



## NEW REFEREE'S PROCEDURAL CHECKLIST

### Pre-Meet Preparation

- Talk to your Meet Manager (Dual Meet = Host Team Rep; Divisionals = Div Coord.) about:
  - Key officials for the session/meet. (Try to ensure number of judges is adequate for pool configuration.) Be sure Marshalls are assigned to be on duty **BEFORE** warm-ups start.
  - Unusual, special requests from teams (e.g., hearing impaired swimmers).
  - Confirm Meet Manager has required supplies/equipment for deck officials (i.e., watches, starter system & backups, copies of meet sheets for all officials, pencils, DQ, RTO slips, etc.)
  - Safety overall (practices, warm-ups, etc.).

### Competition Day

- Get there at least 1.5 hours beforehand.
  - Most important responsibility before first whistle.
  - Very hard to recover if you "start late."
- Pool Setup
  - Backstroke flag locations;
  - Lane markers;
  - Starting system and *backups*;
  - Lane lines tight (but not too tight);
  - Diving boards, ladders, other obstructions out of way (if applicable); and
  - Location of Clerk of Course area.
- Warm-ups
  - Decisions should ensure all teams are treated fairly and equally.

- Follow pool safety policies unless good reason to deviate; advise coaches before making changes.
  - Your primary concern during warm-ups is safety; coaches more concerned with getting swimmer ready for competition—work to accomplish both goals without confrontations.
  - Make sure marshals are watching warm-up while you perform other duties.
  - Instruct coaches (especially visiting coaches) about safety requirements at this pool; your warm-up rules (if any).
  - You can use facility lifeguards to serve as (or assist) your marshals.
- Briefings/Coordination with (need to have **all** of these completed at least 15 minutes prior to start of meet):
    - Team Representatives (both/all teams involved)
      - Find out questions/concerns.
        - Are there any swimmers with a disability?
        - Any problems with meet entries?
        - How will you communicate with one another? (Find out where they will be during the meet; don't accept "somewhere on the deck.")
    - Clerk of Course
      - Clerk of Course location?
      - How will you communicate with one another? (Clerk of Course helps by letting you know, in advance, when swimmers are missing from scheduled events.)
      - Remind Clerk of Course to have swimmers at Ready Area (vicinity of starting area) in time so no event is delayed. Remind Clerk to keep swimmers quiet for the start.

- Check to make sure the path from each team area is clearly indicated and that there are no unnecessary distractions or impediments.
- ☐ Announcer
  - Check to ensure Announcer knows how to pronounce names of *all* competitors. (Have announcer check with appropriate team rep. if not sure)
  - Discuss when you want mandatory announcements (5 minutes prior to start, with your concurrence; just prior to breaks, etc.).
  - Announce score periodically, but suspend if meet gets too lopsided.
  - Announce pool/NVSL records.
  - Don't hold up start of next heat/event.
  - As soon as Referee blows 4-5 short whistles (chirps) Announcer gives event, swimmers' names and lanes.
  - Don't get too talkative.
- ☐ Starter
  - You two are the leadership team; important you work together. Decide on how you will handle false starts. Discuss starting procedure; make sure starter is clear on it.
  - Cover basics. What you are looking for:
    - ⇒ When Starter should give optional commands to swimmers (stepping in water for backstroke; or, stepping forward on deck if swimmers do not respond to whistle commands).
    - ⇒ Reasonably quiet.
  - Will stop start if not going right; will keep whistle in mouth until legal start, watching for:
    - ⇒ Swimmer not taking proper position;
    - ⇒ Swimmer taking position too early;
    - ⇒ Swimmer losing balance versus breaking early;
    - ⇒ Starter making sure to release field if problem with start (NOTE: occasionally field must be recalled if start is unfair such as problem with starting device, loud noise that startles field. False start is not charged if field is recalled); and
- ⇒ Starter informing swimmers ASAP what call is.
- Note *distinction between a false start and swimmer losing balance!*
- Backstroke starts:
  - ⇒ Swimmers enter water on Referee's first long whistle.
  - ⇒ Swimmers must return to wall on second long whistle.
  - ⇒ Swimmers must be stationary before releasing field. (Use common sense here.)
  - ⇒ Toes can be curled over gutter, but swimmers may not *stand* in the gutter. (This is a difference from USA Swimming starting procedures!)
  - ⇒ A towel may be placed over the edge of the pool but must be removed before the race ends.
  - ⇒ Backstroker's hands placed below "Leg's" knees.
  - ⇒ No more than one person (not an official or Timer, or Head coach) assisting as "Legs."
- Go over procedures two of you will follow if false start is observed. (Write lane of infraction on separate pieces of paper, exchange, etc.)
- ☐ Stroke and Turn Judges
  - Review any new stroke/turn rules if appropriate.
  - Positioning:
    - ⇒ Ensure uniform pool coverage (this is dictated by pool design). (NOTE: "fair and equitable" does not require absolute *balance!*)
    - ⇒ Unless otherwise determined by the Referee, the S&Ts should be assigned to the start and turn ends of the pool.
  - Jurisdiction:
    - ⇒ Will have a primary but not exclusive sector.
    - ⇒ If only four S&Ts, two on each end, covering three lanes (no walking on sides unless there are six or more S&T judges available).
  - Assign sectors/positions and establish rotation system.
  - Overall conduct/performance:

