

Starting at CCAA Swimming Meets

Using whistle commands for starting events at swim meets

Forward starts

1. Referee signals the swimmers with a series of short whistles (no fewer than 4) to approach the blocks and prepare to swim. It may be necessary to follow-up with a verbal command until the swimmers get use to the whistle command.
2. The starter then announces the event/distance/heat
3. When all swimmers have approached the blocks, the referee blows a long whistle for the heat to step up onto the block and take their preparatory position. It may be necessary to follow-up with a verbal command until the swimmers get use to the whistle command. Swimmers do not have to start from the blocks; they may stand on the side of the pool (not in the gutter), or start in the water as long as one hand is in contact with the wall.
4. Once the swimmers are on the blocks (or starting position) the referee turns the heat over to the starter by raising one hand out from against the body to an angle out from their side.
5. When the swimmers are prepared, the starter says, "take your mark".
6. When swimmers have assumed the correct position and are motionless, the starter activates the starting signal.

Backstroke starts

1. Referee signals the swimmers with a series of short whistles (no fewer than 4) to approach the blocks and prepare to swim. It may be necessary to follow-up with a verbal command until the swimmers get use to the whistle command.
2. The starter then announces the event/distance/heat
3. When all swimmers are at the side of the blocks, the referee blows a long whistle for the heat to immediately step into the water. When all swimmers have surfaced, the referee blows a second long whistle to have the swimmers return to the wall and immediately assume their starting position. It may be necessary to follow-up with a verbal command until the swimmers get use to the whistle command.
7. Once the swimmers are at the blocks the referee turns the heat over to the starter by raising one hand out from against the body to an angle out from their side.
4. When the swimmers are prepared, the starter says, "take your mark".
5. When swimmers have assumed the correct position and are motionless, the starter activates the starting signal.

False Starts

The current rule for false starts is to let the heat run, and then DQ the swimmer who false started at the end of the race. The false start must be dual confirmed. If the swimmers happened to be called back from the start inadvertently, the swimmer who false started should be DQ'd and the race then proceeds. The swimmer DQ'd is then allowed to swim the heat but is not eligible for ribbons or points.