

The First Whistle – And They're Off!

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Goals of Session

- Discuss your role as the Meet Referee during the meet, now that all your hard work planning has been completed.
  - Note: Other sessions will discuss the preparation for the meet and the meet announcement.
  - Focus is on OQM or championship level meet.
- Discuss your role as a manager and leader at the meet.

Leadership Styles Assessment

- Much of your job as a Meet Referee during the session requires managing people and personalities – officials, coaches, and volunteers.
  - Different roles and responsibilities at the meet.
  - Different motivations for being at the meet.
  - Different personal and professional backgrounds.
- It is important to understand your leadership styles and leadership styles of your team to effectively lead and empower them.

Leadership Styles Assessment

Executing Leaders – Green

Executing (*Dominant - D*) style leaders tend to be very results focused, and are often very action oriented.

Influencing Leaders – Red

Influencing (*I*) style leaders tend to be focused on influencing or persuading others, and are often very optimistic and enthusiastic.

Relationship Building Leaders – Blue

Relationship building (*Steadiness - S*) style leaders tend to be focused on cooperation, loyalty, dependability, and sincerity, and tend to be calm and deliberate.

Critical Thinking Leaders – Yellow

Critical thinking (*Conscientiousness - C*) style leaders tend to be focused on quality, accuracy, and expertise, and tend to be independent and detail oriented.



Leadership Styles Assessment

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING	RELATIONSHIP BUILDING	STRATEGIC THINKING
☐ Achiever	☐ Activator	☐ Adaptability	☐ Analytical
☐ Arranger	☐ Command	☐ Developer	☐ Context
☐ Belief	☐ Communication	☐ Connectedness	☐ Future-Thinking
☐ Consistency	☐ Competition/Jovial	☐ Empathy	☐ Idea-Generating
☐ Deliberative	☐ Maximizer	☐ Harmony	☐ Input
☐ Discipline	☐ Self-Assurance	☐ Inclusion	☐ Intellectual
☐ Focus	☐ Significance	☐ Individualization	☐ Learner
☐ Responsibility	☐ Woo (winning over / persuasive)	☐ Positivity	☐ Strategic
☐ Restorative		☐ Relator	

Now, onto the meet!

Starting the Meet

- Trust your TEAM to do their jobs – starting a meet on time is too big a job for one person! If needed, give a friendly nudge.
- Be aware of demeanor – you are setting the tone for the meet.
- Remember nearly everyone is a volunteer.

Starting the Meet

- Athletes, coaches, and spectators are counting on the officiating team for an on-time start.
  - **Timers** –
    - Enough timers?
    - Timers meeting conducted?
  - **Deck Officials** –
    - Officials meeting conducted?
    - Officials in place?
  - **Admin/Computer Operator** –
    - Timing system ready and in working order?
    - All timer sheets and programs printed and distributed?

