

Masters Swimming Canada

The MSC Rules

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Amending Procedure

Amendments to these Rules may be proposed.

The proposal shall be

- i) from a Class III Member (a swimmer),
- ii) in writing, and
- iii) submitted to the Executive Secretary.

The MSC Rules Committee shall review the proposal, prepare a report with recommendations and forward the report to the MSC Board of Directors for approval.

Amendments shall be adopted on a date suggested by the MSC Rules Committee and approved by the MSC Board of Directors.

Notification of amendments shall be to the Class I Delegates (the Provincial Representatives) and shall be posted to the MSC web site.

Part I : General Rules

CMGR 1. Introduction

CMGR 1.01. Application

Current Swimming Natation Canada rules shall apply to all Masters Swimming competitions in Canada, including the Canadian Masters Swimming Championship, except as provided in the Sections herein. When a conflict occurs between an SNC rule and an MSC rule, the MSC interpretation shall apply. These rules supersede Appendix C: Masters Swimming Rules of the SNC Rulebook. Modifications may be made by Provincial Masters Organizations for swim meets other than the Canadian Masters Swimming Championship. (See Appendix A : Provincial Responsibilities of these MSC Rules)

CMGR 1.02. Interpretations

In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires, words importing the singular shall include the plural and vice versa; words importing the masculine gender shall include the feminine; and words importing persons shall include bodies corporate.

In these Rules, the word 'shall' shall be interpreted as meaning that the action is mandatory and the word 'may' shall be interpreted as meaning that the action is optional at the discretion of those indicated.

CMGR 1.03. Acronyms

The following acronyms are used throughout this document :

MSC Masters Swimming Canada
PMO Provincial Masters Organization
FINA Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur
SNC Swimming Natation Canada

CMGR 1.04. Definitions

- a) Gender : female, male and mixed (2 women and 2 men on a relay team)
- b) Club : an organization that is registered as a Member of a PMO
- c) Relay Team : 4 swimmers swimming together in a relay event
- d) Event : a combination of gender, distance, course length and stroke
- e) Meet Event : an artificial device used for the purpose of swimming heats and recording results
- f) Concurrent Event : a meet event that combines multiple events and in which the swimmer chooses which event to swim and in which the results are separated by the event swum

CMGR 2. Administration

CMGR 2.01. Eligibility to Compete

- a) All Masters Swimmers who have actually attained 18 years of age, as of the first day of the swim meet and who are registered with Masters Swimming Canada through a PMO or any other

FINA recognized National Masters Swimming Organization, are eligible to swim in Masters swim meets sanctioned in Canada.

- b) A swimmer may be registered as a member of a Club or as an unattached swimmer.
- c) Meet Management shall ensure that all swimmers entering and swimming in a sanctioned swim meet are registered.

Note: *Meet Management, swimmers and registering organizations shall work together to facilitate verification of registration. It is possible to verify registration by using a current list of registered swimmers from the registering organization and/or by requiring proof of registration with the entry form.*

CMGR 2.02. Sanction

- a) Meet Management shall obtain sanction for swim meets according to the procedures established in each province.

CMGR 2.03. Age Determination Date

- a) A swimmer's age for a swim meet shall be the swimmer's age on December 31 of the year in which the swim meet occurs.

CMGR 2.04. Age Groups

- a) Individual events: Age groups shall be 18-24, 25-29, 30-34 and continue upward in 5 year increments.
- b) Relay events: Age groups shall be 72-99, 100-119, 120-159 and continue upward in 40 year increments. The age group of a relay team

shall be determined by the aggregate of the ages (in full years) of the four relay team members. Meet Management may offer relay age groups in 20 year increments at its discretion.

Note: *A relay team containing a swimmer in the 18-24 age group shall be ineligible for world records.*

Note: *Relay age groups vary around the world. The youngest age group for United States Masters Swimming is 76-99; the youngest age group for FINA is 100-119; the 20 year increments may not be recognized by jurisdictions outside Canada.*

CMGR 2.05. Drug Testing

- a) There shall be no drug testing at sanctioned Masters swim meets in Canada.

CMGR 2.06. Qualifying Times

- a) There shall be no qualifying times for sanctioned Masters swim meets in Canada.

