

GUIDANCE TO FINA SWIMMING RULES

The following guidelines are provided to assist all participants in the sport in applying the rules in a manner that is safe, consistent and fair to all athletes at all levels of ability.

The guidance notes are sectioned in such a manner as to reflect FINA Swimming Rules. Where there is no specific guidance the FINA Rule as stated is to be used for reference. None of the following guidance notes are intended to overrule FINA Rules; they are intended to provide practical guidance in the running of competition.

The assimilation of athletes with disabilities into open competition is being progressed at all levels. Whilst there should be no alteration of the interpretation of swimming rules, where necessary adaptations to procedures should be made to accommodate athlete's needs, e.g. the starting procedure will be adapted to include a visual signal for deaf athletes.

The content of this guidance does not affect the terms of competition for athletes in possession of a Certificate of Swimming Disability.

SW 1 Management of Competitions.

- a) The following minimum numbers of officials shall be appointed to ensure control of all licensed meets and open competition:

Referee	(1)
Starter	(1)
Judges of Stroke	(2)
Inspectors of Turn	(2, for each turn or take off line other than at the finish)
Finish Judges	(2)
Timekeeper	(1, for each lane - except in competitions where times are not required to determine race results.)
Chief Timekeeper	(1, where Timekeepers are appointed)
Clerk of the Course	(1)
Recorder	(1)
Announcer	(1)

- b) It should be noted that this list is the minimum number of officials to be appointed to fulfil the various roles. Where possible it is desirable to appoint additional officials especially towards the position where there is an Inspector of Turn at each end of each lane. (SW 1.2)
- c) In the case of an ASA Licensed Meet all officials must be appointed in accordance with the conditions of the license.

SW 2 Officials

- a) Responsibility for the safe conduct of all activities in those parts of the premises essential for the running of the competition remains with the Referee. However should the Referee not be satisfied with levels of behaviour then he/she has the authority to suspend competition and refer to the Promoter to restore order.
- b) In individual events of 800m or 1500m it will be at the discretion of the Promoter as to which end of the pool i.e. turn or finish end Lap Cards are displayed. The position of the Lap Cards will be notified to the competitors prior to the commencement of the race. Where Inspectors of Turn are not allocated to individual lanes at the finish end and lap cards are being displayed there, the lane Timekeeper shall operate the lap cards. (SW 2.6.3).
- c) Where Inspectors of Turn are not allocated to individual lanes at the finish end, the lane Timekeeper shall give the warning signal to swimmers. (SW 2.6.4)
- d) Where a Chief Inspector of Turn has not been appointed, Inspectors of Turn will report any violations of rules directly to the Referee. (SW 2.6.6)

Recorder

In the absence of a Chief Recorder the recorder shall:

- Be responsible where necessary for arranging the competitors into heats in a manner to be determined by the Promoter.
- Record the places and times on a results sheet when the race results confirmed by the Referee

- Extract the names of swimmers for any swim off, semi-final or final and arrange them in accordance with FINA Swimming Rules
- Ensure the early announcement or distribution of names of swimmers required for any swim off, semi-final or final.
- Be responsible for any computer generated meet management system and report to the Referee any inconsistencies observed

Announcer

The Announcer shall:

- Make announcements as determined by the Referee in relation to events, heats, disqualifications, swim offs, semi-finals and finals.
- Make such announcements as are necessary in relation to all aspects of safety relating to the competition and venue.
- Make other announcements only as directed by the Promoter, Referee or other authorised person.

SW 3 Seeding of Heats, Semi Finals and Finals

Heats

- a) The arrangement of the swimming order for competitors in the heats of an event shall be by draw or by seeding on entry times.
- b) The provision of SW 3.1.1.1. should be observed in that where entries are sufficient for one heat only and that heat is to be contested as a 'straight final' it should be swum at the time of the programmed event final. Should the promoter conditions require then the swimmers shall swim both a heat and final.
- c) When a promoter wishes to 'spearhead' any or all of the heats the relevant provisions of SW 3.1.2 shall apply.
- d) When a promoter wishes to introduce 'cyclic' seeding the provisions of SW 3.1.1.2 to SW 3.1.1.4 shall apply.

Semi-Finals and Finals

- e) In all competitions the semi final, and final, lane allocations should be determined as described in SW 3.2.1 to SW 3.2.4. Or as is declared in the Promoters conditions for the event.
- f) Where manual timing is in use, the placings as determined by the Referee shall be used to identify those swimmers who will progress to the next round of competition within swimmers who have recorded equal times in the same heat.
- g) Where the numbers of swimmers qualified for a semi final or final due to a dead heat, or equal times, exceeds the number of lanes available, unless the promoter's conditions allow a lesser number of competitors than lanes available a swim off shall take place.
- h) If during a swim off, all competitors are either disqualified, or dead heat again progress in the competition shall be by further swim off, or alternative means as agreed by all competitors and the Referee.

SW 4 The Start

- a) Under FINA Swimming Rules the forward strokes i.e. Freestyle, Breaststroke and Butterfly all start with a dive. (SW 4.1) To allow for development and differing levels of competence of competitors, swimmers are given an option to start from either the pool deck or in the water.
- b) Those swimmers starting from the pool deck shall on the Referee's long whistle stand at the end of their lane. On the command 'take your marks' they shall immediately take up their starting position with at least one foot at the pool edge.
- c) Those swimmers starting in the water shall enter the water on the Referee's long whistle. On the command 'take your marks' they shall immediately take up the starting position in their own lane with at least one hand in contact with the start end of the pool or other starting place. Hand contact must be maintained with the starting place until the start signal has been given.

