

A large, light gray watermark of the USA Swimming logo is centered in the background. The logo consists of a shield with a white star in the center, surrounded by red and blue stripes. The word "USA" is written in large, red, stylized letters across the top of the shield, and the word "SWIMMING" is written in large, blue, stylized letters across the bottom. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located at the bottom right of the shield.

Minnesota Swimming

Pre-Season Officials Meeting

April 2024



Overview

- Welcome!
- General Announcements/Reminders
 - Thank you!
 - Reminders for Long Course Season
 - Policy Updates and Reminders
- Roles of Each Official on Deck
- New Certification Standards for Officials
- Sub-Committee Updates
 - Training
 - Assignments
 - Certifications
- Open Discussion





Officials Committee 2023-24

- Jack Swanson (Chair, RSC)
- Kelly Burrows (UN)
- Chantal Bui (STAR)
- Scott Hauch (SEMS)*
- Chris Hetzler (DRGN)*
- Yolanda Jewell (SDVL)
- Michelle Kirkwold (AQJT)
- Olga Grinberg (RIPT)
- Kerra Mayor (AQJT)
- Steve Pattee (NEP)
- Wendy Peterson (RIPT)
- Anne Stout (FOXJ)
- Kelly Robole (HAST)
- Mark Sorenson-Wagner (UN)
- Lutfi Tardia (WEST)
- Tracy Meece (Staff Liaison, ALEX)
- Andy Allocco (Athlete, EDI)
- Ellen Kovats (Athlete, MFLY)
- Megan Pattee (Athlete, NEP)
- Evelyn Neese (Athlete, TUNA)

All meetings are the first Monday of the month at 8 PM and are open meetings. To add submit an item to the meeting for discussion, please email Jack in advance of the meeting.

Must come to all/nearly all meetings and participate actively if interested.

Additional members are welcome - we now have a sufficient number of athletes. Please email Jack if interested.

**To be appointed at next Board Meeting*

Reminders for Long Course Season



Thank You!!

- Short Course Season 2024 highlights
 - Strong participation at all in season and championship meets
 - 4 OQMs and countless other opportunities for mentoring and learning.
 - Newly certified officials (September 2023 – April 2024)
 - 45 new Stroke and Turn officials
 - 12 new Starters
 - 2 new Chief Judges
 - 5 new Deck Referees
 - 6 new Administrative Officials/Referees
 - 2 new Meet Referees



