

High School Officiating

Points of Emphasis for 2011-2012

1. Only in water starts for pools less than 4 feet.
2. Uniform is one suit, and cap (s) yes more than one cap may be worn.
3. Make sure there is a pre-meet conference with coaches and team captains to ensure good communication.

Also in the NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Interpreters Meeting these points were clarified:

1. Nickname on cap must be some form of swimmers given name. Example "Liz" for Elizabeth
2. Swimmers are not to wear suits that replicate any country's flag.
3. When a swimsuit is made with the sublimation process, where colors, designs, prints, ect. are dyed into the fabric to be used for suits in a pre-construction phase, and the textile material remains 100% permeable, there is no restriction on size of team mascot or name.

But when mascot or team name is applied post construction, with impermeable material, it may only be on the suit once and not exceed the 9 square inch rule. Example the word Bobcat on the front of a female suit does not exceed the 9 square inch rule but there is a bobcat paw print on the backside of the suit. They have ruled this two team names and or logo on the suit and is illegal.

4. Rash guards are permitted if they are air and water permeable, any other special need should go through the State Association. If granted must be accompanied by a letter of authorization from the Sate Association and presented to the Referee at each meet participating in.

Reminder on Concussions

With swimming being a non-contact sport, the incidence of concussions are rare in comparison to contact sports. Striking the head at the end of the pool, colliding with another swimmer during a warm-up, slipping on the deck, in the shower, or locker room area could have a potential for causing a concussion. Rule 3-2-7 outlines the actions to be taken by the meet official for the swimmer to receive medical attention. www.nfhs.org has more information.

New For 2012 – 2013

In response to the growing numbers of individuals interested in insurance benefits and a set pay scale for working high school swim meets, we are in the process of forming an Association of High School Swim Officials so these issues can be addressed. By forming an Association of High School Swim Officials we can work with the UHSAA regarding reimbursement and also register under the umbrella of the National Federation for insurance purposes along with many other benefits that come with an established professional association. This changes the process of certifying we have become accustomed to. For the 2012-13 Season everyone who wishes to certify as a High School Swim Official will follow this process. Log onto

www.UHSAA.arbitersports.com, click on the registration button on the top bar, and follow the instructions. The fee is \$40.00 and includes insurance that covers you to and from and while you are at a meet, background check, book, and membership with UHSAA with access to member's only benefits on their site. A book will be mailed out to you, when you receive your book you may log back onto the site and take the Part I test which is a 50-question test. You can log on and off as many times as you need to complete the test. Once submitted you will get a score but will not be able to see which ones you missed until after the closing deadline. You must pass with an 80%. You may take the test twice for free, a 3rd time will cost \$15.00; remember it is an open book test. Registration will begin Aug. 15th and end Oct. 20th (this may be extended because of the change in start date for swimming next year). Then you must attend one of the official clinics that will be offered around the state. Cost will be \$10.00; this joins you as a member of the Utah High School Officials Association. You may register this year if you want the benefits, next year it will be the way we will certify everyone. The Association was formed so the National Federation would recognize us as a body of certified swim officials and let us come under their umbrella. This will be a new process for us all and we will have to have patience, but it will be a good step in the right direction. This is the process other sports follow, and being under the Federation Umbrella is a plus for us all. The background check also insures safety for us and our swimmers. Next year our Association is requesting the UHSAA to approve a fee schedule for certified swim officials. If passed you will have an opportunity to recoup your fees.

Key points to remember for each stroke

Breaststroke

Start: Forward start must be used

Stroke: Body kept on breast

Stroke cycle is one arm pull and one leg kick in that order

Simultaneous arm movement in the same horizontal plane

Head must break surface at widest part of the second arm pull

Recovery by the hands from the breast-on, under, or over the water

Elbows under the plane of the water except for the last stroke before turn or finish

Kick: Simultaneous vertical and horizontal movements of the legs

Feet turned out during propulsive part of the kick

No alternating, scissors or downward butterfly kick except for the single butterfly kick

That is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull after the start and each

Turn that must be followed by a breaststroke kick

Turns: Simultaneous 2 hand touch at, above, or below the water surface.

Finish: Head may be submerged at turn or finish provided it breaks the surface during last

Complete or incomplete stroke cycle prior to touch.

Butterfly

Start: Forward start must be used

Stroke: Body kept on breast

Multiple kicks are permitted but first arm pull must bring swimmer to the surface

May be submerged after start and each turn for not more than 15 meters where the

Head must break surface. Arms brought forward over water and pulled back

Simultaneous

Kick: Simultaneous up and down movement

No alternating, scissors, or breaststroke kicking movements

Turns/finish: Shoulders at or past vertical toward the breast when the feet leave the wall,

Simultaneous 2 hand touch at, above or below the water surface

Backstroke

Start: In water facing the end wall with both hands on the gutter or starting grips

Feet/toes may be above the water but may not be in, on or above lip

Or bent over the gutter at any time before or after the start

Stroke: Any style as long as the swimmer remains on the back

Swimmer must break the surface throughout the race except the swimmer may be

Submerged after the start and each turn for not more than 15 meters when the head

Must break the surface of the water

Turns: After the backstroke flag the swimmer may go past vertical to the breast and may utilize a single or double arm pull to initiate the turn, kicking and gliding into the turn are

permitted, the swimmer may complete their touch while on the stomach or do a flip turn.

