
Officials' Newsletter - August 2025

USA Swimming Officials <Officials@mail.usaswimming.org>

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OFFICIALS' NEWSLETTER



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Greetings from the Chair

By: Dana Covington

Another championship season is just about to wrap up! These meets could not have happened without you! A huge THANK YOU to every one of you who have spent your precious time on a deck officiating at one (or two or three) of these pool and open water local swim committee (LSC) Championships, Speedo Sectionals, Zones, TYR Futures Championships, Speedo Junior National Championships, or TYR Summer Championships meet. What a gift you have given to these teams and athletes. Additionally, during this summer officials qualifying meet (OQM) season, the N2 and N3 evaluators conducted nearly 900 evaluations. That is pretty impressive! Thank you to each of you who have taken the opportunity to seek out this mentoring opportunity to advance your knowledge and skill as a volunteer official. I am very proud of the efforts of the national evaluators to share their expertise with others in a positive learning environment. It is also appreciated that some of you take the time to complete the Evaluate the Evaluator Survey. Every comment is appreciated and considered. The comments, in large, reflect the appreciation for the evaluator and mentoring program. As we support and elevate each other, we become better as a body of officials. We are an impressive team of officials in 59 LSCs, and it shows! This September's officials training at the annual Summit in Denver will focus on helping the LSC officials develop their mentoring skills.

Enjoy a little down time for the remainder of August and September.

Announcements

- **National Meets:** Applications to officiate at national meets are generally posted six months (~180 days) prior to the meet start date. Applications typically close four months (~120 days) prior to the meet start date, but applications may close earlier if a sufficient number of applications have been received.
 - **Toyota U.S. Open Championships:** December 3-6, 2025, in Austin, Tex. MR: Mike Dilli. Applications are now closed.
 - **Speedo Winter Junior Championships:** December 10-13, 2025. Applications are now closed.
 - East: Indianapolis, Ind. - Kevin Hogan
 - West: Austin, Tex. - Marianne Walling
 - **TYR Pro Swim Series:** Officials may apply to all three meets, but depending upon the application pool, will be selected to serve at only one of these first three TYR Pro Series meets.
 - January 14-17, Austin, Texas - MR: Derigan Silver ([application is now open](#))
 - March 4-7, Westmont, Ill. - MR: Phil Barnes ([application is now open](#))
 - May 20-23, Sacramento, Calif. - Officiating details TBA
 - June 17-20, Indianapolis, Ind. - Officiating details TBA
 - **2026 Open Water National and Junior National Championships**
 - April 2-4, Sarasota, Fla. - Officiating details TBA
 - **Toyota National Championships**
 - July 28-August 1, Irvine, Calif. - Officiating details TBA
- The next **National Officials Committee Quarterly Meeting** will be held by Zoom on Wednesday, September 17 at 6 p.m. MT. This is an open meeting.
- The next **LSC Officials Chairs Quarterly Meeting** will be held by Zoom on Wednesday, October 8, 2025, at 6 p.m. MT. This is an open meeting (request the Zoom link from your LSC Officials Chair), but only LSC Officials Chairs may comment or ask questions. Please contact your LSC Officials Chair to learn more about the items discussed at these meetings.
- The [NCAA 2025-26 and 2026-27 Swimming and Diving Rules Book](#) is now available as a downloadable PDF. Information on the [NCAA Officials Education and Registration](#)

[Program](#) has been updated for the upcoming season. The NCAA rules test will be available beginning August 15, 2025.

- The 2024 and 2025 editions of the USA Swimming Officials' Newsletter can be found on the [Newsletter Archive page](#) of the USA Swimming website.
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Recruitment and Retention of Officials

By: Corky Bye, Dayna Gripp, and Lorraine Temple

Competitive swimming events require numerous volunteers such as timers, timing system operators, announcers, meet marshals, and certified officials. [This article](#) provides an overview of the approaches taken to recruit and retain certified officials in three different Local Swim Committees (LSCs), and based on these experiences, it makes specific recommendations for the recruitment and retention of certified officials.

Benefits of Working at a National Meet

Click the links below to watch as Darcy Smith (Oregon Swimming), Clark Hammond (Southeastern Swimming), and Leia Richter (Sierra Nevada Swimming) share the benefits of working a national meet!

[WATCH](#)

Decoding “Approaching Sectional Protocols”

By: Trish Martin and Marianne Walling

If you're reviewing the requirements for requesting an N3 evaluation and applying for N3 certification, you may come across the phrase “no fewer than 8 sessions at USA Swimming sanctioned prelim/finals meets approaching Sectional protocols.” These experience sessions are mandatory prior to requesting both N3i and N3f evaluations. But what does “approaching Sectional protocols” actually mean? [Click here](#) to find out.

A Quick Guide to a Successful N2 or N3 National Certification Application Process

By: Trish Martin

Officials who have recently been evaluated for N2 or N3 national certification or recertification, and sometimes soon-to-be-evaluated officials are eager to get the application process started. Before submitting that application for national certification, you should first make sure that you meet all the requirements so that your application does not get rejected.

[Review this article](#) to better understand the application process.

Athlete Representatives on the USA Swimming National Officials Committee

By: Colin Gibbons, Dylan Nelsen, Hannah Cousins, and Noah Berryman

As with any voting body within the United States Olympic movement, the National Officials Committee has a number of athlete representatives serving as voting members of the committee.

[Click here](#) to learn how these athletes bring their perspective to the committee.

Celebrating One Year of the Junior Official Membership Category

By: Zach Toothman

September 1, 2025, marks one year since the launch of the junior official membership category, a program designed to welcome the next generation of swimming officials into the deck-side community. Over the past year, we've seen incredible engagement, enthusiasm, and growth in this pilot category, and we are excited to celebrate its success.

