

RULE BOOK MINUTES

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1996

The meeting began at 1:54 p.m. Committee members present were Meg Smath (Chairman), Phyllis Gill, Lil Haneman, Dorothy Donnelly, Mary Lee Watson.

After considering three bids to print the 1997 Rule Book, we awarded the bid to Gateway Printing of Hamburg, New York.

Meg reported that the Rules Committee had voted to approve both the amendments submitted by the Rule Book Committee.

The winning cover design was submitted by Graphic Services of Tampa, Inc.

Marilyn Fink will proofread changes to Part One. Steve Hogan will proofread changes to Part Three. Meg will compile Appendix A after receiving updated records via E-Mail from Walt Reid. Lil will compile Appendix C. Dorothy will compile Appendix E. Phyllis will compile Appendix F. We anticipate few or no changes to Parts Two, Four, Five, and Six, and Appendices B and D, so no proofreading will be necessary for these parts of the Rule Book. If the adapted swimming guidelines are incorporated into Part One, then Appendix G will be deleted.

We completed our style manual (copies available upon request). The key points:

- * Capitalize titles only when they immediately precede a personal name (e.g., President Goldstein). Titles following a personal name or used alone in place of a name are lowercased (e.g., the president; Mel Goldstein, president).
- * Express physical quantities, such as distances, lengths, areas, volumes, etc., as numerals rather than spelling them out.
- * Do not use "sexist" pronouns.
- * Use the serial comma (butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle not butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle).
- * Put periods and commas inside quotation marks; put colons, semicolons, exclamation points, and question marks outside quotation marks, unless they are part of the quoted material.
- * Use "that" to define and "which" to explain (i.e., say "the fruit that was rotten" if the fact that the fruit is rotten is what distinguishes it from other fruit, and "the fruit, which was rotten" if the fact that the fruit is rotten is only an interesting sidelight).

We will announce the dedication for the 1997 Rule Book during the House of Delegates meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Ratify the Style Manual.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45p.m.

THE RULE BOOK COMMITTEE'S PROPOSED STYLE for the USMS RULE BOOK

Capitalization

Two years ago the Rule Book Committee went through and found as many instances of inconsistent capitalization as we could, and then decided on a standard style. In general, anything that was unique, or could be considered a proper noun, we capitalized (e.g., the Referee). Anything you could have more than one of we considered generic, and did not capitalize (e.g., timer). Everyone on the Committee did not always agree on what should and should not be capitalized, and disagreements were settled by the Chairman (who is still pretty wishy-washy about some of them). The list:

All-American	National Office
All-American Long Distance Swimming Team	National record
Announcer	National Registrar
annual meeting	officers
Assistant Referee	official time
automatic timing	Part _____ (e.g., Part One)
budget	Past President, immediate Past President
Chief Judge	President
Chief Timer	Press Steward
Clerk of Course	Protest Committee
the Code	Recall Rope Operator
Code of Regulations	Recall Starter
_____ Committee, the Committee	Recorder
_____ Committee Chairman, Chairman of	Referee
the _____ Committee	Registration Chairman
Controller	Review Section
the Corporation	Rules for Long Distance Swimming
Director, Board of Directors	Rules of Competition
emergency medical technician	Safety Coordinator
events	Scorer
Executive Secretary	Secretary
Head Lane Timer	semi-automatic timing
House of Delegates, Delegates	Starter
Legal Counsel	State of _____ (e.g., State of Kentucky)
manual timing	stroke, tura, relay take-off judge
marshal	timer, lane timer
Masters Swimming	Timing Equipment Operator
meet advisor	Timing Judge
Meet Committee	Top Ten Recorder
meet contract, contract	Top Ten Times
Meet Director	Treasurer
Meet Evaluation Committee	USMS Rule Book
Meet Protest Committee	Vice-President
Meet Secretary	World record
National Championship Meets	zone representative

Sexist Pronouns

The Rule Book Committee has just completed an arduous multi-year project to rid the Rule Book of masculine pronouns. It was neither a popular nor an enjoyable task—We actually had one member of the Committee resign rather than participate in the project. Any new language inserted into the Rule Book should therefore be gender neutral, so that all this work will not have been in vain. This is of course easier said than done. As *Suggestions to authors* notes (p. 155),

Contrived tricky artifices to cover both genders should be avoided: he/she, she or he, s/he, his/hers, his or hers, him/her, and him or her sometime appear in technical reports, but they tend to distract or annoy the reader, especially if used repeatedly. Moreover, by making curt little bows to feminism, they are condescendingly sexist.

What are you suppose to do then? You can't say "The swimmer is responsible for providing *his* own counter" because that's sexist and you can't say "The swimmer is responsible for providing *their* own counter" because the subject and pronoun are not in agreement. Instead, try these suggestions:

1. Use plurals instead of singulars.
The swimmers are responsible for providing their own counters.
2. Change the voice of the verb from active to passive.
Providing a counter is the responsibility of the swimmer.
3. Insert a participle. Instead of saying:
The swimmer may follow the same procedure before he turns the relay card in to the Clerk of Course.

say:

The swimmer may follow the same procedure before turning the relay card in to the Clerk of Course.

4. Simply omit the offending word. Instead of saying:
A swimmer may declare his unattached status at any time.

say:

A swimmer may declare unattached status at any time.

Exception: The Rule Book has historically used the term "Chairman," not "Chairperson," and not "Chair" (which is something you sit on).

Commas

Use the serial comma:

butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle

not

butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle

Quotation Marks

Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks; colons, semicolons, exclamation points, and question marks go outside quotation marks, unless they're part of the quoted material.

That/Which

According to *The Practical Stylist* (3d edition, 1973, p. 178), "*that* defines and restricts; *which* is explanatory and nonrestrictive." In other words, say "the fruit *that* was rotten" if the fact that the fruit is rotten is what distinguishes it from other fruit, and "the fruit, *which* was rotten" if the fact that the fruit is rotten is only an interesting sidelight. "Which" should usually be preceded by a comma.

The incorrect use of "which" is rampant throughout the Rule Book (as it is in much of the material published every year). Several members of the Rules Committee noted incorrect uses of "which" in their recommendations for proposed rules changes submitted at the 1995 convention. People use "which" when they mean "that" because they think it sounds more serious. Most of it probably crept into our Rule Book because it was originally in the USS Rule Book—and there's the problem. Would we rather be correct, or would we rather match USS's wording? The Rule Book Committee would be happy to change all the incorrect uses of "which" to "that"—it would only take an hour or so. But we should carefully consider the consequences.