



## Officials Chair Report

### Niagara LSC Spring 2019 House of Delegates Meeting

May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019

#### Our Numbers

The number of certified Niagara LSC Officials is 295 down from the fall of 2018 when we were at 308. For reference, 298 in spring 2018, 284 in spring 2017. Broken down further, we have 64 AO's, 16 of which also hold a "wet-side" certification. We have 29 Starters and 6 AP. We have 45 Deck Referees and 1 AP.

We still have about one third of the teams "better than target" a third in the middle with "some" but not as many as they should have based upon the athlete count. The remaining third with no Officials at all. The target minimum Official level should be 5%, so if your team has 100 athletes you should have 5 Officials at minimum.

***Teams should strive to achieve that level of Officials or more.*** We have put many things in place to create clinics where needed with a simple request from any team that can find a space and a date that works for the clinic director(s) in your area.

We currently have 37 Officials that hold National Certification(s) down from 48 in 2018 and 60 in 2017. Broken down as follows:

		2019	2018	2017
Stroke and Turn	N2	12	20	29
	N3	25	25	24
Starter	N2	11	12	18
	N3	5	5	5
Chief Judge	N2	8	13	17
	N3	3	2	2
Deck Referee	N2	4	5	8
	N3	5	5	5
Admin Referee	N2	1	1	1

We have lost a few Officials overall and lost some National Level folks; some due to expiring and some due to “retirement”. The trend away from working toward National Certification is a concern.

Thank you to all our N2 and N3 Officials for taking the time, the effort to overcome the nerves to better your skills and make the LSC a better place to be mentored.

We have one remaining “major meet” this August that will be an OQM Meet. It will be N3 at S&T and N2 everything else (except Admin Referee) The Eastern Zone LC Senior Zone Championship in Buffalo. Please consider attending to update, renew or begin a certification.

### **Open Water**

We will be hosting another Open Water Meet in beautiful downtown Skaneateles on June 30<sup>th</sup>, please consider coming out to support the expansion of open water swimming in Niagara.

Niagara now has 6 Open Water Referees 3 Open Water Judges and we NEED more!

I will be scheduling a clinic soon that will allow those of you wanting to work these meets in the future an opportunity to be ready in time to shadow at this meet.

Please consider pursuing these positions; Open Water events are fun, outside and don’t take all day! (And it may get you a few fun boat rides)

### **Out and About**

The following Niagara Officials stepped, or will be stepping, outside of the home court:

Fred Leff, Matty Matuszewski, Jean Lalomia, June Mundt, Khadija Moultais, Mike Burgess, Jim Stromski and Brooks Howard all worked National Level Meets in the past year. Thanks to all for supporting those meets and representing the LSC.

Bob Nicita is stepping out for a learning conference in Chicago in May and I will be attending the National Official’s Chair meeting in June.

## **Official Certification and USA Membership**

There seems to always be questions about the difference between Non-Athlete Membership and Officials Certification. Just a reminder that all the expiration dates are important and must be up to date!!

As a certified Official, you need to be aware of these so that your USA Swimming membership AND officiating certifications to make sure you do not lapse. What you need to know:

Official's Certifications expire on 12/31 of the year of your renewal.

Non-Athlete Membership's expire on 12/31 every year.

Background check (BGC) and Athlete Protection Training (APT) vary on an individual basis. (Note: the new BGC will expire on the actual anniversary not the end of that month)

All the dates are shown on the card that gets sent out of the OTS, and on the Deck Pass page of USA Swimming when you are logged in.

## **Re-Certification**

A quick reminder that all re-Certification cycles are now 3 years, including AO. That means if you should look at your Deck Pass, and if your certification (NOT APT, BGC or Registration) expires on 12/31/2019 you need to find a clinic and retake the required exam(s) before the end of the year. All Clinics will be posted in Team App under the "Events" Tab.

If you and/or your team wishes to host a clinic, please reach out to Brooks Howard to coordinate. The basic need is a private room with a projection system or Large Video screen and access to WIFI or direct internet connection.

## **Requirements for Advancing to Starter and Referee**

The requirements are based heavily weighted on experience rather than "time on the job". We have addressed the longer time frame it took previously to become a Starter and then to Referee while maintaining the required need for experience and knowledge. The ability for those wanting to advance in half the time previously required should begin to show results this year as many newer officials are eligible.

If you are a newer Stroke and Turn, the year of learning flies by!! Check your away from home and your Team's Referee sessions so you can check those boxes and move up to Starter!! Also make sure you are taking advantage of those prelim-finals meets to check off that box also!

*Reminder: The first step in the process is to have your record in OTS verified by the Officials Chair!*

## **Team App in the LSC**

I am hopeful we have turned the corner on Team App use in the LSC. There are still some growing pains and miscommunications, but I do believe the bugs have mostly been worked out. Thanks to all that are out there promoting it and offering feedback so we can make it better.

Some reminders and tips:

Events are things like Clinics, Meetings, and anything else not a Meet

Meets can be viewed in chronological order by clicking the “all entries” at the top.

Meets that are “published” are added automatically. (no form needed)

Meets that are “closed” will not be added to Team App unless a request form (in the doc section) is received.

To RSVP just click the yes, maybe, or no button. (this CAN be changed if something changes)

You must belong to the Access Group the Meet in under to RSVP.

If you need to tell the Meet Referee something, DO NOT do it in the comment section, open a direct chat in the chat room to that person. Those replies can be seen by EVERYONE and lead to some folks not liking the App.

## **LSC Official’s Committee Changes and Openings**

As we have been able to formalize our Committee somewhat in the past three years, there are a couple of things I strive to accomplish. One of which will be a requirement as we move forward, finding our replacements.

Under the new bylaws, if adopted, the Officials Chair will only be able to serve two consecutive terms. As many of you may realize the Officials Chair position requires several tasks and responsibilities.

Based upon this I think it is imperative that we, the existing committee members, to begin a process of evaluation of these tasks and dividing them differently over the next couple of years. I believe if we establish some processes with committee members taking ownership of some tasks, the Official’s Chair position should be less intimidating both to consider and to function.

We will need to add a couple of newer Officials to offer new perspective and to spread our responsibilities in the future. We are required to have Athlete participation, so if you know of an athlete that may be interested, or you may be interested in joining the committee, please reach out to me.

**Thank you to the Committee:**

The Committee provides great feedback from different places and perspectives. I do not want to be making decisions in a vacuum. The Group has been a wonderful resource to me, but more importantly, the Officials in the LSC.

Thanks to: Adam, Ann, Bob, Deborah, Fred, Jerry Jim, June, Katherine, Matty, Paul, Pete, Sharlene and Taylor for everything you do!

**OTS Remider:**

1. If it isn't in the OTS, it didn't happen.
2. As always: Referees, or their designated person for meet session sign in PLEASE, check certification cards to validate expiration date before each session of a meet. There are still occurrences of Officials being on deck with expired certifications, background checks, or APTs.
3. I have created a form fill for those referee's that cannot "create a meet" that makes life easier for everyone. If you have not received an e-mail version which can be auto filled, send me a note.
4. If you are a newer Referee and would like to take the next step to be able to enter your own meets into OTS, please reach out to Brooks Howard to schedule individual training.