



AROUND THE DECK

POTOMAC VALLEY SWIMMING OFFICIAL

NOVEMBER 2013 NEWSLETTER



PVS Officials Code of Conduct

If you volunteer to work at a meet, please show up to work. If circumstances change and you can't make it, let the Officials Coordinator know as early as possible.

Arrive on time for the session, in the proper uniform with the necessary equipment, and ready to officiate. Sign-in on the assignment sheet and attend the Officials Briefing. Be in position on time, plan to work the entire session, be focused on your assignment, and perform your duties to the best of your ability.

Know the rules, interpretations, and procedures. Continually review. Stay informed. Ask questions. Be consistent in the application of the rules at all times and at all levels of competition.

Enforce all rules fairly and equitably. Do not allow rule infractions to go uncalled simply because no one has gained an advantage. If you see a violation and you're sure of what you saw, call it. But remember that the benefit of the doubt always goes to the swimmer.

Disregard a swimmer's identity or club affiliation and avoid any appearance of bias or favoritism.

Never "warn" swimmers (or their coaches) that they were almost disqualified. A violation either occurred or it didn't. A warning constitutes coaching and officials are present to officiate, not to coach.

The Meet Referee is the final authority at the meet; follow his/her instructions and guidance. The Deck Referee and Chief Judge directly represent the Meet Referee.

Never engage in cell phone conversations or texting while performing your duties on deck.

Never enter into discussion with swimmers, coaches, or parents regarding violations, disqualifications, or rule interpretations (unless you are the Referee for the session). Answer appropriate inquiries in a polite, brief and professional manner. Further inquiries should be referred to the Deck Referee.

Coaches should never become hostile or abusive to officials. Such incidents should be promptly reported to the Referee.

Parents or other spectators should never be allowed to interfere with or argue about calls and/or decisions of officials. They should be referred to their coach.

Only offer private, constructive criticism of fellow officials. Serious concerns should only be reported to the Meet Referee or the Officials Committee.

Admit when you've made a mistake and correct the mistake according to the rules. Never make a decision to "make up" for a poor decision made earlier. If you have second thoughts about a call you've made, discuss it with the Chief Judge or Referee. There is no dishonor or disgrace in the withdrawal of a disqualification.

Never leave the deck without notifying the Referee or Chief Judge. If offered a relief break, take it, but be sure to be back in position on time.

Be aware of unsportsmanlike conduct and report such acts to the Referee.

Be aware of safety concerns. Stop unsafe acts. Report unsafe conditions to the Referee.

If asked to assist with the education of apprentice officials, do your best to convey your knowledge and experience in a positive manner. Report your observations about the apprentice's ability to the Referee at the end of the session.



From the Chairman



Official - Coach Relationship

As officials we are partners with the coaches in making the sport of swimming work. We help the coaches in managing the competitions for their swimmers. Although we may be looking at the competition from a different angle we still want the same things as the coaches (e.g. fairness, conformance to the rules, and accurate results). Getting to know the coaches can be one of the most rewarding parts of being a swim official, and getting their perspective can help make us better officials. Respect the coaches and what they do and they will respect you and what you do.

On another note, the first month of the season is completed. The large number and variety of meet has been well staffed and well officiated according to reports I've received. Keep up the good work. Our fall clinics have been well attended. Registration for 2014 and re-certification (for those that need it this year) is progressing nicely. Don't wait until the last week of

December to complete the requirements to stay registered and certified for 2014. If you need a clinic to complete your re-certification, there are several still on the schedule.

I am still looking for referees interested in being considered for meet referee and admin referee positions for our 2014 Spring Championship Meets (Junior Olympics, Junior Champs and Senior Champs). I

will be making those selections this month, so let me know soon if you are interested in being considered.

Lastly, I am always willing to listen to your concerns or answer your questions. You can contact me at OfficialsChair@pvs swim.org.



