

PART ONE ... USA SWIMMING TECHNICAL RULES (excerpts)

All competitive swimming events held under USA Swimming sanction shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules that are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition. It is recommended that the LSC and regional short course and long course championships be held annually and that they be conducted under the rules governing National Championships (Article 207), subject to available facilities and personnel. Events other than such championships may use Article 207 as a guide, subject to local conditions and preferences.

It is not the purpose of the Rules and Regulations of USA Swimming (the National Governing Body) contained herein to set standards of care for the safety of the swimmer. The swimmer, the swim coach, the swim club and the local public entity or pool owner should address safety considerations where events are held.

ARTICLE 101 ... INDIVIDUAL STROKES AND RELAYS

101.1 STARTS

.1 **Equipment** — A loudspeaker start system conforming to 103.15, with or without an underwater recall device, and an electronic strobe signal visible to all manual timers for forward and backstroke starts, shall be the preferred starting device.

.2 The Start

A At the commencement of each heat, the Referee shall signal to the swimmers by a short series of whistles to remove all clothing except for swimwear, followed by a long whistle indicating that they should take and maintain their positions on the starting platform, the deck, or in the water. In backstroke and medley relay events, at the Referee's first long whistle, the swimmers shall immediately enter the water and at the second long whistle shall return without undue delay to the starting position.

B When the swimmers and officials are ready, the Referee shall signal with an outstretched arm to the Starter that the swimmers are under the Starter's control.

C On the Starter's command "take your mark", the swimmers shall immediately assume their starting position, in the forward start, with at least one foot at the front of the starting platform or the deck. Swimmers starting in the water must have at least one hand in contact with the wall or starting platform.

When all swimmers are stationary, the Starter shall give the starting signal.

D When a swimmer does not respond promptly to the command "take your mark", the Starter shall immediately release all swimmers with the command "stand up" upon which the swimmers may stand up or step off the blocks.

.3 False Starts

A Any swimmer starting before the starting signal is given shall be disqualified if the Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter's observation that a violation occurred. Swimmers remaining on the starting blocks shall be relieved from their starting positions with the "stand up" command and may step off the blocks.

B If the starting signal has been given before the disqualification is declared, the race shall continue without recall. If the Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter's observation that a violation occurred, the swimmer or swimmers who have false started shall be disqualified upon completion of the race.

C If the recall signal is activated inadvertently, no swimmer shall be charged with a false start and the Starter shall restart the race upon signal by the Referee.

D A swimmer who would otherwise be charged with a false start may be relieved of the charge if the false start was caused by the swimmer's reaction to the "stand up" command.

E A swimmer shall not be disqualified for an illegal starting position at the start if the race is permitted to proceed. Enforcement of the correct starting position is the responsibility of the Starter.

F Declared false start: swimmers reporting to the Referee prior to the start of their race and declaring their intent not to compete will be disqualified except as noted in 207.12.6D(1).

.4 **Warning Signal** — With the exception of relays, in events 500 yards or longer, the Starter or a designee shall sound a warning signal over the water at the finish end of the lane of the leading swimmer when that swimmer has two lengths plus five yards or five meters to swim.

As an alternative, a bell warning signal may be given over each lane by a lane judge or timer for that lane.

.5 Deliberate Delay or Misconduct

A The Starter shall report a swimmer to the Referee for delaying the start, for willfully disobeying an order or for any other misconduct taking place at the start, but only the Referee may disqualify a swimmer for such delay, willful disobedience or misconduct.

B The Referee shall disqualify a swimmer who fails to appear at the starting platform ready to swim in time for the initial start of his/her heat.

C Such disqualification shall not be charged as a false start.

101.2 BREASTSTROKE

.1 **Start** — The forward start shall be used.

.2 **Stroke** — After the start and after each turn when the swimmer leaves the wall, the body shall be kept on the breast. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time. Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order. All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement. The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over the water. The elbows shall be under water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish. The hands shall be brought back on or under the surface of the water. The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn. During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer's head shall break the surface of the water. After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.

.3 **Kick** — After the start and each turn, a single butterfly kick, which must be followed by a breaststroke kick, is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull. Following which, all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement. The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick. A scissors, flutter or downward butterfly kick is not permitted except as provided herein. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward butterfly kick.

