



Maryland LSC Swimming

Chief Judge

We are all volunteers and our main focus is our athletes. In many cases, the athletes are also our children. Officiating should not be viewed as an obligation. Rather, we officiate because we enjoy what we do. Every official has interests, experiences and abilities suited to the various position required to staff a sanctioned swim meet. At no time should any person feel like they are just a stroke and turn official. Without the help of every official, the meet would not be totally successful. Every official who volunteers to work at our meets contributes to the level of professionalism and the quality of how we judge our athletes' swims. Maryland LSC officials who aspire to serve as a chief judge should be considered as a stroke and turn mentor.

Generally, officials who are asked or who request to be assigned as a chief judge are experienced stroke and turn officials who have been certified as a stroke and turn official for at least one year. However, each person's level of experience, meets worked and interests will be a better indicator of when officials are ready to accept the challenges of the chief judge. The official should be very knowledgeable of the rules and should be able to demonstrate a level of competency when describing a possible disqualification to the chief judge or deck referee. More importantly, a chief judge should have good people skills with the ability to train and support officials. When encouraging an official to follow the anticipated deck protocols or when a call is overturned, the chief judge should always be supportive and provide a reason for the needed change in a positive, constructive manner.

Before the Session:

Oftentimes, officials will not know what position they will be assigned to work by the meet referee until they arrive to the pool. If an official is asked to serve as a chief judge, there are several duties that need to be addressed:

- 1) Establish when and where you want the officials to meet for the stroke briefing. Check with the meet referee first to see if there is a preferred area. Generally, the stroke briefing is held 45-60 minutes before the start of the session.
- 2) Greet each official and ask them to complete the sign-in sheet provided by your meet referee.
- 3) Introduce yourself and ask each official to introduce themselves to the group and tell what LSC and club they represent.
- 4) Give each official a heat sheet.
- 5) Conduct a stroke briefing. This may be a stressful moment, especially if you are conducting the briefing for your first time. The style of the briefing is determined by the chief judge. However, a very effective way to give a briefing is to “tell a story.” Give the briefing in IM order and tell what a legal stroke looks like throughout the swim. The deck referee may also want to add additional suggestions on deck protocol and rule interpretations.
- 6) Discuss the jurisdiction for the stroke and turn officials. This should be established with your meet referee before you start the briefing. If there are only turn judges, the jurisdiction is halfway out and halfway back in. If there is at least one stroke official, the turn judges’ jurisdiction after the start is until the swimmers’ head breaks the surface of the water. At the turn, the official has from the initiation of the turning action for backstroke or the last stroke into the wall, the touch, the turning action and until the swimmers’ head breaks the surface of the water after the turn. At the finish, the jurisdiction is the last stroke into the wall and the touch. Stroke officials have “wall-to-wall” jurisdiction. In some cases, the jurisdiction for turn officials may be from the backstroke flags going into the turn(s) and finish and until the swimmer head breaks the surface of the water after the start and the turn(s). The stroke officials will have “wall-to-wall” jurisdiction.
- 7) Complete the stroke and turn deck assignments. If you have apprentice stroke and turn officials, try to assign them to your most experienced officials. Try to establish at least one relief position/person. The deck referee, administrative referee, and starter will be assigned by the meet referee.
- 8) Discuss deck protocol. At the start of each heat, officials, timers and other swimmers should be behind the blocks so that the starter has a clear view of the swimmers on the blocks. When the swimmers leave the blocks at the start of the race, turn officials should move forward to observe the swimmers in their jurisdiction. At the turn and finish, officials should be at the edge of the pool so that they have a clear view of the touch. An official who is standing back two feet from the edge of the pool at the turn or at the finish is not in a fair position to judge a non-simultaneous or one hand touch. During backstroke event, turn officials at the

start end of the pool should move to the corner of the pool after the first long whistle that invites the swimmers into the water. If you are on the start side of the pool, be sure to stand behind the starter. You are observing swimmers' toes after the start to make sure that a swimmer does not wrap their toes over the gutter or place their feet in the gutter. If a swimmer starts in an illegal position, this call should not be made by the turn official; only after the start.

- 9) Use the briefing to show how a disqualification slip will be completed by the chief judge. There are four sections at the top of each stroke:
- The start should be checked when there is a confirmed DQ by the deck referee after the start and until the swimmer's head surfaces.
 - The swim is checked when there is a confirmed DQ during the swim (after the swimmer's head surfaces and until the turning action of the backstroke or the initiation of the last stroke into the wall).
 - The turn is checked when there is a confirmed DQ from the point the turn is initiated in the backstroke or the last stroke into the wall and until the swimmer's head surfaces after the turn.
 - The finish is checked when there is a confirmed DQ for the last stroke into the wall and the finish touch.

