



IRVINE SWIM LEAGUE

# ***Officials Handbook***



Updated June 2015

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# The ISL Organization

## Mission:

Provide the organizational structure for a recreational developmental summer swim league for youth who live in Irvine with an emphasis on water safety, stroke instruction, and individual improvement.

## Philosophy:

The Philosophy of the League is to promote neighborhood swim teams through a formal ongoing organization. To provide the type of individual competition that has, as its primary goal, the safe teaching of swimming with the proper strokes, the enhancement of each swimmers' self esteem through the improvement of their individual performance, to promote sportsmanship and to promote improved relationships between swimmers, parents and neighbors. As a secondary goal, the Irvine Swim League provides some motivation to each swimmer as a member of a team.

## Importance of Judging for the ISL

Rules are an important part of any sport. They are enacted in order to insure that athletes are able to compete fairly against other participants in a competitive environment. To be effective, the rules set of any sport must be applied consistently and fairly to all those who compete. The Commissioners of Officials have worked to provide you with a consistent set of rules, and a method to fairly apply those rules, as your tools to effectively judge during our weekend competitions.

William Lippman, the US Swimming Rules Chairman in 1981, described what he considered to be an official's responsibility in interpreting the rules so as to benefit the sport and its participants. He put into perspective the need for relying on the judgment and reasoning power of the official on deck to evaluate a situation when he said:

*"...we cannot, in advance, provide a "How to Do IT" for every possible happening. Nor can we always strongly see alike on everything that can take place. If we cannot...strongly agree on an interpretation, then we should leave such adjudication for referees and juries who are at the scene. Let's not try to cover every possible situation in the swimming rules. Let's not write rules to cover these strange and rare possibilities. Leave something for the referee to decide. Let the humans present consider the facts, and come to their own decision on how to handle it. It is impossible to make rules absolute in every instance. There must be room for human judgment to adapt to the intent of the rule to the incident and to the physical factors and make the final decision. That is my philosophy. It is based too on a belief that most adults involved in our sport are fundamentally honest and are willing to exercise their judgment for the best interests of all parties involved."*

The objective is fairness and consistency in officiating for all of our athletes regardless of their skill level. If we believe in the philosophy of providing each athlete with the best opportunity to excel in each and every race and don't let differences of opinion, personal agendas, and egos interfere; we will be guaranteed a successful swim season. As an ISL official it is your responsibility to fairly apply those tools in order to provide our children with an exceptional swimming experience. It's a big responsibility, thank you for taking it on.

## **Enforcement Changes (started 2003 season)**

As an instructional league, it is the duty of the ISL to provide the training necessary for our children to succeed in the sport of swimming. At the request of the League, the judging criteria were revamped and revised before the 2003 swim season. As a result, the ISL has adopted a formalized, standard interpretation of our Technical Rules, which means beginning back in the 2003 season any violation of the technical rules by swimmers in any age group will result in a disqualification (DQ) issued by the meet officials.

### **“Soft DQ’s”**

In 2003, in order to assist the younger swimmers (5-6 and 7-8 year-olds), the ISL introduced the idea of the Soft DQ. A soft DQ is a form of administrative relief for these swimmers, which allows them to still receive awards after receiving a DQ in a race. A Soft DQ is still a technical violation of the rules, but one that will be overlooked by the head table for the prescribed period during the season. The Soft DQ is available to swimmers in the 5-6 year-old age bracket for the first four (4) swim meets, and for the 7-8 year-old age bracket for the first two (2) swim meets. After which time, the full technical rules will be re-established and enforced at all meets in preparation for our Championship meet. The advantage of the Soft DQ is that it allows the participant to complete the race, as an official swim in order to qualify for heat, place and time improvement ribbons.

### **DQ Processing**

Another improvement to the officiating is the establishment of a formalized procedure for handling the DQ's. The goal is to improve the information flow from the officials to the swimmers in order for the swimmers to learn about their mistakes. The head table will be responsible for sorting DQ's and distributing the information to the coaches and swimmers.

## **Disqualification Processing (DQ's)**

If a swimmer violates a technical rule while swimming in an event, an official must issue a Disqualification (DQ) that identifies the swimmer and the violation. The official then files the DQ with the race results with the head table so that only official swims are tabulated to identify the heat and event winners. The receipt of a DQ is a notice that some part of the swimming style is not up to regulation, and it provides an opportunity for a swimmer to improve their mastery of a swimming stroke. But it is also a very important part of the communication process that the information describing the violation be delivered to the swimmer in order to assist in their training. The process identified below will insure that the swimmer receives the documentation of the DQ, as well as their time, and will be able to work on correcting the violation in the future.

