

Central Zone 14 & Under Championships

August 7-10, 2025

Holland, MI

The Central Zone Championships hosted 887 athletes with 3732 splashes. Michigan Lakeshore Aquatics did a fantastic job hosting the meet. Potential areas of concern were identified well before the meet began and processes put in place to avoid those problems. The facility had multiple warm up/cool down pools. We were able to utilize the abundance of water by starting warmups in these pools when a couple of the sessions ran into the next session's warmups. We were able to keep our sessions starting on time. It also allowed us to complete the 10 & under awards in their last session and keep the focus on those teams and athletes receiving awards.

There were 34 officials working the meet with all participating LSC's except Lake Erie represented. Many of the officials stepped up and worked more sessions than originally signed up for. The 10 & under, distance and the very last session of finals had far fewer officials. Over ½ the applications to officiate came in 2 ½ weeks before the start of the meet. 15 of the officials were certified only at the LSC level. We had very few requests for deck referee and chief judge. Nine officials completed evaluations. Robert Scandary, the national evaluator presented a deck referee/starter workshop.

The prelim sessions were anywhere from 3.5 to 5.5 hours in length. The 10 & under sessions were 1.5 – 2 hours in length. The finals sessions ran anywhere from 1.5 – 3.5 hours in length. The 1st day of finals we went over the timeline by 30 minutes. We adjusted our heat interval and also tweaked the athlete introductions and awards and finished 20 minutes ahead of the timeline on the 2nd day of finals. By the 3rd day we were spot on.

We had a protest before the meet started regarding the bonus swims. The meet information did not specify that the bonus swims needed to have a minimum of an A standard to swim. The Zone Policy and Procedures states that the minimum A time must be met for the bonus swims. The eligibility jury was convened. The athletes from the team who protested were allowed to swim bonus events without meeting an A standard. In the future, there will need to be some clean up and clarification of these things in the meet information. We had one other protest of an athlete with a Jr cut who swam that stroke on the 200 medley relay. There was an administrative referee DQ and the call was upheld by the meet referee.

I'd like to also give a huge thank you for an outstanding job to Ian Townsend, MLA, Dawn Gurley (entry chair) and Richard Allen, administrative referee.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve as meet referee.

Respectfully submitted,
Edie Mueller