

**MICHIGAN SWIMMING, INC.
PO Box 1784
Midland MI 48641-1784**



**MS PROCEDURES
FOR
OBSERVED MEETS**
(Revised January 2008)

If you wish to apply to have your Non-USA swim meet “Observed” contact the Office of Michigan Swimming (who will put you in contact with the current MS National Times Coordinator).

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I. USA SWIMMING MEETS

A. Sanctioned, Approved and Observed Meets

There are three (3) general types of swimming meets that USA Swimming designates within its Rules and Regulations – a “sanctioned” meet (202.2 and .3), an “approved” meet (202.4) and an “observed” meet (202.5). This brief summary clarifies the key differences about these meets and, as a result, the various types of meets that generate “official” USA Swimming times (USA Rule 102.16.4) which are then eligible to be included in the USA SWIMS Database. More detailed information is available by reading the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations (Article 202) where requirements and conditions for sanctioned, approved and observed meets are defined. All references to insurance herein are general comments only (and should not be relied on without confirmation) and you should contact USA Swimming for more current information and for clarification of any and all insurance issues.

B. Sanctioned Meets (All USA)

- Meet must be conducted under all USA Swimming technical and administrative rules.
- A request must be made to the LSC within its parameters for Sanctioning.
- All “official” times achieved will be recognized by USA Swimming.
- All participants *must be registered members of USA Swimming* (including meet host, meet director, safety marshal, 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.

C. Approved Meets (Both USA and Non-USA)

- Meet must be conducted under all USA Swimming technical rules including timing resolution.
- A request must be made to the LSC within its parameters for Approval.
- All official times achieved will be recognized by USA Swimming although only times of currently registered USA Swimming members are eligible for incorporation into the SWIMS database.
- There is not a requirement for membership in USA Swimming for participation in the meet. Both registered members of USA Swimming and non members may compete in the meet.
- Insurance: If hosted by a USA Swimming member club/organization full insurance coverage is provided for all registered members of USA Swimming and General Liability coverage is provided for the hosting entity. If hosted by a non USA Swimming entity coverage is provided for the USA Swimming member coaches and athletes who are participating as a USA Swimming entity.

D. Observed Meets [Non-USA meets]

The original intent of “observing” performances in non USA swimming meets was to provide an opportunity for high school, NCAA, etc. athletes, who could not compete in USA/LSC sanctioned meets during their non USA association season (by NGB rule or otherwise) to achieve times that could be used to enter USA Swimming National Championship level meets. This continues to be the basic intent of USA Rule 202.5. In addition, with the advent of the SWIMS database circa 2003, times from non USA meets, if “observed” and “official”, are now eligible for inclusion in the SWIMS database. If included in the SWIMS database the times are available for use with the On Line Meet Entry (OME) system for many of the USA Swimming National level meets and other similar uses.

An “observed swim” is a particular swim occurring in an observed meet. A “blanket observed meet” is a meet where all swims (the entire meet) are observed for conformance under the rules of USA Swimming.

- A request must be made to the LSC within its parameters for observation.
- All official times achieved will be recognized by USA Swimming for currently registered USA athletes.

There is no USA provided medical or liability coverage for participants or host. Excess medical is provided to designated LSC NTV Observers only while observing swims on the LSC’s behalf.

E. “Official” Times

An “official time” is a performance in compliance with all the rules of USA Swimming and as specifically outlined in USA Rule 102.16.4. and .5 If a time is visible in the SWIMS database on the USA Swimming website – the time is considered to be a proven “official” time. However, regardless of its presence in the database, the presumption that the time is “official” can be challenged as being false and inaccurate.

F. “NTV” [National Times Verification]

A “NTV” is the formal confirmation following the conclusion of a performance by a designated USA/LSC Swimming representative that the time (achieved at a Sanctioned, Approved or Observed meet) is an official time and eligible for inclusion in the SWIMS database. The LSC NTV Officers are responsible for the correctness and authenticity of all times they place within the SWIMS Database and are subject to fines and USA Board of Review penalties for any abuse of that authority.

