

Pacific Swim is part of the San Diego – Imperial swimming program, which is part of USA Swimming.

- Pacific Swim web site: <http://www.pacificswim.com/>
- San Diego Imperial Swimming web site: <http://www.si-swimming.com/>
- USA Swimming web site: <http://www.usaswimming.org>

### **Rancho Arbolitos Office Folders**

There are file cabinets at the Rancho Arbolitos office that contain many folders of interest:

- Dues – you can place your monthly dues in this folder
- Meet Sheets – upcoming swim meet sheets - take a copy if needed
- Meet Entry Cards – take a card to register for a swim meet
- Meet Entries – put meet entry cards and meet entry fees attached with a paper clip in this folder
- USA Registration Cards – all USA Registration cards are in this folder. Each swimmer will have two cards – one for the office, and one for the swimmer. Feel free to take one copy for the swimmer.
- Swimmer folders – once there is something to give to a swimmer, a swim folder with the last name will be made. Look in this folder for ribbons, patches, etc.
- Other miscellaneous folders – e.g. team parties

## **Swim Meets**

A swim meet is a swimming competition between swimmers from different swim teams. There are two typical types of swim meets throughout the swim seasons, Novice and Competitive. Every swimmer is required to be currently registered with USA Swimming (on the PS website click on Download Forms, then click on 2007 Athlete Registration Form), no matter what type of meet they compete in, even Novice meets.

Novice meets are attended by novice and advanced novice swimmers, or swimmers new to competitive swimming. These meets are low key, with no Officials. Swimmers do not get disqualified if they improperly swim a stroke, start, turn, or finish. Novice meets are usually less than 4 hours long.

Competitive meets are attended by competitive swimmers, and those novice and advanced novice swimmers that feel ready to compete at these officiated meets. These meets are officiated by trained, volunteer Officials. Swimmers can get disqualified. Competitive meets can last all day or run over several days.

There are two swim seasons each year:

- Short Course – September thru February
- Long Course – March thru August

Short course means 25 yard or 25 meter pools . Long Course means 50 meter pools. At the end of each season there are two special meets. The first is the Junior Olympic (JO) meet for ages 14 and under in February and 18 and under in July, and the second is the JO Max Championship meet for all ages (see below for explanation on these meets). In order to participate in the JO and/or JO Max meets, the swimmer must have competed in at least one competitive SI sanctioned swim meet during the season.

Swim Meets are broken up into events. An event is a single type of stroke and distance, swam by one gender, and one age group. For example, Girls Age 9-10 50 Yard Freestyle. Each event is assigned a number. The events in a swim meet are swum in numerical order of the event numbers. Events alternate between girls and boys in the same age. Because there are usually more swimmers for an event than there are lanes in a pool, each Event can have multiple heats. Each heat within an event fills up the number of lanes in the pool with swimmers. These swimmers race against each other in the heat. The next set of swimmers for the same event will swim in the next heat. At a competitive meet, awards are given for each event, not each heat. At most novice meets, awards are given for each heat. See below for further explanation of novice vs. competitive meets.

### **Meet Schedule**

There are many ways to find out what meets are coming up:

- PS Newsletter
- PS website (<http://www.pacificswim.com/>) – under the Upcoming Events column on the right
- San Diego Imperial Swimming website(<http://www.si-swimming.com/>) – Click on Meets->Meet Schedule
- Rancho Arbolitos (R.A.) office, in the Meet Sheet folder
- Coaches

The PS Newsletter always lists the next meets, both competitive and novice. At the beginning of the season the PS Newsletter lists all of the competitive meets that the team is planning to attend. Occasionally this is updated. The PS website (<http://www.pacificswim.com/>) lists the next meet or two, and the season competitive meet schedule. Just click on the appropriate links under Upcoming Events in the upper right part of the website. San Diego Imperial Swimming (<http://www.si-swimming.com/>) website is a great source for competitive meet schedules. Click on Meets->Meet Schedule. All the competitive meets for the season are listed, along with the meet sheets, as they become available. Click on the PDF link under the Meet Format column for the meet to see the meet sheet. Meet Sheets are also available at the Rancho Arbolitos office in the Meet Sheet folder. Coaches will also occasionally hand out meet sheets at practice.

