Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, Inc.

2019–20 Swimming & Diving Bulletin I
Rules, Revisions, and Interpretations

Jewelry Rule Prohibition is Rescinded

At the May 2019, PIAA Board of Directors Meeting, the Board removed the prohibition of jewelry for swimmers and divers. However, in accordance with Rule 3-5: Electronic Devices - watches, fit bits and other electronic devices are not to be worn by swimmers or divers during warm-ups or competition.

Uniform Rule

The following two paragraphs have been taken from a memo from Sandy Searcy at NFHS, endorsed by Melissa Mertz at PIAA, regarding suit coverage for Interscholastic Swimming and Diving.

“There is a growing trend in high school swimming and diving of athletes wearing training and competitive suits in a manner that contradicts with the intention of their original design and manufacture. Specifically, suits are being worn in such a way as to expose the athlete’s buttocks. This issue is not gender specific, and is occurring in various states across the country. The 2019-2020 NFHS Swimming and Diving Committee has addressed this concern by creating tools and resources for schools to use for parents and athletes. Coaches and schools should take a proactive role and address suit coverage with parents and athletes at their pre-season meetings. Coaches should select team suits that provide appropriate coverage as it pertains to NFHS rules. In addition, coaches should permit different styles to be worn that will appropriately fit various body sizes. During practice and competition, suits shall be worn in the appropriate size as dictated by that manufacturer’s specifications for the athlete’s body type and shall remain unaltered. Simply put, boys shall wear suits which cover the buttocks, and girls shall wear suits which cover the buttocks and breasts.”

Coaches should consider having athletes of various body types try on suits prior to purchasing team uniforms. Remember, they do not all need to have the same suit or color suit.
Uniform Rule Continued

Example of Appropriate and Inappropriate Female Suit

The colored area is the appropriate suit for the female athlete. From the edge of the appropriate into the dotted area on the female is inappropriate.

Example of Appropriate and Inappropriate Male Suits

The colored area is the appropriate area for the male, below the dotted area for the male is inappropriate.

Remember that NFHS ruling is that the suit must cover the buttocks on males and buttocks and breasts on females. Rule 3.3.2 page 24.

Uniform Rule Situations

Situation 1: A team shows up, at a meet, in a suit that does not constitute being legally attired, several girls buttocks are exposed. If this is their team suit, how does the referee handle this situation.

Ruling: According to Rule 3.2.PENALTIES: When an official discovers a competitor wearing illegal attire, the referee shall notify the coach of the competitor(s) to make the suit(s) legal before becoming eligible to compete. If the competitor(s) cannot comply without delaying the start of the heat/dives, the competitor(s) is disqualified from that event/dives and shall not be eligible for further competition until in a legal suit.

Comment: It does not matter whether it is the team suit or not, all competitors must be in accordance with NFHS and PIAA uniform rules for competition.
Situation 2: The referee notices a diver is wearing a suit that is not covering the buttocks. The referee notifies the coach of the competitor to make the suit legal before the diver can participate in the event. The competitor cannot make the suit legal without delaying the meet.

**Ruling:** The referee declares a failed dive.

**Comment:** If the diver is able to correct the suit issue before her next scheduled dive, then she may perform that dive and continue competing. However, if she cannot make the correction before the next dive, then it would be a second failed dive and she would be disqualified from the event.

Situation 3: As the competitors are reporting to the start of the race, the referee notices the competitor in Lane 5 is wearing a suit that is not covering the buttocks. The referee notifies the competitor to make the suit legal before she can participate in the event.

**Ruling:** Incorrect procedure

**Comment:** The referee must notify the coach of the competitor regarding the illegal attire. If the competitor cannot comply without delaying the start of the race, she shall be disqualified from the event.

Situation 4: The first swimmer of a relay team is in the water when an official notices the fourth swimmer has an illegal logo on his cap and swimmer 4 does not change or reverse the cap prior to standing on the block. The referee disqualifies the relay team from the event.

