

# Stroke & Turn Clinic



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# Overview

- Why Officiate?
  - All Sanctioned meets need officials for the times to be eligible for the USMS database. No officials? No times! Absolute minimum is TWO for USMS meets, ideally more.
  - FAIR competition requires people who observe and enforce the rules consistently.
  - Swimmers learn from the DQ process, and then pay attention to coaches on these points.

# What Does an Official Do?

- Understands the rules of USMS Swimming and enforces them fairly.
- Observes swimmers, does not scrutinize. All swimmers are legal until they prove otherwise.
- Treats all swimmers the same regardless of Team, experience, or age.

# What Don't We Do?

- Show favoritism to a Team, swimming legends or elite athletes.
- Talk about specific calls/officials with other swimmers, coaches or interested bystanders.
- Act/look unprofessional on deck.
- Arrive late or leave early.
- Criticize, coach, or belittle athletes when explaining a call.

# What Types of Officials?

- **Level 1 – Stroke & Turn Officials**
  - Responsible for all calls during a race from after the Start until the finish.
  - The most important person to the athlete!
- **Level 2 – Starter**
  - Talkative – “Take Your Mark” “Stand Please.”
  - Responsible for fair starts for all athletes.
- **Level 3 – Referee**
  - Responsible for all officials, running of the meet, accuracy of times, “the whole show.”

# Professional Official

- What sets us apart from the others?
  - Uniform, look professional and be treated well.
  - No Cell phone use while on deck
  - Preparation – know the rules, refresh each meet.
  - Act as part of the team, prompt for meetings and returning from breaks.
  - Take this seriously, 100% attention to the pool when on duty, act professional.

# Professional Official

- Keep current with rules & skills. Work as often as you can, minimum 4 sessions/2 years to Recertify. Keep a log. Recertify every 2 years.
- Be a good team player, do YOUR job well, help others and keep an open mind for new ideas.
- The person who will not listen and learn is not going to be a good official.

# Becoming an Official

- Process:
  - Take the clinic if available – optional but helpful!
  - Take an online, open-book test, pass 80% + from the USA Swimming site.
  - Buy the cool uniform clothes.
  - Work on deck with experienced officials who can provide Mentoring, seek opportunities.
  - Learn the Golden Rule – THE SWIMMER ALWAYS GETS THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT!!!

# Life of a DQ

- Starts with Official observing infraction and raising one hand high overhead for all to see.
- DQ slip written with swimmer name, event, heat, lane and infraction noted. Must be correct!
- Referee reviews, may ask for more information, accepts / rejects call. Signs slip and turns in to Meet Management.
- Athlete and/or coach notified, swim is nullified and time discarded from results.

# The GOLDEN RULE!

- Benefit of the Doubt goes to the Swimmer!!
  - Call what you SEE, but you must SEE what you call
  - no inference.
  - Ugly is not illegal . . . merely entertaining!
  - Can't break a rule that's not in the Rule Book.
  - We are there to observe – not to “catch”. Don't anticipate calls in weak or novice swimmers.

# The Job – New Skills!

- Official speak “at or past vertical to the ....”
- Taking the splash!
- New wardrobe.
- How long can you go between bathroom breaks?
- The BEST job on the deck!

# Butterfly – FINA/USA Rules



- Power Stroke! No cycle, either stroke OR kick if desired.
- 15 Meter rule (1998)
- Arms recover over the water simultaneously
- 2 hand simultaneous touch at turns and finish (dropped shoulders OK 1998)

# Butterfly – FINA/USMS Rules

- USMS Differences:
  - Athlete MAY choose to use Breaststroke kick in Butterfly. IF they do:
    - Cycle of **One** Arm Stroke – **One** Breaststroke kick required.
    - CAN add Butterfly kicks if desired
    - A single Breaststroke kick permitted prior to each turn & finish without an Arm Pull (appears as two kicks)
    - A single Breaststroke kick permitted after the start & each turn PRIOR to the first arm pull.

# Backstroke – FINA/All

- NO Stroke..!
- NO Kick..!
- On your Back..!
- 15 Meter rule (1998)
- Turn rules (1991)
- On your back finish
- “Elementary” stroke & “open turns” fine.



# Breaststroke – FINA/All

- We care!

