

# VSI Officiating Update

No. 13

16 February 2008

## Congratulations Michael!

Michael Downs was selected to officiate at the 2008 USA-S Olympic Trials. Michael was one of 68 officials chosen from throughout the United States and the only one from Virginia Swimming. Congratulations Michael!

## It's Short Course Championship Season

We've already started our District Championships and Regional Championships are right around the corner (22-24 February). These meets are being hosted by CGBD, LY, and QDD. These meets are contested in a prelims and finals format for the 13 & over swimmers. This is the first introduction to this format for many swimmers and officials. Not only is this an opportunity for the swimmers to step up, it's also an opportunity for officials to step up as well. If you've never worked a championship level meet before, this is a perfect place to start. If you haven't done so already, please contact the officials' coordinator for the meet you'll be attending and volunteer now.

Senior Champs will be held 6-9 March at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. The meet has been designated as an Officials Qualifying Meet and evaluations will be available for advancement at the N2 and N3 levels. Peter and Rayleen Soderstrom from Southeastern Swimming will be joining us as National Evaluators.

Age Group Champs will be held 13-16 March at the Freedom Center in Manassas. The morning sessions will be run in two pools which means we'll have a big need for officials at all positions. We expect that this meet will also be designated as an Officials Qualifying meet.

Applications to officiate and request for evaluation forms for Senior Champs and Age Group Champs are available [here](#) on the VSI website.

## National Certification (N2/N3) Reminders

- Details of the N2 and N3 certification requirements can be found [here](#)

- If your national certifications expired 31 December 2007 you now have until 31 March 2008 to renew them without dropping a level in that position. Senior Champs and Age Group Champs will provide you with an opportunity to work an Officials Qualifying Meet if you need one.
- Obtaining a satisfactory evaluation and meeting all other requirements for certification does not automatically get you certification. Each official must apply for certification which is done using the [Officials Tracking System](#) on the USA Swimming website. Paper applications are no longer accepted and there is no longer a \$5.00 fee.

## Guiding Philosophy of Officiating

Developing a firm grasp and understanding of the rules is an important component of becoming a knowledgeable official. Equally important, however, is having a thorough grounding in the philosophy of officiating.

- The benefit of the doubt always goes to the swimmer
- Don't infer – call what you see, not what you don't see
- Don't anticipate
- Ugly isn't (necessarily) illegal

## Things to Remember as a Stroke & Turn Official When You've Observed a Potential Rules Violation

- Immediately and decisively (but not enthusiastically) raise one hand overhead on observing a violation that occurs within your jurisdiction
  - Keep your hand up long enough for it to be seen by the Chief Judge or Referee
  - If you don't immediately raise your hand you can't make the call
  - If you raise your hand you don't have to make the call if upon further thought you

realize that what you saw is not a violation of the rules

- Continue to observe all the swimmers within your jurisdiction – don't focus on writing the disqualification or speaking with the Chief Judge and forget the other swimmers in the pool
- Each infraction that you observe should be called
  - Don't assume that because you've already written up one violation that you can skip the next; the first might be overturned and the second might have been upheld had it been called
  - Don't assume that because you've seen a hand go up at the other end of the pool the swimmer has already been disqualified; it could be a different swimmer, a different violation, or a violation that is ultimately overturned
- For each infraction, be prepared to answer the following three questions:
  - What was your jurisdiction?
  - What did you see?
  - Which rule was violated?
- Use proper terminology when describing a rules infraction
  - As an example, it is not illegal to execute a flip turn when transitioning from butterfly to backstroke during the individual medley, but it is illegal to not finish on the breast during butterfly
- Admit it if you make a mistake
  - Don't penalize the swimmer for your mistake
  - Learn from your mistake

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## 2008 Rules & Regulations

USA-S has begun sending out the 2008 edition of the Rules & Regulations. Please remember that the new rule book is not effective until 15 May 2008.

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## Questions?

Do you have a question about officiating or a tip you'd like to share? Is there a rule that you'd like to

have clarified? Is there something that you'd like to see the Officials Committee do? Do you have a suggestion for a future item in this newsletter?

If so, please send your questions/comments to Kevin Hogan (Chair, VSI Officials Committee, [kevinhogan56@earthlink.net](mailto:kevinhogan56@earthlink.net)).

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## VSI Officials Committee Members

### Chairperson

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### Southeast District Co-Chairs

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### Southwest District Co-Chairs

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