.4 **Turns and Finish** — At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. The head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch.

101.3 BUTTERFLY

.1 **Start** — The forward start shall be used.

.2 **Stroke** — After the start and after each turn, the swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast. The swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water, which must bring the swimmer to the surface. It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface. The swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish. From the beginning of the first arm pull, the body shall be kept on the breast. Both arms must be brought forward over the water and pulled back simultaneously.

.3 **Kick** — All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other. A scissors or breaststroke kicking movement is not permitted.

.4 **Turns** — At each turn the body shall be on the breast. The touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired. The shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall.

.5 **Finish** — At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.

101.4 BACKSTROKE

.1 **Start** — The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips. Standing in or on the gutter, placing the toes above the lip of the gutter, or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter, before or after the start, is prohibited.

.2 **Stroke** — The swimmer shall push off on his back and continue swimming on the back throughout the race. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it is permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn, at the finish and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water.

.3 **Turns** — Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. During the turn the shoulders may be turned past the vertical toward the breast after which a continuous single arm pull or a continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn. The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall.

.4 **Finish** — Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back.

101.5 FREESTYLE

.1 **Start** — The forward start shall be used.

.2 **Stroke** — In an event designated freestyle, the swimmer may swim any style, except that in a medley relay or an individual medley event, freestyle means any style other than butterfly, breaststroke or backstroke. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and each turn. By that point the head must have broken the surface.

.3 **Turns** — Upon completion of each length the swimmer must touch the wall.

.4 **Finish** — The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his person touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance.

101.6 INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY — The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: the first one-fourth, butterfly; the second one-fourth, backstroke; the third one-fourth, breaststroke; and the last one-fourth, freestyle.

.1 **Start** — The forward start shall be used.

.2 **Stroke** — The stroke for each one-fourth of the designated distance shall follow the prescribed rules for that stroke.

.3 Turns

A Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke.

B The turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed, and shall be as follows:

(1) **Butterfly to backstroke** — The swimmer must touch as described in 101.3.5. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner, but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the back when the swimmer leaves the wall.

(2) **Backstroke to breaststroke** — The swimmer must touch the wall while on the back. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall and the prescribed breaststroke form must be attained prior to the first arm stroke.

(3) **Breaststroke to freestyle** — The swimmer must touch as described in 101.2.4. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner.

.4 **Finish** — The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his/her person touches the wall after the prescribed distance.

101.7 RELAYS

.1 **Freestyle Relay** — Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance using any desired stroke(s). Freestyle finish rules apply.

.2 **Medley Relay** — Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance in the following order: first, backstroke; second, breaststroke; third, butterfly; and fourth, freestyle. Rules pertaining to each stroke used shall govern where applicable. At the end of each leg, the finish rule for each stroke applies in each case.

.3 Rules Pertaining to Relay Races

A No swimmer shall swim more than one leg in any relay event.

B When automatic relay take-off judging is used, each swimmer must touch the touchplate or pad in his/her lane at the end of the course to have finished his/her leg of the relay race.

C In relay races a swimmer other than the first swimmer shall not start until his/her teammate has concluded his/her leg.

D Any relay team member and his/her relay team shall be disqualified from a race if a team member other than the swimmer designated to swim that leg enters the pool in the area where the race is being conducted before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race. Exception: When an in-the-water start is required or such start is approved by the Referee.

E Each relay team member shall leave the water immediately upon finishing his/her leg, except the last member.

F In relay races the team of a swimmer whose feet have lost touch with the starting platform (ground or deck) before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified.

G In relay races involving in-the-water starts, the team of a swimmer who has lost touch with the end of the course before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified, unless the swimmer in default returns to the original starting point at the wall.

102.10 DISQUALIFICATIONS

.1 A disqualification can be made only by the official within whose jurisdiction the infraction has been committed. Except for the relay take-off judges when dual confirmation relay take-off judging, as provided in 102.15.6B, is used, the Referee, stroke, turn, or relay take-off judge upon observing an infraction, shall immediately raise one hand overhead. If the official does not do so, there shall be no disqualification unless the Program Operations Vice President has directed that the meet be conducted under FINA procedures.

