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APPLY FOR:

We have now implemented the Online Application to Officiate at National Championship meets! You can access the applications on the USA Swimming website.

[APPLICATIONS TO OFFICIATE](#)

Check out the new revised "Training Resources"

[The Professional Official:](#)

- Stroke and Turn
- Chief Judge
- Starter
- Deck Referee
- Administrative Referee

Are you aware that there have been updates made to the National Certification Program? Read the updated requirements [here](#).

Welcome to the August 2012 Officials Newsletter. The purpose of the Officials Newsletter is to provide a foundation that allows for direct on-going communication with each of you. Articles will cover the technical rules and interpretations, situations, application deadlines for upcoming meets, news from the officials committee, etc. If you have any feedback, comments, or suggestions for stories (or even want to submit an article), please e-mail us at officials@usaswimming.org.

Having completed our Summer Championship season, I want to thank each of you for your time, effort and the financial commitment to USA Swimming and our athletes. We couldn't do it without you.

Look forward to hearing from you.
Clark Hammond, National Officials Chair

Joanie Beisel Shares How She Wears Two Hats – As a Parent and as a National Official

In late June Elizabeth Beisel stood on the awards stand at Olympic Trials. She was the first woman athlete named to represent our country at the Olympic Games in London.

Her mother, Joanie, was in the stands. At this meet she had on her parent hat. What you may or may not know is that Joanie is also a USA Swimming National Official. During the meet, Joanie took a few minutes to share with us how she balances both roles. Click [here](#) to see her interview.

FROM THE INBOX - Responses by Dan McAllen

Often officials send their technical questions to the Rules & Regulations Committee for clarification. And since we often get repeats of the same question we thought it might be good to share them with you. If you have a question you would like answered, please forward it to officials@usaswimming.org.

QUESTION #1

What about the scenario where the Starter gives the "take your mark" command and all the swimmers come down and take a set position. Prior to the starting signal, a swimmer initiates a starting movement which the Starter sees but instead of standing the heat up, the Starter waits just a moment allowing that swimmer to reset prior to the starting signal. Surely this is not what we would like to see in this situation (prefer the Starter to stand the heat up). However, is this still a false start?

RESPONSE:

In the scenario you pose no false start occurs. As long as all of the swimmers, including the one who initiated a starting movement, are in a stationary position immediately prior to the starting signal, the start is legal. Often it is preferable for the starter to wait patiently for a swimmer to reset after an aborted starting attempt rather than immediately issuing a "stand" command. If the pause to reset is only momentary, the slight delay may be less disruptive than standing the swimmers and starting over again.

QUESTION #2

A swimmer in the 100 yard butterfly touched the wall with both hands simultaneously on turn 1. The swimmer then stood up and cleared her flooded goggles, turned, dropped down, and pushed off the wall on her breast. The Turn Judge raised his hand and wrote the DQ slip up as a violation of rule 102.22.5, which states that "Standing on the bottom during a freestyle race shall not disqualify a swimmer, but a swimmer must not leave the pool, or walk, or spring from the bottom. Standing on the bottom during any other race shall result in a disqualification."

The Deck Referee overturned the DQ, citing rule 101.3.4 which states "Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired." Which official made the correct call? These two rules in this case seem to be in direct opposition.

RESPONSE:

Only the butterfly rule contains the language that "once a legal touch has been made the swimmer may turn in any manner desired". This could include using the pool bottom if that is part of the turn. That interpretation covers all turns and all strokes. There is no logic to allowing the swimmer to "turn in any manner desired" for butterfly and not for the other strokes. The turn takes place at the wall where the turn rules and not the usual stroke rules apply. The turn extends from the time a legal touch is made until the swimmer pushes from the wall and commences to stroke again. Thus, the Deck Referee correctly applied rule 101.3.4 as all of the swimmer's activity clearing the goggles took place during the turn. Clearly, one cannot stand on the bottom after leaving the wall except in freestyle, because the swimmer would not be on the breast for butterfly and breaststroke, or on the back for backstroke as those stroke rules require. So, the two rules are not in conflict, as one deals with the turn and the other with the swim.

QUESTION #3

I have a question regarding the use of counters for the 400M free. Last weekend we hosted a SC Meter meet with the 400 free as one of our events. No one could find a ruling in the USA Swimming rule book regarding the use of counters for the event. It lists the 500/1000/1650 and the 800/1500, but nothing about a SCM set up. We assumed that since the 400M free was equivalent to the 500Y free that it would be OK for the kids to have counters. What is USA Swimming's stance here?

RESPONSE:

The shortest distance for which a counter is permitted under USA Swimming rules is 500 yards. Since 400 meters is the equivalent of 437 yards, technically it would not qualify for a counter. I wouldn't lose any sleep over this. I have seen counters used many times in the 400 meters by those who were unsure of the rule. "No harm no foul" is applicable when that occurs.