



## **CHECK STARTER TRAINING NOTES**

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## CHECK STARTER

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

These notes cover the duties and responsibilities of the Check Starter and the procedures applicable to the position.

Candidates for the position of Check Starter are encouraged to read both the Marshal and Check Starter training notes concurrently as well as the applicable Rules. These are key areas for the smooth conduct and flow of a meet.

## 2.0 GENERAL

Check Starters should arrive at the pool at least thirty (30) minutes before the advertised start of the Meet. On arriving at the pool they must immediately report to the Referee to be marked present and receive a program.

Check Starters should familiarise themselves with the areas set aside for marshalling and check starting. They should meet the other officials with whom they will be working and ask the Referee if there are any special instructions which will apply to the meet. The smooth running of the meet is greatly enhanced by a team working relationship between Check Starters and Marshals.

The Check Starters need to take certain equipment to the pool to carry out their duties efficiently. This equipment consists of a number of pens or pencils, a writing pad and a clipboard. Check Starters will find a pen, pencil or highlight pen useful to mark swimmers present on the marshalling sheets.

The Check Starter's primary responsibilities are to receive the swimmers from the Marshals and to make sure that the correct swimmer starts in the correct event, the correct heat in that event and the correct lane in that heat.

The smooth conduct of the events is closely linked to the timely and efficient performance of the respective tasks of both Marshals and Check Starters and any action that can interrupt the continuity of the meet should be reported to the Referee immediately this occurs or appears imminent.

## 3.0 CHECK STARTER

### 3.1 CHECK STARTER DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The formal duties of the Check Starter, as contained in the Rules, are:

- receive swimmers from the Marshals;
- place swimmers in their respective starting positions for the event;
- signal the Referee when all is in readiness;
- maintain general supervision to ensure the costumes of all swimmers are in accordance with the Rules and report any breach of these Rules immediately to the Referee, PROVIDED THAT, for Swimming NSW (SNSW) controlled Meets, the Meet Committee may, if considered expedient, delete any or all of the above duties.

### 3.2 CHECK STARTER PROCEDURES

#### 3.2.1 GENERAL

The Check Starter will receive from the Marshal, at the time the swimmers are handed over, marked up event sheets showing the swimmers remaining in the event, with their heats and lanes. At SNSW meets, UK Judge's Placings Sheets are used for this purpose. An example is shown in Appendix 1. The Check Starter should ask the Marshal if there are any issues they should be aware of.

After the preceding heat has started, or as directed by the Referee or Meet Committee, the Check Starter should direct the swimmers in the next heat to their positions behind the starting platforms, checking that each swimmer is in the right lane in accordance with the event sheets. The checking procedure is normally accomplished by walking behind each swimmer and checking their name against the event sheets, except that for finals, swimmers are announced by the Announcer.

When all swimmers are in place, the Check Starter will signal the Referee by standing in a prearranged position, which is usually next to the furthest lane away from and opposite the Referee (e.g., Lane 9 at SOPAC). The Referee need only look at this prearranged position to observe the Check Starter.

If a race is recalled ensure that all swimmers have returned to their original lanes. Each swimmer should be rechecked as per the event sheets and the Referee advised when all is in readiness to re-start the event. (Trainees should note that if a swimmer has prematurely entered the water it is the Referee's responsibility to advise that swimmer of any disqualification, NOT the Check Starter's).

It is the Check Starter's responsibility to regulate swimmers, in the area behind the starting platforms and/or in the holding area (usually between the marshalling area and the starting platforms) to avoid congestion.

Where single entry cards are being used by Timekeepers to record swimmers individual times, the Check Starter collects them from the Marshal after seeding is completed. The Check Starter uses these cards to check that swimmers are in the correct event, heat and lane and should retain them until the heat has been started. If a false start occurs, the cards will be needed to ensure swimmers return to the correct lane. Once the heat has started, the Check Starter will distribute the cards to the individual Timekeepers on each lane so that the swimmers finish time can be recorded at the end of the heat.

### 3.2.2 AMALGAMATIONS AND RESEEDS

The Check Starter's responsibilities in relation to re-seeds and amalgamations are:

- (a) For a pre-seeded event:
  - After the Chief Recorder has completed a re-seed or amalgamation, obtain the revised event sheets from the Marshal.
  - Receive the swimmers from the Marshal, who will have advised the swimmers of the reseed/amalgamation, their new heat and lane numbers. Place the swimmers behind their respective starting positions at the appropriate time.
- (b) For a non-seeded event:
  - Obtain the details of the heat and lane allocations from the Marshal.
  - Receive the swimmers from the Marshal, advise them of their heat and lane numbers and place them behind their respective starting platforms at the appropriate time.

### 3.2.3 COSTUMES AND ADVERTISING

The Check Starter is to maintain general supervision to ensure the costumes of all swimmers are in accordance with the Rules. SNSW Rule GR19 applies. The Check Starter should also be aware of the latest FINA approved swim suits which are available from the FINA website [www.fina.org](http://www.fina.org) under Approved Swimsuits. The SNSW Swimsuit Compliance Check procedure is provided in Appendix 2.

