

DELCO SWIMMING AND DIVING LEAGUE 2023 SEASON OFFICIAL'S OVERVIEW

1. Officiating Philosophy

The guiding philosophy swim officials must carry onto the pool deck is that their primary responsibility is to ensure:

- Competitions are run safely
- The rules of swimming are upheld
- The competition is conducted in a manner that ensures all swimmers have a fair chance of winning.

Give every swimmer the benefit of the doubt – Don't penalize a swimmer doing it right by not calling an infraction on a swimmer obviously doing it wrong.

2. Delco Swimming and Diving League Homepage: <https://www.delcoswimmingdivingleague.com/>

3. League Swimming Rules

All competitions between teams in the Delco Swim League are governed by the league rules (Rev 2023) and the current (2023) USA Swimming Rules with amendments and supplements noted below.

THIS OVERVIEW IS NOT A SUBSTITUTION FOR BEING FAMILIAR WITH DELCO LEAGUE RULES AND USA SWIMMING RULES

Rev 2023 of the DELCO League Rules are available on the league website at:

https://www.delcoswimmingdivingleague.com/delcosdl/UserFiles/Image/QuickUpload/delcoleaguerules-swimming-rev-2023_052309.pdf

The 2023 USA Swimming Rules can be found on the USA Swimming web site:

https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/governance/governance-lsc-website/rules_policies/rulebooks/2023-rulebook.pdf?sfvrsn=74020f32_2

4. 2023 Rules Amendments/Supplements for Officials

- False starts are to be called for all age groups however, the first false start in any heat swum by the 8, 10, and 12 YO age groups is charged to the entire field (recall the field if required). The next swimmer in the same heat who false starts shall be disqualified.
 - All false starts in the 14 and 18 YO age groups are counted against the swimmer making the infraction.
- Recall ropes shall not be used.
- Official varsity meet start time is 9:00 am but teams mutually can agree to start at a different time.

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5. Rules Clarifications for Officials

- **** NEW in 2023 ** Backstroke Finish.** USA Swimming Rule 101.4.2 has been revised for 2023 to allow a backstroke swimmer to be fully submerged at the finish: . . . *once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the [5 meter/yard mark – from the flags in to the finish] immediately prior to reaching the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged prior to the touch.*

- **** NEW in 2023 ** Breaststroke Stroke & Kick.** The rules for the Breaststroke stroke and kick were amended to remove the requirements that all movements of the arms or legs be in the same horizontal plane. (Articles 101.2.2, 101.2.3). That translates to **TWO** new interpretations: (1) a swimmer's arms and legs no longer need to be on the same horizontal plane (the more important aspect is the arm and leg movements being simultaneous without alternating movement) and (2) after the turn and prior to the first breaststroke kick, the swimmer no longer needs to be on the horizontal plane before taking the single dolphin kick allowed.

- **Backstroke Turns.** No change to how the backstroke turn is to be judged in 2023. Judging emphasis during the turn should be on the continuous turning motion required by the rule:
 - During the turn, the shoulders may be turned past the vertical toward the breast.
 - Once past vertical toward the breast, the turning motion must be continuous. When officiating, consider a 'continuous turning motion' to be made up of any head and arm motion.
 - The rule is silent on foot motion during the turn – keep your focus on the head and arms.
 - Only one single or double arm pull may be used during the turn.
 - The swimmer must be past vertical toward the back when leaving the wall after the turn.

- **Individual Medley Transitions Between Strokes.** There are two transitions worth discussing:
 - Backstroke-to-Breaststroke Transition – Look for Crossover Turns (<https://youtu.be/T6IDN461Seg>). When officiating, it's best to break it down what you're seeing into three steps:
 - During the IM, turns when changing from one stroke to another are judged as finishes.
 - Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer can turn in any manner desired (flip, bucket, etc.).
 - After the turn – when the swimmer leaves the wall – s/he must be toward the breast before beginning the Breast Stroke.

 - Breaststroke-to-Freestyle Transition – Implementation of the Lochte Rule. Remember that after the swimmer completes a legal breaststroke touch, they can turn in any manner desired as long as they return to the breast prior to the initiation of any kicking or arm action.
 - Depending on the breast-to-free turn style chosen by the swimmer, s/he may be still be toward the back when their feet leave the wall. That's okay as long as they are past vertical toward the breast before their first arm pull or kick.

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- **Protests.** To file a protest relative to the outcome of a dual meet, a team representative shall verbally notify the meet referee. The referee and the protesting representative will then, prior to continuing the swim meet, do a written account of the actions being protested and submit the account to the league president within 48 hours of the end of the meet.

6. Officials Placement

The DELCO Swimming and Diving League continues to put emphasis on consistency of officials' placement/jurisdiction during competitions in 2023.

Starter/Referee (1): Located at the start end of the pool with a clear view of all swimmers at the beginning of each heat and within 3 meters (10 feet) of the finish at the conclusion of each heat.

Stroke Judge (2): Positioned one on each side of the pool with equal jurisdiction as determined by the physical configuration of the pool deck. Discuss and agree on jurisdiction limits and restrictions prior to the start of the competition.