II. High School Meets

A. General Information

The area of “Observed Meets” has been in flux recently. Thus, one should always consult the current USA Rule (202.5) and the annually updated “SWIMS Times Module Policy Manual” (available on the USA website) for all current procedures. That being said, USA Swimming has historically allowed the local LSCs great discretion to set parameters/policy within their own LSC in an effort to achieve the goals of “Observation” in a realistic manner within the particular LSC. Thus, you will find some variances from LSC to LSC across the nation as to how High School Association swim meets are handled.

Within the Michigan LSC the following parameters should be noted when dealing with High School meets:

- 1)** All requests for Observation must come from the Meet Host and their Sanctioning organization – not from individual parents, swimmers, Coaches, etc. Observation entails Officials, entry procedures, database issues, etc. and thus is within the jurisdiction of the Meet Host.
- 2)** USA Swimming has the ultimate authority (working with the Michigan LSC) to authorize any HS meets other than the Michigan HS State Meets (which come under the authority of the Michigan LSC). This is done by using application Form A which is forwarded to the Chair of the USA Times and Recognition Committee for Review. No High School dual meets are observed. Extremely large HS Invitationals and Conference Meets are not necessarily excluded by rule but seldom are authorized for Observation.
- 3)** HS Invitationals or HS Conference Meets are historically not authorized in the Michigan LSC due to fairness concerns and strain on the number of MS Observation Officials available. However, the Lower Peninsula HS State Swimming Championships (all Divisions) are automatically Observed. At the time of this writing, the MHSAA has historically not requested Observation of the *Upper Peninsula State Swimming Championships*.

B. High School State Swimming Championships (Lower Peninsula)

General Information

- 1)** The **MHSAA** Division 1, 2 and 3 Lower Peninsula State Swimming Championships (Men and Women) in March and November of each year automatically receive blanket observation by MS, Inc. pursuant to USA Rule 202.5. Following the conclusion of the meet the electronic meet database is reviewed by the MS NTV Coordinator and Tabulator.
- 2)** USA observers are present to determine whether the performances comply with the Observation rules of USA Swimming. * Parents and Coaches should note that a swimmer may be disqualified for USA Swimming purposes even though the High School officials failed to disqualify the athlete at the meet for MHSAA rule purposes. If a swimmer is disqualified for USA purposes by the USA Observer (i.e. time is ruled as “unofficial” by a USA Swimming Observer at the meet) the time will not appear in the SWIMS Database.

- 3) If the athlete is not a *currently registered* USA/MS athlete member during the MHSAA State Championships the time will not appear in the SWIMS Database.

Individual Event Times

- 1) All individual official times occurring during preliminary and final sessions (including swim offs) in compliance with the rules of USA Swimming that can be identified by the MS Office with a currently registered MS athlete will automatically be entered into the SWIMS Database without request. Accordingly, as a general rule, no action/request by the athlete, parent, coach or any athletes' representative is required (see below for an important exception for relays/initial relay split/intermediate distance split). Please check the USA Swimming website two weeks after the conclusion of the MHSAA State meet to confirm that the time is visible in the SWIMS database if the athlete intends to use the time for USA meet entry purposes. If the time does not appear in SWIMS (and you think it should), please then contact the Office of Michigan Swimming to inquire.
- 2) However, due to the lack of accurate USA athlete names and USA ID #'s in the MHSAA electronic meet database there is no guarantee that a time will automatically be entered. Thus, you may use **Form C** to request that a particular performance be entered into the SWIMS Database. The athlete or the athlete's representative (coach preferably) should complete **Form C** at the meet and hand it directly to one of the USA observers at the meet. There is no cost if done at the meet. If the request is made after the meet, the request must be mailed along with a \$5 processing fee to the Office of Michigan Swimming, PO Box 1784, Midland, MI 48614-1784. The request must be made within one year of the conclusion of the meet. The MS NTV Tabulator will process the request within fourteen (14) business days. If Form C is used at all, it is highly suggested that **Form C** be submitted in a timely fashion by the athlete or the athletes representative so the requested time will appear in the SWIMS Database at least 14 days prior to its intended use (for example, a meet entry deadline).

