

THE REFEREE

By Originally by the late FL Swimming official Al Soltis updated and adapted: 5/21/2003

This article is written for all the Referees in Florida Gold Coast Swimming, It's purpose is to bring all of FG Officials to the same level of knowledge and attitude necessary to being a Meet Referee.

All meet hosts should strive to use the same guidelines when hosting meets. The following are rules, suggestions, ideas and thoughts that should keep us all headed in the same direction. Consistency is essential so that no matter where our swimmers and coaches compete, they have the same conditions of competition.

Following is part of a letter sent to all Florida Swimming clubs, from a former Officials Chairman. It refers to Meet Management prior to the Meet. and the capacity of the referee in working with them at that meet.

"First, your Meet Manager, and those that compose the Meet Information Letter, are referred to the USS Rule. 102.8. The rule sets specific limits as to what extent the Meet Referee may make a meet change.

- a. It does not allow for changes because of missed instructions or wording error.
- b. It does not allow for re-seeding due to a swimmer having been left off the heat sheet in error when the name is correctly entered on the Proof of Entry. That swimmer is then put in a vacant lane for that event or allowed to swim alone.
- c. It does not allow for a swimmer to be added or change events because a coach forgot to enter a swimmer or did, in fact enter them in the wrong event.
- d It does not allow canceling events for the sole purpose of having a session/sessions come under the 4-hour limit.
- e. The Proof of Entry, sent to the Host Club, checked by the referee, is the one and only guideline as to whether the swimmer is or is not entered correctly.

Simply put, The Meet Information Letter, the Proof of Entry and the Heat Sheet as printed, available to the referee at the start of the meet, are the tools that will be used for the referee to run the meet. "

Basically, if the error is made by the coach on entry, they must live with it. If the error is made by the Host club, then we must accommodate and correct the error.

In the capacity of being a Referee, sometimes we don't fully realize the responsibility that we accept when we say "Sure I'll referee your meet". By those words, you have just agreed to administer, coordinate, and adjudicate that meet. No matter how hard the Meet Manager has or has not worked for the weeks or months before the meet, you will be blamed for anything and everything that goes wrong at the meet. That is a pretty big responsibility and this article is intended to help you be Pro-active before and during the meet - instead of Re-active, because you did not anticipate or prepare for some happenings that do take place. -- Code Word is Always- BE PRO-ACTIVE.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF BEING A GOOD REFEREE

The Referee has the most influence on the consistency and the quality of officiating. The referee makes sure the rules are applied equitably and fairly. The referee sets the standard for officiating and greatly influences the atmosphere of the meet. The nervous, unprepared, excitable referee-- particularly one who is running around trying to do everything themselves- can make other officials , coaches and swimmers feel that the meet is not under control and that things can go wrong at anytime. A calm, confident and competent referee also imparts that feeling to those around them-- the whole meet reflects a secure. relaxed atmosphere where a swimmer can compete to their full potential without worrying about what's going on around him. This is most important at local meets where you have more inexperienced officials who look to the referee for leadership., Simply put - A swim meet reflects the "professionalism" of its referee. The knowledge and experience, preparation, and, most of all, the attitude.

As a Starter you were part of the team running the meet and had an opportunity to understand much of what it is to be a Referee. Each Referee will give you the same but sometimes diverse outlook and manner of being a good referee. As you accumulate this information, catalog it for your future reference. At times the information may seem disjointed. It will all fall in place when you have completed your apprenticeship and have had time to sort it out.

Finally, if you have any concerns or questions in your efforts to complete the tests or Apprenticing on deck, talk to the Officials Chair. The only stupid question is the one not asked.

FLORIDA GOLD COAST SWIMMING REFEREE GUIDELINES

The following items are Guidelines, as you advance to the position of being a Referee. As such they do not incorporate or contain all the nuances and information you will need. This document will not cover the vast assortment of rules and situations that you will eventually come to know and use in a meet. Your taking and passing the Referee and Administrative tests, your time on deck as an apprentice with Instructors, will give you the insight into being that person. As a Certified Referee you will constantly be learning as you gain experience. Take advantage and accept it.

