

## Proposed Amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition

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The following proposals have been submitted to the USMS Rules committee in accordance with 601.2.

R1 Glossary p12 Pacific

**Course**—designated distance over which the competition is conducted.

- **Long Course**—50 meters (~~55 yards to be recorded as 50 meters~~).
- **Short Course**—25 yards or 25 meters.

*Rationale:* Eliminates ambiguous reference to 55 yard pools and is in conflict with Rule 107.2.1

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R2 101.1.2 Backstroke Start p15 Oregon

**.2 Backstroke Start**

**B Short course yards**—The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips. The feet may be placed in any position on the wall or on the gutter of the pool, and the swimmer may assume any desired starting position that does not remove either foot completely from the water, or either hand from the starting grips or the pool edge. ~~Standing in or on the gutter is not permitted at any time before the start.~~ A backstroke starting block may not be used.

**C Short course meters and long course meters**—The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips. Prior to the command “Take your mark,” and until the feet leave the wall at the starting signal, the swimmer’s feet including the toes shall be placed under the surface of the water. Standing in or on the gutter is not permitted at any time before the start. A backstroke starting block may not be used.

*Rationale:* To remove the prohibition against standing before the short course yards backstroke start. The term Standing is not defined in the Rule Book and this prohibition is currently officiated in an inconsistent manner.

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R3 101.1.2 Backstroke Start p. 15 Pacific Northwest Association

**101.1.2 - Backstroke Start**

**B Short course yards** - The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips. ~~The feet may be placed in any position on the wall or on the gutter of the pool, and the swimmer may assume any desired starting position that does not remove either foot completely from the water, or either hand from the starting grips or the pool edge.~~ Prior to the command, “Take your mark”, and until the feet leave the wall at the starting signal, the swimmer’s feet, with the possible exception of the toes, shall be placed under the surface of the water. The toes may be curled over the lip of the gutter. Standing in or on the gutter is not permitted at any time before the start. A backstroke starting block may not be used.

*Rationale:* The stricken language is from the USS short course yard backstroke start rule that allowed standing backstroke starts (see 1988 USS rule book, 101.3.1, p.15). This language has caused confusion among some officials who thought masters swimmers could do standing backstroke starts. The new language closely matches the current USA language.

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R4 101.1.2C Backstroke Start p15 Pacific Northwest Association

**101.1.2 Backstroke start**

**C Short course meters and long course meters** - The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips. Prior to the command, “Take your mark”, and until the feet leave the wall at the starting signal, the swimmer’s feet including the toes shall be placed under the surface of the water. Standing in or on the gutter or curling the toes over the lip of the gutter is not permitted at any time before the start. A backstroke starting block may not be used.

*Rationale:* The new language matches the current USA language. Since curling the toes over the lip of the gutter is the only difference between yards and meters back starts for masters, that phrase needs to be in the USMS book.

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R5 101.2.5 Breaststroke p. 16 Pacific Northwest Association

- .5 Finish - At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands at, above, or below the water surface. ~~The body shall be on the breast. The head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during any part of the last complete or incomplete stroke cycle preceding the touch.~~

*Rationale:* The new language matches the current USA language. There are no documented differences between USA and USMS breaststroke rules, so the language should be the same.

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R6 101.3. BUTTERFLY p17 Pacific  
.3 Kick

All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. The position of the legs and feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other. The breaststroke or whip kick may be used exclusively or interchangeably with the dolphin kick while doing the butterfly stroke 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 ~~at least once per breaststroke kick following each breaststroke or whip kick~~, except after the last such kick before the turn or finish. A scissors kicking movement is not permitted.

*Rationale:* This would prevent someone from doing two or more breaststroke kicks followed by doing two or more are strokes while doing dolphin kicks.

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R7 101.5 FREESTYLE p. 17 Pacific Northwest Association  
101.5.1 - Start

The forward start or the ~~short course yards~~ backstroke start shall be used.

