

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## General Information

### **What is USA swimming?**

USA swimming is the national governing body for the sport of swimming. Every member of Elite Swim Club is a registered member of USA swimming. For more information about USA swimming please go to [www.usaswimming.org/](http://www.usaswimming.org/).

### **What is NJ swimming?**

NJ Swimming is a member of USA swimming and is the local swim committee (LSC) that governs our geographic area. For more information on NJ swimming please go to [www.njswim.org](http://www.njswim.org).

### **What is ESCPO? What do they do?**

Elite Swim Club Parents Organization (ESCPO), formed in 2006, is a New Jersey registered non-profit organization. Its purpose is to provide support to the swimmers, coaches and families of the Elite Swim Club by fostering a socially enriching, supportive, positive sportsmanlike, open and inclusive team atmosphere.

### **What is my parental obligation to Elite?**

In order to run a successful year round swim club, the club requires parents/legal guardians to pay all fees and to help run swim meets.

Thus, in order for a child to be a member of the Elite Swim Club, there are two obligations that parents or legal guardians commit to:

- 1) Payment in full of all club dues in a timely fashion
- 2) Willingness to work any and all swim meets that Elite hosts that involve one's child(ren). In addition to the various dual/intraclub meets held throughout the season, this especially includes the USA Swim Meets Elite currently hosts:
  - a. Distance Derby (November)
  - b. 9-10 Silver Bronze Championship \*\*
  - c. 13-19 Silver Bronze Championship \*\*\*
  - d. Co-host two meets at Princeton University
    1. Princeton Invitational (January)
    2. Tiger Challenge (May)
  - e. Any other meets Elite elects to run

**\*\* Please Note:** Parents of all Elite Swimmers 10 year old and younger (including 8 & under parents) & including swimmer's parents which swimmer is not qualified due to having all Junior Olympic qualifying times are expected to work this meet.

\*\*\*Please Note: Parents of all Elite Swimmers ages 13-19 are expected to work this meet.

**Where is the practice schedule posted?**

The practice schedule is posted on Elite's website under the Practice Schedule tab on the right side of the home page. A new four week schedule will be posted every Monday. A copy of the schedule will be e-mailed every Monday with the Weekly Memo.

**How can I find out if practice is canceled due to weather, pool chemicals, etc.?**

If practice is canceled because of weather, pool chemical problems, etc. an e-mail will be sent out to the team. You can also check Elite's website for any practice cancellations.

**What should I do if my child cannot attend practice due to injury, illness, school, death in family, or other commitments?**

If a swimmer is going to miss practice for any reason please e-mail the head training group coach and let them know why your child will be missing practice.

**How do I contact my swimmer's coach?**

To contact your swimmer's coach please e-mail them directly. Please click on the following link to find your coach's email address: <http://www.eliteswimclub.org/Contact%20Us/Contact%20Us.htm>.

**What does short course mean?**

Short course is a term which is used to describe the fall/winter swimming season. The short course swimming season last from September through March and meets are held in 25-yard or 25-meter pools.

**What does long course mean?**

Long course is a term which is used to describe the spring/summer season. The long course swimming season last from April through early August and meet are held in 50-meter pools.

**Why does my child need to bring a water bottle to practice?**

It is very important for your child to bring a water bottle to practice to keep them hydrated. Even though they are in a pool your child is still sweating. If you child does not drink water throughout the day and at practice they can become extremely dehydrated.

**Why is my swimmer doing all of those "funny looking" drills?**

Swimmers do drill to work on different parts of their strokes. These drills work on head position, body position, when to breath, rotation, underwater, hand entry into the water, pulling under the water, and timing of the stroke.

**Why does a swimmer want their meet suit to be tight?**

Swimmers want their meet swim suit tight so there is no drag. If a swimmers suit is worn loose it will make it harder for the swimmer to swim.

