

NASHVILLE SWIM LEAGUE

STROKE AND TURN OFFICIALS CLINIC

As officials, our responsibility is to provide fair and equitable conditions at swim competitions so that no swimmer has an unfair advantage over another.

1. One set of rules apply to all swimmers no matter the age or ability level.
2. Violations of a stroke and turn rule results in a disqualification of a swimmer. Therefore the swimmers always get the “benefit of the doubt”.
3. As a stroke and turn official, we do not judge “style”. We only determine if a swimmer conforms to the rules. “Ugly” does not mean illegal.
4. An official can only make disqualifications within his/her jurisdiction. Before the meet begins, the referee must meet with the stroke and turn officials and assign jurisdiction and their relay duties.
5. An official must be in position to make a call.
6. Give equal time to all lanes even though some lanes are empty. Be consistent and fair.
7. Disregard club affiliations and exercise good judgment.
8. Always look and act professionally.
9. Refrain from giving the appearance of impartiality (i.e. cheering).
10. Stroke and Turn Officials are in place to observe and report their observations to the Referee. Stroke and Turn Officials are NOT responsible for handling protests or complaints from swimmers, coaches or parents. Refer any of these conversations to the Deck Referee.
11. No cell phones on deck please.
12. If you feel you made a mistake, talk with the Referee to take the appropriate action.
13. It is your responsibility to have understanding of the rules of swimming contained in the Stroke & Turn briefing (BEFORE you step on the deck at a meet).
14. We are OBSERVERS only. We are not trying to find fault with the swimmer’s performance.

Disqualification Procedure

1. Upon observing a stroke or turn infraction within your jurisdiction, raise a hand over your shoulder with an open palm. The hand should be raised as a reflex to the observed infraction. Make decisions quickly and decisively.
2. Stay in position. Write up the disqualification on the DQ form when the swimmers are out of your jurisdiction. You need to report the event number, the heat, the lane and the violation. Use the appropriate notations – the infraction occurred at the start of the swim or the finish.
3. Sign the DQ slip under ‘official’ and note the DQ on your heat sheet.
4. For relay take-off infractions, the hand is not raised, it is simply noted on the relay take-off slip (an early take-off is marked on a relay take-off slip with an X in the appropriate place).

5. Be prepared to answer “What is the rule and how was the rule violated?” “Were you in position?” and “Did this occur in your jurisdiction?” Ex of a referee question: “Which hand did not touch?”
6. Do not own the call. Do not take offense if your call is overturned. You did your job and the Referee must do his/her job.

After the Meet: Evaluate your performance –

1. Did I make the right calls and was I unbiased?
2. Should I have been more focused?
3. Did I socialize too much, get too distracted by your children, heat, rain, noise, etc.

Practice makes you better as in any endeavor. The more you officiate the more confident you will feel. Remember you are protecting the swimmer who conforms to the rules while providing the coach of an illegal swimmer the opportunity to correct the problem before the next meet.

Resources:

www.usaswimming.org

OFFICIAL’S BRIEFING

- Assignments
- Stroke & Turn Briefing
- Deck Protocol
- Special Information