



Vancouver Pacific Swim Club

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<http://www.pacificdolphins.com/vpsc>

Swim Meets and the Parent's Role

Swim meet are usually the highlight of each month for the swimmer as they finally get to apply the skills that have been working on everyday, have some fun, meet new friends and race.

Swim meets can't happen without the parents though, from little mini-meets to provincial championships and from the timer to the referee, every role needs to be filled. The following is a summary and description as to what help is needed at meets, what each role is and a description of what the officials clinics are about..

The Meets

Over the course of the season parents will be asked to help out at swim meets in two different volunteer roles.

1. VPSC hosted meets

These meets include our VPSC Invitational on October 25/26, the Regional Championships on December 12-14 and any PASS or mini-meet that requires timers held at St George's Pool.

These are the meets that you earn your Volunteer Credits back with. Parental involvement from everyone is key to running a successful meet, and for our larger meets (VPSC Invitational and Regional Championships) we need help from all families if they have swimmers in the meet or not. There are many roles to be filled such as timers (one session of timing is usually about 3-4 hours), food coordinators or workers, officiating (if you have taken the appropriate clinics), concession coordinators or workers and other smaller areas. By helping out at our meets and taking an officials clinic most families can probably work off all or most of their volunteer points with that help alone.

2. non-VPSC Regional Meets

These are meets located in the lower mainland that your swimmer may be attending. This help is not a part of the Volunteer Credits program, but is a role we would like to see each family of a regional level or higher swimmer take an active role in. Most clubs will ask for help from participating clubs to help with timing or officiating at their hosted meets to fill in any gaps that they could not fill within their own club (as we will also ask help from other clubs at our meet). Over the course of the year we would like to see all families try and help out at least twice at these local meets that your children attend.

Timing for one session (approx 4 hours) is all you would have to commit for at a meet, and you get the best seat in the house and free food out of it as well. What we will do this year for these local area meets is add a spot on the consent form that the parent can check off if they are available to help out for a session. This will save the officials coordinator having to phone every family for each meet and scrape together help. Again if each family could find at least two or three times over the course of the season it would help the whole region out.



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The Roles

Here is a list and description of the basic officiating roles needed at a swim meet:

- Timers:** Timers are responsible for getting the time for the swimmer. The job would entail either using a stopwatch and manually timing the swimmer or if there is electronic timing pushing a plunger to stop the backup system when the swimmer touches. When signing up as a timer you would sign up for a specific session (sessions are usually 3-5 hours long and there would be between 1-6 sessions in a meet). There is no qualifications to be a timer, although there is a clinic available for it.
- Chief Timer:** The chief timer is a designated timer who is not assigned a lane, but would have a stopwatch running each race and would be available to back up a lane in case one of the lane timers did not have a watch running that race.
- Marshalling:** The marshaller is the person at the meet who would help organize the swimmers before their races. For younger swimmers the marshall may actively group the swimmers into their heats and line them up before their races.
- Clerk of Course:** The clerk of course would be the person who would accept any scratches or late entries to the meet and notify the referee of any changes.
- Stroke & Turn:** Stroke and turn officials are responsible for making sure the swimmers do not make any stroke infractions. Usually there are about 4-8 stroke and turn officials working each session of the meet. You do need to take the stroke and turn clinic to work this job.
- Starter:** The starter is the person who shoots the starting gun to signal the beginning of the race. A clinic needs to be completed before performing this job.
- Referee:** The referee is the official who is in charge of the session. The referee will signal the starter that the race is ready to begin and is the person that stroke and turn officials report to in case of any disqualifications. This is a senior position and completion of all clinics must be fulfilled before starting this position.

The Clinics

Two or three times a year clinics will be offered to parents somewhere in the lower mainland. Every family should try and take one clinic a season to upgrade their qualifications, learn a new skill, and earn some Parent Participation points. There are five levels of certification you can go through.

- Level 1:** Level 1 clinics consist of the timing and marshalling components.
- Level 2:** Level 2 clinics consist of chief timer, clerk of course, starter and stroke & turn
- Level 3:** Once you have completed all the level 1 and 2 clinics you become a Level 3 official.
- Level 4:** Once you have taken the referee clinic and have the qualification to referee you are a Level 4 official.
- Level 5:** You become a Level 5 official once you have worked a certain number and level of swim meets.