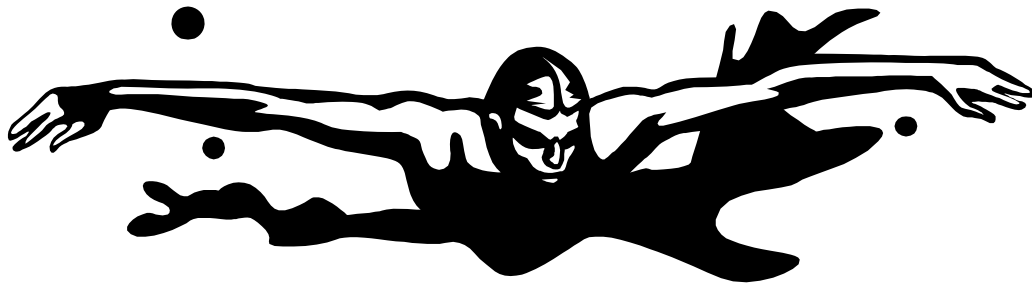


WILDCAT SWIM CLUB



Swimmer & Parent Handbook

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Introduction

Welcome to the Wildcat Swim Club! The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with team policies and introduce you to the sport of competitive swimming. Please take a few minutes to read your handbook; it contains some good information that will help make your experience with swimming a positive one.

By joining the Wildcat Swim Club, your child has become a member of one of the country's largest and most organized youth sports. This manual will give you a good working knowledge of the sport and answer some basic questions you might have at this time. Keep in mind that this information is just an introduction.

The sport of swimming has many benefits, including the people you and your child will meet. The camaraderie among swimmers is unique; many swimming buddies have become lifelong friends.

In addition to being around good people, swimming provides one of the most beneficial forms of exercise for cardiovascular and overall fitness. This exercise can be enjoyed throughout ones' entire life. Possibly the greatest benefits of participating in an organized swimming program are the life skills your child will develop. These skills include time management, self-discipline and sportsmanship. Your child will reap the benefits of swimming long after their participation ends. Most swimmers go on to be very successful and productive adults largely due to what they gained from swimming.

Age group swimming can be fun, exciting and rewarding. Some children improve rapidly during the early development stages due to growth and improved technique. It is difficult to avoid the tendency to push young athletes at this stage. However, the emphasis at this time should be placed on technique. We recommend the training schedule for developmental swimmers be flexible enough to provide time to participate in other activities. Since many swimmers train for ten years or more, swimming at the youngest levels needs to be fun and pressure free.

This booklet is designed to help you and your child succeed in swimming. Remember not every swimmer becomes a world record holder, but everyone gains from his /her swimming experience. Supporting your child in swimming can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. You may soon find yourself cheering at competitions, timing during meets, or even becoming a United States Swimming (USA) certified official. Whatever your role, do it with positive support for your child. Please ask questions of the coaches, the team's board members, swimming officials and fellow parents. We all have the same goal – to provide your child with the best possible experience in swimming.

Best wishes for a successful season. Most importantly, have fun!

The Wildcat Swim Club Coaching Staff and Board Members

Wildcat Communication

- **Email:** Our primary avenue of communication. **Please check your email frequently for updates.** You can contact us at wildcatswim@gmail.com
If you do not have access to email, please let us know.
- **Website:** www.wildcatswimclub.org currently under construction. Please feel free to check it frequently for information and announcements.
- **Bulletin board:** located inside the entrance to the pool. You will find signup sheets for meets and other important information.
- **Swimmers mailboxes:** each swimmer will have a folder in the mailbox which will be placed on the bleachers before practice. Please check it frequently for calendar of events, meet announcements, newsletter, ribbons, etc.
- **Parent meetings**
- **Meetings with coaches upon request.**
- **Board President 203-668-0265**

