

Extract from the FINA rule book

(http://www.fina.org/project/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=45&Itemid=119#sw4)

SW 1 MANAGEMENT OF COMPETITIONS

SW 1.1 The Management Committee appointed by the governing body shall have jurisdiction over all matters not assigned by the rules to the referee, judges or other officials and shall have power to postpone events and give directions consistent with rules adopted for conducting any event.

SW 1.2 At the Olympic Games and World Championships the FINA Bureau shall appoint the following minimum numbers of officials for the control of the competitions:

- referee (1)
- control-room supervisor(1)
- judges of stroke (4)
- starters (2)
- chief inspectors of turns (2, 1 at each end of the pool)
- inspectors of turns (1 at each end of each lane)
- chief recorder (1)
- clerks of course (2)
- false start rope personnel (1)
- announcer (1)

SW 1.2.2 For all other international competitions, the governing body shall appoint the same or fewer number of officials, subject to the approval of the respective regional or international authority where appropriate.

SW 1.2.3 Where Automatic Officiating Equipment is not available, such equipment must be replaced by chief timekeeper, three (3) timekeepers per lane and two (2) additional timekeepers.

SW 1.2.4 A chief finish judge and finish judges are required when Automatic Equipment and/or three (3) digital watches per lane are not used.

SW 1.3 The swimming pool and the technical equipment for Olympic Games and World Championships shall be inspected and approved in due course prior to the Swimming competitions by the FINA Delegate together with a member of the Technical Swimming Committee.

SW 1.4 Where underwater video equipment is used by television, the equipment must be operated by remote control and shall not obstruct the vision or path of swimmers and must not change the configuration of the pool or obscure the required FINA markings.

SW 2 OFFICIALS

SW 2.1 Referee

SW 2.1.1 The referee shall have full control and authority over all officials, approve their assignments, and instruct them regarding all special features or regulations related to the competitions. He shall enforce all rules and decisions of FINA and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, and event or the competition, the final settlement of which is not otherwise covered by the rules.

SW 2.1.2 The referee may intervene in the competition at any stage to ensure that the FINA regulations are observed, and shall adjudicate all protests related to the competition in progress.

SW 2.1.3 When using finish judges without three (3) digital watches, the referee shall determine placing where necessary. Automatic Officiating Equipment, if available and operating shall be consulted as stated in SW 13.

SW 2.1.4 The referee shall ensure that all necessary officials are in their respective posts for the conduct of the competition. He may appoint substitutes for any who are absent, incapable of acting or found to be inefficient. He may appoint additional officials if considered necessary.

SW 2.1.5 At the commencement of each event, the referee shall signal to the swimmers by a short series of whistles inviting them to remove all clothing except for swimwear, followed by a long whistle indicating that they should take their positions on the starting platform (or for backstroke swimming and medley relays to immediately enter the water). A second long whistle shall bring the backstroke and medley relay swimmer immediately to the starting position. When the swimmers and officials are prepared for the start, the referee shall gesture to the starter with a stretched out arm, indicating that the swimmers are under the starter's control. The stretched out arm shall stay in that position until the start is given.

SW 2.1.6 The referee shall disqualify any swimmer for any violation of the rules that he personally observes. The referee may also disqualify any swimmer for any violation reported to him by other authorised officials. All disqualifications are subject to the decision of the referee.

SW 2.2 Control-room Supervisor

SW 2.2.1 The supervisor shall supervise the automatic timing operation including the review of backup timing cameras.

SW 2.2.2 The supervisor is responsible for checking the results from computer printouts.

SW 2.2.3 The supervisor is responsible for checking the relay exchange printout and reporting any early takeoffs to the referee.

SW 2.2.4 The supervisor may review the video used for backup timing to confirm early takeoff.

SW 2.2.5 The supervisor shall control withdrawals after the heats or finals, enter results on official forms, list all new records established, and maintain scores where appropriate.

