



Pre-Meet Planning: The Meet Referee's Meet Announcement Checklist

As a Meet Referee, you have many responsibilities coupled to a swim meet. Some responsibilities are exercised in real-time during a meet but your work really begins months prior when the meet is being planned. When you commit to being the Meet Referee, you become a representative of Colorado Swimming Inc. (CSI) to help ensure the meet follows all applicable rules. The Meet Referee is an integral part of meet planning process working closely with the Meet Director to ensure all details of the meet are planned. If the meet changes after the sanction is issued, the Meet Referee helps the Meet director ensure the protocol of Article 102.7 (Postponements and Changes in Program) is correctly followed.

This checklist **is a guideline** to help the Meet Referee ensure the Meet Announcement includes all required elements as specified by either USA Swimming or CSI. By definition, following a guideline is never mandatory....it's a tool to help determine the best course of action. The elements in this checklist may not apply to every swim meet, as each sanction is unique. Use this checklist to develop a meet specific Meet Announcement.

This checklist is organized into three sections: requirements as described in the Rules and Regulations, requirements as described in the Colorado Swimming Policies & Procedures, and 'best practice' suggestions to ensure all aspects of the swim meet are clearly communicated.

This checklist does not include guidance for ensuring the meet announcement's content isn't ambiguous, impossible to enforce, or doesn't make sense. Those instances rely on the meet referee's experience as an official, knowledge of swim meets, and general psychology on human behavior to ensure the Meet Announcement communicates complete and accurate information about the swim meet.

Meet Announcement Requirements	The Meet Announcement must contain the following information as described in the 2012 Rules and Regulations Book ¹
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USA Swimming Rules & Regulations:

- **Article 102.2.1:** The meet entry requirements including first time swimmers with no time or estimated times
- **Article 102.4:** Meet start times, check-in and scratch procedures for individual and relay events and penalties for violation of those procedures
- **Article 102.4:** Meet start times, check-in and scratch procedures for individual and relay events and penalties for violation of those procedures
- **Article 102.5.6.C:** Order of heats
- **Article: 102.25.4:** Point scoring for the meet
- **Article 202.3.4:** The meet announcement shall include the following statement: "Any swimmer entered in the meet must be certified by a USA Swimming member-coach as being proficient in performing a racing start or must start each race from within the water. When unaccompanied by a member-coach, it is the responsibility of the swimmer or the swimmer's legal guardian to ensure compliance with this requirement."
- **Article 202.3.4:** The meet announcement shall include a statement that all participants must be registered members of USA as provided in Article 302 and the announcement must state whether on-deck registration will be permitted and under what conditions.
- **Article 202.3.4:** The meet announcement shall include the following statement: "Except where venue facilities require otherwise, changing into or out of swimsuits other than in locker rooms or other designated areas is not appropriate and is prohibited."
- **Article 202.3.4:** The meet announcement shall include information about the water depth measured for a distance of 3 feet 3 ½ inches (1.0 meter) to 16 feet 5 inches (5.0 meters) from both end walls."
- **Article 202.3.4:** The meet announcement shall include the following statement: "Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms."

¹ The article numbers listed in this checklist are current as of 2012. As the Rules and Regulations change from year to year, the article numbers may change. Be sure to understand the content required in the Meet Announcement and don't focus too much on the article numbers.



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- **Article 202.3.5:** The meet announcement must include one of the following two statements:
 - The competition course has been certified in accordance with 104.2.2C (4). The copy of the certification is on file with USA Swimming
 - The competition course has not been certified in accordance with 104.2.2C (4).
- **Article 202.3.8:** Entry blanks, advertising and the program must bear the statement: "Held under the sanction of USA Swimming" (sanction #)
- **Article 207.8.2:** The meet announcement shall state qualifying times and procedures necessary for proof of entry times (See Article 207.6)
- **Article 207.8.2:** Requirements for bonus events will be specified in the meet announcement.
- **Article 207.9.1:** The method and procedure for submission of relay entries will be stated in the meet announcement.
- **Article 207.11.2:** Starting times for the preliminary and finals sessions shall be published in the meet announcement
- **Article 701.2.1:** For open water events, the meet announcement: shall contain the policy for abandonment and whether the race will be an "escorted" or "unescorted" swim.
- **Article 701.2.7:** In all Open Water events, time limits shall be published in the meet announcement

Meet Announcement Requirements	The Colorado Swimming Inc. Policies & Procedures describe additional requirements that are enforceable at all Colorado swim meet and should listed in the Meet Announcement.
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Colorado Swimming Policies & Procedures:

- The standard CSI warm-up procedures are in effect for this meet. This includes swimmers entering the warm-up lanes using a 3-point feet-first entry where both feet and one hand must be in contact with the deck or end wall immediately prior to entering the water
- On-deck photography is not allowed from behind the starting blocks
- Hired photographers are not covered by USA Swimming's insurance and must providing both the host club and the venue host with a certificate of insurance naming both as Additional Insured. If the professional photographer doesn't have general liability insurance, they are not allowed to roam the venue as a professional photographer...only as a spectator. Additionally, the club who hired the photographer must have signed permission forms from the parents of all swimmers to be photographed. The USA Swimming insurance broker has recommended that hired photographers not be allowed on deck unless the photographer has been contracted by the host club with the concurrence of all clubs involved in the meet to take pictures of all participants. Again, permission forms must be received from the parents of any swimmer to be photographed.
- Unattached swimmers must be assigned to a coach from another team to act in their interest. Assigned coach shall be responsible for supervision of warm-up/warm-down, and all other responsibilities of the swimmer.
- The Meet Referee must sign the Sanction Application Form before a sanction number is issued
- All sanction applications must be received by at least 60 days before the meet, if not by that deadline, the sanction fee is \$200.00
- The heat timeline interval may not be less than 15 seconds unless chase starts are utilized or approval is granted by the CSI Technical Planning Commission. (reference the Meet Timeline Guidelines within this document to help plan the meet)



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Meet Announcement Recommendations

The Meet Announcement is a document to communicate important information about a swim meet to the attendees and it's the referee's rulebook for the meet. "Best practice" elements to include in the Meet Announce are described below.

