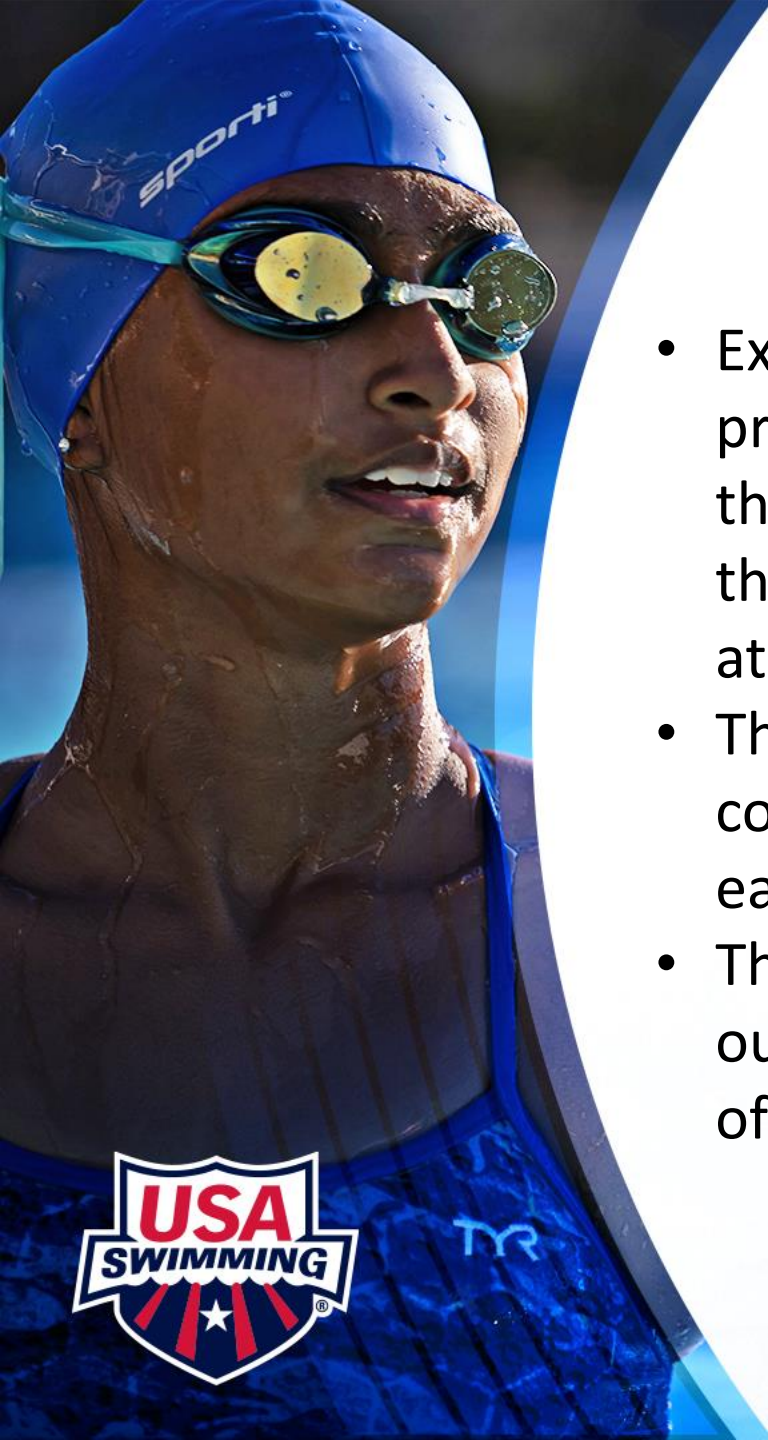




JUNIOR OFFICIALS MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY



Rationale

- Expanding the pool of potential officials is a necessary action to preserve our sport. By allowing 16–17-year-old members to serve in the capacity of a junior meet official, it will generate a new pipeline to the officiating community and offer an opportunity for student athletes to expand their role within USA Swimming.
- This new membership category will contribute to ensuring competition for our swimmers continues and helps meet hosts more easily staff them.
- This will open the door for additional competition opportunities for our athletes that will compete with similar opportunities currently offered in other youth sports.

