

**Handbook**

*Texas*

*Swimming*

*Association*

**2009**

# Texas Age Group Swimming Championships (TAGS)

## Mission Statement

TAGS is a premier swimming experience designed to allow Texas Age Group swimmers to successfully participate in a quality send-of-season championship meet.

## Meet Host Selection

- A. The meet host must be a Texas LSC or a TSA member club
- B. Bid process:
  - 1. Submit Bid Forms to the TAGS committee chair on or before the TAGS committee meeting at the long course TAGS annual meeting.
  - 2. Bids shall be submitted for the next year's long and short course TAGS immediately following the current season, i.e., at the 2003 long course TAGS, bids will be submitted for the 2004 long and short course TAGS meets.
  - 3. The TAGS committee shall report the bidders to the House of Delegates and recommend the meet hosts for approval by the House of Delegates.

## Meet Invitations

- A. A draft of the meet invitation must be sent to each TSA officer and to the TAGS committee chair for their advice and approval including entry fees for the current meet and confirmation of receipt.
- B. This must be received by December first for the upcoming short course and by May first for long course.
- C. The meet invitation must be provided to each LSC Webmaster and posted on the TSA Web Site by January second for short course and June first for long course.
- D. The invitation and corresponding HYV File shall be posted on the TSA Web Site.
- E. The HYV File shall include the current TAGS events and qualifying times.
- F. The content of the meet invitation must conform to the TSA approved format.

## Host Responsibilities

The meet host assumes the entire responsibility for conducting the TAGS competition. The meet host is liable for all costs of conducting the swimming competition, including pool rental costs, awards and administrative and publications costs. TSA assumes no liability of any kind for activities involved in the conduct of the meet.

- A. The meet host shall acquire the proper and separate sanctions for the TAGS championship meet and time trials.
- B. The meet host shall provide the meet director, scoring desk and all administrative personnel for the entire meet.
- C. The meet host shall provide meet marshals for the entire meet, including the pre-meet warm-up.
- D. It is the responsibility of the meet host to select the key officials. Officials must be currently certified and registered with USA Swimming (USA-S).
- E. An application for National certification for officials must be made.
- F. The place for the TAGS pre-meet meeting will be arranged by the meet host.
- G. A Meet Committee will be appointed by the Meet Referee. This committee will be composed of five (5) people, including at least one coach, one official, one athlete and the TAGS committee chair. A single LSC may not be represented by more than two people.
- H. Heat and Psych Sheets for all preliminary sessions will be contained in the meet program and heat sheets will be posted in the starting area for each session.
- I. Coach's packet will be provided to contain the following:
  - 1. One complete heat sheet per team
  - 2. Heat sheet by session for each coach
  - 3. Athlete roster
  - 4. Relay entries
  - 5. Consistency on heat sheets from session to session
  - 6. "Estimated" time lines

- J. Meet results
1. Final results and Commlink Files will be posted on the TSA Web Site within 48 hours of the meet's conclusion.
  2. Times will be uploaded into SWIMS within 48 hours of the meet's conclusion.
  3. Format of the Meet Results:
    - a. they must indicate the name, age and team affiliation of every swimmer in each individual event. They must also include all times achieved in preliminaries, finals and any swim-offs.
    - b. In relay events, the full names and age of each competitor must be listed. The times achieved by the relay team and, if available, the lead-off swimmer's split must be included.
    - c. All events for girls must be listed together by age group (Publication Order), followed by all events for boys listed together by age group. The sequence is: 50 free, 100 free, 200 free, 400/500 free, 800/100 free, 1500/1650 free, 50 back, 100 back, 200 back, 50 breast, 100 breast, 200 breast, 30 fly, 100 fly, 200 fly, 100 I-M, 200 I-M, 400 I-M and relays.
    - d. State Records, Top 16 Times, TAGS Records and order of finish must be indicated.
- K. Financial Report: A complete TSA approved financial report and payment of all TSA fees must be submitted to the Treasurer of TSA, postmarked within 60 days of the meet.
- L. The meet host is accountable to TSA and assumes the sole responsibility for conducting the TAGS competition.

### **Rules**

Current USA Swimming Rules and Regulations will govern the conduct of these championships. Should any inconsistencies arise between TSA rules and the meet invitation, the TSA rules will prevail.

