



Best Practices and Recommendations for Officials in Return to Competition

Safety is a key priority with all aspects of the return to competition. Clubs will need to adhere to municipal, provincial and national regulations regarding large gatherings. Clubs must also follow their Provincial Section and facility requirements. This may impact the number of swimmers at a competition, the officials and volunteers required and the attendance of spectators. 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). Initially, return to competition may only take place locally, as clubs/programs consider the impacts of travelling away to competitions (hotels and restaurants).

Each Provincial Section has the authority to determine appropriate competition guidelines within their jurisdictions. As part of the Return to Competition framework, best practices, recommendations and examples of how to run a competition have been created, including the minimum # of officials required on deck, how to physical distance during a competition, and how to limit the handling of paper, among other items. A variety of meet formats/competition opportunities may be offered across the country including Time Trials, In-house competitions, Dual meets, Virtual meets, and non-sanctioned competitive opportunities.

Competition Best Practices

Competition may look very different for athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators as things start back up again. Officials will need to be adaptable and work with Provincial Sections, and club technical staff, in order to conduct sanctioned competition opportunities based upon the current local and provincial health authority and Provincial Section guidance. Re-imagining competition from the officiating perspective will provide a great opportunity to find new ways of doing things and innovative new solutions that may alter what officiating looks like over the long term.

Pre-Meet

- Identify a Safety Coordinator (possibly also the Meet Manager) who will coordinate and/or delegate the safety measures to be put into place for the competition.
- Meet Manager will work with the facility to confirm all logistics and expectations.
- Meet Manager and Competition Coordinator/Meet Referee 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 requirements. Best practice would be to create a pool diagram that details where all will be located and the flow of traffic on the deck.

- Disinfection protocols should be established and published before the beginning of the meet by the Safety Coordinator and built into the session timelines for the competition.
- No Senior Officials Briefing or General Officials Briefing. This should be completed via email ahead of the competition.
- Conduct coaches meeting virtually before arrival or send information via email.
- All officials should be recruited and assigned to positions ahead of time.
- Provide direction to officials/volunteers on what they need to bring with them, for example their own mask/face covering, hand sanitizer, pre-filled water bottle, pencil, clipboard as appropriate.
- 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.
- All equipment, such as Starters equipment, buttons/plungers, stop watches, clip boards should all be cleaned and disinfected prior to and following every session.
- Competition Coordinator/Meet Referee could also act as the Session Referee for the competition, as appropriate.

Physical Distancing and Safety Precautions

- Warm-up scheduling may need to be reviewed and amended to maintain physical distancing. Split warm-ups by time, club, age may be considered in order to manage the #s in the pool at any one time.
- For Time Trials and In-house competitions where electronic timing is in use and has been tested, consider using only electronic timing with no Timekeepers, per Example 1 below. This will help reduce the number of officials needed and potentially allow for more swimmers. 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.
- Use minimum number of officials as outlined in examples below. Use qualified Inspectors of Turns officials as Timekeepers to have 1 official per lane. Where not all Timekeepers are also Inspector of Turns qualified, the Referee, Starter and Judges of Stroke will support.
- Decide on which side of the blocks all Timekeepers/Inspectors of Turns will stand so officials can be in position and still maintain safe distances. Ensure this is communicated in advance.



- Where possible, the Referee and Starter should be on opposite sides of the pool deck.
- The use of walkie-talkies should be considered when available. Disinfecting will be required between users.
- Judges of Stroke to support Inspector of Turns at turn end, maintaining physical distancing.
- 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.
- Officials should follow Provincial and facility regulations and consider wearing masks while on deck.
- Coaches and swimmers should also follow Provincial and facility regulations and consider wearing masks while on deck. Swimmers should be encouraged to wear masks at all times, up until the time they are to dive in for their heat, or getting in and out of water following their heat and in and out of warm-up.
- Consider when possible the use of every second lane for competition, for example, lanes 1, 3, 5 and 7. This will reduce the # of officials required, maintain physical distancing and also for in-house competitions and time trials, lengthen the sessions to allow for swimmer recovery between events.
- Consideration on whether spectators are permitted, may also be required. The normal spectator stands, may need to be used for clubs, and athletes. This should be clearly communicated to all participating in advance of the competition or in the meet information package if possible.

Timelines

- Heats will move more slowly to allow for swimmers and Timekeepers to move behind the blocks and to allow for disinfecting of the starting block between heats, according to provincial pool regulations. Time intervals should be adjusted in Hy-tek MM or Splash, accordingly.
- Swimmers in the next heat should remain behind the Timekeeper chairs until called behind the blocks for their heat. 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. If the pool is cleared before next heat, swimmers of next heat should remain behind the Timekeeper chairs until called behind the blocks for their heat.
- FINA tweets (short whistle) should be used to have Timekeepers return to their chairs and swimmers in next heat to move behind the blocks. Referee would then use long whistle when heat is ready. 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.

