

TYR Pro Series San Antonio Report

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Intro

Overall, this was a great experience for me, and I would encourage any N3 Stroke and Turn official to apply and work a Pro Series meet if accepted. I met new officials, reconnected with officials I have not seen for some time, and learned a few things along the way. One thing that was emphasized to us often is that we were all chosen to be there, so we all have the skills and experience required to be on a deck at this level. Also, it was awesome to see the number of Olympians on deck. The Meet Referee and Lead CJ mentioned that this was the largest number of Olympians that either of them had seen on a deck outside of trials. Our LCS prepared me well for this experience and I would say there were no surprises for me during the briefings or when learning the protocols.

The Meet

I worked every session at this meet, which included the 1500 Meter session on Wednesday evening and volunteering for the 800 Meter session on Saturday afternoon. I was also assigned to two of the three-time trial sessions that were held. The time trial referee had a goal of helping at least two athletes obtain Olympic trials cuts and, in the end, 5 swimmers got their trials cut during time trials. One of them being a 1500 Meter cut that the swimmer had missed during the Wednesday distance session by .18 of a second.

I was fortunate enough to be judging Caleb Dressel in the 100 Meter butterfly when he tied with Hubert Kos in the finals. I was able to see many Olympians on deck and in the water, either as the left or right chair start / turn / finish judge or as a member of the relief team in all positions other than stroke. I did work as a stroke judge for the 800 Meter free session and watched Katie Ledecky do what she does in that event.

Except for the protocols, I would say this was no different than working at a Minnesota LSC championship meet. Sure, there was at least one official per lane, and a left chair / right chair set up on the start / finish end, but that was just a change to how I am used to doing things. The left chair was simply a timer and if you have ever timed swimming before, this was no different.

Take Aways

There are several things that I will be bringing back to the LSC meets that I work in the future. One will be "do the last thing your CJ told you". This was repeated over and over to get folks to remember that things change while we are on deck, and you need to be flexible as an official. Another point of emphasis was that the way things were done at this Pro Series meet is NOT how all national decks are run and we should not go back to our LSC meets and tell officials this is how all national decks work. In other words, every deck is slightly different and that is OK.