

New Jersey Swimming Officials' Committee
Report for the NJ Swimming Board
April 16, 2019

Again, there is not much to report at this time, but here are a few things that might be of interest to you.

Retention of Officials

Retention of officials continues to be a challenge. Of the 522 officials who were active in 2018, 142 of them did not renew their qualifications for 2019, similar to last year. Of course there were the normal retirements and moves, but they only accounted for a small number of the lost officials.

Also, of the 138 people who took a clinic for the first time passed the test this past Fall, 76 have not yet completed their apprenticeships, which should have been done by the end of the short course season. This is normal; I will contact them shortly and encourage them to complete their apprenticeships this summer.

So right now, we have 518 officials on the books, including 63 Referees and 55 Starters. However, many of our "active" officials work only the bare minimum number of sessions and can be seen sitting in the stands at meets where we are short of deck officials. And almost half of our Referees no longer have swimmers in the age-group program.

As I have said before, like everything else in swimming, officiating is driven by the coaches. If the coaches believe that it is important to have sufficient qualified officials on their team, and they communicate that to the parents, then the team will generate officials who will stay with the program and regularly work meets. If the coaches are lackluster towards the need for officials on their team, that message also gets through. If you look at the teams with the large numbers of officials, you'll find the coaches behind the program every time.

Training Clinics

We will be running at least two Starter Clinics in May, along with a Referee Clinic. Dates will be announced after our Officials Committee meeting on April 24th.

One Starter Clinic will be held at the Ridgewood YMCA on a weekday night in May to be determined shortly. The second Starter Clinic will be held at the Berkeley Aquatic Center for Excellence on a Saturday morning in May to be determined. We are trying to schedule a third Starter Clinic for the southern teams. Details to follow.

The Referee Clinic will be held at the Ridgewood YMCA on Thursday night in May to be determined.

Meet Referee's Post Meet Reporting

In the Fall, we developed a more streamlined Meet Referee report to be filed after each meet. We have received a number of such reports, and we are currently tracking down the missing ones. Based on a cursory review of the reports received to date, they confirm what we are seeing at meets; too few

officials at too many sessions of major meets; too many officials not stepping up to help at meets other than their own team's hosted meets; too much reliance on "outside" Meet Referees who don't have swimmers in the meets any longer. We'll be talking more about this issue later this year.

National Officials Activities

I will be attending the USA-S Rules and Regulations Committee Meeting in Fort Lauderdale in early June and the USA-S Officials Chairs Meeting in Charlotte in mid-June. This is not a year for FINA rules changes, so we shouldn't have any major changes.

We are working with the USA-S Super Sectional assigned officiating team on the various meet details, including getting the meet set up as an OQM meet. Judy Sharkey is spearheading this effort on behalf of the LSC.

Ed Miller
NJ LSC Officials' Chair
April 16, 2019