

TSA Newspaper Reporting Tool (June 2007 version)

This document contains instructions on how to use a spreadsheet-based tool that simplifies the production of swim meet result reports in the formats required by various local community papers in the TSA area. The following newspapers are supported:

- *The Apex Herald*
- *The Cary News*
- *The Eastern Wake News*
- *The Fuquay-Varina Independent*
- *The Garner News*
- *The Holly Springs Sun*
- *The Wake Weekly*

At this time (June 2007), no newspaper reports detailed meet results for Raleigh-based teams (*The News & Observer* will print only overall meet scores), so this tool will not be relevant for those teams. Please let me know if this situation changes; I would be glad to add support for the *N&O* or for any other publications which are willing to publish our league's meet results.

Benefits of This Application

Use of this tool is not mandatory, and anyone who wishes to continue producing meet reports for the local newspaper manually is welcome to do so. However, this spreadsheet offers the following capabilities:

- Allows you to enter the crucial meet information (score, names, times and team affiliation abbreviations) quickly, with a minimum of mouse movement
- Handles all the tiresome punctuation and formatting requirements automatically, so you don't need to type them
- Handles special circumstances such as ties, events in which fewer (or more) than three swimmers scored, and incomplete meets

What You Will Need In Order to Use It

You will need access to a computer with the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet program (part of the Microsoft Office software suite). However, no familiarity with using Excel is required.

To produce a newspaper-compatible meet report, you will need:

- This spreadsheet tool (the file named **NewspaperResults.xls**)
- A copy of the official scoring sheets for the meet you wish to report
- A copy of the rosters of both teams that swam in that meet

Note especially that last item. Copies of the rosters are essential, because handwritten score sheets are often hard to read and may contain spelling errors. Additionally, many score sheets do not include the swimmers' full names, just first initials followed by surnames. Although producing a roster is an official TSA requirement listed in the rulebook (Section 102.6.8: "Prior to each swim meet, each TSA Representative will provide the scoring table a

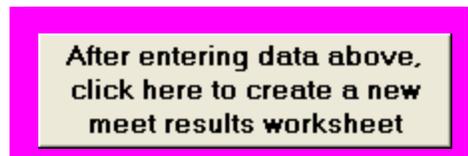
roster of swimmers and date of birth”), it is advisable to remind the other team about your need for a copy of their roster well beforehand.

Starting the Application

- 1) Save the attached file (**NewspaperResults.xls**) and double-click on it to bring up the spreadsheet.
- 2) You will need to have macros enabled for this to work, so if they are not enabled, answer “yes” when Excel asks you if they should be allowed.
- 3) You will start on a worksheet named “Create New Meet Results Sheet”. There are two white boxes you will need to fill in up at the top: one with the name of the month in which the meet was held, the one below it with the day of the month.

Month of Meet (June or July)	June
Date of Meet (1-31)	31

- 4) After entering the date information, click on the big pink-framed button just below it. This will create a new worksheet whose name is based on the meet date and then move you over to that new worksheet. Our example will use the imaginary date of June 31 so that the example “Newspaper Results for June 31” worksheet that is included in your spreadsheet will never collide with the date of any real meet.



- 5) Enter the club names and scores in the spaces provided in the top two rows. In this example, the Hogwarts team beat the Galactic Republic team. (In case of a tie, it doesn’t matter which order you choose to enter the club names).

Winning Club Name	Hogwarts	Winning Score	285
Losing Club Name	Galactic Republic	Losing Score	227

Entering Relay Results

- 6) Now press the “Enter” key a few times to move your cursor down to the fifth row, which is for the Boys 7-8 Medley Relay results.

Boys					
Medley Relay	Time	Members of 1st Relay	Club	Members of 2nd Relay	Club
7-8	2:04.67	Harry Potter	h		
		Ron Weasley			
		Neville Longbottom			
		Colin Creevey			

