



USMS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP MEET REFEREE RESPONSIBILITIES

(Revised September 2014)

The Meet Referee must be a leader whose natural inclination is to serve in a leadership role in the sport of swimming. To serve others means to understand and be aware of the athletes, officials, coaches, and others in the sport. The Referee leads by example in showing respect, honesty, fairness, integrity and responsible behavior that characterize authentic sportsmanship. The Meet Referee will set the tone for the National Championship and determine how fast or slow the meet shall run. He/she will also set the stage for how professionally run the meet is perceived by those attending it.

The Meet Referee provides the example to the swimming community through his/her commitments to the sport of swimming and is committed to:

- ensuring the integrity of the sport and the profession of officiating
- conducting himself/herself with dignity and good humor, while ensuring fair and equitable conditions for the competition
- remaining impartial, while sustaining positive relationships and building trust in the swim community
- maintaining a current understanding of the rules and their applications
- fostering the growth in expertise of all officials through teaching and working with officials on the deck. The Referee is the primary leader and educator for both new and experienced officials.

Selection of Referee

When selecting a Meet Referee for a USMS National Championship meet, special attention should be given to qualifications:

- Experience working a large Championship Meet, e.g. USMS, USA Swimming, YMCA, NCAA, etc.
- Experience working USMS meets and familiarity with USMS rules and procedures
- Organizational skills including multitasking and people skills for interfacing with hundreds of swimmers, officials and volunteers.
- Certification as an N3 Referee by USA Swimming.
- Ability to work with the USMS Officials Chair and USA Swimming to ensure that an appropriate number of National Evaluators are present so that USMS Championships may be approved as a USA Swimming “Qualifying Meet” for N2 and N3 evaluation.

Final choice of the Meet Referee will be the responsibility of the Meet Director with input from the USMS Championship Committee Chair or Liaison and the approval of the USMS Officials Committee Chair.

Responsibilities

The Meet Referee has responsibilities before, during, and after the competition.

PRE-MEET

- Review and contribute to the meet information, as it is being developed, with particular attention to the clarity of the information. Any statements regarding procedures which conflict with rules, or may cause confusion, must be corrected prior to distribution.
- Obtain a copy of the final meet information for review. Know which USMS rules and procedures are applicable to the National Championship meet. The difference between a mediocre or poorly run meet and a highly successful one is usually found in the level of advance planning. If a Meet Referee pays attention to the details of preparation and is proactive, he or she will have a significant influence upon the success of the meet. Having studied the meet information in advance will enable you to intercept many situations and answer many questions.
- Work with the host, local LSC, LMSC, USMS Officials Committee Chair, and USMS Officials Committee liaison to recruit officials to staff the meet.
- Work with the USMS Officials Chair in creating an “Application to Officiate” to be posted on the USMS web pages by the USMS Officials Chair.
- Receive applications from officials wishing to work the meet.
- Review applications, along with recommendations from the Officials Committee Chair and/or Liaison, to identify candidates for the critical deck positions.
- Contact the meet director and coordinate any special requirements for the meet before the day of competition - i.e. a quiet room for officials briefings and a secure space for officials to leave any personal items during the meet.
- If the meet is to be held at an outdoor facility, discuss the possibility of providing shade for the officials and the need to provide water or another form of hydration for the officials.
- Obtain the USMS Sanction number from the meet host.
- Either the Meet Referee or the meet host will need to submit paperwork to the LSC Sanction Chair to have the meet Recognized for USA Observations.
- Obtain a copy of the meet contract, so that you are aware of provisions specifying what the meet host is contractually responsible for, relative to travel expenses, for the Meet Referee, Admin Referee, Head CJ and Head Starter.
- Discuss with the meet host the possibility of "comp" rooms or other forms of enticement that can be used to attract officials or Evaluators to your meet.
- Identify a sufficient number of N2/N3 Evaluators that will commit to working the meet.
- Submit paperwork to USA Swimming to have the meet classified as an OQM meet.
- Attend the pre-meet site visit by the Championship Committee Liaison if possible to discuss facility and equipment issues.
- Familiarize oneself with the facility’s inclement weather policies.
- Conduct a General Meeting covering matters pertinent to the operation and conduct of the meet for swimmers, coaches and officials, at a place and time specified in the meet information.
- Prior to the meet, submit an approximate count of officials to the meet host for credentials, parking and hospitality.
- Prior to the meet, submit to the meet host an approximate count of polo shirt sizes required for officials.
- Prior to the meet, communicate any information concerning room reservations for those officials being supplied housing by the meet host.
- Shortly before the meet, submit a list of key officials (Deck Referees, Starters, CJ's) as well as all committed Stroke and Turn judges and Evaluators to the Head Chief Judge so that they can prepare their deck assignment paperwork and roster sign in sheets.
- Identify any Officials who will be competing in the meet, so that they can be worked into the deck rotation as relief.
- Create an email list of all officials so that they can receive any important pre-meet

