



October 7, 2026

NFHS Swimming and Diving Weekly Rule Interpretations

Diving and Breaststroke Requirements

Rules References: 8-2-2 PENALTY, 9-3-8, 9-4-2, 9-4-2h, 9-4-2 NOTES 1 & 2, 9-5-1, 9-5-2, 9-5-3, 9-7-5d, 9-8-1a

SITUATION 1: The state association stipulates that in all diving competitions conducted during the season using the championship format described in Rule 9-4-2; there shall be 40 contestants permitted in the preliminaries with 24 advancing to the semifinals and 20 to the finals to compete for the 16 places to be scored. **RULING:** Incorrect. **COMMENT:** The rule change established in Rule 9-4-2 NOTE 1 permits the state association to increase the number of semifinalists beyond the number indicted in Rule 9-4-2h (in this case, 20). It does not change the number of finalists, which in this Situation would be 16. Rule 9-4-2 NOTE 2 indicates that there may be “more than 32” participants in the preliminaries.

SITUATION 2: A diver’s forward approach consists of two steps, a hop to a one-foot landing and a hurdle, with a two-foot landing at the end of the board. The referee deducts two points from each judge’s score for a violation of the forward approach (9-8-1a). **RULING:** Incorrect. The diving referee should take no action. **COMMENT:** Per rule 9-5-2, steps, hops, leaps and/or jumps may be utilized by the diver in fulfilling the requirement of three steps in the forward approach.

SITUATION 3: Following the announcement of the competitor’s next dive, the diver steps onto the board and begins adjusting the fulcrum, during which time his coach offers a few words of instruction and encouragement. The diving referee declares the diver’s performance a “failed dive” because of receiving assistance during the performance of his dive (Rules 9-3-8 and 9-7-5d). **RULING:** Incorrect. **COMMENT:** The prohibition on assistance, whether verbal or physical, applies to the actual performance of the dive. The diver is free to move about on the board, adjusting the fulcrum, for example, and listen to encouragement and instructions prior to commencing the actual dive, which occurs when he assumes a starting position. (Rules 9-5-1 and 9-5-3)

SITUATION 4: At the 25-yard turn in the 100-yard breaststroke event, the swimmer in Lane 2 pushes off the wall with her body almost completely on her back as her feet leave the wall. Before performing her initial pulldown, she rotates onto her breast. No body position violation is called by the meet officials. **RULING:** Incorrect. What is described here is a clear violation of Rule 8-2-2f (final sentence) and should result in disqualification for violation of that rule 8-2-2 PENALTY). **COMMENT:** World Aquatics recently announced a rule change regarding body position on breaststroke turns which does not apply to high

school swimming at this time. The NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Committee will review this development and determine appropriate action in March 2027.