**OFFICIALS BULLETIN – JUNE 2015**

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

July 11 – 18 Pan American Games, Toronto, ON

July 13 – 19 IPC World Championships, Glasgow, UK

July 29 – August 3 Canadian Age Group Championships, Quebec City, QC

August 2 – 9 16th FINA World Championships, Kazan, RUS

August 6 – 9 Canadian Swimming Championships, Pointe Claire, QC

August 7 – 14 Parapan American Games, Toronto, ON

September 16 – 19 Swimming Canada AGM, Ottawa, ON

September 19 – 20 2nd Annual Officials Symposium, Ottawa, ON

**MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR - BILL HOGAN**

Over the past number of months, the Officials, Competition, and Rules Committee (OCRC) has be addressing a number of issues to update its mandate to better serve Swimming Canada and its Technical Officials. The most significant endeavor has been renewing our focus on our Officials Certification process through a revised Certification Pathway. We need to address the certification levels we have, the requirements for certification, with a renewed focus on mentoring and evaluation, as well as the content we presently have in our clinics. We have also addressed the long-standing matter of updating and modernizing our dress code, the inclusion of Para and Open Water representation on the OCRC, and an expansion of number of provincial reps on our committee, as well as initiating the framing of published criteria for appointments of Officials to FINA and UANA international appointments and Swimming Canada designated meet appointments.

In compliance with our mandate from Swimming Canada, it is this committee that establishes and addresses the competition rules in Canada, provides technical rule interpretations, and is responsible for the technical development of our national officials by offering the opportunities for Officials certification, evaluation and education. The intention is to move forward over the next few months and into the new swim year in September with the implementation of a creative and skill focused Certification Pathway for all Officials.

**OFFICIALS, COMPETITIONS & RULES COMMITTEE**

A para-swimming appointee and an open water swimming appointee have been added as members of the OCRC. The updated [Terms of Reference](https://www.swimming.ca/docs/OCRC%20-%20Terms%20of%20Reference.pdf) are available on the Swimming Canada website.

**DOMESTIC OFFICIALS ASSIGNMENTS**

The Competition Coordinators for the upcoming Canadian Age Group Championships are Cynthia Pincott (QC) and David Ward (QC). Carole Thomas (QC) has been appointed the Open Water Competition Coordinator for this meet. The competition coordinator for the Canadian Swimming Championships is Louise Leblanc (QC)

**INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS ASSIGNMENTS**

Several officials have been appointed to represent Canada at international competitions this summer including Lyne Laprade (QC) heading to the World Aquatic Championships in Kazan, Russia; and Rob Filion (ON) representing Canada at the World Junior Championships in Singapore. To read more about these assignments, please click on this [link](https://www.swimming.ca/NewsArticle.aspx?newsid=4617) to the news article.

**LEVEL V OFFICIALS**

Congratulations to the following officials who achieved their Level V Certification:

* Richard Dagenais (QC)
* Bonnie Marceau (ON)
* Dayle Knowles (ON)
* Earl McLeod (ON)
* Greg Lewis (ON)
* Kevin Little (ON)
* Mark Lukings (ON)
* Ron Riley (ON)
* Trevor Cowan (ON)
* Steven Brown (AB)

**CHANGES TO COMPETITION PROTOCOL - OFFICIALS 'MARCH ON'**

Hand in hand with our updating the 'image' of Officials attire, Swimming Canada is also addressing certain protocols that have been practiced over many years in an effort to update and present Officials in a modernized approach. Of particular note is the elimination of the Officials 'march on' prior to either prelims or finals. If you were at Trials, you will have noted that after the pre-session briefing, all Officials were asked to reconvene at their assigned position, on their own, 5 minutes prior to the start of the session. No pomp and circumstance, simply assume ones assigned position prepared for the session to begin. Prior to the session starting, the Referee and Starter were announced. We encourage all jurisdictions at all levels that may have previously had an Officials 'march on' to discontinue the practice and move to the new approach.

**CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING PATHWAY**

During the Sunday session of the Officials Symposium held last September in Calgary, the OCRC was given a strong mandate to revise and reframe the certification pathway for swimming Officials in Canada. Work has begun on this project, with a weekend workshop recently completed. The OCRC plus invited contributors convened Friday afternoon, Saturday and Sunday morning (May 29 - 31) in Toronto to work under the direction of a facilitator to review and examine the current system; the challenges and issues it presents, and in examining these pieces, conceive a new approach to the development of swimming Officials. The net result of the weekend was a very empowering and positive development of 6 primary challenges. These were partitioned into deliverables and assigned to working groups, complete with start and completion timelines. It is intended that a full briefing on the new officials pathway will be presented at the Officials Symposium in September, complete with transition strategies. It is intended that the new certification pathway will replace the various provincially developed content and be entrenched as a national approach.

**NATIONAL OFFICIALS TRAVEL PROGRAM - UPDATES**

The National Officials Travel Program process and expense claim form have been updated. Click [here](http://www.swimming.ca/NationalOfficialsTravelProgram) to read more about program and to access the form.

**UPDATE ON BACKSTROKE STARTING DEVICES**

As more facilities purchase the new backstroke starting devices, we will begin to see them deployed at more levels of competition below the national level. To aid in easing into a standardized approach to the use of the devices we're sharing with you the procedure utilized at the recent National Team Trials held in Toronto:

1. The Inspector of Turns (IT) will install the device
2. The IT will also ensure the device is set at 0.
3. The IT will check to ensure the strapping is free of any twists or knots and also that the wedge is sitting flat against the wall.
4. Once the athletes arrive behind the block the IT will wait until the athlete tells them what setting or if they wish to use the device at all. The IT will adjust the device to the requested setting.

