

HIGH SCHOOL SWIMMING 101

New to High school swimming and diving? Never been to a swim meet before? Here are the basics...

TYPES OF MEETS

- **TIME TRIAL OR ALUMNI MEETS**
These are not formal meets. Time Trials provide a chance for the coaches to get times for the athletes to help them plan for the season start. Alumni Meets are a fun meet to invite former teammates to come back and race or dive with the team.
- **CONFERENCE RELAYS**
This is an all relay meet against other teams in our conference. A variety of relay events are swam that are not part of a typical dual meet.
- **DUAL MEETS**
This is a head to head meet against another team in our conference.
- **TRUE TEAM**
This meet is designed and scored to test a team's depth. Teams can enter four individuals and four relays in each event. *ALL* competitors score points in *EVERY* event. The teams competing are the same teams that are in our section. Not all teams choose to participate in this meet. Due to the limited number of entries, it is possible that not athletes will compete at this meet. The top team qualifies for the True Team State Meet which is held the following weekend
- **INVITATIONAL**
These are meets against other teams not typically in our conference or section. Multiple teams are invited to a meet with the same standard order of events as a dual meet. Scoring varies based on the type of invitational, how many team entries are accepted, and how many places score.
- **CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS**
Each athlete will compete in at least one end of season meet.
 - **JV CONFERENCE**
The JV Conference Meet is a final meet for athletes to strive for their season best races.

- **MSHSL SECTION MEET**
Each team selects the top four individual entries per event and one relay team for each relay to compete at the Minnesota State High School League Section Meets. The athletes will compete against teams in their assigned section. At this meet, athletes swim their strongest events in a preliminary session on Day 1. The top 16 swimmers and relay teams in each event advance to finals on Day 2. Qualifiers nine through sixteen swim in a consolation heat. Qualifiers one through eight compete in the championship heat. Medals are awarded to the top eight swimmers from the championship heat. A podium-ceremony is done following each event. A swimmer or relay may only qualify for the state competition during the consolation and championship finals on Day 2. The top two individual and relay finishers, along with any other competitors who swim a qualifying state time in each event at section finals, qualify for the State meet.
- **MSHSL STATE MEET** The Minnesota State High School League State Meet is held at the University of MN Aquatic Center. The meet is a prelims/finals format over three days (Day 1 – Diving Prelims, Day 2 - Swimming Prelims, Day 3 - Swimming and Diving Finals). It is a great achievement to qualify for this meet which celebrates the state’s top swimmers.
- **DIVING AT TRUE TEAM, SECTIONS AND STATE MEETS**
The format for these meets is different than the dual meets; yet, they are scored the same way. The top four divers from each team will compete at Sections. The top four divers at the Section meet will compete at State. In these meets, divers perform eleven dives rather than the six performed in dual meets. Of the eleven dives performed, five are voluntary dives and six are optional. Competitors must have a larger repertoire of dives they can perform, so only the more advanced divers attend these meets. The preliminary round goes through the first five dives, and the field is cut to twenty divers. The semi-final round then goes through eight dives, and the field is then cut to sixteen divers. The final round then goes through eleven dives, and the event is scored. The top four divers at the section meet advance to the state meet. There is no qualifying standard like swimming – only the top four places advance.

MEET PROGRESSION

During a swim and dive meet, the competition follows a standard order of events. This order is the same at all meets. For dual meets, each team enters three swimmers in each individual event and three relay teams in each relay event (in an 8-lane pool a fourth competitor for each team may be entered as exhibition). Swimmers may enter a maximum of four events, no more than two of which can be individual events. Swimmers are selected by the coach for each event or relay based on their times and the coach’s goals for that meet. By rule, the visiting team selects their choice of odd or even lanes. Depending on the number of athletes swimming in each individual event, there may be multiple heats swam in the following progression: Exhibition, JV, Varsity.

