

Seven Hills Swim & Dive League

Swim Official Information

The Seven Hills Swim and Dive League welcomes all USA, YMCA, and high school certified officials on deck. Sometimes we are not able to secure enough certified officials to conduct our weekly dual meets. We appreciate the parent volunteers who step up and offer their services as “summer league officials.” These parent volunteers can help officiate at dual meets but are not qualified to act as officials at our champs meet. Summer officials should be familiar with the sport of swimming, DQ slips, and reading heat sheets. Our league follows the USA Swimming Rulebook, but we do have our own set of rules specific to the league. Below is information to help our volunteer officials prepare for the summer season:

USA Swimming Rulebook 2025: <https://www.usaswimming.org/about-usas/governance/rules-policies>

Seven Hills League rules regarding officiating (complete rules can be found on our league website, www.sevenhillsleague.swimtopia.com):

- **NEW CAP RULE ADDED BEGINNING IN 2024 SEASON:** In both dual meets and the championship meet, swimmers cannot compete in a cap from another club. Swimmers do not have to wear caps and not have to wear a cap from their own team; they just can't wear a cap from another team. This relates to caps only and not suits.
- The current Ohio high school rule concerning the backstroke flip turn will apply instead of the USA rule. Additional information on this rule is at the end of this document.
- All swimmers should be disqualified per USA Swimming/Seven Hills League Rules beginning the first meet of the season to create consistency throughout the league. There will be no disqualifications for 6 & Under events: #11, #12, #33 & #34. DQ slips should be written for education purposes but should not be entered into the computer. If a 6 & under is swimming in an 8 & Under event, they can be disqualified. If there is a stroke or turn disqualification, the official will promptly submit a disqualification form to the computer table and notify the swimmer and coach if possible. A DQ Slip will be filled out for the benefit of the coaches and swimmers. DQ slips should be given to visiting teams at the end of the meet for coaching purposes.
- Stroke and Turn Judges shall ensure that USA Swimming rules of swimming strokes and turns are enforced. Stroke judges can disqualify only for stroke

discrepancies; turn judges can disqualify only for turn discrepancies. Stroke judges will divide responsibilities. One judge will rule only on lanes 1 through 3, while the other judge will rule only on lanes 4 through 6. This rules out consultation between judges, but the primary responsibility lies with the primary judge. Violations will be reported in the following order: (1) Chief Judge/lane recorder (2) swimmer involved if possible (3) Team coach if possible.

- D Two additional turn judges will operate at the opposite end of the pool.
- E The Referee may modify the jurisdiction and personnel in his/her discretion.

Swim Officials Training Videos

Review for existing officials:

Rev 2 – USA Swimming Stroke Briefing for Officials – 6:25 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uq3aZxtXSVO>

Training videos for new summer league officials (5-6 minutes each):

Breaststroke: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZXUEfP-Agc>

Backstroke: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v5IjKFBIY18>

Freestyle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdPhxwvvyIO>

Butterfly: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ajQQQnSKQ0>

Stroke and Turn Cheat Sheet:

COMPONENTS OF A STROKE

The rules describe the stroke by the following components:

1. START – from the start of the race until the head breaks the surface of the water
2. SWIM – from head breaking surface until the beginning of the last stroke into the turn or finish
3. TURN – from the beginning of the last full stroke into the wall until the head breaks the surface
4. FINISH – from beginning of the last full stroke into the wall at the end of the prescribed distance

FREESTYLE

- Forward start
- At start and turn, head must break surface of water by the 15-meter mark

- Any stroke may be used
- Any kick may be used
- Swimmer must touch the wall at each turn and at the finish, any part of the body may be used

BACKSTROKE – additional information at the end of the document

- Start: in the water, with back to the course, feet and toes may not be in or bent over the edge of the gutter. If submerged at the start, head must surface prior to or at the 15-meter mark
- Swim ON BACK, except for turns
- Swimmer must touch the wall at each turn and at the finish, any part of the body may be used.
 - At the turn, the swimmer may turn onto their breast and use either a single or double arm pull during the turning motion
 - Summer rules: the turn does not need to be in a continuous motion, but they cannot turn over onto their breast and kick into the wall prior to the flags
 - At the finish, the shoulders cannot be past vertical

BREASTSTROKE - IS A "CYCLE" STROKE

- Forward Start
- Must swim on the breast; may take one pull past hips and one downward butterfly kick with or following the pull and prior to the breaststroke kick
- Head must break the water surface before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke
- Arms shall move simultaneously and in same horizontal plane
- Hands recover under, on, or over water from the breast
- Elbows must be under the water except at the touch
- Head must break the surface during each stroke cycle
- KICK: following single downward butterfly kick, movement shall be simultaneous and in same horizontal plane; feet turned out
- At turn and finish, body must be on breast, touch made by both hands simultaneously (not overlapping)

