

Glossary of Swim Terms

“A” MEET - A swim meet that requires swimmers to have previously achieved an "A" time standard in the events they wish to enter.

AGE GROUP - The division of swimmers according to age, usually in two-year bands. In USA Swimming, swimmers compete within their respective age groups, usually in the following manner: 10&Younger, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, and 17-18. Most meets combine the two older age groups into a 15-18 age group. A swimmer's age at a meet is determined by the first day of the competition.

AGE GROUP CHAMPS—Season ending championship meets for Virginia Swimming, one in each course, for swimmers aged 14 and younger who meet the qualifying times.

BB/B/C MEET-A swim meet that requires swimmers to have no higher than a “BB” time standard in the events they wish to enter.

CHAMPIONSHIP HEAT - The Championship Heat (A Final) is the fastest heat (6 or 8 swimmers) of Finals when multiple heats are held and is usually conducted last, after the Bonus (C Final) and Consolation (B Final) heats.

CIRCLE SEEDING- A method of seeding preliminary heats in which the fastest swimmers race in the middle of the pool and in separate heats. The swimmers in the top 3 heats are intermingled so that the fastest three swimmers are in the middle lanes of the last 3 heats, the next 3 in the lane next to that in each of those heats and so forth. Also known as pyramid seeding.

Heat	Lane1	Lane2	Lane3	Lane4	Lane5	Lane6	Lane7	Lane8
	21	15	9	3	6	12	18	24
	20	14	8	2	5	11	17	23
Last	19	13	7	1	4	10	16	22

CONSOLATION HEAT- This is an extra heat held during the finals session of a prelims/finals meet, usually for the swimmers who are next fastest after the top swimmers (who race in the finals heat).

CUT- A qualifying time for championship meets (e.g., Age Group Champs, Senior Champs, National Champs).

DISQUALIFICATION (DQ)- At a meet, when a swimmer breaks a rule of swimming, they are disqualified. (For example, if a swimmer finishes a breaststroke race by touching the wall with only one hand, instead of two.) Their race is "not counted," and the swimmer will not receive a time. Disqualifications are indicated on meet results with "DQ" in place of the swimmer's time. During the race, meet officials will indicate a disqualification by raising one arm with an open hand above their head.

DECK SEEDING- Usually at "A" and above meets, but also at some "B-C" meets, the longer events will deck seeded. Swimmers will be given lane assignments just prior to swimming. A check-in will be held early in the meet to determine who is present, so that full heats will be swum.

DISTANCE -How far a swimmer swims in an event. Distances for Sort Course are: 25 yards/meters (1 length), 50 yards/meters (2 lengths), 100 yards/meters (4 lengths), 200 yards/meters (8 lengths), 400 meters (16 lengths), 500 yards (20 lengths), 800 meters (32 lengths), 1000 yards (40 lengths), 1500 meters (60

lengths), and 1650 yards (66 lengths). Distances for Long Course are: 50 meters (1 length), 100 meters (2 lengths), 200 meters (4 lengths), 400 meters (8 lengths), 800 meters (16 lengths), 1500 meters (30 lengths).

DRY LAND -The program of exercises and various strength regimens swimmers do out of the water.

FALSE START- When a swimmer is in motion or leaves the starting block before the starting signal is given. One false start will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team.

FASTSKIN- A type of competition suit made by Speedo.

FINALS- The session of a meet where qualifying rounds were previously held to determine the finalists (usually 6 to 20 in number depending on pool size and whether or not consolation finals are being held). The finalists compete to determine the winner.

HEAT SHEET- A listing of all swimmers in a meet by event, heat and lane assignments.

LOCAL SWIMMING COMMITTEE (LSC) -One of 59 administrative divisions of USA Swimming with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographical boundaries designated by USA Swimming. Virginia Swimming, Inc. (VSI) is our LSC.

LONG COURSE- A type of competitive pool which measures 50 meters in length. This is the standard course for International, Senior National and Olympic competition. The swim year is divided into two seasons: Short Course season, competed in 25-yard/meter pools during fall and winter, and Long Course season, competed in 50-meter pools during spring and summer.

