

Clerk of Course Training

Updated for the 2022 Season



Agenda

- GRAL Handbook
 - Clerk Description
 - Training and Recertification
 - Trainee Requirements
- Setting Up and Starting the Meet
- Individual Events
- Relays
- Troubleshooting
- Time to Practice



GRAL HANDBOOK



Section XIII of GRAL Handbook – Clerk of Course Description

- Clerk of Course (Certified): The individuals for the Clerk of Course work together to get the swimmers seeded in heats and lanes. All classifications of swimmers may be combined to fill the heats. Individual swimmers will be placed according to seed time, fastest to slowest in lane groups, based on USA Swimming seeding rules for standard events. Heats will be swum slowest first and fastest last. The League will conduct pre-seeded meets that are seeded after an accurate Positive check-in has been turned into the Home Club Computer Rep 30 minutes prior to the start of the meet. The swimmers should be allowed to swim with the fastest competition available. In a pre-seeded meet, empty lanes may occur in any heat if there are scratches. SV and ADV relays will be treated as a SINGLE event.



Section XIII of GRAL Handbook – Clerk of Course Description

- The visiting and home clubs must provide to the home Computer Rep. (or meet Computer operator) a list of all scratches and changes no less than 30 minutes prior to the start of the meet.
 - Every effort shall be made to allow all swimmers registered for that meet to swim even if they are late arriving to Clerk. The Referee will be notified if a swimmer has shown up to swim after his/her assigned heat is in the water. The late swimmer may be placed in an empty lane in a later heat. The timers involved in the change will be notified of the late swimmer's name. The Referee must be consulted if there are additions to an event or if an event needs to be skipped in order to combine heats.
 - The Clerk of Course shall keep the Starter and Referee informed of any changes to the number of heats for each event. The Clerk shall also inform any affected timers of the changes and is encouraged to write the changes on his/her meet program.
 - The Clerk shall work with the Announcer to give swimmers a first call, second call, and final call for each event.
 - The Clerk and Computer Rep should work together to seed the relays. The computer will not competitively seed the relays (i.e., it will place teams in clumps rather than dispersing them throughout the heat) and either the Computer Rep or the Clerk may make changes to ensure the seeding is more competitive. The Clerk must be familiar with how to seed in case changes need to be made after the program is printed. If relays scratch, the Clerk shall reseed them so that there are not any open lanes. Relay seeding and/or changes must be communicated to the Starter and Referee prior to the start of the event.



Handbook

- The Handbook can be found at www.gralva.com/general-information
- For more information, see www.gralva.com/officials
- You can always email me at christy@gralva.com



Section XIII of the Handbook – Training and Recertification

- **TRAINING** – The Clerk of Course must complete the GRAL training courses and pass the written test during the first year of service OR if certification is NOT continuously maintained. To complete the certification process, the trainee must walk a half meet (either first or second) and all relays as Clerk.
- There is no USS equivalent to a GRAL Clerk of Course, therefore all GRAL Clerks must go through the training.
- **Recertification**
 - Work a minimum of two halves per year.
 - Pass GRAL written test every other year



Responsibilities of the Trainee

- Take this class from a certified GRAL trainer and pass the accompanying test
 - If you walk prior to passing the test, that walk will NOT count
- You can walk at either a home meet or an away meet, but home is preferred
 - Walk (shadow a certified clerk) all relays (8&under relays that are swum at the beginning of the meet; older relays that are swum at the end of the meet)
 - Walk (shadow a certified clerk) for one half (either first or second)
- You can have a paper copy initialed by the Head Clerk for backup
- Make sure your name is on the cover sheet
 - The cover sheets are posted on the GRAL Web site shortly after the meet. **It is your responsibility to make sure you are on it.** If not, contact officials@gralva.com as soon as possible!



When Walking a Position . . .

Model

Watch the experienced worker in the position. Ask questions when you can.

Practice

Work the position yourself with the experienced worker monitoring.

Feedback

Get feedback (both positive and constructive) on how you did from the experienced worker. Then start the process again.