SW 2.3 Starter

SW 2.3.1 The starter shall have full control of the swimmers from the time the referee turns the swimmers over to him (SW 2.1.5) until the race has commenced. The start shall be given in accordance with SW 4.

SW 2.3.2 The starter shall report a swimmer to the referee for delaying the start, for wilfully disobeying an order or for any other misconduct taking place at the start, but only the referee may disqualify a swimmer for such delay, wilful disobedience or misconduct.

SW 2.3.3 The starter shall have power to decide whether the start is fair, subject only to the decision of the Referee.

SW 2.3.4 When starting an event, the starter shall stand on the side of the pool within approximately five metres of the starting edge of the pool where the timekeepers can see and or hear the starting signal and the swimmers can hear the signal.

SW 2.4 Clerk of Course

SW 2.4.1 The clerk of course shall assemble swimmers prior to each event.

SW 2.4.2 The clerk of course shall report to the referee any violation noted in regard to advertising (GR 6) and if a swimmer is not present when called.

SW 2.5 Chief Inspector of Turns

SW 2.5.1 The chief inspector of turns shall ensure that inspectors of turns fulfil their duties during the competition.

SW 2.5.2 The chief inspector of turns shall receive the reports from the inspectors of turns if any infringement occurs and shall present them to the referee immediately.

SW 2.6 Inspectors of Turns

SW 2.6.1 One inspector of turns shall be assigned to each lane at each end of the pool.

SW 2.6.2 Each inspector of turns shall ensure that swimmers comply with the relevant rules for turning, commencing from the beginning of the last arm stroke before touching and ending with the completion of the first arm stroke after turning. The Inspector of Turns at the starting end of the pool, shall ensure that the swimmers comply with the relevant rules from the start and ending with completion of the first arm stroke. The inspectors of turns at the finish end shall also ensure that the swimmers finish their race according to the current rules.

SW 2.6.3 In individual events of 800 and 1500 metres, each inspector of turns at the turning

end of the pool shall record the number of laps completed by the swimmer in his lane and keep the swimmer informed of the remaining number of laps to be completed by displaying "lap cards". Semi-electronic equipment may be used, including under water display.

SW 2.6.4 Each inspector at the starting end shall give a warning signal when the swimmer in his lane has two lengths plus five (5) metres to swim to finish in individual events of 800 and 1500 metres. The signal may be repeated after the turn until the swimmer has reached the five (5) metres mark on the lane rope. The warning signal may be by whistle or bell.

SW 2.6.5 Each inspector at the starting end shall determine, in relay events, whether the starting swimmer is in contact with the starting platform when the preceding swimmer touches the starting wall. When Automatic Equipment which judges relay take-offs is available, it shall be used in accordance with SW 13.1.

SW 2.6.6 Inspectors of turns shall report any violation on signed cards detailing the event, lane number, and the infringement delivered to the chief inspector of turns who shall immediately convey the report to the referee.

SW 2.7 Judges of Stroke

SW 2.7.1 Judges of stroke shall be located on each side of the pool.

SW 2.7.2 Each judge of stroke shall ensure that the rules related to the style of swimming designated for the event are being observed, and shall observe the turns and the finishes to assist the inspectors of turns.

SW 2.7.3 Judges of stroke shall report any violation to the referee on signed cards detailing the event, lane number, and the infringement.

SW 2.8 Chief Timekeeper

SW 2.8.1 The chief timekeeper shall assign the seating positions for all timekeepers and the lanes for which they are responsible. There shall be three (3) timekeepers for each lane. If Automatic Officiating Equipment is not used there shall be two (2) additional timekeepers designated, either of whom shall be directed to replace a timekeeper whose watch did not start or stopped during an event, or who for any other reason is not able to record the time. When using three (3) digital watches per lane, final time and place is determined by time.

SW 2.8.2 The chief timekeeper shall collect from the timekeepers in each lane a card showing the times recorded and, if necessary, inspect their watches.

