

Sharks Parents' Handbook 2016 – 2017 Swim Season

Welcome from Swim Coach

Welcome to the Sharks Swim Team! The following handbook contains information on the swim team. This packet will answer some of your questions regarding your partnership as a swim team parent in the program. If you have more questions feel free to ask me when you have a chance.

To me, swimming is a life-time sport, an individual sport and a team sport, an aerobic sport, and a competitive sport, that allows one to measure progress against others but more importantly against one's self.

I wish to thank you for placing your child(ren) in the Shark's swim program. I hope this team will be one that elicits pride from the swimmers and their parent's as well as the community as a whole.

Jim Willis
Head Swim Coach

Mission Statement

The mission of the MDI YMCA is to develop community, character, personal growth, and wellness in spirit, mind, and body for the greater MDI community.

Swim Team Philosophy

The intention of the Sharks swim team is to teach the skills of competitive swimming, build enthusiasm for the sport and foster the comradely of a team of young athletes. We want each Shark team member to feel part of a group where teamwork and individual effort are both valued. The philosophy of the Sharks is to treat each swimmer as an individual and to build their self-confidence and self-esteem through personal accomplishment each time they swim.

About The Sharks

The Mount Desert Island YMCA Sharks Swim Team was started in 1971, under the direction of Bob Chaplin and Harlow Cameron. Lenny DeMuro was the Head Coach from 1975 – 2001, with a one-year break sometime in the mid-eighties. This is Jim Willis sixteenth year with the Sharks. There were over 80 swimmers on the team last season, making the Sharks the largest team of any sport on the island.

Over the years Shark swimmers have won numerous State Championships and competed at both regional and national events, including a swimmer who qualified for 1996 US Olympic Trials. The Sharks have also been a strong part of the community, pulling families together from all over the Island to cheer each other on and offer personal support in many ways.

Swimming is a life long sport that offers physical and mental challenges, and rewards, to people of any age. For residents of Mount Desert Island, fortunate as we are to be surrounded by the waters of lakes and the ocean, swimming can also be a life-saving skill. The Sharks team can do much to both instruct and develop a passion for swimming.

The Sharks team members span the competitive spectrum, from recreational competition to national championships. Every swimmer can find their niche and level of competition, and still feel accomplishment for doing their best in each practice or race. The YMCA values of honesty, caring, respect and responsibility can be followed by each swimmer and their family, and will help build stronger children and a stronger team.

The swim team is very attractive to young children who love the water and enjoy the company of other children. It is one of the few - perhaps only - sports where a team will span the ages of 6 to 18 years, and include people from all over the Island. The friendships that develop within age groups can be long lasting. The bonds that develop between age groups can be especially rewarding for the younger children.

Older, middle and high school aged swimmers get a great deal from the program. It is, in many ways, an individual sport where personal goals can be achieved regardless of what teammates might be doing. Unlike other sports, no one gets cut or sits out on the bench much of the time. The regular discipline of practice schedules, combined with increased self-motivation to achieve goals, have had a positive effect on many Sharks swimmers. Valuable personal attributes are added to their character, which can help Shark swimmers in their academic years and throughout their lives.

For those who want to excel in high school or college swimming, starting early on a team such as the Sharks, and continuing through high school has proven most successful. Former Shark swimmers have gone on to compete for schools such as the University of Maine, Bates College, Hamilton College, Oberlin College, Wheaton College, Boston University, Princeton, University of Pennsylvania, United States Merchant Marine Academy, Worcester Poly Tech, University of Texas and Florida State.

The Sharks swimmers have the opportunity throughout the season to participate not only in YMCA competition, but also USA Swimming meets, which lead to regional and national levels of competition. Many team members continue swimming as adults in Masters Swim Team programs.