Quick Logistical Facts

- Ages: 16-17
- Cost: Full Annual USA Swimming Membership. No additional cost if member is already a current Premium Athlete member
- Date of Implementation: September 2024



Membership Facts

- Stroke and Turn Judge
- Introductory officiating position for senior athletes in USA Swimming
- Officiating in sessions limited to 12& Under where not entered to compete
- Meet Referee is responsible for overseeing all officials on deck, including the Junior Official
- 1 Junior Official: 1 Officials Ratio on Deck



Membership Requirements

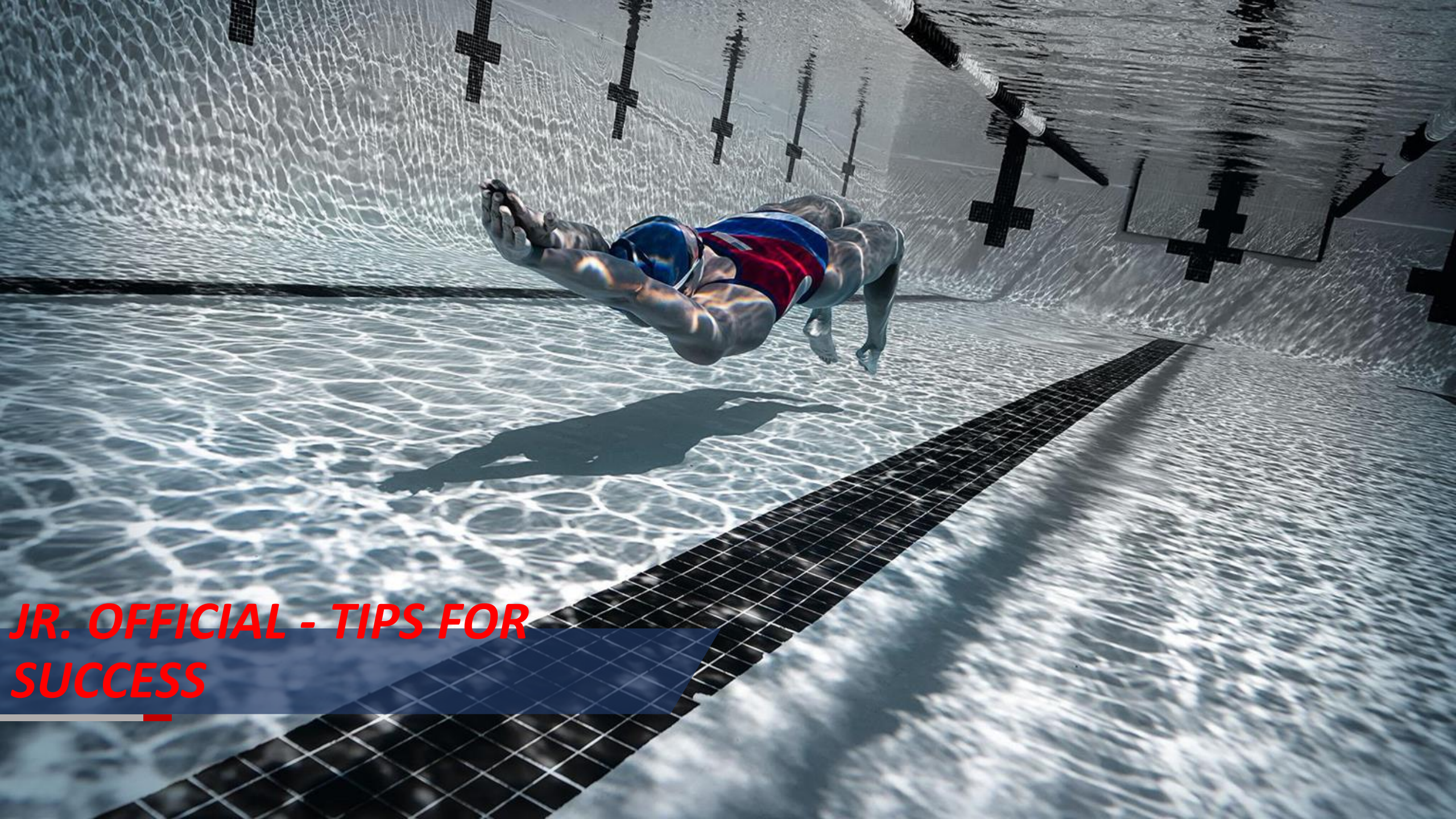
- Technical Training as stated in Rule 102.10.2
- Safe Sport for Youth Athletes (13-17) Training
Replaces APT Training until age 18
- No Background Check (Under 18)
- Concussion Protocol Training



Questions, comments, concerns?