Novice meets are not listed on the SI website. Instead, the coach will inform the novice and advanced novice swimmers when the next novice meet is to be held, and it will be

announced in the PS newsletter. Novice meet sheets are available at the RA office, and are often handed out by the coaches.

PS does not attend every swim meet. A swimmer must have a PS coach in attendance at a meet, so if the team does not attend the meet, no swimmer from the team can go to the meet by themselves. Unattached swimmers swim with their new team or may ask a team to allow them to warm up with their group.

### **Meet Registration**

Each swim meet has a pre-set format. There are different formats for different meets. Each swim meet will have a meet sheet showing the format for the meet, and all the information needed to enter the meet – location, date, time, entry fees, entry requirements (e.g. USA Swimming Registration required), maximum number of events per day, time restrictions, age restrictions, etc. Read these meet sheets carefully.

### Competitive

A swimmer must pre-register for competitive meets, filling out a meet card with the events the swimmer wants to swim, (see the PS website “Entering a meet?” for information on how to fill out a meet card). The meet card and the entry fee need to be turned in to the Rancho Arbolitos swim office, and placed in the Meet Entry folder. Meet entries are usually due two Tuesdays before the meet.

If a swimmer is undecided about which events to swim, he can sign up and pay for more than the maximum allowed number of events, but will have to choose which ones to swim the morning of the meet by scratching those that he decides not to swim. Sometimes a swimmer will wait to see the program, which contains the times of all swimmers in each event, to see what events he has the best chance of winning an award in, before deciding which events to scratch.

Usually around the Wednesday before the meet, you can check to ensure that your swimmer has been properly entered into the meet by checking Hy-Tek’s Team Manager Online:

- Go to <http://www.pacificswim.com/>.
- Click on “P.S. Swimmers Times”
- Click on “Click Here!!!”
- Click on “Entries”
- Click on “Entries” next to the Meet Name.
- Find your swimmer in the list and ensure that the entries are correct.

If there is an error, contact the swim team office (person, phone number?) immediately. Errors are very rare.

### Novice

No pre-registration is needed for most novice meets. Simply show up at the meet with the meet entry fee (typically \$5). It is also a good idea to bring each swimmer’s USA Swimming registration card.

## **Time Standards**

Swim times are ranked with a letter. “C” is the slowest set of times – it is anything below a “B” time. “B” is the first recognized time, followed by “BB” (not used very often), “A”, “AA”, “AAA”, and “AAAA”. Other time standards include Junior Olympic (J.O. for 14 and under) times, Far Western Times, Zones, etc. J.O. times are typically close to “A” times.

Swim times are broken down by age bracket and gender. Age brackets include:

- 6 and under
- 7-8
- 9-10
- 11-12
- 13-14
- 15 and over

Sometimes larger age groups are used, e.g. 10 and under.

A swimmer with a fastest time slower than a “B” time in an event can enter that event in a “C” meet. Once the swimmer achieves a “B” time in an event, he can longer swim that event/distance at a “C” meet. A swimmer must have at least a “B” time to swim in an A/B meet. The meet sheet lists all time restrictions for a meet.

There are USA Swimming time standards and San Diego Imperial Swimming time standards. They are similar, but not exactly the same. San Diego Imperial swim meets use the San Diego Imperial time standards, and these are the times that are listed on the meet sheets.