As the Referee, you need to think of yourself as the “manager”—of your pool if you are the Deck Referee, and of the meet if you are the Meet Referee. You need to always be doing both your direct duties, and as well be observing and managing the other officials on the deck. A good referee uses every moment of their time to observe everything that is happening in the pool and on the deck. Is anything or anyone in the pool that could interfere with the swimmers? Are the timers doing their job? Are the officials in position and observant? Have any DQ’s been called? Is the equipment operating properly? Are the coaches happy with the way the meet is progressing?

In short it is your job to observe and manage everything at the pool to do with the fair running of the meet. Maintaining a calm disposition is important, but your job is not just to blow a whistle and raise your hand. You set the example for all of the officials on deck.

- Always have your copy of the USA Swimming Technical Rules, Rules Interpretations, Florida Gold Coast Swimming standing rules, and if Meet Referee, a copy of the Meet Information Letter. These items are to be used and followed without exception and referred to as needed.

- ❑ The rules are designed to provide a fair and equitable condition for all competitors. It is necessary that you enforce and interpret all applicable rules with total impartiality. A standard of ethics and demeanor dictates that you should assume a protective rather than a punitive attitude towards rule enforcement.
- ❑ Rules and their interpretations are established by the USA Swimming Rules Committee. That allows swimmers to compete under the same conditions, no matter where in USA Swimming they do compete.
- ❑ Continue to observe everything in and around the pool during the competition--immediately observe a raised hand for DQ or a situation that causes a problem for any swimmers.
- ❑ Observe the positioning and attention of the officials. Have the Deck Referee correct either if it is a problem. Get involved if you feel it is necessary.

BEFORE THE MEET:

- ❑ If you know in advance that you will be asked to be the Meet Referee for a particular meet, try and get involved in the development of the meet information letter. Your input may help avoid items that sneak their way into meet information that may be difficult to administer during the meet. Work with the Meet Manager or Meet Director as appropriate.
- ❑ If you were not involved with the development of the Meet Information, several weeks before the meet, contact the Meet Manager and get a copy of the Meet Information Letter. This is a must, since this is one of the tools for you to properly run that meet. Without it you are going blind and unknowing. Not a good idea.
- ❑ After studying the Letter, be sure you understand the wording and its intent. If there is any question or error noted by you, contact the Meet Manager to get any explanation or have it corrected before the meet. All Clubs must be notified if any changes are made prior to the meet.
- ❑ Determine what the host club is doing to solicit officials for the meet. Tell them you want the list of officials who will work the meet when you arrive for the meet. Do not accept a “If we build it, they will come” attitude. Do not assume that officials will show up for a meet. Ensure that you have the minimum required to run the meet prior to the first day of the meet. If there seems to be a problem with number of officials, ask an official from the host team to make calls. A phone listing for all officials can be obtained from the Officials Chairman.
- ❑ Several days before the meet starts, have the Meet Manager send or get a copy of the Psyche Sheets or Heat Sheets to you in time to look it over. This may be crunch time for Meet Management. How do the timelines look. Do you have any swimmers entered at 50.00 seconds in the 500 Free instead of 5:00.00....?
- ❑ Ask to see timelines for each session. Ensure that the computer operator is using a realistic time between heats for the timeline. It make no sense to publish a timeline that uses 5 seconds between heats just to make the timeline look reasonable.
- ❑ Review your USA Swimming Rule book, especially for any item or question that may arise from the Meet Information Letter or rules changes or questions being asked.

FIRST DAY OF THE MEET:

