



# Official Times

GPSA Wiki Documentation

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Greater Peninsula Swimming Association

[wiki.gpsaswimming.org](http://wiki.gpsaswimming.org)

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What makes a swim time **official** in a GPSA dual meet, how backup timing works, and what to do when a swim has **no valid time**. This is the shared reference behind the role guides — the [referee](#) verifies times, the [scorekeeper](#) records them — and it explains the concepts both rely on. For the binding rules, see the [GPSA Rulebook – Time Recording](#).

## Times don't score — places do

GPSA dual meets are scored by **place (sweeps), not by time**. The order of finish on the initialed Place Judge Form determines team points and ribbons; the clock does not. Times are still recorded for every swim, but they are **informational** — they feed:

- seeding for future meets,
- team and pool records,
- City Meet (Championship) qualifying standards, and
- time-drop recognition.

Because of this, a missing or garbled time **never changes the score or a swimmer's place**. That is exactly what makes it safe to clear a bad time rather than guess at one. See [Scoring](#) and the referee's [Verifying Times](#).

## How a time is recorded

A swim time reaches the scorekeeper through one of the recording methods GPSA allows, and is entered into **Meet Maestro**:

| Method                                | What it is                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Electronic timing (Time Drops)</b> | Times captured at the wall and sent to Meet Maestro. See <a href="#">Time Drops</a> .                         |
| <b>Lane slips</b>                     | Written cards with the swimmer, lane, event, and time.                                                        |
| <b>Lane timer sheets</b>              | Multi-heat timing forms — used in place of lane slips, or as a written backup alongside an electronic system. |

Times are recorded to hundredths of a second; a runner delivers them to the scorekeeper, who enters them into Meet Maestro. For the authoritative procedure, see [GPSA Rulebook – Time Recording](#).

## Backups and which time is official

Manual stopwatches are recommended as a backup **even when an electronic system is running** — but not every meet runs both, so a backup time is not always available.

**A backup (manual) time is official only when the electronic system fails.** When the timing system captured the swim, that time stands; the watch is a fallback, not an override. For how a specific system evaluates and reports its times, see the [Time Drops](#) page.

## When there's no valid time

Sometimes a timing issue — a missed button, a failed watch, a start that wasn't captured — leaves a swimmer, or a whole heat, with **no usable time and no backup to fall back on**. The swim still happened and still placed, so this is **not** a no-show, scratch, or DQ.

In that case the time is **cleared**: the [referee](#) directs it, and the [scorekeeper](#) blanks the time in Meet Maestro.

- **Do not fabricate a time**, and **do not fall back to the swimmer's seed time**. Both publish a swim that never happened and corrupt the swimmer's record and time-drop history.
- There is no "NT" code to type in Meet Maestro — you **clear (blank) the time field**. A cleared time is published as **NT (No Time)** in the results.
- Because scoring is by place, the swimmer keeps their **Heat Place** and points exactly as they finished. A cleared time changes nothing in the standings.

! Clear it — never guess

When a time can't be salvaged and there's no backup, the only correct action is to clear it and let it publish as **NT**. A fabricated or seed-substituted time is worse than no time: it looks real, misrepresents the swim, and pollutes records and time-drop tracking. The place — set by the sweeps — is what counts.

This is a practice standard; the rulebook does not yet address a missing time directly. When the cause of a blank time is unclear, or a swim can't be reconstructed, the referee makes the call — in consultation with both [GPSA Representatives](#) when needed.

## Who does what

| Role                                         | Responsibility for times                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Timers</b>                                | Capture each swim (button and/or stopwatch) and report any timing issue immediately.                                     |
| <b>Timing operator</b> (if using Time Drops) | Runs the timing system and confirms each race is saved so times can be loaded.                                           |
| <a href="#">Scorekeeper</a>                  | Enters times into Meet Maestro, flags discrepancies to the referee early, and clears a time when the referee directs it. |
| <a href="#">Referee</a>                      | Verifies times as an independent check on the sweeps, rules on discrepancies, and directs when a time is cleared.        |

## Spotting time problems

Times are an independent record of the same races, so they are a useful check on the order of finish. Obvious outliers — a time that doesn't fit the event, a big unexplained drop from seed, or an order of finish that fights the times — should be **raised early**, while the heat is fresh. The scorekeeper flags them live; the referee verifies and rules. Neither re-ranks by time: a drastic mismatch triggers a *check*, not a re-rank. See the referee's [Verifying Times](#) for the full method.

## Related Resources

- [Referee Guide](#) - Verifying times and directing a cleared time
- [Scorekeeper Guide](#) - Entering times and clearing a no-time in Meet Maestro
- [Time Drops Timing System](#) - The electronic system used by most GPSA teams
- [Meet Preparation Guide](#) - Timing setup and the forms times flow through

## Rulebook References

- [Conduct of Meets – Time Recording](#) - Recording methods and procedure
  - [Scoring](#) - Why place, not time, decides the meet
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## Questions?

Contact the GPSA Rules Committee for guidance on timing procedures or rules interpretations.