Time Standards can be found at:

- PS website <http://www.pacificswim.com/> – Under Swimmer Links, click on Time Standards.
- San Diego Imperial Swimming website <http://www.si-swimming.com/> – Under the “Times” menu

Each swimmer’s official times (times at a competitive meet for events in which the swimmer did not get disqualified) are recorded in two places:

- Hy-Tek’s Team Manager
  - Go to <http://www.pacificswim.com/>.
  - Click on “P.S. Swimmers Times”
  - Click on “Click Here!!!”
  - Click on “Athletes”
  - Click on the first letter of the last name.
  - Click on “Times” next to the swimmer’s name
- USA SWIMS Database:
  - Go to <http://www.si-swimming.com/>

- Click on “Times”
- Click on USA Swimming Database (SWIMS)
- Click on “Individual Times”
- Enter the requested information

A novice swimmer’s times are not recorded in the USA Swimming database, or in Hy-Tek, but they are kept in a P.S. database. Call the P.S. office to get these times, or keep track of them yourself. There are little swim time books for recording all of a swimmer’s times. These books are available at the R.A. office for around \$4.

The first time a swimmer earns a “B”, “A”, “AA”, etc. time in a stroke, for a particular age bracket, the swimmer will earn a patch for that stroke – only one patch for freestyle, backstroke, butterfly, breaststroke, and IM. When the next time standard is reached, the swimmer earns the next level of patch. When the swimmer ages up to the next age bracket, he starts over again earning patches for the new age bracket. The first age bracket for patches is “10 and under”. The patches can be sewn onto the swim jackets. To receive the patch, the swimmer must write a letter to Di, stating the stroke, time swum, and the patch time that was surpassed, e.g. “I swam the 100 IM in 1:24.24, and the “B” time is 1:24.70.” This helps the swimmers to become better aware of the time standards. Leave the note for Di at the R.A. office. Di will read the note and will leave the patch in the swimmer’s folder at the R.A. office.

### **Swim Meet Tips**

Here is a high level list of important things to do the day of the swim meet. Each one is detailed further below.

- Bring necessary items
- Arrive before warm-ups
- Check In
- Find Heat/Lane assignments
- Talk to coach before each event
- Get to blocks early
- Talk to coach after each event

### **What to bring:**

- 1 towel per event + 1 towel for warm-ups
- Chairs
- Sunscreen
- Water, Gatorade, etc.
- Money for a program (usually \$5 or less), novice registration (\$5), and snack bar
- Healthy snacks
- Sandals for wet feet
- Warm boots for dry feet
- Extra goggles and extra swim cap
- Baby powder for swim cap

- Tarp for shade, if desired
- Pen for writing in program
- Permanent marker for writing heat/lane on arm
- Entertainment – cards, small games, books

Pack the night before.

Novice meets usually do not have snack bars or team tarps.

Sunscreen can take off permanent marker, so put sunscreen on first, and let it dry first.

Wear something on your feet when walking around.

Bring extra goggles & cap to race, in case one breaks at the last minute. Latex caps rip easily.

Turn swim cap inside out to dry before putting baby powder in it or you will have a mess.

**When to arrive:** Arrive early enough to find a parking place and walk to the pool (sometimes parking is difficult), check in, and set up your chairs. Check in at Novice meets can be very slow because each swimmer's USA Registration has to be verified, money has to be collected, and the meet card has to be passed out and often explained to new swimmers. Experience has shown that it is a good idea to *arrive a half hour before the first warm-up period* to avoid any stress about being late. If there are two warm-up sessions, and PS is assigned to the late warm-up, there will be no parking if you wait until late warm-up to arrive. Parking is particularly bad at the South Bay and Escondido pools.

### **Check-in:**

#### Competitive

Swimmers MUST check in with the Clerk of Course at competitive meets, usually at least ½ hour before the meet starts, or they will be removed from all events for the day. The meet sheet will indicate when Check-in closes. It is strongly suggested that a swimmer check in PRIOR to warm-ups. The swimmer must check-in in person. A parent cannot check in for the swimmer. The swimmer will give the Clerk of Course (the person at the Check-in table) his name. The Clerk of Course will tell the swimmer what events he is signed up to swim in. The swimmer should write these events on his arm. If the swimmer knows he will not be swimming an event that he is signed up to swim, the swimmer should tell the Clerk of Course that he wants to “scratch” that event. If a swimmer has signed up for more than the maximum allowable number of events, the swimmer must scratch down to the maximum allowed at Check-in.