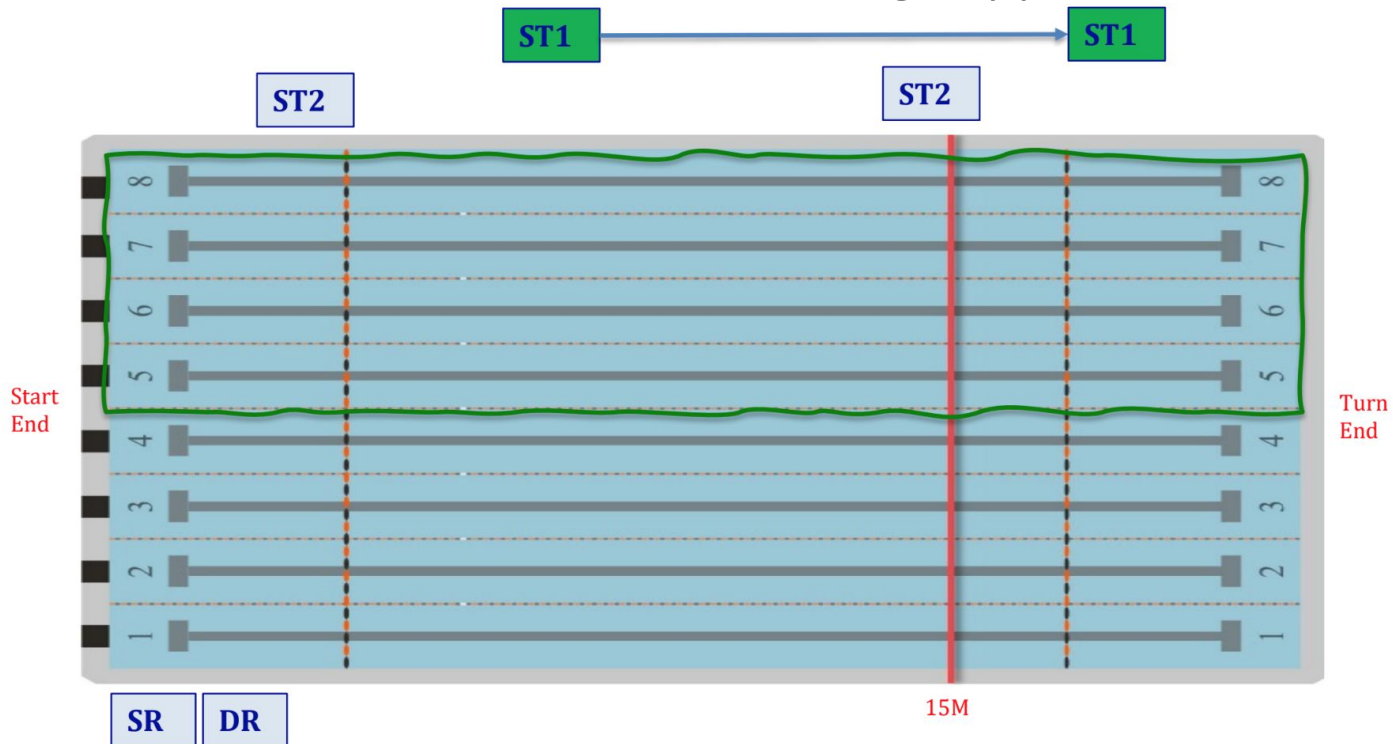
LSC Championship Meets and Other Meets

- **Paralympic Trials** - June 27th-29th - Minneapolis
- **Sectionals** - July 11th-14th - Westmont, IL
- **Regional Championships** - July 12th-14th - Austin, Minneapolis, New Hope, Rochester
- **Senior State** - July 18th-21st - Rochester
- **Futures** - July 24th-27th - Minneapolis (waitlist open)
- **10 and Under State** - July 27th-28th - Rochester
- **11-14 State** - August 1st-4th - Minneapolis
- **Zones** - August 8th-11th - Des Moines, IA



Setting the Deck - LCM

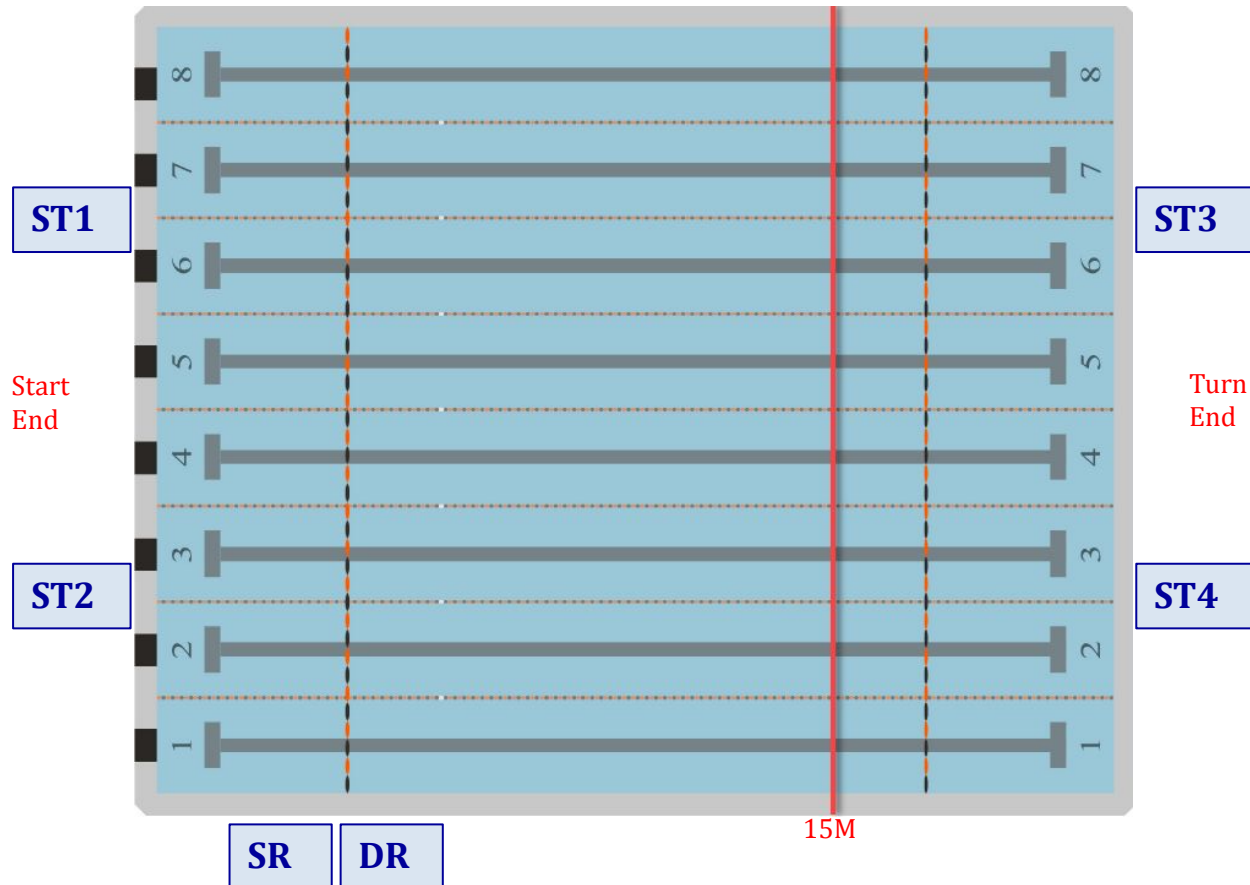
- At least 6 deck officials + 1 admin is best practice, with referee having no jurisdiction and standing next to starter.
- “Lead/lag” or “walking stroke” preferred if facility allows.
- Turn judges also encouraged if personnel allows.
- Relief for officials and additional coverage appreciated.





