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USA Swimming Officials Newsletter

April 23, 2014

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TEST TAKERS! PLEASE NOTE!

The 2014 Rulebook will go into effect for testing on May 1, 2014. Tests will not be available from April 15-30, 2014.

APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR UPCOMING MEETS

- Arena Grand Prix Application - Santa Clara, Calif.
- Open Water Natl Champs - Castaic Lake, Calif.
- Summer Natl Champs - Irvine, Calif.
- Summer Junior Natl Champs - Irvine, Calif.

Click [here](#) to apply!

Welcome to the new e-newsletter for USA Swimming Officials. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a foundation that allows for direct on-going communication with each of you. We plan to have articles that 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.

I wanted to address something that was shared with me recently. I had an official share that he/she felt like a second class citizen within the USA Swimming family. He felt like he/she was only needed because it was necessary for the meet to be legal. I got the sense that he further thought that because most of the officials do not get paid for working that somehow we were second class citizens or that our role was somehow less because of it. Although I tried to see his view, I have to admit it has not been my experience and I hope it has not been yours either. I am not saying that this official's viewpoint does not have merit or he is not entitled to his feelings, I am sure others have felt this way at some point. What I am saying is that I have always had pride in what we do. I believe we are essential and are as professional if not more so, than officials who get paid (and who might not otherwise officiate unless they were!). I also know from those I have had the privilege working with that we bring value and benefit to our sport both for what we do as well as who we are as a group. So if you feel as my friend does or have any reservations as to your value to our sport, please call me so I can provide you with the many reasons why you are mistaken. As always, thanks again to everyone for what you do so our athletes are able to strive to reach their goals and dreams.

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I look forward to hearing from you.

Clark Hammond, National Officials Chair

COLLABORATE YOUR WAY TO A SOLUTION

No matter how experienced we are as officials, swim meets always seem to present us with a new situation. Everything from a “snow-maggadon” rolling-in during the last day of a championship meet to having more swimmers than you can accommodate during time trials. As a referee, you always want to find the best solution for the athletes.

Here are some problem-solving techniques you might want to consider:

BRAINSTORM with the senior officials at a meet. Have they ever had a situation like this? What do they see as potential solutions? Use this group to help you develop a few solutions that might work.

COLLABORATE WITH KEY COACHES. Take a walk around the deck and chat with key coaches. What input do they have? What do they think of your solutions? They always have the athlete’s best interest in mind and can provide you with a viewpoint that you might not have previously thought of.

USE YOUR CONTACT LIST. Call your official’s chair, a previous evaluator /mentor or a senior referee in your LSC to get their feedback.

DON’T FORGET THE OBVIOUS. Check with the facility, meet director, etc. Do they have any rules or procedures that will predicate how you handle the situation? Do they have the resources to implement your plan?

After you’ve had the chance to look at several solutions, use your fact-finding mission to help you narrow down to the best decision that works not only within the rules but also adheres to the meet program.

This process will be even more successful if you take the time before the meet to walk the deck and chat with or introduce yourself with coaches. If they know who you are ahead of time, they won’t be surprised if you show up looking for advice.

Finally, before you put your plan in place, don’t forget the importance communicating your plan. Will you need to have a coaches meeting? Are you prepared for the questions they might have? What do you need the announcer to communicate? Should you put something on the website? Or develop a flyer?

The next time you are presented with a new situation, collaborate your way to provide the best solution for our athletes.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KATHLEEN MORRIS SCANDARY ON RECEIVING THE MAXWELL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Volunteerism, commitment and dedication are just a few words that come to mind when speaking of Kathleen (Morris) Scandary, the Officials Chair of Colorado Swimming.

Kathleen started her officiating career 20 years ago, when her children were swimming with a seasonal team in Fort Collins; Kathleen, a swimmer herself, wanted to give back to the sport and also show support for her children. Volunteering as an official was her way of doing both.

As the Officials Chair for Colorado Swimming, Kathleen sees the potential of the officials under her tutelage and recognizes their strengths. She has helped several officials advance to the national level and Colorado has seen several officials on deck at Junior Nationals, Senior Nationals and Olympic Trials since Kathleen has been the Officials Chair.

Kathleen always has the best interest of the athletes in mind when officiating and has great respect for the coaches at any meet that she attends. She will provide fair and equitable competition for all swimmers no matter what the level of meet and always puts the athletes first.

In 2008, Kathleen was mentoring an official from another LSC and suggested they pursue officiating at the national level. It was an honor to see this same official that Kathleen mentored receive her gold whistle at the Junior National Championships last August in Irvine, Calif. and see the advice that was presented so many years ago come to fruition.

