

# **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CHIEF TIMER**

## **A. Prior to Meet:**

1. Assure sufficient timers are being recruited. At least two timers per lane are needed (and three are highly recommended or the times may not be acceptable for all purposes).
2. Check that there are sufficient watches and that they are operating properly. Backup watches are also needed.
3. Assure the preparation of Lane Timer materials and supplies, such as: clipboards, programs (when available), and pencils (#2). Make sure that if the swimmers are not bringing timing cards to their lane, that forms for recording the watch times are available.
4. For dual meets, determine which teams will be in the even and which in the odd lanes. This may affect the assignment of timers.

## **B. Prior to the first event.**

1. Coordinate with the Referee or Starter regarding whether they wish to participate in the timer's briefing. In some LSC's, this responsibility is given to the Starter.
2. Confirm that sufficient timers are available, that each lane has an equal number of timers, etc. Make sure an individual is serving as the Head Lane Timer in each lane. If enough volunteers are available, appoint Assistant Chief Timer(s) to help you.
3. Assure the "Timers Briefing" is conducted covering (as appropriate) the points discussed under the Instructions for Lane Timers . The Lane Timers should be assembled and the briefing started early enough that attendance can be confirmed, the briefing conducted, questions answered, and a timing check completed prior to scheduled starting time for the first heat.
4. Conduct a timing check with the timers standing by their lanes. The Chief Timer should ask the Starter to conduct a time check before the start of the meet. Usually all timers start their watches at the flash of the strobe or, if used, the signal smoke or flash of a pistol. They stop their watch when the stop signal is given, which is usually after at least 30 seconds has elapsed. The watch times are then compared. This serves to confirm that the watches are operating properly and the Lane Timers are familiar with their watch. If a watch has a time that differs by more the 0.20 seconds, it should be reported to the Chief Timer.
5. Determine if the Timing Equipment Operator wants the timer's assistance for a final confirmation that the buttons and pads are operating properly. You may wish to request such a check if you have Lane Timers who are not familiar with using a button.

## **C. During the meet**

1. Observe whether the Lane Timers are watching the strobe light or gun at the start, looking over the edge at the finish, not clearing their watches prematurely, etc. Assure that the Head Lane Timers are recording the times properly, listing the times as instructed, writing numbers clearly and recording times in a consistent order. If any are not performing efficiently, reinstruct them or replace them.
2. Identify timers who may not be doing a good job, note those lanes where the timers are working

well together and the times are matching well. Then, let them know that they are doing a good job. A little praise and encouragement pays great benefits. An experienced Chief Timer should know after a short period (3 to 5 heats/events), the capabilities of each group of timers.

3. Make sure your lanes remain staffed. Volunteer timers do sometimes leave without giving notice. Be prepared to move people between lanes to maintain consistent coverage. Keep the Referee informed regarding your staffing situation so that heats are not started if there are insufficient timing personnel in place.

4. Particularly when watches are the primary timing system, frequently check various lane times for accuracy and the spread of times. It is particularly important to do this for the first few heats of a session to confirm everybody understands their responsibility. You can use the split hand on your watch to check for accuracy by depressing it when the winner finishes and then stopping the main watch when the last swimmer in the heat finishes. All times recorded should be between your two times. When buttons are being used, work with the Timing Judge, who by his review of timing information can help identify where there may be problems.

5. After each heat or event (depending on how times are being recorded), collect the time information for all lanes and deliver them to the Timing Judge

#### **D. After the meet**

1. Make sure times from the last heat/event are collected,

2. Collect and account for all watches and clipboards.

3. Note any problems and inform the Meet Director or other responsible official of any inoperable watches