After the deck referee confirms/accepts the chief judge's recommendation, the chief judge completes the DQ slip and presents the slip to the official who made the call for their review and acceptance of the DQ slip as completed. During this time, the chief judge may step in for the official while they are reviewing and signing the DQ slip. While in the position for the official and you observe a possible disqualification, the chief judge may make the call. However, under most circumstances, chief judges do not make calls. The official should print their name on the designated line and the chief judge who handled the call should initial to the right side of the official's printed name.

- 10) Ask or give each official a few DQ slips in the event that you need the official to complete their own slip if the deck becomes busy.
- 11) Establish how relief of the officials will be provided. This is generally done after 10 – 15 minutes, depending upon the number of officials assigned to the deck and the number of relief officials that are available. During freestyle events and with the permission of the meet referee, the touch at turns can be observed from the corners of the pool. Generally, stroke officials observe the 16.4 yards/15 meter mark for only the first 50 yards/100 meters of a free style event, especially when long distance events are being contested

- 12) There may be relays and you will need to discuss how relay take-offs will be observed. For medley relays, you will most likely need to ask the off deck referee and starter and even the meet referee to assist with this task. If you aspire to work as a chief judge on a regular basis, keep a few relay take-off slips in your swim bag. You may be the only official with the forms. Give relay take-off slips (if available) to the turn judges who will be serving as lane judges as well as the other officials who may be assisting with relay take-offs as side judges. Discuss how the form is completed and how possible early take-offs are handled by the chief judge. If the side judge has an "X" on their take-off form, let the officials know that the chief judge will take the slip and then go to the lane judge to see if there is a corresponding early take-off. The lane judges should be informed that even though they may have an "X", the chief judge will only come over to them if the side judge also has an "X" mark on the slip. If there is a confirmed early take-off, both officials will need to sign the DQ slip.
- 13) Ask the officials if they have any questions about the briefing or if they have encountered unusual circumstances that they would like to discuss. If there is a question regarding the interpretation of a rule, refer this to a deck referee if one is present during the briefing.
- 14) Be sure to thank the officials for helping and let them know what time to be on deck and in position to start the session.
- 15) In most cases when there are chief judges, the stroke and turn officials will not need radios. Generally, the deck referee(s) and chief judges will get their own radio and headset. The chief judges will also need to give a radio to the administrative referee/official (AO). If there are enough radios, the apprentice stroke and turn officials can use one to listen to the radio protocol.
- 16) If there are distance events requiring counters, make sure that you locate the counters and have them available at the turn end when the event(s) are being contested. Place a counter on each lane just prior to the beginning of the event. In most cases, the starter will be responsible for bringing a bell onto the deck. Double check that there is a bell in the starters' area. Keep a few distance counting sheets in your swim bag in the event that the starter or referee requests the form. An apprentice starter will generally not have counter sheets.

During the Session:

During the session, the chief judge's main job is to observe and assist the stroke and turn officials. A chief judge should be vigilant and focused on the activities of the venue at all times. There will be times when a chief judge may need to leave their position or leave the pool deck. When this is necessary, inform the deck referee. At all

other times, the chief judge's eyes should be on the deck. The chief judge watches for possible disqualifications, indicated by officials by raising a hand over his/her head. It is also recommended that chief judges observe the positioning of the turn officials during the time that they are judging the swimmers in their jurisdiction.

During a prelims-final meet or when there are timed finals events that require the swimmers to complete a "positive check-in," the swimmer or the coach may approach the chief judge to declare a false start (DFS). If this occurs, let the referee know what event, heat and lane the swimmer is assigned. The swimmer can change their mind and swim the event. After the heat is in the water and the swimmer does not swim the event, the deck referee will call into the AO that there is a DFS, not a no-show, in that particular lane. The chief judge does not need to notify the AO of the possible DFS before the heat is swum. Write and present the DQ slip/DFS to the deck referee after the heat is in the water. The referee only will sign the slip, give it back to the chief judge and the CJ will give the slip to the AO. If a swimmer does not swim in an event that requires a positive check-in, there is a penalty. In most cases, the swimmer is out/is not permitted to swim their next individual event. Depending upon what the meet referee has requested, the chief judge may need to write a DQ slip for the "No show."

