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TO: CIF Section Commissioners
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This memorandum is linked to the enclosed CD which contains two PowerPoint files pertinent to the 2008-09 rules, and a text file linked to the NFHS PowerPoint file, which is labeled "2009 NFHS Swimming." The second PowerPoint file, labeled "Tom Shafranski-Jewelry Rule" relates specifically to the change in Rule 3-3-5 Penalty (p. 24 of the current rules book). Slides 16-24 of that file provide good material for understanding that rule change.

References in the text below will link these electronic files. Please be sure that your Section officials have access to all of these materials and to the NFHS Swimming/Diving Rules Book for 2008-09.

RULES AND EDITORIAL CHANGES FOR 2008-2009

1. Lane Numbering-Rule 2-4-3 NFHS PowerPoint Slide 3

The rule now expresses a preference for numbering from right to left. When pools are renovated, this preference should be implemented.

2. Recall Device-Rule 2-7-4 NFHS PowerPoint Slide 4

Some sort of device is required, though it will rarely be needed under the no-recall protocol (Rule 8-1-4 and material on pp. 75-76). The use of a recall rope, a very dangerous device, is neither required nor encouraged.

3. Illegal Attire/Jewelry-Rule 3-3-4 NFHS PowerPoint Slides 5-6; Shafranski Power Point Slides 16-24

Several administrative procedures have been added or altered here. These changes should be read in conjunction with Rule 4-2-2-e and accompanying play rulings in that Section. While swimmers or divers may not compete wearing illegal attire or jewelry, there is to be NO disruption of the race or dive once it has commenced. Emphasis in 3-3-5 is upon discovery PRIOR TO the start. (See NOTE to Rule 3-3-5, p. 24.)

Major changes in this rule were made in the previous two years: (a) The penalties for jewelry and illegal attire were eliminated, except for the case where an athlete refused to make his/her attire legal (Rule 3-3-5 PEN, p. 24). (b) The sanction for subsequent violation is now disqualification from that event only, rather than removal from the meet for unsporting conduct. (c) The referee must notify the athlete's coach when a violation is observed. It is ultimately the coach's responsibility (Rule 3-3-6) to assure that all athletes are properly attired and not wearing jewelry.

Preventive officiating is critical here; officials should attempt to correct violations without unnecessary delay of the meet. **Careful review of the rule book and of the PowerPoint slides is essential for proper application of this rule change.**

4. Referee Signals-Rule 4-2-2-k NFHS PowerPoint Slide 7

The referee will no longer signal immediately when s/he observes relay takeoff or false start violations in meets where dual confirmation is used.

5. Timing Malfunction-Rules 4-8-3 and 6-3-4 NFHS PowerPoint Slide 8

A discrepancy of more than .3 seconds between primary/touch pad time and backup time is now required before the referee must determine whether backup times should be utilized. Please note that it is the REFEREE, not the timing system operator, who makes this decision.

6. Starting Position-Rules 8-1-1 and 8-1-2 NFHS PowerPoint Slides 9, 14-17

Swimmers are to remain stationary, rather than motionless, prior to the starting signal in both the forward and backstroke starts.

7. Dolphin Kick in Breaststroke-Rule 8-2-2-c

The arm pull must be initiated before the dolphin kick is executed. Mere drifting apart of the hands does not constitute initiation of the pull; there must be discernible arm-pulling action.

This interpretation is different from the recently-issued FINA/USA-S interpretation, so officials must be aware of this discrepancy. Club swimmers are being taught to execute the dolphin kick while the arms are fully extended/hands slightly separated BUT without any pulling action being initiated. Such a technique is illegal under NFHS rules and the swimmer shall be disqualified.

8. Swimmers/Divers with Disabilities-Rule 3-3-3 and 3-3-4 NFHS PowerPoint Slides 21-24

Accommodation, including use of equipment and adjustments in requires for performance of strokes and turns, must be approved in writing by the CIF Section Commissioner's office and presented to the meet referee.

The referee/starter may employ hand or arm signals, and use a strobe light starting unit, to assist hearing-impaired swimmers at the start of the race. Such accommodation does not require written authorization.

