



**Best Practices and Recommendations for Officials in  
Return to Competition**

**1. Overriding factors for success:**

- a. Safety is the most important priority with regard to all aspects of the return to competition plan and at all times.
- b. All competitions and the associated participants must adhere to municipal, provincial and national policies, regulations and recommendations regarding large gatherings/physical distancing, travel, self-isolation/quarantines.
- c. All competitions must adhere to all regulations, policies and, recommendations of the Provincial Section and facility management. This may impact the number of swimmers at a competition, the officials and volunteers required and the attendance of spectators.
- d. The competitive environment (training and competition venues) should be continually assessed to ensure precautions are taken to minimize risk to the swimmers, coaches, officials, volunteers and those attending events as spectators (where and when permissible).

**2. Competition Best Practices**

- a. Competition may look very different for athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators as things start back up again.
- b. Officials including meet manager will need to be adaptable and work with Provincial Sections and within current local and provincial health authority and Provincial Section guidance.
- c. Officials should strive to re-imagine competition to find new ways of doing things and innovative new solutions that may alter what officiating looks like over the long term.
- d. Officials including Meet Management shall wear masks covering nose and mouth at all times while inside the facility hosting the competition.**
- e. Officials must wear their masks at all times with the exception of the Referee for critical communications to other officials and the Starter if it is interfering with the communication of the Start command to the swimmers. The Starter may if absolutely necessary lower their mask immediately prior to communicating the Start command and activation of the start signal. The Starter must replace their masks immediately after the start of the race. The Starter's microphone should be disinfected regularly. Multiple Starters cannot share a microphone during the same session.**
- f. All other participants including Coaches and athletes should wear masks covering their nose and mouths whenever possible.



**i. Pre-Meet best practices**

1. Identify a Safety Coordinator (Meet Manager) who will coordinate and/or delegate the safety measures to be put into place for the competition.
2. Meet Manager will work with Swim Manitoba and hosting facility (Pan Am etc.) to confirm all logistics and expectations.
3. Meet Manager and Swim Manitoba will work together to create a plan that outlines all expectations including entry and exit, movement and location of all officials, coaches, and swimmers, based on the facility and applicable jurisdictional requirements.
  - a. Best practice would be to create a pool diagram that details where all will be located and the flow of traffic on the deck.
4. Disinfection protocols should be established and published before the beginning of the meet by the Safety Coordinator/Meet Manager and built into the session timelines for the competition.
  - a. All equipment, such as Starters equipment, buttons/plungers, stop watches, clip boards, starting blocks should all be cleaned and disinfected prior to and following every session.
  - b. Cleaning of starting blocks after each race and other equipment used throughout the competition must occur.
  - c. Hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes and sanitizing spray should be available around the pool for participant use.
5. Minimize close conduct between participants.
  - a. No Senior Officials Briefing or General Officials Briefing. This should be completed via email ahead of the competition.
  - b. Conduct coaches meeting virtually before arrival or send information via email.
  - c. Use of text messaging during competition to communicate between coaches and Meet Manager and senior officials.
  - d. All officials should be recruited and provided specific instructions to guide them through the competition.
    - i. Assign officials to positions before they arrive at the pool.
    - ii. Provide direction to officials/volunteers on what they need to bring with them;
      1. mask/face covering,
      2. hand sanitizer,
      3. pre-filled water bottle,
      4. pencil, clipboard as appropriate.
    - iii. Officials should arrive at the pool, at a pre-designated time and location, dressed in their uniform, bringing their deck shoes and follow any directions they were given upon arrival.
    - iv. Officials should be directed to be in their position at an appropriate time to avoid intermingling of individuals.
  - e. No use of change rooms might be advised or mandatory



- f. No onsite hospitality
- g. Position and movement of all participants will be regulated and controlled by Meet Management, the Session Referees and MSOA Advisory Referee where applicable.

