

THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE: FOR A SWIM MEET ANNOUNCER

Welcome!

You have either been appointed as, or are considering, a role as a volunteer. We wish you a fulfilling and enjoyable experience in your role and appreciate your commitment and the time that you are giving in helping to develop the sport.

How this resource will help you?

This resource is intended to assist you in your role by providing:

- A guide to the roles and responsibilities of this position
- Templates/resources to assist you and save you time
- Top tips and good practice from experienced volunteers
- Further information and learning/training opportunities

This resource complements other national volunteer publications, which are listed at the back of this resource.

Links to swim21



swim21 is the ASA's club development programme. The Good Club Guide is intended to complement swim21, by providing tools, templates and resources that will assist the running of a club and ultimately assist in achieving or maintaining swim21 accreditation.



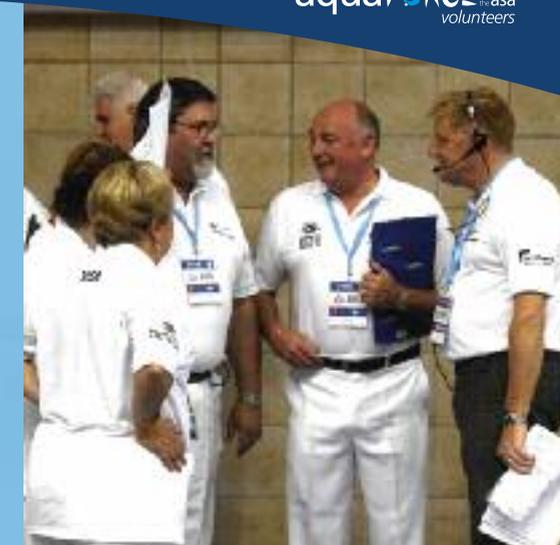
Role of the Announcer

The Announcer plays an important role in ensuring competitors, volunteers and spectators have a high quality experience at a swim meet. This is done by providing accurate and effective information on the event in a friendly, motivating and enthusiastic way. Providing structure and control to a swim meet by seamlessly linking each element, ensuring everyone is aware of safety requirements relating to venue and providing up to date information on what is happening in and around the pool.

Example role description for a swim meet Announcer

Duties of a Swim Meet Announcer

- To provide timely announcements, effective and accurate information in an enthusiastic and motivating way, that will ensure structure and control at a swim meet.
- To provide safety information regarding the competition and venue.
- To introduce the policies and protocols for warm up, reporting to marshalling areas, presentation areas and any outcomes from any protests.
- To inform competitors, volunteers and spectators of what is happening in and around pool side and on event presentations taking place.
- To keep competitors, volunteers and spectators up to date with any changes to the published event programme.
- To work effectively as part of a meet management team to deliver a high quality swim meet.
- To comply with the requirements of the ASA safety laws Prompt Card for the Announcer as defined in the ASA Handbook.



Commitment/time for the role

This will vary depending upon the length and time of the swim meet. Some advance preparation may assist with the smooth running of the swim meet and ensure that you have all the necessary information and equipment ready.

Skills and Qualities Required

- Ability to provide verbal information in a clear and concise manner.
- Enthusiasm.
- Knowledge and experience in swim meet operations.
- Knowledge and experience in identifying when swim meet records are likely to be set during a race.
- Confidence in public speaking.
- Ability to observe and report on action taking place in the pool.
- Ability to receive and report on information provided.
- Ability to use software such as "Announcers Friend" (please note, this is not used at all swim meets)

Reports into

- Meet Director (unless otherwise directed).

Getting started

The following sections will guide a swim meet Announcer through the key areas of the role description above.

The following are key roles you will need to know about and work alongside at a swim meet:

- The Meet Director (sometimes called the Meet Promoter): responsible for the overall running of the whole event. This person will guide you on your role and will be your point of contact and person you take instructions from.
- The Meet Referee: responsible for all technical

officials and ensuring the competition is run in a fair manner.

- The Chief Recorder: responsible for maintaining accurate results of the event.
- The Starter: responsible for the control of the event from the time the referee turns the event over to the starter and until the event starts.
- The Presentation Officer or Medals Co-ordinator: responsible for distributing awards, prizes and certificates.
- The Clerk of Course or Competitive Marshalls or Competitive Stewards: responsible for the assembly of competitors prior to each event.
- The Disability Competition Liaison who will be available to assist with disability queries if required.