**Ruling:** Correct Procedure.

**Comment:** Any relay swimmer may change his attire prior to taking a position on the starting platform. The referee will notify the coach or the competitor he may not compete in further competition until the uniform is made legal.

This example of an Adidas suit is now considered in compliance with NFHS and PIAA ruling. Please be aware of this change.

**REMINDER: Breaststroke Starts & Turns**

One arm stroke beyond the hipline followed by one breaststroke kick may be made while the swimmer is underwater; any time before the breaststroke kick, a single butterfly kick is permitted and some part of the head must break the surface before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke after the start and each turn thereafter.

**Please remember that there is no reference to the 16.4 yard/15 mark for breaststroke and the swimmer is not bound by that marking for a legal start or turn.**
POST MEET CONFERENCES

Post meet conferences must be conducted. They don’t need to be long or drawn out. Conducting these conferences requires all officials to put their feelings aside, be honest, objective and professional. The “gotcha” attitude has no place in life and certainly not in officiating as it relates to our fellow officials, coaches, fans and most importantly, the student-athletes.

These brief sessions should be conducted in a learning environment, away from any and all distractions. Constructive criticism, given in a positive manner, can make us better officials at our next meet and in years to come. We can all improve in what we do.

Questions to be asked at conferences: Did we officiate at our best? Were we spot on with a call? Were we in the best position to make that call the coach questioned? Were all our interactions done in a professional manner with no confrontational attitude? Was the diving judging fair, scores consistent and were breaks in position caught, etc?

Bottom line is, we are all on the same team and, as such, we need to accept and apply constructive criticism including peer assessment by being open minded and looking towards self-improvement.

Using part of the Army’s slogan…We ( Officials) need to be the best that we can be. We owe it to ourselves, to other officials but most importantly and above all, to the student athletes.

PROCEDURE WHEN AN ILLEGAL SWIM SUIT IS OBSERVED

When a swimmer or diver is observed in an illegal suit, two officials must agree that the suit, worn by the swimmer/diver, is illegal. If one of the two officials is not the meet referee, the violation must be reported to the meet referee. The meet referee and one of the two officials who observed the illegal suit, shall notify the coach of the violation. Officials must NEVER speak to swimmers/divers regarding suit violations concerning decency.

Clarification/Interpretation of Rule 3-3-1 thru 3-3-3 Uniform:
The following applies to all levels of competition and includes warm-ups for swimmers and divers:

- Female swimmers/divers shall not pull the suit/straps past the shoulders down to the waist and wear sports bras, bikini tops or halter tops. When on deck, the straps of a competition/performance suit may be lowered off the shoulders PROVIDED the one piece drag suit is on top of the competition suit, and has the straps in place on the shoulders.
- A drag suit may be worn over a competition suit for warm-ups.
- All suits worn on deck (except drag suits) shall meet all requirements of the uniform rule.
- Leggings and pantyhose may be worn with a competition suit for warm-ups.
SITUATION 4.2.2.A (Page 39): In a non-championship meet, a takeoff judge signals a violation, but the referee also observed the exchange and does not disqualify the swimmer.

RULING: If convinced there was not a violation, the referee, whose decision in such matters is final, may overrule the takeoff judge and not disqualify the swimmer.

Dual confirmation of takeoff judging is strongly recommended.

Dual Confirmation is recommended for relays and may be used for all meets. Rule 4-6-3 page 42.

I am aware that judging 4, 6, 8 lanes can be challenging but just as we watch diving to train our eyes to see the complete dive, we can get better at watching multiple lanes by doing it also. It does give the benefit of the doubt to the swimmer, the ones that we are officiating for. Practice can make permanent.

VIOLATION OF THE FEET FIRST WATER ENTRY

SITUATION: After completing their event, swimmers were “diving” into a separate warm-down pool. The swimmers were warned several times about the proper entry into the pool (feet first only-no diving) but these warnings were ignored. The coach was also approached about the situation several times and ultimately asked “what did the official expect him to do.” Please see below.