.2 The Referee or designated official making a disqualification shall make every reasonable effort to seek out the swimmer or his/her coach and inform him/her as to the reason for the disqualification.

.3 Any swimmer who acts in an unsportsmanlike or unsafe manner within the swimming venue may be considered for appropriate action or penalty by the Referee.

.4 A swimmer must start and finish the race in the same lane.

.5 Standing on the bottom during a freestyle race shall not disqualify a swimmer, but a swimmer must not leave the pool, or walk, or spring from the bottom. Standing on the bottom during any other stroke shall result in disqualification.

.6 Obstructing another swimmer by swimming across or otherwise interfering shall disqualify the offender, subject to the discretion of the Referee.

.7 Any swimmer not entered in a race who enters the pool or course in the area in which said race is being conducted before all swimmers therein have completed the race shall be barred from the next individual event in which that swimmer is entered on that day or the next meet day, whichever is first.

.8 Dipping goggles in the water or splashing water on the competitor's face or body prior to an event shall not be considered as entering the pool unless the Referee finds that such action is interfering with the competition.

.9 Should a foul endanger the chance of success of a swimmer(s), the Referee may allow the affected competitor(s) to reswim the event. In case of collusion to foul another swimmer, the Referee may, at his/her discretion, disqualify the swimmer for whose aid the foul was committed, as well as the swimmer committing the foul.

.10 Grasping lane dividers to assist forward motion is not permitted.

.11 For relay disqualifications, refer to 101.7.3.

.12 The time and/or place of any swimmer or relay team disqualified either during or following an event shall not be recorded in the results of that event. If awards have been made prior to the decision to disqualify they shall be returned and made to the proper recipient(s) and if points have been scored by those disqualified the event shall be rescored.

.13 Time and/or place officially recorded for a swimmer shall not be nullified for violations occurring subsequent to such performance.

102.11 PROTESTS

.1 Protests against the judgment decisions of starters, stroke, turn, place and relay take-off judges can only be considered by the Referee and the Referee's decision shall be final.

.2 For consideration of all other protests lodged at the meet, the Referee may appoint a meet jury. The jury shall consist of not fewer than three (3) and not more than five (5) persons, at least one of whom shall be a coach and one an athlete.

.3 Protests made prior to the race contesting the eligibility of a swimmer to compete or to represent an organization shall be made to the Referee in writing. If a protest is not resolved, the Referee or the meet jury shall allow the swimmer to compete under protest and it shall be so announced before the race.

.4 All other competition-related protests, including protests concerning eligibility and representation, must be made to the Referee and submitted in writing within 30 minutes after the race in which the alleged infraction occurred.

.5 Except as provided in 102.11.1, the Referee's or the meet jury's ruling may be appealed as follows:

A Protests concerning interpretation of the rules in Part One and Part Seven of the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations shall be submitted in writing within ten (10) days to the Chairman of the USA Swimming Rules & Regulations Committee who shall issue a ruling within five (5) days from the date of the receipt of such protest. This ruling shall be final and binding on all parties.

B All other protests, together with the Referee's or the jury's written decision, shall be submitted to the General Chairman, or designee, of the sanctioning LSC or, in the case of a National Championship or trials class meet, to the National Board of Review, in accordance with the Hearings and Appeals Section of the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations.

.6 The official results of any protested race shall not be announced, the affected awards shall not be given, and points scored shall not be allocated until the protest is resolved or is withdrawn in writing.

102.12 OFFICIALS

.1 All officials accepting an invitation to officiate at a swimming meet should arrive promptly and report immediately to the Meet Director or Meet Referee.

.2 All officials acting in the capacity of Referee, Starter, or Stroke and/or Turn Judge at a swimming meet shall be certified in such position by their LSC prior to being assigned to officiate in that capacity. Uncertified trainees may perform the duties of such positions when they are under the direct supervision of a certified official. See Article 202 for USA Swimming membership requirements.

.3 For all swimming meets or time trials except dual meets there should not be fewer than the following officiating positions filled or approved by the LSC in authority. Officials other than the Referee may act in more than one officiating capacity only when sufficient qualified officials are not available, but no one may simultaneously time and judge the order of finish.

