

GUIDELINES FOR THE POSITION OF THE TURN JUDGE WITHIN THEIR JURISDICTION

The National Officials Committee has had many inquiries about a preferred or suggested practice of observing turns. Because the Committee has always had the goal of improving consistency from LSC to LSC, the following procedures have been determined. The end result was achieved by polling the Committee members and arriving at a compromise that should satisfy most needs. These procedures may not coincide with what your LSC currently practices but the Committee feels that some aspects are universal with all LSCs. We ask that this recommendation be discussed and shared with others so that some common ground will be established that will work in your LSC.

So to answer the question "Where should I stand to observe the swimmers in my jurisdiction?" you must begin with the basic general answer to "*position yourself where you can best see what you have to for the stroke that you are observing.*" The question as to how much you should move after finding that position is much more complicated. The following should be taken into consideration:

1. If you are watching one or two lanes, you shouldn't have to move at all. The preferred position is over the swimmer if observing one, or over the lane line between two swimmers.
2. If you are watching three, four or five ***(see note)** lanes, and there are NO obstructions between them, you may have to change position slightly to uniformly observe all lanes, but note the word "observe". You must maintain a calm observant posture on the deck even when changing positions. Running from lane to lane imparts a frantic attitude and creates the perception that you are looking for an infraction rather than just 'observing' the swim. The preferred position would be in the middle and slowly move to one side or another for the observation. In freestyle events, the preferred position might be outside of lane 1 or lane 6/8/10 for each half of the pool.
3. If you are watching three, four or five ***(see note)** lanes and there are obstructions between them, i.e. starting platforms, diving board standards, etc., you would be better off finding the optimum position to observe the lanes within your jurisdiction and remaining there. Moving around obstructions distracts your attention from the pool and can lead to inconsistent calls.
4. Outdoor pools can present even more variable conditions, such as the sun glaring on the water. Your positioning then goes back to the basic rule of standing where you can best observe the swims in your jurisdiction, changing the position as physical conditions (such as glare) change.
5. The Meet Referee *may* modify the jurisdictions as outlined above, allowing movement of the official, given the lay out of the facilities, obstacles preventing proper observation, weather, lighting, sunlight, etc.

****NOTE - It is important to understand that observing 5 lanes is not recommended but when a 10 lane pool is being used and staffing is short, there may not be a choice. Alternative coverage may want to be established and the use of a judge on 5 lanes should be a last resort.***

There is no "black and white" answer to the question of movement within your jurisdiction. The decision to remain in place or move should be discussed with the referee of the meet with the ultimate objective of maintaining a calm observant demeanor on the deck while providing uniform conditions of competition. To provide consistent and equitable conditions, the Meet Referee should follow the LSC approved practices that have been determined by using these guidelines and implemented procedures that follow the rules of observing, not scrutinizing the swims.