Note: *FINA qualifying times apply to World Championships sanctioned in Canada.*

Part II : Swimming Rules

CMSW 1. The Start

CMSW 1.01. Starting Procedures

- a) Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Individual Medley: Swimmers shall assume a ready position on the starting block or pool deck with at least one foot at the front of the starting block or pool deck. A swimmer may be permitted to start in the water but is required to have one hand in contact with the pool side until the starting signal is given.
- b) Backstroke and Medley Relay: Swimmers shall assume a ready position in the water facing the starting end, with both hands resting either on any part of the starting block or on the end of the pool. The feet, including the toes, shall be under the surface of the water. Standing in or on the gutter or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter shall be prohibited.
- c) For the Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Individual Medley start, the Referee shall instruct the swimmers to take up a ready position by blowing one long whistle. For the Backstroke and Medley Relay start, the Referee shall instruct the swimmers to enter the water by blowing one long whistle and then to take up a ready position with a second long whistle. When all swimmers are in a ready position the Referee shall turn the race over to the Starter with an arm signal.
- d) On the Starter's command "Take your marks", each swimmer shall immediately assume a starting position. When all swimmers are stationary, the Starter shall give the starting signal.

Note: MSC uses the 'Masters Start' regardless of the rule currently in use by SNC or FINA.

Note: There are many start rules used around the world. It is your responsibility to find out what rules are being used.

CMSW 1.02. False Start Procedures

- a) The One False Start Rule shall apply. That is, any swimmer who commits a false start during the second or subsequent attempt at a start shall be disqualified.
- b) If the disqualification is declared before the starting signal is given, the starting signal shall not be given.
- c) If a false start is committed on the first attempt at a start, the swimmers shall be recalled. The Starter shall then announce "Swimmers, this is your second start." The race shall then revert to the Referee.
- d) On the second or subsequent start, if the starting signal is given before a disqualification is declared, the race shall continue and the swimmer or swimmers shall be disqualified upon completion of the race.

Note: MSC uses the One False Start Rule regardless of the rule currently in use by SNC or FINA.

CMSW 2. The Strokes

CMSW 2.01. The Strokes

- a) The Masters Swimming Rules for swimming the strokes are identical to the SNC Rules SW 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 with the following exception:
- b) A breaststroke kicking movement is permitted for butterfly.

***Note:** Some Masters Swimmers, through age or infirmity, may be unable to adhere strictly to the technicalities of the stroke rules (such as symmetry in Breaststroke). In these cases, the theory of illegally gaining an 'unfair advantage' shall apply before a disqualification is declared. The swimmer shall be responsible for notifying the Session Referee of any such infirmity before the start of the race.*

CMSW 3. Warm-ups

CMSW 3.01. Warm-ups

- a) The safety procedures to be enforced during warm-ups are detailed in SNC Appendix F
- b) There shall be a warm-up prior to every sanctioned swim meet. The length of the warm-up shall be at the discretion of Meet Management.
- c) A minimum of 15 minutes every 4 hours during the swim meet shall be available for warm-up, if there is no separate warm-up facility
- d) A minimum of 15 minutes at the conclusion of the swim meet shall be available for cool-down.

CMSW 4. Meet Procedures

CMSW 4.01. Officials

- a) The minimum number of officials required for a sanctioned swim meet is detailed in SNC Rule CSW 1.2.1, however the Meet Referee may eliminate any position not required, at his discretion.
- b) At least one of the on deck officials shall be an SNC certified Level 4 Senior Official or a Level 5 Master Official.

CMSW 4.02. Entries

- a) Swimmers shall enter and swim only once in any one event, including relays.
- b) There shall be no penalty for failing to swim an event except for loss or forfeiture of entry fee.
- c) Meet Management shall not be obligated to allow swimmers or relay teams to swim in missed events.
- d) All events shall be offered to both men and women.
- e) Meet Management shall distribute the Meet Information Package to all registered clubs and to all unattached swimmers. The method of distribution shall be at the discretion of Meet Management.
- f) Entry fees shall be at the discretion of Meet Management.

Note: *A surcharge may be applied to deck entries and/or swimmers who choose to swim 1 per lane in 2 per lane events.*

CMSW 4.03. Seeding

- a) All events shall be conducted on a timed final basis.
- b) All events shall be seeded by time and may be seeded fastest to slowest, or slowest to fastest, at the discretion of Meet Management.
- c) There shall be a minimum of 3 swimmers seeded per heat whenever 3 or more swimmers have entered an event.
- d) Entries with no specified time shall be seeded slowest.