*Rationale:* The swimmer should be allowed to place the toes under the surface of the water if he or she so chooses when doing a backstroke start during a freestyle event.

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R8 101.5. FREESTYLE CRAWLSTROKE p 17 Allegheny Mountains

101.5.1 Start—The forward start or the short course yards backstroke start shall be used.

101.5.2 Stroke—~~Freestyle means that in an event so designated the swimmer may swim any style, except that in a medley relay or individual medley event, freestyle means any style other than butterfly, breaststroke, or backstroke.~~ Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and each turn. By that point the head must have broken the surface.

Change all other Freestyle references to Crawlstroke

*Rationale:* Since changing the rule limiting a swimmer to swim a maximum of only 15 meters underwater “Freestyle” ceases to exist. A swimmer is no longer free to swim a length of the pool underwater should he or she so wish.

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R9 102.1. ELIGIBILITY p19 Pacific

102.1.1 Swimmers 19 years of age and over may register with USMS. ~~If an individual who has not achieved the age of 19 applies to register with USMS, the registration date shall be the individual's 19th birthday. To be eligible for competition, swimmers must be 19 years of age or over as determined by section 102.2.~~

**Note: Requires amendment of 201.1 -Membership of Athletes to reflect that swimmers 18 and over are eligible for membership in USMS.**

*Rationale:* Many college-affiliated USMS programs are unable to legally allow some students to join or participate because they have not reached the age of 19. Additionally, 18 year-olds with birthdays late in the calendar year are effectively denied their right to compete as a 19 year-old in long course and SCM events.

# Proposed Amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition

R10 102.2 Age Determining Date p19 Lake Erie

**102.2. AGE DETERMINING DATE**

~~102.2.1 For short course yards, the eligibility of a participant for a particular age group shall be determined by the age as of the last day of the meet.~~

~~102.2.2 For short course meters and long course meters, the eligibility of a participant for a particular age group shall be determined by the age as of December 31 of the year of competition.~~

*Rationale:* Make the age-determining date the same for all three courses. Placement in an age group will be affected only once every five years.

R11 102.4.2 WARM-UP/WARM-DOWN p20 Pacific

**102.4.2 Procedure**

Swimmers must ~~enter~~ ease into the pool feet first in a cautious and controlled manner. Diving shall be permitted only ~~from the blocks~~ in the designated lanes.

*Rationale:* Inappropriate entry into the pool during warm-ups/warm-downs in unsporting conduct and contributes to accidents. Diving from the pool deck should also be permitted in designated lanes if desired.

R12 103.13. OFFICIAL TIME p36 Records and Tabulations

**103.13.1** An official time shall be achieved in a USMS sanctioned competition or recognized event in accordance with all applicable rules. It may be achieved in:

- A A timed final heat.
- B An initial distance within a longer event or relay, provided the swimmer:
  - (1) ~~Notifies, in writing,~~ the meet referee in writing of the intent to record an initial split time prior to the ~~swim conclusion of the meet,~~
  - (2) For an initial backstroke distance, in cases where a legal backstroke finish is not normally required, the written request must be made prior to the swim.
  - ~~(2)~~ Completes the initial distance with a legal finish, and
  - ~~(3)~~ Completes the event without being disqualified.
- C A relay lead-off leg provided the swimmers complete the event without being disqualified.

