



## MIDWESTERN SWIMMING

## Officials' Guidelines For Observed Swims

The intent of observing swims is to provide an opportunity for high school and NCAA swimmers who can not compete in MWS sanctioned meets during their association season to achieve times that may be used to enter USA Swimming meets. For times achieved at meets conducted under other than USA Swimming technical rules (*e.g.* NFHS, NCAA, YMCA) to count as official USA Swimming times:

- A request for observation must be made and the meet must be approved for observation
- The swims must be observed by USA Swimming certified officials (observers) who ensure that the swim was in compliance with USA Swimming technical rules

Observation may occur in one of two formats:

- Swimmers are required to request observation: under this format only those swimmers requesting observation are observed (USA Swimming athletes not requesting observation are not observed)
- The entire meet is observed ("blanket" observation): under this format, all swimmers are observed, whether requested or not

Staffing (under all circumstances there must be a minimum of two NFHS/NCAA/YMCA Stroke and Turn officials at each end of the pool to ensure adequate coverage of the rules governing the conduct of the meet):

- If all of the Stroke and Turn officials are also USA Swimming certified, those officials may also serve as the observers and no additional observers are necessary. The dual certified officials shall record any USA Swimming disqualifications for USA Swimming rules which would not be disqualifications under the rules of the meet.
- If none or only some of the meet Stroke and Turn officials are USA Swimming certified, then separate observers are required (USA Swimming rules require a minimum of two USA Swimming Stroke and Turn certified officials, one at each end of the pool).
  - Observers are positioned at the ends of the pool to observe as unobtrusively as possible (this must be coordinated with the Referee running the meet)
  - Observers must be cognizant of their specific role for USA Swimming, i.e. they are not there to judge other officials acting in a different capacity

### Disqualifications

- Stroke and Turn officials working in the dual capacity of being both a meet official and an observer:
  - Are responsible for ensuring compliance with the rules under which the meet is being swum and with USA Swimming rules
  - Should only raise their hand to signal a disqualification when there is an infraction of the rules under which the meet is being conducted
  - Should not raise their hand to signal a disqualification that would occur only under USA Swimming rules
  - Should mark a disqualification of the appropriate swimmer on their heat sheet when there is a violation of a rule that is unique to USA Swimming (the specific violation should be noted; the current "Swimming Rules: Common Elements and Differences" provides a good summary)

- Stroke and Turn officials working only in an observer capacity:
  - At meets which do have USA Swimming observers (2 are acceptable), the USA Swimming observers shall record ONLY disqualifications for USA Swimming rules which would not be disqualifications under the rules of the meet
  - Are responsible for ensuring compliance with those rules that are unique to USA Swimming
  - Should not raise their hand upon observing an infraction
  - Should mark a disqualification of the appropriate swimmer on their heat sheet when there is a violation of a rule that is unique to USA Swimming (the specific violation should be noted)
- An administrative disqualification should not invalidate an achieved time.
  - Either the dual certified officials or the USA Swimming observers shall work with meet administration to record/report the time to be submitted to the SWIMS times' database
- Other meet procedures and follow-up:
  - USA Swimming Disqualification Reports
    - At the end of each session one of the observers should collect all the heat sheets with the marked USA Swimming disqualifications
    - Optional - This information can be collated into a single "USA Swimming DQ Report"
  - Forward the following information to the MWS NTV Chair (Betty Kooy)
    - Any log sheets with swimmer names and birthdates
    - Heat sheets with USA Swimming disqualifications noted

The following are certain minimum criteria that must be applied to all high school, collegiate, Masters, and any other meets authorized to have swims observed. The MWS NTV officer has the responsibility of verifying compliance.

- Timing must comply with USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 102.16.
- If separate officials are being used for observation, at least one official must be stationed at each end of the pool.
- The number of host Association meet officials (high school, NCAA, etc.) must meet the minimum requirements as provided in Article 102.12 of the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations.
- The meet shall be on the published calendar of the appropriate, school, league, conference, etc. Observation of high school competition shall be authorized for meets in the championship progression and large invitational meets run according to championship protocols. NCAA dual meets, invitational swim meets and championship meets shall be eligible to be observed when officiating standards of MWS are met and timely notification to MWS occurs.
- A time trial held in conjunction with a meet whose swims are authorized for observation may also be observed if the time trial will be officiated to the same standard as the authorized meet.