Before the swim meet

The following are suggested areas to plan and prepare in advance of the swim meet:

- Know the location, travel arrangements and parking at the competition venue.
- Research the announcing system at the competition venue and what format music is required e.g. CD/mp3 player etc.
- Agree and understand the systems being used at the swim meet e.g. if the Announcer will be working from paper documents or will be expected to work from a computer system e.g. 'Announcers Friend' (available at www.sportsys.co.uk) at the swim meet which may require prior training and familiarisation.
- Have a collection of suitable music tracks for different aspects of the event e.g. introducing officials, presentations, introducing finalists. Check the music to ensure there is no bad language/content.

- Familiarise yourself with the ASA Handbook and the ASA safety laws.
- Familiarise yourself with existing records and, where possible, make a note of any competitors who are likely to set new records or who have done so in recent swim meets. This will add to the spectators' interest and ensure recognition is given to the swimmer/s involved.
- Agree your arrival time at the swim meet with the Meet Director. Usually, this is a minimum of one hour before the meet starts.
- Prepare any information to be announced such as safety announcements etc.
- Agree the music requirements for the meet with the Meet Director. The Meet Director will need to ensure compliance with music license requirements.
- Pack a bottle of water and any other refreshments you may need.
- Take any other equipment you may need e.g. reading glasses, paper, pens, highlighter pens, stapler, paperclips, bulldog clips, watch, ASA Laws of the sport, CDs/music, spare batteries if using a wireless microphone etc. Where the announcing point is on the spectator balcony, a piece of string with a bulldog clip is very helpful for receiving start lists, results sheets, etc from poolside.

Arrival at the swim meet

These are suggestions to follow when you arrive at the venue and before the swim meet commences:

- Check in with the Meet Director and the Referee. Agree the requirements/protocols for:
 - Announcing safety information on pool depths.



- Playing of music in line with music license restrictions.
- Warm up provision.
- Lane draws (if appropriate).
- Announcing point scores (and how often during the meet).
- Announcing trophy winners.
- Introducing races, announcing disqualifications, medal presentations and ceremonies.
- Whistle blasts being used.
- Announcing next heats e.g. thumbs up from Referee or waiting for the scoreboard to be refreshed.
- Assembling swimmers for races and for medal ceremonies.
- Scheduling/timings that the Meet Director is working to.

- Obtain a copy of the pool safety and operations procedures to announce appropriate health and safety information.
- Familiarise yourself with the venue and know where the marshalling, presentation areas are on pool side as you will need to announce these locations.
- Obtain a copy of the programme and:
 - Write your name on it so you don't lose it!
 - Check pronunciation of names and clubs.
 - Make sure you have every event listed and that there are no missing pages.
- When you receive the start sheets, highlight the title of each event and write, next to each title, how many heats there are as some events continue overleaf.
- Check who the appointed Referees, Starters, Clerk of the Course and Presentation Officer and introduce yourself.
- Check the space allocated for the announcers area and ensure you have all the equipment you need.
- Test the microphone before the meet commences.

Prior to warm up: welcome, health and safety announcements and warm up provision



Approximately 5 minutes before the start of the warm up session, announce the following:

Example 1: Welcome and health and safety information

The Announcer should comply with the requirements of the ASA Safety Laws Prompt Card for the Announcer, as listed in the ASA Handbook and the Pool Safety Operating Procedures which will be issued by the pool operator. Please note that some pool facilities may have pre-recorded/written safety announcements.

“Welcome to the (announce name of swim meet). The following safety announcements are for all competitors, officials and spectators relating to the competition and venue.

The signal that you will hear if it becomes necessary to evacuate the building will be (announce here the nature of the alarm, as given in the Pool Safety Operating Procedures and give a sample sounding if possible).

To evacuate the building, all those present must use the marked emergency exits. Competitors and officials must not return to the changing rooms to collect their clothes or belongings.

Competitors are advised to remove all jewellery in order to prevent accidental injury to themselves.”

