

VSI Mid-Season Official's Newsletter

Happy Holidays!

The mid-season championship meets are finished and we are gearing up for the progression into our championship meets. Below is the schedule for your planning purposes, the info can also be found on meet page on Virginia Swimming at:

<http://www.virginiawimming.com/vsi/Meet/MeetsSchedule.html>

| Dates | District | Meet | Host Club |
|-----------|----------|---------------------|--------------|
| 2/9-2/10 | C | District 8 & Y | NOVA |
| 2/10-2/11 | SW | District 8 & Y | LY |
| | | | |
| 2/15-2/17 | C | District 9-12 | NOVA |
| 2/15-2/17 | SE | District 12 & Y | SEVA |
| 2/15-2/17 | N | District 12 & Y | PWSC |
| 2/15-2/17 | BR | District 9-12 | HOKI |
| | | | |
| 2/22-2/24 | N | Region 13 & O | Rays |
| 2/22-2/24 | SE | Region 13 & O | CGBD |
| 2/22-2/24 | BR | Region 13 & O | LY |
| 2/28-3/3 | LSC | SC Senior Champs | PSDN-Hanover |
| 3/7-3/10 | LSC | SC AG Champs | HOKI |
| | | | |
| 3/28-3/31 | EZ S | Sectionals | HOKI |

Keep in mind this is a busy season for swim meets, as some of these dates coincide with both public and private High School Regions & State Champs.

We have over 470 officials in the LSC so please help out where you can, even a session or two makes the meets manageable for all.

Senior champs will be held at Jeff Rouse Swim and Sport Center in Stafford, Virginia. Age Group Champs will be held at the Christiansburg Aquatic Center, Christiansburg Virginia. Both of these meets will be recognized as Official Qualifying Meets (OQM). What is that you ask? An OQM meet is where we invite experienced officials to expand the education of officials through mentoring, and evaluation. By participating in the process, we are helping to develop officials to hone their craft and ensuring our officiating is consistent throughout the LSC, regardless of where a meet is being held.

Both of these meets will offer N2 certifications and recertifications for Chief Judge, Starter, Deck Referee and Administrative Official. N2 or N3 certifications or recertifications will be offered for Stroke and Turn.

For more info on the program and requirements please refer to the following link below:

<https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/officials/national-certification-and-evaluation>

Applications for AGC and Senior Champs will be on-line at Virginia Swimming once the meet invites are finalized. They can be found at

<http://www.virginiaswimming.com/vsi/Meet/MeetsSchedule.html>

Click on the championship meet on the top bar and it will bring you to the appropriate page. The application is nothing more than letting the Meet Referee know you can work various sessions. So, if you are planning to attend, sign up and help out.

Eastern Zone Sectional Meet:

Virginia Swimming will be hosting the Eastern Zone Sectional Meet in Christiansburg on March 29-March 31. Teams from all over the Eastern Zone will be competing and there should be plenty of fast swimming. This meet will be another OQM meet and we intend to have this one set up for any N3 evaluations. We are still working on finding a Meet Evaluator and should have that information by end of January. If you are interested in working this meet, you can find the application at the following link below:

<http://www.easternzoneswimming.org/>

Concussion Management Training:

This has been a hot topic of late and an important one as well. Some states require every volunteer that is working an athletic activity to take must complete annual concussion training. In Virginia, the law states, “interscholastic youth sports programs utilizing school property athletes and parent or legal guardian must annually sign a form acknowledging receipt and understanding of information on concussions. School staff, coaches, athletic trainers, team physicians and volunteers must complete annual concussion training.

While as parents of swimmers, we do sign a form with our teams each year, however, is that enough? Every official I have met is eager to learn, and there are two on-line courses available if you wish to learn more about concussions

The National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) offer free courses that provide great insight. Neither course will make you a concussion expert, however, they will

make you more aware of the signs of a concussion.

The NHFS course can be found at:

<https://www.nfhs.org/articles/three-revised-online-courses-including-concussion-in-sports-available-for-free-on-nfhs-learning-center/>

The Center of Disease Control course can be found at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>

These courses are not mandatory but rather voluntary. I think you will find great value in taking this course. Once you complete the course, you can download the course completion certificate and send it to businessoffice@virginiaswimming.org. Mary or Emily will enter your course completion into SWIMs database. You will be able to view that by logging into Deck Pass.

One other note about concussions, if you see a swimmer bump their head into a wall, and you think it was hard enough to potentially cause a concussion, let the CJ or DR know. They, in turn, will notify the Coach. Both the coach and parent will determine if the swimmer needs further medical attention. For Meet Referees, if they seek further medical attention or you are not sure if they will seek medical attention, please document with the report of occurrence so there is a paper trail about the mishap.

Rule Changes Coming down the Pike:

Ban on Technical Suits for 12 and Under Swimmers

You may have heard that USA Swimming passed a resolution at the 2018 USAS Convention about the banning of technical suits for 12 &

Under swimmers. **This will take effect in September of 2020.** The only meets where a 12 & U can with a technical suit will be at Junior Nationals, US Open, National Championships or Olympic Trials. Why so long before the rule becomes effective? The swim suit manufacturers are already working on their 2019 line and they need the extra time to figure out how they will mark the suit noting it is not a tech suit. A lot of folks thought, when this was first proposed a couple of years ago, that the swim suit companies would be in an uproar. The ironic outcome is that the swim suit companies stated that the 12 & U technical suits are really not their market.

Swimwear Disqualifications

If there is a question as to whether a swimsuit is legal or not, let the swimmer swim. Then, if it is determined to be illegal, process the disqualification. For S&T officials it is best practice to notify the CJ or DR if you think the suit is illegal.

Why notify the CJ and DR? Because the swimmer may have a waiver for the suit.

The USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Chair has the authority to waive a swimsuit for religious or medical reasons. The swimmer or their parents can petition for a waiver by submitting an email or letter to the Chair, documenting the religious reasons and beliefs, or documenting the medical condition. The latter requires a written statement from a medical professional stating that an exemption is needed. All exemptions are effective for the calendar year in which they apply and must be renewed annually. The swimmer or coach, should be providing a copy of this waiver to the Meet Referee prior to the start of the meet.

Floating Lane Line Markers

Effective 5/1/2019 we will no longer judge the 15-meter mark by lane line buoys. Each competition pool will be required to have a fixed mark on deck, 15 meters from the start and turn end, that will be the default marking for judging a 15-meter violation. This change was adopted to put USA Swimming in-line with FINA and NCAA protocol. Also, only one side has to be marked.

Backstroke Ledges

For clarification, if a meet is using backstroke ledges, they all must be identical and individual swimmers cannot bring their own ledge.

That is all for now, if you have any questions, please let me know. Most of all thanks for everything you do for our sport!

I wish you and your family all the best for the upcoming holidays and new year.

See you all on deck soon!

Sincerely,

Dan Demers

