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TO: CIF Section Commissioners
Swimming/Diving Coaches, Officials, and Administrators
FROM: Doug Glaeser, CIF State Rules' Interpreter

In addition to the notes below, please also consult the Points of Emphasis section (pp. 46-47 of the 2002-03 NFHS Swimming/Diving Rules Book) and the two-page NFHS Swimming/Diving Rules Interpretations sheet for 2002-03. The latter document includes correction of typographical errors in the Rules Book.

WATER DEPTH-STARTING BLOCK HEIGHT RULE

The modification of Rule 2-7-2 which occurred in December 2001 has been included in the 2002-03 NFHS book at page 10. Please note that starting blocks are permitted ONLY if water depth is 4 feet or greater in the starting end. Otherwise, swimmers start from the deck or in the water, depending upon actual water depth at the starting end.

PLEASE NOTE: To date, no further changes in the water depth requirement have been made by any swimming governing body, there is continued discussion at all levels about increasing the minimum water depth under all starting blocks. Some states now require greater depth as a matter of state law. If schools in your Section are planning to renovate existing pools or construct new ones, they should carefully consider the possibility that additional depth may be required in the future.

RULES CHANGES FOR 2002-2003

1. Rules 2-3-1 and 2-4-2 Facilities

These changes address athlete safety concerns. They also permit use of a larger number of pools for high school competition.

2. Rules 2-7-6 PEN 5 and 3-4-1 Optional Use of Lap Counting System

The host team will be penalized only if there are insufficient lap counting systems for the visiting team competitors. There is no penalty for failure to provide devices to host team members. (This change is erroneously listed as 2-7-5 in the front of the NFHS rules book.)

It is especially critical that officials are aware of their responsibilities for the 500 freestyle event. The meet referee (or designee – see Rule 4-8-2) must employ a process to assure that each swimmer completes the required distance for this event. Reliance on inattentive (student) lane timers may not be wise, so it is strongly recommended that each official develop a method to track accurately each swimmer's progress, to assure that all swimmers in each heat have completed the required distance.

Rule 3-4-1 PEN 1 "Aiding the swimmer" refers to physical assistance only. Providing interval times or verbal encouragement is NOT a violation.

3. Rule 3-2-2 Relay Entry Card

In order to assist meet management in tracking participation by individual swimmers and to assure accurate verification of leadoff splits in relay events, it is now required that entry cards contain the actual order of the swimmers who participate in that event. While this rule applies primarily to championship meets, it should be followed in all competition (dual meets, invitationals, etc.)

4. Rules 6-3-1 and 6-3-2 Timing Systems

Although not listed or highlighted, these two articles are both new. Rule 6-3-3 should not be highlighted; it is identical to last year's 6-3-2. These two new articles provide clear definitions and procedures for the balance of this significantly-changed Rule concerning timing/judging procedures.

5. Rule 6-3-3&4 Integration of Back-up Timing/Judging

The methodology of these changes is fairly simple and clear. Please note that there must always be a manual backup (stop watch) operating. In some meets, the manual system is all that is used, but regardless of what is used, the manual device must be present on all lanes. **PLEASE NOTE:** The Table on p. 27 is correct, but the paragraph of explanation immediately following the Table is incorrect. In that paragraph, the total differential should be 29.49 and the adjustment for each lane should be 4.915, with the thousandths dropped so that the adjusting factor is 4.91 seconds.

6. Rule 6-5-1 Backup Timing/Judging Procedures

This article is not listed or highlighted but is also a new rule. It describes a system of ballot computation of finishes which can be used as a backup system to automatic timing/judging equipment and as the sole system for determining finishes when automatic equipment is not available.

7. Rule 8-1-1 Forward Start Clarification

When executing a forward start, swimmers may assume any position on the blocks prior to the starter's command; they need not have one foot or both feet at the front edge of the blocks prior to the command. Please note that this rule assumes that, before the starting command is given, each swimmer will have both feet on the top surface of the block.

8. Rules 8-1-2 and 8-2-1-c Backstroke Start

Safety considerations have made it necessary to eliminate the practice of backstroke swimmers standing in the pool gutter for their starts. This change also brings the NFHS rules into conformity with other rule codes. Both feet are to be completely under the water (even if the water level is low) prior to the start. Please note that, in both the Situations on p. 65 and the interpretations in the accompanying NFHS Swimming/Diving Interpretations for 2002-03, the expectation is that the starter will make every effort to avoid charging swimmers with false starts by taking steps to correct any misplaced feet/toes.

Once the starting signal has been given, swimmers' feet/toes may slide up the starting wall and be above the water surface, provided the swimmer does not curl the toes over the gutter or stand in the gutter before leaving the starting end. Probably the only time this would occur would be when the vertical surface of the end wall extends above the water level (perhaps due to lower-than-normal water depth)..

