

Chief Judge - Philosophy, Procedures & Protocols

Virginia Swimming, Inc.

18 June 2008

Background

- The responsibilities of the Chief Judge and the number of Chief Judges used at a meet will greatly vary depending upon the level of the meet and the available staffing
 - A single Chief Judge might be used at a small B/C meet and the only responsibility of the Chief Judge might be to deal with disqualifications at the turn end of the pool
 - Multiple Chief Judges might be used at a championship level meet and the Chief Judges may have many responsibilities, many of which would be handled by the Referee at lower level meets
 - The Meet Referee is responsible for determining if and how Chief Judges will be used at any particular meet
- Leadership role
 - The leadership roles of the Chief Judge will also vary from meet to meet, with the responsibilities increasing as one progresses to higher level meets
 - If multiple Chief Judges are being used a Team Lead Chief Judge may be assigned along with Assistant Chief Judges
 - The Team Lead Chief Judge reports to the Meet Referee and is responsible for ensuring that the Assistant Chief Judges follow the direction of the Meet Referee
 - A primary responsibility of the Chief Judge is to act as a mentor for the Stroke and Turn officials

Responsibilities

It is important to recognize that the assignment of the following responsibilities will depend upon the level of the meet, the number of officials at the meet, and the certification and experience levels of those officials. A meet such as Senior Champs might make use of all the protocols below while a meet such as Age Group Champs may use only a subset of them. A district-wide B/C meet might do well to have a single Chief Judge with many of the responsibilities described below retained by the Meet and Deck Referees. There is no one right

way to staff and run a meet and how it is done is the responsibility of the Meet Referee.

Pre-Meet Responsibilities

- The Team Lead Chief Judge should communicate with the Meet Referee to determine the duties of the Chief Judges during the meet
 - Jurisdictions of Stroke & Turn Judges
 - Deck protocol for Stroke & Turn Judges
 - Jurisdictions and responsibilities of Assistant Chief Judges
 - Disqualification protocol
 - Radio protocol
 - Will officials parade in for finals; if so, how
 - How will awards be done; do officials need to be moved and to where
 - Assist in scheduling speakers for the officials briefing
- The Team Lead Chief Judge should communicate (letter, e-mail, telephone) prior to the meet with the Assistant Chief Judges
 - Welcome them to the team
 - Determine their level experience
 - Communicate any pre-meet assignments and when you will meet with them before the meet
 - Communicate the expectations of the Meet Referee
- Pre-meet meeting (if the meet is one at which the Chief Judges change from session to session then this information still needs to be communicated – it just becomes more difficult to do so in a timely fashion)
 - Communicate expectations and guidance of the Meet Referee
 - Have assignments done for the first day (may only be possible at the highest level meet)
 - Review how deck assignments will be rotated

- Review how disqualifications will be handed including radio protocol
- Make sure that the following equipment/items will be available at the meet
 - Radios with headsets and spare batteries
 - Clip boards
 - Pencils
 - Watches and spares
 - Bell(s) for distance events
 - Lap counters
 - Chairs on deck
 - Towels for drying chairs
- Make sure that the following forms are available at the meet
 - Sign-in sheets for officials
 - Assignments forms/templates
 - Certification evaluation forms
 - Heat sheets
 - Stroke briefing
 - Jurisdiction briefing
 - DQ slips
 - Relay take-off slips
 - Split sheets for distance events
 - No-show slips
 - Lane timer sheets
 - IRS letter from Meet Referee

Pre-Session Responsibilities

- At a meet with a full complement of Chief Judges, the Chief Judges instead of the Meet Referee or Deck Referees run the Stroke & Turn briefings
- Sign-in sheets
- Introductions
- Deck assignments (making sure to rotate officials as directed by the Team Lead Chief Judge)
- Deck protocol briefing (use USA-S recommended briefing as a guide)
- Jurisdiction briefing
- Answer questions

- Make sure that all the equipment/items listed above in the Pre-Meet Responsibilities section are ready and in good working order
- Make sure that all supplies listed above in the Pre-Meet Responsibilities section are available
- Make sure clipboards/pencils/timing sheets/watches are ready if it is a meet at which these items are being taken care of by the Chief Judges (this would more likely be the case if it is a meet where the officials are also covering the timing responsibilities)

