

DELEGATE PACKET FOR 2023 USMS ANNUAL MEETING (RULES COMMITTEE)

TABLE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE USMS GLOSSARY AND PART 1 RULES OF COMPETITION

The following proposed amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition were submitted to the Rules Committee in accordance with Articles 601.2, 601.4.1, and 601.4.3.

The committee action prior to the annual meeting is indicated as a recommendation to “adopt” or “reject”. Committee actions may be reconsidered at the annual meeting before presentation to the House of Delegates.

Amendments which are recommended for adoption by the committee require a majority vote of the House of Delegates to adopt. Amendments which are recommended for rejection by the committee require a 2/3 vote of the House of Delegates to adopt.

Number	Section	Description	Committee Recommendation
<u>R-1</u>	103.3	Clarification of criteria for qualification of officials	Adopt
<u>R-2</u>	103.18.1	Modify to better align with USA Swimming rule	Adopt
<u>R-3</u>	104.5.3	Modify options for event limits for nationals championships	Reject
<u>R-4</u>	104.5.5	Modify options for seeding procedures for nationals championships	Reject
<u>R-5</u>	105.1.2	Modify Top 10 season dates	Adopt

Pending USA Swimming Amendments that affect USMS Rules

Number	Section	Description	Committee Recommendation
<u>U-1</u>	101.1.1 101.1.2A	Modify to comply with World Aquatics SW 2.1.5	Pending USA Swimming HOD action
<u>U-2</u>	101.4.2	Modify to comply with World Aquatics SW 6.3	
<u>U3</u>	107.1.2	Modify to describe the difference between accommodations (swimmer centered) and modifications (exceptions to technical rules) and to further define the referee’s responsibilities and authority.	

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PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE USMS GLOSSARY AND PART ONE

The following proposed amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition were submitted to the Rules Committee in accordance with Articles 601.2, 601.4.1, and 601.4.3. If adopted by the House of Delegates, these amendments will take effect on January 1, 2024 unless otherwise noted (R-1).

R-1	103.3	Officials Committee	page 18	Modify
Committee Recommendation:		Adopt		
HOD Action:		Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

103.3 Qualification of Officials (In effect through December 31, 2024)

- 103.3.1** Referees shall be certified in this capacity by a USMS-approved certifying body, as defined by the USMS Officials Committee. Starters or stroke and turn judges certified by one of these bodies may serve as referees if they receive training on specific duties of the referee.
- 103.3.2** Starters and stroke and turn judges shall be certified in said capacities by a USMS-approved certifying body, as defined by the USMS Officials Committee. However, uncertified officials may perform the duties of such positions if they receive training in the specified duties of their positions and are under the direct supervision of a certified official.

103.3 Qualification of Officials (Effective January 1, 2025)

- 103.3.1** All officials acting in the capacity of Referees shall be certified in this capacity as a referee or equivalent by a USMS-approved certifying body, as defined by the USMS Officials Committee. ~~Starters or stroke and turn judges certified by one of these bodies may serve as referees if they receive training on specific duties of the referee.~~ Except for national championship meets, exceptions may be granted by the LMSC Officials chair (or designee) or by the USMS Officials chair.
- 103.3.2** All officials acting in the capacity of Starters, Administrative Official, ~~or and stroke and turn judges~~ Judge shall be certified in said capacities such position by a USMS-approved certifying body, as defined by the USMS Officials Committee. However, when necessary and with permission of the LMSC Officials chair or designee, uncertified officials trainees may perform the duties of such positions if they ~~receive training in the specified duties of their positions and~~ are under the direct supervision of a certified official (except for national championship meets).

Rationale: With over 400 certified USMS officials, and a certification process that can be completed quickly, the USMS Officials Committee concludes that it is time to require all deck officials to be certified in the positions they are working for sanctioned meets. Our athletes deserved trained officials.

