

COMPETITIVE SWIMMING GLOSSARY OF TERMS

A Finals - A heat of the fastest swimmers in a preliminary event. This race decides the placement 1-3 plus the other swimmers in the heat depending on the number of lanes in the pool. 4-6 place, 4-8 or 4-10 place. A finals are swum some time after the preliminary events have taken place, usually in the evening of the same day.

Age Group Swimming: This is the program through which Swimming-Natation Canada (SNC) provides fair and open competition for under 18 years of age members. It is designed to encourage maximum participation, provide an educational experience, enhance physical and mental conditioning.

Alternate: In a Prelims/Finals meet, after the finalist is decided, the next two fastest swimmers other than the finalist are designated as alternates. The faster of the 2 being first alternate and the next being second alternate. If a finalist cannot participate, the alternates are called to take their place, often on a moment's notice. Alternate's can be fined for not scratching their spot or attending.

Anchor: The final swimmer in a relay.

AGM: Annual General Meeting - A meeting for membership to hear what the club has done and is doing. Held once a season, usually around January for HHBF.

B Finals - This is a heat of swimmers that are the second set of fastest swimmer in an event. Placements are determined for 7-12 for a 6 lane pool, 9-16 for an eight lane pool and 11 - 20 for a 10 lane pool. This heat is swum after qualifying preliminary events are done and usually occur the evening of the same day. B finals are swum in conjunction with A finals.

Bell Race: Sometimes in developmental meets. A bell is rung before a heat swims. The heat winner wins a small prize.

Block: The starting platform

Bulkhead: A wall constructed to divide a pool into different courses, such as a 50m pool into two 25m pools.

Circle Swimming: Performed by staying to the right of the black line when swimming in a lane to enable more swimmers to swim in each lane.

Cut: Slang for qualifying time. A time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.

Developmental Meet: A classification of meet or competition that is usually attended by swimmers new to the sport.

Distance Event: Term used to refer to events over 400 meters.

Dolphin System: A timing system that provides wireless, synchronized, stopwatch style timing for swimming competitions.

DQ (Disqualified): This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind (e.g. one handed touch in breaststroke). A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive an award, nor will there be an official time in that event.

Drill: An exercise involving a specific part of a stroke, used to improve technique.

Dry-land Training: Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance; usually includes stretching, calisthenics, and/or weight training.

Entry Deadline: A date coaches must submit entries for swimmers to allow them to race in a specific competition. Once the deadline is past there are no further entries accepted into the meet.

Heat Sheet : Also referred to as Meet Program. This report details the events, heats and lane assignments of a swim meet. Spectators enjoy looking at these prior to the race. Swimmers can tell the order the events will be conducted and get a rough idea how long the meet sessions will last.

False Start: Occurs when a swimmer is moving at the start prior to the signal.

False Start Rope: A recall rope across the width of the racing pool for the purpose of stopping swimmers who were not aware of a false start.

FINA: The international, rules making organization, for the sport of swimming. Federation International de Natation.

Final: The championship heat of an event in which the top 6, 8 or 10 swimmers from the preliminaries compete for awards, depending on the number of lanes in the pool.

Finish: The final phase of the race, the touch at the end of the race.

Fins: Large rubber fin type devices that fit on a swimmer's feet. Used in swim practice, not competition.

Flags: Backstroke flags placed 5 meters from the end of the pool. They enable backstrokers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently through being able to count the number of strokes into each wall.

Goal: A specific time, event or skill achievement a swimmer sets and strives for; can be short or long term.

Heats: A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by resulting time, after all heats of the event are completed.

IM: Acronym for Individual Medley, an event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, freestyle.

Leg: The part of a relay event swam by a single team member. A single stroke in the IM.

Long Course or LC: Referring to the length of a pool. Long course is 50 M in length or a pool configured to have 50 M lanes. Olympic events are administered in Long Course pools.

Meet Package - A meet package is required when applying for a sanction with Swim Ontario. The meet package must contain specific statements and links to documents that follow Swim Ontario policies and procedures and Swimming Canada rules. These are updated as policies and procedures are updated. Template meet packages with all required statements have been developed to help the Meet Management Committee prepare their meet packages.

Middle Distance: Term used to refer to events of 200 to 400 meters in length.

Negative Split: Swimming the second half of the race faster than the first half.

Official: A judge on the deck of the pool at a sanctioned competition who enforces SNC rules.

Official Split: The first portion of the full distance of an event raced at a sanctioned meet. Example – a 50 or 100 within a 200 meter event.

Official Time: A time achieved in a race during a sanctioned competition, also referred to as a Final Time.

Open Water Swimming - Swimming that takes place anywhere that isn't a pool outdoors such as oceans, lakes, rivers. There are no sides, lane ropes or black lines to follow.

Pace: The often predetermined speed with which a swimmer completes each segment of a race (e.g. 25m, 50m)

Pace Clock: Large clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice (may also be digital).

Paddle: Colored plastic devices worn on the swimmers hands during swim practice.

Prelim: Abbreviation for preliminaries, also called heats, the races in which swimmers qualify for the championship and consolation finals in an event.

Psych Sheet: An entry sheet showing all swimmers entered into each individual event, organized by entry time, fastest to slowest.

Pull Buoy: A flotation device used for pulling by swimmers in practice.

Q-Time: Qualifying time necessary to compete in a particular event and/or competition.

Relay: An event in which 4 swimmers compete together as a team to achieve a time.

Safety Procedure: Safety procedures are designed to prevent accidents, and must be followed to the letter.

Sanctioned Meet: All competitions in which records may be set and official times may be obtained, must be sanctioned (= approved officially) by a Swim Ontario Sanctioning Officer.

Scratch: To withdraw from an event in a competition. There can be a monetary penalty for a late scratch.

Seed: The fastest time a swimmer has swum at a previous event. Assigns the swimmers heats and lanes according to their submitted or preliminary times.

Short Course or SC: A 25 meter long pool.

SNC: Swimming Natation Canada – National governing body for competitive swimming.

SwimOn/SO: Swim Ontario – Provincial governing body for competitive swimming.

Split: A swimmer's intermediate time in a race. Splits are registered every 50m and are used to determine if a swimmer is on a planned pace. Under certain conditions, initial splits may also be used as official times.

Sprint: Describes the shorter events (50 and 100m); in training, to swim as fast as possible for a short distance.

Streamline: The position used to gain maximum distance during a start and/or push-off from the wall in which the swimmer's body is as tight and straight as it can be.

Taper: Specific training period, reducing amount of training, while maintaining high intensity in the days just before high priority competition. This is essential for optimal performance.

Time Trial: A practice race which is not part of regular competitions. Time trials may be sanctioned and used to qualify for specific meets.

Timed Finals: Competition in which only heats are swum and final placing are determined by those times.

Touch Pad: A large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer's touch is registered and sent electronically to the timing system.

Warm-down: Low intensity swimming used by swimmers after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid, and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

Warm-up: Low-intensity swimming used by swimmers prior to a main practice set or a race to get muscles loose and warm, and to gradually increase heart rate and respiration.

Watches: Stopwatches used to time swimmers during a competition. When totally automatic timing equipment is used, watches serve as a back-up method.

