

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION FOR MEET DIRECTORS AND OFFICIALS

USMS-APPROVED CERTIFYING BODIES

USMS approves USA Swimming, YMCA, Federation of High School Swimming Officials, College Swimming Officials Association (NCAA), and San Diego–Imperial LMSC as certifying bodies.

ENFORCEMENT OF RULES

USMS rules shall be applied uniformly regardless of age.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN USA SWIMMING AND USMS RULES

USMS follows articles 101 and 102 of the USA Swimming technical rules with the following exceptions:

Starts, Strokes, and Relays

Forward start. The forward start may be taken from the starting block, the pool deck, or a push from the wall. The forward start or the backstroke start shall be used for freestyle events.

Backstroke turn. The swimmer who turns past vertical and, in a continuous motion, grabs the wall before pushing off with the feet while on the back is considered to have executed a “continuous turning action.”

Butterfly. The breaststroke or whip kick may be used exclusively or interchangeably with the dolphin kick at any time during the race. However, when the breaststroke or whip kick is used, the arms must be recovered over the top of the water with each breaststroke or whip kick, except after the last such kick before the turn or finish. After the start and after each turn, if the breaststroke or whip kick is used, only one kick is allowed prior to the arm pull that brings the swimmer to the surface.

Relays. Relay swimmers who cannot exit the water quickly enough to prevent interference with automatic officiating equipment may hold on to the lane line until all relays have finished, allowing them to exit the pool more slowly or via the ladders at the conclusion of the race.

Swimming Competition

Personnel. The minimum personnel at USMS sanctioned or recognized Masters swimming meets is:

- One referee
- One starter
- Two stroke and turn judges
- Two timers per lane (if automatic timing is not being used)

The referee and starter may double as stroke and turn judges, but the referee and starter may not be the same person. The referee shall be certified as a stroke and turn judge, starter, or referee by a USMS-approved certifying body.

APPENDIX B

Warm-up. If there is no other warm-up/warm-down area available in pools of five lanes or more, one lane shall be set aside for warm-up/warm-down during the conduct of the meet. In pools of four or fewer lanes, swimmers shall be allowed to swim to the other end of the pool at the end of each heat and a warm-up/warm-down period must be offered at least once during each half-hour of competition.

Timed finals. All Masters events held in meters pools (short course or long course) are conducted on a timed-final basis. Short course yards meets, except for national championships, MAY be conducted on a basis other than timed finals (e.g., trials/finals basis). If trials/finals are offered, competitors are limited to three individual events per day.

Seeding. Age groups, genders, and events of the same distance 200 yards or longer may be combined so that no swimmer has to swim alone and lanes may be filled. Seeding at meets other than national championship meets may be either fast-to-slow or slow-to-fast. Seeding may differ for sprint and distance events.

Records. USMS records may only be established by USMS-registered swimmers in sanctioned or recognized competition. Because swimmers from different age groups and genders may compete in the same heat or event, winning the heat or event is not required to establish a record.

Relay lead-off split times will be considered for records or Top Ten times, provided the swimmers complete the event without being disqualified, and provided automatic timing is used.

If swimmers want their initial splits as part of a longer individual event to be submitted for records or Top Ten times, they must notify the referee, in writing, prior to the conclusion of the meet. However, for backstroke initial splits and relay lead-off legs to count, notification must be made prior to the swim so that officials may verify that a legal finish was performed at the initial distance and that for relays the second swimmer did not start in the water.

Required documentation for USMS records includes the referee's signature, as well as the printout from the automatic or semi-automatic (with three buttons) timing equipment, or the time card bearing times and signatures from *three* timers. For that reason, it is recommended that a printout from the timing system be kept in case record applications need to be filed. If you do not use a printer for the timing system during the meet (e.g., if the data is fed directly to a computer running meet management software), such a printout can be made at the conclusion of the meet using any printer.

Scratch procedures. Swimmers or relay teams not reporting for or competing in an event are not penalized.

Protests. Protests arising from competition shall be made within 30 minutes after the race in which the alleged infraction took place. If the protest is not resolved immediately, the protester shall at that time file a written protest with the chair of the Local Masters Swimming Committee (LMSC) or the chair's representative having jurisdiction over the event. If the LMSC does not satisfactorily resolve the protest within 10 days, the protester may appeal in writing to the USMS Rules Committee chair within the next 5 days for final adjudication, whose final decision shall then be binding on all parties.

Eligibility. The eligibility of a participant for a particular age group will be determined for all meters meets (both short course and long course) by the swimmer's age as of December 31 of the year of competition. For short course yards meets, eligibility will be determined by the swimmer's age as of the *last* day of the meet.