The Coaches

Jim Willis is originally from Brockton, Mass. where he swam for a YMCA team for 8 years. He swam and graduated from the University of Maine. Jim coached the Bangor Y from 1984 –89, the Canoe City Swim Club (Old Town-Orono Y) from 1989 – 98, and the St. Croix Dolphins from 1998 – 2001. He is presently ASCA Level 4 coach who has coached at numerous Y National Meets and Eastern Zones Meets. He was the US Virgin Island National Team Coach at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and also the Maine “USA Swimming” Coach of the Year in 2014 as well as 2015.

Tony DeMuro is a lifelong resident of Bar Harbor. Tony swam for the Sharks from age 6 until his graduation for MDI High School in 1991. Tony graduated from the University of Maine in 1998. He has been the Head Coach of the MDI HS for the last 16 years. In 2002, Tony was named the Maine High School Class ‘B’ coach of the year.

Schedule

Instruction through regular practices is tailored to individual ages and abilities. Young children are taught the basics, introduced to team discipline and allowed some fun. Older children are offered more practice time and greater incentives to work harder. Swimming meets are held throughout the season, and are optional but highly recommended for team members. Individual achievements at competitions are rewarded with ribbons, medals or trophies.

The season begins Monday, October 17, 2016 and concludes in March. Practices will be held until the end of March for all swimmers. Those who qualify for National competition will continue to swim into early April.

The meet schedule is published separately. The first meet this year will be the 33rd MDI Sprint Meet on November 6 at the MDI Y and the first dual meet will be on November 19 at home against the Northern York County YMCA (Biddeford).

The Shark season will end with a team and parent celebration – the traditional Pasta Dinner, complete with awards achieved throughout the season at the MDI HS Cafe.

The Practice schedule is:

Green Team

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 4:15 – 5:15pm

Gold Team

Monday, Wednesday & Friday 5:00 – 6:30pm

Tuesday & Thursday 5:30 – 7:00pm

Senior Team (Oct 17 – Nov 18 & Feb 22 – March 31)

Monday – Friday 2:45 – 4:15pm

Mornings (Senior & Gold)

High School Students 6:00 – 7:00am

Middle School Students 6:45 – 7:45am

Saturday

7:30 – 9:30am

WeeSharks (Nov. 2 – Dec. 21)

Tuesday & Thursday 4:45 – 5:30pm

There will be special practice schedules for school vacations weeks. A monthly calendar will be available at the pool, via email and posted online. A spring schedule will be available for all swimmers going to regional & national competitions.

The Sharks do not cancel practice due to weather but we may combine practices on snow days to make it easier for transportation. Check Facebook and email for any possible changes or combinations due to the weather. If the YMCA decides to close because of weather, there will be no practice. The High School practice time of 2:45 – 4:15pm will become a Shark Senior practice if MDI HS cancels practice.

Practice Groups

Green Team (ages 9 & under) – The Green Team is for the younger and less experienced Shark Swimmers. The practices introduce the team members to the fundamentals of competitive swimming. Swimmers are encouraged to come to at least two practices a week with workouts being held three days per week throughout the winter season. The children are taught the four strokes (butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle) and to develop a proper streamline both from a dive and off the wall. Swimmers are introduced to short swimming sets to develop endurance and begin to work on the proper technique for all turns. Most practices begin with a short free time period and end with a game or relay.

Gold Team (ages 9 – 14) – The Gold Team is for returning and more experienced Shark Swimmers. Practices reinforce the proper techniques of the four competitive strokes, starts, turns, and streamlining. Swimmers are encouraged to come to at least three practices a week with older swimmers coming as much as possible. Practices include work on a specific skill each session and swimming sets to develop the endurance necessary to compete. Racing skills are enhanced with time spent on creating great starts and turns and learning the proper strategies for each event. Practices also include relay games, video feedback, goal setting, and games on Friday evenings.

