

MN Swimming: National Meet Report

TYR Pro Swim Series

Fort Lauderdale

April 20 - May 3, 2025

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I had the opportunity to officiate as a Stroke and Turn Judge and had several firsts for me.

First time at the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Center. A very nice facility which had been recently renovated and has more improvements scheduled. 10 lane 50 meter pool with separate warmup and diving well pools.

The meet was well attended with enthusiastic crowds.

I witnessed remarkable world-record performances:

- Katie Ledecky surpassed her own 800m freestyle world record, achieving a time of 8:04.12, breaking her previous mark set at the 2016 Rio Olympics.
- Gretchen Walsh made history in the 100m butterfly, becoming the first woman to break the 55-second barrier with an impressive 54.60.

The meet used a modified disqualification reporting protocol that incorporated some of World Aquatic's methods:

- No raised arm. End officials walked to the CJ, indicated the call and then walked to the deck referee to report their observation. Stroke was similar but a small arm extension was used.
- As usual a CJ informed the athletes of their disqualification.

As usual the protocol for moving from chairs to an observation position and back was a highly choreographed affair.

Two chairs per lane at the start appears to have become the norm.

An emphasis on setting the backstroke ledges to "zero" and requiring the swimmer to change the ledge's depth.

An emphasis on staying off deck during breaks. There were good viewing opportunities at hospitality.

50 meter stroke events were a new addition. It's my take away that athletes are still learning those events. No change from an officiating perspective.

Another first, the Navy's Blue Angels were conducting training flights during prelims. A bit nerve racking for the starters on a few occasions. A bit strange to see fighter jets flying in formation just 500 feet overhead with their afterburners on.

Several officials gave presentations on their participation at international meets. They were clearly once in a lifetime moments. All felt great pride in representing the USA.

Overall a good meet which I enjoyed.