

# DECK PROTOCOL

## CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS

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In addition to the Stroke Briefing at National Championship Meets there is a protocol briefing. Our suggestion is that this be employed at a local Championship Meet . This is a guide for the Chief Judges of the Meet to instruct the officials on their position on the pool deck so there is a uniformity of officiating. The Chief Judges must receive their instructions for jurisdiction from the Meet Referee. Remember no swimmer should have an advantage over another swimmer and officiating by position as well as knowledge will help to determine this.

### **General Guidelines:**

Be in place at and sitting at least 5 minutes before the session begins.

Consistently observe your entire area of jurisdiction with a proportionate amount of time spent observing empty lanes, if any. Your attention should be focused on the lanes within your jurisdiction.

Maintain a clean look (hands free, no heat sheets on person, no phones on person or out of sight). Do not carry unnecessary item on deck. Sit up straight, feet on deck, hands and arms indicating attentive body language.

When working as a turn/finish judge, go to the edge of the pool when the swimmer is approaching your jurisdiction and return to your chair when the swimmer leaves your jurisdiction. If more than one lane is assigned, approach the pool edge as the first swimmer enters your jurisdiction and return to your chair when the last one leaves. In some situations it is possible that the swimmers will become spread out such that it is not practical for you to sit, however, you should step back from the edge of the pool if no swimmers are within your jurisdiction.

When moving forward to observe, position yourself as close to the edge of the pool as possible without interfering with touch pads or coping. This is generally done from the right side of the lane. With some pools the circulatory system may require you to lean forward to get a good view of the touch on the turn or finish. Do not bend at the waist like a circus acrobat, just place yourself in a position for the best view.

At the conclusion of the meet remain in your position until you are dismissed by your Chief Judge.

### **Freestyle:**

Turn judges remain seated at the start and stay seated throughout the race unless you are assigned to watch turns. At most meets the turn judges will watch the turns from the side of the pool. If there are more than two turn judges at the turn end and start end, then the responsibility of watching turns will be rotated by lanes, 1-8, 2-7, etc. until each group has had a turn, then the process repeats itself. A chair may be place on the side for the official to sit when the swimmers have left their jurisdiction. When this rotation is assigned the CJ may release the rest of the field for breaks.

### **Backstroke:**

Turn judges at start-end stand in place at the Referee's short whistle. End (or appointed) lanes move to (wrap) corners on referee's first long whistle to observe loss for possible infraction immediately after the start signal. Return to place and sit when swimmer(s) have left the wall.

Turn Judges move forward on turn or finish to observe. It is important for the Turn Judge to observe from a position on deck where incoming swimmer's shoulder position can best be seen. Turn Judges return to chair upon observing the swimmer leave the wall.

On the finish of the back stroke the turn judge is judging the touch. The Stroke Judge has the swimmer to the end of the wall. For a swimmer to be submerged at the finish the turn judge has to see the total swimmer under the water before shifting their look to the wall for the touch. If the Turn Judge has to shift their look to see the touch, there is no call. If the Stroke Judge sees the swimmer submerged before the touch they can make the call since they have wall to wall.

**Breaststroke:**

Turn Judges at start-end stand on Referee's long whistle. It is important to stand where the official has the best advantage to getting to the edge of the pool at the start to observe their swimmer(s).

Turn Judges move forward on start, turn and finish to observe their swimmer(s).

Turn Judges return to chair upon observing completion of the first arm stroke (head up) or upon swimmer leaving jurisdiction.

**Butterfly:**

Turn Judges at start-end stand on Referee's long whistle. It is important to stand where the official has the best advantage to getting to the edge of the pool at the start to observe their swimmer(s)

Turn Judges move forward on start, turn and finish to observe.

Turn Judges return to chair upon observing completion of the first arm stroke (head up) or upon swimmer leaving jurisdiction.

**Lead/Lag Coverage for Stroke Judges:**

Lead/Lag is a method of coordinating the actions of two stroke judges on the same **side of a pool** in an effort to have consistent observation of all competitors in their jurisdiction during a race. One judge is positioned at the 15m mark (Judge A) to be involved with any stroke requiring this jurisdiction. A second Judge (B) is positioned on the same side of the pool between the 15m mark and the start end of the pool, but not to interfere or position their self in the area of the Referee/Starter portion also named "the hot box" area.

Once the race has started and the swimmers are in the water Judge "B" observes the initial elements of the stroke within the jurisdiction instructed by the Referee. As the swimmers pass, judge "B" turns and follows, walking slightly behind the field toward the 15m mark. Judge "A" is in position to observe the 15m mark conformance and as they pass turns and follows the swimmers down the course toward the turn end of the pool. Judge "A" is the "Lead" and Judge "B" is the "Lag". It would be ideal for each judge to have two swimmers to watch in a (4) lane course where one is watching ½ of the lanes, but swimmers may disperse themselves so a judge may have only one swimmer while the second judge may have three. Judge "B" stops at the 15m mark for the turn, while Judge "A" observes the swimmers through the turn and initial elements of the stroke in the second length toward the 15m mark. As the swimmers pass the 15m mark at the turn-end Judge "B" falls in slightly behind the swimmers and assumes the "Lead" ahead of Judge "A" who becomes "Lag". This coordinated action is executed until the end of the race when the "Lag" judge has followed the trailing swimmers up to the position of the Lead judge, then returns to the 15m mark for the start of the next heat. In the heats where there are only three entrants in the event, there is only one Stroke Judge for each side of the pool. Continue scanning all lanes – even empty ones – so as not to narrow focus.

Slight modification is made for breaststroke: both judges continue down the pool to observe the turns because the 15m mark does not come in to play. During the freestyle event only one judge is needed on each side to watch the 15m mark. It is suggested on the Referee/Starter side the judge is at the 15m mark for the turn end, while on the opposite side the judge is at the mark on the start end. Each judge will watch eight lanes. If there are enough officials each Stroke Judge will watch their four lanes and then sit when swimmers are out of their jurisdiction. On distance freestyle the judge will only watch the first two 15m mark turns and then remain seated.