



October 21, 2026

## NFHS Swimming and Diving Weekly Rule Interpretations

### Relay Entries

**Rules References:** 3-2-3, 3-2-4, 3-2-5, 3-3 NOTE, 3-3-4b(1), 3-3-4b(3), 3-3-6, 8-2-3e, 8-2-3g, Appendix B

**SITUATION 1:** In the league championship meet (which uses championship rules that require a team to designate the relay participants on the entry form), a team a) designates 8 swimmers on the entry form and then circles the names of the 4 swimmers who will compete on the relay card provided by the meet administration; b) designates 8 swimmers on the entry form and then circles 3 names on the relay card and crosses out one of the other names and writes in a different name; or c) designates only 3 swimmers on the entry form and writes in a fourth name on the relay card. **RULING:** a) Is legal and only the 4 swimmers participating in the relay are charged with an event; b) 8 names were submitted but only 3 of the legal entries swam and the written in name was not designated on the entry form and is therefore an illegal entry; c) The entry is illegal because only 3 swimmers were entered on the entry form. **COMMENT:** The host school must clearly state the method of entry for relays. Coaches must read and follow the entry guidelines for all meets. Officials must be aware of the entry guidelines and assist the meet administration making sure these guidelines are applied equally to all teams.

**SITUATION 2:** One of the relay teams in the consolation heat reported to the blocks minus one of the four swimmers. After the event started, the swimmer appeared and swam in his normal position in the relay. The officials disqualified the relay, using 3-2-3 Paragraph 3 as justification. " Only the four swimmers declared on the relay entry, which shall be submitted at a specified time and place prior to the start of the event, are permitted to report to the blocks and compete." **RULING:** Incorrect. The official should not disqualify the relay team until the team does not complete the race or the team causes a delay in the meet. **COMMENT:** When hosting championship meets it is advisable to check off the relay teams as they must be behind the starting blocks. This helps to ensure all participants are present and helps to limit excessive crowding behind the blocks during relays. This is recommended but not required. Coaches should make sure the swimmers know who is on their relay team and have them report to the blocks together to avoid any disqualifications for not completing events. Officials should officiate the pool and maintain the focus on the competition area of the pool.

**SITUATION 3:** A swimmer competing in the 100-yard butterfly event does not have a right hand due to a childhood accident and is unable to perform the two-hand touch/finish stipulated in Rules 8-2-3e and

8-2-3g. The referee will not disqualify this swimmer unless there is a failure to comply with the portions of the butterfly rule of which the swimmer is physically capable. **RULING:** This is the correct procedure for dealing with such a disability. Officials are informed prior to the event/competition and simply overlook the specific circumstance where the swimmer cannot fulfill the rule requirement. Of course, if a swimmer violates another rule requirement, which the swimmer is physically able to perform, then a sanction is imposed. **COMMENT:** The coach/school should, prior to the start of the season, request a letter of accommodation from the state association, specifically describing how officials are to handle this specific athlete's condition. The details of that letter are spelled out in Rule 3-3 NOTE and Appendix B of the current NFHS Swimming and Diving rules book. The coach should be prepared to provide the letter throughout the season.

**SITUATION 4:** A swimmer is wearing a sleeve-type brace on the left arm to support an elbow injury.

**RULING:** Permissible. **COMMENT:** Initially, as is the case with any use of tape, the school/coach/athlete must provide written medical clearance and authorization for the need of the device (Rule 3-3-6d). Additionally, the state association office would need to confirm that the specific device being used complies with all of the parameters of Rule 3-3-6. The brace should be made of textile or woven material, and not be made of neoprene as that affects buoyancy. (3-3-4 b(1) and 3-3-4 b(3))