### **Eligibility**

- A. Teams: All teams must be current members in good standing with TSA to compete at TAGS.
- B. Athletes:
1. Must be age 18 or under on the first day of the meet.
  2. Must have a current USA-S registration with an LSC in Texas, but need not be attached to a TSA member team.
  3. If an athlete age 13 or over, has achieved a time that currently qualifies that swimmer to compete at a Junior or Senior National Meet, the swimmers may not compete in that event or swim that stroke / distance within a relay at TAGS. In addition, if the event is 100-yards / meters, of backstroke, breaststroke or butterfly; that swimmer may not compete in the 200 medley relay in that stroke.

### **Entries**

- I. Qualifying entry times may have been achieved from January first of the preceding calendar year for short course TAGS and from June first of the preceding year for long course TAGS and prior to the entry deadline for this TAGS. The time must meet the qualifying standard for the age group in which the swimmer is competing at this TAGS (see Appendix for the current time standards).
- II. No individual entry shall be accepted from an athlete, age 13 or over, in any event in which that swimmers has achieved a time that currently qualifies her / him to compete at a Junior or Senior National meet. Nor may that swimmer compete in a relay in that stroke / distance, nor may that swimmer's time in that stroke / distance be used to prove a relay.
- III. All entries, including relays, must be made on an official TSA entry form and must be completed in full.
- IV. FAX entries and computer entries accompanied by an official TSA entry may be used only if stated in the meet information.

- V. Entries received that do not meet the minimum qualifying time standards for an event shall be entered at the minimum time standard and the meet host shall make a reasonable effort to notify the swimmer's coach of the change.
- VI. All entry times shall be submitted in 1/100ths of a second (0.01). Entries submitted in 1/10ths (0.10) will have 0.09 seconds added to them.
- VII. Non-conforming times, as defined in the USA-S Rules and Regulations, will be entered at the minimum qualifying time standard.
- VIII. All entries must be received by the Meet Director by 6:00 PM, Wednesday of the week prior to the first day of the meet. Late entries will be accepted no later than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start of each session. Swimmers who late enter must pre-prove their time at Clerk-of-Course and will be entered at the cut-off time and swim in open lanes in the first heat or a zero heat will be added if necessary. The entry fee is \$25.00 per event.
- IX. Entry fees, as established by TSA, shall accompany all entries and must be received by the meet host by the entry deadline.
- X. A swimmer may enter as many individual events as desired, but may actually compete in a total of seven (7) events during the entire meet with no more than three (3) events on any one day plus one (1) relay per day. Time trial events will count as one of the three events allowed per individual per day, but not as one of the seven (7) events for the meet.
- XI. Relays:
  - A. A swimmer may compete in a maximum of one (1) relay per day.
  - B. The fastest eight (8) seeded relays will be swum in the finals sessions, except on Sunday.
  - C. Sunday finals: Each team must declare on its TSA Official entry Form, which relays they wish to be eligible to swim during the Sunday finals session. Of the teams making this declaration, the fastest eight (8) teams will be seeded in finals and the next fastest teams will be considered as alternates. All other teams will swim in the preliminary session. Teams seeded into the finals session must compete or scratch.
  - D. The first name, last name, age, individual swimming code (from the meet host) and order of swimming must be placed on the relay cards and returned to Clerk-of-Course by 11:00 AM each day.
  - E. Any changes in swimmers or their order of swimming must be made on the card prior to the start of the heat in which the relay is swimming.
  - F. Please refer to the current USA-S Rules and Regulations for meet entry time resolution.
- XII. TAGS Entry Fees:
 

Individual events	\$ 2.50
Relays events	\$ 5.00
Time trials	\$ 5.00
Late entry fee	\$25.00

  - A. Late entries will be accepted no later than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start of each preliminary session. Swimmers who late enter must pre-prove their time at the Clerk-of-Course and will be entered at the cut and swum in the first heat or a zero heat will be added if necessary. The entry fee is \$25.00 per event. With the approval of the TAGS committee, an additional surcharge of \$1.00 maximum per individual event and \$2.00 maximum per relay may be charged. If surcharges are approved for TAGS, they will also apply to time trial fees.

### **Meet Operations**

- I. A Meet Invitation will contain information that will govern the conduct of the TAGS meets.
- II. Meet personnel: All coaches, officials, meet marshals and meet directors must be currently registered members in good standing of USA-S.
- III. Mandatory pre-TAGS General Meeting: All participants and teams must be represented at this meeting. This meeting will be held on the night preceding the start of the meet. The time and place of the meeting will be in the meet invitation. It is the responsibility of each swimmer and coach to be aware of any decisions made at this meeting.

