

Southwest Wisconsin Conference
Rules Update August 8, 2009

I. Age

- A. The age group will be determined as of June 1 of the current year.
- B. A swimmer may move up to any age group above them in any event.
- C. A swimmer may **NEVER** move down an age group.

II. Competition –

A. Equipment

- 1) All pools shall have in place for swim meets backstroke flags at both ends of the pools. These flags should be approximately 5 yards from each end of the pool. This not only helps with turns, but also warns the swimmer of the upcoming wall so they avoid injuring their heads.
- 2) All pools will have a recall/false start rope set up to help stop swimmers that swim through a false start. This should be located approximately 30 feet from the take off point. This must be able to be quickly released from any false start. It is not fair for the swimmer to swim the entire length of the pool and then need to immediately compete. Switch with the next heat to give these swimmers a rest if necessary.

B. Relays

Three man relays will be allowed at all meets using the following guidelines. Any violation of these rules would cause all relays from that age group and sex to be disqualified.

- 1) At conference and the invitational meet it must be the teams first and only relay.
- 2) No team may maximize the use of their members by making three man relays in order to have more relays.
- 3) If there are nine boys in a group, there can only be two separate four-man relays.
- 4) If there are eleven boys in an age group, two separate four man relays and one three man relay.
- 5) If there are four swimmers, a three-man relay may not be used just to use a better swimmer twice.
- 6) A swimmer in a three-man relay may not swim two consecutive strokes in a row. Backstroke and breaststroke in the medley relay or two consecutive freestyles in the free relay.
- 7) Two man relays are **not allowed**.

C. Scoring

- 1) Scoring for dual meets: Individual events 5-3-1 and relays 7-4-2
- 2) Scoring for triangular meets: Relay events 6-4-3-2-1 and relay 8-6-4-2

3) Scoring for invitational and conference meets.

Individual events: 16-13-12-11-10-9-7-5-4-3-2-1

Relay events: 20-18-16-14-12-10-8-6-5-4-3-2

Only the first two relays of each team will score points in the relay events; however. The remaining relays will receive the proper medal and ribbons for their places. If a team places first, third, and sixth in a relay, they will receive points and awards for first and third, but they will only receive awards for the sixth place finish.

III. Workers

A. Starter

1) The starter will be the start/finish judge and his/her work is final. They will work in tandem with the place caller.

2) For each race, the starter will watch for the first three swimmers to touch. If there is any question, and the times do not correspond, then switch the time around to match the actual placing. If desired, the place caller may note the lane numbers instead with the starter simply confirming this.

3) **If unsure, this is summer recreational swimming; it is better to call a tie than give a first placed based on times. As in part B of this section, times are not always accurate.**

4) The starter will say the following commands.

“Timers Ready” (Timers should lift their watch in the air to signal they are ready.)

“Swimmers Up!” or (Swimmers will step up on the starting platform or the
“Swimmers in the Water!” edge of the pool)

“Take your Marks” (Swimmers shall immediately take up a starting position with at least one foot at the front of the starting platform. When all swimmers are **stationary**, the starter shall give the starting signal with a bullhorn.)

If there is a false start a continuous signal with the bullhorn is necessary to alert the swimmers.

All starters should use a megaphone so all swimmers can easily hear them. If a team does not have a megaphone ask to borrow one from another team and they could bring it along.

B. Timers

At the beginning of each meet, the starter and timers will have several “practice” sessions so that the timers are clear on the usage of their watches and both starters and timers are clear on the starting commands.

All pools shall provide individuals such as **timers or teammates to “catch” a backstroke’s head** at both ends of the pool. These “head catchers” would be instructed to stay out of the timers’ way and retreat from the end of the pool as soon as their swimmer has turned.

There must be at least one back up timer and one place caller other than the official starter.

C. Place Caller

All meets should have a place caller. This is to ensure that times are accurate with places at every meet. It also ensures that each heat has the cards correctly marked with the correct places.

D. Lifeguards

A minimal of two lifeguards will be on duty for warm-ups. One lifeguard will be on duty for the remainder of the meet. Some pools may need to increase these numbers do to their regulations.

