

Safety Tip of the Month – July 2009
VSI Safety Committee
“Meet Safety Procedures”

With the long course season coming to an end and with the championship meets being held soon, we should review our meet safety. Virginia Swimming recently adopted new meet safety guidelines. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory at all meets. By following the guidelines your chances of not getting injured are greatly improved.

VSI MEET SAFETY PROCEDURES

The following procedures have been established to ensure safe meet conduct. Safety is an important factor for our program. Anyone seeing an unsafe condition or activity around the meet venue should intervene or summon available meet facility personnel to immediately stop it. The unsafe conduct should also be reported to the Meet Director and the Meet Referee.

These procedures **SHALL** be followed at all meets. The Referee has the authority to remove a swimmer/coach/club/parent from the meet for failure to conform to these safety procedures.

WARMUP PROCEDURES

1. Assignment of Marshals shall be the responsibility of the host club/meet director with a minimum of two Marshals present at all times. These Marshals shall be at least 18 years old. Warm-ups will not begin until the Marshals are on deck and available for duty. Lifeguards required by colleges and recreation centers may **NOT** be used in place of Marshals.
2. A Marshal must be present at any separate warm-up/warm-down area that is designated for use before, during, or after competition.
3. The schedule of warm-up lanes and times for each team shall be posted throughout the venue. The announcer shall announce lane and time assignments and any change in procedure.
4. Coaches are responsible for the conduct of their swimmers. Coaches must be in the immediate vicinity of their swimmers at the start of warm-ups to supervise the entry of their swimmers into the pool. Coaches must maintain line-of-sight control and supervision of their swimmers at all times. All swimmers must start warm-up procedures at the starting end of the pool. Entry into the pool from the sides and turn-end is prohibited.
5. Entry during general warm-ups is feet first only. There will be **NO DIVING OR RACING STARTS** from the blocks or end of the pool during general warm-ups.
6. Each team may be assigned a lane(s) and a specified time for warm-up. Alternatively, warm-ups may be unassigned and follow a format similar to that presented in the “Unassigned Warm-Ups” section.
7. During the sprint period of warm-ups, a racing start will be permitted only for one-way swimming where the swimmer exits at the far end of the pool. Swimmers must **NOT** cut across adjacent lanes to exit the pool at one of the sides.
8. Backstroke swimmers must be allowed to complete their start and to clear the area before any swimmer steps onto the block during the warm-up session.
9. For facilities with a separate warm-up/warm-down area, there shall be no diving or racing starts in that area unless a lane has been specifically designated for one way racing starts.
10. To avoid over-crowding of warm-up lanes, the Referee/Meet Director may restrict warm-ups to those swimmers participating in the session immediately following the warm-ups.

GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

11. No running on the deck is permitted at any time during the meet or during warm-ups.
12. No shaving is permitted anywhere within the swim venue (including locker rooms). Swimmer noncompliance will result in dismissal from the meet.
13. Some areas of the pool may be off limits for the swimmers, parents, and coaches. These areas should be clearly marked, and such boundaries shall be enforced by the Marshals.
14. A swimmer, coach, or parent may be removed from the deck for interfering with a Marshal in the performance of his/her duties.

Unassigned Warm-Ups

Depending upon the type of meet being conducted, the following warm-up format provides an alternative to specific warm-up times and lane assignments. Other formats that take into account the total number of swimmers and the available lane time are also acceptable, and may be assigned by the Referee/Meet Director.

Time	Lanes							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
First 25-30 min	General	General	General	General	General	General	General	General
Last 25-30 min	Pace	Sprint	General	General	General	General	Sprint	Pace

If lanes 2 and 7 are overcrowded during the sprint phase of warm-ups, lane 3 and/or lane 6 can also be designated as a sprint lane.

For long course competition in which the 50 M Freestyle is starting from the "turn" end of the pool, lane 2 or lane 7 should be designated for one-way sprints from that end of the pool.

Sprint lanes should be marked as such. All warm-ups will start from the starting end of the pool (except as noted above for the 50 M Freestyle in long course competition).