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R-2 103.18.1 Lake Erie LMSC page 28 Modify

Committee Recommendation:	Adopt		
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

103.18.1 Achieving Official Times—An official time shall be achieved in a USMS-sanctioned competition or a USMS-recognized event in accordance with all applicable rules (articles 202.1.1E[1] and 108.2.1A). It may be achieved in:

- A Any timed heat.
- B An initial distance within a longer event or relay, provided the swimmer:
 - (1) Notifies the meet referee in writing of the intent to record an initial split time prior to the conclusion of the meet,
 - (2) Makes the written request prior to the swim for relay leadoff splits and for initial backstroke distances in individual backstroke events,
 - (3) Completes the initial distance with a legal finish, and
 - (4) Completes the event without being disqualified.
- C A relay leadoff leg, provided:
 - (1) The second swimmer does not start in the water when automatic timing is used,
 - (2) The second swimmer does not invalidate the pad touch by standing on an active touchpad at the exchange if starting from the deck when automatic timing is used, and
 - (3) ~~That swimmers complete the event without being disqualified. The relay is swum by four eligible relay members. The lead-off swimmer's time shall not be nullified by a subsequent disqualification of the remaining relay team members.~~
- D A time trial conducted in a USMS-sanctioned meet or USMS-recognized meet under the rules of the sanctioning organization

Rationale: We [Lake Erie LMSC] recommend revising the USMS version of the rule to better align with the USA Swimming version (**Article 102.23.1A(1)(c)**). If USA Swimming swimmers are familiar with this rule and USMS desires to grow the sport by welcoming those swimmers once they age out, it would seem logical if not necessary to adopt this rule. This alignment would also benefit volunteers who operate within both USMS and USA Swimming. Furthermore, this alignment would help meet hosts who run dual-sanctioned meets.

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R-3 104.5.3 South Texas LMSC pages 33 and 34 Modify

Committee Recommendation:	Reject		
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

104.5.3 Event Limits

A Individual events—Competitors may enter and swim in a maximum of six individual events (or five individual events, if deemed necessary by the Championship Committee), with a maximum of three individual events per day. In the event the Championship Committee determines that the timeline exceeds what is reasonable:—

- (1) Non-qualifiersCompetitors will be allowed to enter a maximum of two events without meeting the qualifying times.
- (2) If there is still a need for an additional timeline reduction, then the 6th event shall be dropped.

B Relays

(Articles 104.5.3B is unchanged)

C National qualifying times—There shall be qualifying times for national championship meets unless otherwise determined by the Championship Committee. The procedure for determining the qualification times shall be established by the Championship Committee with the approval of the House of Delegates.

(1) Altitude adjustment

(Article 104.5.3C[1] is unchanged)

- (2) **Event limit**—When qualifying times are in effect, competitors may enter and swim in a maximum of three individual events without meeting the established qualifying times in events in which they swam within the past three years at a recognized or sanctioned competition.
- (3) Competitors may also enter up to three additional events (or two if the maximum event limit is five) in which they have in the past ~~two~~ three years achieved a time equal to or better than the qualifying times for those events: in which were conducted at a recognized or sanctioned competition.
- (4) The Championship Committee may choose to specify one or more of the following entry limitations for the 800/1000 and/or the 1500/1650 freestyle:
 - (a) Each competitor may enter only one of these events.
 - (b) Each competitor may enter both of these events.
 - (c) Only competitors who meet the qualifying times in both events may enter both events.
 - (d) One of these events may be restricted to only competitors who meet the qualifying times in that event.

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Rationale: In granting three events without meeting the qualifying times, swimmers should swim those events within three years prior to the entry due date. This is in line with the 2022 requirements for swimmers meeting NQTs.

Nationals should never be someone's first-ever meet or trying an event for the first time.

Swimmers tend to poorly guess their estimated times for events they have never swum before. This either throws the estimated timeline off or slows the meet down when placed in the faster heats.

Why were those who did not meet the qualifying times still allowed to swim three events, when those who met the qualifying times had one taken away to lessen the timeline? Isn't it the people who are slowest and the people who did not qualify to participate at Nationals, the ones who are adding to the length of the meet?

