

# **Before the Meet**

*Presentation to Minnesota Swimming Referees and Starters*

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Bob Crunstedt

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# Before the Meet

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## **Before the Meet**

The difference between a mediocre or poorly run meet and a highly successful one is usually found in the level of advance planning. Being proactive really pays off.

# Before the Meet

## I. **Pre-Meet Organization 30-45 days out**

### A. Preparation

1. Obtain copy of meet information online at [www.mnswim.org](http://www.mnswim.org) and review
2. Refer to a copy of the *Referee's Guide to Meet Administration*
3. *Tip:* Use the *Meet Information* checklist in the guide – it directs your attention to key parts of the meet information and meet setup.
4. Review availability of officials – *Tip:* Get an email list together to invite officials from clubs zoned to the meet. Send invite about 10-14 days out.
5. Contact the key officials assigned – deck referee, starter, chief judge
6. Know who you contact if you have LSC level questions or matters (i.e. session or meet postponement, waiver on 4-hour rule).
7. Review USA Swimming rules and other pertinent documents relative to meet administration and assignments (i.e. marshals, safety officer, 4-hour or 8-hour session limits). In addition to what you find in the rulebook there are many useful documents under [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)  
[Volunteers] [Officials] [Training Resources]

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## B. Liaison with hosts

1. Contact meet director: *Tip*: Send this outline by email for discussion
  - a) Review physical layout of facility and pool
  - b) Discuss potential problem areas
  - c) Establish meeting times (officials and coaches). Where will the meetings be held?
  - d) Reviewing marshaling requirements
  - e) Are there any potential problems with keeping unregistered persons from being on the pool deck or competition area? If so, what are the plans to limit spectators on deck or around the pool's edge?
  - f) Review safety requirements, safety officer assignments, warm-up procedures and schedule
  - g) Review other key positions and contacts for the meet. Are they experienced or still training?
    - (1) Meet entries chair\*
    - (2) Timing equipment operator (*Tip*: more experienced operators at first session of the meet and age group sessions)

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- (3) Computer results chair\* (*Tip*: more experienced operators at first session of the meet and age group sessions)
- (4) Equipment chair
- (5) Facility manager or weekend supervisor (lifeguard supervisor)
- (6) Weekend custodian
  
- h) Review inclement weather process (i.e. blizzard conditions or lightening and thunderstorms, tornado)
- i) What are the facility's rules concerning signage? For outdoor meets, can tents and canopies be left overnight?
- j) What is the facility evacuation plan (e.g. if the fire alarm goes off during a winter time meet, or severe weather sirens at a summer time meet)?



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2. Contact meet entries chair
  - a) Review key dates/deadlines
  - b) Review Hy-tek meet setup – you can reference the *Meet Information* checklist for key settings; positive check-in and events that will be combined.
  - c) *Tip:* If you or the meet entries chair would like to double-check the Hy-tek meet setup, email the meet about 7-10 days ahead of when entries are exported to be imported into the database.
  - d) Go over procedure to confirm entries received from club registrars
  - e) Reminder to send a pre-meet copy of the meet file to the designated MSI recipient to determine if there are non-registered athletes, registration errors, and proof of entry time problems.
  - f) Review heat interval settings; 20 seconds for all heats and +15 seconds for backstroke and medley relay heats
  - g) Reminder to email the meet program to the referee before it goes to print.

# Before the Meet

## ***II. Week before or after entry date deadline***

### A. Meet Program

1. Review for seeding errors, obvious time errors, non-conforming times seeded according to the meet rules, etc.
2. Timeline – have intervals been properly set? Are breaks inserted according to the meet information?
3. Consider alternatives to keep meet within 4/8 hour limit
4. Request that sufficient deck programs are printed with open lanes and timeline.

