### Swimming Rules: Common Elements and Differences

#### Common Elements with Governing Bodies
- Whistle preparatory commands;
- No recall;
- Forward - after TYM – foot/feet at front of block (see USMS);
- Back - feet can be above water; not above lip of gutter or curling of toes over gutter.
- Requires a stationary starting position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Freestyle</th>
<th>Backstroke</th>
<th>Breaststroke</th>
<th>Butterfly</th>
<th>I.M.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FINA; USA-S; YMCA; NCAA</strong></td>
<td>Head up by 15m</td>
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<td>2hand touch - simultaneous; Arms in same horizontal plane; Elbows can be out at turn and finish; Head must break surface by widest part of 2nd stroke; One single butterfly/dolphin kick permitted at start and each turn at any time prior to the first breaststroke kick;</td>
<td>Head up by 15m; simultaneous 2 hand touch; Arms simultaneous in recovery and pull; Breaststroke, scissor, alternating kick not permitted (see USMS); Body kept on breast from beginning of first arm stroke; Can’t re-submerge</td>
<td>Turn rules apply for intermediate turns. Finish rules apply at transition turns. During freestyle the after the turn the swimmer may be towards the back provided there is no kick or stroke.</td>
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<td><strong>NFHS</strong></td>
<td>Verbal or whistle preparatory commands - State option</td>
<td>Kick/glide is permitted before and after turning action. Backstroke starting device not permitted. Both hands in contact with the end of the pool or starting platform.</td>
<td>No sculling permitted; Stacking hands permitted during touch.</td>
<td>At the touch at turns and finish, hands must be “separated” - meaning-cannot be “stacked”.</td>
<td>Hands – at same horizontal plane at any given time during stroke; (both pull and recovery) Stacking hands permitted during touch.</td>
<td>See stroke differences.</td>
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<td><strong>USMS</strong></td>
<td>Use back start for in-water free start; At least one foot at front of block before TYM In water relay exchanges permitted. At least one foot must remain in contact with the wall prior to the exchange</td>
<td>Allow breaststroke or whip kick exclusively or interchangeably Only one breaststroke or whip kick per arm pull permitted. On 9/25/13, adopted the “separated” rule wording interpreted to be identical in meaning to the USA Swimming Interpretation.</td>
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#### Differences – see specific rule book for exact wording

- See POOL DEPTH COMPARISON chart for differences
- At the touch at turns and finish, hands must be “separated” - meaning-cannot be “stacked”.
- Hands – at same horizontal plane at any given time during stroke; (both pull and recovery) Stacking hands permitted during touch.
- See stroke differences.