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The Newsletter

(Published Quarterly)

Communicates with the Swimming Officials of:
Georgia Swimming Inc.

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Rob Schreer

Officials' Committee Chair

Georgia Swimming's mission is to provide a program designed to encourage Georgia athletes to pursue opportunities available through competitive swimming and to educate organizations of the benefits of Georgia Swimming.

Georgia Swimming's vision is to increase opportunity, recognition and growth in competitive swimming.

NOTE FROM ROB

Seen and Heard on Deck

from Kingsland to Dalton and at pools in between

December 2011

"I never knew volunteering could be so expensive." Yes, volunteering as a USA Swimming (USA-S) official is a little pricey but some of your expenses can be recouped at tax time. USA-S and Georgia Swimming are qualified organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. When attending meets home and away you are entitled to take some reasonable deduction for such things as mileage, purchase of uniforms and equipment, lodging expenses and there may be others. So start keeping records. Check with your attorney or tax preparer to ensure you take maximum benefit of your volunteer expenses.

"Why must I complete my apprenticeship at Georgia meets only?" A quick answer would be to say "our Certification Procedures say that is how it is to be done"; and you wouldn't think that was a good answer at all. We believe that we have a very good training program and we hold Georgia Officials to a high standard. Other LSC's across the U.S. share in that feeling because we are repeatedly asked to share our S&T Home School program with them. To the untrained eye it appears that all swim officials do it the same. Not so. We tell you to observe athletes swimming and not to be a stroke inspector nor to look for violations. There is a big difference there, and that difference is not obvious to the casual observer. There are literally thousands of little things that we do different that make a big difference. We want our officials to look like officials when they are on deck. Your appearance. Your posture. Your position on deck. Your demeanor. These are all important aspects of an official. Walking around in cut off jeans, flip flops or barefooted; standing around with your hands in your pockets or arms crossed across your chest do not portray the professionalism that is expected of an official. If you are trained in Georgia, we expect you to complete your apprenticeship in Georgia gaining experience and knowledge from other Georgia trained officials.

Welcome to two new Officials Committee members. The committee announces the addition of Bruce Adams and Kathleen Schmaltz. Bruce will be focusing on the meet sanction process and officials certification working with Pete Junkins. Kathleen brings a wealth of educational background to the committee and years of experience working with both large clubs (RAYS) and small clubs (ABSC).

See you on deck,

Rob

GEORGIA SWIMMING NEWS

SAVE THE DATE: The 2012 Georgia LSC Spring Meeting is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, April 14-15, 2012. All are invited, particularly athletes! See how the LSC works, join in at the Officials' Committee Meeting, participate at the Age Group or Senior Meetings, and find out what Technical Planning is all about. Of note: Officials' Committee Meeting will be Saturday Morning. Georgia Swimming House of Delegates Meeting is Sunday morning. The All-Star Banquet will be held April 15 at the Georgia Aquarium. Hope to see you there!

HOT TOPICS:

- Effective January 1st **YOU MUST** present your 2012 USA-S Membership card at meets. Officials who procrastinated past December 31st to renew their membership can no longer walk up on January 1st or later, complete a renewal application, and pay their 2012 fees and work on deck.
- Recruit, Recruit, Recruit, **Recruit new officials!**
You recruit 'em and Steve will get Bobbie, Bruce, Carl, Dave, Ed, or Gary, George, Glenda, Gregg, Jeff, or Kathleen, Neal, Pete, Phil, Ralph, or Rob to train 'em.

Ready? GO RECRUITIN'

2012 OFFICIALS TRAINING CLINICS SCHEDULE

Following is a schedule of training clinics anticipated. Others may be added as required by interest.