PROCEDURE/POLICY FOR WARM-UP/WARM-DOWN POOL ENTRY

If there is a separate warm-down pool, explain during the Coaches and Captains’ meeting the procedure for entry into the pool which is **feet first only** with the goal being “risk minimization.” Also, explain the penalty if the policy is violated.

First violation of the policy by any swimmer on a team, the swimmer and coach are warned.

Second violation of the policy by any swimmer on a team, *Unacceptable Conduct* is assessed. The swimmer is disqualified from the event that he/she just swam. Additionally, coach is warned that any further violations will result in the same penalty, *Unacceptable Conduct*.

DUAL CONFIRMATION ON RELAYS

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The principal of a High School makes the decision on the gender that the student athlete competes as and this will be accepted by the PIAA. (Page 116 in the PIAA Handbook) If a uniform accommodation is needed, the principal will contact the PIAA for a uniform modification and a letter from Dr. Lombardi will accompany permission on all uniform modifications.

PROPOSED RULE CHANGES

All coaches and officials can file a request at nfhs.org/RuleChangeProposal. Please do so by February 1st so Pat Gebhart will receive these and be able to review them for submission to NFHS by February 15th. Please consider sharing your proposals with your local interpreter or myself, Connie Harakal at charakal7074@gmail.com, for input to Pat.

NFHS LEARN

The course Officiating Swimming and Diving explores the elements of professional development and the fundamentals of officiating strokes and turns. The course also explores officiating and judging diving and provides a practicum of 30 dives. The course costs $20 and there is a $10 discount for officials who are also members of NFHS.

August 7 & 8, 2020
Hilton Harrisburg
1. Where are non team swimmers allowed to swim during a meet for time?
   - The “timing” of non team swimmers may occur during an official event, when there is an open lane for either team, or, it may occur prior to the first event, in between events, or immediately following the last event. When there are no open lanes, an extra heat for the non team swimmer(s) only occurs. (Ref. 2019-20 Pre-season Bulletin)

2. May a Referee confer with a judge during a dual meet when there is uncertainty about a dive being failed?
   - No. The Referee may confer with a judge during Championship Meets only when there is uncertainty about a dive being failed. In dual meets, if there is uncertainty, act in the best interest of the diver if you are not 100% sure. The benefit of the doubt always goes to the diver. Rule 9-7-5 Note.

3. When coaches decide to use cards for their entries, when must they turn them in and up to when can they make changes to them?
   - A coach can use entry cards and choose to turn them in at the beginning of the meet or prior to the start of each race at the designated time set by the Referee at the Coaches and Captains Meeting. Changes can be made up to the start of the race or the time designated to turn them in. Rule 3-2-4.

4. On the breaststroke start and turn, can the swimmer leave the wall and initiate an underwater breaststroke pull, past the midline of the body, then do a breaststroke kick and follow that with a dolphin kick before the head breaks the surface?
   - On the breaststroke, on the start and turn - one arm stroke beyond the hip line followed by one breastroke kick may be made while the swimmer is underwater; any time BEFORE the breaststroke kick, a single butterfly kick is permitted. Rule 8-2-2-c

5. If Team A has 3 females and 1 male in an event with no competitors, can they swim together?
   - No, girls swim with girls and boys swim with boys in separate races. If this practice would occur regularly, the time frame for back to back events would be negligible. Also, the risk of humiliation for either sex plays a role. The only exception would be in the 400 Free Relay when the boys and girls teams are from the same school and the coach verifies that there would be no harm to combine the two.

6. How many officials are required to officiate a dual swim meet?
   - It is recommended that a minimum of two officials administer dual meets. Two is the minimum number or there is no meet. Rule 4.1.3. Each District is responsible for determining the number per meet and the pay scale.

7. At what point on the swimmers body, in the Backstroke, can the swimmer resurface at the 16.4 yard mark to be legal? Is the neck part of the head?
   - The swimmer may be submerged for a distance of not more than 16.4 yards after the start and each turn. By that point, some part of the head must have broken the surface of the water and the chin is the last part of the head to resurface to be legal, therefore, if the neck is the first part of the body to resurface, it would be illegal and a DQ is the call.