**ii. Physical Distancing best practices**

1. Warm-up scheduling must be reviewed and amended as needed to maintain physical distancing. (we need input from coaches on this)
  - a. Split warm-ups by time, club, or age may be considered in order to manage the #s in the pool at any one time.
2. Consider using no Timekeepers when appropriate;
  - a. For Time Trials and In-house competitions where electronic timing has been tested and an experience CJE/CFJ and quantum individual is available.
3. Use the minimum number of officials as possible (see Appendix 1);
  - a. Use qualified Inspectors of Turns officials as Timekeepers to have 1 official per lane.
    - i. When not all Timekeepers are also Inspector of Turns qualified,
      1. The Referee, Starter and/or Judges of Stroke will support judging for outside lanes at start end.
      - ii. The number of turn end IT(s) can be minimal if side stroke judges are utilized to support judging at the turn end.
    - iii. Operation of Quantum and Hytek should be completed with minimum individuals.
      1. If times are recorded manually then they could be recorded on a provided form or on the timer's heat sheet. Those sheets would be provided to recorder scorer with associated DQ(s) for entry in Hytek with the resulting results being certified by a CFJ after the fact. Results would be delayed for several days.
      2. If electronics is used then race results could be printed after each race with associated DQ(s) then attached and noted on the results. Those sheets could then be provided to a recorder scorer after the fact for entry into Hytek with the results from Hytek being certified by CFJ. Results would be delayed for several days.
      3. If sufficient expertise is available one person could operate Quantum and Hytek. This person must be CFJ/CJE qualified.



4. The movement of officials should be regulated and predetermined as much as possible.
  - a. Decide and communicate in advance to Timekeepers/Inspector of Turns which side of the blocks they will stand to maintain consistent safe physical distancing.
  - b. Determine how Stroke Judges would move along the sides making sure that their path along the side is clear and that physical distancing + is maintain at all times.
  - c. Determine DQ protocols for judging officials (see below).
  - d. Minimize direct communications with use of electronic communication.
5. Where possible, the Referee and Starter should be on opposite sides of the pool deck.
6. The use of walkie-talkies should be considered when available.
  - a. Disinfecting will be required between users.
7. In the short-term, it is recommended that backstroke ledges are not used, in order to reduce the number of potential people touching and manipulating the ledges.
8. When possible the use of every second lane for competition should be implemented, for example at the Pan Am; lanes 1, 3, 5 and 7
9. Spectators should be managed with safety in mind;
  - a. No spectators should be allowed if their attendance in any way reduces the number of athletes allowed to compete.
  - b. If spectators can be permitted under existing government, SNC, and SNM regulations, policies or recommendations then specific management protocols must be in place.
    - i. All spectators must wear masks at all times.
    - ii. No spectators at any time in the first five rows of the main tank spectator area.
      1. Spectators cannot be located along the railings as this places them directly over the individuals on the deck below.
      2. It might be possible to physically distance spectators on the Training Tank upper deck area if stand at least six to ten feet back from the rails to eliminate droplets or aerosol spray movement down to the main deck.
    - iii. No Spectators allowed on the deck area.
    - iv. Spectators, swimmers, coaches will not be permitted to cheer but perhaps noise markers that do not require forced expiration could be permitted (i.e.: cowbells).
    - v. Physical distancing must be maintained at all times amongst individuals not from same family and living together.



10. The positioning and movement of each Club and their associated Athletes and Coaches should be determined and communicated to the clubs before each competition.
  - a. Arrival windows should be established for each Club.
  - b. Club members should arrive prepared for competition.
  - c. Perhaps some accommodation for swimsuit switches just prior to and just following a swimmers competitions could be established to reduce deck changing.
  - d. Movement swimmers to the block area must be controlled to reduce the number of swimmers in the block area. Movement of swimmers in the start block area will controlled by the Referee's whistle.
    - i. Generally there will be one swimmer in the water and one swimmer at least ten feet behind the timekeeper's position with a mask on.
      1. In Pan Am training tank the lane rope rolls will have to be moved to permit ample space behind the blocks for larger competitions.
      2. A short whistle at the end of the race will be used to signal the swimmers to exit the pool.
      3. Swimmers exiting the pool will move in a manner to reduce passing officials or other swimmers.
      4. A second short whistle will then command the next heat of swimmers to advance from behind the timekeepers to the blocks.
      5. Referees would then use a long whistle to command the swimmers to mount the blocks.
      6. The race would then be passed to the
    - ii. If fly-over starts are in-place, swimmers in the water should all be instructed to stay on the same side of lanes by lane rope in order to maintain physical distancing. .
      1. A short whistle should be used to have Timekeepers return to their chairs.
      2. A second short whistler will then command the swimmers in next heat to move behind the blocks.
      3. Referee would then use long whistle to command the swimmer's to mount the block.
      4. Upon the start of the next heat, swimmers in the pool, exit as instructed, to the side or at the end, as appropriate, if fly-over starts are being used.
      5. Referees would then use a long whistle to command the swimmers to mount the blocks.



