

Virginia Swimming Officials Winter Newsletter

December 19, 2019
Volume 1, Issue 4

Happy Holidays!

On behalf of the Officials Committee, I want to thank all of you for our support this year as volunteers for our athletes! As we wind down with our families and in your moment of quiet times, please reflect on the positive contributions you have given to the sport of swimming! Without your support, VSI could not have run over 40 meets to date! For most of you, your athlete is now entrenched with practice, has learned the skills of time management and are growing leaps and bounds as a maturing adult. I, for one, can say this all goes by very quickly and my advice is to “take it all in while you can” and enjoy everyday with your family!

MAAPP- Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy (MAAPP)

In our previous newsletter, we discussed MAAPP. As a reminder, USA Swimming also has changed the training requirements. The Athlete Protection Training (APT) is now a yearly requirement which expires one year from the day you completed the course. You should receive an email from USA Swimming one-month prior to expiration notifying you that your APT is about to expire.

USA Swimming Credential Check-up

Now is a good time to make sure all is in order with your USA Swimming Account. Below is a quick how-to on accomplishing that task?

Go to <https://www.usaswimming.org/home> , on the top right click on sign in, and use your account name and password when you created the account



FIND A TEAM SHOP **SIGN IN**

Once you are signed in, on the top menu bar, click on your deck pass



FIND A TEAM SHOP **DAN'S DECK PASS** MY ACCOUNT SIGN OUT

USA Swimming Credential Check-up (cont)



This page will show all of your info. Scroll down and on the left side, click EDIT under your name. On the Edit page there are two options ;Profile info and Account Settings. Profile will show your non-athlete registration expiration date (Should be good through 2020, if not see below), your club affiliation (if not, will show as unattached), your background check, athlete protection expiration dates and whether or not you have completed concussion training. If you completed the later it should show as MET. This same info is shown on the first screen under your

name.

Under Account Settings is if you want to change your sign on and your email address.



Check the later and make sure it is the email that you use on a regular basis. That is the email we use for our communication. Save your changes and you are all set!

Registration Versus Certification

If you just started out training, you may have submitted a Apprentice Registration. These are free and only valid 60-days only. They were created to allow new volunteers on-deck for a 60 day TRIAL period to see if officiating is something they want to pursue. After 60-days they are no longer valid.

Prior to your 4th walk as a trainee, you are required to complete registration. If you still have time left from your apprenticeship, you are fine. However, if your 60-days has expired, you must register as a Non-Athlete. Some clubs reimburse officials for registration, so check with your club officials chair. The Non-Athlete registration from can be found at <http://www.virginiawimming.com/vsi/Official/Information.html> on the bottom right hand column. Follow the directions on the form for both submittal and payment which goes to the Local Swim Committee Registrar registrationchair@virginiawimming.org. who is Mary Turner.

Registration must be completed annually and is different than certification.

Registration versus Certification

When you complete your training, in order to stay certified as an USA Swimming Official, we at VSI require working 8 sessions per calendar year. Of course, the more you work, the better you become with your skill-set.

Certifications are updated in December/early January by your District Chair. They will review your meet history in OTS and if you meet the requirements, they will recertify you in your current position(s). For all positions, the certification and recertification requirements are listed in the VSI Officials Handbook at <http://www.virginiaswimming.com/vsi/Official/OfficTrainings/TrainingInfo.html> , in the top right hand column under General. Or on that same page, under each position click on the applicable certification link.

The District Chair will update the certifications at the LSC Level. If you have National Certifications, that is an entirely different process and information can be found at the following link for National Certifications. <https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/officials/national-certification-and-evaluation>

Concussion Training

Every Coach and Official must complete Concussion Training by **January 15, 2020**. **You have to complete the training or you will not be allowed to officiate after January 15, 2020.**

There are two courses available and you can take either one of them. Both are free.

The links are: [CDC Course](#), [NFHS Course](#). When you complete the training, send the certificate of completion to businessoffice@virginiaswimming.org or vaswimreg@gmail.com . The first will go to Mary Turner , the second will go to Emily Fagan. Either of them will update your status to MET and it will show up in OTS and Deck Pass. **Sending them to anyone else will add a delay to completing this requirement.**

Signing up for Sessions at a Meet

When you sign up for a meet, we are counting on you to be there. If you cannot make it for some reason, please notify the Meet Referee or contact your Club Officials Chair to relay the message. The contact information for all Meet Referee's is noted within the Meet Invitation.

When working a session, you are expected to be there for the entire duration, start to finish. That is our creed and our policy noted in the VSI Officials Handbook. Depending on the events and deck coverage, we may cut back the number of officials needed to cover the deck. However, do not expect that will happen at every meet. If your swimmer(s) are completed with their events and want to leave, make prior arrangements for another team parent you trust to take them out for a bite to eat or bring them back to the hotel.

The Meet Referee, Deck Referee and Chief Judge will do their best to give the officials a breaks as best they can. When we set up the deck, we are planning for everyone to be there from start to finish for the session. There may be times when emergencies pop up and the Referee and Chief Judge will make arrangements to cover your spot, however, that is not the norm.

