

SSL Stroke and Turn Official Positioning and Jurisdiction

There have been questions about the positioning and jurisdiction of S&T officials at SSL dual meets, Time Trials, and Championships. These questions are compounded in the SSL because of the variation in pool configurations. Because of the variation of pool configurations, the guidance provided varies but will be as consistent as possible with positioning and jurisdiction of S&T officials. This paper was developed with input from the SSL Rules Committee and the officials who teach the SSL Officials classes.

This assumes that there are four S&T officials, two from each team, but if one team cannot provide two officials the other team can provide more than two officials so there are four officials. The exception to this is Skyline which could work with four or six officials as explained below.

Dual Meets:

Straight pools (Oakwood Valley, Sherwood Park, Arundel, Yorklyn)

- The 4 S&T officials each work a quadrant of the pool. Two on each side with jurisdiction on the 2 or 3 lanes on their side of the pool for 'half' the length of the pool.
- The 2 officials on each side work as a team moving up and down the pool. This results in each official's 'half' of the pool overlapping in the middle of the pool, but making sure that swimmers at both ends of the pool are always observed. If there is a question of jurisdiction, the Referee will make the determination to accept potential DQs or not.
- An official must be at the corner of the pool to observe the touches at the turns at both ends and at the finishes.
- When the swimmers split, there may be an official at each end of the pool. The turns and finishes have priority over the strokes during the swim which are repeated during the swim.

10-Lane Pools (Western Y)

- Two S&T officials on each end of the pool, each officiating 3 lanes
- Jurisdiction is 'half' the length of the pool
- 'Half' the length of the pool is beyond the middle of the pool as it is difficult to determine if a swimmer is beyond the half way mark when observing from the end of the pool. If the S&T official is not sure if the swimmer observed with a potential DQ is not in their jurisdiction, the S&T official should signal the potential DQ and let the Referee determine if the swimmer was in the jurisdiction of the S&T who signaled the potential DQ. It is better to have 2 officials observing the middle of the pool rather than none.

L-Shaped Pools (All the others)

- Two S&T officials positioned at the start end of the pool and two S&T officials walking the sides of the pool.
- The 2 S&T officials working from the start end of the pool have jurisdiction on 2 lanes in a 4-lane or 5-lane pool and 3 lanes in a 6-lane pool.

- Their jurisdiction is from the starting end wall to the closest backstroke flags or until the swimmer surfaces after the start or turn if the swimmer is underwater when they pass the closer backstroke flag.
- The S&T official should be positioned between the 2 lanes being officiated, even if there is only one swimmer in their 2 lanes. In a 6-lane pool, the official should be positioned in the middle of the 3 lanes. The exception to this is if the S&T officials are observing relay take offs when they should be positioned at the corner of the pool where they can look across all the lanes they are officiating. When positioned at the corner, the S&T official is responsible to observe all swimmers for stroke violations as well as relay take offs.
- The two S&T officials walking the sides of the pool have jurisdiction on 2 lanes in a 4-lane or 5-lane pool and 3 lanes in a 6-lane pool.
 - Their jurisdiction is from the flags closest to the start end of the pool to the turn end of the pool.
 - The official must be at the corner of the pool to observe the touches at the turns at both ends and at the finishes
- In a 5-lane pool where one lane is an exhibition lane, the S&T official with jurisdiction in the 2 official lanes next to the exhibition lane may observe the swimmer in the exhibition lane if they can do so without reducing their observation of the two swimmers in the 2 official lanes. Any potential DQs of the swimmer in the exhibition lane must be reported to the Referee and documented with a DQ card and in the meet score sheet.

Z-Shaped Pool (Skyline)

- When working with 4 S&T officials, **2 officials on each end observing half the length of the pool – the same as at Western Y.**
- When working with 6 S&T officials, there should be 2 officials at each end and 2 officials walking the sides.
 - The officials on the ends have 3 lanes each with jurisdiction from the end of the pool to the closest back stroke flags. This is the same as the officials in a L-shaped pool at the start end.
 - The officials on the sides can walk only along the length of the pool between the corners, so each official walks only the same length. Their jurisdiction is from flag to flag.

Time Trials and Championships:

Time Trials – 5 or 6 lane pools: straight, L-shaped, or Z-shaped

- 3 S&T officials on both ends. The officials on the ends have 3 lanes each with jurisdiction from the end of the pool to the closest back stroke flags. This is the same as the officials in a L-shaped pool at the start end.
 - In a 5-lane pool - one official will be on lanes 1 & 2; one official will be on lanes 3 & 4, observing both lanes but only making potential DQ calls on lane 3; and one official on lanes 4 & 5.

- One official on each side with jurisdiction from flags to flags. In a L-shaped or Z-shaped pool they can walk no further than the backstroke flags or the corner(s) of the L or Z.
 - In a 5-lane pool, one official has jurisdiction on lanes 1, 2, & 3. The second official observes lanes 3, 4, and 5 but only makes calls on lanes 4 & 5.

Championships

- At Western Y, 4 officials at each end, each observing 2 lanes. Jurisdiction is 'half' the length of the pool. No side judges.
- At a 6-lane pool, 3 officials at each end, each observing 2 lanes. Their jurisdiction is from the end wall to the closest backstroke flags or until the swimmer surfaces after the start or turn if the swimmer is underwater when they pass the closer backstroke flag.
- There are side judges on each side with jurisdiction from flag to flag. In a L-shaped or Z-shaped pool they can walk no further than the backstroke flags or the corner(s) of the L or Z.

General expectations:

- When officiating from the side of the pool with responsibility for turns, the official should be at the corner of the pool, looking straight down the end of the pool, whenever a swimmer is turning. The officials should not move around to the end of the pool because they will not be able to observe the swimmers into and out of the turn from the end as well as they can from the side of the pool. The best place to observe turns is from the end of the pool, but when the official has to observe both the turn and the swim into and away from the turn, the best position to have a balanced observation of the swimmer is from the side of the pool.
- For backstroke, the best position to observe turns and finishes is from the end of the pool. The officials can move from the sides to the ends after confirming the swimmers have broken the surface of the water on the first lap. For SSL the swimmers' heads must break the surface before the backstroke flags farthest from the start end. After the first lap, swimmers in SSL do not stay under water for a long distance so the priority should be on the legality of the turns.
- All lanes should be observed the same amount, even if there are empty lanes. The official should observe the empty lane(s) as if there was a swimmer in that lane. The official may not look away from the pool instead of observing an empty lane.
- Officials should observe only the lanes in their jurisdiction. They should not observe swimmers in other lanes. Officials may not communicate with the officials on other lanes or other jurisdiction in their lanes about potential DQs they have observed.
- When the swimmers in the jurisdiction of an official become spread out so the official cannot observe all the swimmers at the same time, the priority is to observe the turns and finish over the strokes in the middle of the pool. Each swimmer will perform the stroke many times for each turn or finish. Also, priority should be for the lead swimmer.

The official will be able to observe the trailing swimmers after the lead swimmer has finished. Overall, all swimmers should be observed the same amount of time.

- Jurisdictions of side judges and end judges do not overlap. The border is at the flags. This does not apply when there are 2 officials both walking the side of the pool and overlapping as they move up and down the side of the pool.

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