- 7) Enter the winning time in the “Time” column (2:04.67 in this example). If no time was available, enter “NT”. Be careful of colons and decimal points! Remember, use colons to separate minutes from seconds, and decimal points to separate seconds from hundredths of a second. (You’d be amazed at how many score sheets I get that use colons for both purposes.)
- 8) Press the right-arrow key or the “Tab” key to move over to the next column, and enter the name of the first swimmer in the first-place relay team in that event (“Harry Potter” in this example).
- 9) Press the down-arrow key to move down one row, and enter the name of the second swimmer in the relay team (“Ron Weasley” in this example). Repeat for the remaining swimmers in the relay.
- 10) Use the right-arrow key to move over to the fourth column and enter the one- or two-character abbreviation you will use for the winning relay team’s club. You can keep this abbreviation all lower-case; it will be automatically capitalized and parenthesized as necessary in the formatted output. Usually, one-letter abbreviations work best, except for clubs with multi-word names (e.g., “PC” for “Pirate’s Cove”) or when both clubs names begin with the same letter and you need to go to two or more letters to distinguish them. For instance, a meet involving both Weatherstone and Wellsley could use “WR” and “WL” respectively, since the “W” abbreviation that both clubs would normally use (or even the two-letter “WS”) would not be sufficient to identify each club uniquely to someone reading the meet details in a newspaper.
- 11) Unless this relay ended in a tie (see below for how to handle these), you can ignore the purple cells to the right, and you are now finished with the Boys 7-8 Medley Relay event. Move down to the other Boys Medley Relay events and repeat the process for each one. Just leave the cells blank for any events in which no points were awarded due to disqualifications or lack of entries.

Entering Individual Results

- 12) When you have finished with all the Boys Medley Relay events, move your cursor down to the first Boys individual event (6-and under Freestyle). Repeat the entry process, this time for the top three swimmers (i.e., the ones that scored points), using the “Tab” or right-arrow keys to move to each subsequent column. Again, just leave cells blank for events in which no third-place or second-place points were awarded, and see below for instructions on handling ties. In our continuing example, Hagrid edged out a pair of droids for first place in Freestyle:

Freestyle	Time	Name of 1st Swimmer	Club	Name of 2nd Swimmer	Club	Name of 3rd Swimmer	Club
6-and-under	11.43	Rubeus Hagrid	H	Artoo Deetoo	gr	See Threepio	gr

- 13) Now press “Enter” to move down to the beginning of the next row. Your cursor should be positioned in the “Time” column of the Boys 7-8 Freestyle event.
- 14) Enter that event and all remaining Boys’ individual events in the same way as described above. Note that you need never enter any punctuation other than the decimal points (and colons for events lasting longer than one minute) in event times, and you can move sequentially through all the events using just the “Tab”, “Enter” and arrow keys, never touching the mouse. You are of course welcome to use the mouse if you wish to copy a name from one event to another, but note that Excel can save you some effort with its auto-completion feature, in which it starts noticing values that have been entered repeatedly and offers to complete later entries after it recognizes the first few keystrokes of your typed input.
- 15) When you finish the Boys’ individual events, enter the Boys Freestyle Relay results in the same way as described above for the Medley Relay. Then repeat the entire process for all the Girls’ relay and individual events.

Generating Text Files

- 16) When you are finished entering all the event data, scroll down to the bottom of the worksheet, where you will find a large pink instruction box followed by several pink-framed buttons:

After entering data above, click one or more of the buttons below to generate meet results file(s) in the format(s) required by the specified newspaper(s).

The Apex Herald

The Cary News

The Eastern Wake News

The Fuquay-Varina
Independent

The Garner News

The Holly Springs Sun

The Wake Weekly

- 17) Choose whichever button corresponds to the newspaper to which you want to send your meet results and click on it. A message box will pop up asking you to confirm the creation of a text file that will contain the formatted meet results. Press “OK” to create this file, which will be in the same directory as your spreadsheet and named something like “**Apex Herald Newspaper Results for June 31.txt**” (substitute the name of your local paper and your meet’s actual date).
- 18) Once the file has been created, a new text-editor (Notepad) window will open on your screen containing the contents of the new text file: the final meet results text formatted to the style of the chosen newspaper, along with some instructions on where to email the results and by what deadline. Continuing our example using *The Apex Herald* as the targeted newspaper, here is what the first few lines of the generated text file would look like:

Send meet results to apexherald@mindspring.com by noon Thursday.
 Use a subject line of 'TSA swim meet results of June 31'.

Hogwarts 285

Galactic Republic 227

Boys

Medley Relay

7-8: 1, H (Harry Potter, Ron Weasley, Neville Longbottom, Colin Creevey), 2:04.67.

9-10: 1, GR (Han Solo, Lando Calrissian, Chewbacca Wookiee, Luke Skywalker), 1:32.11.