REFEREE and STARTER:

Bi-annually, April & September, in conjunction with the LSC HOD meeting

- April 14 or 21, 2012, Location TBD

STROKE & TURN JUDGE:

Home School Program (HSP)

Open schedule based on participant's completion of HSP

Conducted at swim meet that participant is attending

- February 25, 2012, AG SC Championship, Atlanta, GA
- April 21, 2012, location TBD

Full Clinics (No Pre-Study Required)

5-day advance pre-registration required to assure training material availability)

Tri-annually (October, February, June), Minimum 5 attendees.

- April 22, 2012, location TBD

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL/CLERK OF COURSE:

Quarterly (March, June, September, December*), Minimum 5 attendees

- March 17, 2012, Location TBD
- April 21, 2012, Location TBD

AUTOMATIC TIMING EQUIPMENT OPERATOR:

Open schedule depending on interest.

Conducted at swim meet that participant and trainer are attending.

Contact Steve Drew (sdrew@imagecounts.us) for more information.

NEW AND IMPROVED

Congratulations to the following officials who have advanced to a new certification level:

Referee:	Gloria Davis	(DYNA)	Kelly Peterson	(GOLD)
Starter:	Florence Bordes	(DYNA)	Jim Schmid	(SCAT)
	Mike Sampsell	(LINS)		

And to the following NEW officials who have been certified in Georgia Swimming during the 4th quarter of 2011:

Administrator	Laura Deal	(ASL)	Tracy Yuen	(GOLD)
	Angela Franklin	(RAYS)		

Stroke & Turn:	Mike Aziz	(SA)	Andy Miller	(RAYS)
	Cheryl Ballard	(GOLD)	Alpara Mistry	(ABSC)
	Diane Bekemeyer	(SA)	Martha Peribonio	(SA)
	Scott Bertschi	(UATT)	Mark Petersen	(ABSC)
	Jonathan Brewster	(GIST)	Jeff Phillips	(UATT)
	Mike Davis	(GOLD)	Karen Poteat	(ASL)
	Paula Diamond	(CCAC)	Roland Regan	(SA)
	Anita Harrill	(BOOM)	Bart Smith	(SA)
	Eileen Hemmati	(RAYS)	Betsy Trively	(GOLD)
	Shami Jones	(ABSC)	Dane Ulett	(SA)

FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN ADVANCING TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Check out the Georgia Swimming Certification and Re-Certification Procedures approved April 16, 2011:
<http://gaofficials.webexone.com/r.asp?a=5&id=138188>

MY EXPERIENCE AT THE WINTER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS, DECEMBER 1-3, 2011

USA swimming decided to bring the 2011 AT&T Winter National Championships to Georgia Tech, so I thought I'd learn a little about Nats, and submitted an application to work. Lo and behold, my application was accepted, and I was able to work a total of 6 meet sessions, and 3 time trials. However, I did not learn a little, I learned a LOT! I also made some great friendships with officials from other parts of the US. I'll get to renew these friendships as I work meets throughout the US.

I'd encourage anyone that has the opportunity to work a national meet! The experience is well worth while (and the new friendships don't hurt either).



Also pictured are Georgia officials, Julie Allen, Randy Hart, and Ed Saltzman

Neal McKinney



Georgia Swimming Officials pictured are Julie Allen, Keith Dukes, Jeannette Hart, Randy Hart, Stu Hixon, Doug Kintz, Glenda Orth, Peter Soderstrom, and Rayleen Soderstrom.

DUAL IN THE POOL HOSTED AT GEORGIA TECH DECEMBER 16-17

To see the amazing transformation for Duel in the Pool of the 1996 Olympic pool at Georgia Tech, check out the time-lapse photography at the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AnjYUp4p9Jk&feature=youtu.be>

The long term benefit to Georgia Swimming's athletes is the purchase of track start blocks (by the Georgia Tech Athletic Association and Campus Recreation Center) like those used at 2011 Jr and Sr Nationals at Stanford University in Palo Alto, CA.

