

The “Professional” Administrative Referee - or - It’s more like Service with a Smile!!

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The “Professional” Administrative Referee should:

1. **Read** the “GUIDE TO OFFICIATING SWIMMING” on the USA Swimming website (the Administrative Referee chapter in particular!)
2. **Know the Rules** and the official interpretations.
3. **Read and Understand the Information in the Meet Announcement**, including: FAX, email and late entries, minimum entry times, and how many events each swimmer may enter for the entire meet
4. **Make sure you have all the needed supplies:**
 - Several 3 Ring Binders
 - No-shows Slips and No-Show Penalty Forms
 - Relay Cards or the ability to make Relay Cards using the Meet Management program
 - Distance Event “Positive Check-in” Folders
 - Scratch Box and Scratch Cards
 - Exception Reports, produced by your Computer Operator
 - Office Supplies, including the much-needed stamps, pens, pencils, staples, hole-punch, highlighters, tape, etc.
 - Filing system – for after the event has been completed
 - DQ Slips and DQ Log Forms
 - Computer Change Forms
 - Psych Sheets (reviewed prior to distribution)
5. **Get ready for the General Meeting** and take:
 - *The Scratch Box and Scratch Cards*
 - *All Meet Event Folders*
 - *A list of swimmers and teams who have not checked-in for the Positive Check-in Distance Events or Relays.*
 - *Some supplies and Computer Change Forms*
6. **Manage confirmation of Official Times and resolve Timing Issues:**
 - Make timing adjustments (work with the Computer Operator and Head Timer)
 - Supervise the Timing Equipment Operator and Timing Judge
 - Supervise and work with the Computer Operator
7. **Work with the Computer Operator to:**
 - Add advertisement logos to the Meet Program
 - Seed preliminaries after scratches
 - Seed finals after “Intent to Scratch,” “Scratches” and any ties have been finalized
 - Possibly seed Time Trials, as determined by the Meet Referee and meet management
8. **Work with the Chief Judges to:**
 - Establish procedures to receive confirmed and signed DQ, DFS and “No Show” slips
 - Be sure CJs (*and ARs and the Deck Referees*) understand and are using the same radio protocol
 - Confirm how Relay Cards will be handled
9. **Check with the Deck Referee** at the end of each event to let them know if swim-offs are needed. Remind them that they must be held within the time required by the rules. If the coaches use another method to resolve ties, record the result. Produce swim-off heat sheets (reflecting the DR’s negotiations) and give them to the DR for distribution to the announcer, other officials, coaches and timers. If scratches absolutely remove the need for resolution, help the DR inform the Coaches
10. **Be pro-active and always work with the coaches.** Call, or text, a coach when their swimmer has “no-showed” or has moved up or into Finals. Always deal with a coach’s questions or concerns, with a smile. Your job is to assist the swimmers and coaches
11. **Approve** all heat sheets programs and results for distribution, to post, to go to the Announcer and for your Meet Folder.
 - ★ If heat sheets for a session change any time after the initial publication, use colored paper (use a very different color for each new distribution in a session), clearly stamped “RESEED”, for distribution to coaches, announcer, officials and timers and posting for swimmers and spectators. If possible, have them hand delivered to affected coaches and athletes.
12. **As the Administrative Referee at the venue, possibly be involved in:**
 - **Before the session:**
 - Making announcements as needed
 - Taking Declared False Starts (DFSs) until the session begins
 - Assisting swimmers and coaches with any needs, including the declaring of a false start
 - Seeding, with accuracy
 - Taking Scratches for finals and assisting Coaches with Scratch Cards and Computer Change Forms
 - Accurately entering all Scratches and Computer Changes in the Meet Event Binder
 - Printing an accurate program – keeping in mind “slowest to fastest” and “fastest to slowest” events, alternating events, genders or age groups, and changed event orders
 - Communicating with the Meet Referee to produce pre-scratch and post-scratch time lines

- **After the start of an event:**
 - Turning over the handling of DFS’s to the Chief Judges and Deck Referees at the Start area
 - Listening for any Disqualifications, “Declared False Starts” or “No-Shows” and noting them
 - Notifying the Computer Operator of “no-shows”, DFS’s or potential DQ’s; finalizing them after signed slips are received
 - Documenting each DQ and DFS in the DQ Log
 - Notifying the coach of each “No-Show” swimmer of any penalty and the positive check-in requirements (form and deadlines) for future seeding in the meet; filling out a No-Show Penalty Form with all relevant details including the event, heat and lane of any “penalty” DQs; and advising the appropriate DRs (using the starting area CJ, if necessary)
 - Checking times for accuracy. Making timing adjustments, if needed
- **After each event:**
 - Checking that all DQs have been finalized (including swimmer or coach notification)
 - Listening for a summary of DQs, DFSs and No-Shows from the Deck Referee(s)
 - Immediately counting the number of No-Shows, DFS’s and DQ’s recorded and reconciling with the Deck Referee’s summary so that the results may be finalized for announcement
 - Advising Deck Referees of potential swim-offs. Following-up to confirm any ties for positions in finals have been resolved
 - Getting ready for the next event
 - Getting the results (interim results if “flighted seeding” is used) to the Announcer for broadcast of finals qualifiers and alternates, and the Scratch and “Intent to Scratch” closing time for the event.
 - Notifying coaches of swimmers who have moved up, due to scratches, including new 1st and 2nd Alternates
- **After the Deadline for Scratching a Finals Event:**
 - Checking for Final scratches. Following-up any “Intents to Scratch” that are waiting on later events.
 - Seeding Finals after verifying all ties and scratches are finalized, taking into account “fighting” or other program issues
 - Double-checking Finals Seeding
 - Making sure all timelines and advertisements are in the Finals Program. Double-checking and have Meet Referee double-check timelines for breaks, changed, alternating or alternative (fighting) event or heat order, and any other special conditions