Setting the Deck - SCY

- At least 6 deck officials + 1 admin is best practice, with referee having no jurisdiction and standing next to starter.
- Relief for officials and additional coverage appreciated.





Officials' Honorarium

- Officiating in USA Swimming is a **volunteer commitment**.
- Many Minnesota Swimming clubs are VERY generous in offering officials a stipend/honorarium.
 - Officials are not entitled to an honorarium.
 - In many LSCs, there are policies specifically prohibiting officials from accepting an honorarium or stipend.
 - Be sure to officiate both when assigned and not assigned - we work together as a team!
- Swim meets are expensive for clubs to host and clubs may not have budgeted for honorarium for specific positions.
- Please be judicious in asking clubs whether a position is paid - do not suggest you are not willing to volunteer if not assigned - this can make it more challenging for clubs to find officials.
- [HERE](#) are honorarium guidelines.



Officials' Honorarium

- **For In-Season Meets (Including Prelim/Final Meets)**
 - Any honorarium is at the discretion of the host club.
 - Officials should not solicit additional honorarium or a hotel room from the host club.
 - Many clubs do communicate up front, but this is not a requirement.
- **For LSC Championship Meets (MAC, MRCs, State Meets)**
 - Honorarium is set by the Officials' Chair - generally \$40 per session for each assigned official (MR, DR, SR, AO/AR, CJ)
 - If traveling from more than 60 miles/1 hour away, a hotel room up to IRS rate will be provided – please save receipts.



Uniform Reminders

- **Uniform has been updated to allow pink shirts on any day.** If you only have one pink shirt, please wear on Sunday. Uniform may be modified by MR for LSC championship meets.
- **Closed toed shoes are strongly recommended for deck:**
 - Crocs, flips flops, sandals discouraged.
 - Could lead to tripping/falling hazard on wet deck, especially if walking stroke.
- **Several clubs have recently asked whether they may order shirts with their club's logo on the shirt.**
 - Officials are neutral parties, not showing bias to one club or individual.
 - Please avoid wearing shirts with club logo, especially at higher level or championship meets.
 - Logo from a meet is welcome.
- **Note: These are best practices, not 'requirements.'**



Recruiting New Officials

- **Personal invitations** are a great way to invite new officials into the community, especially if coming from coaches/club leadership.
 - Below are a few resources to help you recruit new officials:
 - [Tips for Recruiting New Officials](#)
 - [Top 5 Reasons to Become an Official](#)
 - [Apprentice logs posted on the MNSI website.](#)



Contact Information for Officials

- The best place to find contact information for officials is in the Contact Information Dropbox. Email Jack or Tracy for a link.
- Contact information and certification information is updated periodically (about once per quarter).
- All Meet Referees and Officials' Coordinators should currently have access, but please email me if you do not.

