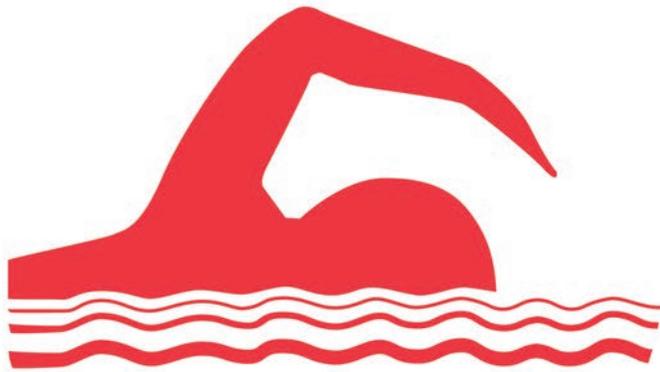


# Montgomery County Swim League



HANDBOOK 2017

[www.mcsl.org](http://www.mcsl.org)

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## Rule Changes for 2017

### Functions Required of MCSL Member Pools

#### Drones

Page 43. In the interest of safety, *all MCSL meets should be considered no drone zones* and Team Reps and meet officials should do their best to prohibit the use of drones throughout competitions.

### MCSL Rules for Competition

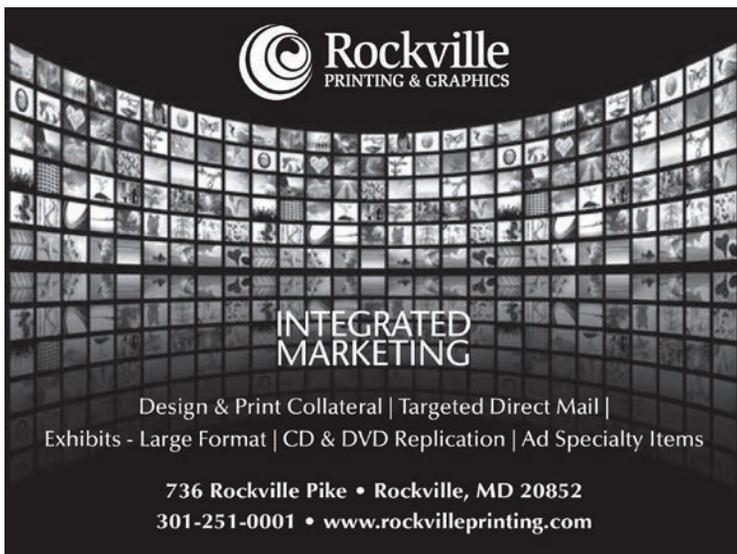
#### Uniform Rules

2. f. Uniform. A swimmer shall not wear a suit or cap bearing the name, insignia or logo of any team or pool other than the MCSL team represented by the swimmer. This rule now applies to all MCSL A meets, Relay Carnival Meets, Divisional Meets in addition to the Coaches Long Course, and All Star Meets. We deleted 15.i, 16.j and 17.i, rules which only applied to the Coaches Long Course and All Star Meets.

#### Eligibility of Swimmers & Team Transfers

7.d., 7.e. and 7.g-j, Rules regarding “Eligibility of a swimmer to participate on a team” have been revised this year. See the President’s note for a synopsis and the rules section on page 54-56 for the exact wording. Team transfers need to be reviewed by the MCSL rules committee in some circumstances.

(Rule changes continue on page 5)



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## Rule Changes for 2017 (continued)

### Certification of Stroke & Turn Officials

8.d.iv. CCSDA Stroke and Turn Judges. A CCSDA certified Stroke and Turn Judge may be MCSL certified based on his/her CCSDA certification. Country Club Swim & Dive Association training for stroke and turn judges is recognized for MCSL certification.

### Relay Carnival Ribbons

12.q. Awards. MCSL medals for first place, ribbons for second through sixth place. Duplicates awarded for ties.

### Early Take-Off Violations

Relay Early Take-Off Violations, signatures required. Update 18.c and 18.e.i.

18.c Documentation. DQ cards are to follow the template provided by the MCSL. The DQ card must be signed by the disqualifying official(s), the referee and the swimmer’s coach or designated team representative. If a team wishes to have DQ’s handled by a representative other than the coach, that representative must be identified to the referee at the start of the meet.

18.e.i Dual confirmation of illegal take-offs is required; that is, both the side take-off judge and the lane take-off judge must record that a particular swimmer left early for a team to be disqualified. Both the lane and side take-off judge shall sign the MCSL DQ slip for dual confirmed early take-off violations (see 18.c for additional signatures required). Swimmers must be in a forward starting position when the relay exchange takes place.

# MCSL Rules for Competition

## 1. PURPOSE OF LEAGUE

- a. To provide organized, friendly team competition within a fair and wholesome environment at the neighborhood pool level;
- b. To help young people develop athletic skills; and
- c. To foster good sportsmanship, teamwork and an appreciation of the relationship between effort and success.

