



Officials Committee Q2 Meeting

May 1, 2024

5:00 p.m. MT/7:00 p.m. ET

USA Swimming Mission: USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. We administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Olympic & Amateur Sports Act. We provide programs and services for our members, supporters, affiliates and the interested public. We value these members of the swimming community, and the staff and volunteers who serve them. We are committed to excellence and the improvement of our sport. We are committed to providing a safe and positive environment for all members.

Officials Committee Mission: To conduct programs to recruit, educate, train and certify a diverse team of USA Swimming officials to provide the highest quality and consistent officiating for athletes at all levels of swimming.

USA Swimming Priority Results:

1. USA Swimmers achieve sustained competitive success at the Olympic Games and other high-level international competitions.
2. Members have and use resources for sustainable success.
3. There is growth in swimming participation and interest.
4. USA Swimming is recognized as the “Best in Class” National Governing Body.

Type of Meeting: Officials Committee Quarterly Meeting – Q2 2024 (*Virtual*)

Meeting Facilitator(s): Dana Covington (Chair) and Anne Lawley (Committee Member)

ROLL CALL

Present: Dana Covington (Chair), Jason Johnson, Anne Lawley, Trish Martin, Curtis Myers, Jack Swanson, Marianne Walling, Dylan Nelsen (Athlete), Derek Paul (ex officio), Kathleen Scandary (ex officio), Judy Sharkey (ex officio), Jay Thomas (ex officio), Dean Ekeren (Staff), Brendan Hansen (Staff), Macie McNichols (Staff)

Committee Members Not Present: Mike Murphy, Hannah Cousins, Harper Freeman, Colin Gibbons

Guests: Ken Galica, Tracy Meece, Susan Mechler, Jim Peterfish, Betsy Russell, Lisa Vetterlein

MINUTES

- I. **Call to Order:** Dana Covington called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. Mountain Time (MT)
- II. **Introduction, Mission & Housekeeping Items**
- III. **Staff Updates**
 - Dean Ekeren reported that there are no major updates; USA Swimming is in full preparation for the 2024 U.S. Olympic Team Trials, which are set to be held next month in Indianapolis, IN.
 - Brendan Hansen is working on communication for the 2024 USA Swimming Workshop.



IV. Ex officio Updates

- Program and Events (*Kathleen Scandary*)
 - Rules & Regs update meeting was held on April 23. AO is someone on all meet announcements. DR and MR for pool competitions, and MR for OW. Worked on definition for alternating kick. Jay Thomas provided insight to new definitions. Submitted to R&R, no questions at time of meeting.
- Updates from World Aquatics (*Jay Thomas*)
 - Run up to Paris. Two USA Swimming Officials will be on-deck at the Games. The next World Aquatics Congress is a year away.
- Rules & Regs (*Derek Paul*)
 - Two weeks out from deadline of submitting proposed R&R. The updated Officials Standards document has been reviewed, approved by USA Swimming's Board of Directors, and re-posted.
- YMCA (*Judy Sharkey*)
 - National Championships in Greensboro. Finished reciprocity agreement between YMCA and USA Swimming. YMCA LCM championships end of July.

Lisa Vetterlein joined the call to bring forward a possible amendment/rule change to the Committee. Additional proposed legislation items were discussed.

- Change "Stand Command" to "a stand command" to simplify and comply with all strokes and situations. Dana Covington and Derek Paul to write this proposal.

V. R5 Article 105 - Presented by Jim Peterfish, accompanied by Dana Covington

Dana Covington invited Jim Peterfish to the May 2024 Officials Committee call to discuss changes to legislation by the passage of R5.

The Why – Mr. Peterfish explained that there were inconsistencies with how swimmers with disabilities were accepted and officiated in meets. Over the years, Article 105 has had very few changes and needed revisions.

The Motivation – The motivation being R5 was to ensure that swimmers with disabilities received parallel experiences to their able-bodied competitors when competing at meets. The number of swimmers with disabilities competing in competitions is low compared to the number of sanctioned competitions. Mr. Peterfish explained that swimmers with disabilities need to be treated as athletes, attending competitions and are there to swim.