1 Referee

1 Starter

3 Timers per lane (one minimum if automatic equipment with touchpads is used)

1 Clerk of Course

2 Place Judges (optional if automatic or semi-automatic timing equipment is used)

2 Stroke Judges and 2 Turn Judges or 2 Stroke & Turn Judges

Relay Take-off Judges (if applicable)

1 Recorder

1 Timing Judge

1 Announcer

Timing Equipment Operators (as needed)

Marshal(s) (number determined by the LSC)

.4 Minimum Number of Officials Required for Dual Meets

1 Referee, who may also act as a stroke and turn judge

1 Starter

1 Other stroke and turn judge (may be the Starter)

2 Recorders — one from each team

1 Announcer

3 Timers for each lane (one minimum if automatic timing equipment with touchpads is used)

1 Timing Judge

2 Place judges (optional if automatic or semi-automatic timing equipment is used)

Relay take-off judges (if applicable)

Timing Equipment Operators (as needed)

Marshal(s) (number determined by the LSC)

The visiting team may furnish officials as a courtesy, not a requirement.

.5 Officials For USA Swimming Championships

A Officials for USA Swimming championship meets shall be assigned by the National Officials Chairman with the approval of the Program Operations Vice President.

B The following officials shall be required and assigned for all USA Swimming championship and team selection trials competitions:

1 Referee 1 Administrative Referee

1 Starter 1 Chief Timer

1 Chief Judge

1 Stroke Judge per each side of pool

1 Timer/Relay Take-off Judge per lane (start end)

1 Recorder/Head Lane Timer per lane (start end)

1 Timer/Turn Judge per lane (start end)

1 Turn Judge per lane (turn end)

4 Relay Take-off Judges — two each side of pool

1 Recall Rope Operator

4 Marshals (minimum)

C In addition to the officials listed above, assistant referees, assistant chief judges, one additional stroke judge per each side of the pool and relief personnel may be assigned. In the event of insufficient officials, the Referee may modify or combine assignments, subject to the provisions of 102.12.3.

D Additional Required Meet Personnel

1 Clerk of Course

1 Announcer

2 Timing Equipment Operators

1 Computer Operator

102.13 REFEREE

.1 Shall have full authority over all officials and shall assign and instruct them; shall enforce all applicable rules and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the final settlement of which is not otherwise assigned by said rules; can 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.

.2 The Referee has the authority to disqualify a swimmer(s) for any violation of the rules that the Referee personally observes and, except for false starts, shall at the same time raise one hand overhead. If the Referee does not make such a signal there shall be no disqualification.

.3 Shall signal the Starter that all officials are in position, that the course is clear, and that the competition can begin, before each race; shall assign marshals with specific instructions.

.4 Shall give a decision on any point where the opinions of the judges differ; shall have authority to intercede in a competition at any stage, to ensure that the appropriate racing conditions are observed.

.5 For LSC and local records only, may assign three (3) additional official timers on request to record a record attempt at initial distances in accordance with 102.16 and Article 104.

.6 When automatic or semi-automatic officiating equipment is used and an apparent malfunction occurs it shall be his/her responsibility to make an immediate investigation to determine whether the swimmer finished in accordance with the rules and/or if there was an actual equipment malfunction.

.7 May prohibit the use of any device that disrupts or interferes with the meet, such as a laser pointing device or artificial noisemaker.

.8 May modify any rule for a competitive swimmer who has a disability. Any such modification shall be in accordance with Article 105 of the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, shall affect only the current meet, and does not set a precedent.

.9 When the meet sanction allows conducting the events by starting them from the alternate ends of a 50-meter course, the Referee shall establish the necessary administrative and officiating procedures to conform to Part One of the rules and local conditions.

.10 Refer to 102.11 concerning protests.

102.14 STARTER

.1 **Preparation** — The Starter shall stand within ten feet of the starting end of the pool and upon signal from the Referee, shall assume control of the swimmers until a fair start has been achieved.

.2 **Optional Instructions** — The Starter may:

A Announce the event.

B Advise the heat when a swimmer will be attempting to achieve a time at an initial distance.

C For backstroke starts, give the command, "Place your feet."