### **Where can I find a list of legal championship suits?**

Please check Elite's website for information on legal championship suits or click on the following link.  
<http://www.eliteswimclub.org/Suits/Reference%20List%20for%20Allowable%20Swimsuits%202009.htm>

### **What is a drag suit or drag tights?**

A drag suit/tights is a loose fitting suit or tights that a swimmer wears to get more resistance while swimming practice or a meet warm up.

### **What are fins?**

Fins are a piece of equipment that goes on a swimmer's feet. They are used in both kicking and swimming sets to strengthen a swimmer's kick. Every training group at Elite Swim Club uses fins.

### **What is a pull buoy?**

A pull buoy is a piece of equipment that is held in between a swimmer's leg that prevents them from kicking. Pull buoys are used when a coach wants to work on only the upper body portion of a swimmers stroke. The Wave Black, Wave Gold, Senior Preps, and Seniors use pull buoys.

### **What is a best time ribbon? When does my swimmer earn one?**

A best time ribbon is given to a swimmer by the ESCPO for when a swimmer swims a best time. Please see the ESCPO page for specific guideline for earning a best time ribbon.

<http://www.eliteswimclub.org/Parents%20Org/Homepage.htm>

## **Types of Swim Meets**

### **What is a dual meet?**

A dual meet is a swim meet between Elite and another team.

### **What is a Qualifying Meet?**

A qualifying meet is a swim meet which has cut/qualifying times. Depending upon the meet the cut times will be different. In order to qualify to swim in a qualifying meet you must meet or be faster than the cut time posted on the meet announcement. A few examples of a qualifying meet are Junior Olympics, Sectionals and Junior Nationals.

### **What is a Championship meet?**

New Jersey Swimming defines a championship meet as Junior Olympics (JOs), Silvers, Bronze, Silver/Bronze and 8 and Under Mini Champs. These meets are held in late February to mid March for short course and mid to late July for long course. Each year New Jersey Swimming establishes qualifying times for each of these levels with the exception of 8 & Under Mini Champs. USA Swimming designates championship meets at the regional and national level. The qualifying times for these meets are set by USA Swimming.

### **What is an Invitational Meet?**

An Invitational meet is a swim meet in which the host team will invite different swim teams to attend the meet. These types of meet are not opened to every team.

### **What are Bronze, Silver, Gold, Zone, Sectional, Junior National, and Senior National cut times?**

Bronze, Silver, Gold, Zone, Sectional, Junior National, and Senior National cut times are time standards that delineate different levels within New Jersey Swimming, Eastern Zone Swimming, and USA Swimming.

Please click on the following link to see a list of the current Bronze, Silver, and Gold time standards:

Short Course: [www.njswim.org/njswimmingtimestandards.html](http://www.njswim.org/njswimmingtimestandards.html)

Long Course: [www.njswim.org/njswimmingtimestandardscopy1.html](http://www.njswim.org/njswimmingtimestandardscopy1.html)

### **What is Zones and how do I qualify?**

Zones is a regional swim meet that takes place after Junior Olympics in April and August. To qualify for Zones in the Fall/Winter season you must place in the top 3 for 12 & under swimmers and top 2 for 13 & over swimmers in an individual event at Junior Olympics to be guaranteed a spot on the Zone Team. To qualify in the Spring/Summer season a swimmer must achieve the cut time in an event. To find out what the cut times for Zones please go to the New Jersey Swimming website ([www.njswim.org](http://www.njswim.org)).

## **Swim Meet Information**

### **Where can I find directions to a swim meet?**

Directions can be found on Elite's website under the meet schedule tab on the right side of the page. Please find the meet you are attending and click on the purple meet information link.

### **Where can a swimmer find what he/she are entered to swim at a meet?**

Entries can be found on Elite's website under the meet schedule tab on the right side of the home page. Please find the meet you are attending and click on the purple meet entries link.

### **When should a swimmer arrive to a swim meet?**

Please arrive to a swim meet at least 15 minutes prior to the posted warm-up time. Parents should take into account travel time and parking. Swimmers who arrive after the scratch sheets are due will be scratched from the meet.