MATTERS FOR GENERAL REVIEW

1. “By State Association adoption...”

A variety of issues in high school swimming and diving are left to the discretion of the State Association for determination in conformity with local demands and circumstances. In California, these determinations are made by the Section Commissioners’ offices. The rules where such local determination is possible include Rules 3-1-2(d), 3-2-1, 5-1-1-NOTE, 5-1-3, 9-4-1 NOTE, and 9-4-6-NOTE.

2. Exhibition Competitors

Under CIF State By-Laws, Art. 5, (500-D), exhibition competition is permitted. There are CIF and NFHS limitations on such participation, including (a) the swimmer/diver may not earn any points towards the team score of that meet; (b) s/he may not exceed the maximum allowable number of events in Rule 3-2-1a; (c) s/he may not compete in regular competition on the same day; and (d) this participation must be properly supervised, including written permission from the principals of the schools involved. For more detailed information, please seek advice/direction from your CIF Section office and refer to State Rule 500.

3. Important Safety Concerns

a. Water Depth-Starting Block Height Rule

The water depth requirement (Rule 2-7-2) extends the minimum depth requirement from the starting end wall to 5 meters (the area in which swimmers performing racing starts will land). If schools in your Section are planning to renovate existing pools or construct new ones, they should carefully consider the possibility that additional water depth may be required in the future, either as the result of changes in swimming rules OR of state or local health and safety requirements. Rule 2-3-1 should also be consulted here.

b. Meet Warm-Up

The section on meet warm-up is provided primarily to enhance the safety of this aspect of swimming/diving competition. Unfortunately, meet warm-up is a time when many serious injuries have occurred, primarily due to the lack of proper regulation of athlete conduct by coaches and administrators. Please emphasize this information not only to your officials but also to coaches and host school administrators, who should be actively involved in this phase of a swimming/diving competition. See p. 5 of the NFHS Swimming/Diving Rules Book.

c. Weather-Related Problems

Lightning and other weather phenomena may raise concerns for athlete safety. Guidelines for such situations are provided at p. 7 of the NFHS Swimming/Diving Rules Book.

4. Back-Up Times and Touch Pad Contact-Rules 2-7-8/4-2-2-n/6-4-1/8-1-7

These rules and the accompanying Play Rulings following each of these Sections address various situations where back-up times should be utilized if swimmers do not, or are not able to, contact the touch pad at the end of the race. The beginning point is the expectation that the touchpad will cover the ENTIRE width of the lane. If the swimmer touches the pad, or where the pad should be, the requirements of the rules have been met. Statements about completion of a race (Rule 8) are to be interpreted by this provision.

It is the responsibility of the meet referee to determine whether integration of back-up times is necessary in any situation where the primary timing/judging system malfunctions. The procedure for adjustment and integration of back-up times (Rule 6) may not always be necessary, and it is the referee’s duty to determine this. Parents, desk personnel or coaches are NOT to make such determinations independently; the referee is responsible for determining when backup times are used, and overseeing how they are determined and used.

5. Prelims/Finals Are The Same Meet- Rule 3-2-1

Coaches and athletes must remember that prelims and finals of a championship or invitational meet are a single meet. There have been numerous entry rule violations in past years because coaches have assumed that prelims and finals are separate meets. This is especially problematic with relay entries.

6. Unsporting Conduct-Rule 3-5-1

Rigorous enforcement of good sportsmanship is a major expectation for all CIF officials and administrators, as an essential element of "Pursuing Victory with Honor." The prohibition of misconduct, including "taunting," is an important aspect of the preservation of a proper competitive atmosphere. Athletes, coaches, officials and administrators should be attentive to inappropriate situations and enforce fully the rule provisions that are designed to maintain proper participant conduct. See especially Rule 3-5-1 and accompanying Play Rulings.

NOTE: Clapping or other unnecessary/distracting noises while swimmers are on the blocks prior to a race may also fall within this Rule.

7. Backstroke Start- Rules 8-1-2 and 8-2-1-c

The NFHS backstroke start rule requires that toes be completely submerged. Consult the Play Rulings (pp. 49 and 52-53 of the NFHS Rules Book) for additional information.

