



# New Referee Training

UPDATED FOR THE 2023 SEASON

# Agenda

- ▶ Certification Requirements
- ▶ Main Duties of the Referee
- ▶ Prior to the Meet
- ▶ During the Meet
- ▶ After the Meet

# CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS



# Responsibilities of the New Referee Trainee

- ▶ Take all four training classes including tests from a certified GRAL trainer, unless . . .
  - ▶ If GRAL certified Starter or Clerk, just take the test only, otherwise, take the full class (for new officials)
  - ▶ IF USA certified Strokes & Turns or Starter, no need to take test or class
- ▶ If you walk prior to completing a class, that walk will NOT count
- ▶ You can walk at either a home meet or an away meet
  - ▶ Walk one half meet as Starter (unless currently certified GRAL or USA)
  - ▶ Walk one half meet as Clerk (unless currently certified GRAL)
  - ▶ Walk one first half and one second half as Referee

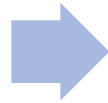
# Responsibilities of the New Referee Trainee

- ▶ Please do NOT wear the white tops and dark bottoms of a judge when walking so that the Referee and Coach are not confused
- ▶ Get the back of your card initialed by the Referee when walking Starter and Referee and by the Head Clerk when walking Clerk
- ▶ Make sure your name is on the cover sheet
  - ▶ The cover sheets are posted on the GRAL Web site shortly after the meet. It is your responsibility to make sure you are on it. If not, contact [officials@gralva.com](mailto:officials@gralva.com) as soon as possible!

# When Walking the Ref Position . . .

Model

Watch the experienced worker in the position. Ask questions when you can.



Practice

In your mind, go over the decisions that you would make.



Feedback

Ask lots of questions and feel free to discuss calls and protocols with the experienced worker.

***The working Referee is in charge, and only s/he can make decisions affecting the meet.***

# Recertification of the Returning Referee

- ▶ Work at least two halves as Referee in prior year
- ▶ Take the Strokes & Turns and Referee classes EVERY YEAR (unless certified by USA Swimming)
- ▶ Pass all four tests (Starter, Clerk, S&T, Ref) EVERY YEAR prior to working (unless certified by USA Swimming in Starter or S&T, then skip those tests)
- ▶ Be familiar with any USA rule changes that affect GRAL
- ▶ Attend Referee Roundtable (this year and subsequent years)

# GRAL Officials Facebook Group

- ▶ GRAL has a Facebook group for officials! (see GRAL website on Officials page)
- ▶ All GRAL officials are invited and encouraged to participate
- ▶ Group discussion can include:
  - ▶ Questions on rules or rule interpretations
  - ▶ Share lessons learned and observations
- ▶ Intent is to promote consistency among GRAL officials
- ▶ Discussion on FB group does not constitute official guidance on rules
- ▶ To join:
  - ▶ Search for GRAL officials on Facebook and answer the questions about your position (referee) and club



