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USA Swimming Officials Newsletter

November 27, 2012

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Applications to Officiate

Hope you can join us at these upcoming meets:

- Austin Grand Prix - Click [here](#) to apply
- Orlando Grand Prix - Click [here](#) to apply

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Welcome to the Officials Newsletter. The purpose of this 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.

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

CAN A DECK REFEREE OVERTURN A CALL ONCE HE/SHE HAS ACCEPTED IT?

Dan McAllen, Rules & Regulations Chair, shares his thoughts in this video. Click [here](#) to view it!

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SANCTIONED, APPROVED AND OBSERVED SWIMS?

As we move into high school and college season, the question often arises as to whether a time can be entered into the SWIMS database. This summary is intended to help clarify the key differences between the various types of swims generating "official" USA Swimming times. More detailed information is available in USA Swimming Rules & Regulations (Article 202), in which requirements and conditions for

sanction, approved competitions and observed swims are defined.

SANCTIONED EVENT

- Meet must be conducted under USA Swimming technical and administrative rules.
- All times achieved will be recognized by USA Swimming.
- All participants must be registered members of USA Swimming (including meet host, meet director, safety director, marshals, coaches, officials [excluding timers], athletes, and participating clubs).
- Full insurance coverage is in effect (excess medical and general liability) for all registered members of USA Swimming. General liability coverage is in effect for the meet host and volunteers.

APPROVED COMPETITION

- Meet must be conducted under USA Swimming technical rules, including time resolutions (e.g., YMCA).
- A request must be made to the LSC within its parameters for Approval.
- All times achieved will be recognized by USA Swimming, although only times of USA Swimming members are eligible for incorporation into the SWIMS database.
- There are no requirements for membership in USA Swimming for participation in meet.
- Insurance: If hosted by a USA Swimming member club/organization, full insurance coverage is provided for all registered members of USA Swimming. General liability coverage is provided for the hosting entity. If hosted by a non-USA Swimming entity, full coverage is provided for the USA Swimming member coaches and athletes who are participating as a USA Swimming entity.

OBSERVED SWIM(S)

- Meet is conducted under other than USA Swimming technical rules (e.g., high school, NCAA, IPC).
- A request must be made to the LSC within its parameters for Observation.
- Only those times from swim(s) observed and approved by USA Swimming or YMCA appointed and certified officials acting as observers are recognized by USA Swimming. Only times of USA Swimming members are eligible for incorporation into the SWIMS database.
- There are no requirements for membership in USA Swimming for participation in meet.
- There is no medical or liability coverage for participants or host. Excess medical is provided to designated USA Swimming Observers only while observing swims on the LSC's behalf.

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 on Individual Medley:

A swimmer finishes the breaststroke leg, then turns and pushes off wall to start the freestyle leg. The swimmer takes a full underwater pull followed by a butterfly kick and breaststroke kick, assumes a streamline position, and then butterfly kicks to the surface where he begins swimming a conventional freestyle stroke. Is the underwater pull followed by a butterfly kick and breaststroke kick enough to judge the athlete as swimming breaststroke during the freestyle leg of the IM, which should result in a disqualification?

Answer:

The swimmer should not be disqualified. First, until the swimmer surfaces he is still considered in the turn and no judgment should be made as to the style in which he is swimming. Secondly, a single series of movements giving the appearance of breaststroke is insufficient to make the disqualification. Note: in this scenario the appearance of breaststroke was immediately interrupted when the swimmer butterfly kicked to the surface. In making a determination as to whether an athlete is swimming in the style of backstroke, butterfly, or breaststroke during the freestyle leg of the individual medley, the swimmer should be observed swimming in that style for a sufficient distance to leave no doubt as to the stroke being swum. One stroke or combined series of movements such as a breaststroke start is not sufficient to make that judgment. It would, however, put the official on notice to continue observing the athlete for a potential violation after a sufficient distance had been swum and all doubt had been eliminated.

Breaststroke during a Freestyle Race:

The freestyle rule states that except for starts and turns when a swimmer may be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards), some part of the swimmer must break the surface throughout the race. The legal breaststroke swimmer could be completely submerged for a brief period until the head breaks the surface during each stroke cycle. Does the head breaking the surface briefly during each breaststroke cycle satisfy the freestyle requirement that some part of the swimmer must break the surface throughout the race test, or should there be a freestyle disqualification?

Answer:

Swimming breaststroke during freestyle does not merit disqualification because the body may be completely submerged briefly during the cycle. The intent of the language in the freestyle rule requiring the swimmer to remain on the surface throughout the race is to prevent an athlete from swimming the race under water. Clearly, the legal breaststroke swimmer is not swimming underwater. If, however, the athlete performed multiple strokes underwater that should result in a freestyle disqualification.