Behavior Guidelines: Team Rules and Regulations

1. Swimmers must abide by all pool rules and listen for the coaches instructions:
 - **NO** running on the pool deck or locker rooms.
 - **NO** hanging on the lane lines.
 - **NO** gum or food, especially glass bottles on the pool deck.
 - **NO** diving in the shallow end of the pool.
 - **NO** fooling around in the water or on the pool deck.
 - **NO** boys in the girls' locker room/ **NO** girls in the boys' locker room.
 - **NO** touching another swimmer (keep your hands to yourself).
2. Swimmers are not allowed on deck until a coach is present. **Parents are asked not to drop their children off without first verifying that a coach is present.**
3. Swimmers are to be on deck with their suits and cap on 5 minutes prior to the start of practice and wait for the coach to take attendance prior to entering the pool. No swimming unless authorized by the coach.
4. It is strongly encouraged that bathroom breaks are taken before and after practice and when absolutely necessary between swim sets with the coaches permission.
5. Talking is not permitted while the coach is giving instructions or during a swim set. Swimmers must be courteous and attentive to others in their lane and follow the rules of lane swimming.
6. Team suits and caps are **required** at all meets. It is recommended that the team suit not be worn for practice. Swimmers with long hair are required to wear a cap at all times. It is strongly recommended that swimmers wear goggles during practice and meets.
7. Swimmers must respect the right to use the Seymour High School facilities and respect other people's property. There shall be no loitering in the locker rooms. Pool equipment will be treated with respect and care. Any permanent damage to the facilities or equipment will result in replacement by the offender.
8. Swimmers should always show the utmost respect for all coaches, officials, parents and other swimmers. Swimmers should conduct themselves in a proper and courteous manner during practices, swim meets, and team social gatherings.
9. Swimmers are expected to treat each other as teammates with a spirit of respect, enthusiasm, and cooperation. Never interfere with the progress of another swimmer. Teammates should support and encourage each other to reach their goals.
10. At meets, children must stay with the coaches as an organized group at all times. No one is to leave the deck area without the coaches' permission until their last event has been completed.
11. During a swim meet, only the following people shall be allowed on deck: swimmers, parents working as volunteers or swim officials, and members of the coaching staff.
12. Swimmers and parents should check email, team bulletin board, and the website and swimmer mailboxes frequently.
13. Swimmers must inform one of the coaches by telephone, as soon as they know that they will be unable to swim in a scheduled meet so that they can be properly scratched. In the event of a medical emergency, please call a coach or a team board member immediately.

Disciplinary Policy

Horsing around, fooling around, hanging around, tardiness or failure to listen to a coach's direction during practices or meets will not be tolerated. The coaches want the swim team experience to be one of growth and fun – fooling around is not a part of having fun. Failure to abide by these rules will result in the following”

1st Offence: The child will be verbally reminded that this is their first offence and their action is unacceptable and must cease.

2nd Offence: The child will be removed from the pool and will be asked to sit on the bench for a short break. When the coach has the opportunity he/she will explain to the child that their behavior is unacceptable and they must cease the behavior immediately.

3rd Offence: The child will be removed from the pool, a parent will be called and the child will be excused from the practice/meet for the remainder of the event.

Continued misbehavior during meets or practice may result in a 2 week suspension and the child will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled competitive swimming event.

Further disciplinary action may include expulsion from the team and forfeiture of all fees paid.

Bullying, verbal threats, harassment, verbal arguments or similar actions will not be tolerated.

1st Offence: The child will be immediately removed from practice or meet, a parent will be called and the child will be excused from the practice/meet for the remainder of the event.

2nd Offence: The child will face a 2 week suspension and the child will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled competitive swimming event.

3rd Offence: The child will be suspended from the team for the rest of the season and all fees paid will be forfeited.

Physical contact, hitting, fighting or similar actions will not be tolerated.

1st Offence: The child will be immediately removed from practice or meet, 2 week suspension and the child will not be allowed to participate in the next scheduled competitive swimming event.

2nd Offence: The child will be suspended from the team for the rest of the season and all fees paid will be forfeited. In Addition, the Board will call a meeting with the swimmer and their parent(s) and a decision will be made as whether or not future participation in the club will be allowed.

Note: Other discipline issues not covered here will be handled accordingly. All swimmers and parents know there are consequences the fill be followed y appropriate actions. The coaches and Executive Board members have the authority to institute any penalty they they feel is appropriate for the infraction committed.

Parent Responsibilities

Wildcat Swim Club is a not-for-profit corporation that relies to a great extent on the volunteered time of its parent members to be successful. All parents are expected to support the team by attending team sponsored events, participating in team social activities and fundraisers, and volunteering their time. **It is the nature of the sport of swimming, that when a child joins a team, so do his/her parents.**

Working at Meets

Volunteering is a great way to get involved in your child's sport. Parents are needed to assist with many duties to help make our team run and become better. By volunteering your time, the coaching staff can concentrate on what is most important ... your child!

You are required to work at all meets that your child is signed up for. At all meets the team attends, we are expected to provide workers. **Our team could be prevented from participating in a meet if we do not supply the required number of workers.** Please do not let this happen to our children.