# MAIN DUTIES OF THE REF

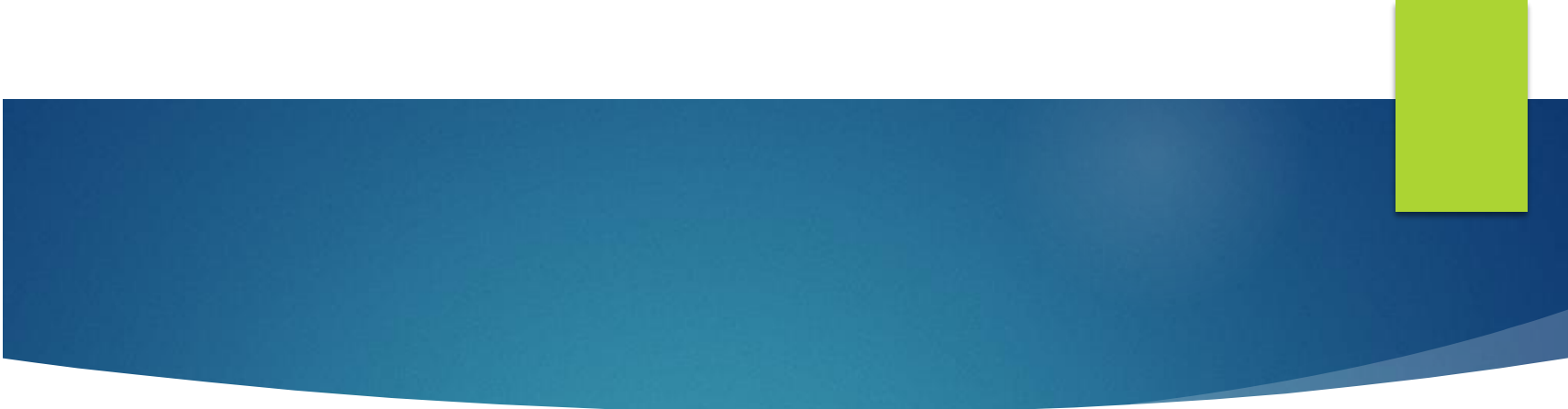




The Referee's primary role is  
to ensure that the meet  
is contested fairly.


# Qualities of a Good Referee

**Calm** **Confident** **Fair**  
**Knowledgeable**  
**Experienced** **Prepared** **Alert**  
**Communicator** **Proactive**  
**Delegator** **Multi-tasker**  
**Good Attitude** **Professional**



The Referee should be familiar with **both** the most recent GRAL Rules (listed in the handbook) and the most recent USA Swimming Rules and ensure that the meet is being conducted following both sets.

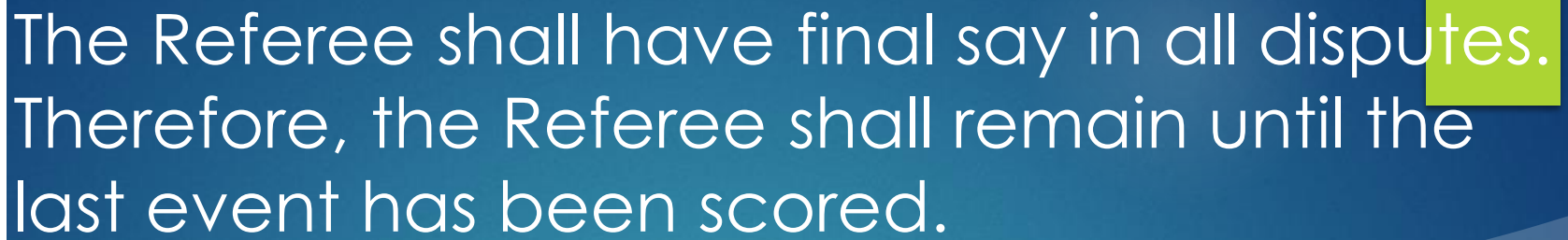
Have both documents on hand and accessible at every meet.



The Referee must **remain on deck** through the course of the meet, be in communication with the Starter before each heat and observe each start.

# The Referee shall . . .

- ▶ Have full authority over all officials and shall assign and instruct them
- ▶ Enforce all applicable rules
- ▶ Decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the final settlement of which is not otherwise assigned by said rules
- ▶ Overrule any meet official on a point of rule interpretation or on a judgment decision pertaining to an action which the Referee has personally observed



The Referee shall have final say in all disputes.  
Therefore, the Referee shall remain until the  
last event has been scored.