#### Novice

At a novice meet, after the swimmer pays the entry fee (\$5) and proves he has a USA Swimming Registration card, each swimmer will be given a meet entry card. At a minimum, fill out the swimmer's name on the card. There are usually 5 events available at a novice meet, and sometimes 1 or 2 relays. There is no limit on the number of events a swimmer can swim at a novice meet, although the swim coach may suggest which strokes the swimmer should enter. Feel free to discuss this with the swim coach.

### **During the meet:**

Everyone except the timers and the current swimmer should always remain behind the chairs at the blocks.

### Competitive

At competitive meets, each swimmer will be assigned a heat and a lane per event. The heat/lane assignments will be posted somewhere within the pool area. For the first few heats, the heat/lane assignments are sometimes posted only minutes before a race. There will be a huge crowd around the heat/lane assignment sheets. Find the swimmer's name under the event, and write down the heat and lane for the swimmer. The swimmer should write these on his arm, next to the event.

Prior to each race, the swimmer should go talk to his coach. The swimmer will tell the coach his heat/lane assignment for the event. The coach will give the swimmer any last minute tips and encouragement. After each race, the swimmer should talk to his coach again. The coach will review the race with the swimmer and note anything that needs to be worked on.

The swimmer/parent is completely responsible for knowing when to get the swimmer to the block, and which block to go to. Most programs will have a timeline showing the approximate time of each event, and the number of heats in each event. Parents should listen carefully to each announced event to determine when the swimmer's event is coming up. Beware that sometimes events are combined. This will be announced during the meet. It is strongly suggested that the swimmer arrive at the lane early. The swimmer can check with the timer to ensure that he is in the right lane, but should remain behind the chairs until it is time for his heat.

If a swimmer misses an event, he is automatically disqualified from the NEXT event too, so it is important for the swimmer to show up at each event that the swimmer has not officially scratched. If a swimmer decides he does not want to swim an event after Check-in has closed, he must still go to the starting block for his heat, but he does not have to actually jump in and swim when the race starts. This will prevent him from being disqualified from his next event.

### Novice

At a novice meet, before each event, swimmers will be called to a holding area for that event. Swimmers must bring their meet entry cards with them to the holding area. The swimmers will then be led to the starting blocks and placed in a lane. Just before they swim their event, the swimmers will hand their meet entry cards to a timer. After they complete their swim, the timer will write their time on the meet entry card, and hand the card and a ribbon back to the swimmer. If the time was recorded on only the card or only the ribbon, the parent can copy the time from one to the other. After the meet, turn in the meet entry card to the swim coach. The swim coach will turn in the card to the PS Swim Team office so that the times can be recorded in the PS database.

Novice Variations:

Single lap events: When swimming a single lap, e.g. 25 yards, the swimmers will hand their meet entry cards to a person who will deliver the cards to the timers at one end of the pool, while the swimmers go to the opposite end of the pool to start their race. The swimmers will still pick up their meet cards and ribbons after each race.

Meet entry cards not used: occasionally a meet will not use the meet entry cards during the meet. Instead the swimmer will get only a ribbon with his time on it at the end of each event. It is up to the parent to copy the time recorded on the ribbon to the meet card. The meet card is still to be turned in to the coach at the end of the meet.

### **Awards:**

Each competitive meet will list the awards that can be earned at each meet, usually at the bottom of the meet sheet. Typical awards are: Ribbons 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, or Medals 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>, ribbons 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>. Awards are usually not available the day of the meet. Awards may be passed out by the coach at practice, or can be picked up in the swimmer's folder at R.A. Sometimes it takes a couple of weeks to get the awards because they have to be picked up at the main SI swim office.

Novice meets usually give a ribbon to every swimmer immediately after every event they swim.

