



**MASTERS
SWIMMING**
Australia

AUS SI Guide to Refereeing

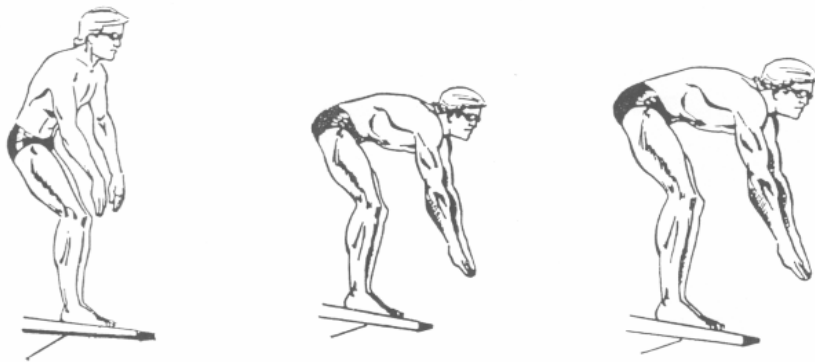
August, 1997
Revised: June 1999
Revised January 2003

SW11 THE START

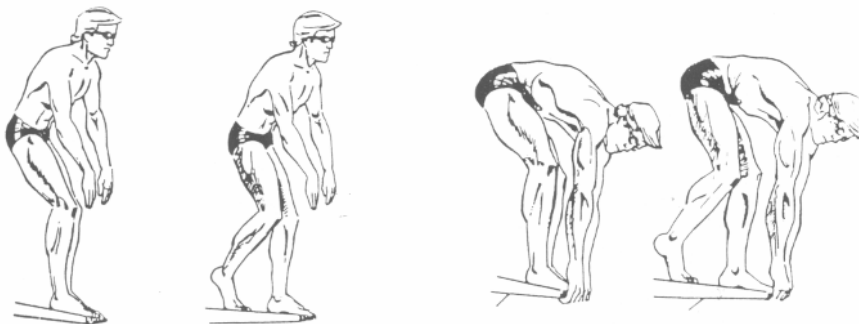
SW11.1 On the long whistle from the Referee (SW9.4.6), swimmers shall take up their position with at least one foot at the front of the starting platform or immediately enter the water. The forward start may be taken from the front of the starting block, the pool deck or a push from the wall below the allocated starting block with one hand having contact with the starting wall. On the Starter's command "take your marks", they shall immediately take up a starting position. When all swimmers are stationary, the Starter shall give the starting signal (shot, horn, whistle or command).

CLARIFICATION: Where possible a visual signal should be used (eg an electronic flash) in addition to the auditory signal at the start.

CLARIFICATION: Sitting on the block or pool edge is acceptable under this Rule provided that they do not interfere with the timing touch pads.



Incorrect starting positions before the command 'Take your marks'.



Correct starting positions before the command, 'Take your marks'.

Correct starting positions after the command, 'Take your marks'.

Swimmers should be stood up if all the swimmers are not stationary within a reasonable period and a false start is imminent. In Backstroke, swimmers are asked to relax.

SW11.2 The start in backstroke and medley relay races shall be from the water. At the Referee's long whistle (SW9.4.6), the swimmers shall immediately enter the water. At the Referee's second long whistle the swimmers shall return without undue delay to the starting position (SW13.1). When all swimmers have assumed their starting positions, the Starter shall give the command "take your marks". When all swimmers are stationary, the Starter shall give the starting signal.



Incorrect backstroke starting position



Correct backstroke position until the starting signal is given.

Explanation of the 2nd whistle.

SW11.3 Any swimmer starting before the starting signal has been given shall be disqualified. Once the starting signal sounds, the race shall continue and the swimmer and or swimmers shall be disqualified upon completion of the race. If the disqualification is declared before the starting signal, the signal shall not be given, but the remaining swimmers shall be stood up, be reminded by the Starter of the penalties, and be started again.

Clarification: If a swimmer loses his balance on the blocks and falls in before the start signal is given, the Referee may declare this a technical false start.