### **Officials' Responsibilities**

1. Observe violation
2. Record DQ on judging form in English (no codes) as per DQ guidelines
3. Identify and list if violation qualifies for a soft DQ (if possible.)
4. Submit finishing order and DQ's on judging form to head table, head sorter

### **Head Table Responsibilities**

1. Home team head table sorter pulls out all DQ'd swimmer lane cards from event results
2. Sorter writes reason for DQ's on back of lane card for future review by swimmer & coaches.
3. Sorter verifies if violation qualifies for soft DQ and writes "Soft DQ" on lane card. If soft DQ, card goes back into official results for consideration for heat and place ribbons.
4. Head table sorter assigns places to lane cards at the end of the race according to times and finish order.
5. Sorter separates cards by team and provides lane cards to visiting team(s) for posting results to their team database.
6. Team data entry person posts official results and times for all official and soft DQ results into software. Hard DQ's are also noted in the entry process.
7. Place and heat ribbons are generated for all official results. Participation ribbons for all non-place winners and DQ's
8. Team's head table logs both hard and soft DQ's on ISL Disqualification Reference Sheet for use by coaching staff and swimmers for evaluation.
9. Lane cards are held for each meet until the end of the season.

## Officials Use of the Judging Slips

With regards to judging slips, in addition to noting the normal finishing order for places, we suggest using the area to the left of the place column to make quick notes on any violations during the race.

**DQ NOTES** - You can then use the area to the left of the place column to make quick notes about violations, either hard DQ's (HDQ) or soft DQ's (SDQ).

**FINISH PLACES** – This area does not change; write the lane number of the finishing places as they come in.

**DOCUMENT DQ's** – Start your documentation of your DQ violations here as normal. If more room is needed, continue on the back

### DQ NOTES

Use this area to quickly record DQ's for lanes 1-6. Use the printed numbers as lane numbers

IRVINE SWIM LEAGUE  
DUAL/TRI MEET  
Appendix D2

**JUDGING**  
EVENT \_\_\_\_\_ HEAT \_\_\_\_\_

Place	Lane
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

**DQ**

LANE	VIOLATION

IRVINE SWIM LEAGUE  
DUAL/TRI MEET  
Appendix D2

**JUDGING**  
EVENT \_\_\_\_\_ HEAT \_\_\_\_\_

Place	Lane
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

**DQ**

LANE	VIOLATION

### FINISH PLACES

Use this area to record the finishing places as normal

IRVINE SWIM LEAGUE  
DUAL/TRI MEET  
Appendix D2

**JUDGING**  
EVENT \_\_\_\_\_ HEAT \_\_\_\_\_

Place	Lane
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

**DQ**

LANE	VIOLATION

### DOCUMENT DQ's

Use this area to document the DQ's noted in the left column

# Stroke Technical Rules

## 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 him to the surface. It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4yds) 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. From the beginning of the first arm pull, the swimmer's shoulders shall be in line with the water surface. Both arms must be brought forward over the water and pulled back 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 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 simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.

## Backstroke

1. **Start**
  - a. The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips.
  - b. Prior to the command, "take your mark" and until the feet leave the wall at the starting signal, the swimmer's feet, including the toes, can be over the edge of the water but shall not be curled over the gutter. Standing in or on the gutter is not permitted at any time before the start. A backstroke starting block may not be used.
2. **Stroke** - Standing in or on the gutter or curling the toes over the lip of the gutter immediately after the start is not permitted. 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 shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yds.) after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water.
3. **Turns** - Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. During the turn, the shoulders may be turned past the vertical toward the breast after which a continuous single arm pull or a continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to execute the turn. Once the body has left the position the back, there shall be no kick or arm pull that is independent of the continuous turning action. 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.

