



Starter (Announcer)

The starter at a swim meet plays a crucial role in ensuring each race begins fairly, consistently, and according to the rules.

Primary Role

The starter controls the start of each race — ensuring that all swimmers are ready, properly positioned, and given a fair and consistent start signal.

Key Responsibilities

1. **Call the Swimmers to the Blocks:**
 - The starter announces **“Take your mark.”**
 - This tells swimmers to get into their starting position.
2. **Ensure a Fair Start:**
 - Waits until all swimmers are motionless before initiating the start signal (an electronic tone).
 - If a swimmer starts early, the starter can signal a **false start** (often using a recall signal).
3. **Maintain Consistency:**
 - Ensures that the time between “Take your mark” and the start signal is consistent, not rushed or delayed.
 - Uses a calm, even tone and timing for every heat and event.
4. **Use of Starting Equipment:**
 - Operates the electronic starting system, which usually includes:
 - An audible tone or beep
 - A strobe light for visually impaired swimmers
 - Integration with the dolphin stopwatches and computer system.
5. **Monitor Swimmers’ Readiness:**
 - Observes all lanes to ensure no swimmer is disadvantaged.
 - Can stand down a heat (“Stand please”) if something is wrong (equipment issue, movement, noise, etc.).

Qualities of a Good Starter

- Calm and even-tempered
- Good focus and attention to detail
- Strong knowledge of rules and procedures
- Ability to stay consistent across all heats