CMSW 4.04. The Race

- a) One lap counter per swimmer may be used, at the discretion of the swimmer, during individual freestyle events 400 metres and longer.
- b) A warning signal may be given, at the discretion of the Session Referee, in individual freestyle events 400 metres and longer and shall be given in individual freestyle events 800 metres and longer, when a swimmer has two lengths plus 5 metres to swim to finish. The signal, if given, shall not be by whistle.
- c) Genders may be combined for any event, at the discretion of Meet Management. Such information shall be stated in the Meet Information Package.

CMSW 4.05. Concurrent Events

- a) Heats from two or more events may be swum concurrently, at the discretion of Meet Management.

- b) Each event shall be given a different number.
- c) The swimmer shall ensure that the correct event is recorded on the time card.
- d) Meet Management shall ensure that the results indicate which event was swum.
- e) If there is any question about the stroke swum, the swim shall be recorded as freestyle.

Note: *A swimmer shall be judged according to the rules of the stroke swum, unless the event is designated as a freestyle event, in which case the swimmer shall be judged according to the rules of freestyle.*

CMSW 4.06. 2 Per Lane Events

- a) Individual freestyle events, 400 metres and longer may be swum with 2 swimmers of the same gender per lane, at the discretion of Meet Management.
- b) If an event is to be swum 2 per lane, then an option to swim 1 per lane may be offered, at the discretion of Meet Management. All swimmers who choose to swim 1 per lane shall swim after the 2 per lane swimmers have completed their swims. Swimmers shall indicate their choice in advance of the swim meet and shall not change a selection of 2 per lane to 1 per lane at the swim meet.
- c) If two swimmers swim in the same lane then staggered starts shall be used.
- d) The same starting options shall be offered to all swimmers, regardless of whether the swimmer is swimming 2 per lane or 1 per lane.

CMSW 4.07. Results

- a) If the same event is swum at different times during the swim meet, the times shall be combined to produce the final results.
- b) Results shall be separated by gender, even if genders are combined to swim a meet event.
- c) A swimmer may swim any stroke during a freestyle event, but the time shall appear in the results as a freestyle time.

CMSW 4.08. Records

- a) The swimmer shall advise the Session Referee before the beginning of the session of a record attempt. The swimmer may be responsible for providing additional timers, at the discretion of the Session Referee.
- b) The Session Referee shall ensure that there are 3 valid times available for a record attempt.
- c) Meet Management shall ensure that all timing requirements as stated in the SNC Rules are adhered to.

CMSW 5. Relays

CMSW 5.01. The Swim

- a) For a freestyle relay there shall be 4 swimmers on a relay team and each swimmer shall swim one quarter of the prescribed total distance.
- b) For a medley relay there shall be 4 swimmers on a relay team and each swimmer shall swim one stroke one quarter of the prescribed total distance in the following order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle.

- c) Each leg of a relay shall be swum in accordance with the rules of that stroke. Any swimmer who fails to comply with the rules for the stroke or who fails to complete the full distance of the relay leg shall cause the team to be disqualified.
- d) Swimmers may remain in the water after completing their relay leg at their own discretion. Swimmers who remain in the water shall not interfere with any swimmer in any lane nor the timing system and may remain in their lane until all relay teams in the heat have finished.

CMSW 5.02. The Swimmers

- a) A mixed relay team shall consist of 2 men and 2 women. The order in which men and women swim shall be at the discretion of the relay team.
- b) A swimmer shall compete as a member of only one relay team per event.
- c) All members of a relay team shall be registered with the same club. However, a relay team that contains one or more unattached swimmers or swimmers registered with different clubs may compete, at the discretion of Meet Management, and shall be designated as an "exhibition" relay team.

Note: *This rule allows all swimmers to compete in relays, but prevents relay teams made up in this way to hold records or appear in the top twenty.*

- d) All swimmers on a relay team shall be properly entered in the swim meet.

CMSW 5.03. Check-In

- a) The relay check-in deadline shall be specified in the meet information package and the heat sheets.
- b) Each relay team shall provide the following information on a relay team form or on a time card before the relay check-in deadline:
 - i) the age group entered,
 - ii) the name and code of the club,
 - iii) the full name, age and gender of each swimmer,
 - iv) the order in which the swimmers shall swim, and
 - v) an entry time.

CMSW 5.04. Substitution

- a) Substitutions shall not be permitted after the relay check-in deadline.