## Breaststroke

1. **Start** - The forward start shall be used. After the start and each turn, a single downward butterfly kick followed by a breaststroke kick is permitted while wholly submerged.
2. **Stroke** - From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and after each turn, the body shall be kept on the breast. The arms shall move simultaneously and in the same horizontal plane without any 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 last stroke at the finish of the prescribed distance. The hands shall be brought back on or under the surface of the water. The hands shall not be brought beyond the hipline, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn. Some part of the swimmer's head shall break the surface of the water at least once during each complete cycle of one arm stroke and one leg kick, in that order, except after the start and each turn the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs and one leg kick while wholly submerged. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.
3. **Kick** - All vertical and lateral movements of the legs shall be simultaneous. The feet must be turned outward during the propulsive part of the kick movement. A scissors, flutter, or downward butterfly kick is not permitted, other than one butterfly kick after the start and each turn followed by a breaststroke kick. Breaking the surface with the feet shall not merit disqualification unless followed by a downward butterfly kick with the exception noted above.
4. **Turns** - At each turn, the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. 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 any part of the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch. 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 and the form prescribed in 2 above must be attained from the beginning of the first arm stroke. A single butterfly kick is allowed as noted above in section 1. Start.
5. **Finish** - At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. 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 any part of the last complete or incomplete stroke cycle preceding the touch.

## 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 during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yds.) after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface.
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.



## Individual Medley

The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: the first one-fourth, butterfly; the second one-fourth, backstroke; the third one-fourth, breaststroke; and the last one-fourth, 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. **Turns**
  - 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:
    - i. Butterfly to Backstroke—The swimmer must touch as described in stroke rules. 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.
    - ii. 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.
  - c. Breaststroke to Freestyle—The swimmer must touch as described in stroke rules. 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.

## 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: first, backstroke; second, breaststroke; third, butterfly; fourth, 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 take-off 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.
- 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 shall jump into or enter the pool in the area where the race is being conducted before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race.
- 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.

## Starts

1. The Starter shall stand within ten feet of the starting end of the pool and shall assume control of the swimmers until a fair start has been achieved.
2. After a single long whistle the Starter may:
  - a. Ask swimmers to step up to the start/blocks or enter the water for backstroke.
  - b. Announce the event and heat number
    - i. the distance to be covered
    - ii. the stroke or strokes to be swum and when relevant the order in which they are to be swum; and
    - iii. The number of lengths in the event.
  - c. When the officials and swimmers are ready, the Starter may command, “take your mark”.
  - d. 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 on the deck. Swimmers starting in the water must have at least one hand in contact with the wall or starting platform and toes may not be curled over the gutter. When all swimmers are stationary, the starter shall give the starting signal.
  - e. Any swimmer who breaks his starting position and enters the water before the starting signal is given will receive:
    - i. Relief from disqualification for the first break in position and entry into the water if a recall signal is given.
    - ii. Disqualification for the second entry into the water, or in the case of a backstroke start, the second push off from the wall.
  - f. When the swimmer does not respond promptly to the command “take your mark”, the Starter shall immediately release all swimmers with the command “Stand up” upon which the swimmers may stand up.
3. **Relay Starts:** The official shall stand so that they can clearly see both the touch of the incoming swimmer(s) and the feet of the departing swimmer(s) as they leave the starting platform, and shall judge whether the swimmer is in contact with the platform when the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool. A relay will be disqualified if the official judging the take-off observes a violation.

## Irvine Swim League Disqualification Guidelines

Modified 6-2003

### RULES, Appendix B, 4. Disqualifications (DQ's)

“Soft DQ” Indicates Soft DQ for 5-6 & 7-8 age groups

Soft DQ Period: 5-6 year-olds - first 4 meets

7-8 year-olds - first 2 meets

#### GENERAL

**In the case of flagrant violation of a stroke, which gives him/her an advantage over other swimmers in the event....**

No walking on bottom of pool, jumping off bottom, or pulling on lane line.

15-meter underwater rule applies to Butterfly, Backstroke, and Freestyle

#### RELAYS

No early take-offs

Medley Relay – not following proper sequence 1) Back 2) Breast 3) Fly 4) Free

#### FLY

*Soft DQ* 2 hands not touching wall at the same time

*Soft DQ* If scissor, flutter or breast kick used

*Soft DQ* Feet not kicking simultaneously

*Soft DQ* Hands don't enter water at the same time (Simultaneous pull)

*Soft DQ* Arms don't recover over water

If other kicks used whole length

Swims wrong stroke

Hands don't recover over water

Body not on breast

#### BACK

*Soft DQ* Toes curled above gutter at start

*Soft DQ* Not staying on back at finish and when feet leave wall after turn.

Not waiting for Starter's instruction to enter the water

Not staying on back

*OK* High School flip turn acceptable with kick in if needed

#### BREAST

*Soft DQ* 2 hands not touching wall at the same time

*Soft DQ* Arms not pulling simultaneously

*Soft DQ* Arms pull past hips after first stroke

*Soft DQ* If scissor, dolphin or flutter kick used

*Soft DQ* Start and turn – pull/kick/surface (pull down optional but second pull must bring head to surface and arms must not pass shoulders before breath)

*Soft DQ* Head must break surface of water during each arm stroke cycle but may go completely underwater.