UPCOMING OFFICIALS' QUALIFYING MEETS

Following is a listing of local, not so local, and national meets that are upcoming in 2012:

LarsonAllen Invitational	1/13-15 Charlotte, NC	contact: Chris Kitchens, cjkitchens@gmail.com
SZES Senior Championships	3/8-11 Greensboro, NC	deadline 2/1/12, Dave Olack, MR
SZES Age Group Championships	3/15-18 Greensboro, NC	contact: Jon Fox, jfoxswim@gmail.com
Charlotte UltraSwim	5/10-13 Charlotte, NC	deadline 4/1/12, John Wilson, MR
GCST 2012 "Trials Qualifier" (FINA)	5/11-13 Ft Myers, FL	contact: Mark McCaw, mm2886@comcast.net
SZES LC Senior Championships	7/12-15 Greensboro, NC	contact Gloria Schuldt, schuldt@earthlink.net

More information is available at <http://www.teamunify.com/TabGeneric.jsp?tabid=43797&team=szlsc>
To apply for SZES Championship meets, contact Gloria Schuldt, Southern Zone Officials Chair at schuldt@earthlink.net

SITUATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Closing the Heat

**by Dan McAllen, Chair, USA Swimming Rules & Regulations Committee,
and John Wilson, USA Swimming and NCAA, Starter and Referee**

For some period of time we taught our Deck Referees and Starters that once a heat was whistled up on the starting blocks, and the Deck Referee extended the arm to turn the field over to the Starter, the heat was closed and any swimmer getting on the starting block after that time should be disqualified for Delay of Meet. There was, however, nothing in the rule book requiring the disqualification. To be honest, the extended arm was a simple and convenient answer to the question "When does the heat Close"?

Experience has taught that closing the heat is not as simple as an extended arm. To disqualify the late arriving swimmer just because the arm has been extended without conducting an investigation as to the cause might well result in a serious injustice. Consider (1) the swimmer who was given erroneous information by a lane timer; (2) the swimmer who had a swimsuit issue; (3) or the swimmer who was a victim of a fast whistle and arm by a Deck Referee who failed to look carefully and didn't notice the swimmer making his/her way to the blocks. To disqualify any of these athletes for Delay of Meet because they stepped up after the arm was extended would not be correct.

Best practice dictates that anytime a swimmer steps onto the blocks after the Referee's arm has been extended, the heat should be stepped down and the Referee should go to the lane of the late arriving swimmer and determine the cause. If in the opinion of the Deck Referee the cause is legitimate the athlete should be allowed to swim. On the other hand, if the delay was due to the athlete's inattention, voluntary diversion (I was talking to my girlfriend), or other excuse unacceptable to the Deck Referee application of the Delay of Meet penalty would be appropriate. Obviously, if the Deck Referee recognizes his/her own error in whistling and extending the arm too quickly thereby missing the opportunity to pause and wait for the late arrival, there is no need to step anyone down, simply proceed.

Bottom line. The heat is closed when the Deck Referee is satisfied that it is proper to close the heat, and not before. The extended arm is not determinative.

If a swimmer is late to the blocks (jumps up just before the starter sends the heat), the starter can ask the heat to stand and then start them as usual. There is no real delay or disruption to the heat or the meet. If the referee feels compelled to inquire as to the reason for the late arrival, the investigation can be carried on without disruption or delay to the heat or the meet after the heat swims. At that point there is no good reason to disqualify the athlete for delay of the meet. Actually, the referee will delay the meet and disrupt the heat much

more if time is taken to disqualify the athlete. An athlete centered referee and starter team can and should make this a non-event.

MAY I HAVE THIS DANCE?

Part 2, Stroke and Backstroke

A briefing on National Deck Protocol – by Bruce Adams, Administrative Referee

In watching backstroke, your responsibilities will vary depending on the pool, the CJ, Referee and so on. At the start of a backstroke event, you may be asked to “watch toes” at the start of a race. Remember that before the horn, toes are the Starter’s (and to a lesser degree the Deck Ref’s) responsibility. The rules say that the toes may NOT be curled over the lip of the gutter or edge of the pool at the start. If the swimmer has toes over the edge improperly before the horn sounds, the starter should tell them to move their feet down. If he doesn’t and the horn sounds with the toes still curled over the lip of the pool, let it go. The starter should have fixed it.

