



In continuing our discussion of Timers let's move to the Head Lane Timer for each lane. Depending on the number of timers assigned to each lane the designation of a Head Lane Timer means that one of the persons will have a few extra duties in addition to the regular timing function. If you are making the "appointment" as the meet official, try to get an experienced timer on each lane. If the appointee is experienced in high school level timing all the better.

The extra duties assigned to the Head Lane Timer include ensuring the time card is transmitted to the Chief Timer or Computer Software Operator, determining if the swimmer has touched the finish end of the pool or the touch pad when electronic timing is in place, and maintaining a "written" tally of the laps completed by the swimmer competing in their lane in the 500 Freestyle. Time card transmission is usually accomplished by handing the time card to a person designated to pick up the lane time cards. Monitoring the touch on the finish wall is important in determining when the watches or backup buttons should be stopped. If the touch pads do not cover the end wall from lane marker to lane marker, have moved off center in the lane or have become dislodged from the end wall a touch on the end wall would be an appropriate finish. The Head Lane Timer must also monitor the electronic touch pads to determine if the swimmer's contact on the pad was either too light or on a non-sensitive portion of the pad, which has resulted in the pad failing to activate (Situations 8-1-7 A, B, C, D). Often the first notification of a problem with a wall or

pad contact comes to the Referee from a Head Lane Timer. During the 500 Freestyle the team members serving as counters for their respective lanes miscount, are unfamiliar with the counting cards or drop the cards in the water. While the swimmer is responsible for his or her progress and number of laps completed the timers need the correct information to know when to stop the watch, therefore an accurate count is essential. The Head Lane Timer should notify the Referee if the lap count is suspect. Referees usually maintain a count on some of the swimmers as they progress. As the race progresses it is not uncommon for the Referee to lose count of the laps completed by swimmers in the back of the field. This makes the Head Lane Timers count an excellent way, along with the electronic count (if available) to verify the performance of the competitors in the 500 Freestyle.

Our Last Consideration: Last Bulletin we asked about removal of the Backstroke Flags at the deep end after the 200 Individual Medley. The Diving Coach was planning to speed up the pool preparation for the diving event. The answer is yes and no (?). 2-7-5 requires the Backstroke Flags for all events in which the Backstroke is swum. The event between the 200 Individual Medley and Diving is the 50 Freestyle so the flags are not required by any rule. However, be aware that some swim coaches may coach their swimmers to use the flags for a point of reference in other meets such as the 50 Freestyle. The discussion as to the removal and/or replacement of backstroke flags should be discussed at the pre-meet coaches and captains meeting.

Something to Consider: When should the name of the lead swimmer in a relay be designated?

Legal Gamesmanship or Illegal Actions: Every time that the visitors arrive for a dual meet at a particular host facility, the host team changes which lane they choose to close in a five-lane pool. The visiting team requests from the officials that they be forced to not use the same lane so consistency can be established.

This is legal gamesmanship. The home team may choose to close one of the five lanes, but it is suggested that they close the same lane—doesn't always happen though.