Acknowledgement of differences between USA Swimming Rules and WHALe

| **Topic** | **USA Swimming** | **WHALe Swim League** |
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| Infraction | 102.13.3) A judge shall ensure that the rules relating to the style of swimming designated for the event are being observed; and shall report any violations to the Referee detailing the event | 11.a.i) A swimmer in a ***6&under event is not disqualified unless there is an unfair advantage*** (or he/she does NOT finish the race legally on backstroke). 11.a.ii) A swimmer in a ***7-8 event is allowed one (1) stroke infraction*** per race and/or relay leg. 11.a.i-iv) A swimmer in a ***6&under event is allowed two (2) stroke infractions*** per race in the backstroke. The exception is if a swimmer gains an unfair advantage (pulling on a lane rope, pushing off the bottom/side wall) |
| Backstroke | 101.4.1) Standing in or on the gutter, placing the toes above the lip of the gutter, or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter, before or after the start, is prohibited.  \*\*No restriction to the toes being below the surface of the water\*\* | 101.3.1.a) ***Ankle grip starts will be permitted*** unless pool deck conditions are deemed unsafe for this start by discretion of the meet referee prior to meet start. No part of the ankle gripped foot/shoe should extend beyond the edge of the pool. 101.3.1.c) The swimmer’s ***feet, including the toes, shall be placed under the surface of the water*** 101.3.1.c) A backstroke ***starting block may not be used***. |
| Backstroke | 101.4.3) Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. During the turn the shoulders may be turned past the vertical toward the breast after which an ***immediate*** continuous single arm pull or ***immediate*** continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn.  \*\*No designation on hands not being allowed to touch the wall\*\* | 101.3.3.b.i) During the turn, once the arm pull is completed (hands at side) ***all kicking may stop or may continue***. At that point, the swimmer is ***allowed to glide or kick into the wall*** to complete the turn. 101.3.3.b.ii) If a swimmer chooses to complete the turn on their breast, ***they cannot touch the wall with their hand(s)*** during the turn. |
| Starter | 102.12.1) The Starter shall ***stand on the side of the pool within ~5 meters of the starting end of the pool*** and, upon signal from the Referee, shall assume control of the swimmers until a fair start has been achieved. | \*\*There is no designation on where the Starter shall stand\*\* |
| The Start | 101.1.2A) The Referee shall ***signal the commencement of an event by a short series of whistles*** inviting them to get ready at the starting end, followed by a long whistle indicating they should take and maintain their positions on the starting platform. In backstroke and medley relay events, at the Referee's first long whistle, the swimmers shall immediately enter the water and at the second long whistle shall return without any undue delay to the starting position. 101.1.1.E) A swimmer shall not be disqualified for an illegal starting position at the start if the race is permitted to proceed. Enforcement of the correct starting position is the responsibility of the Starter.  \*\*No designation on instructing swimmers to step up or describing the type of event\*\* | H.1.3.a) After receiving clearance from the referee, the ***starter instructs the swimmers, including the type of event***.  \*\*There is no designation of whistles or how the Meet Referee will provide the clearance for the Starter\*\* |
| False Starts | 101.1.3.A) Any swimmer initiating a start before the signal may be disqualified ***if the referee independently observes and confirms the Starter's observation*** that a violation occurred. 101.1.3.B) If the starting signal has been given before the disqualification is declared, ***the race shall continue without recall***. The swimmer(s) who have false started shall be ***disqualified upon completion of the race***. 101.1.3.C) If the ***recall signal is activated, no swimmer shall be charged with a false start*** and the Starter shall restart the race. | H.3.c) An individual's ***second false start*** shall result in disqualification, except for 6&Under events H.3.d) For backstroke starts, a false start may be charged to any swimmer who fails to maintain his feet and/or hands in a legal position ***after one warning***. H.3.e) For relay starts, a still start is required with feet touching some portion of the deck - ***no running, stepping, or hop starts***. H.3.g) When the starting signal is given and one or more swimmers have obtained an unfair advantage, **all swimmers shall be recalled at once by a second signal**, and the ***starter shall indicate the swimmer(s), if any, who are charged with a false start***. H.3.h) Upon the Starter declaring a false start, the ***coaches from either team shall be permitted to enter the water to stop swimmers*** that entered the water and who are not recognizing that a false start has been called. |
| Meet Referee | 102.11.1) The Referee shall have full authority over all officials and shall enforce all applicable rules and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the final settlement of which is not otherwise assigned by said rules; ***can overrule any meet official*** on a point of interpretation, or on a judgment decision pertaining to an action which the Referee has personally observed. 101.11.2) The Referee has the ***authority to disqualify a swimmer(s) for any violation*** of the rules that the Referee personally observes 101.11.5) The Referee shall ***give a decision on any point where the opinions of the judges differ***; and shall have authority to intercede in a competition at any stage.  \*\*No designation on where the Referee will be positioned at the finish of each event\*\* | H.4.b) The Referee ***cannot disqualify or place swimmers***. H.4.c) The Referee ***cannot overrule a judge*** but can ask questions to verify understanding of the rule if the Referee believes the applicable judge may not understand a rule. Such questions must be about the nature of the rule involved and not about the facts relating to any specific disqualification. H.4.e) The Referee will ***be at the finish line to observe the finish*** and check with stroke and touch/turn judges for disqualifications. |

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