



## ***A brief guide to using Lap Cards and Bells (or whistles)***

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### **When and Why**

We use Lap Cards and Bells (or whistles) in the 800m & 1500m races. Lap cards, so swimmers have guidance on how many lengths to go and Bells to signal the final 2 lengths. It still remains the responsibility of the swimmer to swim the correct distance.

### **Who**

Normally at CSC the Timekeepers (Inspectors of Turns - Start end) are responsible for using them, please see note at the bottom regarding this.

### **How we do it normally at a CSC meet**

1. Set your Lap card to the required number of lengths for the race:

| Pool length  | 800m | 1500m |
|--------------|------|-------|
| Short course | 32   | 60    |
| Long course  | 16   | 30    |

2. Lean it against the left-hand side of the starting block so the Referee can see it is set to the correct number of laps for the race.
3. When you check the swimmer in, ask them what side of the block they want the lap card to be displayed.
4. Once race has started immediate count down 2 laps, so you are ready for the next turn at your end. You will always have an even number and go down in steps of 2.
5. You will need to turn both numbers over when you go from a round number, for example: 20 to 18 – turn the 2 to 1 and the 0 back to 8....if you don't the race gets longer 😊.
6. You hold the lap card on the left or the right of the block as per the swimmer's request. Hold it as low as you can safely. The lap card should be in position from when swimmers reach the 5m mark, keep it in position until they have turned and passed the 5m mark again, often they will look over their shoulder to see the card once they have turned.
7. Follow a process so you don't miss turning the card over, I always turn to the next number as soon as I stand up after the swimmer has passed the 5m mark.
8. Whilst you are waiting for the next turn, position the lap card where the referee can see it.
9. When the lap card is at 2 lengths left, you will display the lap card and also ring the bell when they come in for their final turn at your end. You ring it from when they pass the 5m mark until they pass it again.
10. As soon as they have passed the 5m mark and you stand up, reset your lap card for the next race. If your swimmer is the last swimmer and you wait until they have finished before preparing lap card, you will not have much time to be prepare for the next race.
11. Make sure you are ready to stop your stopwatch when they return after their final 2 lengths.



**Remember if you have a problem or if you are not sure about something inform the referee and they will support and guide you. You wouldn't be the first person it happens to; referees have seen it all and the swimmers always get the benefit of doubt.**

### **To note**

The referee and promoter will decide whether the lap cards are start or turn end (even numbers start and odd numbers turn) but normally there are not enough officials to have the cards at the turn end.

For the rules and guidance in full regarding lap cards and whistles/bells please follow this link [World Aquatics Rules](#), you need the World Aquatics Competitions Regulations document, details regarding lap cards are on page 126.