

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: On the entry form it always asks for a seed time. What is a seed time?

A: Swimmers' seed times are their personal bests for each event they are entering. Swimmers are allocated lanes based on their seed times to try and provide them with a close competitor in the adjacent lane(s). For a popular event there may be two or more heats. The heats are run in order of slowest to fastest.

If an event has more than one heat all the results from each of the heats are combined to give overall placing. This means that it is usually better to get third or fourth in a fast heat than first in a slow heat. This underlines the importance of being in the right heat as swimmers record their fastest times when there is a swimmer in the next lane that is just a bit faster but within catching distance.

Q: What is a personal best?

A: A swimmer's personal best is the fastest time they have recorded over the same distance in the same length pool.

Q: How can a swimmer find out what their PBs are?

A: Results sheets are available for all swimmers after a meet. They detail the times swum by each swimmer as well as the placings for each event. Times are also printed on the ribbon labels. Swimmers are encouraged to keep a log of their times.

Q: How are the times recorded?

A: Simultaneously as the race is started a buzzer sounds, a strobe light flashes and the electronic clock starts. The two manual timers assigned to each lane start their watches on seeing the strobe light. As each swimmer finishes they touch the black pads below the water line at the end of their lane and this stops the electronic clock. At the same time the manual timers assigned to their lane stop their watches and press a plunger. The plunger stops the electronic clock in the same way as if the swimmer had touched the pads. It sends a back up electronic time to the timing equipment. The times recorded by the human timers are recorded in the timing booth but only used in the event that the swimmer did not make contact with the black pads or a malfunction of electronic equipment occurred and no record of an electronic time was available.

Q: What's in the blue hut next to the starter?

A: The hut houses the computer timing equipment. Two or three people work in the timing shed during a meet. One person is in charge of re-setting the electronic time and pads before and after every race. One person verifies that all the lanes got a valid time either electronically or manually. The third person is the computer operator. He or she inputs the time into the computer, which determines the places and prints the results and ribbon labels.

Q: What prizes are awarded?

A: After an event the times from all the heats are compared to find the overall winner. It is customary to award ribbons or medals for places up to the number of lanes in the competition pool. In our case, we have a six-lane pool, so ribbons and/or medals are awarded for 1st to 6th place **per event, not per heat**. Participation ribbons are awarded to all aged 6 & unders.

At the end of the meet or as soon as possible afterwards, the high point awards are presented. Points are awarded to the fastest 8 swimmers in each event as follows:

- | | | | |
|----|--------------|-------|------------------------|
| 1. | Steve Ebanks | 39.39 | 9 points |
| 2. | John Smith | 39.58 | 7 points |
| 3. | Paul Bodden | 39.59 | 6 points |
| 4. | Tom Johnson | 40.02 | 5 points and so on ... |

The points are added up for each swimmer in every sex and age group. The swimmer with the most points in each category wins the high point award.

Q: What are the motivational times shown against each event on the heat sheets?

A: For many years, US Swimming has published a set of Age Group time standards, termed National Motivational Times.

For example, for short course, 11-12 Boys 100m freestyle, the current times are:

AAAA	AAA	AA	A	BB	B
1:00.89	1:03.79	1:06.69	1:09.59	1:15.39	1:21.19

Stingray Swim Club utilizes the American Swim Coaches Association Chevron Awards Program. This nationally recognized badge program with over 35,000 participants is based on the National Age Group Time Standards (B-AAAA), available on the web at www.usswim.org. Not every swimmer can win a medal or a ribbon so the badge is a great incentive. The badges provide an incentive package all the way up the ladder of success for the swimmer. The badges mean a lot to the swimmers who usually don't get as much recognition. At the Stingray Swim Club annual awards banquet members receive AAAA, AAA, AA, A, BB, B and C badges according to the times they've swum during the year.

Q: What is the order of the individual medley?

A: Butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle. This differs from the medley relay, which is backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle.

Q: What is the difference between the 3 sets of records?

One set of records is "The Pool Records". These are record times swum in the Lion's Pool by any swimmer affiliated with any club or country. Another set of records is kept for "Club Short Course Records". A Stingray member can achieve these records in any 25m pool. A Stingray member can hold both the club and pool record. The third set of records is for "Long Course Records". These records can be set by any Stingray Member in any 50m pool.