

Subject: Officials Newsletter: Pursuing Excellence in 2018

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USA Swimming Officials Newsletter | February 2018

OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER

Thoughts from the Chair

Jim Holcomb, Chair, National Officials Committee

Applications

Applications for national meets (Futures, Juniors, Pro Series, Nationals) will go live on the web site 180 days prior to the start of the event. They will come down no sooner than 120 days prior to the event. They will close when there are a sufficient number of applicants to staff the meet after the 120 day mark.

I've heard some whispers that this summer's nationals and Pan Pac trials will be an "invitation only" event. That is not correct. Summer Nationals and Junior Nationals applications have been posted already at www.usaswimming.org/NatlMeetApp. Futures applications will be posted no later than February 4. Please note that you must apply for each meet you are willing to work at. The reviewing committee will consider the staffing needs of each meet individually.

Uniform

The comments about the new uniform (black pants, socks, and shoes) have been quite favorable. It looks good on television. I've been asked if shorts will be allowed at outdoor summer meets. As usual, wearing shorts for prelims in outdoor meets is a decision for the meet referee. If the meet referee chooses, black shorts are authorized. In addition, if shorts are authorized, low-cut black (or white) socks are authorized.

How "black" do the shoes need to be? Just like when we were wearing white shoes, the answer is "predominately black." Gone are the days when we needed to color over (or white out) offending marks on the shoes.

Being the Best that We Can Be

Bill Rose, National Officials Committee

Before the Officials Tracking System (OTS) was even thought about, there was a program for officials to earn their National Certification patch, card, and pin, by working a certain number of sessions at approved LSC meets and paying \$3. The LSC Officials' Chair would apply to have these approved National Certification meets. Attendance would be taken, and along with the names and sessions, the amount paid would be noted. This form would then be sent to National Officials Committee, for processing. Eventually, the official would receive his or her National Certification patch, card, and pin in the mail.

Along with the National Certification, there was one more certification, which could be earned only at National Championship meets. This certification was called the National Championship Certification, and could be earned in the same manner as the National Certification, except that the meet had to be one of the National Championship meets occurring each spring or summer. In much the same way, a Chief Judge was assigned to take attendance, keep track of the sessions worked, and collect \$5 for a slightly different patch, card, and pin.

When paying for certifications went away, a new certification program emerged. National Championship Certification as a Stroke and Turn Judge could be earned by working the position at a Sectional meet, while National Championship Certifications for the positions of Chief Judge, Starter, and Deck Referee were earned by working the position at a National Championship Meet.

Later, the present day National Officials' Certification Program began. We now have three

levels of certifications: LSC, N2 and N3 certifications. Each level has requirements for obtaining such certifications and when and how to renew this certification.

This program's primary goal is to expand the education of officials through mentoring and evaluation, to help officials further develop their skills. We now have the "Professional Documents" that are the framework of the criteria that is used to mentor the official.

We have come a long way—and we are always still working—so that we may all be the best that we can be for our athletes!

Maxwell Award Winner

Wane Oviatt, Utah Swimming

Each LSC may submit a candidate that is deserving of recognition, and the winning officials are selected by the National Officials Committee to be recognized in *Swimming World* magazine every two months. This month's recognition goes to Wane Oviatt of Utah Swimming.

Wane is a valuable resource. He believes it is important to understand the rules and has practically memorized the rulebook. As Officials' Chair of Utah Swimming, he has made many noticeable, lasting contributions to the LSC. At the start of his term, Utah had 93 officials. Wanting to increase this number, Wane set recruitment goals for the clubs in the LSC, and scheduled and held monthly training meetings throughout the state. Utah now has over 150 officials.

Additionally, as Officials' Chair, Wane wanted officials to have better opportunities for continued learning. One step in this process was to send officials to the Western Zone meets and other higher-level meets. He asked for and received funding to send two officials to the Western Zone Senior Championships and two officials to the Western Zone Age Group Championships. Wane's second step was to hold OQMs, with Utah Swimming recently holding its first OQM in ten years. At the beginning of his term, Utah had two officials with current national certifications. Now, Utah has more than twenty officials with current national certifications.

Further, Wane spends many hours updating records, following up with trainees, and has developed a training curriculum for new starters. He officiates at meets from intrasquads to state championships, often dropping-in to help at a meet that he thinks might not have enough officials. Wane also officiates at Special Olympics, Masters, College and High School meets. He has a reputation for fairness, integrity, and impartiality. And, while his children have stopped swimming, Wane continues to serve the swimming community.

Congratulations Wane!

January Situations and Resolutions Highlights

The Stroke and Turn Situations and Resolutions document has been revised! The full document is available [here](#). Here are a couple situations to consider...

- A swimmer is 8 years old and has insufficient strength to lift her arms completely over the water during the recovery phase of her stroke. She pushes her arms forward, with her elbow and part of her forearm underwater, but with the remainder of her forearm, her wrists, and her hands clearly out of the water. The stroke judge raises his hand to signal a disqualification on the basis of an underwater recovery. Should the deck referee accept the call?

Recommended Resolution: Yes, the call should be accepted. The rules define the arm as "that part of the body that extends from the shoulder to the wrist." The butterfly rule states, "Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water." Both entire arms must recover over the water; the swimmer in question did not comply with this rule. However, there is no requirement that there be a visible space between the water and the recovering arms. Thus, had this swimmer been able to lift the arms sufficiently so that during the recovery the entire arms were above the water, or even broke the surface of the

water even though not completely clearing the water, the swim would have been legal.

Applicable Rules: 101.3.2, Glossary

- While swimming the breaststroke, a swimmer realizes that her goggles have come loose. She moves both arms forward simultaneously and in the same horizontal plane to adjust her goggles, taking two breaststroke kicks to keep herself afloat in the process. Should the swimmer be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, "Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order." By taking two breaststroke kicks to keep herself afloat, the swimmer violated this rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

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