

2020 COVID-19 Swim Nova Scotia Officials Returning to Competition

August 14, 2020

OVERVIEW

Safety is the key priority with all aspects of return to training and competition. Safety with regards to COVID-19, but also injuries related to an increase in activity and/or training need to be considered carefully when adding competitive opportunities. Clubs must adhere to Municipal, Provincial Health Mandates and all Facility Regulations. All restrictions outlined by Swim Nova Scotia must be adhered to including social gathering limits, physical distancing and other requirements related to the Swim Nova Scotia Return to Swimming Plan.

The competitive environment (training and competition venues) should be continually assessed to ensure precautions are taken to minimize risk to the swimmers, volunteers/officials and others in attendance.

Effective immediately, Swim Nova Scotia has lifted the suspension on sanctioning competitions. The resumption of competitions will be a multi-phased approach. Clubs may apply to host sanctioned In-House Competitions (Time Trials). Swim Nova Scotia will begin a Virtual Swim Meet Series through the Fall of 2020. **Preliminary information is outlined in Swim Nova Scotia's Return to Swimming Plan and is subject to change.**

Swim Nova Scotia has prepared this document based on Swimming Canada's 'Best Practices and Recommendations for Officials in Return to Competition' to be published at the end of August 2020 and is subject to change.

PHASE 1 – AUGUST 2020 – IN-HOUSE COMPETITIONS

Phase 2 – Virtual Sanctioned Swim Meets Officials Information will be available in September.

At this time, Clubs may begin to organize short course meters in-house competitions (Time Trials). *Long course meters in-house competitions will be introduced at a later date.* These are single Club events; multiple teams cannot compete against each other at this time; multiple teams may be introduced at a later date.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all in-house competitions (Time Trials) will be run as Class One Sanctioned Time Trials and allow for Provincial record attempts and swimmers to attempt to achieve a time which may qualify them for entry into future meets.

Note: No advertising is required for Class One Sanctioned Time Trials during Phase 1 of the Swim NS Return to Competition.

Competition may look very different for athletes, coaches, officials, volunteers and spectators as things start back up again. Officials will need to be adaptable and work with Club Head Coaches in order to adhere to the current local and provincial health authority and Swim Nova Scotia regulations. Re-imagining competition from the officiating perspective will provide a great opportunity to find new ways of doing things and innovative new solutions that may alter what officiating looks like over the long term.

Pre-Event

- Identify a Safety Coordinator (possibly second Meet Manager) who will coordinate and/or delegate the safety measures to be put into place for the event
- Meet Manager and Head Coach will work with the facility to confirm all logistics and expectations
- Meet Manager, Head Coach and Meet Referee will work together to create plan that outlines all expectations including entry and exit, movement and location of all officials, coaches, and swimmers, based on the facility requirements. Best practice would be to create a pool diagram that details where all will be located and the flow of traffic on the deck
- No Senior Officials Briefing or General Officials Briefings, complete via email ahead of the competition
- All officials should be recruited and assigned to positions ahead of time
- Provide direction to officials/volunteers on what they need to bring with them, for example their own mask/face covering, hand sanitizer, pre-filled water bottle, pencil, clipboard as appropriate
- Officials should arrive at the pool, at a pre-designated time and location, dressed in their uniform, bringing their deck shoes and follow any directions they were given upon arrival
- All equipment, such as Starters equipment, buttons/plungers, stop watches, clip boards should all be cleaned and disinfected prior to and following every session
- Meet Referee/Head Official would also act as the Session Referee for this event, as appropriate

Physical Distancing and Safety Precautions

- Warm-up scheduling may need to be reviewed and amended to maintain physical distancing. Split warm-ups by time, club, age may be considered in order to manage the numbers in the pool at any one time
- Use minimum number of officials, use qualified Stroke and Turn officials as Timekeepers to have 1 official per lane, where not all Timekeepers are also stroke and turn qualified, the Referee, Starter and Stroke Judges will support
- Ensure all officials, including Timekeepers/Turn Judges are maintaining social distancing from swimmers
- Where possible the Referee and Starter should be on opposite sides of the pool deck
- The use of walkie-talkies should be considered when available. Disinfecting will be required between users
- Stroke Judges to support Inspector of Turns at turn end, maintaining physical distancing
- If backstroke ledges are being used, they must be sanitized in between uses. One volunteer/official is required to oversee the installation of them
- In an indoor aquatic facility, masks are encouraged for anyone not participating in the event. They are required when entering and exiting the facility

Meet Administration

- Minimize the handling of DQ slips
- DQs should be recorded on a heat sheet or DQ slip and held by the Turn Judge or Stroke Judge. The Turn Judge or Stroke Judge will come to the Session Referee, maintaining social distancing as usual and the DQ will be discussed with no paper being exchanged. The Session Referee will handle the paperwork necessary to process and sign off on the DQ
- Notification to the Recorder-Scorer will be done by the Session Referee, maintaining social distancing

- Notification to the Coach/Swimmer will be done by the Turn Judge or Stroke Judge, maintaining social distancing
- It may be necessary to complete all admin/meet results following the competition to maintain physical distancing – in this case meet results including a DQ report would be provided to clubs/coaches following the competition
- A full log of all officials/volunteers, including contact information, who have worked the session should be maintained by the Meet Manager for all sessions.
- Heat sheets/meet programs can be posted online or use of Meet Mobile, or other mobile applications, where possible

Senior Officials (Referee and Starter)

- Level 3 officials who are fully certified and as such have taken the Referee clinic, may be the Referee on deck for competition opportunities as approved by Swim Nova Scotia
- Referees should consider using an electronic whistle as traditional whistles should not be used. This will also facilitate the use of a mask on deck. For example:
<https://www.fox40world.com/electronic-whistle>

Timekeepers

- One per lane; one watch and button(plunger) preferred
- Where possible the Timekeeper should also be Stroke and Turn qualified and act in both roles
- Always go to the right-hand of the block to maintain physical distancing, as directed in advance of the competition
- Where electronic timing system in use, consider no Timekeepers in place at all, as per example outlined below.
- Timekeepers or Turn Judges at the start end should be disinfecting the starting block, including kick plate and backstroke starting grips following every heat.

Minimum Number of officials for competition and rule CSW 1.2.1

Swimming Canada Rule, CSW 1.2.1 says: *For each session there should be a minimum of the following certified officials:*

Referee

2 Inspectors of Turns (at each end)

Chief Judge Electronics (if applicable)

Chief Finish Judge

1 Timekeeper per lane

2 Safety Marshalls

Starter

Chief Timekeeper

2 Judges of Stroke

Clerk of Course

Marshal

Recorder-Scorer

Note: *In some meets the officials may perform in several capacities where the duties of each position are not in conflict with one another. Not having the minimum number of officials will not nullify the results of the competition.*

This means that the number of officials on deck for any sanctioned competition can be dramatically reduced and still have valid results.

Officials Placement

Different meet formats/competition opportunities will help inform what officials are needed on deck. In-house competitions and Time Trial events with electronic timing, can have minimal staffing on deck and still have valid results. As provincial and local health guidance changes, there may still be the opportunity to look at officiating in a new way. Reducing the number of officials required on deck over the long term, will help support changes to volunteerism and may help support a complete reimagining of officiating in Canada.

Examples of officiating placements will be available for consideration by Head Officials through Swim Nova Scotia in the Fall.