Senior Team (High School Students) – The Senior team is for High School students and the advanced Gold Team member. Practices are held when the High School team is not in season, in the morning including the Saturday practice, and on days when the High School practice is not held. Senior Team members are encouraged to come at least 4 times a week with some swimmers swimming 7 or 8 practices a week. Training is focused on developing the endurance, speed, and skills necessary to compete at a high level at the end of season meets in February and March.

WeeSharks (ages 10 & under) – The WeeSharks is for the swimmer that is not ready to commit to the Sharks but wishes to learn about competitive swimming. Practices are held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings with a choice of once or twice per week. WeeSharks members are taught the fundamentals of swimming including streamlining, kicking, diving, and the basics of all four strokes. WeeSharks (Must be member of MDI YMCA) may participate in home meets and may join the Green Team in January.

Dryland Training – on Tuesday & Thursday evenings the 1st 15 minutes of Senior & Gold practice are dedicated to dryland training. Exercises include crunches, pushups, jumps, balancing and medicine balls.

Types of Swim Meets

YMCA Invitational Meets

MDI Y Sprint Meet and Downeast Family Y Invitational are meets where many Y teams are invited. Swimmers may pick their events with some assistance from the coaching staff.

YMCA Dual Meets

The Sharks swim 5 meets in November, December, & January against teams from other Y's throughout the state of Maine. Swimmers usually compete against swimmers in their age group. A swimmers age is determined by how old they are on December 1 of the current season. Age groups are 8 & under, 10 & under, 12 & under, 14 & under, and Senior, which is actually 12 & older. These meets are scored and require the participation of all the swimmers. The coaching

staff will pick the events for each swimmer to assure that the Sharks are able to compete with the other team. Meet ribbons are awarded based on race finish.

YMCA Championship Meets

The Y States are the annual championship meet for YMCA swimmers in Maine. It is held at the University of Maine. All Shark swimmers who have participated in three Y meets are eligible and must make every effort to attend. Each swimmer may swim up to three events in the state meet. This is the meet where all the swimmers from the Sharks compete against the other teams in the state to see where we stand overall.

The New England's held at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Y Nationals in Greensboro, North Carolina are meets that swimmers must meet qualifying times to attend.

USA Swimming Meets

There are swim teams in Maine that are not YMCA teams. They have a national USA-Swimming team charter and are eligible for any USA-Swimming (USA-S) meet held in the U.S. YMCA teams are allowed to charter a team and be a part of Maine Swimming Inc., the governing organization for all Maine USA-S swim teams.

The Maine Swimming Championships (JO's) are held in March at Bowdoin College in Brunswick. This is the state championship for all swimmers in the state and also the selection meet for the Maine All-Star team.

USA Swimming is not required of Shark swimmers. If a swimmer is interested in USA-Swimming participation, they must register with USA Swimming at a cost of \$67 for 1 year until December 31, 2017. Note: Maine Swimming offers a seasonal membership from Oct 19 – March 19 for \$40 and also an outreach membership for \$5 for those swimmers that receive free or reduced lunch at school.

Benefits of USA-Swimming include: swimmers get the opportunity to pick and choose which meets and events to participate in as opposed to a Y meet where the coaching staff may select the events. Full year USA Swimming members get a subscription to SPLASH, a magazine devoted to swimming. Members of USA Swimming get additional exposure to more racing and other events has more often than not, resulted in more success to a swimmer. Meet signups are sent via email and posted on the website. USA-S meets charge a per event fee to be paid at time of sign up. In USA-S meets, a swimmers age is determined by age on the first day of the meet in question. USA-S also exposes swimmers to many other swimmers and formats of swimming meets they may normally not see. Swimmers may be recruited to participate in USA-S based on the perceived need of the team that season.

