way to get on deck, and that is to volunteer to Officiate. There are different types of officials, each with a different job. Sanctioned swim events require a lot of officials—around 40 or 50 per Session. Officials are always volunteers—even at the Olympics.

Most officials will be parents of swimmers at the host club. Unlike swimming lessons, parents are members of the swim club and all must participate for the club to work.

At ROW-hosted meets in which your swimmer is entered, **expect to be assigned an officiating role**. A week or two prior to each such meet, expect an **e-mail** listing parents and **assigned officiating roles**. If you're on the list, you, your spouse, or a competent teenager needs to show up. Meet Management, the rest of the club, and swimmers arriving from other clubs are counting on you. If someone died suddenly and you **absolutely** cannot make arrangements for someone to replace you, you need to tell Meet Management immediately (contact information in the e-mail)

The good news is that no experience is needed! If you can ask swimmers their names and can push buttons, you can do it! If you haven't officiated before, you'll be working with a partner and will be assigned one of the jobs that can be learned on the spot. Typically, you'll be assigned the job of a Timer, or perhaps as a Marshall to help younger swimmers get to their Events on time so they don't miss races.

Wear black pants or shorts and a white shirt if you expect to be a Timer (the most likely scenario).

Be aware that **officials can't leave early**. You must stay on deck until the **very end** of the Session, so tell your swimmer they may need to wait for you.

## Planning your trip to the pool

Figure out when you need to be there. It is very important to arrive on time. Each Session starts with a warm-up, and your swimmer needs to be there for that. Indeed, they need to be on deck, ready to go, 15 minutes to half an hour before the warm-up begins. (Ask your coach for the exact time.)

Plan ahead. It can be difficult to find a parking spot at meets, and traffic and weather conditions are unknowns. At minimum, aim to arrive 45 minutes before warm-ups start. At some venues, even finding the change rooms can be a challenge. Plan ahead so even if something unexpected happens, your swimmer has ample time to find his or her way, change, and get on deck.

Remember to watch **your e-mail** the night before, and the morning of the event. Sometimes changes get made at the last minute!

## Attending the meet

Now, you've arrived on time. If you've never been to Meet, you'll want to know what to expect. First, pools have between 6 and 10 lanes. Some pools have 50 meter lanes that can be divided lengthwise in two, doubling the pool capacity for so called "Short Course" (25 m lane) Events, but doing so isn't always possible as few pools have starting blocks at both ends.

Even with a large divided pool, at most 20 swimmers can swim at a time. There can be hundreds of swimmers; sometimes dozens from multiple clubs. Most attendees will swim in multiple Events. All that adds up to an awful lot of waiting, both for you and for your swimmer. That's one reason your swimmer needs warm comfy clothes to wear for hours on deck.

Conversely, it's usually hot and humid in the stands. You may want to wear summer-weight clothes, even in the winter, and bring snacks for yourself. While many races are exciting to watch, you may wish to bring a good book—or better yet, offer to help officiate.

It is common for dozens of swimmers to be entered in any one Event. Thus, almost all Events will be broken down into **Heats**, ensuring each swimmer has their own lane. The Heats swim sequentially. Each Heat is started as soon as possible after the last swimmer in the previous Heat finishes.

Swimmers who have slower previous times, or have not swum in a particular event before, typically swim in the first Heat. Those with the fastest previous times will be in the final Heat. As there can be more than a dozen Heats per Event, this process takes time. On the up side, your swimmer will swim with others close to their own level, which helps many people swim faster.

Since the pool deck is often barely large enough to hold the swimmers, spectators such as parents, siblings, grandparents, friends and supporting acquaintances are never allowed on deck. Expect that you and your swimmer will part just after entering, only to be reunited after the Session is over. You will be able to wave to them from the stands, but don't count on being able to visit with them, or pass them important items (extra goggles, warm shirt, or food) during the event.

There is only one way to get on deck at a sanctioned meet, and that is to volunteer to be an Official (such as a Timer).

## Meet Sheets and Meet Apps

Each Event is broken into Heats so all swimmers get their own lane; slower swimmers in the first Heat; fastest in the last. Now that you're at the meet, you will want to know which **Heats** your swimmer is in, and which **lane number** in each Heat.

There are two ways to find out this information. The first is to purchase a Heat Sheet when you arrive. Although at a few meets the heat sheets will be e-mailed out, or available in PDF format online, generally the hosting club prints copies and sells them at the start of each Session for a nominal fee, such as \$3 or \$4 each. You search through and find your swimmer's name. (Some people bring highlighters.) The fee supports the hosting club.

