Finals for which team selection, scoring points and/or prize money are awarded

- Bonus Final(s) — any finals heat in which no points or placement prizes are awarded

FINISH — the instant that a swimmer touches the wall at the end of the prescribed distance.

FINISH POINT — the physical location where an open water race terminates.

FIRST DAY OF MEET — day on which the first competitive swimming event is conducted.

FOREIGN SWIMMER — an athlete member of a World Aquatics member-country federation, other than USA Swimming, or an athlete member of USA Swimming who is not eligible to represent the United States in international competition due to World Aquatics sports citizenship requirements. (See Sports Citizen)

FORWARD START — an entry made while facing the course.

FOUL — an instance of obstruction, interference, collision, or equipment malfunction which prevents the successful completion of a race.

HEADQUARTERS — USA Swimming's office in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

HEATS — a division of an event in which there are too many swimmers to compete at one time. (See Preliminary Heats and Timed Final Heats)

HORIZONTAL — parallel to the surface of the water.

INITIAL DISTANCE — that first portion of a race for which an official time may be recorded but which is not in itself a completed event.

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION — any athletic competition between any athlete(s) or member organization(s) of USA Swimming, either individually or as part of a team, and any athlete(s) or member organization(s) (e.g., clubs) representing any foreign country.

INTRA-SQUAD MEET — a competition exclusively among members of a single club.

LANE DIVIDER — continuous floating markers attached to a line stretched from the starting end to the turning end of the course for the purpose of separating each lane.

LEAD BOAT — the boat used as a course guide for open water swimmers.

LENGTH — extent of the course from end to end.

LSC (LOCAL SWIMMING COMMITTEE) — an administrative division of USA Swimming with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by USA Swimming.

MANUAL START — the start of any timing device by an individual in response to the same starting signal given to the swimmer(s).

MAY — permissive, not mandatory.

MEET ANNOUNCEMENT — document setting forth information of the meet events, schedule, and procedures.

MEET COMMITTEE — unless otherwise specified in the meet announcement, the Meet Committee shall consist of the Meet Director, Meet Referee, and coach and athlete members as appropriate.

MEET REFEREE (OPEN WATER (OW) COMPETITION) — an experienced OW referee who oversees the operations of the entire OW swim meet and ensures that all safety plans, rules, and regulations are followed, and who makes final decisions on any procedure, modification, dispute, or protest to ensure a safe, fair, and equitable competition.

MEET REFEREE (POOL COMPETITION) — an experienced referee who oversees the entire swim meet and ensures that all rules and regulations are followed by making final decisions on any procedure, modification, dispute, or protest for a fair and equitable competition.