Mr. Peterfish noted that R5 added definitions for accountability and communication. Both are now shared responsibilities with the coach, as much as the official. Guidelines for Article 105 included how the Meet Referee may choose to communicate accommodations and modifications to their officiating crew. Article 105 also overturned disqualifications if a modification is in place for a para-athlete. It is up to the Starter and Stroke and Turn officials to observe and report infractions *OTHER* than what is listed as a modification for the specific swimmer. To summarize, the preferred method is for the MR to not alert officials, process DQ, and invoke Article 105 when appropriate.

Furthermore, Article 105 provided definitions and distinction between accommodation and modification for meet referees, officials, and others:



Accommodation (accessibility) – timeline, arrival at facility to the starting blocks.
Modification – under the authority of the starter, changes made for the athlete.

He further noted that the Meet Referee has sole authority for approving accommodations for para swimmers.

VI. NOC Recommended Rule Changes for HOD

Addressed during the ex-officio updates. No additional updates.

VII. NOC Goals Tracking

- Education Working Group (*Jason Johnson*)
 - Jason Johnson provided insight on the responses received from the Officials Newsletter's survey results:
 - December 2023 – 482 views, 205 responses, 43% conversion rate.
 - Feb 2024 – 422 views, 236 responses, 56% conversion rate.
 - April 2024 (feedback still being received as of 5/1).
- Committee Chair (*Dana Covington*)
 - Dana Covington discussed the amendment recommendations for R9 to USA Swimming's Board of Directors. The most noteworthy amendment made now gives the LSC the choice of allowing their championship meets to be training opportunities. With the amendment in place, LSCs can opt to not use LSC Championship as training opportunity. Ms. Covington also created documentation that outlines the National Meet Officiating Selection Process. She plans to make the document public in June 2024. Anne Lawley added that there is a document on website that would pair nicely with Dana's new document. Ms. Covington also created the National Meet Referee Team Selection Guidelines. The goal is to increase the number of unique officials selected to assigned positions at national events. The guidelines have been shared with 2024 Futures and Speedo Summer Championships meet referee. It will also be made public in June 2024.
- Evaluation & Mentoring (*Trish Martin*)
 - Trish Martin explained that the Evaluation and Mentoring group added two new N3i and N3f mentors to the existing list. Several documents have been updated and posted to the website to reflect changes by R9.
- LSC Liaison (*Curtis Meyers*)
 - Curtis Meyer's task group has met. He asked the group for ideas on how to address the handbook for LSC Officials Chairs. The Officials Excellence Award program will be transitioned from Anne Lawley to Curtis Meter. More engagement, better understanding for new LSC Officials Chairs transitioning to committee.
- Testing (*Jack Swanson*)
 - Jack Swanson discussed the new testing survey results. Tests not required under R9 will be retired.
- Nationals Certs, OTS & OQM (*Marianne Walling*)
 - Marianne Walling's working group has met. She noted that the Evaluator's spreadsheet is up-to-date. Historical data (evaluators) have been added into past OTS. Evaluations are now being added. Additional work needed on back-end. Holding tank entry has stopped. 121 OQMS as of 5/1. National Certs – in testing. Nationals Certs. will shut down for June 2024.



- Athletes (*Dylan Nelsen*)
 - No updates.
- Officials Communication (*Anne Lawley*)
 - Anne added that the Officials Excellence Award will be moved under Curtis Meyer. The award has plenty of candidates. She and her working group are reviewing what's posted on the USA Swimming website, if the documents are current, and how pages can be reorganized to meet the needs of USA Swimming's officiating membership. The April 2024 Officials Newsletter went out last week. Officiating Standards FAQ update made with new updates to standards.

- VIII. Other Announcements (Dana Covington/Staff)
IX. Adjourn (Dana Covington)

Motion to Adjourn – 6:16 p.m. MT

Next Committee Meeting: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 – 5:00-6:00 pm MT (via Zoom)