



OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER



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Greetings from the Chair

By: Trish Martin

Championship season is in full swing! Thank you for all you do to make sure athletes at all levels of our wonderful sport have enjoyable and successful season-culminating meets. Not only is this a time of year for our athletes to demonstrate all they have learned and gained over the season, but it is also the time for officials to shine. USA Swimming officials are on the decks or on the water at our own championship meets and also at high school championships, college championships, YMCA nationals, Masters, and Para meets. Wherever there are competitive swimmers, USA Swimming officials are there to support them.

As you look ahead at your plans over the next several months, be sure to take advantage of the many Officials Qualifying Meets (OQMs) offered across the country. Now is the time to demonstrate all those new skills you acquired over the short course season and advance your credentials to reflect your investment in training and practice, just like the athletes.

Thank you for making this critical part of the season possible and for being so generous with your time and talent. Competitive swimmers across the spectrum have you to thank for making these important competitions legal, fair, and rewarding.

See you at the pool!

Announcements

Upcoming USA Swimming Championship Meet	2026 Competition Dates	Location	Applications Open (click the link to apply)*	National Certification Requirements	Meet Referee(s)
2026 Open Water National and Junior National Championships	April 2-4	Sarasota, Fla.	CLOSED	Required N3ST	Mike Murphy
USA Swimming Pro Swim Series	May 20-23	Sacramento, Calif.	CLOSED	Required N3ST	Kathleen Scandary
USA Swimming Pro Series	June 17-20	Indianapolis, Ind.	CLOSED	Required N3ST	Peter LaGow
Futures Championships	July 29-August 1	Multi-Site: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin, Texas • Greensboro, N.C. • Knoxville, Tenn. • Madison, Wisc. • Sacramento, 	OPENED January 29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austin, Texas • Greensboro, N.C. • Knoxville, Tenn. • Madison, Wis. 	Minimum N2ST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keith Lambert • Aimee Onozsko • Mike Trexler • Bryan Wallin • Sheila Lovell-

		Calif.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacramento, Calif. 		Otterstrom
Toyota National Championships	July 28- August 1	Irvine, Calif.	OPENED January 29	Required N3ST	Anissa Kanzari
Speedo Junior National Championships	August 3-7	Irvine, Calif.	OPENED January 29	Preferred N3ST	Marcus Stromberg
Pan Pacific Swimming Championships	August 12-15	Irvine, Calif.	Invitation Only		TBA
Short Course World Championship Trials	October 28-31	Westmont, Ill.	April 26	Required N3ST	TBA
Toyota U.S. Open Championships	TBA	TBA	TBA - June	Required N3ST	TBA
Speedo Winter Junior Championships - East	TBA	TBA	TBA - June	Preferred N3ST	TBA
Speedo Winter Junior Championships - West	TBA	TBA	TBA - June	Preferred N3ST	TBA

*An application closes when a sufficient number of appropriate applicants have been obtained to fill the decks. Please mark your calendars, as applications have filled up quickly for recent meets. All applications are located on the [USA Swimming National Meet Application webpage](#).

General Announcements:

- The 2024 and 2025 editions of the USA Swimming Officials' Newsletter can be found on the [Newsletter Archive page](#) on the USA Swimming website (scroll down to "Officials' Newsletter" section).
- Is there an official in your LSC who you think deserves national recognition? This individual doesn't need to be a national-level official, but the individual should be someone who has made a major impact on officiating at the local level. More details of the award and a nomination link can be found [here](#) and below following the announcement of this month's recipient of the **Officials Excellence Award**.
- The **2026 USA Swimming Rulebook** has shipped! If you missed the printed copy pre-order deadline of December 1, 2025, you can purchase one through [SwimOutlet](#), with availability expected soon. Both the [full rulebook](#) and the [mini rulebook](#) are available as PDF documents.
- The next **LSC Officials Chairs Quarterly Meeting** will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. MT. This is an open meeting (request the Microsoft Team link from your LSC officials chair), but only LSC officials chairs may comment or ask questions. Please contact your LSC officials chair to learn more about the items discussed at

these meetings.

- The next **National Officials Committee Quarterly Meeting** will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, May 6, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. MT. This is an open meeting, but only NOC members have a voice and vote. When available, the registration link will be available on the USA Swimming Events page [here](#).
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Building Collaboration Between Referees and Coaches Before, During, and After Weather-Related Incidents at a Meet

By: Peter LaGow

Weather-related incidents are among the most challenging situations in competitive swimming, particularly in outdoor venues. Lightning, extreme heat, high winds, or sudden storms can quickly disrupt a meet and place athlete safety at risk. As a referee, how do you handle these situations? Click [here](#) to learn more.