9. Rule 8-3-5 Forward Starts from the Deck in Relays

Since there is increased likelihood of swimmers starting from the deck, due to the changes in Rule 2-7-2, this change clarifies the foot position requirement for all relay starts

10. Rule 8-3-6 Finishes by Relay Swimmers

The requirement for touching the end of the pool at the completion of each relay leg has been clarified. The only member of the relay team who must touch the pad is the fourth swimmer; the first three swimmers legally complete their legs of the relay by touching any part of the end (finish) wall.

11. Rule 9-2-1 Practice Dives Prior to Competition

Every diver must be permitted at least one warm-up dive immediately prior to the event.

12. Rule 9-4 Designating Dive Position by Letter

A letter code for each dive position has been adopted for high school diving events.

13. Rule 9-7-4-d Unsatisfactory Dive

Previously, the failure to come out of the tuck position ("cannonball") resulted in a maximum score of 2 from each judge (unsatisfactory dive). The same penalty now applies for failure to come out of the pike position.

14. Rule 9-7-5 Additional Causes of Failed Dives

Paragraph (k) is a new rule which makes failure to list the official description of the dive (that is, the dive number and position – see Rule 9-3-4) on the diving score sheet an additional circumstance resulting in a failed dive. Paragraph (e) has been revised to delete Dives 5211 and 5311, which can no longer be performed in the pike position.

15. Rule 9-8-2-b Lifting the Feet on Back/Inward Takeoffs

Lifting of one or both feet from the board prior to the back/inward takeoff results in a deduction (1/2 to 2 points) by each judge. Note that only one of the feet need be lifted to invoke this penalty.

MATTERS FOR GENERAL REVIEW

1. “By State Association adoption...”

A variety of issues in high school swimming and diving are left to the discretion of the State Association for determination in conformity with local demands and situations. In California, these determinations are made by the Section Commissioners’ offices. The rules where such local determination is possible include Rules 3-1-2(d), 3-2-2-NOTE, 5-1-1-NOTE, 5-1-3, 9-4-1 NOTE, and 9-4-6-NOTE.

Under CIF State By-Laws, Art. 5, (500-D), exhibition competition is permitted. There are a number of CIF and NFHS limitations on such participation, including (a) the swimmer/diver may not earn points towards the team score; (b) s/he may not exceed the maximum allowable number of events in Rule 3-2-1a; (c) s/he may not compete in regular competition on the same day; and (d) this participation must be properly supervised, including written permission from the principals of the schools involved. For more detailed information, please seek advise/direction from your CIF Section office and refer to State CIF Rule 500.

2. Rule 9-1 Diving Competition

Diving is one of the events of the swimming/diving program in high school competition. Unfortunately, too many schools have, either consciously or by default, “eliminated” diving as part of their competitive aquatics program. However, under NFHS rules, there is really only one justification for this decision, and that is inadequate water depth (see pp. 35-36). Otherwise, schools should be conducting diving as part of their competitive program. Penalties 2-3 (p. 36) state the consequences of failure to do so.

There are, of course, legitimate situations where diving cannot be conducted because of equipment failure. Those situations are also discussed on p. 36. The usual consequence of equipment failure is that the visiting teams are awarded points without having to dive, while the host team receives no points

3. Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Proper sportsmanlike conduct, including the prohibition on “taunting” is an important aspect of the preservation of a proper competitive atmosphere. Athletes, coaches, officials and administrators should be attentive to inappropriate situations and enforce fully the rule provisions that are designed to maintain proper participant conduct. See especially Rule 3-5-1 and accompanying Situations (p. 59). Rigorous enforcement of good sportsmanship is a critical part of officials’/administrators’ responsibilities in the CIF.

4. Rules 1-3-13 & 14 and 3-2-2 Scratches/Declared False Starts

A scratch means total withdrawal from the meet. A swimmer or diver who is scratched will not participate further in any aspect of that meet; one who scratches at any point during the prelims of a championship meet cannot compete in any events in the finals. A declared false start allows a swimmer to withdraw from a specific event with no additional penalty imposed; however, the swimmer is charged as if s/he had actually competed in that event and the event becomes part of the event limitations in Rule 3-2-1.

5. Rule 3-3-1 Competitive Attire

The rule regarding competitive attire applies only to suits and caps, not goggles. The measurements of manufacturer’s trademark or American flag are to be made with the suit or cap in the “normal” state, *i.e.*, without being stretched. Only one logo is permitted on each piece of competitive attire (maximum of 2.25 square inches; no more than 2.25 inches in any dimension). The flag display is limited to a single 2”x3” American flag. A commemorative/memorial patch is limited to 4 square inches if approved by the CIF Section Commissioner. (The individual swimmer’s name/number and school information, such as mascot, logo or name, is not limited as to size or quantity.)