Meet Administration

- Minimize the handling of DQ slips.
- If radios are available for use by Inspectors of Turns and Judges of Stroke:
 - DQ slips should not to be used.
 - DQs or other issues should be recorded on a heat sheet, and called into the Session Referee.
 - DQs should be processed once verbally approved by the Session Referee.
- If radios are unavailable:
 - DQ slips should not to be used.
 - 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

Senior Officials (Referee and Starter)

- Level 3 officials who are fully certified and as such have taken the Referee clinic, may be the Referee on deck for competition opportunities as approved by the provincial sections.



- Referees should consider using an electronic whistle as traditional whistles should not be used. This will also facilitate the use of a mask on deck. For example: <https://www.fox40world.com/electronic-whistle>
- Starters are encouraged to wear a facemask at all times except when providing a verbal command to start the race.
- Where possible the Referee and Starter should be positioned on opposite sides of the pool deck.

Timekeepers

- One per lane; one watch and button(plunger) preferred.
- Where possible, the Timekeeper should also be qualified as an Inspector of Turns and act in both roles.
- Always go to the same side of the block to maintain physical distancing, as directed in advance of the competition.
- For Time Trial or In-house competitions where electronic timing system is in use, consider no Timekeepers in place at all, as per Example 1 outlined below.
- Timekeepers or Inspector of Turns at the start end should be disinfecting the starting block, including kick plate and backstroke starting grips following every heat, as required.

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.*

This means that the number of officials on deck, for any sanctioned competition, can be dramatically reduced and still maintain the integrity of the results.



Competition - placement of officials' examples

Different meet formats/competition opportunities will help inform what officials are needed on deck. In-house competitions and Time Trial events with electronic timing, can have minimal staffing on deck and still have valid results. As provincial and local health guidance changes, there may still be the opportunity to look at officiating in a new way. Reducing the # of officials required on deck over the long term, will help support changes to volunteerism and may help support a complete re-imagining of officiating in Canada. Where possible, the Referee and Starter should always be placed on opposite sides of the pool to support physical distancing and to also support judging of the turns at the start end.

The following examples are just that, examples, potential scenarios that may help guide what officiating can look like when competition resumes. There isn't one right answer or one right model for how officials are utilized in competition. These 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. Locally, provincial officials' committees may work with their provincial section technical staff to further develop examples based on the realities in each Provincial section.

For this section - recommend inserting example of pool set-ups for different meets - use pictures with officials' placement as illustration depending on what realities exist provincially

Example 1: 6 or 8 or 10 lane 25m or 50m Time Trial or In-House competition - electronic timing system

For this type of competition, it may be possible to run with no Timekeepers, if the electronic system is working well and touchpads have been tested and validated. Any missed times due to light touches or electronic timing malfunctions would need to be re-swum. A plan on how the blocks are disinfected following each heat will need to be determined.

The Chief Judge Electronics position will be critical when conducting a meet with no Timekeepers.

of officials - 10

Meet Manager - may also act as Safety Coordinator/Recorder-Scorer during or following the competition

Referee - also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes

Starter - also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes

2 Inspector of Turns, at the start end



2 Inspectors of Turns, at turn end
2 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
1 Chief Judge Electronics (CJE)
*The number of Safety Marshals may be updated based on the size of the meet and how many swimmers will be accessing the pool during the warm-up period.

Example 2: 6 lane 25m Time Trial or In-house competition - no electronics

For this competition format example, it is advisable to complete the results following the meet. All times to be recorded in the heat sheets and then compiled and entered in meet manager software (Hy-tek or Splash) following the competition. One Timekeeper per lane would be used, and may include Inspector of Turns qualified official. One official per lane is recommended.

of officials - 15

Meet Manager - also acts as Safety Coordinator/CFJ and completes all results following competition

Referee - also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes

Starter - also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes

3 Timekeepers, lane 1, 2 and 6

3 Timekeepers who are also Inspector of Turns qualified, at start end, lanes 3, 4 and 5

2 Inspectors of Turns, at turn end

2 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

1 Chief Timekeeper - also acts as Clerk as needed

1 additional Timekeeper - also acts as Asst. Clerk/Marshal as needed

*The number of Safety Marshals may be updated based on the size of the meet and how many swimmers will be accessing the pool during the warm-up period.

