

High School Swim Meet 101

If you are new to High School swimming you will find it is different from club or summer league swimming. High School competition pools are short course pools, either 25 yards or 25 meters. There are eleven events per meet. One heat is held for each event; one for girls, one for boys, for a total of twenty-two events. There are no second heats in any event with the exception of multi-team championship meets. The eleven events are:

- 200 Medley Relay
- 200 Freestyle
- 200 IM
- 50 Freestyle
- 100 Butterfly
- 100 Freestyle
- 500 Freestyle
- 200 Free Relay
- 100 Backstroke
- 100 Breaststroke
- 400 Free Relay

During the season most meets will be dual meets against another school. End of season playoffs are determined by teams submitting their meet results for the two meets in which they scored the most power points. Note that order of each event above will go a heat of JV Girls, JV Boys, V Girls, and then V Boys.

Here is how a meet is run and scored. To start each event, swimmers are called to the starting position by the starter (usually a whistle) who visually checks that all swimmers are motionless. When all swimmers are set, the starting horn or gun is sounded to start the race. If the starter feels that one of the swimmers has moved, left early or achieved an unfair advantage, the guilty swimmer may be disqualified after the race for a false start. Should a swimmer inadvertently enter the water before the starting signal, they may be disqualified at the discretion of the officials.

Scoring is for the team with points awarded by finish place in each event. Point values are:

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Individual events scoring	6	4	3	2	1
Relay events scoring	8	4	2	-	-

In dual meets (two teams head-to-head) there are 14 points available for each of the three relays for 42 points. Each of the eight individual events has 16 points available for 128 points. The total meet has 170 points available. Ties do occur. Note that the only place to not score points individually is 6th so every swimmers swim is important to the team score. **DO NOT MISS YOUR EVENT** as that is a guarantee of the team losing points.

Scoring in multi-team events, such as the county championships, is much more complex. First, there are multiple heats per event. Swimmers are seeded in advance by meeting qualifying times. Swimmers are placed in heats from highest qualifying time to

lowest. The fastest swimmers swimming last. The lowest event times determine the finish order. In multi-team meets the top twelve finishers receive points. The points system shown in the table below:

Place	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Individual Events	16	13	12	11	10	9	7	5	4	3	2	1
Relay Events	32	26	24	22	20	18	14	10	8	6	4	2

Each of the three relays is worth 93 points and each of the eight individual events is worth 186 points. The total meet has 1,767 points available. The team with the largest number of points is the winner. Trophies are awarded to the top two girls teams and top two boys teams. Medals are awarded to the top six finishers in individual events and to all members of the top three relay teams.

You may also hear Power Points mentioned. Power Points are determined for each swimmer in each event based on their finish time (either yards or meters). The NJSIAA has charts of Power Points for boys and girls on the Swimming page of their web site. Power Points are tallied throughout the meet and are also tracked for individual swimmers for the season by the coaches. Power Points are one of the tie breaking criteria.

Events

FREESTYLE

In freestyle events, the competitor may swim any stroke, but the fastest is what is often called the crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the water surface and an alternating (up-and-down) flutter kick. On turns and finishes, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. Most swimmers do a flip turn.

BACKSTROKE

Backstroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may turn onto the stomach and do a flip turn (they cannot glide into the wall and then turn). Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall at the turn. The swimmer must finish on the back.

BREASTSTROKE

The breaststroke requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pushed forward from the breast. In the return of the arms, the hand cannot go past the waist. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously. One of the hardest parts of the breaststroke is the start. After the dive, while still underwater, the swimmer can (but doesn't have to) do one arm pull where the hands can go past the waist, one dolphin kick, and then another arm pull-with a breaststroke kick - to bring them to the surface.

BUTTERFLY

Some consider the butterfly to be the most beautiful of the strokes. It features a simultaneous movement of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissor or breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY (I.M.)

The individual medley, commonly referred to as the I.M., features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle. The rules of each stroke apply to that leg of the IM.

MEDLEY RELAY

In the medley relay, all four strokes are swum. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly, and the final swimmer anchors the relay with freestyle.

FREESTYLE RELAY

The freestyle relay events consist of four swimmers, each swimming one quarter of the total distance of the event.