Radio Protocol:

If the chief judge observes an official with a raised hand, this needs to be communicated promptly to the deck referee and done in an expeditious manner. The best way to start this process is to, "Walk and Talk." When the chief judge observes a possible disqualification, they should immediately start walking towards the official while simultaneously saying the following on their radio: "I have a possible disqualification at the turn/start end lanes 1 – 3; stroke lane 1/8." If the official has not lowered his/her hand upon reaching the official, remind them to do so. Ask the official, "What lane?" Circle the number of the lane on your heat sheet and report to the deck referee on your radio a second time, "I have a possible disqualification at the turn end, lane 3." Ask the official for the rule violation and then ask them to describe what they observed (i.e. – "Delay of initiating the turn. After the swimmer turned from their back to their breast, they took a stroke with their right arm, it stopped at their side and the swimmer continued kicking into the wall for approximately three feet before they initiated their turn").

Take notes on your heat sheet in case there is a delay due to the start of the next heat. You may also have additional possible disqualifications in the same heat. When the deck referee is starting the next heat (Blowing the chirps to inform the swimmers to

get ready to swim), wait until the heat is in the water and the deck referee has called in any possible no-shows to the AO before getting on your radio to report a possible DQ from the previous heat. **Keeping good notes is the best way to manage a busy deck!** Use your own form of short hand. After you circle the lane, write on your program what violation was called. For example, use 1HT, R/O (One hand touch, right hand only). Or, DOT, kicks (Delay of turn, independent kicks to make up the distance before initiating the turning motion). You can also keep notes if the swimmer was notified. Use an "N" with a circle around it. If the swimmer was not notified, put a line across the "N."

For some calls like non-simultaneous arms, you will also need to ask the official when the possible disqualification was observed to insure that it was within the official's jurisdiction. If you are clear on the official's call and description, step away from the official and call the deck referee on your radio: "I have a possible disqualification at the turn end, event 45, heat 2, lane 3, for delay of initiating the turn, independent kicks, recommend the disqualification." Keep your description brief, but be prepared to answer any additional questions from the deck referee. When the chief judge recommends the call, you are telling the deck referee that you are also 100% confident that it was a good call. Perhaps you also observed the call. After you recommend the call and the chief judge also observed the infraction, the chief judge can end with, "The call was well observed."

In some cases, the official may be using terminology, other than the wording of the rulebook and the chief judge will need to ask for additional information. The chief judge should not "put words in their mouth", but should guide the official through what they observed. Ask the official, if they said something like, "The arms were erratic during the swim," to tell you more about what the arms were doing. Ugly does not mean it is illegal. Sometimes, when you assist the official in a patient manner, the official will discover that it was not a call or they were not sure about the call. The official at this point can tell the chief judge, "No call." Under no circumstances can a chief judge "overturn" a call. That is the prerogative of the deck referee or the meet referee. If the official says no call, radio the deck referee and let them know that there is not a call.

The referee generally says, "I confirm or I accept the disqualification for delay of initiating the turn, event 45, heat 2, lane 3." The chief judge will then complete the disqualification slip and present it to the official for their review and printed name. Put your initials to the right side of the official's printed name. The chief judge at the start end of the pool or possibly an off deck referee will attempt to notify the swimmer of the disqualification. After the swimmer has been notified, call into the deck referee,

“Swimmer, lane #, has been notified.” The deck referee will say, “Thank you” to acknowledge they heard that the swimmer was notified. When you hear this has been done, check swimmer notified at the bottom of the disqualification slip. Give the completed slip to the presiding referee as soon as possible. At no point should a chief judge or stroke and turn official discuss a DQ with a coach, a timer or a parent. Always refer the coach or the other person to the presiding deck referee.

If you are the chief judge at the turn end, it can be a challenge giving the completed DQ slip to the deck referee. In most situations, the chief judge should not leave their area of supervision. If there are stroke officials, give the DQ slip to the stroke official on the start side. The stroke official can then give the DQ slip to the deck referee when they walk back to the start end of the pool. If there are no stroke officials, you may need to wait until after the event is complete. The presiding deck referee or an official from the start end can come to you to retrieve the DQ slip.

