



# Introduction To Officiating

# USA Swimming Officials Certification

- Overview of International/National/Local Swimming
- Swim Meet Structure and Staffing
- Certification and re-certification requirements
- Working meets
- Timer Certification

# Swim Organizations

- FINA-International governing body of swimming
- United States Aquatic Sports, Inc. (USAS)
  - USA Swimming
    - Local Swim Committees (LSC) (59)
      - Virginia Swimming, Inc. (VSI)
        - » Local Teams
- AAU
- YMCA
- NCAA
- NFHS
- Summer Leagues

# USA Swimming Rules

- USA Swimming Rules and Regulations
- VSI Policies
- Meet Invitation
- (YMCA uses USA Swimming Technical Rules as September 2006)

# Philosophy of Officiating

“All competitive swimming events held under USA Swimming sanction shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules *which are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and promote uniformity in the sport so that no swimmer shall obtain unfair advantage over another.*”

# Meet Organization

- Major responsibilities divided between:
  - Meet Director
  - Meet Referee

# Meet Director

- Responsible for:
  - Pre-meet planning
  - Meet Invitation
  - Organizing volunteers
  - Running the non-technical aspects of the meet
  - Post-meet reports

# Meet Officials

- Referee
  - Responsible for running the meet
  - In charge of all officials
  - May have particular responsibilities
    - Meet Referee
    - Administrative Referee
    - Deck Referee



# “Wet Deck” Officials

- Starter
  - Ensures that all swimmers receive a fair start
- Stroke and Turn Judge
  - Ensures that the swimmers comply with the technical rules of swimming including:
    - Stroke and kick
    - Turns
    - Finish
- Chief Judge
  - Assigns/supervises Stroke and Turn Judges
  - Reports DQs from S&T Judges to the Referee



# “Dry Deck” Officials

- Clerk-of-Course
  - Seeds swimmers by time into appropriate lanes and heats
  - Does reseeds, relay cards, timer sheets and other administrative functions
  - “Shepherds” younger swimmers to the blocks
- Timing System Operator (TSO)
  - Runs the electronic timing system
    - Colorado Timing System (CTS), Daktronics, or Omega
- Timing Judge
  - Under the supervision of the Referee, determines the official time for each swimmer
- Recorder
  - Records and publishes the results of the meet



# Timers

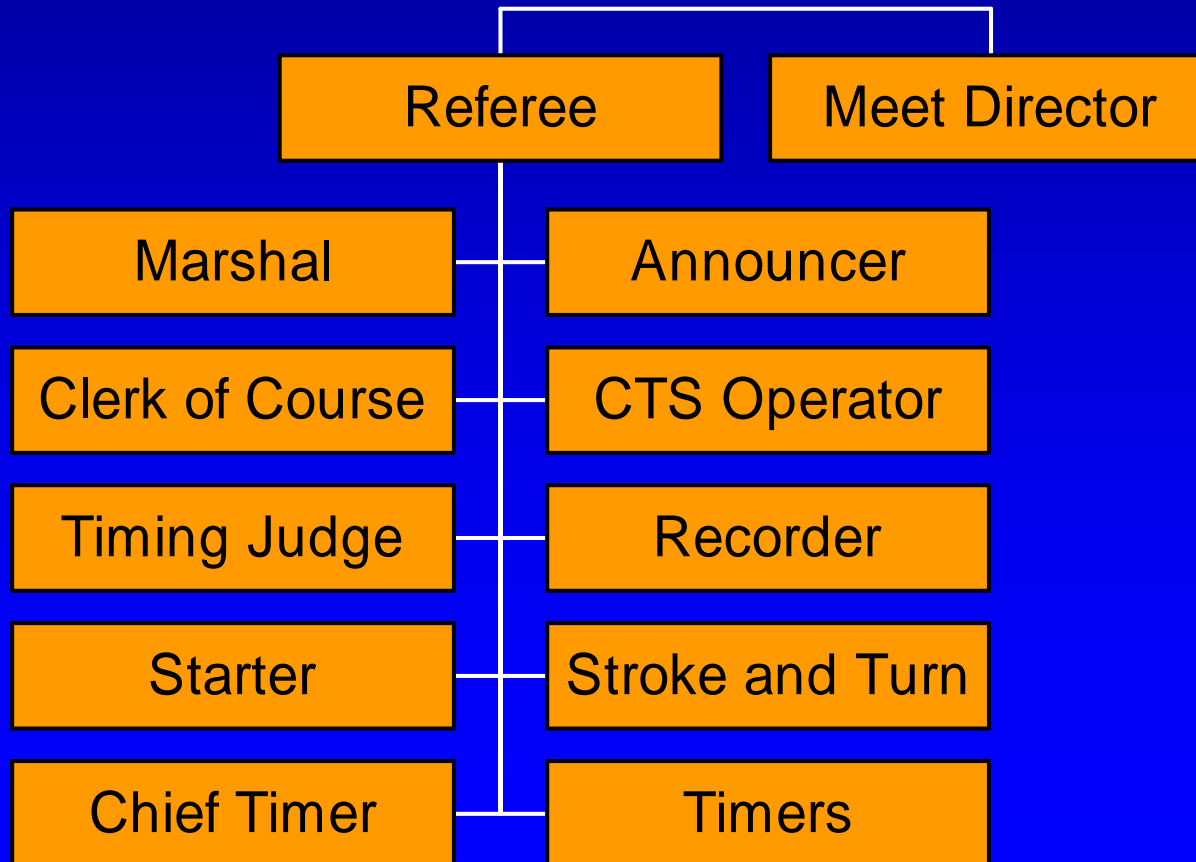
- Chief Timer
  - Organizes Timers before session
  - Assist Starter with Timers' briefing
  - Starts extra watches for each heat
- Timers
  - Time swimmers
  - Additional duties as indicated below

