

Wave Aquatics Announcer Guideline

The announcer role is both important and critical to the overall flow of the swim meet. You not only ensure that everyone knows what event and heat is in the water, but also the upcoming events and heats. Additionally, the pace of the swim meet can also be impacted by the announcer.

In general, you are addressing the Deck Referee when making your heat announcement and a variety of audiences with your other announcements, whether it is the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd calls or ad hoc announcements that may be needed during a meet.

There are 2 officials on the deck that you work with on your announcements for the heats. One directly and one indirectly. The indirect one is called the **Starter**. This is the official who speaks into the hand microphone and tells the swimmers to take their mark and starts the race. The one you speak to directly, called the **Deck Referee**, is the other official near the starter who is blowing the whistle and raising their hand in a horizontal fashion to the **Starter**, indicating that the next heat may start. This is who you interact with silently with your heat announcements.

You can watch how a meet goes by watching any of the past meets that were streamed and available on-demand from the Wave Aquatics Youtube account. The link to the channel is [HERE](https://www.youtube.com/@waveboosters3352). (<https://www.youtube.com/@waveboosters3352>) A few that would be good to watch, or review would depend on the type of swim meet you are announcing. Those can be just timed finals and others are prelim and finals.

- Example of a Timed Finals Only Meet
 - [Video](#)
 - This is a single video that spans the multiple sessions for that day, but all are timed final sessions.
 - Link: <https://www.youtube.com/live/O8BBA8HKqkw?feature=share>
- Example of a Prelim/Finals Meet
 - [Video](#)
 - This is a single video that starts with the prelims in the morning, continues with the 10 & U timed finals for the middle session and ends with the finals in the late afternoon. Scroll accordingly to the session you wish to review.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/live/O8BBA8HKqkw?feature=share>

Each Meet Referee is a little different in their asks and expectations. It is best to check in with that person, or the Booster President, to confirm what they want and expect outside of the norm from you.



General Guidelines

Some general guidelines in making your announcements:

- Please speak loudly and clearly. (The PA system isn't the greatest so a quiet voice or unclear pronunciation will be difficult to hear and understand.)
- Mistakes happen, it's ok if you aren't perfect. Try to relax as best as you can.
- Everyone has their own style, some more energetic than others, some more to the point, while others have their own unique trait. Main thing is to find your style, get comfortable with it, and have some fun announcing. You've got one of the best seats in the house and everyone is listening to you!
- Since most people don't exactly wait to listen to an announcement, it is best to always repeat each announcement twice. The first time, you'll typically catch their attention, but they may not hear your entire announcement. So, if you repeated immediately after your 1st time through? They'll hear it and know what is going on or what is being asked.
- How you start your announcements is up to you. There are many ways to do this. This example is included just to give you an idea.
 - i.e. *May I have your attention please.....*
- Please make sure to review and understand this document prior to arriving to work your shift. This will make it much easier for you and our pre-session meeting to go much easier.

Meeting Announcements

Depending on the type of swim meet and your arrival time, the following announcements may need to be made. Confirm with the Booster President and/or Meet Referee to get the latest info:

- Coach's Meeting – typically happens about 15 min before warmups start. You want to make sure you state the actual start time of the meeting and the location as it can change with every swim meet.
 - i.e. *Attention coaches, your coach's meeting will start at 7:45 AM outside behind hospitality.*
- Official's Meeting – typically happens about 30 minutes before each session starts. Again, you want to state the time and location of where this will happen.
 - i.e. *Attention officials, your officials meeting will start at 8:30 AM on the back staircase near Hospitality.*
- Timer's Meeting – typically happens about 25 minutes before each session starts. Please make sure you state the time it starts and location.
 - i.e. *Attention volunteer timers, your timer's meeting will start at 8:35 AM out back past Hospitality*



Starting Warmups

If your arrival time is before the start of warmup, you'll also need to make the following announcement to start warmups. Again, check with the Meet Referee or Booster President for any last-minute changes.