Rationale for Recommendation to Reject: The Rules Committee felt that the proposed changes were significant enough to warrant consultation with the Championship Committee before having been submitted for final consideration by the Rules Committee. Also, restrictions on achieving NQTs at only sanctioned or recognized events (not timed swims at practice as is currently allowed) was not seen as being in the best interests of swimmers at this time. This change would especially impact our youngest swimmers who may attain NQTs in college or high school meets, which are not USMS-sanctioned or -recognized events.

Note that the Rules Committee made an amendment in article 104.5.3A(1), which would be included in the final rule change if the House of Delegates votes to adopt this proposal.

R-4 104.5.5 South Texas LMSC Page 36 Modify

Committee Recommendation:	Reject		
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

104.5.5 Seeding

A General procedures for seeding (also see article 102.10)

- (1) At the request of the meet director and with the approval of the Championship Committee, any or all events may be deck-seeded. The Championship Committee may mandate deck seeding for any or all events.
- (2) All preseeded events and all deck-seeded events 100 yards/meters or less shall be 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.
- (3) Events 200 yards/meters ~~and longer~~ up to and including 500 yards/400 meters shall be seeded by one of the following methods:

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- (a) By entry time only, slowest heats swum first,
- (b) By age group, the oldest age group first, slowest to fastest within each age group, or
- (c) By a combination of (a) and (b).

The Championship Committee shall make all seeding decisions.

(Note exception provided in article 104.5.5A[8].)

- (4) The 1000/1650 yard and 800/1500 meter Freestyle events shall be seeded fastest to slowest. Swimmers ages seventy-five (75) and older will be allowed the option to be seeded in heats one and two. As lane space is available, heats one and two shall be filled using the next slowest swimmers.

(Current articles 104.5.5A(4) through 104.5.5A(8) are unchanged and will be re-numbered)

Rationale: At 2023 Spring Nationals, 43 of 224 swimmers (19.2%) in the 1650 free misrepresented their times.

There were 21 swimmers who did not meet the qualifying time in an event that required it. Five had never swum the 1650 before and 16 had not done so in the past 5 years. In 2022, there were 18 of 187 swimmers who did not meet the qualifying time. Five did not make the NQT. They entered below the NQT. Each held up the meet by more than 2 minutes.

One swimmer was at his first meet ever and guessed so poorly on his time that he finished almost 4 minutes slower than the entry time.

If swimmers are seeded fastest to slowest, this would reduce the timeline by eliminating heat hopping, as no one would put a faster time to swim early, at the risk of being slower than everyone else in the heat. (It is not the intent of this rule application that our most senior swimmers should have to wait hours before their races.)

Rationale for Recommendation to Reject: The Rules Committee felt that the proposed changes were significant enough to warrant consultation with the Championship Committee before having been submitted for final consideration by the Rules Committee. In addition, the age of 75 was seen as somewhat arbitrary and problematic for spouses/teammates who may be a year apart in age but who could potentially end up swimming several hours apart. There was also no guidance on how entries would be handled should there be more than 2 heats worth of 75+ swimmers. Finally, based on the statistics given for 2023, the added time from the 43 swimmers who purportedly misrepresented their times equates to roughly 15 additional minutes in the total timeline for the meet.

Note that the Rules Committee made an amendment in article 104.5.5A(3), which would be included in the final rule change if the House of Delegates votes to adopt this proposal.

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R-5 105.1.2 Records and Tabulation Committee page 40 Modify

Committee Recommendation:	Adopt		
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

105.1.2 Deadlines—Times to be considered for records and Top 10 times shall be achieved and submitted as follows:

Course	Times Shall Be Achieved On or Before:	Times Shall Be Forwarded to Records and Tabulation Chair Or Designee By:	Season
Short Course Yards	May 31*	June 30**	June 1– May 31
Long Course Meters	September 30*	October 20**	October 1– September 30
Short Course Meters	December 31	January 26 <u>20</u>	January 1– December 31

* If USMS requests that a meet host conduct a USMS national championship meet after the season-ending date, times achieved at all USMS/World Aquatics meets up to and including Nationals after the season-ending date (May 31 or September 30) shall be considered for USMS Top 10 for the season that just ended, not the next year’s season.

