

The background features a large, faded watermark of the USA Swimming logo. It consists of a shield with a white star in the center, surrounded by red and white stripes. Above the shield, the letters 'USA' are written in a large, stylized font, and below it, the word 'SWIMMING' is written in a bold, sans-serif font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the right of the shield.

Minnesota Swimming

Stroke and Turn Clinic 201 - Technical Rules



Clinic Overview

- Introductions
- Philosophy of Officiating
- Technical Rules
- Observation Tips & Tricks
 - General
 - Lead/Lag
- Pursuing Certification
- Questions



Philosophy of Officiating

- Everything is grounded in the rules. The rules determine what is allowed and what is not.
 - “Ugly but legal” is okay!
- Observation should be consistent for all rules and swimmers
- Swimmer ALWAYS gets the benefit of the doubt
- Observers, not inspectors
- Call what you see, See what you call



Technical Rules

- Four Main Strokes
 - Freestyle
 - Backstroke
 - Butterfly
 - Breaststroke
- Other Events
 - Individual Medley
 - Relays
- Please see the appendix for definitions, technical rules and common disqualifications for each stroke.



What You're Looking At

Stroke	Start	Body	Head	Arms	Legs	Turn	Finish
Freestyle	Forward	Any	Break the surface by 15M	Any	Any	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· May turn in any manner· Must touch at turn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Must touch at finish
Backstroke	Backward	On the back	Break the surface by 15M	Any	Any	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· May turn in any manner· Must touch at turn· No delay in arm pull/initiation of turn· Must be on back when feet leave the wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Must touch while on the back at finish· May resubmerge prior to finish if within 5 yards/meters
Butterfly	Forward	On the breast	Break the surface by 15M	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· First pull brings to surface· Arms over the water simultaneously	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Simultaneous up and down· No alternating, scissors or breaststroke kick	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Two hands simultaneous touch at, above or below the water surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Must touch while on the breast at finish· Two hands simultaneous touch at, above or below the water surface
Breaststroke	Forward	On the breast	Break the surface by first breaststroke pull	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Cycle stroke· Simultaneous· Elbows under water except at turn· May take one pull past hips at start/turn before first breaststroke pull	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Breaststroke kick (propulsion with feet turned out)· May take a single butterfly kick at start/turn before breaststroke cycle begins	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Two hands simultaneous touch at, above or below the water surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Must touch while on the breast at finish· Two hands simultaneous touch at, above or below the water surface



Technical Rules: Freestyle

Start

- Forward start.

Stroke/Kick

- Any style may be used. Must break surface throughout the race except swimmer may be submerged after start and each turn not more than 15 meters where head must break surface.

Turns/Finish

- Some part of swimmer must touch the wall at completion of each length or required distance.



Common Infractions: Freestyle

- Head did not break surface of water by 15 meter mark
- Walking on/springing from bottom
- No touch at turn



Technical Rules: Backstroke

Start

- In water facing start end with both hands on gutter or starting grips.
 - Gutted pool - Feet/toes may be above the water, but may not be in, on, above lip, or bent over the gutter at any time before or after start.
 - Flat wall pads - Feet/toes may be placed above the water level.
 - When using backstroke ledges - The toes of both feet must be in contact with the wall

Stroke/Kick

- Any style as long as swimmer remains on the back. Must break surface throughout the race except swimmer may be submerged after start and each turn not more than 15 meters where head must break surface.



Technical Rules: Backstroke (cont.)

Turns

- During the turn the swimmer may go past vertical to the breast and may utilize a continuous single or continuous simultaneous double arm pull to initiate the turn.
- Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall at the completion of each length.
- Shoulders must be at or past vertical toward back when feet leave wall.

Finish

- Some part of swimmer must touch the wall while on the back.
- Swimmer may resubmerge prior to the finish if within 5 yards/meters of the wall.



Common Infractions: Backstroke

- Toes above lip of gutter after start
- Head did not break surface of water by 15 meter mark
- Shoulders past vertical towards breast
- Delay initiating arm pull
- Delay initiating turn



Technical Rules: Butterfly

Start

- Forward start

Stroke

- Body kept on breast.
- Multiple kicks permitted but first arm pull must bring swimmer to the surface.
- Must break surface throughout the race except swimmer may be submerged after start and each turn not more than 15 meters where head must break surface.
- Arms, shoulder to wrist, brought forward over water and pulled back simultaneously.



Technical Rules: Butterfly (cont.)

Kick

- Simultaneous up and down movement.
- No alternating, scissors, or breaststroke kicking movements.

