

Referee Training

Updated for the 2016 Season



IMPORTANT –

Do not waste your time

- In order to train for Referee, a trainee **MUST** have **WORKED** as Strokes and Turns at least 8 halves (4 full meets) of GRAL meets in the last 4 years. **MUST** also have worked as either a Strokes and Turns judge or a Starter in the past 2 years.
- Other organizations' meets do not qualify. There is another path for those who are USA Certified. Stay for the class, but see Greg or Christy afterwards.
- If you have not met this requirement, you will not be able to walk as a Ref until you do meet the requirement.
- Please contact officials@gralva.com if you have any questions.



Agenda

- GRAL Handbook
 - Referee Description
 - Training and Recertification
 - Trainee Requirements
- Main Duties of the Referee
- Prior to the Meet
- During the Meet
- After the Meet
- Discussion



GRAL HANDBOOK



Section XIII of GRAL Handbook – Referee Description

- **Referee (Certified):** See USS Handbook for duties. The League recommends that the Referee be fully cognizant of the job responsibilities and rules governing the performance of the Clerk of Course, Starter, Strokes & Turns Judges, Table workers, and computer functions. The Referee shall be aware of any concerns that arise during the conduct of the meet in any of these areas and be prepared to intervene to resolve those concerns.
- Note: There are several bullets following this description. We will discuss the duties in this class, but every Referee should be familiar with the handbook – Especially any changes made in the past year.



Section XIII of the Handbook – Training and Recertification

- **TRAINING** - (Prerequisite - The Referee candidate must have worked four full GRAL meets in the past four seasons as a Strokes & Turns Judge prior to becoming a Referee. The candidate must also have worked as a Strokes & Turns Judge or Starter in the consecutive 2 seasons prior to training.)
The Referee must complete the GRAL training courses and pass all tests in Clerk of Course, Starter, Strokes & Turns Judge, and Referee during the first year of training OR if certification is NOT continuously maintained. Referees must attend a stroke and turns and referee clinic every year. Referees are required to pass the appropriate certification exams every year.
A New Referee Trainee shall walk at least half of a meet as a Starter and half of a meet as Clerk of Course unless he/she is already certified in either one of these two positions. The New Referee Trainee shall also walk at least one full meet as a Referee to successfully complete the training qualifications as a Referee.
Note that the test and walking requirements for Strokes & Turns are taken care of by the prerequisites for becoming a Referee. Referees are Strokes & Turns Certified
- **Recertification**
 - Work a minimum of 1 meet per year as Referee
 - Attend Stroke & Turn and Referee Clinic every year
 - Pass certification tests (Clerk, Starter, Stroke & Turn, and Referee) every year
 - Maintain Strokes & Turns Certification



Responsibilities of the Trainee

- Take all four training classes from a certified GRAL trainer (unless certified in Starter or Clerk)
- A link to the online tests will be sent to the email that you provide at the training
 - Take and pass ALL FOUR tests **PRIOR** to walking regardless of prior certifications
 - If you walk prior to passing any test, that walk will NOT count
- You can walk at either a home meet or an away meet
 - Walk one half meet as Starter (unless currently certified)
 - Walk one half meet as Clerk (unless currently certified)
 - Walk one first half and one second half as Referee



Responsibilities of the Trainee

- Please do NOT wear the white tops and dark bottoms of a judge when walking so that the Referee and Coach are not confused
- Get the back of your card initialed by the Referee when walking Starter and Referee and by the Head Clerk when walking Clerk
- Make sure your name is on the cover sheet
 - The cover sheets are posted on the GRAL Web site shortly after the meet. **It is your responsibility to make sure you are on it.** If not, contact officials@gralva.com as soon as possible!



When Walking the Ref Position . . .



Model

Watch the experienced worker in the position. Ask questions when you can.

Practice

In your mind, go over the calls that you would make.

Feedback

Ask lots of questions and feel free to discuss calls with the experienced worker.

The working Referee is in charge, and only s/he can make decisions affecting the meet.



MAIN DUTIES OF THE REF



The Referee's primary role is
to ensure that the meet
is contested fairly.



The Referee should be familiar with **both** the most recent GRAL Rules (listed in the handbook) and the most recent USA Swimming Rules and ensure that the meet is being conducted following both sets.

Have both documents on hand and accessible at every meet.