**Pamela Starke-Reed (Officials Committee Vice Chair)
and Tim Husson at the last Officials
Committee meeting.**



Radio Protocol



Radios at PVS Meets

The use of radios is becoming increasingly common on PVS pool decks. Radios are commonly used to conduct meet business including disqualifications, safety incidents, injuries, equipment failures, and other information critical to the operation of the meet. It is important that the radios be used appropriately to ensure accurate, efficient, and effective communication among officials.

General Guidelines

Radios are to be used strictly for the efficient administration of the meet. Always assume that an athlete, coach, or parent with another radio is listening to your conversation, and conduct your communication in a professional and responsible manner.

Radios should never be used to transmit any information that could be misconstrued as being unprofessional in nature.

Radios should never be used to call attention to a swimmer (i.e. one official should not use the radio to ask other officials to observe a swimmer's stroke, turn, or finish).

Radios should never be used to tell jokes or off-color stories of any kind.

Abusive language or swearing of any kind, in any language, should never be used.

Radios should never be used to talk about any coach, swimmer, parent, or volunteer.

Communication of situations dealing with meet operations should be limited to those situations in which a "public announcement" would not cause embarrassment or harm.

Radios are typically used by the Deck Referee, Chief Judges, Evaluators, and the Meet Referee. The Administrative Official should also use a radio. It can be helpful for the Hy-Tek Operator to have a radio. Starters should not use a radio.

It is important to test the radios before the start of the session, to ensure that:

- the radios are powered-up
- the volume level is appropriate
- the radios are on the appropriate channel
- the radios are not switched to VOX (voice-activated)

Key the microphone briefly before speaking; hold the microphone key down during speaking, and stop speaking before releasing the microphone key.

Before using the radio during the meet, be aware of the starting area. All officials should avoid speaking while a start is taking place—this can be very distracting to the Deck Referee.

Handling the Disqualifications

It is the responsibility of the Meet Referee or the Deck Referee to establish the specific procedure to be used for the communication of potential disqualifications at the meet. The procedure should cover how communications should flow and who has the responsibility for writing the disqualification. The only official authorized to approve or reject a disqualification is the Deck Referee. The Deck Referee must obtain sufficient information to make this decision. When Chief Judges are assigned, it is important that they are certified Referees, certified Chief Judges, or Stroke & Turn Judges with sufficient knowledge and experience that they can "ask the right questions" and make informed recommendations for approval or rejection.

The Recommended Procedure Upon seeing a Judge raise his/her hand for an infraction, the Chief Judge immediately alerts the Deck Referee of a possible disqualification, identifying the area of the pool where the potential infraction occurred (e.g. "possible disqualification, stroke judge lane 1 side" or "possible disqualification, lanes 5/6, turn end")

Upon reaching the official making the call, the Chief Judge begins by verifying the lane where the potential infraction occurred, and then immediately relaying that information to the referee and other CJs via the radio (e.g. “the possible disqualification is in lane 2”)

The Chief Judge will then engage the official in a discussion of the disqualification, without interfering with the judge’s ability to observe swimmers within the jurisdiction. After the Chief Judge gathers information from the official, the infraction is reported to the Deck Referee using rulebook terminology.

The Chief Judge also makes a recommendation to the Deck Referee that the DQ be accepted if all information is correct, or indicates to the Deck Referee that he/she “needs further discussion”. Chief Judge: states “Possible disqualification in event # ___, heat # ___, lane # ___, for (description of the violation). I recommend that the disqualification be accepted.” OR “Possible disqualification in event # ___, heat # ___, lane # ___, for (description of the violation). “I need further discussion.” Deck Referee responds with “The disqualification in event # ___, heat # ___, lane # ___ is confirmed (or accepted)”, or will ask to speak to the Chief Judge off-line in person, depending on the situation.

Extended conversations concerning the details of a disqualification should not take place over the radio. If additional information is needed beyond that which can be concisely communicated, the Deck Referee should confer “off-line” with the Stroke & Turn Judge or the Chief Judge.