- ❑ Always dress in the proper uniform so that, as a Referee, you will portray a professional image. Keep in mind that you do or do not establish or add to that image each time you leave a meet. Your personal image is you, and the manner you carry out your duties as a Referee, and the knowledge you have to carry out that position.
- ❑ If you are the Meet Referee, arrive at the meet prior to warm-up. Check in with the Meet Manager. Keep in mind that as of this time you are now in charge and the only one to take care of any problems until the meet is over.
- ❑ Discuss with the Meet Manager any question or problems that may have been posed to them and you need to handle. Take care of this by giving your decisions on each problem and have them take care of notifying any coach or swimmer or host club staff. Always, any entry problems shall be resolved by the Proof of Entry Form or the electronic entry.
- ❑ Equipment check: Backstroke flags - water level - 15 meter lane ropes marked - PA system - starting blocks - (are they numbered right to left correctly?) -are they solid and not wobbly? - A reminder that incorrectly numbered blocks, left unchanged, can and do cause swimmers confusion and can result in wrong lane.. Don't leave this to chance- have block numbers changed, if necessary.
- ❑ Check to be sure block and turn end of pool are cordoned off for swimmers, officials and timers only. Cordon off the side of pool to give access to officials from end to end. It is sometimes necessary to place signs on the roping to identify the restricted areas.
- ❑ Check with the Timing Equipment Operator to determine if the system is ready to go. Do we need pads on both ends for 50 meter or splits? From the Scoring Room person determine the system for arriving at and posting results. Will the results, sent to FG tabulator have the splits for relays and individual swims? Coaches often ask about that fact. Be Ready.
- ❑ Ensure that all equipment is set up and checked early. Ask to be advised of any problems. Let the person responsible for setup and operation know that you expect the equipment to be tested and ready for and ON TIME START.
- ❑ Be sure that there is a table at the starting area for the deck referees and starters.
- ❑ Review your copy of the Meet Information Letter. Check the wording as it applies to the check-in times (being sure the sheets are out in time)- Warm-up schedule - Do we have 25 yd event in a SC or 50 meter event in a LC meet-(what end will we start these events?) What is the scratch rule?
- ❑ Identify and talk to the Marshal about monitoring the warm-up area before and during the meet. Make them aware of what and where you want them to monitor the pool and deck area. Any problems they cannot handle, they are to call on you to clear it up.
- ❑ Determine for future reference: Where and with whom are the Proof of Entries / electronic entries? Where is the check-in sheet to be available for swimmers? Where is the Award table? Where is and who will be the announcer? Where will the results be posted?

- ❑ Find out who the Head Timer for each session will be. Then talk to them and alert them to get their timers together for the Starters Instructions at least 15-20 minutes before the start of the meet. This would be a good time to have the Meet Mgr. line up runners to take Timing Equipment printouts to the Scoring room. Runners are very important.
- ❑ Have an official sign in form available, and ask all officials to sign in when they arrive. Study it to arrive at the assignment of your team. Remember the officials on deck in each spot will determine the quality of the meet for which you will be held responsible .
- ❑ In order for you to be available to solve problems and answer meet questions, it is best that you not be an on deck working official. Assign competent persons for the deck job and then you can " make yourself obsolete". Being obsolete means giving instructions so clear that they will not have to come to you for every little thing, only with the unusual.
- ❑ Have an officials meeting before each session. Give the group your general instructions for the meet and answer any rule questions or give any interpretations of rules. Review your list and make your assignments. Check for USA Swimming membership & certification, explain areas of jurisdiction, handling of DQ slips and any special instructions you feel are necessary for the meet.
- ❑ It is best, if possible, to have 2 deck referees and 2 starters, alternating with other duties. Make them aware of the pacing you wish for the meet- slow/fast - when next heat is to be called up, etc. It is important that your Deck Referees know what the Meet Information Letter says so they may abide by it. The matching of a Referee and Starter is most important because they must be able to work together and be compatible. It is a partnership with each acting as the "eyes and ears" for the other.
- ❑ Remind them that you do not want them setting a precedent. -"Remember the decisions made the first day of the meet establish a precedent for the rest of the meet." You also leave the swimmers with the feeling that it will be accepted at other meets as well. Consistency in your meet will lead to consistency in other meets. Strive for it.
- ❑ Have the Starters give instructions to the Timers at least 20 minutes before the start of the meet. Let the starters know if there is anything you want emphasized.
- ❑ A Chief Judge should be assigned, if possible, to monitor and check accuracy of DQ calls - to be sure the swimmer and/or coach is notified -and DQ slip is delivered to Deck Referee, or if the Chief Judge is a referee and is assigned to, he/she may sign off on DQ's.
- ❑ Assign S/T Judges in a manner you feel they have their best strength and knowledge. Also, use officials to balance the deck equally. Not all officials are equal in ability, attentiveness or experience.
- ❑ At this time, if you have any apprentice officials, assign them to instructors that you feel are the best at giving instructions and attention. This applies to apprentice Starters and Referees. The quality of their instructors will determine the quality of their instruction and the resulting quality of their ability to be good officials for you at a later meet.
- ❑ Arrange for any extra officials, if you're lucky, to give those on deck periodic breaks..
- ❑ Have it announced that a coaches meeting will be held, immediately after the pool is closed for warm-up. Several prior announcements usually are given.