Policy Updates and Reminders



Assignments Policy (#2201)

- Has been amended to remove L2/L3 language - see revised policy [HERE](#).
- Assigned positions include Meet Referee, lead Deck Referee, lead Starter, lead Chief Judge, lead Admin Official.
- **Responsibility for Assignments**
 - **Timed Final Meets** - host is responsible for all assignments.
 - **In-Season Prelim/Final Meets** - host is responsible for ½ of assignments, Officials Committee is responsible for ½ of assignments
 - **LSC Championship Meets** - Officials Committee is responsible for all assignments.
- **Meet Referee** - must be present at all sessions of the meet, unless excused by the Officials Chair or designee.
- **Chief Judges** - must be used at all prelim/final meets. Use of radios highly encouraged.



Meet Juries (#237A)

- **Role of Meet Jury** - adjudicate protests other than those against “judgment decisions of starters, stroke, turn, place and relay take-off judges” (see 102.22).
- At all prelim/final and LSC championship meets (includes MRCs), the Meet Jury must be appointed prior to the first coaches meeting/the general meeting, and announced at that meeting.
- Meet jury must consist of one coach, one athlete, and one official.
- Special consideration should be given to formation of a diverse jury.
- If athlete is under 18, their team, but not their name, should be announced.
- Give background, give both sides opportunity to present views, and leave to allow jury to deliberate.
- [THIS DOCUMENT](#) is a helpful resource for running a Meet Jury.



Athlete Registration

- **4 unregistered athletes competed at meets this season.**
 - Times of athletes will not be loaded into the SWIMS database.
 - Club of unregistered swimmer will received a fine.
 - Meet insurance coverage jeopardized.
- **Majority of cases - official or meet personnel added swimmer after entry deadline and did not check to make sure they were registered.**
- If considering adding swimmer after entry deadline (a) be judicious and (b) ensure athlete is registered.
- Remember to check USA Swimming app or club portal (or if not clear, with MNSI office) to ensure athlete is registered, has completed APT if 18+ and in good standing



Meet Warm-Ups (#250)

- **Slip-in Entry.**
 - Splash and ripple action of the water should be kept to a minimum.
 - Enter by sitting down on the edge if the pool facing the water. Keep your eyes on the water, gently slide into the water with your hand on the deck.
 - Violation of the slip-in procedure will result in the offending swimmer being barred from his/her next individual event in the meet.
- **Referees - policy should be strictly enforced.**

Roles of Each Official on Deck



Every Official Has an Equally Important Role

- Many roles at swim meet, each equally important role:
 - **Stroke and Turn Officials** - observe the swim
 - **Starter** - ensures a fair start
 - **Admin Official** - ensures times are accurate
 - **Chief Judge** - manages deck, ensures calls are appropriate
 - **Deck Referee** - ensures calls are appropriate, manages timeline
 - **Meet Referee** - final decision maker.
- Decks run most smoothly when officials do their jobs without doing other officials' jobs.
- During pandemic, many officials were fulfilling multiple roles at once due to decreased personnel on deck and 'leaving box' was sometimes necessary.
- Now, we have many more officials on deck so 'staying in box' is much more necessary to ensure meet runs smoothly.



Why are Roles Important?

- Coaches are not always privy to or aware of who is in each role or what each role entails.
- Meet will run more smoothly if everyone does their own job and does not interfere in other's jobs.
- Goal is fair competition for all - will not occur if there is undue participation in other roles.



How to Stay in Your Box

- **Examples of staying in box:**
 - Following instructions from the MR to the best of your ability.
 - Following deck protocols to best of your ability.
 - Admin running program for finals/distance event by MR before handing out to coaches.
 - Asking 'would you like me to.....'
- **Examples of leaving your box:**
 - Wearing a whistle around your neck when not serving as DR or off-duty DR.
 - Modifying timeline or entries without consent of the MR.
 - Changing the deck protocol without consent from the TL or MR.
 - Starter asking swimmers to step up or step down without permission of DR.
 - Stroke and Turn Official verbally participating in coaches meeting without consent of MR.

New Standards for Certification of Officials



Background Information

- Legislation to standardize officials certifications across all 59 LSCs passed House of Delegates of USA Swimming in September 2023.
- **October-November 2023** - Group consisting of LSC Officials Chairs, members of National Officials Committee, members of the Coaches Advisory Council, and athletes reviewed old standards and proposed new standards.
- **January 2024** - Board of Directors of USA Swimming approved new standards.



