

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE  
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



**NEWS RELEASE**

**Reorganized High School Swimming/Diving Rules  
Address Event Clarity, Definition, Flexibility**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Sandy Searcy

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (April 23, 2018) — In an effort to assist meet personnel operating high school swimming and diving meets, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Swimming and Diving Rules Committee reorganized Rule 1 and Rule 5 at its March 18-20 meeting in Indianapolis. All rules changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Additionally, the committee's other rules changes focused on pre-meet conferences, equipment requirements and the order in which diving may take place at non-championship events.

"While the list of 2018-19 swimming and diving rules changes appear to be extensive, in general, most of the proposed changes involve a reorganization of two rules," said Sandy Searcy, NFHS director of sports and liaison to the Swimming and Diving Rules Committee. "These changes provide clarity, a definition and flexibility to accommodate swimming and diving meets that are conducted in a variety of formats and facilities, and with various team personnel."

In addition to a reorganization of Rule 1, the committee approved new terminology that accurately reflects and defines meet specifications and organization, including the consolidation of several terms that label the types of meets such as dual, double-dual, triangular, invitational, multi-team, etc.

In a similar fashion, Rule 5 was reorganized to list meet specifications in a “logical stepwise fashion from the dual meet to the championship meet,” according to Searcy. Rule 5-3-2 was one of the notable changes within the rule, as additional lane assignments were provided to accommodate non-championship multi-team and double/triple dual meets.

“The changes to Rule 5 provide flexibility and direction for situations in which the number of teams and/or entries cannot be equally divided into the number of available lanes,” Searcy said. “New language delineates options for conducting meets based on high school facilities across the country.”

The committee approved a change in diving in Rule 5-1-2a. In non-championship events, diving may now be the first event. Beginning next year, diving may be conducted either first, last or simultaneously with swimming events.

“In addition, it is now permissible to conduct 11-dive competitions during any non-championship meet with prior mutual consent of competing teams,” Searcy added.

Another change involves the pre-meet conference in Rule 4-2-1d. A mandatory pre-meet conference with the referee, starter, and the captain and coach of each team must be held to review meet procedures, special instructions and any unusual pool conditions. Equipment requirements were addressed in Rule 2-4-5, which now mandates a 15-meter mark on both sides of the pool deck. Markings may also be integrated into each lane marker, but deck markings take precedent.

Other rules changes include:

- Rules 2-6-1 through 4, which were reorganized to clarify mandatory requirements versus recommendations.
- Rule 2-7-2b, which adds the prohibition of the backstroke starting ledge to the rules so that there is no question that the equipment is not permitted in high school swimming.
- Rules 4-5-3 and 4-7, which clarify and confirm that responsibilities of stroke inspectors and turn/finish judges can be combined. This is especially the case when the availability of officials is limited. The flexibility to staff the deck effectively and efficiently with available officials should be preserved.

A complete listing of all rules changes is available on the NFHS website at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org). Click on “Activities & Sports” at the top of the home page, and select “Swimming & Diving.”

Swimming and diving ranks eighth in popularity among girls with 170,797 participants and 10th among boys with 138,364 participants, according to the 2016-17 NFHS Athletics Participation Survey.

*This press release was written by Cody Porter, a graphic arts/communications assistant in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department.*

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**About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)**

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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