

SWIMMING AND DIVING

POOL DEPTH

Question: Are swimmers allowed to start from the deck if the water depth from the end of the pool to the Point of Entry (0-5 m) is less than four feet at any point?

Interpretation: NFHS Rule 2-7-2 now indicates that when the water depth from the end wall to the Point of Entry is less than four feet, swimmers must use an in-water start. Deck starts are no longer allowed in pools where the water depth at any point from the end wall throughout the Point of Entry (0-5 m) is less than four feet.

NFHS Rule 2-7-2a indicates: “The minimum water depth at the point of entry for racing starts during practice or competition shall be measured for a distance from the end wall to a minimum of 16 feet, five inches (5 meters) from the end wall.”

PHYSICAL FORM, ATHLETIC CODE, AND WIAA RULES OF ELIGIBILITY

Question: Can a player start practice without turning in a WIAA physical form, acknowledgment of receiving the school athletic code and WIAA Rules of Eligibility?

Interpretation: No, WIAA Sr. High School Handbook, Rules of Eligibility, Article VII—Health and Behavior, Section 1—Physical Examination, page 39, A student may not practice for or participate in interscholastic athletics until the school has written evidence on file in its office attesting to (a) parental permission each school year including an acknowledgment of receiving the school athletic code and WIAA Rules of Eligibility, and (b) current physical fitness to participate in sports as determined by a licensed physician or Advanced Practice Nurse Prescriber (APNP) no less than every other school year with April 1 the earliest date of examination. School policy determines when an athlete may return to competition following an injury, except where rulebook or WIAA tournament policies apply.

Note: It is recommended that a student also have dental fitness attested by a licensed dentist.

--Physical examination taken April 1 and thereafter is valid for the following two school years; physical examination taken before April 1 is valid only for remainder of that school year and following school year.

SWIMSUIT TECHNOLOGY

Question: Should officials inspect swimmers if they view a potential violation of the new swimming suit rule?

Interpretation: No, all questions regarding the legality of a swimming suit are directed to the coach of the swimmer involved. If no violation is observed by the official, then there is no violation.

If an official discovers a competitor wearing an illegal suit due to construction, design, and/or wearing two suits, the official shall:

- When reporting prior to the start of the heat, notify the competitor to make suit legal before the competitor is considered eligible and does not delay the start of the heat.
- When the competitor has stepped up on the starting platform, but prior to activation of starting device, direct the competitor to “step down,” disqualify the competitor from event and declare ineligible until suit is legal.
- When the starting device has been activated, disqualify competitor at end of heat, nullify competitor’s performance time, and declare competitor ineligible until in a legal suit

Question: Can we put the initials of a swimmer on our caps?

Interpretation: NFHS Situation 3-3-2 as found on page 22 of the NFHS Rule book perhaps describes regulations pertaining to this matter best. It reads as follows: “A swimmer places the initials of a friend who is struggling with cancer on his/her suit to show support. RULING: Illegal. COMMENT: Commemorative and memorial patches, no larger than 4 square inches, may be worn on the uniform with written state association approval. The intent of this rule is the patch has a special meaning to the entire team, not just one swimmer. In this instance, the swimmer could place something on his/her warm-ups, a towel, etc. (3-3-5 Penalty)”

Based upon this NFHS Situation, you can do the following:

1. Have a patch no larger than four square inches made and placed on the uniform and have your Athletic Director attain State Association approval through my office.
2. Place initials on warm-ups or a towel or other pieces of apparel worn or used during warm-ups, but not during competition.

Placing the initials of a swimmer on the cap in any way is not allowed. Most schools have chosen to place initials and patches on the warm-up so as to prevent additional drag on the suits while competing.

[BOYS AS MANAGERS ON GIRLS TEAMS](#)

Question: Can a boy be a manager on a girls swimming and diving team? Can they be a lifeguard? Can they time a meet?

