

Situations and Resolutions—Stroke and Turn

The following situations and resolutions have been outlined by the USA Swimming Officials Committee and the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Committee to demonstrate examples of legal and illegal variations of strokes to be used for officials' education and training. While this resource has been designed to be representative of the many situations that an official may encounter, it is not intended to be exhaustive. The core principle of officiating—that the benefit of the doubt always goes to the swimmer—should always be followed.

Officiating Athletes with Disabilities

- 1. A swimmer with a disability is entered in a meet. When sending in the team's entries, their coach informed the entry chair of the swimmer's disability using a Necessary Accommodation form. What happens now?**

Recommended resolution: The entry chair notifies the meet referee and forwards Necessary Accommodation form to the meet referee. The meet referee should contact the coach. The meet referee should instruct the deck referee(s) and starter(s) as to how the "accommodations and/or modifications will be made for the swimmer with a disability," and instruct the remaining officiating team to either "Instruct them to observe and report ANY violation of the rules and vet the call against the approved modification(s) and apply Article 105 to overturn the call" or "share the specific modification(s) and instruct them to observe and report any violation except the approved modification(s)."

Applicable Rule: 105.1.2B

- 2. The deck referee receives a DQ slip that is a potential Article 105 based on information from the meet referee. What happens now?**

Recommended resolution: When the deck referee receives a DQ recommendation slip and decides that Rule 105 should be applied write or check "Rule 105" on the DQ slip and send it to the administrative official or referee as per the protocols established for the meet.

Applicable Rule: 105.1.2B

- 3. A swimmer in the breaststroke/butterfly only has 1 functioning leg/arm. No information has been given to the stroke and turn official about their presence. What is the proper protocol here?**

Recommended resolution: The stroke and turn official should raise their hand and inform the deck referee that the swimmer does not have simultaneous motion as they only have one functioning limb. If the deck referee has not been informed about any requested modification or accommodation, a disqualification should be

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written. The rules state that the swimmer or their coach is responsible for “notifying the referee, prior to competition, of any swimmer with a disability and of the requested accommodations and/or modifications.” The coach should be informed of the disqualification. The meet referee granted the authority to choose to overturn the call following the discussion with, and education of, the coach.

Applicable Rules: 105.1.2A, 101.2, 101.3

- 4. A coach contacts the meet referee to discuss the participation of his autistic swimmer in an upcoming competition. The swimmer just started on the team and the coach is unsure of what accommodation may be appropriate. How should the meet referee proceed?**

Recommended resolution: There is no single solution for this situation. Swimmers with autism may have a wide variety of difficulties dealing with the competitive environment. Everything from sensory overload to difficulty communicating with timers and meet officials can require some flexibility and individualized solutions. It would be permissible to have a parent, or other trusted adult as a Personal Assistant (PA) with the athlete. They may need to avoid Clerk of Course environments (bullpen) and escort the swimmer directly to the blocks and remain through the start. As the swimmer gains more experience, this need may lessen.

Applicable Rules: 105.1.3A-B

- 5. Officials were briefed to not observe the right leg of a swimmer with a disability. The swimmer swims breaststroke and performs 2 butterfly kicks with their left leg at the start of the breaststroke. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended resolution: Yes, the swimmer should be disqualified. The rule states that only one (1) downward butterfly kick may be performed at the start and turn of the breaststroke. The swimmer performed two (2) butterfly kicks with their left leg, which was not a part of their rule modification.

Applicable Rules: 101.2.3, 105.5.3

- 6. During the officials briefing, officials were briefed that there is a swimmer with a disability in the meet who will drag their legs, and that they should not observe the legs of that swimmer in the breaststroke. During the 100 butterfly, this swimmer had a non-simultaneous touch at the turn and the turn judge reports the call. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**



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Recommended resolution: Yes, the swimmer should be disqualified. the swimmer's technical modification was for the legs. The swimmer should still be observed and if a rule violation not including the legs is observed, it should be reported, and a disqualification made.

Applicable rules: 105.5.2, 101.3.2

- 7. A swimmer with a disability is observed inconsistently not turning their feet outwards for the propulsive part of the kick during the 100 meter breaststroke. Should the swimmer be disqualified**

Recommended resolution: Yes, the rule states the feet must be turned outwards for the propulsive part of the kick. This is a violation of the rule and the swimmer should be disqualified.

Applicable rules: 105.2.3B, 105.5, 101.2.3

- 8. A swimmer says that they sprained their ankle and cannot turn their foot out in the breaststroke kick. Should the swimmer be disqualified if they do not turn their feet out in the propulsive part of the kick?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. This does not qualify as a disability, which is defined in Article 105 as “a permanent physical or cognitive disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities.” Therefore, no exception to the breaststroke rule is warranted.

Applicable Rules: 101.2.3, 105.1.1



Breaststroke

9. A breaststroke swimmer moves their hands in a sculling or flipper movement at the end of the first arm stroke, both after the start and after the turn. Should they be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: No, the swimmer should not be disqualified. This is legal provided, "All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous without alternating movement." A sculling motion of the hands, only as a part of the arm stroke, is not considered the beginning of a new stroke.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

10. In a 9-10 100 yard breaststroke event, a swimmer completes 50 yards and, thinking that the race is over, pushes back from the wall to read the scoreboard. At this point, realizing that the race is only halfway over, the swimmer returns to the wall, pushes off on the breast, and completes the required distance in good form. What call, if any, should be made?

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer left the wall on the back and then returned to the wall before resuming the stroke. One violation that could be called would be that the swimmer was not on the breast when leaving the wall. Additional violations could include that the arm stroke was not simultaneous, depending on what was observed by the judge.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

11. In a 9-10 100 yard breaststroke event, a swimmer completes 50 yards, and, thinking that the race is over, stands on the bottom of the pool to read the scoreboard. At this point, realizing that the race is only halfway over, the swimmer pushes off the wall on the breast and completes the required distance in good form. What call, if any, should be made?

Recommended Resolution: No call should be made. The rule states, "It is permissible to turn in any manner as long as the body is on the breast when leaving the wall." The swimmer stood on the bottom during the turn rather than during the swim, so they are not disqualified as per 102.21.6, which states that "standing on the bottom during any other stroke [other than freestyle] shall result in disqualification"

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2



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12. In a senior 100 yard breaststroke event, the turn judge calls a disqualification because the swimmer in lane 2 was not on their breast when leaving the wall at the first turn. Upon further investigation, the referee determines that the judge observed the following sequence of events:

- The turn judge picks up the swimmer in lane 2 as the swimmer is headed away from the wall.
- The turn judge sees that the swimmer is not on their breast.
- The turn judge shifts their eyes to the feet of the swimmer and sees that they are off the wall.

Should the swimmer be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer should not be disqualified. The rule requires, “After the start and after each turn when the swimmer leaves the wall, the body shall be kept on the breast.” In the sequence that was described, it is possible that the swimmer’s feet were still on the wall when the turn judge observed the swimmer not on their breast. By the time the turn judge’s eyes had shifted to the feet of the swimmer, the swimmer had left the wall. To give the swimmer the benefit of the doubt, the turn judge must first observe the swimmer leave the wall and then check the position of the shoulders.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

13. When a swimmer left the wall at the first turn of the 50 yard breaststroke, the swimmer was on their back. The swimmer was disqualified. Should the swimmer have been disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, “After the start and after each turn when the swimmer leaves the wall, the body shall be kept on the breast.”

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

14. After a turn in the 100 yard breaststroke, a swimmer took their first stroke immediately after the turn. When taking this stroke, their shoulders were past vertical towards the breast; however, their right arm was significantly higher than their left arm. Should the swimmer be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states “All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous without alternating movement.” There is no stipulation that the arms must be in the same horizontal plane.



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Applicable Rules: 101.2.2

- 15. A swimmer swims the breaststroke in a way that their hands are completely underwater when they are pushed forward together from their breast. The swimmer does this because their coach told their swimmer that they could not recover with their hands or their arms out of the water. Is their coach correct?**

Recommended Resolution: No, the coach is not. The rule states, “The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over the water. The elbows shall be under water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish.”

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

- 16. To get further distance out of their breaststroke pulls, a young swimmer’s hands are brought all the way down to their legs on each pull. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: It is not legal. The rule states, “The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn.”

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

- 17. Although a breastroker’s head breaks the surface of the water during each cycle, they were disqualified at a recent meet for not taking a breath during each cycle. Is this a valid DQ?**

Recommended Resolution: No. There is no requirement to breathe at any specific point of any swim. The rulebook states, “During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer’s head shall break the surface of the water. After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.”