We will require many parents to help at our home meets. We cannot run these meets without you. Some of the jobs include but are not limited to, timing runners, starter, concessions, set up, clean up, donations of food and beverages, etc.

Timing responsibilities at USA and league championships are shared equally between all parents attending the meet. **If you attend a USA meet you must time.** It is your responsibility to have learned how to time prior to these meets. Parents can learn timing by signing up to time at dual meets. It is really a task that is simple to learn and you will become quite comfortable with timing after only a few heats have been completed. Being a timer will give you the best view to see your child swim and cheer him/her on.

Committee Assistance

You are encouraged to assist with at least one committee during the swimming season. There are many committees needed to help the team function properly, and your participation is imperative. Please be flexible about the committee(s) you are willing to serve on, as some committees are small, but all are important.

General Guidelines

- Please verify that a coach is in attendance prior to leaving your child at practice.
- Pick up your child from all practices, meets and other functions on time. Parents are responsible for their own child while in the locker room. During practice, swimmers should not be in the locker room unless given permission by the coach to use the restrooms.

For your child's safety, Seymour High School requires that the following rules be followed by all team members, siblings, and other team visitors:

- No running or horseplay on the deck, in the locker rooms, or in the lobby. It is slippery, which can be very hazardous and very distracting to the swimmers in the pool. If you are watching your child swim and younger children are with you, please do not allow your younger ones to run around the pool deck. Siblings are not allowed in the locker rooms without an adult.
- No one is to wander any area of Seymour High School.
- Follow all pool rules posted in the pool area.

Any concerns that you have about a coach or board member should be addressed in a private setting and definitely not in front of your child, other children, or any other parents.

Please do not interrupt coaches during practices. If you have questions or concerns, please email the coach to set up a meeting before or after practice.

Tips for swim meets: Please pack accordingly for your child. Items they may need at swim meets include the following but are not limited to:

- Team suit (mandatory)
- Team cap (mandatory for all girls and boys)
- Goggles (keep an extra pair in your child's bag in case they break)
- Warm clothes
- Towels (at least two)
- Water bottle and a healthy snack
- Folding chair that stores in a carry bag for easy portability

At the beginning of the season, swimmers will be given the opportunity to purchase a team suit as well as optional team apparel. More information on this will be provided during the swim season.

Ten Commandments for Swimming Parents

(Written by Rose Snyder for USS Swimming)

- **Thou shall not impose your ambitions on thy child** Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do their personal best.
- **Thou shall be supportive no matter what** There is only one question to ask your child "Did you have fun?" Your child should not be forced to participate.
- **Thou shall not coach your child** Do not undermine the coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to support, love and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent the swimmer/coach bond from forming. Have your child ask the coach if they have a question.
- **Thou shall only have positive things to say at a meet** When you go to a meet you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coach.
- **Thou shall acknowledge thy child's fears** A first time in competition or the first time doing an event can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be nervous. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if they were not ready to compete in it.
- **Thou shall not criticize the officials** If you do not have the time or the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those that are doing the best they can.
- **Honor thy child's coach** The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one and one that contributes to your child's successes as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child; it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.
- **Thou shall not jump from team to team** The water isn't necessarily bluer at another team's pool. Every team has internal problems, even teams that build champions.
- **Thy child shall have goals besides winning** Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning.
- **Thou shall not expect thy child to become an Olympian** There are 225,000 athletes in United States Swimming alone. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are 1 in about 4,300. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask a coach why he coaches. Chances are, he is not an Olympian, but still got enough out of swimming that he wants to pass that love for the sport to others. Swimming teaches self discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they have won. Swimming programs build good people, and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

Meet and Practice Attendance Policies

Practice Attendance

In order to compete in swim meets, it is recommended that swimmers attend a minimum of eighty percent (80%) of all practices. If a swimmer has not met this requirement, the final decision will be at the discretion of the head coach. It is important to be on time for practices, as swim sets are purposely designed to warm a swimmer up and gradually build in intensity as the practice session progresses. Anyone more than twenty minutes late to a practice will be considered absent. Please be on time for practices, ready to swim!

Meet Attendance

Swimmers in all levels are strongly encouraged to participate in all dual meets (home and away) and championship meets. If your child cannot attend a meet, please give the coaches notice at least 3 days prior to the meet. If your child should become ill, please make every effort to notify a coach or board member that you will not be attending.

