




Category	Date	Interpretation By	Scenario/Topic	Interpretation
A) Butterfly	2010-0606	Bruce Stratton - - USA-S Rules Committee Chairman	Interpretation of USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 101.3.2 (Butterfly)	 Interpretation of butterfly recovery.pc
A) Butterfly	2010-06-11	Bruce Stratton - - USA-S Rules Committee Chairman	Butterfly Recovery	<p>The entire portion of the body that extends from the shoulder to the wrist (the arm) must at least break the surface of the water during the recovery. For example, if only the wrist and elbow break the surface, or if only a small portion of the wrist breaks the surface, it would be cause for disqualification. The recovery is that portion of the stroke that begins at the end of the pull and ends when the swimmer begins the next pull. Although it will require judgment and common sense on the part of the official regarding the recovery, if part way through the recovery, the swimmers arms no longer break the surface of the water, it would be cause for disqualification. If you need further clarification, please let me know.</p>
B) Backstroke	2009-1121	Kathleen Morris - Chair, CSI Officials Committee	<p>Scenario: Backstroke</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The swimmer turns toward the breast for a turn and does a legal turn • However, the swimmers does NOT touch the wall and starts to swim away • The swimmer then swims backwards (somehow) and gets back to the wall to make the touch <p>I heard a couple of plausible ways to</p>	<p>State that the swimmer missed the wall at the turn. Touching the wall is part of the turn rule for backstroke and no touch was made as part of the turn</p>

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			<p>describe this infraction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State that the swimmer missed the wall at the turn. Touching the wall is part of the turn rule for backstroke and no touch was made as part of the turn 2. Shoulders past vertical during the swim. Since no touch was made, that part of the turn never happened. The swimmer was then past vertical towards the breast during the swim. <p>I think that both of these could technically be used to describe the infraction, but the first one is the clearest and simplest description.</p> <p>When the DQ slip had the “non-continuous” verbiage, it was simple to lump this infraction under those words. With the new DQ slip, the backstroke verbiage helps to describe the more common backstroke turn infraction and not this scenario.</p>	
B) Backstroke	2009-1123	Kathleen Morris - Chair, CSI Officials Committee	<p>Writing the DQ: Missing the wall on a backstroke turn</p> <p>Scenario: Backstroke</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The swimmer turns toward the breast for a turn and does a legal turn 	<p>Its suggested this DQ be written up as “the swimmer missed the wall at the turn” and to write it under “Other”. Remember, the DQ notice is a communication tool of the infraction. By writing it this way, it clearly communicates the infraction.</p>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, the swimmers does NOT touch the wall and starts to swim away • The swimmer then swims backwards (somehow) and gets back to the wall to make the touch <p>I heard a couple of plausible ways to describe this infraction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State that the swimmer missed the wall at the turn. Touching the wall is part of the turn rule for backstroke and no touch was made as part of the turn 2. Shoulders past vertical during the swim. Since no touch was made, that part of the turn never happened. The swimmer was then past vertical towards the breast during the swim. 	
B) Backstroke	2009-1213	Kathleen Morris - Chair, CSI Officials Committee	<p>The Scenario: a swimmer is approaching the wall on their back. Prior to the touch, the swimmer turns onto their breast. Once on their breast, the swimmer is fairly close to the wall and they grab...hanging on for a period of 3 to 5 seconds. After that time period, the swimmer leaves the wall on their back.</p> <p>The Question:</p>	This situation is perfectly legal as they have completed their turn and are welcome to hang as long as they want

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is staying on the wall during the backstroke considered “safe” regardless of whether the swimmer touched the wall on their back or on their breast? • Or once a swimmer turns toward the breast, are they required to do “something” in a continuous and immediate manner which makes the turn happen? Would hanging on the wall be considered a “delay” in the turning action when past vertical at the turn? 	
B) Backstroke	2010-0206	Kathleen Morris - Chair, CSI Officials Committee	<p>Scenario: A swimmer approaching the wall during a backstroke event turns past vertical toward the breast and initiates a single arm stroke. Immediately at the conclusion of the arm pull of that stroke, or during the arm pull (I have seen both cases), the swimmer realizes that she is too close to the wall to initiate a flip turn and reaches forward with her arm (it could be the other arm as well) and grabs the wall. She then proceeds to leave the wall on her back. However, after reading the rule book once again I realize that it says "During the turn the shoulders may be turned past vertical toward the breast after which a continuous arm pull (my emphasis) or a continuous simultaneous</p>	<p>If the swimmer has completed the one pull or a double arm pull, then the turning action must be initiated. If they are too close to the wall and grab for it to end the length, without actually taking another pull, then it cannot be considered multiple strokes.</p> <p>Some people believe that a turn means a somersault...maybe we should express this more clearly in the training clinics.</p>