*In the event a primary referee must leave, a mutually agreed upon GRAL certified referee shall continue the referee duties. If a replacement is unavailable, the meet will be postponed and continued at a later date before the next scheduled meet if this occurs in Meets 1 – 5 or before results of the last meet are due prior to Champs registration.*

# Multiple Referees

- ▶ In the event that more than one Referee will work the meet, there is only ONE **Referee in Charge** on Deck at any time with authority for the meet
- ▶ If an additional Referee is on deck, his/her only job is to assist the **Referee in Charge** of the meet
- ▶ The additional Referee may be asked to assist other officials
- ▶ ONLY the **Referee in Charge** of the meet has the authority to question and sign DQ cards
- ▶ It is not the job of any additional referee to write DQ cards unless s/he is substituting for an absent Strokes & Turns Judge
- ▶ **The Referee in Charge** has final authority on any questions that need to be resolved



# Referees Must Assist in Training of Other Officials

- ▶ Ensure trainees are walking right sessions
  - ▶ S&Ts must walk three halves:
    - ▶ 1st half of an even meet
    - ▶ 2nd half of any meet
    - ▶ One additional half
  - ▶ 3rd walk for S&T must be under observation of an experienced official as listed on GRAL website. "Experienced" officials are GRAL referees, USA Swimming certified S&T, or have worked 8 halves as S&T in last 4-years
  - ▶ Try to match trainees with most experienced officials
  - ▶ Training must be one-to-one
- ▶ Spend time with trainees to review rules
- ▶ Discuss interactions with referee and other officials

# Concussion Training

- ▶ This is required for all Coaches, Strokes and Turns Judges, and Referees beginning in 2021
- ▶ The classes are highly recommended for all other officials
- ▶ There are two links to training on the Officials Web page – either High School or CDC
- ▶ You just need to take it once and then report to GRAL with your certificate – [christy@gralva.com](mailto:christy@gralva.com)

PRIOR TO MEET  
START



# Pre-Meet Meetings

- ▶ Introduce yourself and/or check in with the Head Table Worker, Head Computer Operator, Clerk of Course, and Head Timer
- ▶ Meet with Runners for both halves to explain their duties – assign one to run time sheets and the other to run DQ cards. Show them where they deliver the paperwork to the table workers.
- ▶ Meet with Starter
  - ▶ Discuss procedure for signaling start of each heat (whistle, hand signal, look, discretion, etc.)
  - ▶ GRAL is using flyover starts for swimmers who are 9 and older in non-backstroke events to help make meets go faster

# Pre-Meet Meetings

- ▶ Meet with Coaches to introduce yourself
  - ▶ Develop positive rapport
  - ▶ Discuss layout of the pool and facility and any safety concerns
  - ▶ Remind them of the weather policy
  - ▶ Present warm-up schedule
  - ▶ Ask about any special needs swimmers
  - ▶ Discuss protest procedure
  - ▶ Tell them how to find DQ Cards
  - ▶ See if there are any questions
- ▶ Meet with timers, or ask Starter or Head Timer to conduct timers' brief

# Pre-Meet Meetings

- ▶ Meet with Strokes & Turns Judges from both halves
  - ▶ Thank the Volunteers for their commitment
  - ▶ Introduce yourself and any other Referee if sharing position
  - ▶ Introduce Starter
  - ▶ Record names on the cover sheet and DOUBLE CHECK
  - ▶ Discuss special needs swimmers and procedure
  - ▶ Review pool layout, jurisdictions, rotation schedule, and assign starting positions and any walkers
  - ▶ Talk about where judges should stand
  - ▶ Identify 15 meter mark
  - ▶ Discuss relay takeoff procedure
  - ▶ Conduct a technical review of USA Swimming rules, DQ card, and answer any questions
- ▶ In USA Swimming events in this area, an occasional reminder to 'immediately raise one hand all the way up, with authority, but without enthusiasm' upon observing a rule infraction is sometimes included in pre-meet briefings.