This would have to be judged as deliberate when a swimmer dives in - but some swimmers may overbalance and fall forward or slip off the starting block. Swimmers to relax, stand up, step down.

SW11.4 The signal for a technical false start shall be the same as the starting signal but repeated together with dropping of the false start rope. Alternatively, if the Referee decides that the start is a technical false start, he shall blow his whistle, which shall be followed by the Starter's signal (repeated) and dropping of the false start rope.

SW11.5 Where a swimmer makes little or no attempt to take up and hold a starting position at the front of the starting block following the Starter's command, the Starter and the Referee shall consider this to be a disqualifiable infraction.

Swimmer is late onto the starting block or climbs onto the starting block after the race has already started.

SW12 FREESTYLE

SW12.1 Freestyle means that in an event so designated the swimmer may swim any style, except that in individual medley or medley relay events, freestyle means any style other than backstroke, breaststroke or butterfly.

SW12.2 Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface.

SW12.3 Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall upon completion of each length and at the finish.

- **The somersault or tumble is allowed in Freestyle swimming and the touch restriction of the 3 form strokes does not apply except when form strokes are nominated – the swimmers may touch the wall with any part of the body at the turn and finish.**
- **If the swimmer misses the wall during the turn, then a return to the wall to make the touch with any part of the body does not incur a disqualification.**

**SW12.4 In all freestyle events, if a swimmer nominates a form stroke or medley for sealed handicap, Top Ten, Award Swims or record attempt purposes, he shall comply with all the rules relating to such stroke or strokes.

A record can only be recognised for the nominated stroke. The swimmer must be disqualified if they do not conform to the rules of the nominated stroke.

SW13 BACKSTROKE

- SW13.1 Swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands holding the starting grips or 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 is prohibited.



Incorrect backstroke starting position.



Correct backstroke position until the starting signal is activated.

Both feet can be in any position on the wall, except toes shall not be visible above the water line. Any starting position may be used, as long as both feet stay in contact with the wall and both hands are on the starting grips or on the edge of the pool deck.

- SW13.2 At the signal for starting and after turning the swimmer shall push off and swim upon his back throughout the race. He must be on his back at all times except when executing a turn. (Refer to Rule SW13.3). The normal position on the back can include a roll movement of the body up to but not including 90 degrees from the horizontal. The position of the head is not relevant.

**Explanation of 90° needed (must be less than 90°) and to use the line of the shoulders relevant to the water as a guide.
Any arm movement may be used including double arms and allows for any type of kick combination.**

SW13.3 During the turn, the shoulders may be turned over the vertical to the breast after which a continuous single arm pull or a continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn. Once the body has left the position on the back, there will be no kick or arm pull that is independent of the continuous turning action. The swimmer must have returned to the position on the back upon leaving the wall. When executing the turn there must be a touch of the wall with some part of the swimmer's body.

CLARIFICATION: The swimmer who turns past vertical and, in a continuous motion, touches the wall with any part of the body eg 'grabs' the wall before pushing off with the feet while on the back, is deemed to have executed a "continuous turning action".

CLARIFICATION: When off the back, a glide is permissible without any forward propulsive action (from either arms or legs) until the swimmer is deemed to be executing a continuous turning action.

CLARIFICATION: If a swimmer applies to have their intermediate distance especially timed, (refer to SW19.2), the swimmer must complete that distance in accordance with the finish rule for Backstroke as in SW13.5

- **A swimmer who does not tumble turn but turns over onto the breast before touching the wall, touches the wall with any part of the body and pushes off on the back - this is okay providing there is no long pause (after grabbing the wall) and the turn is continuous.**
- **A swimmer may use a swivel turn i.e. doesn't come off the back during the turn, and may use any part of the body, including the feet before the feet have left the wall.**
- **If the turn is missed, the swimmer can scull backwards. (Does not refer to tumble turn.)**
- **A continuous turning motion (during the tumble turn) does not allow the swimmer to stop and stand up facing the end of the pool; the swimmer must be on the back when the swim is recommenced.**
- **If the swimmer turns onto the breast too far out from the wall, then it is not permitted to return to the back and then turn to the breast a second time when closer to the wall.**
- **The swimmer cannot use a 'freestyle' stroke to initiate the turn—ie take an extra stroke.**

SW9.4 Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 metres after the start and each turn. By that point the head must have broken the surface.