## 2. GENERAL–RULES OF COMPETITION

- a. Applicability. These rules govern all MCSL meets.
- b. United States Swimming (USA Swimming) rules govern all aspects of MCSL meets that are not specifically addressed by these rules.
- c. Smoking. Smoking is prohibited on the deck, in the locker rooms, in spectator areas and in all areas used by swimmers during the meet or warm-ups.
- d. Participation in other swim leagues. An MCSL team cannot participate as a team in meets sponsored by any other leagues during the MCSL season.
- e. Eligible Swimsuits -- MCSL follows USA Swimming rules with regard to eligible swimsuits for competition. In general, these requirements state that swimsuits for men may not extend above the navel or below the knee and for women may not cover the neck or extend past the shoulders or below the knee. No zippers or other fastening devices are allowed, except for a waist tie on a brief or jammer. Suits must be of textile material and must not be made of any rubberized type of material such as polyurethane or neoprene. The swimmer must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces except it is permissible for the swimmer to wear a single set of garments underneath his or her competition swimsuit for modesty and/or privacy reasons. Exemptions to this rule will be granted only for conflicts due to a swimmer's religious beliefs or medical conditions. All requests for an exemption must be submitted to the Meet Referee by the swimmer, coach and/or team representative prior to participation in any MCSL sanctioned event for consideration.
- f. **Uniform. A swimmer shall not wear a suit or cap bearing the name, insignia or logo of any team or pool other than the MCSL team represented by the swimmer.**

## 3. GENERAL –RULES OF SPORTSMANSHIP

- a. Team representatives and coaches shall ensure good sportsmanship throughout all meets. As an example, team representatives and coaches shall ensure that there are no signs, objects or actions that are in bad taste or offensive to any team.
- b. Team representatives shall ensure that spectators do not interfere with officials in performance of their duties.
- c. Team representatives and coaches may consult with the referee, as necessary, but shall refrain from consulting or contacting the referee from the time the swimmers report to the starter until the event has been recorded. Team representatives and coaches should not consult with officials other than the referee.
- d. Team representatives and coaches shall ensure that the pool grounds and locker rooms used by their teams are thoroughly policed before departing. Trash should be picked up and chairs and pool equipment should be returned to their original locations.

## 4. GENERAL–POOL STANDARDS

- a. Size of pool. Pools must be 25 meters in length and have at least six competition lanes each at least seven feet wide. Pool depth at any end where swimmers dive into the pool must be at least four feet (measured at a distance of one meter from the wall out to five meters). If the pool depth is shallower than four feet, swimmers must start in the water at that end.
- b. Backstroke flags. Backstroke flags must be set at 5 meters from each end of the pool. Older pools that have their flags set at 15 feet must change to 5 meters when the pool is redecked.

## 5. GENERAL–REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

- a. Each team must have:
  - i. A functioning electronic starter (home team usually provides at meet);
  - ii. A minimum of 10 digital watches;
  - iii. A computer;
  - iv. A printer;
  - v. Team Manager software.
- b. MCSL provides each team:
  - i. Meet Manager software;
  - ii. Meet forms. Teams must use MCSL approved relay cards, disqualification cards, relay takeoff cards and dual/divisional meet cover sheets for all meets.

## 6. GENERAL–TEAM ROSTERS

- a. Each team representative shall maintain a current roster listing all swimmers on the team with their gender, birth date and address.

## 7. GENERAL–ELIGIBILITY OF A SWIMMER TO PARTICIPATE ON A TEAM

- a. Purpose. To maintain a stable environment for team competition, it is generally expected that swimmers and their families will not seek to, nor be encouraged to, change MCSL teams unless the family moves residences. The MCSL's eligibility rules are established with this expectation in mind, recognizing that an individual's opportunity to participate with a particular team must be appropriately balanced against MCSL's legitimate interest in maintaining stability and competitive fairness within the MCSL.
- b. Membership in pool. Each swim team member must be a member of the pool for which he or she competes.
- c. Type of membership. Each swim team member's pool membership must be of the same type and on the same terms as a pool membership available to a non-swim team member.
- d. **USA Swimming Registered Swimmers - MCSL teams shall not provide USA Swimming registered swimmers, either direct or indirect, financial inducements that are not provided to any other non-USA Swimming registered swimmers. Direct financial inducements include, but may not be limited to, reductions of MCSL pool or swim team membership/program fees. Indirect financial inducements include, but may not be limited to, reductions of any pool or swim team membership/program fees associated with the USA Swimming team (or affiliated organization) for which the swimmer participates that are contingent upon the swimmer's participation on an affiliated MCSL Swim team.**
- e. **Swim Team Members Employed at a Pool - A swim team member may not compete for a pool at which the member is employed unless the member is also a member of the pool. If the member competed in "A" meets, including Dual meets, Divisional Relay Carnival or Divisional Championships, for**