The Referee must **remain on deck** through the course of the meet, be in communication with the Starter before each heat and observe each start.



The Referee has the authority
to suspend a swim meet for
unsportsmanlike behavior.



The Referee shall . . .

- Have full authority over all officials and shall assign and instruct them
- Enforce all applicable rules
- Decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the final settlement of which is not otherwise assigned by said rules
- Overrule any meet official on a point of rule interpretation or on a judgment decision pertaining to an action which the Referee has personally observed



The Referee shall have
final say in all disputes.
Therefore, the Referee
shall remain until the last event
has been scored.

In the event a primary referee must leave, a mutually agreed upon GRAL certified referee shall continue the referee duties. If a replacement is unavailable, the meet will be postponed and continued at a later date before the next scheduled meet if this occurs in Meets 1 – 5 or before results of the last meet are due prior to Champs registration.

The Professional Referee

- Required Uniform for Referees and Stroke & Turn Judges
 - White shirt and dark shorts, pants or skirt, preferable dark blue. No team identifying logos or labels.
 - This uniform adds to your credibility and professionalism
 - Please do not wear this while *walking* so that you aren't confused with the working judge (unless you will be working later that meet as Ref, Strokes and Turns, or Starter)
- When a Stroke & Turn judge is wearing this uniform, it makes it easier for you to notice him/her when s/he is officiating
- A Referee may send a judge home to get his/her uniform if s/he forgets it



Multiple Referees

- In the event that more than one Referee will work the meet, there is only ONE **Referee in Charge** on Deck at any time with authority for the meet
- If an additional Referee is on deck, his/her only job is to assist the **Referee in Charge** of the meet
- The additional Referee may be asked to assist other Meet officials
- ONLY the **Referee in Charge** of the meet has the authority to question and sign DQ cards
- It is not the job of any additional referee to write DQ cards unless s/he is substituting for an absent Strokes & Turns Judge
- **The Referee in Charge** has final authority on any questions that need to be resolved



PRIOR TO MEET START



Pre-Meet Meetings

- Introduce yourself and/or check in with the Head Table Worker, Head Computer Operator, Clerk of Course, and Head Timer
 - Note that, with the exception of when at the Pebble Creek or Burkwood Swim and Racquet Club pools, which have 8 lanes, all timers should have two watches to help them record times more quickly
- Meet with Runners for both halves to explain their duties – assign one to run time sheets and the other to run DQ cards. Show them where they deliver the paperwork to the table workers.
- Meet with Starter
 - Discuss procedure for signaling start of each heat (whistle, hand signal, look, discretion, etc.)
 - Note that beginning with the 2008 Season, GRAL began using flyover starts for swimmers **who are 9 and older** in non-backstroke events to help make meets go faster



Pre-Meet Meetings

- Meet with Coaches to introduce yourself
 - Develop positive rapport
 - Discuss layout of the pool and facility and any safety concerns
 - Remind them of the weather policy
 - Present warm-up schedule
 - Ask about any special needs swimmers
 - Discuss protest procedure
 - Ask if they would like to split the SV and ADV relays
 - See if there are any questions



Pre-Meet Meetings

- Meet with Strokes & Turns Judges from both halves
 - Thank the Volunteers for their commitment
 - Introduce yourself and any other Referee if sharing position
 - Introduce Starter
 - Record names on the cover sheet and DOUBLE CHECK
 - Discuss special needs swimmers and procedure
 - Review pool layout, jurisdictions, rotation schedule, and assign starting positions and any walkers
 - Talk about where judges should stand
 - Identify 15 meter mark
 - Discuss relay takeoff procedure
 - Conduct a technical review of USA Swimming rules, DQ card, and common DQs and answer any questions
- In USA Swimming events in this area, an occasional reminder to 'immediately raise one hand all the way up, with authority, but without enthusiasm' upon observing a rule infraction is sometimes included in pre-meet briefings.



