



OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER



Featured Content

- [Greetings From the Chair](#)
 - [National Meet Announcements](#)
 - [The Rule Change Process](#)
 - [Stroke & Turn Officiating - We Have Liftoff](#)
 - [Are You Ready? Part 2- A Guide to N2 Through N3 Certification](#)
 - [Hot Summer Nights](#)
 - [Refresh of the Officials' Webpages](#)
 - [Heard It on a Pool Deck](#)
 - [Asked and Answered](#)
 - [Situations and Resolutions](#)
 - [Congratulations!](#)
 - [Officials' Excellence Award](#)
 - [Newsletter Feedback](#)
-

Greetings from the Chair

By: Trish Martin

It has been an exciting spring so far! USA Swimming recently announced seven rule amendments based on World Aquatics (AQUA) rule changes. You can read the seven amendments on the Rules and Policies page on the USA Swimming website. In summary, the amendments provide for counting and ringing bells in the 400 freestyle, allowing swimmers to be completely submerged at the finish of the butterfly and freestyle, and no longer prohibit the use of therapeutic elastic tape. Stay tuned for the possibility of additional stroke rule amendments coming soon and learn more about how USA Swimming rules are amended in an article below.

The updated 2026 and new 2027 events calendar came out recently as well. You can find it on the Events page of the USA Swimming website. And national meet officiating applications will open soon, too. Take advantage of summer mentoring and evaluation opportunities at OQMs near you to get your swim resume in tip top shape. National events require nationally certified, experienced officials to ensure the best meets for our top swimmers. And every athlete at every local meet deserves that, too!

Enjoy the warm weather and have a wonderful long course season. Thank you for being officials.

See you at the pool,

Trish

National Meet Announcements

Upcoming USA Swimming Championship Meets	2026 Competition Dates	Location	Application Opens*	National Certification Requirements	Meet Referee(s)
Futures Championships	Jul 29 -Aug 1	Multi-site • Austin, Texas • Greensboro, N.C. • Knoxville, Tenn. • Madison, Wis. • Sacramento, Calif.	OPENED - Jan 29 Open for ST alternates	minimum N2ST	• Keith Lambert • Aimee Onoszko • Mike Trexler • Bryan Wallin • Sheila Lovell-Otterstrom
Toyota National Championships	Jul 28 -Aug 1	Irvine, Calif.	OPENED - Jan 29 Open for ST alternates	required N3ST	Anissa Kanzari
Speedo Junior National Championships	Aug 3-7	Irvine, Calif.	OPENED - Jan 29 Open for ST alternates	preferred N3ST	Marcus Stromberg

Pan Pacific Swimming Championships	Aug 12 - 15	Irvine, Calif.	Invitation Only		Trish Martin
Short Course World Championship Trials	Oct 28-31	Westmont, Ill.	April-28 Closed	required N3ST	Jamie Cahn
Toyota U.S. Open Championships	Dec 2-5	Austin, Texas	OPENED June 2	required N3ST	Traci Johnson
Speedo Winter Junior Championships - East	Dec 9-12	Indianapolis, Ind.	OPENED June 2	preferred N3ST	Kathy Fish
Speedo Winter Junior Championships - West	Dec 9-12	Austin, Texas	OPENED June 2	preferred N3ST	Edgar Caraballo
TYR Pro Series Meet - Nashville	Jan 14-17, 2027	Nashville, Tenn.	OPEN Mid to Late July	preferred N3ST	TBA
TYR Pro Series Meet - Westmont	March 3-6, 2027	Westmont, Ill.	OPEN Early to Mid September	preferred N3ST	TBA
TYR Pro Series Meet - Ft Lauderdale	April 21-24, 2027	FT Lauderdale, Fla.	OPEN Mid to Late October	preferred N3ST	TBA

*An application closes when a sufficient number of appropriate applicants have been obtained to fill the decks. Please mark your calendars, as applications have filled up quickly for recent meets. All applications are located on the [USA Swimming National Meet Application webpage](#).

PROCESS UPDATE: The process for notifying officials accepted for a meet after the national application closes has changed. The Center for Safe Sport now requires a review of all officials, including meet referees, before they are cleared for invitation. Please be patient and expect a longer lead time during this new process.

General Announcements

- The 2025 and 2026 issues of the USA Swimming Officials Newsletter can be found on the [Newsletter Archive page](#) (scroll down to "Officials' Newsletter" section) of the USA Swimming website.
- The **2026 USA Swimming Rulebook** has shipped! If you missed the Dec. 1, 2025 pre-order deadline to receive a printed copy of the rulebook, you can purchase one through [SwimOutlet](#), with availability expected soon. Both the [full](#) and [mini rulebooks](#) are available as PDFs.
- The next **LSC Officials Chairs Quarterly Meeting** will be held in person at the 2026 USA Swimming Annual Summit.
- The next **National Officials Committee Quarterly Meeting** will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams. The date is to be determined, but it will be held in September and prior to the 2026 USA Swimming Annual Summit. The link will be available on the [Events](#) page of the USA Swimming website. This is an open meeting, but only NOC members have a voice and vote.
- The revised [Officials Certification Standards](#) as approved by the USA Swimming BOD are now posted on the USA Swimming website (the document shows a June 2026 revision date). Also posted are revised training

logs for the ST, CJ, SR, CJ, Ref, and AO positions. Please note that the training logs for ST and AO can also be used to train junior officials in these positions. Head to the [Officials Certification Standards & Templates](#) section of the [USA Swimming](#) website to find all of these documents.

