REFEREE'S SAFETY CHECKLIST

- Note, Locate, Resolve
  - Locate nearest exits
  - Locate and meet facility Manager and Safety Staff leader
  - Check Emergency Action Plan
  - Locate first aid equipment, ☐ check contents
  - Is the pool chemical balance and temperature OK?
  - Locate emergency call phone and numbers
  - Locate: backboard, blood spill equipment and AED
  - Ambulance - on campus or external? Directions to the pool available?
  - Note dangerous areas including loose cords or electric wires - resolve
  - Forms – Are Report of Occurrence forms available?
- 911 and Lightning Protocols - Learn - Convey to coaches, officials
  - Who monitors lightning? Are there "Safe" areas?
- Marshals
  - How many?   Is coverage adequate?   Distinctively dressed?
  - Do they understand their function?
- Are medically trained personnel at the meet?
  - Ask, Introduce yourself
- Pool and Equipment
  - Blocks: stable? not slippery? handgrips safe? sharp edges?
  - Is pool deep enough to use starting platforms?
  - Is diving board blocked off, and not hazardous?
  - Are the lane lines safe? loose wires, stable anchors.
  - Are ladders safe?
  - Is training equipment out of the way?
  - Is the deck too slippery?
  - Are there any open pole or starting block holes?
  - Touch Pad and Anchors: sharp edges, projections
  - Consider accommodations for swimmers with disabilities
  - Is there sufficient gathering area behind the blocks?
  - Are Spectators separated from Meet Operation areas?
  - Can Officials operate safely and without interference?
  - Shade, Hydration and Chairs for Officials and Timers.
  - Warmup Pool – don't forget all of above that's applicable.
- Don't hesitate to stop the meet and resolve any safety issues anywhere in the venue!

CERTIFICATION AND REGISTRATION

There is sometimes confusion about what the terms "certification" and "registration" mean and how they relate to our position as an official. I hope this article will clear up some of that confusion.
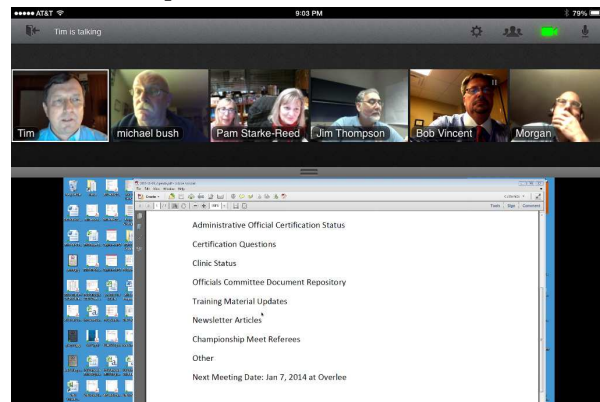
Certification means that Potomac Valley Swimming (for USA Swimming) "certifies" that an official has the skills and experience to officiate USA Swimming meets. Certification involves attending a clinic, a minimum number of apprentice sessions, passing a USA Swimming test, and for positions other than Stroke & Turn Judge, an evaluation.

Certification in PVS is for a two-year period. The requirements for recertification include attending a clinic, passing a recertification test, and working a minimum number of sessions per year to maintain the skills required for the position. If you are certified in multiple positions, your recertification at the highest position also includes recertification in the other positions.

The other requirement to become certified and to maintain your certification is to maintain USA Swimming Registration. USA Swimming Registration is good for one year and must be renewed every year by submitting a Non-Athlete Registration Form. In addition to submitting the form, you must also pass a background screening every two years and take Athlete Protection Training every year.

This year the Officials Committee broke new ground by having their first online meeting. It took the committee a little while to get used to the new environment, but by the end of the meeting the spirited discussions resumed.

In recognition of the volunteer hours you provide for Potomac Valley swimmers, Potomac Valley Swimming will pay for your re-registration if you work a minimum of ten sessions at PVS-sanctioned meets during the current calendar year. Note that approved meets, observed meets, and meets in other LSCs do not count towards this minimum.

If you have not re-registered yet for 2014 and/or your current certification expires 12/31/2013, please take care of those items before the end of the year to insure your certification to work swim meets at the beginning of 2014. You can check your own certification/registration status through the USA Swimming Officials Tracking System (OTS). Your registration status is also available through the USA Swimming DeckPass app.

If you have questions on any of this process, I can direct you to the individual in PVS that can help you. Thank you for your support of Potomac Valley Swimming.

Tim Husson OfficialsChair@pvswim.org

OPEN WATER OFFICIALS WORKSHOP

USA Swimming will be conducting an Open Water Officials Workshop April 11-13, 2014 in conjunction with the Open Water Festival in Ft. Myers, FL. USA Swimming will provide the hotel and meals. PVS will pay the transportation costs. USA Swimming is interested in officials that have some open water experience but have not been to a clinic in the last two years. However, PVS will consider nominating any official that shows interest. If you wish to be considered, please contact Tim Husson <OfficialsChair@pvswim.org>.

You Make the Call!

WHAT IS A FALSE START?

The rules state… "When all swimmers are stationary, the starter shall give the starting signal" (101.1.2.c) and "Any swimmer starting before the starting signal is given shall be disqualified if the Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter's observation" (101.1.3A). So what constitutes a false start? These scenarios should help you paint the picture.

