

Committee Name: Rules Committee **Session #:** 4
Committee Chair: Mollie Grover **Vice Chair:** Christina Fox
Minutes recorded by: David Benjamin **Date/time of meeting:** October 30, 2025/7:30pm ET

Actions Taken:

1. MSA to approve HK-1.
2. MSA to approve HK-2.
3. MSA to approve HK-3.
4. MSA to approve HK-4.
5. MSA to accept U-1.
6. MSA to accept U-2.
7. MSA to accept U-4.
8. MSA to accept U-3.

Number of committee members present: 12 Absent: 0 Guests: 0

Committee members present:

David Benjamin, Kathy Casey, Christina Fox (Vice Chair), Mollie Grover (Chair), John King, Claire Lentendre, Susan Nolte, Jason Weis, Patrick Weiss, Kris Wingenroth, Benjamin Wyckoff, Rome Yount

Not present: None

Ex Officio present: Omar de Armas, USMS Officials Committee Chair, Onshalee Promchitmart, USMS National Office

Minutes

Mollie called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm ET and announced the agenda for the meeting: Take up the housekeeping proposals in order, HK 1 through HK 4, and then take up the U proposals in the order U-1, U-2, U-4, and U-3; because of controversy concerning the rules governing backstroke ledges, Mollie proposed this order to allow the committee more time to discuss U-3.

Housekeeping Proposals

1. **HK-1**

The purpose of HK-1 is to codify amendments to the rules governing the individual medley which were approved by the HOD in 2024, but which inadvertently were not updated in the 2025 Rule Book.

M/S (Jason/Rome) to approve HK-1.

There was no discussion.

Motion to approve HK-1 passed unanimously.

2. **HK-2**

In 2024, the HOD approved an amendment to article 102.12.1.E, which allows a swimmer, as a consequence of injury, to tape two fingers or two toes together. The purpose of HK-2 is to approve the same amendment to a related article of the rule book, article 102.13.10, so that the two articles are consistent.

M/S (Jason/Claire) to approve HK-2.

There was no discussion.

Motion to approve HK-2 passed unanimously.

3. **HK-3**

The 2025 HOD approved an amendment to article 102.12.1.E, which in essence prohibits a swimmer from wearing a device that transmits data, sounds, or signals to the swimmer, and prohibits using such a device to aid the swimmer's speed. The same amendment should have been made to article 102.13.10 to make the two articles consistent. The purpose of HK-3 is to add the same language to 102.13.10 so that the two articles are consistent.

M/S (Jason, Claire) to approve HK-3.

There was discussion about the difficulty of enforcing this provision on deck but no discussion regarding the desirability of achieving consistency between articles 102.12.1.E and 102.13.10.

Motion to approve HK-3 passed unanimously.

4. **HK-4**

The 2025 HOD approved R-7 and R-8 concerning personnel at a national championship meet. Those amendments designated a "lead administrative official" and a "lead chief judge." Those designations should have also been carried forward into article 104.5.10.B. The purpose of HK-4 is to make the articles consistent.

M/S (Jason/Claire) to approve HK-4.

There was no discussion

Motion to approve HK-4 passed unanimously.

USA Swimming and World Aquatics rule changes

5. **U-1**

USMS rules (article 103.8.6E) provide that a swimmer “shall not be disqualified for an illegal starting position at the start if the race is permitted to proceed.” USA Swimming has deleted that provision, which thus allows a swimmer to be disqualified for an illegal starting position even if the race is allowed to proceed, and has given the stroke and turn judge as well as the starter the authority to enforce the correct starting position. The purpose of U-1 is to amend USMS rules to conform to USA Swimming rules.

M/S (Jason/Claire) to accept U-1.

There was discussion about the meaning and effect of this amendment.

Motion to accept U-1 passed unanimously.

6. **U-2**

U-2 moves the definition of “disability” from article 107 to the Glossary in order to conform to rule changes adopted by USA Swimming.

M/S (Jason/Claire) to accept U-2.

Several committee members noted that the changes approved by USA Swimming during their HOD caused their final language and the rationale to be in conflict with each other. Therefore, the USA Swimming changes were not clear. The committee decided to approve the final USA Swimming language and subsequently update the rationale that would be included in the USMS proposal.

Motion to accept U-2 passed unanimously.

7. **U-4**

USMS article 102.13.4 provides that a swimmer must “start and finish the race in the same lane.” World Aquatics has amended its rules to state that a swimmer must “remain and finish the race in the same lane in which they started.”

M/S (Jason/Claire) to accept U-4.

M/S (Kathy/Jason) to amend U-4 by adding an “s” to “swimmer” and an “s” to “lane.” There was discussion concerning this proposed grammatical change. Motion to amend U-4 failed, 1 yes and 9 no.

Motion to accept U-4 passed unanimously.

8. U-3

USMS rules (article 106.12.1) provides that the backstroke ledge “may be adjustable to four centimeters above and four centimeters below the water level.” Article 106.12.2 provides that a ledge must be a minimum of 65 centimeters in length. World Aquatics and USA Swimming have amended their rules to provide that the ledge “shall” be adjustable to four centimeters above and four centimeters below the water level and have gone on to provide that the ledge “may not be used outside this range.” They have also reduced the minimum length of the ledge to 60 centimeters.

M/S (Jason/Claire) to accept U-3.

There was energetic discussion among committee members about the rules governing the use of backstroke ledges. Committee members noted that it is difficult to keep some ledges within tolerance during the course of the meet, as their nylon webbing stretches when wet. Committee members noted that, in many pools, the water level is even with the gutters, so swimmers do not have the benefit of a ledge that is four centimeters above the water level. They also noted that for everyone except elite Masters swimmers, it is difficult for them to set their feet four centimeters below the water level. Additionally, Masters swimmers who do not use the ledge can place their feet at any level, but then they are deprived of the benefit of using the ledge.

As the only issue presented by U-3 is whether to accept the changes to World Aquatics rules, motions to table U-3 and to delete the limit on how far below the water level a ledge may be set were ruled out of order by the chair.

Motion to accept U-3 passed, 10 yes and 1 no.

Following action on the HK and U measures, there was extensive discussion about the rules governing pool measurements.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36 pm ET.