- ❑ Have the announcer give a 5 minute warning and then clear the pool 5-10 minutes before the start or in accord with the meet information letter warm up schedule. This time is needed to get the officials and timers in place and to recheck the Timing Equipment. Host club may use this time for any greetings and/or the National Anthem.
- ❑ A Coaches Meeting is a must for all meets. Be aware that the coaches have a plan for their warm-up. The earlier you can set the time for the coaches meeting the easier it will be to get them to attend. Consider the last 10-15 minutes prior to the session as the time they most likely will be available. If it a “standard” type meet, (County BC , ABC) it can be very brief. You should have a the meeting prior to the first session and then only as needed at subsequent sessions. At some meets, the first session is primarily distance events and not all coaches may be present. If this is the case, hold a second meeting prior to the first session that all coaches will be present. It is an opportunity to explain briefly any item that you feel may be confusing from the Meet Letter. Explain the Relay card system to be used. Caution them that swimmers must be "Ready To Swim at the Starting Platform" when called. If a Championship meet- where is the scratch table and procedures. Alternates must be at the starting area and ready to swim when called. Any facility restrictions. Estimated time of finish for each session - approximate afternoon start time if they are, Timed Finals. Any problems (DQ -scoring-results-etc.) should be brought to you. Simply put - there should be no surprises in the meet after the coaches meeting. The meeting should establish a good rapport with the coaches.
- ❑ Check to see that all officials and the timing equipment are ready to go and then ---ON TIME – START THE MEET.
- ❑ ON TIME START – It will impress coaches, parents, swimmers and the media, if all equipment is checked, timers and officials are in place, and the swimmers are behind the blocks waiting for the clock to reach the designated starting time. It is the way you should strive to start each meet.

MEET HAS STARTED:

- ❑ Once the meet has started, concentrate on your key officials -Deck Referee and Starter to be sure they are pacing the heats as requested. Check the position of the Chief Judge to be sure they can view any and all DQ calls. Be sure the timers are alert fulfilling their role, and are seated for the start. A lax timer or timers can create tremendous problems. Good timers have a soothing effect for all.
- ❑ Have each Deck Referee and Starter use the same Heat Sheet for each session and it is to be passed on to the next team. Both Deck Referee and Starter should record order of finish. Note “No-Shows”. You never know when order of finish may be needed.
- ❑ Weather can be a problem at a meet. In some cases it is the facility manager or lifeguards will make a "stop meet call", but in all cases you can stop the meet at your discretion in case of dangerous weather. Check with Meet Management, so you will know your position if "lightning" or heavy rain does happen. Do not under any circumstances continue the meet or restart the meet if the weather does not meet your personal standard of “SAFE”.
- ❑ Photographers should not be allowed behind the blocks - Flash photos should not be taken at the start. Camcorder or camera parents should not interfere with the competition.