As the competition progressed it was acknowledged that the swimmer's skill set in setting the device quickly usurped the IT - consider allowing swimmer's the opportunity to set and check the device if they are experienced.

**2015 OFFICIALS SYMPOSIUM**

Swimming Canada is currently in the planning process for the Annual General Meeting and the meetings that are conducted in concert with the AGM. On ‘odd’ years Swimming Canada conducts the AGM in Ottawa, while on ‘even’ years the AGM is conducted as part of the larger Canadian Swimming Congress with locations around Canada. 2014 was the inaugural year for the Canadian Swimming Congress and the Swimming Canada Officials Symposium.

On ‘odd’ years the Officials Symposium will be held in Ottawa in conjunction with the Swimming Canada AGM. The rationale for holding the Officials Symposium in conjunction with the AGM is to permit those who wish to take in the AGM or who may be fulfilling dual roles to take in both the AGM and the Symposium. Provincial Officials Directors and FINA level Officials are asked to attend, other officials are welcome. Final details will be communicated shortly.

The AGM is scheduled for September 19th and the dates of the Officials Symposium are September 19th & 20th.

**OFFICIALS REGISTRATION PROGRESS**

The Swimming Canada officials registration system was launched on April 8, 2015. The officials registration system will be a means of tracking an officials’ training and certification at the domestic and international level for pool, para-swimming and open water swimming. Alberta is the first province to go live and the remainder of the provinces are required to register their certified officials with Swimming Canada for the 2015-2016 season. The national official registration system will be fully launched on September 1, 2015. The second phase of the officials registration, which is ongoing, will involve integrating online education and certification.

**OFFICIALS ATTIRE**

Swimming Canada officials attire and look has been 'modernized' as part of the review and updating process of the Swimming Canada officials programming. The officials 'branding' has also been aligned with the new [Swimming Canada brand](http://swimming.ca/brand/), launched in March 2015. The new officials attire will be adopted at all upcoming Swimming Canada designated meets, Speedo Eastern and Western Canadian Swimming Opens and Can Am Para-swimming Championships. The long-term goal is to have the new officials attire implemented at all Swimming Canada sanctioned competition and adopted by all provincial sections.

At Swimming Canada designated meets, Speedo Eastern and Western Canadian Swimming Opens and Can Am Para-swimming Championships, officials will wear the following attire:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| White T-Shirt | Black Pants / Shorts / Skirt | Red Polo |
| Timekeepers & Chief Timekeepers | Black Shoes | All Other Officials |

Swimming Canada is encouraging all provinces and clubs to transition from the ‘whites’ to the new officials ‘look’. We will not be changing the logo and print on shirts from competition to competition thus allowing officials to build up enough shirts to allow them to comfortably work 3, 4, 5 or 6 day competitions.

Swimming Canada shirts will be available for purchase via Swimming Canada online store and special bulk orders.

**COMPETITION COORDINATORS REPORT – NATIONAL TEAM TRIALS**

The Team Canada Trails 2015 took place April 1st to 4th at the Toronto Pan Am Sport Centre. Officials from across the county were represented, in actuality we had officials from 9 different provinces volunteering at this competition.

This competition was the final swimming test event for this summer’s Pan Am and Para Pan Am Games. The majority of the sport committees assigned to the swimming competition are led by officials and they had the opportunity to refine their roles and responsibilities. Additionally, our Canadian International Technical Officials assigned to the Pan Am Games had an opportunity to experience the venue in advance of the games.

The OCRC and Swimming Canada staff debrief following each national competition, reviewing opportunities to improve the running of our national competitions. The update and communication related to the use of the Backstroke ledges and the seeding of the 400’s included in this bulletin was a direct outcome of our debriefing. We do have a couple of other items that are currently being reviewed at the OCRC and the results of these discussions will be communicated following the end of the national competition schedule.

At national meets in the future you will see the role of the competition coordinators and the meet commission evolve from one focused on the evaluation of national official to a role of mentoring. Mentoring is seen as key to the ongoing development and advancement of officials in Canada.

**SEEDING OF 400M, 800M AND 1500M EVENTS**

FINA’s inclusion of the amended seeding for distance events (Rule SW 3.1.1.5) has caused some confusion as to where this rule is enforced domestically and where it is not. In Rule SW 3 (preamble to SW 3.1.1.5) it is clearly stated that the rule applies to “Olympic Games, World Championships, Regional Games and other FINA competitions.” The only meet this would pertain to in Canada is a meet Swimming Canada has registered with FINA as either a World Championship or Olympic Games qualifier. Even then, Swimming Canada has and will seek dispensation from this rule to allow us to continue to run 3 circle-seeded heats where Prelims are swum (as opposed to Time Finals). The reasoning behind this is:

* The FINA rule was determined based on the condition that the events in question do not go to either a semi-final or include a “B Final”. Therefore, the prelims circle seed only the final two heats to replicate a semi-final condition – ie/ top 16 are placed favourably to compete for 8 positions in the final.
* Swimming Canada meets include an “A” and “B” final format – therefore we wish to create a prelim condition where 24 swimmers are put in favourable position to compete for 16 final positions (or 30 to 20 where 10 lanes are used).

Rule SW 3.1.1.5 should **NOT** be considered for meets in Canada.