

SWIM MEET DICTIONARY

ANCHOR

The last swimmer in a relay.

BLOCKS

Starting platforms at the end of the lanes.

DUAL MEETS

Dual meets are swum against another VSL team. VSL (Valley Swim League) dual meets are usually held on Saturdays with exceptions as needed.

In a VSL meet, a swimmer is allowed to swim 5 events either individual or relay, any events after 5 will result in disqualification. The only exception is if there are less than six swimmers in an age group. The order of events for a dual meet are: medley relay, freestyle, butterfly, breaststroke, IM, backstroke and freestyle relay. Each event is separated by age group.

DQ or DISQUALIFICATION

This simply means that a swimmer made an infraction on one or more of the following: the stroke, the turn, or the start. This happens to everyone at some point in their swimming career, and is not the end of the world. DQs can be good learning opportunities. The coaches will have all of the DQ slips at practice the following week and will be happy to answer any questions.

EVENT

A race during the meet.

FALSE START

This occurs when a swimmer leaves the starting block, or is moving on the block before the starter officially starts the race. A false start is grounds for disqualification.

FLAGS

Pennants strung across the pool 5 yards or meters from the end of the pool. They enable backstrokers to execute a turn and finishes more efficiently by counting their strokes from the flags to the wall.

FLY OVERS

Starting the next race at the completion of the previous race but before the finished swimmers leave the pool. They wait close to the wall while the next race is started "over" them. If performed properly by the starter it can significantly speed up the meet.

GUTTERS

The area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows during a race (wave reduction) and recirculates through the filtration system. The gutter cannot be used to aid a backstroke start. Toes cannot curl over the gutter. It's up to the starter to ensure that no one has their toes curled over the gutter at the start.

HEAT

A group of races per Age Group, with-in each event.

LANE LINES

Continuous floating markers which separate the pool into lanes. They are designed to reduce or eliminate waves from swimmers in adjacent lanes. While they can be touched in a race, they cannot be used for an advantage (e.g., pulling on them to propel yourself).

RELAYS

- Free Relay: Four swimmers, each swimming free style, swim one quarter of the total distance of the event.
- Medley Relay: All four strokes are swum by four different swimmers. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly, and the final swimmer anchors the relay with freestyle.

SEEDING

The position and lane assigned to a swimmer in a particular meet.

STARTS

In the start, the swimmer is called to the starting position by the starter who visually checks that all swimmers are motionless. When all swimmers are set, the starting horn is sounded to start the race. If the starter feels that one of the swimmers has moved, left early or gotten an unfair advantage, the guilty swimmer may be disqualified after the race for a false start. Under USA Swimming rules, one false start disqualifies the swimmer.

STROKES

- Freestyle: Front stroke which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the water surface and an alternating (up and down) flutter kick.
- Backstroke: Consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may rotate to the stomach and perform a flip turn and some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. The swimmer must finish on the back.
- Breaststroke: The hands are pressed out from in front of the breast in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously at, above or below the water surface.
- Butterfly: Features a simultaneous recovery of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissors or use the breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish.
- IM or Individual Medley: Features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle.

TIME TRIALS

The Time Trials are the first official inter-squad swim meet of the season. The swimmers swim their best possible times in each stroke, or in all the strokes that they know at the time. The times are recorded and then used by the coaches as a starting point from which the swimmer can work to improve during the summer. The initial times are entered in the statistical database. Meet times, starting with Time Trials, are useful for assigning lanes and heats in future events.

WARM DOWN OR COOL DOWN

The recovery swimming performed at the end of practice to allow the athlete's body to slowly return to a comfortable heart rate.