SW13.4 Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn, at the finish, and for a distance of not more than 15 metres after the start and each turn. By that point the head must have broken the surface.

- This may be difficult to achieve when using the 2 arm backstroke with breaststroke kick... however the style is acceptable.
- With the design of lane ropes, the 15m mark is indicated where the lane ropes change colour - it is only the head that must surface at the 15m mark, whereas the hand may extend beyond the 15m line. Have you considered making sure you know where the 15m line is? You can't depend on the placement of the false start rope.
- Also it is head is to be watched that it is up at the 15m—not the hand.

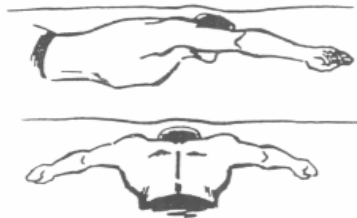
SW13.5 During the finish the swimmer may be completely submerged. The swimmer must touch the wall while on the back

If a swimmer miscounts the laps, does not touch on the back and continues to swim beyond the required distance, the swimmer would be disqualified.

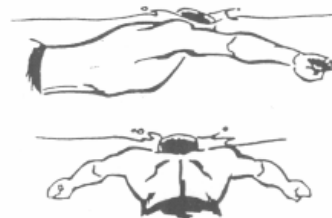
SW14 BREASTSTROKE

SW14.1 From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and after each turn, the body shall be kept on the breast. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time.

SW14.2 All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.



Correct breaststroke head position



Correct breaststroke head position.

Simultaneous means 'occurring or operating at the same time'. All movements of the arms need to be at the same time.

Alternating (of two things) means succeeding, or passing (in this context of feet or legs) in relation to each other by turns.

*** Refer to Medical Disability BR1 & BR3**

Although diagram shows the ideal stroke, shoulders no longer have to be in line with the water.

SW14.3 The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over the water, and shall be brought back on or under the surface of the water. The elbows shall be under the water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn, and at the finish. The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn.

*** Refer to Medical Disability BR2**

**SW14.4 The feet should be turned outward during the propulsive part of the kick. A scissors, flutter or downward dolphin kick is not permitted. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward dolphin kick. All movements of the legs shall be simultaneous during the propulsive part of the kick.

An attempt to comply - the swimmer may be pigeon toed - however not a sort of dolphin kick. Up and down movements of the legs and feet are not allowed however the normal involuntary rise and fall of the feet and legs in a vertical plane during the Breaststroke kick is allowable.

**** Also refer to Medical Disability form - BR3**



Breaststroke propulsion from the bottom of the feet.

SW10.5 At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. The head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch.

An uneven touch although the touch is simultaneous and a grab of the top of the pool is not illegal (after the touch is made).

Also the arm recovering over the top of water (after the touch), similar to a freestyle stroke is also acceptable.

The head can be turned or the swimmer can swim with the head to one side as long as there are no stroking faults.

The somersault or tumble turn is allowed providing the swimmer complies with both the touch and turn rule.

*** Refer to Medical Disability BR4**



Correct turn of finish/turn for breaststroke.

SW14.6 During each complete cycle of one arm stroke and one leg kick, in that order, some part of the swimmer's head shall break the surface of the water, except that after the start and after each turn the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs and one leg kick while wholly submerged. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.

- The head may be below the water surface prior to the turn or the finish as long as the head breaks the surface of the water during the last cycle before the turn or finish.
- Part of the swimmer's head must actually come out of the water i.e. exposed directly to the air during the race.

SW15 BUTTERFLY

SW15.1 From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and after each turn, the body shall be kept on the breast and both shoulders shall be in line with the normal water surface. Underwater kicking on the side is allowed. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time.

SW15.2 Both arms must be brought forward together over the water and brought backward simultaneously.

