



Championship Meet Admin Rules/Procedures



Because we swim Preliminaries and Finals, the administrative rules and procedures for championship format meets are different than for our regular meets. Here's some that apply to Region Championships:

What are Preliminaries and Finals?

Preliminaries are the qualifying heats for Finals swum during the morning session. Seeding for these heats is a little different in that the last three heats are circle seeded. The Swimmer with the fastest entry time is placed in the last heat, the Swimmer with the next fastest entry time is placed in the next to the last heat, the Swimmer with the third fastest entry time is placed in the third to the last heat and placement of the Swimmers follows this procedure until all three heats are filled. The rest of the heats in the event are seeded normally. Finals are heats (Consolation and Final) in which the fastest 16 Swimmers from Preliminaries of each event who wish to compete for points swim during the evening session.

What are points?

Swimmers and Relays compete for points which are attributed to their Teams to determine the Girls, Boys, and Combined Team awards and Girls, Boys, and Combined High Point awards. Points for Relay events are double the points for Individual events.

What if a Swimmer qualifies for Finals in an event, but doesn't want to swim?

Once the Preliminaries of an event are completed, the fastest 16 Swimmers and 2 Alternates are announced. These qualifiers will be seeded into and must swim the finals heats. If a qualifier does not want to compete further, the Swimmer is allowed to scratch from the event. To scratch, the Swimmer and Swimmer's Coach must fill out and sign a Scratch Sheet which must be deposited in the Scratch Box within 30 minutes of the results from that event being announced. The Admin Referee will remove the Swimmer from the seeding of the event for Finals and all subsequent qualifiers move up a notch. The qualifiers and alternates after scratches will be announced.

Can a Swimmer delay their decision to scratch from event?

Yes, the rules allow for such a delay. A swimmer may wish to delay their decision until they see how they place in one or more subsequent individual events. This is called "intent to scratch". The same procedure from above must be followed, except instead of checking the box next to Scratch, the Swimmer would check the box next to Intent to Scratch and write in their last individual event number.

If this option is chosen, the Swimmer must declare their final intention to scratch within 30 minutes of their last individual Preliminaries event. If the Swimmer fails to declare their final intention, they will be seeded into Finals for the event.

What is a swim-off and when are they held?

A swim-off is an additional race used to resolve ties and is considered part of the preliminary process of qualifying for finals. A swim-off occurs when two or more Swimmers tie for certain places in the Preliminaries of an event – normally 8th, 16th, 17th, and 18th. Sometimes, swim-offs will be conducted down to 24th place to accommodate scratches. In order to determine which Swimmer(s) get into the Final and/or Consolation heat or become the Alternates, the tied Swimmers must race against each other for the disputed spot. Ties in the other top 16 places are not resolved by a swim-off.

The Referee will set the time for the swim-off and, by rule, the swim-off must occur within 45 minutes of the last heat of any event in which one of the Swimmers is competing in that session. If the Swimmer doesn't want to participate in the swim-off, he/she may concede the spot to the other Swimmer. Sometimes, Swimmers/Coaches elect to resolve the swim-off by a coin flip.

What if there is a tie or disqualification during a swim-off?

As long as the competitors wish to compete for the spot, they will continue to race until a winner is determined. Additional swim-offs shall occur within 45 minutes of the last swim-off. If a Swimmer is disqualified, the spot goes to the Swimmer who finishes legally. The disqualified Swimmer still gets to compete in Finals. All legal times earned in swim-offs count for records and future use.

What is an Alternate?

In each event of Finals, 2 Alternates are listed – they are the 17th and 18th fastest Swimmers after scratches. If a qualifier fails to show for a Finals heat, the Alternate can be inserted in their place. If a no-show is identified prior to the event being swum, the Alternate, if available, will take the place of the missing Swimmer and the event reseeded. If the no-show is identified in the Consolation heat when it has been called, the Alternate fills the missing spot on the blocks. If a no-show is identified in the Final heat after the Consolation heat has been contested, the Alternate cannot be inserted and the heat swims with an empty lane. Alternates missing when they are called are not penalized – they just don't get to swim. So, if they want an extra swim, it's important for both Alternates to report to the Referee ready to swim (in their suits with their caps/goggles) prior to the event.

What if a Swimmer gets “scratched into” Finals?

It is important to check the results of the Preliminary heats prior to leaving the pool. When Swimmers scratch from an event, the next in line swimmers move up. If there are several scratches, the Alternates or lower ranked swimmers may become qualifiers and lower ranked Swimmers may become Alternates. Consequently, Swimmers may have another opportunity to compete and may be subject to the failure to compete penalty if they don't show. The Admin Referee, as a courtesy, will attempt to notify Coaches in these cases.

What if a Swimmer misses their event in a championship format meet?

In this meet, there is no further penalty for missing a heat of a Preliminaries event – the Swimmer just can't swim the event unless it can be shown that he/she was prevented from swimming by a Timer or an Official. The Referee will investigate the circumstances surrounding the late or missing Swimmer to determine if he/she can/should be allowed to swim.

However, once the heats have been seeded, failing to swim an event during Finals bars the Swimmer from further competition in the meet. The Referee may waive this penalty due to illness or injury or for circumstances beyond the Swimmer's control.

Who should the Swimmer or Coach talk to about scratch procedures, swim-offs, and/or penalties associated with failing to compete?

Swimmers are ultimately responsible for knowing and abiding by the rules. The Administrative Referee can answer all questions concerning administrative rules.