CMSW 5.05. Records and Top Twenty

- a) If a relay team is disqualified, the time achieved by the lead-off swimmer shall be eligible for consideration as a record, provided the disqualifying infraction was not committed by the lead-off swimmer, the lead-off swimmer completed the relay leg according to the rules and the relay team completed the race.
- b) An exhibition relay team and the lead-off swimmer of an exhibition relay team shall not be eligible for a Canadian Record nor Top Twenty Ranking.

CMSW 6. Records and Top Twenty

CMSW 6.01. Eligibility

- a) Swimmers shall be eligible for a Canadian Record or Top Twenty Ranking provided that the swimmer:
 - i) is a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant,
 - ii) is resident in Canada or stationed overseas as a member of the Canadian Armed Forces,
 - iii) is registered by a PMO, and
 - iv) swims as a member of a club registered by the PMO or swims as a provincial unattached swimmer.
- b) Times swum in Canada shall be eligible for a Canadian Record or Top Twenty Ranking provided that the time is swum at a swim meet sanctioned by a PMO.
- c) Times swum outside Canada shall be eligible for a Canadian Record or Top Twenty Ranking provided that the swim meet:
 - i) is sanctioned by a FINA member organization, or
 - ii) is approved by a swimming body whose jurisdiction MSC accepts.

CMSW 6.02. Events

- a) Records shall be maintained and Top Twenty Rankings published for the following events:

<u>STROKE</u>	<u>DISTANCE</u>
Freestyle	50-100-200-400-800-1500
Backstroke	50-100-200
Breaststroke	50-100-200
Butterfly	50-100-200
Individual Medley	100(*)-200-400
Freestyle Relay	200-400-800
Medley Relay	200-400-800

Note: () designates short course only.*

- b) Records shall be maintained and Top Twenty Rankings published for long course metre (50 metre) pools and short course metre (25 metre) pools.

CMSW 6.03. Records

- a) The fastest time (or times, if tied to the 100th of a second) in each age group, gender and course length shall be designated as a Canadian Record.

CMSW 6.04. Top Twenty Ranking

- a) The 20 fastest times in each age group, gender and course length shall be compiled annually as the Top Twenty Ranking.

CMSW 6.05. Record Applications

- a) For each potential Canadian or World record, an acceptable record application form shall be completed by Meet Management or by the swimmer and submitted to the Provincial Recorder, ensuring receipt within 15 days of the conclusion of the swim meet.
- b) Time cards and/or electronic timing tapes (or photocopy of same) shall accompany the record application.
- c) The record application and all attachments shall be endorsed by a qualified on-deck official.
- d) Any swimmer who attends an out-of-country swim meet may submit a completed record application directly to the Provincial Recorder in accordance with the above subsections.

Note: *World record applications require proof of age, a pool length certification and shall be submitted within 60 days from the date of the swim meet. The Swimmer, The Referee, Meet Management, Provincial Recorder and National Recorder shall work together to meet these requirements.*

Part III : Open Water Swimming

CMOWS 1. Introduction

CMOWS 1.01. Application

The conduct and organization of Open Water Swimming (OWS) for Masters Swimming in Canada shall be governed by Masters Swimming Canada.

Current Swimming Natation Canada rules shall apply except for OWS 1 (replaced by CMOWS 3.01), OWS 8 (replaced by CMOWS 3.03) and COWS 9 (not applicable).

Current SNC rules for Officials (OWS 2) and their Duties (OWS 3) shall apply in full. Current SNC rules for the Start (OWS 4), the Venue (OWS 5), the Race (OWS 6) and the Finish (OWS 7) shall apply except as provided in the Sections herein.

Swimmers, Officials and Meet Management are advised to use common sense when applying SNC rules, so that the "international three-letter country code" is not mandatory (OWS 6.14) nor is the video system (OWS 7.2) and references to escort craft only apply if escort craft are used.

Current MSC rules for Administration (CMGR 2) shall apply in full.

Current SNC Masters Open Water Rules (MOWS) shall not apply.

CMOWS 2. Administration

CMOWS 2.01. Sanction

- a) Meet Management shall obtain sanction for open water swimming competitions according to the procedures established in each province.
- b) Open water swimming competitions may involve swimmers registered with different organizations, at the discretion of Meet Management. In such case the races may be conducted simultaneously, but shall be separate events.

Note: Meet Management may be required to obtain sanction from each governing body involved.

CMOWS 3. Events

CMOWS 3.01. Definition

- a) An open water swimming event is any swimming event of 800 metres or more, for individuals or relay teams, held in open water. The body of water may be natural or artificial.