BUTTERFLY

- Forward Start
- Must swim on the breast
- If submerged at the start and following turns, head must break surface by 15-meter mark
- One arm pull under water is allowed, which must bring the swimmer to the surface
- Arms must be brought forward over the water and recovered simultaneously
- All up and down movements of the feet and legs must be simultaneous
- At turns and at finishes, body must be on the breast; the touch made with both hands simultaneously

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY (IM)

- Forward start
- ORDER: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle (“Butter Back Breast Free”)
- Freestyle is any stroke other than the previous three
- Rules for each stroke apply

MEDLEY RELAY

- ORDER: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, Freestyle
- Freestyle is any stroke other than the previous three
- Rules apply for each stroke
- No swimmer shall swim more than one leg
- Each swimmer must leave the pool immediately upon finishing his/her leg, except the last swimmer

INFRACTIONS: ALL STROKES APPLY TO ALL STROKES:

- Did not finish
- Walking on or pushing off the bottom
- Pulling on lane lines
- Not touching the wall at turn or finish
- Not starting and finishing in the same lane
- False start – starter/ref call

RELAY TAKE-OFF JUDGING

- Relay Early Take-Off is a DUAL VERIFICATION call
- The officials stand beside the blocks looking across the pool
- “Toes to Hands” Judge when the toes leave the block or wall, then look down to see if the incoming swimmer has touched
- If you observe an early take-off, mark an X on the swimmer # for that lane.
- Do not raise your hand

Additional clarification of USA and Ohio High School backstroke turn rules:

USA/YMCA rules say:

- at a backstroke turn, the swimmer may ...
 - option 1:
 - stay on their back (shoulders past vertical toward the back) until touching the wall (with any part of their body)

- then may turn in any fashion,
- but, when the body (last part of the body) leaves the wall, shoulders need to be past vertical toward the back
- there are two possible violations:
 - not touching the wall
 - shoulders not past vertical toward the back, when leaving the wall
- option 2:
 - **may** roll on their breast (shoulders past vertical toward the breast),
 - **may** take one (single or simultaneous double) arm pull
 - **may** do a flip turn
 - prior to touching the wall
 - then when the body (last part of the body) leaves the wall, shoulders need to be past vertical toward the back
 - HOWEVER
 - any/all of the 3x "may" actions listed above are OPTIONAL
 - **but if any/all are executed, they must be done "immediately/continuously"**
 - EXAMPLES:
 - ex 1: swimmer rolls to breast, immediately touches the wall (no arm pull, no flip turn) = legal
 - ex 2: swimmer rolls to breast, immediately executes a single arm pull, immediately touches the wall (no flip turn) = legal
 - ex 3: swimmer rolls to breast, immediately does a flip turn, immediately touches the wall (no arm pull) = legal
 - ex 4: swimmer rolls to breast, does not immediately start an arm pull OR does not immediately turn the wall = violation ("delay initiating the arm pull")
 - ex 5: swimmer rolls to breast, immediately starts an arm pull, after arm completely stops pulling water, does not immediately start the flip turn OR does not immediately turn the wall = violation ("delay initiating the flip turn")
 - ex 6: swimmer rolls to breast, takes more than 1 arm pull = violation ("two strokes while on breast during the turn")

- ex 7: swimmer rolls to breast, immediately starts an arm pull, after arm completely stops pulling water, immediately starts the flip turn, but completely misses touching the wall = violation ("no touch at the turn")
- There are 5 possible violations:
 - "delay initiating the arm pull"
 - "delay initiating the flip turn"
 - "two arm pulls while on breast during the turn"
 - not touching the wall
 - shoulders not past vertical toward the back, when leaving the wall

High School (aka NFHS rules) Say: the rules are the same, except there is no requirement that the "may" actions be done "immediately/continuously".

While officiating, here are the practical changes:

- If the swimmer does option 1: no difference
 - possible violations:
 - not touching the wall
 - shoulders not past vertical toward the back, when leaving the wall
- If the swimmer does option 2:
 - These are not violations:
 - "delay initiating the arm pull" is not a violation (swimmer rolls to breast, is NOT required to immediately start an arm pull)
 - "delay initiating the flip turn" is not a violation (swimmer rolls to breast, executes an arm pull (1x single arm or 1x simultaneous double arm), is NOT required to immediately touch the wall or initiate the flip turn)
 - There are 3 possible violations:
 - "two arm pulls while on breast during the turn" is still a violation
 - not touching the wall
 - shoulders not past vertical toward the back, when leaving the wall