

Amended RVAA Technical Rules - Updated May 2023

BREAST:

The rules for the Breaststroke stroke and kick were amended to remove the requirements that all movements of the arms or legs be in the same horizontal plane. (Articles 101.2.2, 101.2.3)

BACK:

USA Swimming Rule 101.4.2 (pp 24) – To Comply with World Aquatics SW6.3 Stroke — The swimmer shall push off on his back and continue swimming on the back throughout the race. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it is permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water. Additionally, once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the 5 meter mark (long course and short course meters) or 5 yard mark (short course yards) immediately prior to reaching the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged prior to the touch.

START:

101.1.2C (pp 21) – On the Starter’s command “take your marks,” the swimmers shall immediately assume their starting position, in the forward start, with at least one foot at the front of the starting platform or the deck. Swimmers starting in the water must have at least one hand in contact with the wall or starting platform. When all swimmers are stationary, the Starter shall give the starting signal.

RVAA Technical Rules

Rules are adapted from USA Swimming 2014 Rules & Regulations and are effective beginning May 15, 2014

101.2 BREASTSTROKE

.1 Start - The forward start shall be used.

.2 Stroke - After the start and after each turn when the swimmer leaves the wall, the body shall be kept on the breast. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time. Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order.

All movement of the arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.

The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast, on, under, or over the water. The elbows shall be under the 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.

During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer's head shall break the surface of the water. After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.

.3 Kick - After the start and each turn, a single butterfly kick, which must be followed by a breaststroke kick, is permitted before, during or at the completion of the first arm pull. Following which, all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.

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 provided herein. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward butterfly kick.

.4 Turns and Finish - At each turn and 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.

BREASTSTROKE TIPS

- ✓ Simultaneous arm movement
- ✓ No butterfly kick except one allowed following first arm pull after start and turn. Breaststroke kick must follow
- ✓ Hands not past hip except on first pull after start or turns
- ✓ Head must break surface each cycle or part of cycle
- ✓ Cycle - 1 arm pull followed by kick. in that order
- ✓ Simultaneous leg movement with feet turned out on the propulsive part of kick
- ✓ Touches must be simultaneous - watch for "pitty - pat" touches
- ✓ Arms must move in same horizontal plane as the water

101.3 BUTTERFLY

.1 Start - The forward start shall be used.

.2 Stroke - After the start and after each turn, the swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast. The swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water, which must bring the swimmer to the surface. Once on the surface, the swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish (RVAA Exception: The swimmer must surface prior to the head passing the backstroke flags of each length being swum.) From the beginning of the first arm pull, the body shall be kept on the breast. Both arms must be brought forward over the water simultaneously and pulled back under the water simultaneously.

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

.4 Turns - At each turn the body shall be on the breast. The touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired. The shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall.

.5 Finish - At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.

BUTTERFLY TIPS

- ✓ First pull at start and after each turn must bring swimmer to surface, may kick as many times as desired.
- ✓ Shoulders at or past vertical toward the breast after start and turn.
- ✓ Simultaneous arm movement.
- ✓ Simultaneous leg movement - feet not necessarily together but must not alternate. Touches must be simultaneous - watch for "pitty - pat" touches.
- ✓ Arm recovery must be over water: watch for this at turns and finishes.

- ✓ Swimmer must remain on surface after surfacing from first arm pull - after start and turns
- ✓ Must surface and take a stroke of butterfly before head passes under backstroke flag.

101.4 BACKSTROKE

.1 Start - The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips. 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.

.2 Stroke - The swimmer shall push off on his back and continue swimming on the back through-out the race. 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 after the start and during the turn (RVAA Exception: The swimmer must surface prior to the head passing the backstroke flags of each length being swum.)

.3 Turns - Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. After any part of the swimmer's head has passed the backstroke flags the shoulders may be turned past the vertical position toward the breast after which an immediate single arm pull or immediate simultaneous double arm pull may be used to execute the turn (RVAA Exception: Gliding and/or independent kicking shall not be considered a disqualification.) The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall.

.4 Finish - Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back.

BACKSTROKE TIPS

- ✓ Only requirement for stroke is that it be swum on the back.
- ✓ Swimmer has finished when any part of body touches the wall.
- ✓ JUDGE TURN FROM END of POOL!
- ✓ After the turn, shoulders must be past vertical towards the back when feet leave wall.
- ✓ Any part of head must be past backstroke flags prior to shoulders turning past vertical toward breast.
- ✓ Swimmer must remain on surface of water after coming to surface of water after start and turns.

101.5 FREESTYLE

.1 Start - The forward start shall be used.

.2 Stroke - In an event designated freestyle the swimmer may swim any style, except that in a medley relay or an individual medley event, freestyle means any style other than butterfly, breaststroke or backstroke. 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 after the start and during the turn (RVAA Exception: The swimmer must surface prior to the head passing the backstroke flags of each length being swum.)

.3 Turns - Upon completion of each length the swimmer must touch the wall.

.4 Finish - The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his person touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance.

FREESTYLE TIPS

- ✓ Can swim any stroke or combination thereof - not judged for correctness.
- ✓ In Medley Relay or Individual Medley, must be a stroke other than butterfly, breaststroke, or backstroke.
- ✓ Must backup and touch the wall on any turn missed - disqualified only if touches another end prior to touching previous one.
- ✓ Must remain on surface of water during swim after surfacing at start and turns.
- ✓ Must surface and take a stroke before head passes under backstroke flag.

101.6 INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: The first $\frac{1}{4}$, butterfly; the second $\frac{1}{4}$, backstroke; the third $\frac{1}{4}$, breaststroke; and the final $\frac{1}{4}$, freestyle.

