**OPEN vs NOVICE the Quick Explanation:**

* Did my swimmer place 1st - 8th in an event at last year’s City Meet?  If yes, they are required to swim OPEN in that event this season.
* Did my swimmer ever swim on a year round team AND have a current BB time standard or better in an event?  If yes, they are required to swim OPEN in that event this season.

**OPEN vs NOVICE the in depth Explanation:**

**All swimmers can swim open**, thus the name open.  Novice is more restrictive.  Any swimmer that places 1st - 8th at city meet whether in an open or novice category will have to swim that event open the next summer.  Any swimmer that swam during the school year either for a school team, year round club, YMCA etc will have to be evaluated to determine if they must swim open.  **It does not matter if the year round swimming occurred last year or several years ago.**  A swimmer’s best time stays with them.  If a year round swimmer has a current BB time standard in an event they must swim that event open.

Prior to the first meet each season all swimmers are researched to determine if they have placed at the prior season’s city meet and/or swam year round at some point.  Their best times are gathered from US Swim time search and from their year round team results and compared to the Time Standards available on the Nashville Swim League website.  If the swimmer has a best time that is a BB Standard time or faster and they have year round swim experience they will be required to swim open in that event and can NOT swim novice.  These swimmers are reported to the League each season.

During the dual meet season a “novice” swimmer may be placed in OPEN as a strategic decision at the coaches’ discretion.  Coaches spend hours pouring over meet entries beginning one week prior to each meet.  These decisions are not made lightly and each swimmer is placed in an event after careful consideration and looking at where the coach feels the swimmer will perform the best.  Sometimes this may be in OPEN sometimes in NOVICE.  In addition, butterfly, breaststroke and IMs entries are limited to 6 entries.  In order to allow more swimmers to swim we try to place 6 in NOVICE and 6 in OPEN.  Please recall that only the top 3 finishers score for the team.  It is a complex process to prepare each meet entry.

Each year when we are preparing the City Meet entry we evaluate where a swimmer would have placed based on the prior year results if they swim an event open or novice this year.  Sometimes a novice swimmer will actually place higher in the open category than in the novice category.  This is because there are far fewer year round open swimmers than novice swimmers especially in the younger age groups.  Sometimes they would have placed better in a novice event.  It is a judgment call made by the coaches with each swimmers best interest taken into account.  Again, meet entries are not taken lightly.  Coaches truly consider each swimmer individually.  This is why it takes hours to prepare an entry.  That being said, they cannot predict the future but can only make the best decision with the information they have.