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

- 18. At the start of the 100 yard breaststroke, a swimmer dives in, and, in this order, executes a butterfly kick, a breaststroke kick, and one arm stroke completely back to the legs. Is this legal?**

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Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order.” By taking a breaststroke kick before the arm stroke, the swimmer’s breaststroke is out of cycle.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

Recommended Resolution: This is not legal. The rule states, “The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.”

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

- 19. While swimming the breaststroke, a swimmer realizes that their goggles have come loose. The swimmer extends their right arm forward to adjust their goggles. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, “All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous without alternating movement.” By using only their right arm to adjust their goggles, the swimmer violated this rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

- 20. While swimming the breaststroke, a swimmer realizes that their goggles have come loose. The swimmer moves both arms forward simultaneously to adjust their goggles, taking two breaststroke kicks to keep themselves afloat in the process. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, “Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order.” By taking two breaststroke kicks to keep themselves afloat, the swimmer violated this rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

- 21. After the start of the breaststroke, a swimmer realizes that their suit has come loose. The swimmer reaches back with both arms simultaneously to adjust their suit and brings their hands forward. The swimmer then takes a breaststroke kick. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer should not be disqualified. Their act of adjusting the suit, as described above, meets all of the requirements of the first legal breaststroke stroke. However, had this instead happened after the first stroke, it would be illegal if their hands were brought back beyond the hip line.

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Applicable Rule: 101.2.2

- 22. A coach is teaching their swimmers to do what they believe is a faster technique of getting to the wall on the breaststroke finish. The coach wants their swimmers, when they are inside of the backstroke flags, to stay completely under the water and not take any breaths. It takes several complete cycles while wholly submerged before the swimmers touch. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer’s head shall break the surface of the water.” Also, at the turn and finish, “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 the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch.”

Applicable Rules: 101.2.2, 101.2.4

- 23. After a deep forward start in the breaststroke, a swimmer took one arm stroke completely back to their legs followed by a little butterfly kick and a breaststroke kick to get closer to the surface of the water. Their head broke the surface of the water before the hands turned inward at the widest part of the second stroke. The swimmer was disqualified. Was the disqualification correct?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “After the start and each turn, at any time prior to the first breaststroke kick, a single butterfly kick is permitted.”

Applicable Rule: 101.2.3

- 24. A coach believes that their swimmer will be able to swim the breaststroke faster if the swimmer kicks their legs in a way in which they are always pointed inwards. When their swimmer tried this at their last meet, the swimmer was disqualified. Should the swimmer have been disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, “The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick.”

Applicable Rule: 101.2.3

- 25. When an 8-year-old novice swimmer gets tired in the breaststroke, the propulsive part of their kick is performed by the top instep of one foot and**



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the bottom part of their other foot. Should the swimmer be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The swimmer is doing a scissors kick. Scissors kicks are not permitted in the breaststroke.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.3, Glossary

26. A coach teaches their swimmers that they can swim the breaststroke faster if, off of each wall, they streamline and take at least 5 butterfly kicks before beginning regular breaststroke. Is this revolutionary technique legal?

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “After the start and each turn, at any point prior to the first breaststroke kick a single butterfly kick is permitted.” The rule is very clear that the swimmer is only allowed one downward butterfly kick after the start and each turn.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.3

27. When a swimmer swims the breaststroke, after each breaststroke kick, their feet travel downward as the swimmer recovers and draws the knees forward. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. This is a natural part of the swimmer’s recovery and is not a separate kick.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.3

28. When a swimmer swims the breaststroke, after each breaststroke kick, their legs move upward, back downward, and then stop, prior to the knees drawing the legs forward during the recovery phase of the kick. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No. the swimmer is executing a downward butterfly kick after each breaststroke kick, which is not permitted.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.3

29. A stroke judge observes significant water turbulence following every breaststroke kick taken by the swimmer in lane 4. The swimmer raises their hand and calls a disqualification on the swimmer for butterfly kick during the swim. Upon further questioning by the referee, the official admits that they not see the actual movements of the legs, only the extremely turbulent water. Should the disqualification stand?



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Recommended Resolution: The disqualification should not stand. The turbulent water could just as likely be caused by a completely legal breaststroke kick. The official must actually observe a butterfly kick in order to make that call.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.3

- 30. Since the elbows can legally come out of the water at the turns and finish of the breaststroke, a coach tells their swimmer that the hands can only touch simultaneously while they are out of the water. Is this correct?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water level.”

Applicable Rule: 101.2.4

- 31. While swimming the breaststroke, a swimmer touches the wall at the turn with both hands at the same time. However, the swimmer’s left hand was at the top of the wall, while their right hand touched well below the surface of the water. The turn judge raised their hand and the swimmer was disqualified. Was the call correct?**

Recommended Resolution: No, the call was not correct. The breaststroke turn rule states, “The touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water level.” This allows the swimmer’s hands to be on different levels when they touch the wall. They still need to touch the wall at the same time. The same is true for the touch at the finish of the race.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.4

- 32. An 8-year-old approaches the turn in the 50 yard breaststroke. Prior to touching, the swimmer does a flip turn and pushes off the wall with both feet. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water level.” The swimmer should be disqualified.

Applicable Rule: 101.2.4



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- 33. In a breaststroke turn, a swimmer touches with their left hand and then touches immediately after with their right hand. The turn judge raises a hand, signaling a disqualification. The coach argues that the turn is legal because both hands were on the wall at the same time. Should the disqualification stand?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes, the rule is very clear. The rules state, “At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water level.” The rules define simultaneously as “occurring at the same time.” Therefore, the hands must touch at the same time, not one after the other.

Applicable Rules: 101.2.4, Glossary

- 34. A turn judge observes the touch of a swimmer during the third turn of the 100 yard breaststroke. A couple of fingers from the right hand are barely in contact with a couple of fingers from the left hand when the simultaneous touch is made. The turn judge raises their hand to signal a disqualification, on the basis of the hands not being separated at the touch. Should the referee accept the call?**

Recommended Resolution: The referee should not accept the call. USA Swimming’s interpretation of the rule provides that incidental contact of the fingers at the touch is permitted.

Applicable Rules: 101.2.4, “Breaststroke and Butterfly Hands Separated Interpretation” (see this [link](#))

- 35. When a swimmer swims the breaststroke, at each turn, and at the finish, the swimmer stacks their hands completely on top of each other, as the swimmer believes it will allow them to make a more quick and powerful touch. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: This is not legal. The rule states, “At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water level.” USA Swimming’s interpretation provides further clarification, expressing that complete stacking of the hands is not permitted.

Applicable Rules: 101.2.4, “Breaststroke and Butterfly Hands Separated Interpretation” (see this [link](#))



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- 36. After the start of a breaststroke event, a swimmer incorrectly believes that there has been a recall. The swimmer stands on the bottom of the pool, but, realizing that no one else has stopped, resumes swimming. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No. Any swimmer who stands on the bottom in a stroke other than freestyle will be disqualified.

Applicable Rule: 102.21.6



Butterfly

- 37. A swimmer in the 100 yard butterfly moves too close to the right lane line. During the recovery portion of an arm stroke, their right arm hits the lane line, causing the right arm to trail the left arm over and into the water (alternating action). However, the swimmer then pulls both arms back simultaneously during the propulsive portion of the arm stroke. The stroke judge signals a disqualification. Is this a valid DQ?**

Recommended Resolution: This is a correct call. The rule states, “Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water and pulled back simultaneously under the water throughout the race.” In this case, the swimmer’s arms were not brought forward over the water simultaneously. The fact that the lane line prevented the swimmer from recovering both arms simultaneously is not germane to the judging of the stroke.

Applicable Rule: 101.3.2

- 38. Near the finish of a butterfly race, a swimmer starts their final stroke and finds themselves too close to the wall to make a full recovery. The swimmer ducks their head underwater, and reaches forward from the breast simultaneously with both hands to touch. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The swimmer executed an underwater recovery, which is prohibited in the butterfly. The rule states, “Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water and pulled back simultaneously under the water throughout the race.”

Applicable Rule: 101.3.2

- 39. A swimmer is 8 years old, and their coach thinks that the swimmer is a terrific butterfly swimmer. Currently, at the start, the swimmer takes only one kick and then one arm stroke that brings him to the surface of the water. The coach thinks that the swimmer would be able to swim faster if the swimmer took multiple strokes underwater at the start. Is this allowed?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “The swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water, which must bring the swimmer to the surface.”