Life has thrown Kathleen some curve balls, but it has never dampened her determination and commitment to the sport of swimming. She will always be there for the officials, coaches and athletes.

HY-TEK CORNER

In January, there were some very useful new features added

to Meet Manager for Swimming 5.0:

- Official's names and email addresses can now be imported into the Official's Menu using a csv file exported from USA Swimming's Officials Tracking System.
- In the Relays Menu, an "Early Seed" column is added for convenience to mark those relays wishing to be seeded in an early session when there are two sessions setup for the event. Before you had to go to the Scratch Pad to select those relays desiring to swim in the early session.
- When pulling times from a timer, if you pull the same data from the timer for two consecutive heats, you will receive a warning message and will be given the option to proceed or not since in most cases this is a mistake.
- When merging results for the same meet from one computer's database to another computer's database, the Adjustment Status and DQ official's name did not come over in the merge and that is fixed.
- There is also a new option to sort the Meet Summary's DQ report by DQ code.

WITHIN THE RULES

By Dan McAllen
Chair, Rules & Regulations Committee

SWIM-OFF SITUATION:

In a prelims/finals LSC Championships two teams, A&B tie for 16th place in the 200 free relay. One of the relay swimmers on Team B also tied for eighth place in the 50 freestyle with swimmer C. Obviously, that tie required a swim-off also. Rule 105.5.2 grants the Team B relay swimmer another 45 minutes following the 200 free swim-off before competing in the second swim-off in the 50 free. Thinking creatively, the coaches agreed and proposed to the Referee rather than wait another 45 minutes to let the swimmer from Team B rest between swim-offs, the 50 free swim-off athlete would lead off the relay for Team B, and the relay would swim in lane four. The other swimmer involved in the 50 free swim-off was placed in lane three to go head-to-head against the leadoff swimmer on relay B. Relay A was seeded into lane five to go head-to-head with relay B in lane four. The Referee approved this procedure. Thus, two swim-offs involving two different events and two different distances were resolved in a single race. Legal?

ANSWER:

Absolutely legal. Rule 105.5.2 requirements were met. Rules are written permissively not proscriptively. Thus, unless the rule prohibits certain actions, they may be taken. While this resolution was somewhat unconventional, so was the situation that spawned the solution. The lesson here is that as long as all the coaches involved agreed on how the swim-off should be handled, the Referee should permit it. No one else has standing to object, because they are not involved or affected by the action taken. Kudos to all involved.

HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGIATE SWIM TIMES – HOW DOES USA SWIMMING TRACK THESE TIMES?

It's that time of year when many states are hosting high school championship meets and college conferences are competing in championships leading up to the NCAA Division I, II, and III national meets. The question often asked is: why are the times for these athletes shown as LSC-UN in the SWIMS database?

- First, the swimmers are not representing their club teams at the time of the swims; they are competing for organizations with different governing rules, and with eligibility requirements that have nothing to do with the club structure of USA Swimming.
- Meets held under the umbrella of a different governing body using different rules are “observed” meets if a request is made to the local LSC to include the times swum for USA Swimming usage. This means that USA Swimming officials are present at the meet, according to our rules and policies, to observe the competition and note any violations of USA Swimming technical rules. These violations are reported to the SWIMS Times Officer or designated official in the LSC.
- Once an observed meet is completed, each LSC, according to its policies, may load the times that are valid for USA Swimming use. High school meets are loaded by the LSC; NCAA meets are loaded directly from the host institution.
- During the high school and college seasons, athletes may represent their schools in scheduled competitions. In some states, the high school association may restrict the time a swimmer may practice with his/her club team and prohibit competition in club meets during the season. If a swimmer's time from an observed high school meet were to be credited to the club team, the athlete could lose eligibility for the school.
- For this reason, and in order to protect all our USA Swimming member high school swimmers, the times swum in these observed meets are credited to the athlete for swimming unattached in his/her LSC.

- Similarly, the times swum in NCAA competition that go into our database are shown as LSC-UN for member athletes. If a college meet is observed, the times will also go into the USA Swimming side of the SWIMS database. If a meet is not observed, the times will only show on the NCAA side of the database (secondary organization times).
- Times in the USA-S database for member athletes are eligible for records, for top times, for Scholastic All America and for use as entry times into any USA Swimming meet.

When the Virtual Club Championship program was initiated, Club Development worked with the Times and Recognition Committee to try and get credit for the club of record for high school swimmers. Given the differing policies and restrictions of state associations, this was not possible. Rather than permit club credit for high school swims in states where it was not an issue, the decision was made to maintain the same status for all swimmers—a good example of fairness across the board which is a cornerstone for programs sponsored by USA Swimming.