CMOWS 3.02. Individual

- a) Distances for individual events shall be the same for men and women.
- b) Age groups, genders, strokes and other classifications may swim simultaneously, at the discretion of Meet Management, but results shall be tabulated separately.

CMOWS 3.03. Relay Teams

- a) Relay teams shall consist of two or more swimmers as specified in the meet information package.

- b) The time or distance each swimmer is required to spend in the water shall be specified in the meet information package.
- c) The changeover to the new swimmer shall be made when the previous swimmer has completed the required time or distance.
- d) In the exchange, physical contact shall be made in the water between the two swimmers.
- e) In relay events in which swimmers swim more than once the team members shall rotate in the same order throughout the event.

CMOWS 3.04. Qualification

- a) With the entry form, for swims of 15 kilometres or greater, swimmers shall be required to provide proof of a swim, completed within six months of the competition, of at least 50% of the event distance to a maximum of 16 kilometres.

CMOWS 4. Safety

CMOWS 4.01. Swimmers

- a) As conditions and courses vary, it is the responsibility of each swimmer to know and follow the safety standards to protect the swimmer from as many dangers as possible.

CMOWS 4.02. Meet Management

Meet Management shall

- a) Obtain necessary permits/approvals from the appropriate authorities, e.g. Coast Guard, Park Authorities, Life Guard Associations.
- b) Identify known risks in the meet information package and at the briefing meeting.

- c) Provide accurate maps, with course descriptions and other pertinent information, with the meet information package.
- d) Plan for possible medical evacuations.
- e) Assign rescue/aid personnel and craft.
- f) Make provisions for controlling escort craft and access of non-race craft into the race area.
- g) Brief swimmers, coaches, managers, trainers and meet officials.
- h) Plan for possible cancellation, postponement and/or modification of the competition.
- i) Plan for escort craft. All escort craft shall carry a whistle and a large blanket or towel. Where other boaters are present, a "Flag Alpha" shall be clearly displayed. This item is an internationally recognized naval flag indicating that a "diver" is operating adjacent to the boat displaying the flag.
- j) Provide easily visible caps to be worn by all swimmers to assist in identification and visibility.

CMOWS 4.03. Liability Release

- a) An acknowledgement and release shall be included on the entry form and signed by each participant prior to the competition. The wording shall include, "In addition, I specifically acknowledge that I am aware of all the risks inherent in Open Water Swimming and agree to assume those risks".

CMOWS 5. Conduct of Competition

CMOWS 5.01. The Start

- a) All open water competitions shall start with all competitors standing or treading water in a

depth sufficient for them to commence swimming on the start signal. Running starts from the beach or shallow water may only be used where dictated by the physical characteristics of the course.

- b) The start line shall be clearly defined by either overhead apparatus or by removable equipment at water level. In cases where this is impossible then an imaginary line between 2 points may be used, at the discretion of Meet Management.
- c) All escort safety craft shall be stationed prior to the start so as not to interfere with any competitor, and if picking up their swimmer from behind shall navigate in such a way as not to maneuver through the field of swimmers. This rule may be waived by the Referee, if the presence of escort craft is essential for the guidance of a blind swimmer or other extenuating circumstances. Special requests from the swimmer are required for approval and arrangement of such coverage.
- d) A count shall be recorded of the actual number of swimmers in the water at the start of the event.

CMOWS 5.02. The Finish

- a) All finishes shall be in the water. Swimmers shall touch a clearly defined vertical surface or swim across a clearly defined finish line.

CMOWS 5.03. The Venue

- a) A certificate of suitability for use of the venue shall be issued by the appropriate local health and safety authorities, not more than 10 days prior to the start of the competition. In general

terms the certification shall relate to water purity and to physical safety from other considerations. In areas where the water quality is subject to sudden changes, recertification shall take place not more than 12 hours prior to the start of the competition.

- b) Details of water movement, such as tides and current, shall be specified in the request for sanction, the meet information package and the briefing meeting, and shall be taken into consideration when deciding the starting and cutoff times.
- c) The average water temperature over the course on the day of the competition shall not be lower than 18 degrees Celsius for swims greater than 3 kilometres, or 16 degrees Celsius for swims up to 3 kilometres, and in no case shall the actual temperature be lower than 14 degrees Celsius. Typical water and air temperatures shall be specified in the request for sanction and in the meet information package.