SW 5 Freestyle

- a) No additional guidance

SW 6 Backstroke

- a) No additional guidance

SW 7 Breaststroke

- a) No additional guidance

SW 8 Butterfly

- a) No additional guidance

SW 9 Medley Swimming

- a) No additional guidance

SW 10 The Race

Fouling

- a) In addition to disqualifying a competitor who commits a foul, should the Referee consider that the foul was intentional the Referee shall report the matter as a complaint under ASA Judicial Laws. (SW10.6)

Relay Events

- a) Unless specified by the Promoter conditions all relay teams shall consist of four swimmers in each team (SW 10.9)
- b) In the event of swimmers starting their leg in the water, the starting swimmer must maintain hand contact with the starting place until the preceding swimmer touches the wall. (SW 10.10)
- c) Unless specified by the Promoter's conditions the nomination of team members and the relay swimming order must be made before the race. (SW10.12) Teams may be changed between rounds provided they are from a pool entered for the race.

SW 11 Timing

- a) FINA timing and placing is primarily based around the premise of Automatic Officiating Equipment (AOE) or three manual Timekeepers.
- b) When AOE is available, the Referee must determine whether or not the equipment operated correctly. As the equipment places by time, if the determination is that it worked then those AOE times and places must remain in the same relative order to themselves, taking precedence over manual placings. (SW11.1)
- c) Any time achieved other than via a correctly operating fully automatic process, i.e. timing started by the starting signal and stopped by the swimmer, will be deemed a manual time; this includes semi AOE, where the timing has been stopped by the Timekeeper, and hand held watches. (SW11.3)
- d) When there are fewer than three manual times, including Semi AOE, per lane, placing by the Finish Judges shall take precedence over times in determining places.
- e) Where the AOE has not functioned correctly, the backup time recorded by the timing system and the official manual hand held time shall be considered when determining the official time for the swimmer. Should a suitable time not be available without causing conflict with the placings, the swimmer shall be awarded the same time as the swimmer with whom his time and placing conflicts. It is not permissible to alter a valid AOE time. This time shall be indicated as a Referee's Decision (RD) and should not be used for British/English/Scottish/Welsh Record purposes; it may not be usable for other Record purposes, depending on the Record conditions.
- f) In situations where AOE is not in use, if times registered by the Timekeepers do not support the finish order, the swimmers involved shall be given the average of their times, raised to the next whole 1/100 second where necessary. It is not permissible to announce times which do not support the finish order decided by the Finish Judges / Referee. All times arrived at by such an averaging process (even if, coincidentally, any are actually the same as the swimmer's un-adjusted time) shall be indicated as a Referee's Decision (RD) and should not be used for British/English/Scottish/Welsh Record purposes; it may not be usable for other Record purposes, depending on the Record conditions.

- g) Where no time is available, the swimmer shall be given the time of the next slowest swimmer. If the swimmer is last in the race, the Referee shall determine an acceptable time. This time shall be indicated as a Referee's Decision (RD) and should not be used for British/English/Scottish/Welsh Record purposes; it may not be usable for other Record purposes, depending on the Record conditions. Alternatively, the swimmer may be offered the opportunity for an individual re-swim.

SW 12 World Records

- a) No additional guidance given

SW 13 Automatic Officiating Equipment

- a) Where AOE did not operate properly or was not in use, the Referee must decide on the finish order of a race by using all the information available.

Where the finishing orders of the Finish Judges disagree in any way, their results and that of the Referee shall be considered. The relative order of any two swimmers shall be determined by a majority decision.

Example 1.

Judge A	5 6 8 4 3 1 2 7
Judge B	5 6 8 4 1 3 2 7
Referee (R)	5 6 8 4 1 3 2 7

The three Officials only disagree on lanes 1 and 3. The Referee and Judge B have Lane 1 before Lane 3, so that is their relative order.

Result is 5 6 8 4 1 3 2 7

Example 2

Judge A	5 6 8 4 3 1 2 7
Judge B	5 6 4 8 1 3 2 7
Referee (R)	5 6 4 3 8 1 2 7

The places in doubt are Lanes 1, 3, 4 and 8. Judge B and the Referee have Lane 4 before Lane 8. All three have Lane 4 before Lane 3, and Lane 4 before Lane 1, so Lane 4 is the first in the group. Judge A and Judge B have Lane 8 before both Lane 3 and Lane 1, so Lane 8 is second in the group. Judge A and the Referee have Lane 3 before Lane 1, so that is their relative order.

The result is 5 6 4 8 3 1 2 7

Example 3

Judge A	8 4 3 1 7 6 2 5
Judge B	3 4 1 8 5 6 7 2
Referee (R)	4 3 8 1 5 6 7 2

Judge A and the Referee have Lane 4 before Lane 3, Judge B and the Referee have Lane 3 before Lane 8, Judge A and the Referee have Lane 8 before Lane 1, all three have Lane 1 before Lane 5, Judge B and the Referee have Lane 5 before Lane 6, Lane 6 before Lane 7, Lane 7 before Lane 2.

The result is 4 3 8 1 5 6 7 2

- b) When automatic relay takeoff officiating equipment has been provided, it shall be used to determine the correctness of all relay takeoffs and shall have precedence over the

decisions of Inspectors or Turn/Judges of Stroke provided that the Referee is satisfied that the equipment operated correctly.

- c) Any team having a takeoff time more negative than minus 0.03 seconds (e.g.0.04) shall be judged to have carried out an early takeoff and shall be disqualified. The figure of 0.03 shall be used as the default time unless there is another time stipulated at the technical meeting.