During Competition

- Chief Judges are placed inconspicuously at the corners of the pool
- The focus of the Chief Judge should be on the officials within his/her assigned area of the pool
- Placement will follow the direction of the Meet Referee but some common usages are:
 - 1 Chief Judge: Turn end on opposite side of pool from the Deck Referee
 - Watch turn judges on turn end of pool and side judges (help from the Deck Referee may be needed to watch the Stroke Judge on the near side of the pool as the view of the Chief Judge may be obstructed by swimmers and coaches on the side of the pool)
 - Handle disqualifications for turn end and sides of the pool
 - 2 Chief Judges: Start end on opposite side of pool from the Deck Referee and turn end on the same side of pool as the Deck Referee
 - Start end Chief Judge
 - watches start end Turn Judges and Stroke Judge on the opposite side of the pool
 - handles disqualifications on start end and near side (will likely be alerted to the latter by radio of turn end Chief Judge)
 - Turn end Chief Judge:

- watches turn end Turn Judges and Stroke Judge on the opposite side of the pool
 - handles disqualifications on turn end and near side (will likely be alerted to the latter by radio of start end Chief Judge)
- 2 Chief Judges – alternative positioning
 - Start end on same side of pool as the Deck Referee and turn end on the opposite side of the pool as the Deck Referee
 - Start end Chief Judge handles the “Hot Box” responsibilities (see below)
- 4 Chief Judges: Each Chief Judge has responsibility for a quadrant of the pool and is responsible for the disqualifications within that quadrant
 - Chief Judge in the quadrant with the Deck Referee handles the “Hot Box” responsibilities (see below)
- Disqualification protocol
 - Upon observing a raised for an infraction the Chief Judge will immediately radio the Deck Referee using the prescribed radio protocol that a potential disqualification has occurred
 - The Chief Judge approaches the officials and asks:
 - What was your jurisdiction?
 - What did you see?
 - What rule was violated?
 - The Chief Judge then radios the infraction to the Deck Referee and recommends approval or disapproval (it is not the responsibility of the Chief Judge to approve the disqualification, this is solely the responsibility of the Deck Referee)
 - If the disqualification is accepted, the Chief Judge fills out the disqualification slip and has the official verify the information and sign it
 - The Chief Judge then delivers the disqualification slip to the Deck Referee, or if the infraction is at the turn end of the pool, has the Stroke Judge act as courier
- The Chief Judge at the finish end of the pool is responsible for notifying the swimmer of the disqualification
 - Ask the swimmer to step behind the seated timers/officials
 - Inform the swimmer of the infraction and that their coach should talk to the Referee if there is any question about the call
- Common variations
 - *Radios not in use* – The Chief Judge goes to the Deck Referee to discuss each call
 - *Stroke & Turn Judges write their own DQ slips* – Chief Judge reviews the call and verifies the information on the slip
 - *Swimmers not notified* – The disqualification slip is brought to the coach
- “Hot Box” responsibilities
 - The quadrant of the pool that includes the starting area is referred to as the “Hot Box”
 - Pre-write disqualification slips for declared false starts
 - Write no-show slips for no-shows
 - Write false start disqualifications and either notify the swimmer of the infraction or have the Chief Judge in that quadrant notify the swimmer
 - Inform Deck Referee of upcoming declared false starts and lanes that should be empty due to earlier no-shows (the latter information is obtained from the Administrative Referee)
- Distance races
 - Lap counters should be located in a convenient location prior to the session and should be set out in a timely fashion so that that finding them doesn’t disrupt the start of the race
 - If bells are being used on each lane follow the guidance given for the lap counters
- Relay take-offs
 - Pre-write the needed relay take-off slips

- Assign coverage to lane and side take-off judges (could be off-duty Stroke Judges, Turn Judges, Starters, Referees)
- If a side judge marks an early take-off the Chief Judge should radio “possible early take-off lane # X” at the end of the race
- The Chief Judge should then collect *all* the ballots from within his/her jurisdiction and either radio “all clear lanes # X to # Y” or “confirmed early take-off lane X”
- The early take-off slips as well as a completed and signed disqualification report should be given to the Deck Referee
- Notify the team of the infraction and which swimmer took off early
- Team Lead Chief Judge Responsibilities
 - Provide overall supervision of the Assistant Chief Judges, Stroke Judges, and Turn Judges
 - Provide relief for the Assistant Chief Judges as needed
 - Makes sure that equal coverage of the deck is maintained at all times
 - While an infraction is being discussed
 - When an official needs to be excused
- Mentoring and evaluation
 - Observe officials within jurisdiction for appearance, adherence to deck protocol, knowledge of rules, etc.
 - Where needed, constructive guidance should be given in an educational manner – do not embarrass or berate
 - Perform evaluations for national certification as requested

Post-Session Responsibilities

- Thank all officials
- Collect watches, clip boards, towels, etc. and get them ready for the next session
- Return the evaluations to the Team Lead Chief Judge or handle them as directed
- Note any exceptional official
- The Team Lead Chief Judge completes his/her evaluations of the Assistant Team Judges