SW 2.8.3 The chief timekeeper shall record or examine the official time on the card for each lane.

SW 2.9 Timekeepers

SW 2.9.1 Each timekeeper shall take the time of the swimmers in the lane assigned to him in accordance with SW 11.3. The watches shall be certified correct to the satisfaction of the

meet Management Committee.

SW 2.9.2 Each timekeeper shall start his watch at the starting signal, and shall stop it when the swimmer in his lane has completed the race. Timekeepers may be instructed by the chief timekeeper to record times at intermediate distances in races longer than 100meters.

SW 2.9.3 Promptly after the race, the timekeepers in each lane shall record the times of their watches on the card, give them to the chief timekeeper, and if requested present their watches for inspection. Their watches must be cleared at the short whistle of the Referee announcing the following race.

SW 2.9.4 Unless a video backup system is used, it may be necessary to use the full complement of timekeepers even when Automatic Officiating Equipment is used.

SW 2.10 Chief Finish Judge

SW 2.10.1 The chief finish judge shall assign each finish judge his position and the placing to be determined.

SW 2.10.2 After the race, the chief finish judge shall collect signed result sheets from each finish judge and establish the result and placing which will be sent directly to the referee.

SW 2.10.3 Where Automatic Officiating Equipment is used to judge the finish of a race, the chief finish judge must report the order of finish recorded by the Equipment after each race.

SW 2.11 Finish Judges

SW 2.11.1 Finish judges shall be positioned in elevated stands in line with the finish where they have at all times a clear view of the course and the finish line, unless they operate an Automatic Officiating device in their respective assigned lanes by depressing the "push-button" at the completion of the race.

SW 2.11.2 After each event the finish judges shall decide and report the placing of the swimmers according to the assignments given to them. Finish judges other than push-button operators shall not act as timekeepers in the same event.

SW 2.12 Desk Control (other than for Olympic Games and World Championships)

SW 2.12.1 The chief recorder is responsible for checking results from computer printouts or from results of times and placing in each event received from the referee. The chief recorder shall witness the referee's signing the results.

SW 2.12.2 The recorders shall control withdrawals after the heats or finals, enter results on official forms, list all new records established, and maintain scores where appropriate.

SW 2.13 Officials' Decision Making

SW 2.13.1 Officials shall make their decision autonomously and independently of each other unless otherwise provided in the Swimming Rules.

SW 3 SEEDING OF HEATS, SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS

The starting stations for all events in Olympic Games, World Championships, Regional Games and other FINA competitions shall be by seeding as follows:

SW 3.1 Heats

SW 3.1.1 The best competitive times of all entrants for the preceding twelve (12) months prior to the entry deadline of the competition, shall be submitted on entry forms and listed in order of time by the Management Committee. Swimmers who do not submit official recorded times shall be considered the slowest and shall be placed at the end of the list with a no time. Placement of swimmers with identical times or of more than one swimmer without times shall be determined by draw. Swimmers shall be placed in lanes according to the procedures set forth in SW 3.1.2. below. Swimmers shall be placed in trial heats according to submitted times in the following manner.

SW 3.1.1.1 If one heat, it shall be seeded as a final and swum only during the final session.

SW 3.1.1.2 If two heats, the fastest swimmer shall be seeded in the second heat, next fastest in the first heat, next fastest in the second heat, next in the first heat, etc.

SW 3.1.1.3 If three heats, the fastest swimmer shall be placed in the third heat, next fastest in the second, next fastest in the first. The fourth fastest swimmer shall be placed in the third heat, the fifth in the second heat, and the sixth fastest in the first heat, the seventh fastest in the third heat, etc.

SW 3.1.1.4 If four or more heats, the last three heats of the event shall be seeded in accordance with SW 3.1.1.3 above. The heat preceding the last three heats shall consist of the next fastest swimmers; the heat preceding the last four heats shall consist of the next fastest swimmers, etc. Lanes shall be assigned in descending order of submitted times within each heat, in accordance with the pattern outlined in SW 3.1.2 below.