CMOWS 5.04. The Swim

- a) Standing on the bottom during a race shall not disqualify a swimmer but they shall not walk or jump. Swimmers shall not receive support from any fixed or floating object and shall not intentionally touch or be touched by their safety escort craft or crew therein. Permission shall be obtained for the use of special devices ("tappers") by swimmers with disabilities to maintain correct direction.
- b) Any obstruction, interference or deliberate contact between swimmers shall result in disqualification. Swimmers shall maintain a 2 metre

clearance from one another. Moderate congestion at starts, turns and some other conditions may be acceptable, at the discretion of the Referee.

- c) No swimmer shall "draft" from another swimmer.

CMOWS 5.05. Disqualification

- a) Swimmers shall be disqualified if they fail to complete the prescribed course or if they or their personal escort fail to follow any of the rules.

CMOWS 5.06. Cancellation and Termination

- a) Due to safety considerations, the Referee may cancel the swim, either prior to its start or during the competition. Such considerations include, but are not limited to poor visibility, lightning, rough water, cold water or inadequate number of officials or safety personnel.

Appendix A

Provincial Responsibilities

Sanction

Worldwide sanctioning authority for Masters swim meets is controlled by the Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA). FINA delegates sanctioning authority to one organization in each member country. In Canada sanctioning authority flows from the Aquatic Federation of Canada (AFC) to Swimming Natation Canada (SNC) to the Provincial Sections. Provincial Masters Organizations (PMO) in Canada each have their own relationship with the Provincial Sections. It is therefore the responsibility of each PMO to grant sanction based on procedures in place in each Province.

Championship

Each province is encouraged to hold a Provincial Championship each year. There are basic swimming and administrative rules that apply to every swim meet, however it is suggested that a more rigid bid process be implemented for Championship meets. Each province is encouraged to analyze the Canadian Masters Swimming Championship documents available from the MSC Executive Secretary. It may be possible to use these documents as is, applying a logical interpretation of the words (for example, using the word 'provincial' instead of the word 'national'). On the other hand a province may wish to draft its own rules, bid process, application and contract.

Records and Top Twenty

Each province is encouraged to maintain a listing of Provincial Records and to publish a Top Twenty Ranking. Each province may wish to interpret these MSC rules on a provincial basis. However, issues such as eligibility and process and course length, may be addressed specifically and separately by each province. If a province chooses not to publish a Top Twenty Ranking, then the results from each swim meet sanctioned in the province shall be forwarded to the National Recorder.

Warm-ups and Insurance

Insurance requirements and policies vary from province to province. Each province may need to develop warm-up and safety procedures to ensure that insurance is not invalidated.

Other

It is possible, although not encouraged, that each province may create its own rules to cover other special situations.

Amending Procedure

If a province establishes its own rules then an amending procedure shall be required.

Appendix B

Guidelines for Officiating Swimmers with a Disability

MSC welcomes adults with disabilities who share Masters Swimming's goals of fun, fitness and friendship. MSC understands that there are other sports organizations that offer swimming competition for athletes with disabilities but also recognizes that many persons with disabilities would like to participate in Masters swimming programmes with friends from their communities. The fun and fellowship associated with Masters swimming is enriched by the participation of adults from the entire community. These guidelines contain information that may assist Masters Swimmers, coaches, clubs and meet personnel to include swimmers with disabilities in MSC programmes. See also SNC Appendix E : IPC-SAEC-SW Swimming Rules for more precise definitions and interpretations of the Swimming Rules. Additional information is available from the following:

Organizations

Canadian Federation of Sport for the Disabled (CFSOD)
Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association (CWSA)
Canadian Amputee Sports Association
Canadian Cerebral Palsy Sports Association
Canadian Blind Sports Association (CBSA)
Canadian Deaf Sports Association
Special Olympics International (SOI)

Publications

Esso Swim Canada for the Physically Disabled
Coaching the Wheelchair Swimmer
Swimming for the Blind Coaching Manual Level One
Beyond Sight / Plein la Vue
Run for Light - Facts About Vision

Contact SNC at Suite 700, 2197 Riverside Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1H 7X3 for the above publications.

A. Interpretation

For the purposes of these guidelines, the term "disability" refers to a condition that limits an individual's ability to perform strokes, starts or turns according to MSC rules. Adult disabilities include, but are not limited to:

- i) physical impairments such as cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries, amputations, multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis;
- ii) sensory impairments such as hearing loss, deafness, visual impairments and blindness; and
- iii) health conditions such as cancer or severe asthma

Temporary conditions such as pregnancy or injuries such as tendonitis shall not be considered as disabilities. In general, the Referee shall accept a swimmer's self-identification that he has a disability.