### **Where can I find the allowed uniform and swim suit for a swim meet?**

This information can be found under the meet schedule tab on the right hand side of the homepage. Please find the meet you are looking for and click on the purple meet information link.

### **What should a swimmer bring to a swim meet?**

- Team swim suit or championship swim suit (depending upon the swim meet)
- Two or more towels
- Team uniform/tee-shirt (see meet information for uniform required for each day)
- Water and food
- Pen or a marker for the swimmer to write events, heats, and lanes
- Books, IPOD, personal hand held games, etc.
- 2 pairs of goggles
- 2 Elite team swim caps

### **Where are the meet results posted after a swim meet?**

The meet results will be posted on the team's website under the Meet Result tab on the home page.

### **What is a seed time?**

It is the time a swimmer uses to enter a swim meet. This is the time that determines a swimmers heat and lane.

### **What is a psych sheet?**

A ranking by seed times for swimmers entered in each race of a meet. It is a document that will list the swimmers in order from fastest seed time to slowest seed time.

### **What is a heat?**

A heat is a used to determine when a swimmer is swimming an event. Customarily heats are set up slowest to fastest. In a heat the fastest swimmers will be in the middle of the pool and the slower swimmers will be in the outside lanes.

### **What is a heat sheet?**

A heat sheet is a listing by event number which will tell you a swimmers heat and lane assignment during a swim meet.

### **How many events will my child swim at a meet?**

A child will swim no more than the allowed number of events listed on the meet announcement. At most meets this will be three events per day. For meets that have qualifying times, a swimmer can only swim those events that he/she qualifies for, but this will not exceed the maximum number of events per day listed in the meet announcement.

### **What is an open event?**

An open event is an event that is opened to all age groups.

### **What is the 4-hour rule in NJ Swimming?**

The 4-hour rule in USA Swimming mandates that each/all age group sessions last no more than 4 hours per session (not including warm-up). The 4 hour rule does not apply to championship meets.

### **What does a scratch mean?**

A scratch means that a swimmer is taken out of an event because he/she is sick, injured, or did not show up for a meet. If a swimmer is scratched from an event they are not allowed to swim that event.

### **What does preliminaries, finals, and timed finals mean?**

There are two main types of swim meets in New Jersey Swimming: Timed Finals and Championships.

Timed Final meets consist of a single session and does not have a separate contest for the top swimmers in each event. The winners are determined by the top times overall in each event. Swimmers in the 12 and under age group almost always participate in timed final events. Also, distance events such as the 1000 Freestyle and the 1650 Freestyle are timed final events.

Championship meets consist of preliminary and finals sessions. Preliminaries or prelims are swum in the morning session to determine the finalist. The Final session generally consists of the top 16 preliminary swimmers. There is a consolation heat (9<sup>th</sup> thru 16<sup>th</sup> place in prelims) and a final heat (1<sup>st</sup> thru 8<sup>th</sup> place in prelims). Winners are determined by their place of finish by heat. The overall event winner is the winner of the final heat.

### **How does the NJ Swimming aging-up process work?**

New Jersey Swimming is broken up by age groups at swim meets. These age groups are 10 and Under, 11-12, 13-14, and 15 and older. Swimmers compete in these age groups based upon their birthday. Whatever age a swimmer is on the first day of the meet is the age group he/she will compete with for the meet.

### **What does it mean if a swimmer is DQ/disqualified?**

When a swimmer gets DQ/disqualified they have done something illegal with their stroke, turn, or start. If a swimmer gets disqualified, the time in that event does not count.

Examples of what a swimmer could get DQ/disqualified for:

1. One-hand-touch in a Breast or Fly turn/finish.
2. False start (leaving the block early on the start)
3. Not finishing (touching the wall) a backstroke swim on their back.