SW 3.1.1.5 Exception: When there are two or more heats in an event, there shall be a minimum of three swimmers seeded into any one preliminary heat, but subsequent scratches may reduce the number of swimmers in such heat to less than three.

SW 3.1.1.6 Where a 10 lane pool is available and equal times are established for the 8th place in the heats of 800m and 1500m Freestyle events, lane 9 will be used with a draw for lane 8 and lane 9. In case of three (3) equal times for 8th place, lane 9 and 0 will be used with a draw for lane 8, 9 and 0.

SW 3.1.1.7 Where a 10 lane pool is not available SW 3.2.3 will apply.

SW 3.1.2 Except for 50 metre events in 50 metre pools, assignment of lanes shall be (number 1 lane being on the right side of the pool (0 when using pools with 10 lanes) when facing the course from the starting end) by placing the fastest swimmer or team in the centre lane in pool with an odd number of lanes, or in lane 3 or 4 respectively in pools having 6 or 8 lanes. In pools using 10 lanes, the fastest swimmer shall be placed in lane 4. The swimmer having the next fastest time is to be placed on his left, then alternating the others to right and left in accordance with the submitted times. Swimmers with identical times shall be assigned their lane positions by draw within the aforesaid pattern.

SW 3.1.3 When 50 metre events are contested in 50 metre pools, the races may be swum, at the discretion of the Management Committee, either from the regular starting end to the turning end or from the turning end to the starting end, depending upon such factors as existence of adequate Automatic Equipment, starter's position, etc. The Management Committee should advise swimmers of their determination well before the start of the competition. Regardless of which way the race is swum, the swimmers shall be seeded in the same lanes in which they would be seeded if they were both starting and finishing at the starting end.

SW 3.2 Semi-Finals and Finals

SW 3.2.1 In the semi-finals heats shall be assigned as in SW 3.1.1.2.

SW 3.2.2 Where no preliminary heats are necessary, lanes shall be assigned in accordance with SW 3.1.2 above. Where preliminary heats or semi-finals have been held, lanes shall be assigned as in SW 3.1.2 based, however, on times established in such heats.

SW 3.2.3 In the event that swimmers from the same or different heats have equal times registered to 1/100 second for either the eighth/tenth place or sixteenth/twentieth place depending on the use of 8 or 10 lanes, there shall be a swim-off to determine which swimmer shall advance to the appropriate finals. Such swim-off shall take place not less than one hour after all involved swimmers have completed their heats. Another swim-off shall take place if equal times are registered again. If required, a swim off will take place to determine 1st and 2nd reserve if equal times are recorded.

SW 3.2.4 Where one or more swimmers scratch from a semi-final or final reserves will be called in order of classifications in heats or semi-finals. The event or events must be re-seeded and supplementary sheets must be issued detailing the changes or substitutions, as prescribed in SW 3.1.2.

SW 3.2.5 For heats, semi-finals and finals, swimmers must report to the First Call Room no later than 20 minutes prior to the start of their event. After inspection, swimmers proceed to the final call-room.

SW 3.3 In other competitions, the draw system may be used for assigning lane positions.

SW 4 THE START

SW 4.1 The start in Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Individual Medley races shall be with a dive. On the long whistle (SW 2.1.5) from the referee the swimmers shall step onto the starting platform and remain there. On the starter's command "take your marks", they shall immediately take up a starting position with at least one foot at the front of the starting platforms. The position of the hands is not relevant. When all swimmers are stationary, the starter shall give the starting signal.

SW 4.2 The start in Backstroke and Medley Relay races shall be from the water. At the referee's first long whistle (SW 2.1.5), the swimmers shall immediately enter the water. At the Referee's second long whistle the swimmers shall return without undue delay to the starting position (SW 6.1). When all swimmers have assumed their starting positions, the starter shall give the command "take your marks". When all swimmers are stationary, the starter shall give the starting signal.