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			double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn." I am now questioning the difference between "stroke" (as listed on the DQ slip) and "pull" (as stated in the rule book). In each instance that I observed, the swimmer did not initiate a second arm pull, but merely reached out to touch the wall to complete her turn. In your opinion, is this a violation of the rule?	
C) Breaststroke	2008-1208	Bruce Stratton - - USA-S Rules Committee Chairman	The First Stroke of the Breaststroke Also See the interpretation on 2011-0710	 20081208 Breaststroke Interpre
C) Breaststroke	2008-1208 2011-0414 2011-0710	Bruce Stratton - - Chair, USA-S Rules Committee Dan McAllen -- Chair, Rules & Regulations Committee Dale Ammon -- CSI Rules Interpretation Liaison	The First Stroke of the Breaststroke <u>The Rule</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Excerpt from Article 101.2.2:</u> Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order. <u>Excerpt from Article 101.2.3:</u> After the start and each turn, a single butterfly kick, which must be followed by a breaststroke kick, is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull. 	 Breaststroke Butterfly Kick Rule Int <u>When Judging the First Cycle</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>The First Pull (Defined in December 2008):</u> "After the start and after each turn, any lateral or downward movement of the hands or arms is considered to be the initiation of the first arm pull". (reference the interpretation letter on the USA-S website) <u>At the Start:</u> Regardless of the arm position, if the judge has a solid view of the swimmer and observes that no initiation of the pull (no lateral


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				<p>or downward movement of the arms) preceded the kick sequence, then a rule violation has occurred and a DQ should be made</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>At the Turn:</u> Regardless of the arm position, if the judge has a solid view of the swimmer and observes that no initiation of the pull (no lateral or downward movement of the arms) preceded the kick sequence, then a rule violation has occurred and a DQ should be made. However, during a turn the judge's eyes will be on the swimmers feet as they leave the wall. When the eyes shift to verify the swimmer is towards the breast and the arms are in the same h-plane; the arms may be separated. If a kick occurs at that time <u>the official must use their judgment decide</u> if the pull was initiated while they were watching the feet or if swimmer did a kick before the pull. The amount of time it takes the official eyes to shift from the feet to the shoulder may influence the judgment. <p>This is not a non-call as some have described it, and there are cases where benefit of the doubt is given depending on where judge's eyes are focused and the actions of the swimmer. Don't forget that we are judges and we must use our judgment</p> <p>In April of 2011, Dan McAllen sent a letter to all officials on this specific topic. In the letter he says "If</p>

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				<i>the official can, with the same degree of certainty that would be used to report any other stroke infraction violation, state that no lateral or downward movement of the arms preceded the butterfly kick, the call is appropriate and should be made". <u>Think about that principle because it applies to every splash we judge.</u></i>
C) Breaststroke	2009-0222	Bruce Stratton - - USA-S Rules Committee Chairman	Breaststroke: the single butterfly kick What of the part of the rule that addresses when the butterfly kick may be taken. The variation of interpretation seems to come with the point at which "time runs out" for a swimmer to use that kick, should they so desire to take one at all.	It is almost impossible to write our rules such that they cover every possible situation. No matter how hard we try, there always seems to be differing thoughts about the intent of the written rule. You are correct that the rule states it may occur "during or at the completion of the first arm pull", but he interpretation has always been, and continues to be, that the kick may occur anytime during or after (perhaps the word "at" was not the best choice) after the pull has been completed as long as is followed by a breaststroke kick before the next cycle begins.
C) Breaststroke	2009-0309	Jim Sheehan -- USA Swimming Officials Committee Chairman	The DQ slip when a swimmer's head does not break the surface of the water prior to the hands turning inward at the widest part of the second stroke after the start and after each turn	You should use line 11, "two strokes under" as that is the reason it was included. Line 14, which is under the section headed "Cycle", was aimed at the head not breaking the surface during the stroke cycle. I believe using line 11 communicates the infraction more clearly than line 14. Additionally, the START check line should also be checked. The intent of the DQ slip is to communicate the infraction as completely as possible and while it covers the vast majority of situations, it can't