E. Stroke Judge

- 1) **All meets must have stroke judges.**
- 2) Stroke and turn judges will be lifeguards or a WSI certified person from the pool. If the home pool cannot provide them, the visiting team may provide them if needed as long as they are given advanced notice to bring a qualified person to the meet.
- 3) Notice of the disqualification will be immediately brought to the swimmer's attention by the stroke judge when they inform the timer that the swimmer is disqualified. **Therefore, a stroke judge should be on either side of the pool.**
- 4) **A brief reason should be written on the card in case a reference is made to the situation later in the meet. Even though they are disqualified please enter a time for this person on their card.**
- 5) Disqualifications

When disqualifications, it must be remembered that this is a Summer Recreational program which allows minimal time for stroke perfection. If you are not sure do not disqualify.

WALKING OR JUMPING FROM THE BOTTOM IN ANY GROUP MAY MAKE NO FORWARD PROGRESS. If a swimmer is having trouble such as swallowed water in any event, they may stop and touch as long as no forward progress is made. Therefore, if the problem passed, they may finish and be placed accordingly. This holds true for all age groups.

8 and Under

These swimmers will only be disqualified for taking steps on the bottom of the pool or swimming the completely wrong stroke (front crawl instead of breast). They will only be disqualified if they placed in the overall event.

These swimmers will be allowed two different and unique infractions before being disqualified (butterfly kick the entire length of breast stroke and a one hand touch would be two infractions). A third infraction would be required for disqualification.

11 and 12

These swimmers will be disqualified for one infraction. Remember it is a summer recreational program and even this age group will be allowed a little leeway.

Other infractions that will lead to disqualifications

a. **Doing the wrong stroke**

Doing the entirely wrong stroke: Such as, the front crawl during the butterfly.
Combination strokes: Such as, butterfly with a whip or frog kick or a continual flutter kick on the butterfly.

b. **Touches, Turns, and Finishes**

Butterfly – Breaststroke – A swimmer must touch the wall with both hands on the wall at the same time, but not necessarily on the same plane for the butterfly and the breaststroke.

Freestyle – Backstroke – In the freestyle or backstroke you must touch with one hand or one foot on a flip turn. A swimmer who turns over on their stomach for a flip turn in the backstroke must complete the flip turn.

If the wall is missed on a turn, the swimmer may go back and touch using any stroke without being disqualified as long as the above rules are followed.

c. **Lane Assignment – Interference**

A swimmer must finish the race in the same lane in which they started. If they cross into another lane and interfere or obstruct another swimmer they will be disqualified. If no interference occurs and they return to their lane they are not disqualified.

d. **Additional Swim Gear**

No swimmer shall be permitted to wear any device that may aid his/her speed, buoyancy, or endurance such as webbed gloves, flippers, fins, etc. during a competition.

e. **Exhibition Contestants**

Exhibition contestants such as swimmers aided in their swimming by an adult cannot score, but their time will be recorded.

f. **Relay Events**

In relay events, the team of a swimmer whose feet lose touch with the starting platform before the receding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified, unless the swimmer is in default returns to the original starting point at the wall. It shall not be necessary to return to the starting platform.

IV. Strokes

A. Starts and Finishes.

- 1) A swimmer is allowed two false starts and will then be disqualified upon the third.
- 2) The start in freestyle, breaststroke, butterfly, and individual medley races shall be with a dive.
- 3) During the individual medley coming out of the backstroke and into the breaststroke is considered a turn and not a finish. A swimmer will not be disqualified for using a flip turn coming out of the backstroke during the IM.
- 4) Starts and Finishes will be judged by the following guidelines:

Freestyle: The swimmer may do the dolphin or flutter kick during the glide phase on the entry or turn. The swimmer must come to the surface by the time they have reached the midpoint of the pool. No pull will be allowed until the swimmer surfaces and begins the stroke.

Backstroke: Swimmers may do a dolphin kick or flutter kick during the glide phase of the entry or turn until they surface, then they begin the flutter kick. No pull will be allowed until the swimmer surfaces and begins to do the stroke.

