

SUMMER OFFICIALS FAQs

- Q. Why do we need to do all that whistle blowing on the starts?
- A. It prepares your swimmers to compete in the larger meets. Many of the swimmers in the area already understand it. Please follow the Summer Starting Routine on this website to the best of your ability. It gets easier the more you do it.
- Q. How many officials are needed for a meet?
- A. You can legally run a dual meet with only 2 officials. But it's a lot easier if you have more. The ideal is 6: Referee, Starter, and 4 Stroke and Turn judges. If you don't have this many, then divide your pool up as evenly as you can among the number of people that you do have. Just make sure that each official understands his/her jurisdiction.
- Q. What if the timers do not know what they are doing?
- A. They probably don't. It is very nice of them to volunteer. They should be instructed before the meet starts, by the Starter or Referee. Important concepts for the timers are how to start and stop their watch, when to start and stop their watch, to check the child's name, and where to write down their watch time, and not to write a time off the electronic scoreboard if such is available. Also they must not drink alcohol until the meet is over, and neither should any of the deck officials.
- Q. Isn't it mean to disqualify the little bitty kids?
- A. Swimming is a learning process. We no longer walk over to them and make them cry by telling them they were disqualified. The coach is notified, so that he/she can continue to work with the child. The coaches want the children to learn and to do the strokes correctly. If you want to be a bit lenient in the summer, here is how to do it in a fair way (at the dual meets only.) They **MUST** do the 2 hand touches on breast and fly, and stay on their back at the backstroke finish. The coaches go over and over this every

day. But for other violations, such as an illegal kick, watch until you have seen them do it TWICE. This gives a little benefit to the child who is trying but just forgets something for a minute.

Q. Should the timers cushion the heads of the swimmers coming in on the backstroke?

A. NO!!! This is interfering with the competition and is against the rules and possibly dangerous.

Q. Is there any particular kick or stroke that is illegal on the backstroke?

A. No. They can do anything they want as long as they are on their back, specifically “at or past the vertical toward the back.” (This includes hanging in the water with their head tilted slightly backwards.)

Q. What about the backstroke turns?

A. The backstroke turn is a particularly pesky problem that just won't go away. A good idea is for the referee to go over his/her preference for how strict to call the turns, at the beginning of the meet. Keep in mind, if the swimmer touches the wall while on the back, and pushes off the wall again on the back, they may turn in “any manner desired”, which in summer encompasses a great deal of body positions. But if they roll to the breast, I recommend watching the arms. If they take TWO or MORE arm pulls, this is a definite disqualification. Also, if they come more or less to a stop and are on the breast not near the wall, this is a disqualification. Other actions are less clear, and the benefit of the doubt always goes to the swimmer.

Please email your questions to lreeves@mindspring.com and I will try to answer you and then we can get Coach Raphael to add them to this site. All questions are good!