



The Chief Judge, Local

This presentation has been adapted from the “The Chief Judge.2016” presentation provided for National Officials Clinics.

At a meet following ‘National Deck protocol’ the CJ team has significant responsibilities both on and off deck, as well before, during and after the meet.

At a local meet, the CJ normally has a subset of those responsibilities. This presentation provides an overview of typical ‘Local Meet CJ’ expectations.

AMS Certification Requirements

- Prior approval by AMS Officials Chair
- Shadow minimum of 6 sessions
- Referee Recertification Test



The Chief Judge

Topics:

What is a CJ?

What a CJ is not!

The CJ's Job

Who?

When?



WHAT IS A CJ?

At the local level, the CJ primarily plays a supporting role to the Meet/Deck Referee to help spread the workload and allow the meet to run smoothly.

Typical responsibilities include:

- Ensuring deck officials (stroke, turn, heads-up) are in place both at the start of a session or during rotations
- Providing relief for officials
- Mentoring stroke and turn judges, particularly trainees or those new to the particular pool/meet
- Processing possible disqualifications
- Helping with any questions/issues that may arise with swimmers, timers, volunteers, etc. as directed by the Deck Referee



By filling these roles, the CJ allows the Deck Referee to focus on the pool.

A CJ is NOT:

- Another **Deck Referee**
 - Don't sign DQ slips
 - Don't argue with coaches, swimmers, parents
 - Another **Stroke & Turn Judge***
 - Don't raise your hand or make calls
 - Don't focus on the swimmers, observe your *officials*
- *The CJ can be asked to temporarily relieve a Stroke & Turn Judge if they need a break, need to talk to the Deck Referee, or need to fill out paper work.





the cj'S JOB

Processing possible disqualifications...vetting calls

During competition, the CJ should place themselves where they can observe the *officials* in their jurisdiction (not the swimmers).

When an official signals a possible DQ with a raised hand, the CJ moves to that official and 'vets the call'



- Confirm that the call is within the judge's jurisdiction
- Confirm that the disqualifying rule is appropriately understood and applied by the judge
- Ask any clarifying questions you need so that you can *visualize in your head* what the swimmer actually did. Examples: Which hand? How far from the wall? One time or many times? During the turn or the swim?
- Be prepared to answer questions from the Deck Referee
- Keep notes on your heat sheet if necessary.



the cj'S jOB

Processing possible disqualifications...informing swimmers

If a call is accepted by the Deck Referee, you may be asked to notify the swimmer or coach of the disqualification. Keep it simple: What rule was broken and when. Let the coaches and swimmers talk to each other about how to correct it. If they disagree, let them know they have the option to speak with the Deck Referee.



The CJ may also get calls made by the Deck Referee, including false starts. Those calls don't need to be vetted, but may still need to be written up and notified.

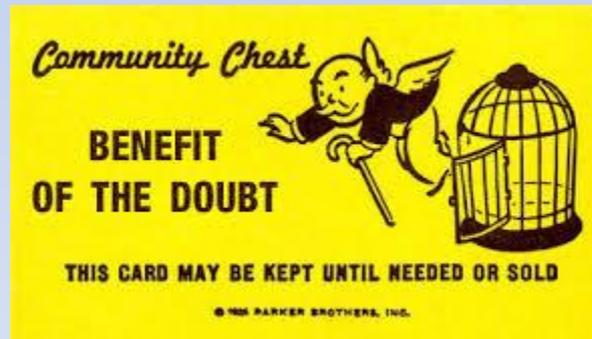


THE CJ'S JOB

Processing possible disqualifications...swimmer's advocate

Remember to be the swimmer's advocate. If the judge is unsure, or the call sounds questionable, don't hesitate to recommend a rejection or no-call.

Judges' feelings shouldn't be hurt. It happens to all of us, and we should collectively be pleased that the swimmer will be credited with a legal swim.



The swimmer always gets the benefit of the doubt!



the cj'S JOB

Communicating with the Deck Referee...

If radios are available: Find out from the Deck Referee if you are expected to closely follow a formal radio protocol?

- Possible disqualification, Heat 2, Lanes 1-4, turn end.
- Lane 3
- Heat 2, Lane 3, 1-hand touch at turn 1 of the breaststroke, recommend accept....



Or an abbreviated protocol?

- Possible disqualification, Lane 3, 1-hand touch at turn 1.

If radios aren't available: You will likely vet the call with the judge, write up the DQ slip, and bring it all the way to the Deck Referee...where he/she may or may not sign/accept it.



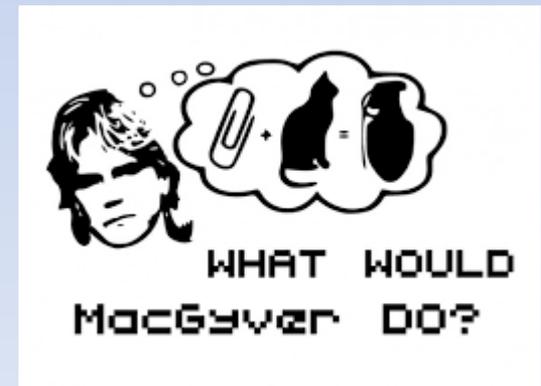


the cj'S jOB

Extra help on deck...

The Deck Referee may ask you to help in a variety of ways:

- Help organize swimmers behind the blocks
- Deliver/retrieve messages or paperwork to/from other officials (judges, other referees, admin)
- Help communicate/organize any on-the-fly judge assignments/changes
- Locate a coach
- Help sort out equipment or supplies issue





WHO SHOULD CJs BE?

Good candidates: Moderately experienced officials who...

- have a decent grasp of the rules and are willing to communicate with referees and judges.

Great candidates: Very experienced officials who...

- have a good grasp of the rules.
- can follow meet protocol.
- can vet, write up and notify possible disqualifications.
- can communicate clearly and succinctly with referees and judges.
- remain organized and calm.

Working as a CJ is good preparation for becoming a Deck Referee.



WHO SHOULD CJs BE?

AMS does not have an LSC level certification for Chief Judge, so any certified deck official can fill the role.

AMS officials are still eligible for evaluation and advancement to National certification as a CJ (N2 and N3), subject to normal National certification requirements:

<https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/officials/national-certification-and-evaluation>

Those interested in National certification as a CJ should look for opportunities to work in that position at LSC Championship meets.



WHEN SHOULD CJS BE USED?

In My Humble Opinion -

- At any meet that will have at least one experienced official available after reasonable deck coverage by Stroke and Turn Judges.



HOW IS CJ DIFFERENT AT A CHAMPIONSHIP MEET?

- There is typically a CJ Team Lead, and 3-6 additional CJs.
- CJs 'manage' the staff of judges, and ensure the deck is 'set' and ready for competition with minimal or no additional guidance from the Deck Referee(s).
- CJs have pre-meet and pre-session responsibilities: recruiting, communications, assignments, briefing materials and briefings, supplies, deck setup.
- During the meet, CJ's may handle paperwork besides just DQs (DFS, No-show, RTO, etc.).
- CJs have post-meet and post-session responsibilities: collecting documentation for admin, collecting/storing equipment, tracking attendance for deck officials, possibly providing feedback for judges' evaluations.
- *CJs often have a very long day (start early, finish late) and often work many or all sessions at a meet.*



RESOURCES

USA Swimming Profession Official: Stroke and Turn Judge

- <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/professional-official/the-stroke-and-turn-judge.pdf>

USA Swimming Profession Official: CJ

- <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/professional-official/the-chief-judge.pdf>