

Virginia Swimming DR Training Clinic



v. April 11, 2024

Agenda

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- ❖ The After Session





Certification Requirements

- * Member of USA Swimming
- * Certified as a S&T Judge, Starter, and Administrative Official
- * Attend Referee Training Clinic
- * Pass USA Swimming Referee Certification Test
- * Apprentice as a Referee for at least 4 training sessions over at least 2 meets with at least 2 different trainers



Philosophy of a Deck Referee

The Referee – The person whose attitude has the most to do with how a swim meet runs. Ensures the rules are applied equitably and fairly while setting the standard for officiating

Review from Anneliese Eggert documents from 2001 on the VSI website, Referee's Attitude and Referee and the Rules

Attitude:

- ❖ *Disposition and temperament – Are you calm or do you easily get upset?*
- ❖ *Perspective – Do you look at issue fairly? Remember to keep all swimmers in mind- not just the current issue at hand. Setting a precedent*
- ❖ *Demeanor – Are you respectful interfacing with coaches and other officials?*
- ❖ *Approach- Is your intent to always put the swimmers first?*



Philosophy of a Deck Referee

- ❖ A calm, confident and competent referee also imparts that vibe to everyone else -- A whole meet becomes secure and relaxed atmosphere
- ❖ The above is even more important at smaller local meets or dual meets with potentially fewer and less experienced officials.

Bottom line, they are looking to the Referee for leadership.



Formula for Deck Referee

Knowledgeable of the Rules – 1st & foremost –w/out question

- + Demeanor – Upbeat on and off deck
- + Mentorship – Actively trains officials with positive reinforcement
- + Progression – Always strives for new opportunities
- + Experience – Participation at regular & championship meets at least within our LSC
- + Recommendations from DRs and DCs

= **Leader**

Rank does not confer privilege or give power. It imposes responsibility

-Peter Drucker



The Pre-Meet

- ❖ To be confident, you must prepare yourself to ensure you know what you doing.
- ❖ Do you know the USA Swimming Rules? Not just the technical rules, but what about Administrative Regulations of Competition?
- ❖ Do you memorize them?
 - * Most likely not
 - * Best to earmark sections that could pop up at a swim meet
- ❖ Have you read the Meet Announcement?
 - * What is particular about the meet that you follow?
 - * Are there scratch rules?
 - * Special rules for distance events?
 - * Deck entries allowed?



The Team

Deck Ref is the facilitator in aiding, not micromanaging the team, to ensure they complete their tasks correctly.

Meet Referee – Your CEO, sets guidelines for protocols & procedures

- * Sets P & P, should let those certified are qualified to handle the position
- * Should not be a micromanager

S&T – Front line staff

CJs - Managers – Eyes, ears and communication link to the deck

Starter – Key individual(s) for smooth meet flow

– 2nd set of eyes, ears and “watch your back”

AR/AO – Handle the table keeping you in the loop of any admin issues

Meet Director – Valuable resource, sometimes underutilized to facilitate communication w/ coaches

The Proactive Pregame

Delegate & checks they are completed

- Equipment checks
- Timer's brief
- Radio check
- Staff on deck – **including the announcer**
- Discussion with Starter
 - Info you want from them
 - Your signal if you want the heat to stand
 - Where are they going to stand – **You adjust**
- Timeline
- National Anthem
- Admin team ready
- Session start time



The Start

Patience before and after the whistles (don't blow the whistle with blinders on)

Finals – MR procedures – different from regular LSC meet or even prelims

Handing over a heat to your Starter

False Start versus bad start

- Who initiates a recall?
- How do you handle a recall?
- What constitutes a false start or bad/unfair start?

Missed heats – MR procedures & type of meet

- **Setting a precedence - Elephants do not forget!**
- Early season – probably OK, later in the season, not so much
- How to handle? Athlete's coach should be present
 - Delicately explain who is responsible for their swims
 - Consider it an educational moment **We are all learning**



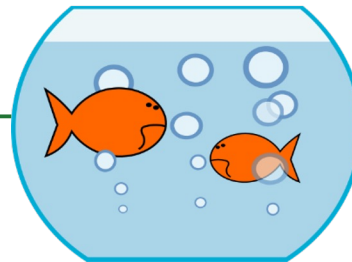
The Race

Swimmers come to surface

- Look back at SE S&T
- Sweep scoreboard to ensure clock is running
- Mark your heat sheet
- Step towards the backstroke flags, observe officials & pool

You & CJs are watching the S&T

Refrain from hanging out with the Starter –



The Race

Avoid distractions

- Keep eyes on the pool
- If distractions come up, keep them short or delay until after the race

Watch your timeline

- Every heat not necessary, by event is fine

When you are the DR, it is your pool

- What could go wrong?
 - Lane lines, pads, buttons, caps floating, pom-poms, tennis balls and objects in the water, loss of power

Expect the unexpected

S&T raises their hand, what do you do?

- Quiz yourself, what stroke, where are the swimmers, what could be called?
- Mark your heat sheet of where the call occurred
- Could be expecting a DQ slip from that quadrant



The Adjudication

What was the judge's position/jurisdiction?

What rule was broken?

As a DR, their explanation of what they saw should paint the picture

If not, ask CJ or judge for clarity

However, do not lead either

Review DQ slip – E/H/L, name and team match?

Stroke circled and appropriate violation checked?