- Warmup start – you're opening the competition pool up for warmups so the swimmers can get ready for the session.
 - i.e. *Attention swimmers & coaches, your competition pool is now open for warm-ups. Please enter feet first.*

During Warmups

During warmups, about halfway through, you'll want to open certain lanes for sprint starts and pace lanes. You will also want to announce when it is getting close to the time you are closing the pool for warmups. Please check with the Meet Referee/Booster President for any last-minute changes and to confirm which lanes are to be used for sprint starts, backstroke starts, and the pace lane.

- Sprint Starts – you're opening a couple of lanes for sprint starts during the warm-ups.
 - i.e. *Attention swimmers & coaches, please clear lanes 2 & 5 for sprint starts.*
- Backstroke Starts – you're opening a specific lane for backstroke starts since they use a ledge. Please confirm a separate lane is needed for this with the Meet Referee or Booster President before making the announcement.
 - i.e. *Attention swimmers & coaches, please clear lane 3 for backstroke starts*
- Pace Lane – you're opening a specific lane for pace swimming, which those who swim long distance events typically look for, during the warm-ups. This allows them to practice and hone the exact speed they wish to swim to match a given interval their coach wants them to swim for that event. Please confirm a separate lane is needed for this with the Meet Referee or Booster President before making the announcement.
 - i.e. *Attention swimmers & coaches, please clear lane 6 for pace swimming.*
- Warnings for the end of warm-ups – Coaches and swimmers appreciate knowing when warm-ups are about to end. Most will be done by now, but there's always a few that like to max out the time they can warm-up for a variety of reasons. For this, we like to give some warnings to when warm-ups are ending at the 10 min, 5 min, and 2 min marks.
 - i.e. *Attention swimmers & coaches, your warm-ups end in 10 min.*
 - Replace the above with 5 min and 2 min at the appropriate time.



Ending Warmups

You will need to announce the end of warmups so that the competition pool is closed, and things can get ready for the swim meet. Check with the Meet Referee/Booster President for any last-minute changes.

- Ending Warmups – you’re closing the competition pool up for warmups so the swimmers can get ready for the session.
 - i.e. *Attention swimmers & coaches, your competition pool is now closed for warmups. Please exit the pool.*

Staging the 25-Yard Races

If the session you are announcing has any 25-yard events, you should also make the following announcement about 30 min before the first 25-yard event. You’ll need to check the timeline, consult with the Meet Referee or Booster President on the exact time it is planned for the 25-yard events. You don’t need to make this announcement for the subsequent 25-yard races in the same session unless they are over an hour after the last 25-yard event completes.

- Announce where the staging will happen for 25-yard events so the swimmers know where to go.
 - i.e. *Attention swimmers, all 25 yard events will be staged in front of the bleachers on the shallow end. Please follow the instructions from the volunteer stagers.*

Positive Check-Ins

For some swim meets, they may use positive check-ins. This is an exercise for the swimmers to “check-in” at a signup sheet posted somewhere around the pool so that their presence is confirmed. This allows the Admin Officials to condense the heats down, ensuring that every heat is full as best as possible. This makes the session go quicker if there is a sizeable number of swimmers deciding to not attend at the last minute.

- To announce Positive Check-Ins always include the location and the time it closes. Check with the Meet Referee, Admin Official, or Booster President for the exact time it closes.
- Sometimes, they are staggered if there are check-ins for multiple events. If so, each should be announced separately.
- If there is only 1 positive check-in.
 - i.e. *Positive Check-Ins are in the lobby and will close at 9:30 AM*
- If there are multiple events for positive check-in.
 - i.e. *Positive Check-ins are in the lobby. Closing time for the 400 Yard IM is 9:30 AM and for the 1650 Yard Freestyle is 10 AM.*



Before the Session Starts

There are some leading announcements that need to be made. These will change whether it is a session with just timed finals, it is just prelims, or if it is the finals session. Please check with the Meet Referee or Booster President for final confirmation.