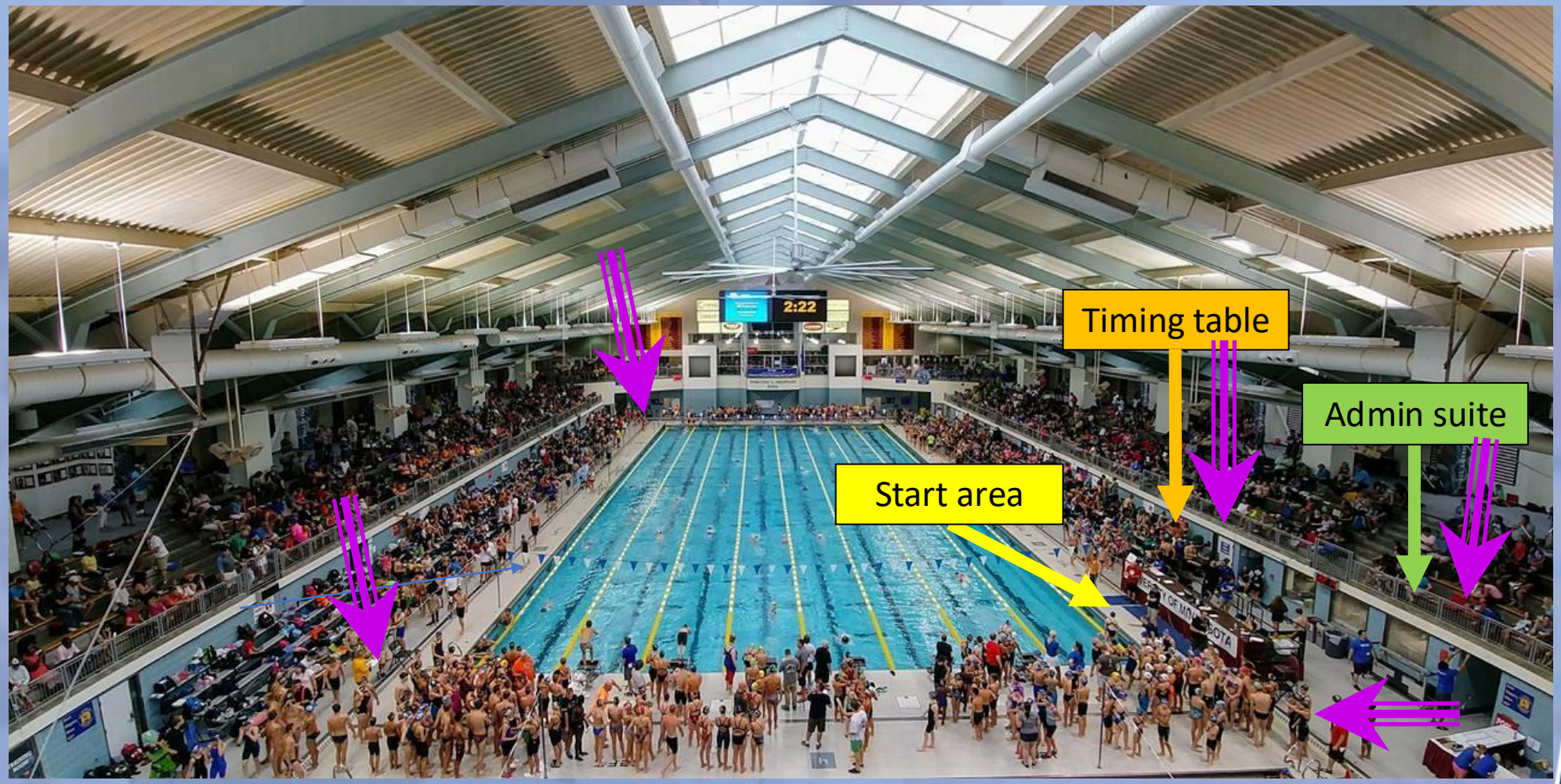
Empowering Your Team

- The duty of ensuring a fair competition for swimmers is too big for one person – you have a TEAM to assist with this!
- Let your LEADERS do their job and LEAD.
  - Many skills and expertise.
  - More than one way to meet end goal.
  - Let leaders shine.



- Understand your team's motivations for volunteering and get to know them as officials and as people.

Where is your Meet Referee Domain?



Where is your Meet Referee Domain?

- Where do you like to position yourself on or off deck?
- Depends on venue and your team!
  - Where are you accessible to coaches and officials without being in the way?
  - Where can you see the pool or the venue?
  - What are the levels of experience of officials on deck?

Should You Wear a Headset?

- Should you wear a headset?
  - Most Meet Referees prefer YES
    - In the loop on what's going on – disqualifications, no shows, unusual situations
    - Can step in as an extra set of eyes for the DR or AR
    - Can provide feedback to team members
  - Some Meet Referees prefer NO
    - Fresh set of eyes in resolving a disqualification or protest
    - May not know of potentially challenging situations in real time

Walking the Deck as an Ambassador

- Get feedback from coaches and officials – what's working, what's not.
- Handing out DQ slips?
- Prevent situation from 'blowing up' by being accessible to coaches and officials.
- Maintain a positive, calm demeanor throughout.
- Enjoy meet and fast swims.

Syncing With Evaluators

- Are there evaluators at the meet?
  - Communicate with the evaluators – changes to protocol, potential issues.
  - Discuss any feedback given to officials with evaluators so as not to contradict each other.

Communication is Key!

- One of your most important roles as a meet referee is **communication**!
  - Communicate your expectations with your team leads
  - Communicate rules and unique aspects of the meet with coaches
  - Communicate before problems arise

Checking In With Team Leads

- Schedule time to go over how things are going with your team leads.
  - Any necessary adjustments?
  - Are you staying on timeline?
  - If you make a change, what is your rationale?
  - Try to prevent major issues before they happen!