At invitational swim meets and championship swim meets there will often be multiple heats of swimmers grouped together by time. Heats progress in order from slowest times to fastest times. At these meets diving usually takes place at another time and/or location.

In diving, all divers compete at the same time – varsity divers compete in 6 dives each, while JV divers complete a number of dives determined by their diving coach. The diving format for dual meets can get a bit confusing. Divers are required to perform one voluntary dive and five optional dives for a total of six dives for each meet. Voluntary dives are the simpler ones, such as a front dive, a back dive, a reverse dive, or an inward dive. Optional dives can be any dive except the one performed for the voluntary dive. If you thought that part was confusing, just wait... Each week, the voluntary dive that must be performed changes. The first meet, a front must be done as the voluntary; the second meet, a back; the third meet, a reverse; the fourth meet, an inward; the fifth meet, a twister; and that cycle continues until the dual meet season is over. The divers must perform five optionals from only four groups, without repeating the dive they did for their voluntary.

MEET ORDER OF EVENTS

As stated above, every meet follows a standard order of events. Each event consists of either one competitive stroke or all four competitive strokes: freestyle, butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke. In addition, every race is a specific distance of 50 yards, 100 yards, 200 yards or 500 yards. Each length of the pool is 25 yards – therefore, a 50-yards race is 2 lengths, a 100-yard race is 4 lengths, a 200-yard race is 8 lengths, and a 500-yard race is 20 lengths.

ORDER OF EVENTS

1. **200-yard Medley Relay**
4 Swimmers, 50-yards each in the following order – Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, Freestyle
2. **200-yard Freestyle**
3. **200-yard Individual Medley (IM)**
50-yards of each stroke in the following order – Butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle
4. **50-yard Freestyle**
5. **Diving**
6. **100-yard Butterfly**
7. **100-yard Freestyle**
8. **500-yard Freestyle**
9. **200-yard Freestyle**
4 swimmers, 50-yards each – All Freestyle
10. **100-yard Backstroke**
11. **100-yard Breaststroke**
12. **400-yard Freestyle Relay**
4 swimmers, 100-yards each – All Freestyle

SCORING

At a dual meet, there are 170 points available. There are 14 points available for each of the three relays (totaling 42 points), and each of the eight individual events has 16 points available (totaling 128 points).

- **RELAYS** – The top 3 places are scored; only two relay teams being allowed to score for each team. There are 14 points available for each of the relays (totaling 42 points).
- **INDIVIDUAL EVENTS** – The top 5 places are scored; only three individuals being allowed to score for each team. There are 16 points available for each individual swim event (totaling 128 points). Note: If there are empty lanes for relays or individual events, these points are forfeited from the meet.
- **DIVING** – The diving competition is scored as an individual event and the top 5 places are scored the same as an individual event. The judging is comprised of three judges, one from each team's coaching staff, and one official. Each dive, no matter what it is, is assigned a degree of difficulty based on how difficult the dive is to perform. Each dive's total score is added up to get a final score, which then determines the final ranking of the divers.

All varsity dual meets are scored the same using the following point system:

RELAYS		INDIVIDUAL EVENTS	
1 st Place	8 Points	1 st Place	6 Points
2 nd Place	4 Points	2 nd Place	4 Points
3 rd Place	2 Points	3 rd Place	3 Points
4 th - 8 th Place	0 Points	4 th Place	2 Points
		5 th Place	1 Points

Once a team has secured a victory (94 points), in the spirit of sportsmanship, coaches may forfeit their remaining points. Remaining varsity swimmers for the victorious team will be counted as exhibition swims and will not earn points towards their team's total.

It is important to note, unlike club meets, times swam at high school meets do not qualify a swimmer for the MSHSL state meet. State qualifying times must be achieved at SECTION FINALS (not prelims). There are no ribbons or other awards at dual meets, just an opportunity for swimmers to better their times, help the team score points, and maybe even set a new record - personal, pool, and/or team!