

Recent Rules Update

By Tom Cox

I hope your year has been going well. I'm seeing a lot of good swimming out there so you must be working hard. As an Official for the past 20 years and at levels from the neighborhood meet to the National level I work very hard to understand and apply the rules as intended. I have summarized the latest rules changes handed down from FINA and USMS. If you have any questions about these or any other rules and how they are interpreted please contact me.

Rules Update:

- For backstroke, the words "at the finish" have been removed from the rule stating that it is permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged. This means the only time a swimmer may be completely submerged is during the turn and for a distance of 15 meters after the start and each turn. If the swimmer is submerged prior to coming in to touch at the end of the race, that is a DQ. For those of you that do the extra strong kick at the end that takes you completely under water. You can be DQ'd if you are completely submerged at any point prior to the touch.
- An immediate arm pull(s) is required once the swimmer has rotated toward the breast in the backstroke turn (word "immediate" has been added to continuous single or double arm pull). Only an immediate continuous single or double arm pull, not a head movement, will be considered as the beginning of a continuous turn.
- In breaststroke and butterfly, the swimmer is not permitted to touch at the turn or finish with the hands "stacked" one on top of the other; the hands may be side by side with thumbs touching, but not overlapping, and they may touch with separated hands at, above, or below the water surface. The hands must touch simultaneously. Once a touch has been made at the turn, the swimmer may turn in any manner as long as the swimmer is toward the breast when leaving the wall.
- The single butterfly kick is permitted in breaststroke after initiation of the first arm pull on the start and the turn (no change from previous rule). No scissors, alternating movements or downward butterfly kicks are permitted outside of the previous statement.(the term "flutter" was changed to "alternating movements")
- No adhesive substances, bands are permitted. USMS does not permit the use of "kinesio" tape with or without a medical authorization. Other medical tape is permitted only with the approval of the Referee.

See you on Deck!