- a different MCSL pool in the previous season, the member's parent or guardian must apply to change teams (Section 7(h) of the MCSL rules) and must also be a member of the new pool.
- f. **Montgomery Village - Eligibility of swimmers competing for pools in Montgomery Village shall be determined by geographic boundaries set and amended from time to time by the MCSL Rules Committee in conjunction with the team representatives of the Montgomery Village pools.**
  - g. **Team Transfers – No Prior Board Approval Required**
    - i. **Change of Family Residence - A swimmer may change pool membership and MCSL team when the swimmer's family moves residences. The swimmer has up to two years from the time of the move to make this change. A swimmer may not change teams during the swim season without the permission of the Rules Committee.**
    - ii. **Waiting List – A new swimmer who applies for membership in an MCSL pool and is put on a waiting list may join and swim for another MCSL pool until membership in the waiting-list pool is obtained. Once the membership in the waiting list pool is obtained, the swimmer may join and swim for that pool's team with no loss of eligibility. However, the swimmer may not change teams during the swim season without permission of the Rules Committee.**
    - iii. **Swimmer Did Not Swim "A" Meets the Prior Season - If a swimmer did not participate in any MCSL "A" meets in the season immediately prior to the season for which the swimmer desires to make a change in team, the swimmer may transfer to another MCSL team without applying for approval from the Rules Committee.**
    - iv. **Withdrawal of Team from MCSL – If a swimmer's team chooses to withdraw from the MCSL, the swimmer may transfer to another MCSL team without applying to the Rules Committee or sitting out a season. The swimmer must become a member of the new pool before the swimmer can compete for that pool.**
  - h. **Team Transfers – Board Approval Required**
    - i. **Application Process - If a swimmer's parent or guardian believes it is necessary for the swimmer to change MCSL teams and the family **has not made a change of residence or met the other conditions of Section 7(g)**, the parent or guardian must submit an application, to the Rules Committee chairman, requesting to change MCSL teams.**
      1. **The application must identify the circumstances requiring the change and must be signed by the parent or guardian.**
      2. **Applications will not be accepted earlier than March 15th or later than May 1st of the year for which the change is sought.**
      3. **For each application received, the Rules Committee chairman will notify the team representatives of both the swimmers current team and the MCSL team to which the swimmer is requesting to join.**
    - ii. **Issues to be Considered by the Rules Committee in Rendering its Decisions - The Rules Committee, in its sole discretion, may deny the application for change in team if it has evidence of recruitment or if it deems the transfer to negatively affect the MCSL's legitimate interest in maintaining stability and competitive fairness within the league.**
      1. **In order that families and teams have an understanding of the various issues that will be considered by the Rules Committee in granting or denying a request to change teams, the Rules Committee will post a document on the MCSL website that will identify issues the committee will consider during its deliberation.**
  - iii. **Final Ruling Date - The Rules Committee will approve or disapprove all applications no later than May 15th. If the transfer is approved, the swimmer must become a member of the new pool before the swimmer can compete for that pool.**
  - iv. **Denial of Transfer Request - If a transfer is denied or if a swimmer fails to apply, the swimmer may either continue to compete for their current MCSL team or may transfer to the team to which the transfer was denied but, in the case of a transfer, the swimmer will not be eligible to participate in "A" meets, including Dual meets, Divisional Relay Carnival or Divisional Championships, for their new team during the first season after the transfer occurs.**
  - v. **Rules Committee Transfer Decisions are Final – Any transfer decision by the Rules Committee under this section of the MCSL rules is deemed to be final and not subject to protest.**
    - i. **Recruitment – Consistent with Sections 1(a) and 7(a) of the MCSL rules, MCSL teams, including team representatives and coaches, shall not encourage swimmers and their families to change MCSL teams. Notwithstanding the above, recruitment shall not be deemed to have occurred if a swimmer transfers teams under conditions set forth in Section 7(g) of the MCSL Rules.**
    - j. **Team Notification to the Board - Team Representatives shall provide the Rules Committee a listing of all new swim team members that swam for another MCSL team the prior season. The initial listing must be submitted no later than June 15th with updates provided, as needed.**

## 8. GENERAL—OFFICIALS

- a. Team requirements. Each team should have at least:
  - i. Two MCSL certified referees;
  - ii. Two MCSL certified starters; and
  - iii. Two MCSL certified Stroke and Turn judgesIf a team cannot provide an appropriate certified official, the opposing team should provide that official. If neither team can provide the official, the teams should try to secure the services of a certified official from another MCSL team or from the MCSL Board. If no certified official is available, the host team should provide a person to fill the position.
- b. Duties of officials. The duties of officials are outlined in the Guide for Officials section of this handbook.
- c. Use of stopwatches. Stopwatches will not be used during a meet by any active official other than lane timers, the head timer and the assistant head timer.
- d. Certification requirements.
  - i. MCSL certification. An individual must attend a position-specific MCSL clinic to be certified as a referee, starter or stroke and turn judge. To maintain certification, he or she must attend an MCSL clinic in that position once every two years. A referee must also be currently certified as a stroke and turn judge. Currently certified referees may maintain their stroke and turn, referee and starter (only if currently a certified starter) certifications by attending the Advanced Referee Clinic.
  - ii. Record of certification. Clinic attendees must register at the clinic to be certified. Record of certification is maintained by the MCSL.
  - iii. USA Swimming starter and stroke and turn judges. A USA Swimming certified starter or stroke and turn judge may be MCSL certified based on his/her USA Swimming LSC certification.
  - iv. **CCSDA Stroke and Turn Judges. A CCSDA certified Stroke and Turn Judge may be MCSL certified based on his/her CCSDA certification.**

## 9. GENERAL—AGE OF SWIMMER FOR MCSL COMPETITION

- a. Age of swimmer. A swimmer shall compete for the MCSL season at the age he or she is on June 1. Since MCSL is an age-group, developmental league, swimmers should compete in their own age group (e.g., an 11 year old in the 11-12 age group).
- b. Swim up rule. If a team has fewer than four swimmers of the correct age and gender in an age group expected to be available to swim at the time entries are exchanged and all the entered swimmers not scratched are maxed out on entries (see example below), the team may swim a younger swimmer in an older age group (“swim up”) if all of the following apply:
  - i. The younger swimmer swims in the older age group for the entire meet;
  - ii. The younger swimmer does not displace an older swimmer of the correct age from any event, including the freestyle relay; and
  - iii. The younger swimmer is not filling a position that is vacant because a swimmer in the older age group has been moved up to an even older age group.
  - iv. Teams with fewer than six swimmers in an age group may swim a younger swimmer in an older age group in the extra heat of freestyle as long as the other qualifications stated above are still met.
- c. Identifying swim ups. Swimmers who are swimming up must be identified on the meet entry report. Relays that include a swim up must be entered with a yellow relay card.
- d. Times achieved by swim ups. Times achieved by swim ups will not qualify for the Coaches’ Invitational Long Course, Individual All Star or Relay All Star meets or be eligible to set an MCSL record
- e. Open events. Open events are open to all swimmers 18 years and younger.