Best Practices:

- Meet Dates
- All Session Start Times
- Warm-up Times
- Meet Scoring
- Awards
- Pool Altitude
- Number of Lanes (Pool, Race, and continuous warm-up)
- Water Depth (in addition to Article 202.3.4)
- Type of Meet (Times Finals, Time Trials, Preliminary/Finals)
- Qualifying Times
- Heat seeding: slowest to fastest or fastest to slowest
- Swimmers Age at the Start of the Meet (Article 205.2.2)
- The meet will follow the 4 hour time limit for sessions containing age Group events (Article 205.3.1.F)
- Describe what "positive check-in" means for the meet. Include which events are positive check-in, the positive check-in deadlines, what happens if the swimmer doesn't check-in (are they dropped from the event or seeded with as an NT)
- Describe the Scratch Procedures for the meet including Penalties for not showing for a non-scratched event
- All meet deadlines (meet entry, scratch, positive check-in, relay declarations, time trial entries, etc.)
- Fees (Per event, Meet Fee, Pool Fee, Other Fees)
- Date and locations for Psych sheets to be posted
- The meet referee will be the final authority for conduct of the meet.
- List of meet organizers: Entry Chairperson, Meet Referee, Meet Director, Safety Chairperson, and the Admin Referee (if you have one). Provide name, responsibility, phone number, and e-mail address
- Describe any venue Specific Rules or Restrictions
- All coaches and officials must display a current USA Swimming Credentials Card that includes a current background check date and a current Safe Sport Program training date.
- Only sign the Sanction Application Form when in agreement with the Meet Announcement



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The Meet Timeline Guidelines to help the meet hosts and meet referees plan a meet so that session duration requirements and goals can be met.

Influencing Factors:

1. **Type of Start Used:**
 - Fly-Over Starts- Strongly Recommended whenever possible.
 - Chaser Starts- Used in Long Course Pool when blocks are available from both sides.
2. **Skill level of the athletes participating:** Planned timelines should reflect the experience level of the average athlete in the meet.
 - A 10 & Unders session of developmental swimmers should not be planned the same as a Senior meet with qualification times consisting primarily of older more experienced swimmers.
 - Meet with qualification times can generally be run on faster range of timeline estimate.
3. **Experience level of Officials:** An experienced crew of officials (esp deck referee+starter) may be able to run on a tighter timeline than an official without as much experience.
4. **Timer Moves:** You should schedule 1-2 min break for every time timers need to move from one side of the pool to the other.

Timeline Recommendations for Timed Finals/ Prelim Sessions based on Athlete Age using FLY-OVER Starts:

- **10 & Under Sessions:** 18-26 Sec Heat Interval + 10-20 Sec additional Backstroke Interval
- **12 & Under Sessions:** 14-22 Sec Heat Intervals +10-15 Sec additional Backstroke Interval
- **13 & Over/Open Sessions:** 10-18 Sec Heat Interval + 10-15 Sec additional Backstroke Interval

Timeline Recommendations for Finals Sessions: Determine what your protocol will be i.e. are athlete's being announced behind the blocks, are athletes being awarded.

- **25-40 Sec Heat Interval:** B Heat= Fly-Over A Heat, announce B Heat names while B Heat in competing. Announcing A Heat names behind the block with no walk-out.
- **30-60 Sec Heat Interval:** B Heat= Fly-Over A Heat, announce B Heat names while B Heat in competing. Short Walk-Out + Announce A heat names behind the block (Depends on length of walk-out).

Timeline Recommendations based on Athlete Age using CHASER Starts- This depends greatly on experience level of officials.

- Make to sure to consider the number of 50m events in the session. 50 m races cannot be run with chaser timeline.
- All event distances 100/200/400/800/1500 will result in a heat interval of negative 10-25 seconds per heat.
- You will need to average the 50 m heats which will run on a +10-15 with the number of even length heats which will run on a negative 10-25.
- Slower moving athletes will create a greater negative number i.e. heats of 12 & under 100 breaststroke where athletes are finishing around 2 minutes per 100 will produce a negative 25-30 seconds per heat, while 100 Freestyle for senior athletes swimming around 1 minute per heat will produce a negative 10-15 seconds per heat.
- **12 & Under Sessions (including mix of 50m races):** 0 seconds to negative 10 seconds, no additional backstroke interval. Depends on ratio of 50 m heats vs total heats in the sessions
- **12 & Under Sessions (NO 50m races):** Negative 8-16 seconds, no additional backstroke interval
- **13 & Over/Open Sessions (including mix of 50m races):** 0 seconds to negative 12 seconds, no additional backstroke interval. Depends on ratio of 50 m heats vs total heats in the sessions
- **13 & Over/Open Sessions: With no 50 m races** negative 8-16 Sec Heat Interval + no additional Backstroke Interval