

# Prince-Mont Swim League

## Referee Clinic

2010

(updated 5/16/2010)

### I. Introduction

- A. It goes without saying that the position of Referee is one of, if not the most, important positions on the deck.
- B. He/she has authority over all officials at the meet.
- C. They enforce all of the rules and decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet.
- D. They instruct all officials.
- E. They are the final authority in regard to all rules interpretations pertaining to an action which the Referee has personally observed.
- F. They set the example, by their dress, decorum, and attentiveness for all other officials.
- G. They shall give a decision on any point where the opinions of the judges differ.

### II. Pre-season preparation

- A. Be familiar with
  - 1. USA Swimming rules (rulebook).
  - 2. PVS or Maryland LSC handouts
  - 3. Prince-Mont rulebook
- B. Attend clinics
- C. Work meets! (USAS, HS, College, YMCA, etc.)

### III. Pre- "start-of-meet" preparation

- A. Get there early. (At least 1 hour before, or 30 mins. before initial warm-ups)
- B. Inspect the physical facilities
  - 1. Placement of backstroke flags
    - a. 5 meters or 5 yards out, depending upon pool
    - b. Pennants over each lane? (At least 2 per lane in PMSL)
  - 2. Location of Clerk of Course relative to start end of pool.
  - 3. Lane ropes
    - a. Are they tight enough? (Can tighten after warm-ups are completed.)
    - b. Are they well secured?
    - c. Do they have an adequate number of floats?
    - d. Are there any sharp edges, particularly at the ends?
  - 4. Are all of the obstacles removed from the pool, ie. ladders, diving boards?
  - 5. Are swimmers protected from any unmovable objects?
  - 6. Pool circulation
    - a. Will swimmers be swimming into it, creating inequities? Can it be turned off during the meet?
  - 7. Determine type and location of starting system.
  - 8. Does pool have an overflow lip? (May need to make timers and S&T's aware of.)
  - 9. "In-the-water" starts, where depth is < 4feet, --- will they be required?
- C. Start warm-ups on time
  - 1. Both teams to have equal amount of warm-up time (generally 15 – 20 mins. each)
    - a. If Home team in pool before official start of warm-ups, --- get them out!
  - 2. Swimmers to enter feet first until take-off lanes established.
    - a. Establish one-way T/O lanes about halfway through warm-up time period.
    - b. Use lanes 2 & 5 for T/Os

#### IV. Check-ins to have:

##### A. Meet with **Meet Managers**

1. Determine if any unresolved issues between the two.
2. Determine the number of heats.
  - a. Up to 9 swimmers/3 heats for Freestyle; up to 6 swimmers/2 heats for all other strokes.
3. Any issues peculiar to this meet, or locale
  - a. Head Coach absent.
  - b. Shortage, or planned tardiness of any officials.
  - c. Hearing, or sight-impaired swimmers.
  - d. Announcer, yes or no.
  - e. Weather forecast!
4. Make sure there are enough supplies for meet.
  - a. Watches
  - b. Table supplies
  - c. Computer

##### B. Meet with the **Clerk of Course**

1. Re-iterate that rosters (cards) must be turned in no less than 30 mins. before start of meet.
2. Make sure there are enough workers, and enough experience.
3. No substitutions in individual events without Referee's permission.
4. Go over Referee's opinion as to special seeding situations
  - a. 7 swimmers
  - b. (In freestyle), 3 swimmers from home team, vs. 9 swimmers from visiting team.
5. Determine the approximate length of meet (by number of heats).
  - a. Need to speed up, --- or slow down?
6. Obtain & review copies of meet sheets

##### C. Meet with **Starter**

1. Determine experience of Starter
2. Go over expectations regarding the calling of False Starts.
  - a. Starter to initiate the call.
3. Go over protocol for stepping up swimmers, **whistle sequence**, etc.
4. Determine who will brief Timers (Head Timer or Starter).
5. Make sure starting equipment is working.
6. Make sure Starter is in charge of the pool while S&T briefing is being conducted.
7. Have Starter do a "watch check" prior to first start.