Want to Own Your Own Radio?



Many of our officials want to purchase their own radios. The Radios that we use in PVS are [Midland GXT1000VP4](#). There are different styles of headsets that will work with these radios, so you can select one that is most comfortable for you: [AVP-1](#) (these come with the radios), [AVP-H3](#) (in the ear), or [AVP-H5](#) (behind the head). If you get certified as a Chief Judge or Referee PVS will give you your own headset.

You Make the Call!



In the girls 10 & under 50 yard breaststroke, the starter has just finished giving the command “take your mark” when the swimmer in lane 4 comes down and immediately falls in the water headfirst. The referee could not tell why the swimmer went into the water. However, the starter indicated he/she thought the swimmer had lost her balance when she came down for the start. *What should occur and why?*



Upcoming Meets

Please check the Meet Announcement to find the officials contact to volunteer your services.

NOVEMBER			
Date	Meet	Host	Location
14-16	Grand Prix Series (SCY)		University of Minnesota
15-17	RMSC November Invitational (by invitation)	RMSC	MLK
16-17	Odd Ball Challenge	FAST	PGCC site change
22-24	Swim & Rock (By Invitation)	SDS	Oak Marr
24	Pilgrim 9 & U Mini Meet	NCAP	Claude Moore
DECEMBER			
Date	Meet	Host	Location
5-7	AT&T Winter National Championships	USA Swimming	Knoxville, TN
5-8	Turkey Claus Championship	MACH	Univ. of MD
7-8	MAKO Holiday Invitational	MAKO	GMU
7-8	Reindeer Mini Meet	YORK	Providence
12-14	Speedo Winter Junior Nationals	USA Swimming	Greensboro, NC
12-15	Tom Dolan Invitational	NCAP	UMD
12-15	Holiday Invitational	RMSC	Germantown
12-15	Sport Fair Winter Classic (by Invitation)	PM	GMU
13-15 change	Christmas Championships>	MSSC	PGS&LC site change



Updated Officials Briefing

USA Swimming has posted an updated version of the recommended stroke briefing, including all recent changes. This the PVS recommended briefing. Follow the link to see the new briefing. http://www.usaswimmig.org/Rainbow/Documents/c7dfbe7a-e30b-453a-b1e1-a996f4d9217d/Officials_Briefing_2013.pdf



From the Eastern Zone



Officiating at the Zone level.

Serving as an official at the Zone level can be a great experience. You get the privilege of working with officials from other LSCs in our zone. You also get to work with Meet Referees and Evaluators from different parts of the country. Go to the [Eastern Zone Swimming](#) website and look under meets for the meet announcements for upcoming meets and apply to work at the Zone level, it will be a great experience.



UPCOMING CLINICS

Upcoming Clinics				
Date	Clinic	Location	Time	Who's Attending
Saturday November 23	Starter	Oak Marr	2:30 - 4:30 PM	list
Saturday November 23	Stroke and Turn	Oak Marr	4:30 - 7:00 PM	list
Saturday January 4	Chief Judge	Overlee	8:00 - 10:00 AM	list
Saturday January 4	Referee	Overlee	10:30 AM - 12:30 PM	list
Saturday January 4	Administrative Official	Overlee	1:00 - 3:00 PM	list
Wednesday January 8	Stroke & Turn	Georgetown Prep	6:30 - 9:00 PM	list



You Make the Call Resolution

The starter should “Stand up” the remaining swimmers. It should be determined if the swimmer had any outside interference, which they responded to such as a flash camera or horn sound. If the referee agrees that the swimmer fell before becoming set and this was not a starting motion, the swimmer should be allowed to swim with the heat.

Applicable Rules:101.1.3A, 101.1.2C, 101.1.2D, 102.13.1



One Last Thing

If you have any stories or pictures about experiences you have had concerning any of our officials please send them to [Bob Vincent](#) so that we can get them in the newsletter.

BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT GOES TO THE SWIMMER

Call what you see and see what you call