When the feet leave the wall the swimmer must be past vertical towards the back, if the

swimmer does not touch the wall during their turning action it is not permissible to

return to the wall for the touch. Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall for

completion of each length.

Finish: May be completely submerged at the finish, some part of the swimmer must touch the end wall/touch pad

Freestyle

Start: Forward start must be used

Stroke/Kick Any style may be used

The swimmer must break the surface of the water at the 15 meter mark after the start and each turn

Turns/finish: Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall, if the swimmer misses the wall they are permitted to return to the wall for the touch

Individual Medley

Start: Forward start

Stroke: Rules for each stroke apply.

Turns/Finish: Intermediate turns conform to turn rules for the stroke, transition turns conform to the finish rules for the stroke.

Common jurisdictions

Turn judge with no stroke judge/ 50% of the pool. Turn judge with stroke judges – freestyle, jurisdiction on all turns and inside the backstroke flags. Backstroke – jurisdiction inside the backstroke flags and complete turn, finish touch. Breaststroke – from start through initial pull down to heads up, turns touch and turn to heads up, finish touch Butterfly – from start to heads up, turns touch and turn to heads up, finish touch.

Stroke Judge when used has jurisdiction wall to wall start to finish with the exception of the breaststroke and butterfly where the turn judge has jurisdiction of the start to heads up and all touches, stroke judge has jurisdiction after heads up and feet during touch. Stroke judge will also have jurisdiction of the 15 meter mark. The stroke judge needs to walk the deck following behind the slowest swimmer in their jurisdiction except for backstroke and freestyle where the stroke judge is positioned on the 15 meter marks (furthest marker out for benefit of the doubt) except for the individual medley when the referee may instruct the stroke judge to walk the deck for all four strokes.

The referee has full control over jurisdiction and can make assignments according to manpower and pool configuration

Basic Concepts

Well run meets are the direct result of well trained, competent officials that have a good working knowledge of the rules they are applying and are fair and consistent with the application of those rules.

Swimmers train hard so please remember the golden rule of swimming:

“The swimmer always gets the benefit of the doubt”

Don't be lenient with the rules with one swimmer when all the other swimmers have followed the rules, the “benefit of the doubt” can be applied to liberally and can be used as an unfair tool.

The rules of swimming define the acceptable form for each stroke. Many variations of form are possible and may still comply to the letter of the rule, remember that something that looks unusual is not always illegal. Decisions regarding the form of strokes & turns must, therefore, be subject to flexible judgment and common sense.

Take officiating seriously and work hard at it. Competitors have a right to expect officials to know the rules and interpret them correctly, fairly and courteously. Call violations as seen, don't guess or anticipate. When you see an infraction raise your hand over head, open palm. The disqualification can only be made by the official whose jurisdiction the infraction has been committed. Be fair and consistent, disregard team affiliation and always exercise good judgment.

Don't ever think that you have learned everything possible, every swimming official is always learning because the sport is always evolving.

Above all be professional and fair, make decisions quickly and decisively and if you can't be fair and unbiased find some other place to volunteer to help the team. Be approachable, if a swimmer has a question. **DO NOT CHEER** for your team or your swimmer when you are on deck.

Referee

Because high school swim meets are run with a minimum of officials you may be asked to “wear two hats”, you may have to be the referee as well as the stroke & turn official at one end of the pool or the starter. As the Referee it is your job to ensure the integrity of the competition as well as give instruction to the deck officials and to set the jurisdiction of the venue.

The Referee has full authority over all officials, they assign and instruct them before each session and they also need to enforce all applicable rules and decide all questions relating to the conduct of the meet. The Referee can also overrule any call made by a stroke & turn judge but only if you have personally observed the infraction and can say with absolute certainty that the stroke & turn official did not make a correct rule interpretation. The Referee can also disqualify any swimmer in any jurisdiction as long as they personally observe the rule infraction, the Referee also must make sure that each disqualification is accompanied by an upraised hand as a signal of a rule infraction, if there is no hand raised there is no disqualification, except during relay take offs where dual confirmation must be used and there is no raised hand to indicate a possible disqualification. The Referee signals the starter that all officials are in position and that the course is clear. The Referee is the only person on a deck that wears a whistle, the whistle commands come from the Referee, several short whistles to tell competitors to report to the block and ready themselves to step up, one long whistle tells the competitors to step up, or in the pool. In backstroke a second long whistle instructs the swimmers to set their feet, after the competitors have stepped onto the block the Referee then extends their hand to the starter and turns the race over to the starter. The Referee is also responsible for any timing malfunctions and is charged with the responsibility to make sure that all applicable rules are followed in figuring out times in heats with malfunctions. In addition any false start requires dual confirmation with the starter, the Referee and the starter are the only two people that can make that dual confirmation decision.