Applicable Rule: 101.3.2

- 40. A swimmer is 8 years old and has insufficient strength to lift their arms completely over the water during the recovery phase of their stroke. The swimmer pushes their arms forward, with their elbow and part of their forearm underwater, but with the remainder of their forearm, their wrists, and their hands clearly out of the water. The stroke judge raises their hand to signal a disqualification on the basis of an underwater recovery. Should the deck referee accept the call?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes, the call should be accepted. The rules define the arm as “that part of the body that extends from the shoulder to the wrist.” The butterfly rule states, “Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water.” Both entire arms must recover over the water; the swimmer in question did not comply with this rule. However, there is no requirement that there be a visible space between the water and the recovering arms. Thus, had this swimmer been able to lift the arms sufficiently so that during the recovery the entire arms were above the water, or even broke the surface of the water even though not completely clearing the water, the swim would have been legal.

Applicable Rules: 101.3.2, Glossary

- 41. A swimmer is 7 years old and sometimes struggles when swimming the butterfly. When the swimmer recovers their arms, the entirety of both arms barely breaks the surface of the water, but there is no visible space between their arms and the water. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rules define the arm as “that part of the body that extends from the shoulder to the wrist.” The butterfly rule states, “Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water.” There is no requirement that there be a visible space between the water and the recovering arms.

Applicable Rules: 101.3.2, Glossary

- 42. At a local championship meet, a coach noticed that many swimmers were dropping their shoulders after the final arm pull prior to the touch. The coach believes and has taught their swimmers that they must keep their shoulders level with the water until the touch is made. Is the coach correct in their belief?**

Recommended Resolution: No, the coach is incorrect. The only requirement of the shoulders in the butterfly is that “the swimmer’s shoulders must be at or past

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vertical toward the breast.”

Applicable Rule: 101.3.2

- 43. In the 200 yard butterfly, a swimmer approaching the finish takes a stroke, recovers, and then dives for the wall with a powerful butterfly kick. As part of the dive, the swimmer submerges completely prior to touching the wall. The official raises their hand. Should the deck referee accept the call?**

Recommended Resolution: As long as the official can clearly see that the entire body of the swimmer is fully submerged, the call should be accepted. This, however, would be extremely difficult to observe; once the official shifts their observation to the hands for the touch, it would be very difficult to accurately observe whether the swimmer’s hips or feet are breaking the surface of the water. The rules require that the swimmer’s head must break the surface of the water by the 15 meter mark, and, after that, “the swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish.”

Applicable Rule: 101.3.2

- 44. In a 13-14 100 yard butterfly event, the turn judge calls a disqualification because the swimmer in lane 6 was not on their breast when leaving the wall at the first turn. Upon further investigation, the referee determines that the judge observed the following sequence of events:**

- The turn judge begins to observe the swimmer in lane 6 as the swimmer is headed away from the wall.
- The turn judge sees that the swimmer is not on their breast.
- The turn judge shifts their eyes to the feet of the swimmer and sees that they are off the wall.

Should the swimmer be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer should not be disqualified. The rule requires, “After the start and after each turn, the swimmer’s shoulders must be at or past vertical toward the breast.” In the sequence that was described, it is possible that the swimmer’s feet were still on the wall when the turn judge observed the swimmer not on the breast. By the time the turn judge’s eyes had shifted to the feet of the swimmer, the swimmer had left the wall. To give the swimmer the benefit of the doubt, the turn judge must first observe the swimmer leave the wall and then check the position of the shoulders.



Applicable Rule: 101.3.2

- 45. At the local aquatic center, not all of the 15 meter marks on the lane lines are aligned, and there is some variation between the lanes. At the start of the butterfly, the swimmer in lane 4 dives in and kicks underwater with a legal butterfly kick. Their head does not break the surface of the water by the 15 meter mark in their lane; however, it does break the surface of the water by the 15 meter marks in lanes 2 and 7. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: It depends: According to the rules, a fixed mark shall be placed on any wall or the deck adjacent to an outside lane to correctly align the 15-meter buoys for judging underwater starts/turn distances. The mark on the wall or deck will be considered the default marking for officiating purposes. So, if the swimmer's head breaks the surface of the water after the fixed mark on the wall or deck, the swimmer should be disqualified. Otherwise, the swimmer should not be disqualified.

Applicable Rule: 101.3.2 and 103.5.3

- 46. During a butterfly race, a swimmer realizes that their goggles have come loose. After taking a legal butterfly stroke, the swimmer simultaneously brings their hands forward under the water to adjust their goggles, meanwhile performing a legal butterfly kick to stay afloat. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, "Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water and pulled back simultaneously under the water throughout the race." The swimmer was not in compliance with this rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.3.2

- 47. During a butterfly race, a swimmer realizes that their suit has come loose. After taking a stroke, the swimmer simultaneously reaches back with both arms, pulls their suit forward, and recovers their arms over the water. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, "Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water and pulled back simultaneously under the water throughout the race." The swimmer did not do anything to violate this rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.3.2



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- 48. A swimmer in the 100 yard butterfly takes a simultaneous two-arm pull, kicks several times with their arms at their sides, simultaneously brings both arms forward over the water, keeps their arms stretched out in front of their for several kicks, and then does another simultaneous two-arm pull. The swimmer repeats this process throughout the swim. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer should not be disqualified. There is no rule requiring an arm stroke between leg kicks. The swimmer may kick as many times as desired between strokes as long as both legs kick simultaneously.

Applicable Rules: 101.3.2, 101.3.3

- 49. An age group swimmer comes off the 50 yard turn in the butterfly on their back, with their arms fully extended, and does two butterfly kicks, before rolling onto their breast and taking their first arm pull. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. While a swimmer may do one or more leg kicks after the start and each turn in the butterfly, the swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall.

Applicable Rules: 101.3.2, 101.3.4

- 50. A swimmer likes to keep their feet separated while kicking to the surface of the water at the beginning of the butterfly. Their legs still move simultaneously both upwards and downwards, and do not alternate. The swimmer was disqualified for not having their feet and legs together while doing the butterfly kick. Is this a valid disqualification?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, "All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other." There is nothing in the rules that prohibits the feet from being separated.

Applicable Rule: 101.3.3

- 51. A swimmer in the 100 yard butterfly enters the water at the start, with their shoulders at or past vertical toward the breast, and kicks on their side. The swimmer performs a kick with both legs moving simultaneously, without alternating movement, but moving from side to side. An official calls a**



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disqualification stating that the swimmer did not perform a kick with an up and down motion. Should the DQ be accepted?

Recommended Resolution: The DQ should not be accepted. The view of the kick as up and down is relative to the swimmer's body.

Applicable Rule: 101.3.3

52. When swimming the butterfly, a swimmer's right leg is slightly higher than their left leg. The legs move upward and downward simultaneously and do not alternate in relation to each other. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: Yes, this is legal. The rule states, "All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other." For the kick to be considered alternating, the official must observe that one leg moves up while the other moves down at the same time in "propulsive motion."

Applicable Rule: 101.3.3, Glossary

53. At the turn in a 50 yard butterfly event, the turn judge makes a call for a one-hand touch. After further discussion with the official, the chief judge determines that the turn judge observed three swimmers in their jurisdiction come into the wall simultaneously. As the turn judge shifted their eyes across all three lanes, the turn judge observed the swimmer in lane 3 pulling away from the wall with only the left hand in contact with the wall. Since the turn judge did not observe the right hand of the swimmer in contact with the wall, the official raised their hand to make a call. Is this a valid DQ?

Recommended Resolution: The chief judge should recommend to the referee that the call not be accepted. Stroke and turn judges should only call what they see, not what they don't see. While it is possible that the swimmer did not make a two-hand touch, it is also possible that a two-hand touch was made, but made before the turn judge had shifted their eyes to that lane.

Applicable Rule: 101.3.4

54. At the 175 yard turn of the 200 yard butterfly, a swimmer, realizing how tired they are, legally touches the wall with two hands, stops, stands on the bottom, and pushes off the wall on the breast a few seconds later. Should



the swimmer be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired. The shoulders must be at or past vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall.” Nothing that the swimmer did violated this rule. The swimmer stood on the bottom during the turn rather than during the swim, so they are not disqualified as per 102.21.6, which states that “standing on the bottom during any other stroke [other than freestyle] shall result in disqualification”

Applicable Rule: 101.3.4

55. A swimmer is 12 years old and is working to improve the speed of their butterfly. Prior to touching during one of the turns, the swimmer does a flip turn and pushes off the wall with both feet. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “The touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.” The swimmer should be disqualified.

