MEMORANDUM

February 10, 2022

VIA EMAIL

TO: NCAA Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving Conference Commissioners and Head Coaches

FROM: Greg Lockard, Secretary-Rules Editor,
      NCAA Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: NCAA Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving Rules Review.

NCAA Rules Process:

• Waiver Requests – Institutions requesting a waiver of the NCAA Swimming and Diving playing rules must submit the request in writing to the NCAA Secretary-Rules Editor, Greg Lockard (greg@swimdiverrules.com). Waiver requests must include the name(s) of the student-athlete, rationale for requesting a waiver of the specific playing rule and any other pertinent documentation (e.g. medical documentation), if necessary.

• The NCAA Swimming and Diving Rules change process occurs every two years, and began in January 2021, with a call for suggested items for consideration. A non-binding survey was distributed to the entire NCAA membership, and the results were discussed at the College Swimming Coaches Convention, followed by consideration for adoption by the Swimming and Diving Rules Committee, in May. The newly adopted rules were included in the 2021-2022, 2022-2023 rule book that was released on September 1, 2021.

• The current rules book is available to be downloaded or purchased from NCAA publications (www.ncaapublications.com).

NCAA Officials Program:

• All officials that wish to be NCAA registered officials are required to take the new test, which updated and released on September 1, 2021.

• Most conferences mandate the use of NCAA registered officials, and only registered officials can be selected to officiate at the NCAA Championships, in the three divisions.

COVID-19 Waivers for 2021-2022 Season:

• Relay Takeoff Judges: When electronic judging equipment is being used in championship meets, in conjunction with stationary overhead cameras recording 100 images per second and that are fully integrated into the primary electronic timing system, relay takeoff judges are not required. (Rule 4.14.6.a.)

• Backup Timers: Eliminate the use of human timers from all individual and relay events when overhead cameras are in place that measure 100 images per second. (Rule 4.16.1.)
• **Open Lanes Between Relays:** Waive the prohibition on intentionally leaving a lane open between competing teams during relay events only. Current rule: "Note: When seeding the swimmers, intentionally leaving empty lanes between them is not permitted." (Rule 5.7)

• **Meets Open To The Public:** Waive the bona fide competition requirement that the meet be open to the public. Current rule: "Time standards, consideration standards and optional-entry standards for swimming (individual and relay) events and diving events must be achieved in bona fide competition. Bona fide competition is defined as an event that conforms to all NCAA rules relevant to swimming and diving performances. They include the following: Meet is open to the public (spectators)." (Rule 9)

**Interpretation:** Backstroke Ledges.

• **Rule 2-2-1-a:**
  When using a backstroke ledge at the start, the toes of both feet must be in contact with the end wall or face of the touchpad. Bending the toes over the top of the touchpad is prohibited.

• **Interpretation:**
  When backstroke ledges are utilized, they must be positioned and utilized as intended by the manufacturer, which includes a maximum of 10 degrees of slope. Specifically, the ledge(s) may not be turned or adjusted to change the intended use or exceed the maximum of 10 degrees of slope.

**Rule Reminders:**

• **Suits and Logos:** The only responsibility that a meet referee has regarding logos is to ensure that there is no more than a single manufacturer’s logo on a swimsuit and a single post-construction institutional logo that does not exceed 9 square inches. The size of the manufacturer’s logo is no longer a playing rules issue; and while potentially a bylaw issue, falls outside of the jurisdiction of meet officials. The meet officials have no jurisdiction over logos or markings on any other piece of apparel such as caps or warm-ups, etc. (Rule 3-1)

• **Kinesiology Tape:** The use of tape, kinesiology tape, and compression sleeves are permitted to treat a documented medical condition to allow swimmers to compete. Requests for use must be submitted to the Secretary Rules Editor, with a letter and documentation from a designated health official. Upon approval, the referee must be presented with documentation before each subsequent meet. Alternatively, divers are permitted to compete with tape, **kinesiology tape** and/or wrist guards without medical documentation. (Rule 3-1-4)

• **Backup Timers:** "Regardless of the availability of automatic and/or semiautomatic timing equipment, a minimum of one human timer per lane and one manual watch per lane is required for all non-NCAA championships meets and is recommended for all nonchampionships meets. In addition, for an NCAA championship qualification standard, two human timers, each with a manual watch, are required if there is a malfunction with priority level one or two equipment." (Rule 4-16-2)

• **Mixing Genders: Rule 5:** "Note: It is not permissible to mix genders in any heat or event, in non-championships or non-NCAA championships, including time trials and/or time standard trials."
• **Failure to Compete**: Failure to compete in a preliminary heat of a prelim/finals event is simply a disqualification and a charged event with no further penalty. Failure to compete in a timed final or in a final that had preliminary qualification remains a disqualification and prohibits further competition in the meet. (Rule 5-1-1a)

