

RULES AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
The Cosmopolitan Las Vegas
Las Vegas, Nevada
June 3-4, 2011
Minutes

Present: Dan McAllen, Julie Bare, Arvydas Barzdukas, Joel Black, Kathy Casey, Van Donkersgoed, Brian Gordon, Diane Hicks-Hughes, Larry Johnson, Claire Letendre, Paul Lundsten, Jeri Marshburn, Ed Miller, John Morse, Wells O'Brien, Jamy Pfister, Megan Ryther, Jim Sheehan, Bruce Stratton, Jay Thomas, Hannah Wilson, and Carol Zaleski. Staff Liaison Carol Burch. Guest: Pat Lunsford. Mary Jo Swalley was in attendance via phone on June 4th.

Absent: David Berkoff, Anneliese Eggert, Clark Hammond, Jim Kelly, Stephanie Koziol.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m., June 3, 2011, by Chairman Dan McAllen. Introductions were made.

Agenda: There was one addition to the agenda (added discussion regarding aligning the verbiage for swimmer/athlete/competitor/athlete, etc.)

Minutes: The minutes from the Rules meeting in Reunion, Texas, September 15-16, 2010, were approved.

Reports from Affiliated Organizations:

- FINA – Carol Zaleski reported that FINA will not be considering rules changes until 2013. She spoke of the unique interpretation that Australia is applying to the butterfly kick in breaststroke. The Technical Committee has been conducting officials clinics, using the curriculum developed by USA Swimming.
- FINA Open Water – Jay Thomas's report is attached. (Attachment A)
- YMCA – Ed Miller said that it has been five years since the YMCA adopted USA Swimming technical rules and he believes they are where they hoped to be in the process. Officials training coordination is going well. Ed spoke of the problems at their Nationals in Fort Lauderdale when the grandstands were condemned. Work is scheduled to coordinate the USA Swimming and YMCA officials database portals.
- NCAA – Brian Gordon's report is attached. (Attachment B)
- NFHS – Diane Hicks-Hughes said that most of their time has been spent on the diving approach. High School will require an in-water start in depths 3.5 feet to 4 feet.
- USMS – Kathy Casey indicated that it is not a rules year for Masters. She has been spending time trying to align their book with USA Swimming's revised Article 102 and 103. Masters Rule Book has appendices with procedures for dual sanctioning of meets and rules differences from the other federations (high school, USA Swimming, NCAA). Their main issues have centered on the use of kinesio tape, trans-gender swimmers, and the misinterpretation of some of their rules by people in the field.
- OKI – Pat Lunsford reviewed the history of Our Kids Initiative which was started in 2000 to attempt to align the technical rules of the different organizations so that swimmers weren't disqualified when moving from one governing body to another. Pat referred people to the web site where there is lots of helpful information.

Report from the Timing Task Force - Jay Thomas gave a thorough report detailing the recommendations of the Timing Task Force. (Attachment C)

Review of Significant Interpretations and Rules Changes Since Last meeting

- Dan issued an interpretation from the Board of Directors which allowed for the sharing of a room by two coaches, even if one coach was also an athlete.
- Dan re-issued FINA's interpretation of the initiation of the pull in breaststroke.
- The Committee adopted the open water rule change that clarifies that swimmers must stay within the chute to the finish.

Motion Authorizing Chair to Interpret Rules on behalf of the Committee – It was moved and seconded to authorize Dan McAllen, Chair of the Rules and Regulations Committee, to interpret rules on behalf of the committee in between meetings of the committee. PASSED unanimously.

Discussion Items

- 205.2.2 deals with the age of an athlete when finals are on a different weekend from prelims. If timed final events are also held on the first weekend, what age should be listed for the athlete? The question was referred to the Age Group Development Committee for input, along with 205.2.3 (for which no one knows the purpose).
- Does sanctioning authority change when an LSC releases a club to a new LSC but does not relinquish any territory? It was determined that we should stick with a bright line. The LSC in whose territory the meet is being held is the sanctioning authority, even if the host of the meet is a member of another LSC.
- Can officials certified by the YMCA serve as observers for compliance with USA Swimming rules? The Committee decided to put forth legislation adding YMCA officials as observers.
- Butterfly touch – if the swimmer hits the wall with his head prior to the 2-hand touch, is it a disqualification? Yes.
- Mere wiggling of the fingers does not constitute the initiation of the pull in breaststroke.

The meeting was adjourned until the next morning.

June 4, 2011

Review of Committee Responsibilities for Recommendations

- Purpose should be to make sure items are properly and concisely worded, that they are not in conflict with existing rules or policies of USA Swimming, and that any other affected provisions are considered.
- Legislation coming forward from committees or task forces should be given special consideration and any recommendation for rejection should be for very good and valid reasons and clearly stated in the package.

