



Calling What You See

In the 200 Medley Relay the referee is doubling as the starter. After he has called the swimmers to stand behind the blocks with a whistle, he places the swimmers in the water, clears the timers' watches and directs the swimmers to "place their hands and feet". Official "A" tells the swimmers to "take your mark" and activates the starting device. Official "B" then raises his hand to indicate a violation. Whatever "B" observed had to occur after this point and did not require dual confirmation if our officials are performing properly. In this case the officials are performing properly and making a correct call. What official "B" has most likely observed is a violation of 8-1-2 as enhanced in 8-1-2 Situation A. "Once the starting signal has been given the violation becomes a stroke violation, not a false start/infraction. If the violation occurs after the starting signal, the designated official (B) disqualifies the swimmer". Official "B" watching his nearest 3 lanes doesn't need a dual confirmation for an illegal foot position after the start occurs.

In the scenario you will notice that official "A" said he did not see the infraction. Lane 6 is farthest from "A" and it is quite probable that he would not see the feet/toes of the competitor in lane 6 as his view could easily be blocked by his position on deck and the position of the competitors in lanes 4 and 5. Had he seen the violation he could have stopped the starting sequence and issued a caution about foot/toe position or allowed the start to go on and rely on a dual confirmation of the violation as a start infraction. "B" may have been able to stop the start process and prevent the violation depending on what he saw, when he saw it and if there was a timely way to stop the process. "A"'s statement "I didn't see that" explains why he did

not react to swimmers position and also means that under 4-1-5 Situation C he cannot overturn (acting as referee) the decision of "B" as he did not see the violation, examples 4-2-2 Situation D, 4-4-2 Situation B.

Postseason Preparations

As we begin to move into division, conference and regional meets be sure you have reviewed the changes that championship competition bring to the forefront. Be sure that the comments you make as an official reflect the rules in place and not information from sources other than your current rule book. All competitors' performances are to be measured against the published rules. When working in an officiating crew it may be wise to reroute questions by a coach or swimmer to the meet referee for an answer rather than risk having different interpretations or information being offered.

If you are the Referee remember that in addition to all the rules you are required to normally interpret and enforce you must also supervise other officials as they perform their assigned tasks. Part of your preparation process should include a review of the current rule book with an emphasis on those portions that are employed during a championship meet. If you come upon a situation where you can't recall the exact wording of a rule that is in question, you may have to stop and research during the meet or have another official check the rule and advise you. In some instances, you may not proceed until there is resolution; in others the meet may continue while research is completed. At the State Finals meets this is often one of the roles of the Assistant Referee.

Rules Review: For the start of the 100-yard backstroke, a swimmer is observed laying a towel over the edge of the pool so that it covers the touch pad.

Ruling: This is illegal and the official should have the towel removed before the start of the heat. It is permissible for swimmers to place a towel over the starting platform if the facility manager permits this; however, towels over the touch pad can interfere with timing equipment or become loose in the water.