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Officials Newsletter - March 2021

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Tue, Mar 9, 2021 at 12:03 PM



Officials Newsletter



Greetings From the Chair

As counties across the country open up, we are seeing an interesting and now common practice of twice as many meets for officials with twice as many sessions in order to accommodate swimmers with half the number of officials per session. Thank you all for stepping up to meet the needs of the athletes as they return to competition.

The commitment to volunteerism motivates us to do all sorts of activities whether it is helping at food banks, schools, churches or various foundations. The love we officials have for this sport, combined with the spirit of wanting to give back, drives us to travel across town or country, stay in hotel rooms for multiple nights, stand on decks for hours in rain or shine and keep three to four uniform ensembles for the different meets. We love this sport and we believe in this sport and its purity, where the event produces one important piece of objective data – the swimmer's time.

We would like to say to athletes that we revel in your successes and feel empathy in your disappointments, no matter the level of the competitions. Naturally, we want to be there to help keep you safe from the time when you enter the venue to the moment when you first hit the

water for your race. So we have masked-up, stayed the required distance away from you, learned to smile with our eyes as you come to the edge of the water and cheered quietly in our hearts.

We are excited to be together again as a team of athletes, coaches and fellow officials. We have missed you.

After all, "this is the funnest sport!"

Kathleen

Announcements

- April TYR PSS Application is posted
- [2021 DIGITAL Rule Book](#) is available to download and/or print
- USA Swimming Virtual House of Delegates - June 30

Tech Suit Restriction for 12-and-Under Swimmers - NEW TOOL!

As requested on the last Quarterly LSC Officials Chair call, the FINA numbers for all **APPROVED** 12 & Under Tech Suits have been published on the USA site ([Approved 12 & Under FINA Stamped Suits](#)). This handy three-page document will allow you to easily identify whether a suit is allowed to be used in competition. Just in time for the end of season meets!

National Certification Holding Pattern - Marianne Walling

USA Swimming's National Official Certification and Official Qualifying Meets (OQM) programs have been in a holding pattern since March 2020. As OQM's become available, parameters have been put in place to assist with certification needs as well as maintain the National Certification programs standards.

Q: Why are OQM's being restricted to only N2 and N3 recertification evaluations?

A: The level of mentoring required for advancement is challenging with social distancing and the reduced numbers of officials on deck. Many meets are also being moved to timed finals, and thus skills that are acquired at normal OQM's won't be able to be demonstrated, i.e. swim-offs, intent to scratch, no show penalties, etc.

Allowing only recertifications will reduce the number of sessions needed in a position to two rather than three or four for advancement. This will allow referees to utilize more officials and in different positions throughout a meet. Officials seeking recertification will still be required to serve four sessions at the meet, but could be rotated to another position.

In addition, mentors can work through more recertification evaluations, which will assist with those who have recently lapsed or will expire soon. Also, N3 initial evaluators can do N3 recertifications which should provide for more mentor availability in an LSC.

Q: How are sessions being counted for timed final LSC Championship meets?

A: If, due to local restrictions, an LSC Championship meet is a timed-finals format but approved as an OQM, one session will be counted as both genders/age group with equivalent events even if swum in separate flights. Thus, an official may only receive one session of credit regardless of working just the women's or men's or both flights.

Q: Many of my certifications are expiring. What is the best way to get the number of recertifications needed?

A: One evaluation can go a long way for recertification. The N2/N3 recertification document, [N2 AND N3 RECERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS](#), shows which recertification evaluations may be used for multiple positions. For instance, a Deck Referee recertification will also recertify Chief Judge and Stroke and Turn.

Before requesting a recertification evaluation, make sure you are within 18 months of the certification expiring, and review your OTS history. If you have evaluations within the past 3 years with favorable outcomes, they are still valid to be used. As long as the meet, education and mentoring requirements have also been satisfied you may submit an application for recertification without a new recertification evaluation.

Q: My N3i will expire before I have a chance to finish my N3f. What can I do?

A: Those who received N3i evaluations from March 2017 to January 2018 will be reviewed on an individual basis for time extension.

Q: Why doesn't USA swimming advance everyone's certification expiration date?

A: There is a "date clock" associated with each certification. If everyone was mass forwarded, we could not track who was in progress on advancement or where in the timeline.

As always, there is a grace period of three years beyond any expiration date to update through recertification. The only caveat is mentors not current in their certifications will not be able to serve as evaluators.

