

# STROKE AND TURN

## Philosophy of Officiating

The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer.

Being disqualified is not the end of the world. Almost all swimmers have been DQ'd at some time. For all swimmers, a DQ should be treated as a learning experience. A DQ alerts the swimmer and coach to what portions of the swimmer's stroke need to be corrected. They should be considered in the same light as an incorrect answer in schoolwork - they point out areas that need further practice.

Trained officials observe the swimmers during each event to ensure compliance with these technical rules. If a swimmer commits an infraction of the rules that is observed by an official, a disqualification (DQ) will result. This means that the swimmer will not receive an official time and will not be eligible for an award in that event.

- Judging should be consistent among different officials at a meet
- Judging should be consistent at different meets.
- All of the rules are enforced, we don't individually choose to enforce some rules and ignore others.
- **The rules are enforced across all age groups and levels of ability.**
- Officials should be neutral in their enforcement of the rules; don't favor your team over other teams, and don't favor your child over other children.
- **The benefit of the doubt always goes to the swimmer**
  - Rule infractions don't result in the loss of yardage, foul shots, terminal penalty box, time police, etc. They result in disqualification.
- Call what you see, not what you don't see.
- Ugly ain't (necessarily) illegal.
- If it isn't specifically prohibited by the rules, it is legal.
- Know the rules; review the rules before meets.
- Raise your hand confidently, but not enthusiastically.
- Disqualification is not a punishment for a swimmer, rather it is a learning opportunity.

Stroke and Turn Judges observe all of the swimmers for illegal technique immediately after the start, during the stroke, at the turns, and at the finish. There should be at least two Stroke and Turn Judges on each end of the pool.

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Observes swimmers for compliance with RSL Swimming Rules and Regulations for the following:

- style of swimming designated for the event (i.e. stroke)
- correctness and completeness of "Turn"
- May serve as a judge for relay takeoffs. (More detailed information may be found in the Relay Takeoff Judge Section below).
- Refers any swimmer with possible head injury to their Head Coach for evaluation.

Occasionally swimmers will use an illegal technique immediately after the start, during the stroke, during the turn, or at the finish during an event. The Stroke and Turn Judge must observe this and make the "DQ call". This ensures that no swimmer gains an unfair advantage.

- Raises one hand with open palm (except early take-offs) when any infraction is observed.
- Reports violations on DQ slip detailing:
  - swimmers name (obtain if possible)
  - event number, heat number, lane number
  - judge's initials
  - description of infraction
- Gives completed DQ slip to Referee or Admin for validation.

### Judges' Jurisdiction

- During the pre-meet meeting judges are assigned jurisdictions
  - Normally you will be observing swimmers in  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the pool, possibly from the side, possibly from the end, or both
  - You may make calls only when observing swimmers while in your jurisdiction
  - The Referee should make it clear where you should be positioned to view your jurisdiction; be sure to ask the Referee if you have any questions
- Typically, judges rotate positions around the pools clockwise between each major stroke grouping. The Referee will go over this in the meeting.
- If there are empty lanes in your jurisdiction, do not stare at the swimmer(s) who are swimming, but rather look elsewhere or at the empty lanes so that you are not giving a swimmer undue focus.
- Where you stand is very important and can affect what you see. For example:
  - It's often necessary to lean over edge of pool to observe a turn or finish
  - It is difficult to see one-hand touch from the side of the pool
  - When standing at the end of the pool, it can be difficult to observe butterfly kicks immediately after the start.

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## Working With the Referee

- During the meet, the referee has the responsibility to review and approve disqualifications
- As an S&T judge, you should expect the referee to discuss calls - and missed calls -with you and other officials:
  - Ensures swimmers get the benefit of the doubt
  - Helps reinforce rules for S&T officials and ensures consistency
  - It does not mean the referee doubts your judgment or expertise
  - Avoid getting defensive when the referee approaches you to discuss a call
  - Focus on answering the three key questions from the referee:
    - Where were you?
    - What did you observe?
    - What rule was violated?
  - You may (and should) discuss any questions you have with the referee prior to writing the DQ Card.
  - It's okay to raise your hand and not write a slip!

## Disqualification

- When you see a violation in your jurisdiction, follow these six steps in this order:
  - Raise one hand above your head.
  - Continue observing all swimmers in your jurisdiction.
  - Make a quick note or symbol on your heat sheet.
  - Determine whether the violation is valid and if there is any doubt (remember the benefit of the doubt goes to the swimmer)
  - Fill out the DQ card and make it available to the Referee
  - Be prepared to answer the Referee's questions

## Hand Raise

- It is important that the official's hand is raised immediately when a potential infraction is observed so the Referee, Coaches, and the Runner are aware of the potential infraction, and because it is a USA Swim rule.
- When you raise your hand, do so directly without hesitation. Hold it up for about three to five seconds, then bring it back down. If you see another infraction by the same swimmer or other swimmer while your hand is raised, keep your hand up for three to five seconds after that observation. It is not necessary to drop the hand to re-raise it.
- If, after dropping your hand, the swimmer performs a different infraction, you should raise your hand again.
- If the swimmer returns to your jurisdiction and performs the same (or different) infraction, you should raise your hand again.
- Raising your hand does not require you to write a DQ card. The swimmer always gets the benefit of any doubt.

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## Relay Takeoffs and Dual Confirmation

A Referee may ask the Stroke and Turn Judge to assist with dual confirmation of relay takeoffs

### Relay Take-Offs

- *The key to relay take-offs is to watch the feet of the swimmer on the blocks.* When the feet of the swimmer on the block loses contact with the starting platform, look down to see if the incoming swimmer has touched the wall. If the incoming swimmer has NOT touched the wall yet, the takeoff is early and this is a violation. Mark an X on your Relay Takeoff Slip. If the incoming swimmer HAS touched, this is legal. Mark an O on your Relay Takeoff Slip. WATCH FEET THEN LOOK DOWN TO TOUCH.

## Jurisdiction

Stroke and Turn Judge:

- Assigned lanes from wall to 25m/yd out
- Start (from after starter signal to entry into water) through Finish (when swimmer touches wall).
- Be sure completion conforms to finish rules.

OR: As assigned by the Referee who has full control and authority over all officials.