

Committee Name:	Long Distance	Session #:	4
Committee Chair:	Catherine Rust	Vice Chair:	Dave Brancamp-absent
Minutes recorded by:	Christie Ciraulo and AI	Date/time of meeting:	05 May 2026. 8pmEDT

Actions Requiring Approval by the House of Delegates:

None

Motions Passed: (see below)

The committee passed moving three protest-related rules (303, 305, and 307) from the rules section to procedures

Committee Present: 8	Committee Absent: 5	ExOfficio Present: 3	ExOfficio Absent: 1	Guest: 1
<b>Committee Members Present:</b>				
Catherine Rust				
Christie Ciraulo				
James Davidson				
Bob Kolonkowski				
Nicki Phillips				
Phyllis Quinn				
Stephen Rouch				
Vesna Shelnut				
<b>Committee Members Absent:</b>				
Amy Wagner				
Marnie Whitley				
John Fox				
David Spitzler				
David Brancamp				
<b>ExOfficio Members Present:</b>				
Carrie Stolar				
Jay Eckert				
David Miner				
<b>ExOfficio Members Absent:</b>				
Onshalee Promchitmart				
<b>Guest:</b>				
none				

The meeting was called to order at 8pmEDT.

Meeting Opened by Chair Catherine Rust

**Meeting Summary Reports**

1. Catherine Rust

- a. Discussion regarding the extension of the deadline for relay entries in virtual events. Recommendation is for the deadline to extend one week past individual swim deadline. Jay will report back to committee.
- b. USMS 2026 Open Water National Championship in Oregon has been cancelled due to low water levels. The registered swimmers have been notified and registration taken down. Entries are being refunded.
- c. All committee members are encouraged to take the Safety Director exam and the Referee Exam. Christie took the exams and passed with perfect scores. She offered to assist anyone who would like to study for and take the exams.

2. Jim Davidson

- a. Update: per email on 5/6/2026 from Catherine, there is no set date to finish the LDC Guidelines. It is suggested we have a draft of the guidelines by the LDC Forum meeting in August and completed by HOD in September.

It is requested that Nicki put together a document of guidelines and procedures for protests. All the LD documents will continue to be added to the "Long Distance Administration" location on the USMS Website. This will keep our documents in one place with easy access. Comments welcome.

b. The committee passed moving three protest-related rules (303, 305, and 307) from the rules section to procedures. The committee agreed to include links to the new procedures' locations in the rules section, with Jay confirming he will work with Jessica to ensure proper placement on the USMS website. (see attachment)

c. Neoprene caps and the 78-degree water temperature threshold rule 303.4.2.A discussion was put on hold. (see attachment)

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### 3. Phyllis Quinn

Concerns raised about the current system in Pacific LMSC where pool and open water sanctions are handled by different people, leading to communication challenges, and Jay agreed to explore solutions including potentially using a shared email alias.

### 4. David Miner

New sanction process is online and functional. So far, 35 sanctioned events this year, an increase of five from the previous year.

### 5. Nikki Phillips and Carrie Stolar

Updated numbers on the Minnesota open water event stand at 133. Hoping for warm water and calm seas!

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## **New Open Water Sanction Process**

1. The new USMS Sanction System currently requires that both a USMS Certified Open Water Referee and USMS Certified Safety Director are entered into the fields in order to submit the request for an Open Water Event. If these names are not on the USMS list of certified open water officials, the request cannot be submitted as these fields are required.

2. The default is then the "Calendar Event" designation, which creates more follow-up in order to be able to submit the sanction request, approve the sanction, receive the sanction number, and open event registration.

3. This is different from the previous process where the Referee and Safety Director names were entered on the Safety Plan for the sanction request. And then the Safety Director, if not USMS certified, would need to submit and pass the certification test before the date of the event.

4. Also, not all Open Water Referees have USMS certification, they have USA Swimming Open Water Official certification.

5. Note that this is different from entering a pool event sanction request in the new System, where one can "add" a new Meet Referee during the request process. This name is not required to be on the USMS Certified Officials/Referees list.