If incorrect, or too much info, have them rewrite

Too much info can lead to doubt

We do not throw out DQs because they have an error

- Best box to check is the one that the Coach will understand the call
- Print your name and check Coach or Swimmer, whichever is appropriate



The Adjudication

Keep your admin table “in the game” with DQs

Check with CJ and let the CJ know to inform Admin when they can close an event

After event closed, & if you have time, give them # of DQs & no-shows

They will  you for this!

In dual, local meets, let CJ deliver yellow slips to the coaches

Let them explain call w/ the rule language

However, turns into a discussion, have the CJ direct the coach to you

Why? **Development of a CJ** **We are all learning**



The Coach

Take the moral high ground

How do you handle the irate coach not happy with a S&T call?

- Off deck – if necessary
- Patience
- Common sense

If the coach is really upset, allow them to calm down, how?

1. Let them talk, you listen – often that is all that you need to do
2. After you listen, tell them you will be glad to investigate and get back to them
3. Keep your emotions out of the loop

These steps create a “cooling off” period for the Coach.

BTW -These simple steps work for every Coach. Practice these & it will prepare you for the overzealous types.

The bonus is that you'll be building relationships with the coaches.



The Coach

Take the moral high ground

Do you have the authority to revoke a DQ?

Sure do, BUT use this authority wisely after your investigation

- Doubt in the call
- Rule was incorrectly applied, or
- It appears there was a mistake

DO NOT just go through the motions when investigating a call

- Sometimes, it turns out that additional info will be obtained, that could overturn the call, or
- Sometimes you'll get additional info that will clarify the call to the coach



The Decision



- ❖ Don't be trapped into upholding a call because your ego is on-the-line by not admitting a mistake or an error, we are human!
- ❖ You are not the most important person on deck
 - Neither are the coaches or parents
- ❖ ***The most important people on deck are the SWIMMERS***
- ❖ Decisions should always, always, always be made in providing “fair and equitable conditions of competition”
- ❖ Remember to ask yourself, “It my decision fair for one swimmer, or it is fair for the whole field”
- ❖ Knowledge and experience may be the basis for your decisions, but attitude– the way you handle and communicate them – is what makes your judgements acceptable

The After Session

- ❖ *Remember to thank your staff, managers, starter, admin and meet director, hospitality and your timers!*
 - * *A simple thank-you and a handshake goes a long way*
 - * *Adds to recruiting by making people feel respected and appreciated!*
- ❖ *Talk to your mentors and your trainee's, sign their cards*
 - * *How was the training?*
 - * *Did you learn anything?*
 - * *How do you feel out there?*
 - * *Any questions for me about the process?*
- ❖ *Complete a self-eval on how you lead the team – We learn from our mistakes*
 - * *What good things did you do?*
 - * *What did not work?*
 - * *How can you improve?*



The Others

❖ **Distance Sessions**

- * *Positive check-in – when does it close?*
- * *Is it check-in to be seeded or check-in to swim?*
- * *Distance session seeded and coaches have heat sheets?*
- * *Timer slips printed and distributed?*
- * *Starter has a bell?*
- * *DR, Starter and S&T have count sheets?*
- * *Timers in place?*
- * *Counters checked and on the deck?*
- * *Admin table ready?*
- * *Swimmer's ready?*



The Others

❖ *Combining Heats*

- * *As long as they are the same age-group – Why?*
- * *Heat 1 has one swimmer on the blocks, heat sheet has Heat 2 with an empty lane. Combine?*
- * *What are the drawbacks to combining heats on the fly?*
- * *Best to do it ahead of time and talk to all of the Officials, including Admin, & Coaches*
- * *Let the announcer & meet director know as well*
- * *Lane timer slips updated as well*



The Others

❖ **Options for bad weather**

- * *How long are you going to be out of the pool?*
- * *Hold a Meet Director and Coach Meeting*
- * *What do they really need to swim? Could some events be pushed to next day's session?
Are you allowed to do this?*
- * *Should we set up positive check-in for remaining events*



The Others

❖ **Report of Occurrence**

- * *Report to USA Swimming and LSC Operational Risk*
- * *Form on-line at USA Swimming*
- * *Basic info of the accident or injury*
- * *Best to collect incident reports from lifeguards*
- * *Will need member ID's*



The Others

❖ **Coaches Meetings**

- * Regular season meets, not normal held at meet, can shoot the coaches and email
- * Championship or multi-teams from out of LSC
- * Introduce leadership team
- * Facility layout and venue rules
- * Discuss any pertinent info about meet schedule, timelines, warm-ups procedures
- * Scratch box, relay cards, positive check-in
- * Finals, time trials procedures
- * Meet Jury and pool of jurists
- * Q&A



The Others

❖ **Protests and Meet Jurys**

- * ***Written protest must be submitted within 30 minutes of the infraction***
- * ***Normally deals with eligibility or administrative rules***
- * ***Protests against the judgement decisions of starter, S&T, RTO can only be considered by the Referee and the Referee's decision shall be final.***
- * ***Meet jury shall consist of not fewer than three (3) and not more than five (5) persons. At least one has to be a coach and an athlete.***



The Others

❖ **Referee Pass down/Turnover**

- * *Seldom used anymore*
- * *There is a form on VSI website that details the warm-up procedure used*
- * *Type of starts*
- * *Manner on handling empty lanes*
- * *Anything special that occurred*
- * *Provides any precedents that were set*

❑ *Regardless, this is the basic information you should receive from an MR prior to they session. If not, ask!*

- * *Why? MRs may have different approach to handling a missed swim*



Thanks for all you do for our Sport

Q&A Time