Turns/Finish

- Shoulders at or past vertical toward breast when the swimmer leaves the wall.
- Touch should be made with both hands separated and simultaneous at, above, or below the water surface.



Common Infractions: Butterfly

- Head did not break surface of water by 15 meter mark
- Alternating kick
- Breaststroke kick
- Scissors kick
- Non-simultaneous arms
- Underwater recovery
- One hand touch
- Non-simultaneous touch



Technical Rules: Breaststroke

Start

- Forward start.

Stroke

- Body kept on breast.
- Stroke cycle is one arm pull and one leg kick in that order.
- Simultaneous arm movement
- After start and each turn one arm stroke may be past the hipline. Head must break surface before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second pull.
- Recovery by the hands from the breast-on, under, or over the water. Elbows under water except last stroke before turn or finish.



Technical Rules: Breaststroke (cont.)

Kick

- After start and each turn, prior to the first breaststroke kick, a single butterfly kick is permitted.
- Movement of the legs shall be simultaneous without alternating movement.
- Feet must be turned outwards during propulsive part of kick.
- No alternating, scissors, or butterfly kick, except as stated, is allowed.

Turns/Finish

- Shoulders at or past vertical toward the breast when feet leave the wall.
- Touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.
- At the last stroke before the turn and at the finish an arm stroke not followed by a leg kick is permitted.
- Head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete stroke cycle preceding the touch.



Common Infractions: Breaststroke

- Head did not break surface of the water by widest part of the second stroke
- Butterfly kick
- Scissors kick
- Alternating kick
- Toes not pointed out
- Arms past hipline
- One hand touch
- Non-simultaneous touch



Technical Rules: Individual Medley

Start

- Forward start

Stroke/Kick

- Rules for each stroke apply.
- Must swim $\frac{1}{4}$ of event distance as prescribed for each stroke and swum in the order of Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle.
- Freestyle means any style other than Butterfly, Breaststroke or Backstroke.

Turns/Finish

- Intermediate turns conform to the turn rules for the stroke.
- Transition turns conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed and start rules for the next stroke



Common Infractions: Individual Medley

- Swimming more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the race in the style of butterfly, backstroke, or breaststroke
- Stroke, turn and finish violations for individual strokes



Technical Rules: Relays

Freestyle Relay

- Freestyle rules apply.
- Each swimmer must swim $\frac{1}{4}$ of distance.

Medley Relay

- Rules pertaining to each stroke apply.
- Each swimmer must swim $\frac{1}{4}$ of event distance, in the order of Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Freestyle.
- Freestyle means any style other than Butterfly, Breaststroke or Backstroke.

Takeoffs

- Swimmer's feet/foot must remain in contact with the starting platform until the incoming swimmer has touched the finish wall or pad.



Common Infractions: Relays

- Early takeoff
- Swimming more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the race in the style of butterfly, backstroke, or breaststroke (if a medley relay)
- Stroke, turn and finish violations for individual strokes



Observation Tips & Tricks

- Observe all lanes in your jurisdiction equally even when empty – watch the water!
- Scan the lanes – not inspecting
- You will not see every infraction and that's okay
- For Stroke Observation
 - When swimmer is coming into the wall, you will have a better view of the head, hands and arm movements
 - When swimmer is leaving the wall, you will have a better view of the feet and legs
 - Observe strokes according to the rules – ugly does not mean illegal
- Turns
 - Don't be a bobble head – you may not be able to observe all lanes at the same time