6. This new requirement for open water events was NOT communicated during the roll-out. Here is the link to the USMS Officials website page for Open Water Training and Certification-

<https://www.usms.org/volunteer-central/guide-to-local-operations/event-management/officials/training-and-certification/open-water-certification-programs>

## **Clarification of Determination of Eligibility**

The changes to USMS's interim eligibility policy only apply in states and local jurisdictions that require that members be eligible for local recognition based on the nondiscrimination laws that cover gender identity and/or gender expression. In these places:

For local recognition programs in the women's category (such as event awards and points scored), members will be eligible based on gender identity and/or gender expression in applicable jurisdictions. Anyone is eligible for local recognition programs in the renamed men's/open category.

Eligibility for national recognition programs (such as Top 10 times, USMS records, and All-American and All-Star honors) continues to be determined by sex assigned at birth in the women's category. Anyone is eligible for national recognition programs in the men's/open category.

Events will follow either the national recognition procedure or the local recognition procedure, depending on the applicable law where the event is held.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36EST

LDC 2026 Meeting Dates

8m Eastern Time as needed:

First Tuesday of each month.

February 3, 2026 - DONE!

March 3, 2026 - DONE!

April 7, 2026 - DONE!

May 5, 2026 - DONE!

June 2, 2026 – if needed

July 7, 2026

August 4, 2026

September 1, 2026

## Rules Covering Protests

### 303.12 Protests

**303.12.1** Any protest arising from an open water swim (other than national championship swims—refer to article 307.7.8) shall be made to the event referee within 30 minutes after the release of results at the venue. If results are not released in a timely manner, a protest may be made to the event director in writing within three days after all swimmers are notified of the release of results. If the protest is not resolved, the protester may appeal in writing promptly to the LMSC. If the LMSC does not satisfactorily resolve the protest, the protestor may appeal in writing promptly to the USMS Long Distance Committee chair.

### 305.7 Protests

Any protest arising from a long distance pool swim (other than national championship swims—refer to article 307.7.8) shall be made to the referee within 30 minutes after the release of results at the venue. If results are not released in a timely manner, a protest may be made to the event director in writing within three days after all swimmers are notified of the release of results. If the protest is not resolved, the protester may appeal in writing promptly to the LMSC. If the LMSC does not satisfactorily resolve the protest, the protestor may appeal in writing promptly to the USMS Long Distance Committee chair.

### 307.6.8 Protests

**A** Protests against judgment decisions regarding the start, missing a course turn, failure to achieve a cutoff time, or the finish of a race can only be considered by the referee, and the referee's decision shall be final and may not be appealed.

**B** Any protest arising from an open water championship swim shall be made to the referee within 30 minutes after the release of results at the venue. If results are not released in a timely manner, a protest may be made to the event director in writing within three days after all swimmers are notified of the release of results. After receipt of a protest, the referee or event director shall have 10 days to reply. If the protest is denied by the referee or event director, the swimmer will have five days to appeal in writing to the Long-Distance Committee Chair. The Long-Distance Committee Chair will have 10 days to reply, unless the USMS Long Distance chair notifies the parties that the issue must come before the entire committee.

**C** Any protest arising from a virtual championship swim shall be made to the Long Distance Committee Chair in writing within five days after all swimmers are notified of the release of preliminary results or amendments to the preliminary results.. The final decision for any protests will be determined by the Long Distance Committee chair. After receipt of a protest, the Long Distance Committee Chair shall have 10 days to reply, unless the USMS Long Distance chair notifies the parties that the issue must come before the entire committee.

October 6, 2026

**2026 USMS Long Distance Rules Scoresheet  
For LDC Consideration**

LD# for Annual Mtg	Article	Proposed or Pulled by	Description
<b><u>Issues (Pulled)</u></b>			
<b><u>Proposals</u></b>			
	307.3	CR	Remove language for a successful bidder and the requirement for a contract for distance championship.
	302.2.2 A	JD	Clarifies requirements for water temperature and thermal plans for USMS sanctioned water swim,
	303.4.2 A	CR	Remove neoprene swim caps from approved category I swimwear
<b><u>For Discussion</u></b>			
	303.12.1, 305.7, 307.6.8 B	NP	Should these be removed from the rule book and made procedures.