



## A Parent's Guide to Galas!

### Help! My swimmer has been selected for a Gala! What now?

That's brilliant news! Galas are some of the best bits of swimming competitively and this handy guide is aimed at helping you through your first gala experiences... If you're familiar with galas but not the venue, go straight to the venue guide and scoring below.

### What to wear and do

#### **- you and other spectators especially any younger brothers and sisters.**

It will be hot hot hot, (see greenhouse factor in table below) so wear layers that you can take off! If you are there all day, many spectators bring a pair of flip flops or sandals that you can change into. The spectator seating is NOT comfy, you might want a cushion. Also remember that space is often at a premium so there is nowhere to put large bags.

You may want to find the other Sharks parents and sit with them. You can learn a lot from chatting to more experienced parents and watching their swimmers. You will also enjoy the gala experience more when everyone gets together and you cheer on the whole team. Swimming is a sport that requires lots of hours, so you will eventually consider these people to be your friends and the galas will be your social lives 😊

You will usually need a few ££ for the raffle and a programme. Bring a pen and your swimmers PB book so you can write down your swimmer's race times, and record how well they are doing. You might want to download a PB app for your smartphone – talk to other parents about which ones are good.

If you plan to take photos or video of your swimmer make sure you sign the declaration upon arrival. Pictures and video can only ever be used for personal use and NEVER posted on social media.

For youngsters, shorts and a vest top to change into is a good idea, and bring something for them to do that is quiet, a book or colouring for example. For electronic devices remember there will be nowhere to charge them, and for games with sound you will need headphones.

#### **- Your swimmer**

Your swimmer will need their swim kit, spare trunks/costume, goggles and spare goggles, Sharks swimming hat and a Sharks club t-shirt/sweatshirt to wear in between races.

It's a good idea to pack an extra towel as if they are there all day, one often gets very wet.

#### **- A note about Swimwear**



Serious swimmers never seem to have enough swimwear! In truth you only really need two sets, a tight fitting set for racing, and another set preferably in chlorine resistant fabric for training. Swimming websites will do their best to part you from your cash and you can spend a lot if you have the budget. In reality the benefit of high performance expensive suits only comes when you are in the top squads, and regularly checking the fit of a standard priced suit will be fine for most swimmers. The main message here is baggy swimwear is a big no no for galas! With regard to colour, anything goes – be guided by what your swimmer wants to wear!

### **What about food?**

#### **- You**

Bring plenty of water!! It's a good idea to also take plenty of food and snacks (see the café guide below) as the café food is sometimes expensive and the galas often run over time, so you may finish later than you planned. Extra supplies for your swimmer are also recommended. (You'll be amazed at what they get through)

#### **- Your swimmer**

The following nutritional advice has been taken from the British Swimming website (link here: <http://www.swimming.org/swimfit/daily-nutrition-tips-for-competitive-swimmers/> )

You can also find out what to eat **THE DAY BEFORE** and **THE MORNING OF THE EVENT**

### **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 the 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 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 crudités e.g. carrots, peppers, cucumber and celery

### Can my swimmer sit with me?

No (sorry)

But they can visit you if they ask permission/ or are told it's ok by their coach. This means your swimmer should take everything they need with them in their bag.

Swimmers normally sit with the rest of the team and spend the time cheering and supporting their team mates.

Parents may not go into the marshalling area or on to poolside because the club could be penalised if you do so without permission.

### Where am I going?

Use the handy table below for a guide to the various venues and what to expect when you get there

#### Scoring





	St Austell	Bodmin	Newquay	Truro	Carn Brea	Penzance	Plymouth	Newton Abbot	Exeter Pyramids
Easy to find?									
Parking									
Phone Reception									
Greenhouse Factor									
Café opening hours			no café	no café				no café	no café
Café & food quality/price									
Toilets									
spectator seating - quantity									
spectator seating - comfort									

Criteria				
Easy to find?	I can drive straight there and the road signs are crystal clear	Easy as long you remember the one tricky bit	you can spot it after you've driven past the turn	it could be anywhere, leave extra time
Parking	I can arrive last minute and still get a space	I will get a space	arrive early or prepare for a walk	put out roadcones the day before
Phone Reception	5 bars and 4G	calls and texts ok	I can just about make a call	semaphore only
Greenhouse Factor	Comfy room temperature on poolside	pleasant t-shirt weather	hot and humid	sweatier than the Amazon in high summer
Café opening hours	Always open during galas	Open over lunch	sometimes open, sometimes not	café? What café?
Café & food quality/price	good range, tasty, plenty of availability, reasonable prices	good range & tasty	limited choice at busy times or can be expensive	unable to cope at busy gala, expensive
Toilets	Smell fresh & have soap, towels and loo roll even at the end of a 3 session gala	generally cope well	a bit phew, lack of loo roll after 2nd session	bring a peg, or try elsewhere
spectator seating - quantity	I can arrive last minute and still get a space	I will get a space	arrive early or prepare to stand	put out your towel at 4am
spectator seating - comfort	just like my sofa at home	back support and leg room	it's a seat...	numb bum before the end of the warm up