

ASAJ OFFICIALS HANDBOOK

INSTRUCTIONS FOR - REFEREE

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REFEREE

The Referee must be a leader whose natural inclination is to serve; an inclination that may lead one to accept this leadership role in the sport of swimming. To serve others, means to understand and be aware of the athletes, officials, coaches, parents and others in the sport. The referee leads by example in showing respect, honesty, fairness, integrity and responsible behavior that characterize authentic sportsmanship.

1. The Referee provides the example to the swimming community through his/her commitments to the sport of swimming and is committed to:
 - 1.1. Ensuring the integrity of the sport and the profession of officiating;
 - 1.2. Conducting him/herself with dignity and good humor, while ensuring fair and equitable conditions for the competition;
 - 1.3. Remaining impartial, while sustaining positive relationships and building trust in the swim community;
 - 1.4. Maintaining a current understanding of the rules and their application; and
 - 1.5. Fostering the growth in expertise of all officials through teaching, providing workshops and working with officials on the deck. The referee is the primary leader and educator for both new and experienced officials.
2. ***The referee:***
 - 2.1. Shall have full authority over all officials, approve their assignments and instruct them regarding any specific features or regulations related to the competitions
 - 2.2. Shall enforce all rules and decisions of FINA and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet
 - 2.3. Can 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
 - 2.4. May intervene in the competition at any stage to ensure that the FINA regulations are observed, and shall adjudicate all protests related to the competition in progress
 - 2.5. Shall disqualify a swimmer(s) for any violations of the rules that the S/he personally observes
 - 2.6. May also disqualify any swimmer for any violation reported to him by other authorized officials. All decisions are subject to the decision of the referee
 - 2.7. Shall ensure that all necessary officials are in their respective posts for the conduct of the competition. S/he may appoint substitutes for any who are absent, incapable of acting or found to be inefficient. S/he may appoint additional officials if considered necessary
 - 2.8. Shall at the commencement of each event:
 - 2.8.1. Signal to the swimmers by a short series of whistles inviting them to remove all clothing except for their swimwear
 - 2.8.2. This will be followed by a long whistle indicating that they should take their positions in the starting platform (or for backstroke swimming and medley relays to immediately enter the water)
 - 2.8.3. A second long whistle shall bring the backstroke and medley relay swimmer immediately to the starting position

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- 2.8.4. When the swimmers and officials are prepared for the start, the referee shall gesture to the starter with a stretched out arm, indicating that the swimmers are under the starters control
- 2.8.5. The stretched out arm shall stay in position until the start is given
- 2.9. When automatic or semiautomatic officiating equipment is used and an apparent malfunction occurs it shall be his/her responsibility to make an immediate investigation to determine whether the swimmer finished in accordance with the rules and/or if there was an actual equipment malfunction.
- 2.10. He may at his/her discretion prohibit the use of any bell, siren, horn or other artificial noisemaker during the meet.
- 2.11. The Referee may modify any rule for a competitive swimmer who has a disability. Such modification shall be in accordance with ASAJ by-laws.
- 2.12. Refer to the ASAJ By-Laws concerning protests.

3. *The referee must be knowledgeable of:*

- 3.1. Timing procedures, equipment and the specific rules that apply to each type of equipment used.
- 3.2. Across-the-board judging procedures.
- 3.3. Check in and seeding procedures.
- 3.4. Starting procedures, rules and application.
- 3.5. Recording procedures.
- 3.6. Stroke and Turn Judging, stroke rules, jurisdiction, application and enforcement.
- 3.7. The referee must have mastered the application and use of the starting and of stroke and turn rules, their fair enforcement and appropriate judging. S/he is responsible for the effective functioning of the meet and will monitor, and assist as necessary, all officials in performing their functions to ensure the participants are provided with a quality competitive swimming environment.
- 3.8. The referee must have learned, acquired and posses: a sound swimming leadership, a positive swimming attitude and active administrative skills.

4. *Sound Swimming Leadership*

- 4.1. Sound swimming leadership is based on a thorough knowledge of the rules and the reason for the rules - to ensure fair and equitable conditions of competition and uniformity in the sport. Swimming leadership is a skill that can only be developed through participation. Substituting opinion for rules, no matter how well intentioned, invites protests and challenges.

5. *Positive Swimming Attitude*

- 5.1. The referee's confidence in understanding the swimming rules, his respect for the other officials and his/her understanding for those who are still gaining knowledge of the sport contribute to a positive swimming attitude. The attitude is manifest in the referee's efforts to ensure that all other officials, swimmers and coaches are able to perform their respective tasks to their highest potentials within the meet and the sport of swimming.