102.15 JUDGES — Shall have jurisdiction over the swimmers immediately after the race has begun.

.1 **Chief** — An overall "Chief Judge" may assign and supervise the activities of all stroke, turn, place and take-off judges and may report their decisions, or if desired any judging category may have a designated "Chief". Any "Chief" may act as liaison for the judges and may serve simultaneously in one of the judging positions and shall assign those judges within the "Chief's" category.

.2 **Place Judge** — At the discretion of the Referee, two place judges — one on each side of the course — shall be stationed near the finish and each shall judge the order of finish of all swimmers. A place judge shall record a tie if a place distinction cannot be made. Judging results shall be used only in accordance with 102.16.6C in determining the order of finish.

.3 **Stroke Judge** — Shall operate on both sides of the pool, preferably walking abreast of the swimmers during all strokes except freestyle, during which events they may leave poolside, at the Referee's discretion; shall ensure that the rules relating to the style of swimming designated for the event are being observed; and shall report any violations to the Referee on signed slips detailing the event, the heat number, the lane number and the infraction.

.4 **Turn Judge** — Shall operate on both ends of the pool; shall ensure that when turning or finishing the swimmer complies with the turning and finishing rules applicable to the stroke used; and shall report any violations to the Referee on signed slips detailing the event, the heat number, lane number and infraction observed.

.5 **Jurisdiction of Stroke and Turn Judges** — Before the competition begins, the Referee shall determine the respective areas of stroke and turn responsibility and jurisdiction, which may include joint, concurrent, and coordinated responsibility and jurisdiction. The Referee shall insure that all swimmers shall have fair, equitable, and uniform conditions of judging.

.6 Relay Take-Off Judges

A Relay take-off judges shall be assigned by the Referee and shall stand so that they can clearly see both the touch of the incoming swimmer(s) and the feet of the departing swimmer(s) as they leave the starting platform, and shall judge whether the swimmer is in contact with the platform when the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool.

B If dual relay take-off judging is used, the lane and side take-off judges shall independently report infractions in writing without the use of the infraction hand signal. A relay will be disqualified only if the lane take-off judge has reported an infraction and the assigned side take-off judge has confirmed the same infraction.

C When automatic relay exchange judging equipment is in use, the system printout will provide the information to judge relay exchanges. Integrated back-up timing cameras may be reviewed by the Referee to confirm the automatic system's results. When backup timing cameras are not available, the Referee will determine the confirmation process.

102.16 TIMING

.1 **Timing Systems** — Every race in a swimming competition shall be timed with one or more of the following systems, listed in their preferred order of use:

A **Automatic** — A timing system whose start is activated by a starting device and stopped at the finish by the swimmer touching the touchpad.

B **Semi-Automatic** — A timing system whose start is activated by a starting device and stopped by buttons pushed by timers at the finish touch of the swimmer.

C **Manual** — A timing system consisting of individual lane timers, each operating a manual watch that is both started and stopped by the timer as described in 102.16.3C. Only hand-held, battery powered, digital read-out type watches designed for timing purposes shall be used.

.2 **Timing System Designation** — Timing systems shall be designated in the order in which results are used as follows:

A **Primary System** — The primary system shall determine the official time of each swimmer unless a comparison of the primary with secondary and/or tertiary system times indicates a malfunction of the primary system. A primary system shall always be in place and shall consist of one of the following, listed in their preferred order of use:

(1) Automatic Timing.

(2) Semi-Automatic, with three (3) or two (2) buttons per lane, each operated by a separate timer.

(3) Manual, with three (3) or two (2) watches per lane, each operated by a separate timer.

B Secondary System — If manually operated watches are not the primary system, a secondary system of precedence equal to or lower than the primary system must be used. The secondary system may be:

- (1) Back-up timing cameras recording a minimum of 100 images per second. The cameras must be fully integrated with the timing system.
- (2) Semi-Automatic with one (1), two (2), or three (3) buttons, each operated by a separate timer.
- (3) Manual with one (1), two (2) or three (3) watches per lane, each operated by a separate timer.

C Tertiary System — Unless the primary system consists of manual watches or the secondary system includes at least one (1) manual watch per lane, a tertiary system of at least one (1) manual watch per lane shall be provided.

