



January 2021

From: USMS Legislation and Rules Committee Chairs

To: LMSC Chairs, Sanctions Chairs, Officials Chairs, and Meet Directors

As many Local Masters Swimming Committees (LMSC) and clubs are returning to competition, we recognize that many LMSCs and clubs are seeking new and creative ways to offer competitive opportunities for USMS members within local constraints. Options for conducting USMS sanctioned meets may include smaller meets, virtual meets, and dual-sanctioned meets held in conjunction with USA Swimming sanctioned events. We recognize that sometimes opportunities for competition may present themselves without the usual planning time that might have been associated with sanctioned meets in previous years.

To avoid any confusion, we would like to highlight several provisions of the current USMS rules and regulations that apply to all sanctioned events. We encourage clubs to work with the national office, LMSC sanctions chairs, and the chairs of the Rules and Legislation Committee to clarify questions regarding sanctioned events in the planning stages so that sanctions and official results may be processed quickly and without errors. We encourage questions and feedback on the administrative rules and regulations regarding sanctioned events as USMS navigates through the challenges of restrictions places on pools.

Timeline Requirements for Sanctioned Meets

201.1.1 B says that “Entries shall not be accepted before the sanction has been issued. Paper forms shall not be distributed, online entry systems shall not be activated, and the event shall not be listed on the USMS Calendar of Events until the sanction has been issued.”

202.1.1 G(1) says that “The conduct of a sanctioned event shall be in strict compliance with applicable USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations, or when the sanctioned event is held simultaneously in conjunction with a USA Swimming sanctioned meet, with applicable USA Swimming rules and administrative regulations.

102.5.7 says that “Following the issuance of a sanction, the order of events must be published in the meet announcement and made available to all eligible swimmers at least one week prior to the entry deadline. The LMSC may establish a minimum period of time longer than one week for which the meet announcement must be made available to all eligible swimmers.”

These provisions taken together mean that the host club should consider the timelines to ensure that a sanction is obtained first, then the event is published with a meet announcement that specifies the order of events a minimum of one week prior to the entry deadline, and then entry systems are activated to accept entries. Entries are then closed, the meet is conducted, and then the official results submitted. The process must occur in this order and in accordance with deadlines established in the USMS rules and by individual LMSC policies.

The penalty for non-compliance with the timelines specified in the USMS rules and regulations is that the times will not be accepted for official purposes (USMS records and top ten ranking).



In addition, please note the following provisions on dual-sanctioned and virtual meets.

Dual-Sanctioned Meets with USA Swimming

A dual-sanctioned meet held in conjunction with a USA Swimming is still considered a USMS sanctioned event and is subject to all of the administrative rules and regulations that apply to all other USMS sanctioned meets.

Some exceptions for combined meets are specified in the updated guidelines for dual-sanctioned meets which will appear in the 2021 USMS Rule Book.

Combined Meets—With the consent of all (co-)hosting teams and the LSC and LMSC, a combined meet may be sanctioned by both USA Swimming and USMS and all swimmers competing according to USA Swimming technical rules for individual strokes, relays, and the conduct and officiating of the competition with the exception **that USMS regulations governing events, eligibility, protests of applicable rules, and meet results shall apply to USMS members. Otherwise, each organization’s rules and administrative regulations apply to their members.** This mechanism allows the meet host(s) to seed the event as they normally would, based upon times, with USA Swimming and USMS members combined in heats without specific lanes allocated to one organization or the other. Relay teams must consist of members of the same USMS or USA Swimming club. Note that all USMS events held in 25-meter and 50-meter pools must be conducted as timed finals, but USMS members may compete in preliminary heats if they are not competing for slots in the finals session(s). USMS does not permit time trials in 25-meter and 50-meter pools.

Please also note that meet announcements for dual-sanctioned meets or open water events must contain information for **both USMS and USA Swimming athletes** in accordance with each organization’s rules and administrative regulations.

Virtual Meets

The USMS House of Delegates approved additional rules regarding the sanctioning of virtual meets that took effect immediately following the annual meeting in September 2020.

102.5.8 Virtual meets may be held as competitions at multiple venues (sanctioned by each respective LMSC) with the same order of events and all results merged. Virtual meets may be held on different days at the multiple venues. All of the events must be completed within a maximum 10-day period in the same calendar year. The age determining date shall be the same for the entire meet and in accordance with article 102.2.

Meet—an event or series of events held under sanction or recognition and conducted within 10 consecutive days at the same venue, or multiple venues for virtual meets. Postal meets may be conducted over periods longer than 10 days.



**U.S. MASTERS
SWIMMING**

Article 201.1.1A says that “Applications for sanction shall be made to the LMSC within which the event is to be held.”

Since the definition of “meet” provides for multiple venues as part of a single virtual meet, **a single sanction may be used to cover the entire virtual meet if all of the venues are located within the same LMSC. However, if the multiple venues are located in more than one LMSC, each LMSC must issue a sanction to cover the venue(s) within their respective jurisdiction.**

Thank you for your support of masters swimming.

Best Regards,

Charles Cockrell
Chair, USMS Legislation Committee

Mollie Grover
Chair, USMS Rules Committee