- Cycle
- Arms
- Kick
- Toes
- Head
- Turns
- Finish



1950's Butterfly created, 1987 Underwater pullout allowed, 2005 dolphin kick @ start & turn legal

# Freestyle – FINA/All

- Normally “Australian Crawl” stroke.
- Forward start, 15 meter rule (1998).
  - USMS allows Backstroke start in all Freestyle events including leg of Medley Relay.
- Can stand on the bottom but not push off.
- Can return for missed touch at turn.
- In Freestyle event - ANY stroke or combination is allowed.
- In IM or Medley Relay can NOT be Back, Breast or Fly (“Lochte rule” 2015)

# Individual Medley – FINA/All

- Four strokes – KNOW THE ORDER!!
  - “BUTTER your BACK so your BREAST swims FREE”
- Start, turn & finish stroke rules apply to each stroke.
- Can NOT do Back, Breast or Fly in Freestyle leg (“Lochte rule” 2015).
- Swimmers often confuse distances (100, 200 or 400 IM) and disqualify themselves when fail to change strokes at the right time.

# Relays

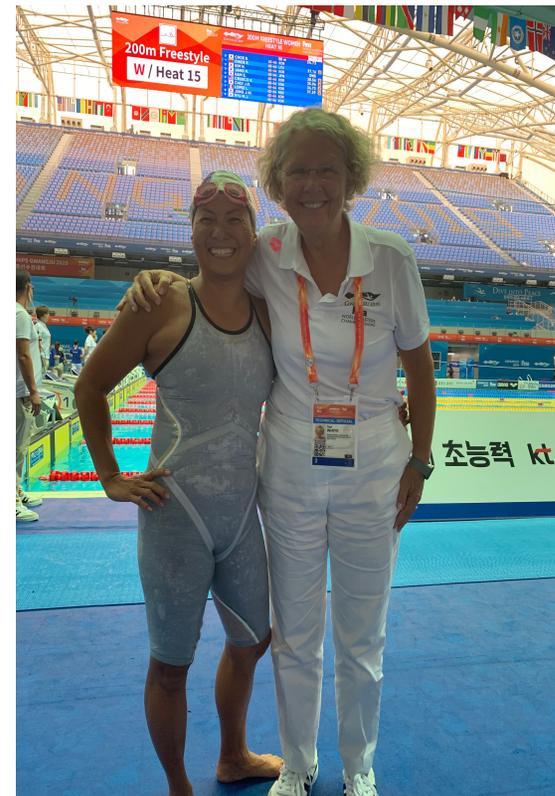
- No swimmer can swim twice
- Dual confirmation – no raised hands
- We watch exchanges as “Toes to nose” – feet leave the wall, look down for hand on the wall
- Circles & X’s – circles are good exchange, X’s are bad exchange
- Often swimmers remain in the pool or start from in the water adding confusion, only mark clear infractions you are sure of.

# Now What?

- Using the Glossary & Section 1 of USA Rule book, Take the test. Please complete soon, TAKE your time and do well! Email results to [officialscertification@usms.org](mailto:officialscertification@usms.org)
- Take the USMS Supplemental test (link on USMS.org/Officials). Email results.
- Buy the 'cool clothes!' (White polo, navy bottoms, white deck shoes)
- Find a meet to work and get on deck – advise Referee that you're new and ask for Mentoring. Enjoy making a difference!

# The BEST JOB!!!

- At the “glory” end...
  - 2016 US Olympic Trials
  - Michael, EVERY News show in the country (& me!)
- At the “personal” end...  
Close to the swimmers,  
making a difference to them!



# My Journey to date

- 1991 – 4 yr old in summer league, ran concessions, UGH!
- 1992 – certified S&T
- 2000 – certified Starter
- **Many meets**, USA, NCAA, High School, USMS!!
- 2004 – certified Referee
- **Many meets**, USA, NCAA, High School, USMS!!!
- 2012 – OLYMPIC TRIALS!!
- 2016 – OLYMPIC TRIALS!!
- 2017 – FINA Masters World Championships Budapest!!
- 2019 USMS Spring Championships Meet Referee
- 2019 FINA Masters World Championships Gwangju!!
- **MANY MEETS**, friends & memories