*Rationale:* Legitimate swims are not being recognized for top ten and records because of the pre-swim notification rule. Notification before the end of the meet is necessary so that the splits can be included in the meet results

R13 103.13.3 OFFICIAL TIME p37 San Diego Imperial

**103.13.3** The official time to establish records and Top Ten times can be achieved only in accordance with the following timing methods:

Timing method	Official time level
Automatic timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World records, USMS national records, and USMS Top Ten times</li> <li>• Initial splits for all purposes</li> <li>• <u>Relay lead-off times for all purposes</u></li> </ul>
Three watches or semi-automatic with three buttons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World records, USMS national records, and USMS Top Ten times</li> <li>• Initial splits and relay lead-off times for <del>world records only</del> <u>all purposes</u></li> </ul>
Two watches or semi-automatic with two buttons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USMS Top Ten times</li> </ul>

*Rationale:* First change is housekeeping left out of 1999 and 2000 rule book. Second change: Many meets run in various parts of the country do not have financial and/or physical access to automatic timing equipment. Swimmers in these meets should not be barred from having their initial or relay lead-off split times count for Top Ten and Records, when three semi-automatic buttons or three watches separate from those used to time the final distance are the only timing means available.

## Proposed Amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition

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R14 MEET CATEGORIES p38 Pacific

**104.1. MEET CATEGORIES**—USMS national championship meets shall be awarded in the following categories and held during the following dates:

**104.1.1 Short Course (25 Yards or 25 Meters)**—Between April 15 and May 31.

*Rationale:* Provides the option for the National Short Course Championships to be bid for, awarded and conducted in the Short Course Meters format. Note, for the first time ever, the NCAA Championship meet was conducted in a 25 meter pool - this is where the future of the sport is going.

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R15 104.3 AWARDING OF NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS p38 Championship Committee

~~**104.3.1 Meet Rotation System**~~—Delete entire section 104.3.1 and renumber

**104.3.2.—Bidding Procedures**

**A Solicitation of bids**—The USMS Championship Committee shall be responsible for the solicitation of bids in accordance with the area rotation system outlined in article 104.3.1, and shall present a list of all certified bidders for each short and long course championships to the House of Delegates at the annual meeting held at least 2 years prior to the meet being awarded. with emphasis on soliciting bids from all areas of the country.

**B Eligible bidders...**

**C Bid Information...**

**D Bid Deadline...**

~~**E Failure to receive bid**~~ delete all of E and renumber

~~**F Out of area bids**~~-- delete all of F and renumber

**G Certification of bids**—Prior to the annual meeting, the Championship Committee shall certify each bid for compliance with its policies and procedures, including facilities standards (article 107)

~~**H Awarding of bids**~~ delete all of H

~~**I Out of rotation meet**~~ delete all of I

Insert and renumber:

**104.3.2—Awarding of bids** At the annual meeting of the Championship Committee, those bids that have been certified shall be presented. The awarding of the bid shall be made by majority vote of the Championship Committee, with emphasis on awarding bids to maximize variety in site location.

*Rationale:* This rule change proposal would do two things: (1) remove the requirement of a formal rotation system, while keeping an emphasis on the need to maximize variety in location; (2) place the responsibility for actually choosing the site with the Championship Committee, whose members are the only delegates who ever thoroughly review all bids. (1) Too often in past years the Championship Committee has not received bids in rotation and must “go begging” at the last minute for bidders outside the designated rotation area. In addition, the committee has had excellent bidders come forward to present a bid at a time when their area is not in rotation, either because that year is when they have the group who wants to make the effort or their in-area year is one in which it is impossible for them to get the facility. We need to maximize the number of bids, and our present system is not producing enough bids. (2) By having the Championship Committee select the site, we hope to have a selection that is based on more than a flashy bid presentation and vacation desires. Unfortunately, the Championship Committee does not feel that it is appropriate to cite all the pluses and minuses of bids in detail before the full House of Delegates as this kind of “public nit-picking” could discourage future bids from the non-preferred sites.

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R16 104.3.2 Bidding Procedures p39 Championship Committee

**104.3.2 Bidding Procedures**

**A Solicitation of bids**--The USMS Championship Committee shall be . . . at the annual meeting held at least two years more than one year prior to the meet being awarded

*Rationale:* old wording was in fact not correct.