The “full body” suit is permitted by NFHS rules and may be worn in CIF competition. Note that, despite their full-body coverage, only one manufacturer’s logo of 2.25 square inches is permitted.

6. Rule 3-3-4 Jewelry

If an elastic band or other device is worn in the hair, and is functioning to restrain the hair, it is legal. If it is removed from the hair and worn around the wrist, it becomes illegal, as it is no longer performing its intended function. Jewelry is still illegal, with the exceptions noted in the body of the rule.

7. Rule 4-2-2-e Referee Duties

The referee is responsible for enforcement of the entry limitation rules (see Rule 3-2). Under the section concerning meet management software (Rule 4-10-1-e), much of this duty can be assigned to the person who fills that software operator's position.

8. Rule 6-2-2 Official Time

The averaging procedure only applies to manual or semi-automatic timing systems when only two watches or buttons function. Under this rule, if such averaging results in a time including thousandths of a second, the thousandths figure is dropped. *Example:* Two watches record times of 24.61 seconds and 24.68 seconds. The official time is 24.64 seconds.

9. Underwater Swimming/15-Meter Limitation

In backstroke, butterfly and freestyle, the head of the swimmer must break the surface of the water within 15 meters of the start and each turn. (See Rule 8-2-1-e, 8-2-3-f and 8-2-4-d). If any part of the head has broken the surface by that point, the swimmer is in compliance, even if a portion of the head has already passed the 15-meter mark. Once that requirement has been met, the swimmer may re-submerge and continue swimming underwater.

10. Rule 2-7-4 Recall Device

The recall rope, if used, may be located at any point 42 feet or further from the starting end. A recall rope is not required; a recall device is an acceptable alternative. Such a device could include the same device used by the starter to start the races; for example, repetitive sounding of the beeper, or firing of an additional shot if a pistol is used. A SAFETY WARNING: If a recall rope is used, please be sure that operators are properly instructed about the safe use of the rope. Serious injuries can result to swimmers if the rope is quickly tightened while swimmers are near it.

11. Rule 9-4 Voluntary Dives

In non-championship meets (9-4-6), the voluntary dive is to be selected from the group for that week of competition and performed first. The d.d. for that dive shall be its actual d.d., up to a maximum of 1.8. *Example:* In the first week of competition, a diver selects 101B as the voluntary dive; the d.d. is 1.3 for that dive. If the diver chooses 104B, the d.d. will be 1.8, even though a higher d.d. is listed.

In championship meets (9-4-1): Five voluntary dives are performed. The total of the five degrees of difficulty of these dives may not exceed 9.0. The dive number and d.d. of each voluntary dive are to be circled on the entry/score sheet (Rule 9-3-4). In the event that a diver submits a list of voluntary dives that exceeds the 9.0 total d.d., and the error is not discovered and corrected until the event is underway, the dive that puts the diver over the 9.0 total (most likely the final voluntary dive on the list) will be declared failed. This penalty is specified as part of the rule (Rule 9-4-1 Penalty 1, p. 39).

12. Rule 9-4-1 Penalty 2 and Rule 9-8-3 Disqualification of Divers

In championship meets, divers can be disqualified for three violations – see Rule 9-4-1 Penalty 2, pp. 39-40. These violations should be detected at the pre-event review of the entry sheets. Disqualification for these errors should be imposed with utmost caution, given the expectation that pre-event review will be carefully conducted. These three violations are in addition to those listed on p. 44.

13. Warm-Up Procedures

As a matter of safety, the Guidelines For Meet Warm Up (see pp. 24-25) should be implemented for ALL meets – small dual meets as well as large invitational or championship meets. Even though meet officials arrive during or even after warm-up periods, they should be attentive to whether meet hosts are implementing these very important safety guidelines. Avoiding the all-too-frequent injuries that occur during warm-up should be a priority for coaches and school/meet administrators.

Revised 01-13-03

N.F.H.S. Swimming/Diving Rule Interpretations 2002-2003

Corrections -

p. 27: The calculations in the first paragraph beneath the Table should be changed to the numbers found in the Table. Total difference should be 29.49; heat adjustment should be 4.91 (29.49 divided by 6; drop the thousandths).

p. 38: The last dive listed in the "Twist Dives" category should be deleted. Dive #5351 is properly listed in its correct place on the chart, with correct DDs of 2.7 and 2.9.

