

-----MEET AN ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL!-----

POTOMAC VALLEY SWIMMING

DECEMBER 2016



OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER

-----“WE ARE MENTORS WORKSHOP” SUMMARY PART 2 -----

POTOMAC VALLEY SWIMMING MISSION STATEMENT

Potomac Valley Swimming (PVS) shall promote swimming and foster equal access for competitive opportunities for the benefit of swimmers of all ages and abilities, in accordance with the standards, rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the Federation Internationale de Natation (FINA), USA Swimming (USA-S) and PVS and its Articles of Incorporation. The objectives and primary purpose of PVS shall be the education and assurance of instruction and training of individuals to develop and improve their capabilities in the sport of swimming.



From the Chairman
PVS Officials Committee Chair Tim Husson



I can't believe it is December already! I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. It is the only weekend in the Fall where there are no swim meets in PVS!

There are still another ten PVS meets in December, including five with a prelims/finals format. The meet referees all need more officials and would appreciate any help you can give them. And, if you need to complete sessions for your re-certification or for PVS to pay for your 2017 registration, there are lots of opportunities. Remember, if you work ten sessions at PVS sanctioned meets in 2016, PVS will pay for your 2017 registration. Approved and observed meets do now count towards that total.

Our series of mentoring articles is continued below. My article last month described how we are all mentors at some level. This article will give you tips on how you can be a better mentor.

Email me your comments and questions anytime.

Tim Husson
OfficialsChair@pvswim.org

"We ARRE Mentors Workshop" Summary Pt. 2

by Steed Edwards and Ellen Colket



Of course, as indicated by its name, much of the material covered at the above workshop covered the aspects, qualities, and functions of,

--- ***Mentoring!***

Why is mentoring such a critical subject for those of us in the swim officiating community? Our sport is unique in that our competitive swimmers generally spend a set amount of time in the sport, whether it is 1 year, or 20 years, -- and then they graduate out, taking their parent /officials out with them in most cases! Our sport is also unique in that our USAS officials are all, --- volunteers! This requires a constant effort to recruit new officials, --- and a constant effort to groom them up through the various levels and positions of expertise.

Whether you are an LSC S&T official or an N3 Meet Referee working the Olympic Trials, we all have, and ask you to use, your ability and knowledge when asked, to pass your experience along to the next generation.

Regardless of what level you are asked to be a mentor, it requires certain skills and qualities. Those qualities include the ability:

to **Listen**: Mentors should maintain eye contact and give mentees their full undistracted attention.

to **Provide insight**: Mentors can and should use their personal experience to help their Mentees avoid mistakes and learn from well-honed skills, thoughts and ideas.

to **Criticize Constructively**: When necessary, Mentors should point out skills that need improvement, but never focus on personal likability, personal habits or intangibles.

to be **Supportive**: No matter how painful the experience, Mentors need to recognize that learning comes from mistakes, and should support and encourage Improvement.

to be **Specific**: Specific advice is to be provided on what was achieved and done well, and on the areas that can be corrected and improved.

to **Care**: True interest and compassion are key to the Mentor-Mentee Relationship.

to **Listen** (Again and Again): More listening is done than talking. Mentors advise; they don't preach.

to **Say Thank You**: Mentors will learn from their Mentees and remember to thank

them for the opportunity.

Additional skills requested of us as Mentors include:

1. An ability and desire to **communicate**,
2. Adequate **preparation**,
3. **Approachability** and **availability** both for the Mentee and the Mentor
4. **Ethical** and **professional behavior** while serving as a Mentor
5. **Honesty** coupled with **tact and diplomacy**
6. A conscientious effort on your part, as Mentor, to **keep up with your own deck skills**,
7. **Objectivity** and **fairness**,
8. Remaining **“ego-free”**,
9. **Putting yourself “in the shoes”** of your Mentee,
10. Maintaining a **neutral “body language”** while mentoring.

Of course, there is considerably more detail to these qualities and skills, along with further discussion/explanation, that make for a good mentor. Just like any advancement within the positions on deck, ie. from N2 to N3 level, the task of **Mentoring** requires practice. We hope to delve further into these qualities in the future in various forthcoming clinics and articles.

Meet an Administrative Official

by Tim Husson



The USA Swimming Rules & Regulations specify that an Administrative Official is a requirement for all swim meets and describes the duties of the Administrative Official. Unlike the Deck Referee, Starter, Chief Judges, and Stroke & Turn Judges, their work is usually done in the background, with minimal interaction with the majority of the “wet side” officials. To introduce you to the role of the Administrative Official, I caught up with one after a recent session.

TH: How would you describe the job of Administrative Official?

AO: The Administrative Official (AO) is the Customer Service for the meet.

TH: Who are the customers?