** *CLARIFICATION: Both arms must be brought forward together over the general surface of the water with the elbows being visible on the top of the water and the arms being brought back simultaneously. This is the minimum requirement in accordance with this rule.*

*** Refer to Medical Disability BU1**

- The swimmer can wholly submerge at any time during the race, provided at all times both arms are brought forward over the water.
- Skimming of the arms across the surface of the water is allowed as long as the elbows are visible above the general surface of the water.
- In August, 1997 at the Technical Workshop in Adelaide, it was determined that 1 arm recovery over the water per lap was the minimum requirement. (as there is no cycle with arms, head and leg kick)

- SW15.3 All movements of the feet must be executed in a simultaneous manner. Simultaneous up and down movements of the legs and feet in the vertical plane are permitted. The legs or feet need not be at the same level, but no alternating movements are permitted.

CLARIFICATION: Either a dolphin or breaststroke leg action may be used with the butterfly arm action. A mixture of these types of leg action may be used during the performance of butterfly.



Correct positions of the feet for butterfly (relative position may not change during a kick).

- The swimmer may do several leg kicks to one arm pull.
- The mixture of leg kicks can be in any ratio. The swimmer can switch between kick styles provided the simultaneous movement is unbroken.
- The legs and feet need not be at the same level but no alternating movement is permitted.
- The legs and feet would have to maintain their position in relation to each other throughout the race i.e. the left leg and foot above the right leg and foot.
- No alternating movements of the legs and feet are allowed i.e. legs and feet passing each other in a flutter kick motion. Alternating (of two things) means succeeding, or passing (in this context of feet and legs) in relation to each other, by turns.

The dolphin kick - the vertical up and down movements of the legs and feet in a vertical plane.

The breaststroke kick -

- Simultaneous movement of the legs and feet in the same horizontal plane.
- The feet may be turned in or out.
- The feet may break the surface of the water.

* Refer to Medical Disability BU2

- SW15.4 At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously, at, above or below the water surface. It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15 metres after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface. The swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish.

If the hands just fall short of the wall at the turn or finish the swimmer may
(a) float into the wall with arms extended
(b) kick into the wall with arms extended
(c) take another complete stroke, bringing the arms over the water to touch.
Once an arm stroke has started the arms must not be brought forward under the water to finish (the underwater recovery is not allowed i.e if the swimmer pulls the hands back under the water from the extended position and then pushes his hands forward on or below the water surface to touch the wall).
*** Refer to Medical Disability BU3**

- SW15.5 At the start and at turns, a swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks and one arm pull under the water which must bring him to the surface. It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15 metres after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface. The swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish.

Use of dolphin or breaststroke kick.

SW16 MEDLEY SWIMMING

- SW16.1 In Individual Medley events, the swimmer covers the four swimming styles in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle.

Freestyle means any stroke other than Backstroke, Breaststroke or Butterfly.

- SW16.2 In Medley Relay events, swimmers will cover the four swimming styles in the following order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle.
Clarification: Each stroke in a medley (both individual and relay) must be finished in accordance with the Finish rule for that stroke eg, in the case of the change from backstroke to breaststroke, the swimmer must touch the wall while still on the back, before the shoulder has rotated beyond the vertical.

As above:
Swimmers in individual and medley relays cannot negate a wrong stroke as in SW16.3

- SW16.3 In Individual Medley events and Medley Relays an equal distance of each stroke must be swum.
Clarification: A swimmer who commences with the wrong stroke in any leg cannot negate the error by stopping and returning to the pool end and re-commence using the correct stroke

Intermediate turns within each stroke must conform to the turn rules for that stroke.
The turns when changing from one stroke to another must conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed—
Butterfly to Backstroke - as in SW15.4 . Once the legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner, but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical towards the back when the swimmer leaves the wall.

*** Medical Disabilities in Butterfly and Breaststroke to be considered.**

SW17 THE RACE

- SW17.1 A swimmer swimming over the course alone shall cover the whole distance to be eligible for points, records and awards.