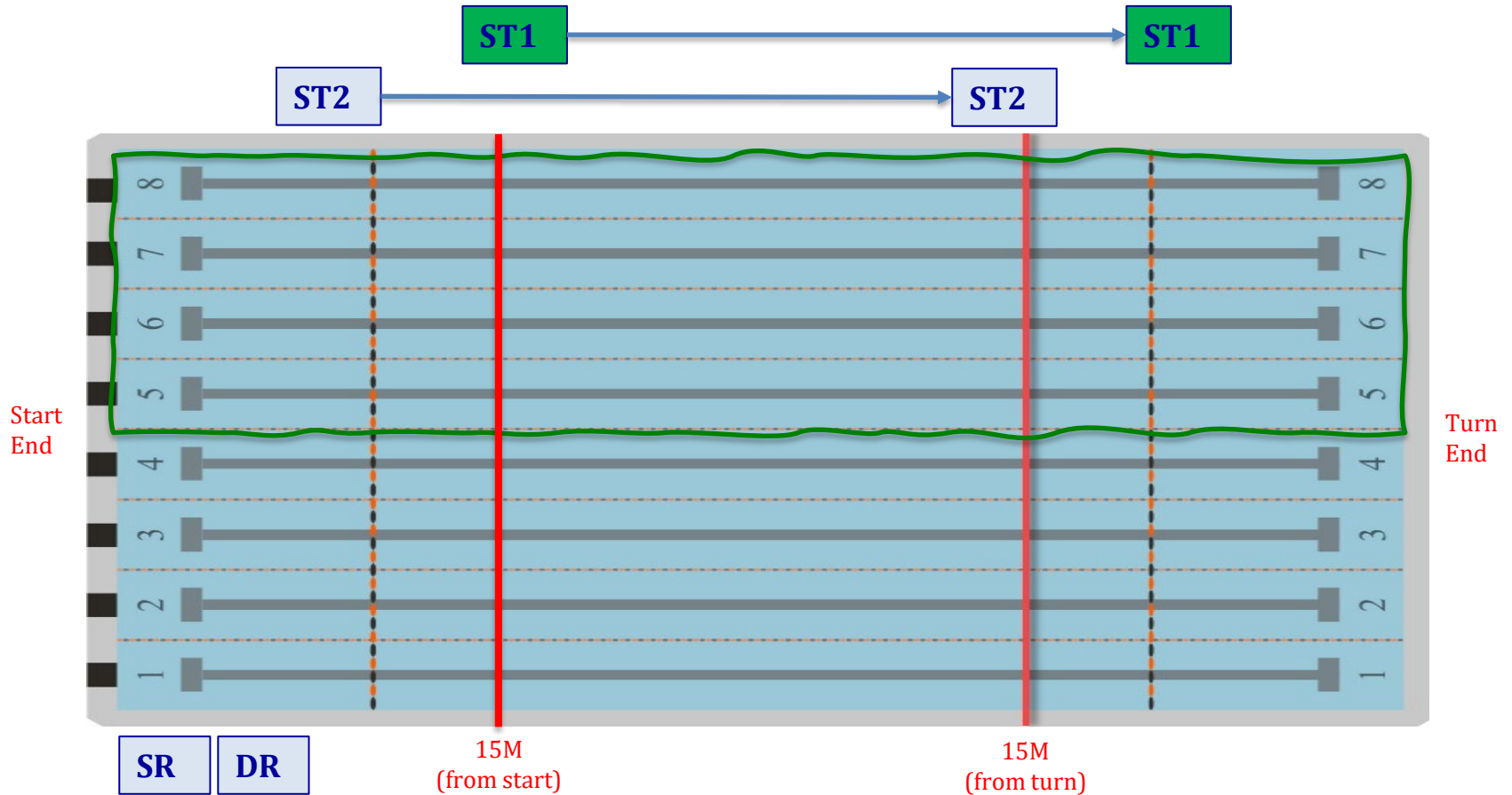


Observation Tips & Tricks (cont.)

- Lead/Lag (or walking stroke)
 - Provides a better opportunity to observe all swimmers in your jurisdiction from wall to wall
 - In general, S&T 1 will “lead” by starting at the 15M mark and walking just behind the feet of the fastest swimmers in their jurisdiction to the turn.
 - S&T 1 will wait at the turn until all swimmers in their jurisdiction have completed their turns.
 - S&T 2 official B will “lag” by starting near the flags and will walk just behind the feet of the slowest swimmers.
 - S&T 2 official will stop in a position to observe the 15M (if applicable) for the next length of the race.
 - As the swimmers leave the wall after the turn, S&T 2 becomes the lead and S&T 1 becomes the lag for the next length.
- [Lead Lag Resource](#)

Observation Tips & Tricks (cont.)