- e. Swimmers waiting to compete must be physically distanced at all times.
  - i. Specific areas should be set aside for each club. This may involve the spectator areas.
  - ii. Competitions should be designed to limit the amount of time individual swimmers would be in the facility.
- f. Coaches might need to be placed in a specific area that would allow for clear view of races, physical distancing amongst coaches, ease of interaction with swimmers post-race.

**iii. Meet Administration**

- 1. Minimize the handling of DQ slips.
- 2. If radios are available for use by Inspectors of Turns and Judges of Stroke:
  - a. DQ slips should not be used.
  - b. DQs or other issues should be recorded on a heat sheet, and called into the Session Referee.
  - c. DQs should be processed once verbally approved by the Session Referee.
- 3. If radios are unavailable:
  - a. DQ slips should not be used.
  - b. DQs should be recorded on a heat sheet by the Inspectors of Turns or Judges of Stroke, and shown to the Session Referee at the end of the session, and then processed as a batch at the end of the session.
- 4. As indicated above it may be necessary to complete all admin/meet results following the competition to maintain physical distancing – in this case meet results including a DQ report would be provided to clubs/coaches following the competition.
- 5. A full log of all officials/volunteers, including contact information, who have worked the session should be maintained by the Meet Manager for all sessions.
- 6. It is recommended that there is no sale of heat sheets/meet programs for spectators. Heat sheets/meet programs should be posted online, on Meet Mobile, or other mobile applications, where possible.
- 7. A hospitality or food room should not be made available during the competition until deemed safe in order to reduce the potential for contamination and to keep the number of volunteers required to a minimum. The distribution or sale of pre-packaged goods only may be considered as an alternative.



**iv. Senior Officials (Referee and Starter)**

1. Level 3 officials who are fully certified and have taken the full Swim Canada Referee clinic, may be the Referee on deck for competition opportunities as approved by the provincial sections.
2. Referees and Starters should be placed whenever possible on either side of the start end of the pool deck.
3. Referee and Starters must wear masks whenever possible.
4. Referees;
  - a. Must use an electronic whistle. This will also facilitate the use of a mask on deck. <https://www.fox40world.com/electronic-whistle>
  - b. Referee may assist in judging stroke and turns in some cases.
5. Starters;
  - a. Can remove mask to give start command but it is not recommended.
  - b. Sanitation of the Starter's equipment must take place before, during and after the competition.
  - c. Starter may be required to assist in judging turns in some cases.
6. If a CJE/CFJ is not available it might be feasible for the Referee and Starter perform this function on the raw race data after the cessation of racing.
  - a. Flaws in the data could result in no time for a swimmer or entire heat as a re-swim would not be available once the meet is whistled over.

**3. Competition – placement of officials' examples**

- a. Different meet formats/competition opportunities, availability of officials and changing governmental regulations will help determine what officials are needed on deck.
  - i. In-house competitions and Time Trial events with electronic timing, can have minimal staffing on deck and still have valid results.
  - ii. As provincial and local health guidance changes the availability of facilities or the maximum number of individuals allowed in a facility.
  - iii. Opportunities to look at officiating in a new way do exist.
  - iv. Reducing the # of officials required on deck over the long term,
    1. Will help support changes to volunteerism,
    2. May help support a complete re-imagining of officiating in Canada.
- b. The following examples are potential scenarios that may help guide what officiating can look like when competition resumes. But it should be clear that;
  - i. There isn't one right answer or one right model for how officials are utilized in competition.
  - ii. The examples are meant to provide minimum standards in how officials can support competition opportunities once provinces, clubs and coaches are ready for competition to begin again.