B. MSC Policies

MSC actively encourages adults with disabilities to

participate in Masters Swimming training programmes, competitions and other activities.

Because it is important to the personal success of a swimmer with a disability to perform within the rules as much as possible, and because it is impossible to regulate rule changes to accommodate the unique needs of all swimmers with disabilities who participate in MSC competition, no specific rule changes shall be adopted to accommodate swimmers with disabilities.

Meet officials are allowed flexibility to interpret MSC/SNC swimming rules as needed to accommodate swimmers with disabilities. The purpose of these guidelines is to aid meet officials in interpretation of the rules.

Masters swim clubs, coaches and meet managers are encouraged to use pools that are accessible to swimmers with disabilities for both training and competition, to remove barriers to locker room and pool facilities and to describe the accessibility of facilities in meet information packages.

Meet managers are encouraged to request in meet information packages that swimmers with disabilities describe, with their meet entry, any special requirements for their participation in Masters swim meets.

MSC also actively encourages PMO's and clubs to work with the various Sports Associations for Athletes with disabilities in co-hosting swim meets with separate events for each.

C. Swim Meet Guidelines

1. Rule Interpretations

The Referee may modify swimming rules to accommodate swimmers with disabilities. Such modifications may be needed to ensure the safety of the swimmer and that no swimmer (including the swimmer with a disability) obtains unfair advantage over other competitors.

The "unfair advantage" principle should be especially helpful to the Referee. For example, consider an individual who has limited functional use of the legs in a breaststroke event. If the swimmer cannot perform propulsive movements of the legs (but can maintain a legal body position and perform a legal arm stroke), he should not be disqualified because he has not obtained an unfair advantage. The same swimmer should be disqualified if he uses an illegal, but propulsive, kicking action, because he is gaining an unfair advantage over swimmers who are not allowed to use the illegal kicking action.

Although it is impossible to suggest rule modifications that are appropriate for every swimmer with a disability, the following suggestions may be used as guidelines in rule interpretations:

- a) Start: Masters Swimming rules permit the forward start to be taken from the starting block, the pool deck or in the water. Examples of possible modifications to the start rule may include using a strobe light or other visual stimuli for a swimmer with a hearing impairment; or using a beeper or whistle for a swimmer who may overreact to a gun start, or a special Marshall to assist a swimmer with a disability to the starting position.

- b) Relay Starts: Potential modifications include permitting swimmers to begin subsequent relay legs from the optional deck or water positions, which may require turning off electronic timing equipment in that lane after the start and until the last swimmer finishes; or warning a visually impaired swimmer when to dive by a verbal command and/or a tap of the heel or hand.
- c) Turns: Examples of rule interpretations include using a “tapper” (a soft ball at the end of a pole) to warn a visually impaired swimmer of the pool end; or judging a swimmer with a physical disability based upon functional body parts. For example, a swimmer with only one arm or who is paralyzed on one side of the body should be judged based upon hand instead of hands and arm instead of arms. Similarly, the stroke initiated upon leaving the wall should be judged in terms of the body extremities that are capable of performing the required movements.
- d) Strokes: Rule interpretations should be concerned with the body extremities that are capable of performing the required movements. Flotation devices are not permitted in competition. A band around paralyzed limbs is acceptable.

2. Responsibilities of the Swimmer:

The primary responsibility of the swimmer with a disability is communication. The swimmer or his representative shall notify the Referee of his disability prior to competing. The swimmer with a disability is encouraged to inform the host

club in advance of any special needs related to his participation in the swim meet and to ask a teammate or friend for personal assistance at the meet if necessary.

3. Responsibilities of the Meet Officials:

The primary responsibilities of meet officials are to ensure fair competition and to time, judge and record the results accurately. These do not change when swimmers with disabilities are included in the competition.

4. Responsibilities of the Host Club:

All clubs hosting a Masters swim meet are encouraged to use accessible facilities when possible, working to remove barriers to accessibility, describing the accessibility of facilities in meet announcements and cooperating with swimmers who have disabilities regarding their participation in the competition.

5. Preparation of the Facility:

MSC competition rules require that there shall be a designated, sufficiently equipped and stocked First Aid facility and that meet managers discuss emergency procedures and responsibilities with the pool staff. Specific preparations for swimmers who have disabilities will depend upon the information provided by the individual swimmer. Some suggestions include:

- a) For swimmers with visual impairments: remove all hazards and nonessential equipment from the pool deck, either close or open all doors (be consistent) and ask the swimmer to bring a friend to assist the swimmer around the facility.