Measuring the Pool

- USA Swimming Rules dictate that swimmers must not dive in water that is less than four feet (4') deep [USA Swimming Rule 103.2.3A]
- This depth shall be measured one meter (3 feet 3 ½ inches) from the wall and should continue for 4 more meters
- The Referee is required to oversee measurement of the depth and required to certify it prior to every meet
- There is a space on the Meet Cover Sheet to note the measurement
- The most common way to measure this distance is using a marked pole
- If the swimmers will not be diving from one end or the other, there is no need to measure that end



Information to put on the Meet Cover Sheet

- Division
- Meet # (1 – 6)
- Meet Date
- Meet Start Time
- Time Event 44 begins (don't forget to note this)
- Meet Completion Time
- Checkbox for Weather Delay
- Teams competing
- Meet Location
- Pool Measurement (Yards or Meters)

There will be two copies of the meet cover sheet – one for the Ref to write on at the meet that the computer rep uses to input the official electronic coversheet. Both are on the Web site.



More information to put on the Meet Cover Sheet

- Pool Depth information for each lane, certified by the Referee
- Meet Workers and Walkers
 - **Remember that this is how people get credit for working or walking, so it needs to be accurate!**
 - Make sure people are marked in the correct spot
 - Make sure first and last names are spelled out and spelled correctly
 - Make sure that teams are noted for S&T and Walking officials
- Meet Cover Sheets no longer need to be signed nor do you need to fill out the score, however, you still must stay until the meet is completely scored in case there are issues.



The Meet Cover Sheet

The Meet Cover Sheet
online form shall be filled out
within 24 hours
of the completion
of the meet.

It can be found on
www.gralva.com
in the Computer section.



DURING THE MEET



Running a meet

- Signal the starter to begin every heat as discussed
- The Referee generally stands next to the Starter unless he needs to move around to talk to other officials and address issues
- Spot check the seeding of the swimmers as they arrive at the block



Running a meet

- Discuss any protests with Coaches and only Coaches
 - Send any other persons to their team's Coach or Parent Rep if they happen to come to you first
- Discuss any meet issues with the home team Parent Rep
 - Disrupting devices like laser pointers, noisemakers, flash photography
 - Alcohol policy
 - Other issues regarding personnel or facility
- Handle any misconduct by swimmers (according to GRAL and USA Swimming rules)



DQ Cards

- Review and approve with signature or initials all disqualifications from the Strokes & Turns judges prior to the DQ cards going to the Table Workers
- You can mark infractions that you observe on your meet program and check them with cards that come in
- If the Stroke & Turn judge did not raise his/her hand for the DQ, that is grounds for overturning the DQ



DQ Cards

- Check that the event number, heat number, and lane number all make sense
 - If a judge makes a mistake on an event number and the heat and lane don't exist, you can send it back or you can overrule the DQ
- Send back any cards that aren't signed or filled out completely
- Go to the judge and discuss any calls that are questionable or that you need more information about
- Do not over-officiate by writing cards for infractions that you saw but weren't called by a Stroke & Turn Judge
 - If you do make a disqualification, you must raise your hand



False Starts

- The Referee shall confirm any false start calls with the Starter
- GRAL deviates from USS in that a swimmer is only disqualified for a second false start in the same event
- The Referee writes the card



Reseeding

- There are certain situations where the Clerk will need to reseed from what is printed in the meet program
 1. Relays – often the clerk will seed the relays and they won't appear in the meet program, or they may change due to scratches
 2. Late arrivals – when a swimmer arrives late to his event and needs to be put in a later heat or swim with another event
 3. Combining heats – when heats are combined because of no shows
 4. Combining events – when two events are combined to make the meet run faster
- In all cases above, Clerks are instructed to inform the Referee, Starter, and all affected Timers. It is up to the Referee to inform the Stroke & Turn Judges.
- In case 4 above, you have the final say. The Clerk should have a good reason for why it is worth the headache
 - For example, if you are combining two 50 Freestyle events, it is probably not worth it, but if you are combining two 100 Breaststroke events, it might be a good idea



Rules of Reseeding Individual Events

- FIRST ASK THE SWIMMERS IF IT'S OKAY!
- Must have **SAME stroke and length**
- Can ***NOT*** create extra heat – combining of events must result in only one heat
- If mixed gender, an empty lane MAY remain between them, but this is no longer a requirement
- Swimmers in the same event must swim together



Another Clerk Situation

- What if scratches make it so a swimmer is swimming alone in a heat, but the next heat(s) is/are full?
 - The Clerk will ask the swimmer if it's okay to swim alone
 - If the swimmer really doesn't want to swim alone, the Clerk will move the two outside lanes to flank the swimmer
 - If those swimmers get upset, you may need to intervene



