

# 8 REASONS TO VOLUNTEER AS A LANE TIMER

Taking a timer's chair at a swim meet is like sitting in the "splash zone" at Sea World: you get an up-close-and-personal vantage point for all the action, and you're guaranteed to get wet (but you won't smell like whale).

Soggy feet aside, volunteering to time a lane is one of the easiest ways an individual can contribute to the sport. Here are 8 reasons why you should slip off your sneakers and volunteer as a lane timer.

CHASE MCFADDEN

## 1 YOU'LL FEEL WANTED.

And it's good to feel wanted. Not like when your kids use you as a human ATM to continually withdraw funds for concession stand fare; I mean genuinely appreciated. Age-group meets are always in need of timers. ALWAYS. Volunteer and you're instantly a hero.

## 2 IT'S THE BEST SEAT IN THE HOUSE.

As long as you're paying close attention to the swimmer in your lane during the final few yards into the wall, you can take in the entirety of each race from pool level.

## 3 MEETS GO FASTER.

Let's do some math: one session of a typical meet lasts 3-4 hours. If your child swims four events and averages, let's say, 1-2 minutes of actual time-in-water during each of those four splashes, you're watching at the most 10 minutes of swimming. But when handling a stopwatch, you're actively engaged for the entire session; time flies by.

## 4 IT'S AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE COMPETITIVE.

Wanna play a game? See how close you can come to the time posted from the touchpad. Better yet, see if both you and your timing partner can hit the same readout on the scoreboard. That feat is commonly referred to as the "Golden Trifecta of Timing Perfectitude," and if you do it, you'll be rewarded with a free bottle of water! (Okay, I just made that up.)

## 5 YOU GET FREE BOTTLES OF WATER.

That part's true.

## 6 KIDS ARE CHEAP ENTERTAINMENT.

You'll meet some characters when seated down behind the blocks. The capped-and-goggled set is one of the most interesting demographics you'll come across, and they'll keep you on your toes. (Which—just to reiterate—will be wet.)

## 7 NETWORKING.

Those willing to pitch in and help for the greater good tend to be pretty decent folks, like you. Chances are you're going to be timing along with another individual—likely a fellow parent of a swimmer—who is good people. Whether it's someone from your child's club, or a complete stranger, take the opportunity to strike up a conversation. Who knows? Maybe you'll become BGTTPFFs (Best Golden Trifecta of Timing Perfectitude Friends Forever.)

## 8 IMPROVED HEALTH.

Research suggests that performing multiple tasks simultaneously with both sides of the body helps to generate neural pathways. Guess what? Pickle in one hand, stopwatch in the other? Boom: better brain. Hey, at the very least you'll be better hydrated from all that free water, and that's something.