



THE MEET REFEREE

As outlined in the Swimming Canada (SNC) Rulebook, the Referee shall be responsible for ensuring that the rules are adhered to and for decision-making regarding all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet over which they are officiating. But what happens if there is more than one Referee at a meet? In order for a meet to be sanctioned, Meet Management is required to designate a 'Meet Referee.' Is this the Referee who is responsible? Alternatively, is it the Referee who is in charge of a specific session at the meet (i.e., the Session Referee)?

The Meet Referee and Session Referee should be considered separate, although related, positions. A Meet Referee may or may not also serve as a Session Referee at the meet itself. However, where the positions are separate, it is expected that the Meet Referee and Session Referee(s) will work as a team.

It is the Session Referee's responsibility to ensure that the rules of swimming are adhered to and for decision-making regarding all questions relating to the actual conduct of the session over which they are officiating. Thus, at a given meet, the Referee position as outlined in the SNC Rulebook, applies most directly to the Session Referee.

The Meet Referee's responsibilities are somewhat broader and restricted neither to the day of the meet nor to a specific session.

Qualifications and Responsibilities

The Meet Referee for all multi-club sanctioned meets shall be a Level 4 or 5 official. For BC Provincial Championships, the Meet Referee shall be a Level 5 official. For BC Divisional Championships and high-level, multi-day invitationals with heats and finals, it is recommended that the Meet Referee be Level 5 or a very experienced Level 4 official. For in-house time trials, a Level 3 official may be the Meet Referee, if approved by Swim BC and the Regional Officials' Director.

The main responsibilities of this position include:

- Providing advice and input to the Meet Director/Manager/Organizing Committee to help ensure that a meet adheres to the rules of swimming.
- To help ensure the consistency, fairness and quality of officiating is maintained throughout a meet.

Over the course of a meet, these responsibilities will tend to unfold as follows:

Before the Meet

- Participate on the Meet Organizing Committee (as required) and provide advice and assistance to ensure that the meet adheres to the rules of swimming.
- Assist in preparation of the meet package for sanctioning (to ensure accuracy, adherence to the rules, feasibility of events and length of meet, etc.).
- Coordinate with Meet Officials Chair to ensure that an adequate number of appropriately certified officials are in place for each session of the meet (including Referee, Starter, Chief Timer, Clerk of Course, Chief Finish Judge, Chief Judge of Electronics, Stroke and Turn, Timing).
- Work with the Meet Officials Chair and Meet Management to ensure that all equipment and/or forms required are in place for the senior officials (including Referee, Starter, Chief Timer, Clerk of Course, Chief Finish Judge, Chief Judge of Electronics, Stroke and Turn).

During the Meet

- Attend all sessions of the meet (Note: Having the Meet Referee present throughout all sessions of a meet is particularly important in meets that involve multiple days, sessions and Session Referees).

- Attend Coach and/or Technical Meeting(s) to ensure coaches are briefed on any changes to meet package or meet schedule, start and scratch procedures, and any other special procedures or variances that have been required that differ from the sanctioned meet package.
- Work with Session Referee(s) to ensure warm-up sessions are coordinated, lanes and times designated, and Safety Marshalls are briefed.
- Meet with Session Referee(s) to review meet requirements and procedures so as to help ensure fair and consistent application of rules and procedures throughout the meet. These requirements and procedures may include: officials briefings, deck entry and scratch procedures, rule interpretations, start procedures, swim-overs, timing of session, double-ending/double-laning, use of announcer, awards, pace and rhythm, handling of infractions, handling of protests, debriefings, sign-off procedures, etc.. Problems encountered in previous sessions should also be reviewed.
- Be available to fill in for the Session Referee (or other senior official) when necessary (e.g., while they are otherwise busy with on-deck problems).
- Provide advice and assistance to the Session Referee (serving as a resource, or someone to bounce ideas off when requested) with regard to protests and/or any other problems and issues that arise over the course of the meet. In the event of a Jury of Appeal, the Meet Referee should avoid being on the jury if they have counselled the Session Referee. (Note: This is ideal if there are enough senior officials to be placed on the jury - however, this may not always be the case).
- Mentor and/or evaluate Referees and Starters (if requested).

After the Meet

- Provide feedback to the Meet Director/Manager/Meet Organizing Committee (as required) regarding any issues encountered during the meet. Forward any opportunities for improvement to the Officials Advisory Committee or Regional Officials Director (depending on the level of meet).