

GENERAL NOTES ON AGE GROUP SWIMMING COMPETITIONS

Age Group Swimming

“Age Group Swimming” generally refers to swim meets in which swimmers compete only against other swimmers in their assigned age group. Events are also organized by stroke (e.g., freestyle, backstroke, etc.) and by gender (i.e., boys compete only against boys, and girls compete only against girls).

The Age Group State Championship Meet has three age groups: 10 & Under, 11-12, and 13-14. A typical meet, however, would have the following age groups: 8 & Under, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-14. In special “swim-your-own-age” meets there are even more age groups: 7 & under, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14. Some meets will include older swimmers, e.g., 15-18 and “Senior” swimmers (19 and older).

Competition Strokes and Distances

Swimmers compete in four strokes: freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly. In addition, “individual medley” events are held in which swimmers must swim lengths of each stroke during the race.

During the winter short-course season, the events typically offered to each age group as follows:

8 & Under Swimmers (10 events): 25 yard and 50 yard races in each of the four strokes, plus a 100 yard freestyle and a 100 yard individual medley (25 yard lengths of each of the four strokes).

9 & 10 year old Swimmers (10 events): 50 yard and 100 yard races in each of the four strokes, plus a 200 yard freestyle and a 200 yard individual medley (50 yards of each stroke).

11 & 12 year old Swimmers (11 events): All of the 9 & 10 year old events (see above), plus the 500 yard freestyle.

13 & 14 year old Swimmers (14 events): The 50 yard, 100 yard, 200 yard, 500 yard, 1000 yard and 1650 yard freestyles, 100 yard and 200 yard races in each of the other three strokes, plus the 200 yard and 400 yard individual medley races.

Summer long course events are similar, except that the distances are measured in meters and there are no races shorter than 50 meters.

“Short Course” vs. “Long Course” Meets

Swimming competitions are divided into “short course” and “long course” competitions.

Short course meets are held in 25 yard pools, the size pool you typically see in a high school. The events in a short course meet are measured in yards, e.g., the 25 yard freestyle, 100 yard breaststroke, etc. All winter season meets are short course, including the state championship held in March.

Long course meets are held in 50 meter pools, the size pool you see in the Olympics. The events in a long course meet are measured in meters, e.g., the 50 meter freestyle, 100 meter breaststroke, etc. Most summer season meets are long course, including the state championship held in July. There are also some summer short course (yard) meets, including our own Spring Splash in May. These are usually local meets and are recommended for new swimmers.