##### D. Meet with **Table Workers**

1. Make sure they are experienced, and/or have experienced people to fall back on.

##### E. Meet with **Place (Sweep) Judges**

1. Emphasize their importance.
2. Emphasize the need for them to be in the best possible position.
3. Explain which heats to judge, --- final heat only.
4. Describe the 3 varieties of calls that they can make;
  - a. "1<sup>st</sup> place, 2<sup>nd</sup> place" – the desired call.
  - b. "tie" – in which case, this call will override the watches.
  - c. "no call" – will allow watches to determine the order of finish.
5. Many times these people have not been particularly well trained in this position. You, as the Referee, do not want to be in a position of not having briefed these individuals if a problem becomes apparent.

##### F. Meet with the **Head Timer**

1. Determine his/her experience.
2. Get their cooperation in monitoring the performance of the timers.
3. Along with Head Timer, determine that the timers have been assigned correctly to each team's lanes.

- a. Home team lane: 1 timer from Home team, + 2 timers from Visiting team
  - b. Visiting team lane: 1 timer from Visiting team, + 2 timers from Home team.
- 4. Timer briefing responsibility
- G. Meet with **Coaches**
  - 1. Determine any special needs
    - a. Visually, or hearing-impaired swimmers
      - i. Coach, parent, or Team Rep has primary responsibility for bringing this to Referee's attention.
  - 2. Go over warm up times
    - a. 15 or 20 minutes allotted equally to each team.
    - b. Review new swim suit issues
      - i. **Swimsuits for men may not extend above the navel or below the knee and for women may not cover the neck, or extend past the shoulders or below the knee**
      - ii. **Material used for swimsuits can be only textile material which is defined as materials consisting of natural and/or synthetic, individual and non-consolidated yarns used to constitute a fabric by weaving, knitting, and/or braiding. Simply put, this would generally refer to suits made only from nylon or Lycra that do not have any rubberized material such as polyurethane or neoprene; and**
      - iii. **No zippers or other fastening devices are allowed except for a waist tie on a brief or jammer.**
- H. Meet with **Announcer**
  - 1. Make sure he/she understands what he/she should announce
    - a. Event #, gender, distance, stroke, heat #, --- in that order.
  - 2. Make sure that they understand that they should be consistent in their announcements.
  - 3. Probably a good idea to introduce the Starter to the Announcer. They have to work together to get timing down.
  - 4. Announcement of next event to come after Referee's "chirps"
- I. Meet with **Head Judge**
  - 1. Determine the experience of the individual. Should be an experienced person.
  - 2. If necessary, review the rules governing "place" determination
    - a. If 2 times agree.
    - b. If all 3 watches disagree.
    - c. If only two watches present (round to slower time.)
    - d. When Place Judges overrule watches.
- J. Meet with the **Team Reps**
  - 1. Explain any pre-meet decisions that you might have made to date, ie. special seeding instructions given to CofCr.
  - 2. Explain to visiting team rep his/her location on deck, for ease in finding.
- K. Meet with **Stroke & Turn Judges**
  - 1. Meeting to be 15 mins. before start of meet.
  - 2. Pick a relatively quiet place for the meeting.
  - 3. Go over introductions and thank all for working.
  - 4. Determine level of experience
    - a. If trainees, go over expectations for them.
      - i. Walk with certified S&Ts, rotating amongst all.
      - ii. Make calls, but will not be used unless certified has also made call.
      - iii. Encourage to ask questions & discuss situations, as time allows.
  - 5. Review positioning, jurisdiction, & rotation
    - a. Positioning: 3 lanes apiece, if 4 judges

