



Houston Cougar Aquatic Sports



Glossary of Common Swimming Terms

AGE GROUP SWIM MEET - all USA Swimming registered swimmers, 14 years of age and under, who have met the qualifying time standard for a specific event(s) are eligible to participate in their age category. Age on the first day of competition shall govern the entire meet. (See also: Senior Swim Meet)

AGE GROUP SWIMMER – all USA SWIMMING registered swimmers aged 14/under

CHECK-IN (POSITIVE CHECK-IN) - The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck-seeded meet. Sometimes referred to as positive check in, the swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host.

CIRCLE SEEDING - A method of seeding swimmers when they are participating in a prelims/finals event. The fastest 18 to 24 swimmers are seeded in the last three heats, with the fastest swimmers being in the inside lanes.

CLERK-OF-COURSE - an area at the meet where swimmers report before their event to be arranged into their heat and lane assignments.

DECK SEEDING - a procedure of assigning swimmers to proper lanes and heats immediately before each event at the Clerk of Course on the deck

COOG - the official abbreviation for Houston Cougar Aquatic Sports for meets.

IM (INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY) – A race done by a swimmer consisting of one leg of each of the competitive strokes (butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle) in that order.

FINALS (CHAMPIONSHIP OR CONSOLATION) - the session of a meet where the meet winner is determined. It is generally swum in the evening. Finalists are determined by the fastest swimmers in the preliminary rounds.



Houston Cougar Aquatic Sports



Glossary of Common Swimming Terms

GULF SWIMMING, INC. - the name of the Local Swimming Committee (LSC), charged by USA SWIMMING to govern competitive swimming in the Gulf area.

HEAT SHEET - a listing of all swimmers by event number, heat and lane assignments in the meet. These are available for purchase at the meet.

LONG COURSE - a type of competitive pool, which measures 50 meters in length. The standard size for all international competition and all world record swimming is the 50-meter course. Typically meets conducted from the end of April through August are swum Long Course.

PRELIMS (PRELIMINARIES) - in certain meets, the qualifying rounds held for each event to determine the finalists.

PROOF OF TIME- a requirement at some meets to make certain that all swimmers have legally met the time standards for that meet.

PSYCH SHEET- a ranking by seeding times for all the swimmers entered in each race of a meet, sometimes used at meets in place of a heat sheet.

REFEREE - the USA SWIMMING official who has the authority over all other officials at the meet. He makes all final decisions and sees to the efficient running of the meet.

SEEDING TIMES - the time a swimmer uses to enter a meet. This time determines one's heat and lane in the particular event.

SENIOR SWIM MEET - all USA SWIMMING registered swimmers who have met the qualifying time standard for a specific event(s) are eligible to compete.

SENIOR SWIMMER – all USA SWIMMING registered swimmers aged 15 and over



Houston Cougar Aquatic Sports



Glossary of Common Swimming Terms

SHORT COURSE - a type of competitive pool, which measures 25 yards or 25 meters in length. Typically meets conducted from September through the end of March are swum Short Course.

SPLIT - a per lap time that coaches often record for teaching the concept of pacing. For instance, a swimmer's time for each 25-yard leg of a 100-yard event is his split.

STARTER - the USA SWIMMING official at a meet responsible for starting each heat and calling the next to the blocks.

STROKE JUDGE - a certified USA SWIMMING official, who determines the legality of swimmers' strokes and disqualifies those who do not conform to USA SWIMMING rules.

TIME STANDARDS - certain qualifying times which have been set up annually by USA SWIMMING for all events in all levels of meets to insure that all competitors are of reasonably the same ability in their respective meets. The swimmer's goals should be betterment of his time progressing from the "B" standard to the Nationals.

TOUCH PAD - the part of an electronic timing system that rests in the water at the finishing end of each lane. Swimmer's times are electronically recorded when the pad is touched.

UNATTACHED - the status a swimmer receives when changing from one USA SWIMMING club to another. A swimmer must be "unattached" for 120 days from their last competition with their previous USA SWIMMING club. During this time they may compete individually, but not in relays, without representing any club.

USA SWIMMING - the governing body for all amateur swimming in the United States. National Headquarters are in Colorado Springs, Colorado.



Houston Cougar Aquatic Sports



Glossary of Common Swimming Terms

USA SWIMMING # (ID) - the personal registration number of each athlete member in USA Swimming. The formula for deriving your USA SWIMMING # is: birth date (6 digit format MMDDYY), first three letters of the first name, middle initial, and first four letters of the last name. For example: John A. Smith was born September 1, 1959. His USA SWIMMING # is 090159johasmit