

## VBSL – Referee and Starter Training Session

### ❖ Welcome

- Role of Referee/Starter
  - Referee – Be a fair unbiased facilitator of competition
  - Starter – Give all swimmers a fair chance to get a good start

### ❖ Referee

- Know the rules
  - Understand both the VBSL and USA rules and the differences between them (mainly backstroke turn)
  - Know how to handle disputes
  - Know the timing systems and how to determine official times (Dolphin/Electronic, Manual Watches, Button, other?)
- Be fair to all
  - The Ref is there for both teams – no home team bias
  - Remember this is Summer League
    - All rules apply, but give kids a chance to compete
  - Do not over officiate
    - Don't make stroke calls unless S&T official is clearly not in position or other unusual circumstance
  - Do not under officiate
    - Keep control of Stroke & Turn officials. Make sure they are doing their job.
  - Do not argue. Keep things calm. Enlist help of coaches, team reps as needed.
- Be proficient
  - Have a plan for the day.
  - Make sure you know who the Team Reps and Coaches are.
  - Know the pool you are working and a plan for fair officiating coverage
  - Know who the lead guards/managers are of the facility.
  - Have a plan in case there is a threat of unsafe weather conditions
  - Have an Official's briefing with all officials (first and second half)
    - Cover jurisdictions, rotations, rules, unusual situations, swimmers with disabilities (if any)
  - Make sure timers are keeping up with the flow of the meet.
    - Address any timers not doing their jobs politely – remind them of the importance of their jobs
    - Make sure they are getting water
    - Make sure they are not overly distracted (cell phones, kids, etc..)
  - Keep an eye on the overall flow of the meet
    - Use team reps to assist where needed (Clerk-of-course, DQ delivery, etc..)
- Disqualifications (DQs)
  - Make sure officials are properly positioned to make calls
    - Relay take-offs from the sides
    - S&T are walking the sides or on the ends as appropriate

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- Officials are raising their hands to indicate stroke infractions (not raising their hands for relay take-offs)
- Officials are filling out the DQ slips properly and completely.
  - Have them write their name or initials clearly so that you can read and determine who the DQ is from
  - Confirm Heat & Lane match
  - Confirm the stroke infraction matches the stroke being swum.
- Use an experienced judge to be a Chief Judge if you have enough officials
  - A visiting team's Ref is a great CJ or a more experienced S&T.
  - Have them review DQs for accuracy before bringing to you for signature.
- Make sure the DQ is legitimate.
  - Don't be afraid to question a S&T official if you do not understand an infraction.
  - Remember – Ugly swimming is not necessarily illegal swimming
  - Take multiple DQs on the same swimmer. (This reinforces the point to the coaches and is great evidence of an illegal swim)
- Do make calls for unusual situations:
  - Swimmer not finishing the event, sportsmanship, out of order relays, etc..

### ❖ Starter

- Give swimmers a fair start
  - Need a clear calm voice
  - Need to practice
  - Understand the equipment you are working with (Recall system)
  - Make sure you get prime position for seeing all swimmers at the start
    - Ask Ref to move to the other side of you if needed
    - Make sure you are at the start end of the pool (move as needed if swimmers start from both ends for 25s versus 50s, 100s, relays)
  - You and the Ref are a team. Make sure you know what the Ref wants from you.
  - Help the Ref by looking behind the blocks prior to the start for missing swimmers or other items that help the flow of the meet.
- Start Sequence (Updated May 2014)
  - The Ref blows a series of short whistles
  - The Announcer (or Starter if acting as Announcer also) announces the Event and/or Heat
  - The Ref blows one long whistle. This indicates to the swimmer to move to the desired starting position or enter the water if backstroke. A second long whistle will be blown for backstroke once all swimmers heads are above water.
  - The Ref extends his or her arm which turns the start over to the Starter. At this point you are in charge of the swimmers.
  - The Starter says "Take Your Mark"
  - Once the swimmers are all stationary the Starter presses the start button

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- If you see a False Start or if the Ref blows his whistle after the start, use the start system to recall the swimmers. All swimmers that went before the start get a warning and if they False Start a second time, they are disqualified.
- Starting Tips
  - Use a calm clear voice. Do not scare the swimmers into the pool.
  - Swimmers do not need to be motionless, just stationary.
  - If swimmers do not follow the command, calmly ask them to stand (or relax if backstroke)
  - Make sure swimmers are getting a fair chance to start meaning: there is not excessive noise, that there are not other swimmers/timers/officials crowding them at the start line, that you are patient with young swimmers.
- ❖ Ref & Starter – Practice
  - Prior to the first meet. Use Time Trials to get timing down.
  - Don't hesitate to get help/training from the other team's seasoned officials if you are new.