

GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS

Ever wonder what your coach means when they say something? Here are all of the terms that you may hear while on deck!

25, 50, 100, 200, 500 Yard Events- The pool at the Y is 25 yards long. A 25 yard event is one length. A 50 yard event is two lengths. A 100 yard event is four lengths. A 200 yard event is eight lengths. A 500 yard event is 20 lengths.

Age Groups- Swimmers are grouped according to their ages: 8 and under; 9 and 10 year olds; 11 and 12 year olds; 13 and 14 year olds and 15-18 year olds.

Age Group Swim Meet – All USA registered swimmers 18 years old or younger who have met the qualifying time standard for specific events are eligible to participate in their age category. Age on the first day of the meet shall govern the entire meet.

Bonus heat – The first or slowest heat of finals.

Bullpen – Place where swimmers report at meets before their event to receive their entry cards and to be arranged into their heat and lane assignments.

Circle seeding – See pyramid seeding.

Consolation heat – The first or slower of two heats of finals at a championship meet.

Course – Designated distance over which the competition is conducted. Long course (LCM) is 50 meters and short course (SCM) is 25 meters or (SCY) is 25 yards.

Deck seeding – Heat and lane assignments are determined for the swimmers at the beginning of each meet session, after scratches are taken out.

DQ – Disqualification. A swimmer is usually disqualified when s/he performs a stroke, touch or turn incorrectly or when s/he enters the water before the start (false start).

Dual Confirmation- When two officials must see an infraction. Dual Confirmation is necessary to determine if swimmers in a relay have left before the previous swimmer has touched.

Dual meet- A swim meet where two different teams compete.

False Start – When a swimmer enters the water before a race or moves during the start,

s/he may be charged with a false start. This results in disqualification, and the swimmer being unable to compete in the event.

Finals – The session of a meet where qualifying rounds were held previously to determine the finalists. Usually there are 1-2 heats of finalists and their order of finish determines the ultimate placement in a given event. Most trials-finals meets are on a championship level.

Freestyle Relay – Four swimmers on each team each swim one fourth of the total prescribed distance all freestyle.

Head Timer- A timer who is responsible for making sure an accurate time is collected. These duties include collecting times from other timers and counting laps.

Heat – The group of swimmers who swim a race at the same time. Several heats may be held in a particular event.

Heat sheets – Printed listings of all swimmers by event number and entry time. These are also called the Meet program or “Psych Sheets.”

IM – Individual medley. The event where a swimmer swims butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle, in that order.

Lap – Two lengths of the pool

Length – One length of the pool.

LSC – Local Swimming Committee. One of several regional groups such as Connecticut Swimming charged with the conduct of all USA activities in that region.

Medley relay – Four swimmers on each team each swim one fourth of the total prescribed distance in the order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle.

Meet Director – The individual in charge of planning and organizing all aspects of a meet. It is under the discretion of the meet director that changes be made to the event schedule, scoring, time line, etc.

New England's- This a regional meet, New England Area Swim Meet. You must achieve a qualifying time to be eligible to go.

NMY- Northern Middlesex YMCA

NMYB- Northern Middlesex YMCA Barracudas

Qualifying Time-Some swim meets require that swimmers swim faster than a certain time for a given stroke in order to participate. These times are published well in advance of the meet.

OVC – Official Verification Card. Issued by meet officials to swimmers achieving a Junior National or Senior National time.

Prelims or Trials –Usually either the top 12 or 18 will compete again at the finals session.

Proof of time – a requirement at some meets to make certain that swimmers have legally met the entry time standards for that meet.

Pyramid Seeding – In trials or preliminaries of trials-finals meets, the swimmers in the top three heats are intermingled so that the fastest three swimmers are in the middle lanes of the last three heats, the next three in the lane next to that in each of those heats, and so forth. This is also called “circle seeding” In finals, those finishing fastest by time swim in the top 1 or 2 heats (Final and Consolation Final).

Referee – The YMCA or USA official who has the final authority over all other officials at the meet. He makes all final decisions and sees to the efficient running of the meet.

Runner-An individual whose job it is to transport the event cards or timer sheets from the head timer to the scorer’s table.

Seed times – The times a swimmer uses to enter a meet. These times appear on the heat sheet and the entry cards and determine the swimmers heat and lane assignment in a meet.

Seeding – The process of assigning swimmers to lanes and heats by time. In general the swimmers with the slower seed times swim in the earlier heats. The order of swimming in the final heats depends on the type of meet.

Senior meet – A meet with only one age group called “Senior.” Swimmers of any age who have met the qualifying times may compete.

Starter- Person who starts each race of the meet. Should be level II certification.

Straight seeding – Swimmers are assigned to lanes in heats from slowest to fastest. In a given heat, the fastest swimmers swim in the middle lanes and slower ones in the outer lanes.

Split – The time a swimmer achieves in one or more laps of his race. Coaches use these times to instruct swimmers in pacing. For example, the time for the first 50 yards in a 100-yard race is the swimmers 50 yard split.

Starter – The official responsible for starting each heat and calling swimmers to the blocks.

Stroke and turn judge – An official who determines the legality of swimmers strokes, turns and finishes and disqualifies those who do not conform to YMCA or USA rules depending on the meet.

Swimming World – A monthly magazine about competitive swimming. For a subscription, write Swimming World, PO Box 45947, Los Angeles, CA 90045, or go to <http://www.swiminfo.com>

Time Standards – a set of times developed to assist swimmers in performance planning developed by United States Swimming. They are based on percentiles of the 16th fastest time in each stroke in each age group.

Timer- A volunteer who starts a stopwatch when the Colorado System flashes and stops the watch when some part of the swimmer's body touches at the end of the race. There are two or three timers per lane.

Top 16 – A tabulation of the top 16 times in the USA and/or YMCA in each age group, stroke and distance. These are published annually in Swimming World. The “consideration” times that may be eligible appear in the USA rulebook.

Touch pad – An electronic pad, which stops the clock when the swimmer touches it at the end of the race. This is usually the official time, although corrections are made if the swimmer misses the pad.

Unattached – The status a swimmer receives when changing from one USA club to another. A swimmer must swim unattached for 120 days from the date of the last USA meet he swam for the previous club. During this time they may compete individually, but may not be entered in relays. Connecticut high school swimmers compete unattached for their USA clubs during the high school swim season.

Unofficial- A swim, designated in advance, that does not score points for the team. There is nothing bad about swimming unofficial! A swimmer is only allowed to be official in a certain amount of events during a meet. A coach may have a swimmer swim unofficial because they would like to get a time on the swimmer for a particular event.

USA Swimming – Abbreviation for United States Swimming, the governing body for all amateur swimming in the US. National headquarters are in Colorado Springs, CO.

Yankee Cluster Championships- End of the season championship where all YMCA's swim against each other. Everyone participates. There are no qualifying times in Yankee Clusters.