What is over-Officiating?

We strive to avoid unfair officiating at all sessions, providing a consistent level of observation for all swimmers in all heats. The key word in the last sentence is observation, not inspection.

That's why we train our Stroke and Turn judges to actively observe empty lanes in their jurisdiction and balance their observation to the inner lanes, even though the near lanes are much easier to see while walking the sides.

I would define "over-officiating" as instances where an official is actively looking for a violation. In other words, they are no longer observing, but rather inspecting the swimmers. For instance, you are a turn judge and you thought you saw something during a turn when the swimmer left the wall. You say to yourself, "I'll watch them on the next turn to see what they are doing". In reality, you did not raise your hand and you gave the **swimmer the benefit of the doubt, which is the correct call**. However, invoking the thought of "watching them on the next turn" translates into inspection rather than observation. When swimmers re-enter your jurisdiction you should be observing the swims. If a stroke rule infraction occurs during that time it should hit you square in the face and your arm should be raised above your head with confidence.

Some other examples: A stroke judge who tells a CJ, "The swimmer did his breaststroke pull-out at 5-10 degrees short of horizontal" is probably over-officiating. As is the judge who wants to disqualify a young backstroker who performs a very ugly (but very legal) turn.

What is over-Officiating? (cont)

Remember our stroke rules do not discuss technique, that is left up to the Coaches. A swimmer's technique may not be the best, however, they could very well be swimming within accordance of the stroke rules.

A CJ who over-emphasizes one or two specific rules during the stroke briefing may be setting us up for some over-officiating. Stick the standard briefing, if there are questions about specific strokes/scenarios field them using rule terminology, or you can answer them one-one after the briefing.

Officials are charged with providing fair and equitable conditions of competition for all swimmers, regardless of heat and lane. A huge part of this responsibility is to guard against both over-officiating and unfair officiating.

Upcoming Championship Meets

February through March is a busy time for short course championships. We will need all of you support these meets to ensure we have a great product for our swimmers. Below is a list of upcoming meets and dates to jot down. If you need more info check our website at <http://www.virginiawimming.com/vsi/Meet/MeetsSchedule.html>

February 8-9th: 8&U District Championship

February 14-16th: 9-12 District Championship

February 28—March 1: 13&O Region Championship—Only the Blue Ridge/SW district will be swum the same weekend

March 5-8: SC Senior Championships*

March 12-15: SC Age Group Championships*

March 26-29th: 2020 Eastern Zone South Region Speedo Championship Series*

*The last three meets will be Officials Qualifying Meets for National Certification. To sign up for these meets, the first two will have forms that can be found at the link noted above. Click on Age Group Champs or Senior Champs on the top of the page. For the EZ South Region the form can be found at <http://www.easternzoneswimming.org/meets.html>

There is also another OQM meet being held at the University of Maryland Baltimore County Campus on January 17-20, 2020. I have added the links for the meet invite and application to officiate if you interested in working this meet.

Link to Meet Announcement

[2020 Retriever Classic Invitational Meet Announcement](#)

Link for Officials

[Volunteer to Serve as an Official](#)

Officials Apparel

Need extra Virginia Swimming White Polo Shirts? The apparel link is now open for orders through December 31st. Once the link is closed, the orders are submitted and sent out. The link is active for up to 6 weeks at a time so they can process all of the orders at one-time, take advantage of production and shipping. Below is the link if you want to order.

<http://www.virginiawimming.com/vsi/Official/Resource/Apparel/ApparequipmentR.html>

Scott Farrar or I will send out a notice when the link is open to the Club Officials Chair for distribution. Or you can check the same link periodically to see if the store is open.

Officials Committee Vacancy

We have a vacancy for an Athlete Representative on the Officials Committee. We hold quarterly meetings by Zoom Conferences that last around 1 hour. Our VSI By-Laws require our committee to have one or more athlete rep's acting as a voice for our swimmers. If your daughter/son or you know of another swimmer who is interested, please let us know.

Thanks for all you do for our Sport!

If you have questions or comments/suggestions or a topic for the newsletter, drop us a note!

VSI LSC Official Committee

Officials Chair—Dan Demers (ddemers3@cox.net)

Southeast District Chair—Genny Kimbel (Gennykimbel@gmail.com)

Central District Chair—Bob Rustin (brustin55@gmail.com)

North District Chair—Michael Sizemore (MCSizemore@gmail.com)

Southwest District Chairs

North—Beth Arnold (arnoldeaa@gmail.com)

South—George Zolovick (gzolovick@gmail.com)

At-Large Representatives

Ralph Jones (Ralph.Jones@vdot.virginia.gov)

John Squires (jpswmm1@yahoo.com)

Will Murphy (wlmmmurphy@aol.com)

Officials Apparel—Scott Farrar (Sfarrar@bsnsports.com)

Officials Database—Georg Fuhs (vsi.officials.rosters@gmail.com)

Will Murphy (wlmmmurphy@aol.com)

Athlete(s): TBD

Coach: Art Anthony