.3 Timing Personnel and Their Duties

A Chief Timer — The Chief Timer shall:

- (1) Assure the assignment of Lane Timers to lanes and the designation of one timer on each lane to be the Head Lane Timer.
- (2) On the starting signal, start a watch(es) on every race. The time of this watch shall be used if a Lane Timer's watch fails.
- (3) Be responsible for delivering all manual watch times, including those of disqualified swimmers, to the Timing Judge.

B Head Lane Timer — The Head Lane Timer shall:

- (1) Determine whether the swimmer or relay team is present and in the correct lane, heat and event, and that relay swimmers are swimming in the order listed.
- (2) Determine and record manual watch times or the absence of a swimmer or the relay team seeded in that lane.
- (3) Assign one timer to time relay splits and initial distance times if requested by the Chief Timer.
- (4) Report if the swimmer has delayed in touching or has missed the touch pad at the finish, or if there is reason to believe the semi-automatic or manual times may be inaccurate.

C Lane Timers — Officials assigned as Lane Timers may simultaneously operate two dissimilar devices (one watch and one button) but not two similar devices (two watches or two buttons). It is not within the Lane Timer's jurisdiction to judge if the swimmer's touch conforms to the applicable finish rules or if a relay take-off infraction has occurred unless assigned concurrent responsibility as a Lane Timer and Turn Judge or Relay Take-off Judge. Each timer shall:

- (1) Be in position at the start to have an unobstructed view and shall start the watch at the instant of observing the visual starting signal. If the visual starting signal is not observed, the watch shall be started upon hearing the sound of the starting signal.
- (2) Stand directly over the assigned lane at the finish to observe a touch above, at, or below the surface of the water and stop the watch and/or push the semi-automatic system button when any part of the swimmer's body touches the wall.
- (3) Report the watch time to the Head Lane Timer or the designated recorder, report if a late or missed pad touch is observed; and, if requested, present the watch for inspection. Lane Timers shall not clear their watches until a command to "clear watches" is given or the Referee signals that the next heat is ready to start.

D Timing Equipment Operator — The Timing Equipment Operator shall be responsible for the automatic or semi-automatic timing equipment, including the electronic starting system and scoreboard (if used), and shall advise the Referee of any system problems that might affect the accuracy of times or whenever the touchpad is observed to have failed to record the finish when the swimmer completed the race. The timing equipment should be placed so that the operator is able to observe the finish of each race.

E Timing Judge — Under the direction of the Referee, the Timing Judge shall determine the official time for each swimmer as follows:

- (1) Receive and review the automatic and/or semi-automatic timing results from the Timing Equipment Operator and compare primary timing results with the back-up timing results to determine their validity.
- (2) Receive the times recorded by the Head Lane Timers from the Chief Timer and use those times to the extent needed to determine the official time for each swimmer.
- (3) Notify the Referee whenever a time obtained by the primary timing system cannot be used as the Official Time.
- (4) Record disqualifications approved by the Referee. A written record of all disqualifications signed by the Referee shall be given to the Recorder.

F Recorder — The Recorder shall:

- (1) Record the Official Times and disqualifications;
- (2) Determine the official Order of Finish;
- (3) Publish the results; and
- (4) May also determine the score of the meet.

.4 Requirements for Official Time

A Performance Requirements

- (1) An official time can be achieved only in USA Swimming sanctioned or USA Swimming approved competition, or in an observed swim in accordance with all applicable rules. It may be achieved in:
 - (a) A preliminary or final heat.
 - (b) A swim-off held to determine qualifiers or alternates for consolation or final heats.
 - (c) A lead-off leg in a relay.
 - (d) A split time recorded from the official start to the completion of an initial distance with a legal finish within a longer event, provided the swimmer completes the event or the lead-off portion of the relay in compliance with applicable rules.
 - (e) A time trial or a record attempt.
- (2) An official time for an event or a stroke can be achieved only in that event or stroke, or in an initial distance of such event or stroke (e.g. a backstroke time must be achieved in a backstroke event or the backstroke leg of a medley relay). Regardless of the stroke(s) used, times achieved in freestyle events can be recorded only as freestyle times.