

NASHVILLE SWIM LEAGUE

STROKE AND TURN OFFICIALS CLINIC

As officials, our responsibility is to provide fair and equitable conditions at swim competitions so that no swimmer has an unfair advantage over another.

1. One set of rules apply to all swimmers no matter the age or ability level.
2. Violations of a stroke and turn rule results in a disqualification of a swimmer. Therefore the swimmers always get the “benefit of the doubt”.
3. As a stroke and turn official, we do not judge “style”. We only determine if a swimmer conforms to the rules. “Ugly” does not mean illegal in inexperienced swimmers.
4. An official can only make disqualifications within his/her jurisdiction. Before the meet begins, the referee must meet with the stroke and turn officials and assign jurisdiction and their relay duties.
5. An official must be in position to make a call.
6. Give equal time to all lanes even though some lanes are empty. Be consistent and fair.
7. Disregard club affiliations and exercise good judgement.
8. Always look and act professionally.
9. Refrain from cheering – control your emotions.
10. Officials do not answer to parents and coaches.
11. No cell phones on deck please.
12. Admit a mistake when you are wrong or confused. The competitor’s welfare is more important than your ego.
13. Review the stroke rules BEFORE you step on the deck at your meet.
14. We are OBSERVERS only. We are not trying to find fault with the swimmer’s performance.

Disqualification Procedure

1. Upon observing an infraction within your jurisdiction you must raise your hand over your shoulder with an open palm. A relay take-off judge does not use this procedure. An early take-off is marked on a relay take-off slip with an X in the appropriate column.
2. The hand should be raised as a reflex to the observed infraction. Make decisions quickly and decisively.
3. Stay in position. Write up the disqualification on the DQ form when the swimmers are out of your jurisdiction. You need to report the event number, the heat, the lane and the violation. Use the appropriate notations – the infraction occurred at the start of the swim or the finish.
4. Sign the DQ slip under ‘official’ and note the DQ on your heat sheet.

5. Be prepared to answer “What is the rule and how was the rule violated?” “Were you in position?” and “Did this occur in your jurisdiction?” Ex of a referee question: “Which hand did not touch?”
6. Do not own the call. Do not take offense if your call is overturned. You did your job and the Referee must do his/her job.

After the Meet: Evaluate your performance –

1. Did I make the right calls and was I unbiased?
2. Should I have been more focused?
3. Did I socialize too much, get too distracted by your children, heat, rain, noise, etc.

Practice makes you better as in any endeavor. The more you officiate the more confident you will feel. Remember you are protecting the swimmer who conforms to the rules while providing the coach of an illegal swimmer the opportunity to correct the problem before the next meet.

Resources:

www.usaswimming.org

OFFICIAL’S BRIEFING

- Assignments
- Deck Protocol
- Special Information

BREASTSTROKE

- Start:** Forward Start
- Stroke:** Body kept on breast
Stroke cycle is one arm pull and one leg kick in that order
Simultaneous arm movement in same horizontal plane
Head must break surface at widest part of second pull
Recovery by the hands from the breast – on, under, or over the water
Elbows under water except last stroke before turn or finish
- Kick:** Simultaneous vertical and horizontal movements of the legs
Feet turned out during propulsive part of kick
No alternating, scissors or downward butterfly except a single butterfly kick is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull after the start and each turn which must be followed by a breaststroke kick
- Turns/Finish:** Shoulders at or past vertical toward the breast when feet leave the wall
Simultaneous two-hand touch at, above or below the water surface
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BACKSTROKE

- Start:** In water, facing start end of pool with both hands on gutter or starting grips
(a) guttered pool – feet/toes may be above the water, but may not be in, on, above lip, or bent over the gutter at any time before or after start
(b) flat wall pads – feet/toes may be placed above the water level
- Stroke:** Any style as long as swimmer remains on back
- Kick:** Must break the surface throughout the race except swimmer may be submerged after start and each turn not more than 15 meters where head must break the surface
- Turns:** During turn, swimmer may go past vertical to the breast and may utilize a continuous single or continuous simultaneous double arm pull to initiate the turn
Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall at completion of each length
Swimmer must have returned to back when feet leave the wall
- Finish:** May be completely submerged at the finish
Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back

FREESTYLE

- Start:** Forward Start
- Stroke:** Any style may be used
- Kick:** Must break the surface throughout the race except swimmer may be submerged after start and each turn not more than 15 meters where head must break the surface
- Turns/Finish:** Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall at completion of each length or required distance
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BUTTERFLY

- Start:** Forward Start
- Stroke:** Body kept on breast
Multiple kicks permitted but first arm pull must bring swimmer to the surface
May be submerged after start and each turn for not more than 15 meters where head must break surface.
Arms are brought forward over the water and pulled back simultaneously
- Kick:** Simultaneous up and down movement
No alternating, scissors or breaststroke kicking movements
- Turns/Finish:** Shoulders at or past vertical toward the breast when feet leave the wall
Simultaneous two-hand touch at, above or below the water surface
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INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

- Start:** Forward Start
- Stroke:** Rules for each stroke apply
May not swim in the style of the other three strokes during the freestyle leg
- Kick:** Rules for each stroke apply
- Turns/Finish:** Intermediate turns conform to turn rules for each stroke
Transition turns conform to finish rules for each stroke

RELAYS

Takeoffs: Swimmers feet/foot must remain in contact with the starting platform until the incoming swimmer has touched the finish wall or pad

JURISDICTION

Stroke Judge: Wall to wall – start to finish

Turn Judge: Start – from entry into water through completion of first arm stroke
Turn – Last stroke and kick prior to touch and through first arm stroke after the turn
Finish – Ensure completion conforms to finish rules

OR: **As assigned by the Referee who has full control and authority over all officials**