

**YELLOWKNIFE POLAR BEAR SWIM CLUB**  
**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**  
Last Updated April 20, 2003

**What is Swim Alberta?**

Swim Alberta is the sport governing body for swimming in Alberta and the Northwest Territories. They sanction events, provide training and funding (to Alberta Clubs), provide some insurance and generally look after and promote the interests of competitive swimming.

**What is the NWT Swimming Association?**

The NWT Swimming Association is the sport governing body for swimming in the NWT. The Association is part of the Sport North Federation and provides funding for coach and official training and championship events. It is also responsible for Team NWT swimmers at the *Canada Games*, the *North American Indigenous Games* and the *Western Canada Summer Games*.

**What is an 'A' Time?**

Swim Alberta sets qualifying standards for Provincial level swim meets. If a swimmer achieves an 'A' time they are qualified to swim at either the Alberta Age Group Championships (14 & Under) or the Alberta Senior Championships (15 & Over). 'A' times represent roughly the average top 5% of swimmers in a given age category and given event. 'A' times can be found on the web site under "time standards".

**What is a Qualifying Time?**

Swim Alberta also sets qualifying standards for the Alberta Regionals (one swim meet for Clubs Red Deer and north and one for Clubs south of Red Deer). These meets are for swimmers 14 years of age and younger only. The 'Qualifying Times' are set for the 400 freestyle and the 200 individual medley events only. If a swimmer achieves a qualifying time they are eligible to swim at the Alberta Regionals. The qualifying times can be found on the web site under "time standards".

## What is a B' Time?

Swim Alberta publishes 'B' times to help swimmers and coaches gauge progress. 'B' times represent roughly the average top 10% of swimmers in a given age category and given event. Swimmers 15 years of age and older with 'B' times can also enter the Alberta Senior Championships - 'B' division. The B times can be found on the web site under "time standards".

## What are Invitational Swim Meets?

Swim meets run by sanctioned Clubs with invitations extended to a group of Clubs, usually in a geographic area.

## What are Qualifying Swim Meets?

Swim meets run by sanctioned Clubs where the swimmers must have a predetermined qualifying time before they can enter.

## What are Time Trials?

Sanctioned swim competitions run by Clubs to give their swimmers a chance to measure their progress and potentially qualify for higher-level meets.

## What are Heat Sheets?

Heat sheets are the 'program' for a swim meet or time trial. They are organized by event number, i.e.

Event # 1 = 25 meters freestyle

<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Lane</u>	<u>Entry Time</u>
Devon Hall	15	M	3	:16.59
Jessi Casebeer	14	F	4	:17.76
Jenny Aitken	10	F	2	:19.24
Tanner Dolynny	8	M	1	:24.56
Kirsten Knutson	7	F	5	:26.55

The swimmers who have entered the event are listed by their entry time. Entry times are the swimmer's best result in that event in a previous meet. If an "NT" is shown, it means the swimmer does not have a time for this event on file. Once the races have been completed the results are sorted by age and gender.

**I notice that my 9 year old daughter is swimming in the same heat as a 12 year old boy, how are swimmers grouped for a heat?**

The heats at Yellowknife swim meets are set up so that swimmers race against other swimmers that are the closest to their entry time regardless of age or gender. This allows for the best race possible for the swimmers and allows us to shorten the total length of time for the meets. When the results are printed all swimmers are ranked according to their age group and gender.

**At time trials / swim meets do I have to be there at the start if my first event is not for an hour?**

Swimmers are asked to be at the pool at the start of the swim meet or time trial so that their coach can lead a proper warm-up and spend some time with each of them to help prepare for the day.

Parents are also asked to come along with their swimmers to help officiate or cheer. It takes about 20 volunteer officials to run a swim meet so parent help is always encouraged.

**At time trials/swim meets do I have to stay until the very end of the meet, or can I leave after my last event?**

Swimmers and their parents are encouraged to stay at the pool until the end of the swim meet to encourage other swimmers and help build that all important sense of team spirit. Sometimes we hold relays or do other special things at the end of the day as well.

**Who can disqualify a swimmer and why?**

Swimming is a very technical sport with specific rules on how each stroke must be swum in competition. Stroke and turn judges are volunteer officials who are trained to watch the races to make sure that these rules are followed. Coaches go over these rules with swimmers regularly during practice but occasionally the pressure of a race will cause a swimmer to forget one of these rules. When this occurs, the Stroke and Turn judge is required to disqualify the swimmer. Although this can be upsetting for a swimmer, coaches will use the occasion as a learning opportunity to help the swimmer improve. Stroke and Turn judges can use their discretion to only advise swimmers or their coach in these matters. This typically occurs with younger swimmers only.

**I notice there are 3 timers in each lane for time trials, how is the official time for the swimmer determined?**

The rules of swimming require that manual timing include at least two and preferably three timers for each lane. If two times are used, the actual result is the average of the two times rounded up to the nearest 100<sup>th</sup> of a second. If three times are used, the middle time is used unless two times are identical in which case that time is used. In Yellowknife, we always try and use three timers per lane just in case a watch fails.

**What can a swimmer do if their goggles fall off or slip down during a race?**

There are a number of techniques that can be used for a swimmer to make sure their goggles stay on during the start of a race. The swimmers should discuss this and what to do if their goggles fall off with their coach during practices and the warm-up for the swim meet.

If they do fall off or slip down in freestyle events the swimmer can remove them or leave them in place as long as they don't stand on the bottom or pull along the lane rope. In backstroke events, the same rules apply plus they cannot turn on to their front. Both breaststroke and butterfly rules say that the swimmer must maintain symmetrical arm and leg actions throughout the entire length of the race. This makes it more difficult to take the goggles off during the race.

**Can a swimmer choose not to swim an event? Can a swimmer ask to be added to an event that they are not entered in?**

Coaches are responsible for entering swimmers in events for each swim meet. Coaches typically discuss these entries with the swimmer but sometimes they may be away or they are missed for another reason. At our Yellowknife meets, swimmers can be scratched (removed) from an event or added to another event at the discretion of the coach and the Meet Manager. Coaches often encourage swimmers to try out new events and push themselves to see what they can achieve.

**What happens when a swimmer's name does not appear on the Heat Sheets?**

If a swimmer's name does not appear on the heat sheets just speak with their coach and the swimmer will be 'deck entered' into a number of events.

**Can a swimmer change strokes during a course of a freestyle event?**

Yes, freestyle means that the swimmer can swim any style of stroke although the traditional front crawl taught by coaches is the fastest.

If you would like to learn more about swim officiating check out the Swim Canada web page at [www.swimming.ca](http://www.swimming.ca) or speak with the Meet Manager or Head Coach.

**What should I do if I would like to speak with my child's coach?**

Coaches are always available to speak to the parents of their swimmer's. Simply introduce yourself before or after a practice or swim meet and the coach will be glad to speak with you. If possible, please avoid doing this during a practice or a busy time during a swim meet. Our coaches typically have 8 - 12 swimmers that they need to keep track of during these periods. Head Coach Ian Legaree can also assist with your questions.