

Subject: Officials Newsletter: New Year, New Events

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USA Swimming Officials Newsletter | November 2018



OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER

Thoughts from the Chair

Jim Holcomb, Chair, National Officials Committee

Twice this month, I was asked about procedures for a swim-off. First, a swim-off is an additional race (usually) used to resolve a tie from a preliminary heat to qualify for a spot in a final, e.g., two or more swimmers tie for eighth place. In larger meets, with multiple finals heats, swim-offs may be conducted for 16th and/or 24th place. Additionally, because of the possibility of swimmers moving up due to scratches or other unforeseen circumstances, swim-offs may be conducted for other places as well (i.e. 9th, 17th, and 25th).

A swim-off is considered part of the preliminaries (102.5.2) and must be held "no more than 45 minutes after the last heat of any event in which any one of these swimmers is competing in that session." The questions that come to me are concerned with the part of the rule that states: "The swim-off shall be timed and judged in the same manner as the original event."

Does this mean the swim-off can only be the same stroke and distance as the original? Although athletes generally do race the same stroke and distance in a swim-off to get the additional "free" swim (swim-off times do go into the SWIMS database), that is not the only possible resolution. One swimmer can concede the spot to the other swimmer. For a tie in a 400 I.M., oftentimes both swimmers are willing to concede spot!

Swimmers or coaches sometimes agree to a coin flip to decide. It is also permissible for the referee to let the swimmers compete in a different event than the original. If the swimmers and/or coaches agree, you could resolve the 400 I.M. tie with a 50 freestyle!

Remember, only the involved swimmers have a stake in the outcome. I will not go so far as to say that any mutually agreeable method of resolution is acceptable, but there are alternatives to swimming the same stroke and distance. One example I know of was the coaches noticing that their swimmers, who needed to swim-off to resolve a tie in the 200 freestyle, were both entered in the last event of the session, a 400 Freestyle Relay. The coaches agreed to each put their swimmer in the lead-off spot and use that split to resolve the swim-off. The involved swimmers and/or coaches were happy and the meet staff didn't have to wait around for up to 45 minutes after the session.

USA Swimming Announces Dates and Locations of 2019 National Events

USA Swimming has announced the dates and locations of many of its 2019 national events. The dates and locations include:

TYR Pro Swim Series:

- Knoxville, Tennessee- January 9-12, 2019
- Des Moines, Iowa- March 6-9, 2019
- Richmond, Virginia- April 10-13, 2019
- Bloomington, Indiana- May 16-19, 2019
- Location TBD- June 12-15, 2019

Phillips 66 National Championships - Stanford, California, July 31-August 4, 2019

Speedo Junior National Championships- Stanford, California, August 6-10, 2019

Futures Championships - August 1-4, 2019

- East - Geneva, Ohio
- South - Greensboro, North Carolina
- Central - Des Moines, Iowa
- West - Gresham, Oregon

Winter National Championships - Atlanta, Georgia, December 4-7, 2019

Speedo Winter Junior Championships, December 11-14, 2019

- East- Atlanta, Georgia
- West- Federal Way, Washington

Additionally, USA Swimming has announced the dates and locations of two of its 2020 national events:

- U.S. Olympic Team Trials - Swimming - Omaha, Nebraska, June 21-28, 2020
- Combined U.S. Open/Speedo Junior Nationals - Indianapolis, Indiana, August 4-8, 2020

The applications to officiate for the TYR Pro Swim Series events at Knoxville, Des Moines, Richmond and Bloomington have been posted. These applications will remain open until no less than approximately 120 days prior to the start of the event.

It is generally the practice of the Officials' Committee to post applications to officiate national events approximately 180 days prior to the start of the event and to close these applications no earlier than 120 days prior to the start of the event.

Officials' Excellence Award October 2018

Dave Smith, Southeastern 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 Dave Smith of Southeastern Swimming.

Dave has been a dedicated and technically proficient official, mentor, and leader within Southeastern Swimming for well over two decades. He has been a consistent advocate for swimmers, our sport, and has exemplified himself as a well-loved professional both on deck and off. Dave's calming and happy demeanor, coupled with his willingness to serve at every level of competition, from age group developmental meets to the Olympic Trials, sets him apart from many other national-level referees.



Dave has donated thousands of hours to Southeastern Swimming, helping to standardize

training and elevate officiating proficiency across the LSC. He has taught other officials to accept criticism and to deescalate stressful situations or instances with the potential for conflict, encouraging interacting with coaches, parents, fans, and swimmers in a positive way.

He gladly performs any role that will support the smooth execution of a meet and always provides options to consider when other officials seek advice and solutions. Dave has also served in multiple leadership positions in Southeastern Swimming and consistently helps the LSC make sound decisions, while ensuring full compliance with the current policies and interpretive guidance published by USA Swimming.

Thank you Dave for your lifelong contribution to our sport!

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