Situation: A diver performs an unsatisfactory dive. The referee instructs judges to award no more than two points, but no less than $\frac{1}{2}$ point. **Ruling:** incorrect procedure. **Comment:** Although it is customary for the diving judge to instruct a maximum number of points to be awarded, it is not customary for them to instruct the minimum amount to be awarded. (9-6-1)

Situation: A new community recreation center has been built. The markings in the center lane of the pool are: (a) a continuous line 10" wide with the last 10" forming a 36" broad "T"; (b) lines ending 80" from the end walls; (c) a line indicating the center of each lane on the end wall by a 10" line extending vertically 3'6" below the waters surface. **Ruling:** (a) (b) and (c) legal. **Comment:** Pools that have Olympic markings may also serve the needs of high school students provided measurements are legal. (2-4-2)

Situation: Several schools are invited to participate in a swim meet at a pool that is undergoing renovations. Upon arriving at the pool, one of the teams notices the lack of: (a) starting platforms; (b) lap counters; (c) markings in the pool. **Ruling:** (a) and (b) legal; (c) illegal. **Comment:** The use of starting platforms is optional; the use of lap counters is optional, although, the home team may not score if visitors do not have lap counters. Pools are required to have markings. (2-4)

Situation: Swimmer A does not want to use a lap-counting system, but wants a teammate to be in the position of the lap counter, verbally counting laps aloud during the event. (a) swimmer A is disqualified; (b) lap counter is disqualified; (c) official asks that all students, not using the lap-counting equipment, return to the spectator's section during the competition. **Ruling:** (a) and (b) incorrect procedure; (c) legal. **Comment:** The position at the end of the pool is not for cheering, but for the specific function of utilizing a lap-counting system. (3-4-1)

Situation: School A invites another school to participate in a dual meet. The host school has five sturdy starting platforms and a sixth that is old and rickety. The host school decides to put the swimmer with the best qualifying time in the lane with the old rickety platform. **Ruling:** illegal procedure. **Comment:** When starting platforms are used, they shall be securely attached to the end walls. Either all six lanes have acceptable platforms that are securely attached, or no platforms are used. (2-7-2)

Situation: After the starting command, a backstroke swimmer has his/her toes curled over the lip of the gutter. The swimmer is disqualified. **Ruling:** incorrect procedure. **Comment:** While it is the responsibility of the coach to have the swimmers familiar with the parameters of a legal start, the starter should remind swimmers of the legal starting position, even if it means repeating the starting sequence. (8.1.2)

Situation: A swimmer misses the wall during the turn of the 500 freestyle. Upon realizing that the wall was missed, the swimmer sculls back to the wall, touches the wall and continues the swim. **Ruling:** legal. **Comment:** There is not a specific body position in freestyle. Since the turn requires some part of the swimmers body contact the end wall, the swimmer can scull back and touch the wall if missed on the turn. This does not eliminate the need for a legal start, legal turn and touch pad finish. (8-2-4)

Situation: In a championship meet, after the 50 freestyle and prior to the diving event, (a) the diving referee does not allow practice approach dives due to time constraints; (b) divers are allowed to warm up through 50 freestyle and up to diver introductions, but are not allowed an additional practice approach after introductions. **Ruling:** (a) incorrect procedure; (b) correct procedure. **Comment:** The diver should be allowed a warm-up dive or approach after a long break, regardless of time constraints. (9-2-1)

Situation: In the individual medley relay, as a backstroker approaches the wall, the swimmer rotates to their stomach and executes a flip-turn. An official sees the turn and disqualifies the swimmer for the position of the body during the finish of the leg. **Ruling:** incorrect procedure. **Comment:** The backstroke is a turn rather than a finish during the individual medley. Swimmers shall not be disqualified for using flip turns coming out of the backstroke during the individual medley. (8-2-5, 8-2-1f)

Situation: A swimmer walks on the pool bottom after mistakenly thinking the race has concluded. The swimmer did not do so for the purpose of gaining an advantage. The swimmer should: (a) be disqualified for stopping; (b) have a second subtracted from their time but be allowed to finish the race; (c) be ignored because in the judgment of the referee, the mistake was not done for the purpose of gaining an advantage; (d) be scratched from any remaining events. **Ruling:** (a), (b) and (d) are incorrect; (c) correct procedure. **Comment:** If in the judgment of the referee, the error was not to gain an advantage, the student would receive no penalty. (3-5 Pen 5d)

Situation: The primary timing system completely fails during the preliminaries of the breaststroke event. The referee: (a) asked the for the use of back-up system; (b) scores and records places without an official time (c) uses estimated times provided by people in the stands who may have had watches running; (d) schedules a re-swim after the last event. **Ruling:** (b) and (c) incorrect procedure; (a) and (d) correct procedure. **Comment:** The referee must determine the best way to rectify a failed system. Since conditions of the event cannot be duplicated, an event should only be re-swum as a last resort. If places can be determined but qualifying times are needed to advance to the next level of competition, and back-up times are not available, the referee could authorize the event be re-swum. (6-4-1)