When informing a swimmer of their disqualification, wait until the swimmer is out of the water. Never discuss the DQ with the swimmer when they are still in the water or standing at the edge of the pool next to the blocks. You do not want to block the starter’s view of the swimmers for the next heat. Ask the swimmer to step away from the blocks before talking to them. When notifying the swimmer of their DQ, start the conversation with a positive comment to establish a rapport with the swimmer. Remember, you are not disqualifying the swimmer. The swimmer disqualified himself for a violation of a swimming rule.

In the event that the official was not in a position to properly observe the swimmers in their jurisdiction or the official was not totally sure about the call, remember, any doubt goes to the benefit of the swimmer. You can say to the deck referee on the radio, “I have concerns about the call and I do not recommend acceptance for the following reason(s).” You may also need to request to talk directly to the deck referee, especially if it requires a more lengthy discussion or if you have concerns about an official’s call or description of a call. If, after mentoring the official on expected deck protocol or you believe the official is making too many calls or seems to be missing many obvious calls, request a conversation with the meet referee. A chief judge does not have the authority to release an official from the deck. This becomes a wonderful training opportunity to work with the official. If you do not recommend a call, the official deserves an explanation after the session or when the official is on break. Be honest, but be supportive when you discuss the call with the official.

The chief judge assigned to the starter’s area, will also need to write a disqualification slip if there is a dual confirmed false start. After the start of a heat, the

starter will report a possible false start to the deck referee. If the deck referee confirms the false start, he/she will call on the radio, "I have a dual confirmed false start, event 34, heat 2, lane 3." The chief judge will write the slip, present it first to the starter and then the referee. The referee will give the signed slip back to the chief judge. During this process, it is important to observe the officials in your jurisdiction for any possible swimming violations. After the chief judge notifies the swimmer, check swimmer notified at the bottom of the slip. Give the slip to the administrative referee/official.

The radio protocol for relay events and processing possible disqualifications can be a real challenge, especially during the short course season. Generally, a chief judge will stand with the side judge during relays. After the fourth swimmer of each team in your respective jurisdiction leaves the blocks, ask the side judge if there are any possible early take-offs. Generally, the side judge will say, "All clear." In this case, you do not need to collect the slip or go over to the lane judge because the call must be dual confirmed. If all the exchanges were good, radio the deck referee and say, "Lanes 1-4/5-8 clear." If the side judge gives you a slip with an "X" indicating a possible early take-off, take the relay take-off slip with you and begin walking towards the lane judge while simultaneously saying, "I have a possible early take-off, lane 5, swimmer 3." When you reach the lane judge, ask for their relay take-off slip. If all the exchanges were good, call on your radio, "Lanes 1-4/5-8 clear." If the lane judge has the same early take-off recorded as the side judge, call the deck referee and say, "I have a dual confirmed early take-off, lane 5, swimmer 3; recommend disqualification."

After the deck referee accepts your call, notify one member of the relay team after the heat. It does not need to be the swimmer who left early. If needed, ask the team to wait or ask one of the timers to hold the relay team while you are waiting for confirmation from the deck referee. Write the disqualification slip and have the lane judge as well as the side judge sign the slip. Give both relay take-off slips as well as the disqualification slip to the deck referee as soon as possible.

If there is an injured swimmer or if you discover bodily fluids in the pool, on the blocks or on the deck, notify the deck referee immediately. You may also need to assist keeping the area clear or helping to locate a safety Marshall or life guard. However, stay in your position.

After the Session:

After the session, there are a few remaining duties to complete before leaving the venue:

- 1) If the meet is being swum in a prelims/final format, remind the officials to stay on deck until they are released. There may be a swim-off or two that needs to be officiated.
- 2) Collect the heat sheets from the officials. Put the deck referee(s) and starter's heat sheets on the top of the stack, followed by the chief judges and then the stroke and turn officials. If there is a timeline posted near the starting area, the last referee will record the finish time and sign their name at the bottom. Put the timeline on the top of the stack of heat sheets. Give the heat sheets to the AO's.
- 3) Collect the radios and headsets and put them back into the chargers for the next session. Check to see that the charging light comes on for each radio. Check to see that all radios are turned off. Be sure to retrieve the radio from the AO.
- 4) Gather the lap counters, if distance events were swum, and put them back where they were initially stored. Check to see that the bell was returned.
- 5) And finally, and most importantly, thank all the officials for helping at session.

Reflect on your job as a chief judge. If you were not sure about a particular call or procedure, ask the deck or meet referee or experienced official for advice. Remember, you are still learning and some day you may aspire to become a deck referee.