13. Be Knowledgeable about your Timing Equipment and Meet Management Software

- Work with your Timing Equipment Operator and keep them informed about DFS’s, DQ’s and No-Shows
- Be familiar with what your Timing Equipment and Meet Management program can do for you
- Produce forms, and know processes, that can help you best manage your assignment and interact with the operators
- Make sure the Computer Operator is not disturbed during times of stress or crisis

Other Important Stuff:

- You will coordinate and interact with the Clerk of Course
- You will help the Meet Referee in making decisions during the meet. You will be a sounding board for the Meet Referee
- Be alert, attentive, focused, calm, professional, and approachable
- Always be “friendly” and helpful to coaches, swimmers, and other Officials, even if they are not
- Try to take all discussions and emotional issues off-deck
- You may be a Trainer for new Apprentice Administrative Referees
- You will need to have the ability to keep a calm demeanor during stress or crisis. Remember Anneliese Eggert’s “duck analogy” – a duck appears to be calm and serene on the surface of the pond but underwater they’re paddling like crazy! Work through at your own rate. You will get it done right, eventually. Prioritize your work on the real meet needs!
- Maintain your sense of humor

And that’s just the tip of the iceberg!

Remember; Professional Administrative Referees:

- Can adapt to meet conditions and needs
- Are willing to learn
- Help make sure the benefit of the doubt goes to the swimmer
- Find ways (within the rules) to let swimmers compete, and don’t over interpret procedural rules
- Have, and generously apply, **COMMON SENSE**
- Don’t read more into the rules than is written
- Are neatly uniformed, look confident, are competent, and are never imperious
- Advise the Meet Referee of any non-routine decisions made. If possible, involve them in those decisions
- Do the Administrative Referee job well and don’t overstep those responsibilities unless asked by the Meet Referee (this doesn’t mean that you can’t help out here and there)
- Self-evaluate after all shifts, sessions, and meets
- Are Team Players

Checklist for Administrative Referee (AR) Advancement Evaluation

(Refer to the National Certification Advancement Summary¹)

Attachment A

N2 Administrative Referee - Prerequisites² for requesting an Evaluation:

- LSC-certified Deck Referee or Administrative Referee for one year. At least 2 years as a certified official
- At least 8 sessions working as an Administrative Referee, Meet Referee or Administrative Official at meets using “check in” and preliminaries and finals with scratching from finals procedures

N2 Administrative Referee - Performance Requirements for an Advancing Evaluation

- Arrives at the meet with necessary equipment and supplies, or has arranged for them
- Completely understands the rules and procedures for the meet set out in the Meet Announcement
- Uses appropriate procedures for timely preparation of accurate heat sheets for preliminaries and finals, including management of scratches
- Reconciles DQs and No Shows, advises Deck Referee of “swim off” possibilities and follows up, reviews and checks all results and any timing adjustments or corrections during or after each event. Knows how to make timing corrections
- Finalizes all results after each session, day, and the meet. Prepares any reports for special occurrences (records, incidents, etc.)
- Keeps a tidy work area and uses an acceptable filing and paper management system so that all information is readily available
- Understands the timing system and scoring program being used and their limitations. Can operate the basic functions of those systems if necessary
- Works well with other officials, timing system and meet management program operators, and coaches

N3 initial Administrative Referee Evaluation (this is not a certification level) – Prerequisites² for requesting an evaluation:

- Very active N3 Deck Referee or, N2 AR with N3 ST certification and, preferably, N2 DR certification
- At least 8 sessions as an AR since N2 certification or as a Meet Referee since N3 DR certification at meets using “check in” and preliminaries and finals with scratching from finals procedures

N3 initial AR Evaluation - Performance Requirements for a recommendation to proceed to an N3 final Evaluation

- Arrives at the meet in sufficient time to perform pre meet duties with all necessary equipment and supplies, or has arranged for them and verified that they are there
- Performs all of the duties and procedures outlined for N2 evaluation with the addition of the management of scratches from preliminaries to prepare heat sheet
- Has more than basic knowledge of the scoring program being used
- Anticipates and resolves potential issues

N3 final AR Evaluation – Prerequisites² for requesting an evaluation:

- Certification as an N3 Stroke and Turn Judge and either N2 AR or N3 Deck Referee certification
- Note: N3 Deck Referees may receive a final N3 AR evaluation without N2 AR certification or an N3 initial AR evaluation **if** they are the head Administrative Referee for all sessions at an approved OQM **or**, they are the Assistant Administrative Referee at a USA Swimming National Championship Meet **and** they are evaluated by a qualified N3 final Administrative Referee evaluator. They must also satisfy the following prerequisite -
- At least 8 sessions as an AR since N2 certification, or as a Meet Referee since N3 DR certification, at meets using National Championship Meet procedures for “check in”, scratching and seeding for preliminaries and scratching from finals. (Penalties may be different.) Sessions meeting all these requirements at an N3 initial evaluation may be used

N3 final Administrative Referee Evaluation - Performance Requirements for Certification

- All of the performance requirements for N2 and N3 initial evaluation with little, or no, supervision
- Can step in to fill the Meet Referee role temporarily at a major meet, if necessary
- Consistently shows a demeanor that is calm, comfortable, competent and cooperative!

¹ There are other requirements that need to be met before an application for National Certification can be submitted and approved.

² Do not ask to be evaluated before the prerequisites have been satisfied.