However. If the athlete’s feet are properly place before the start, and they move them so as to curl them over the edge AFTER the horn sounds, then you do have a call. This is quite rare.

If before the start, the athlete’s toes are incorrectly placed, can you say anything to the swimmer? Generally it’s ok to, but it is still the starter’s responsibility.

In some pools known sometimes as a “FINA Pool” where the wall extends a foot or more out of the water, (Georgia Tech is an example), the rule still applies, but a swimmer would have to be standing on his head to get their feet up to the edge. We don’t watch in this situation.

Remember feet out of the water OK, toes curled over any edge, not so much.

Now, where do you watch from? Depends again (like everything...). I have been to national level meets where the CJs will tell you to watch backstroke starts in your normal poolside vantage point. At others two of the turn judges have been asked to walk around to the sides of the pool, and watch half of the lanes, one from the lane 1 side and the other from the lane 8 (10 or whatever) side. The judges from lanes 1 and 8 take the first heat, 2 and 7 the second heat and so on. Even though you may have 4 or 8 judges at the pool during turns and finishes, just having the two on the side at the start make for a less cluttered deck, and the athletes would generally rather you not be staring down at them at the start, you are a distraction they don’t need.

Walking stroke. This is probably the best job on deck in many people’s opinion. For myself, I would rather walk stroke than watch turns. You are all familiar with the “lead-lag” system for two officials to walk stroke, so I will not say too much about it here. But from the national deck perspective, you should be a little more conscious of how well you follow the swimmers, and how you look to the spectators. How far do you go? You generally will be told, something like from flag to flag, as close to the end as you can go and still keep up with swimmers. Ask to be sure. And, keep an eye on the judges on the other side of the pool. You don’t want to go further, nor not as far as they do. Just because you were stopping at the flags, and they weren’t don’t assume they are wrong and you are right. Do two things: One: Get the CJ’s attention and clarify how far you are supposed to go, and two: try to do what the other side is doing as well. Remember we want equal coverage from both sides of the pool. Generally flag to flag is a safe bet, (or where the flags would be if a backstroke event were in progress – Quite often these days the flags are only up for backstroke and medley events, and are taken down for other strokes, again to un-clutter the deck and give the TV cameras a cleaner shot). One other question for the CJ would be whether or not they’d like just one stroke judge on a side that has only one swimmer in jurisdiction since there’s no need for a lead and lag. In this situation, the deck would be off-balance, but it’s best not to over-officiate.

Ok so you are walking stroke at nationals and the silly TV trolley track is on your side of the pool with the two operators running the cart up and down the side of the pool. So what then? You just have to do the best that

you can. Make sure you and the CJs discuss the situation. The Meet Referee will ultimately determine how stroke will be judged from the side when TV is a consideration.

Now you have a call. What now? As usual it depends. (FINA doesn't raise hands but I'll ignore that for the time being. Raise your hand. If all is as it should be, the CJ will see you and start over toward you to discuss what you saw. If the CJ doesn't see you immediately, all you can do is keep doing your job, walking the pool with your hand up. Don't try to wave it around to get the CJs attention, because you will also attract the attention of everyone else. Suppose you make a call on team A, and the CJ sees you right away and comes over. Now suppose you make a call on Team B in the next heat, and the CJ doesn't see you. If you begin to frantically wave your hand about, the coach for Team B will be none too pleased with you for so vividly advertizing your call on his swimmer when you didn't for the team A swimmer. Generally at a high level meet, there are enough eyes on the officials (CJs, Deck ref, and other assorted folk, someone will get the CJ's attention soon enough. If not, then what? You may just have to walk over to them at the end of the heat as time allows. There is no real good answer to this because it shouldn't happen to begin with. Use common sense. But if at all possible, eventually talk to a CJ to resolve the call, your call may likely be legitimate and shouldn't be pocketed just because a CJ was asleep at the wheel.