The expectation is that the starter will make every effort to avoid charging swimmers with false starts by taking steps to correct misplaced feet/toes. If the swimmer curls the toes over the gutter or stands in the gutter -

*Prior to the starting command, swimmers are released from the starting position and the situation is corrected;

*After the starting command but prior to the starting signal, swimmers are released from the starting position and the situation is corrected;

*After the starting signal, the swimmer is disqualified for a stroke violation and the heat is NOT recalled.

8. False Starts/Recall of Races-Rule 8-1-3

A brief review of the major points of earlier discussion of the no-recall procedure includes: (a) The NFHS adoption of the procedure of not recalling the heat when one or more swimmers have obtained an unfair advantage at the start means that such false starts are not recalled but are declared, with the offending swimmer being disqualified at the completion of the race; (b) This protocol challenges long-standing habits so the possibility of inadvertent recalling of such false starts remains a possibility. For that reason, it is critical that procedures described in the Rule be carefully followed. (c) Recalling of the heat does not require that a swimmer be disqualified – if the starter or referee is not satisfied with the fairness of the start, the heat may be recalled and subsequently re-started without charging any violation.

Note: The NFHS protocol is similar to that used in USA-Swimming; the NCAA continues to require that such false starts be recalled.

9. Dual Confirmation of False Starts-Rule 8-1-6

Dual confirmation of false starts is required in championship meets but can be utilized in all meets.

10. Re-Submerging/15-Meter Limitation

In backstroke, butterfly and freestyle, the head of the swimmer must break the surface of the water within 15 meters of the start and each turn. If any part of the head has broken the surface by that point, the swimmer is in compliance, even if a portion of the head has already passed the 15-meter mark. A swimmer may not entirely re-submerge thereafter except at the turn/finish.

11. **Diving Competition- Rule 9-1**

Diving is one of the events of the swimming/diving program in high school competition. Unfortunately, too many schools have, either consciously or by default, “eliminated” diving as part of their competitive aquatics program. However, under NFHS rules, there is only one justification for this decision, and that is inadequate water depth – a safety consideration (Rule 9-1-1). Otherwise, schools should conduct diving as part of their competitive program. Penalties 2 & 3 (p. 57 of the NFHS Rules Book) state the consequences.

There are, of course, legitimate situations where diving cannot be conducted because of equipment failure. Those situations are also discussed on p. 57. The usual consequence of equipment failure is that the visiting teams are awarded points without having to dive, while the host team receives no points

12. **Change of Dive Position-Rule 9-3-6**

This change applies only to the voluntary dives in an 11-dive program – see Rule 9-4-1-a (p. 61). A diver is always permitted to change the listed position of his/her dive (usually for safety considerations). Abuse of this opportunity led to this rule being adopted in 2007-2008. The core rule about position changes is that any time a diver requests a change of position, the rule requires that the newly-selected position NOT result in an increase in the listed degree of difficulty; if the “new” position is of a lesser degree of difficulty, then that lower d.d. is imposed.

In 11-dive events only, if the listed or “true” d.d. of the newly-selected position causes the total d.d. of the five voluntary dives to exceed 9.0, then the diver is not permitted to make that change. In this instance, the diver in the example is left with two options: One is to perform the dive as listed. The other is to perform the dive in the newly-selected (but disallowed) position, in which case the dive will be declared “unsatisfactory” and awarded a maximum of two points – see rule 9-7-4 (p. 68).

Diving referees must now conduct an inquiry each time a position change is requested in one of the voluntary dives in 11-dive programs. When a diver requests such a change, the referee must first determine whether the change will result in a total d.d. of greater than 9.0. If so, the referee shall not permit the change; if not, the referee shall permit and apply Rule 9-3-6 to calculate the d.d. for the newly-selected position. This verification will inevitably disrupt flow of competition.

13. **Disqualification for Two Failed Dives-Rule 9-8-3**

A diver shall be disqualified for failing two dives for any reason. Please note that the list of reasons for a failed dive (Rule 9-7-5) includes both performance and administrative violations, all of which are counted towards the two failed dives that result in disqualification. Once the diver has failed two dives, s/he shall perform no further dives.