Relay Times/Relay Lead off Splits/Intermediate Distance Split Times

Neither relay times/relay lead off splits nor intermediate distance split times will be entered into the SWIMS Database without specific request by using **Form C**. For relay times, all four swimmers must be currently registered with the same USA/MS Club. Also, these times (relay, relay lead off and intermediate distance split) must be included in the MHSAA meet results electronic data file. If there is a timing pad malfunction at a split distance the split cannot be verified and the time is unofficial.

There is no cost if Form C is used at the meet. If the request is made after the meet, it must be mailed along with a \$5 processing fee to the Office of Michigan Swimming, PO Box 1784, Midland, MI 48614-1784. The request must be made within one year. The MS NTV Tabulator will process the Form C request within fourteen (14) business days.

III. NCAA or Other Meets

A. General Information re: NCAA

As of September 1, 2007 USA Swimming and the NCAA joined forces in an effort to create a specific database and subsequent On Line Meet Entry (OME) system for the NCAA Division 1 Championships. This database is referred to as the "NCAA Database". It is a different database than the SWIMS database and, at the time of this writing, if an NCAA Meet Host wants to have times achieved at NCAA Meets entered into the SWIMS Database there is still a requirement to have the NCAA meets "Observed". Please consult the USA Swimming website under the "NCAA (Times Database)" page for additional information.

Within the Michigan LSC the following parameters should be noted when dealing with NCAA meets:

1) All requests for Observation must come from the Meet Host and their Sanctioning organization – not from individual parents, swimmers, Coaches, etc. Observation entails Officials, entry procedures, database issues, etc. and thus is within the jurisdiction of the Meet Host.

2) USA Swimming has the ultimate authority (working with the Michigan LSC) to authorize any NCAA meets such as duals and Invitationals. This is done by using application Form A which is forwarded to the Chair of the USA Times and Recognition Committee for Review.

B. Getting a NCAA or Other Meet Observed

- 1)** If you are conducting a **Non USA** swimming meet within the Michigan LSC (e.g. NCAA-Division 1, 2, 3, MAC, Masters, etc) and wish that the meet be observed pursuant to Rule 202.5 you must make a written request to have your swim meet observed sufficiently in advance of the competition. This request is sent to the MS NTV Coordinator using the appropriate **Form (Form A or Form B).**
- 2)** Apply for Observation only if a significant number of the swims to be observed have a reasonable chance of meeting current USA Swimming Summer and Spring National Championship, Junior National, World Cup, US Open, Grand Prix, Sectional or USA Top 10 qualifying standards. Check the USA Swimming website for the current qualifying times for these Championship meets.
- 3)** Requests for observation may be approved or denied depending on the likelihood of these times being attained and the availability of USA/MS certified Observers.
- 4)** Pursuant to Rule 202.5 Form A and Form B requests must be at least 10 days before the start of the meet. **However, the sooner the request is made – the better.** This is especially true with Form A requests - since Form A requests are forwarded to, reviewed by and possibly approved by USA Swimming. [Also, USA officials and USA athlete ID numbers may need to be secured.] **It is recommended that all requests be made at least 30 days before the meet.**

5) Officiating requirements:

