# Starter Clinic Notes

* Your job is to insure a fair and equitable start
* A couple days before the meet make sure the starting unit is charging
* Get to the pool early, I like to get there an hour before the meet starts
* Invigilate the pool during warmups
* Make sure the starting unit is setup properly and working
  + Be sure to test the recall
  + Starting unit should be positioned between the end of the pool from which the swimmers are starting and the backstroke flags at that end of the pool
* If you are not giving the Timer briefing at least attend it to make sure it was given properly
  + Make sure you know who the Head Timer is and make sure to point them out to the Referee
  + Perform timer check
    - Once timers are ready announce a 25 meet event, issue “Take Your Mark” command, then start
    - Wait 10 to 15 seconds
    - Announce swimmers coming into the wall in 3.. 2.. 1… then press start button again
  + If giving the briefing
    - Read it from the script
    - Confirm swimmers name
    - Step back at the start
    - Start on strobe not sound
    - After start look at watch and make sure it is running
      * If not raise your hand to get attention of Head Timer
    - At finish step to the edge of the pool so you can see the entire wall
    - Stop when any portion of the swimmer touches the wall
    - Record times to the hundredths
      * Drop/truncate anything beyond that, do not round
    - Head lane timer is responsible for determining official time
      * If 2 of the 3 watches match then that is their time
      * If 3 different watch times take the middle
      * If only 2 watch times average them
    - For 25’s will swimmers start from the other end of the pool or will timers be moving?
* Make sure you have briefing/meeting with Referee
* Positioning
  + You get priority positioning on pool deck
  + Make sure that when the Referee extends their arm you can their arm without blocking your view of the swimmers and without having to turn your head
  + Both the Referee and Starter should be positioned between the end of the pool from which the swimmers are starting and the backstroke flags on that end of the pool
  + The starting unit should not be positioned between the Referee and Starter as that could cause swimmers and timers to miss the strobe
* How to use the starting system
  + Press and hold the button on the side of the microphone to talk
  + Hold microphone close to your mouth, just like a rock star
  + Speak clearly into the microphone
  + The red button signals the start, to press it you must be pressing the button to talk at the same time
  + Once the swimmers are in the water do not depress the side button until you are sure there will be no recall
  + To recall a heat press and hold the red button at the same
* The start
  + Your job is to insure a fair and equitable start
    - You have no timeline
  + “Take Your Mark” should be in a calm inviting tone
  + Do not start a heat until you feel that they are ready
  + Make sure you can see all swimmers, at the start, in a single gaze
  + Wait for Referee to blow chirps
  + Announce Event/Heat as it is written on meet program
    - After heat 1 just announce heat number
  + For non-backstroke starts
    - After Referee blows long whistle wait for them to extend arm
    - Once extended wait until you feel the swimmers are ready then issue the “Take Your Mark” command
    - Once all swimmers are set send them
  + For backstroke starts
    - If swimmer is using “legs” make sure heels do not extend over lip of the pool
    - First long whistle is for swimmers to step in
    - If they take too long then you can ask them to step in
      * Step in please
    - After Referee blows long whistle wait for them to extend arm
    - Once extended wait until you feel the swimmers are ready then issue the “Take Your Mark” command
    - Once all swimmers are set send them
  + There is no set time between when the swimmers take their mark and you send them.
    - Once they are set you send them
    - Every heat is different
    - Do not get into a cadence
  + You should stand the heat immediately if you have issued the “Take Your Mark” command and
    - The Referee pulls their hand down
    - Something out of the ordinary happens (aloud noise, a flash from a camera, a swimmer arriving late)
    - If swimmers take too long to settle or are jumpy
  + The Stand Command
    - Stand Please
    - This should be said in a calm not startling tone in an attempt to not cause swimmers to actually start
    - Try to use a softer lower tone than what you use for “Take Your Mark”
    - The swimmers do not need to do anything you are simply telling them that you aren’t going to be starting them yet
    - Do not keep repeating stand waiting for all the swimmers to actually stand, once is enough
* Review False Start protocols
  + Stationary vs motionless
  + You initiate with the Referee
  + Circle lane number and show to Referee
    - No words should be spoken
  + If you match then write up DQ slip
  + Pay attention to surroundings for external influences that may cause a false start (clapping, camera flash, loud noise, etc)
  + What is a False Start
* How to start hearing impaired swimmers
  + Start with your arm out at a 90 degree angle with your hand above/at your head
  + As Referee blows 4+ chirps twist your hand back and forth
  + On long whistle lift arm straight overhead
  + As you issue “Take Your Mark” command lower arm to be outstretched to your side
  + At the same time you actually press the starting button drop your arm
* Once swimmers are in the water
  + Note any empty lanes on your meet program
  + Assist the Referee as needed
  + Keep an eye on/around the pool for any possible safety issues
  + Observe swimmers for next heat
    - Does the number of swimmers match the heat sheet
    - Are the any potential issues (broken goggles, etc)
  + If you see a Stroke and Turn raise their hand but the Referee misses it them let them know
  + Keep an eye out for timers that need a new watch
  + Make sure Timers and Stroke and Turn officials are stepping to the edge of the pool as necessary
  + With relays keep an eye out for running and/or assisted starts
  + If only using a single starting unit and the swimmers start 25s from turn end then after the last heat of the last event prior to a 25 move the starting unit to the other end of the pool once the swimmers are all safely in the water and any potential false starts are resolved