



SWIMMING EVENTS WITH TWO SWIMMERS PER LANE (DOUBLE-LANING)

Ordinarily, races are swum with one swimmer per lane. However, meet hosts frequently decide to double-lane distance events in order to allow more swimmers to participate in these events without adding excess time to the meet. The decision to double-lane must consider safety (i.e., problems resulting from collisions) and performance concerns. To address such concerns, the following guidelines are suggested:

When should double-laning be considered and when not?

- Double-laning may be considered when it allows significantly more swimmers to participate in events that they might not otherwise be able to do. This includes situations where swimmers meet event qualifying entry time standards as specified in the meet information package.
- Double-laning may also be considered when it significantly reduces the length of a session to an appropriate length (i.e., less than 4 hours). In general, a session that can be completed in less than 4 hours without double-laned events should not include events run with two swimmers per lane.
- Double-laning should not be considered when its primary purpose is to allow officials/coaches/others to get home early.
- Double-laning is not recommended for provincial, selection, and other championship meets.
- Double-laning is not recommended when lanes are less than 2.5 meters wide.
- Where events will be swum two per lane, this should be noted in the meet information package to allow coaches and parents to manage their entry decisions appropriately.

Which events should and should not be swum two per lane?

- Double-laning should not be used for any events other than Freestyle. Participating swimmers should be informed that they will be required to swim front crawl in these races, and that no other stroke will be allowed. **This should be noted in the meet information package.**
- Double-laning is likely to be of greatest benefit and least problematic when it comes to: Long Course rather than Short Course events; and longer (e.g., 400m, 1500m) rather than shorter (200m) events.
- Double-laning is **not** recommended for 50m, 100m, or 200m events.
- Double-laning is **not** recommended for heats and finals events.
- Double-laning should not be utilized if a swimmer is wanting a time to stand for a "record" at the regional, provincial or national level.

Which heats should be double-laned?

- In a senior-seeded timed final event with an odd number of heats, it is recommended that the fastest heat swim single-laned. All slower heats can be swum two per lane. If there is an even number of heats, the two fastest heats can be swum with one swimmer per lane.
- Times achieved in a single-laned heat shall qualify for a "record" at the regional, provincial or national level. This should be noted in the meet information package.

Should all age/gender groups be included in double-laned events?

- Double-laning is not recommended for events involving swimmers aged 12&U.
- Double-laning is not recommended for events involving para swimmers.
- When events are being swum two per lane, it is recommended that both swimmers occupying each lane be similar with regard to age and gender.

What are coaches' and officials' responsibilities when events are being double-laned?

Coaches:

- Prior to each double-laned event, to educate participating swimmers regarding to how to swim this event.

Officials:

- Meet information: Relevant information regarding double-laned events (as noted above) should be duly noted in the meet information package.
- Coaches meeting: A coaches meeting should be held before or during each session in which double-laned events are being run. Coaches should be informed that their assistance is required in educating participating swimmers with regard to how to swim double-laned events.
- Officials briefing: Timers and Stroke and Turn Officials' roles with regard to double-laned events should be discussed. Timers can assist the Referee in ensuring that swimmers know which side of the lane is theirs. It is recommended that Stroke Officials walk the entire length of the pool deck throughout such events (i.e., not sit down). Both Stroke and Turn Officials are asked to assist in identifying swimmers who may be swimming on the incorrect side of their lanes and in having them move to the correct side.
- During the Event: Referees and/or Starters should remind swimmers by announcing the protocol prior to the start, that it is being swum two per lane. For younger/novice swimmers, it may also be necessary to talk to each individual swimmer prior to starting the race. The protocol in BC is to have the first heat start on the right hand side of the lane as the swimmer enters the lane from the start position, and remain on that side of the lane throughout the race. The following heat will then start on the left hand side of the lane (for single-ended events) or right hand side of the lane (for double-ended events) as the swimmer enters the lane from the start position, and remain on that side of the lane throughout the race.
- Referees should check to ensure that swimmers arriving from a prior heat are on the correct side of their lanes before initiating a start for their heat. If a swimmer from the prior heat continues to swim on the incorrect side of the lane and/or a safe and fair start can no longer be achieved once the offending swimmer has moved to the correct side of their lane, the race should proceed as a single-laned event, with the offending swimmer subsequently disqualified (delay of meet).
- Referees should watch and monitor the swimmers' progress throughout the race. Attempts should be made to ensure that any swimmers who begin to swim on the incorrect side of the lane during the race move to the correct position and/or are stopped from proceeding (e.g., are stopped at the turn end of the pool). Turn Judges (in consultation with the Referee) should be called upon to assist the Referee in halting a swimmer's progress. Serious violations (including obstructions that either could or do result in collision) should result in the offending swimmer being disqualified from the event by the Session Referee. Disqualification is based on Rule SW 10.7: Obstructing another swimmer shall disqualify the offender.
- Any swimmer whose performance is impeded by another swimmer should be given the opportunity to swim the event in a later heat.