SW 4.3 In Olympic Games, World Championships and other FINA events the command "Take your marks" shall be in English and the start shall be by multiple loudspeakers, mounted one at each starting platform.

SW 4.4 Any swimmer starting before the starting signal has been given, shall be disqualified. If the starting signal sounds before the disqualification is declared, the race shall continue and the swimmer or swimmers shall be disqualified upon completion of the race. If the disqualification is declared before the starting signal, the signal shall not be given, but the remaining swimmers shall be called back and start again. The Referee repeats the starting procedure beginning with the long whistle (the second one for backstroke) as per SW 2.1.5.

SW 5 FREESTYLE

SW 5.1 Freestyle means that in an event so designated the swimmer may swim any style, except that in individual medley or medley relay events, freestyle means any style other than backstroke, breaststroke or butterfly.

SW 5.2 Some part of the swimmer must touch the wall upon completion of each length and at the finish.

SW 5.3 Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 metres after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface.

SW 6 BACKSTROKE

SW 6.1 Prior to the starting signal, the swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands holding the starting grips. Standing in or on the gutter or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter is prohibited.

SW 6.2 At the signal for starting and after turning the swimmer shall push off and swim upon

his back throughout the race except when executing a turn as set forth in SW 6.4. The normal position on the back can include a roll movement of the body up to, but not including 90 degrees from horizontal. The position of the head is not relevant.

SW 6.3 Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race. It is permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn, at the finish and for a distance of not more than 15 metres after the start and each turn. By that point the head must have broken the surface.

SW 6.4 When executing the turn there must be a touch of the wall with some part of the swimmer's body in his/her respective lane. During the turn the shoulders may be turned over the vertical to the breast after which a continuous single arm pull or a continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn. The swimmer must have returned to the position on the back upon leaving the wall.

SW 6.5 Upon the finish of the race the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back in his/her respective lane.

SW 7 BREASTSTROKE

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.

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.

SW 7.3 The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over the water. The elbows shall be under water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish. The hands shall be brought back on or under the surface of the water. The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn.

SW 7.4 During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer's head must break the surface of the water. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke. All movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and on the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.

SW 7.5 The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick. A scissors, flutter or downward butterfly kick is not permitted except as in SW 7.1. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward butterfly kick.

SW 7.6 At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. The head may be submerged after the last

arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch.

SW 8 BUTTERFLY

SW 8.1 From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and each turn, the body shall be kept on the breast. Under water kicking on the side is allowed. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time.

SW 8.2 Both arms shall be brought forward together over the water and brought backward simultaneously through-out the race, subject to SW 8.5.

SW 8.3 All up and down movements of the legs must be simultaneous. The legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other. A breaststroke kicking movement is not permitted.

SW 8.4 At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously, at, above or below the water surface.

SW 8.5 At the start and at turns, a swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks and one arm pull under the water, which must bring him to the surface. It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15 metres after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface. The swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish.

SW 9 MEDLEY SWIMMING

SW 9.1 In individual medley events, the swimmer covers the four swimming strokes in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle. Each of the strokes must cover one quarter (1/4) of the distance.

SW 9.2 In medley relay events, swimmers will cover the four swimming strokes in the following order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle.

SW 9.3 Each section must be finished in accordance with the rule which applies to the stroke concerned.

SW 10 THE RACE

SW 10.1 All individual races must be held as separate gender events.

SW 10.2 A swimmer swimming over the course alone shall cover the whole distance to qualify.

SW 10.3 The swimmer must remain and finish the race in the same lane in which he/she

started.

SW 10.4 In all events, a swimmer when turning shall make physical contact with the end of the pool or course. The turn must be made from the wall, and it is not permitted to take a stride or step from the bottom of the pool.

SW 10.5 Standing on the bottom during freestyle events or during the freestyle portion of medley events shall not disqualify a swimmer, but he shall not walk.

