

NOTICE TO ALL USMS MEMBERS FROM THE USMS RULES COMMITTEE

BREASTSTROKE

USA Swimming has issued an updated interpretation of the initiation of the breaststroke arm pull to conform to the FINA interpretation (see box below). USMS Swimming Rules: Part 1 of the USMS Rule Book are based in part upon article 101, “Individual Strokes and Relays”, of the USA Swimming Technical Rules which includes the breaststroke rule. **The updated interpretation will apply to USMS competition (USMS article 101.2.3).** See the following text published by Dan McAllen, Chair of the USA Swimming Rules & Regulations Committee, March 14, 2012:

Text from USA Swimming:

“On March 7, 2012, FINA issued an interpretation of the breaststroke rule covering the initiation of the arm pull. Obviously, this interpretation also applies to correctly judging the timing of the single butterfly kick which may follow initiation of the arm pull.

BREASTSTROKE INTERPRETATION

SW 7.1 After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs during which the swimmer may be submerged. A single butterfly kick is permitted during the first arm stroke, followed by a breaststroke kick.

Interpretation

The first arm stroke begins with the separation of the hands.

SW 7.2 From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and after each turn, the body shall be on the breast. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time. From the start and throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order. All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and on the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.

Interpretation

A pause after the separation of the hands is not a violation of the rule.

1. This interpretation is substituted for breaststroke interpretations issued on December 8, 2008 and April 14, which are hereby expressly revoked.
2. This interpretation requires “observable separation” to initiate the arm pull. No other action will initiate the arm pull.
3. This interpretation requires additional separation if the swimmer starts or leaves the wall after a turn with the hands already separated.”

Here ends the text from USA Swimming.

Note that the rules quoted in the box are FINA rules. The corresponding USMS rules are 101.2.3 and 101.2.2 respectively. The previous interpretation (any lateral or downward

movement of the hands or arms was the initiation of the first arm pull) is no longer in effect and now requires observable separation of the hands to initiate the first arm pull.

For any questions about the interpretation of the initiation of the first arm pull contact:

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