GRAL Officials Facebook Group

- GRAL has a Facebook group for officials!
- All GRAL officials, trainees and coaches are invited and encouraged to participate
- Group discussion can include:
 - Questions on rules or rule interpretations
 - Share lessons learned and observations
- Intent is to promote consistency among GRAL officials
- Discussion on FB group does not constitute official guidance on rules
- To join:
 - Search GRAL Officials on Facebook and answer the questions with your team and noting that you are a Clerk



SETTING UP AND STARTING THE MEET



Setting Up Your Area

- Benches, Chairs behind blocks
 - Set up to keep the flow going
 - The more benches you can set up the better
 - Each bench should have a number for each lane, or you can have the same number of benches as lanes, and the benches can be numbered for heats.
- Supplies
 - Pencils, post its
 - Event numbers board that can be seen on deck (may need multiple)
 - Speaker to amplify your voice



Restricted Access

- The only people who should be in the area during a meet are swimmers who are being seeded and clerk/clerk help.
- No other swimmers or parents are allowed.
- Coaches, parent reps, and referee have unrestricted access, but if it becomes a problem, talk to the parent rep or board rep.



Personnel

- Personnel needed:
 - Head Clerk and at least 1 per position per half (benches, chairs behind block, etc.)
 - You will get one helper from the away team for each half. Please give him/her a meet program, put him/her where you need him/her, and treat him/her with respect.
- Announcer is part of your team.
 - Announcer – call no shows? It's up to your team; many do not.
 - Do not call an event whose age group is on the blocks (or behind). They won't hear you and you don't need that much time to set up. Take a break.
 - Also, please instruct your announcer to NOT talk over the Starter. The announcer should wait for the Starter and not the other way around.



Starting the Meet

- As soon as you get the 8 & Under Relay cards seeded, you can start organizing them(it takes a while)
 - You should have extra parents and even older swimmers helping
 - These helpers are not allowed to touch the swimmers once they get in the water for the in water start, but they can give verbal directions
- The meet can start (on referee's call) once you have the 8 & Under Relays and the first seven events in paperwork; the rest will come
- Should receive 4 copies of meet program – 3 for home team, one for away team
 - Unless you ask the computer rep for more or fewer copies
 - You are encouraged to take notes on your program of no shows or any seeding changes that you make



INDIVIDUAL EVENTS



Individual Events – Pre-seeding

- With the introduction of pre-seeding, the computer now does all the seeding for you. All you have to do is follow the meet program.
- The meet is seeded 30 minutes prior to meet start.
- Empty lanes are okay due to scratches. You shouldn't have too many if the pre-seeding was done correctly (i.e. kids who didn't show up are taken out).



The Meet Program

GRAL A

HY-TEK's MEET MANAGER 7.0 - 2:16 PM 5/12/2020 Page 1

Chestnut Oaks at Colonies - 7/16/2019 to 7/17/2019

Meet Program - GRAL Regular Season Meet

Event 2 Girls 9-10 100 SC Meter IM

GRAL Reg.Sea: 1:17.69 7/3/2019 GABRIELA CARVALHO

2019: 1:17.59 7/16/2014 JILLIAN HAIG

Lane	Name	Age	Team	Seed Time
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Heat 1 of 2 Finals Starts at 06:00 PM

1				
2	GRESOCK, KATE E	9	COLONIES	2:46.97
3	BUTCHER, KAITLYN E	9	COLONIES	2:05.39
4	COSTELLO, EVIE E	10	COLONIES	2:13.25
5				
6				

Heat 2 of 2 Finals Starts at 06:04 PM

1	HARRISON, JULIA G	10	CHESTNUT OAKS	2:01.96
2	CONCEPCION, MIA A	10	COLONIES	1:51.77
3	CARLSON, ANNIE L	10	COLONIES	1:39.00
4	BEATTY, LILLY R	10	CHESTNUT OAKS	1:48.09
5	DENHOLM, MACKENZIE	10	COLONIES	2:01.31
6				

Heat 2 of 2 Finals Starts at 06:15 PM

1				
2	CASEY, DECLAN P	12	COLONIES	1:30.74
3	BALDWIN, COLE D	12	CHESTNUT OAKS	1:23.47
4	BREWER, CARSON	11	COLONIES	1:28.21
5	RETTIG, SEAN M	11	CHESTNUT OAKS	1:37.12
6				