Example 2: Use of photography

If the competition involves children under the age of 18 years, the following announcement will need to be made:

“In line with the recommendation in the ASA Child Protection Policy, the promoters of this event request that any person wishing to engage in any video, zoom or close range photography must register their details with staff at the entrance control before carrying out any such



photography. This includes the use of a mobile telephone with an image capturing facility.”

Example 3: Warm up provision

“Welcome to the warm up session for the (announce the name of the swim meet). This is a (announce the number of lanes) pool and (announce the number of clubs that have entered) clubs have entered.

Where clubs have been allocated lanes for warm up, these will need to be announced. These lane draws may have been selected either prior to the swim meet or on the day of competition. The Meet Director should direct you on this:

“Clubs have been allocated the following lanes for warm up:
Lane 1: XXX club
Lane 2: XXX club, etc.”

Example 4: Water depth announcements

“You are reminded that the depth of water at the shallow end is (announce the depth) and the deep end is (announce the depth). Starting



blocks are (announce the height) above water level at the shallow end and (announce the height) above water level at the deep end.”

- For water depth of less than 0.9m at the end of the pool where starting or turning takes place the following announcements must be made: “As the water depth is below 0.9m at (name the end/s) of the pool, all starts at that end must be in the water and you are reminded that this depth is considered insufficient for tumble turns.”
- For water depth of 0.9m but less than 1.5m and the height of the pool edge is not more than 0.38m above the level of the water, the following announcement must be made: “Coaches and Team Managers are reminded that only those competitors who have reached the standard of the ASA Preliminary Competitive Start Award are permitted to start with a shallow racing dive from the side of the pool. Competitors who have not reached this

standard must start in the water.”

- For water depth of 0.9m but less than 1.5m and starting blocks are provided, the following announcement needs to be made: “Coaches and Team Managers are reminded that only those competitors who have reached the standard of the ASA Competitive Start Award are permitted to start with a shallow racing dive from the starting blocks.”

Example 5: False starts

“If there is a false start, you must continue with a shallow racing dive, you must not topple into the water head downwards as this is dangerous.”

Example 6: Starting in the water

“If you are starting in the water, you must lower yourself over the side; do not jump or dive.”
“There will now be a (announce the length of time) minute warm up period which will finish at (announce the time).”

Example 7: Dive sprint lanes

For events such as open meets and County Championships:

“Coaches and competitors are advised that lane numbers (announce the lane numbers) are allocated as dive sprint lanes.”

The warm up session

Approximately thirty minutes before the finish of the warm up (or as agreed with the Meet Director) extra lanes are normally added for diving and sprinting. Any announcements here should be in full agreement with the Meet Director and follow agreed warm up guidelines/schedules.

Example 8: Additional dive sprint lanes

“Coaches and competitors you are advised that lanes (announce the lane numbers) in addition to lanes (announce the lane numbers) are now dive sprint lanes.”



Approximately fifteen minutes before the finish of warm up (or as agreed with the Meet Director) announce the finish time for warm up.

Example 9: Ending warm up

“Coaches and competitors, you are reminded that warm up will cease in fifteen minutes in the main competition pool.”

(In major pools this can also be indicated on the score board).

Example 10: Ending warm up

“Coaches and competitors, you are reminded that warm up will cease in 5 minutes in the main competition pool.”

(In major pools this can also be indicated on the score board).

Example 11: Ending warm up

“Coaches and competitors, the time is now XX:XX and warm up in the main competition pool has ended. If you wish to continue warm-up please do so in the utility pool.” (If one is available).

Prior to the start of the meet

Example 12: Calling competitors

“Would all competitors for the first two/three (as guided by the Meet Director) events, please proceed to the marshalling area located at (name the location).”

Example 13: Missing competitors

“Would (name the competitor/s) please report to the Clerk of the Course at (name the location of the pool area to report to) in preparation for their event.”

Check with the Meet Director 10 minutes prior to start of the meet that the technical officials will be ready to march on to pool side in 5 minutes.



Example 14: Officials ready & welcome to the meet

5 minutes prior to scheduled start of the meet:

"Ladies and gentlemen please welcome the Referee and Technical Officials to the pool side for this (announce the session e.g. morning's) programme."

