



MEMORANDUM

December 6, 2018

VIA EMAIL

TO: NCAA Swimming and Diving Conference Commissioners, Head Coaches and Registered Officials.

FROM: Greg Lockard, secretary-rules editor
NCAA Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving
Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: Pre-Championships Rules Review.

The following information is intended to serve as a review of the pertinent playing rules and operational issues in order to provide a consistent standard of enforcement and compliance.

- **Minimum Number of Competitors:** In all NCAA championship and non-championship meets, all swimming and diving events must be offered and contested as long as any of the eligible participating teams choose to enter a minimum of one eligible student-athlete in the event. Furthermore, all events must be scored identically as stated in the playing rules. It is not permissible to adjust scoring values based upon the number of participants. (See Note: Page 79 of the 2017-18 and 2018-19 NCAA Swimming and Diving Rules Book)
- **Permissible Use of Tape:** The use of tape is permitted to treat a documented medical condition to allow a student-athlete to compete, but not gain an advantage over the remainder of the field. The referee must be presented with documentation from a designated health official before certifying the student-athlete eligible to compete with tape. If no documentation is presented, the student-athlete must remove the tape or be disqualified from the event. Tape and/or wrist guards may be used by divers to support the wrists in a preventative manner without documentation. (Rule 3.4)
- **Swimsuit Waivers:** There have been several waivers granted this year for medical and religious exceptions to the swimsuit rule. These institutions have received a written copy of the waiver, with instructions to present it to the referee at each respective competition. If a coach presents a written waiver exempting the student-athlete from the conditions of the swimsuit rule, it must be honored. (Rule 3-1-1-d-6)
- **Mixing Genders:** It is not permissible to mix genders in any individual or relay event, non-championships, championships and/or time trial heats. (Rule 5-6-5)
- **Deaf and Hard of Hearing Swimmers:** Deaf and hard of hearing swimmers require a visual starting signal, (i.e., strobe light and/or starters arm signals). The referee may reassign lanes within the swimmer's heat in a non-championship meet, (e.g., exchange one

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lane for another), so that the strobe light or starter's arm is visible to the competitor. The starter will use visual signals as demonstrated in diagram 105.3 of the 2017-18 and 2018-19 NCAA Swimming and Diving Rules Book. The referee will notify the affected heat if a deaf and/or hard of hearing competitor is competing. A false start rope is required in the event of a recall, provided that the host institution is notified at least 10 days prior to the event/meet that a deaf or hard of hearing swimmer will be participating. A strobe light shall be located where the swimmer can clearly see it from the start.

It is permissible to use a lighting system (i.e. a lighting system using LED, strobe lights) in addition to hand signals used for the start of races involving deaf and hard of hearing swimmers. The lighting system, using either LED or strobe lights can be used to mimic the audio (whistle) and hand/arm commands of the referee and starter. The system must be fully integrated with the existing automatic timing system. (Rule 2-1)

- **Starting Blocks/Wedges/Ledges:** The starting blocks and any additions to the blocks must be identical for all competition lanes. Track style starting blocks with wedges are permitted. In meets requiring relay judging platforms, such starting blocks must accommodate these platforms.

It is recommended that clear directions be given prior to the beginning of competition regarding the use of the starting block wedges along with conditions of when and how they can be removed and returned to the starting block.

When using backstroke ledges, they must be identical in all competitive lanes. There should be a protocol for who will be removing them from the lanes during events, if they are non-retractable models. (Rule 1-3-8)

- **Timing Priority:** For a time to be considered for entry into an NCAA championship it must have been achieved using priority level one equipment (automatic equipment). If a malfunction is confirmed by the head judge, with priority level one equipment, then priority level two equipment (two-button semiautomatic equipment) is acceptable. If a malfunction is confirmed by the head judge with priority level two equipment, then priority level three equipment (two manual watches per lane) is acceptable. No other priority level is acceptable for NCAA championships time qualification. (Rule 4-21-2-c-2)
- **Lap Counting:** The count must begin at the start of the race and may be given in ascending or descending order of lengths completed and/or lengths remaining until the end of the race. The final visual count, to be given when the swimmer has one length to complete, shall be of fluorescent orange color. (Rule 2-3-1)
- **Finishes:** The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his person touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance. (Rule 2-4-1)

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- **Honest Effort Rule:** There is not an “honest effort” rule in the rulebook. Any action by a coach or student-athlete that is deemed unsporting or unsafe may be considered by the referee and/or meet committee for disciplinary action under the policies of the meet and the individual conference.
- **Pistol Use:** The use of a pistol for starts, recalls and two-lap warnings during distance races is not permitted. Acceptable noise makers include bells, whistles and horns.

Please send any questions by email to me, Greg Lockard (greg@swimdiverules.com). We will publish relevant questions and answers and communicate any clarifications to the membership.

The dates and locations for the 2019 NCAA men’s and women’s swimming and diving championships are as follows:

- Division II Men and Women – Indianapolis, IN (March 13-16, 2019)
- Division III Men and Women – Greensboro, NC (March 20-23, 2019)
- Division I Women – Austin, TX (March 20-23, 2019)
- Division I Men – Austin, TX (March 27-30, 2019)

GL:bh

cc: NCAA Men’s and Women’s Swimming and Diving Rules Committee
Selected NCAA Staff Members