Please be on time for all meets! **If your swimmer is more than 20 minutes late to the announced warm-up start time, they will be scratched and not allowed to swim in the meet. There will be no exceptions to this policy. This is a USA swimming policy, not ours.**

In order for a swimmer to participate in a meet, a permission slip must be signed by the parent and returned to the head coach with cash, check, or money order made payable to Wildcat Swim Club for splash fees by the given deadline. No late entries will be accepted. Splash fees are those fees charged by the host team to cover the costs involved in running the meet. They are non-refundable.

Practice cancellations

When inclement weather causes practice to be cancelled, every effort will be made to send emails and to post the information on the website. However, due to the nature of fast developing weather, call the **Board President (203-668-0265)** when in doubt. If a practice or meet is cancelled, that information will be updated as soon as it is known.

In general, if school is dismissed early or cancelled for inclement weather, practice will also be cancelled.

Away meets are cancelled or not cancelled at the discretion of the host team. If there is inclement weather and the host team has not cancelled, use your own discretion. If you decide not to attend, please notify the coach by calling the team phone and leaving a message. **Fees are non-refundable.**

There may sometimes be cancellations that are beyond our control. SHS student activities such as home swim meets take precedents. We will make every effort to notify you of changes to the practice schedule.

League Affiliations

- **Nutmeg League:** The Nutmeg League consists of local clubs competing in dual or tri-meets during the fall/winter season. These meets are scored. A scored championship meet is held at the end of the season with awards for the top sixteen finishers.
- **CSSL:** The Connecticut Summer Swim League consists of local clubs competing in dual or tri-meets during the spring summer season. These meets are scored. A scored championship meet is held at the end of the season with awards for the top sixteen finishers.
- **U.S.A. – United States Swimming:** U.S.A. is the National Governing Body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States. U.S.A. was conceived in 1978 with the passage of the Amateur Sports Act, which specified that all Olympic sports would be administered independently. Prior to this act, U.S.A. was the Competitive Swimming Committee of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) located in Indianapolis, Indiana. U.S.A. Headquarters office was established in Colorado Springs, Colorado in 1981 and is located in the Olympic Training Center.

As the National Governing Body for the sport, U.S.A. is responsible for the conduct and administration of swimming in the United States. In this capacity, U.S.A. formulates the rules, implements policies and procedures, conducts the national championships, disseminates safety and sports medicine information and selects the athletes to represent the United States in international competition.

How is United States Swimming Organized?

International – The international federation for aquatic sports is the Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA). U.S.A. is affiliated with FINA through United States Aquatic Sports (USAS), which is made up of four aquatic sports: swimming, synchronized swimming, diving and water polo.

National – U.S.A. is a Group A member of the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and has a voting representation in the USOC House of Delegates.

Local – Within the United States, U.S.A. is divided into fifty-nine (59) Local Swimming Committees (LSCs), each one responsible for administering U.S.A. activities in a defined geographical area. Each LSC has its own set of by-laws under which it operates.

A House of Delegates, with representation of athletes, coaches, members of the Board of Directors and clubs is responsible for managing the business affairs of each LSC.

Age Group Classification

There are seven different age group classifications recognized by U.S.A. Swimming: 8 & under; 10 & under; 11-12; 13-14; 15-16; 17-18 and Senior. The senior classification includes any age swimmer who has achieved the prescribed qualifying time for the event. Not all age group classifications are offered at every meet. The swimmer's age on the first day of a meet will govern the swimmer's age for the entire meet.

U.S.A. Entry Fees

An annual USA Swimming membership/insurance fee of \$57 will be required for all swimmers participating in the program. In addition to the membership fee, at each U.S.A. meet, a "splash fee" for each event a swimmer enters is charged. You will be asked to provide the money for these fees as you register your swimmer for each USA meet. **All fees are non-refundable.**

For more detailed information about competitive swimming, check out the following websites:

www.ctswim.org
www.usaswimming.org

Glossary of Swimming Terms

Age Group: Division of swimmers according to age. The National Age Group divisions are: 10-under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, and 17-18. Some LSCs have divided the swimmers into more convenient divisions specific to their situations: (i.e.) 8-under, 13-Over, 15-Over, Junior, Senior.

Anchor: The final swimmer in a relay.

Backstroke: One of the four competitive racing strokes, basically any style of swimming on your back. Backstroke is swum as the first stroke in the Medley Relay and second stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd back).

Beep: The starting sound from an electronic, computerized timing system.

Block: the starting platform.

Breaststroke: One of the four competitive racing strokes. Breaststroke is swum as the second stroke in the Medley Relay and the third stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter. (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd breast)

Bulkhead: a wall constructed to divide a pool into different courses, such as a 50 meter pool into two 25 yard courses.