** Should a USMS national championship meet occur after the submission deadline for that course, times from meets through Nationals shall be forwarded to the Records and Tabulation chair or designee by the last day of the month in which that meet was completed or by the 15th of the following month, if the meet was held in the last two weeks of the month.

Rationale: Additional time is needed to prepare the AQUA top 10 lists and make sure they are submitted on time. This change also makes the Short Course Meters season timing identical to the Long Course Meters season.

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HOUSEKEEPING REPORT

Pursuant to article 601.1.2, housekeeping changes to the USMS Rules of Competition submitted and approved by the Rules Committee, with the concurrence of the Vice President of Administration, are reported to the House of Delegates in the annual report from the Rules Committee or in a subsequent report (if approved after the annual meeting). These changes will take effect on January 1, 2024.

There are no housekeeping changes to be reported prior to the 2023 annual meeting.

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USA SWIMMING AMENDMENTS THAT AFFECT USMS RULES

Pursuant to article 601.4.3, Amendments to USA Swimming articles 101, 102, and 105 shall automatically be adopted by USMS unless the USMS Rules Committee determines that the amendment is not applicable to USMS, corresponds to a previously approved difference or is not in conformance with World Aquatics Masters technical rules.

Amendments to USA Swimming article 103 (USMS article 106, facilities standards) may be submitted by the Rules Committee with a recommendation for adoption by the USMS House of Delegates.

The following amendments will be submitted by the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Committee to the USA Swimming House of Delegates for consideration at the USA Swimming 2023 annual meeting and are pending final action and reporting by the USMS Rules Committee.

Number	Section	Description	Committee Recommendation
U-1	101.1.1 101.1.2A	Modify to comply with World Aquatics SW 2.1.5	Pending USA Swimming HOD action
U-2	101.4.2	Modify to comply with World Aquatics SW 6.3	
U-3	107.1.2	To describe the difference between accommodations (swimmer centered) and modifications (exceptions to technical rules) and to further define the referee’s responsibilities and authority.	

U-1	101.1.1 and 101.1.2A	page 1	Modify
Committee Recommendation:		Adopt	Adopt as Amended
HOD Action:		Adopted	Adopted as Amended
		Reject	Defeated

101.1.1 Forward Start—The forward start may be taken from the starting block, the pool deck, or a push from the wall. ~~At the commencement of each heat, the referee shall signal to the swimmers by a short series of whistles to remove all clothing except for swimwear.~~ Once all swimmers have removed their clothing, except for swimwear, the referee shall signal the commencement of an event by a short series of whistles inviting them to get ready at the starting end, followed by a long whistle indicating that they may take and maintain their positions with at least one foot at the front of the starting platform, or the deck, or in the water, and remain there. On the starter’s command, “Take your mark,” each swimmer shall immediately assume the starting position that maintains at least one foot at the front of the starting platform or the

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deck. Each swimmer starting in the water must take the position on the wall with at least one hand in contact with the wall or starting platform and one foot in contact with the wall. A swimmer starting in the water may face any direction.

101.1.2 Backstroke Start

A Starting commands—~~At the commencement of each heat, the referee shall signal to the swimmers by a short series of whistles to remove all clothing except for swimwear. Once all swimmers have removed their clothing, except for swimwear, the referee shall signal the commencement of an event by a short series of whistles inviting them to get ready at the starting end.~~ At the referee's first long whistle, the swimmers shall immediately enter the water and at the second long whistle shall take their positions on the wall without undue delay.

Rationale: To comply with World Aquatics SW 2.1.5

U-2 101.4.2 page 3 Modify

Committee Recommendation:	Adopt	Adopt as Amended	Reject
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

101.4.2 Stroke—Standing in or on the gutter, placing the toes above the lip of the gutter, or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter immediately after the start is not permitted. The swimmer shall push off on the back and continue swimming on the back throughout the race. 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 of the water. Once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the **final** 5 meter mark (long course and short course meters) or 5 yard mark (short course yards) immediately prior to reaching **for** the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged prior to the touch.