Music to be played (if appropriate) as Officials parade to their places. Once all officials are in position the music should be stopped.

3 minutes before start of meet:

"On behalf of (announce the relevant organisations) welcome to the (full title of swim meet) and number heat/session/final session (as appropriate).

The Meet Director for this (announce the full title of swim meet) is (announce the name).

Your Referees are (announce the names) for the men's events and (announce the names) for the women's events.

Your Starters are (announce the names) for the men's events and (announce the names) for the women's events."

As directed by the Meet Director (If appropriate):

"Please be up standing for the National Anthem of Great Britain (normally only played at finals sessions)."

Music to be played.

"We now invite the Technical Officials to be seated"

Example 15: Changes to programmes

"Before the event starts – please delete the following competitors from your programmes. In event number (name the event number) and in heat number (name the heat number), please delete competitors (name the competitor/s)"

Getting the swim meet underway

General points to follow during the swim meet:

- Remember your role is important in maintaining the flow and pace of the meet – keep focused and ensure you are delivering motivating and energetic announcements to keep spectators interested.
- Be focused on the meet, it is so easy to get distracted. Avoid conversations that are not about the swim meet taking place.
- Should parents, coaches, swimmers etc approach you for information whilst you are announcing, acknowledge their presence and then direct them on to where they need to go for information.
- Take your instructions only from the Meet Director or the Referee unless agreed otherwise.

- Keep hydrated by drinking lots of water.
- Keep announcements short and to the point. Speak clearly and do not rush.
- Enjoy yourself – inject your own style into the position.
- Be sure of your facts, double check all information provided.

Example 16: Introducing events

"The first event is (name the full title and description of event). There are (announce the number of heats) heats in this event."

Once the race is underway the following announcement is then made to confirm the event:

"Competitors in the water for heat (announce the heat number) are competitors... to... on your programme." You could state the name and club if you have time.



Example 17: Introducing final sessions (specific to open meets and national level meets only)

After introducing the Referees and Starters and inviting the Technical Officials to be seated, on the signal from the Meet Director:

“Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the finalists in the (announce the full description of event title) event to the pool side.”

Music to be played (if appropriate) as Officials parade to their places. Once all Officials are in position the music should be stopped.

Once the competitors have marched on to poolside and following the cue of the Meet Director, introduce the competitors as follows:

“In lane number (announce lane number) representing (announce name of club) is (announce name of competitor).” Repeat this through all the lanes.

Example 18: Amalgamations

When advised by the Chief Recorder and/or the Referee that there has been an amalgamation the public must be informed:

“There has been an amalgamation in event number (announce the event number/s). We commence with heat... of... heats.” Where competitors are not in their original lane/heat this should be announced.



Example 19: Reseeds

If a competitor withdraws or a mistake has been made drawing up the finalists a reseed takes place. Where there has been a reseed the Chief Recorder and/or Meet Referee will advise you that a reseed has taken place and hand you a piece of paper (normally with the wording “re-write” written on it). The following announcement is then made:

“This event has been reseeded. We now have XX heats in this event.”

If the scoreboard is not functioning correctly, you may need to read out the competitors and their lane numbers.

You should also make a note on the reseed paper of the time this was passed to you as an announcer and the time you read out this information in case of any complaints made from people not hearing or receiving the information.

Example 20: Disqualifications

These MUST BE ANNOUNCED WITHOUT ERROR and are normally announced immediately after the end of the race.

“We have a Referee’s report. In event (announce the event number) and heat number (announce the heat number), the competitor in lane number (announce lane number) was disqualified for (full description of the infraction report or basic information e.g. start, turn etc as guided by the Meet Director).”

Remember to note down the time you announced the infraction report as a record, in case there are any queries regarding when this information was read out. Also note your initials on this paper before handing it back to the Chief Recorder.



Example 21: Preparing for medal presentations (specific to open meets and national level meets only)

As an Announcer, you may be asked to provide warning calls to competitors in advance of medal presentations.

“Would (announce name of competitor and club), please report to the medal presentation area located at (announce location). That is (repeat the names).”

Final call – When asked, you may have to call one of the medallists again, or when sufficient time has elapsed for them to report to the presentation area.

Either repeat the above announcement or:

“This is the final call for (announce the name of competitor and club) to report to the medal presentation area as your medal is to be presented at the conclusion of this event.”