The Check Starter should also check that any kind of tape on the swimmers body (Rule SW10.7) has been approved by the Referee.

The Check Starter should check to ensure the costumes of all swimmers are in good moral taste, suitable for the individual sports discipline and non-transparent. The object is to debar immodest costumes not the swimmer.

The Check Starter should also monitor swimmers for any body advertisement which is prohibited or breaches of the Rules in regard to advertising material on technical equipment worn in the water or on pool deck equipment. The Rules regarding advertising are contained within SNSW Rules GR20, as follow:

- (a) Swimwear
- (b) Pool deck equipment
- (c) Swimming Caps
- (d) Goggles
- (e) Body Advertising- is not allowed in any way whatsoever.
- (f) Advertising for tobacco or alcohol is not permitted.

Note: This rule (GR20) does not apply to design advertising and trademarks of SAL, or its commercial sponsors, or the design advertising trademarks of the major sponsor of SNSW or a State Association so long as it does not conflict with a sponsor of SAL.

The Check Starter has no power to disqualify or exclude a competitor, however, will immediately report any non-conformity with any of these Rules to the Referee for action.

### 3.2.4 FINALS

If a final is re-seeded the Check Starter will advise the swimmers and reserves.

Although not a specific duty under the Rules, the Check Starters for each final place the finalists in position for their public introduction by the Announcer. The usual procedure is for one Check Starter to lead out the finalists with the other Check Starter bringing up the rear. Both Check Starters remain standing, on their respective sides of the pool, facing the swimmers, while the swimmers are introduced, and remain in these positions until after the start of the race.

### 3.2.5 HANDICAP EVENTS

At SNSW meets all events are run as Scratch races, however at Area and Club level handicap races are often conducted.

For Handicap races, the Check Starter informs swimmers of their starting number and lane number and places them in their starting positions as per the program or event sheets, i.e. in the water for backstroke or on the starting platform for all other strokes. Note – All swimmers in a freestyle handicap race must start the race from the starting platform with a dive.

The first to start is the “limit” swimmer, who is placed in the right hand lane of the pool, usually lane 0 or 1, and the “scratch” swimmer, last to start, is in the furthest lane. The Check Starter must also inform the Starter of the highest handicap starting number for each heat.

After giving the starting signal “Go”, the Starter moves across the pool behind the swimmers counting off the seconds from a stopwatch, starting from “one” (1) and continuing until the scratch (last) swimmer’s starting number is called.

As it is not possible for the Starter to watch both the stopwatch and each swimmer while calling off the seconds as they elapse. It is the responsibility of the Check Starter to report to the Referee any swimmer who starts before their respective starting number is called unless the swimmer returns immediately to the original starting position at the wall and restarts but not before their respective starting number is called. The Check Starter must also report to the Referee any swimmer who is not stationary when their respective starting number is called. The swimmer may be disqualified by the Referee.

“Stationary” is defined as there being “no apparent movement”. Any questions should be referred to the Referee.

## 3.3 CHECK STARTER PROTOCOL

Protocols are a set of guidelines or rules that help deliver a consistent standard of behaviour and outcome. A professional appearance at a swim meet depends on the following factors:

- Appearance – neat dress,
- Attitude – body language can be observed by the spectators and swimmers, so smiling and good posture is important,
- Consistency/uniformity of movement,
- Being in position and appearing to focus on the job at hand,
- Attitude can manifest itself in language and posture. Officials choosing a positive attitude will inspire confidence in fellow officials, swimmers and athletes.

The Referee may alter the standard protocol to meet the specific needs of a competition. For example, if there are insufficient officials available, individual duties and protocols may need to be adjusted.

The Meet Director may also alter protocols to meet the needs of the competition, such as when a meet is televised.

The general protocols for Check Starters at SNSW meets are:

1. To lead the swimmers to their respective lanes,
2. Return back along the line of swimmers and confirm each is in the correct lane,
3. Stand somewhat in line with the swimmers, facing toward them and observing that they remain in their correct lane and step up as appropriate. The Referee will be noting your position as an indication that the swimmers are in their correct positions,
4. Once the event has commenced, move off the pool deck,
5. For finals, one Check Starter leads out the finalists on prearranged timing for their public introduction with the other Check Starter bringing up the rear. Both Check Starters remain standing, on their respective sides of the pool, facing the swimmers, while the swimmers are introduced, and remain in these positions until after the start of the race.

At the start of a session, swimmers should only be escorted onto pool deck once the technical officials are in position and the Referees and Starters have been introduced to the swimmers and spectators.

For heat sessions at SNSW meets at SOPAC where there is ample space, there should be no more than two (2) heats on pool deck at any one time. This also applies where there is a change of ends for long course events.

For example, if a 50 metre event follows a 200 metre event, the first heat of the 50 metre event is not brought out on pool deck at least until the second last heat of the 200 metre event has started, and the second heat is not brought out until the last heat has started.