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				<p>cover everything. If the referee feels that it would be better to record certain DQs in a certain way, that is his or her prerogative. That said, we would like to see consistency of use around the country and in this case, line 11 is the appropriate item to select.</p>
C) Breaststroke	2011-0125	Dale Ammon -- CSI Rules Interpretation Liaison	<p>Breaststroke Interpretation: when the feet leave the wall</p> <p>The Question: The rulebook (for the breaststroke) states under STROKE “After the start and after each turn when the swimmer leaves the wall, the body shall be kept on the breast”. The key words are “on the breast”. I believe one of the current trainees asked why the rulebook states “on the breast” while we judge it as “towards the breast” before the arm pull. The rulebook clearly states “on the breast” when leaving the wall and many swimmers come off the wall at a slight angle towards the breast and then level out before starting their first pull.</p>	<p>The Interpretation: As stated, the words “on the breast” are in the rulebook to support the position of the body for the breaststroke. Those same words appear in the butterfly rule in relation to the position of the body, just in different locations in how the rule is written. As Dale learned, even though the words are different between the butterfly and breaststroke, <u>how it’s interpreted from the National level down to age group swimming is exactly alike...when the feet leave the wall the body must be “toward the breast.”</u> At that point other descriptors in the rules ask us to judge the stroke uniquely, e.g. “All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.” This part of the rule really supports that the swimmer must be on the breast to perform the swim legally while maintaining their arms in the horizontal plane throughout the swimming portion of the race (Breaststroke rule 101.2.2). As we all know, it’s the swimmer who leaves the wall toward the breast, starts their pull to bring them onto their breast, then takes their second pull in a different plane than their first that is in violation of the rules.</p> <p>The interpretation for the breaststroke for when the feet leave the wall in the breaststroke is meant to be</p>

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				interpreted similar to that of the butterfly when the feet leave the wall: toward the breast is legal . At the point as each stroke is swum, it is intended that the swimmer be on the breast.
D) Freestyle	None			
E) Medley	2010-0118	DQ overturned by the USA-S Rules Committee	<p>Interpretations of Article 101.6 (Individual Medley) and 101.7.2 (Medley Relay)</p> <p>Freestyle Leg of the Medley</p> <p>Scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freestyle leg of the 200 IM (25 yard pool) • Swimmer turns at the 175 yard mark (freestyle turn) <p>When the swimmer leaves the wall, the shoulders are past vertical toward the back....the swimmer is called for stroke out of sequence...swimming the backstroke during the freestyle leg of the IM</p>	<p>Originally published on June 1, 1997: Adopted the following FINA Technical Committee interpretation regarding the freestyle leg of these events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a swimmer has traveled a sufficient distance that the official can with certainty judge that the competitor is swimming in the style of butterfly, breaststroke or backstroke, then a disqualification is appropriate. <p>I spoke to Kathleen about this protest last week and she didn't expect any new interpretations to come from the protest, but after her many conversations with Bruce Stratton -- USA-S Rules Committee Chairman (Chairman, Rules & Regulations Committee) on this rule, she offered insight into her conversations with Bruce and how this particular scenario should be judged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the swimmer surfaces on/toward their back during the freestyle leg of the IM, the swimmer is doing the backstroke (aka stroke out of sequence) • Leaving the wall (underwater) toward the back in

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				<p>this scenario <u>is not a DQ</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other freestyle rules apply (15m mark) <p>The information provided in October 2009 for this stroke still applies:</p> <p><u>The Freestyle Stroke During the Medley (individual or relay):</u> we frequently see younger swimmer gasping for air on the freestyle leg of the medleys. In most cases, the swimmer goes to their back (or close to being on their back) and struggles to survival in this difficult event. Is being in survival mode a stroke out of sequence DQ? That's truly a judgment call, but to help you make it, there are two things to think about.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> While the swimmer is on their back, is there propulsion? Were they on their back and kicking at the same time (i.e. were there <u>two components</u> to the stroke while gasping for air...a propulsive kick and a measure of time on the back). Is the swimmer on their back for a fairly long amount of time...a subjective observation, but the propulsion aspects mentioned about should help you make that determination.
F) Misc	2009-0625	Bruce Stratton - - USA-S Rules Committee Chairman	Approved Swim Suits	 <p>Revised FINA Suit List Memo .pdf</p>

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F) Misc	2009-0921	Bruce Stratton - - USA-S Rules Committee Chairman	Important new rules regarding swimsuits	 Letter to members re swimsuits.pdf
F) Misc	2010-0215	Kathleen Morris - Chair, CSI Officials Committee	A referee tells an official to move over the lane in which an infraction was called. Some of the less experienced officials at that meet took that direction as the (new) standard protocol and attempted to practice that at other meets.	It is not necessary to stand over the lane when you raise your hand. It is okay to move there to get ready to talk to the swimmer, but only after the others are either finished or out of their jurisdiction
F) Misc	2010-0609	Bruce Stratton - - USA-S Rules Committee Chairman	Racing Starts	<u>Conditions of Sanction</u> Under our current rules when a swimmer shows up at a meet unaccompanied by a coach, the Meet Host or Referee are required to insure the swimmer will be supervised by a USA Swimming member coach. However, there is no requirement or procedure for insuring that the unaccompanied swimmer has been properly trained and certified by a USA Swimming member coach to execute a racing start. The following proposed legislation will put the burden of complying with the rule on the swimmer and his parents when that swimmer is unaccompanied by his coach. If passed, this legislation will become effective January 1, 2011; however, it is strongly recommended that LSCs immediately begin requiring the following statement be included in all meet announcements: <u>“Any swimmer entered in the meet, unaccompanied</u>