Procedures for Withdrawal of Legislation and Approval Percentage

- Legislative proposals are considered to have been stated as of May 15th because that is the deadline and may only be withdrawn with the consent of the HOD.
- All proposals received after May 15th, except those from the Rules Committee (if published 75 days in advance), require a 90% approval.

Legislation – The legislation packet was discussed. The recommendations and edits are included in the Rules packet.

Other Business

- There was discussion about the format of the Rule Book. Should there be a vertical line adjacent to any section with a change? No.
- Claire will head a task force to go through the Rule Book to align the verbiage for athlete/swimmer/competitor, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Bare, Secretary

ATTACHMENT A

May 31, 2011

From: Jay Thomas - FINA Open Water Representative to Rules and Regulations
Subject: FINA Open Water Report to Rules and Regulations

1. At the Dubai – Short Course World Championship, FINA clarified that the finish chute was considered part of the course and the swimmers must remain within the rows of buoys leading up to the approach to the finish. On February 7th, USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Chair modified 702.5.1 via letter to reflect this change.
2. As a result of the FINA Commission Report on the death of Fran Crippen during competition, FINA has implemented numerous changes to organizational, operations and conditions of open water competition.
3. USA Swimming has created an Open Water Development Committee. I will work with the OWDC to bring forward any additional legislation to address changes that may be brought forward from FINA.
4. Last year's report indicated that FINA was going to be introducing a "Team Pursuit Race" at this year's World Championship. At this point, about all we know about this event is that is that it will be called a "Team Time Trial" and will be conducted in Shanghai . The rules for the event have not yet been published.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jay Thomas

ATTACHMENT B

USA Swimming Rules & Regulation Committee Meeting
June 3-4, 2011
Las Vegas, NV

NCAA Report

- A. NCAA Rulebook year (new rulebook effective 9/1/2011)
 - I. 4 prong process to rule changes
 - a.) Rule changes proposals submitted by NCAA membership (coaches, athletic directors, conference commissioners) or by NCAA rules sub-committee
 - b.) Membership votes on proposals through an online survey (Head Swim Coach, Diving Coach, Athletic Director, Conference Commissioners). Survey results are not sole determining factor.
 - c.) Items discussed at the CSCAA Convention in San Diego and comments factored into the online voting process.
 - d.) Rules subcommittee reviews results and makes recommendation on adoption to full swimming & diving committee in Indianapolis in June. Rule changes are then forwarded to NCAA Playing Rules and Oversight Panel (PROP) for final approval. Prop is composed of NCAA Presidents, Chancellors and Athletic Directors.

- B. Potential Rule Changes (Rulebook)
 - I. Requiring Starting Blocks for all NCAA Swim Meets (Dual, Invitational, Championship)
 - II. Eliminate restrictions on Track Type Starting Block
 - III. No recall false start
 - IV. Eliminating prohibition on declared false start for timed final events (800 relay, 1650)
 - V. Add a camera to review 15m underwater disqualifications. Camera could not be used to make calls, only reaffirm or overturn calls made by officials.
 - VI. Eliminate the wording "kicking and gliding actions are permitted" for backstroke turns
 - VII. Add wording to read downward butterfly kick in reference to breaststroke.
 - VIII. Change rule regarding interference and obstruction - currently swimmers cannot go to side to exit pool during relays - it is considered interference.
 - IX. Toughen penalty for wearing illegal swimsuit.
 - X. Add tape interpretation from November 2009 to rulebook (for documented medical reasons) and allow use of kinesio-tape (new).
 - XI. RJP rules
 - a.) Eliminate RJP's
 - b.) When there is a malfunction, eliminate all results from event, not just applicable heat.
 - c.) Only use RJP's to verify the dual confirmation of two human judges.
 - d.) Eliminate the +/- .09 from rulebook
 - XII. Change wording on swim-offs to add clarity and direction.
 - XIII. Two proposals to change event order for both dual meets and championship meets.
 - XIV. Rule to only permit short course yard performances for NCAA Championship qualification.
 - XV. To make 25 yards the default distance in dual meets where coaches cannot agree and the facility can accommodate 25 yard courses.
 - XVI. Several Diving proposals.

ATTACHMENT C

Timing Task Force report to the Rules and Regulations Committee – Phase 3 Report 5/31/2011

Summary: In June 2010, the Chair of the Rules and Regulations Committee commissioned a Timing Task Force (TTF) charged with “evaluating our process, policies and procedures for adjusting times and bring forward any recommendations for changes, which could include eliminating timing corrections altogether.”