- National Officials Chair: [Dana Covington](#)
- Registration/Membership Chair: [Angela Monty](#)
- Junior Officials Working Group Co-Chairs: [Zach Toothman & Marco Greico](#)
- SWIMS & OTS Software: [Eric Stimson](#)
- LSC Officials Chair & LSC Registrars



A high-angle, slow-motion shot of a swimmer in a red and blue suit performing a butterfly stroke in a pool. The swimmer is in the center of the frame, with their arms extended forward and legs kicking. The water is rippled, and a dark lane line runs diagonally across the pool. The swimmer's shadow is cast on the pool floor. The text "JR. OFFICIAL - TIPS FOR SUCCESS" is overlaid in red at the bottom left.

**JR. OFFICIAL - TIPS FOR
SUCCESS**

GETTING STARTED

- The introductory officiating position for the Junior Official will be the role of the Stroke & Turn Judge.
- The Junior Official must meet the Apprentice and Certification Requirements established by the member's LSC. Those requirements will often include:
 - ✓ If USA Swimming Athlete Registered, then obtain Non-Athlete Add-In
 - ✓ Safe Sport for Youth Athletes 13-17
 - ✓ Attend a Stroke & Turn Clinic, as needed
 - ✓ Complete the Stroke & Turn and Timer tests on the USA Swimming University website
 - ✓ Complete the Concussion Training
 - ✓ Apprentice on deck with an Officiating Mentor for the required sessions/hours



GETTING STARTED

- Officials in each LSC wear uniform-colored shirts, shorts/slacks/skirts, and shoes. Check with your LSC to see if shirts, in particular, are provided.
- Officials utilize items that aid in officiating and should be brought to each meet the Jr. Official is attending, both as an apprentice and certified official. They are:
 - ✓ Rule Book
 - ✓ Clipboard
 - ✓ Pen or Pencil
 - ✓ Walkie Talkie radio (some teams or LSCs provide radios)
 - ✓ Name tag (some teams or LSCs provide name tags)
 - ✓ Weather Gear for outdoor facilities



GETTING STARTED

- Arrive at the meet dressed to officiate and with the needed gear at least one hour before the session start time for the Officials' Briefing, where all officials are updated on the information for the meet.
 - If officiating after the Jr. Official's practice, the Jr. Official is permitted to change into officiating attire in the athlete locker room. The Jr. Official is also allowed to use the restrooms in the athlete locker room during the meet.
- At the Briefing the Jr. Official Apprentice will be paired with a Deck Mentor who will instruct on the application of the rules to the actual swims.
- Ask questions of the Deck Mentor and encourage dialogue.



GETTING STARTED

- Most LSCs have an Apprentice Form the officials use to log their sessions/hours and tasks experienced, such as relay take-offs or various protocols. Make sure that form gets signed/initialed by the Deck Mentor at the end of each session.
- For each apprentice session make sure to move around deck and experience officiating duties at the start-end, turn-end, walking stroke, relay take-off judging, etc.
- Work with different deck mentors to get a broad education of officiating and application of the rules.



HELPFUL TIPS

- “Know What You See, See What You Call.”
- The purpose of Officiating is to maintain a level field of competition where swimmers fairly achieved times based on an adherence to the rules.
- Disqualifications are not punishments to swimmers.
- Disqualifications help swimmers and coaches know what areas of a swim need to be corrected.
- Enforce rules fairly and equitably. Avoid any appearance of bias or favoritism.
- No excuses! Judge swimmers of all ages and ability using the same standard of adherence to the rules.
- Always Remember the Benefit of the Doubt goes to the Swimmer.



HELPFUL TIPS

- There may be times when a Deck Referee or Meet Referee request more details about a DQ call. That is likely because a coach has asked them for more information and not because they question the Jr. Official's knowledge or ability. Such information assists a coach form a plan for the swimmer's next practice.
- AT NO TIME should a Jr. Official be approached or questioned by a coach, parent, or teammate about any disqualification calls or operations at a meet.
- ALWAYS politely refer the coach to the Meet Referee.
- ALWAYS politely refer the parent or swimmer to their Coach.
- Should any Official feel they're being harassed, always report the incident to the Meet Referee, the Jr. Official's head coach or to the LSC Officials Chair.



A high-angle, slow-motion shot of a swimmer in a red and blue suit performing a butterfly stroke in a pool. The swimmer is in the center of the frame, with their arms extended forward and legs kicking. The water is rippled, and the lane lines of the pool are visible. The swimmer's shadow is cast on the pool floor. The text "JR. OFFICIAL: COACH TIPS" is overlaid in red on a dark blue banner at the bottom left.