For any appropriate award/record - under full race conditions, must complete the full distance to claim the record at any distance e.g. 100m Butterfly during a 200m Butterfly swim— if the swimmer is disq in the 2nd 100m, the record cannot be claimed. (does not apply with the 1st swimmer of a relay)

- SW17.2 A swimmer must finish the race in the same lane in which he started.

If a swimmer crosses into another lane and does not obstruct another swimmer, they are not disqualified - however they must finish in the correct lane.

SW17.3 In all events, a swimmer when turning shall make physical contact with the end of the pool or course. The turn must be made from the wall and it is not permitted to take a stride or step from the bottom of the pool.

**SW17.4 Standing on the bottom during a race shall not disqualify a competitor but he shall not walk or push off to resume the swim. In like manner, holding on to the lane rope during a race shall not disqualify a competitor but he shall not propel himself forward by pulling on the lane rope. If a swimmer has to stop during a race (to adjust goggles, swimming costume or has swallowed water), the swimmer may resume without penalty.

This applies to all strokes—in the interest of safety—eg goggles over the face.

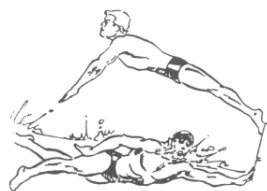
SW17.5 Obstructing another swimmer by swimming across another lane or otherwise interfering shall disqualify the offender. Should the foul be intentional, the Referee shall report the matter to the body promoting the meet, and to the Club of the swimmer so offending.

SW17.6 No swimmer shall be permitted to use or wear any device that may aid his speed, buoyancy or endurance during a competition (such as webbed gloves, flippers, fins, heart rate monitor etc.). Goggles may be worn.

SW17.7 Any swimmer not entered in a race, who enters the water in which an event is being conducted before all swimmers therein have completed the race, shall be disqualified from his next scheduled race in the meet.

SW17.8 Relays shall consist of four swimmers each registered with the same Club. No swimmer is allowed to represent more than one Club. The order of the swimmers is optional in mixed freestyle relays.

SW17.9 In relay events, the team of a swimmer whose feet lose touch with the starting platform before the preceding team-mate touches the wall shall be disqualified, unless the swimmer in default returns to the original starting point at the wall, but it shall not be necessary to return to the starting platform.



SW17.10 Any relay team shall be disqualified from a race if a team member, other than the swimmer designated to swim that length, enters the water when the race is being conducted, before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race.

SW17.11 Any relay swimmer having finished his leg, must leave the pool as soon as possible without obstructing any other swimmer who has not yet finished his leg. Otherwise the relay team at fault may be disqualified.

Refer to SW17.13 and SW17.14—in the interests of safety and the older/less able swimmer.

SW17.12 Should a foul endanger the chance of success of a swimmer, the Referee shall have the power to allow the swimmer to compete in the next or a later heat or the Referee may order the heat to be re-swum.

SW17.13 Swimmers in individual events shall remain in the water in their lane until all swimmers in the race have finished, unless instructed to leave the water by the Referee.

**SW17.14 The Meet Director and/or Referee shall be allowed, in the interests of saving time, to leave swimmers in the water and to start the next heat.

SW17.15 The Referee shall be empowered to allow a swimmer to remain in the water while the next heat starts, to enable him/her to recover before getting out.

SW18 RECORDS

SW18.1 WORLD RECORDS:

SW18.1.1 World record lists for each age group and gender shall be made available.

SW18.1.2 World records require AOE times or three (3) manual times recorded to 1/100th of a second.

SW18.1.3 Application for records on the appropriate form shall be forwarded to the National Recorder within 30 days of the end of the meet.

SW18.2 NATIONAL RECORDS:

Records shall be kept of the fastest times recorded in each age group and gender for the following events:

Individual	Freestyle	50, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1500m.
	Backstroke	50, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1500m.
	Breaststroke	50, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1500m.
	Butterfly	50, 100, 200, 400, 800m.