LCM- Abbreviation for Long Course Meters.

NT- USA Swimming abbreviation for "no time." Appears in place of a time on the heat sheet to indicate that a swimmer has not raced the event before.

OPEN WATER- Any non-pool swimming locale, typically oceans, lakes, and rivers.

OVERHEAD STARTS- Start procedures at a meet in which swimmers of the previous heat remain in the water, close to the wall, during the start of the next heat.

QUALIFYING TIME- The time a swimmer must have achieved previously in an event in order to enter a meet.

PRELIMS- In certain meets, especially championship meets, the qualifying rounds used to determine the finalists. These meets are usually set up to swim Prelims in the morning and Finals in the evening.

PSYCH - A printed order of events by session with swimmers listed in order, usually fastest to slowest according to their entry times. It does not show heats. After scratches are turned in, the session is seeded and heat sheets are printed.

REFEREE- The USA Swimming official who has authority over all other officials at a swim meet. He/She makes all final decisions and sees to the efficient running of the meet.

SCM- Abbreviation for Short Course Meters.

SCRATCH-To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. In a Prelims and Finals (championship) format, swimmers who qualify for finals usually have 30 minutes to withdraw if

they don't wish to participate. Failure to participate in finals without scratching normally results in disqualification from the rest of the meet. In a timed finals format, there's no penalty for missing an event without scratching.

SEED TIMES- The time a swimmer uses to enter competitions. This time (generally the swimmer's best time) is used to determine a swimmer's heat and lane, when compared to other entrants. This system ensures that each swimmer is competing immediately with swimmers with similar best times.

SENIOR CHAMPS- In Virginia Swimming, season-ending championship meets, one in each course, for senior swimmers (usually, aged 15 and older) who meet the qualifying times.

SHORT COURSE- A type of competitive pool measuring 25 yards or 25 meters in length.

SPEEDOCHAMPIONSHIP SERIES-Originally called "sectionals," these open, USA Swimming sanctioned, senior-level meets are typically offered in each Zone during the spring or summer

SPLIT-A per lap time that coaches use to determine pace for each swim.

STARTER- The USA Swimming official at a meet responsible for starting each heat, calling the next heat to the block, and ensuring that each swimmer gets a fair start.

STROKE JUDGE- A USA Swimming certified official who determines the legality of a swimmer's strokes and notifies the Referee of disqualifications, if necessary

SWIM OFF- A tie-breaker race. Used at prelims/finals-formatted meets to determine which swimmer gets to race in finals, or if there is a tie for the alternate spots.

TAPER- The final recovery phase of a training plan before an end-of-season championship meet. During taper, the swimmer reduces the intensity and length of workouts in the weeks or days leading into an important race. This allows the body to fully recover, or repair itself, from the training of the previous weeks and months.

TIMED FINAL - A meet format in which swimmers' times from the heats are their final time in the event. The swimmers with the fastest times are the event winners.

TIME STANDARDS - A set of times by course, event, age group, and classification established by USA Swimming for classifying swimmers for entry into meets (e.g., a 10 year-old girl who's best time in the 50y Freestyle is 32.05 seconds is classified as an "A" swimmer and can't compete in a BB/B/C/Mini meet in that event). The time standards are updated every four years and are based on the Top 16 times for each event/age group. Also, Qualifying Times.

TOUCH PAD- The part of the electronic timing system that rests against the wall at the finishing end of each lane. Swimmer's times are electronically recorded when the pad is touched.

UNATTACHED- The status a swimmer receives when he/she changes from one USA Swimming club to another. Swimmers must be "unattached" for 120 days from their last competition for one club until they can compete for their new club. During this time they may swim for a club in individual events, but may not score or swim on relays. . Represented by "UN" or "UNAT" in the meet program.

USA SWIMMING- The abbreviation for United States Swimming Inc. which is the governing body for all amateur swimming in the United States.

ZONES- Eastern Zone All-Star Championship Meet contested twice a year at the end of each season. In Short Course, the LSC teams consists of the top two swimmers in each event/age group. In Long Course, swimmers must meet qualifying times (usually AAA).