Example 22: Presentations

As the Announcer, you are required to advise spectators that a presentation is taking place and by whom the presentation is being made. The Meet Director will guide you on when the actual presentations are to take place as this may differ upon the style and level of the swim meet, e.g. sometimes medals are presented between events and not between heats, other times they are presented during events of 200m or more.

You will receive a presenter’s list from the Presentation Officer. You will need to check this carefully to establish the correct title of the presenter and the correct name/s of competitors as well as the pronunciation.

Fanfare music if required.

“Ladies and gentlemen, may I draw your attention to the presentation area at (announce location) where we have the medallists for (announce the full name and title of the event). These medals are to be presented by (announce the full name and title of presenter).”

“The winner of the bronze medal in a time of (announce time) from (announce name of club) is (announce name of competitor).”

The winner of the silver medal in a time of (announce time) from (announce name of club) is (announce name of competitor).”

The winner of the gold medal in a time of (announce time) from (announce name of club) is (announce name of competitor).”

Check if any records have been set/broken and announce it and publicise the fact, for example outstanding effort, congratulations etc.

e.g. “The winner of the gold medal” or “In first place, the gold medallist and (name of swim meet) champion in a (County, National, Commonwealth, World Record), in a time of (announce time) is (announce name of competitor) representing (announce name of club).”

In the case of BAGCAT awards, for example, once the main presentations have been made (first three) you could then advise the 4th to... places, otherwise advise competitors to collect their awards from the presentation area.

Top tips in being a great swim meet announcer

- Sometimes there is a tendency to over announce. A few pertinent announcements are much more effective than too many.
- Maintain an even pace of announcing. Always take cues from the Meet Director. Also look for cues from the spectators, poolside officials and competitors that they understand the information being announced. Don't be afraid to repeat an announcement if you need to.
- Talking too fast may cause mis-interpretation of information and confusion, whereas talking too slowly may make boring listening. Be aware of the pace you use for announcing – remember to take a deep breath and relax too!
- If possible, observe the spectators briefly whilst you are making your announcements about any adjustments/amendments to the programme. This way you can tell if the spectators can hear you and are making the necessary amendments.
- Always keep a bottle of water with you.
- Be very careful when making announcements

prior to starts, so as not to interfere with the race conditions or keep the swimmers waiting.

- Be aware of the acoustics – and adjust the bass or treble on the sound system, if you are able to, in order to ensure that you are clearly heard by spectators.
- Be very aware of what meet you are at and the title the winners deserve: e.g. County Championship winner, Age Group winner etc as this will help in profiling the meet and also the competitor.
- Develop your skills at announcing by offering to announce safety information or something that is already scripted as this will help you practise. Then ask if you can assist at local competitions, Counties, Regional events and Open Meets to gain more knowledge and experience.
- Shadow good announcers (Officials are best placed to advise you on who the good ones are!).
- Always turn your microphone off when you have finished an announcement.



Commentating at a swim meet

Announcing and commentating are generally seen as two different roles, requiring different skill sets. This resource focuses on announcing.

An effective commentator is someone who can really add value to what the spectators see by providing information such as a split time being consistent with an event record, a National Qualifying Time is in prospect etc. Ex-swimmers or coaches are often recruited as commentators as they are likely to have an understanding of times, strokes and racing and are able to add value in this way.

If you are announcing at a swim meet and there is also a commentator, careful planning needs to take place to ensure that you complement each

other and that you are able to get information across when needed, e.g. the name of finalists.

Ending the swim meet

Example 23: Ending the swim meet

If at the conclusion of the last event of the meet/session there are still medals to be presented, or, on the instructions of the Referee/Meet Director, the following announcement can be made:

“That completes the morning's/evening's sessions. Would the Technical Officials please remain seated until all the presentations are completed.”

“Thank you ladies and gentleman for your attendance. We hope that you have enjoyed this (morning's session) competition.”



For competitions with finals sessions:

“May we remind you that the next session/finals will commence at (announce time) with a (announce duration of time e.g. 30 minute) warm up.”

“On behalf of the Referees, we thank the Technical Officials for their expertise and attendance. All Technical Officials are now invited to leave the pool side. Thank you.”