### B. Facility and equipment - reach out to the meet director/equipment chair

1. First aid kit including blood absorbing supplies
2. Telephone
3. Light switches (need to be taped to prevent inadvertent shut-off)
4. Starts from deck or gutter
5. Lap counting numbers
6. Back-up pads in case of malfunctioning pads

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7. Buttons including extras (secondary timing)
  8. Watches including extras (tertiary timing)
  9. Properly charged starting device. Do you have a backup?
  10. Timing console including documentation if there is a need to review session or pool settings.
  11. Scoreboard
  12. P.A. system
- C. Competition Equipment - discuss with meet director
1. Safety requirements
    - a) Warm-up schedule posted and copied to announcer
    - b) Signs or cones on blocks
    - c) Hazards in pool area noted
  2. Starting blocks – confirm they are safe, secure, anchored, proper height
  3. Lane lines and 15 meter marked
  4. Backstroke flags in the proper position including 5-meters from ends of the pool for long course

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5. Lap counting number

6. Bell

### D. Supplies

1. Current USA Swimming rules book

2. ***Referee's Guide to Meet Management***

3. Any recent MSI legislation

4. DQ slips

5. Time trial supplies (e.g. envelopes with entry info on front)

6. Relay take-off forms

7. Lap counting forms

8. Deck assignment form

9. MSI officials sign-in form (typically meet director will have this in their supplies from MSI office)

10. Calculator

11. Two-way radio headsets

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12. Report of occurrence forms
13. Athlete/non-athlete sanction forms
14. Cell phone numbers of key personnel – meet director, entries chair, host club coach/equipment chair, deck referee, starter, chief judge, technical support for Hy-tek.

### E. Administrative

1. If the MSI office knows who the referee is, he/she will be cc'd on pre-meet reconciliation reports emailed by the MSI office to the meet director.
2. No late entries should be accepted; however, if an athlete is added after the meet recon file is sent a registration card should be presented to the meet directors or on-deck registration form completed with a check. Do NOT take the word of anyone that a swimmer is registered.
3. Coaches certification reports emailed by the MSI office
4. Prepare for the coaches meeting (sample agenda)

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## III. Day of meet

- A. Arrive 20-30 minutes before start of warm-up to meet with key meet personnel
  - 1. Pool – The main questions are, “Is it safe and conforming to USA Swimming rules?”
    - a) Water level and temperature
    - b) Chemical balance
    - c) Lighting
    - d) Starting blocks secure
    - e) Backstroke flags in proper position and 15-meter point marked
    - f) Other: cables and cords secured, slippery spots on the deck marked or roped, entrances to the deck roped or spectator seating separated from competition area (*Tip*: meet marshal can monitor), unsafe points on the deck for traffic flow
  - 2. Speak with meet marshal to review warm-up and deck safety and control. Also discuss facility evacuation plan.
  - 3. Meet committee – appoint:

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- a) One official other than host club
  - b) One coach other than host club
  - c) One athlete other than host club – *Tip*: give a heads up to coach of club seated near meet management if you need an athlete for committee.
4. Timing equipment operator to review equipment operation and heat result printout settings. If far end pads are being used are the settings correct and pads tested?
  5. Computer results operator to review any last minute entry issues, back-up time integration procedure, relay card entries, positive check-in and time trial procedure.
  6. Runners to retrieve watch times as needed. *Tip*: Have two runners recruited for age group sessions – lot's of backup watch times needed.
  7. Head timer to review volunteer needs, supply of watches, time recording procedures, and swimmer check-in and heat staging procedures. Advise if starter will conduct a timers' meeting.

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8. Check with the meet director about plans for the national anthem before a session and any other last minute matters, special situations or concerns not previously discussed.
9. Check with the deck referee if they have specific requests or questions. Determine the paper flow - NS's, DQ's, open lane seeds (if permitted). He/she should be ready to conduct the official's briefing
10. Speak with the announcer - If the referee has not already covered whistle protocol with announcer go over the details – short whistles – announce heat or event/heat - long whistle. Reminders about flash photography before and at the starts as needed.
11. Fine tune your topics for the coaches meeting and conduct the meeting:  
*Tip: Have the announcer remind coaches during the warm-up and once more as the pool is cleared for warm-up*