



Meet Jury Use Under Rule 102.22

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In this article, I address the use of a Meet Jury under rule 102.22. In a companion article (Eligibility Protest Juries and Technical Protest Juries at National Championships), I address the use of juries at National Championship meets under rules 207.11.4 (Eligibility Protests) and 207.11.5 (Technical Rules Protests).

Section 102.22 "Protest" provides the following guidance:

First, as an initial matter, protests against the judgment decisions of Starters, Stroke, Turn, Place and Relay Take-off Judges can only be considered by the Referee and the Referee's decision is final (102.22.1).

Second, for all other protests lodged at the meet, the Referee may appoint a Meet Jury. The jury shall consist of not fewer than three and not more than five persons, at least one of whom shall be a coach and one an athlete (102.22.2).

Third, protests made prior to the race contesting the eligibility of a swimmer to compete or represent an organization must be made to the Referee in writing. If the protest is not resolved, the swimmer is allowed to compete under protest and it shall be so announced prior to the race (102.22.3).

Fourth, protests for all other competition-related protests, including protests concerning eligibility and representation, must be made to the referee and submitted in writing within 30 minutes after the race in which the alleged infraction occurred (102.22.4).

Finally, per the USA Swimming Operating Policy Manual, only USA Swimming may challenge an athlete's competition category (men's category or women's category).

What are the reasons for appointing a jury?

- Protests made prior to the race contesting the eligibility of a swimmer to compete or to represent an organization (102.22.3).
- All other protests lodged at the meet (except judgment decisions or eligibility and representation protests occurring after the race). This could include protests related to facilities, the racecourse, results (judgment decisions regarding times or timing equipment is not covered by 102.22.1), score, points awarded, interpretation of the rules, etc.

When should you appoint a meet jury?

- Prior to the race in the case of contesting an athlete's eligibility to compete or represent an organization.
- Whenever the need arises. Except for the situation above, there is no set time. It is best to plan ahead so you are not running around trying to form a jury at the last minute.

How many members should be on the jury?

- Either three or five is recommended, but not four. You want an odd number to avoid a tie. Three members should be sufficient, but you certainly can have five.

Who should be the members?

- At least one coach and one athlete are required. An official is frequently chosen to serve on the jury, but there is no requirement that you have an official and no restriction on having another athlete or coach.
- There is no requirement that the other member even be a coach, athlete or official; however, it is probably unwise to pick someone from the stands.
- Members should not be from the team(s) involved in the situation.

How does a jury perform its duties?

The Meet Referee should facilitate the process.

1. Find a quiet spot, preferably off the deck.
2. Allow the protester to present their case.
3. If there is an opposing view, allow them to present their side.
4. If they need interpretation of the rules, ask the Meet or Deck Referee for assistance.
5. Deliberate.
6. Let all concerned know the jury's decision and the effect it has on the situation.
7. Ask the jury not to discuss their deliberations publicly.