- ❑ The area behind the blocks should be clear of all except timers, officials and swimmers for that event. If the area is not clear, have the announcer or the starter PA system clear that area. The swimmers should not have any trouble getting to the blocks to compete. Help them.
- ❑ For other deck areas - is there free flow to go from one area of the deck to the other. Swimmers sometimes have it jammed up - Clear it up - It is a safety hazard and can be responsible for someone tripping or falling.
- ❑ Take care of any and all problems of DQ, timing, scoring, questions, etc. as soon as possible so the coach or swimmer will be put at ease.
- ❑ If necessary, privately and politely correct any official or meet personnel that you feel is not doing the job right. It will fall on your shoulders if a mistake is made and not corrected. If the official still does not do an adequate job, consider replacing them. You have to choose between an incompetent official and a bruised ego and what is best for the competitors. The situation is very rare but it does happen.
- ❑ Arrange for officials to have rest breaks and get on deck refreshments- coordinate the lunch break with the event schedule and the hospitality group. It is important that we make officials feel taken care of and not just left out there to do the job.
- ❑ If there is a disputed call, remember that the coaches are not angry with you but are arguing a point that they do not agree with. Listen and find out what they are saying and trying to relate to you. First, explain the official rule point. Then, agree to check with the official involved, if it is not yourself. Check the rule, if necessary, and then get back to them promptly with your explanation and final decision.
- ❑ If a parent approaches you with a complaint or question on a call, tell them to talk to their coach and have the coach come to express the complaint.
- ❑ In the event the coach is hostile or becomes hostile, cut off the conversation immediately. Tell them to come back when they can discuss it in a more calm manner. If necessary, ask the coach to accompany you to a more private area where a less passionate discussion will be held. Do not allow yourself to get angry or be drawn into an argument.
- ❑ Disciplinary action for unsportsmanlike conduct is at the discretion of the referee. Although, it is rare, when it is needed, use common sense and logic. Whether- it is a swimmer, a coach or a parent. Your word will be final

MEET CONSIDERATIONS

- ❑ Starting procedures (pacing of the meet), should be the same as given at the coaches meeting.
- ❑ Do not get caught up in the calling up of a late swimmer- if you do then you must continue doing it for the remainder of the meet. If you don't continue, you will be reminded by a coach, and asked "Why not"?
- ❑ DQ calls must be recorded by S/T Judge and recorded and signed by the Deck Referee or Chief Judge if given that authority, before being sent to the scoring room.

- ❑ Have all officials work various positions, within their certification, during the meet. It will keep them sharp in all positions and allows for a diverse experience at the meet.
- ❑ A Meet Committee is appointed for Championship meets and it has limited authority- None of which can overturn the Head Referee final decision. Judgment calls of officials cannot be a subject for a Protest. Read it to be comfortable with your total authority. That authority requires you to have all the proper knowledge, experience and attitude to take the total responsibility.
- ❑ The Protest procedure, should be reviewed, although they are very rare, must be handled properly.
- ❑ Remind all officials - No small talk on headsets. It gets out of hand sometimes and may be misinterpreted by coaches. Caution officials that after a DQ call, their actions sometimes can be read as making fun of the swimmer if there is any inadvertent kidding or joking at that time.
- ❑ Caution all officials that when they notify a swimmer of a DQ, or explain a DQ to a Referee or Chief Judge. that they do not use body language or hand motion. Verbalize it, because a coach watching can misinterpret their motions as being not consistent with the DQ call or the explanation.
- ❑ DQ calls or other happenings on the deck should not be discussed by officials away from the deck, especially in the hospitality room.
- ❑ At no time should DQ calls or other meet problems be discussed by officials over the headsets. A DQ call, good or bad, should not be discussed between officials over headsets. This does not mean that the Head S/T or Referee cannot ask an official to repeat or make more clear a call they have made. All officials should use the language of the rule book or from the DQ slip so that it will be readily understood by all.
- ❑ At no time should one official call attention for another official to observe whether the swimmer is doing the stroke correctly. Each official shall make their own calls or non calls based on their own knowledge and judgment.

As we are all aware, a well run meet is a compliment to the referee and a real satisfaction. A meet that has a few glitches or problems, is not any less a satisfaction. A quote from Anneliese Eggert, former National Officials Chairman.

"Handling protests or complaints is the area where all of your knowledge experience judgment and attitude come together. Knowledge and experience give you the basis for making your judgment. Attitude allows you to render that -judgment without making everybody even madder than they already were!"

Conclusion: Becoming a Referee is a rewarding experience. It is not a power trip. You are the leader of a team. As the leader, you set the example for your team members. Your knowledge, commitment, and involvement brings out the best in your entire team. The best Referees are the leader of a team that just “Blends in with the scenery” and is not the focus of the competition. You can be that leader. Good luck!

Below are a few documents that will help you as a Meet Referee.