- a) **Minimum number of Officials:** According to USA Swimming Administrative Rules, the meet to be observed must be officiated by the NGB with a minimum of 4 certified officials. These 4 officials must include a referee, a starter, and two stroke and/or turn officials.
- b) **Minimum Number of Observers:** Under USA Rule 202.5, there must be a minimum of two (2) USA observers per competition pool. (Two competition pools require four (4) Observers).
- c) **Presence of Observers:** At least two (2) USA/MS Observers must remain on deck (one on each end of the pool) for the entire meet as they are observing the performances for compliance with the USA Swimming Rules.
- d) **Compensation of MS Observers:** [The NGB Meet Host staffs the meet with the Officials of their choice pursuant to the rules of their NGB. If the officials are dually certified NGB and USA, the compensation of the MS observers is determined by the Meet Host as regularly scheduled officials of the meet.] However, if MS, Inc is requested to supply USA/MS Observers for the sole purpose of observing their meet, the meet host is responsible for directly compensating any USA/MS Observers supplied by MS, Inc. at the current MS fees schedule for MS stroke and turn judges. If it is necessary for the observers to have overnight accommodations, the meet host is also responsible for this cost.
- e) **Approval of Observers:** The MS and USA NTV Coordinators reserve the right to approve all USA observers chosen by the NGB { i.e. checking for outstanding disciplinary actions, etc.}

Use of Form A To Request Observation of Non Season-Ending meets

- 1) This form is used to request observation of Non USA swimming meets (such as high school or collegiate meets) that are not season ending Championship Meets. Examples are: high school and NCAA Invitationals, NCAA duals. Form A is ultimately transmitted to USA Swimming for their review and possible approval.
- 2) Apply for Observation only if a significant number of the swims to be observed have a reasonable chance of meeting current USA Swimming Spring or Summer National Championship, Junior National, World Cup, Grand Prix, Sectional, USA Top 10 Times or US Open qualifying standards.
- 3) No high school dual meets are designated for observation. Non-Championship level high school meets (high school conference, large Invitationals) are generally not approved for observation by USA Swimming.
- 4) This form must first be sent 10 days (minimum) prior to the event to the MS NTV Coordinator listed on **Form A**. After review and preliminary decision by the MS NTV Coordinator, the form is then forwarded by the MS NTV Coordinator to the USA NTV Coordinator for USA Swimming final review and

possible approval (subject to concurrence of the USA Program Operations Vice Chair.).

Use of Form B To Request Observation of Season Ending Championship Meets

- 1) This form is to be used for season culminating (i.e. Championship) meets. If NCAA or Collegiate, the meet must be a Season Culminating Championship or in the very immediate qualifying progression for the season culminating championship. Examples are: NCAA Championships –Division 1, 2, 3, MAC Championships, Big Ten Championships, etc.
- 2) This form must first be sent 10 days (minimum) prior to the event to the MS LSC Coordinator for review and possible acceptance. If the meet host is requesting that MS, Inc. supply USA observers it is recommended that Form B be sent at least 30 days prior to the meet. It is always recommended that the meet host secure dually certified officials as part of their NGB officiating crew.

Identifying Athletes and Entry of Times into the SWIMS Database

- 1) As part of the discussion and Observation process the MS NTV Coordinator and the meet host will discuss and decide the appropriate method for identifying athletes (securing accurate USA athlete names and USA Registration #'s) and for entering times into the SWIMS Database. The Meet Host must follow the procedure if the meet is to be Observed.
- 2) Various methods may include:
 - a) Encouraging teams who use Hy-Tek Team Manager (TM) to set up their Teams as a USA Swimming Club in TM using full names and birthdates and to enter the meet using TM. When this method is used, USA Swimming ID numbers will become part of the meet results file.
 - b) Having the meet host contact all participating teams prior to the meet and requiring athlete identification information to be submitted as a "Team Request" with the meet entries using **Form D**. The meet host will then enter the full names of the athletes and their USA ID numbers into the meet database. The USA Swimming ID numbers then become part of the meet results file.
 - c) Having all times as "Individual Request Only" by the athlete or the athletes representative (i.e. coach) at the meet or thereafter. This is done by using **Form E**. Any requests made at the meet and transmitted to the USA Observer at the meet are free of charge. Individual requests made after the meet to the MS NTV Tabulator incur a \$5 processing fee.