Butterfly: One of the four competitive racing strokes. Butterfly (nicknamed FLY) is swam as the third stroke in the Medley Relay and first stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, and 200 yards/meter (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yard fly).

Button: The manual Timing System stopping device that records a back-up time in case the touch pad malfunctioned. The button is at the end of a wire, plugged into a deck terminal box. There are usually 3 buttons per lane. It is the timers' responsibility to push the button as the swimmer finishes the race.

Championship Meet: The meet held at the end of a season. Qualification times are usually necessary to enter meet.

Circle Seeding: A method of seeding swimmers when they are participating in a prelims/finals event. The fastest 18 to 24 swimmers are seeded in the last three heats, with the fastest swimmers being in the inside lanes. (i.e.) Lane 4 in the final three heats. See rule book for exact method for seeding depending on the lanes in the pool.

Circle swimming: performed by staying to the right of the black line when swimming in a lane, enabling more swimmers to swim in each lane.

Coach: a person who trains and teaches athletes in the sport of swimming.

Code of conduct: a set of behavioral guidelines, which swimmers are expected to follow.

Colorado timing system: an electronic, touch-pad system used to time swimmers during meet events.

Course Designated distance: (length of pool) for swimming competition. (I.e.) Long Course = 50 meters / Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.

Cut: a slang term used for qualifying time; a time standard necessary to participate in a particular meet or event.

Deck: The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches. No one but an "authorized" USA Swimming member may be on the deck during a swim competition.

Distance: a term used to refer to events over 400 meters/500 yards.

DQ: disqualified. A disqualification occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind, e.g. freestyle kick during the butterfly. A disqualified swimmer is not given an official time, nor are they eligible to receive awards for that event.

Drill: an exercise involving a portion or part of a stroke, used to improve technique.

Dry land training: training done out of the water, which aids and enhances swimming performance, usually includes stretching, calisthenics, and/or weight training.

Dual Meet: Type of meet where two teams/clubs compete against each other.

Dropped Time: When a swimmer goes faster than the previous performance they have "dropped their time."

Entry Fees: The amount per event a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the LSC and type of meet.

Electronic Timing: Timing system operated on DC current (battery). The timing system usually has touch pads in the water, junction boxes on the deck with hook up cables, buttons for backup timing, and a computer-type console that prints out the results of each race. Some systems are hooked up to a scoreboard that displays swimmers.

False start: occurs when a swimmer is moving before the start gun is sounded. In USA, one false start will result in disqualification.

Final: the championship heat of an event, in which the top swimmers from the preliminaries compete.

Finish: the final phase of the race; the touch at the end of the race.

Fins: Large rubber flipper-type devices that fit on a swimmers feet. Used in swim practice, not competition.

Flags: backstroke flags are placed 5 yards for short course or 5 meters for long course from the end of the pool. The flags enable backstroke swimmers to execute a backstroke turn and finish more efficiently.

Freestyle: One of the four competitive racing strokes. Freestyle (nicknamed Free) is swum as the fourth stroke in the Medley Relay and fourth stroke in the I.M. Racing distances are 50 yards/meter, 100 yards/meter, 200 yards/meter, 400 mtr/500, yd 800 mtr/1000 yds, 1500 mtr/1650 yds (LSCs with 8-under divisions offer the 25 yd free).

Goal: a specific time achievement a swimmer sets and strives for. Can be short or long term.

Gun Lap: The part of a freestyle distance race (400 meters or longer) when the swimmer has two lengths plus five yards to go. The starter fires a gun shot over the lane of the lead swimmer when the swimmer is at the backstroke flags.

Gutter: the area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows into during use of the pool (and is re-circulated through the filtration system).

Heats: A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by swimmers time swum, after all heats of the event are completed.

Heat Award: A ribbon or coupon given to the winner of a single heat at an age group swim meets.

Heat Sheet: The pre-meet printed listings of swimmers' seed times in the various events at a swim meet. These sheets vary in accuracy, since the coaches submit swimmers times many weeks before the meet. Heat sheets are sold at the admissions table and are used mainly to make sure the swimmer has been properly entered in all the events they signed up for. Parents enjoy looking at the seeding prior to the race plus swimmers can tell the order the events will be conducted and get a rough idea how long the meet sessions will last.

Individual Medley (IM): A swimming event using all four of the competitive strokes on consecutive lengths of the race. The order must be: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle. Equal distances must be swum of each stroke. Distances offered: 100 yards, 200 yards/meters, and 400 yards/meter.

