



## President's Editorial

Hello Fellow Officials,

Partway through the Girls' 2007 Fall Season, I'd like to review several items:

### **1. Whistle Protocol –**

The new Whistle Commands Starting Protocols (Rule Book, page 74) are designed to minimize talking from Officials. Four (or more) whistles to bring the assembly to order, call the swimmers to the blocks, and prepare to swim. One whistle to call the swimmers to step up onto the blocks or enter into the water. (Which officially begins the race) (1.3.4, page 10).

The only words the swimmers need to hear is "Take your Mark". Even with a speaker attached to a Start System, the far lane often only hears muffled words from the Starter.

There is also the rationale that we now are seeing more non English-speaking swimmers on teams. After the first week of the season, the need is diminished to explain what the event is, how many lengths of each stroke are involved, telling the timers to check their watches, when the warning sound for the 500 will occur, asking for quiet, etc.

### **2. Starter Commands –**

On the Start, when one or more swimmers do not go into a Start Position on command:

- a. Please don't say: "Let's all come down together".
- b. Rather say: "Lane 2, Promptly Come to a Start Position when I give the command."
- c. Coaches have complained that their swimmers are trained to immediately respond to the Starter's command, and should not feel that they are responsible for the other competitors' not "coming down together".
- d. They're not in a Synchronized Water Show, where six competitors are somehow required to "come down together" in unison with their competition.  
***Tell the offending swimmer!***

### **3. Dual Confirmation for Relay Exchanges –**

When there are only two officials assigned to the meet, both must be able to judge the Relay Exchanges of each Relay Swimmer. The 'tug' to an official in this situation is to attempt to watch the strokes and turns of the rest of the field of competitors at the other end of the pool. When there are three officials, the problem is not an issue.

Bottom line...stay inside the Backstroke Flags during the Relays unless you're wearing roller skates and have a clear, empty runway down the side of the pool.

Our vote of Dual Confirmation for False Starts and for Relay Exchanges at all Dual Meets may need to be re-visited. I've heard many concerns from officials, and some from coaches about not DQ'ing "obvious" faults to everyone but one of two officials. Please be attentive and alert to this new Ruling.

A swimmer can beat the system, score points, and qualify for post-season competition if one official misses a call. I'm asking for feed-back from our membership to perhaps re-vote before the Winter Season.



**4. 500 Counters -**

Numerical Counters are required to be provided only for the visiting team. (2.7.6) Their use or non-use is also Optional for each individual swimmer. The officials now don't have to delay the meet while searching for the sixth counter. (3.4.0, page 25, 26)

**5. E.M.S.O.A. Officer Voting –**

If you are interested in being nominated and running for any one of the Officers' positions, please contact a Nominating Committee Member: Ed Gardner, Sue Gaspar, Paul Schaake, Barb Smith. If you're motivated to help the Association, don't sit by the phone waiting for them to call you and 120 other officials.

Nominations will close on December 31, 2007.

Election of New Officers will begin on March 1 and end March 31.

Rather than call a special meeting (s), voting will be by US Mail only. Please anticipate voting for your officers for the next three years.

This will allow the new Officers to prepare adequately for the new season in September.

**6. Official Paper Material –**

I'm interested in your input on the new Timer's Sheets on a Pad, and the Score Sheets.

As we had mentioned at the 2007 Fall Meetings, we're anticipating printing a very large volume over the Winter in preparation for several more seasons, and providing a larger quantity of pads for each official. We'd like to make sure your input is provided.

At this time, we have extra pads of Timer's Sheets; if you'd like an extra pad for next season, email me and I'll send a box to several central location-officials for distribution.

**7. Referee Duties –**

Finally, and probably most important, the officials at a swim meet have an official name. One is Referee. The other is named Starter.

The Referee not only has wide-ranging authority, but also tremendous responsibility, more than the Starter.

Several Rule Book references worth re-reading (not a complete list) are: 1.3.4, 2.6.1, 3.5.1. pen., 4.2.1, 4.2.2

Page 28, Especially Rule 4.1.2 states:

"The referee is the head official and is responsible for making decisions on matters not specifically covered by the rules, setting aside application of a rule... The referee's decision is final."

Because the Referee is in charge of the Meet and all that pertains to the events, coaches, fans and participants, if "heaven forbid" there is an accident or incident, there is



added risk of liability to the Referee. We all have Liability Insurance with our membership to National. If you're more concerned, talk with your family lawyer. We're in a crazy society these days.

Conclusion.... Your duties and responsibilities go far beyond the casual: "I'll call them up and you get them going"

I continue to enjoy my relationships with you officials, the coaches, fans and competitors, and love the swimming and diving competition. What a great sport!

Dick Lennon  
President, EMSOA