



SWIM MEET 101 LARCHMONT BARRACUDAS

SWIM MEET OVERVIEW

- Swim meets can seem OVERWHELMING but once you get the general idea, they make a whole lot more sense!
- Swim meets during the summer have the same events taking place in the same order each meet.
- The meets are generally 2 1/2 to 3 hours long and move along very quickly.
- The home team always swims in the even numbered lanes, generally lanes 2, 4, 6 and 8.
- The visiting team swims in lanes 1, 3, 5 and 7.
- Before the swim meet, the coaches make up the meet sheets that tell us who is swimming what events and in what lane. An index card is made up for each child with his/her name, event number, event name, and what lane the child is swimming. This information is important because sometimes your child's events may change from the meet sheet to the day of the event.
- Cards are handed out during the meet by a parent helper, when it is time for the child to go "line up" behind the starting block to get ready to swim. The card is then handed to a timer who is at the swimmer's block. The timers use this card to record the children's times.
- It may seem that we're handing out cards for events that seem a long way off. Races go very quickly, especially the older age groups, who are quite fast! So, when a card is given to your child, it's crucial to get your swimmer to the designated area as soon as possible.
- All children swim in their age groups. They are broken down as follows: 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and 15-18.
- Coaches require all swimmers to stay in the team area with their respective age group when they are not swimming.
- *Parents are of crucial importance to our team. We rely on them to keep all the younger children together in the team area. When we're handing out the event cards, we need to be able to find them quickly and easily, to avoid having a child miss a race.*

ORDER OF EVENTS AT A MEET

- Boys and girls generally swim each event separately.
- The events for each stroke go from youngest to oldest. The girls in a given age group swim the event first, followed by the boys. Some age groups do not compete in certain events. Some age groups compete in different distances for the events

EVENTS

1. IM
 - a. Ages 9 and up
 - b. 100 meters
2. Medley Relays
 - a. Mixed teams of 4 (girls and boys)
 - b. 8U & 9-10; 25 meters of each stroke
 - c. 11 and up; 50 meters of each stroke
3. Freestyle
 - a. 8U; 25 meters
 - b. 9-10 & 11-12; 50 meters
 - c. 13 and up; 100 meters
4. Backstroke
 - a. 8U & 9-10; 25 meters
 - b. 11 and up; 50 meters
5. Breaststroke
 - a. 8U & 9-10; 25 meters
 - b. 11 and up; 50 meters
6. Butterfly
 - a. 8U & 9-10; 25 meters
 - b. 11 and up; 50 meters
7. Freestyle Relays
 - a. 4 swimmers (girls and boys have separate heats)
 - b. 8U; 100 meters
 - c. 9-10 and up; 200 meters

MEET SCORING

The winner of the meet is determined by the team scoring the highest number of points.

For individual races:

- 1st Place = 5 points
- 2nd Place = 3 points
- 3rd Place = 1 point

A team can only receive a maximum of 8 points in a race. So if they sweep (1st, 2nd, 3rd) they would only receive 8 points and the other team would receive 1

For relays:

- 1st Place = 7 points
- No other points allotted for relays, the first place winner takes all 7 points.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- It takes MANY parent volunteers to run a meet
- These are kids and we want them all to have fun and be cheered on
- It's summer. Meets can be hot! Make sure you and your swimmers are prepared.
- Remember to put lots of sunscreen on both yourself and your child. Bring lots of water and a good hat.
- Families should bring their own chairs, since seating may be limited at some pools.
- Please do NOT go and stand behind the blocks OR take photos there it is against the rules
- The meets ALWAYS need timers! This is a great way to get involved in the meets.
- If you have questions about anything, ask!

GLOSSARY OF SWIM TERMS

Age-group swimming

Swimmers compete in the following age brackets: 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 and 15-18. Their age on the first day of a swim meet is their age for the whole meet, even if their birthday falls during the competition.

Bilateral Breathing

The process of breathing on alternate sides during freestyle, such as breathing every third or fifth stroke.

Blocks

The platform from which swimmers begin races.

Catch

The point in a swimmer's stroke at which the swimmer's hand grabs the water in front of them and applies downward pressure to move the body forward.

Club team

Generally speaking, this is the USA Swimming or YMCA sanctioned swim team under which your child trains and competes. Your kid does not represent the club team when competing at high school or summer league meets.