If the preceding event is 400 metres or longer, as a guide the Check Starter should ensure the first 2 heats are brought out no earlier than 5 minutes before the expected finish of the last heat in the preceding event.

At pools with limited space behind the starting blocks, and at Club and Area meets, it may be more appropriate that swimmers are only put into their respective lanes after a fair start in the preceding heat.

### 3.4 EVENT BOARD

Where event boards are being used it is the Marshal's responsibility to ensure that the event being marshalled and the event in the water are correctly displayed.

At Club and local meets there could be limited resources or the proximity of the marshalling area to the event board and the pool may be challenging. It may be appropriate that the Check Starter change the event number at the start of the first heat of each event and the marshal number when requested by the Marshal. This variation in protocol should be approved by the Referee. The key is team work and cooperation between the Marshals and the Check Starters.

The event board should show the number of the event in the water or about to start as 'EVENT' and show the one next to close as 'MARSHAL' (or 'CLAIM'). For example, at SNSW meets where marshalling closes two (2) events ahead of that being swum, if event 21 is being swum, event 23 has closed and the event board would show:

<b>EVENT</b>  <b>21</b>
<b>MARSHAL</b>  <b>24</b>

At Area and Club meets the marshalling instructions will be printed in the program or announced by public announcement. The event board should be operated in accordance with these instructions.

SNSW has decided that an event board will not be used at meets where a scoreboard is in use that displays the current event and heat number.

### 3.5 SUMMARY

It is recommended that the following SNSW Rules should be read by prospective Check Starters:

SW2.5 Check Starters' duties	GR19 Swimwear
SW2.4 Marshals' duties	GR20 Advertising
SW3.9 Amalgamation of heats	GR21 Accidental omission by an official
SW10.7 Body tape	GR22 Error by an official.
SW10.17 Unauthorised persons in areas designated for swimmers or officials	

# Appendix 1 UK Judge's Placings Sheet

## Event 1 Girls 16 Year Olds 200 LC Metre Butterfly Prelims

### Judge's Placings

Heat 1

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th

Lane	Comp#		Team	Place	Time
0	430	ECCLES, CAITLIN 16	WYN		
1					
2	1420	COLQUHOUN, BETHANY 16	WODN		
3	808	ESSEX, EMMA 16	WWORX		
4	634	HANN, KAELYN 16	BROTH		
5	1160	ROGERS, DAHLAS 16	CMBT		
6	184	SCHULTZ, ADELE 16	BUN		
7	1150	BERNARD, ALANA 16	CMBT		
8	933	GOLIGHTLY, REBECCA 16	GARDE		
9					

## Event 1 Girls 16 Year Olds 200 LC Metre Butterfly Prelims

### Judge's Placings

Heat 2

1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th

Lane	Comp#		Team	Place	Time
0	14	FIELD, (V), SHANNON 16	NZL		
1	348	ROBERTS, NATALIE 16	MARB		
2	1313	REDMAN, SAMANTHA 16	HUNT		
3	1363	MERLINO, ALICIA 16	PICT		
4	646	SHERIDAN, MIKKAYLA 16	CHAND		
5	247	NIERE, EMMA 16	FAS		
6					
7	580	HERITAGE, MELANIE 16	PBAP		
8	1330	BORROW, CARISSA 16	NOVO		
9	562	LINN, SOPHIE 16	NWD		

## Appendix 1

# SNSW Swimsuit Compliance Check Instructions to Technical Officials

Please note that this applies to competitors in both Individual AND Relay events.

### Check 1 - Marshalling Area

- When swimmers report to the marshalling table to have their name marked off they will be subject to swimsuit compliance check.
- Marshal to ask swimmer "are you wearing one (1) FINA approved suit OR are you wearing one (1) suit compliant with the SNSW General Rules (GR.19)?" "Please show me?"
- Swimmers who are found to be in breach of the General Rules will have the opportunity to change into a swimsuit that is compliant.
- If swimmers refuse to change their swimsuit the Referee will be notified and the swimmer will be excluded.
- Swimmers who have been instructed to change into a compliant swimsuit must report to the marshalling area and be checked again.

### Check 2 - Check Starter

- A final check of the swimsuit will be conducted by the Check Starter as swimmers are checked off before their race.
- If a swimmer is found to be in breach of the General Rules the Referee will be notified and the swimmer will be excluded.
- Swimmers will not have the opportunity to change at this point. Swimmers in breach of the General Rule will not be permitted to swim.

### What Technical Officials should look for when checking swimsuits

- FINA Approved Tag on the suit (approved)
- Traditional Swimsuits as defined in GR19.1.3 and GR19.1.4 (approved)
- Suits that are made of polyurethane or neoprene material (not approved)
- Zippers or fastening devices on any suit (not approved)
- Multiple suit lines/two (2) suits (not approved)

**Post Race** - If a swimmer is found to have swum a race with a suit in breach of the General Rules the Referee will be notified and if proven the swimmer may be disqualified.