Swimmers who make qualifying times or other standards may attend other meets such as the Bowdoin Open, Sectional Meets and the US Olympic Trials. **Note: This year all swimmers who wish to go to the All-Star Meet must swim in 2 USA Swimming Meets from April 15, 2016 – March 11, 2017.**

Meet Conduct

- Swimmers/parents should notify Jim as soon as possible if they will not be able to attend meet. If the swimmer is sick on the day of the meet, please phone the Y in the morning to notify the coaches or phone/email the coaches if it is an away meet or a USA swim meet.
- Swimmers, parents, coaches, and anyone connected with the Sharks are expected to behave at home and away meets in a way that is reflective of the YMCA philosophy of competitive sports. Competitive sports participants learn by example. Parents, coaches, and officials should set the best possible example.
- It is important that the swimmers report on time to the meets.
- All Shark swimmers must sit together at each meet.
- No swimmer may scratch an event without approval of a coach.
- Swimmers should see a coach before their event for the proper heats and lanes.
- 10 & under swimmers will usually be escorted to the blocks by someone on the coaching staff. Swimmers should also seek out a coach directly after their event to receive feedback on their performance.

Practice Etiquette

- Please **respect** the other members of the Sharks and the YMCA that use the locker room (i.e. no water fights, towel snapping, loud voices, and other horseplay).
- If you have valuables please place them in a locker with a lock. You may rent a locker from the Y.
- Arrive on time for practice (late arrivals are always welcome because of other commitments/ transportation problems) and plan to stay for the entire practice. Swimmers who need to leave early should inform the coaches before practice begins.
- Swimmers should walk on deck and follow all the other pool rules.
- All equipment should be replaced in its proper spot when practice is completed.
- All swimmers should place their names on their personal equipment (i.e. goggles, bathing suits, fins, towels, water bottles, and any thing else that they bring to practice).
- Goggles are highly recommended, they allow the swimmers to see better and also prevent the eyes from soreness.
- Water bottles are also highly recommended; remember water is just like the oil that we use in our cars. It keeps swimmers hydrated (lubricated), allowing them to perform at their best at each practice.
- Swimmers should **respect** other swimmers, coaches, and the YMCA staff whenever at the YMCA.

Communication

We use many channels of communication to facilitate information to all swimmers and their families. The lines of communication are between the swimmers, their parents, and the coaches. If you have any problems with the communications please get in touch with the Head Coach as soon as possible.

Newsupdates

Each week a weekly update is published to keep swimmers/parents up to date on what will be occurring in the next week or two. These updates are sent via email, posted on the website and placed on the bulletin board. These updates include practice schedules & changes, meet announcements, travel information, upcoming events, and anything else that needs passing along to swimmers and families.

Bulletin Board

Parents and swimmers should check the bulletin board for announcements and meet results. Sign-up sheets for concessions and meets timers are posted as well. Meets results and lists of swimmers seasonal times are also posted on the bulletin board.

E-Mail

The best and easiest way to communicate is email. All news updates, sign-up sheets, monthly calendars, and other announcements are sent via mass email (BCC) to all families that provide the team with an email address. This guarantees that the information is at least sent to the home of each family. The most efficient way to communicate with the coach is through email, and the coach's address is sharks@mdiyymca.org.

Website

Our team website is www.mdiysharks.com. Most information that is sent via email is also posted on the website. The site also contains links to other swim sites, best times, meet schedule, and much more information about the Sharks swim team.

Ribbon Folders

Each family has a ribbon folder in the pool office. After each meet all awards are placed in the folders. Swimmers may pick their awards at any time provided the swimmers are dry.

Facebook

Search for Mount Desert Island YMCA Sharks on Facebook. Practice schedules & changes for the week, upcoming events & meets, and other information will be provided on the team page. Team pictures should be downloaded onto the Facebook page.

Being a Swim Team Parent

Having your child on the MDI YMCA Sharks Swim Team is a commitment not only for your child but for you as well. Parental involvement is an important ingredient in making the MDI YMCA Sharks a great team. Never hesitate to volunteer what ever time and skills you may have; it will be enthusiastically received! When we each do what we can, everyone benefits.

All swim team families are expected to work at home meets in some capacity: food concession (providing or making food, selling, and clean up), officials, timers, ribbon organizers, computer operators, announcer, coaching assistants, and meet set-up & clean up.

