



## MEMORANDUM

January 13, 2021

### 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: Rules Review and Clarifications

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.

### **Waiver - Relay Social Distancing**

**Rule 5-7: Open Lanes:** "Note: When seeding the swimmers, intentionally leaving empty lanes between them is not permitted."

### **Waiver:**

A single lane may intentionally be left open between relays, and they may be contested in multiple heats in dual meets, invitational meets, non-NCAA Championship meets, and NCAA Championship meets, for the purpose of social distancing, for the 2020-2021 NCAA Swimming Season.

Time standards, consideration standards and optional-entry standards for relay events achieved utilizing this seeding procedure may be considered for NCAA Championship qualifying and NCAA records.

This waiver applies to relays only and not individual events. If this seeding procedure is adopted, the same seeding procedure must be utilized for all relay events in that respective meet, invitational, or championship.

### **Supporting Rules:**

Currently, multiple heats may be contested in dual meets as per Rule 8-1-3. In addition, Rule 5-2-1a states; "By mutual consent of all participating coaches, more than one heat may be swum. Thus, the number of entries per team may be increased to reflect the number of heats.

### **Rationale:**

National Collegiate Athletic Association

*Creating a pathway to opportunity for college athletes*

The NCAA is an equal opportunity employer that values inclusive excellence in the workplace.

Based on the number of athletes in relay events, social distancing is very difficult, and the current rules support the use of multiple heats of scoring relays. This waiver allows a single lane to be intentionally left open between teams, to allow for greater social distancing.

**Rule Reminders:**

- **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 non-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)
- **Crossing Occupied Lanes:** Rule 2-5-1-d references that one of the first three swimmers on a relay cannot cross an occupied lane to exit the pool or the relay team is disqualified. With the number of international student-athletes involved in NCAA swimming, it may be beneficial to remind coaches (during the pre-meet meeting or reference in information sent) that this differs from FINA rules and could cause their teams to be disqualified.
- **Seeding:** When eight lanes are available, all eight lanes should be used in seeding preliminary heats, finals and time standard trials. A full complement of entries shall be placed in all heats starting with the fastest heat. However, no *timed final or preliminary heat* may contain less than three competitors. So, with nine individuals and/or teams you would seed 3 in the first heat and 6 in the 2nd heat. In an event with a prelim and final (8 lane pool); for finals, you would seed as they qualify 1 in the first heat and 8 in the 2nd heat. This same seeding pattern should be followed for time trials. (Rule 5-6-5)
- **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.”
- **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)
- **Record Application:** The NCAA now recognizes records across all three Divisions for non-national and national championship meets. The form can be downloaded from the NCAA website and completed and returned along with meet result for that event, timing tape from the heat involved, and a copy of the bulkhead laser measurements for that day and for the lane where the record was set. Materials need to be submitted within 14 days of the performance. If an American or US Open record is set, application must be made to

USA Swimming, if done outside of the NCAA National Championships. (Appendix A; Sections 2.1 and 2.2)

- **Turn Judges:** When not specifically instructed otherwise by the referee, jurisdiction for the Turn Judge for each turn, if positioned at the end of the pool at either end and having no more than two lanes of coverage responsibility, commences from the beginning of the last arm stroke before touching and ends with the completion of the first arm stroke after the turn; except in breaststroke where it shall be the second arm stroke. Jurisdiction for the Turn Judge at the finish, if positioned at the end of the pool, commences from the beginning of the last arm pull before finishing the race. (Rule 4-12)

**Rules Process:**

The NCAA swimming and diving rules change process occurs every two years, and will begin in January 2021, with a call for suggested discussion items for consideration. A non-binding survey will be distributed to the entire NCAA membership, and the results will be discussed at the College Swimming Coaches Convention, followed by consideration for adoption by the NCAA Swimming and Diving Rules Committee in May 2021. Newly adopted rules will be included in the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 rules book that will be published in September 2021.

The dates and locations for the 2021 NCAA Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving championships are as follows:

- Division II Men and Women – Birmingham, Alabama (March 17-20, 2021)
- Division III Men and Women – Federal Way, Washington (March 17-20, 2021)
- Division I Women – Greensboro, North Carolina (March 17-20, 2021)
- Division I Men – Greensboro, North Carolina (March 24-27, 2021)

Please send any questions by email to me, Greg Lockard ([greg@swimdiverules.com](mailto:greg@swimdiverules.com)). Relevant questions and clarifications will be communicated to the membership.

GL:bb

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