

# VSI Officiating Update

No. #17

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## Registration & Certification – There’s a Difference!

To volunteer as a Referee, Starter, or Stroke & Turn Judge you must be a currently registered USA-S non-athlete member *and* be currently certified in that position.

To volunteer as a Timing Equipment Operator, Timing Judge, Recorder, or Clerk of Course you must be certified in that position. USA-S membership is highly recommended but not required.

So what’s the difference between registration and certification?

USA-S rule 202.3.3 states: “*All meet directors, referees, starters, and stroke and turn judges, serving in an official capacity in a sanctioned event, must be members of USA Swimming...*” You can register by submitting a completed “Non-Athlete Registration Application” and payment to Louise Limerick, the Registration Chair for VSI. You will then receive a registration card that is good from September 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009. If you have a 2008 registration card you can continue to use through the end of 2008 after which a 2009 card will be required.

Some clubs, with varying conditions, will pay the registration for officials associated with their club. Either the Registrar for the club or the Club Officials Chair may coordinate making sure that the forms are filled out and returned to Louis. In other cases, it may be the responsibility of the individual official. [Registration forms](#) are available on the VSI website (scroll down to the “Non-Athlete Registration” section).

USA-S rule 102.12.2 states: “*All officials acting in the capacity of Referee, Starter, or Stroke and/or Turn Judge at a swimming meet shall be certified in such position by their LSC prior to being assigned to officiate in that capacity.*” VSI provides training and certification in these positions, as well as clerk of course, timing equipment operator, timing judge, and recorder.

Certification in VSI is done on a calendar year basis. Everyone who is currently certified is certified through December 31, 2008, after which the certification expires. In order to officiate in 2009, you must renew your certification through 2009.

The recertification period for the upcoming year will begin on October 1 and end on December 31. You may recertify at any time during the recertification period, as long as they have fulfilled the recertification requirements. If you do not recertifying during this time period your certification expires until such time that you recertify.

## Referee Recertification

One of the requirements for recertifying as a Referee is to “*attend a Swimposium or Referee Clinic every two years, or pass recertification tests at the end of even numbered years.*”

If you attended the 2007 Swimposium you have already fulfilled this requirement. Attendance at the 2008 Swimposium (October 4) and/or the Referee Clinic on October 5 will satisfy this requirement. If you didn’t make the Swimposium in 2007 and can’t make either of these clinics, then the alternative will be to pass the recertification tests.

## Referee Clinic

In conjunction with the Swimposium we will hold a Referee Clinic on Sunday, October 5 at the Koger Center in Richmond. The clinic will run from 8 am until noon.

This clinic will serve as both a clinic for training Referees as well as a refresher clinic for currently certified Referees. You can register for the clinic using the [Swimposium Registration Form](#).

## Invisible on Deck

As part of your effort to get ready for the upcoming season now is probably a good time to take a look at your official’s attire with an eye towards whether or not it conveys a neat and professional appearance on deck. Neat and professional means that your clothes are wrinkle free, white shirts are white, and navy blue isn’t faded to light blue. Clothes that stand out for whatever reason also make you stand out, and as officials, we want to fade into the background.

While crisp and clean clothes are a start, they aren’t the end. A professional appearance is spoiled if your shorts and skirts are too short, or

your shirts that are tight fitting and/or revealing. And this applies to men as well as women (although men will call attention to themselves even if their skirt isn't too long).

Please remember that you should not wear anything on deck that makes you the focus of attention. Doing so not only makes it more difficult for you to convey a professional demeanor, but it draws attention towards yourself and away from the swimmers where it belongs.

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## VSI Official's Handbook

In case you missed it, the [VSI Official's Handbook](#) was revised this past May. The handbook contains a wealth of material on officiating in VSI. Among the topics covered are who's who, training guidelines, certification and recertification requirements, official's attire, working championship meets, professional conduct, and more. If you haven't seen it before, or it's been a while since you've read through, give it a read.

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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, [swim@embarqmail.com](mailto:swim@embarqmail.com)).

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