USA SWIMMING
REQUEST FOR OBSERVATION – NON-SEASON CULMINATING MEET
Form A

Revised 01-08

Meets requiring authorization by the Program Operations Vice President or designee **require 10 day advance application**. Such meets include High School, Collegiate, Masters' or other meets that are not season-culminating Championship meets. This completed form and a copy of the meet information must be sent at least 10 days prior to the event to the LSC NTV official for review. The LSC official will send this completed form to the Program Operations Vice President or designee for approval. The request must include a reason & explanation for the request and approval will be granted only in limited circumstances. Acceptance of verification requests from the meet is subject to proof that conditions at the meet were in conformance with the required procedures and pertinent USA Swimming Rules and Regulations.

Name of Meet: _____ **Name of Facility:** _____

Date(s) of Meet: _____ **Meet Director:** _____

Name of person filing this request: _____ **Phone:** _____

Is this meet on the regular, published calendar? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Type of Meet: ☐ High School ☐ College ☐ Masters ☐ Other (e.g. IPC)

Course: ☐ Long Course Meters ☐ Short Course Yards ☐ Short Course Meters

Approx. number of teams participating ____ Approx. # of swimmers participating ____

- ☐ Timing systems will conform to the conditions specified in 102.16 – USA Swimming Rules & Regulations.
- ☐ The number of Association officials must meet the minimum requirements as provided in Article 102.12 – USA Swimming Rules & Regulations. A minimum of **two** additional USA Swimming Certified stroke & turn officials shall be assigned as observers for the purpose of verifying conformance with USA Swimming technical rules. Observers shall be permitted access to the deck and be in position for all swims for which observation has been requested. Observers shall be positioned at each end of the course. If the meet stroke and turn officials are **dually certified** by USA Swimming and are stationed at each end of the pool, additional observers are **not** necessary. Observers should remain on deck throughout the entire meet.
- ☐ The meet referee, or LSC designee, will provide swimmers and coaches with information about the observation program and the procedures to be used to request observation. Requests may be submitted prior to the swim for which observation is desired, or all swims may be observed.
- ☐ A copy of the meet information is attached. Names and phone numbers of USA Swimming officials who will serve as observers at this meet or the dually certified officials are also attached.
- ☐ The reason & explanation for this request for Observation is attached.

This form must be submitted and accepted by the LSC NTV Official prior to submission to Program Operations for approval.

Step One – Accepted by:

Step Two – Approved by:

MS LSC NTV Coordinator

for USA Program Operations

Date:

Date: _____

LOCAL SWIMMING COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR OBSERVATION – SEASON-CULMINATING CHAMPIONSHIP MEET

Form B

This form is used to request authorization for observation of swims at High School, Collegiate, Masters or other association **season-culminating Championship meets**. Observation requests for meets that are not season-culminating Championship(s) must be made on Request for Observation – Form A.

Application Requirements:

- 1) Timing systems must comply with conditions outlined in 102.16 – USA Swimming Rules & Regulations.
- 2) Officiating:
 - a) The number of Association officials must meet the minimum requirements as provided in Article 102.12 – USA Swimming Rules & Regulations. If the stroke and turn officials are also certified by USA Swimming and are stationed at each end of the pool, no additional observers are necessary. Officials may note compliance with USA Swimming Technical Rules only for those swimmers requesting observation or the entire meet may be observed.
 - b) A minimum of **two** USA Swimming certified officials shall be assigned, one at each end of the pool, to verify compliance with USA Swimming Rules for those swims requested to be observed.
 - c) The designated USA Swimming certified officials must verify compliance with applicable USA rules and procedures.
- 3) **SWIMS Database Entry Requests:**
 - a) If an athlete's correct USA Swimming ID # and full USA registered name and birth date **is included** in the electronic meet results and the athlete is currently USA registered, no individual request for data entry into the SWIMS system will be necessary. The meet host must enter the athletes name and USA # into the meet database prior to the conclusion of the meet.
 - b) If the above data is not included in the meet electronic database results, individual requests for times must be made to the LSC NTV Tabulator where the meet took place **pursuant to LSC procedures**. **Check with the LSC – there may be a processing fee for this service.**

Name of Meet: _____ **Date(s):** _____

Name of Facility: _____ **City:** _____

By signing below, the Meet Referee or Meet Director verifies the following:

Check one of the options listed below and complete the remainder of this section.