Example:

Using 4 swimmers to fill all events in 15-18 Age Group:

Swimmer->	1	2	3	4
Free	X	X		X
Back		X	X	X
Fly	X	X	X	
Breast	X		X	X
IM	X	X	X	
200 Medley Relay	X	X	X	X
Total Entries	5	5	5	4

Swimmer 3 is sick and not at the meet.

Swimmer->	1	2	3	4
Free	X	X		X
Back		X		X
Fly	X	X		
Breast	X			X
IM	X	X		
200 Medley Relay	X	X		X
Total Entries	5	5		4

Swimmer 4 is not maxed out and must be used for the IM, as Swimmer 4 is already entered in three individual events. The Medley Relay is an Open event, so any age swimmer could fill that spot without being a swim-up.

Using 4 swimmers to fill all events in 9-10, 11-12, or 13-14 Age Group:

Swimmer->	1	2	3	4
Free	X	X		X
Back		X	X	X
Fly	X	X	X	
Breast	X		X	X
IM	X	X	X	
175 Free Relay			X	X
Total Entries	4	4	5	4

Swimmer 2 is sick and not at the meet.

Swimmer->	1	2	3	4
Free	X			X
Back			X	X
Fly	X		X	
Breast	X		X	X
IM	X		X	
175 Free Relay			X	X
Total Entries	4		5	4

In this example, Swimmer 4 would be put in the IM. Neither Swimmers 1 or 4 can be used for Free/Back/Fly/Breast as they are all at the 3 maximum events they are allowed. In addition, Swimmer 1 cannot be used in the 175 Free Relay as Swimmer 4 is already entered in the freestyle relay for that age group.

In both of the examples it would make sense to also enter the swim-up swimmers in the extra heat of freestyle.

## 10. GENERAL—OFFICIAL TIME

- a. The official time for each lane shall be determined by three lane timers with digital watches. The official time is the time of two watches that agree, or, if none agree, the middle time, and is recorded to the hundredths of a second (for example, 1:35.10). If three valid times are not available, the official time shall be calculated as follows:
  - i. Two valid times. If there are only two valid times, the official time is the average of those two times. For two times to be valid, there must have been three timers on the lane and a valid third time was not obtained. The assistant head timer and referee initial the lane/time sheet to accept the two times that were obtained.
  - ii. One valid time. If there is only a single valid time, that time becomes the official time. For a single time to be valid, there must have been three timers on the lane and valid second and third times were not obtained. The assistant head timer and the referee initial the lane/time sheet to accept that a single time was obtained.
  - iii. No valid time/referee or starter's sweep. If there is no valid time, the order of finish may be determined by the referee or starter's sweep. The three lane timers and the back-up timer (usually the assistant head timer) must tell the head timer that no valid time was obtained.
- b. Rounding. If the digital watches used record time to the thousandths of a second or if two times must be averaged, the digits represented thousandths are dropped with no rounding (example: 1:35.109 becomes 1:35.10).
- c. Electronic timing
  - i. Dual Meets. By prior agreement of the team representatives and with approval of the MCSL Rules Committee obtained at least 48 hours in advance of the meet, the order of finish may be determined by electronic timing in accordance with USA Swimming rules for determining official times.
  - ii. Coaches' Invitational Long Course, All Star Relay and Individual All Star meets. Electronic timing will be used in accordance with USA Swimming rules for determining official times.

## 11. DUAL MEETS

- a. Schedule. Team representatives vote to determine the MCSL calendar at the July MCSL meeting. A team's rank in the division determines its dual meet schedule. (See table, MCSL Calendar, Dual Meets in this handbook). Any change in schedule due to weather, pool conditions or other factors (e.g. religious reasons) must be communicated to the MCSL Automation Chair as soon as practicable.
- b. Home pool change. Any team that wants to use a pool other than its home pool for any dual meet during the season must receive approval from the MCSL Rules Committee prior to the start of the season.
- c. Meet arrangements. Approximately one week prior to the date of the meet, the home team representative should contact the visiting team representative concerning arrangements for the meet.
- d. Rosters. A swimmer must be on the team roster by noon the Friday before a Saturday meet to swim in that meet.
- e. Events. The order of events is on the back cover of this handbook.
- f. Officials
  - i. Minimum. The following table lists the minimum number of officials each team should provide. Names of all officials must be recorded on the "Dual Meet Cover Sheet".

### *Recommended Officials for Dual Meets*

<b>Position</b>	<b>Home Team</b>	<b>Visiting Team</b>
Certified Referee	1	
Certified Starter		1
Certified Stroke & Turn	2	2
Announcer	1	
Clerk of Course, Head	1	
Clerk of Course, Assistant		1
Head Timer	1	
Assistant Head Timer		1
Timers	9	9
Scorer		1
Computer Operator	1	
Verifiers	1	1
Ribbon Writers	1	1

*These positions are described in the section entitled “Guide for Officials”*

- ii. Chief Judge. MCSL does not recommend the use of a Chief Judge at dual “A” meets.
- g. Meet entries—number of entries per event
  - i. Individual events. A team may enter no more than three swimmers in an individual event with one heat and six swimmers in the two-heat freestyle events
  - ii. Relay events. A team may enter no more than two relay teams in each event.
- h. Meet entries—number of events per swimmer.
  - i. A team may enter a swimmer in a maximum of five events. A team cannot enter a swimmer in all four individual stroke events (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly).
 