Applicable Rule: 101.3.4

56. In a butterfly turn, a swimmer touches with their left hand and then touches immediately after with their right hand. The turn judge raises a hand, signaling a disqualification. The coach argues that the turn is legal because both hands were on the wall at the same time. Should the disqualification stand?

Recommended Resolution: Yes, the rule is very clear. The rules state, “The touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.” Therefore, the hands must touch at the same time, not one after the other.

Applicable Rule: 101.3.4

57. A turn judge observes the touch of a swimmer at the finish of the 200 yard butterfly. A couple of fingers from the right hand are barely in contact with a couple of fingers from the left hand when the simultaneous touch is made. The turn judge raises their hand to signal a disqualification, on the basis of the hands not being separated at the touch. Should the referee accept the call?



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Recommended Resolution: The referee should not accept the call. USA Swimming's interpretation of the rule provides that incidental contact of the fingers at the touch is permitted.

Applicable Rules: 101.3.5, "Breaststroke and Butterfly Hands Separated Interpretation" (see this [link](#))

- 58. When a swimmer swims the butterfly, at the finish, they stack their hands completely on top of each other, thinking it will help them reach for the wall in a more effective manner. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: This is not legal. The rule states, "The touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface." USA Swimming's interpretation provides further clarification, expressing that complete stacking of the hands is not permitted.

Applicable Rules: 101.3.5, "Breaststroke and Butterfly Hands Separated Interpretation"

- 59. A swimmer completed their butterfly event with a two-hand touch. One hand was under the water and one hand was out of the water, above the water surface, on this simultaneous finish. The stroke and turn official disqualified them for not having both of their hands either out of the water or under the water. Should the swimmer have been disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: No, the swimmer should not have been disqualified. The rule states, "The touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface."

Applicable Rule: 101.3.5

- 60. After the start of a butterfly event, a swimmer incorrectly believes that there has been a recall. The swimmer stands on the bottom of the pool, but, realizing that no one else has stopped, resumes swimming. Should there be a disqualification?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. Any swimmer who stands on the bottom in a stroke other than freestyle will be disqualified.

Applicable Rule: 102.21.6



Backstroke

- 61. A senior swimmer has never used the backstroke ledge before. Their coach tells them that all ten of their toes must be in contact with the touchpad in order for their start to be legal. Is their coach correct?**

Recommended Resolution: No. As long as one toe from each foot is in contact with the end wall or face of the touchpad, the swimmer is complying with the rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.1

- 62. A swimmer knows that they can swim the backstroke faster if they dive in off the block at the start and then rotates onto their back, as opposed to simply starting in the pool. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips.”

Applicable Rule: 101.4.1

- 63. In a backstroke start, a swimmer keeps their toes under the water until the starting signal, then slides them up, and takes off from the gutter. Should any action be taken?**

Recommended Resolution: The rule states, “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, before or after the start, is prohibited.” Since the infraction took place after the start, the stroke and turn judge should make the disqualification call.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.1

- 64. There are yellow buoys on each lane line to mark the 15 meter distance, but some buoys shift and slide haphazardly up and down the lane lines with all buoy markers moving further out from the side wall 15 meter mark,. The swimmer's head in lane 6 breaks the water surface at the edge of the buoy**



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in their lane, but the marker in lane 7 is passed. Is this a DQ?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The 15 meter marks on the deck or walls take precedence over the lane markings.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.2 and 103.5.2

65. In an 8 & under 25 yard backstroke event, the stroke judge raises their hand to disqualify a swimmer on the basis that the swimmer swam an “elementary” backstroke and not a “crawl” backstroke. Should the swimmer be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer should not be disqualified. The backstroke rules do not specify any particular stroke or kick requirements, only that the race be swum on the back. There is no requirement that the stroke must be "crawl" or that the kick be an alternating kick.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.2

66. A backstroker starts their race and surfaces prior to the 15 meter mark. The swimmer then resubmerges and resurfaces, again prior to the 15 meter mark. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No. Once the head breaks the surface of the water by the 15 meter mark, the swimmer may not resubmerge regardless of the fact that the swimmer resurfaces again within the 15 meter mark. The rule states, “Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it is permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water.” Once the surface has been reached, the start or turn has ended, and the requirement of remaining on the surface throughout the race is applicable.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.2

67. Approaching the finish of the backstroke, a swimmer likes to submerge themselves completely underwater when coming into the finish past the flags, as they know that it will allow him to achieve a faster finish. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: Yes, if the swimmer is determined to be reaching for the finish. The rule states: “Once some part of the swimmer’s head has passed the



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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.”

Applicable Rule: 101.4.2

- 68. While approaching the finish of the 100 long course meter backstroke, a swimmer submerges once their head has passed the 5 meter mark. Then, they run out of air, and resurface, and kick into the wall without taking an additional stroke. Is this legal?**

Recommended resolution: Yes, this is legal. The rule states, “Immediately prior to reaching for the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged prior to the touch.” Because the athlete reached for the wall, then kicked into the wall without taking an additional stroke, they have resubmerged after their head crossed the 5 meter mark, and immediately prior to reaching for the finish.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.2

- 69. An official makes a resubmerged call at the finish of the backstroke. The swimmer’s coach speaks with the referee and adamantly believes that the swimmer’s toenail was breaking the surface of the water just after their head passed the flags. The referee investigates the call with the official, where the referee learns that the official did not observe the location of the feet when the swimmer made the call nor where the swimmer’s head was with respect to the flags when the swimmer submerged. Should the call be upheld?**

Recommended Resolution: No, the call should not be upheld. In order to make a resubmerged call, the official must be certain that the entire body of the swimmer is underwater and the head was submerged prior to the flags. By failing to note the position of the feet (or any other part of the body, for that matter) there is no certainty that the swimmer’s body was underwater. Therefore, the benefit of the doubt must go to the swimmer.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.2

- 70. At the start of the backstroke, a swimmer likes to kick on their side, as they know that it allows him to achieve a faster time. Their shoulders are at vertical and their head breaks the surface of the water by the 15 meter mark. An official raises their hand to signal a disqualification because the swimmer is not flat on their back. Should the referee accept the call?**

Recommended Resolution: The rules define “on the back” as the “position of the

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body when the shoulders are past vertical towards the back.” The position in which the swimmer is kicking is not considered to be “on the back.” However, as we officiate as observers, not inspectors, and are unable to measure and/or determine the exact body position of the swimmer, it is expected that the benefit of the doubt be provided to swimmers in situations where it appears that their shoulders are “at” vertical. Unless it is abundantly clear that the swimmer’s shoulders are past vertical towards the breast, the swimmer is considered to be “on the back” during backstroke swims, turns, and finishes, and a disqualification should not be called.

Applicable Rules: 101.4.2, Glossary

- 71. A young swimmer approaches the turn of the 50 yard backstroke. The swimmer rolls from the back to the breast, takes a single arm pull, and initiates their turn. After completing one full flip turn, the swimmer returns to a position facing the wall without ever touching the wall. The swimmer looks up at the official and does another somersault turn, touching the wall this time, leaves on the back, and finishes the race. The turn judge makes no call. Is this correct?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The swimmer should be disqualified for failure to perform a continuous turn. The second “turn” is not part of the initial rollover turn and is viewed in the same way as sculling back to the wall.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

- 72. After passing under the flags and preparing for a turn during a 100 yard backstroke event, a swimmer turns past the vertical towards the breast and extends their arm while kicking, eventually executing a flip turn, leaving the wall on their back. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer should be disqualified for delay in initiating the arm pull. As the swimmer does not initiate any turning action after the shoulders pass vertical, the turning action is not continuous. The fact that the swimmer was kicking has no bearing on the disqualification.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

- 73. A swimmer was disqualified when, after turning past vertical toward the breast to make a turn, the swimmer somersaulted and failed to touch the wall with any part of their body. The swimmer then continued to swim the backstroke properly. Is this a valid DQ?**

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Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, “Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall.”