Working with Your Team Lead Chief Judge

- “Tightening up” protocol.
  - Safety or Safe Sport concerns
  - Unique features of the deck
  - Fairness and consistency
  - Appearance
- Any questions that have come up from officials (meeting times, unusual calls, rules and regulations).

Working with Your Head Starter

- Any tweaks to Deck Referee/Starter rotation.
  - Official not present
  - Putting officials in positions to be successful
- Any tweaks or reminders regarding pacing of the meet.
  - Ahead or behind timeline
  - Finals protocol (parading athletes, announcing athletes, when to blow whistles, when to clear pool)

Working with Your Administrative Referee

- Regularly work with your Administrative Referee
  - Double check and review prelims heat sheet
    - Proper seeding – circle seeding and distance events
  - Double check/review finals heat sheet
    - Proper order of finals (as per meet announcement)
    - Properly seeded
    - Timeline and awards breaks
    - Alternates listed in program

Working With the Meet Host

- Meet Referee plays a major role in implementing host club's vision for the meet - spelled out in Meet Information.
  - Meet Director is often ambassador for host club.
  - Is the meet being run according to the meet host's expectations?
  - Is there anything the meet host would change or plans to tweak/change (within the rules) that you should be aware of?

Thanking your Team!

- ALWAYS thank the officials, hospitality members, all volunteers, and the meet host.
- Everyone is volunteering their time to provide a fair and fun competition for the athletes.

When It Goes According to Plan…



Scenarios

- We will now walk through some scenarios that Meet Referees have encountered in the past.
  - Please feel free to unmute your microphone or type responses in the chat.

Questions to Consider

- Identify the problem(s)
- Concerns of Meet Ref?
- Decision Makers (Who has power?)
- Key stakeholders (Who needs to receive this information?)
- Resources (what is at your disposal to help?)
- Resolution?
- How will you disseminate the information?
- Is there some sort of communication that could have prevented the problem?

Scenario – Timing System Goes Down

- You are the MR at a 14 and under Zone Championship. You just completed your 2nd event and there is a catastrophic failure of the timing system. The timing system will not boot back up.
  - What are your options for how to proceed?
  - Whose input should you seek before making a decision on how to proceed?
  - Who should you communicate your decision with?

Scenario – Coach Upset About Entries

- At a large regional 14 and under championship meet a young coach of a team is upset because his relay team's time will not count because one of the swimmers was not registered for the meet. The Meet Announcement does allow for Relay Only swimmers if they are registered for the meet prior to the entry deadline. The coach had multiple email communications with the AO/Entry Chair during which it was mentioned that the relay athletes could be identified up until the start of the relay.
  - What information would you need to make decision?
  - How would you resolve the situation?
  - What could have been done to prevent this situation?

Scenario – Swim Under Protest

- You are the MR at an LSC Championship meet. The swimmer who is marked as a penalty NS enters the pool for the 100 backstroke. You hear the DR ask admin via the radio if the swimmer is indeed as penalty NS. Admin confirms the swimmer is a PNS. The DR asks the swimmer to exit the pool. The swimmer is confused and is unaware of a NS or PNS. The swimmer is again asked to exit the pool which they do. The heat is raced and then the swimmers unhappy coach approaches and states that his swimmer was not allowed to race and wants to know why! Preliminary investigation reveals the wrong swimmers were marked DFS and NS by Admin. The swimmer that was made to exit was NOT a DFS or PNS.
  - How should the Meet Referee handle this situation?
  - What additional information is needed before making a decision?
  - What could have been done to prevent this situation?

Scenario – Team Not Cohesive

- The Starter and Deck Ref team are not cohesive at this televised Pro Series Meet. The team members are all N3 certified but this is the first time outside of their LSC for one of them and half have never worked with TV camera before. Some are new in their N3 role and some have tremendous experience. The announcer has not worked with any of the SR/DR team before. The Starter is feeling frustrated because the newish DR is looking to the Starter for guidance regarding protocol as the swimmers are behind the blocks. The Starter is focusing on their job at hand. Prior to the meet the Head DR met with the DR's and the Head Starter met with the Starters to review protocols.
  - How should the Meet Referee handle this situation?
  - What could have been done to prevent the situation?

Summary

- Remember that you are leading a TEAM – empower your team members to do their jobs!
  - Multiple ways to do job
  - Flexible
  - Experiment and find what works best for you
- Officials on the team have different leadership styles and motivations for being on deck – understand these to bring out their best.

Questions?

