

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SANCTIONED, APPROVED AND OBSERVED SWIMS?

As we move into high school and college season, the question often arises as to whether a time can be entered into the SWIMS database. This summary is intended to help clarify the key differences between the various types of swims generating “official” USA Swimming times. More detailed information is available in USA Swimming Rules & Regulations (Article 202), in which requirements and conditions for sanction, approved competitions and observed swims are defined.

SANCTIONED EVENT

- Meet must be conducted under USA Swimming technical and administrative rules.
- All times achieved will be recognized by USA Swimming.
- All participants must be registered members of USA Swimming (including meet host, meet director, safety director, marshals, coaches, officials [excluding timers], athletes, and participating clubs).
- Full insurance coverage is in effect (excess medical and general liability) for all registered members of USA Swimming. General liability coverage is in effect for the meet host and volunteers.

APPROVED COMPETITION

- Meet must be conducted under USA Swimming technical rules, including time resolutions (e.g., YMCA).
- A request must be made to the LSC within its parameters for Approval.
- All times achieved will be recognized by USA Swimming, although only times of USA Swimming members are eligible for incorporation into the SWIMS database.
- There are no requirements for membership in USA Swimming for participation in meet.
- Insurance: If hosted by a USA Swimming member club/organization, full insurance coverage is provided for all registered members of USA Swimming. General liability coverage is provided for the hosting entity. If hosted by a non-USA Swimming entity, full coverage is provided for the USA Swimming member coaches and athletes who are participating as a USA Swimming entity.

OBSERVED SWIM(S)

- Meet is conducted under other than USA Swimming technical rules (e.g., high school, NCAA, IPC).
- A request must be made to the LSC within its parameters for Observation.
- Only those times from swim(s) observed and approved by USA Swimming or YMCA appointed and certified officials acting as observers are recognized by USA Swimming. Only times of USA Swimming members are eligible for incorporation into the SWIMS database.
- There are no requirements for membership in USA Swimming for participation in meet.
- There is no medical or liability coverage for participants or host. Excess medical is provided to designated USA Swimming Observers only while observing swims on the LSC’s behalf.