



11759 Groat Road, Edmonton Alberta, Canada T5M 3K6  
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## Referee Briefing Guidelines

### Guidance on Level of Detail

Use the following points to determine what level of detail to provide during a briefing:

- Gauge your audience: find out how many new officials you have in each role.
- What level of meet are you refereeing?
  - Refer to Swim Alberta's Competition Focus per Level.
- What session are you briefing?

*'We are all here for the swimmer's, coaches, and officials' development. This allows us to all grow as we collectively create a learning environment with a goal of a swimmer's improvement and lifelong fitness. We are committed to ensuring the fairness, integrity and safety of this competition by upholding the values of Swim Alberta.'*

### Welcome and Overview

- Introduction of Meet Referee, Referee(s), Starter(s), Chief Timer(s), and the Meet Manager.
- Highlight of the Swim Alberta Code of Conduct and Ethics and Swim Canada's Safe Sport.
  - All interactions are in an open and observable environment.
  - "See something, say something".
  - Please refer to the documents on Swim Alberta's website.
- List the events in the session and the time out.
- Remind officials that they are responsible for giving their full attention to the swimmers.
- Any cell phone use should be off the deck, no videoing.
- Do not touch the swimmers, including helping them out of the pool (swim to the side).
- Do not speak to the swimmers except when it is necessary to do your role, or you are asked a question.
- When taking breaks keep them short so all officials have an opportunity.

### Timing System

- Identify timing system (Touch Pads, plungers, Dolphin or Watches).
- Chief Timer – your go to person for issues with timing.
- Responsibilities of the timer:
  - Get times at splits and finish

- Record split times for distance events.
- Ring Bells for distance events.
  - State distance at what lap the bell is to be rung
  - To ring the bell, stand on the right side of the lane, unless the swimmer is on this side, and ring the bell over the lane rope. Begin to ring from the flags until the swimmer has surfaced and taken at least one stroke.
- Verify relay names upon the swimmers exit from the pool.
  - Report swimmers swimming out of sequence to an inspector of turns.
- Two plungers (both timers) for relay takeovers if using plungers.
- Provide 'best times' awards as determined by meet management.
- Stand at the edge of the pool, without standing on the touch pad, so you can see some part of the swimmer touch. Leave room for inspector of turn.
- Return to your seat when the job is done and remain seated if not timing or there is no swimmer in lane.
- Plungers should be placed on the bulkhead beside or behind the block.
- You may be asked to help with the backstroke ledges.

### **Backstroke Ledge**

- Meet management may have a team to install and remove the ledges OR the timers and/or inspector of turns (IT) will install the device. Initially the device is set at 0 and the top of the footrest is level with the surface of the water. Ensure the straps are free of any twists or knots.
- It is the swimmer's responsibility to adjust the level of the ledge.
- After the start the ledge shall be lifted out of the water and placed behind the device on the top of the block with the straps tucked into the spools.
- For one-way swims, such as 50m back in a LC pool, the ledge remains in the water.
- Prior to the next start the ledge shall be placed back in the water. If an athlete asks not to use it, remove the ledge from the water.
- At the end of the event, if there is not a field of play team, remove the entire ledge and roll it up.
- For medley relay the entire ledge must come off after the lead swimmer has left the wall after the start.

### **Start End Inspector of Turns**

- For the Start:
- Stand on long whistle.
- For all strokes move forward to behind bulkhead.

- For freestyle, butterfly, breaststroke and individual medley step up and forward to the edge of the pool once the swimmer leaves the block and judge the swimmer until they surface.
- For backstroke, step up on the first long whistle and on the second long whistle step to the edge of the pool and look discreetly at the swimmer to ensure at least one toe from each foot is in contact with the wall.
- If not, advise the swimmer to adjust toes.
- If the toes are in the correct position after observation, stand up straight and look down pool to indicate to referee that race is good to be started.
- Do not step back.
- Roles of the Turn End Inspector of Turns also apply.

### **Turn End Inspector of Turns**

- The area of jurisdiction is the last stroke coming into the wall, through the execution of the turn and the first stroke out of the wall, second stroke if breaststroke.
- Stand when the swimmer approaches the flags and judge the swimmer through your area of jurisdiction.
- Pick a lane – judge the complete turn cycle, until swimmer has finished the stroke as per the rules. If you still have time to judge the complete turn cycle of the swimmer in the next lane while being in the correct position, please do so, otherwise watch them next time. Do your best to randomize who you judge.
- Stand as directly over the swimmer as possible.
- When you complete your task sit down and remain seated until the next turn or finish.
- Relay takeovers – watch the feet of the swimmer on the blocks, once they leave look down to see that the swimmer in the water has touched the wall.