.1 Start - The forward start shall be used.

.2 Stroke - The stroke for each one-fourth of the designated distance shall follow the prescribed rules for that stroke.

.3 Turn –

- A. Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke.
- B. The turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed, and shall be as follows:

1. *Butterfly to backstroke* - The swimmer must touch as described in 101.3.5. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner, but the shoulders must

be at or past the vertical toward the back when the swimmer leaves the wall.

2. *Backstroke to breaststroke* - The swimmer must touch the wall while on the back. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall and the prescribed breaststroke form must be attained prior to the first arm stroke.
3. *Breaststroke to freestyle* - The swimmer must touch as described in 101.2.4. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner.

.4 Finish - The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his/her person touches the wall after the prescribed distance.

101.7 RELAYS

.1 Freestyle Relay - Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance using any desired stroke(s). Freestyle finish rules apply.

.2 Medley Relay - Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance continuously in the following order: 1st, backstroke; 2nd, breaststroke; 3rd, butterfly; and 4th, freestyle. Rules pertaining to each stroke used shall govern where applicable. At the end of each leg, the finish rule for each stroke applies in each case.

.3 Rules Pertaining to Relay Races

- A. No swimmer shall swim more than one leg in any relay event.
- B. When automatic relay takeoff judging is used. Each swimmer must touch the touch plate or pad in his/her lane at the end of the course to have finished his/her leg of the relay race.
- C. In relay races a swimmer other than the first swimmer shall not start until his/her teammate has concluded his/her leg of the race.
- D. Any relay team member and his/her relay team shall be disqualified from a race if a team member other than the swimmer designated to swim that leg enters the pool in the area where the race is being conducted before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race. Exception: When an in-the-water start is required or such start is approved by the referee.
- E. Each relay team member shall leave the water immediately upon finishing his/her leg, except the last member.
- F. In relay races the team of a swimmer whose feet have lost touch with the starting platform (ground or deck) before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified.
- G. In relay races involving in-the-water starts, the team of a swimmer who has lost touch with the end of the course before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified, unless the swimmer in default returns to the original starting point at the wall.

102. DISQUALIFICATIONS

- 1) A disqualification can be made only by the official within whose jurisdiction the infraction has been committed and observed. Except for the relay take off judges when dual confirmation relay takeoff judging is used, the S&T Judge shall immediately raise one hand overhead. If the official does not do so, there shall be no disqualification.
- 2) The Referee or designated official making a disqualification may make every reasonable effort to seek out the swimmer or his/her coach and inform him/her as to the reason for the disqualification.
- 3) Any swimmer who acts in an unsportsmanlike or unsafe manner within the swimming venue may be considered for appropriate action or penalty by the Referee.
- 4) A swimmer must start and finish the race in the same lane.
- 5) Obstructing another swimmer by swimming across or otherwise interfering shall disqualify the offender, subject to the discretion of the Referee.
- 6) Standing on the bottom during a freestyle race shall not disqualify a swimmer, but a swimmer must not leave the pool, or walk, or spring from the bottom. Standing on the bottom during any other stroke shall result in disqualification.
- 7) Any swimmer not entered in a race who enters the pool or course in the area in which said race is being conducted before all swimmers therein have completed the race the offender shall be disqualified subject to the discretion of the Referee
- 8) Dipping goggles in the water or splashing water on the competitors face or body prior to an event shall not be considered as entering the pool unless the Referee finds that such action is interfering with the competition.
- 9) Should a foul endanger the chance of success of a swimmer(s), the Referee may allow the affected swimmer(s) to re-swim the event. In case of collusion to foul another swimmer, the Referee may, at his/her discretion, disqualify the swimmer for whose aid the foul was committed.
- 10) Grasping lane dividers to assist forward motion is not permitted

102.9. Equipment & Swimwear

1. No swimmer is permitted to wear or use any device, substance or swimsuit to help his/her speed, pace, buoyancy, or endurance during a race (such as webbed gloves, flippers, fins, etc) Goggles may be worn, and rubdown oil applied if not considered excessive by the Referee. Any kind of tape on the body is not permitted unless approved by the Referee.
2. Competition suits must be constructed of a woven/knit material that is 100% permeable to air and water. Suits may not be made or altered to aid in buoyancy, with no zippers or other fastening system other than a waist string for a brief or jammer and elastic material

within the casing ribbing in the terminal ends (straps, leg openings and waist openings). The male suit shall not extend above the waist or below the top of the kneecap. Female suits shall not extend beyond the shoulders or below the kneecaps or cover the neck. Swimmers are allowed to wear only one suit in competition (unless prior approval has been given by the league Head Judge/Referee). Swimmers wearing an illegal suit will not be allowed to compete in the meet until wearing a legal suit or, if caught competing in an event with an illegal suit, will be disqualified for that event and not allowed to compete further until complying with the rule.

3. If an RVAA swimmer is competing in a team suit or cap, it must represent his/her RVAA team. Swimmers must wear suits or caps not readily identified with any other team during competition. If wearing a suit or cap from another team, the swimmer will be asked to wear another suit or cap. Turning a cap inside out to obscure the non-team logo is acceptable. Failure to comply with this rule can result in disqualification and the swimmer will not be allowed to swim further until compliance with this rule. If caught after a swim, the swimmer will be disqualified and will be told to cease from further competition until compliance with the rule.
4. Changing into or out of swimsuits other than in locker rooms or other designated areas is not appropriate and is prohibited at any RVAA designated competition. Failure to change in designated areas may result in expulsion from the competition at the discretion of the Referee.