Interpretation: Yes, a boy can be a manager on a girls swimming and diving team and vice versa. However, WIAA rules prevent coaches from having coaching contact with their athletes outside the season, during the school year, in any sport. Rules further prevent schools from offering a sport season, except as outlined in the WIAA Season Regulations. An athlete working as a clinician, under the direction of his/her coach, is considered to be coaching contact.

This means, for example, that boy swimmers cannot serve as assistant coaches, clinicians, instructors, etc., during the girl's swimming and diving season, in the school program. Obviously, girl swimmers are similarly restricted during the boy's swimming and diving season. Boy's swimmers cannot practice with the girl's swimming and diving team because the boy's season is defined in the WIAA Winter Season Regulations and the school cannot make opportunities available outside the season. Again, girl swimmers and divers are similarly restricted. Soccer, golf and tennis are other sports where the seasons are split and where these rules apply.

Recently, we have had situations where managers became involved in practice, either as clinicians (demonstrators), participants, and/or assistant coaches. Consequently, I am providing coaches with the safest practice to prevent the eligibility of a swimmer or diver from being jeopardized. Unfortunately, there is plenty of temptation for a student-athlete to become involved in a drill or workout sometime during the season.

Timing at a meet and/or writing down splits and times have been considered to be "managerial duties" that have been allowed. WIAA regulations have allowed boys to be "managers" on girls teams and vice versa so long as it is only duties like using a stop watch, recording times, taking attendance, getting towels and setting up lanes that these "managers" are involved in. The duties they are responsible for must be strictly managerial duties--not coaching, demonstrating, assisting and/or participation in or during a practice or meet.

Being a lifeguard during a meet or practice is also allowed.

Question: **If there is a different coach for girls and boys swim team can the manager swim practices with the team?**

Interpretation: **No**, the WIAA season for boy's swimming and diving is during the winter sport season. Boys who even get in the pool during a girl's practice in the fall are considered to have participated in the one swimming and diving season they are allowed during a school year. In other words, if a boy practices one day with the girl's team, they have used their eligibility for swimming and diving and are not allowed to participate in the winter boy's season.

[TOWELS ON STARTING SURFACES](#)

Question: **What is the current rule as far a placing a towel/foreign object on the starting surface?**

Interpretation: The WIAA's position has remained consistent, that being, a school can provide a document from a school administrator indicating they can use towels on starting platforms. As this is an instructional matter and a district decision, even if a host school does not allow towels, a visiting school team with a document is allowed to use towels.

Question: **Also, what is the penalty if a towel/foreign surface is used?**

Interpretation: Currently, there is no penalty as this rule has been developed for the protection of coaches and officials. If a violation of the towel/foreign surface rule takes place, contact Tom Shafranski at the WIAA office and he will contact school officials.

MEET MAXIMUMS

Question: In our conference schedule, we have been asked to host a double dual meet, with School CCC & School DDD swimming at School AAA. The meet will be scored three ways...AAA vs. CCC, AAA vs. DDD and CCC vs. DDD.

Currently we are counting this double dual meet as two meets for our team maximum limit. Is that accurate, or can we count this meet as one date, which would allow us to pick up one more meet on the schedule.

Interpretation: This is considered one meet. WIAA Season Regulations for Swimming and Diving remain silent regarding multi-school meets including double duals. If a school team is in a meet where each event is raced one time, then it is only one meet that is counted towards a team's 15 allowed meets so long as one is an alumni meet.

SCRIMMAGES

Question: Can alumni return and workout during practice with the high school swimming and diving team?

Interpretation: Yes, WIAA regulations do not prevent alumni from returning, practicing or working out with school teams during their practice sessions.

Question: Can a meet with alumni be identified as a "scrimmage?"

Interpretation: No, now that WIAA Swimming and Diving programs are allowed 15 meets, all alumni competitions, no matter how they are organized are considered to be a meet and must be counted as one of the 15 allowed regular season meets.

Question: Can one school count a scrimmage as a meet while another school counts the same scrimmage as a scrimmage?