## Proposed Amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition

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R17 104.4.5—Meet Report p40 Championship Committee

### 104.4.5--Meet Report

The meet director of each national championship meet shall submit a written report to the chair of the Championship Committee within . . . This report shall include a complete financial report, copies of meet information, entry forms heat sheets, final results (an electronic file plus hard copy), and any other . . .

*Rationale:* Championship Committee wants the disk from the computerization as well as the printed written report.

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R18 104.5.3—Event Limit p42 Championship Committee

C **National qualifying times**—There shall be qualifying times at national championship meets ~~when deemed necessary by the Championship Committee. The Championship Committee shall make that decision prior to the publication of the meet entry form for that meet.~~

*Rationale:* There is little reason to continue to have to vote each year on NQT's as they are being universally used. Exceptions could always be made.

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R19 104.5.3 - Event Limit p42 Pacific

C **National qualifying times** --There shall be qualifying times . . .

(1) **Determination of qualifying times**—The qualifying times shall be 10 percent slower than the previous year's tenth place time on the USMS Top Ten list. If there are fewer than ten swimmers on the Top Ten list, the qualifying times shall be 15 percent slower than the previous year's fifth place time on the USMS Top Ten list. If there are fewer than five swimmers on the Top Ten list, there shall be no qualifying time.

*Rationale:* National qualifying times add prestige and consistency to a Championship meet. This proposal would also help to expedite Championship meets.

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R20 104.5.3C Event Limit p42 Championship Committee

~~(1)~~ **Determination of qualifying times**—The qualifying times shall be 10 percent slower than the average of the previous three years' year's tenth place times on the USMS Top Ten list. If there are fewer than ten swimmers on the Top Ten lists for two or three of the previous three years, there shall be no qualifying time. If there are fewer than ten swimmers on the Top Ten list for one of the previous three years, the qualifying times shall be 10 percent slower than the average of the other two years' tenth place times on the USMS Top Ten list.

*Rationale:* To prevent wild fluctuations in the NQT of an event when one year is an aberration—by having a more consistent NQT, we can encourage swimmers who use the NQT as a personal goal. Coaches have pointed out that they could have a swimmer who looks at the NQT and works hard for over a year to make the time, only to find that the time changed radically—in other words, smoother, more consistent and understandable changes in the NQT's

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R21 104.5.4—Entry Procedures p43 Championship Committee

### 104.5.4A Eligibility/affiliation

(1) **USMS registration**--USMS individual ~~and club~~ registration numbers and club names and abbreviations must be submitted . . .

*Rationale:* We do not require club numbers, we do require the names and abbreviations.

## Proposed Amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition

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R22 104.5.4 – Entry Procedures p43 Championship Committee

**104.5.4B Entry form**

- (2) **Distribution of entry form**--The entry form for individual events and all meet brochure information shall be published in an official USMS publication and on the USMS Web site at no cost to the meet host. . . . May-June issue. ~~One copy each of the~~ The individual and relay entry forms and any additional information the host desires shall be ~~sent to all registered clubs~~ posted on the USMS Web site as soon as the entry form and information are available and no later than 5 months prior to the first day of the meet.

*Rationale:* Removes the burden of mailing when the internet is now almost universally used. The Championship Committee will include the information about where this material will be published in the meet information in *SWIM*. Mandates that identical information be put on the Internet.

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R23 104.5.4—Entry Procedures p43 Championship Committee

**104.5.4B Entry Form**

- (4) **Information on entry**--All information regarding seeding must be stated ~~on the entry form.~~ in the meet information.

*Rationale:* It is impossible to fit all seeding information on the entry form, but it is mandated to be in the meet information section prior to the entry form

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R24 104.5.4—Entry Procedures p43 Championship Committee

**104.5.4B Entry Form**

- (5) **Relay entry cards**--On the relay card, relay teams must list the name of the registered swim club and the full name (as it appears on the USMS registration card), and the age, and the meet ID number of each relay member.

*Rationale:* The word “entry” is removed as this rule is referring to the relay card, not to the relay entry form we use. We no longer need meet ID numbers in most meet computerization programs.