Sanctioned, Approved, Observed - Lisa Olack

The rulebook defines sanctioned, approved and observed meets within the glossary. Additional

explanations and requirements for each meet type can be found in Article 202. There are some key differences between the three types.

Sanctioned

A sanctioned meet must be conducted under USA Swimming technical and administrative rules. All participants, coaches, meet directors, officials, and athletes must be registered USA Swimming members in good standing (all applicable certifications, background checks and safe sport training must be valid). Adult athletes, 18 years of age and older, must complete the APT training prior to participation in a meet. An adult athlete who does not complete the APT training prior to participation in a meet will have their times invalidated and these times will not be loaded into SWIMS. Adult athlete APT is a requirement for sanctioned meets only.

Approved

An approved meet must be conducted under USA Swimming technical rules, including timing requirements. Examples of approved meets are YMCA, AAU and NCAA meets. A request for an approved meet ([MEET APPROVAL REQUEST TO USA SWIMMING](#)) shall be made to the LSC according to the guidelines established by the LSC. Participants are not required to be members of USA Swimming, however, times achieved by USA Swimming members will be recognized by USA Swimming and loaded into SWIMS. These times may be used for meet entry and recognition purposes.

Observed

An observed meet is a meet conducted under another organization's technical rules, such as high school. The timing rules however must comply with USA Swimming rules. Observation is to ensure that swims performed by USA Swimming members are in compliance with timing and technical rules, as well as other requirements such as race course dimensions, taping and starting platform rules as outlined in the USA Swimming rulebook. Requests for observation shall be made to the LSC at least 10 days prior to the beginning of the meet as established by the LSC. Form A is used for non-season culminating meets such as mid-season invitationals ([USA SWIMMING REQUEST FOR OBSERVATION – NON-SEASON CULMINATING CHAMPIONSHIP MEET](#)). Form B is used for season culminating meets ([LOCAL SWIMMING COMMITTEE - REQUEST FOR OBSERVATION SEASON CULMINATING CHAMPIONSHIP MEET](#)). A dual or intrasquad meet is not eligible for observation. Participants are not required to be members of USA Swimming, however, times achieved by USA Swimming members will be recognized by USA Swimming and loaded into SWIMS. These times may be used for meet entry and recognition purposes.

It should be noted that the requirement for adult athletes to be APT compliant does not apply for approved and observed meets.

Again, this is a summary of sanctioned, approved, and observed meets. Please refer to the rulebook for additional requirements and explanations. Additional information may also be found in the Times Policy Manual located on the USA Swimming website ([Times Policy Manual](#)).

If you should have any additional questions, please contact either Lisa Olack, Chair, Times & Recognition Committee, or Marianne Walling, Coordinator-Approved and Observed Meets, Times & Recognition Committee.

Congratulations to These Officials Who Served at Their First National Meet Recently

Note - data obtained from Chief Judges and Meet Referees to the best of their ability. We apologize for any omissions or errors.

Toyota US Open - nine sites

Mary Evelyn Bowling - South Texas
Dan Brackney - Indiana Swimming
Heather Freeman - South Texas
Deb Hanley - North Carolina Swimming
Wayne Lewoczko - Gulf Swimming
Andrew Olson - Wisconsin Swimming
Mary Ross - Florida Gold Coast Swimming
Gary Sanderson - Florida Swimming
Rachel Sherrer - Pacific Northwest Swimming
Sally Taggart - San Diego Imperial Swimming

TYR Pro Swim Series - January 2021 (San Antonio & Richmond)

Robert King Fung Kwong - Maryland Swimming
Steve Mandacina - South Texas
Greg Spicka - New Jersey Swimming



Officials Excellence Award

Scott Boggs - Florida Gold Coast

Scott has been officiating since 2006. He started when his kid's coach approached him to become an official because of his leadership qualities. Scott was the first official that I can remember for the North Palm Beach Swim Club. He is responsible for training and seeing that every one of the officials associated with the club is certified. He has mentored many more in Palm Beach and Martin County. You can count on Scott to be either Referee/Starter/CJ or Stroke and Turn at any meet from Wellington North to the end of the Florida Gold Coast. He is active in High School Swimming, Masters Swimming, as well as NCAA in his area. He is often on deck as a referee at the Florida High School finals as well as Districts and Regions. Scott is the referee every other year at Florida Gold Coast Junior Olympics.

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