### **Special Meets**

End of the Summer Novice Swim Season Championship Meet - The swimmers must pre register for this championship meet, just like they do for a competitive meet. Usually a swimmer can enter no more than three events at the Novice Championship meet. The meet is run similar to a Competitive meet, in that the swimmers will be pre-assigned a heat and lane, based on their previous best time in each event they enter. However, unlike competitive meets, this assignment is usually made ahead of time and is included in the program, instead of being assigned on the fly the day of the meet. There is no holding area for the swimmers to gather prior to each event. Instead, it is the parent's responsibility to pay attention to the swim meet and get their swimmer to each event in time, and in the proper lane, and in the proper heat, just like for a competitive meet. Typically only the top three to eight swimmers get medals or ribbons at a Novice Championship meet.

JO meets – At the end of each season is a JO meet. All swimmers 14 and under with JO times, that have competed in at least one official meet during the season, are highly encouraged to enter this meet. Even swimmers without JO times may be invited to swim on a JO relay if the combined times of the swimmers on the relay add up to a JO time. It is a privilege to be invited to swim on a JO relay team. JO meets are usually the third or fourth weekend in February for short course, and the third or fourth weekend in July for long course. Occasionally long course is in August. Long course JOs is for swimmers 18 years and under who qualify.

JO Max meets – At the end of each season, a week or more after the JO meet, there is a JO Max meet. Any swimmer with less than six JO times can enter the JO Max meet, in the events for which he/she does not have a JO time. A swimmer can swim a relay leg only if he does not have a JO time in that stroke/distance (TBD on the distance part). The JO Max meet is also a team championship meet. Swimmers earn points for their team based on their placement in the races. The top three teams get a trophy.

Sectionals, Zones, Far Westerns These are high level competitive meets and swimmers need to qualify to compete.

### **Volunteers**

Parent volunteers are needed at away swim meets (meets not hosted by PS) for the following activities:

- Tarps
- Timing
- Officiating

Tarps – Swimmers (and families) need shade at swim meets. At competitive meets, parents will be assigned to bring tarps to the meet or take home tarps at the end of the meet. Over the course of a year, different families are assigned tarp duty. Tarps need to be picked up at and returned to Rancho Arbolitos. The office staff will assist in getting tarps in and out of your car. If you are bringing tarps, plan on arriving at the meet early so that you can save some space to put up the tarps. Parents should help to put the tarps up and take them down. No tarp duty is assigned for Novice meets, so usually there are no tarps at novice meets. If a parent wants to bring/return tarps for a novice meet, that is up to them.

### Timing

#### Competitive

Each swim team with more than a few swimmers will be assigned some timing responsibilities at competitive meets. All families are expected to help with timing. The swim meet program will indicate how many timing positions our team is responsible for each day. The number of positions assigned to our team is based on the number of swimmers from our team that are entered in the meet. Someone on the team will typically make a timing sign up sheet each morning. Timing assignments are usually 1 hour long, .i.e. each family at the meet should expect to time for 1 hour each day. Sometimes timing jobs are shorter or longer, depending on the length of the meet and the number of families at the meet. Please be considerate and do your fair share of the timing each meet. If your swimmer will be in the last events of the day, please consider signing up to time at the end of the day, so that those families that aren't signed up to swim in any events at the end of the day do not have to stay to fill a timing spot. If you are concerned about getting your child to his or her event while you are timing, either ask someone you know to help your child, or bring your child with you when you do the timing, remembering that they need to stay behind the chairs.

At competitive meets, official timing is usually done electronically with the use of touch pads. As a backup to the pads, there are also two buttons per lane wired to the timing system, that need to be pressed when each swimmer completes his race, in case the touch pads do not register. As a backup to all of the electronic timing, a stopwatch is also used. At the start of the race, one timer starts the stopwatch. It is best to watch for the flash of the starting strobe light, rather than listen to the starting buzzer. When the swimmer completes the race, both timers press one wired button, and one timer also stops the stopwatch (button in one hand, stopwatch in the other hand). The timer with the stopwatch tells the time to the timer without the stopwatch, who then writes the stopwatch time on a sheet of paper. The paper lists each swimmer's name that is in that lane for that event, in the order of the heats that will be swum for that event. At the end of each event, the sheets will be taken by a "runner". The timer with the sheets is also responsible for helping get the correct swimmer to the block at the right time, especially the young swimmers, by calling out the name of the swimmer a couple of heats ahead of time.