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R25 104.5.5 - Seeding p44 Pacific Insert and renumber

**A General procedures for seeding** (also see article 102.10)

- (1) At the meet director’s option, all events may be deck seeded.
- (12) In events which are pre-seeded, all events 200 yards/meters or less shall be pre-seeded, with oldest age groups first, slowest heats swum first in each age group. In the event that swimmers of the same gender are simultaneously swimming in two courses, the Championship Committee may authorize some alteration of this rule to allow for smooth progress of the meet.

*Rationale:* This would speed up meets by encouraging the most efficient use of the pool. This also would stimulate competition, by eliminating empty lanes.

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R26 104.5.5 - Seeding p44 South Texas Insert new item

- (10)** All events at the National Championship competition shall offer at least one seeded heat in each age group.

*Rationale:* Our current competition format lacks integrity. Unless all events are treated in an equal manner then the competition encompasses discrimination. If we discriminate against a particular group or event then we are not hosting a true, fair and equitable competition. If our competition is unfair then it truly lacks the integrity of being a real, honest, National Championship event.

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R27 104.5.6—Club Scoring p45 Championship Committee Insert new section

**104.5.6—Club Scoring**

- D Overall Point Total**--For information purposes only, the overall point totals for each club shall be published in all results documentation after the list of the scores by size divisions.

*Rationale:* A team that just misses a first, second or third in its size category may be thrilled to see how well they finished overall, such as how many bigger teams they beat; in other words, a motivational, fun tool requiring little effort by the meet host.

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## Proposed Amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition

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R28 104.5.8—Results p46 Championship Committee

### 104.5.8 Results

- B Publication of Meet Results**--Meet results in the appropriate format (see Appendix B) and club scores shall be published within 30 days of the last day of the meet, posted on the USMS Web site, and distributed to members of the USMS Board of Directors, representatives of participating clubs, hard copies sent to the chair and liaison for the Championship Committee and the USMS Record and Tabulation Committee chair.

*Rationale:* With the ubiquitous nature of the Internet, why spend the money or make the Nationals meet director spend the money to send all these hard copies? The three hard copies go to the personnel who officially need them.

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R29 104.5.10—Personnel p47 Championship Committee

### 104.5.10 Personnel

- C Other personnel** --The minimum other personnel at each session of a USMS national championship meet shall include the following:

Two timers per lane for each course, each using a watch and backup button

*Rationale:* To make it clear that the backup timers need a manual watch as well as the computer back up button.

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R30 105.2. Top Ten Times p47 San Diego Imperial

105.2.2 - Individual split times and relay lead-off times shall be considered for Top Ten times if:

- A** Recorded by fully automatic timing equipment, semi-automatic timing equipment with three buttons, or three watches separate from those used to time the final distance,

*Rationale:* Many meets run in various parts of the country do not have financial and/or physical access to automatic timing equipment. Swimmers in these meets should not be barred from having their initial or relay lead-off split times count for Top Ten and Records, when three semi-automatic buttons or three watches separate from those used to time the final distance are the only timing means available.

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R31 105.2. Top Ten Times p47 Records and Tabulations

105.2.2--Individual split times and relay lead-off times shall be considered for Top Ten times if:

- A** Recorded by fully automatic timing equipment,  
**B** ~~Prior to the swim~~ The intent to record a split time is brought in writing to the attention of the meet referee prior to the conclusion of the meet, and  
**C** For an initial backstroke distance, in cases where a legal backstroke finish is not normally required, the written request must be made prior to the swim.  
**ED** The swimmer(s) completes the full distance of the scheduled event without being disqualified and performs a legal finish at the initial distance.

Such split times shall be included separately in the summary of results prepared by the meet director, and submitted to the LMSC Top Ten recorder.

*Rationale:* Such split times shall be included separately in the summary of results prepared by the meet director, and submitted to the LMSC Top Ten recorder.