- ⇒ Make calls promptly and without hesitation;
- ⇒ Don't "over" or "under" officiate; simply call what they see - honestly;
- ⇒ Give same attention to outside and inside lanes; observe all equally;
- ⇒ Write DQs to the rule (i.e., book doesn't recognize a "flutter" kick as a DQ in the butterfly stroke; it does prohibit an "alternating or scissors" kick.);
- ⇒ Bad (or unusual) form is NOT illegal; and
- ⇒ Ensure the event, heat ("B" meets), and lane are correct when recording a DQ.
- Tell judges where you will be and how they are to get potential DQs to you.
- Chief Timer
  - Encourage Chief Timer to check times for consistency; make sure getting intermediate times, range of times is NOT excessive, etc. Particularly important to do for first few heats.
  - Let experienced Chief Timer brief timers; if new, you or Starter brief timers.
  - Tell Chief Timer to have head lane timer check names of swimmers
- Blow 4-5 short whistles for swimmers to get ready and for announcer to give event, names and lanes, then blow long whistle (two for backstroke events – one to step in and one to set their feet) and then when field is ready, give arm motion that turns over control to the starter.
- Personally observe every start!**
- Watch performance of officials.
- Watch the finishes.
- Take care of DQs/problems before letting the next race start.
- Handling of Disqualifications:
  - If DQ is called, ask S&Ts:
    - ⇒ "What happened?"
    - ⇒ "Why is that a violation?"
    - ⇒ "Where were you relative to the swimmer?"
  - Ensure the DQ slip is written properly and completely (check lane number, event/ heat number (B meets), and ensure rule violation is written properly);
  - Give copy of DQ slip to appropriate team representative; and
  - Advise the team representative that "Your swimmer in Lane X disqualified him (her) self by ...;"
  - Give original of DQ slip to Chief Timer or scorer's table. Check at end of meet to ensure all DQ's are in with that heat of that event.
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### Just Before Meet Starts

- Are skimmer holes in competition lanes blocked?
- Has Starter tested starting and recall system(s)? Completed watch check with timers?
- Have national anthem played (performed) 2 minutes prior to the start of the meet.

### During the Meet

- Referee
  - Crowd management techniques:
    - Voice;
    - Whistle; or
    - Use Announcer.
  - Each race, before turning over to Starter, check:
    - Course is clear;
    - Timers are ready; and
    - Judges are ready.

- Starter
  - Coach starter if techniques need improving—but don't over coach.
    - Proper commands.
    - Voice inflection/good cadence/tone; appropriate pauses.
    - Early starts/late starts.
  - Starter must have **Patience!**
  - Make certain Starter relaxes swimmers if there is going to be a delay in a start.
  - Backstroke:
    - Very young backstrokers should not be put in the water too soon (they'll just hang on the edge of the pool and tire their arms out); and
    - Older backstrokers should be put into the water ASAP to permit them one last opportunity to check distance from the flags.
  - Is Starter constantly thinking of swimmers and relaxing them without

distracting them or breaking their concentration?

- Stroke and Turn Judges
  - Personally observe these officials in the performance of their duties.
  - Understand when you should make a call personally—highly unlikely except for delay of meet, unsportsmanlike conduct, etc.
  - Review all DQ slips/calls:
    - Make certain you understand the call.
    - Was the judge in the proper position to make that call? (Don't allow calls where a judge is clearly out of position to make them—i.e., calling a non-simultaneous touch underwater at the finish when the judge is either at the turn end or several steps back from the edge of the pool away from the finish.)
    - Is the event/heat (when applicable) /lane correct?

## Relays

- Relay Take-off Judges
  - Have RTO slips pre-sorted for start and turn end, hand out at RTO briefing.
  - No kneeling down.
  - Positioning (side of lane; don't block swimmer's movement on deck; don't touch departing swimmer).
  - Discuss use of Relay Take-off slips. They should be marked after each and every take-off with an "O" for a good take-off or an "X" for an early take-off. Discuss who will collect them and get them to the Referee?
- Stroke and Turn Judges
  - Remind to watch one lane only, hold position at start and turn end of pool

unless otherwise directed by the Referee.

- Remind S&T's it is not an infraction in NVSL if swimmer swims the 4<sup>th</sup> leg in any style desired**

- Announcer
  - Announce start and end of warm-ups before relays.
  - Recall officials to deck 3 minutes before start of relay events.
  - Thank visitors and all officials just prior to announcing final race of the meet.
- Finally, keep meet moving. Explain calls (if necessary) but don't debate them.
- SMILE!!! And, thank your volunteers before the meet ends!

## Post-Meet

- Review and sign the official copy of the meet results to be sent to the League. Remember this is not the computer-generated copy, this is the hand-prepared copy done at the meet. Make sure the officials listed on the meet sheet are the officials who actually worked the meet. Did you have any NVSL records in this meet? Are they properly annotated? Is the card signed by Timers, Chief timer, and you? Are all of the DQ's listed and assigned to the proper swimmer?
- Debrief your S&T's and starters. If they've done a good job, recognize it; if they need improvement, make suggestions.
- Final check with the meet manager before departing the site.
- Self critique and evaluate your performance to get ready before your next opportunity.