USA Swimming

March 15, 1999

Recommended Stroke & Turn Jurisdictions

BACKSTROKE

- Turn Judge
- Turning action must be continuous
 - Full jurisdiction inside backstroke flags
 - On back until touch at finish and at end of backstroke leg in IM and Medley Relay
 - May be assigned to watch feet after start
- Stroke Judge
- Between the flags, swimmer remains on back
 - No pulling on lane lines or pool edge
 - Head must break surface by 15 meter mark
 - Judge walks between 15 meter marks

BREASTSTROKE

- Turn Judge
- At start/leaving on turns
 - Stroke/kick through first "head up" including widest arc of second arm pull
 - Arms on same horizontal plane from beginning of the first arm pull
 - On entering a turn/finish
 - Last stroke in - head breaking surface
 - Elbows under water, except last stroke at turn during turn, and at finish
 - After last pull arms need not be on same plane
 - Simultaneous hand touch
 - Proper stroke-kick cycle into turn/finish
- Stroke Judge
- Kick and stroke after head breaks surface through next to last stroke into the wall
 - Responsible for kick all the way into the wall
 - Elbows under water during recovery phase

BUTTERFLY

- Turn Judge
- Kick through first arm pull
 - On Breast on first arm pull
 - On entering a turn/finish
 - Last stroke in (underwater recovery)
 - After last stroke shoulders need not be level until touch
 - Simultaneous hand touch
- Stroke Judge
- Kick and stroke after first armstroke through next to last stroke into the wall
 - Kick all the way into the wall at turn/finish
 - 15 meter heads up mark

FREESTYLE

- Turn Judge
- Full jurisdiction, observe turns/touches and 15 meter heads up mark
- Stroke Judge
- May be assigned the recall rope and 15 meter heads up mark

GUIDELINES FOR THE POSITION OF THE TURN JUDGE WITHIN THEIR JURISDICTION

The National Officials Committee has had many inquiries about a preferred or suggested practice of observing turns. Because the Committee has always had the goal of improving consistency from LSC to LSC, the following procedures have been determined. The end result was achieved by polling the Committee members and arriving at a compromise that should satisfy most needs. These procedures may not coincide with what your LSC currently practices but the Committee feels that some aspects are universal with all LSC's. We ask that this recommendation be discussed and shared with others so that some common ground will be established that will work in your LSC.

So to answer the question "Where should I stand to observe the swimmers in my jurisdiction?" you must begin with the basic general answer to "position yourself where you can best see what you have to for the stroke that you are observing." The question as to how much you should move after finding that position is much more complicated. The following should be taken into consideration:

1. If you are watching one or two lanes, you shouldn't have to move at all. The preferred position is over the swimmer if observing one, or over the lane line between two swimmers.
2. If you are watching three, four or five *(see note) lanes, and there are NO obstructions between them, you may have to change position slightly to uniformly observe all lanes, but note the word "observe". You must maintain a calm observant posture on the deck even when changing positions. Running from lane to lane imparts a frantic attitude and creates the perception that you are looking for an infraction rather than just 'observing' the swim. The preferred position would be in the middle and slowly move to one side or another for the observation. In freestyle events, the preferred position might be outside of lane 1 or lane 6/8/10 for each half of the pool.
3. If you are watching three, four or five *(see note) lanes and there are obstructions between them, i.e. starting platforms, diving board standards, etc., you would be better off finding the optimum position to observe the lanes within your jurisdiction and remaining there. Moving around obstructions distracts your attention from the pool and can lead to inconsistent calls.
4. Outdoor pools can present even more variable conditions, such as the sun glaring on the water. Your positioning then goes back to the basic rule of standing where you can best observe the swims in your jurisdiction, changing the position as physical conditions (such as glare) change.
5. The Meet Referee may modify the jurisdictions as outlined above, allowing movement of the official, given the lay out of the facilities, obstacles preventing proper observation, weather, lighting, sunlight, etc.

*NOTE - It is important to understand that observing 5 lanes is not recommended but when a 10 lane pool is being used and staffing is short, there may not be a choice. Alternative coverage may want to be established and the use of a judge on 5 lanes should be a last resort.

There is no "black and white" answer to the question of movement within your jurisdiction. The decision to remain in place or move should be discussed with the referee of the meet with the ultimate objective of maintaining a calm observant demeanor on the deck while providing uniform conditions of competition. To provide consistent and equitable conditions, the Meet Referee should follow the LSC approved practices that have been determined by using these guidelines and implemented procedures that follow the rules of observing, not scrutinizing the swims.