Event 6 Girls 8 & Under 100 SC Meter IM

GRAL Reg.Sea: 1:29.28 6/23/2004 EILEEN WANG

2019: 1:46.00 7/18/2014 RILEY CAMPBELL

Lane	Name	Age	Team	Seed Time
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Heat 1 of 1 Finals Starts at 06:17 PM

1				
2				
3	GOULDIN, MIA L	7	COLONIES	2:02.03
4				
5				
6				



Individual Events – Clerk's Job

- Your job is to keep the flow going
- Call kids' names and place them on the bench
- Tell them their heat and lane numbers
- Remind swimmers to tell the timers their names



RELAYS



Relay Cards

- It is recommended that you have a second trained clerk who seeds the older relay cards while the main clerk is working the meet. This way the second clerk can focus on the seeding.
- Get 8 & Under Relay cards from Computer Rep as early as possible to start setting up
- Other relay cards should arrive by Event 40 (13-14 Girls Fly)



Relay Changes

- Coaches can make changes to the relay cards up to when heat is on the block
 - Once the meet has started, relay ***divisions*** can **NOT** be changed and relays can **NOT** be added
 - Changes are written directly on the cards
- Coaches may **not** see other teams' cards



Relay Composition

- Coaches have the authority to separate Advanced and Senior Varsity Relays (have them swim in different heats) but it must go through the Referee prior to meet start and both coaches must agree
 - This is uncommon
- Relay composition: this is the coach's responsibility, but as Clerk of Course, you should know the information
 - Advanced Relays may have mixed or same gender
 - Senior Varsity Relays must be mixed gender
 - Advanced Relays have only advanced and novice swimmers
 - Senior Varsity Relays have at least one JV/V/or SV swimmer



Relay Seed Times

- All relays are given a custom time by the computer rep or coach
- These custom times follow a prescription and must be done the same by each team or seeding will be difficult
 - Senior Varsity relays are noted by a 2 in the minute spot, and then go up by one second:
 - The first SV relay will have a time of 2:00.00
 - The second SV relay will have a time of 2:01.00 and so on
 - Advanced relays are noted by a 4 in the minute spot, and then go up by one second
 - Relays start with the letter A and progress through the alphabet from fastest team to slowest team as determined by the coach
 - Therefore, the letters for each team will not match unless they have the exact same number of SV relays



Relay Cards

Fox Hall at Tuckahoe Village West - 7/16/2019

Event 1 Mixed 8 & Under 100 SC Meter Medley Relay - Finals

Heat: 1 Lane: 1 Seed Time: 4:02.00

FOX HALL - E

BK	JOHNSTON, GRANT A 7	BR	LIPAWSKY, NATALIE P 7
FL	DURR, CLAIRE J 8	FR	TOGNARELLI, CONNOR J

T1 __:__.__ T2 __:__.__ T3 __:__.__

Official Time __:__.__



Seeding Relays

- **The clerk (and not the computer or computer rep) is ultimately responsible for seeding the relays**
- All trained clerks are expected to know how to seed
- The computer (machine) may seed the relays, but they will not be seeded correctly, so the clerk will need to fix it
- If the meet program has the relays printed in it, make sure to inform the Referee and Starter of any changes.
- If the meet program does not have the relays printed in it, make sure to let the Referee and Starter know how many teams are in each heat and how many heats in each event.



Seeding Relays – How To

- Seeding is guided by USA Swimming rules 102.5.3, 102.5.4, and 102.5.6
 - We do not hold preliminary swims or swim-offs with GRAL
 - USA Swimming specifies that the lanes are numbered from right to left, but for ease of training, we will number the lanes from left to right when seeding
- Lane assignments are made in descending order of seed times by placing the fastest team in the center of the pool and moving outwards (to the right if your lanes go from right to left and to the left if your lanes go from left to right)



Seeding Relays – How To

Lanes:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5 Lane Pool	5	3	1	2	4	X	X	X
6 Lane Pool	5	3	1	2	4	6	X	X
8 Lane Pool	7	5	3	1	2	4	6	8

- The numbers in the lighter blue boxes above apply to the rank order
- Start with putting the team with the fastest time in the middle lane
- The next highest time should be placed to the right and then to the left, and so on