- SW19.3 Individual
Medley 100 200, 400, 800m.
The 100m Individual Medley (25m pools only) is eligible for short course records only.
- SW19.4 Relays
Freestyle 4 x 50m Women, Men and Mixed
Medley 4 x 50m Women, Men and Mixed
- SW19.5 National records may be broken or set at:
- SW19.5.1 any swim meet involving two or more clubs which has been sanctioned by the AUSSI Management Committee or any of its affiliated Branches
- SW19.5.2 any official ASI meet, including those conducted or sanctioned by affiliated State Associations
- SW19.5.3 FINA World Masters Meets
- SW19.5.4 any Masters Meet which has been sanctioned by FINA or any of its affiliated members, subject to approval by the AUSSI Management Committee.
- SW19.5.5 Swim Meets that have been sanctioned by FINA or any of its affiliated members, subject to approval by the AUSSI Management Committee providing that:
- the swim meet is conducted over a 50m or 55yard course for the setting or breaking of Long Course records;
 - the swim meet is conducted over a 25m course for the setting or breaking of Short Course records.
- SW19.5.6 The times are recorded by one of two approved methods:
- (a) electronic timing
- (b) by recording three manual times and where two of the three are the same time, taking that as the official time, or if all three watches record different times taking the intermediate time as the official time.
- SW19.5.7 All rules have been complied with and verified by the Referee.
- SW19.6 The National Recorder will issue Certificates for all new records established.
- SW19.7 Records may only be set or broken by members of AUSSI.
- SW19.8 When a member is confident of setting or breaking a record the swim entry should be duly marked "RECORD ATTEMPT". The Chief Recorder should ensure all relevant officials are notified.
- SW19.9 When a record has been established, and the time and the swimmer's details have been recorded on an official record form, the details should be verified by the Chief Recorder and signed by the Referee.

All details on the Certificate of Performance should be checked against the official results and all sections of the COP should be completed correctly—eg using the full title of a stroke not B/stroke.

SW19.10 It is the duty of the Meet Director to ensure that all results are given to the Branch Recorder.

This would include the COPs.

SW19.11 The Branch Recorder will complete the Record Application Form and send it to the National Recorder within 30 days from the end of the meet.

This would include the COPs. The Branch Recorder needs to check that all details on the COP have been completed and can be verified against the results. This includes current registration of the swimmer.

SW19.12 In relay events, the first swimmer may request the Referee to have his/her performance specially timed for possible recognition as a record. The performance shall not be nullified by any subsequent disqualification of the relay team or team member for violations occurring after his distance has been completed.

SW19.13 A swimmer in an individual event may apply to have their intermediate distance especially timed, in accordance with the provisions of SW19. Swimmers must complete the scheduled distance of an event to be eligible for a record at the intermediate distance.

SW4 FINA RULE CHANGES

SW4.1 The Technical Committee will consider any changes made to the Rules by FINA. If the changes are thought not to conflict with the purpose and objectives of AUSSI, they may be adopted upon receipt of notification from the National Management Committee until ratified or rescinded at the subsequent Board meeting.

SW8.5 MEDICAL DISABILITY

SW8.5.1 A swimmer with a non-manifest disability shall provide a medical certificate stating the medical disability, the range of motion/activity that is impaired and the swimming stroke(s) that may/will be affected.

SW8.5.2 For a medical disability to be considered, the Medical Disability Certificate must be registered with the National Office before the close of entries.

SW8.5.3 For a medical disability that has occurred after the close of entries, the Medical Disability Certificate may be accepted at the discretion of the Referee.

SW8.5.4 When a swimmer is allocated a heat and lane number, the Referee's heat program should be marked accordingly, or the Referee notified.

SW8.5.5 The time for a swimmer with a Medical Disability will be eligible for placing, points and the medal in that event and for inclusion in National Top Ten, but cannot be accepted for World Top Ten.

SW8.5.6 The Referee, at his discretion, may take medical disabilities into account.

**** Refer to the attached Medical Disability form and be familiar with the categories as they apply to the strokes of Breaststroke and Butterfly.**

** denotes any marked departure or addition to FINA rules of swimming.