

Silver State Situation...

During the race start, the referee whistles the swimmers up onto the blocks, then hands over the heat to the Starter. Upon the "Take your Mark' command, the swimmers come down and become stationary, but before the starter starts the race, one swimmer moves forward, but does not leave the block. Rather than asking the swimmers to "Stand Please," the Starter chooses to wait and the swimmer becomes stationary again along with the rest of the heat. The starter then starts the race which runs to completion and no disqualification was made.

Interpretation of Situation in an e-mail exchange with Dan McAllen, USA Swimming Chair of Rules and Regulations on 3/14/13...

Dale,

This is NOT a false start. This was a Starter who exercised the patience we preach, waited for the swimmers to become

stationary a second time, and then started them fairly. Good on him/her. There can never be a false start unless one of two things,

or both, occur. Number one, a starting signal is given, and the swimmer starts before the signal. (Your athlete never left the blocks when he moved and no starting signal was ever given. One cannot be ahead of a starting signal that is not given.) Number two, the swimmer ends up in the pool as a result of an intentional starting action not in response to a verbal command to stand. Rule 101.1.3A Would anyone even consider charging this swimmer with a false start if the Starter had stood the field and the swimmer was able to stand? Please say NO. The early movement can be negated in two ways. Stand the field and begin the starting sequence anew, or just be patient and let everyone settle back into a stationary position. The rule requires the swimmer to be stationary at the start, and he was.

Dan McAllen

Chair, Rules & Regulations Committee