Turn – shoulders not parallel to wall (shoulders at same level)

If other kicks used whole length

After start and each turn, a single downward butterfly kick followed by a breaststroke kick is permitted while wholly submerged.

#### FREE

A part of the swimmer's body must touch wall at turn and finish

#### IM

Strokes must be swum correctly (see above) and in proper order.

1) FLY 2) BACK 3) BREAST 4) FREE

Turns: Backstroke to Breaststroke –

Must touch wall while on back before turn to breast

#### STARTS

If swimmer has more than one (1) false start

Feet not at edge of deck/diving block – track starts are OK

## Filing a Protest

**Formal Protest Forms** - The ISL shall provide formal protest forms upon request. Each team shall have protest forms at the scoring tables during Dual Meets. Every parent, team officer and member of the ISL Executive Board obligates him or herself to file a formal protest form whenever they discover, first hand, a violation of the Rules.

**Submission of Protests, Judicial Committee Process, Appeal Process** - The person who signs the formal protest form shall submit it to the ISL Board, by personal delivery, mail, or e-mail to the Executive Director, the President or the President Elect within a reasonable period of time after the alleged rules violation or their knowledge of the alleged rules violation.

In the event of a formal protest, the ISL Judicial Committee meet as outlined in the current ISL Rules. All meetings of the Judicial Committee may be held with no less than 24 hours notice. Notice may be given personally in writing, mail, e-mail, fax, or by telephone to the president or team representatives of the team against whom a protest is filed (the "offending team"), with a general statement of the alleged rules violation. The offending team shall have the right to obtain a copy of the protest form upon request. The offending team shall be entitled to one (1) continuance, prior to or at the meeting, for one (1) working day (the term working days shall exclude weekends and holidays). Attendance at the meetings shall include, but not be limited to the members of the Judicial Committee, the Executive Director, and the person or persons who filed the protest, and the president (or their designee) of the offending team. If no representative of the offending team attends the meeting, and it is shown that they were notified of the committee meeting within the time prescribed, then the Judicial Committee may, irrespective of the appearance of any representative of the offending team, rule on a protest as a default.

*Meetings shall be conducted in a manner to assure each side an opportunity to be heard and to rebut the charges made by the other party.*

After each side of the protest has had a chance to be heard and submit evidence, the Judicial Committee shall excuse the parties and shall confer to reach a decision. If the Judicial Committee decides that a violation of the rules occurred, then it shall determine an appropriate penalty. All decisions of the Judicial Committee, and the recommended penalty, if any, shall be submitted by the chairman of the committee in writing to the ISL Board and the team or individual against whom the protest was filed.

Decisions of the Judicial Committee that a rules violation has occurred, and that a penalty has been recommended by it, shall be final and the penalty enforced, 48 hours after its submission to the ISL and receipt by the team against whom the protest was filed, unless

- (i.) The team against whom the protest was filed lodges, within 48 hours of its notification of the Judicial Committee decision, a written appeal with any member of the ISL Board that requests a new hearing before the entire ISL Board; or
- (ii.) The decision of the Judicial Committee and the penalty recommended would cause the team against whom the protest was filed to: be temporarily or permanently suspended from the ISL; be required to forfeit meets or team awards; or be excluded from any meet, including dual, tri, or championship meets, in which event the appeal to the full ISL Board shall be automatic; or
- (iii.) ISL Executive Board elects, because of the gravity of the charges and the penalty recommended by the Judicial Committee to bring the final determination to the full ISL Board.

On an appeal based on the three (3) events, labeled (i), (ii) or (iii), immediately above, the Judicial Committee decisions shall not be final, but shall be deemed a recommendation to the full ISL Board and the full ISL Board shall meet to make a final determination of the protest. Such meeting shall be held on not less than 24 hours notice, given in the same manner as prescribed above for Judicial Committee hearings, and shall include all interested presidents and team representatives of the ISL, the ISL Executive Board, the Executive Director, and all interested parents. Such meetings shall be held in a manner that allows each side to be heard. Decisions on appeal may include adopting the recommendations of the Judicial Committee, rejecting the recommendation of the Judicial Committee, and/or other decision of the full ISL Board.



5319 University Dr., #302 Irvine 92612