

VSI Officials' Guidelines for Observed Swims

For times achieved at meets conducted under other than USA-S technical rules (eg. NFHS, NCAA) to count as official USA-S times:

- A request for observation must be made to LSC National Times Coordinator and the meet must be approved for observation
- The swims must be observed by USA-S certified officials (observers) who ensure that the swim was in compliance with USA-S technical rules.

Observation:

- The entire meet will be observed.

Staffing: under all circumstances there must be a minimum of two NFHS/NCAA Stroke and Turn officials at each end of the pool to ensure adequate coverage of the rules governing the conduct of the meet.

- If all of the Stroke and Turn officials are also USA-S certified, those officials may also serve as the observers and no additional observers are necessary, although the Meet Referee may choose to use separate observers if he/she chooses (if this latter approach is taken then staffing should follow the guidelines for separate observers as indicated below)
- If none or only some of the meet Stroke and Turn officials are USA-S certified, then separate observers are required (USA-S rules require a minimum of two USA-S Stroke and Turn certified officials).
 - Observers are positioned at the ends of the pool to observe as unobtrusively as possible (this must be coordinated with the Referee running the meet)

Disqualifications

- Stroke and Turn officials working in the dual capacity of being both a meet official and an observer:
 - Are responsible for ensuring compliance with the rules under which the meet is being swum and with USA-S rules
 - Should only raise their hand to signal a disqualification when there is an infraction of the rules under which the meet is being conducted
 - Should not raise their hand to signal a disqualification that would occur only under USA-S rules
 - Should mark a disqualification of the appropriate swimmer on their heat sheet when there is a violation of a rule that is unique to USA-S (the specific violation should be noted).
- Stroke and Turn officials working only in an observer capacity:
 - Are responsible for ensuring compliance with those rules that are unique to USA-S. Are not responsible for ensuring compliance with those rules that are the same between USA-S and those of the governing body under which the meet is being run. If the meet official and observer differ in their opinion as to whether or not a violation has occurred for these rules, the call of the meet official is to prevail. (as per Chair of the USA-S Rules & Regulations Committee)
 - Should not raise a hand upon observing an infraction
 - Should mark a disqualification of the appropriate swimmer on their heat sheet if there is a violation of a rule that is unique to USA-S (the specific violation should be noted).
- When the technical rules under which the meet is being swum are more stringent than the USA-S rules:
 - As long as the swimmer was in compliance with USA-S rules (the swimmer wasn't disqualified for another infraction common to both sets of rules) the time counts for USA-S purposes.

- The swimmer (or his/her coach/representative) that has been disqualified for such an infraction must come to an observer prior to the end of the session and request that the time be documented for USA-S purposes
- In conjunction with meet personnel (Referee, Administrative Referee, Recorder), the observer should then determine if the swimmer had any additional violations in the swim in question
 - If the swimmer was disqualified for a violation in addition to the more stringent violation, the disqualification stands for USA-S purposes and the time does not count
 - If the swimmer was only disqualified for an infraction that is not also an infraction under USA-S rules, the time achieved can be counted for USA-S purposes
 - If the time can be counted for USA-S purposes, the observer should obtain the official time, note that the swimmer was in compliance with USA-S rules, and this information should be collated and forwarded with the USA-S DQ report for the meet
- Other meet procedures and follow-up:
 - USA-S Disqualification Reports
 - At the end of each session one of the observers should collect all the heat sheets with the marked USA-S disqualifications
 - This information should be collated into a single “USA-S DQ Report”
 - Swims in compliance with USA-S rules but not the meet specific rules
 - Document these occurrences and obtain official time in case overwritten by “DQ” in the meet database
 - Forward the following information to the VSI National Times Coordinator.
 - The Meet Manager backup file of the meet
 - Documentation of any swims in compliance with USA-S rules but not meet specific rules
 - USA-S DQ report