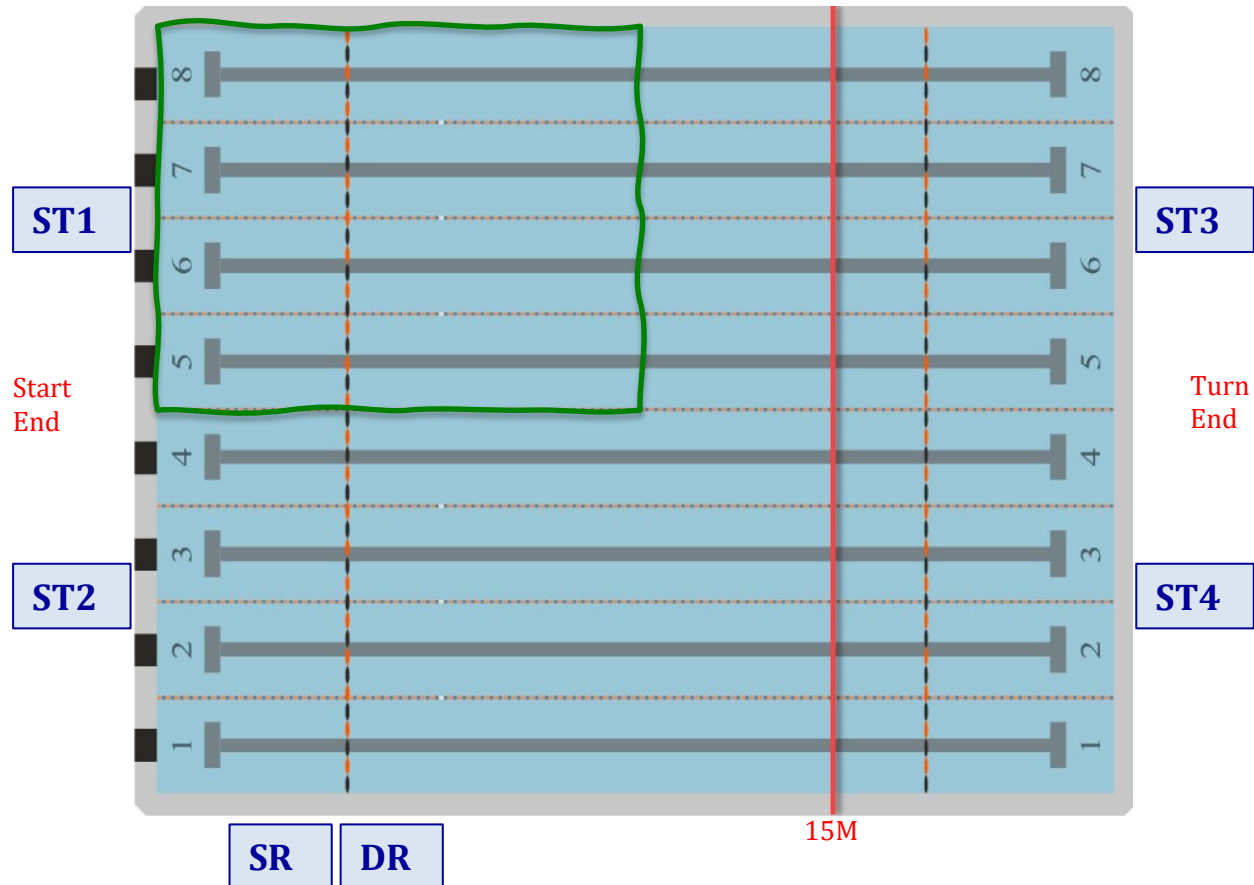
○ Assignments and Jurisdiction – Lead/Lag





Observation Tips & Tricks (cont.)

- Assignments and Jurisdiction - Quadrants





Pursuing Certification

- **On-Deck Training**
 - Link to the S&T apprentice form [HERE](#) from MNSI – Officials website
 - Link to the Junior S&T apprentice form [HERE](#) from MNSI – Officials website
 - Track your 4 shadow sessions and progress to becoming an official!
- **Online Testing**
 - Once registered with USA Swimming, log in to access the online testing from the USA Swimming University - <https://university.usaswimming.org/landing>
Note: After taking your exam, please send a screenshot showing completion to mnoc.swim@gmail.com
- **USA Swimming Non-Athlete Membership**
 - Ask your club if they take care of this for you!
Note: If you previously had a USA Swimming membership prior to 2023, you must create a new membership. Email your club registrar for you club-specific registration link.
- **Background Check**
 - Complete a background check [HERE](#). This may take a few days and there is a cost. Check to see if your club will cover it for you.
- **Athlete Protection Training**
 - Link to training [HERE](#). This takes time to complete and follow the instructions to finish it and receive credit!
- **Concussion Protocol Training**
 - Complete NFHS ([Here](#)) or CDC ([Here](#)) course.
 - Email completion certificate to MNSI office (bvonderharr@mns swim.org) NOT the Officials chair.



Record Your Attendance

Please visit the following link to record your attendance at this clinic:

<https://forms.gle/iJKF2rMsHSnXbsJN9>

(This link is in the PDF posted on the MNSI website.)

-or-

Email: mnsitraining@gmail.com

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QUESTIONS?

