

What did (or did not) happen at the Frank Clark meet? Why doesn't my time count for USMS Top Ten?

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Top Ten and Records Keeper

Some swimmers have asked how it can be that the results of the 2013 Frank Clark meet are not considered for USMS records and Top 10. This was a well run USMS sanctioned meet, so what is the problem? The problem was pool measurement or the lack thereof. USMS has various requirements for pool measurements that have to be performed at certain times and in a certain manner. Not meeting these requirements causes meet results to be invalid for USMS records and Top 10.

Usually pool measurements are performed when a pool is built to make sure that meets can be conducted and results are accepted by different swimming organizations like USMS and USA Swimming. For the Greensboro Aquatic Center pool this was done by a licensed surveyor in 2011 and 2012. Based on these measurements the pool was certified by USA Swimming for all possible race configurations, including 20 lanes 25 yard across the width of the pool, 16 lanes 25 yard and 25 meters from walls to bulkheads and 8 lanes 50 yard. Only the 25 yard wall to wall race course was certified by USMS. This configuration was used for the 2012 Frank Clark meet and the USMS Spring SCY National Championship meet. USMS used to accept pool certifications made by USA Swimming, so everything seemed fine.

When online meet sanctioning was introduced the person entering the information for requesting a sanction, usually the meet director, has to acknowledge that pool measurement requirements will be satisfied and that the meet will be conducted according to USMS rules. Without getting too concerned about this you acknowledge and the sanction is approved. In this particular situation everyone involved assumed what is good enough for USMS Nationals should be OK for a local meet as well.

However, for the 2013 Frank Clark meet there were two problems, both related to pool measurements. At the USMS convention it was decided that USMS would no longer recognize pool certifications made by USA Swimming. Article 105: **Records, Top 10 Times and All-American Recognition** of the 2013 USMS rule book states "*Record applications and Top 10 submissions shall not be accepted unless certification of course length accompanies them or is on file with USMS or FINA*" (rule 105.1.6 A). As the race course for the meet was wall to bulkhead, the pool certification on file did not satisfy this rule.

Moreover, rule 105.1.7 C states "*If a moveable bulkhead is used and the initial pool length certification for all lanes is on file, the length of the course must be confirmed by measuring the two outside lanes and a middle lane prior to the start of the meet and at the conclusion of each session*". This rule was not satisfied either as this was only done the day before for another meet that took place using the same race configuration.

Although there is a logical explanation for all of this, it is obvious to everyone involved that this unfortunate occurrence resulted in a disservice to our members. The fact that this has happened before, in NC and out of state, makes it even worse. Simply stating that everyone involved should know the USMS rules is not the solution. Therefore, the Board of the LMSC for North Carolina has started a discussion about what can be done to make sure that this does not happen again. You will be informed in an upcoming Across the Lanes about this. In the meantime do not hesitate to let me know about your suggestions.

With the LCM season approaching some of you are making plans to participate in so-called recognized meets. Usually these are meets sanctioned by USA Swimming, but USMS also may recognize meets held by other organizations. It is important that swimmers are aware whether or not times in these meets qualify for National records or Top 10. If not sure you can read article 105 of the USMS rule book (www.usms.org/rules/part1.pdf), or send me an email.