Other commitments include: providing transportation to and from practices (organizing a carpool is helpful), volunteer coaching, bus driving, fund raising (aqua-a-thon, concessions and cupcake/lemonade stand), and offering your help whenever you have the time.

Here are some thoughts for you as a parent to consider:

Do not impose your ambitions on your child.

Swimming is your child's activity and progress occurs at different rates for each child. Do not judge your child's progress based on the performance of others and do not push your child based on what you think he or she should be doing. The wonderful thing about a sport such as swimming is that every person can strive for his or her personal best!

Be supportive.

There really is only one question you need to ask your child: "Did you have fun?" If practices and meets are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.

You are not the coach.

People have been hired to do that job. Your job is to support, love and give your child a big hug no matter what.

Thumper's Rule: "If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all."

Cheers and applause are welcome at practices and meets. Criticism to a child or coach is not. If you have concerns, discuss it privately with the person.

Acknowledge your child's fears.

The first meet, a new stroke, swimming a new event can be stressful. It is appropriate to be nervous and scared. Assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if he or she were not ready to compete in it.

Do not criticize the officials.

If you do not have the time or the desire to volunteer as an official, do not criticize those who are probably doing the best they can.

Respect the coaches.

The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, one that contributes to your child's success. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child; it will only sever to hurt your child's swimming.

Create other goals besides winning.

Giving an honest effort, regardless of the outcome, is more important than winning.

Do not expect your child to be an Olympian.

One million children swim competitively in the United States. Every four years no more than 52 people are chosen for the Olympic team out of 350,000 members of USA Swimming. Swimming is so much more than the competition: swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self-esteem and fitness, it provides life-long friendships. Swimming builds good people. How wonderful that your child wants to participate!

Your Financial Responsibility

COST OF MEMBERSHIP TO MDI YMCA

The swimmer must be an annual member of the MDI YMCA, either as part of a family membership or as an individual member. You as a parent are not required to be a member. Membership prices are printed in the YMCA Program Brochure.

MDI YMCA SHARKS TEAM MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Gold Team - \$440 or \$180 at registration and 4 monthly drafts @ \$65

1st year members on Sharks \$380 or \$180 at registration and 4 monthly drafts @ \$50

Green Team - \$330 or \$170 at registration and 4 monthly drafts @ \$40.00

1st year members on Sharks \$290 or \$170 at registration and 4 monthly drafts @ \$30

Senior Team - \$220 or \$120 at registration and 4 monthly drafts @ \$25

WeeSharks - \$50 for 1 time/week, \$75 for 2 times/week per session.

The Y has set up a monthly autodraft plan to allow families to spread out the cost for the season. Autodraft plans are set up at the member services desk. These may be set up with checking accounts or credit cards. All swim team members must also participate in the Sharks Aquathon to be held on Sunday, February 5, 2015. The MDI Y pays for entry fees into all YMCA Meets. **It is hoped that cost is not a barrier to your child's participation. If it is an issue the MDI YMCA does offer reduced fees for both swim team fees and memberships. Scholarships may also be available and are based on financial need.**

EXTRA COSTS:

EQUIPMENT:

Of course swimsuits suitable for practice and competition are required. A "Team Suit" is not required but recommended for meets. Suits are priced Can be priced from \$35 - \$75.

Team suits and other team equipment can be ordered online at www.swimoutlet.com/mdiyssharks. Suits goggles, caps, fins and other accessories can be ordered on the site.

The Sharks coaches do not approve of wearing the Sharkskin, Fastskin, Tech Suits or other high priced suits during the regular season. Swimmers may purchase these suits and use them for the Championship Meet season (not YMCA States) in March and April.

Swim Caps: If a cap is worn at a meet it must either be a shark's cap or a cap with no lettering. We offer 'MDI' latex caps for \$5.00 and 'MDI' silicone caps for \$10.00. These caps along with an assortment of other caps are available at our team store.