- b) For swimmers with hearing impairments: have a chalkboard on hand to indicate progress of the meet and use signs to indicate the location of meet officials and facilities.
- c) For swimmers with physical impairments: keep locker rooms and deck areas clear to enable easier access by wheelchair users; place wheelchairs, crutches or canes behind the timers during the race and return personal equipment to the swimmer after the race and assist the swimmer in and out of the water if necessary (ask the swimmer for instructions about the safest and most efficient way to assist).

6. General Guidelines:

Although the athlete with a disability may have some special requirements for his participation, (e.g., help transferring from a wheelchair to the pool, amplification of an auditory starting device), most persons with disabilities do not want to be treated differently. If unsure whether a swimmer with a disability requires assistance, ask the swimmer.

- a) Do not seed swimmers with disabilities in special (outside) lanes unless indicated by safety considerations.
- b) Do not observe their swims more (or less) closely than other swimmers.
- c) Do allow a little extra time between heats to permit safe entry and exit from the pool.
- d) Do be certain that swimmers with hearing impairments are aware of your verbal instructions.
- e) Do use common sense.

D. Co-hosted Meets

1. The appropriate Sports Association would govern and be responsible for their related events. i.e.. CWSA the wheelchair events; MSC the Masters events. In other words this is two or more separate swim meets swum at the same facility on the same day(s) with the same officials. Insurance coverage is up to each participating Association.
2. A swimmer with a disability shall have the choice of competing in the Masters events or the events of his respective Association, but not both.

MSC Record Application Form

1 EVENT Male / Female / Mixed (circle one)

2 OFFICIAL TIME min sec sec/100

3 AGE GROUP

4 POOL LENGTH (Short course 25m/Long course 50m)

5 LOCATION/DATE OF SANCTIONED MASTERS MEET
.....

Pool Name City Country Date

6 POOL LENGTH CONFIRMATION ATTACHED ...ON FILE ...

First Name Last Name Sex Age Date of Birth

7 NAME OF SWIMMER
..... M/F

8 RELAY TEAM NAMES

1 M/F

2 M/F

3 M/F

4 M/F

9 PHOTOSTAT OF BIRTH CERTIFICATE OR PASSPORT
ATTACHED OR ON FILE

10 CLUB NAME COUNTRY

11 ELECTRONIC TIME min sec sec/100

12 NON ELECTRONIC TIME (Three digital watches required)

(1) : (2) : (3) :

13 PHOTOSTAT OF TIME RECORD TO BE ATTACHED

CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME DATE

OFFICIAL TITLE

NATIONAL MASTERS RECORDER

SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME Christian Berger DATE

ADDRESS 1130 rue Emma, Longueuil, Quebec, J4J 3A3

COUNTRY Canada

FINA MASTERS RECORDER Long Course / Short Course
Approved / Not Approved Reason for Non Approval

Signature Date

FINA OFFICE Ratified / Not Ratified

Signature Date

Masters Swimming Canada

Pool Length Certification

Pool Name:
Address:
City: Province: Postal:

Measurement Parameters (circle answer)
Pool Length: 25 meters (SCM) 50 meters (LCM)
Moveable Bulkhead: Yes No
Number of touchpads: None One Two
Measuring Tape: Steel Fiberglass

Measurements
Outside Lane: metrescentimetres
Middle Lane: metrescentimetres
Outside Lane: metres centimetres

Measured By
Name: Title:.....
Address:
City: Province: Postal:
Date of Measurement:

Submitted By
Name: Title:.....
Address:
City: Province: Postal:
Date of Measurement:

Sent completed form to:
Christian Berger, 1130 rue Emma, Longueuil, Quebec, J4J 3A3

Measurement Procedures
Measurement shall be conducted using a steel or fibreglass tape;
The tape shall be longer than the distance to be measured;
Measurements shall be reported in the metric system (metres, centimetres);
Measurements shall be conducted for each outside lane and one centre lane;
Measurements shall be taken at water level from inside end wall to inside end wall;
Measurements may be conducted with or without touchpads in place;
Permanent courses need only be measured and submitted once unless structural changes have occurred since original measurements.
Pools with a moveable bulkhead should be measured as a permanent course and benchmarked. Before each session of competition and at the conclusion of the meet, a responsible person shall confirm the pool length by checking the benchmark as a reference point.