Example 3: 8 lane 25m competition - with or without electronics, running 4 of 8 lanes

For this competition format example, only half the lanes are used for competition, reducing the number of officials required on deck and maximizing physical distancing. This will also allow for more rest between events for swimmers competing in multiple events. Could also be used in 6 lane pool, using 3 of 6 lanes, or 10 lane pool, using 5 of 10 lanes. The # of Timekeepers would be adjusted accordingly.



The Recorder-Scorer position is used in conjunction with a Chief Judge Electronics, and the Chief Finish Judge position is used when an Electronics operator is in place.

of officials - 13

Meet Manager - acts as Safety Coordinator/Recorder-Scorer or CFJ following the competition

Referee - also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes

Starter - also act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes

2 Timekeepers, lane 1 and 7, also act as Safety Marshals* during warm-ups

2 Timekeepers who are also Inspector of Turns qualified, at start end, lanes 3 and 5

2 Inspector of Turns, at turn end

2 Judges of Stroke, one on either side act as Inspectors of Turn at turn end for outside lanes

1 Electronic operator or 1 CJE

1 Chief Timekeeper - also acts as Clerk as needed

*The number of Safety Marshals may be updated based on the size of the meet and how many swimmers will be accessing the pool during the warm-up period.

Example 4: 8 lane 25m competition opportunity - electronic timing system

For this competition format example, one Timekeeper per lane would be assigned. Where possible, the use of a qualified Inspector of Turns official also acting as the Timekeeper, is recommended. In the example below, 4 Timekeepers are used, along with 4 Timekeepers who are also Inspector of Turns qualified.

The Recorder-Scorer position is used in conjunction with a Chief Judge Electronics, and the Chief Finish Judge position is used when an Electronics operator is in place.

of officials - 17

Meet Manager - may also act as Safety Coordinator/Chief Finish Judge or Recorder-Scorer during the competition

Referee - act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes

Starter - act as Inspector of Turns at start end for outside lanes

4 Timekeepers, lane 1, 2, 7 and 8

4 Timekeepers who are also Inspector of Turns qualified, lanes 3, 4, 5, 6

2 Inspectors of Turns, at the turn end

2 Judges of Stroke, one on either side - act as Inspectors of Turns at turn end for outside lanes, also act as Safety Marshals* during warm-ups

1 Electronics operator or 1 Chief Judge Electronics

1 Chief Timekeeper - also acts as Clerk, as needed



*The number of Safety Marshals may be updated based on the size of the meet and how many swimmers will be accessing the pool during the warm-up period.

Example 5: 8 lane 25m competition - 2 competition pools running concurrently - electronic timing system

For this competition format example, assuming 2 25m competitions pools being run with middle bulkhead separating each end.

The Recorder-Scorer position is used in conjunction with a Chief Judge Electronics, and the Chief Finish Judge position is used when an Electronics operator is in place.

of officials - 33-35

Meet Manager - may also act as Safety Coordinator

2-Referees, one for each competition pool

2-Starters, one for each competition pool

16 Timekeepers who are also Inspector of Turns qualified, one per lane at each start end

2 or 4 Inspectors of Turns, depending on pool configuration for double ended SC competition

4 Judges of Stroke, one on either side of each competition pool - act as Inspectors of Turns at turn end for outside lanes, also act as Safety Marshals* during warm-ups

2 Electronics operator or 2 Chief Judge Electronics, one for each competition pool

2 Chief Finish Judges or 2 Recorder-Scorers, one for each competition pool

2 Chief Timekeepers, one for each competition pool - also acts as Clerk as needed

*The number of Safety Marshals may be updated based on the size of the meet and how many swimmers will be accessing the pool during the warm-up period.

Example 6: 10 lane 25m or 50m competition

For this competition format example, in either a 25m or 50m pool, all Timekeepers are Inspector of Turns qualified officials. This could be amended for a 6 lane or 8 lane competition format with the number of Timekeepers adjusted, to 6 or 8 as appropriate.

The Recorder-Scorer position is used in conjunction with a Chief Judge Electronics, and the Chief Finish Judge position is used when an Electronics operator is in place.

of officials - 20

Meet Manager - may also act as Safety Coordinator

Referee



Starter

10 Timekeepers who are also Inspector of Turns qualified, one per lane at the start end

2 Inspectors of Turns, at the turn end

2 Judges of Stroke, one on either side - act as Inspectors of Turns at turn end for outside lanes, also at as Safety Marshals* during warm-ups

1 Electronics operator or 1 Chief Judge Electronics

1 Chief Finish Judge or 1 Recorder-Scorer

1 Chief Timekeeper - also acts as Clerk as needed

*The number of Safety Marshals may be updated based on the size of the meet and how many swimmers will be accessing the pool during the warm-up period.