Swim Fins: We have a large number of fins in the pool storage room, but swimmers can always bring their own to practice. You can order fins online (Swimoutlet.com) and at a variety of stores in the area. Other equipment includes towels, water bottle, and athletic bag.

It is highly recommend that swimmers names be placed on all their equipment including towels, goggles, & swim suits.

SWIM TEAM STORE

This year the team store will be open on Monday & Wednesday evening from 4:45 – 5:15pm during practice and during home swim meets. During the course of the season we will try to stock items (goggles, straps & caps) that swimmers need during the season. All checks should be written to the MDI YMCA Sharks Swim Team.

SOME NOT SO OBVIOUS COST:

Wear and tear on your vehicle; transportation to and from practice and meets.

Donating food items at concession for home meets.

Money for food for your child at out of town meets.

Money for overnight expenses for travel meets.

Donations for: Fundraisers, awards Banquet, and Coaches presents. We ask that each swimmer raise \$125 each year for the Sharks Aqua-A-Thon, to help offset the high cost of operating the swim team.

Remember even though monetary donations are greatly appreciated, donations of time are equally valuable and important. Volunteers are always needed at swim meets and swim practices.

Many parents comment on the high cost of the swim program. It is an expensive sport due to its requirement for a well-maintained indoor pool as well as its intensity and length of season (*offering at least 2 practices a day each week for at least 6 Months*).

,

GLOSSARY OF SWIMMING TERMS

AGE GROUP SWIMMING- Nationally recognized age groups for competition are: 8 and under, 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, and 15-18. The Maine Y's age groups are 8 & under, 10 & under, 12 & under, 14 & under, and Senior (12 & older).

BLOCK- The starting platform.

CIRCLE SWIMMING- Performed by staying to the right of the black line when swimming in the lane to enable more swimmers to swim in each lane.

COACH- A person who trains and teaches athletes in the sport of swimming.

CODE OF CONDUCT- an agreement signed by a swimmer/ coach/ parent stating that the swimmer will abide by certain behavioral guidelines.

CONSOLATIONS- The second fastest heat in the finals. These swimmers cannot move in to the finals for places.

CUT- Slang for qualifying time. A time standard necessary to attend a particular meet or event.

DISTANCE- Term used to refer to events at least 400 meters/500 yards or longer.

DQ- Disqualified. This occurs when a swimmer has committed an infraction of some kind; e.g., freestyle kick during butterfly. A disqualified swimmer is not eligible to receive awards, nor can the time be used as an official time.

DRILL- An exercise involving a portion or part of a stroke, used to improve technique.

DRYLAND TRAINING- Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance; usually includes stretching, calisthenics and / or weight training.

ENTRY FORM- Form on which a swimmer enters a competition. Usually includes USA-S number, age, sex, event numbers and entry times.

EXHIBITION- competing in a heat as a “ practice,” no points earned by exhibition swimmer, but the time is official.

FALSE START- Occurs when a swimmer is moving before the start gun is sounded. In USA-S and YMCA, one false start will result in a disqualification.

FINAL- the championship heat of an event in which the top swimmers from the preliminaries compete.

FINISH- The final phase of the race; the touch at the end of the race.

FLAGS- Backstroke flags placed 5 yards (short Course) or 5 meters (long course) from the end of the pool. The flags enable backstrokers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently.

GOAL- A specific time achievement a swimmer sets and strives for. Can be short or long term.

GUTTER- The area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows during a race and is recirculated through the filtration system.

HEAT- Specific race in an event. Each race is numbered by heat, usually the last heats are the fastest times.

I.M.- Slang for Individual Medley, an event in which the swimmer uses all four strokes in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle.

JUNIOR OLYMPICS- “J.O.’s” USA-Swimming state competitions to qualify for Zones and Nationals. Also call Age Group Championships. To be held at Bowdoin College from March 17 – 20.