- i. Will judges be able to walk sides, --- equitably?
    - ii. Go over expected position for backstroke starts, --- at corners.
  - b. Jurisdiction:
    - i. May be overlapping; -- generally to the far backstroke flags.
  - c. Rotation:
    - i. Every 4 events?
    - ii. Rotate promptly so as to be in proper position and not delay the meet.
- 6. Review expectations for relays
  - a. Will probably want to meet with S&Ts during break for positioning & briefing.
  - b. Include Sweep Judges for Medley Relay.
- 7. Go over basic deck protocol.
  - a. Do not fraternize with swimmers, parents, coaches.
  - b. Do not show favoritism.
  - c. Check for appropriate dress
    - i. White over blue
    - ii. No team shirts
    - iii. For the weather.
  - d. Emphasize the need for judges to be in best possible position to make call.
  - e. Be professional at all times.
  - f. Calls should be prompt and crisp in nature.
  - g. Don't over-officiate!
    - i. No "calibrated" eyeballs"!
    - ii. S&Ts are there to "observe" the swimmers, --- not "scrutinize" them!
    - iii. Remember, poor form ("ugly"), in swimming, is not necessarily illegal!
  - h. Do not let coaches, swimmers, parents, influence your call.
  - i. However! --- S&Ts are expected to make calls! You are not window dressing!
  - j. Make sure competition is judged on an equitable basis.
    - i. Outside lanes vs. inside lanes.
    - ii. 1<sup>st</sup> heat versus 2<sup>nd</sup> heat.
    - iii. Empty lanes versus filled lanes.
  - k. If they see a violation
    - i. Raise hand/arm (for 2-3 seconds).
    - ii. Make note on "program".
    - iii. Go back to judging the race.
    - iv. If swimmer makes separate errors in same race, raise hand each time.
    - v. When writing up DQ slip, be prepared to answer,
      - a. Where were you?
      - b. What did you see?
      - c. How is it a violation?
      - d. Also, which turn, if appropriate?
    - vi. Use the language of the rulebook in your explanation.
    - vii. Emphasize that they should not demonstrate the violation, or the swimmer's actions.
    - viii. Check DQ slip for accuracy of:
      - a. Event #
      - b. Heat #
      - c. Lane #
  - l. Go over the rules
    - i. All strokes
      - a. Go into detail, if questions arise.
      - b. Emphasize any rule changes from last year, if necessary.
        - 1. Language for "non-continuous turns" has been revised**
          - a. "Delay initiating arm pull"**

b. “Delay initiating turn”

c. “Multiple strokes”

## V. Start of Meet

- A. Start on time
  - 1. Have Announcer bring first heats to Clerk of Course 10 minutes prior to start.
  - 2. National Anthem 5 minutes before.
  - 3. Make sure Announcer announces first event / first heat
  - 4. Clerk of Course should have supplied you (as well as the other officials) with a heat sheet by now.
  - 5. Motion for the Starter to bring first heat up.
  - 6. Look for any “lost” swimmers, stragglers, empty lanes.
  - 7. Blow whistle (chirps) when all swimmers, timers, and officials seem ready and in position.
    - a. Swimmers must be close to edge of pool.
    - b. Long whistle tells swimmers to assume their ready position (equivalent to stepping up on the blocks in USA swimming.). Out-stretched arm to Starter closes off heat. Keep whistle in mouth until you are satisfied that an equitable start has been achieved.
      - i. Remember, --- 2 long whistles for backstroke
    - c. Enforce reasonable quiet from the spectators without being obnoxious. (Usually a few short chirps on the whistle will often bring the noise down.)

