# VHSL TIPS FOR STARTERS

1. Before meet, set up and test starting equipment and check stability of blocks.

2. Very often, referees will assign starters the task of doing the timer briefing.  Be prepared to do this.

3. Speak slowly, clearly, and loudly into the microphone—*practice beforehand to get the feel for the microphone and volume levels*.

4. Limit speaking over the microphone to essential commands.  Do not add introductory language such as "Swimmers" before your commands.

5. Use full names of events, not abbreviations ("Individual Medley", not "IM"). Do not put an "s" on the end of "yard." (e.g., 100 yard_ freestyle)

6. Always ensure <u>fair</u> starts for <u>all</u> swimmers.

7. If too much noise at the start, wait or ask for quiet.

8. If you say the wrong event, simply say, "Correction," and say proper stroke and distance.

9. Starter should stand reasonably close to the end of pool, but where s/he can see all swimmers at once.

10. Watch the whole field, rather than focusing on specific swimmers.

11. **False starts are not recalled**.  A false start is handled like a stroke disqualification and the swimmer is notified at the completion of the race.  See the *No-Recall Starting Protocol* on page 81 of the 2010-11 NFHS Rules Book

12. Each swimmer is responsible for his or her own start so if Swimmer B leaves his mark in reaction to Swimmer A's false start, Swimmer B **must also** be charged with a false start by the starter/referee.

13. If a swimmer leaves his mark in response to "Stand up" command, starter/referee **may** relieve the swimmer of the false start.

14. If you stand a heat up because a swimmer is moving, and that swimmer's movement takes him into the pool, generally that swimmer should be disqualified.

15. If a heat is stood up a second time, usually it is best to ask swimmers to step off blocks, wait a few seconds, then try again.

16. If you make a mistake or some external factor interferes with a fair start, recall the race and do not disqualify anybody.

17. With starter/referee permission, swimmers may do a forward start from within the water (at least one hand in contact with starting platform/end wall).

18. A swimmer who fails to report for the initial start of his heat is disqualified.

19. For forward start, swimmers no longer have to have a foot at front of block <u>prior</u> to "Take your mark" command.

20. Backstroke start no longer requires swimmers to have feet, including toes, completely below water surface.

21. In 500 yard freestyle, starter must count laps and ring bell for lead swimmer at 450 yards; ring bell from flags into wall and back out to flags.  No longer needs to be over the lane of the lead swimmer, but still preferred.  Timers are supposed to count laps too.