- If it's the 1st session of the day of timed finals OR it is the Finals session, we will need to play the national anthem. (Or have someone sing it if we have one pre-arranged.) We do this at the end of warmups once everyone has gotten out of the pool.
 - i.e. *Will everyone please rise for the playing of the national anthem.*
- Typically, warmups end about 10 min before the session starts. You will then need to start calling for the heats, which are explained in a section below. This happens after the national anthem if it is played.
- Any other ad hoc announcement requests made by the Booster President or Meet Referee. Tough to give examples but for any of these, always ask the requestor what they wish to have announced so that you both are on the same page.
- Remind the spectators that there is no flash photography during the starts of the race.
 - i.e. *Please do not use flash photography during the starts.*

Calling of the Heats

The main thing here is to be consistent in how you do this. The preference is to always announce the 3rd Call, then 2nd Call, then 1st Call in that order each time you call for the heats. Some do it 1st, 2nd, & 3rd call which technically is not wrong, but for the most part, every meet does it the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st call way.

This is where you are letting the coaches and swimmers know that the following heats are either getting ready to race or need to start getting to the starting blocks. It also lets the spectators know what event and heat are up and next as they may not always be in their seats or sitting in an area where they can see the scoreboard.

At a minimum, your call must include the Event # and Heat #. If you wish to include the Event Name, then please make sure you speak fairly quickly. If not, the Meet Referee may come ask you to trim it down to just the Event # and Heat # or speak a little faster. Also, you only say the Event # or Event Name once during each call. You don't repeat it for every heat as you'll see later on.

Always mark the heat sheet you're given so that you know what calls you made. Some people put the numbers 1, 2, and 3 when they have made that call. Others just use a tick mark, while yet others have done something else. Main thing is you know what the marks mean and can quickly know what call you need to make when you hear the whistles as you might be distracted with a request, watching your swimmer racing, or something else.



Leading Up to the Session Start

After the national anthem is played and other announcements made, we need to get the event/heat calls ready for the start of the session. So, this will start about 5 min before the start of the session. You'll do the 1st call initially, then about a minute or so later, the 2nd and 1st call. Finally, about a minute or two after that, make the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st call so that the swimmers should be ready to start on time for the session. Remember, the minimum is Event # and Heat #. You do not need to include the Event Name unless you want to.

This is what you need to do to get the swimmers and your calls ready to start the session.

- Your very first call (*Don't forget to mark your heat sheet that you've made the 1st call.*)
 - i.e. (with event name) *This is the first call for Event 1, Boys 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle, Heat 1.*
 - i.e. (without event name) *This is the first call for Event 1, Heat 1.*

- After about a minute or so, make the following call. (*Don't forget to mark your heat sheet that you've made the 2nd & 1st call.*)
 - i.e. (with event name) *This is the second call for Event 1, Boys 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle, Heat 1. First call for Heat 2.*
 - i.e. (without event name) *This is the second call for Event 1, Heat 1. First call for Heat 2.*

- After about a minute or so, make the following call to have everything ready to start the session. (*Don't forget to mark your heat sheet that you've made the 3rd, 2nd, & 1st call.*)
 - i.e. (with event name) *This is the third call for Event 1, Boys 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle, Heat 1. Second call for Heat 2. First call for Heat 1.*
 - i.e. (without event name) *This is the third call for Event 1, Heat 1. Second call for Heat 2. Third call for Heat 3.*

After the Start of the Session

Once the session has started, you'll continue with the same calls you did in the previous section but continue through the session with your heat sheet. The timing of your calls now will now follow the whistles of the Deck Referee and the start of each heat.

When you hear what is called the "short whistles" which is a string of short whistles as the swimmers from the current race is finishing or sometimes after they've all touched the wall, you'll be calling the next heat to the blocks. Remember to address the Deck Referee, as explained in Paragraph 3 properly by saying Mister or Madam appropriately.

After the start of each heat, your cue to make your next call is when the 1st swimmer's head breaks the water surface after their dive. You can do it a little beforehand, after the race starts if you wish. But please know you may be announcing while they start blowing whistles to indicate a false start. So, it is recommended to wait until the 1st swimmer's head breaks the surface before making your next heats call.