Summary of Certification Standards

- See [Certification/Recertification Requirements](#) for complete details
- **Stroke and Turn (ST)**
 - 4 sessions, completion of online module for certification.
 - Only 2 sessions required if current/former coach or current/former athlete (5+ years as 15+ athlete).
- **Starter (SR)**
 - At least 3 months and 4 sessions as a ST prior to beginning apprenticeship.
 - 4 sessions (2 for coaches/swimmers), online test, clinic required for certification.
- **Chief Judge**
 - At least 16 sessions as a ST prior to beginning apprenticeship
 - 4 sessions and clinic required for certification.
- **Admin Official (AO)**
 - 4 sessions, online tests, clinics (101, 201) required for certification.
- **Referee (DR)**
 - Certified ST, SR, AO before beginning apprenticeship.
 - 4 sessions, online test, clinic (DR 101, MR 101) required for certification.

NOTE: These are MINIMUM standards. More practice may be encouraged/expected prior to certification or beginning apprenticeship.



Recertification Requirements

- See [Certification/Recertification Requirements](#) for complete details
- **Stroke and Turn (ST)**
 - Complete online module for Stroke and Turn once every 3 years
 - 8 sessions as a Stroke and Turn or higher in a 3 year period.
- **Starter (SR)**
 - Complete test and clinic for Starter once every 3 years.
 - 8 sessions as a Starter in a 3 year period.
- **Chief Judge**
 - To be announced.
- **Admin Official (AO)**
 - Complete test and attend clinic (Admin 101, 201) for AO once every 3 years.
 - 8 sessions as an AO in a 3 year period.
- **Referee (DR)**
 - Complete test and attend clinic (DR 101, MR 101) for Referee once every 3 years.
 - 16 sessions in a 3 year period, at least 8 as a Referee.

NOTE: Recertification is only required in your highest position. Additional education is always encouraged but not required.



Apprentice Officials Must Be Registered!

- We have received clarification from USA Swimming that apprentice officials are required to be registered and in good standing PRIOR to coming onto deck to apprentice. Two options:
 - **Register as an apprentice official (Recommended)** - does not require payment of membership fees, completion of APT, background check, concussion training for 60 days. After 60 days, registration as a full non-athlete member is required.
 - **Register as a non-athlete member of USA Swimming** - requires payment of membership fees, completion of APT, background check, concussion training.

If an apprentice official is not registered and in good standing in one of these ways, they should not be permitted on deck.



Meet Referee Guidelines

- The **Meet Referee is not a certified position** under the updated certification standards.
- MNSI sanctions a number of different types of meets, for which different levels of experience in the Meet Referee role are expected.
- The MNSI Officials Committee has put together guidelines for recommended experiences for prospective Meet Referees.



Recommendations for Minnesota Swimming Meet Referees

Updated February 2024

The Meet Referee position is not a certified position under USA Swimming's standards for certifications of officials. However, Minnesota Swimming sanctions a variety of levels of meets, which require different levels of knowledge and experience in the Meet Referee role, who is the leader of the officiating team and the individual responsible for ensuring USA Swimming rules are followed at the meet. The following document is intended as a guide for clubs and officials to help determine readiness to serve as Meet Referee at a specific level of meet and to ensure that Meet Referees are successful in fulfilling their duties. Meet Referees for all levels of meets should have a demonstrated ability to remain calm and to apply the rules fairly without favor to individuals and teams.

Intrasquad Meets, Dual Meets, Development Meets (as defined under 205.11)

Certification as a Referee is sufficient to volunteer as the Meet Referee for intrasquad meets, dual meets, and development meets.

Timed Final Meets of More Than Two Teams

Certification as a Referee, and experience as a Referee after certification, to include:

- 2 complete meets (of 2 or more sessions, with more than two teams) after Referee certification in which the official is mentored in the Meet Referee role (could be concurrently serving in another assigned position, for example, Deck Referee). Should be with two different Meet Referees at meets hosted by two different teams.
- At least 4 sessions at LSC championship meets (MAC, MRC, State Meet) or prelim/final meets as a Deck Referee.

Experience as an Administrative Official at timed final meets with more than two teams.

