



# NEW ENGLAND SWIMMING



## Timers' Briefing

1. Welcome everyone.
2. Introduce all the key senior officials for the session; Meet Referee, On-deck Referees, Administrative Referee, Chief Judge, & particularly the Chief Timer and/or Head Timer.
3. Start the watch check:
  - a) Tell the timers that you will give the Starter's commands and then blow your whistle (shoot the gun, etc.). They need to start their watches on the signal.
  - b) Give the Starter's commands and then blow your whistle (shoot the gun, etc.).
4. Review conduct of the meet:
  - a) Emphasize that the timers are an integral part of the meet and that the success of the swimmers depends on their attentiveness and accuracy.
  - b) Review the types of timing that will be used for today's meet. If there is no electronic timing system, then the watch times will be the **primary** timing system that will be used to determine official times. If electronic timing pads and back-up buttons are in place, the watch times will be the **tertiary** timing system that will only be used if there is a failure in the pad/button system.
  - c) Have them check the swimmers' names before they get up on the blocks or step in the water. If the race is a 25-yard or 50-meter race, check the swimmers' names as they get out of the water at the finish end of the pool. Check relay swimmers to ensure that they are the individuals listed on the entry card and that they swim in the order listed.
  - d) At the beginning of the race, the timers should start their watches on the flash of the strobe inside the blue circle on the Colorado Starting System (or the puff of smoke from the Starter's pistol), not the sound of the horn. They should position themselves to get a clear view of the Starting System. In fact, they can move away from the end of their assigned lanes for the start of the race as long as they are over their lanes for the finish.

If the watch does not start (or they missed the starting signal), hold the watch in their hands over their heads. The Chief Timer will bring a started watch to them and exchange watches.

It is also not necessary to push the back-up button at the start of the race.

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- e) At the finish of the race, timers **must be over the end of the pool** to record the finish by stopping their watches and/or pushing the back-up button when some part of the swimmer's body *touches* the end of the pool. They cannot get an accurate time if they are behind the end of the pool or sitting in their chairs. Remind the timers that it is the job of the Stroke & Turn Officials to determine if a legal touch is made, not theirs.
  - f) Write down the watch times on the seed card, timing sheet, or a blank piece of paper if necessary before clearing the watches. If the swimmer asks for his/her time (as they are instructed to do by their coaches), politely ask them to wait until the recorder has finished writing down the watch times. If things are happening fast, ask the swimmer to wait until after the start of the next heat to get their times.
  - g) Remind the timers that if they need to leave the deck, they **must** inform the Chief Timer and be replaced before they can take off.
5. Complete the watch check.
- a) Tell the timers that you are going to give them a count down ("3-2-1") and then blow your whistle (shoot the gun) again. They need to stop their watches on the signal.
  - b) Give them a count down ("3-2-1") and then blow your whistle (shoot the gun) again.
  - c) Ask the nearest timer what they got for a time. Ask the rest of the timers if they got anything significantly different (0.3 seconds or more is significant). If the nearest timer was the problem, check another watch time and have the rest of the timers compare to that time. Check any watches that might have problems and replace them, if necessary.
6. Ask for questions and thank them all again for helping make the meet a success.