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

- 74. During a backstroke turn, a swimmer turned their shoulders past vertical toward the breast to make their continuous motion turn. While on the breast, the swimmer immediately took one continuous single arm pull and then one continuous simultaneous double arm pull to execute the turn. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The swimmer may only use one continuous single arm pull or one continuous simultaneous double arm pull, not both.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

- 75. A swimmer is swimming the 100 yard backstroke. At the second turn, the swimmer turns past vertical towards the breast and immediately takes a single arm pull. The swimmer then kicks and glides prior to executing the turn with no movements that are part of the turning motion. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The swimmer should be disqualified for delay in initiating the turn, as this is not a continuous turning motion.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

- 76. A swimmer is swimming the 200 yard backstroke. At the fifth turn, the swimmer turns past vertical towards the breast and immediately initiates a single arm pull. Realizing that they are still too far away from the wall in order to turn, the swimmer slowly continues their arm pull, while kicking, until the swimmer is ready to turn. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: No. By slowly continuing their arm pull, the swimmer’s turn is continuous. The swimmer should not be disqualified.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

- 77. A swimmer is swimming the 100 yard backstroke. At the third turn, the swimmer turns past vertical towards the breast and immediately takes an arm pull. When their arm stroke concludes, the swimmer thrusts their head forward and then initiates the turn. The turn judge raises their hand to signal**



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a disqualification on the basis of delay in initiating the turn. Should the referee accept the call?

Recommended Resolution: The referee should not accept the call. The swimmer thrusting their head forward is a part of their continuous turning motion. This scenario does not constitute delay in initiating the turn.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

78. A swimmer was swimming the 100 yard backstroke. At the first turn, the turn judge indicated a disqualification stating that the swimmer missed the wall on the turn. The swimmer and their coach come to the deck referee to discuss the call, and both say that the swimmer did touch the wall and that their feet just slipped. They also state that the swimmer could not have pushed off the wall if the swimmer didn't touch it. Should the deck referee uphold the call?

Recommended Resolution: Stroke and turn judges are taught to call what they see and not what they don't see. This philosophy is very evident in the missed touch at the turn where the turn judge must actually observe the swimmer not touch the wall, as opposed to merely not observing the swimmer touch the wall. The judge also cannot infer an infraction from other evidence such as a slow departure from the wall that normally accompanies a missed touch. The referee should further investigate the call and find out exactly how the judge knew that the swimmer missed the wall.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

79. During the 50 yard backstroke, a swimmer approaches the turn. When the swimmer moves past vertical towards the breast to make a flip turn, the swimmer finds themselves in contact with the wall. Without doing a flip turn, the swimmer leaves the wall past vertical towards the back. What action should the turn judge take?

Recommended Resolution: No action is required. The rule states, "During the turn the shoulders may be turned past vertical towards the breast after which an immediate continuous single arm pull or immediate continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn. The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall." Nothing that the swimmer did violated this rule; there is no requirement for the swimmer to do a flip turn.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

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- 80. During the backstroke turn, a swimmer turns past vertical towards the breast, executes a single continuous arm pull, flips, touches the wall with their feet, and accidentally pushes off the wall on their stomach. Realizing that the swimmer had made a mistake, the swimmer immediately turns past vertical towards the back. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rules state, “The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall.” The swimmer did not do this.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

- 81. An official is observing turns in the 100 yard backstroke. The swimmer sees a swimmer turning in the backstroke that appears to be past vertical towards the breast after flipping and raises their hand to report an infraction. Upon further investigation by the referee, the referee determines that the official did not know the location of the swimmer’s feet when the official observed the shoulders. Should the referee accept the call?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall.” It is possible that the swimmer’s feet were still on the wall when the official observed the shoulders past vertical towards the breast.

Applicable Rule: 101.4.3

- 82. At the turn in the 50 yard backstroke, a very young swimmer touched the wall with their elbow, while on their back. At the finish, the swimmer touched with their head. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rules state that “some part of the swimmer” must touch the wall. There is no requirement that it be any specific body part.

Applicable Rules: 101.4.3, 101.4.4

- 83. A swimmer is 8 years old. The swimmer is very afraid of hitting their head on the wall, so, at the finish of the backstroke, the swimmer turns past vertical towards the breast and touches the wall while on their stomach. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, “Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back.”



Applicable Rule: 101.4.4

- 84. A swimmer is entered in the 100 yard backstroke. When the swimmer places their feet, the swimmer bends their toes around the top of the touchpad. The starter does not notice. After the starting signal is sounded, the swimmer's toes are still in this position. The stroke and turn official raises their hand to disqualify the swimmer for bending their toes around the top of the touchpad. Should the referee accept the call?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, "A swimmer shall not be disqualified for an illegal starting position at the start if the race is permitted to proceed. Enforcement of the correct starting position is the responsibility of the starter."

Applicable Rule: 101.1.2E

- 85. During the 200 yard backstroke, a swimmer gets very tired. The swimmer stands up in the middle of the course. The swimmer does not walk or spring off from the pool bottom, but rests and then resumes swimming. Should there be a disqualification?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. Any swimmer who stands on the bottom in a stroke other than freestyle will be disqualified.

Applicable Rule: 102.22.5



Freestyle

- 86. A swimmer wants to swim in the style of backstroke during the 200 yard freestyle, and understands that this is legal as freestyle has no stroke or kick requirement. The swimmer would like to begin their race with a conventional backstroke start, in the water, with their back facing the course. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “The forward start shall be used.”

Applicable Rule: 101.5.1

- 87. A swimmer wants to swim the corkscrew during the 50 yard freestyle. Their coach informs him that this would not be legal, as the freestyle must be swum on the breast. Is their coach correct?**

Recommended Resolution: No. There is no required body position for the freestyle events, except for that the forward start shall be used.

Applicable Rules: 101.5.2, 101.5.1

- 88. A swimmer dives in to the pool to start the 100 yard freestyle, and kicks on their breast in a streamline position. Their shoulder blades break the surface of the water by the 15 meter mark, but their head breaks the surface of the water slightly past the 15 meter mark. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule requires the head to break the surface of the water by the 15 meter mark.

Applicable Rule: 101.5.2

- 89. A meet is conducted at a facility with aging lane lines. The floats designating the 15 meter mark are not perfectly aligned among the lanes. At the start of the freestyle, the swimmer in lane 6 legally executes the forward start, but their head does not break surface of the water by the 15 meter mark in their lane. It does, however, break the surface of the water by the 15 meter mark on the side of the pool. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: No, the swimmer should not be disqualified. The



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official must use the 15 meter marks on the sides of the pool and pool deck for judging.

Applicable Rule: 101.5.2 and 103.5.3

- 90. A swimmer wants to swim the freestyle in a unique way. The swimmer intends to begin with a forward start and swim entirely underwater, except for periodically coming to the surface to breathe. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: This is not legal. The rule states, “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 after the start and each turn. By that point the head must have broken the surface.”

Applicable Rule: 101.5.2

- 91. To achieve a faster finish in the freestyle, a swimmer likes to take a powerful stroke towards the end of their race that forces their entire body to be underwater before they touch the wall. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “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 after the start and each turn. By that point the head must have broken the surface.” By resubmerging after the 15 meter mark, the swimmer is in violation of this rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.5.2

- 92. A swimmer likes to swim the butterfly. The swimmer would like to swim the butterfly during a freestyle event. An official tells their coach that the swimmer can swim butterfly, but the swimmer can't alter the stroke at any time during the race. Is this a correct statement made by the official?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “In an event designated freestyle, the swimmer may swim any style.” Regardless of how the swimmer chooses to swim, the swim may only count as a freestyle time.

Applicable Rule: 101.5.2

- 93. A swimmer missed their championship cut in the 200 yard butterfly by less than one second. The swimmer is also entered in the 200 freestyle. Their**

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coach tells them that if they swim legal butterfly during a freestyle race, their time can count as a butterfly time, giving their another opportunity to earn their championship cut. Is their coach correct?

Recommended Resolution: No. Although a swimmer may swim in any style during a freestyle event, the time may only be officially recorded as a freestyle time.

Applicable Rule: 101.5.2

94. A young swimmer can't make up their mind what stroke they want to swim during the 50 yard freestyle. The swimmer decided to do the backstroke and the butterfly during the first 25 yards and the breaststroke and the freestyle during the last 25 yards. For the first length, the swimmer did a forward start and then a corkscrew to get into position to do their backstroke. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, "In an event designated freestyle, the swimmer may swim any style."

Applicable Rule: 101.5.2

95. During a turn in the 500 yard freestyle, a swimmer misses the wall. The turn judge signals an infraction. At what should be the end of the race, the coach shouts, "swim another 50," and the swimmer does so. Is there any limit to when a swimmer can go back and touch a missed wall? Does the disqualification stand? What if the event is 100 yards or 1,650 yards? Does the length of the race have any bearing on the disqualification?