# Other Officials

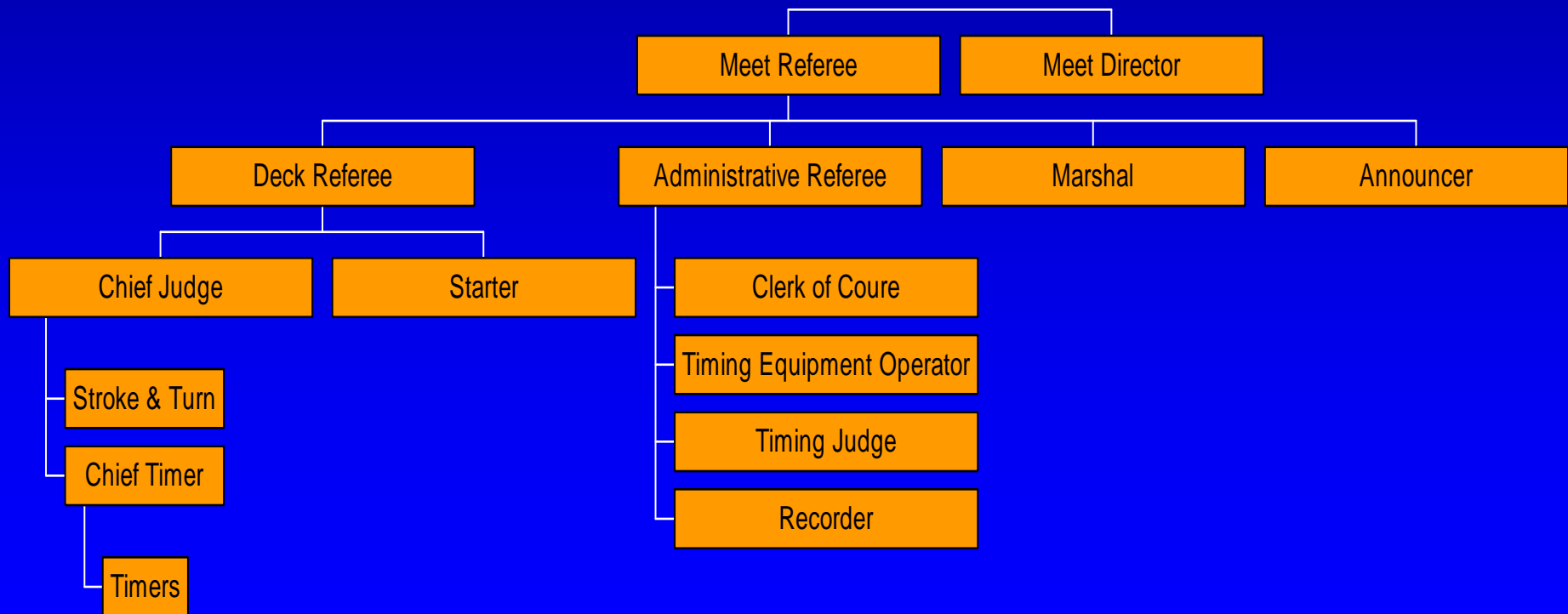
- Marshal
  - Responsible for maintaining a safe and orderly swim venue
- Announcer
  - Announces events and heats
  - Announces pertinent meet information
  - Introduces swimmers in finals