*Example 1: If a swimmer is entered in the open Medley Relay, the Freestyle Relay and the Individual Medley, that swimmer can swim only two individual stroke events.*

*Example 2: If a swimmer is entered in either the open Medley Relay OR the Freestyle Relay (but not both relays), that swimmer may swim the Individual Medley and three individual stroke events*
  - ii. If a team enters a swimmer in all four individual stroke events, the swimmer cannot swim the butterfly event. The entry in the butterfly event is treated as an empty lane.
  - iii. If a team enters a swimmer in two age groups, the swimmer shall swim in his or her correct age group. Each entry in the older age group is treated as an empty lane.

- i. Meet entries—age of swimmer. A swimmer shall compete for the MCSL season at the age he or she is on June 1. Since the MCSL is an age-group, developmental league, teams should strive to fill events with swimmers of the appropriate age (e.g., a 15-year-old in the 15-18 age group). However, if a team expects to have less than four swimmers of the correct age and gender in an age group available at a meet to swim, the team may swim a younger swimmer in an older age group (“swim up”) subject to a number of restrictions. Please see above, “Rule 9b – Swim up rule”, for the specific requirements to swim a child in an older age group.
- j. Meet entries - exchange:
  - i. Deadline for exchange. Teams must exchange their dual meet entries for all individual events and current team rosters at the home pool or other location acceptable to both teams no later than noon on the day before the meet. No additions, deletions or other changes to the meet entries may be made after this meeting and before the scratch meeting the day of the meet without consent of both team representatives. Each team shall be assumed to have two relay teams per relay event.
  - ii. Method of exchange
    - 1. In person exchange
      - a. The home team provides the visiting team:
        - i. A paper print out by swimmer of its meet entries for all individual events and
        - ii. A current team roster
      - b. The visiting team provides the home team:
        - i. A paper print out by swimmer of its meet entries for all individual events,
        - ii. A current team roster, and
        - iii. A computer disk or equivalent compatible device containing its meet entries for all individual events and the current team roster.
      - c. MCSL recommends that teams review the paper copy of the entries and make any hand changes as necessary. The paper print out, with hand changes, becomes the official entry. Teams can enter relay swimmers on the day of the meet on an MCSL “Official Relay Entry Card”.
    - 2. E-mail exchange
      - a. Teams may exchange e-mail entries and team rosters by e-mail if both team representatives agree.
      - b. If teams choose to use e-mail, the e-mailed meet entries and roster become the official entries for the meet. A team cannot change its entries after the e-mail exchange and before the scratch meeting without the consent of both team representatives.
      - c. By agreeing to e-mail exchange, a team waives its right to protest any issues arising from the e-mail exchange.
- k. Lane assignments. The visiting team chooses odd or even numbered lanes when the meet entries are exchanged. Lane 1 is the competition lane farthest to the right as the swimmers face the pool for a 50 or 100 meter event. Swimmers from each team are limited to their own lanes as assigned.
- l. Heats. Except for the individual freestyle events all individual events will have one heat. The individual freestyle events will have two heats, with the fastest three swimmers from each team swimming in the second heat.
- m. Meet program/heat sheet and lane/timer sheets. The home team shall use the paper print out of meet entries, if there are hand changes, and the computer disk or equivalent compatible device of each team’s meet entries to produce the meet program and lane/timer sheets.

