

“But I Have a Video!”

“My child was Disqualified for an illegal kick. But I took a video from the bleachers that proves he didn’t do it.”

Officials hear this statement (and variations) from parents every now and then. And each time the Referee replies that he/she is sorry, but that video cannot be used to make the call. Is the Referee just being obstinate or lazy? Absolutely not.

The USA Swimming rulebook is clear that the only video that may be used to review stroke or turn infractions is footage from cameras in the pool or immediately adjacent to the pool that are approved prior to the meet by USA Swimming leadership. The camera system is provided by a professional sports video company, and is designed to provide high-speed, high definition video that can be reviewed using play-back software designed specifically for swimming. This system is extremely costly and is used only at trials-level meets (Olympic Trials, World Championship Trials) and at select national championships. At these meets, calls made on deck are immediately reviewed by the replay officials using this high-quality video.

Your video is a terrific way to remember and review your child’s swim. But it lacks the quality and proximity to the pool in order to be used as replay review. And the rules of the sport prohibit the Referee from using it.