### **Judge of Stroke**

- Your area of jurisdiction is wall to wall and assist with turns and finishes.
- Stand at the 15m mark for the start of each race except breaststroke, come into the flags to judge the start for breaststroke.
- When the last swimmer passes the 15m mark begin to walk with the swimmers; slightly ahead for backstroke and slightly behind for everything else – out of line of sight of swimmers.
- For freestyle and distance events, after the start, one judge of stroke will move to 15m mark from the turn end (return 15m mark) and the other judge of stroke will remain at the start 15m mark.
- Be sure to be standing to judge the swimmers surfacing at your respective 15m mark.
- Lead and Lag (if applicable):



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- One stroke judge follows the faster group and the other the slower group on respective side of the pool.
- At the long whistle for freestyle, butterfly and backstroke, one judge will position themselves at the 15m mark and one judge at the 7m mark. This is to ensure that the swimmers adhere to the rules of swimming up to the 15m mark.
- At the long whistle for breaststroke, one judge will position themselves at the 5m mark and one judge at the 7m mark.
- Lead judge goes to the wall, lag judge stops at 15m; except for breaststroke, lead judge goes to the wall, lag judge goes to backstroke flags.
- On the final lap both judges go to the end wall.

### **In General**

- A reminder to any official that is completing a deck evaluation, please see the *referee* before and after the session to sign your deck log. Please follow up with your Club Officials Administrator directly to ensure the information is updated on the Swimming Canada database.

### **Infraction Reporting**

- Ensure you are in the proper place to see the infraction.
- Report after the swimmer has left your jurisdiction for the last time OR immediately as directed by meet referee.
- Infraction will be discussed and if accepted you will be asked to write it up.
  - We will ask you a series of questions like where you were standing. Which hand touched first etc.
- Don't be offended if we don't accept your infraction.
- Benefit of the doubt goes to the swimmer.

### **Strokes**

- It is important to use the vocabulary of the rulebook to describe legal strokes vs versus telling them what to look for or what they should not be seeing.
- Provide any other pertinent information to assist them in performing their roles and ensuring a technically proficient meet for the swimmers.

### **Freestyle**

- Some part of the head must surface at or before the 15-meter mark off the start and at each turn.
- Once the swimmer has surfaced, they must break the surface throughout the race, with

any part of the body.

- The swimmer can swim any style.
- The swimmer must touch at every turn and at the finish.
- Can't walk on the bottom of the pool or pull on the lane ropes.

## Butterfly

- Some part of the head must surface at or before the 15-meter mark off the start and at each turn; swimmer is allowed any number of butterfly kicks before surfacing.
- The swimmer is permitted one simultaneous arm pull under the water at the start and at each turn, which must bring them to the surface of the water.
- After which, both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water and brought backwards simultaneously under the water throughout the race.
- The kick is the butterfly kick. (Masters swimmers are permitted to do a breaststroke kick).
- All up and down movements of the legs shall be simultaneous. The legs and feet need not be on the same level, but they shall remain simultaneous.
- The touch shall be made with both hands, separated and simultaneously.

## Backstroke

- The start is from the water, with both hands holding the starting grips or the wall. The toes are not permitted to bend over the lip or gutter.
- **Reminder:** When using a backstroke ledge at least one toe from each foot must be in contact with the touchpad or the wall.
- Some part of the head must surface at or before the 15-meter mark off the start and at each turn.
- Once the swimmer has surfaced, they must break the surface throughout the race except at the finish where they may be submerged after some part of the head has passed the 5m mark into the wall and they must finish on their back.
- The swimmer must remain on the back throughout the race and is permitted to do any stroke on the back.
- At a turn, swimmers may choose to turn onto their breast. If they choose to turn on their breast they must take an immediate continuous single arm pull or an immediate continuous simultaneous double arm pull. Once the arm(s) has completed the pull (the hands at the hips), the swimmer must be initiating the turn. At the completion of the turn, the swimmer must leave the wall on their back.

## Breaststroke

- There is no 15m surfacing requirement. From the start and at each turn, the swimmer may take a full arm stroke completely back to the legs.



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- At any time prior to the first breaststroke kick a single butterfly kick is permitted.
- At the widest part of the second arm pull, some part of the head must surface.
- The breaststroke kick is the only kick that is permitted throughout the stroke, the feet must be turned out during the propulsive part of the kick.
- The cycle is one pull, one kick.
- All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and be brought forward from the breast.
- The touch shall be made with both hands, separated and simultaneously.
- The swimmer must leave the wall on the breast.
- The elbows are to be in the water throughout the stroke except for the last stroke before a turn and at the finish touch, where the swimmer may reach for the wall with the elbows over the water.

### **Individual Medley (IM)**

- The order for IM is butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle.
- Each stroke shall cover  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the race.
- Each stroke shall be started, swum and finished under the rules for each stroke. (You may choose to describe each transition at this point.)
- The freestyle stroke must be something other than fly, back or breast.
- When they leave the wall for freestyle, the swimmer shall make no propulsive motions until they have turned onto their breast.

### **Relays**

- The judge will observe the departing swimmer's toes and once they have left the starting platform, the judge drops their eyes to the incoming swimmer to ensure that they have touched. A swimmer who leaves early is not permitted to return to the start to touch. Remember to circle the name of the swimmer who left early on the heat sheet.
- The departing swimmer may be in motion prior to their toes losing contact with the starting platform.
- The swimmers **MUST** swim in the order their names appear on the relay entry card held by the timers.
- The timers shall verify that swimmer's name when the swimmer exits the pool after their leg of the relay.
- The order for the Medley Relay is backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle.

### **Water Starts**

- A swimmer starting in the water must have one hand and one foot in contact with the wall prior to the start signal.