# Measuring the Pool

- ▶ USA Swimming Rules dictate that swimmers must not dive in water that is less than four feet (4') deep [USA Swimming Rule 103.2.3A]
- ▶ This depth shall be measured one meter (3 feet 3 ½ inches) from the wall and should continue for 4 more meters
- ▶ The Referee is required to oversee measurement of the depth and required to certify it prior to every meet
- ▶ There is a space on the Meet Cover Sheet to note the measurement

How was pool depth measured? \_\_\_\_\_

*The pool depth shall be measured for a distance of 3'-3 ½" (1 meter) to 16'-5" (5 meters) from the end of the wall. The minimum water depth shall be recorded.*

	Lane 1	Lane 2	Lane 3	Lane 4	Lane 5	Lane 6	Lane 7	Lane 8
Start End:								
Turn End:								

- ▶ The most common way to measure this distance is using a marked pole
- ▶ If the swimmers will not be diving from one end or the other, there is no need to measure that end
- ▶ But you must put a measurement for EVERY lane where a swimmer will dive.

# Information to put on the Meet Cover Sheet

- ▶ Division
- ▶ Meet # (1 – 6)
- ▶ Meet Date
- ▶ Meet Start Time
- ▶ Time Event 44 begins (don't forget to note this)
- ▶ Meet workers & walkers (this is how people get credit!)
- ▶ Meet Completion Time
- ▶ Checkbox for Weather Delay
- ▶ Teams competing
- ▶ Meet Location
- ▶ Pool Measurement (Yards or Meters)



# Noting Workers on the Cover Sheet

- ▶ It should be self-explanatory for the most part
- ▶ It gets tricky with Strokes & Turns
  - ▶ Any walks prior to final walk, the S&T Trainee goes in section 10 or 11
  - ▶ For the final “shadowed walk” the S&T judge is actually the judge of record. His/her name goes in section 2 or 6
  - ▶ The experienced “shadow” goes in section 10 or 11
  - ▶ **Ultimately, GRAL needs to know that it is the trainees final walk and who shadowed him/her**

<b>Certified Official role</b>	<b>Certified Official (1<sup>st</sup> Half)</b> <i>Name and Team (ie Joe Smith, PC)</i>	<b>Certified Official (2<sup>nd</sup> Half)</b> <i>Name and Team (ie Joe Smith, PC)</i>
Referee:	1	5
Strokes & Turns #1:		
Strokes & Turns #2:	2	6
Strokes & Turns #3:		
Strokes & Turns #4:		
Starter:	3	7
Head Clerk of Course:	4	8
Meet Director:		
Parent Rep:	Home Team:	Away Team:

<b>Walking/Shadowing role</b> <i>(ie Referee, S&amp;T...)</i>	<b>Walking/Shadowing Official (1<sup>st</sup> Half)</b> <i>Name and Team (ie Joe Smith, PC)</i>	<b>Walking/Shadowing Official (2nd Half)</b> <i>Name and Team (ie Joe Smith, PC)</i>
9	10	11



DURING THE  
MEET

# Running a meet

- ▶ Signal the starter to begin every heat as discussed
- ▶ The Referee generally stands next to the Starter unless he needs to move around to talk to other officials and address issues
- ▶ Spot check the seeding of the swimmers as they arrive at the block

# Running a meet

- ▶ Discuss any protests with Coaches and only Coaches
  - ▶ Send any other persons to their team's Coach or Parent Rep if they happen to come to you first
- ▶ Discuss any meet issues with the home team Parent Rep
  - ▶ Disrupting devices like laser pointers, noisemakers, flash photography
  - ▶ Alcohol policy
  - ▶ Other issues regarding personnel or facility
- ▶ Handle any misconduct by swimmers (according to GRAL and USA Swimming rules)

# DQ Cards

- ▶ Review and approve with signature or initials all disqualifications from the Strokes & Turns judges prior to the DQ cards going to the Table Workers
- ▶ You can mark infractions that you observe on your meet program and check them with cards that come in
- ▶ If the Stroke & Turn judge did not raise his/her hand for the DQ, that is grounds for overturning the DQ
- ▶ Video of the event will **not** be considered

