

Determining Race Results

The determination of the result of a race is the sole responsibility of the Referee controlling that race (SW2.1). There are many sources of information the Referee may use to accomplish the task and there is a sequence of actions to undertake in order to arrive at a result which is both within the rules of the sport and fair to the competitors.

The basic premise is that the fastest swimmer wins followed by the second fastest and so on through the placings. That may sound like an obvious statement and so it is, but it helps to focus the mind when faced with a combination of placings and times.

FINA timing and placing is primarily based around the premise of Automatic Officiating Equipment (AOE) or three manual Timekeepers. When operating with Automatic Operating Equipment alongside manual timekeepers there are three sources of a time for each swimmer and they have an order of preference in use:

- Automatic time (primary); whereby the timing was started by the starting signal and stopped by the swimmer applying sufficient pressure on the timing pad to stop the timing. (No human timekeeper intervention)
- Secondary (back-up); whereby the timing was started by the starting signal and stopped by the timekeeper activating the back-up button at the end of the race. (One human intervention)
- Human (stopwatch); started by the timekeeper upon hearing/seeing the starting signal and stopped when the swimmer finishes the race. (Two human interventions)

Where Automatic Operating Equipment (AOE) is in operation the result of a race shall be that provided by the AOE as set out in SW13. It must be kept in mind that regardless of what the Referee or any other human judge might think about that result the Referee must be satisfied that the equipment has malfunctioned before intervening – when there is no evidence of malfunction the Referee should not intervene because the finish order is not necessarily as they saw it.

Consider. 'If I change this result and there is a protest what grounds do I have to consider the system to have malfunctioned'.

SW13 goes on to set out the process to undertake when there is a system malfunction whereby a swimmer or swimmers do not have an automatic (primary) time and finish. If three timekeepers are used per lane then the finish order is determined by time (SW1.2.3). Where less than 3 timekeepers per lane are used the Referee shall, as previously mentioned, use all information available to determine the result of a race.

It is a fundamental rule that where swimmers have an AOE time and place their relative position to each other in a race shall not be changed (SW13.2).

When using AOE should a swimmer not have a primary time the first consideration is the back-up time, supplemented where Finish Judges are used by a manual finish order.

The first option should be to insert the back-up time to obtain a place for the swimmer and consider the resulting position against other information - the manual finish order. Where it

cannot be proved that the time gives an inaccurate place, e.g. a blanket finish the back-up time should be used. If there is no back-up time available then the manual time should be used in the same manner.

If the finish was not close and the Referee is satisfied based upon other information, e.g. an agreed manual finish order, that the back-up time does not accurately reflect the swimmer's place in the finish order then the manual time should be considered together with the manual finish order. Should there not be a back-up or human time available the Referee should seek to find a 'real' time which reflects the swimmer's place in the race. **If that is not possible the Referee shall insert a time 1/100th of a second faster than the swimmer placed immediately behind them in the race. This time reflects that the swimmer was faster than the beaten swimmer. It is not possible to accurately reflect the actual winning margin but it can be said with certainty that it was not less than 1/100th of a second. This time should be marked 'RD' to indicate that it is a referee's decision not a real time. Such a time should not be used for British/English/Scottish/Welsh Record purposes; it may not be usable for other Record purposes, depending on the relevant Record conditions.**

Where no time is available, the swimmer shall be given the time as outlined above. If the swimmer is last in the race, the Referee shall determine an acceptable time. This time shall be indicated as a Referee's Decision (RD) and should not be used for British/English/Scottish/Welsh Record purposes; it may not be usable for other Record purposes, depending on the relevant record conditions. Alternatively, the swimmer may be offered the opportunity for an individual re-swim.

Where AOE is not in use then in the same manner as above the Referee must decide on the finish order of a race by using all the information available.

It is the process of assessing swimmers times and places by which the Referee will determine a finishing order.

The times of the swimmers shall be used to establish a finish order, if necessary that order should be compared with that of the agreed manual finish.

A process as outlined above should be carried out in a manually resulted race. The Referee should ask the following question:

Do I have grounds to consider that the result provided by the times is not accurate?

If the answer is yes then the manual places should be used in order to establish a fair and accurate finish order. If necessary times should be adjusted in the same manner as previously described.

In order to establish the agreed manual finish, if the Finish Judges disagree in any way, their results and that of the Referee shall be considered. The relative order of any two swimmers shall be determined by a majority decision.