Role of the Chief Judge: National Meets

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The Chief Judge (CJ) Philosophy

You are a team. You will succeed and fail as a team. Don't let evaluations change this philosophy.

You set the tone of the deck.

A good team makes for a great meet.

A bad team or a team that is not cohesive can destroy a meet.

No drama on the CJ team

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The Roles Vary by Meet

- LSC Meets (Last week)
- **Sectionals/Zones –1 star (and equivalent)**
- **Futures—2 stars**
- **Juniors—3 stars**
- **Pro Series—4 stars**
- **Nationals & US Open—5 stars**
- Selection Meets/World Aquatics Protocols/Role of CIT (next week)

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LSC Meets

- CJ Teams vary based on the size of the meet
- CJ duties can vary as well – informal to formal
- The Role of the CJ should not be the last person in the door
- For more information about being a CJ at LSC meets, refer to last week's presentation

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SECTIONALS/ ZONES

- Consist of a dedicate team with a Team Lead Chief Judge (TLCJ)
- Protocols designed by the TLCJ and Meet Referee
- Each CJ assigned certain duties (rotation/dedicated duties)
- The team performs at all sessions, though the team may change depending on other staffing needs (TLCJ typically does not change)
- Responsibilities include pre-meet, during sessions and post-meet activities

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FUTURES, JUNIORS & US OPEN/PSS/NATIONALS

Dedicated TLCJ and CJ Team

Consist of TLCJ and 4-5 CJs

Adheres to “National Deck” protocols

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Chief Judge Role at National Meets

- The Chief Judge role is different at LSC meets than the role of Chief Judge at higher level meets. One big difference is the preparation in advance of the meet.
- At local meets you are assigned as a CJ upon attending the briefing.
- At 1 to 5-star meets you are assigned months in advance & will meet several times before the meet.

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Team Lead CJ

- TLCJ works with the Meet Referee on the details of the meet
  - CJ protocols & assignments
  - Radio protocols (done in conjunction with AR, HDR and MR)
  - Early Relay Take Off (ERTO) protocols (done in conjunction with AR, HDR and MR)
  - ST protocols & jurisdictions

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Team Lead CJ and the Team

- The CJ Team will be assigned certain duties to perform before the meet and each session. These assignments may rotate, or you may do the same duties the entire meet.
  - Deck Assignments
  - Radios
  - Stroke briefing(s)
  - Deck protocols/jurisdictions briefings (general and specific)
  - Counters/bells/chairs
  - Relays take off slips
  - Other duties as assigned
- Activities include pre-session, during and post session.

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Pre-meet preparation

- The TLCJ typically stays in close contact with the MR in the two months leading up to the meet.
- TLCJ may host multiple meetings with the CJ team in the two months leading up to the meet (the MR may attend part/all of these)
- The TLCJ may send out multiple emails to the entire team with relevant information
  - Uniform, meeting times, hotel information, parking information, social, etc.

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Chief Judge responsibilities

Responsibilities pre-session

- Sign in, credentials, daily attendance
- Referee, SR, OOF paperwork (prior to the session start in consultation with the admin team)
- Deck sets to MR, DR, CJs and anyone else who needs one
- Timers sheet, pencils & stop watches (work with meet ops)
- Bells and lap counters (if needed)
- Chairs & towels
- Relay take off slips (if needed)
- Events, announcements, etc. on the white board (if needed)
- Hand out radios and do a radio check

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Chief Judge responsibilities

Responsibilities pre-session: The officials briefing

- Welcome
  - What is your style? Ice breaker? Jokes? Quick and to the point? Watch others and learn what you like (and what you don't like); do what works for you, not for someone else
- Stroke briefing (likely only one per meet)
- Jurisdiction briefing
- General protocol briefing
- Event specific protocol briefing
- Introduce the meet referee
- Review anything with the deck set you need to

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Chief Judge responsibilities

Responsibility during session

- Officials in place before meet begins
- Timers in place
- Mentor ***and*** care for your officials (water, rest, event, heats, etc.).
- Watch your officials, not the swimmers
- Write DQ, false starts and distribute penalty no shows DQ slips
- Relay take-offs, notify if lanes clear or DQ (know the ERTO protocols)
- Notify Swimmer of DQ-highest priority!
- Remind officials to remain in place until excused

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Chief Judge responsibilities

Responsibility during session

- Watching each other - the CJ dance
- Shifting to adjust coverage of the deck
- Examples:
  - You have an assigned “quadrant,” but you need to have situational awareness of what is going on in every area of the pool
  - If the start area CJ is vetting a call, you have to shift to notify the swimmer exiting the pool
  - If someone doesn’t see a call, help them—don’t throw them under the bus
  - Remember, you are a team

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Chief Judge responsibilities

Responsibility during session

- Start area CJ will be asked to do many things by the DR team
- DFS are reported to the start area CJ after the start of the session; place on the DR and SR clipboards
- In finals, alternates report to the start area CJ
- CJs are responsible for paperwork related to a swim off and making sure ST officials are in place for the swim off

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Chief Judge responsibilities

Responsibility during session: Taking calls

- When a potential DQ is signaled by a raised hand, the CJ should:
  - Determine what lane of possible infraction (then radio that in so DR and CJ team are aware)
  - Ask ST as many questions as necessary to let the DR know what the ST official observed.
  - Notify DR the basics of the potential DQ
- Anticipate any questions the DR might have; be ready to paint a picture (a polaroid, not a Rembrandt) of what was observed.
- Do not offer the description of the call unless asked. If the DR has follow-up questions, then you can paint the fuller picture.

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Chief Judge responsibilities

Responsibility during session: Taking calls

- CJ recommendations
  - “Recommend accept”
  - “Recommend further discussion”
- ST:
  - No call
  - Rescind a call
- DR:
  - Accept a call
  - Not accept a call
  - Ask for further discussion

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Chief Judge responsibilities

Responsibility during session: Taking calls

- *Sample* radio protocol from a recent 3-star meet
- CJ: “Possible disqualification, lane(s) z or stroke judge lanes 1-4/5-8”
- DR: “Acknowledged” or “DR acknowledged”
- (CJ: If a lane group was called in, the CJ will follow with the specific lane number: “Lane z”)
- CJ after talking to ST: “Possible disqualification, event x, heat y, lane z, (description as close to DQ slip as possible), (recommendation)”
- DR will then respond

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Chief Judge responsibilities

Responsibility post-session

- Thank your officials!
- Ask officials to stay in place until released by DR
- Manage any ST needs related to swim offs
- Collect radios and headsets
- Collect timer sheets and deliver to admin (pro tip: organize them first!)
- Collect DR, SR, OOF clipboards (DRs are responsible for the paperwork)
- Pick up bells, counters, etc.
- Debrief after each session and/or a session to discuss evaluations
- One or more CJs may be asked to assist with Time Trials transitions

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Chief Judge documents

There is no need to create these on your own. Lots of different versions exist and are shared by CJs. Don’t reinvent the wheel!

- ST protocols and jurisdictions document(s)
- ST assignment spreadsheets
- CJ protocols & philosophy (might also include radio protocols)
- CJ assignment spreadsheets
- Radio protocol if not in another document
- Radio check out spreadsheet
- Evaluation spreadsheet

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Thank you!

Questions?

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