- c. **Example 1: 6 or 8 lane 25m or 50m Time Trial or In-House competition – electronic timing system.**
- i. For this type of competition, if electronics and touch pads are tested and working well then it may be possible to run with no Timekeepers.
  - ii. Two lane configurations could occur;
    1. All lanes used
    2. Every second lane used
      - a. In an 8 lane pool Lanes 1,3,5,7 are used.
      - b. In a 6 lane pool Lanes 1,3,5
  - iii. Any missed times due to light touches or electronic timing malfunctions would need to be re-swum.
  - iv. The Chief Judge Electronics position will be critical when conducting a meet with no Timekeepers.
  - v. The # of officials (8 lanes used) could be as low as 17 (13 if half the lanes used) in this example.
  - vi. Meet Manager – may also act as Safety Coordinator/Recorder-Scorer during or following the competition.
  - vii. Referee – also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes.
  - viii. Starter – also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes.
  - ix. Two Inspector of Turns, at the start end.
  - x. Two Inspectors of Turns, at turn end.
  - xi. Two Judges of Stroke, one on either side – also act as Inspector of Turns at turn end for outside lanes, may also act as Safety Marshals\* during warm-ups.
  - xii. One Chief Judge Electronics (CJE).
- d. **Example 2: 6 or 8 lane 25m Time Trial or In-house competition – no electronics.**
- i. For this competition format example manual times would be recorded.
    1. All times to be recorded by time keepers on the heat sheets or heat result cards/sheets.
    2. Sheets are collected at the end of the meet and then compiled and entered in meet manager software (Hy-tek) following the competition.
    3. Two lane configurations could occur;
      - a. All lanes used
      - b. Every second lane used
        - i. In an 8 lane pool Lanes 1,3,5,7 are used.
        - ii. In a 6 lane pool Lanes 1,3,5
    4. One Timekeeper per lane would be used, and may include Inspector of Turns qualified official. One official per lane with swimmer is recommended.
    5. The # of officials (8 lane used) could be as low as 17 if all lanes used and 13 if half the lanes are used in this example.
    6. Meet Manager – also acts as Safety Coordinator/CFJ and completes all results following competition.
    7. Referee – also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes.
    8. Starter – also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes.



9. Timekeepers in non-outside lanes (those covered by the Starter or Referee) must also be Stroke and Turn qualified (HLT).
10. Two Judges of Stroke, one on either side – act as Inspectors of Turn at turn end for outside lanes, also act as Safety Marshals\* during warm-ups.
11. One Chief Timekeeper – also acts as Clerk as needed.
12. 1 additional Timekeeper – also acts as Asst. Clerk/Marshal as needed.

**e. Example 3: 6 or 8 lane 25m competition – with or without electronics, running 4 of 8 lanes**

- i. For this competition format example, only half the lanes are used for competition.
  1. This reduces the number of officials required on deck and maximizes physical distancing.
  2. This will also allow for more rest between events for swimmers competing in multiple events.
  3. The Recorder-Scorer (Hytek) position is used in conjunction with a Chief Judge Electronics/Chief Finish Judge.
  4. The # of officials (4 of 8 used) could be as low as 13.
  5. Meet Manager – acts as Safety Coordinator/Recorder-Scorer or CFJ following the competition
  6. Referee – also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes.
  7. Starter – also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes.
  8. 2 Timekeepers, lane 1 and 7, also act as Safety Marshals during warm-ups.
  9. 2 Timekeepers who are also Inspector of Turns qualified, at start end, lanes 3 and 5.
  10. 2 Inspector of Turns, at turn end.
  11. 2 Judges of Stroke, one on either side act as Inspectors of Turn at turn end for outside lanes.
  12. 1 Electronic operator or 1 CJE.
  13. 1 Chief Timekeeper – also acts as Clerk as needed.



**Appendix #1**

**Minimum # of officials for competition and rule CSW 1.2.1**

Swimming Canada Rule, CSW 1.2.1 says: *For each session there should be a minimum of the following certified officials:*

*Referee  
2 Inspectors of Turns (at each end)  
Chief Judge Electronics (if applicable)  
Chief Finish Judge  
1 Timekeeper per lane  
2 Safety Marshals  
Starter  
Chief Timekeeper  
2 Judges of Stroke  
Clerk of Course  
Marshal  
Recorder-Scorer*

***Note: In some meets the officials may perform in several capacities where the duties of each position are not in conflict with one another. Not having the minimum number of officials will not nullify the results of the competition.***

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4. Should there be a light touch, or electronic timing malfunction, there would need to be a re-swim. This procedure to be communicated to the attending coaches.