- n. Meet start time and other issues of punctuality. Dual meets shall start at 9:00am on Saturday morning, unless both team representatives agree to a different start time. Teams shall report to their assigned areas at the home pool no later than 8:30am. When directed by the referee, swimmers may take a 20 minute warm-up swim after which they shall return to their team area and remain there until called to the clerk of course.
- o. Reporting for events. Swimmers should report to the clerk of course promptly when their event is called. Progress of the meet should not be delayed for the late arrival of a swimmer.
- p. Scratches and substitutions. Fifteen to twenty minutes before the meet begins (8:40 or 8:45am), the referee will conduct a scratch meeting. The referee, each team coach, each team representative and the clerks of course should attend the scratch meeting. Scratches and substitutions may be made only at this meeting.
- i. Scratches. Each team may scratch a maximum of three swimmers and substitute new swimmers in the original swimmers' events. The original swimmers, once scratched, cannot compete in any events in that meet, including relay events.
- ii. Substitutions
1. Teams may use more than one substitute swimmer to fill a scratched swimmer's events.
  2. Teams must scratch a swimmer for a substitute to swim; teams cannot add a swimmer to a lane that was empty when the meet entries were exchanged.
  3. Substitute swimmers must:
    - a. swim in the seeded place of the scratched swimmer;
    - b. if already in the meet, remain in their original events. The events added at the scratch meeting may not cause the substituted swimmers to exceed their event limits. (See above, Meet entries—number of events per swimmer);
    - c. if not already in the meet, be on the roster exchanged at noon on the day before with meet entries;
    - d. if a "swim up", not displace a swimmer in that age group. (See above, "General—Age of Swimmer for MCSL Competition", swim up rule).
- q. Swimmer entries for relay events. Teams enter swimmers in relay events at the meet by entering each swimmer's last name and first name in the space provided for that leg of the relay on the tan MCSL "Official Relay Entry Card" and presenting the card to the clerk of course. Teams must use yellow cards for relays that include a swim up. Swimmers entered in relays must appear on the team roster as exchanged by noon the day before the meet and cannot be entered to swim in more than five events (see above, Meet entries—number of events per swimmer). Once the relay card has been presented to the clerk of course, the relay cannot be changed. The Relay Entry Card serves as the official relay entry; there is no requirement to enter relay events prior to presenting the Relay Entry Card to the clerk of course.
- r. Placement of take-off judges for relays. Since dual confirmation is required to confirm an illegal take-off, two take-off judges must observe all relay exchanges. There shall be one lane take-off judge in each lane, observing take-offs for the relay team in that lane. That judge should be from the opposing team. There shall be two side take-off judges, one on each side of the pool at the take-off end. Each judge shall observe take-offs in the lanes closest to him/her.
- s. Order of finish. The order of finish for each event shall be the order determined by official times (see above, "General—Official Time".)
- t. Scoring. Individual events are scored: 6-4-3-2-1. The relay events are scored: 8-4-2-0. Points are not awarded for any event unless the event is actually swum. In the event of a tie, the points for the tied place and the next place will be added and divided between the tied swimmers. The next finisher will receive the next place down. *(Example: a tie for first in an individual event. Add the points for first and second place (6 + 4 = 10) and divide by 2 (10 divided by 2 = 5). The two tied swimmers each receive five points and the next finisher receives third place and 3 points).* Errors in scoring that affect win/loss records, if discovered by the time of divisionals, will be corrected, as well as any resulting changes in team rankings within the division.
- u. Awards. **Ribbons in individual events for the first six places with duplicates for ties. For relays, ribbons for the first four places with duplicates for ties.**
- v. Meet results.
- i. Sent to MCSL automation liaison. The home team must e-mail the meet results, including the score, to the automation liaison and/or directly to the MCSL automation web site by 2:00 p.m. the day of the meet.
  - ii. Kept by home team. The home team retains the following until the end of the season:
    1. Each team's meet entries as marked by the clerk(s) of course at the scratch meeting.
    2. Cover sheet signed by representatives of both teams that includes the score and the names of all meet officials.
    3. Relay cards.
    4. Lane/timer sheets.
    5. DQ cards.
    6. Printed copy of the meet results.
- w. Availability of meet results. If requested, teams must make dual meet results available to other teams for review.
- x. Postponed or interrupted meets. A postponed or interrupted meet shall be considered one continuous meet. The roster and original meet entries cannot be changed. The meet shall be rescheduled by mutual agreement of the team representatives before the next regularly scheduled meet (usually before the next Saturday).
- y. Exhibition swimming. Exhibition swimming is permitted for swimmers disqualified for false starts (where the start signal is not given) and for other swimmers if both teams agree. No additional heats shall be added to accommodate exhibition swims. An exhibition swimmer may not place in an event, and the time may not be included in his/her team's results. An exhibition swim does not count as a MCSL dual meet swim to qualify for the division championship meet (divisionals) and cannot be used to seed a swimmer in divisionals.

## 12. DIVISION RELAY MEET (RELAY CARNIVAL)

- a. Schedule and host pool. Division relay meets shall be held within a calendar window determined at the July MCSL meeting. At the April MCSL meeting, the division team representatives choose a date and host pool. Team representatives should also choose a rain date at this time.
- b. Meet arrangements. Approximately one week before the meet, the team representatives shall meet at the host pool to discuss officials, team areas and other meet details.
- c. Rosters. Team rosters must be exchanged no later than noon the day preceding the original date of the meet. If teams exchange rosters earlier, they may add swimmers, if necessary, as long as they notify the host pool no later than noon on the day preceding the original date of the meet. A swimmer must be on the roster by this time to compete.
- d. Events. See “Order of Events: Relay Meet” in this handbook. Any mixed relay event must be composed of two boys and two girls. All medley relays must be swum in the following order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly and freestyle. See also Section 7 Relays, in the USA Swimming Rules for Swimming the Strokes, below.
- e. Officials. No team should furnish more than two certified officials (referee, starter, chief judge and stroke and turn judge). The list of officials needed to staff the meet can be found in the MCSL Meet Management Handbook. Names of all officials must be recorded on the meet cover sheet.
- f. Meet entries—number of entries per event. Each team may enter only one relay team per event.
- g. Meet entries—number of events per swimmer. In the division relay meet, a swimmer may compete in as many events as he/she qualifies for based on his/her age and gender.
- h. Meet entries—age of swimmer. A swimmer shall compete for the MCSL season at the age he or she is on June 1. Since the MCSL is an age-group, developmental league, teams should strive to fill events with swimmers of the appropriate age (e.g., a 15-year old in the 15-18 age group). However, if a team expects to have fewer than four swimmers of the correct age and gender in an age group available at a meet to swim, the team may swim a younger swimmer in an older age group (“swim up”) subject to a number of restrictions. Please see above, “Rule 9b – Swim up rule”, for the specific requirements to swim a child in an older age group. Relays that include a swim up must be entered on a yellow card. Relays with swim ups may place and score points, but cannot go to Relay All Stars.
- i. Meet entries—method of entry. The official meet entry for each relay is the tan “Official Relay Entry Card.” Relays that include a swim up must be entered on a yellow card. Each relay swimmer’s last name and first name must be entered on this card in the space provided for that swimmer’s leg of the relay. The entry becomes final when the card is given to the clerk of course. Once the card has been presented to the clerk, the swimmers in the relay cannot be changed. There is no scratch meeting at a division relay meet.
- j. Lane assignments. In the first event, the teams will be assigned the lane number corresponding to their original rank in the division, i.e., the team ranked number 1 at the start of the season will take lane 1. In subsequent events, lane assignments will rotate in increasing numeric order, i.e., the team in lane 1 in event 1 moves to lane 2 in event 2.