Rationale: To comply with World Aquatics SW 6.3

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U-3

107.1.2

page 50

Add/Modify

Committee Recommendation:	Adopt	Adopt as Amended	Reject
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

107.1.2 Responsibilities

- A Swimmer/Coach**—The swimmer (or the swimmer’s coach) is responsible for notifying the referee, prior to the competition, of any ~~disability of the swimmer~~ with a disability and of the requested accommodations and/or modifications. The swimmer/coach shall provide personal assistant(s) or any equipment (tappers, deck mats, etc.) if required.
- B Meet Referee**—The meet referee’s responsibilities include:
- (1) Determining if the requested accommodations/modifications are appropriate and can be met.
 - (2) Instructing the deck referee and starter ~~and stroke and turn officials~~ as to how the accommodations and/or modifications ~~to~~ will be made for ~~that the~~ swimmer with a disability.
 - (3) In communication with the remaining officiating crew a referee may:
 - (a) Instruct them to observe and report ANY violation of the rules and vet the call against the approved modification(s) and apply article 107 to overturn the call.
 - (b) Or, share the specific modification(s) and instruct them to observe and report any violation except the approved modification(s).
 - ~~(3) **Modifications**—Aids to speed, pace, buoyancy, and endurance are not permitted (see articles 102.12.1E and 102.13.10). Some of the modifications that the referee may make to accommodate the swimmer with a disability are:
 - (a) A change in starting position.
 - (b) Reassignment of lanes within a heat (e.g., exchanging lanes two and seven).
 - (c) Allowing the swimmer to have a personal assistant(s).Other allowable modifications are further described in this section under the type of disability.~~

107.1.3 Accommodations/Modifications

- A** Accommodations are considerations which allow a swimmer with a disability to access the facility (locker rooms, restrooms, pool deck, warm-up/down pool) and afford the athlete the time, assistance and deck space required to obtain a starting position for each event. Accommodations which the meet referee may approve for the swimmer with a disability include but are not limited to:
- (1) Reassignment of lanes within a heat, e.g., exchanging Lanes 2 and 7.

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(2) Allowing a swimmer to have a personal assistant(s) for any reason approved by the meet referee.

(3) Assuring proximity wheelchair access from deck to block.

B Modifications are any exception to the technical rules approved by the meet referee (see article 103.6.9) allowing a parallel performance for a swimmer with a disability. Aids to buoyancy or speed are not allowed (see articles 102.12.1E and 102.13.10). Modifications which the referee may approve for the swimmer with a disability include but are not limited to:

(1) Personal Assistant to act as a tapper at the turn and finish walls for a swimmer who is blind or has low vision.

(2) Use of visual starting signal(s) (strobe and hand signals) for a swimmer that is deaf or hard of hearing.

(3) Inability of the swimmer to turn a foot out in breaststroke during the propulsive part of the kick.

(4) Examples of other allowable modifications are further described in this section under the type of disability. Allowable modifications in accordance with article 107 shall affect the current meet and shall not set a precedent (see article 103.6.9).

Rationale: To emphasize the difference between accommodations (swimmer centered) and modifications (exceptions to technical rules) and to further define the referee's authority to grant such accommodations along with suggestions as to how officials, under the referee's instruction, will carry out their responsibilities.

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CHANGES TO CONFORM TO USA SWIMMING FACILITIES STANDARDS

Pursuant to USMS article 601.4.3, changes USA Swimming article 103 (facilities standards) may be submitted by the Rules Committee with a recommendation for adoption by the USMS House of Delegates.

There are no amendments to the USA Swimming facilities standards proposed for the 2023 annual meeting.

CHANGES TO CONFORM TO WORLD AQUATICS RULES

Pursuant to USMS Article 601.4.4, if amendments to the World Aquatics Masters Technical Rules are adopted between annual meetings of the House of Delegates, the corresponding portions of Part 1 shall be automatically adopted by USMS, except that such amendments may be altered, amended, repealed, or changed by a nine-tenths vote of the Rules Committee and a majority vote of the Executive Committee.

There are no pending World Aquatics amendments to consider during the 2023 annual meeting.