



AQUA Swimming Officiating Protocols

25m Competitions

22 June 2026

Protocol – Short Course (25m) Competitions



General Directions

- Turn off all electronic devices; do not use your cell phone during your assignment
- When seated, feet on the deck (don't cross your legs), sit up (no slouching), and please tuck in your shirt
- Be sure to have a pen and reading glasses (if you require them), to fill out the DQ card
- After march-on, remain standing for the technical official introductions – please applaud
- Please sit on request from the announcer
- National Anthem: Please face the flags
- At the conclusion of the session, please wait for the announcer to end the session, then parade off deck in reverse order
- Please be flexible and expect adaptations
- Look out for each other! And, again, smile and enjoy yourselves!

	Inspector of Turns: Start/Finish End (IoT)	Inspector of Turns: Turn End (IoT)	Judge of Strokes: (JoS)
GENERAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Except for checking the side for the lap card, no initiating conversations with swimmers. Respond if a swimmer speaks to you • Leave clipboard/start list at seat during races • Make sure you are standing clear from the overhead camera view – stand on the side of the starting platform that has the sticker • Be standing throughout the race, however remain seated if no swimmer in your lane • If everything is ok, take one step back after each start, turn and finish (unless reporting an infraction) • Help to clear swimmers out of the water after each heat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave clipboard/start list at seat during races • Be standing throughout the race, however remain seated if no swimmer in your lane • After judging, if everything is ok, take one step back after each turn (unless reporting an infraction) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leave clipboard/start list at seat during races • Follow the swimmers - also observe turns and finishes to assist Inspectors of Turns <p><u>Depending on pool setup:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referee's side: Walk behind LED wall • Opposite Referee's side: Walk behind track cam rail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JoS are challenged by the quick pace of the races. They should observe swimmers but at the same time be in a position to return to their respective 15m marks in order to judge the 15m - see below
HEATS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand on short whistles • Move forward on the long whistle to behind starting bulkhead • After start signal, step onto starting bulkhead (if required – depending on pool) to observe swimmer until after first arm stroke, step back if all clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand on short whistles • Step forward on long whistle to edge of turning bulkhead • After start signal, step onto back of turning bulkhead (if there is a bulkhead) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand on short whistles • Go to position on long whistle depending on the race: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BACKSTROKE, BUTTERFLY & FREESTYLE lag JoS at 7m and lead JoS at 15m • BREASTSTROKE at 5m and 7m

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SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand when Lane X swimmer is announced (as confirmed by the Referee) Judges will begin walking out to get into position when the swimmer is behind athlete chairs.-Coordinate walk-on with other IoT (s) to reach position at same time On short whistles, remain standing behind athlete chairs Move forward on long whistle as above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand when Lane X swimmer is announced (as confirmed by the Referee) Judges will begin walking out to get into position when the swimmer is behind athlete chairs. Coordinate walk-on with opposite side to reach position at same time On short whistles, remain standing behind lane Move forward on long whistle as above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand when Lane X swimmer is announced (as confirmed by the Referee) Judges will walk into position according to strokes as set forward above

