



## FREQUENTLY USED ACRONYMS AND TERMINOLOGY

- **ASA:** Amateur Swimming Association, the governing body of British swimming.
- **Age Group:** Division of swimmers according to age, usually in one or two year bands.
- **Anchor:** The final swimmer in a relay.
- **Back Up Time:** The time given to a swimmer when they fail to stop the electronic timing by hitting the timing pad hard enough or the pad fails to record a time. The back up time is initiated by the time keeper pressing a button when the swimmer finishes the race.
- **BAGCATS:** British Age Group Categories are a point-based system operated by the ASA. Their objective is to encourage development across multiple strokes and distances for girls under 14 and boys under 15 and to discourage specialisation at too early a stage in a swimmer's career
- **Beep:** The starting sound made from an electronic timing system
- **Blocks:** The starting platforms which are located behind each lane.
- **Club Championship:** A swimming competition open to all members of the club regardless of their age or experience.
- **Closing Date:** The last date when entries into a competition have to be received by the club in order to send them to the Meet Organiser. Entries will not be accepted after the closing date
- **CQT:** County Qualifying Time.
- **Course:** The length of pool: Long Course = 50 metres / Short Course = 25 metres.
- **Disqualified:** The swimmers performance in an event is not counted because they breached the rules.
- **Electronic Timing:** A timing system that is operated electronically which normally has touch pads in the water that hook up to a computer and records the swimmers split and finish times when they touch the pad.
- **Eligible to compete:** The status of a member swimmer that means they are registered with the ASA and have met all the entry requirements.
- **Entry Fees:** The amount per event a swimmer or relay is charged. This varies depending on the type of meet.
- **Entry Limit:** Normally meets have a maximum number of swimmers they can accept for each race
- **Event:** A race.
- **FINA:** Federation Internationale de National de Amateur, the international governing body of competitive swimming, diving, water polo and synchronized swimming.
- **False start:** When a swimmer leaves the starting block or moves on the block before the starter has started the race. The swimmer will be disqualified for making a false start.
- **Faulty Start:** When a swimmer or swimmers leave the starting block because of an error of an official or failure of the starting equipment.
- **Final:** The championship final of an event in which the fastest eight swimmers from the heats or semi-finals compete.
- **Fins:** Rubber training fins worn on the feet designed to help develop kick and ankle flexibility
- **Flags:** The flags / pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool. These are designed to assist backstroke swimmers to determine how far away the end of the pool is.
- **Free:** Freestyle is a category of stroke defined by the FINA rules , in which competitors are subject to only limited restrictions on their swimming stroke. (In other words, they have great freedom with respect to their swimming style.) The stroke used almost universally in freestyle races is the front crawl, as this style is generally the fastest.
- **Gallery:** The spectator viewing area.
- **Goals:** Short, Medium and Long term targets for the swimmers to aim for
- **Heats:** When an event has too many swimmers to allow them to all compete at the same time. The swimmers are split into heats and then the overall results for the event are given after all heats of the event are finished.
- **IM: Individual Medley,** The swimmer uses all four competitive strokes in the order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle.
- **Kick Board:** A flotation device used by swimmers during training when swimming with legs only.
- **Kick:** The leg movements of a swimmer.
- **Late Entries:** Meet entries from a club or individual which are received by the meet host after the entry deadline. These entries are usually not accepted and are returned to sender.



- **Leg:** The part of a relay event swum by a single team member.
- **Log Book:** A personal log book kept by the swimmer including information on training sessions and personal best times.
- **Long Course:** A 50 metre pool.
- **Marks:** The command to take your starting position.
- **Meet:** A series of events held in one programme. Also known as a Gala.
- **NQT:** National Qualifying Time
- **NTR:** No Time Recorded. The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to show that the swimmers time was not officially recorded.
- **Nationals:** ASA senior, junior and age group meets conducted each year.
- **Novice:** A beginner or someone who does not have experience.
- **OT Official Time:** The swimmers event time recorded to one hundredth of a second (.01).
- **Official:** A judge on the poolside. The judges have a variety of roles, including an official starter and also lane judges monitor the swimmer's strokes, turns and finishes.
- **Open Competition:** Meet Competition which any qualified club, organisation, or individual may enter.
- **Over the Top Start:** At some meets and galas for Front Crawl (Freestyle), Breaststroke and Butterfly races to save time the swimmers will remain in the water after their event until the next race starts.
- **PB Personal Best -** The best time a swimmer has done so far in each stroke and distance.
- **Pace Clock:** The large clock at the end of the pool so the swimmers can check their times during warm-ups or swim practice.
- **Paddles:** Hand paddles are devices worn by swimmers during training. They consist of a curved plastic plate worn over the swimmer's palm and attached over the back of the swimmer's hand with elastic cords. The plate is often perforated with a pattern of holes. These give the swimmer considerably more forward propulsion from the arm stroke than the hand can give alone.
- **Pull Buoy:** A pull buoy or leg float is a figure-eight shaped piece of foam used in training. Swimmers place the buoy between the legs – either between their thighs or their ankles to provide support to the body without kicking the legs. This allows the swimmer to focus on training only their arms and developing both endurance and upper body strength.
- **Qualifying Time:** Times Published times necessary to enter most Open Meets, and all County, District and National competitions. Some competitions will have upper and lower qualifying times.
- **Referee:** The head official at a swim meet.
- **Registered:** Swimmers register with the ASA to be able to participate in competitive swimming meets.
- **Relays:** A swimming event in which 4 swimmers participate as a relay team and each swimmer swims an equal distance of the race.
- **Scratch:** To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate.
- **Seed:** The swimmers are assigned heats and lanes according to their submitted PB times.
- **Senior Meet:** A meet that is for senior level swimmers and is not divided into age groups. Qualification times are usually necessary and will vary depending on the level of the meet.
- **Set:** Swim workouts are divided up into sets of swims in a particular stroke, style, and distance, such as kick sets, pull sets, Distance sets, sprint sets, IM sets, etc. Sets are given in terms of the distance to be swum, calculated in metres.
- **Short Course:** A 25 metre pool.
- **Split Time:** A swimmer's intermediate time in a race. Splits are registered every 25 or 50 metres depending upon the distance of the race and are used to determine if the swimmer is swimming at the correct pace.
- **Step-Down:** The command given by the Starter or Referee to have the swimmers step down and move off the blocks.
- **Submitted Time:** Times used to enter swimmers in meets. These times must normally have been achieved by the swimmer at a prior meets. For County, Regional/District & National championships the submitted times must be achieved in Designated Meets
- **Time Trials:** An event or series of events where a swimmer records their times in order to improve on personal best times and achieve qualifying times for entry to events.
- **Touch Pad:** The removable plate (on the end of pools) which is connected to an automatic timing system. A swimmer must firmly touch the touch pad for it to register their official time in a race.
- **Whipping Area:** A room or area on or near the pool side for the swimmers to muster before they compete in a race