Seeding Relays – How To

- USA Swimming states that if any teams have the same time, their respective lanes shall be determined by draw
 - Since, by design, there are usually two teams with the same exact time, it would be tedious to do a draw each time
 - The recommendation is that you place the away team first, but switch the lanes of teams with equal seed times (not necessarily letters) to allow teams to swim against the competition and not their own team, as much as is feasible



Seeding Relays – How To

- The last heat should be composed of the fastest teams, thus heat one should have the fewest teams
- If there are multiple heats, every heat must have ***at least three*** entrants; not every heat needs to be full
- Make sure you tell the starter and the referee how many heats you have if the program does not list it (or does not list it correctly). Post-it notes are handy for this.
- You will want to use the tips and video to practice! You will need to seed relays on the test. The video that demonstrates seeding is also on the GRAL Web site.



Seeding Relays

- After you seed the relays, it will be necessary to write the heat and lane numbers on the cards before you give them to the kids
- If the computer seeds the relays and the numbers are already printed there, you will most likely need to change them



TROUBLESHOOTING



Troubleshooting - Procedures

- If a swimmer is late and event is not over, try to fit him/her in an empty lane; check with ref before not letting the child swim
- GRAL Procedure VI.3: “No swimmer may be entered in more than 3 individual events.”
 - How does this affect you? You can't add a swimmer to another event (say breaststroke) if s/he missed his/her first event (say backstroke) if that would make 4 entries. If this comes up, send the Coach to the Referee.
- GRAL Procedure VI.2: “No changes may be made after the start of the meet or Distribution of Heat Sheets, whichever comes first.”
 - How does this affect you? If a Coach comes and asks you to make a change other than names on relay cards, send him/her to the Referee.



Troubleshooting - Reseeding

Pros

- Speeds up the meet
- Swimmers have more competition swimming beside them

Cons

- A lot of hassle for a little gain
- If not communicated correctly, it could cause a lot of problems
- Often, there isn't enough time



Troubleshooting - Reseeding

- Whom to tell? Ref, Starter, affected Timers
- Rules:
 - FIRST ASK THE SWIMMERS IF IT'S OKAY! (not necessary if just reseeding same event due to no shows)
 - Must have SAME **stroke and length**
 - Can ***NOT*** create extra heat – combining of events must result in only one heat
 - Swimmers in the same event must swim together



Troubleshooting - Reseeding

- If combining two heats in the same event due to no shows, go for it; but only if 2 or more heats have just a couple of swimmers. Don't go crazy – reseeding is a big headache!
- If 2 events have very few or just one swimmer(s), ask Ref for permission
- Another situation – what if scratches make it so a swimmer is swimming alone in a heat, but the next heat(s) is/are full? Ask the swimmer if it's okay to swim alone. If not, move the two outside lanes to flank the swimmer. Let referee intervene if swimmers get upset.



Troubleshooting – Meet Postponement

- Meet programs no longer need to be returned. Someone should recycle them
- Meet will start where we left off – could be in the middle of an event (2nd heat, etc.)



TIME TO PRACTICE



Video

*Seeding
Relays*



Seeding Relay - Tips

- Sort cards by event, then by team in letter order (A to Z). Place them in front of you left to right with the away team on the top and A at the left.
- Move cards so that the away team's seed time matches the home team's seed time (e.g. match 2:00.00 with 2:00.00 and 2:01.00 with 2:01.00, etc.). You may have to leave an empty space if a team does not have a match – Ignore the letters from this point on.
- When you have matched up the teams, you can pick up the cards in rank order. The fastest should be on top and it should start with the away team if there are two with the same time (e.g. 2:00.00). If there is not a match (say you only have one team with 2:01.00) then go to the next time (2:02.00 or 4:00.00).
- Place the first card in the fastest lane (3 if a 5- or 6-lane pool; 4 if an 8-lane pool).
- Continue placing right then left until you run out.
- Optional: Switch places of teams that are equal in terms of time (not necessarily letter) to make it so teams are most likely to swim next to the competing team and not their own team.
- Number the heats starting with the slowest. Remember all heats should have at least three entrants (if there are multiple heats). If not, move a team or two teams earlier to make it three. Outside lanes may be empty.



QUESTIONS?

- Ask on the Facebook group
- Email officials@gralva.com