## VI. During the Meet

- A. Remember, the Referee & Starter are the Leadership team for the meet. Must work together.
- B. Keep track of events, heats, & all DQs on your program.
- C. Keep meet running smoothly.
  - 1. Don’t rush, but be cognizant of time gaps.
  - 2. Resolve all issues before start of next heat.
- D. During races, keep eye on competition, as well as degree of attentiveness of S&Ts.
  - 1. Make sure all calls are being made fairly.
  - 2. If too many calls being made by one judge,
    - a. Keep a closer eye on him/her
    - b. Question the calls a little further.
- E. Try and anticipate future needs of the meet as it progresses.
  - 1. Have Announcer solicit “legs” for backstroke before you get to the first heat.
  - 2. Let Starter know what your expectations are for announcing the Individual Medley races
    - a. Should strokes (“fly, back, breast, & free”) be announced for all age groups, --- or at all?
- F. Make sure S&Ts are rotating properly and promptly.
- G. Pick up DQs promptly.
  - 1. Question S&Ts
  - 2. Make sure you are satisfied with their explanation.
  - 3. Remember, you must be prepared to explain the disqualification to the Team Rep.
  - 4. “Pocket” the DQ if necessary. But you must accept the DQ from the S&T if he/she has properly reported and explained the infraction.
- H. Referee can make calls on their own, --- however, you don’t want to “over-officiate” certain lanes.
- I. Inform Team Reps of DQs promptly before next event.
- J. Keep track of table workers to determine if running smoothly.
  - 1. Encourage them to inform the Referee should any problems or discrepancies arise. Better to catch the problems early.
- K. Check with the Head Judge to make sure timers and place judges are performing adequately.

- L. Keep an eye out for the Clerk of Course to make sure they are running smoothly, and are keeping up with the pace of the meet. Things are running smoothly if,
  1. You are not waiting on swimmers,
  2. The heats are being seeded properly,
  3. The noise level at the Clerk of Course is being kept to a reasonable level, and,
  4. The next 2-3 heats are waiting behind the timers, and are reasonably quiet also.
- M. Watch the starts. Make sure the Starter is attentive, giving proper commands, and allowing swimmers to get set. However, don't over-coach. (This may only upset the Starter more. Wait until the end of the meet if you have any suggestions.)
- N. **You must confirm all False Starts.** Pay attention to all starts!
  1. If False Start is confirmed, Referee must notify swimmer promptly upon completion of the race, if swimmer starts without a horn. This allows an opportunity for the swimmer's explanation, if any
  2. Otherwise, treat as any other DQ.
- O. Compliment Starter on good starts.
- P. Have Starter stand swimmers if there is an undue delay.
  1. Especially, do not let backstrokers hang too long with arms up.
- Q. Use of towels OK if deck is slippery.
  1. Make sure they are removed from the water promptly after the start, especially on 50s.
- R. Do not place backstrokers in the water until all previous DQs have been resolved.
- S. For backstroke, for those serving as "legs", heels cannot be over the edge at the start.
  1. Cannot use timer for legs.
  2. Artificial assistance cannot be used by the "legs", ie. can't grasp another person or object.
- T. Keep an eye on the competition in the pool. You can judge better the job being done by your S&Ts. However, you do not want to fall into the routine of feeling the need to personally confirm all of their calls.
- U. If a race (heat) is recalled,
  1. No false start is to be charged.
  2. If swimmers have swum too far, allow for some pre-agreed-upon time to elapse before re-swimming the race. Talk to the coaches.
- V. If a heated, prolonged dispute develops with a parent, coach, or Team Rep, try to take it off deck by physically backing off gradually.

## VII. Relays

- A. Use break after individual events to position Take-off Judges.
  1. Avoid using Timers.
  2. May want to use 4 S&Ts at turn end as TOJs for 8U relays, with 2 Sweeps, Starter, & Referee at start end.
  3. Use T/O slips if available.
  4. Instruct as to proper way to judge take-offs, ie., fix eyes on departing swimmers' feet, then incoming touch.
  5. Instruct not to raise a hand if they see an infraction.
  6. Watch take-offs yourself, even if not a judge, just to self-confirm.

## VIII. End of Meet

- A. Thank all officials.
- B. Wait around for any possible protests. A team has 30 minutes after meet to file protest.
- C. Check scoring at table for accuracy.
- D. Sign official results.