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	Inspector of Turns: Start/Finish End (IoT)	Inspector of Turns: Turn End (IoT)	Judge of Strokes: (JoS)
FREESTYLE			
50m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When lead swimmer reaches the inbound 15m mark on return, all IoT step forward together to judge finish from last arm stroke in until touch If all clear, step back when swimmer touches at finish When all swimmers have finished, return to chair on signal from Chief Inspector of Turns (CIT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When lead swimmer reaches the inbound 15m mark, all IoT step forward together to judge turns from the last arm stroke before the turn until the completion of the first arm stroke after the turn If all clear, step back when swimmer leaves jurisdiction When all swimmers have finished, return to chair on signal from CIT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For start of race, one JoS at 7m and the other at 15m After last swimmer has passed 15m mark after start, lag JoS goes to return 15m mark to observe 15m on return JoS do not walk during Freestyle Lead JoS joins lag JoS with last swimmer at 7m mark Observe swimmers until all swimmers have finished their race Signal to Referee at end of race if all clear and return to chairs
BUTTERFLY, BACKSTROKE, BREASTSTROKE			
50m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BACKSTROKE: Install backstroke ledge and put on position O. During finals sessions, install ledge on signal from CIT BACKSTROKE: Step to edge of pool on second long whistle to observe proper toe position. Step back and look up to confirm all is clear. If toe position is not correct, instruct swimmer of proper position. After start, step to edge of pool and observe until completion of the first arm stroke BACKSTROKE: Remove ledge from water BUTTERFLY: Observe until completion of first arm stroke BREASTSTROKE: Observe until completion of the second arm stroke ALL STROKES: When lead swimmer reaches the inbound 15m mark on return, all IoT step forward together to judge finish from last arm stroke in until touch If all clear, step back when swimmer touches at finish When all swimmers have finished, return to chair on signal from CIT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When lead swimmer reaches the inbound 15m mark, all IoT step forward together to judge turns from the last stroke before the turn until completion of the first arm stroke after the turn BREASTSTROKE: Observe until completion of the second arm stroke If all clear, step back when swimmer leaves jurisdiction When all swimmers have finished, return to chair on signal from CIT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BUTTERFLY and BACKSTROKE: For start of race, one JoS at 7m and the other at 15m After last swimmer has passed 15m mark after start, lead judge follows head swimmers to end of pool and returns after last swimmer has turned, lag judge follows lag swimmers and remains on return 15m mark to observe 15m on return BREASTSTROKE: Lead to about 7m and lag at 5m for start of race; lag JoS follows swimmers until lead swimmers return. Do not stop on return 15m. Both JoS observe and follow swimmers until finish; traditional lead/lag pattern, observing strokes, turns and finishes Signal to Referee at end of race if all clear and return to chairs
If you observe an infraction, please refer to INFRACTION REPORTING section below			

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	Inspector of Turns: Start/Finish end (IoT)	Inspector of Turns: Turn end (IoT)	Judge of Strokes: (JoS)
FREESTYLE			
100/ 200m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When lead swimmer reaches the inbound 15m mark on return, all IoT step forward together to observe last arm stroke in before the turn until completion of the first arm stroke after the turn or last arm stroke until finish If all clear, step back when swimmer touches at finish When all swimmers have finished, return to chair on signal from CIT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When lead swimmer reaches the inbound 15m mark, all IoT step forward together to judge turns from the last arm stroke before the turn until the completion of the first arm stroke after the turn If all clear, step back when swimmer leaves jurisdiction When all swimmers have finished, return to chair on signal from CIT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For start of race, one JoS at 7m and the other at 15m After last swimmer has surfaced, lag JoS goes to return 15m mark from turn end; lead JoS comes back to join lag JoS with last swimmer on return of last length JoS do not walk during Freestyle races but are positioned at each 15m mark while observing swimmers throughout the race Signal to Referee at end of race if all clear and return to chairs
400/ 800/ 1500m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask swimmer which side to place lap card, EXCEPT FOR FINALS Indicate side to IoT-Turn Record laps using count sheet Ring bell at 350/750/1450m turn (5m before and after) (or blow whistle if no bell) Step forward when swimmer in your lane is at 15m mark on return. No need for all IoT to step forward when lead swimmer reaches 15m Other procedures same as other Freestyle events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge IoT-Start end's direction by placing lap card on the indicated side Count down from 15/31/59, holding lap card on deck angled down or on pole in the water as swimmer approaches, flipping the number when the swimmer passes the 10m mark (15m from start end) Hold lap card in hand so number is visible to CIT Other procedures same as other Freestyle events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above
BUTTERFLY, BACKSTROKE, BREASTSTROKE and INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY			
100/200/ 400m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BACKSTROKE LEDGE: Same as 50m event After start, step to edge of pool and observe until completion of the first arm stroke BACKSTROKE: Remove ledge from water BUTTERFLY, INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY: Observe until completion of first arm stroke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When lead swimmer reaches the inbound 15m mark, all IoT step forward together to judge turns from the last arm stroke before the turn until completion of the first arm stroke after the turn BREASTSTROKE: Observe until completion of the second arm stroke If all clear, step back when swimmer leaves jurisdiction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BUTTERFLY, BACKSTROKE and INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY: For start of race, one JoS at 7m and the other at 15m After last swimmer has surfaced after start, lead JoS follows fastest swimmers to end of pool and returns after last swimmer has turned; lag JoS follows lag swimmers and remains on return 15m mark – recommence walking with lead swimmers once all