JR. OFFICIAL: COACH TIPS

TIPS for COACHES

- Encourage the advancement of swimmers to the Jr. Official position.
- Positively acknowledge the Jr. Official's dedication to the Sport of Swimming and the knowledge they have gained.
- Consider praising all Officials in Team newsletters, meetings or bulletin board postings.
- Acknowledge that DQ calls are helpful to making corrections to technique or a reminder not to fall back on old habits.
- Help officials with the attire or equipment needed to officiate by providing items such as shirts, clipboards or radios.
- Veteran officials will often have excess equipment to share or give. Ask them.



TIPS for COACHES

- Avoid approaching any deck official at a meet about a DQ call. Always direct any questions to the Deck Referee for that event or the Meet Referee.
- Try to be calm and logical in those discussions.
- Avoid criticizing the Jr. Official and All Officials in team practice gatherings.
- Remind Parents and Swimmers that only the Coach will get additional details about all DQ calls.
- Parents should avoid criticism of Officials and should NEVER approach an Official for information about calls or meet operations.





MAAPP Guidelines for Junior Officials



SafeSport Training Requirements

- SafeSport for Youth Athletes (13-17) Training
 - Available through USA Swimming University webpage
- Athlete Protection Training is not required for Junior Officials



Interactions with Officials, Athletes, and Coaches

- One-on-one contact between a minor Junior Official and adult participant must occur at an **observable** and **interruptible** distance from another adult
- The Meet Referee is responsible for overseeing all Officials on deck, including the Junior Official



Locker Rooms

- Junior Officials must use the designated locker room when changing
- Contact between adult participants and minor Junior Officials in a locker room must be **observable** and **interruptible**



Electronic Communications

- All electronic communication from adult participants to minor Junior Officials must be professional in nature
- If an adult participant communicates one-on-one with a minor Junior Official via electronic communications, the minor Junior Official's parent/legal guardian must be copied or included



Electronic Communications

- Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. local time for the location of the minor Junior Official



Electronic Communications

- Adult participants are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with minor Junior Officials



Power Dynamic



Junior Official Behavior and Composure

- When in the capacity of a junior official, one should be professional and focused solely on the officiating role.
- When interacting with athletes, conversation and socializing with athletes is acceptable, however, during the session all focus should be on the role not socializing.
- Understanding when to be casual and professional in this role is critical based on the above expectations. These expectations go for any athlete, coach or volunteer on deck you may know.

Adult Official & Junior Official Relationship Dynamic

- A meet referee or deck official should treat a junior official like a peer and look for situations where they can provide advice and assistance with the role.
- Ultimately an adult official on deck should be a mentor in such supervising role



Empowerment and Resources for the Junior Official

- Junior officials should be mentored and encouraged to perform their best while enjoying their time in the role. This working relationship dynamic is important to keep a professional setting.
- Junior officials should look towards adult officials for guidance or with any questions or concerns they have with the role.





Reporting and Protest Intimidation



How Does a Junior Official Handle a Protest of a disqualification?

- The current practice for an official to handle a protest of a disqualification is to refer the individual to the Deck Referee who is responsible for handling protests of a disqualification.

How should a junior official handle a coach approaching them regarding a swimmer's disqualification?

- If a Junior Official is approached about the protest of a disqualification, the coach should be directed to the Deck Referee who is responsible for handling protests. This is the same as an adult Stroke and Turn official being approached about a protest of a disqualification, the standard practice is for the Deck Referee to handle situations regarding protests of a disqualification. Stroke and Turn officials can not overturn a call.



How should a junior official behave in a situation that is intimidating?

- For example, If a coach attempts to intimidate a Junior Official regarding a disqualification, the Junior Official should walk away from the situation if appropriate and report it to the Deck Referee as soon as possible. If the Junior Official is approached off the deck and intimidated, it should be reported to the non Safe Sport complaint filing on the USA Swimming website.

How does a junior official act when their coach intimidates them about ignoring a swimmer's stroke infraction?

- Junior Officials should not be singled out or treated differently than their peer officials on deck as they are required to complete the same training requirements as other Stroke and Turn Officials. It is a good reminder that a call can be withdrawn but an infraction can not be called later on after it has taken place. It is a learning experience for any official that may miss an infraction to learn from it. Any inappropriate or intimidating behavior towards a Junior Official regarding not calling or missing an infraction should be reported to the Deck Referee.

