**Ten (Dispelled) Reasons Not To Swim in a Meet**

**Only former age-group/high school/college swimmers compete in meets**

FALSE. Many masters swimmers with no previous competitive swimming background enjoy participating in meets.

**I'll be the slowest/oldest one at the meet**  
HIGHLY UNLIKELY. Unless you are in your late 80s/early 90s, other swimmers will have both of these categories covered. And trust me, these swimmers are celebrated and cheered on (just as you will be by your teammates).

**Everyone will have to wait for me to finish the race**  
HIGHLY UNLIKELY. Everyone is seeded in heats with swimmers with comparable abilities/times (not ages or gender).

**I can't/don't like diving off the blocks**  
NO PROBLEM. Swimmers are welcome to start their race with a dive from the pool deck or, if preferred, in the water holding on to the gutter.

**My goggles will fall off if I dive in**  
IT CAN HAPPEN, BUT there are ways to minimize the likelihood. Talk with your coach and teammates who race for tips. Practice dives in the weeks leading up to the meet so you feel confident.

**I only feel comfortable swimming one event**  
FINE. Come swim the 50 Free (or whatever calls to you). If the meet is at Ray, it's your home pool with your home team hosting; it's a great boost to try something new (especially in familiar territory at a low-key event).

**I don't have any idea how a meet runs, when I go to the blocks, what the whistles mean…**  
DON'T WORRY. You have many teammates/coaches who will be happy to help you get familiar with the proceedings. After watching a few heats, you'll have the hang of it in no time.

**I'm not competitive by nature**  
FINE. Use the time you swim a particular race as a marker for your fitness. Swim the same event each year and see how you improve.

**I have bad hearing and won't be able to hear the starter**  
You have teammates who have overcome this hurdle and will help you do the same.

DON'T LET IT KEEP YOU FROM COMPETING.

**I'll be too nervous**  
Being NERVOUS before a race IS NORMAL. It just means you care.