Recommended Resolution: The disqualification should stand. The rules require that the swimmer touch the wall upon completion of each length. When the swimmer makes the next touch at the opposite end of the pool, the swimmer has lost the opportunity to correct the missed touch. The length of the race has no bearing.

Applicable Rule: 101.5.3

96. A young swimmer just completed the only turn in the 50 yard freestyle, but didn't touch the wall. The swimmer started to swim, and got as far as the middle of the pool, when the swimmer decided to return to the turn end of the pool, and touch without doing a flip turn. In the meantime, the official raised their hand and wrote a disqualification slip. Was this a valid disqualification?



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Recommended Resolution: No. The disqualification should be withdrawn. Upon completion of each length the swimmer must touch the wall. The swimmer should not have been disqualified if the swimmer went back and touched the wall at the turn end prior to touching the wall at the finish end.

Applicable Rule: 101.5.3

97. In a 100 yard freestyle race, the turn judge observes a swimmer miss the wall at the first turn. When should the judge raise their hand?

Recommended Resolution: The judge should raise their hand when the swimmer starts swimming the next length after missing the wall. If the swimmer realizes their error, returns to the wall, and touches it before reaching the other end of the pool, the judge can reverse their call.

Applicable Rule: 101.5.3

98. During the turn of the 50 yard freestyle, a swimmer touched the wall with only their toe. At the finish, the swimmer touched the wall with their head because the swimmer was looking under the water at the swimmer in the next lane and not looking for the wall in their lane. Were these legal touches?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. In the freestyle, any part of a swimmer's person touching the wall constitutes a legal touch.

Applicable Rules: 101.5.3, 101.5.4

99. A swimmer in the 400 meter freestyle notifies the deck referee that they will be trying for a 100 meter split. After the first 100 meters, they see that they have not made the desired time, and swim about 25 meters out, and then back to the start end and exits the pool. What infraction has occurred? When should the judge raise their hand?

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer has committed two infractions. The first is that the swimmer did not touch the wall at the completion of each length. Additionally, the swimmer left the pool prior to the completion of the race. The turn judge at the turn end should raise their hand when the swimmer starts to swim back to the start end from 25 meters out. The turn judge at the start end should raise their hand when the swimmer exits the pool. The swimmer's 100 meter split will not count, as the swimmer did not legally finish the race.



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Applicable Rules: 101.5.3, 102.22.5, 102.24.1A(1)(d)

- 100. In the 1650 yard freestyle, a swimmer exits the pool to use the restroom. The swimmer re-enters with an in-water start with a push off of the wall. At the completion of their race, the swimmer is notified that they have been disqualified for leaving the pool. The swimmer argues the disqualification citing special provisions in the rules for distance events. Should the swimmer have been disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer should have been disqualified. The special provisions in the rules for long distance events are for pool events longer than 5000 yards or meters. The 1650 yard freestyle is not subject to these special provisions.

Applicable Rules: 101.8.1, 102.22.5

- 101. A swimmer leaves the pool believing they have finished their freestyle race. Finding out that they have not swum the correct number of lengths, they enter the pool again to finish. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “A swimmer must not leave the pool.”

Applicable Rule: 102.22.5

- 102. A swimmer believes that they finished a freestyle race and walks a few steps away from the wall. The swimmer is advised to swim two more lengths. The swimmer returns to the wall and completes the required distance. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer should be disqualified. The rule states, “A swimmer must not leave the pool, or walk, or spring from the bottom.”

Applicable Rule: 102.22.5

- 103. A swimmer got very tired during the 500 yard freestyle. The swimmer decided to stop and rest. By resting, their feet touched the bottom of the pool. After the short rest, the swimmer sprang from the bottom of the pool and completed the race. Should the swimmer be disqualified?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, “Standing on the bottom during a freestyle race shall not disqualify a swimmer, but a swimmer must not leave the



pool, or walk, or spring from the bottom.”

Applicable Rule: 102.22.5

104. A swimmer, towards the end of a 50 yard freestyle race, grabs the lane line to rest and, in the process, pushes backwards towards the turn end before resuming and completing the distance. Should the swimmer be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: The swimmer should not be disqualified. The rule states, “Grasping lane dividers to assist in forward motion is not permitted.” There is nothing in the rules that prohibits pushing backwards on the lane line. Freestyle has no prescribed cycle or form so resting, floating, and pushing back are not stroke violations.

Applicable Rules: 102.22.10, 101.5.2



Individual Medley

105. A coach has conducted several experiments in their practices and has determined that the individual medley can be swum faster if the swimmer swims the strokes in the order of butterfly, breaststroke, backstroke, and then freestyle. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: the first one-fourth, butterfly; the second one-fourth, backstroke; the third one-fourth, breaststroke; and the last one-fourth, freestyle.” It is not legal to swim the strokes in any other order.

Applicable Rule: 101.6

106. A swimmer is an extremely fast breastroker, but is not particularly skilled in the butterfly. The swimmer would like to swim breaststroke in the place of butterfly during the individual medley. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: the first one-fourth, butterfly; the second one-fourth, backstroke; the third one-fourth, breaststroke; and the last one-fourth, freestyle.” A swimmer may not swim the same stroke for more than one-fourth of the race in the individual medley.

Applicable Rule: 101.6

107. During the breaststroke portion of the individual medley, a swimmer takes a downward butterfly kick following each breaststroke kick. When discussing the call with the referee, the swimmer argues that their kick was legal, as butterfly is also a part of the individual medley. Should the referee uphold the call?

Recommended Resolution: The referee should uphold the call. The rule states, “The stroke for each one-fourth of the designated distance shall follow the prescribed rules for that stroke.”

Applicable Rule: 101.6.2



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108. A swimmer is a very strong butterfly swimmer. The swimmer would like to swim butterfly during the freestyle leg of the individual medley, as the swimmer understands freestyle to be swimming in any style that the swimmer chooses. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states, “In a medley relay or an individual medley event, freestyle means any style other than butterfly, breaststroke or backstroke.” Thus, in the individual medley, it would not be acceptable for the swimmer to swim the freestyle portion of the race in the style of butterfly.

Applicable Rules: 101.6, 101.5.2

109. A swimmer begins the freestyle leg of the individual medley by taking several butterfly kicks. The swimmer is disqualified for swimming more than one quarter of the race in the style of butterfly. Is this a correct disqualification?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not a correct disqualification. The butterfly kick is only one element of butterfly; it is not the defining characteristic. A swimmer would need to use both a butterfly kick, as well as a simultaneous double arm pull, in which the arms recover over the surface of the water, in order to be disqualified for swimming more than one quarter of the race in the style of butterfly.

Applicable Rules: 101.6, 101.5.2

110. A swimmer begins the freestyle leg of the individual medley with a breaststroke kick followed by a breaststroke pull. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The swimmer utilized both fundamental characteristics of breaststroke—the kick and the pull. Although the swimmer performed them in a sequence that would be illegal in breaststroke (the pull must come before the kick), by using both fundamental characteristics of breaststroke, the swimmer is considered to be swimming more than one quarter of the race in the style of breaststroke.

Applicable Rules: 101.6, 101.5.2

111. During the freestyle portion of the 400 yard individual medley, a swimmer becomes extremely tired, and, mid-pool, turns past vertical towards the back, in order to catch their breath and recover. Should the swimmer be disqualified?



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Recommended Resolution: Yes, the swimmer should be disqualified. The rule states, “In the freestyle, the swimmer must be on the breast except when executing a turn.” By turning past vertical towards the back, the swimmer is in violation of this rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.6.2

- 112. In an intermediate butterfly turn in the 200 yard individual medley, a swimmer is disqualified for touching the wall with only one hand. Their coach argues the call, citing that the requirement to touch simultaneously with both hands is a butterfly rule, not an individual medley rule. Should the call be upheld?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes, the call should be upheld. The rule states, “Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke.”

Applicable Rule: 101.6.3A

- 113. In a freestyle to freestyle turn in the 400 yard individual medley, a swimmer executes a flip turn, pushes off of the wall past vertical towards the back, and takes several butterfly kicks before turning past vertical towards the breast. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states, “Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke, except that in the freestyle turn, the swimmer must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.” The swimmer kicked while still past vertical towards the back, warranting disqualification.

