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NEWCOMER'S GUIDE TO SWIMMING

Swimmers often talk using their own abbreviations and words that do not apply to the outside world. Below is a simple glossary of the most frequent terms used:

PB: Personal Best time

Splits: This is the time at each 50m turn. Swimmers will monitor these to see how they paced a race.

Taper: A swimmer will 'taper' prior to any major competition. What this means is that they will rest. They will cut back the amount of training they do each day and decrease the intensity also. A swimmer may swim over 12,000m a day during heavy training, however they will swim as little as a few hundred metres the day before an event.

Free: Freestyle or front crawl

Breast: Breaststroke

Fly: Butterfly

Back: Backstroke

I.M: Individual Medley (Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle). In a medley relay, the order is changed so that backstroke is first. This addresses the fact that backstrokers cannot do a dive to start a race. Four swimmers compete in one of the following strokes in the following order; backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle.

Swim-down: A recovery exercise that takes place several minutes after a swimmer completes their race. They will swim at a low intensity in another pool in order to rid the body of lactic acid, which would have accumulated in the muscles after high-intensity swims.

Short Course: Short Course events are those held in a 25m pool.

Shaving-down: Most swimmers shave the hair from their bodies for a big meet. Although they will remove almost all of their body hair, the actual intention is to remove the top layer of skin from the body. This increases the sensitivity and "feel" for the water. Even though many swimmers wear all-over body suits, shaving remains a key psychological measure in getting prepared for a race.

The eight fastest swimmers from the heats will compete in the final. The **lane order** for the finals is decided from times in the heats or semi-finals. The fastest qualifier will swim in lane 4, the second fastest in lane 5, third fastest in lane 3, fourth in lane 6, fifth in lane 2, sixth in lane 7, seventh in lane 1 and eighth in lane 8. Theoretically, this creates a **spearhead** format in the race.

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