# DQ Cards

- ▶ Check that the event number, heat number, and lane number all make sense
  - ▶ If a judge makes a mistake on an event number and the heat and lane don't exist, you can send it back or you can overrule the DQ
- ▶ Send back any cards that aren't signed or filled out completely
- ▶ Do not over-officiate by writing cards for infractions that you saw but weren't called by a Stroke & Turn Judge
  - ▶ If you do make a disqualification other than false start, you must raise your hand
  - ▶ Disqualifications a ref would make include improper assistance to a swimmer while swimming, unsportsmanlike conduct, and other non-stroke and turn related infractions
  - ▶ If a Strokes and Turns judge does not appear to be fulfilling his/her duty, consider replacement

# Working with S&T Officials

- ▶ Referee should review calls - and missed calls - with S&T officials
- ▶ During pre-meet brief, remind S&Ts that the referee is supposed to review their calls, and why we do it:
  - ▶ Ensures swimmers get the benefit of the doubt
  - ▶ Helps reinforce rules for S&T officials and ensures consistency
  - ▶ It does not mean we doubt their judgment or expertise
- ▶ It's impossible to review every call, so look for some of the following signs:
  - ▶ If you observed the swim and are unsure about the call, or know a call was missed
  - ▶ If an official is making a lot of the same calls
  - ▶ Calls from new or inexperienced official
  - ▶ If DQ Card doesn't make sense or isn't written properly
  - ▶ Sample of calls from all officials

**While this can be an uncomfortable thing to do,  
it's a critical function of the referee!**

# Relay Takeoffs and Dual Confirmation

- ▶ Dual Confirmation is required in order to disqualify a relay for early take-off / false-start - plan ahead for this
- ▶ Remember to watch the departing swimmer leave the blocks, then look down to see if other swimmer has touched.
- ▶ Use Starter or other available S&Ts to assist. Do not use regularly scheduled S&Ts to judge relay take-offs.
- ▶ For event 1 (8&U relay), this requires a lot of judges!
- ▶ Dual confirmation forms are available on GRAL website to print
- ▶ When using the dual confirmation method, two independent observations of an early take-off are required for disqualification
- ▶ Dual confirmation sheets should be returned to the Referee for final approval of the disqualification



# Working with the Starter

- ▶ The Referee shall confirm any false start calls with the Starter
- ▶ GRAL deviates from USS in that a swimmer is only disqualified for a second false start in the same event
- ▶ The Referee writes the card
- ▶ No hand is raised
- ▶ Starters do not write DQ cards
- ▶ Beginning in 2023, Starter should say “Take your marks” (plural)

# New since COVID: Order of Finish

- ▶ You may request that someone take order of finish data for each race (may be assigned to Starter, a non-working Strokes & Turns Judge, or Head Timer)
- ▶ This is not a difficult task, but it may take some time to get used to doing it accurately
- ▶ Simply write down the lane numbers of the swimmers in the order they finish (e.g. 3 4 1 6 5 2)
- ▶ Write it directly onto the program in case the Computer Rep or Head Table Worker needs the information
- ▶ It will take practice to get this information down and be able to start the next race in a timely manner.

# Working with the Clerk of Course

- ▶ There are certain situations where the Clerk will need to reseed from what is printed in the meet program
  - ▶ Relays – often the clerk will seed the relays and they won't appear in the meet program, or they may change due to scratches
  - ▶ Late arrivals – when a swimmer arrives late to his event and needs to be put in a later heat or swim with another event
  - ▶ Combining heats – when heats are combined because of no shows
  - ▶ Combining events – when two events are combined to make the meet run faster
- ▶ In all cases above, Clerks are instructed to inform the Referee, Starter, and all affected Timers. It is up to the Referee to inform the Stroke & Turn Judges.
- ▶ In case 4 above, you have the final say. The Clerk should have a good reason for why it is worth the headache
  - ▶ For example, if you are combining two 50 Freestyle events, it is probably not worth it, but if you are combining two 100 Breaststroke events, it might be a good idea
  - ▶ Use good judgement when determining if you should “make” a swimmer move