AO: The swimmers, coaches, and other officials are the customers. The AO works with the meet director to provide the seeding and meet programs for the meet. The AO is responsible for making sure that the results for all the swimmers are accurate.

TH: How are the officials customers of the AO?

AO: The AO makes sure that the deck officials have all the things they need to run

the competition. This includes meet programs and forms. The AO also processes deck entries, positive check-in, reseeds, declared false starts, and relay names submitted by the coaches.

TH: The AO is usually one of the first one to arrive at the meet and is always the last one to leave. What do you do during a typical session?

AO: There is a lot to do even before a session begins! If there are deck entries, they must be processed. Any positive check-in events for the beginning of the session must also be processed so as not to hold up the start of the session. Getting lane timer sheets printed, if not already done, and ready for the timers. Making sure that the deck officials have their meet sheets including any last-minute changes. Lastly, making sure the Hy-Tek Computer Operator and the Timing System Operator are prepared and ready for the start.

TH: And, during the session?

AO: The AO is responsible for making sure the table is running smoothly and processing results. The primary task of the AO during the session is to ensure that the results are accurate. This means reviewing all the results and making timing adjustments if the primary time is determined to not be accurate (see rule 102.24). Don't forget prompt posting of results! The AO also troubleshoots any issues that arise so that the meet keeps running without problems or delay. There may also be additional positive check-in events to process and ongoing re-seeds.

TH: That's a lot tasks. How do you keep them all going at the same time?

AO: The AO must stay organized, keep track of the piles of paperwork, and must be able to handle constantly changing priorities to perform the job.

TH: What happens after the session?

AO: The AO must finish processing all the results from the session. For a prelims/finals meet, there are finals events to seed and a finals program to produce. The AO must also file all the paperwork from the session in an organized manner so that it can be accessed later if questions arise.

TH: I've heard the term Administrative Referee (AR). How is that different than an Administrative Official?

AO: The job is the same, only the title is different. The AR is an AO that is also a certified deck referee.

TH: This sounds like a lot of work. Why do you do it?

AO: The satisfaction of knowing you've helped run a fair, accurate competition is the reward.

TH: How does someone become an Administrative Official?

AO: To become an AO, you must be first certified as a Hy-Tek Computer Operator (for a year) and a Timing System Operator. So, the first step is to certify at one of those positions. Check the [PVS website](#) for the clinic schedule and other certification

requirements.

Proactive Situation Resolutions for New Referees



Protocol for the re-direction of a talkative, distracting official

If you as the Meet Referee have the ability to move around (a deck referee to maintain watch of the competition) approach the official during the interaction with others. He cannot deny his role if you approach him while interacting with others. Arrange for a relief official to step in, and ask the official to take a break with you. Off the deck, ask the official if there was a situation arising that you should know about. Explain that he is preventing others from doing their assignment by engaging his neighbor and distracting them from doing their best. Tell him you love his outgoing personality and appreciate his knowledge, humor, etc. but ask him to please help to maintain a balanced deck by doing his job and allowing others the same courtesy. At the end of the session seek him out and thank him for understanding your position and tell him you appreciate his positive contribution to the official's team.

Protocol for disallowing a call because of an erroneous rule interpretation on the part of an official

If you as the referee or deck referee have rejected a "DQ" after asking the three usual questions, It is essential that you seek out the official who made the call and talk to her before she leaves the venue at the end of the session. The chief judge has been a go between and may not have had time to make the official understand the reasons for the disallowance, nor can they take the time to correct the concept during the session. Tell her you appreciate her abilities and attitude and explain in depth why you did not accept the call. When the dialogue is over ask her if she understands, and is okay with your reasoning on the underlying concept of the rule. Be sure to tell her you look forward to working with her again soon, as you consider her a real asset to the official's team.

Protocol for addressing an official wanting to work who is improperly attired according to the LSC Standard

In meets requiring applications to officiate the dress standard is clearly stated, and failing to arrive properly dressed, the official should be told even before the official's briefing that he needs to comply if he wishes to work that session. If he cannot comply, tell him you will miss his contribution and that you hope he can find the proper attire so he can contribute to the official's team in following sessions. If an official appears wearing team colors, open toed sandals, carrying umbrella's etc., the official should be approached before the meeting and the concept of impartiality or safety etc. can be explained in private. In small local meets, you may choose to give the official a short time to comply with the standard and accept them on deck for that

session. Again, make certain that he understands your reasoning and thank him for complying and serving.

Protocol for addressing the issue of cell phone usage on deck

In today's world, every official's briefing should include a request that cell phones not be used on deck, as they are a distraction from the reason we are working the meet. Explain cell phone usage is acceptable in the break area only. Explain that if an emergency call comes in as a text message, she should ask the referee for a replacement and return the call off the deck. If an official uses the phone while doing her assignment, the referee should personally or through the chief judge, request that she give full attention to the pool. If the official has important obligations that require her attention, give her the option to be excused from service that session. Whatever the outcome of the official's decision, thank her for her service, express hope that the problem will be solved to her satisfaction and that she can return and be a valuable member of the team very soon.