The Rule Change Process at USA Swimming

By: Trish Martin

In February, World Aquatics (AQUA) issued several amendments to its swimming competition rules. On May 6, USA Swimming's Rules and Regulations Committee issued seven amendments to align the USA Swimming rules with the AQUA rules, but not all of the AQUA changes were adopted. [This article](#) discusses the process USA Swimming uses to keep its technical rules in sync with AQUA's.

Stroke & Turn Officiating - We Have Liftoff

By: Ron Van Pool

Stroke and turn officials play an important role on deck, observing swimmers to ensure they are swimming in compliance with the rules. [This article](#) discusses the professionalism that stroke and turn officials bring to the deck.

Are You Ready? Part Two - A Guide to N2 Through N3 Certification

By: Marianne Walling and Anissa Kanzari

In part one of this two-part series exploring the question "Are you ready?", the April 2026 article focused on certification advancement at the LSC level. In this second part of the series, the article focuses on advancement through the N2 and N3 levels. [Read more here](#) to help you decide if you are ready for that next certification.

Hot Summer Nights

By: Jason Johnson

Hot Summer Nights is coming soon. LSC Referee (August 19), Advance Referee (August 26), and Open Water (September 2) are this year's offerings. [Click here](#) for more details, and mark the dates on your calendar.

Refresh of the Officials' Webpages

By: Kevin Hogan, Aimee McMillan, George Mathes, and Phil Barnes

The officials' webpages on the USA Swimming website have been reorganized and refreshed since the beginning of 2026. Read [this article](#) to learn about what the webpages have to offer.

Heard It on a Pool Deck

By: Phil Barnes

We have all heard them – the myths, the urban legends, and the ideas that make their way from pool deck to pool deck. While some of these items might be appropriate in some well-defined circumstances, others just miss the mark. [Click here](#) to get the real scoop on things heard on a pool deck.

Asked and Answered

By: Kevin Hogan and Trish Martin

A question asked by one official is frequently a question asked by many officials. [Asked and Answered](#) endeavors to address officiating questions likely to be of broad interest.

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.

Congratulations!

Congratulations and thank you to the following officials who recently served at their first national meet:

TYR Pro Swim Series – Sacramento, Calif. May 20-23, 2026
Blake Cunningham - Sierra Nevada Swimming
Mike Flegel - Pacific Swimming



Officials' Excellence Award

Congratulations to the June winner of the Officials' Excellence Award: Mike Burgess, Niagara Swimming.

Mike Burgess embodies the excellence, professionalism, and dedication that the USA Swimming Officials Excellence Award is designed to recognize. He is one of Niagara Swimming's most trusted and versatile officials, known for his reliability, deep rule knowledge, and unwavering commitment to supporting athletes and fellow officials. Serving on multiple committees and consistently ranking among our highest-contributing volunteers, Mike has become a cornerstone of our LSC's officiating community.

His impact extends well beyond Niagara. Mike has officiated at numerous national-level meets, where his calm presence, consistency, and fairness have earned him the respect of officials, coaches, and athletes alike. He approaches every assignment with integrity and a clear focus on ensuring a fair and positive competitive environment.

Over the past three years, Mike has also served as an evaluator during the Niagara Swimming Open Championships. In this role, he has demonstrated exceptional leadership and mentorship, helping developing officials grow in confidence, judgment, and professionalism. His thoughtful guidance and high standards have strengthened the quality of officiating across the LSC.

Mike's service reflects the very best of our sport. His integrity, professionalism, and dedication to both athletes and officials make him an outstanding and deserving recipient of the June 2026 USA Swimming Officials Excellence Award.

Thank you, Mike!

Officials Excellence Award Nominations Deadline Extended!

Due to a lack of nominations for the Officials Excellence award, the nomination period will remain open through July 15, 2026. The National Officials Committee will then vote on the next cycle of six recipients.

The Officials Excellence Award:

- National recognition for outstanding officials for LSC contributions
- Anyone can submit a nomination, 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 in each issue of the Officials Newsletter
- Nominations are held for two cycles (24 months) unless selected

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

Newsletter Feedback

In this newsletter, we strive to provide information that will benefit the community of USA Swimming officials. Please let us know if we are meeting that objective. Feedback, both positive and negative, is welcome, as are suggestions for future topics. [Click here](#) to provide us with your feedback and suggestions. Your comments are anonymous unless you choose to leave your name.



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