

Subject: Officials Newsletter: Updated Referee Situations and Resolutions Now Available

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OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER

Is There a Better Way?

Dan McAllen, Program Operations Vice Chair, USA Swimming

Since the enactment of rule 101.1.3B allowing a race to continue before a false start disqualification is declared, the number of recalled starts has declined significantly. However, there are still occasions when a recall may be required. For example, a recall might be required due to equipment failure, inadvertent recall, or a start so unfair that the deck referee orders a recall. Whatever the reason for the recall, the deck referee is then confronted with the decision as to when to swim the recalled heat while balancing fairness to recalled athletes and athletes in subsequent heats. Generally speaking, most deck referees will allow the recalled athletes a minute or two to catch their breath and gather themselves. Then the deck referee will start down the line and ask the individual athletes if they are ready to swim.

Is there a better way? Remember, the deck referee is an authority figure and the athletes know exactly the answer they are expected to give because the deck referee wants to get on with the meet. The likely response will be "Yes, I am ready", whether they are or not. Peer pressure also comes into play. When the swimmer in one lane says, "I am ready," the remaining athletes in the heat are likely to follow suit. After all, who wants to declare they are a wimp and hold up the restart?

Allow me to propose a solution. As the deck referee, simply gather the athletes in the recalled heat, take them aside, and tell them to discuss it among themselves and that you will swim their heat when they come to you and tell you they are ready. Then, walk away and continue with the meet. Your initial reaction is that athletes might take 15 minutes before returning. If that is the case, so be it. At least you were fair to them. But it has been my experience that without exception, the athletes will come back in less than 5 minutes declaring ready. Now, the deck referee simply looks for the best place to insert this heat for their swim. It has the benefit of being completely fair to the athletes who had their heat recalled and allows the meet to proceed without undue delay.

"Officials Swaps" now Available for Swaponz Phone Cases

Swaponz, a partner of USA Swimming, has now released "Officials Swaps" to pair with their Swaponz phone cases. These swaps include the "USA Swimming Meet Official" logo, as well as other USA Swimming related themes.

You can browse them under the “Officials and Meets” tab under the “Choose Your Swaps” menu on the USA Swimming section of the Swaponz website.

Sport yours on deck today!

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Updated Starter and Deck Referee Situations and Resolutions Now Available

The Starter and Deck Referee Situations and Resolutions document has been updated! It covers 62 distinct situations that Starters and Deck Referees may encounter at the start of a race, recommended resolutions of these situations, and applicable rulebook references.

Here are a few samples...

1. At an age group meet, the swimmer in lane 3 starts before the starting signal during the 50 yard butterfly. The Starter stands the heat, and approaches the Referee with the observation of a false start in lane 3. The Referee has independently observed and confirmed the observation, but chooses to not remove the swimmer from the heat, as he does not want to “humiliate” the swimmer. Instead, he allows the swimmer to swim with the heat, and disqualifies the swimmer at the end of the race. Is this correct?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not correct. The rule states, “Any swimmer starting before the starting signal is given shall be disqualified if the Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter’s observation that a violation occurred. Swimmers remaining on the starting blocks shall be relieved from their starting positions with the ‘Stand up,’ command and may step off the blocks.” The swimmer should be disqualified and not permitted to swim with the heat. While the Referee may feel that he is doing no harm by allowing the swimmer to swim with the heat, he could actually be doing a disservice to the swimmer, as the swimmer is utilizing energy to swim a race that will not count.

Applicable Rule: 101.1.3A

2. In the 400 yard individual medley, a Starter recalls a heat because she determines that the start was unfair. The swimmers in lanes 2 and 4 stop as soon as the recall signal is activated, the swimmers in lanes 3 and 7 stop after swimming 50 yards, and the swimmers in lanes 1, 5, 6, and 8 continue swimming and do not stop. How should the situation be handled?

Recommended Resolution: If the swimmers in lanes 1, 5, 6, and 8 do not respond to the recall following an effort to recall the swimmers, the Referee should allow them to continue swimming. After they have finished swimming, the Referee should gather all of the swimmers in the heat, along with their coaches, and offer all of the swimmers in the heat the opportunity to re-swim the race. For any swimmer who elects to re-swim the race, only the time from the re-swim will count.

Applicable Rules: 102.11.1, 102.11.5, 102.12.1

3. At a local senior meet, the adjustable back plate on the lane 1 starting block malfunctions midway through the preliminaries of the 100 yard butterfly and cannot be fixed. How should the situation be handled?

Recommended Resolution: If one adjustable back plate becomes inoperable, the adjustable back plates must be removed from all of the blocks to provide a fair competitive environment for the swimmers. The Referee should ask the facility personnel to remove the adjustable back plates from all of the starting blocks. The preliminaries should be continued without the adjustable back plates on the blocks. The swimmers in previous heats should not be required to re-swim without the adjustable back plate, and their times achieved should remain unchanged. If the adjustable back plate is later fixed and/or a replacement adjustable back plate is found, it should not be introduced midway through

the event, but may be used for subsequent events and during finals.

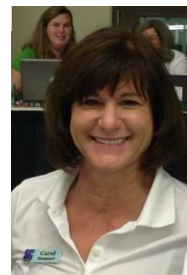
Applicable Rules: 102.11.1, 102.11.5, 103.14.3

[More References](#)

Official's Excellence Award: Carol Hammond

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 Carol Hammond of South Carolina Swimming.

Carol Hammond is a CPA by profession, and has used those skills of careful attention to detail to help better her LSC. She has been involved with USA Swimming for the past 10 years and is currently a Meet Referee and the LSC's past Officials Chair.



She has led the South Carolina LSC in the complete re-working of its apprentice process to help make sure its officials are well-trained before becoming certified. Upon introduction of the Administrative Official position, Carol worked to ensure that the South Carolina LSC was ready to certify the position. In consultation with other experienced officials in her LSC, she developed incredible training materials for the position.

Carol also worked to re-tool LSC championships decks in an effort to more closely mirror sectional and national meets. This included enhancing the use of the Chief Judge position within the LSC, especially at championship meets.

In a mentoring fashion, she continually encourages officials to advance. While Officials Chair for the South Carolina LSC, her officials' newsletters and e-mails kept officials informed with local and national swimming news, abreast of opportunities for officials, aware of advancements and other accomplishments of the LSC's officials, and encouraged to continue developing their officiating skills. Carol also created an officials' recognition program to honor officials in the LSC.

Carol continues to have an immense impact on South Carolina Swimming, as she spends an enormous amount of her time and talent volunteering.

Congratulations, Carol!

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