

Judging Protocol

Benefit of the doubt:

Benefit of the doubt should always go to the swimmer. If a violation is not directly observed, it should not be called.

Uniform:

In order to set the atmosphere where parents recognize the judges (and will not discuss rulings with them), the dress for a judge should be Khaki pants or shorts and a white shirt that does not have team logo (impartiality).

Stroke and turn judge jurisdiction:

Each team will provide 1 turn judge and 1 stroke judge each half. They will officiate on opposite sides of the pool. After the break, the teams will exchange areas of responsibility.

Turn Judge is responsible for half the lanes and evaluates stroke from the backstroke flags, to the turn end, and back to the flags. Also responsible for turns mechanics and relay early take-offs at the turn end.

The Stroke Judges are responsible for stroke evaluation for half the lanes. Must walk the side of the pool to adequately evaluate the stroke mechanics. Also responsible for the turns and relay early take-offs at the start end. Some overlap may occur at the flags.

Each team should provide 2 relay takeoff judges for relay events. When exchanges are made between swimmers in the relay events, takeoff judges should watch the swimmers take off, then look down to the incoming swimmer. If a touch has been made, it is a legal takeoff. If the touch has not been made, then the relay team should be disqualified. It is the strongest preference that the relay takeoff judges stand in line with the edge of the pool and do not have responsibility for other calls during the relays.

General:

Officials should raise their hand immediately upon seeing an infraction and hold it up until the meet referee acknowledges you.

We have a broad range of ability among our swimmers and it is our obligation to help with the learning process. Therefore, make the calls the same way at the very first meet as you would at Championships. The swimmers and coaches should get used to proper procedure as early as possible. Also, it's far less upsetting to the swimmer to be disqualified early than to have it happen at Championships.

Act like a professional. You would not expect a basketball official to chat with the fans during the game, so you should avoid unnecessary conversations with parents, swimmers, coaches as well. No parent, coach or swimmer should approach you about a call. The procedure is that all questions should be addressed to the coach or team rep and by that person to the meet referee.

For Starters

If a swimmer does not report for an event and the heat is ready to go, you should not wait. At Championships we are very strict with this rule and everyone should get used to it early.

If a swimmer reports to the starting area but delays taking his or her position on the command "Step up" "Step in" or "Take your mark" (fumbling with goggles, not paying attention, etc), then you should charge the swimmer with one false start, stand the heat down and start over. Remember that we don't DQ until the second false start in the same heat.

Backstroke

Must be vertical or toward the back at all times except: during the turns.

Must surface by ½ length of pool.

Turns - may rotate toward the breast and execute 1 single or 1 double arm pull.

May kick or glide to the wall.

When the feet leave the wall, must be vertical or toward the back.

Must touch at finish on back.

8 and under – may use kickboard at finish.

6 and under – may rotate to breast last 6 feet before finish.

Breaststroke

Elbows must be under the water at all times except during a turn.

At start and each turn, may execute 1 arm pull, 1 kick in that order.

Must break the surface of the water by the arm recovery of 2nd stroke.

Hands may be brought below hipline during 1st stroke only.

Arms – simultaneous at all times

Toes are key to the breaststroke kick, toes must be pointed out during propulsion.

No scissors or butterfly kick.

NEW RULE – **one** dolphin kick at start and turn is permitted. Must be part of first stroke cycle

At turn and finish, must be 2 hands simultaneous touch in any plane.

8 and under – must execute legal stroke at least ½ length of pool.

Butterfly

May execute 1 arm pull, then must surface by ½ length of pool.

Elbow / forearms must be above the water during arm recovery.

Arms – simultaneous at all times.

Feet must be simultaneous, not necessarily in same plane.

At turn and finish, must be 2 hands simultaneous touch in any plane.

8 and under – must execute legal stroke at least ½ length of pool.

Freestyle

Must surface by ½ length of pool.

If swimmer misses the wall, may come back - do not call until they reach next wall.

Cannot push off the bottom to gain advantage.

Cannot use lane dividers for forward motion

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Butterfly, back, breast, free, in that order

At end of each leg, must touch according to finish rules of the stroke.

Freestyle leg may swim any stroke except one of the other 3 legal strokes.

8 and under – ½ pool length rule does not apply.

Relays

After feet of outgoing swimmer leaves the side, then look down to see if the incoming swimmer has touched.

ONLY if the incoming swimmer has not touched can you call an early take off

Medley relay – Back, Breast, Butterfly, Free in that order (alphabetical).

When using deck starts, the outgoing swimmer must have at least one foot anchored at the edge immediately prior to the takeoff. The rest of his/her body can be in motion and the exchange is judged as just stated above.

Dual confirmation is recommended at a dual meet, required at championships.