- k. Heats. There is one heat per event.
- l. Meet start time and other issues of punctuality. A division may choose to swim its relay meet in the evening or on Sunday morning. Sample meet schedules are available in the MCSL Meet Management Handbook.
- m. Reporting for events. Swimmers should report to the clerk of course promptly when their event is called. Progress of the meet should not be delayed for the late arrival of a swimmer.
- n. Placement of take-off judges for relays. Since dual confirmation is required to confirm an illegal take-off, two take-off judges must observe all relay exchanges. There shall be two lane take-off judges for each lane, observing take-offs for that lane. One lane take-off judge shall be at the start end and the other, at the opposite end. In addition, there shall be four side take-off judges, two at the start end and two at the opposite end. These judges shall observe take-offs for the three lanes closest to their position.
- o. Order of finish. The order of finish for each event shall be the order determined by official times. (See above, “General–Official Time”.)
- p. Scoring. Points for 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> place in each event are: 14-10-8-6-4-2. For five and four team divisions the points are respectively, 12-8-6-4-2 and 10-6-4-2. Points are not awarded for any event unless the event is actually swum. In the event of a tie, the points for the tied place and the next place will be added and divided between the tied relay teams. The next finisher will receive the next place down. (*Example-in a tie for first, add the points for first and second place (14 + 10 = 24) and divide by 2 (24 divided by 2 = 12). The two tied relay teams each receive twelve points and the next finisher receives third place.*) Errors in scoring that affect won/loss records, if discovered by the time of divisionals, will be corrected as will any resulting changes in team rankings within the division.
- q. Awards. MCSL medals for first place, ribbons for second **through sixth place**. Duplicates awarded for ties.
- r. Meet results. The division automation liaison will forward the meet results to the MCSL automation chair.
- s. Postponed or interrupted meets. A postponed or interrupted meet shall be considered one continuous meet. Swimmers cannot be added to the roster. Relay meets must be made up before the end of the calendar window set by the MCSL each season.
- t. Exhibition swimming. Exhibition swimming is permitted for relays disqualified for false starts (where the start signal is not given) and for other relays if all teams agree. No additional heat shall be added to accommodate exhibition swims. An exhibition relay may not place in an event nor can its time be used to seed a relay in divisionals.
- u. Relay All Stars. Relay teams that place first in each event except the Open Medley Relay (events #8 and #9) and the Graduated Freestyle Relay (events #1 and #2) are invited to Relay All Stars unless the relay team includes a swim up. If the winning relay includes a swim up or is an exhibition swim, the second place team will be invited. Invitations for Open Medley (events #8 and #9) and the Freestyle (events #1 and #2) are extended to the relay teams with the fastest time in those events over the current season, including swims at all five dual meets and the division championship (divisionals) meet.

### 13. DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIP MEET (DIVISIONALS)

- a. Schedule and host pool. The divisional championship meet is held on the Saturday after the last dual meet. The host pool is determined by the division team representatives at the April MCSL meeting.
- b. Meet arrangements. The organizational meeting should be held on the Sunday before the championship meet unless another time is agreeable to all teams in the division. The seeding meeting should be held in conjunction with or later than the organizational meeting, at a time and place agreed by a majority of the teams in the division.
- c. Rosters. To swim in divisionals, a swimmer must have swum in at least one MCSL dual (“A”) meet during the current season. Therefore the team roster for divisionals should include only those swimmers who have swum in at least one dual (“A”) meet during the current season.
- d. Events. The order of events is on the back cover of this handbook.
- e. Officials. No team should furnish more than two certified officials (referee, starter, chief judge and stroke and turn judge). The list of officials needed to staff the meet can be found in the MCSL Meet Management Handbook. Names of all officials must be recorded on the meet cover sheet.
- f. Meet entries—number of entries per event
  - i. Individual events. A team may enter no more than two swimmers in any individual event.
  - ii. Relay events. A team may enter no more than one relay team in any relay event.
- g. Meet entries—number of events per swimmer
  - i. A team may enter a swimmer in a maximum of five events. A team cannot enter a swimmer in all four individual stroke events (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly).

*Example 1: If a swimmer is entered in the Open Medley Relay, the Freestyle Relay and the Individual Medley, that swimmer can only swim two individual stroke events.*

