Collegiate Swimming Officials Association- Best Practices for Dual Meet Officiating

The Collegiate Swimming Officials Association has designed these best practices as a suggestion for consideration as pertains to officiating collegiate dual meets. However, it is understood that all meets, schools, and facilities have unique considerations, and that discretion, judgment, flexibility, and common sense must be applied in each individual situation so as to provide a fair and quality competition for the athletes and coaches- our ultimate priority in officiating.

Prior to Session- Meet Logistics

- Arrive on deck 45-60 minutes prior to session start.
- Introduce self to coaches from both teams as well as meet management staff.
- Engage in informal conversation with coaches and/or meet management staff so as to determine key meet logistics. The meet should be run following the preferences/practices agreed to by both/all head coaches, so long as no NCAA rules are violated:
    - What is the order of events/program used for the meet?
        - Will there be extra heats of any events? If so, are these heats eligible to score or exhibition only?
    - Will there be breaks inserted into the program? If so, where and for how long?
    - Will flyover starts be used, or will be pool be cleared between heats?
    - Is there an announcer? If so, what is being announced? Will the Starter be needed to perform any announcements (events, heats, etc.)?
    - Will backup timers be utilized? If so, how many per lane? Will an official be needed to conduct a timers' meeting?
        - If backup timers are not utilized, ask that each team perform backup timing (i.e. stopwatches) for its own swimmers. This may prove to be crucial should automatic timing equipment fail.
    - Who is running the meet management software? What is the process for resolving timing discrepancies?
        - Ideally, meet management will notify officials if an order of finish is needed and/or if a timing resolution requires judgment.
    - Will relay judging platforms be used? If so, have they been tested and are all in proper working order?
    - What process will be used for notifying coaches/swimmers of disqualifications?
    - Will diving be run concurrently, or will the meet stop for diving? Will any officials be needed to judge diving and/or assist with diving in other ways?
    - Do any athletes require special accommodations?
    - Are any athletes wearing tape? (Please provide appropriate documentation, if so)
    - Are other special events/ceremonies occurring for which we should be aware (senior ceremony, etc.)?
- Assess the facility and relevant equipment for any considerations that need to be taken into account.
    - Are 15-meter marks properly marked on the deck?
    - Are backstroke flags placed appropriately?
    - Do starting blocks have adjustable wedges?
    - Are backstroke ledges in use?
    - Test the starting system. Is microphone functioning? Is volume appropriate? Are additional speakers in use?
    - If movable bulkheads are used at either the start end or turn end, verify that the competition course has been measured using a laser device and that the course is of the proper length.

Officiating Logistics- Determine roles and positioning based on number of officials. Suggested configurations for consideration:

- At dual meets, particularly when using two or three officials, the responsibilities of the "Referee" as outlined in the rulebook may be shared or delegated among more than one official. Generally speaking, the strongest Starter available should work as the Starter for the meet. The rotation of officials is generally discouraged for collegiate dual meet competitions.
- While NCAA rules do not require that dual confirmation be used for relay take-offs, we believe that the use of dual confirmation is a best practice that should be used at all meets.
- 2 officials
    - Designate "Referee" and "Starter"
    - Referee and Starter are across the pool from each other
    - Utilize "lead and trail" positioning
    - No formal jurisdiction defined
        - Although no formal jurisdiction is defined, generally speaking, the pool is split width-wise. Referee assumes responsibility for the turn half of the pool and Starter assumes responsibility for the start half of the pool.
        - With the exception of relays, after start, Referee immediately repositions to turn half of pool. Starter remains at start half of pool.