Protocol for addressing the issue of an official who cannot seem to refrain from cheering and showing bias toward their team or children

Most every LSC has an official's philosophy statement that explains this is unacceptable. The official who cannot seem to understand or practice this philosophy needs to be monitored and reminded often at first. A bragging rights section of the official's briefing session sometimes helps and could be a good lead in to a short segment on maintaining composure on deck. A personal intervention, off the deck, directly after such an incident to explain how coaches and athletes from other teams will have valid, bias-based reasons to protest any call he makes, may help. The referee may also explain that his child may feel embarrassed and isolated from his teammates by such excessive behavior from his parent, and that the swimmer will always see the official as a parent first. Assure the official that you respect his skills, and want him to continue to develop his skills and progress to other assignments as well. Assure him that his enthusiasm for the sport is appreciated. Ask him that if he would prefer other assignments, in admin, or timing console operator, and tell him you will always be glad to work with him. Assure him the official's community values his continuing participation as a member of the team.

Protocol for handling the official who habitually arrives late, misses the briefing and leaves early to miss the distance events

Occasionally an official will make arrangements with a referee to arrive late due to valid circumstances, or traffic etc. This may prevent an official from reporting to the briefing, but the person who just comes late over and over, shows very little respect for the meet. The referee may want to explain that since she did not give any advance notice, the assignments have been made for this session, and that you hope she will be on time to the next briefing and receive an assignment. Give the time of the briefing for the next session and assure her that she will be welcome. Tell her you value her knowledge and hope she understands the need to be on time to get instructions on the different nuances of each meet. As a referee, you may look at the

time line and if the session is long you may want to make some telephone calls in advance of the session and set up two teams of officials, thus assuring that you are not expecting too much of too few officials.

Upcoming Clinics



Date	Clinic	Location	Time
Computer-Based Training	Timing System Operator	Register for this clinic	Any time
Saturday January 7	Hy-Tek	GMU	9:00 - 11:30 AM
Saturday January 7	Administrative Official	GMU	10:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Saturday January 7	New Referees (By Invitation Only)	GMU	1:00 - 3:00 PM
Saturday January 7	Referee	GMU	3:30 - 5:30 PM
Sunday January 8	Stroke & Turn	GMU	8:00 - 10:30 AM
Sunday January 8	Starter	GMU	11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Sunday January 8	Chief Judge	GMU	1:30 - 3:30 PM
Sunday January 15	Stroke & Turn	MLK	9:00 - 11:30 AM
Sunday January 15	Chief Judge	MLK	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
Sunday January 15	starter	MLK	1:30 - 3:30 PM

Upcoming Meets



****Click on the Upcoming Meets Banner to see the latest Information*

December 2016

- 1-4 - Turkey Claus Showdown (MACH) - University of Maryland
- 2-4 - Christmas Championships (MSSC) - Fairland Aquatics Center
- 3-4 - MAKO Holiday Invitational (MAKO) - George Mason University
- 3-4 - Reindeer Mini Meet (YORK) - Providence Recreation Center
- [7-10 - Speedo Winter Junior Nationals \(USA Swimming\) - Columbus, OH](#)
- 8-11 - Sport Fair Winter Classic (PM) - George Mason University
- 8-11 - NCAP Invitational (NCAP) - University of Maryland
- 8-11 - Holiday Invitational (RMSC) - Germantown
- 11 - Frozen Five Mini Meet (MACH) - Fairland Aquatics Center

- 17 - Candy Cane Mini Meet (NCAP) - Freedom Center
- 17 - Splash and Dash (FAST) - Fairland Aquatics Center

January 2017

- 7-8 - PVS January Distance Meet (PVS)
- 7-8 - DPR Winter Invitational (DCPR)
- 7-8 - Senior Circuit #3 (AAC)
- 7-8 - MAKO Winter Invitational (MAKO)
- 7-8 - Polar Bear Meet (SDS)
- 8 - RMSC Frosty Pentathlon (RMSC)
- [13-17 - Arena Pro Swim Series \(USA Swimming\) - Austin, TX](#)
- 20-22 - Green & Orange Bowl Invitational (MACH)
- 21-22 - PVS January Open (PVS)
- 21-22 - Snow Dude Mini Meet (PM)
- 21-22 - New Years Challenge Tri(AAC)
- 27-29 - RMSC January Invitational (RMSC)
- 27-29 - IM Xtreme Games - NE (PM) - University of Maryland
- 29 - Polar Pentathlon Mini (NCAP)
- 29 - Little Blue Penguin Pentathlon (PAC)



BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT GOES TO THE SWIMMER!

Call what you see and see what you call