- IV. Pre-TAGS Warm-ups: On the night preceding the start of the meet, the competition pool will be available for warm-ups from 3:00 to 9:00 PM for short course and 2:00 to 9:00 PM for long course.
- A. A new session will begin on each hour with general warm-up for 45 minutes. During the last 15 minutes of each one hour session, once-way racing starts shall be permitted in lanes 2, 3, 6, and 7; and push / pace in lanes one and eight.
- V. Warm-up Procedures for Preliminaries: The TSA Warm-up Procedures and Safety Guidelines must be used at TAGS and included in the meet invitation. Warm-ups for preliminaries will be divided into three 35 minutes sessions. The host is responsible for publishing in the meet invitation the team assignments for preliminaries as follows: South Texas and the Woodlands in session one; North Texas and Border in session two; and West Texas and the rest of the Gulf in session three. The first warm-up session will begin at 7:00 AM. Any necessary changes may be made at the pre-TAGS meeting. There will be a dedicated "10 and under" warm-up area at TAGS.
- |    |                                |                             |                 |
|----|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| A. | Warm-up Procedures for Finals: | General warm-ups            | 4:30 to 5:30 PM |
|    |                                | Warm-ups for finalists only | 5:50 to 6:30 PM |
- VI. Ceremonies:
- A. A parade of athletes will be held from 9:00 to 9:15 AM on Friday morning of the meet.
- B. An awards ceremony will be held at the conclusion of finals on the last night of the meet.
- C. There will be no award ceremonies for individual and relay events.
- D. Team pep rallies and demonstrations may be held before the playing of the National Anthem and after the start of the first event at all TAGS sessions, but not between the two.
- VII. Seeding: The 400 I-M, 400 / 500 free, 800 / 100 free, 1500 / 1650 free events will be deck seeded and listed in the heat sheet as psych sheets. The remainder of the events may be pre-seeded or deck seeded at the discretion of the meet host.
- IX. Check-in / Scratch Rules:
- A. Any swimmer not competing in a preliminary heat or timed final heat, whether deck seeded or pre-seeded will not be penalized.
- B. A positive check-in is required for all deck seeded events. Please refer to VII above plus relays
- C. Scratching from finals will be in accordance with USA-S Rules and Regulations.
- D. A 1500 / 1650 TAGS qualifying time may be used as a proof-of-time for the 800 / 1000 free events and the time will be entered at the cut-off and seeded as a non-conforming time.
- E. Completed relay cards / forms must be turned in to the clerk of course by 11:00 AM on the day of the event.
- X. Schedule and Conduct of the Events:
- A. All TAGS meets will be conducted in a preliminaries and finals format. Short course TAGS will be held over three-and-one half days; long course over four-and-one-half days.
- B. Start time for preliminary sessions will be warm-ups at 7:00 AM and competition begins at 9:00 AM, except on Friday when the preliminary session will begin immediately after the parade of athletes at 9:20 AM.
- C. Finals sessions will begin at 6:30 PM each day except for the Sunday of short course TAGS, which will begin at 4:30 PM. Warm-ups will begin one hour prior to the scheduled start time.
- D. Individual swimmers will be allowed at least 20 minutes between swims.
- E. All individual events will be conducted as preliminaries and finals with the exception of the 800 / 1000 and 1500 / 1650 freestyles, which will be conducted as timed finals.
- F. All relays will be conducted as timed finals with only the fastest heat being swum in the finals sessions. All other relay heats will swim in the preliminary sessions. Exception: Please see **Relays**.
- G. The 800 / 1500 freestyle events will be conducted as timed finals and swum on the first night of the meets. The heats will be swum fastest to slowest, alternating girls, boys, girls, etc. The age groups will be combined for competition and scored separately.

- H. the 1500 / 1650 freestyle events will be conducted as time finals. The fastest heat of girls and boys will swim in the finals session. All other heats will swim as the final events in the preliminary session. The heats will be swum fastest to slowest, alternating girls, boys, girls, etc. The age groups will be combined for competition and scored separately. If two pools are utilized in preliminaries, during finals the girls and boys will swim simultaneously in their respective pools.
- I. Time permitting, time trials will be conducted each day. Only TAGS participants entered on the final entry sheet / disk are permitted to enter time trials. Time trials will be held at each TAGS championships between the preliminary and finals sessions.