- communications or last minute changes.
- Provide regular status updates to the Officials Committee Chair and Liaison so that they can address any issue that may come up.
 - Provide the Rules Committee Chair or Liaison a count of Officials that will be working the meet so that they can supply a sufficient quantity of USMS mini-rule books.
 - Provide the Officials Committee Chair or Liaison with a count of Officials that will be working your meet so that they can supply a sufficient number of USMS Officials Pins and USMS vs. USA Difference cards.
 - Provide the meet host with a list of Officials that will be working the meet for inclusion in the Meet Program - ask the meet host for the program submission deadline.
 - Prior to the meet, create any Tax Letters with your signature, in case required by any officials.
 - Have the LSC Sanction Chair create a meet record in OTS and assign admin rights to the Meet Referee or his/her designate.
 - Obtain a copy of the USMS Officials Committee Stipend policy from either the Officials Committee Chair or their Liaison. Review it with them so you fully understand how it can be used to reimburse travel expenses for your officials.

NOTE: Host should provide radio headsets for the Meet referee, Admin referee, Timing System Operator, Deck referees, Chief judges, and facility manager along with extra batteries, DQ slips, etc. If multiple courses are used; a unique radio frequency should be selected for each course – or specify that all transmissions start with the pool designator – Odd Pool or Even Pool to avoid confusion.

DURING THE COMPETITION

The referee's attitude during the pre-meet briefing can establish a tone for the meet. He/She should assume complete control, but do so in a pleasant and confident manner.

On all days of competition the referee should arrive at least one hour or more prior to the meet start to adequately perform pre-meet responsibilities. Responsibilities include:

- Confer with the meet director; present a list of meet officials; inspect the facilities, with specific attention to any safety issues in the meet venue; review seeding and administrative procedures; bring any facility concerns to the attention of the Meet Director and Championship Committee Liaison.
- Conduct an officials meeting to introduce the key management team, deck officials, etc. and assign/instruct other officials in radio etiquette and general procedures to be used during the conduct of the meet.
- Conduct (or assign this to another official) a briefing of all officials covering the differences between USA Swimming and USMS rules and distribute a handout prepared by the USMS Officials Committee.
- Discuss operations procedures specific to USMS that can impact the timeline, e.g. allowances for older swimmers to exit the pool; use of dive over starts; specific course designations (Odd/Even); allowances for 'swim-through' lanes; lane numbering; specific instructions for relays and in-the-water-starts; procedures to address any medical emergencies that may occur in the field of play; policy for missed swims.
- Discuss swims being observed for inclusion in the USA Swimming SWIMS database.
- Establish necessary administrative and officiating procedures to conform to the USMS Rules and local conditions, e.g. when the events are starting from the both ends of a 50-meter course.
- Turn the meeting over to the Head CJ to deck assignments, setting of jurisdictions, rotation timing, relief procedures, DQ procedures, etc.

During the conduct of the meet the Meet Referee should entrust the actual operation of the meet to the Deck Referee and Administrative Referee. This will allow the Meet Referee to use his/her time to interface with the Meet Director and meet participants to make sure everything is running smoothly and to address any immediate problems.

POST-MEET

During the final Officials briefing; or during the final session of the meet; the Meet Referee should distribute USMS Vouchers to those officials he/she has determined qualify for reimbursement of some portion of their travel expenses.

The exact process of the distribution of reimbursements should be discussed with the Officials Committee Chair or Liaison to determine the best way to maximize the number of officials covered and the amount of money available.

After the last race has been completed, the referee must remain at the pool long enough to accomplish the following:

- Ensure that final results have been posted and announced
- Deal with any problems or protests.
- Evaluate the meet with the meet director
- Sign any referee/record documentation forms pertinent to the meet.

As soon as possible after the meet, the referee should:

- Compile a list of officials who worked the meet and in what position (needed for OTS)
- Go online and enter all the officials and sessions worked into OTS to close out the meet
- Follow up with OQM Evaluators to make sure all paper work has been completed and all officials who were evaluated received a copy of their evaluation and an opportunity to ask questions.
- Write an evaluation of the meet officials
- Summarize and document any issues from the meet relating to the officials and officiating
- Document recommendations for officials' assignments at future meets.

This information should be filed with the Meet Director and the USMS Officials Committee Chair to use as reference for the selection of future National Championship officials.