Members of the Timing Task Force were:

Jay Thomas – Official – Chair

Anneliese Eggert – Official

Arvydas Barzdukas – Official

Suzanne Heath - Official

Julie Bare – Official

Paul Lundsten – Coach

Blake McKay – Athlete

The TTF came up with the following three phase process to examine and make recommendations to Rules and Regulations.

Phase 1 – Report to the Rules and Regulations Committee summary observations of the following related topics:

1. Current timing equipment on the market.
2. Current Meet Management Software and how those programs handle corrections.
3. Review of technical data studies regarding backup timing accuracy.
4. Review how FINA handles timing malfunctions and what guidance (if any) is given by rule. Examine how other Federations handle timing issues and corrections.

Phase 2 – Review of USA Swimming Rules, procedures, best practices, etc. in light of information gleaned from Phase 1.

Phase 3 – Development of recommendations to the Committee regarding timing corrections based on Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Work Since Last Report

As a follow up to Phase I and II, the TTF decided it would be beneficial to examine timing data collected recently to validate the statistical work of some of our older timing studies. Hy-Tek created a routine by which large amounts of raw pad and backup times. Times were extracted from meets run with equipment from the three major timing system manufacturers. The meets selected sought to represent the broad spectrum of meets – LSC Developmental, LSC Championship, Sectional or above. The results of this analysis confirmed the validity of the earlier studies.

Additional research was performed at the International Swimming Hall of Fame archives seeking to completely understand the history behind our current rules and procedures. Specific research was done to attempt to understand the history behind the 0.3 second threshold to investigate for a possible timing system malfunction in Rule 102.24.4.C (1). FINA, AAU, NCAA, NFHS, and USA Swimming rule books were examined to find the earliest reference to the 0.3 second threshold.

The earliest mention of any type timing correction was in the AAU Rule book from 1977.

“Rule III.8.D(3)

(a) Malfunction Determination – The determination of a malfunction shall be made by comparison of the primary and secondary times of each individual swimmer within a given race. When the difference between the primary and secondary times is equal to or greater than 0.3 seconds a potential malfunction in that lane is identified. A primary malfunction exists when this potential Malfunction is confirmed by other information such as the two additional times in three watch timing, manual watch backup (a third system), visual indication by equipment operators, across the board judges, etc.

(b) Comparison and Ranking Procedure

(c) Secondary Timing Errors – When because of an error in the secondary timing system the use of a secondary time as an official time would result in inaccurate and unfair time and placement of the swimmers, the swimmer's official time shall be determined as follows:

a. System Timing Error – A system timing error is identified by comparison of primary and secondary times of all swimmers having valid times with both systems. When this comparison shows that all or substantially all, of the secondary times are faster (or slower) than the primary times by approximately the same amount, a system timing error is indicated.

b. Method of Determination – The system timing error is determined by finding the simple average of the valid time differences between primary and secondary times of the individual swimmers in a given heat. This average is the system timing error and is used to add , or subtract if appropriate, from the secondary time of any swimmer not having a valid primary time in order to obtain that swimmer's official time. This time is used to determine the place and rank as described in Article III.....

NOTE: Such an error usually occurs in 3-button manual systems with a human start. A late start will produce "fast" secondary timing and thus unfair times when secondary timing is used to provide times for swimmers having a primary malfunction."

The earliest mention of timing corrections was found in the book "Officiating Swimming written by Richard Close. Mr. Close was a FINA Official from the USA who officiated at the World Championship and Olympic Games. In 1975, he released the 4th addition of his book. In that addition lies the first mention of electronic timing and corrections. In this book he states that "...when examining automatic times to a set of three watches, the Referee should investigate the accuracy of the electronic time when the difference is approximately 0.3 seconds (which represents the normal scatter seen in a set of watches) and when comparing against the average of two watches, approximately 0.5 seconds."

One significant note in Close's book is that the 0.3 and 0.5 second times are "approximate" – not an absolute threshold. In this year's timing study, we asked whether the 0.3 second differential between primary and backup buttons appeared to have any statistical significance. The answer was yes, it appeared that the 0.3 second differential represented a value of approximately 2 standard deviations – meaning that @ 95% of valid differentials would fall within this 0.3 second time window. It is probable that the 0.3 second window was based on statistical analysis of manual timing data during the development of electronic timing systems – perhaps before that time.

The TTF also examined the method by which we make a correction to a backup time under 102.24.4E – Adjustment for a malfunction on a lane. Our current rules have us computing a differential between valid primary and backup times – normally within a given heat – we will call this a horizontal calculation. The TTF questioned whether computing differentials vertically – by lane - would be a more appropriate method to determine a differential since that calculation would measure the error induced by that specific timer. Additionally, the TTF examined whether a standard correction – determine by statistical studies would yield more accurate backup timing correction results. The method used to analyze which correction method yielded the best result consisted of taking a set of known valid data (pads/backup buttons) and then computed horizontal and vertical differentials and applying those differentials to the known valid buttons to see which of the three methods (horizontal, vertical, standard) yielded button times that were closer to the known accurate pad times. When looking at a set of times it did not appear that any method consistently resulted in

times that were closer to the known accurate pad time. The group surmised that the variability in an individual timers performance in a specific race (backup button) had more impact on the accuracy of the time than did the method of calculating a correction factor.