Maryland LSC Championship Meets and "OQM's":

At this stage of your chief judge development, you have worked at least two years as a certified chief judge for Maryland Swimming. Much if not all the information written above as well as the information on the chief judge certification test should pretty much be part of your routine when you serve as a chief judge at one of our LSC meets. You are probably known for your leadership, your excellent radio protocol, your supportive mentoring skills, your thorough knowledge of the rulebook, your ability to give a comprehensive stroke briefing and your committed desire to help others as needed or to work in any position requested of you.

If you should be selected to serve as a chief judge at one of the three Maryland Championship meets or an Officials' Qualifying Meet (OQM), there will probably be additional duties and responsibilities as well as protocols and procedures that may be different than what you may need to do at a local meet. At this level of competition, we try to provide the highest level of professionalism in officiating for our swimmers, their coaches and the parents.

The leadership team will be selected by the meet referee and each of these officials will be contacted by the meet referee prior to the meet. The team lead chief judge will send you

your assignments as well as a description of the jurisdiction and deck protocols that are to be implemented at the meet. It is best to prepare a notebook with copies of all the information that is sent to you. Print a copy of the meet notice, study it completely and then put it in your notebook. You are encouraged to print a copy of the “professional chief judge” document found on the USA Swimming web page and include this in your notebook.

The section that follows provides a greater in-depth look at a chief judge’s role at these meets:

Chief Judge Assignments and Duties:

As a chief judge, you will have different assignments, depending upon the number of stroke and turn officials who volunteer at each session. It is very important that you plan your schedule to arrive at least 30 minutes before the briefings. At the Maryland Championship meets and OQM’s, we will try to start all briefings one hour before the beginning of the sessions. An OQM means that officials may be observed for advancement or re-certification at the N2 or N3 levels. The meet will be organized in a manner to give all officials the closest experience to a national meet. However, the size of the deck and the number of officials limit this type of exposure to the duties and responsibilities assigned at this level.

For the purpose of this type of meet, chief judges will be assigned to one or more of the duties listed below at each session:

- Officials’ Sign-In - As the officials arrive to the briefing, have each person complete the sign-in sheet. If the official’s name is not on the roster, add their name to the corresponding section. All administrative officials and deck referees, starters and chief judges have already been appointed to these positions. Any additional leadership members will be selected by the meet referee as needed. Take the administrative referee/official sign-in sheet with you when you go down to the deck. Collect the sheet after the session and put it back in the sign-in book.
- Deck Assignments - The chief judge assigned to check in officials will also complete the deck assignments. The form that is used has been published by USA Swimming. This form will already have the information completed at the top. Your job is to staff the deck with stroke and turn officials. Whenever possible, at least one stroke official should be assigned to each side of the pool. Since most of the sessions are long, try to assign one or two officials as relief officials. The remaining officials will serve as the turn judges. Use a pencil to begin the assignments. There may be officials who arrive late. You will be asked to tell the officials their assignments during the briefing. After the

assignments have been confirmed, copy over the names in pen. Make enough copies so you can give a copy to the meet referee, the deck referees and the chief judges. Ask the administrative referee and head starter if he/she would like a copy. Oftentimes these officials do not want a copy. Put the original copy back in the sign-in/deck assignment book.

- Relay Take-Offs – You will generally use the relief officials, the off duty referee(s) and/or starter(s), the meet referee or depending upon the number of officials that volunteer for each session, you may use the turn officials at the start end for freestyle relays. If you have more than two turn officials at the turn end (Since we watch the turns from the corners for freestyle events) you can also use these officials. For medley relays, you will need to keep the deck assignments in place and use the additional staff listed above. Give the relay take-off forms to each official assigned this duty. Complete as much information as possible on the relay take-off form before giving it to the take-off judges.
- Heat Sheets – Request one sided, two column heat sheets from the administrative team. Make sure that there are sufficient two column copies of the heat sheet and give a copy to all the leadership officials. Write the name of the leadership official on the top of the heat sheet. The three column heat sheets can be given to the stroke and turn officials if requested. More recently, a single page event will be produced for the referees to be used to summarize the activities of the event before it is given to the administrative referee/official.
- Stroke Briefing – Study the rule book before every session that you work. At this level of meet, it is best to describe the rules for each of the strokes without the use of notes. However, if you have not had the opportunity to present a stroke briefing before, crib notes would be acceptable. The chief judge presents each of the strokes (Recommend that this be done in IM order) and after each stroke description, asks the officials if there are any questions or need for further clarification. Do not try to interpret the rules or give your own opinion about the rules. This will lead to confusion. If any questions are raised about a rule interpretation, defer to the team lead chief judge.
- Jurisdiction and Deck Protocol – The jurisdiction is established by the meet referee. In brief, the turn judges will have until the heads are up after the start and turns of the butterfly and breaststroke events. Turn officials will have the last stroke into the turns or into the finish and the touch. Stroke officials will have wall-to-wall jurisdiction. As for deck protocol, the turn judges should stand behind the blocks prior to the start and move up after the start with one foot forward and hands to the side or behind the back. At the turns and finish, the judges should move to the edge of the deck with one foot forward. When the swimmers leave the jurisdiction, stand back behind the blocks and wait for the next turn or finish. The stroke judges should walk between the backstroke

