



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

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Illegal attire penalty modified at swimming rules meeting

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (April 22, 2005) — Beginning with the 2005-06 school year, high school swimmers discovered to be wearing illegal attire or jewelry no longer will be automatically disqualified from further competition.

The revision to Rule 3-3-4 was among seven rules changes approved by the NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Committee at its annual meeting April 10-11 in Indianapolis. The rules subsequently were approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

In the past, a swimmer wearing illegal attire or jewelry was disqualified from the event. With the revision, the student-athlete will no longer be allowed to participate in an event until the attire or jewelry is replaced or removed, but will not be disqualified unless he or she refuses to adhere to the rule.

“The rule has changed many times over the years, but you were always disqualified if wearing jewelry,” said Doug Glaeser, chair of the NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Committee. “This makes the rule more consistent with the other sports that have jewelry rules in place.”

In an effort to reduce risk to swimmers, Rule 4-2-2(n) was added to the rules book. With this rule, swimming and diving competitions are subject to the NFHS Lightning Guidelines, due to the fact that many states either hold competitions outdoors, or in a facility with open sides. The Lightning Guidelines, henceforth, will be incorporated into the rules book, beginning with the 2005-06 edition.

With the addition of Rule 3-2-3 Penalty #1, in non-championship meets, a competitor who has been officially entered in an event but does not compete shall be disqualified from that event only. Previously, the competitor would have been disqualified from the competition.

“Students may miss an event for a variety of reasons,” said Tim Flannery, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the NFHS Swimming and Diving Rules Committee. “The committee felt that the penalty was probably inappropriate for that kind of infraction.”

The change to Rule 9-8-3, which states “a diver shall be disqualified if he/she fails two dives, and shall perform no further dives,” simply clarifies that it has been practiced at meets, but has not previously been stated in the rules book.

The rules committee also approved a new dive that will be added to the 2005-06 diving chart. Dive 5227, a back somersault with 3½ twist free, will allow athletes to attempt a more difficult dive, and will enable more advanced divers to add the dive to their list.

Three other rules were passed at the meeting. They are:

- Rule 7-1-2 Note — If agreement on scoring systems cannot be reached, the system in 7-1-2(b) will be used. The committee believed this rule will help teams agree on which scoring system to use.
- Rule 8-2-2(c) — Some part of the head must break the water surface before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke after the start of each turn. “This rule will make the start or turn easier to judge,” Glaeser said.
- Rule 9-6-3(b) New — The announcer shall announce (and may also display) the award given the dive. The committee thought this rule will enable judges to double-check their scores in the event that the displayed score is not visible.

Swimming and diving is the 10th-most popular high school sport for boys, with 5,758 high schools offering programs and 96,562 participants. It is also the ninth-most popular girls program for high schools, with 6,176 participating schools and the eighth-most popular sport among high school girls, with 144,565 participants according to the 2003-04 High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS.

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