- ***The visiting team's stroke judge should be placed on the same side as the host team's referee.***

Turn Judge (2): Positioned at the turn end of the pool; positioned directly over the turn end bulkhead. Turn judge jurisdiction is from the nearest backstroke flags to the observing bulkhead. Turn judge duties can be combined with the Stroke judges

- ***The visiting team's turn judge should be placed on the same side as the host team's stroke judge.***

Place Judge (2): Positioned one on each side of the pool with clear line-of-sight across all competition lanes.

7. Relay Take-Offs

- Relay take-off violations require dual confirmation before being brought to the referee for consideration. Relay take-offs should be observed by one officiating representative from each competing club:
 - Start end of the pool: the opposing team's place judges – or – the referee and the opposing team's place judge or official.
 - Turn end of the pool (100-meter/yard relay events): stroke/turn judges.

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8. Disqualifications

DQ Slips are encouraged for all varsity competitions. League DQ slips can be downloaded/printed from here:

<https://www.delcoswimmingdivingleague.com/page/swimming/meet-forms>

Once a DQ is observed and accepted by the Referee, the following actions must be completed:

- The heat's runner's card should be annotated by the referee prior to being returned to the scorer's table. The disqualified swimmer's name should be circled with "DQ" written after it. It is also a good practice to note the reason for the DQ on the runner's card.
- All accepted DQ slips for a given heat should accompany the runner's card back to the scorer's table.

9. Finishes

Finish order is decided by the Place Judges.

- If the Order of Finishes (OOFs) recorded by the runner from both Place Judges agree, the OOF is dual confirmed and final (subject to any disqualifications accepted by the referee).
- If the OOFs recorded by the runner from both Place Judges DO NOT agree, the referee will compare them to his/her own OOF record and circle the one that is accepted, dual confirmed, and final.
 - The referee must remember to circle the accepted OOF when the Place Judges' OOFs do not agree.
 - The referee should independently record the OOF for every event.

10. Use of Heat Sheets

Heat Sheets can be a valuable tool for the Starter/Referee to ensure the expected swimmers are in position before beginning a heat but . . .

- Only the meet scorers can be in possession of a combined heat sheet once the lineups have been entered.
- Coaches should only have team heat sheets. Violations are reportable and prohibit future substitution

11. JV Meets

The primary purpose of JV meets is to keep as many of the young swimmers as possible interested in swimming.

- If officials are fielded for JV Meets, they should be very liberal with their interpretation of stroke/turn rules.

OFFICIALS MEETING CHEAT SHEET

GENERAL WELCOME & INTRO

- Introduce yourself.
- On behalf of your club, welcome the opposing team.
- Thank the group for volunteering.
- If waters are staged, remind the volunteers where they are.

TIMER'S MEETING

- Anyone not timed before?
 - Try to put brand new timers in Lane 1 or 6 to start – or pair them with you most experienced timers
- Timers set the pace of the meet – the quicker you get times to the runners, the quicker the next heat can start.
- Conduct a general watch overview if required:
 - Two buttons: start/stop and reset.
 - If watches have a third decimal place timers should just ignore it – don't round – just pretend it's not there.
- Timers start watches on the horn or the flash.
- Timers stop watches when any part of the swimmer's body touches the finish wall.
- Two timers per lane – one from each club. The two timers compare times, average them, and give the single, averaged time to the runner. [Introduce the meet runners here]
- Reset your watch for the next heat.
- Run down lane assignments, identify the backup timer(s), and what timers should do if they have a watch issue.
- Perform a watch check – zero out watches, blow the whistle, let the watches run. While watches are running:
 - Remind timers no hands in the water – don't instinctively try to cushion a backstroke swimmer coming into the wall.
 - If you're running the meet with fly-overs, ask the timers to remind the kids to stay in the water at the end of their heat.
- Blow the whistle and compare times. They should be close.
- Ask for questions – tell the timers to report behind their block by XX:XX – dismiss the timers.

OFFICIALS MEETING CHEAT SHEET

OFFICIAL'S MEETING

- Official's meeting should consist of Stroke, Turn, and Place Judges. [identify judges by name]
- Start by reminding officials that swimmers should get every benefit of the doubt but if you observe an infraction, you should be calling it – don't penalize a swimmer doing it right by not calling an infraction on one that isn't.
- Run down official's placement and jurisdiction during individual events:
 - Opposing team Stroke Judge should be on the same side as the starter/referee; home team Stroke opposite side.
 - Turn Judges should be flip-flopped so you have one judge from each team watching each lane cluster.
 - Stroke observes from the start to the turn flags. Turn observes from the turn flags, to the wall, and back to the turn flags.
 - Official's jurisdiction limited to lanes [1-2-3] or [4-5-6] depending on the side of the pool they're assigned to.
 - If pool configuration prohibits travel for one judge, the other judge should work to the same constraint. Turn judges should position themselves on the turn wall over lane {2} or {5}.
- Infractions: Raise your hand, get the starter/ref's attention, fill out a DQ slip, present it to the starter/ref. [Include as much detail as needed]
- Run down relay takeoff dual confirm responsibility (dual confirm teams watch ALL lanes during relays):
 - You want one official from each team dual confirming: usually starter/ref & opposing team Stroke or Place at start end; turn judges far end.
- Go over any specific rules clarifications you consider appropriate (back turn clarifications, IM turns, Breast/Fly stroke, etc.)
- Place Judges: Make sure your place judges know how to properly record the OOF and how to give it to the runners. Make sure YOU record the OOF for each heat (don't forget you're the tie breaker if the Place Judges don't agree).