Applicable Rule: 101.6.3A

- 114. In a freestyle to freestyle turn in the 200 yard individual medley, a swimmer executes a flip turn, and pushes off of the wall past vertical towards the back, but rotates past vertical towards the breast prior to taking any kick or stroke. The turn judge standing over the swimmer’s lane disqualifies the swimmer on the basis of swimming more than one quarter of the race in the style of backstroke. Is this a correct call?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not a correct call. The rule states, “Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke, except that in the freestyle turn, the swimmer must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.” The swimmer returned to the breast prior to taking any kick or

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stroke, making their swim legal.

Applicable Rule: 101.6.3A

- 115. A swimmer is competing in the 400 yard individual medley. In one of the intermediate freestyle turns, the swimmer executes a flip turn, pushes off the wall, and kicks on their side—her shoulders are at vertical. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rules define “on the breast” as the “position of the body when the shoulders are at or past vertical towards the breast.” Therefore, it is perfectly legal for the swimmer to kick in the position described.

Applicable Rules: 101.6.3A, Glossary

- 116. In the butterfly to backstroke turn of the 200 yard individual medley, a swimmer leaves the wall with their shoulders past vertical towards the breast, but then immediately rotates towards their back, and begins swimming backstroke. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states, “The shoulders must be at or past vertical toward the back when the swimmer leaves the wall.” The swimmer did not do this.

Applicable Rule: 101.6.3B(1)

- 117. During the butterfly to backstroke turn of the 400 yard individual medley, a swimmer legally finished the butterfly with a two hand touch. Their turn was rather irregular. When the turn judge observed the swimmer in a position with their shoulders towards the breast, the official raised their hand to disqualify the swimmer for not being on their back at the start of the backstroke. The referee determines, upon further investigation, that the turn judge was not aware of the location of the swimmer’s feet when the swimmer observed their shoulders past vertical towards the breast. Should the referee uphold the call?**

Recommended Resolution: No, the call should be overturned. Since the turn judge did not know the location of the swimmer’s feet when the swimmer observed their shoulders past vertical, it is possible that the swimmer was still on the wall at the time the call was made, and that their body was in a legal position when the swimmer left the wall.



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Applicable Rule: 101.6.3B(1)

- 118. For the backstroke to breaststroke turn of the 200 yard individual medley, a swimmer likes to utilize the “crossover” turn. The swimmer touches while on their side, and then swings their legs around to push off of the wall on their other side. Their shoulders were at vertical when they touched the wall, and at vertical when they left the wall. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes, this is legal. The rule states, “The swimmer must touch the wall while on the back. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall and the prescribed breaststroke form must be attained prior to the first arm stroke.” Nothing the swimmer did violated this rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.6.3B(2)

- 119. A swimmer is 11 years old. The swimmer also attempts to execute the “crossover” turn. At the finish of the backstroke, the swimmer reaches back to touch the wall, but their shoulders turn past vertical towards the breast in this process. The swimmer also pushes off the wall with their shoulders past vertical towards the back. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states that “the turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed.” While the swimmer attempted a “crossover” turn, which is legal, if done correctly, the swimmer did not successfully execute it in accordance with the rules, which require that the swimmer “touch the wall while on the back.”

Applicable Rule: 101.4.4, 101.6.3.B(2)

- 120. A swimmer prefers to use a “bucket” turn. The swimmer touches the wall on their back, somersaults backwards, and pushes off the wall on the breast. At a recent meet, an official disqualified her, stating that a flip turn is not a legal means to transition from backstroke to breaststroke. Was the official correct?**

Recommended Resolution: The official was not correct. The rule states that “the turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed.” The swimmer touched the wall while on their back, and left the wall while on their breast. The swimmer did not violate these rules.



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Applicable Rule: 101.6.3.B(2)

- 121. An age group swimmer sees no reason why they cannot use a traditional backstroke flip turn to transition from backstroke to breaststroke. As they approach the wall, they turn past vertical towards the breast, takes an immediate continuous single arm pull, and immediately initiates a flip turn. Their shoulders are past vertical towards the breast when they leave the wall. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states that “the turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed.” The swimmer did not finish the backstroke by touching the wall on their back. The swimmer may not use a traditional backstroke flip turn, as this is considered the finish of the backstroke, not a turn.

Applicable Rule: 101.6.3.B(2)

- 122. In a breaststroke to freestyle turn in the 100 yard individual medley, a swimmer touches the wall with a legal breaststroke finish, pushes off of the wall past vertical towards the back, and takes several butterfly kicks before turning past vertical towards the breast. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule requires the swimmer to “return to the breast before any kick or stroke.” The swimmer kicked while still past vertical towards the back, warranting disqualification.

Applicable Rule: 101.6.3B(3)

- 123. During the breaststroke to freestyle turn in the 200 yard individual medley, a swimmer executes a legal breaststroke finish and proceeds to push off the wall on their back. The swimmer later rotates to a position in which their shoulders are past vertical towards the breast, and does so before taking any kick or stroke. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes, this is legal. The rule states that the swimmer “must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.” The swimmer’s swim was in accordance with this rule.

Applicable Rule: 101.6.3B(3)

- 124. After legally finishing the breaststroke leg of the individual medley, a swimmer pushes off the wall on their side and takes several butterfly kicks,**



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with their shoulders at vertical, before surfacing and swimming a traditional freestyle. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: This is legal. The rules define “on the breast” as the “position of the body when the shoulders are at or past vertical towards the breast.” Therefore, the is considered to be kicking on the breast.

Applicable Rules: 101.6.3B(3), Glossary



Relays

- 125. During the 400 yard freestyle relay, the team in lane 6 decided to swim in medley relay order. The first swimmer began with a forward start and rotated onto their back after the start of the race. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes, this is legal. Swimmers may use “any desired stroke(s)” during the freestyle relay.

Applicable Rule: 101.7.1

- 126. A medley relay team would like to swim the relay legs in the order of backstroke, butterfly, freestyle, and then breaststroke. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rules require that the medley relay legs be swum in the order of backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and then freestyle.

Applicable Rule: 101.7.2

- 127. The butterfly swimmer on a 200 yard medley relay team swims their leg of the race using the breaststroke kick instead of the butterfly kick. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states, “Rules pertaining to each stroke used shall govern where applicable.” A breaststroke kick is not permitted in the butterfly; therefore, it is not permitted in the butterfly leg of the medley relay.

Applicable Rule: 101.7.2

- 128. A swimmer is a very strong breaststroke swimmer. The swimmer would like to swim breaststroke during the freestyle leg of the medley relay, as the swimmer understands freestyle to be swimming in any style that the swimmer chooses. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states, “In a medley relay or an individual medley event, freestyle means any style other than butterfly,



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breaststroke, or backstroke.” Thus, in the medley relay, it would not be acceptable for the swimmer to swim the freestyle portion of the race in the style of breaststroke.

Applicable Rules: 101.7.2, 101.5.2

129. A swimmer begins the freestyle leg of the medley relay by taking several butterfly kicks. The swimmer is disqualified for swimming butterfly during the freestyle leg of the medley relay. Is this a correct disqualification?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not a correct disqualification. The butterfly kick is only one element of butterfly; it is not the defining characteristic. A swimmer would need to use both a butterfly kick, as well as a simultaneous double arm pull, in which the arms recover over the surface of the water, in order to be disqualified for swimming butterfly during the freestyle leg of the relay.

Applicable Rules: 101.7.2, 101.5.2

130. A swimmer begins the freestyle leg of the medley relay with a breaststroke kick followed by a breaststroke pull. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The swimmer utilized both fundamental characteristics of the breaststroke—the kick and the pull. Although the swimmer performed them in a sequence that would be illegal in the breaststroke (the pull must come before the kick), by using both fundamental characteristics of breaststroke, the swimmer is considered to be swimming breaststroke during the freestyle leg of the medley relay.

Applicable Rules: 101.7.2, 101.5.2

131. During the freestyle leg of the 200 yard medley relay, a swimmer becomes extremely tired, and, mid-pool, turns past vertical towards the back, in order to catch their breath and recover. Should the relay team be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: Yes, the relay team should be disqualified. The medley relay rules note that article 101.6 is in effect for the medley relays, for which part 101.6.2 states, “In the freestyle, the swimmer must be on the breast except when executing a turn.” By turning past vertical towards the back, the swimmer is in violation of this rule.

Applicable Rules: 101.7.2, 101.6.2

132. In a freestyle to freestyle turn in the 400 yard medley relay, a swimmer

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executes a flip turn, pushes off of the wall past vertical towards the back, and takes several butterfly kicks, before turning past vertical towards the breast. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The medley relay rules note that article 101.6 is in effect for the medley relays, for which part 101.6.3A states, “Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke, except that in the freestyle turn, the swimmer must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.” The swimmer kicked while still past vertical towards the back, warranting disqualification.