• **Medical Scratches** – All requests for a medical scratch must include a written certification from a physician or a certified athletic trainer. A written certified request must be made, to enable a student athlete to be reinstated to compete in the same competition. (5-1-1d)

• **Declared False Start vs. Scratching**: Scratching is when a swimmer is eliminated by the coach following normal scratch protocol and is relieved of the requirement to swim and is not charged with an event swum. A declared false start is actually a disqualification and counts as an event contested for the student athlete. Since a declared false start doesn’t take place until the heat of the race occurs, a coach can rescind a declared false start without penalty. If a relay should take a declared false start, they must turn in an entry card listing four eligible athletes and they are all in turn charged with an event. (Rule 5-3-4)

• **Relay Entries/Changes**: If a relay event has preliminary qualification heats and finals, changes can be made in the relay line-up between preliminary and final heats (or between preliminary heats and swim offs when applicable). If a relay event is a timed final, a student-athlete may swim on only one relay team even if they are swum with some heats in the morning and some in the afternoon, or even if some relays are non-scoring. A student-athlete can only compete on one relay – it is not permissible to swim on both an exhibition and a scoring relay in the same event. (Rule 5-7-1g)

• **Seeding vs. Reseeding**: A heat cannot be seeded with less than three competitors in it. However, once a heat is seeded, if declared false starts cause the heat to go below three, the heat may be swum because the declared false starts are disqualifications and the rule only speaks to seeding with a minimum of three participants. Since a coach can rescind the declared false starts, under current rules you DO NOT reseed when the heat goes below three. (Rule 5-7-3d)

• **Appeal Procedure** – Must be submitted in writing within 15 minutes after the finish of the final heat of the event in question. Appeals may only be lodged for errors in the recording of data, scoring and nonjudgmental errors in application of rules. The use of video is not permitted during the appeal process. If the referee uses video to review relay judging platforms, his/her decision is a judgement call and cannot be appealed. The decision of a meet committee is final. (Rule 8-4-3)

• **Bona Fide Competition** - Time standards, consideration standards and optional-entry standards for swimming (individual and relay) events and diving events must be achieved in bona fide competition. Bona fide competition is defined as an event that conforms to all NCAA rules relevant to swimming and diving performances. They include the following:
  o Meet is open to the public (spectators); – Waived for 2020-2021 Season
  o Competition is between two or more teams of the same gender at the same time and site, from different collegiate institutions;
  o All NCAA competitors must be eligible by NCAA standards;
  o Meets must be in institutions’ approved competition schedule;
  o Meets must have published results; and
  o Depending on the governing body, meet official(s) must be qualified and/or certified.
o OR;
   o Any bona fide meet as defined above and that is sanctioned or approved by USA Swimming and USA Diving that follows NCAA rules and regulations. The following USA Swimming and Diving Meets, are acceptable for achievement of time standards, consideration standards and optional-entry standards:

- **Acceptable USA Swimming Meets**: Select USA Swimming and USA Diving meets which are acceptable for achievement of time standards, consideration standards and optional-entry standards may be designated each year by the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championship Committee. Examples include USA Swimming National Championships, FINA Short Course World Championships and USA Swimming Pro Series meets. (Rule 9-1-1-h) The Division I Championship Committee has selected USA Swimming National Championships, and FINA Short Course World Championships as acceptable meets for the achievement of NCAA qualifying standards.

- **Initial Distance Time Standards**: A time standard, consideration standard or an optional-entry standard may be achieved over an initial distance within any individual or relay race that is conducted according to the criteria established for bona fide competition. This rule applies to competitors who are eligible to score in regularly scheduled and scored events, and to exhibition competitors in such events. This rule does not apply to competitors in time-standard trials. (Rule 9-2-1-c)

- **End-Of-Season-Competitions**: Division I institutions choosing to participate in end-of-season swimming and diving competitions that are held within the last ten days of the qualifying period, with the exception of conference championships, must ensure that the meet host completes the [End of Season Meet Competition Form](http://www.ncaa.org/championships/division-i-mens-and-womens-swimming-and-diving) and submits to the following NCAA staff member: John Bugner at [jbugner@ncaa.org](mailto:jbugner@ncaa.org) by no later than noon (Central time) Monday, February 28, 2022 for women and Monday, March 7, 2022 for men.

**2022 NCAA Championships**:
- Division II Men and Women – Greensboro, NC (March 9-12, 2022).
- Division III Men and Women – Indianapolis, IN (March 16-19, 2022).
- Division I Women – Atlanta, GA (March 16-19, 2022).
- Division I Men – Atlanta, GA (March 23-26, 2022).

Throughout the year, if you have questions or need to request an interpretation, please contact me via email at [greg@swimdiverules.com](mailto:greg@swimdiverules.com) or by phone at 973-486-5501.

Greg Lockard
Secretary-Rules Editor
NCAA Swimming and Diving Rules Committee.

cc: NCAA Swimming and Diving Rules Committee
    Select NCAA Staff