To read more, [click here](#).

Junior Official Feedback

By: Samantha Synsvoll, Samuel Stockton, and Theodore Avelis

In order to gain a "first-hand" perspective of the Junior Official program, the USA Swimming Officials Committee Communications and Social Media Working Group recently completed written interviews with three junior officials: Samantha Synsvoll, Samuel Stockton, and Theo Avelis. The interview questions and responses from each of the three participants can be [read here](#).

Situations and Resolutions

By: Jack Swanson

The Online Testing Working Group spent the last year updating the Stroke and Turn and Starter/Referee Situations and Resolutions, adding situations and resolutions based on recent rule changes and adding situations pertinent to officiating athletes with disabilities (thanks to the Disability Subcommittee of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee for their help!). Links to the situations and resolutions are below and are also published to the USA Swimming webpage:

- [Stroke and Turn](#)
- [Starter and Deck Referee](#)

Each newsletter, we will highlight a situation and resolution from each group. [Click here](#) to see two selected situations and resolutions.

Thank You for Reader Feedback

Thank you to both Jack Neil (Potomac Valley Swimming) and Rome Yount (Arizona Swimming) who have identified questions in need of revision or correction for the published situations and resolutions. We appreciate your feedback and thank you for helping us to make sure all our publications are as accurate as possible.

Congratulations!

Congratulations and thank you to the following officials who recently represented USA Swimming in international competition:

World Aquatics Championships, Singapore, July 11-August 3, 2025

Dana Covington - Sierra Nevada Swimming
Tom Lombardo (open water) - Ozark Swimming
Jay Thomas - North Carolina Swimming
Lisa Vetterlein - San Diego-Imperial Swimming

Junior Pan American Games, Asunción, Paraguay, August 10-14, 2025

Hector Acevedo (open water) - Florida Gold Coast Swimming
Edgar Caraballo - Ohio Swimming
Kathy Fish - Florida Gold Coast Swimming
Rich McMillen - Potomac Valley Swimming
Jason Johnson - North Texas Swimming
Traci Johnson - North Texas Swimming
Jayne Spittler (open water) - Illinois Swimming

World Aquatics Junior Championships, Otopeni, Romania, August 19-24, 2025

Dana Covington - Sierra Nevada Swimming
Jason Johnson - North Texas Swimming
Mickey Smythe - Indiana Swimming

Congratulations and thank you to the following officials who recently served at their first national meet (Note - we apologize for any omissions or errors):

Speedo Junior National Championships, Irvine, Calif., July 30-August 3, 2025

Sharon Badertscher - Lake Erie Swimming
Paul Cary - Niagara Swimming
ReNaye Davis - Virginia Swimming
Becky Fowkes - Potomac Valley Swimming
Francis Friedman - Potomac Valley Swimming
Daniel Guzman - San Diego-Imperial Swimming
Scott Hastings - Sierra Nevada Swimming
Jane Ju - Pacific Swimming
Tara Maxey - North Carolina
Laura Razzolini - Southeastern Swimming
Michael Repko - Iowa Swimming

Susan Repko - Iowa Swimming
Shaunna Tobin - North Carolina
Chin Tong - Colorado Swimming
Iris Yao - Metropolitan Swimming

TYR Summer Championships, Irvine, Calif., August 5 – 8, 2025

Bob Armbruster - Pacific Swimming
Tom Donley - Potomac Valley
Bill Hayhurst - Oregon Swimming
Dan Ho - Metropolitan Swimming
Annemarie Juhlin - Virginia Swimming
Ha Nguye - Colorado Swimming
Hang Owen - Potomac Valley Swimming
David Rivera - Maryland Swimming
Teri Rose - Arizona Swimming



Officials' Excellence Award

Congratulations to the August winner of the Officials' Excellence Award: Ellen Colket from Potomac Valley Swimming.

Ellen Colket has been an official for more than 20 years. Ellen spends most weekends on a pool deck, either as an official just helping at a local meet, or as a meet referee, mentor, or evaluator. Although she is very active on the national officiating scene, she is also a frequent volunteer at all levels of meets in Potomac Valley Swimming (PVS). She is an active evaluator both in the PVS LSC as well as other LSCs and at the national level. Beyond that, she is a former swimmer herself, has coached high school, and supports local meets including masters meets, college meets, and Special Olympics meets. Ellen is the epitome of a “renaissance woman” of swim officiating – she does it all. And while doing it all, she is caring, thoughtful, positive, and encouraging. She is always learning and improving her skills while helping others find their potential. Ellen is actively involved in PVS governance and is the current vice chair for finance for PVS, a role she has served in before. She established a PVS investment committee that includes athletes. She is also involved in USA Swimming governance and serves on the National Board of Review. Ellen is married and has raised two wonderful sons. She has a business background that includes extensive knowledge and experience in operations, program management, contract, and people development, allowing her opportunities to lead and develop culturally diverse and global organizations.

Thank you, Ellen!

Looking for more details on the Officials' Excellence Award?

The Officials' Excellence Award:

- National recognition for outstanding officials for LSC contribution
- Anyone can submit, although we will ask the LSC Officials' Chair or LSC General Chair for input
- The nominee must be an active member of USA Swimming with current registration
- There are six awards each year, one each in odd-numbered months
- Nominations close around April
- Nominations are held for two cycles (24 months) unless selected
- The National Officials Committee votes in May for the July through next May period (1 cycle)

Hopefully, your LSC OC committee is actively looking for ways to acknowledge officials and appreciate their service at the local level. This award is just a way to further acknowledge those deserving higher recognition. The link for the nomination form is [here](#).
