

## The “Professional” Stroke & Turn Official should:

1. **Read and be familiar with the “GUIDE TO OFFICIATING SWIMMING”** (the Stroke & Turn chapter in particular!) and “Lead/Lag Coverage for Stroke Judges” on the USA Swimming website
2. **Know the Rules** and the official interpretations
3. **Read and understand** the information in the Meet Announcement prior to the meet or session beginning
4. **Attend the Officials Briefing to:**
  - Sign-in on the assignment sheet
  - Review the technical rules
  - Listen to and review protocols for the meet
  - Listen to and review jurisdiction for the meet
  - Be given an assignment by the Meet Referee or the Chief Judge team
  - Cover relief rotation
  - Discuss any other specific instructions or duties for the meet
  - Meet team members, including the Chief Judge for your assigned location
5. **Develop your own “mental check list”** of things to do before, during and after the duty session

For example:

- **Before the session:**
  - Know when and where the stroke briefing will take place
  - Locate where officials should sign-in
  - Be prompt to the meeting and dress appropriately and professionally
  - Be attentive during the stroke briefing
  - Have a positive attitude regardless of the assignment
  - Turn off (or if absolutely necessary – mute) cell phone. If you will need access to your cell phone for a compelling reason during the meet, let the Meet Referee and Chief Judge know before the meet so that plans can be made.
  - Be ready and in position 5-10 minutes before the session starts or as requested by either the Meet Referee or Team Lead Chief Judge
- **Before each event:**
  - Visualize the stroke
  - Run through the rule requirements of a legal stroke and any transitions
  - Recall the best and recommended ways to observe the stroke and turns. Always use “benefit of doubt” observation protocol
  - Maintain your heat sheet out of sight (other than as required)
- **Before each race:**
  - Remain out of the visual line of sight of the timers and strobe at the start
  - Stand on the long whistle, next to the chair (if provided) for breaststroke and butterfly starts
  - Wrap around the end to observe backstroke starts if necessary and assigned
  - Stand in the correct location, 15m mark, flags, etc. if walking stroke
- **After the start:**
  - Walk briskly to the edge of the pool for breaststroke and butterfly if working the start end as a Turn Judge
  - Observe swimmers until they depart your jurisdiction (usually heads up)
  - Determine if all heads broke the surface prior to or at the controlling 15m mark, if walking stroke
  - Walk wall-to-wall, if possible, or as instructed
  - Give equal observation to all lanes in your jurisdiction, even the empty ones
  - Raise hand promptly to signal a possible disqualification, if an infraction is observed
  - Keep the hand raised until it is acknowledged by a Chief Judge or Referee
  - Do not discuss the infraction with another official or any other individual, including a coach, before reporting it to the designated official. (Don’t discuss it afterwards unless asked to by the Deck Referee)
  - Immediately communicate the lane number to the Chief Judge or Deck Referee (if a Turn Judge covering more than one lane or a Stroke Judge)
  - Visualize the infraction before communicating it to the Chief Judge or Deck Referee
  - Use rule book or DQ slip language to communicate the infraction
  - Answer the three questions with: 1) What I observed, 2) My jurisdiction, and 3) The rule violated

- Watch all lanes while reporting the disqualification, unless relieved by a reserve judge
- During relay exchanges, observe the toes departing from the platform and then look for the touching fingers
- Do not raise a hand for an early relay take-off when dual confirmation is being used
- Circle the lane and swimmer number on the take-off slip for a good exchange, and X for an early take-off
- Retract a call if there is any doubt, by simply stating, “No call”
- Check to make sure a disqualification slip has been written and documented properly before signing the slip

### **REMEMBER - BENEFIT OF DOUBT GOES TO THE SWIMMER – ALWAYS!!!**

#### • After each event:

- Reset to the correct position for the next stroke or event
- Transition between heats for relief; not during a race
- When being relieved note clock time and return promptly, as directed in the pre-session briefing
- Take a break OFF DECK or in the designated officials’ break area. Do not congregate with other officials on deck

#### 6. If assigned to invigilate controlled warm-up:

- Coordinate with the assigned partner to observe the pool and politely enforce compliance with warm-up rules
- Open pace lanes at the designated time and racing start lanes as requested (open additional sprint lanes if demand warrants). Coordinate with the Announcer and Marshalls
- Review deck set-up in general – Notify Meet Referee of deficiencies or safety issues

#### Other Important Stuff:

- Consider your “body language” when “on duty” and at all other times when you are accessible. Always assume you are “on camera!”
- Be alert, attentive, focused, calm, professional and approachable
- Always be “friendly” and helpful to coaches, swimmers, and other officials; even if they are not
- Avoid coaching, cheering or fraternizing with coaches or swimmers
- Questions should be directed to the appropriate official. Do not engage in discussions regarding a disqualification
- Take discussions and emotional issues off-deck
- Do not abuse your credentials. If you are not working the meet you are a spectator, and should act as such
- Maintain a sense of humor

#### And that’s just the tip of the iceberg!

#### Remember; Professional Stroke & Turn Officials:

- Make sure the **BENEFIT OF DOUBT GOES TO THE SWIMMER - ALWAYS**
- Adapt to meet conditions and needs and help out wherever requested
- Apply and use COMMON SENSE generously
- Don’t read more into the rules than is written
- Observe the swims but do not scrutinize
- Exhibit confidence, are competent, and are never imperious
- Dress professionally and neatly in the designated uniform
- Are willing to learn, and frequently work as a Stroke and Turn Judge
- Never take advantage of credentials to gain deck access when not working in an official capacity
- Self-evaluate after all shifts, sessions and meets and ask, “What can I do better?”
- Enjoy the volunteer work, and opportunity to work with coaches, officials, and most importantly, swimmers of all levels