

## RELAY TAKE-OFF JUDGE

### RESPONSIBILITY:

The Relay Take-off Judge determines whether the swimmer in each leg of a relay (other than the first) leaves the starting block before the incoming swimmer touches the pad or the wall at the end of their leg.

### ASSIGNMENTS:

The Referee or the Chief Judge will assign Relay Take-off Judges to their positions.

Whenever possible dual confirmation of take-offs is preferred, with two relay take-off judges independently judging each take-off and recording whether an early or legal take-off occurred. One judge does this at the end of the lane and the other from the side of the pool.

For the most complete coverage, there should be one lane Relay Take-off Judge assigned to each lane. For dual coverage, side Relay Take-off Judges are also assigned. Coverage is needed at both ends of the pool for 100 yard/meter relays (in a 25-yard/meter pool) and 200 meter relays (in a 50-meter pool.)

Usually this many officials are not available, so the lane Relay Take-off judges may have to observe two or more lanes and the each side Relay Take-off judge will cover four lanes.

It is also possible for the Relay Take-off judges to be paired into two groups of two. Then, each pair observes half the lanes with one person watching from the middle of the lanes and the other from the side.

Current PVS policy is that only certified Stroke and Turn Judges may act as Relay Take-off Judges. Stroke and Turn Judges will still need

to observe whether the strokes are being swum legally. More Stroke and Turn Judges will obviously be needed when a medley relay is being swum. Starter(s), and Chief Judges (when used) can be used to augment the staffing. The Referee should avoid assigning himself a position as a Relay Take-off Judge.

If a sufficient Relay Take-off Judges are not available, single confirmation may be used.

### JUDGING:

A swimmer may be *in motion* before the touch of the in-coming competitor as long as his feet have not completely left the starting platform (ground/deck) before the touch. A take-off violation only occurs if the incoming swimmer touches after the departing swimmer has completely broken contact with the starting platform.

*When judging take-offs it is important to concentrate on the departing swimmer's toes, not on the incoming swimmer.. When the departing swimmer completely leaves the starting platform (deck), glance down immediately.* By refocusing the eyes in this manner, if the hand of the incoming swimmer has not yet touched, a early take-off has occurred.

If you are certain there has been a break (early take-off), call it. **If there is doubt, don't call it!**

If a competitor leaves the platform before the incoming competitor has touched, he may not return to the block or wall to avoid a disqualification.

**Do not** instruct competitors. Do not tap, slap, or otherwise "touch-off" the swimmer on the

block. (There are exceptions that apply to blind or visually-impaired swimmers.)

**I**f you involuntarily close your eyes or pull your head back at the tag or take-off, don't guess whether or not a legal start was made. You must be sure before calling a violation.

**W**henver dual take-off judging is being used, you should receive a form to record your decision. Mark the form after each set of exchanges. Record a legal take-off by circling the appropriate lane(s) and exchange number. Record an early exchange by making an "x" in the same place on the form.

**W**hen you observe an early take-off, only make an appropriate mark on the form. **DO NOT RAISE YOUR HAND.** The only time you should raise your hand is when single confirmation judging is being used.

**T**he slips may be collected shortly after the fourth leg of the relays have entered the water. Have your slip ready. Writing the event and heat numbers and signing the forms ahead of time helps this process.

#### **POSITION:**

**P**rior to the exchange, the lane Take-off Judges should stand next to the starting block or platform without touching the swimmer. Remain standing, do not kneel or crouch.

**A** lane judge responsible for multiple lanes, should stand between the lanes being observed. If it appears, however, that the exchanges are going to occur at essentially the same instant, it may be necessary for the judge to move to one side of all the lanes for which the judge is responsible so all exchanges can be observed.

**S**ide take-off judges should take a position on the side just far enough from the starting end to clearly see all the lanes for which they are responsible.

**I**n all cases, the relay take-off judges should be in a position to see clearly both the touch of the incoming swimmer and the feet of the swimmer leaving the starting platform.

**I**f you are afraid of getting wet, don't take this job. You must ignore the splash and keep your eyes on exchange.

**W**atch the competitors for whom you are responsible and not the teams in the adjoining lanes.