15 meters, who watches? It may very well be you as a stroke judge in the event you don't have dedicated 15 meter judges. But again make sure, and confirm your responsibility with the CJ.

Ok, so who is watching who? Let's start at the bottom, (or if you prefer, the most important) the Stroke and Turn judges are watching the swimmers. The Chief Judge is watching the Stroke and Turn judges, just as intently as the S&T are watching the swimmers. The Team Lead Chief Judge is watching the CJs and the S&T judges, and not to be outdone, the Deck Referee should be watching all of the above. Refs, you are the last line of defense for that hapless Stoke judge with his hand up. The Meet Ref, when not schmoozing, will also be watching all of this, as will evaluators.

What if a call I made is challenged? Remember the three golden questions, and always be prepared to answer them. The CJ will ask you what he needs to know. Don't volunteer additional information unless asked. If I want to know was it "right hand only", or "left hand first", I'll ask.

Now suppose that some time latter during the session, maybe even hours later, you may be asked again about an earlier call. This presents a conundrum of sorts. At Nationals, you won't have a heat sheet to make notes on (usually), so all you can do is your best.

At my first national level meet, I made a call on a backstroker who had (in my opinion) turned over to his breast at a transition in an IM. The CJ came over and asked about what I saw, where I saw it from and what the rule was. What she didn't ask is which way he had reached, right or left hand and I didn't offer. About 2 and ½ hours later, here comes the Meet Ref with a relief official in tow on the bulkhead. (I had moved from the start end in the interim.) He wanted to talk further about that particular call because a rather irate coach had accosted him in the back hall demanding to know how we could have possibly disqualified his swimmer. Leaving the relief official in my place he took me out of sight to further discuss the DQ.

Now to resolve the conundrum. At that meet, or most any high level meet, calls will be few and far between, you may not make any calls all meet, so any one you do make is liable to remain clear in your head longer because of the rarity, than the 50 calls you made on 10 and under breast stokers at your last B meet. The Meet Ref asked that additional piece of information, namely which way had the swimmer reached to make the turn. Because it was the only call I had made I was easily able to tell him. After a couple more questions he was satisfied and upheld the call. Because I was able to answer confidently he could be comfortable with his decision. The whole point here is if you don't have facilities to make little notes, do the best you can. If you can't remember, you can't remember. Answer the questions honestly, and confidently. The Referee will make a decision partly on how you respond to the further questions.

Finally what to do when you are off, and not on deck.

DO take advantage of the time off to relax and take care of whatever needs taking care of...

DO leave the area immediately around the pool, again appearances, the coaches and spectators will assume that you are on duty if you are near the pool.

DO take the opportunity to talk to a CJ if you need something clarified. (I know, sorta clashes with the move off the DECK "DO", but, if you need a question answered, this is a reasonable time, but remember they still have a job to do so keep it short, and then get outta there.

DO take care of that urgent business (I mean the office kind here), but OFF deck, in hospitality or a back hall, just not on deck.

DO NOT go and sit with and talk to any on-duty official. Their job isn't shooting the breeze with you, save it for off-duty time for both of you.

DO NOT Congregate around the Starting Area. The Ref, Starter, finish judge, usually an off starter at national level meets, (starters are always a little off anyway, but I digress...) usually have more than enough to keep up with and really, REALLY don't need the distraction of other white shirts hanging around. You'll get your chance as you move up the ranks.

DO NOT be late coming back. It's just common courtesy.

And that's all I have to say about that.

GEORGIA SWIMMING OFFICIALS COMMITTEE:

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IDEAS? COMMENTS? SUGGESTIONS?

Great! We want to hear from you! Send an e-mail with your ideas, comments, suggestions, articles and whatever you think may be of interest to the other officials in Georgia to Julie Allen, editor-in-chief at: GeorgiaSwimmingOfficialsNews@gmail.com

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