

# The “Professional” Stroke & Turn Official -or- The Eyes of the Referee

## The “Professional” Stroke & Turn Official should:

- **Know the Rules** and the official interpretations
- **Read and understand** the information in the Meet Announcement prior to the meet or session beginning
- **Attend the Officials Briefing to:**
  - Sign-in on the assignment sheet
  - Review the technical rules
  - Listen to and review protocols for the meet
  - Listen to and review jurisdiction for the meet
  - Be given an assignment by the Meet Referee or the Chief Judge team
  - Cover relief rotation
  - Discuss any other specific instructions or duties for the meet
  - Meet team members, including the Chief Judge for your assigned location
- **Develop your own “mental check list”** of things to do before, during, and after the duty session
- **Before the session:**
  - Know when and where the stroke briefing will take place
  - Locate where officials should sign-in
  - Be prompt to the meeting and dress appropriately and professionally
  - Be attentive during the stroke briefing
  - Have a positive attitude regardless of the assignment
  - Turn off (or if absolutely necessary – mute) cell phone. If you will need access to your cell phone for a compelling reason during the meet, let the Meet Referee and Chief Judge know before the meet so that plans can be made.
  - Be ready and in position 5-10 minutes before the session starts or as requested by either the Meet Referee or Team Lead Chief Judge
- **Before each event:**
  - Visualize the stroke
  - Run through the rule requirements of a legal stroke and any transitions
  - Recall the best and recommended ways to observe the stroke and the turns. Always use “benefit of doubt” observation protocol
- **Before each race:**
  - Do not block the strobe at the start
  - Follow the meet protocol for each stroke
  - Stand in the correct location, 15m mark, flags, etc. if walking stroke
- **After the start:**
  - Walk briskly to the edge of the pool if working the start end as a Turn Judge
  - Observe swimmers until they depart your jurisdiction (usually heads up)
  - If walking stroke:
    - determine if all heads broke the surface prior to or at the 15m mark for non-breaststroke events
    - Walk wall-to-wall, if possible, or as instructed
    - Give equal observation to all lanes in your jurisdiction, even the empty ones
  - Raise hand promptly to signal a possible disqualification if an infraction is observed (unless utilizing FINA protocols)
  - Keep the hand raised until it is acknowledged by a Chief Judge or Referee
  - Do not discuss the infraction with another official or any other individual, including a coach, before reporting it to the designated official. (Do not discuss it afterwards unless asked to by the Deck Referee)
  - Immediately communicate the lane number to the Chief Judge or Deck Referee (if a Turn Judge covering more than one lane or a Stroke Judge)

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- Visualize the infraction before communicating it to the Chief Judge or Deck Referee
- Describe what you observed
- Watch all lanes while reporting the disqualification, unless relieved by a reserve judge
- Retract a call if there is any doubt, by simply stating, “No call”
- Check to make sure the DQ slip is correct before PRINTING your name on the slip
- **Relays:**
  - During relay exchanges, observe the toes departing from the platform and then look for the touching fingers
  - Do not raise a hand for an early relay take-off when dual confirmation is being used
  - Circle the lane and swimmer number on the take-off slip for a good exchange, and X for an early take-off
- **After each event:**
  - Reset to the correct position for the next stroke or event
  - Transition between heats for relief, not during a race
  - When being relieved, return promptly as directed in the pre-session briefing
  - Take a break OFF DECK or in the designated officials’ break area. Do not congregate with other officials on deck
- **If assigned to invigilate controlled warm-up:**
  - Coordinate with the assigned partner to observe the pool and politely enforce compliance with warm-up rules
  - Open pace lanes at the designated time and racing start lanes as requested (open additional sprint lanes if demand warrants). Coordinate with the Announcer and Marshalls
  - Review deck set-up in general – notify Meet Referee of deficiencies or safety issues
- **Other Important Items:**
  - Consider your body language when on duty and at all other times when you are accessible. Always assume you are “on camera”
  - Be alert, attentive, focused, calm, professional, and approachable
  - Always be “friendly” and helpful to coaches, swimmers, and other officials
  - Avoid coaching, cheering or fraternizing with coaches or swimmers
  - Questions should be directed to the appropriate official. Do not engage in discussions regarding a disqualification
  - Take discussions and emotional issues off-deck
  - Do not abuse your credentials. If you are not working the meet, you are a spectator and should act as such
  - Maintain a sense of humor
- **Remember, Professional Stroke & Turn Officials:**
  - Make sure the BENEFIT OF DOUBT GOES TO THE SWIMMER - ALWAYS
  - Adapt to meet conditions and needs, and help out wherever requested
  - Use common sense
  - Don’t read more into the rules than is written
  - Observe the swims but do not scrutinize
  - Exhibit confidence
  - Dress professionally and neatly in the designated uniform
  - Are willing to learn, and frequently work as a Stroke and Turn Judge
  - Never take advantage of credentials to gain deck access when not working in an official capacity
  - Self-evaluate after all shifts, sessions and meets and ask, “What can I do better?”
  - Enjoy the volunteer work, and opportunity to work with coaches, officials, and most importantly, swimmers of all levels

