

Sectional Referee Starter Guidelines

1. Starters should find their positions on deck for both the forward and backstroke starts.
2. Referee's then position himself or herself either on the right or left of the starter, but where the starter has visual contact with the referee.
3. The starting cadence is a series of short whistles to signal the next event or heat is about to start, followed by a long whistle which is the signal for the swimmers to step up on the block.
4. When the referee knows that the heat is correct and that the race is ready to begin, they will extend an arm to turn the swimmers over to the starter.
5. The starter should raise the mic when they first hear the long whistle and be ready for the extended arm.
6. The starter and referee need to develop a working natural rhythm as a team.
7. When the swimmers are turned over to the starter, when the starter is ready, the starter then simply says, "take your mark" in a calm, collected and conversational tone.
8. With the start of the race, the starter should follow the swimmers in the water until their heads come up or until they are comfortable that a good race has begun.
9. With the start of the race the starter should slowly begin to lower the mic
10. No heat of swimmers should be left on the blocks or in the water for an extended length of time due to circumstances beyond their control.
11. If there is a need for the "stand" command, the starter should use *the* terms "stand please". If the stand command has to be used twice, the heat should be asked to step down by saying "ladies or gentlemen step down please". Then there should be a simple silent pause and then the starter should say, "Ladies Or gentlemen step up please. Remember, once the referee extends their arm to the starter the swimmers are in the starters jurisdiction and remain there until the race is started. There may be circumstances where the referee will need to use the long whistle again to have the swimmers step up on the block.
12. No commands should be given to address movement on the starting platform. If an athlete needs to be talked with, the starter addresses the referee and the referee goes to *the* block and talks with the swimmer.
13. If the starter observes anything that can impact the start such as a loud noise or flash, the swimmers should be stepped down and the referee addressed as to the reason. If something occurs after the starting sound that impacts the race, the heat or the swimmers the starter may recall the race and the second attempt starts again with the whistle cadence of one long whistle.
14. If the starter or referee observes a false start, they **MUST** write it down independently and not converse with anyone, The starter then should then address the referee with the words "I have a potential". If the referee has something they simply show the starter what they have written down. No words should be spoken during this process. If they agree, the referee then will complete the write-up and communication process.
15. Across the board finishes will be taken by the starter and the off duty starter that is next in the rotation from both the lane 8 and lane 1 sides of the pool. The finishes will be written down *on* either programs or finish forms that will be passed from starter to starter. At the end of each prelims or finals these forms are to be turned in to the admin referee.
16. The first starter for each day and the next starter in rotation are to make sure that all is ready to start the races of the day. This includes making sure that the blocks are tight; the pads are in, the volume of starting **speakers is checked** and that a test start is conducted. This is all **BEFORE** and in time to start the **events ON TIME**. Not late or early but on time.
17. Starters and Referees need to be ready to step in as next in rotation if the need should arise **no matter what the** reason.
18. Off Duty referees and starters should not congregate around the starting hot box. *Too* many officials in one place will self-destruct.
19. Starters must stay focused on their role and their role only. They should not try to wear all hats at the meet. Let the referees, chief judges and other officials do their job. If you are paying attention to everyone else then you are not adequately focused on starting.
20. Starters should practice **PATIENCE, PATIENCE, and MORE PATIENCE when starting and** should never rush a start or feel rushed by the referee. Yes, you need to **keep a time line, but you-** never, never rush a start.