Prelim/Final Meets and LSC Championships Meets (MAC, MRC, State Meets)

Certification as a Referee, and experience as a Referee after certification, to include:

- Prior completion of recommendations for Meet Referees for timed final meets of more than two teams.
- Substantial experience as a Deck Referee (> 25 sessions) at many levels of meets.
- Substantial experience as a Meet Referee (> 4 Timed Final meets with two or more teams).
- 1 complete prelim/final and 1 complete LSC championship meet as an assigned official (Deck Referee, Administrative Official, Chief Judge, or Starter) OR 2 complete prelim/final meets as an assigned official.
- Substantial participation in prelim/final or LSC championship meets hosted by multiple different teams.

Experience as an Administrative Official and Chief Judge at prelim/final and/or LSC championship meets.

Definitions of Meet Levels

- **Intrasquad meets** are meets in which one team is competing.
- **Dual meets** are meet in which two teams are competing.
- **Development meets** are defined in 205.11 of the USA Swimming rulebook.
- **Timed final meets** of more than two teams are in-season meets of more than 2 sessions with two or more teams.
- **Prelim/final meets** are meets which preliminaries are conducted, with swimmers qualifying for finals in a separate session.
- **LSC championship meets** include the Minnesota Regional Championships, Minnesota Achievement Championships, and State Meets (Age Group State, Senior State, Single Age State, etc.).

Please note: The following are recommendations. Minnesota Swimming clubs are encouraged to assign Meet Referees who met the following characteristics. If a club assigns a Referee not meeting these recommendations, the Officials Chair or designee reserves the right to establish an action plan with the host club/Referee to ensure the Referee and the meet are successful.





Admin Official Certification

- Admin Official certification is now required prior to beginning Referee apprenticeship.
- Current Referees who are not Admin Officials are **highly encouraged to become certified as Admin Officials and regularly officiate as Admin.**
 - Admin is position in high demand!
 - Encourage culture of mentoring and learning.
 - Avoid logjam in Admin position.
- Admin sessions should be entered into OTS as AO, EXCEPT at prelim/final meets for admins also certified as Referee (enter as AR).



Written Action Plan

- From time to time, apprentice officials will not be ready for certification after the minimum number of sessions. This is OK!
- If this is the case, the reason must be communicated in writing both to the apprentice and the LSC Officials Chair.
- For Referee and AO positions, written action plan is NOT required for sessions 5 and 6 due to the challenging nature of these positions.
- Both trainer and MR must agree to issue written action plan.
- Please use judiciously.



**Action Plan for Additional Practice Prior to Certification as an Official
Minnesota Swimming**

Name: _____ Club: _____

Email: _____

From time to time, it may be necessary for an apprentice official to gain additional practice as an apprentice beyond the minimum required apprentice sessions and training prior to certification as an official in a given position. This is to ensure that the official is qualified to independently perform the duties of an official as the 'lead' official at a meet and is intended to be helpful to the apprentice official. This log should be used to determine an action plan for certification that is mutually agreed upon between the trainer/mentor and the apprentice. Some reasons for additional practice as an apprentice official may include:

- In the opinion of the trainer/mentor or the Meet Referee, the apprentice does not meet one of the skills outlined in the apprentice log or the 'professional document' for the position.
- The apprentice official exhibits one or more deficiencies in performance that, in the opinion of the trainer/mentor or Meet Referee, would lead to the apprentice being unable to perform the role independently at an in-season timed final meet.
- The apprentice official requests additional practice prior to certification.

If a written action plan is used, steps requested should be reasonable and specifically address the identified growth opportunities mentioned in this apprentice log.

Reason for Action Plan
Please be as specific as possible and list the skill(s) the apprentice official would benefit from additional practice on. If the apprentice has requested additional practice, note that in this log.



Written Action Plan

- If any of the skills in apprentice log are not met or understood, written action plan should be issued.