The approximate times at which each event will run may also be listed on the Heat Sheets. At any rate, the events and heats will be listed in order. You can estimate when they might occur by periodically taking a peek at the scoreboard, where the current event number and heat number are displayed.

One downside of printed heat sheets is that Meet Management occasionally makes last-minute changes; for example, collapsing heats if they are informed that some swimmers aren't coming. These changes can occur less than half an hour before the Session starts, so printed heat sheets won't reflect them.

The other way to find Heat and lane information is by installing a suitable App on your smart phone. As of this writing, the most popular one seems to be **Meet Mobile** by ACTIVE Network. One notable alternative is **OnDeck** by TeamUnify. Some swim facilities offer free Wi-Fi, which may make using an App easier.

Although there are free versions, you'll probably want to pay the subscription fee, often via in-App purchase, of approximately \$8 per year. Paying usually unlocks more features for keeping track of your favourite swimmers. Moreover, it gives you access to other meet information in somewhat real time; for example, your swimmer's time will appear soon after the race. (Some venues seem able to upload the information faster than others.) Some subscriptions can be shared among family members, making them an even better value.

Another advantage of the App is that you can use it to keep track of swimmers even if you aren't physically at the meet!

## The Importance of Scratching

If, for any reason, you must be late or absent (perhaps your car broke down), you need to let your coach know as soon as possible. Doing so is extremely courteous and may exempt you from financial penalties. The Heats may be assigned as late as possible—sometimes only 30 minutes before the Session starts. A coach that gets the information in time may be able to remove you from Events. This last-minute removal of swimmers names is called “**scratching**”. Of course, the best thing is to just be there and swim, but if you can't, scratching minimizes the impact on everyone else at the meet.

If you just don't show up, and nobody knows, your swimmer's lane is likely to be empty and perhaps time wasted searching for your swimmer. An empty lane can create all sorts of problems. First, it is unfair to the other swimmers in the Heat, as they won't have the same level of competition and may not swim their best. If meet management knows before the start of a Session, they can sometimes collapse Heats, or insert other swimmers. Perhaps now only 10 Heats will be needed for the event, rather than 11. (Swim Meets are already long enough without unnecessary heats!) Besides all that, unexplained empty lanes makes the club look bad.

For events hosted by other clubs, ROW has already paid the meet fees on your behalf, so anticipate that you're **still going to get the bill**. You may; however, be exempt from fines for missed races.

In higher-level meets (particularly at the provincial or national level), missed races can mean that swimmers who would otherwise have made the final races are denied a place, and the remaining swimmers are left with fewer competitors. Races are more fun to watch when the lanes are full. The final Heats contain the fastest swimmers; empty lanes here detract most from the Event. As a result, swimmers who don't show up, particularly in finals, may face **fines**. Depending on the level of the event, these can range from around \$50 to several hundred dollars **per Event**.

At the very least, promptly informing your coach saves them from embarrassment, and lets them tell meet management so your name won't be blaring over the loudspeakers when they can't find you.

### The other type of Scratching

If you know at least a few days ahead of time that you can't attend an entire Meet, your coach may be able to withdraw your name from the entire meet, as if you'd declined the Meet in the first place. Confusingly, this process is also called "scratching". If your coach is able to do so, you then won't be charged the relevant Meet fees. Indeed, you probably **won't be able** to go if you change your mind again.

It is very important to note, however, that there's some complexity in compiling swimmers and arranging payments to a host club. Don't count on being able to withdraw from a meet in this manner, or conversely, assume that you can sign up at the last minute, even for ROW-hosted Meets. Once you've Accepted a meet, assume you'll be paying the Meet fees and will be expected to attend.

At the very least; however, promptly informing your coach that you can't attend gives them time to scratch your name from the particular Events in which you are entered. It's courteous, not only to your coach, but to all the other parents, swimmers, and volunteers attending the meet.

### Deck Entries

Conversely, if you want to swim in an Event in which your coach hasn't entered you, your coach sometimes **can** enter your swimmer at the last minute, as long as he or she knows at least half an hour before a Session begins. Doing so is possible because

Meet Management may not arrange the final Heats until then. If informed in time, and if in agreement, your coach can sometimes literally walk over to Meet Management and ask them to add a swimmer; your swimmer's name will then be added to one of the Heats.

That said, adding your name to a heat is generally possible only if you're already attending the meet, and more likely for Meets hosted by ROW. If you have not Accepted the meet at all, then the process for adding an entirely new swimmer is complex enough that your coach may well be unable to do so.