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	Inspector of Turns: Start/Finish end (IoT)	Inspector of Turns: Turn end (IoT)	Judge of Strokes: (JoS)
100/200/400m (Cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BREASTSTROKE: Observe until completion of second arm stroke ALL STROKES: When lead swimmer reaches the inbound 15m mark on return, all IoT step forward together to observe last arm stroke in before the turn until completion of the first arm stroke after the turn, or last arm stroke until finish If all clear, step back when swimmer touches at finish When all swimmers have finished, return to chair on signal from CIT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When all swimmers have finished, return to chair on signal from CIT 	<p>swimmers have surfaced after the turn. If there is a large distance between the swimmers the lag JoS can observe the 15m mark for the lag swimmers, so the lead JoS can continue following the lead swimmers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BREASTSTROKE: Lead to about 7m and lag at 5m for start of the race; lag JoS follows swimmers until lead swimmers return. Do not stop on return 15m Both JoS observe swimmers until finish Traditional lead/lag pattern, observing strokes, turns, and finishes Signal to Referee at end of race if all clear and return to seats
RELAY EVENTS			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judge correct touch of swimmer according to stroke Exchanges will be judged by overhead cameras/AOE Leave enough room for outgoing swimmer. Be aware of arm swings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judge correct turn of swimmer according to stroke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure you are positioned to judge 15m on exchanges for Backstroke, Butterfly and Freestyle portions

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BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT GOES TO THE SWIMMER. CALL WHAT YOU SEE AND SEE WHAT YOU CALL.

Backstroke Ledges

- IoT at start-end are also responsible for installation and removal of the backstroke ledges, if assistance is needed await appropriate personnel
- IoT is to place the ledge at water level (“O”) for every race
- Swimmers must adjust the level of the ledge
- IoT should not touch ledge after it is set by the swimmer
- In case a swimmer does not want to use the Backstroke ledge, the IoT should be informed in order to remove it before the start
- Remember: At least one toe of each foot must be touching the touchpad at the start

Infraction Reporting

- Do not be afraid to call an infraction and be 100% sure when reporting
- JoS – report any possible infractions **immediately** to Referee
- IoT – Upon observing a possible infraction: finish observing swimmer in your jurisdiction, do not step back. When swimmer has left your jurisdiction, indicate immediately to CIT by remaining at the front of the bulkhead. CIT will arrange IoT replacement
- The CIT will report via radio to the Referee
- The IoT goes immediately to the Referee and reports details of the infraction directly to the Referee
- Answer the questions asked of you by the Referee in a calm manner without any hand gestures
- Complete and sign the Disqualification Card – PRINT infraction in English
- Swimming Rule Quick Reference Infraction Sheet is available at the Referee’s table

Chief Inspector of Turns

- One Start End
- One Turn End
- Brief IoT team before each session on operating protocols relevant to that session
- Be observant at all times
- Send Reserves to replace IoT or JoS during infraction reporting
- Notify Referee immediately of any possible DQ (lane & turn) so IoT can go to the Referee as soon as possible after the turn or at the finish
- CIT to give indication (all ok) to Referee at end of race
- If there are any problems, please use the radio. No hand signals

Reserves

- One Reserve seated beside CIT - Start End
- One Reserve seated beside CIT - Turn End
- Reserves remain seated during start procedure and throughout the race
- In case of an infraction report, CIT will send you in to take over the position of IoT so that IoT can report to the Referee IMMEDIATELY
- Also be aware of JoS reporting infractions, as you will be called to step in for them

Resolution Desk

- Ideally 2 Officials assigned and situated in a location accessible to Team Leaders but not too “public”
- As Team Leaders cannot access restricted areas on deck you are the liaison between Team Leaders and TSC Commission
- Receive initial queries (withdrawals, queries relating to DQs, swim-offs) and refer to TSC Commission on poolside
- Ensure you have withdrawal forms, pens, etc.
- Communication via radio