GRAL Procedures for Seeding

- GRAL Procedure VI.3: “No swimmer may be entered in more than 3 individual events.”
 - How does this affect the Clerk? A swimmer cannot be added to another event (say breaststroke) if s/he missed his/her first event (say backstroke) if that would make 4 entries.
 - You may be called upon to enforce this rule.
- GRAL Procedure VI.2: “No changes may be made after the start of the meet or Distribution of Heat Sheets, whichever comes first.”
 - How does this affect the Clerk? If a Coach asks the Clerk to make a change to relays (such as a change in Relay Division) other than switching in and out swimmers or scratching the relay, the Clerk will send him or her to the Ref.
 - You may be called upon to enforce this rule.



Relay Takeoffs and Dual Confirmation

- Dual Confirmation, while not required is recommended for Events 1 and 52 through 55.
 - Second half judges can help with the second and fourth swimmer starts for event 1
- Have the Computer Rep print 4 Dual Confirmation Sheets or provide other note paper forms
- The Stroke & Turn Judges on the start end should be the first confirmation
- The Referee and Starter can be the second confirmation
- If you have extra Stroke & Turn Judges who are not working, they could instead be the second confirmation or replace the working Judges especially during Medley meets so that they can concentrate on the strokes
- When using the dual confirmation method, two independent observations of an early take-off are required for disqualification
- The sheets should be returned to the Referee for final approval of the disqualification



Sample Dual Confirmation Sheet

Dual Confirmation Judges: Place an X in the square of any swimmer that takes off early and an O if the takeoff is legal.

Lane		1			2			3			4			5			6			7			8		
Swimmer		2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4
Event	Heat																								
1	1																								
	2																								
	3																								
	4																								
52	1																								
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Weather Delays

- At the first observation of lightning or thunder, the lifeguard should blow his/her whistle and the pool should be cleared
 - If the lifeguard does not do this, the Referee should prompt him/her
- The meet can resume after 30 minutes of absence of lightning or thunder. It is the responsibility of the Meet Director, the Parent Representatives, and Pool Management to enforce the weather delay.
- The Parent Reps of both teams and the Meet Director will make the call as to postpone or continue the meet, but there are some GRAL rules to follow, so have the handbook available
 - Relays will not be held if the first heat of Event 44 (9-10 Girls 50 Free) is not in the water by 10:30p.m. and the meet is completed on that night.
 - 8&Under Relay scores will not be included if all relays are not swum.
- Note that the Referee is NOT involved in the decision to postpone or not.



AFTER THE MEET



After the Meet

- Thank the volunteers and coaches
- Check in with the coaches to make sure there aren't any outstanding protests for which you may need to detain a Strokes & Turns Judge
- Review and approve the Meet Cover Sheet - **Please make sure this is accurate! Often it is not and volunteers have suffered because they aren't recorded correctly**
- Give the Computer Rep your copy of the meet program and collect S&T copies. This is to check any DQs after the meet has completed.
- Sign any provisional cards you might have missed
- Make notes for the next meet



Qualities of a Good Referee

Calm **Confident** **Fair**
Knowledgeable
Experienced **Prepared** **Alert**
Communicator **Proactive**
Delegator **Multi-tasker**
Good Attitude **Professional**



Remember to read and become familiar with both the GRAL rules and the USA Swimming Handbook often and especially prior to a meet.



DISCUSSION



Rule Clarifications

- For in water starts, including relay starts, one hand must be in contact with the wall.
 - For a relay in-water start, if the swimmer's hand loses contact with the wall before the previous swimmer makes contact with the wall, it would be an early take-off unless the swimmer retouches the wall with his/her hand after the previous swimmer has touched the wall.
- In Butterfly, the arm from the wrist to the shoulder must break the surface of the water throughout the recovery.



Rule Clarifications

- Butterfly arm movements are not required to be on the same horizontal plane.
- In a Backstroke turn, if the swimmer turns past vertical to the breast, and with continuous motion touches the wall prior to a flip, this is not a violation of the rules.



Rule Clarifications

- New USA Swimming rule not covered in the video requires that touches at the turns and finish for Breaststroke and Butterfly have the palms not stacked. the rule uses the word 'separated', but overlapping fingers, thumbs, or palms being adjacent, but not stacked is OK. Fingertip touches without the palms touching the wall is also OK.