Cool Down

Easy to moderate swimming following an intensive effort or race. The purpose is to rid the body of excess lactic acid and to reduce heart rate and respiration. May also be referred to as “recovery swimming,” “active rest/recovery,” or “warm-down”.

Deck

The area surrounding the pool at practices and meets, not including the bleachers or stands. USA Swimming rules prohibit parents from being on the deck at practice. At meets, only swimmers, coaches, officials and select volunteers may be on the deck.

Dolphin kick

Once just the leg motion for butterfly, the dolphin kick (which mimics the undulating motion by which the sea animal moves through the water) is now considered the fifth stroke. It is done underwater in streamline position to in order build momentum on fly, freestyle and backstroke starts and turns. Swimmers are even allowed to take one dolphin kick in breaststroke.

Dryland

A catch-all term for all physical conditioning done outside of the water. This can range from pre-practice stretching to regular sessions dedicated to lifting weights or doing resistance exercises, yoga, Pilates, spin classes, etc.

Hand entry

The position the hand is in at the time it touches the water after the recovery and before the catch phase. The hand should enter with the fingers together and pointing downward, as if putting on a glove. It should also enter in line with the shoulder to avoid injury.

Heat sheet

At large meets, officials distribute printed listings for each heat of each event to be swum. Swimmers should already be aware of what events they are entered in, but the heat sheet will tell them the order of events as well as the group and lane to which they are assigned. Athletes should take this timetable into consideration when planning when to warm up and when to leave the deck to go to the bathroom or the vendor area, lest they miss their heat.

IM

This term stand for individual medley, an event in which a swimmer performs all four competitive strokes. The order is butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle. (The order is different in a medley relay, where the order is back, breast, fly, free.) IM race distances are 100 (one length of each stroke, contested only in a short course, or 25-yard or meter pool, mostly for 10-and-unders), 200 and 400. In a short-course pool, a 200 IM is 50 yards/meters or two pool lengths of each stroke; in a long-course or 50-meter pool, it's one length. In a 400 IM, the swimmer does 100 yards/meters of each stroke. In short course, that's four lengths; in long course, it's two.

Long course

A 50-meter pool. This is the true definition of Olympic-sized pool. Most long-course racing is done in the summer from May to August. A swimmer's long-course times will generally be slower because there are fewer turns. There are several online calculators for converting short-course times to long and vice versa.

Recovery

This term has two meanings for swimmers. It can pertain to the point in the stroke in which the hand is above the water line preparing for the next stroke. It can also be used to describe the process of resting and refueling after practice or a race.

Scratch

To withdraw from an event at a meet. Oftentimes, heading into a major meet, swimmers will enter every event for which they have qualified in order to keep their options open and then withdraw (or opt not to compete in finals) based on how they feel at the meet.

Short course

In America, this term usually means a 25-yard pool. Most USA Swimming-sanctioned racing during the fall, winter and spring is done in short-course yards, including high school and college meets. The term can also pertain to 25-meter pools, although they are more common in summer league and abroad.

Split

The time for a portion of a race, such as each 50 of a 100-yard-race. Coaches will compare the split for the first (or front half) part of a race with the second (or back half) to determine where the swimmer was fastest and slowest. A negative split means the swimmer swam the second half faster than the first.

Streamline

When the body is pointing in a long, straight line with the arms at the ears, locked together with one hand on top of the other, while the legs are together, and the toes are pointed. It is used on starts and turns because it minimizes drag or resistance underwater.

Taper

A few weeks before a major meet, the coach will begin scaling back the volume or workload at practice in favor of working on fine details, like starts and turns. This allows the swimmer to get more rest in hopes of dramatically improving their times at their goal meet. Warning: You may find your swimmer suddenly has a lot more energy after practice while at the same time telling you, "I can't take the garbage out because I'm on taper."

Warm Up

A period of swimming in which you acclimate and warm your muscles for faster swimming, which is important to prevent injury. During warm-up, you should generally experience an increase in heart rate and respiration.

<https://www.htseahawks.org/info/swim-meet-101>

<https://fitterandfaster.com/fun-and-games/glossary-guide-swim-terms/>

<https://www.usms.org/workout-library/glossary-of-swimming-terms>