

MHSAA OFFICIALS BULLETIN



Over the last few weeks we have addressed interactions with people prior to a dual meet and with the office staff who will be working the meet including the announcer. At most dual meets there is a Chief (Head) Timer, Head Lane Timer and other Timers. Most of the time they are the parents and friends of the host team. In some instances, the previous year's Men's Swim Team members that are returning, time for the Women's Team who reciprocate by timing during the Men's season. You may also find team members of the competing teams timing for each other especially if the number of available timers is small. If you must use current swim team members, try to ensure that they are paired with an adult or assigned to lanes where exhibition swimmers will be competing. The actual pairing is often done by the Head Timer as are the individual lane assignments.

The Chief Timer "shall instruct each timer before the meet how to time a race, read the watch, when to reset the watch and how to determine the official time" 4-9-1. In many instances he/she will assign the timers to lanes, appoint Head Lane Timers and give other instructions. Some of his/her duties may be supported during a pre-meet timers' meeting by the Referee who may give additional information and responsibilities to the Chief Timer, Head Lane Timers and other Timers. We will talk about the Head Lane Timer, Timers and the pre-meet timers meeting in next Bulletin.

Our Last Consideration: Last week we asked a question regarding an improperly secured starting block that cannot be repaired prior to the start of the meet. The answer is found in 2-7-2c. If the blocks are all equipped with wedges, then all must function properly. If one is inoperable and unreparable the other wedges should be removed, placed on the rear most point on the block and the Head Coach of each team advised that the wedges are not to be used to create equal competition conditions. Competitors who do not wish to use an operable wedge may either remove them or place them at the extreme rear end of the starting block. The choice of the individual competitor to not utilize the functioning wedge does not affect the other competitors who may continue to use the wedges.

You might also have noticed that "prior mutual consent" (1-4-1) is permitted as a remedy to allow the use of some blocks and not others. Since it is unlikely that the functionality of the starting block is known before the meet, the acceptance of the concept of "prior mutual consent" could be accomplished by the agreement of Head Coaches, with the concurrence of the Referee, under his/her authority granted by 4-1-5.

Something to Consider: This week we want to spend some time on backstroke flags. Backstroke flags mark a distance of 5 yards or 5 meters from the end wall at each end of the pool, whichever is appropriate. They are to be suspended approximately 7' over the water in each lane. There is an exception to be noted regarding metered pools built prior to 2004.

The question: You are the only official at a dual meet conducted in a 6-lane pool. The diving board is at the deep end of the pool and the end of it protrudes over active lanes during competition. After the 200 Individual Medley the Diving Coach wants to remove the backstroke flags at the deep end of the pool to speed up the preparation for the Diving event. Do you honor his request?