



# Take Your Mark!

Potomac Valley Swimming  
Parents Newsletter

May, 2019

## Safe Sport Recognized Club Program

Is your club a Safe Sport Recognized Club?

Safe Sport is USA Swimming's comprehensive program to respond to and prevent instances of abuse and misconduct within the sport of swimming.

USA Swimming's Safe Sport Recognized Club program allows clubs to demonstrate their commitment to creating a safe, healthy, and positive environment for all members through the development and implementation of athlete protection policies, Safe Sport best practices, and education. Safe Sport Recognized Clubs earn a badge to display on their website, and these clubs are designated as Safe Sport Recognized in USA Swimming's Find-a-Club online tool.

In order to achieve Safe Sport Recognized status, clubs must detail their procedures and policies, and verify their educational efforts.

USA Swimming clubs across the country have embraced the Safe Sport program's abuse prevention measures and educational tools. Safe Sport recognition allows your club to publicly demonstrate its unwavering commitment to a healthy, safe, and positive environment.

For more information, go to <https://www.usaswimming.org/Home/safe-sport> or talk to your child's coach.



## Talk the Talk

It's time for another installment of "Talk the Talk," an opportunity to review some common swimming terms.

**Heat Sheet:** The meet program which lists the swimmers in the meet by event, heat, and lanes. This allows you to figure out when and where your child is swimming.

**Psych Sheet:** This document has the swimmers listed in events organized fastest to slowest. Unlike heat sheets they do not list the swimmers heat and lane assignments. A psych sheet allows you to quickly see how a swimmer ranks against the competition.

**Seed Time:** This is usually the best time the team has on record for your child from previous swims. Usually when a swimmer enters a meet, his/her previous best time will be reported so that they can have swimmers of similar speed/ability level swim against each other in a heat. In a Prelims/Finals meet, the seed time will be the time the swimmer swam to qualify, which may not be the overall best time.

**Individual Medley:** Often referred to as “IM,” a race in which the swimmer swims one-fourth of the prescribed distance in each of the four strokes, in the order of butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle.

**Medley Relay:** A relay race where each swimmer does a different stroke. This is swum in different order than the IM; the order is: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle.

**Split:** This is a time for a part of the race. This may refer to the time for one swimmer's leg of a relay, or the time for part of an individual race. For example, in a 100 yard race the time for your first 50 yards would be your “50 split”.



## What Do All the Officials Do?

“I see a whole bunch of folks in white shirts on the deck. Are they all looking to DQ my child?! Why do they need so many officials?”

It takes a lot of people to run a swim meet. Probably the most visible individuals are the volunteer meet officials, who can be divided into those working the “dry side” and those working the “wet side.”

Dry side officials are led by the Administrative Official, or “AO.” This person is responsible for the accurate processing of entries, the accurate seeding of the events, determining the official times and results, and the posting of the results. The AO is assisted by the electronic timing operator, the results computer operator, and others. Each of these volunteers has undergone training and worked several sessions as an apprentice before being evaluated and certified by PVS in their positions.

Stroke and Turn Judges are the most numerous of the wet side officials. Each of these officials has jurisdiction for specific lanes, observing that the swimmers in these lanes are complying with the rules for each stroke. If a rules violation is observed, the judge raises one hand overhead. The violation is reported to the Chief Judge, an experienced official who ensures that the call is indeed a violation, that it is within the S&T Judge’s jurisdiction, and that the judge has absolutely no doubt what he/she saw. Like the dry side officials, these judges have undergone training, have worked as apprentice judges, have taken comprehensive rules tests, and have undergone evaluation by an experienced official before being certified by PVS. In addition, they are required to pass criminal background checks and to take athlete protection courses prior to stepping on deck.

Another wet side official is the Starter, the person who says, "Take your mark," and activates the starting unit to begin each race. The Starter confirms that each swimmer has assumed a legal starting position, and aims to do everything possible to ensure that the start is fair for all competitors. This official is required to have extensive experience as a Stroke and Turn Judge before even initiating training as a Starter.

Finally, there's the Referee, a highly-experienced and knowledgeable official who is in charge of the entire competition. The Referee ensures that all rules and procedures are followed with fairness and consistency. His/her whistles signal the swimmers, coaches, and officials that the competition can begin. He/she closely observes the start of each heat and confirms whether a fair start has been achieved. He/she handles any protests or disagreements. After conferring with the Chief Judge, the Referee makes the final determination regarding all disqualifications. He/she is the final arbitrator on any matter relating to the conduct of the meet.

Officials at PVS meets frequently attend clinics and training sessions. They are required to take and pass tests on the rules regularly. Many choose to further their education as officials by undertaking the stringent requirements for national certification. Those folks in the white shirts are some of the most dedicated volunteers you'll see on the pool deck. No, they're not looking for disqualifications, but they're expected to report it if one is observed.



## **Links to some intriguing articles for swim parents:**

### **Goal Setting For Kids: A Must For Young Athletes**

<https://www.mentaltoughnesstrainer.com/goal-setting-for-kids/>

### **Raising Quit-Proof Kids**

<https://www.nays.org/sklive/for-parents/raising-quit-proof-kids/>

### **Swimmers Have Special Hydration Needs**

<https://www.momsteam.com/swimming/swimmers-have-special-hydration-needs>

### **Failure: Why it's actually good for your young athlete**

<https://nays.org/sklive/for-parents/failure-why-it-s-actually-good-for-your-young-athlete/>



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