SW 10.6 Pulling on the lane rope is not allowed.

SW 10.7 Obstructing another swimmer by swimming across another lane or otherwise interfering shall disqualify the offender. Should the foul be intentional, the referee shall report the matter to the Member promoting the race, and to the Member of the swimmer so offending.

SW 10.8 No swimmer shall be permitted to use or wear any device or swimsuit that may aid his/her speed, buoyancy or endurance during a competition (such as webbed gloves, flippers, fins, etc.). Goggles may be worn. Any kind of tape on the body is not permitted unless approved by FINA Sport Medicine Committee.

SW 10.9 Any swimmer not entered in a race, who enters the water in which an event is being conducted before all swimmers therein have completed the race, shall be disqualified from his next scheduled race in the meet.

SW 10.10 There shall be four swimmers on each relay team.

SW 10.11 In relay events, the team of a swimmer whose feet lose touch with the starting platform before the preceding team-mate touches the wall shall be disqualified.

SW 10.12 Any relay team shall be disqualified from a race if a team member, other than the swimmer designated to swim that length, enters the water when the race is being conducted, before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race.

SW 10.13 The members of a relay team and their order of competing must be nominated before the race. Any relay team member may compete in a race only once. The composition of a relay team may be changed between the heats and finals of an event, provided that it is made up from the list of swimmers properly entered by a Member for that event. Failure to swim in the order listed will result in disqualification. Substitutions may be made only in the case of a documented medical emergency.

SW 10.14 Any swimmer having finished his race, or his distance in a relay event, must leave the pool as soon as possible without obstructing any other swimmer who has not yet finished his race. Otherwise the swimmer committing the fault, or his relay team, shall be disqualified.

SW 10.15 Should a foul endanger the chance of success of a swimmer, the referee shall have the power to allow him to compete in the next heat or, should the foul occur in a final event

or in the last heat, he/she may order it to be re-swum.

SW 10.16 No pace-making shall be permitted, nor may any device be used or plan adopted which has that effect.

SW 11 TIMING

SW 11.1 The operation of Automatic Officiating Equipment shall be under the supervision of appointed officials. Times recorded by Automatic Equipment shall be used to determine the winner, all placing and the time applicable to each lane. The placing and times so determined shall have precedence over the decisions of timekeepers. In the event that a break-down of the Automatic Equipment occurs or that it is clearly indicated that there has been a failure of the Equipment, or that a swimmer has failed to activate the Equipment, the recordings of the timekeepers shall be official (See SW 13.3).

SW 11.2 When Automatic Equipment is used, the results shall be recorded only to 1/100 of a second. When timing to 1/1000 of a second is available, the third digit shall not be recorded or used to determine time or placement. In the event of equal times, all swimmers who have recorded the same time at 1/100 of a second shall be accorded the same placing. Times displayed on the electronic scoreboard should show only to 1/100 of a second.

SW 11.3 Any timing device that is terminated by an official shall be considered a watch. Such manual times must be taken by three timekeepers appointed or approved by the Member in the country concerned. All watches shall be certified as accurate to the satisfaction of the governing body concerned. Manual timing shall be registered to 1/100 of a second. Where no Automatic Equipment is used, official manual times shall be determined as follows:

SW 11.3.1 If two (2) of the three (3) watches record the same time and the third disagrees, the two identical times shall be the official time.

SW 11.3.2 If all three (3) watches disagree, the watch recording the intermediate time shall be the official time.

SW 11.3.3 With only two (2) out of three (3) watches working the average time shall be the official time.

SW 11.4 Should a swimmer be disqualified during or following an event, such disqualification should be recorded in the official results, but no time or place shall be recorded or announced.

SW 11.5 In the case of a relay disqualification, legal splits up to the time of the disqualification shall be recorded in the official results.

SW 11.6 All 50 metre and 100 metre splits shall be recorded for lead-off swimmers during relays and published in the official results.