### Novice

No timing assignments are made at novice meets, but timers are still needed at novice meets. The person in charge of the meet will simply call for timing volunteers. Two timers per lane are needed. Parents should take turns timing during the meet. At novice meets a stopwatch is used to time each swimmer. The swimmer will hand his meet entry card to one of the timers just before the race. One timer starts and stops the stopwatch. The other timer records the time on the meet entry card and on the ribbon, and then gives the card and ribbon to the swimmer.

Officials - At competitive meets, every team must supply one official for approximately every 18 swimmers that attend the meet. If we do not provide the required number of officials, the team is fined \$75-\$150/day/official. This fine will be passed on to every swimmer from PS that signed up for the meet. Therefore, it is critical that the team have many parents trained to be officials.

Officials attend one official class and train at four meets to become an official. They need to register as a non-athlete member with USA Swimming. PS will pay the fee.

### **PS hosted meets**

Pacific Swim usually hosts two competitive meets a year, usually in October and April. It takes a lot of volunteers to host a successful swim meet, approximately 200 volunteer hours per day! PS is blessed with wonderful parents who graciously volunteer many hours at every PS hosted swim meet.

Every family with a swimmer in attendance is usually asked to bring a cooler with a bag of ice for chilling drinks, and 6 pre-baked potatoes, for the snack bar. Skin-on is fine. The potatoes are used for breakfast food (potato bowls, breakfast burritos – a swimmer favorite!), so bring them in the morning before the meet. The cooler can be picked up at the end of the meet, or it will be returned to the Rancho Arbolitos for pickup at your convenience.

The volunteer jobs and their definitions are listed below. Approximately one month before the meet, the newsletter will explain how to sign up for volunteer positions.

- Meet Director
- Meet Entries – handles all team member entries for the meet.
- Volunteer Coordinator – accepts volunteers for all positions
- Clerk of Course (Check-in table) – mark each swimmer as present (like taking role).
- Computer Room – printing heat/lane assignments, results, etc.
- Finishing Table – compare the different timing device values for discrepancies
- Hospitality – serving food to coaches, officials, timers.
- Snack Bar Supervisor – in charge of the menu, planning, and running of the snack bar
- Snack Bar Shoppers - get food before the meet
- Coffee/Bagel Pick-Up – get bagels and coffee the morning of the meet
- Grocery “Runner” – run to the store during the meet if we run out of something
- Program Copies – go to print shop to make Meet Program copies
- Program Sales – sell programs in the morning
- Awards – place stickers on medals and ribbons during and after the meet
- Set-up – set up tables, chairs, electronic wiring, etc.
- Take Down/Clean-up – put away tables, chairs, electronic wiring, etc.
- Tarp Duty – bring tarps, set up tarps, take down tarps, return tarps
- Walk-Through – ensure everything is ready for the meet
- First Aid
- Trash Can Emptier & Marshall – empty trash cans during the meet, ensure warm-up area is used for warm up and cool down, and not for playing, ensure bathroom safety
- Head Timers – start two stop watches for each heat, in case a timer forgets to start one.
- Runners – pass out Event/Heat/Lane sheets to timers, pick them up when event is done, and bring to finishing table
- Officials
- Snack Bar workers

**Mentors:**

If a new family or swimmer feels they would like an experienced member of PS to assist them for the first couple of meets they attend, we will assign a family from our team to assist. Newly enrolled PS members can request a mentor family through Gary Scott by emailing their request to [gary@psswim.sdcoxmail.com](mailto:gary@psswim.sdcoxmail.com) and he will find an experienced family to assist with your needs.