# Organization of Officials at a “Typical” Swim Meet

## “Organized Chaos”



# Organization of Officials at a Championship Swim Meet



# Certification Requirements

- For details, see *VSI Officials Certification Requirements* (on website)
- Differ by position
- General summary
  - Attend clinic
  - Become certified as a Timer
  - Pass position certification test, if required
  - Work required minimum number of sessions
  - Work final session 1 (or 2) sessions “in charge”
  - Positive recommendation from Referee and Trainer
  - Certified for one year probationary period by District Officials Chair

# Working / Training at a Meet

- Host club will contact invited clubs to solicit officials (usually done through Officials Chairs)
- Officials Chair from invited club contacts club officials for session availability
- Officials Chair informs host club of the availability of officials
- Working requested sessions is usually not a problem



# Responsibilities of Officials When Agreeing to Work

- Work sessions that were agreed to
- Arrive on time for pre-session officials briefing
- Work the entire session (distance events sometimes excepted)
- Maintain current technical and philosophical understanding of the rules

# Paperwork

- VSI/USA-S membership required to be on deck (trainees and certified officials)
- Trainees receive training cards which are signed by the Referee after each training session
- Certified officials receive a certification card which is also used to track sessions worked

# Training Cards

- Issued following clinic and passed test
- Used to track process at each training session
- Referee will sign-off each session
- Referee will recommend certification when the trainee has mastered the position responsibilities
- Return to District Officials Chair who will issue certification (or require additional training)

# Training Opportunities

- In general, all training sessions must be performed at VSI/USA Swimming sanctioned meets. Approval to train at non-VSI LSC meets requires prior approval of the apprentice's District Officials Chair, or the LSC Officials Chair
- To sign up for training contact your team Official's Chair

# Training Opportunities (cont)

- LSC Championship Meets (Senior Championship, Age Group Championship and similar meets) may only be used to complete Administrative Referee training under supervision of the assigned Administrative Referee.
- District/Regional Championship Meets (District Champs, Regional Champs, Summer Awards) may be used for limited training of apprentices subject to the discretion of the meet referee as follows:
  - Dry deck apprentices must have completed at least four (4) training sessions with positive ratings, including the familiarization sessions at other administrative positions. Final sessions and certification may occur if all requirements are met.

# Training Opportunities (cont)

- Stroke & Turn apprentice training is not allowed except under unusual circumstances which must be approved by the LSC Officials Chair in consultation with the District Chair. Final (“white and blue”) sessions may not be accomplished, nor may final certification.
- Starter apprentices must have completed at least five (5) training sessions with positive ratings. Final sessions and certification may occur if all other requirements are met.
- Referee apprentices must have completed at least four (4) sessions and have the positive recommendation of their District Officials Chair. Referees may complete the administrative referee session.
- Other championship-format meets run by individual host clubs provide additional opportunities for specialized training in the administrative aspects of trials and finals as well as for all other types and forms of training, including initial sessions.

# Dress

- White shirt / blouse with collar
- Blue shorts / pants/skirt
- White socks and shoes
- Badge
- VSI/USA-S Registration Card



**Thank you!**



# Additional Resources

- USA-Swimming
  - [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)
- Virginia Swimming, Inc.
  - [www.virginiaswimming.org](http://www.virginiaswimming.org)