Newsletter Survey

By: Jason Johnson

The National Officials Committee Education Working Group is looking for feedback on this issue's educational article "Building Collaboration Between Referees and Coaches Before, During, and After Weather-Related Incidents at a Meet," and they are soliciting ideas for future topics. Please take a few minutes to complete [this survey](#) to gather your feedback.

LSC Leaders: Developing N2 Mentors

By: Trish Martin and Marianne Walling

One of the many roles of an LSC officials chair is to identify and develop N2 mentors for Officials Qualifying Meets. As this is frequently requested information, we are reprising a previous article on this topic that originally ran in the February 2025 issue.

Click [here](#) to learn more.

COMING SOON! Junior Official Role Expansion

By: Trish Martin

The junior official position has been successfully implemented on pool decks everywhere. Athletes, aged 16-17 years old, have gone through the training, apprenticeship, and certification process and may now serve as stroke and turn judges at 12&U sessions. These junior officials are giving back to the sport they love, providing positive role models for younger athletes, and helping their teams host meets. The program has been so successful that the junior official role will be broadened later this spring.

Pending USA Swimming Board of Directors approval at their April meeting, the junior official role will be expanded to allow junior officials to officiate at any meet session in which they are not competing. Plus, it will permit junior officials to train, apprentice, and certify as junior administrative officials (AO). Junior AOs cannot serve as the AO of record that is required for sanctioned and approved meets and must work with a certified adult AO at all sessions. However, junior AOs will have a nice head start on being fully trained and experienced AOs once they turn 18.

Look for the official announcement in April!

P.S. Shoutout to Metropolitan Swimming for putting together a great Instagram reel on this program. [Here it is.](#)

Situations and Resolutions

By: Jack Swanson

The Online Testing Working Group spent the last year updating the Stroke and Turn and Starter/Referee Situations and Resolutions, adding situations and resolutions based on recent rule changes and adding situations pertinent to officiating athletes with disabilities (thanks to the Disability Subcommittee of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee for their help!). Links to the situations and resolutions are below and are also published to the USA Swimming webpage:

- [Stroke and Turn](#)
- [Starter and Deck Referee](#)

Each newsletter, we will highlight a situation and resolution from each group. [Click here](#) to see two selected situations and resolutions.

Congratulations!

Congratulations and thank you to the following officials who recently served at their first national meet (Note - we apologize for any omissions or errors):

Pro Swim Series – Austin, Tex., January 14-17, 2026

Rudy Chapa - South Texas

Andrew Choy - Pacific Northwest

Sarah Cinson - North Carolina

David Ferrick - Sierra Nevada

Brooke Fulham - Virginia

Somiranjan Ghosh - Potomac Valley

Peng Li - Pacific Northwest
Eric Mok - North Texas
Brittany Ramsey - South Texas
Mitch Satz - Sierra Nevada
Janel Smith - South Texas
Jim Works - Southeastern



Officials' Excellence Award

Congratulations to the February winner of the Officials' Excellence Award: Mike Davis from Pacific Swimming.

Mike Davis's long and distinguished career as a swim official in the Pacific Swimming LSC spans over 20 years. Mike has dedicated countless hours, often in less-than-ideal weather conditions, to ensure that meets are fun, fast, and fair. His commitment extends beyond the pool deck, encompassing extensive training and multiple certifications. Moreover, Mike has served the LSC in many leadership roles: as both a member and chair of the Pacific Swimming Officials Committee and currently as Western Zone officials coordinator. Mike also takes part in officials' training and mentorship programs, both at the LSC level and nationally. Mike's biggest passion is to identify talented officials and inspire them to continue their journey of officiating by working outside their comfort zone, by participating outside their home LSC, and on the national deck. Mike has proven that while swimmers may chase records in the water, the standards of fairness and integrity through officiating on deck remain equally paramount. Mike is more than deserving of this award.

Thank you, Mike!

Looking for more details on the Officials' Excellence Award?

The Officials' Excellence Award:

- National recognition for outstanding officials for LSC contribution
- Anyone can submit, although we will ask the LSC Officials' Chair or LSC General Chair for input
- The nominee must be an active member of USA Swimming with current registration
- There are six awards each year, one each in odd-numbered months
- Nominations close around April
- Nominations are held for two cycles (24 months) unless selected
- The National Officials Committee votes in May for the July through next May period (1 cycle)

Hopefully, your LSC OC committee is actively looking for ways to acknowledge officials and appreciate their service at the local level. This award is just a way to further acknowledge those deserving higher recognition. The link for the nomination form is [here](#).

Newsletter Feedback

In this newsletter, we strive to provide information that will benefit the community of USA Swimming officials. Please let us know if we are meeting that objective. Feedback, both positive and negative, is welcome, as are suggestions for future topics. [Click here](#) to provide us with your feedback and suggestions. Your comments are anonymous unless you choose to leave your name.



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