# The “Professional” Stroke & Turn Official -or- The Eyes of the Referee

## **N2 Stroke and Turn Judge (ST) – Prerequisites for requesting an Evaluation:**

- LSC-certified Stroke & Turn judge for 16 sessions
- Must work at least 4 sessions at the OQM, at least 3 in the ST position to be evaluated.

## **N2 Stroke and Turn Judge - Performance Requirements for an Advancing Evaluation:**

- Arrives on-time, prepared with necessary personal equipment, and properly and professionally attired
- Knowledgeable of all stroke rules, timer rules and clerk of course rules
- Acts as a mentor for new officials, as requested
- Is familiar with the jurisdiction for each stroke and turn position and is aware of the jurisdiction for each event to be judged
- Is comfortable making calls as appropriate and also realizes when a call is not appropriate
- Can clearly articulate an infraction to the Deck Referee or Chief Judge, as appropriate, both with the reference in the rule book as well as what was seen
- Doesn't discuss disqualifications in front of others
- Accepts assignments as given and conforms to the “relief” cycle for the meet
- If the evaluation is satisfactory and all other requirements are met, submits a “National Certification Application” using the OTS

## **N3 Stroke and Turn Judge Evaluation – Prerequisites for requesting an evaluation:**

- Active N2 Stroke & Turn Judge in the LSC at all levels of meets (even if certified in other positions)
- At least 8 sessions as a Stroke & Turn Judge, recorded in OTS, since N2 certification

## **N3 Stroke and Turn Judge Evaluation - Performance Requirements for Certification:**

- Arrives on-time, prepared with necessary personal equipment, and properly and professionally attired
- Is knowledgeable of all N2 requirements as well as:
  - Understands “National Deck” protocols including the role of each of the three chairs that may be found on a National Deck (left – lane timer and Relay Take-off Judge, center – head lane timer and distance length counter and bell ringer, right – Turn Judge and timer) and the use of Reserve Judges and relief teams. Is also aware of not only the judging role but also the role as a timer and recorder
  - Is aware of “FINA protocol” for indicating and reporting an infraction
  - Acts as a trainer for new officials, as requested
  - Is familiar with the jurisdiction for each Stroke and Turn position on the National pool deck and is aware of what constitutes jurisdiction for each event to be judged
  - Is very comfortable calling infraction as appropriate, as well as realizing when a call is not appropriate
  - Can clearly articulate an infraction to the Chief Judge and, as appropriate, the Deck Referee both with the reference in the rule book as well as what was observed

**If your evaluation is satisfactory, and all other requirements are met, you will need to submit a “National Certification Application” using the OTS.**