flags. For 15 meter events, start at the 15 meter mark and walk between the flags for the remainder of the heat. Walk up to the backstroke flags at the finish. If there are not enough officials and stroke officials are not assigned, the turn end judges will have the jurisdiction for 15 meter violations if the swimmer surfaces at the backstroke flags at the turn end. A variation of the jurisdiction for the turn judges may be from the backstroke flags into the turns or the finish.

- Radios – Stroke and turn officials will not need radios at this meet. Give a radio and headset to the meet referee, the administrative referee/officials, the deck referees, the chief judges and yourself. If there are extra radios remaining and if there are apprentice stroke and turn officials, radios may be given to these officials so that they can listen to the radio protocol and descriptions of possible disqualifications. After the session, collect all the radios and put them back into the charger to prepare them for the next session. Make sure all radios are turned off and the light has lit on the charger. You will need to complete a radio “roll call” 15 minutes before the start of the session. Use the deck assignment sheet to complete this task. Start by saying, “It is now time for our radio roll call. Say, “Good morning/afternoon/evening *official’s name*, how do you copy?” If an official does not reply the first time, call their name a second time after all other officials have checked-in with you. If you still are not able to raise the official by radio, seek them out personally to see if they have a radio and that the radio is in working condition.
- Starter Area – If you are assigned as the chief judge in the starter area, you will be responsible for writing DQ slips for the officials in your quadrant as well as DQ slips for false starts for the starter and referee. You may also need to notify the swimmer of the dual confirmed false start or a confirmed disqualification after the heat. You may be given or need to write a slip for a declared false start (DFS). A swimmer or their coach can declare a false start up until the time of the swimmer’s heat. Give the DFS slip to the deck referee after the start of the heat. The deck referee will sign the slip and give it back to you and you will give it to the administrative referee/official. You will only need to write a DFS for positive scratch events, not for prelims. During finals, have the alternates stand-by near the start area, but not in the starter’s area. Always keep the starter’s area clear during the start of a heat. If there is a no-show for finals, wait for the deck referee’s instructions.
- Collect the Heat Sheets – After the session is complete, barring any swim-offs, collect the heat sheets from all officials. Collect the time-line from the last presiding deck referee and put it on the top of the heat sheets. Put the deck referee(s) sheets next followed by the starters order of finish and master starter sheet, then the chief judges followed by the stroke and turn officials. Give the heat sheets to the administrative referee/official.

- Lap Counters – For distance events, the swimmers' teammates will be doing the counting. Your job is to locate the counters and make sure that they are at the turn end ready to be used. Put a lap counter at the turn end of each lane just prior to the start of the distance events. After the distance events are completed, put the counters to the side of the pool or return them to the storage area if all distance events have been completed.
- Bells for distance events – The starters will be responsible for securing a bell and will be ringing the bell over the lead swimmer's lane for each heat.
- Releasing the officials after the session – Generally the team lead chief judge or the chief judge in the starter area will check with the referees to see if there are any possible swim-offs. If there are none indicated, call on your radio to the other chief judges to release the stroke and turn officials.
- Always work as a team!!! Our job is to prepare the officials before the session and observe and mentor the officials during the session. Respond promptly to any official with a raised hand. Additionally, we take care of each other. If there are multiple disqualifications in one area, assist the other chief judge as needed. Complete your assigned duties and permit the rest of the team to complete their duties. Suggestions and recommendations are always welcome. If you think of something or see something on deck, share your thought or observation with your team lead. After the session and time permitting, the team lead may want to have a brief meeting with the CJ team to review protocols, procedures and any special circumstances that might have occurred during the session. Remember to thank the officials for helping at the session.