The above two cues are when your next calls happen. Any ad hoc announcement requests should be stated during the race so that there is less confusion for the swimmers. The exception is if the



announcement is for the swimmers like asking them to keep quiet during the race starts or something else like that.

So, let's pretend you've done everything so far and have done your pre-session calls to get everything ready. The swimmers start lining up and the officials have come out around the pool and are stationed. The Deck Referee will typically look up to you to make sure you are ready. That's when the session will start, and the following will now become your guidance on when to make the calls.

- When the Deck Referee blows their short whistles the first time (*Don't forget to mark your heat sheet that you've called this heat to the blocks.*)
 - i.e. *(with Event Name) This is Event 1, Boys 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle, Heat 1 swimmers to the blocks, Mister/Madam Referee.*
 - i.e. *(without Event Name) This is Event 1, Heat 1, swimmers to the blocks, Mister/Madam Referee.*

- This will then be followed by what is called the long whistle. This alerts the swimmers to climb on the starting blocks. The Starter then asks the swimmers to take their mark and hits the button to start the race. Once the 1st swimmer's head has broken the surface of the water after their dive, you then make the next set of calls. (*Don't forget to mark the heat sheet appropriately for the heats you are calling here for their 3rd, 2nd, & 1st calls.*)
 - i.e. *(with Event Name) This is the 3rd call for Event 1, Boys 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle, Heat 2. Second call for Heat 3. First call for Heat 4.*
 - i.e. *(without Event Name) This is the 3rd call for Event 1, Heat 2. Second call for Heat 3. First call for Heat 4.*

Now you wait for the current race to finish. As the swimmers reach the flags before touching the wall, the Deck Referee will blow the short whistles again. At that point, you need to call the next heat to the blocks.

- When the Deck Referee blows their short whistles. (*Don't forget to mark!*)
 - i.e. *(with Event Name) This is Event 1, Boys 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle, Heat 2 swimmers to the blocks, Mister/Madam Referee.*
 - i.e. *(without Event Name) This is Event 1, Heat 2, swimmers to the blocks, Mister/Madam Referee.*

- This will then be followed by the long whistle. The swimmers climb onto the starting blocks and the Starter has them start the race. Once the 1st swimmer's head has broken the surface of the water after their dive, you then make the next set of calls. (*Don't forget to mark!*)
 - i.e. *(with Event Name) This is the 3rd call for Event 1, Boys 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle, Heat 3. Second call for Heat 4. First call for Heat 5.*
 - i.e. *(without Event Name) This is the 3rd call for Event 1, Heat 3. Second call for Heat 4. First call for Heat 5.*

Do you see the pattern here? This is what you'll follow for the rest of the session as you go through the events. The only other thing to add is if your calls cross events.



Let's say there are 8 Heats in Event 1, Boys 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle and you've just called Heat 6 to the blocks. Once those swimmers dive into the water and the 1st swimmer's head breaks the surface, your calls will need to include that a new event is up. So, your call changes to: *(Don't forget to mark!)*

- i.e. *(with Event Name) This is the 3rd call for Event 1, Boys 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle, Heat 7. Second call for Heat 8. First call for Event 2, Girls 11-12 100 Yard Freestyle, Heat 1.*
- i.e. *(without Event Name) This is the 3rd call for Event 1, Heat 7. Second call for Heat 8. First call for Event 2, Heat 1.*

Notice that you announce the next event. Again, you only state each event once in the call. When Heat 7 has started, you'll make the call above but now for Event 1, Heat 8, then Event 2, Heat 1 then Heat 2. You don't repeat stating the Event # or Name more than once in each call.

You will continue through each event and its heats until the session ends. At that point, you'll make the same call to close the pool as you did when you closed it for warmups.

- To close the pool at the end of the session
 - i.e. *The competition pool is now closed. If swimmers wish to warm down, please use the shallow pool.*

The main thing is to be consistent, make your marks on the heat sheet so you always know your location, relax, and have some fun. Thank you for volunteering!