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F) Misc	2010-0623	Bruce Stratton - - USA-S Rules Committee Chairman	The use of tape on swimmers	<p>Article 102.9.1E states that any kind of tape is not allowed unless approved by the Referee. The intent of this is to not allow any tape unless it is required for some kind of medical reason and it does not provide any kind of competitive advantage over other swimmers. For example, a bandage use to cover a cut or other open wound would certainly be acceptable and fall within the kind of tape a referee should allow. It is required for a medical reason and does not provide any kind of competitive advantage. On the other hand, if a swimmer needed to have all of his fingers taped together for some medical reason, it should not be allowed because it would provide the swimmer with a competitive advantage. Probably the most common example of</p>

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				<p>what should not be allowed is kinesio taping. Although there may be a medical reason to wear kinesio taping, it is considered to provide a competitive advantage to the swimmer wearing it and it should not be allowed. If you need further clarification, please let me know.</p> <p>Bruce</p> <p>Bruce W. Stratton</p>
F) Misc	2011-0617	Dan McAllen and Carol Zaleski during the LSC Officials Chair Meeting in Kansas City	Miscellaneous Rule Interpretations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hz plane = always defined as calm surface of the water. • Arm and leg bands (non-compressive) are OK • 2 caps ok - two suits not • Re-submergence - once you're up you're up - CANNOT re-submerge inside 15 Meter mark • Tape – kinesio-tape and compressive tape is banned - other tape allowed by Meet Ref. "I have never banned the use of tape, except kinesio-tape at a meet" Dan McAllen = Up to Meet Ref. allowing fingers to be taped if broken or jammed is ok - Dan McAllen • On Butterfly or Breast Stroke - at finish or turn if head hits wall before hands, and then 2 hands hit it is a DQ - when the wall is touched the race is over - timing pads are activated. • Freestyle during the IM -- no hard and fast rule - use judgment - is the swimmer swimming the Backstroke? Or Butterfly or Breaststroke? - Survival is OK - Dan McAllen; up to the Stroke and Turn Judge and the Deck Ref and Meet Ref.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiation of Breaststroke pull – any downward or lateral movement of hands. Some teams are coaching "thumb movement" is initiating the pull - not correct - Australia - is teaching to do the Butterfly kick during the recovery portion of the arms. Not legal. • False Starts - no uniform definition - "leaves their mark prior to the buzzer" is a false start- swimmer must remain stationary not motionless, flinching, twitching, or head movement ok.
F) Misc	2012-0405	USA Swimming Officials April 2012 Newsletter	False Start Examples	<p>The rules state... “When all swimmers are stationary, the starter shall give the starting signal” (101.1.2.c) and “Any swimmer starting before the starting signal is given shall be disqualified if the Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter’s observation”(101.1.3A). So what constitutes a false start? These scenarios should help you paint the picture.</p> <p>FALSE START SCENARIO #1 Swimmer leaves the set or stationary position prior to the starting signal. The starting signal is then given. The race proceeds and, assuming the Starter observed the early start and the Deck Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter’s observation, the offending swimmer is disqualified at the conclusion of the race. Rule 101.1.3B applies. This is a false start.</p> <p>FALSE START SCENARIO #2 Swimmer leaves the set or stationary position prior to</p>

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				<p>deck like everyone else in the heat, and no starting signal ever sounded.</p> <p>FALSE START SCENARIO #5 Exactly the same facts as scenarios #2 and #3 above. However, when the Starter gives the “stand please” command a swimmer(s) other than the offending swimmer instantly bolts from the blocks and enters the water. Rule 101.1.3D applies. The swimmer(s) clearly started in reaction to the “stand” command. This is NOT a false start.</p> <p>FALSE START SCENARIO #6 The swimmer, upon hearing the command “take your mark” starts down to take a set or stationary position. The swimmer loses his/her balance before coming set and falls into the pool. Rule 101.1.2C applies. The swimmer should be given the opportunity to come to his/her set or stationary position prior to the start. A loss of balance prevented that, and clearly this swimmer never engaged in any starting action. This is NOT a false start.</p>