Timing Task Force - Phase 3 Report. – Recommendations for legislation to address issues reported by the TTF.

The TTF identified the following subjects as areas that warranted legislation for 2012:

1. USA Swimming Rule 102.24.4D – Adjustment for the timing system difference. This clause in the rules is meant to apply a correction to a backup time to address human reaction error. The current rule states that “The adjustment for timing system difference may be incorporated into the automatic or semi-automatic system by design or may be determined by calculating the consistent average difference between the valid primary and backup systems used at that meet.” This provision was part of the original USA Swimming Rule Book. The drafters included this statement in order to address a feature that was present in one manufacturers timing system. There is valid statistical reasoning to make this correction (Killpatrick, Hirschmann/Barzdukas, Holcomb) to semi-automatic times. However, Colorado Times System is the only manufacturer that incorporates such a correction into its timing system. Under a scenario where semi-automatic timing is a secondary timing system, and a correction is being applied to that backup time, the “partial error” (in the case of Colorado since they back out the 0.15 second error) or “total error” (in the case of other manufacturers) is calculated under our current rule and is applied to the backup time. The net effect is that one would get a comparable result.

When a semi-automatic system is used as primary timing, an inequity exists. If a given race were conducted using two different manufacturers equipment (CTS vs. DAK or OMEGA), the swimmers timed by CTS would be assigned times that were 0.15 seconds faster than DAK or OMEGA. This is due to the internal correction that CTS applies under 102.24.4D.

RECOMMENDATION: Delete wording in the current 102.24.4D which permits a correcting for timing system difference to be incorporated into the design of timing equipment.

2. The TTF recognized that nominal human performance in timing using a semi-automatic system results in recorded times being approximately 0.15 seconds slow.

RECOMMENDATION: In rule 102.24.4D state that when semi-automatic timing is the primary timing system, 0.15 seconds will be subtracted from all recorded times. This correction will normally be performed as a meet management system function. The TTF realizes that there will be a significant period of time where legacy timing systems continue to be used which incorporate a built-in correction. If this legislation is approved, the TTF will liaison with the meet management software vendors to ensure that appropriate corrections are applied.

3. In the early history of electronic timing and timing corrections, a guideline time differential between primary and backup timing was established where it was suggested that a Referee should investigate to see if a timing system malfunction may have occurred. Over time, this 0.3 second window has become somewhat of a “sacred line” which many Referees feel should not be crossed.

RECOMMENDATION: The TTF recommends that 102.24.4C be changed to indicate that the 0.3 second threshold be a guideline – not an absolute threshold – where a Referee should investigate for a possible malfunction. Given corroborating secondary information that a pad result was incorrect, the Referee could order a corrected backup time be awarded to a swimmer within that 0.3 second window. There was some disagreement within the TTF on exactly what wording should be presented so two options were presented for consideration.

Conclusion: When deliberating possible changes to the rules regarding timing corrections, the TTF considered recommending changes only if that change would clearly result in a more accurate backup timing solution. There certainly would be opportunities to change for change sake – but we did not see compelling reasons to make a change to backup timing correction calculations processes. The TTF did feel it was important to address the inequities found in one manufactures system. It is important to note that the rules changes proposed to address that issue will effect a very small number of meets – probably less that 5% (meets where semi-automatic systems are used as the primary system.). Coming up with a proper backup timing solution to a timing system malfunction is often not a simple process. As our meet management software systems have become more capable, it appears that the in depth understanding of the underlying timing concepts are becoming a lost art. We should work with the Official’s Committee to encourage increased training and understanding of advanced timing system malfunction resolution processes and procedures.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of the Timing Task Force for their contributions to this project. I would also like to thank John Hirschman for his perspective regarding some of the early history of the USA Swimming timing rules and Dr. Jim Holcomb for doing the statistical analysis of meet data which ultimately validated earlier statistical studies used in the original rule making process. Additionally, I would like to recognize Charlie Hodgson of Hy-tek who developed a software utility to allow for the efficient extraction and ultimate statistical analysis of meet management data. Finally, I would like to thank Bruce Wigo and the International Swimming Hall of Fame for providing access and research assistance with their vast collection of archived rule books, documents and other publications which helped in the research of the history behind some our rules related to timing.

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Thomas
Times Correction Task Force Chair