

Subject: Meet Referee Report for 2023 Speedo Sectionals – North Section

Dates: March 9-12, 2023

Location: Hulbert Aquatic Center, West Fargo, ND

Number of Officials: 35

Number of Evaluations of Officials: 8 (2-DR, 1-SR, 1-CJ, 4-ST)

Number of Athletes: 364

Number of teams: 63

This meet consisted of one timed-final session, six prelim/final sessions, and three time trial sessions.

The West Fargo Flyers did a good job hosting this meet and the venue provided for great competition and spectators views of it. The Meet Director and her volunteer staff made sure the swimmers, coaches and officials were always taken care of and addressed any of their needs as quickly as possible. Hospitality was good and everyone I spoke with was happy with the accommodations.

With OME still being down from the SWIMS 3.0 upgrade the Admin Team did have some challenges reconciling entries the first couple sessions but handled it all with calmness, poise, and professionalism. The Deck Referees, Starters, and Chief Judges conducted the competition with an athlete centric focus and their interaction with coaches was very good. The evaluators for the meet were Phil & Kerry Barnes. The feedback I heard from those being evaluated was very positive and I observed them both mentoring with the heart of a teacher. It was a pleasure having them there.

Overall, the meet ran fairly smooth. The athlete count initially was relatively low which led to the lowering of the time standards. While we did almost double the athlete count in the end, we still barely had enough to fill all the finals heats in most events. If the Spring Sectional is going to continue to conflict with zoned LSC's championship meets it might be preferable to reduce the number of finals heats to 3. I would also recommend that the 1500 be moved to event 25 & 26 with all but the final heats of each gender being competed in a distance session prior to Sunday Finals warm-ups. With the 1500 being the last event of the meet we had less than a full heats in finals, as most athletes chose to downseed to prelims.

It was an honor to serve as the Meet Referee for this Sectional Meet and I want to thank the Meet Host, Officials, Coaches, and Athletes for making it a successful one.

Marcus Stromberg
Meet Referee