The backstroke races start in the water. Prior to the starting signal, swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands holding the starting grips. The feet, including the toes, shall be under the surface of the water. Standing in or on the gutter or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter is prohibited.

For a back flip, swimmers will pivot on their right or left arm stroke, they may then only take one stroke with the opposite arm but kick as much as necessary until they do their flip turn. Coming out of the flip turn, they may momentarily be on their stomachs but then must be on their side or back before surfacing and beginning to backstroke. They may do a dolphin or flutter kick before returning to the stroke.

If the swimmer turns over for a flip turn, they must complete the turn. They may not go to the back again to touch the wall.

Butterfly: Swimmers may do a dolphin kick during the glide phase of the entry or turn for a distance no greater than half the length of the pool, but may not pull until they surface.

From the beginning for the first arm strike after the start and each turn, the body shall be kept on the breast. Underwater kicking on the side is allowed. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time.

Both arms shall be brought forward together over the water and brought backward simultaneously throughout the race.

All up and down movements of the legs must be simultaneous. The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other.

A breaststroke kicking movement is not permitted.

At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made simultaneously but not necessarily on the same plane, at above or below the water surface.

At the start and at turns, a swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks and one arm pull under water, which must bring him or her to the surface.

It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than one-half the distance of the pool after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface; the swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish.

Breaststroke: From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and after each turn, the body shall be kept on the breast. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time.

All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating, except at the wall touch. Here they must be simultaneous, but not necessarily in the same plane.

The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under or over the water. The elbows shall be under water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish. The hands shall be brought back on or under the surface of the water. The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn.

All movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and a scissors kick will be allowed for our conference with attempts by all to work with swimmers to master the correct kick.

The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward dolphin kick.

At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously but not necessarily on the same plane at, above or below the water level. The head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch.

During each complete cycle of one arm stroke and one leg kick, in that order, some part of the swimmer's head shall break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.

Freestyle: The freestyle designation means that the swimmer may do any stroke they desire, but must do that strike for the event's entire distance.

Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall at the completion of each length and at the finish.

Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and start of not more than one-half the length of the pool. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water.

Walking or jumping from the bottom by any age group may make no forward progress!

If a swimmer is having trouble (for example swallows water) in any event, they may stop and touch as long as no forward progress is made.

If the problem passes, they may finish and be placed accordingly. This holds true for all ages.

V. Meets

- A. Two lifeguards will be on duty for warm-ups. One lifeguard will be on duty for the remainder of the meet.
- B. All pools shall have in place for swim meets backstroke flags at both ends of the pool. These flags should be approximately 5 yards from each end of the pool. This not only helps with turns but also warns the swimmer of the upcoming wall so they can avoid injuring their heads.
- C. All pools will have a recall (false start) rope set up to help stop swimmers that swim through a false start. This should be located approximately 30 feet from the take off point. This must be quickly released for any false start. It is not fair for the swimmer to swim the entire length of the pool and then need to immediately compete in that same race.
- D. Must call and cancel meets by 1:00pm the day of the meet.

VI. Conference and Invitational

- A. Each visiting team is responsible for providing three timers and three stopwatches for the entire length of the meet. If the host team needs more they may request more. It is easiest to divide workers into shifts.
- B. Each visiting team is responsible for providing one ribbon writer for the entire length of the meet. It is easiest to divide workers into shifts.
- C. Each team will pre-register their swimmers for the conference meet my using A, B, and C coding to set up the meet.

- The codes will be as follows: A – Reserved for the top swimmer in each event from your team.
B – Reserved for the second best swimmer on your team.
C – Reserved for the rest of the swimmers.
- D. Teams will provide medals for first, second, and third places in every event including relays. Ribbons will be provided for fourth through twelfth place.
- E. Coaches who do not reach 19 years of age by June 1st of the current year are eligible to compete for their team.
- F. Each team in the conference is responsible for having at least one representative attend the conference meetings held in the spring and fall. These meetings are typically held in August and May.