Interpretation: No, WIAA Season Regulations, 4., NOTE, reads, "If either school counts a scrimmage as a game, it must be counted as a game for both programs, schools or teams.

Question: Can a swimmer who is not enrolled in a school practice with a school team?

Interpretation: Allowing a student to even practice with a school team when not enrolled at a school is a very dangerous risk. Student-athletes are required to have a physical on file. This is a very important factor should an emergency situation take place.

Question: Can a swimmer from School A practice with School B's team?

Interpretation: No, scrimmage rules as found in the WIAA Season Regulations prevent students from another school from practicing with a different school's team.

NON-SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

Question: Can a swimmer currently out for a school team's swimming and diving program compete in the swimming portion of a triathlon held during the school season?

Interpretation: No, WIAA Sr. High School Handbook, page 37, Rules of Eligibility, Article VI, Section 1, A., indicates: "A student becomes ineligible in a sport for the remainder of the season for competing in non-school game, meet or contest in the same sport during the season of practice and competition established by the school."
A swimmer can participate in the running/walking and/or biking portion of the triathlon, but not the swimming.

If local organizers wish to have high school students involved in these events, we encourage school administrators to suggest to these organizers to have the event during the summertime period prior to the start of high school athletic programs in August.

Question: I have a swimmer who qualified for junior nationals with USA swimming. What form do I need to fill out in order for her to compete and miss the first week of practice?

Interpretation: Page 37 of the WIAA Sr. High School Handbook, Article VI, Section 1, 2), provides the language you seek: "A student who was a member of a school team in a given sport during the previous year may not delay reporting for the school team beyond the school's official opening day of practice in order to continue non-school training or competition, except in the fall-sponsored sports of tennis, golf, and swimming, provided the delay does not extend beyond the first interscholastic meet.

So long as this swimmer reports prior to the first meet of the girls swimming season (JV and/or Varsity), she is allowed to do so without filing any paperwork with our office. If she is to report following your first meet, please see Mr. Overgaard. He knows how to get in touch with my office for review of these matters.

Question: There is a swim club meet the weekend of Friday, November 19 & Saturday, November 20. It is an age-group swim meet and my coach was wondering if freshman boys could swim that meet if it is before the first scheduled meet of the boys season (November 23). Please advise.

Interpretation: Boys may not swim if they have reported to the school's season. However, there are two ways that will allow competitors to participate in this non-school event: 1. Delay the start of your school season until after this event.

The second is for freshmen only: 2. Don't allow frosh to report until after this meet.

Question: **I qualified to swim representing Wisconsin at the USS Zone meet. What do I need to do to be released from my high school team for that week without facing sanctions?**

Interpretation: Although it is the philosophy of the WIAA member schools for student-athletes to have loyalty and allegiance to their school team during their school season, girls in the sports of swimming and diving, golf and tennis are allowed by WIAA regulations to complete their summer period nonschool competition without jeopardizing their eligibility. This can be done by not reporting to the school team for practice until after you have completed the nonschool competition. Please keep in mind that you may not report to the school team--even for practice--until you have completed the nonschool competition. You may want to discuss this with your school team's Head Coach so that he/she is aware of this as well.

DIVING

Question: **How can diving officials determine if a coach is inflating or inappropriately scoring a diver?**

Interpretation: First, talk with judges prior to the start of the competition about the emphasis being placed on accurate, non-inflated scoring this year. Indicate that as the diving referee or official you have a responsibility to observe the scores and actions of the judges who have been selected.

During the competition, watch for judges that are delaying the reporting of their scores. Judges who delay their scores can be attempting to read the scores of other judges prior to providing their individual dive score. Consequently, watch for judges looking toward other diving judges. Both of the actions found above can frequently be observed.

In addition, the diving referee should find time during the diving competition to review the scores of each judge and diver. Most diving programs provide the score from each judge for every dive. Any judge who is scoring a diver differently than the other judges by 1.5 points on a regular basis should be considered to be inappropriately scoring those dives.