Applicable Rules: 101.7.2, 101.6.3A

133. In a freestyle to freestyle turn in the 200 yard medley relay, a swimmer executes a flip turn, and pushes off of the wall past vertical towards the back, but rotates past vertical towards the breast prior to taking any kick or stroke. The turn judge standing over the swimmer’s lane disqualifies the relay team on the basis of the freestyle swimmer swimming backstroke during the freestyle leg of the medley relay. Is this a correct call?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not a correct call. The medley relay rules note that article 101.6 is in effect for the medley relays, for which part 101.6.3A states, “Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke, except that in the freestyle turn, the swimmer must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.” The swimmer returned to the breast prior to taking any kick or stroke, making their swim legal.

Applicable Rules: 101.7.2, 101.6.3A

134. A swimmer is competing in the 400 yard medley relay. In one of the intermediate freestyle turns, the swimmer executes a flip turn, pushes off the wall, and kicks on their side—his shoulders are at vertical. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rules define “on the breast” as the “position of the body when the shoulders are at or past vertical towards the breast.” Therefore, it is perfectly legal for the swimmer to kick in the position described.

Applicable Rules: 101.7.2, 101.6.3A, Glossary

135. At the local 8 & under LSC championships, a team has three 8 & under girls entered in the meet, but only one 8 & under boy. For the mixed 200 yard medley relay, they would like to swim a relay consisting of three girls and



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one boy. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states, “Mixed competition category relays must consist of two (2) males and two (2) females” and permit compositions other than two males and two females only at meets below the LSC championship level if it is stated in the meet announcement.

Applicable Rule: 101.7.3

136. At a local development meet, a team has three 8 & under girls entered in the meet, but only one 8 & under boy. For the mixed 200 yard medley relay, they would like to swim a relay consisting of three girls and one boy. Mixed relays consisting of swimmers of any competition category are permitted in the meet announcement. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: Yes, this is legal, if permitted in the meet announcement. The rule permits “mixed relays of compositions other than two (2) male swimmers and two (2) female swimmers” at meets below the LSC championship level if it is stated in the meet announcement.

Applicable Rule: 101.7.3

137. At the local 10 & under LSC championships, a mixed 200 yard medley relay is inadvertently permitted to compete with 3 boys and 1 girl. The lead-off swimmer achieved qualification time for an upcoming Zone championship meet. The coach argues that the lead-off time should count because the athlete completed their swim legally. Is the coach correct?

Recommended Resolution: No, the coach is incorrect, and the lead off time would not count. Official times can be achieved in lead-off legs swam in relays by “four eligible relay members.” The rule states, “Mixed competition category relays must consist of two (2) males and two (2) females” and permit compositions other than two males and two females only at meets below the LSC championship level if it is stated in the meet announcement. This relay was not swum by four eligible relay members, so the lead off time is not an eligible official time.

Applicable Rule: 101.7.3, 102.23.1A

138. At an age group meet, a team has only three 11-12 girls. For the 11-12 girls 200 yard freestyle relay, they would like to have the fastest of the three girls swim twice. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states, “No swimmer shall

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swim more than one leg in any relay event.”

Applicable Rule: 101.7.4A

- 139. At an LSC championship meet, electronic relay judging equipment is being used to confirm potential relay take-off violations. The third swimmer on the lane 5 relay team touches the top of the wall at the end of their length, but never touches the touchpad. Is this legal?**

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states, “When automatic relay take-off judging is used, each swimmer must touch the touchplate or pad in his/her lane at the end of the course to have finished his/her leg of the relay race.”

Applicable Rule: 101.7.4B

- 140. In the 400 yard freestyle relay, the third swimmer on the lane 5 relay team enters the water while the first swimmer on their team is swimming, as the swimmer wants to get wet, so that they are more ready to begin their leg of the race. Should their relay team be disqualified as a result of this action?**

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, “Any relay team member and his/her relay team shall be disqualified from a race if a team member other than the swimmer designated to swim that leg enters the pool in the area where the race is being conducted before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race.”

Applicable Rule: 101.7.4D

- 141. A novice swimmer will be swimming the breaststroke leg of the 200 yard medley relay. The swimmer is nervous, and does not want to do a dive start off of the block, but their coach tells them that they cannot do an in-water start, as the rules prohibit entering the water during any leg other than their own. Is their coach correct?**

Recommended Resolution: Their coach is not correct. The rules grant an exception to the restriction on entering the water during any other leg in cases “when an in-the-water start is required or such start is approved by the Referee.” It is perfectly fine for the swimmer to do an in-water start.

Applicable Rule: 101.7.4D

- 142. During the 400 yard medley relay, the breaststroke swimmer doesn’t get out of the pool before it is time for the freestyle swimmer to make the final**



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exchange with the butterfly swimmer. The team is disqualified because the breaststroke swimmer didn't get out of the pool in time. Is this a valid disqualification?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, "Each relay team member shall leave the water immediately upon finishing his/her leg, except the last member." There is an exception to this rule, however, for swimmers with a disability. The rule states, "Relay swimmers who cannot exit the water immediately may be allowed to remain in the lane until all relays have finished so long as they do not interfere with the other swimmers or the timing equipment."

Applicable Rules: 101.7.4E, 105.5.4

143. In the 200 yard freestyle relay, the third swimmer on the team in lane 4 misjudges their finish into the wall, and takes an extra stroke that the team's fourth swimmer was not anticipating. As a result, the fourth swimmer loses contact with the block prior to the third swimmer touching the wall. Should the relay team be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, "In relay races the team of a swimmer whose feet have lost touch with the starting platform (ground or deck) before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified."

Applicable Rules: 101.7.4F, 101.7.4C

144. A relay take-off judge makes note of an early take-off observation for the second swimmer of the relay team in lane 2. The official observed the first swimmer touch the wall, and then observed that the second swimmer had already left the block. Is this a valid observation?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not a valid observation. A relay take-off judge must observe the next-up swimmer lose contact with the starting platform before checking to see if the swimmer in the pool has finished. By doing this in reverse order, it is very possible that legal exchanges could be called as early take-offs, as the swimmer may leave the block while the judge is shifting his/her eyes. By observing the swimmer lose contact with the starting platform, and then shifting focus to the swimmer in the water, it is ensured that the swimmer always receives the benefit of the doubt.

Applicable Rules: 101.7.4F, 101.7.4C

145. The third swimmer on the medley relay team in lane 6 chooses to use an



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in-water start. The swimmer enters the water and places one hand and both feet on the wall. Their hand, as well as both feet, lose contact with the wall prior to the touch of the second swimmer. Should the relay team be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: Yes. The rule states, “In relay races involving in-the-water starts, the team of a swimmer who has lost touch with the end of the course before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified, unless the swimmer in default returns to the original starting point at the wall.”

Applicable Rule: 101.7.4G

146. The fourth swimmer on the freestyle relay team in lane 3 chooses to use an in-water start. The swimmer enters the water and places both feet on the wall. Both feet lose contact with the wall prior to the touch of the third swimmer, but the swimmer returns to their original starting position after the swimmer has touched, and starts their leg of the race. Should the relay team be disqualified?

Recommended Resolution: No. The rule states, “In relay races involving in-the-water starts, the team of a swimmer who has lost touch with the end of the course before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified, unless the swimmer in default returns to the original starting point at the wall.”

Applicable Rule: 101.7.4G

147. The third swimmer on a 200 yard freestyle relay team executes their relay take-off with one foot behind the adjustable back plate of the block and one foot on top of the adjustable back plate of the block and does not touch the block forward of the black plate during the takeoff. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: No, this is not legal. The rule states, “On relays, the second, third and fourth swimmers are prohibited from starting from the top of the adjustable back plate. A swimmer must have at least one foot in contact with the starting platform in front of the adjustable back plate during a relay exchange.”

Applicable Rule: 101.7.4H

148. The fourth swimmer on a 400 yard medley relay team executes their relay take-off using the “stepover” start. The swimmer begins with one foot behind the adjustable back plate and one foot on top of the plate, and later steps forward, leaving the block with one foot on top of the plate and one foot in

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front of the plate. Is this legal?

Recommended Resolution: Yes, this is legal. One foot is in contact with the starting platform in front of the adjustable back plate when the swimmer leaves the block, making their start in compliance with the rules.

Applicable Rule: 101.7.4H

