

USA SWIMMING DECK REFEREE & STARTER GUIDELINES

STARTER:

- A. Takes deck position which affords an optimal view of the starting field.
- B. Assists in checking starting field for correct number of athletes in proper lanes.
- C. Raises microphone upon hearing long whistle and awaits deck referee's outstretched arm
- D. When the starting field is ready says "Take Your Mark" in a calm, conversational tone.
- E. Completes the start only after all swimmers have assumed an observable stationary position.
- F. Notes all empty lanes and time of start on starter's record.
- G. Takes across the board finishes on starter's record.

DECK REFEREE:

- A. Signals "prepare to swim" with the series of short whistles.
- B. Checks starting field for correct number of athletes in proper lanes.
- C. Sounds long whistle indicating swimmers should take a position on the blocks, deck, or in the pool.
 - A second long whistle is required on backstroke starts indicating swimmers should take their starting position.
- D. Closes field and turns control of the swimmers over to the starter with an outstretched arm.
- E. Carefully observes the start, noting the lane(s) of any swimmers who were not stationary on the deck referee's record, and then focuses attention on the athletes during their swim.

FALSE START PROCEDURE:

- A. If the starter observes that a swimmer was not stationary at the starting signal, the race shall continue without recall, and the lane(s) of the offending athlete(s) circled by the starter on the starter's record.
- B. When appropriate, the starter should advise the deck referee of a "possible false start".
- C. If the deck referee agrees that there was a false start, the starter should show the circled lane number(s) to the deck referee without further discussion.
- D. When there is agreement on the noted lane(s) by the deck referee and the starter, the deck referee shall confirm the false start initiated by the starter and implement the meet protocol for handling disqualifications.

REMEMBER,

- A. NEVER:
 - a. Force a start by commencing a starting sequence before the athletes are ready
 - b. Keep athlete(s) on the blocks or in the water for an extended time prior to the start.
 - c. Congregate in the starting area when not working an event.
- B. ALWAYS:
 - a. Practice PATIENCE, PATIENCE, PATIENCE.
 - b. Use the word PLEASE when giving any command.
 - c. Be alert for requests from the deck referee
 - Especially notice to recall a heat.
 - d. Be conscious of any outside interference that might affect the start.
 - e. As the first starter / deck referee of the session, check starting blocks and operation / volume of starting system.
 - f. Be ready to step in for any official when requested.