# GRAL Procedures for Seeding

- ▶ GRAL Procedure VI.3: “No swimmer may be entered in more than 3 individual events.”
  - ▶ How does this affect the Clerk? A swimmer cannot be added to another event (say breaststroke) if s/he missed his/her first event (say backstroke) if that would make 4 entries.
  - ▶ You may be called upon to enforce this rule.
- ▶ GRAL Procedure VI.2: “No changes may be made after the start of the meet or Distribution of Heat Sheets, whichever comes first.”
  - ▶ How does this affect the Clerk? If a Coach asks the Clerk to make a change to relays (such as a change in Relay Division) other than switching in and out swimmers or scratching the relay, the Clerk will send him or her to the Ref.
  - ▶ You may be called upon to enforce this rule.

# Rules of Reseeding Individual Events

- ▶ Must have SAME stroke and length
- ▶ Can NOT create extra heat – combining of events must result in only one heat
- ▶ If mixed gender, an empty lane MAY remain between them, but this is no longer a requirement
- ▶ Swimmers in the same event must swim together
- ▶ Avoid having swimmers alone in a heat

# Reseeding and DQs

- ▶ If you get a DQ for a swimmer who has been re-seeded, make sure to write the swimmer's name and team on the card and inform the runner that this swimmer was reseeded.
  - ▶ GRAL recommends that the tables workers write the names on the cards unless there was reseeding
- ▶ They should be able to tell from the timing sheets, but it is good to double check!

# Working with Table Workers

- ▶ Table Workers may approach the Referee if a DQ card has not been signed or if they only have one time for a swimmer
- ▶ They may also come to the Referee with seeding questions or other issues

# Odds and Ends

- ▶ There is no exhibition swimming in GRAL (unless there is)
- ▶ You should only be the Referee – not the parent rep, not the meet director, not a strokes and turns judge, not a starter . . . – in that particular meet
- ▶ Remember the rules where we deviate! (see the handbook)



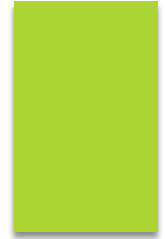
# Weather Delays

- ▶ At the first observation of lightning or thunder, the lifeguard should blow his/her whistle and the pool should be cleared
  - ▶ If the lifeguard does not do this, the Referee or the Parent Rep may prompt him/her
- ▶ The meet can resume after 30 minutes of absence of lightning or thunder.
- ▶ **It is the responsibility of the Meet Director, the Parent Representatives, and Pool Management to enforce the weather delay.**
- ▶ **The Parent Reps of both teams and the Meet Director will make the call as to postpone or continue the meet, but the Ref should be available to provide guidance on GRAL policies (see next page)**

# GRAL Policies for Weather Delays

- ▶ Meets must start by 8pm (Div 1) or 8:30pm (Div 2 and smaller)
- ▶ Meets must end by 11:30pm. Remaining events should finish on a later day. Relays can be scratched.
- ▶ Event 44 must be in water by 10:30pm or relays will not count
- ▶ Weather delay after 10:30pm will result in remaining events swimming on another day. No exceptions.
- ▶ If meet is moved to another day, swimmers may be added or change events and relays may change classification
  - ▶ However, no swimmer may enter more than 3 individual events including scratches, no shows and DQs

# AFTER THE MEET



# After the Meet

- ▶ Thank the volunteers and coaches
- ▶ Check in with the coaches to make sure there aren't any outstanding protests for which you may need to detain a Strokes & Turns Judge
- ▶ Review and approve the Meet Cover Sheet - **Please make sure this is accurate!**
- ▶ Submit the Cover Sheet (new this year)
- ▶ Sign any provisional cards you might have missed
- ▶ Make notes for the next meet

# QUESTIONS?

- ▶ Ask at the Referee Roundtable
- ▶ Ask on the Facebook group
- ▶ Email [officials@gralva.com](mailto:officials@gralva.com)