JO TRIALS- A USA Swimming meet for swimmers who have not qualified for JO's. The top 2 in every event and anyone making the qualifying times qualify for JO's.

LAP COUNTER- A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. (Also, the person who counts for the swimmer, stationed at the opposite end from the start.)

LONG COURSE- A pool 50 meters in length. USA-Swimming conducts most of its summer competition in long course pools. The YMCA also holds a Long Course Nationals in the summer. The Olympics are held in a 50-meter pool.

LSC- Local Swimming Committee. Governing body for swimming at the local level. Maine is one of the 59 LSC's in the country, that under the control of USA-Swimming.

MEET- Competition designed to be a learning experience. By implementing what has been learned in practice, the swimmer tests himself/herself against the clock to see how he is improving.

NATIONAL AGE GROUP TIME STANDARDS- Time standards derived from the previous years results that are broken down by age and sex as well as B, BB, A, AA, AAA, AND AAAA, divisions. These time designations are NATIONAL and should be used as motivational times.

NATIONAL REPORTABLE TIMES / TOP 10 - Times standards set for both short and long course based on previous years achievements. Only times meeting these standards may be submitted for consideration each year. The Top 10 submitted times in each event are recognized.

NEGATIVE SPLIT- Swimming the second half of the race equal to or faster than the first half.

NEW ENGLANDS- YMCA championship for top swimmers in New England- Maine, NH, VT, MA, RI, & CT. To be held at MIT in Cambridge MA. For 2016, the 8 & unders swim on March 12, 9-10's swim on March 13, 11-12's swim on March 19 and 13-14's & 15-18's swim on March 20.

OFFICIAL- A judge on the deck of the pool at a sanctioned competition who enforces rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, timers and referees.

OPEN WATER SWIMS- Any freestyle event over 1500 meters, normally conducted in a natural body of water, such as a lake, river or ocean.

PACE CLOCK- Large clock with a large second hand and a smaller minute hand, used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice; may also be digital.

PRELIMS- Slang for preliminaries also called Heats or Trials. Those races in which swimmers qualify for the championship and consolation finals in the events.

Q-TIME- Qualifying time necessary to compete in a particular event and / or competition.

RELAY- An event in which 4 swimmers compete together as a team to achieve one time.

SAFETY- The condition of being safe. Safety procedures are designed to prevent accidents.

SENIOR SWIMMING – Swimmers 12 & older who compete in open (no age group) competition.

SCRATCH- To withdraw from an event in a competition.

SHORT COURSE- A pool 25 yards or 25 meters in length. USA-S and YMCA conducts most of its winter competition in short course yards.

SPLIT- A time recorded from the official start to the completion of an initial distance within a longer event. Also the time for one of the four individual in a relay. Under certain conditions, splits may also be used as official times, for example, the lead off swim in a relay, or the lead off portion of an event.

SPRINT- Describes the shorter events (50 and 100). In training, to swim fast as possible for a short distance.

TIME TRIAL- A time-only swim which is not part of a regular meet.

TOUCH PAD- A large sensitive board at the end of each lane where a swimmer's finish is registered and sent electronically to the timing system.

USA-SWIMMING – (USA-S) The national governing body for amateur competitive swimming in the United States.

WARM DOWN- Low intensity swimming used by swimmers after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid, and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

WARM UP- Low intensity swimming used by swimmer prior to a main practice set or race to get muscles loose and warm. Warm up gradually increases heart rate, respiration and helps to prevent injury.

WATCHES- Stopwatches used to time swimmers during a competition. When totally automatic timing equipment is used, watches serve as a back-up method.

Y STATES- Championship swim meet to include all YMCA swim teams in State.

Y NATIONALS- National Championship meets held in Greensboro, North Carolina (Short Course) and Indianapolis, Indiana (Long Course) where swimmers must achieve a qualifying time in order to compete.