



Victory Aquatics Swim Team Timing Chair How-To

Timing Chair How-To's

Purpose of the timing chairs

Most pools have touch pads, however, they have been known to fail. And a lot of the kids either miss the touch pads altogether or don't hit them hard enough to stop the clock. And electronics have been known to fail. When the time a swimmer gets becomes 'official' it is entered into the USA Swimming 'Swims' database and will be with that swimmer forever. For that reason age group swim meets have multiple back-up systems.

NO CELL PHONES and NO DISTRACTIONS. The kids are counting on you.

Timing Chair Assignments

Before the meet starts check the assignment board or clip board (usually hanging on an E-Z Up) for your timing chair assignment and mark that you have 'checked in'. Set an alarm to remind you. It is easy to forget to watch the time in the excitement of the swim meet.

Procedures & Responsibilities

Each lane (usually) has 3 timing chairs. The two chairs on the outside have stop watches and the chair in the middle has a clip board.

There are also 3 black wire thing-a-ma-jig's with a button on the end hanging down. These are called "pickles". Pickles are another timing mechanism. They are connected to the timing equipment in the admin area. When the starter goes off the timers start. When the button on the end of the pickle is pushed the timers for that lane stop.

Clipboard: Someone from the host team will come around periodically with a sheet containing the event/ heat/ swimmers for that lane. The person with the clip board gets the sheets. When the event is finished someone will come around to collect those sheets.

It is very important for the person with the clipboard to call out the name of the swimmer about 3 heats before they are to swim to make sure the kids are there, lined up, and ready to swim.

It is also very important for the timer with the clipboard to keep track of which lap the swimmer is on when the race goes for more than 50 yards (SCY) or 100 meters (LCM).

Stop Watch Timers: The stop watches have a start/stop button usually on the right side and a reset button on the left side. Somewhere close to the starter is a pole with a speaker and a light on top. When the starting horn sounds the light will flash. Timers should watch the light and when it flashes they push the start/stop button to start the stop watch.

Pickles: When the swimmer is about half way through the last lap all 3 timers need to approach the edge of the pool, get a pickle, and be ready to push the button when the swimmer's hand touches the wall. The stop watch timers also need to push the start/stop button to stop the clock.



Victory Aquatics Swim Team Timing Chair How-To

End of the Race: The timers with the stop watches tell the timer with the clip board what the time on their watch says and the timer with the clip board writes both times next to the swimmer's name. When the swimmer exits the pool the timer with the clipboard should let the swimmer know what their best stop watch time was. Some kids need to report this to their coach. Most kids like to know if they dropped time.

Fly Overs: In all events except for back stroke and 25 yard events (SCY) or 50 meter events (LCM), swimmers are supposed to stay in the water until the next swimmer leaves the block or 'flies over' the swimmer in the water. The timers need to make sure the swimmer stays in the water until the following heat begins.

In the 25 yard (SCY) or 50 yard (LCM) events, the timers must make sure the swimmers get out of the water so the next heat can start. In these events, the swimmers will be starting from the opposite side of the pool. In that case the starting light is usually on the edge of the pool closest to the swimmers.

Sometimes, when there is a delay in starting a heat the referees will have the swimmers exit the pool. Timers, please assist the referees in getting the kids out of the water.