11-12: 1, H (Albus Dumbledore, Remus Lupin, Severus Snape, Sirius Black), NT.

13-14: 1, GR (Jango Fett, Chancellor Palpatine, Jabba Hutt, Count Dooku), 2:28.55.

15-18: 1, GR (Mace Windu, Obi-Wan Kenobi, Qui-Gon Jinn, Master Yoda), 1:59.32.

Freestyle

6-and-under: 1, Rubeus Hagrid (H), 11.43; 2, Artoo Deetoo (GR); 3, See Threepio (GR).

7-8: 1, Harry Potter (H), 25.45; 2, Biggs Darklighter (GR); 3, Ron Weasley (H).

... and so on

- 19) Review the contents of the text file that was generated above. If anything is missing or incorrect, re-enter data as appropriate in the spreadsheet and press the appropriate pink button again to regenerate the text file. Alternatively, you can directly edit the text file itself to your heart's content. Either way, when you are satisfied with the text file's contents, mail those contents to the newspaper according to the instructions at the top of the file. **IMPORTANT: DO NOT mail the spreadsheet file itself to the newspaper – send only the textual results!** If you mail the spreadsheet instead of the text file, your results will not get printed in the newspaper, and the editorial staff will get confused and/or cranky.
- 20) If you have a second newspaper to which you report results, or the opposing club reports to a different home newspaper, you can press a different pink button to generate a text file formatted for another paper. The name of the generated file will always include the name of the targeted newspaper, so the second file will not overwrite the first. Either way, it's a nice idea to CC the other club's TSA Rep on any meet results you do send to a newspaper.
- 21) You are done!

Handling Ties

- 22) If an event ended in a tie for any scoring place, move several columns to the right, past the end of the purple area, to where the columns are titled "Place to display for Swimmer1" (or "Place to display for RlyTeam1"), etc. You can then customize the place names in that row to reflect the particular tie. For instance, if there was a two-way tie for second place, then change the "Place to display for Swimmer2" value from "2" to "2 (tie)" and change the "Place to display for Swimmer3" value from "3" to "2 (tie)".

Place to display for Swimmer1	Place to display for Swimmer2	Place to display for Swimmer3
1	2	3
1	2	3
1	2 (tie)	2 (tie)

- 23) Note that spaces are provided for up to six swimmers (or relay teams) in each event. You should only enter the ones that scored points, leaving the remaining spots blank. Normally, there is only one point-scoring position (first place) in a relay event, and only three point-scoring positions (1, 2, 3) in an individual event. To reflect this, only those positions appear as white boxes in the spreadsheet, and the subsequent (i.e., normally non-scoring) places are shaded purple. However, ties may result in more than the usual number of point-scoring places in a particular event. For example, if there was a tie for third place in an individual event, then you will have four swimmers who scored. In that case, you will need to enter the other third-place swimmer in the "Name of 4th Swimmer" column and change the values of both "Place to display for Swimmer3" and "Place to display for Swimmer4" to "3 (tie)". It is vanishingly unlikely that more than

four swimmers will score in a single event, as it would require a 3-, 4-, 5- or 6-way tie. However, should such an anomaly ever take place, spaces for all six possible swimmers have been included.

Examples

To see a complete (if fictional) example of how this works, refer to the worksheet named “Newspaper Results for June 31” included in the spreadsheet. This worksheet contains the full results of the big meet pitting the team from the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry against the Galactic Republic’s club from a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away. Go ahead and press any of the pink buttons at the bottom of this worksheet if you want to see how the results would be reported to the various newspapers. This particular collection of results has the following noteworthy features:

- No time was recorded for the Boys 11-12 Medley Relay, so the winning time is listed as “NT”.
- There was a two-way tie for second place in the Boys 9-10 Backstroke.
- There was a two-way tie for third place (and thus, four swimmers scoring) in the Boys 15-18 Backstroke.
- Only two swimmers were able to complete the event without getting disqualified in each of the Boys and Girls 6-and-under Breaststroke, so no third place was awarded in either of those events.
- There was a two-way tie for first place (and thus, two relay teams scoring) in the Boys 15-18 Freestyle Relay.

Questions and Problems

Just drop me an email (BobGoudreau@nc.rr.com) if you have any problems with or questions about this mechanism.

Regards,

Bob Goudreau
Kildaire Farms