Interval: A specific elapsed time for swimming or rest used during swim practice.

Lane: The specific area in which a swimmer is assigned to swim. (ie) Lane 1 or Lane 2.
Pools with starting blocks at only one end: As the swimmers stand behind the blocks, lanes are numbered from Right (lane 1) to Left (Lane 6).

Lane Lines: Continuous floating markers attached to a cable stretched from the starting end to the turning end for the purpose of separating each lane and quieting the waves caused by racing swimmers.

Lap: One length of the course. Sometimes may also mean down and back (2 lengths) of the course.

Lap counter: a set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race.

Long course: a pool 50 meters in length. USA conducts most of its summer competitions in long course pools.

Long distance: term used to refer to events of 800 meters/1000 yards to 1500 meters/1650 yards in length.

Mark: The command to take your starting position.

Meet: a competition designed to be a learning experience for swimmers. By implementing what has been learned in practice, the swimmer tests themselves against the clock to see how they are doing.

Negative split: swimming the second half of a race equal or faster than the first half.

NT: No Time. The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swum that event before.

Official: a judge on the deck of a pool at a sanctioned competition who enforces USA rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, timers and referees.

Pace clock: a large clock with a second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain interval in practice; may also be digital.

Paddle: Colored plastic devices worn on the swimmers hands during swim practice.

Prelims: slang for preliminaries, also called heats or trials. The races in which swimmers qualify for the championship and consolation finals in an event.

Pre-seeded: A meet conducted without a bull pen in which a swimmer knows what lane and heat they are in by looking at the heat sheet or posted meet program.

Psyche Sheet: An entry sheet showing all swimmers entered into each individual event, sometimes referred to as a "Heat Sheet" or meet program. However, a "heat sheet" would show not only every swimmer in an event, but also what heat and lane they are swimming in.

Pull Buoy: A flotation device used for pulling by swimmers in practice.
Qualifying Times: Published times necessary to enter certain meets.

Relays: A swimming event in which four swimmers participate as a team. Each swimmer completes an equal distance of the race. There are two types of relays: 1.) Medley relay - One swimmer swims Backstroke, one swimmer swims Breaststroke, one swimmer swims Butterfly, one swimmer swims Freestyle, in that order. Medley relays are conducted over 200 yd/mtr and 400 yd/mtr distances. 2.) Freestyle relay - Each swimmer swims freestyle. Free relays are conducted over 200 yd/mtr, 400 yd/mtr, and 800 yd/mtr distances.

Runner: a person responsible for walking event cards to the scorers after each heat of an event.

Scratch: to withdraw from an event in a competition.

Seed: Assign the swimmers heats and lanes according to their submitted or preliminary times.

Seeding: Deck Seeding - swimmers are called to report to the Clerk of the Course. After scratches are determined, the event is seeded. Pre Seeding -swimmers are arranged in heats according to submitted times, usually a day prior to the meet.

Short Course: a pool 25 yards or 25 meters in length. USA swimming conducts most of its winter meets in short course pools.

Split: a time recorded from the official start to the completion of an initial distance within a longer event. Also the time for one of the four individuals in a relay. Under certain circumstances, splits may also be used as official times, for example, the lead off swim in a relay, or the lead off portion of an event.

Sprint: describes the shorter events (50 and 100 yards). In training, to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.

Start: The beginning of a race. The dive used to begin a race.

Starter: The official in charge of signaling the beginning of a race and insuring that all swimmers have a fair takeoff.

Streamline: the position used by swimmers when starting or pushing off the wall; designed to reduce water resistance.

Stroke: There are 4 competitive strokes: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle.

Taper: the final preparation phase sometimes referred to as “rest.”

Time Standard: A time set by a meet or LSC or USA-S (etc) that a swimmer must achieve for qualification or recognition.

Timer: The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks/finish end of pool, who are responsible for getting watch times on events and activating the backup buttons for the timing system.

Time trial: a time-only swim, which is not part of a regular meet.

Touch pad: a large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer’s finish is registered and sent electronically to the timing system.

USA: United States Swimming, Inc. The national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States.

Warm down: low intensity swimming used by a swimmer after a race or main practice to gradually reduce heart rate and respirations.

Warm up: low intensity swimming used by a swimmer prior to a main practice set or race to get muscles loose and warm. Warm up gradually increases heart rate, respiration and helps to prevent injury.

For a complete glossary of terms go to www.usaswimming.org