Performance Checklist

Complete with trainer during your final apprentice session. If any skills are not met, trainer should send written proposed plan to help apprentice (e.g. additional apprentice sessions, rewatch clinic) to the apprentice and the Minnesota Swimming Officials Chair. Mark Y for Yes, N for No, and ND for Not Demonstrated

Arrives on time, prepared with necessary personal equipment, in proper and professional uniform.
Is respectful of other officials, coaches, meet volunteers, spectators, and athletes.
Understands and applies proper positioning on deck.
Understands and applies communicated jurisdictions and protocols.
Understands and applies the rules for the start, stroke, kick, turn, and finish for butterfly.
Understands and applies the rules for the start, stroke, kick, turn, and finish for backstroke.
Understands and applies the rules for the start, stroke, kick, turn, and finish for breaststroke.
Understands and applies the rules for the start, stroke, kicks, turn, and finish for freestyle.
Understands and applies the rules for relays.
Understands and applies the rules for individual medley.
Is comfortable making calls as appropriate and also understands when a call is not appropriate.
Can correctly communicate a disqualification and what was observed using USA Swimming rulebook language.
Always gives the swimmer the benefit of the doubt.
Understands performance criteria as outlined in Stroke & Turn Judge Professional Document.
Understands USA Swimming Safe Sport and MAAPP rules.

Performance Checklist

Complete with trainer during your final apprentice session. If any skills are not met, trainer should send written proposed plan to help apprentice (e.g. additional apprentice sessions, rewatch clinic) to the apprentice and the Minnesota Swimming Officials Chair. Mark Y for Yes, N for No, and ND for Not Demonstrated.

Arrives on-time, prepared with necessary personal equipment and properly & professionally attired.
Knows the rules for starting
Demonstrate ability to start swimmers with a wide range of age and experience.
Understands basic starting protocols and procedures (distance counting, OOF, etc.).
Understands how to start swimmers with disabilities.
Demonstrates the Start for a hearing impaired swimmer.
Demonstrates both forward and backstroke starts.
Understands how the starting system operates.
Establishes a comfortable starting position on deck for both forward and back starts.
Demonstrates ability to communicate and interact with the DR (positioning, inserting swimmers, etc...).
Prepared and in position prior to each heat; comfortable holding microphone and securing cord.
Delivers TYM calmly and with necessary volume.
Shows PATIENCE before delivering TYM and starting signal.
Understands the use of Other Commands.
Understands and practices the False Start Protocol.
Always gives the benefit of the doubt to the swimmer.
Understands performance criteria as outlined in Starter Professional Document.
Understands USA Swimming Safe Sport and MAAPP rules.



Junior Official Certification

- **TENTATIVE:** Beginning in September 2024, USA Swimming will be allowing for Junior Officials aged 16 and 17 to be on deck at certain levels of meets.
- More details will be announced in Summer 2024!

Sub-Committee Updates



Training

- **Chair: Kelly Robole (HAST)**
- Clinic schedule posted on MNSI website.
- Stroke and Turn 101 and 201 no longer required; all other clinic remain required.
- Working to update Administrative Official Clinics.
- Please contact Kelly if interested in leading a clinic.

Virtual Clinic Schedule			
Clinic	Date	Sign Up Link	Presenter(s)
Stroke & Turn 101	April 8, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Starter 101	April 17, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Stroke & Turn 201	April 22, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Chief Judge 101	April 30, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Admin 101	May 7, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Meet Ref/Deck Ref 101	May 9, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Starter 201	May 15, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	Gail Ann Witzel & TBD
Starter 101	June 5, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Stroke & Turn 201	June 10, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Equipment 101	June 13, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Admin 201	June 17, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD
Starter 201	June 26, 2024 7PM	Sign Up HERE	TBD

Clinic attendance (Stroke and Turn 101 and 201) is optional for Stroke and Turn Officials. Stroke and Turn Officials should complete the Foundations of Officiating and Stroke and Turn Certification courses offered through USA Swimming prior to certification.
Clinic attendance is required for all other positions (Starter, Admin Official, Chief Judge, Referee).
Interested in leading a clinic? Contact Officials' Training Coordinator Kelly Robole.



Certifications

- **Chair: Steve Pattee (NEP)**
 - Remember to complete recertification exam and clinic.
 - Recertification required every three years in highest position.
 - Complete test
 - Attend clinic
 - Officiate in expected number of sessions.



Assignments

- **Chair: Kelly Burrows (UN)**
- ½ of assigned team is recommended by Officials' Committee for prelim/final in-season meets, and full assigned team is recommended by Officials' Committee for championship meets.
- **Sub-Committee members:** Chris Hetzler (DRGN), Yolanda Jewell (SDVL), Kerra Mayor (AQJT), Pat Thompson (UN)
- **Upcoming Prelim/Final and LSC Championship Meet**
 - Aquajets Summer Invitational
 - Minnesota Regional Championships
 - Senior State
 - 10 and Under State
 - 11-14 State

Questions?

Open Forum