Recommended Stroke Briefing

BREASTSTROKE:

- At the start of the race, the swimmer **may** take one arm pull and one leg kick, in that order, while completely submerged (rules comm. interpretation). The head must break the surface of the water by the time the arms have reached the widest part of the second arm pull.
- From the beginning of the first arm stroke, the body **shall** be kept on the breast, and the **arms shall** be in the same horizontal plane.
- The **arms** must move in the same horizontal plane with no alternating movement, but the position of the **shoulders** is **irrelevant** (rules comm. Interpretation)
- The recovery movement may be made at, above or below the water surface, but the hands must be pushed forward from the breast.
- The elbows must stay in contact with the water during the **recovery** phase of the arm stroke throughout the race except for the last stroke before each turn, during the turn, and at the finish (rules comm. interpretation).
- The only time the hands may be brought back beyond the hipline is during the first arm pull after the start and each turn.
- All vertical and lateral motion of the legs shall be simultaneous
- The position of the toes is key to judging the breaststroke kick. If the toes are pointed out during the propulsive part of the kick, it is a legal breaststroke kick. If the feet are dropping with the toes still turned in while the knees are pulling up during the recovery, it is legal.
- There shall be no scissors, flutter or downward butterfly kick. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is not a disqualification unless accompanied by a downward butterfly kick.
- At the turns and the finish, a two hand simultaneous touch is required.
- After the final pull into the wall at the turns and the finish the arms no longer need to be in the same horizontal plane. However, the shoulders do have to be at or past the vertical towards the breast when the feet leave the wall at each turn and at the finish.

BUTTERFLY:

- After the start and each turn, the swimmer's shoulders **shall** be at or past vertical towards the breast.
- The swimmer may take as many kicks as they want but when they begin their first arm pull the body must be **on the breast** and that first arm pull must bring them to the surface of the water.
- The head must break the surface of the water by the 15-M mark and some part of the body must remain on the water surface throughout the swim, except the first 15-M after each turn.
- During the swim, the arms must recover simultaneously over the water surface.
- All movements of the legs and feet shall be simultaneous. There shall be no alternating, scissors or breaststroke kick.
- At the turns and the finish, there shall be a two hand simultaneous touch (rules comm. interpretation).
- After the final pull into the wall at turns and finish, the shoulders do not have to be horizontal.
- There shall be no underwater recovery.

BACKSTROKE:

- Immediately following the start, standing in or curling the toes over the lip of the gutter is not permitted (rules comm. interpretation).
- The swimmer **must** be at or past the vertical towards the back during the swim.
- The head must break the surface of the water by the 15-M and some part of the body must remain on the water surface throughout the swim, except for the first 15-M after each turn and at the finish.
- At each turn, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall.
- The swimmer **may** turn past the vertical towards the breast, at which time they **may** execute a single or simultaneous double arm pull, which may be used to execute the turn.
- Once a swimmer has left their position on the back, any kick or arm pull must be part of the continuous turning action.
- The swimmer **must** be past vertical towards the back when the feet leave the wall after each turn and **must** touch the wall at the finish while on the back.

FREESTYLE:

- The swimmer may choose to swim any style they want but their head must break the surface of the water by the 15-M mark.
- Some part of the body must remain on the water surface throughout the race except for the first 15-m after each turn (rules comm. Interpretation)
- Some part of the swimmer's body **must** touch the wall at the end of each length of the swim.

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY/MEDLEY RELAY:

- The Individual Medley is swum in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, and Freestyle. Freestyle is to be done in any stroke other than the previous three (rules comm. interpretation).
- The Medley Relay is swum in the following order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle.
- Each leg of the race **shall** be judged by the rules pertaining to that stroke and each transition shall conform to the **finish** rules of that stroke.

RELAY TAKE-OFFS:

- Watch the feet of the swimmer on the block. When the feet of the swimmer on the block leave the starting platform, look down to the pool to see if the incoming swimmer has touched the wall. If so, the exchange is good.
- In recording your observation, an O indicates a good take off and an X represents an early take-off. Do not raise your hand for an early take off when doing dual confirmation take-off judging until after the confirmation of an early take-off by both judges