Music (if played).

After the swim meet

Reflect on your own performance as an Announcer and make a note of things you would do differently next time and/or areas to improve.

Moving on from your role...

Have you thought about how you will ensure all your knowledge and experience is passed on to a person taking over from you when you decide its time to move on?

Here are some suggestions to ensure a smooth transition and to ensure the person taking over from you has the information and resources they need:

- Try to give as much notice as you can that you are moving on, in order to allow the swim meet organisers to recruit/elect another volunteer.
- Where possible, try to build up or be part of a small team of Announcers in the local area in order to share workloads, ensure others can take over when you move on and are able to offer training to new volunteers.
- Assist in developing an up to date role description and advert for the post based on your experience and think of any people that may be interested.

- Think about the type of information you would like to receive if you were to volunteer for this position and the format you would like to receive it in, e.g. an e-mail; paper file; face to face hand over meeting; shadowing at a swim meet.
- Prepare an information pack for the new volunteer to assist them in their role.
- Prepare a list of any outstanding work/issues.
- Prepare a ‘top tips’ or similar list to help a new volunteer.
- Provide a list of key contacts or people who can assist a new volunteer.
- Hand over hard copies of any files or important correspondence. Put electronic information onto a USB stick or disk.
- Offer to mentor the new volunteer in this role for an agreed period of time.

Summary

We hope you have found this guide informative in supporting you in your role and providing you with information and helpful tips. We wish you a great experience in your role and thank you once again for all your time and commitment you are giving to the sport.



Amateur Swimming Association
Harold Fern House
Derby Square
Loughborough
Leics LE11 5AL
Tel: 01509 618700
Email: info@swimming.org
Web: www.swimming.org

Child Protection in Sport Unit
NSPCC National Training Centre
3 Gilmour Close
Beaumont Leys
Leicester LE4 1EZ
Tel: 0116 234 7278
Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk
Web: www.thecpsu.org.uk

Volunteering England
Regents Wharf
8 All Saints st
London N1 9RL
Tel: 0845 305 6979
Email: information@volunteeringengland.org
Web: www.volunteering.org.uk

runningsports
3rd Floor, Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square,
London WC1B 4SE
Tel: 0800 363373
Email: info@runningsports.org
Web: www.runningsports.org

SkillsActive
Castlewood House
77-91 New Oxford Street
London WC1A 1PX
Tel: 0207 632 2000
Email: skills@skillsactive.com
Web: www.skillsactive.com

Youth Sport Trust
Sir John Beckwith Centre for sport
Loughborough University
Loughborough
Leics LE11 3TU
Tel: 01509 226600
Email: info@youthsporttrust.org
Web: www.youthsporttrust.org

Sport England
3rd Floor, Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square,
London WC1B 4SE
Tel: 0845 850 8508
Email: info@sportengland.org
Web: www.sportengland.org

**National Association of Councils
for Voluntary Service (NACVS)**
177 Arundel St
Sheffield S1 2NU
Tel: 0114 278 6636
Email: nacvs@nacvs.org.uk
Web: www.nacvs.org.uk

County sports Partnerships
(located all across England.
Contact details available via
ASA Regional Offices.

CCPR - One voice for sport and recreation
Fourth Floor
Burwood House
14-16 Caxton Street
London SW1H 0QT
Tel: 020 7976 3900
Email: info@ccpr.org.uk
Web: www.ccpr.org.uk

Sportscoach UK
114 Cardigan Road
Headingley
Leeds LS6 3BJ
Tel: 0113 274 4802
Email: coaching@sportscoach.org
Web: www.sportscoachuk.org

Further Information

The ASA accepts no liability for any errors or omissions in this resource. Further, whilst it is hoped that volunteers will find this resource useful, no liability arising out of its use can be accepted by the ASA or the club.

This resource is not a contract of employment and the role you undertake as a volunteer will not create an employment relationship between you and the club or the ASA.

ASA website pages dedicated to volunteers... Did you know that the ASA website has a dedicated section for volunteers? To find this section, go to www.swimming.org/asa/volunteering.

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The ASA

Tel: 01509 618700 Fax: 01509 618701

Email: volunteering@swimming.org

www.swimming.org