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6. *Active Administrative Skills*

6.1. The referee has responsibilities before, during and after the competition:

6.1.1. **Before the meet** - The referee should contact the meet director and coordinate any special requirements for the meet before the day of competition. On the day of competition the referee should arrive in time **(at least one hour)** to adequately perform pre-meet responsibilities. S/He should confer with the meet director; obtain a list of meet officials; inspect the facilities, with specific attention to any safety issues in the meet venue; review seeding and administrative procedures; conduct a coaches' briefing (if needed), and assign and instruct the other officials. The referee's attitude during the pre-meet briefing can establish a tone for the meet. S/He should assume complete control, but do so in a pleasant, confident manner. A sample referee's checklist is included at the end of this chapter.

6.1.2. **During the meet** - The referee's (or a designated deck or assistant referee's) full attention must be given to every start. The rules require that the referee both observe and concur with the starter's false start disqualifications. Between the starts, the referee oversees the competition and evaluates the performance of the other meet officials. If a rule is misunderstood, the referee must correct the misunderstanding. If the referee personally observes an infraction, he/she must disqualify the swimmer and then determine why the assigned official(s) did not. The referee clarifies rules and jurisdictions, suggests appropriate judging techniques, assigns and may reassign officials. He/She also answers questions, protests and appeals, maintaining his/her sense of humor and keeping a positive attitude. All questions should be politely answered to the best of his/her ability. Protests and appeals are sometimes difficult because they tend to be emotionally charged. The referee must always display a moderate temperament. It is inexcusable for the referee to become visibly angry at a distraught swimmer, coach or parent.

6.1.3. **Communication** - The following communication guidelines for dealing with a concern arising during the competition, are recommended:

6.1.3.1. The referee listens to the person who has a complaint or concern. The referee must avoid becoming defensive.

6.1.3.2. The referee indicates that he/she understands the person's perspective, and that he/she wants to resolve the conflict. He/She repeats his/her understanding of the protest or appeal to the person who has the complaint.

6.1.3.3. The referee then confers with all parties involved to ensure proper interpretation and understanding.

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- 6.1.3.4. The referee then communicates his/her understanding of the problem and his/her decision to all affected parties.
- 6.1.4. **After the meet** - The referee must remain at the pool long enough after the last race to ensure that final results have been announced in case there is a problem or a protest. This time can be used to evaluate the meet with meet director and to sign any referee forms pertinent to the meet. As soon as possible after the meet, the referee should write an evaluation of the meet officials. This will be filed with the Official's chairman or with the meet according to the regulations of the local swimming committee sanctioning the competition. A sample form follows at the end of this chapter.
- 6.1.5. **On the way home do your own post meet evaluation reflecting on what you'll do better next time.**

7. Summary

- 7.1. A referee must attend to many responsibilities during a swimming competition. The referee's knowledge, honesty and fairness will create a climate for an equitable and rewarding competition. The referee's service is a source of building the entire swim community for the betterment of all those who participate Swimming. It is a challenge worth accepting, and doing well.

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REFEREES CHECKLIST

- ☐ Review rules for meet
- ☐ Report to pool facility one (1) hours prior to session start time
- ☐ Meet with Meet Director to discuss any unusual issues, rules, seeding or programme problems etc.
- ☐ Inspect facilities;
 - Starting blocks installed correctly and are secure
 - Timing system installed and tested (including speakers)
 - Backstroke flags in place where necessary
 - False start rope installed and tested
 - Lanes are installed and secure (check to ensure that the 5 M and 15 M markings are in the correct position)
 - If 800 and/or 1500 M events are scheduled (400 M Short Course), are bells and lap counters available?
- ☐ Obtain officials list and assign responsibility where necessary
- ☐ 30 Minutes before start of session brief officials
 - Thank officials for volunteering
 - Indicate time that session is scheduled to end and time for breaks
 - ** Check watch accuracy - have timekeepers start watches at the beginning of the briefing.
 - Review order of events and any special requirements e.g.
 - DQ Procedures
 - Remind judges of responsibilities for each type of event e.g.
 - Stroke and Turn Judges
 - Positioning
 - Stroke rules
 - Starter
 - Start rule being used
 - ** Timekeepers
 - Need to check swimmers name
 - Procedures for timing (if new timer present)
 - Positioning
 - ** Stop watches at end of briefing – compare times for accuracy
- ☐ Ask if there are any questions
- ☐ Prepare officials for march (if planned) in the following order;
 - Referees
 - Starters
 - Stroke and Turn Judges
 - Chief Timekeeper
 - Timekeepers

NOTE: ** items may be covered by Chief Timekeeper in a separate meeting held before the Referees meeting.