XI. Proof-of-Time:

- A. A Proof-of-Time desk will function during all preliminary sessions to accept proofs-of-time for swimmers and relay teams who fail to achieve the minimum qualifying time standard or are disqualified in an event. Scratches do not require proof-of-time.
- B. A swimmer's seed time or a faster time must be proved prior to the swimmer being allowed to swim their next scheduled event. If a time cannot be proved, the swimmer will be assessed a \$50.00 fine and allowed to swim. If, for administrative reasons, a swimmers or the swimmer's coach is not properly notified of the need for a proof-of-time, and the swimmer is allowed to swim their next individual event; the swim will be disqualified until such time as the time is proved or the fine is paid. If a second offense occurs at the same TAGS meet by the same swimmer, another \$50.00 fine will be assessed and the swimmer will be barred from further competition at this meet. Failure to prove a relay time shall not affect the eligibility of individual swimmers on the relay or other relays of that team.
- C. If the swimmer refuses to pay the fine, the club to which the swimmer is attached at TAGS will be responsible for paying the fine. If the fine is not paid by February first or July first for fines levied at the preceding TAGS, the amount of the fine will be doubled. If the club refuses to pay the fine by the next pre-TAGS meeting, it will be barred from further TAGS competition until such time as the fine is paid.
- D. At each TAGS meet, it is the responsibility of the meet host to collect the fines paid at TAGS and to include a list of all unpaid fines in the financial report to the TSA Treasurer.
- E. Acceptable Proofs-of-Time:
  - 1. OVC Copies
  - 2. Official final results from USA-S Sanctioned or Approved meets
  - 3. Official final results from high school, college or YMCA meets
  - 4. Other official meet results is approved by the Meet Referee
- F. Non-conforming times may be used for proof-of-time.
- G. Times submitted for proof must have been achieved from January first of the preceding calendar year for short course TAGS and from June first of the preceding calendar years for long course TAGS; and prior to the entry deadline for this TAGS. The time must meet the qualifying time standard for the age group in which the swimmers is competing at this TAGS.
- H. Pre-proving the 800 / 1000 and 1500 / 1650 freestyle events has been eliminated. Positive check-in will be according to TSA Rules.
- I. Relays:
  - 1. Relay times may be proved in composite or aggregate
  - 2. The names of the relay swimmers must be listed in the Officials Final Results used to prove the time must be swum within the approved time period and the swimmer must be currently eligible to swim on that relay.
  - 3. In long course TAGS, the 13 – 14c and 15 – 18 200 medley relays may be proved with 400 medley relay qualifying time standard or faster, but only when the 200 medley relay is entered at the minimum time standard. The 200 medley relay cannot be used to prove the 400 medley relay entries.
  - 4. Times must be proven to 1/100ths of seconds (0.01). Times submitted in 1/10ths of seconds (0.10) will have 0.09 seconds added to them.

XII. Awards:

- A. Individual and Relay Awards:
  - 1. Medals will be awarded to the first eight (8) individual places and to the first three relay places. Ribbons will be awarded to relay teams finishing in fourth through eights places.

2. A high point trophy / plaque will be given to the female and male swimmers in each age group based on the total number of points scored in individual events during the meet.
3. A State of Texas Plaque will be awarded to the outstanding female and male swimmer of the meet, regardless of age, who place highest in the Reportable Top 16 Rankings of the previous year using the following methodology:

*The Top 16 Ranking List is printed annually in Swimming world Magazine. The winners will be determined by the most points earned for times equal to or better than a place in the previous year's "Top 16 in the Nation" age group list. In the event no points are scored according to the following formula, the award will not be given:*

<b>Place</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<b>Points</b>	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

*Example: A swimmer's best time earned in either preliminaries or finals of an event equals the first place time in the Top 16 list, so the swimmer earns 16 points. The swimmer swims another event and her / his time equals the 6th place time in the Top 16 list; therefore she / he earns an additional 11 points. This formula is continued throughout the meet. More than one swimmer in an event may place in the Top 16 list and each swimmer is entitled to the points earned.*

**B. Team Awards:**

1. A Team Age Group Award will be awarded to the highest score in the following age groups for each gender: 10 and under, 11 – 12, 13 – 14, and 15 – 18; using individual and relay events.
2. Texas Flags will be awarded to teams that finish first through tenth place in combined scoring.
3. The first place team in combined scoring will be awarded a team trophy. This is a traveling trophy and must be brought to the next TAGS by the previous winner and awarded to the next Team Champion.

**C. Awards Standards:**

1. Medals, ribbons, trophies and plaques must be of a quality consistent with awards for past TAGS meets.
2. The flags will be the standard State of Texas Flag, two feet by three feet in size. On each flag will be sewn the place (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.), the year of the competition and whether the flag is awarded for the short course or the long course championships as awarded in past TAGS meets.