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R32 105.3. USMS NATIONAL RECORDS p48 Pacific Northwest Association

105.3.6 The official time for establishing records shall be achieved and determined in accordance with 103.11 (Timers), 103.12 (Timing Equipment), and 103.13 (Official Time). Records shall require three watches, semi-automatic timing with three buttons, or automatic timing.

*Rationale:* To clarify that all timing rules must be followed.

## Proposed Amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition

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- R33 105.3. USMS NATIONAL RECORDS** p48 San Diego Imperial
- 105.3.7** Records established by a swimmer's split time in an individual event or by a swimmer's lead-off time in a relay shall be acceptable as an individual performance for all purposes if:
- A** Recorded by fully automatic timing equipment, semi-automatic timing equipment with three buttons, or three watches separate from those used to time the final distance,

*Rationale:* Many meets run in various parts of the country do not have financial and/or physical access to automatic timing equipment. Swimmers in these meets should not be barred from having their initial or relay lead-off split times count for Top Ten and Records, when three semi-automatic buttons or three watches separate from those used to time the final distance are the only timing means available.

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- R34 105.3. USMS NATIONAL RECORDS** p48 Records and Tabulations
- .7** Records established by a swimmer's split time in an individual event or by a swimmer's lead-off time in a relay shall be acceptable as an individual performance for all purposes if:
- A** Recorded by fully automatic timing equipment,
- B** ~~Prior to the swim~~ The swimmer's intent to record a split time is brought in writing to the attention of the meet referee prior to the conclusion of the meet, and
- C** For an initial backstroke distance, in cases where a legal backstroke finish is not normally required, the written request must be made prior to the swim.
- D** ~~The swimmer(s) completes the full distance of the scheduled event without being disqualified and performs a legal finish at the initial distance.~~
- D** The swimmer's relay lead-off time shall not count if the second swimmer starts in the water.

Such split times shall be included separately in the summary of results prepared by the meet director and submitted to the LMSC Top Ten recorder.

*Rationale:* None given.

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- R35 105.3.10 USMS National Records** p. 48 Pacific Northwest Association
- 105.3.10** - When a record is claimed..., the primary printout tape including the secondary times, and/or copy of the entry card...official scorer of the meet.

*Rationale:* To clarify timing information that must be included with a record application.

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### The following have been submitted as housekeeping by the Rule Book and Rules Committees:

- H1 101.2. BREASTSTROKE** p16 Rule Book Committee
- 101.2.1 Start**—The forward start shall be used.
- 101.2.2 Stroke**—From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and after each turn, the body shall be kept on the breast. The arms shall move simultaneously and in the same horizontal plane without any alternating movement. The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over ~~the surface~~ of the water.

*Rationale:* USS deleted "...the surface of..." between 1993 and 1994. USMS did not, an oversight.

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- H2 101.4 Backstroke** p. 17 Rule Book Committee
- 101.4.2 --Stroke** - Standing in or on the gutter...after the start. ~~Swimmers~~ The swimmer shall push off on ~~their backs~~ the back and continue swimming on ~~their backs~~ the back throughout the race. Some part...the surface of the water.

*Rationale:* The second sentence is plural and the rest of the paragraph is singular. The corrections maintain singular throughout the paragraph.

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- H3 101.5 Freestyle** p 17 Rule Book Committee
- 101.5.2 --Stroke** - ~~Freestyle means that in~~ In an event so designated freestyle the swimmer may swim any style...butterfly, breaststroke, or backstroke. Some part...broken the surface.

*Rationale:* New language is less awkward.

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- H4 103.8.5D False Starts** p30 Rules Committee
- E** A swimmer can be charged with a false start by the starter ~~or recall starter~~ only if the referee or an officially designated assistant referee has observed the violation and confirms that the violation occurred.



## **Proposed Amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition**

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*Rationale:* Recall starter removed last year with the adoption of the “no-recall” start.