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Appendix: Definitions

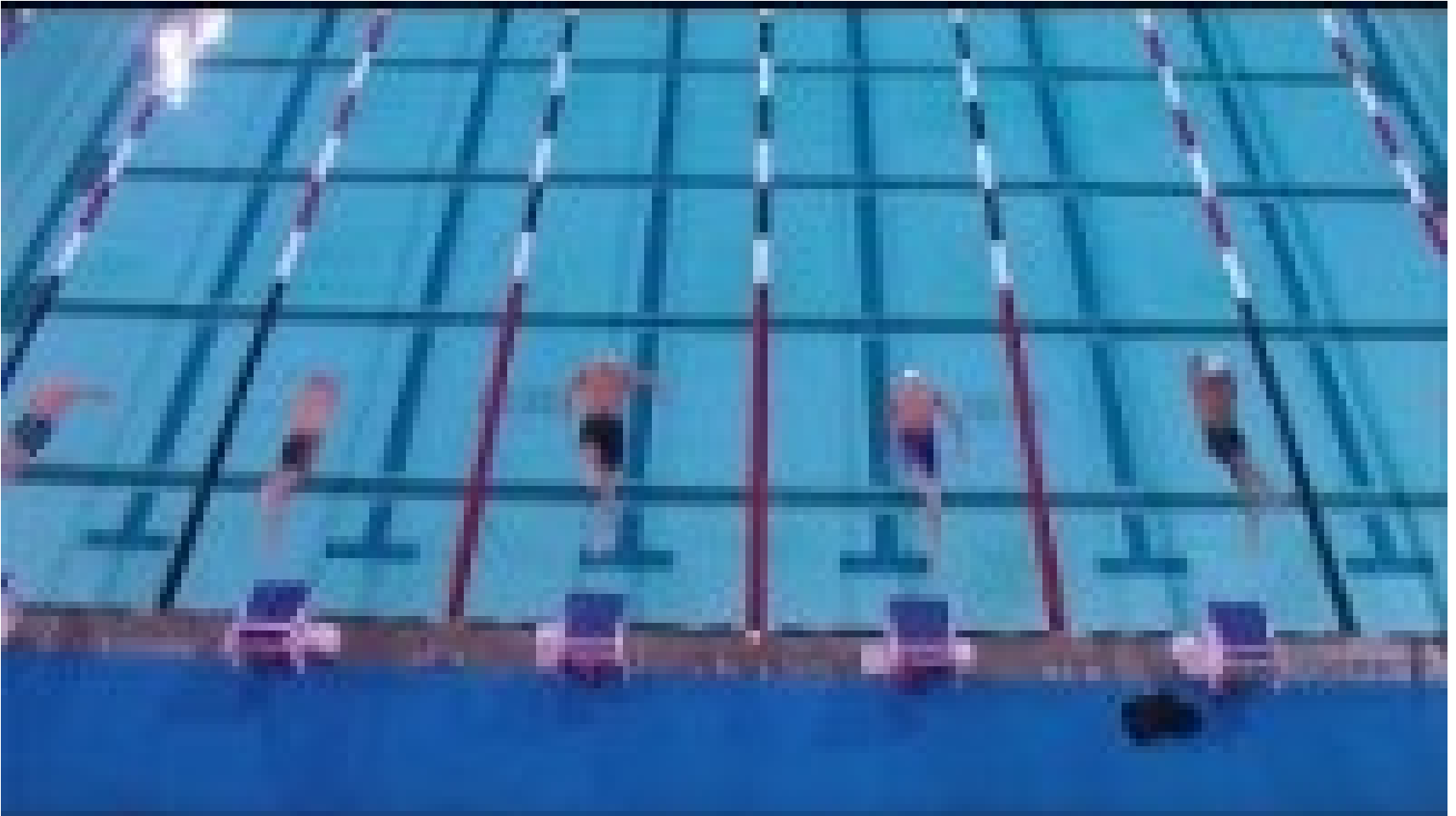
- Arm: That part of the body that extends from the shoulder to the wrist
- Body: The torso, including the shoulders and hips
- Finish: The instant that a swimmer touches the wall at the end of the prescribed distance
- Horizontal: Parallel to the surface of the water
- May: Permissive, not mandatory
- On the Back: Position of the body when the shoulders are at or past vertical towards the back
- On the Breast: Position of the body when the shoulders are at or past vertical towards the breast

Appendix: Definitions (cont.)

- Propulsive: Having the power to propel
- Scissor Kick: Use of the top of the instep of one foot and the bottom of the other foot in the propulsive part of the kick
- Shall: Mandatory
- Simultaneously: Occurring at the same time
- Touch: Contact with the end of the course
- Turn: A point where the swimmers reverse or change direction
- Vertical: Perpendicular to the water surface
- Wall: Vertical portion of the pool, contiguous surfaces of the deck and overflow gutter, the front portion of the starting block or platform, or the touchpad at the end of the course



Stroke Briefing Video





Relay Video