### **What is an official? What do they do?**

Officials are certified through USA Swimming to perform a specific job. These jobs include meet referee, starter, and stroke and turn judge. Officials are responsible for making sure the swimmers strokes, turns, and starts are all legal. When a swimmer has an illegal stroke, false starts, or has an illegal turn an official will disqualify or “DQ” a swimmer.

For information on how to become an official please click on the following link:

<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1506&Alias=rainbow&Lang=en>

### **What does it mean to “check in with a coach” at a swim meet?**

When you arrive at a swim meet you must see a coach and tell them that you have arrived. This is very important because at swim meets we have scratch sheets. Scratch sheets lets the host team know the swimmers from each team that will be competing during each session of a meet. If a swimmer fails to “check in with a coach” that swimmer will be scratched from that session and will not be able to compete in that session of the swim meet.

### **Why is warm-up important at a swim meet?**

Warm-up is the most important part of a swim meet and practice. Warm up helps get a swimmer loose, ready to swim fast, and helps prevent injuries. Think of it this way, you need to get the swimmers body going and warmed up before they can go all out in a race.

### **Why do I need to tell Elite if my swimmer is not planning to swim at a meet all or one day?**

It is important that if your swimmer is not planning on attending a day or the entire weekend of a swim meet so the coach knows who is attending the swim meets. This information is also helpful to the parent timing coordinator when completing the timing responsibilities at a swim meet.

### **What does Marshalling mean?**

Marshalling is when somebody from the host team is in charge of gathering the swimmers in an event and places them into their heats and lanes. This person will then bring the swimmers to the pool area in the order they were just placed and lines them up behind the blocks.

### **What is a touch pad?**

A touch pad is a part of the electronic timing system that is used at swim meets. It rests in the water at the finishing end of each swimmer's lane. Swimmer's times are electronically recorded when the touch pad is touched.

### **What is the Individual Medley (IM)?**

The Individual Medley (IM) consists of a single swimmer swimming equal distances of four different strokes within one race. The order of the different strokes is: fly, back, breast, free.

### **What is the Medley Relay?**

The Medley Relay consists of four different swimmers in one relay competition, each swimming one stroke. The order of the different strokes is: back, breast, fly, free.

### **What is the Free Relay?**

The Free Relay consists of four different swimmers in one relay competition, each swimming freestyle.

### **What is a two-handed touch?**

Swimmers are required to touch the wall with "two hands" when competing in fly and breaststroke races.

### **What is a one-handed touch?**

Swimmers touch the wall with "one hand" when competing in freestyle and backstroke.

### **What is a false start?**

A false start occurs when a swimmer leaves the start-position before the starter sounds.

## **Timing Obligations**

### **What is a Timer?**

Timers have stopwatches and are stationed at the end of the pool where the races end. Usually two timers are assigned to time each lane.

### **How do I know if I need to time at a swim meet?**

Before each meet the parent timing coordinator for the 12 and under or 13 and over will send out an e-mail and let everyone know who is responsible for timing during each session of a swim meet. If you are unable to attend a meet for any reason please contact Bill Deatly and the timing coordinator for your child's age group and let them know that you will not be attending the meet – preferably prior to the timing assignments being distributed.

### **Why do I need to time at a meet?**

In order to participate in a swim meet the host club requires each team to provide timers. Times from the timers are used as a backup timing system just in case there is a problem with the electronic timing system. These times will also be used if a swimmer doesn't touch the touch pad hard enough or if there is a discrepancy in a swimmers time/place.

**Why am I only allowed on the pool deck when I am timing?**

According to USA swimming rules, parents are not allowed in the immediate competition venue unless they are serving in an official capacity. This is mainly for safety and insurance purposes. During a swim meet the pool deck can become very crowded and slippery. So to limit the number of people on the deck only coaches, swimmers, timers, and officials are allowed in the competition area.

**What is a Runner?**

The Runner collects the timing sheets from the lane timers and brings them to the console/computer operator.