        - Following the final turn, Referee returns to start end so as to take order of finish. If swimmers are spread out, and a close finish is imminent, Referee should prioritize order of finish over observing all turns. Both officials take order of finish.
    - Relay take-offs observed by Starter and Referee across all lanes, using dual confirmation.
- 3 officials
    - Designate "Referee", "Starter", and "15M/Stroke/Turn Judge"
    - No formal jurisdiction defined
    - Referee and Starter are across the pool from each other and observe the lanes in their areas of the pool.
    - 15M/Stroke/Turn Judge begins on 15-meter mark for all races but breaststroke, prioritizes first 15-meter mark for all swimmers, and observes turns from corner or from turn end for remainder of race. For breaststroke, observe turns from corner or from turn end.
    - Relay take-offs observed by Starter and Referee across all lanes, using dual confirmation.
- 4 officials
    - Designate "Referee", "Starter," and "15M/Stroke/Turn Judges"
    - Jurisdiction: Assigned quadrant of pool
    - Referee and Starter are across the pool from each other and observe the lanes in their quadrants of the pool.
    - 15M/Stroke/Turn Judges begin on turn-end 15 meter marks for all races but breaststroke. Once all swimmers in jurisdiction clear 15 meter mark, observe first turn from the corners. Then, proceed to turn end of pool to observe remaining turns.
    - Relay take-offs observed by Starter and Referee across all lanes, using dual confirmation.
- 5 officials- Configuration A
    - Designate "Referee", "Starter", "15M/Stroke Judges", and "Turn Judge"
    - Referee and Starter are across from each other, wrap to start end to observe turns for stroke events 100 yards and longer (Jurisdiction: Assigned lanes, half of pool)
    - Stroke Judges begin on 15 meter mark for all races but breaststroke, and, once all swimmers clear 15 meter mark, walk flag to flag for duration of race (Jurisdiction: Assigned lanes, wall to wall)
    - One turn judge on turn end of observe turns (Jurisdiction: All lanes, half of pool)
    - Relay Take-Offs- Dual confirmation
        - Stroke judges change position to center on start end
        - Lanes split in half for take-offs- Starter looks to one Stroke and Turn Judge, Referee looks to other
        - Remaining Turn Judge on turn end remains on side of pool, prioritizes 15 meter mark for all swimmers and observes turns from corner as able
- 5 officials- Configuration B
    - Designate "Referee", "Starter," and "15M/Stroke/Turn Judges"
    - Stroke and Turn Judge Jurisdiction: Assigned quadrant of pool
    - Referee and Starter are next to each other- Starter has stroke/turn jurisdiction for his/her quadrant, wraps to observe turns for stroke events 100 yards and longer
    - One Stroke and Turn Judge on start end observes other quadrant on start end
    - Turn end 15M/Stroke/Turn Judges begin on turn-end 15 meter marks for all races but breaststroke. Once all swimmers in jurisdiction clear 15 meter mark, observe first turn from the corners. Then, proceed to turn end of pool to observe remaining turns.
    - Relay Take-Offs- Dual confirmation
        - Referee changes position to across from Starter, two Stroke and Turn Judges change position to center on start end
        - Lanes split in half for take-offs- Starter looks to one Stroke and Turn Judge, Referee looks to other
        - Remaining Turn Judge on turn end remains on side of pool, prioritizes 15 meter mark for all swimmers and observes turns from corner as able
- 6 officials
    - Designate "Referee", "Starter," and "15M/Stroke/Turn Judges"
    - Stroke and Turn Judge Jurisdiction: Assigned quadrant of pool
    - Referee and Starter are next to each other with no assigned jurisdiction on pool
    - Start end Stroke and Turn Judges on start end
    - Turn end 15M/Stroke/Turn Judges begin on turn-end 15 meter marks for all races but breaststroke. Once all swimmers in jurisdiction clear 15 meter mark, observe first turn from the corners. Then, proceed to turn end of pool to observe remaining turns.
    - Relay Take-Offs- Dual confirmation
        - Referee changes position to across from Starter, Stroke and Turn Judges change position to center on start end
        - Lanes split in half for take-offs- Starter looks to one Stroke and Turn Judge, Referee looks to other

Disqualificaitons

- Stroke, Turn, and 15-meter violations- Raise hand confidently, but not enthusiastically
- False Starts- Record on heat sheet. Starter approaches Referee. If Starter and Referee are across from each other, this should not occur until the conclusion of the race.
- Early Take-Offs- Record on heat sheet. Once the final exchange within jurisdiction occurs, raise hand. If both officials observing jurisdiction raise hand, compare heat sheets so as to determine if the same violation was observed by both officials.

Officiating- Key Principles and Other Considerations

- Above all, ensure that the swimmer receives the benefit of the doubt.
- Officials are observers, not inspectors.
- The meet is a competition, and the deck needs to be fair and balanced. If officiating across a high volume of lanes, it is critical to consider that all lanes are being officiated equally.
- We are professional officials. At all times our appearance, demeanor, and conduct must be reflective of our professional status.