Starter

The starter has the responsibility to ensure that all swimmers receive a fair and equitable start. It is important that each competitor be given the opportunity to achieve the best start possible within the confines of the rules. The starter must know the rules governing starting procedures.

The starter should review the rules and events and establish protocol with the meet Referee, they need to decide ahead of time where each will stand on the deck. The starter needs to be positioned within 10 feet of the starting end of the pool and be free from obstruction that might block or restrict the view of the athletes on the blocks. The starter must be familiar with the type of equipment they are to use, make sure that everything works before you start your first race.

Starting procedure

At the commencement of each heat, the Referee shall signal to the swimmers by a short series of whistles to remove their warm-ups, put on their goggles etc. One long whistle indicates that they should take and maintain their position on the starting platform. The swimmers can take any position that they want, when the swimmers and officials are ready, the Referee shall signal with an extended hand to the Starter that they are under the Starter’s control. On the Starter’s command “take your mark”, the swimmers shall immediately assume their starting position, in the forward start at least one foot must be at the front of the block, and in the backstroke toes must not be above or curled over the gutter. When all swimmers are stationary the Starter shall give the starting signal. When a swimmer does not respond promptly to the command “take your mark”, the Starter shall release all swimmers with the command “Stand Up” upon which the swimmers may stand up or step off the blocks.

Any swimmer gaining an unfair advantage at the start shall be disqualified. We are now allowed to do the “no recall” false start, simply stated this means that when the starter and the Referee both independently agree that a swimmer has obtained an unfair advantage at the start the race shall be allowed to proceed and the swimmer will be notified of the disqualification at the end of the race, should the starter inadvertently recall the heat the swimmer can still be disqualified, however because the first start is the best start for all athletes the use of the recall button should not be used unless the starter feels that there was something in that start that was incorrect and they feel that it was their fault, at that point the starter should recall the heat to give everyone a

fair chance of a good start. Starters can stand a heat up if they notice that someone is having a hard time finding their mark in a timely manner, but patience is the key here, you need to know how long is too long to wait for that swimmer before standing the heat up, the stand up command can make the swimmers jittery, if you stand up too many heats the swimmers will not relax and wait for the starting signal, they will instead be wondering if you will stand the heat up or allow it to go so use the stand up command as little as possible. Also be aware that every swimmer has the right to find their mark, if you have a novice swimmer that steps up on the block and at the command “take your mark” immediately falls into the pool that swimmer should be allowed back into the heat, every swimmer has the right to find their mark. The simplest way to decide on a false start is to imagine a glass wall in front of the swimmers, if they leave early that glass will be broken, it is a very easy thing to see, if you have a swimmer that finds their mark and then jerks forward and into the pool before the starting signal is given that swimmer should be disqualified for a false start and the rest of the heat released while you deal with that disqualification.

Starters are charged with a great amount of responsibility in seeing that one swimmer does not gain an advantage over the others during the start. This responsibility requires concentration, quick reactions and fair decisions. It takes practice to become a good starter, and some people will never be good starters. With experience, the starter will be able to accurately judge when the field is ready to race, please don't be a rocket starter because you are afraid to let the swimmers set. Remember patience, patience, patience. Starters can cause the swimmers to be jumpy because they don't know what you are going to do. Starters should speak in a conversational tone, avoid rapid instruction and sharp commands. The voice of a good starter will lead the swimmers into the starting positions and not break their concentration with unexpected orders or remarks. The starter must protect all of the competitors by not allowing any one swimmer to obtain an unfair advantage. Remember as the starter you are generally the person on the deck with the spotlight shining directly on you, the spectators notice your actions more than any other official on the deck so if you make a mistake it is generally seen by everyone in the venue, you must be confident and knowledgeable to be able to perform well and work in this position.

Relay Take Off

Relay take off forms can be found on the www.swimutah.com webpage under the forms, 500 counting sheets are also available on this page. When you are watching relay take offs look at the toes of the swimmer on the block, when those toes no longer have contact with the blocks look down for the hand of the incoming swimmer, if there is no hand it is an early take off, make an X on the number that corresponds to the swimmer on the relay take off form, if the take off was good then circle the corresponding number, do not put the X and the O next to the numbers, you need to put it directly on the number that corresponds to the swimmers order in the relay.

Below you will find an example of what the relay take off slips look like, please fill these slips out correctly because if there is a possible disqualification but the slip is not filled out correctly the disqualification could be overturned.

Correctly filled out

High School Relay Take Off

Event # _____ **Heat #** _____

(Circle one; SIDE LANE)

Swimmer Number

Lane 1 2 3 4

Lane 2 2 3 4

Lane 3 2 3 4

Lane 4 2 3 4

Lane 5 2 3 4

Lane 6 2 3 4

Lane 7 2 3 4

Lane 8 2 3 4

Signature_____

Incorrectly filled out

High School Relay Take Off

Event # _____ **Heat #** _____

(Circle one; SIDE LANE)

Swimmer Number

Lane 1 2 3 4

Lane 2 2 3 4

Lane 3 2 3 4

Lane 4 2 3 4

Lane 5 2 3 4

Lane 6 2 3 4

Lane 7 2 3 4

Lane 8 2 3 4

Signature_____