- ☐ This meet will be observed in its entirety, exclusively by USA Swimming Officials, according to staffing guidelines specified in USA Swimming Rules & Regulations.
- ☐ This meet will be officiated exclusively by USA Swimming officials, but due to the limited number of verification requests expected, only swims specifically requested in advance will be observed for compliance with USA Swimming Rules.
- ☐ This meet will be officiated by the proper number of Association officials and also **observed by a minimum of two** assigned USA Swimming Stroke & Turn certified officials, one at each end of the competition course, in compliance with USA Swimming Rules.

Names of currently certified USA Swimming officials who will officiate at the meet:

- 1) _____ 2) _____
3) _____ 4) _____

Name of Meet Referee _____ **Phone** _____

This form must be received by the designated person in the LSC at least 10 days prior to the meet.

It is suggested that this Form be forwarded to the LSC Official at least 30 days prior to the meet.

Approved: _____ (LSC NTV Official)

FORM C
MHSAA STATE SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS (Lower Peninsula)
MS, Inc. Individual or Relay Verification Request Form
Revised 01-08

Use this form if you wish to have a time achieved at the **MHSAA LP State Championships (Div 1 or 2 or 3 –Men or Women)** entered into the USA Swimming SWIMS Database for your USA/MS registered swimmer(s). **Due to the lack of DOBs, USA ID #'s, etc** in the MHSAA meet database, it is possible that the time may not be entered unless this form is submitted. Also, **ALL** Relay Times/Relay Lead off Splits/Intermediate Distance Split Times **MUST** be requested by use of this form and submitted or they will not be entered. The swimmer must be a currently registered USA/MS athlete member for the time to be entered into the SWIMS database. **Fill out the form completely, accurately and legibly.** Then, turn in the completed form to the USA Swimming Observers in attendance at the meet. (If submitted after the meet it must be mailed along with a \$5 fee to the Office of Michigan Swimming) **Data entry for proof of times is subject to verification that the competition and the performance were conducted in compliance with all applicable USA Swimming Rules and Regulations.**

Individual Event(s): (Use one form for each swimmer or relay)

Swimmer Name: _____ **USA ID#:** _____
First, Middle, Last

GENDER: F M **DOB:** _____ **LSC:** _____ **Club Code:** _____

Name of Meet: _____ **First Day of Meet:** _____ **Location:** _____

Event #	Distance/Stroke (e.g. 100 Free)	Time	Session (See below)

-----OR-----

Relay Events: (All four must belong to the same USA Club, one form per each relay)

Swimmer Name: _____ Age: _____ USA ID#: _____

Swimmer Name: _____ Age: _____ USA ID#: _____

Swimmer Name: _____ Age: _____ USA ID#: _____

Swimmer Name: _____ Age: _____ USA ID#: _____

Event #	Distance/Stroke (e.g. 200 MR)	Time	Session (See below)

Name of person filling out this form: _____

Phone Number: _____ **E-mail Address:** _____

Check the USA Swimming website two weeks after the submission of this form to confirm that the requested time appears in the SWIMS Database. <http://www.usaswimming.org>

Into the USA SWIMS Database

A Local Swim Committee of USA Swimming rev 01-08

Contact Name_____

Meet Name: _____

First Day of Meet: _____

- 1) In addition to the below information being accurately supplied, your NCAA athlete **must be a currently registered USA athlete member** for the achieved time to appear in the USA SWIMS / National Times Database. Use the name that the athlete used to register with USA Swimming.

2) Requests for electronic loading made after the meet ends are subject to a \$5 processing fee per individual or relay event. Thus, it is highly recommended that this form include all athletes and be submitted at or before the meet.

[illegible]

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