

Basics of Prelims/Finals for Regionals

February 2025



Overview

- At Regionals, the majority of 11-12 and 13-14 individual events are swum as Prelims/Finals
- Relays and some distance events (more on the next slide) are swum as Timed Finals, like a regular meet where all swimmers swim once
 - All events 500 Y and longer will be swum alternating women and men
 - The 1650 (13-14 only) will be seeded fastest to slowest
- At Regionals, Prelims are swum in all 10 lanes. At Finals, lanes 1 and 10 are not used, swimming only in 8 lanes.

Which events are swum as Timed Finals at our NW OH SC Regionals (2025)?

- All 10&U individual and relay events are swum as Timed Finals
 - The Meet Bucket is written so that the daily timeline is 11&Over Prelims, 10&Under Timed Finals, then 11&Over Finals
 - Because of short sessions, the past two year, 10&Under Timed Finals were mixed in with 11&Over Prelims
 - This change will be announced once entries are closed. The adjusted order of events is at the back of the Meet Book
- All 11&Over relays are swum as Timed Finals
- All 11&Over events 400 Yards and longer are swum as Timed Finals
- 11-12 200 Y Breast, Back, and Fly are swum as Timed Finals

Some of the 11&Over Timed Finals events will be swum during Prelims, and some will be swum during Finals

- The **fastest seeded heat (top 8)** of 11-12 200 Back/Fly/Breast & 400IM, as well as top 8 in the 11-12 & 13-14 Free Relays, and the 13-14 1650 will swim at Finals.
 - The rest of the competitors in those events will swim at Prelims
- The **two fastest seeded heats (top 16)** of the 11-12 & 13-14 500 Free and 13-14 400IM will swim at Finals
 - The rest of the competitors in those events will swim at Prelims
- All 11-12 & 13-14 Medley Relays will swim at Prelims
- See Page 4 of the Meet Book for more details

How are Prelims seeded?

- The final three heats (the fastest 30 swimmers) are “circle seeded”
 - The fastest swimmer is in lane 5 of the final heat
 - The next fastest is in lane 5 of the second to last heat
 - The next fastest is in lane 5 of the third to last heat
 - The next fastest is in lane 6 of the final heat
 - And continuing on until all the lanes are full
 - Seed order for a 10-lane pool is: 5, 6, 4, 7, 3, 8, 2, 9, 10, 1
- Any heats prior to those are seeded as normal, slowest to fastest
- Circle seeding provides more equitable conditions (cleaner water, middle lanes, etc) for the fastest swimmers to make it to Finals

My swimmer had one of the fastest times in Prelims, now what?

- Once the event has been scored, the announcer will list off the swimmers who made it to Finals (the fastest 16 swimmers from Prelims), as well as the Alternates (swimmers 17 and 18).
- The announcer will also give the time and say ,“The scratch window for Event X closes in 30 minutes”

What is the scratch window?

- The 16 swimmers who made it to Finals in that event now have 30 minutes to Declare their Intentions for that event at Finals
- Option 1: Scratch from Finals – the swimmer won't be seeded into Finals
 - There is an official procedure for scratching. The coach must tell the Admin Official that a swimmer is scratching from that event at Finals.
- Option 2: Declare their Intent to Scratch, pending a specific event
 - The coach tells the Admin Official that the swimmer *may* scratch from Finals, pending their future Prelim results
 - The Admin Official records the last event for that swimmer, once their final prelim event has concluded, the swimmer, via the Coach, must inform the Admin Official of their decision
- Option 3: Do nothing. The swimmer will be seeded into Finals
 - If the swimmer is then a No Show for their event at Finals, they are penalized. They will not be allowed to swim their next event. If that was their final event, they are fined \$50.

Why might a swimmer scratch?

- The most common reason a swimmer scratches a Finals event is that they already made whatever cut time they were trying to achieve during Prelims and can now focus on other events
- The reverse could also be true. If the swimmer was expecting to make a cut in their second event of the day during Prelims but didn't, they may decide to declare their intention and then scratch that first event if the second is more important to them.
- There's a host of other reasons, but scratches should always be talked through with Coach

How are Finals seeded?

- The fastest 8 swimmers will be seeded appropriately in the A Final, the next are seeded in the B Final.
 - The B Final swims first
- The results of the A Final will be the 1st through 8th place swimmer. The results of the B Final will be the 9th through 16th swimmer.
- How might this look:
 - If the winner of the B final has a faster time than the last place A final swimmer, the B final winner will still take 9th place
 - If there is a No Show in the A Final, there will not be an 8th place swimmer

My swimmer is an alternate. What now?

- If your swimmer is announced as an alternate, they may end up being able to swim by being "scratched into" finals
- If there are scratches before the scratch deadline, the alternate will get seeded into the event
 - If they do not want to swim the event, it is a good idea that the AO is informed that they are a scratching as the alternate
 - If the Finals heat is reseeded with them included and they are a No Show at Finals, they may get penalized
- If there are no scratches during the scratch window, the swimmer can report to the Referee during Finals, tell them that they are the alternate and that they want to swim in the case of a No Show
 - An alternate will only be entered into the B Final, not the A Final
 - An alternate will not be penalized for not appearing during Finals if they were not reseeded into Finals

What's a swim off?

- If there is a tie for a certain place, a swim off between the two swimmers determines who gets that place
 - Not used for every tie, just significant placement ones
 - The last spot in the A Finals
 - The last spot in the B Finals
 - Who is the first alternate, etc
- The swim-off is held at a specific time and is used to break the tie
- A swimmer is able to concede the swim off, or the coaches can agree to a coin toss.
- Times swam in a swim off are official times

What's a Time Trial?

- Time trials are allowed after the Final session on the final day at our Regionals
- Time trials are paid for when signing up (\$16 per individual event, \$24 per relay)
 - There will be an announced window when signups close (No later than 1 hour before the estimated end of the last Finals session).
- Time trials should only be conducted if reasonably close to a specific published cut. The Meet Referee has the right to say no.