- D. Distribution:** Team Flags, Outstanding Swimmer Plaques and High Points Trophies shall be awarded within one hour of the conclusion of the meet or the meet host shall mail them at their (the host's) expense, to the participating teams postmarked no later than one week following the meet. Teams and athletes who are not present to receive these awards shall make arrangements to get them at no expense to the meet host.

**XIII. Scoring:**

The meets will be scored to eight places as follows:

Place	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Individual	9	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Relay	18	14	12	10	8	6	4	2

Team points will not be awarded for performances that do not meet or better the minimum time standard for that event. However, the swimmer is entitled to the individual point award if the time can be proven.

**XIV. Order of Events:**

Please refer to the Appendix

### Time Trials

- I. Time trials will be conducted each day between the preliminary and finals sessions – time permitting. Only TAGS participants entered on the initial entry sheet / disk are eligible to participate.
  - A. Events will be requested by the swimmers
  - B. An individual swimmer may participate in only one time trial per day
  - C. A fee, plus surcharge if allowed for TAGS entries, will be charged for each time trial.
  - D. Time trials results cannot be considered for State Records.
  - E. Time trial results will be printed and attached to or made a part of the TAGS Final Results.

### Time Standards

- I. The TAGS Time Standards will be updated annually and approved at the annual TSA meeting of the House of Delegates.
  - A. The TAGS time standard formula will use the 24th place, averaged over three-years for individual events and the fastest 16th place time for relays, the 800 / 1000 and freestyles over the same three year period. In the event there are not 24 or 16 competitors in a given event for three consecutive years, 1% will be added to the time standard. The entry time shall not get slower unless approved by the TAGS committee.
  - B. Swimmers may qualify for TAGS using the USA-S standard altitude adjustments.
  - C. The time standards may be found in the Appendix.

### Financial Penalties

- I. If the postmark deadline for the draft and / or final meet invitation is not met, there will be a fine of \$50.00 per day levied against the meet host for every day past the deadline.
- II. If the required copies of the final results are not mailed within two weeks following the TAGS championships, the host will pay a fine of \$100.00.
- III. If the meet host fails to postmark a complete financial report, proof-of-time fine payment, and / or TSA splash fee payment within 60 days of the last day of TAGS, a fine of \$100, 00 for each omission will be imposed.
- IV. Failure to provide proof-of-time at TAGS: Please see the Proof-of-Time Section.
- V. All fines are due and payable to the TSA Treasurer.

### Warm-up Procedures

- I. Coaches may choose to control warm-ups in their assigned lanes (s), but in either case must adhere to safety considerations.
- II. General Warm-Up:
  - A. No diving from the blocks or pool edge / deck
  - B. Swimmers must enter the water feet first in a cautious manner
  - C. No sprints or pace work is permitted
  - D. All lanes are to be utilized for general warm-up
- II. Specific Warm-ups:

Pool	Push / Pace	Race Starts	General warm-up
8 Lanes	1 and 8	2, 3, 6 and 7	4 and 5

- A. Push / Pace Lanes: Push off from starting end – circle swimming – NO DIVING!
- B. Racing Starts: Sprint lanes for race starts and backstroke starts. Race starts at designated times, swimming in one direction only.
- C. General Warm-up: No diving or sprinting – circle swimming only

1. Discretion and common sense must always prevail during warm-ups. Therefore, the Meet Referee may modify any procedures should the needs of the meet so dictate.

III. Coach Responsibilities:

- A. Coaches shall instruct their swimmers regarding the safety guidelines and warm-up procedures.
- B. Coaches shall supervise swimmers throughout the warm-up session

IV. Host Responsibilities:

- A. Safety marshals shall be on deck to enforce the safety guidelines and warm-up procedures.
- B. The marshals shall report to the Meet Referee and / or the Head Marshal and receive instructions from them.
- C. Marshals shall have the authority to remove any swimmer or coach from the deck for the remainder of the warm-up session if found to be in violation of these procedures.
- D. A dedicated warm-up area for 10 and under swimmers must be provided.
- E. The warm-up procedures shall be included in the meet information.

V. Miscellaneous: Discretion and common sense shall always prevail during warm-ups. Therefore, the Meet Referee may modify any procedures should the needs of the meet so dictate.

These Warm-up Procedures and Safety Guidelines were adopted by the Texas Swimming Association, October 1987, to conduct North / South All-Star Competition and Texas Age Group swimming Competitions (TAGS)