FALSE START SCENARIO #1

Swimmer leaves the set or stationary position prior to the starting signal. The starting signal is then given. The race proceeds and, assuming the Starter observed the early start and the Deck Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter's observation, the offending swimmer is disqualified at the conclusion of the race. Rule 101.1.3B applies. This is a false start.

FALSE START SCENARIO #2

Swimmer leaves the set or stationary position prior to the starting signal. The swimmer upon realizing the early starting motion attempts to catch himself/herself. Starter says absolutely nothing, and the swimmer fails to halt the forward motion and goes into the pool. Rule 101.1.3A applies. This is a false start.

FALSE START SCENARIO #3

Exactly the same facts as #2 above, but this time the Starter says "stand please" after the swimmer leaves the set or stationary position. The seven other swimmers stand or step down from the blocks. The offending swimmer struggles, but once again is unable to halt the forward motion and falls into the pool. Unlike scenario #2 above, here the starter said, "stand please", but that does not change the false start result. The rule is clear that the "stand" command is for the benefit of the other swimmers on the starting blocks. When the stand command is issued, the athletes have the option of standing or stepping off the blocks. The offending swimmer did neither. He fell into the pool just like the swimmer in scenario #2. Rule 101.1.3A applies. This is a false start.

FALSE START SCENARIO #4

Exactly the same facts as scenarios #2 and #3 above. However, this time when the command "stand please" is issued, the offending swimmer struggles, but is able to stand or step off the blocks. Rule 101.1.3A applies. This is NOT a false start. Why? Because the swimmer remained on the blocks or deck like everyone else in the heat, and no starting signal ever sounded.

FALSE START SCENARIO #5

Exactly the same facts as scenarios #2 and #3 above. However, when the Starter gives the "stand please" command a swimmer(s) other than the offending swimmer instantly bolts from the blocks and enters the water. Rule 101.1.3D applies. The swimmer(s) clearly started in reaction to the" stand" command. This is NOT a false start.

FALSE START SCENARIO #6

The swimmer, upon hearing the command "take your mark" starts down to take a set or stationary position. The swimmer loses his/her balance before coming set and falls into the pool. Rule 101.1.2C applies. The swimmer should be given the opportunity to come to his/her set or stationary position prior to the start. A loss of balance prevented that, and clearly this swimmer never engaged in any starting action. This is NOT a false start.

UPCOMING CLINICS

Upcoming Clinics				
Date	**Clinic**	**Location**	**Time**	**Who's Attending**
Saturday	Chief Judge	Overlee	8:00 - 10:00 AM	list

January 4				
Saturday January 4	Referee	Overlee	10:30 AM - 12:30 PM	list
Saturday January 4	Administrative Official	Overlee	1:00 - 3:00 PM	list
Wednesday January 8	Stroke & Turn	Georgetown Prep	6:30 - 9:00 PM	list
Sunday January 19	Starter	MLK Swim Center	2:00 - 4:30 PM	list
Sunday January 26	Stroke & Turn	MLK Swim Center	2:00 - 4:30 PM	list

Upcoming Meets

December 2013				
Date	**Meet**	**Host**	**Location**	**Notes**
5-7	*AT&T Winter National Championships*	USA Swimming	Knoxville, TN	Qualifying Times
5-8	Turkey Claus Championship	MACH	Univ. of MD	Application to Officiate
7-8	MAKO Holiday Invitational	MAKO	GMU	
7-8	Reindeer Mini Meet	YORK	Providence	
12-14	*Speedo Winter Junior Nationals*	USA Swimming	Greensboro, NC	Qualifying Times
12-15	Tom Dolan Invitational	NCAP	UMD	Application to Officiate & Request for Evaluation Hotel Information Parking Purchase (Thursday & Friday) Volunteer Sign up Meet T-shirt Order Form
12-15	Holiday Invitational	RMSC	Germantown	
12-15	Sport Fair Winter Classic (by Invitation)	PM	GMU	Application to Officiate
13-15 change	Christmas Championships	MSSC	PGS&LC site change	
January 2014				

Date	Meet	Host	Location	Notes
4-5	PVS January Distance Meet	BWST	Lee District	
5	RMSC Frosty Pentathlon (By Invitation)	RMSC	Germantown	
11-12	DC Wave Winter Invitational	DCPR	Takoma	
11-12	MAKO Winter Invitational	MAKO	GMU	
11-12	Winter Senior Meet	MSSC	Fairland	
11-12	Polar Bear Meet (By Invitation)	SDS	South Run	
17-19	Grand Prix Series (LCM)		Austin, TX	
18-19	PVS January Open	MACH	Audrey Moore (Wakefield Park)	Due to Fairland's closure, UMD will be used for two sites of the Janaury Open
		RMSC	Germantown	
		FAST	UMD	
		FBST	UMD	
25-26	Snow Dude Mini Meet	PM	Mt. Vernon	
30-2	IM Xtreme Games - NE	PM	UMD	

ONE LAST THING

Here's a toast to a safe and prosperous new year for everyone!

If you have any stories or pictures about experiences you have had concerning any of our officials please send them to Bob Vincent so that we can get them in the newsletter.

BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT GOES TO THE SWIMMER
Call what you see and see what you call