*Example 2: If a swimmer is entered in either the Open Medley Relay OR the Freestyle Relay (but not both relays), that swimmer may swim the Individual Medley and three individual stroke events.*
  - ii. If a team enters a swimmer in all four individual stroke events, the swimmer cannot swim the butterfly event. The entry in the butterfly event is treated as an empty lane.
  - iii. If a team enters a swimmer in two age groups, the swimmer shall swim in his or her correct age group. Each entry in the older age group is treated as an empty lane.
- h. Meet entries—age of swimmer. A swimmer shall compete for the MCSL season at the age he or she is on June 1. Since the MCSL is an age-group, developmental league, teams should strive to fill events with swimmers of the appropriate age (e.g., a 15-year old in the 15-18 age group). However, if a team expects to have fewer than four swimmers of the correct age and gender in an age group available at a meet to swim, the team may swim a younger swimmer in an older age group (“swim up”) subject to a number of restrictions. Please see above, “Rule 9b – Swim up rule” for the specific requirements to swim a child in an older age group.
- i. Meet entries—seeding times. Swimmers and relays must be entered in an event with the best time achieved during the current MCSL season. Times must be achieved in a current season MCSL dual (“A”) meet or the division relay (relay carnival) meet. Times achieved as a “swim up” in an MCSL dual (“A”) meet can be used as long as the stroke and distance of the swim up event is the same as the swimmer’s divisional event. If an eligible swimmer has not swum a particular event in an MCSL meet, that swimmer must be

- entered with a “no time”, Exhibition times, previous season times, and “B” meet times cannot be used as seeding times for divisionals.
- j. Meet entries—exchange. The coach and the team representative from each team should attend the divisional seeding meeting. Each team brings to that meeting:
  - i. A paper print out by swimmer of its meet entries for all individual events;
  - ii. A paper print out of the current team roster;
  - iii. A computer disk or equivalent compatible device that includes all individual entries and the current team roster.
- k. Meet entries—deadline. Once the seeding meeting is completed, no additions, deletions or other changes can be made to the meet entries until the scratch meeting at the meet without the consent of all team representatives.
- l. Lane assignments. Lane assignments shall be based on seeding times.
- m. Heats. There will be two heats of every individual event and one heat of every relay event. In events with two heats, the fastest swimmers shall swim in the second heat.
- n. Meet program/heat sheet and lane/timer sheets. At the conclusion of the seeding meeting, each team should receive a copy of the heat sheet for the meet listing the lane and heat of each of the team’s swimmers. The division should choose a team to run automation for the Divisional meet. If no team is selected, the home team shall make a disk (or equivalent compatible device) of each team’s meet entries suitable for producing heat sheet/program and lane/timer sheets. If there are changes to the entries, then the home team shall print the paper copy with hand changes.
- o. Meet start time and other issues of punctuality. The division championship meet usually begins at 8 a.m. on the Saturday after the last dual meet, unless all team representatives agree to a different start time. Teams shall report to their assigned areas at the host pool, and when directed by the referee, take a short warm-up swim after which they shall return to their team area and remain there until called to the clerk of course. Sample meet schedules are available in the MCSL Meet Management Handbook.
- p. Reporting for events. Swimmers should report to the clerk of course promptly when their event is called. Progress of the meet should not be delayed for the late arrival of a swimmer.
- q. Scratches and substitutions. At least fifteen to twenty minutes before the meet begins, the referee will conduct a scratch meeting. The referee, each team coach, each team representative and the clerks of course should attend the scratch meeting. Scratches and substitutions may be made only at this meeting.
  - i. Scratches. Each team may scratch a maximum of three swimmers and substitute new swimmers in the original swimmer’s events. The original swimmers, once scratched, cannot compete in any events in that meet including the relay events.
  - ii. Substitutions.
    1. Teams may use more than one substitute swimmer to fill a scratched swimmer’s events.
    2. Teams must scratch a swimmer for the substitute to swim; teams cannot add a swimmer to a lane that was empty when the meet entries were exchanged at the seeding meeting.
    3. Substitute swimmers must:
      - a. swim in the seeded place of the scratched swimmer;
      - b. if already in the meet, remain in their original events. The events added at the scratch meeting may not cause the substitute swimmer to exceed their event limits. (See above, Meet entries—number of events per swimmer);

- c. if not already in the meet, have swum in at least one MCSL dual (“A”) meet during the current season;
- d. if a “swim up”, not displace a swimmer in that age group. (See above, “General–Age of Swimmer for MCSL Competition”, swim up rule).
- r. Swimmer entries for relay events. Teams enter swimmers in relay events at the meet by entering each swimmer’s last name and first name in the space provided for that leg of the relay on the MCSL “Official Relay Entry Card” and presenting it to the clerk of course. Teams must use yellow cards for relays that include a swim up. Swimmers entered in the relays must appear on the team roster as exchanged at the divisional seeding meeting, must have swum in at least one MCSL dual (“A”) meet during the current season and cannot be entered or swim in more than five events (see above, Meet entries–number of events per swimmer). Once the relay card has been presented to the clerk of course, the relay cannot be changed.
- s. Placement of take-off judges for relays. Since dual confirmation is required to confirm an illegal take-off, two take-off judges must observe all relay exchanges. There shall be one lane take-off judge in each lane, observing take-offs for the relay team in that lane. There shall also be two side take-off judges, one on each side of the pool at the take-off end. Each judge shall observe take-offs in the lanes closest to him/her.
- t. Order of finish. The order of finish for each event shall be the order determined by official times. (See above, “General–Official Time.”)
- u. Scoring. Points for individual events places 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> are: 16-13-12-11-10-9-7-5-4-3-2-1. For five and four team divisions the points are respectively: 14-11-10-9-8-6-4-3-2-1 and 12-9-8-7-5-3-2-1. Points for relay events are 28-20-16-12-8-4. For five and four team divisions the points for relays are respectively: 24-16-12-8-4 and 20-12-8-4. Points are not awarded for any event unless the event is actually swum. In the event of a tie, the points for the tied place and the next place will be added and divided between the tied swimmers. The next finisher will receive the next place down.  
*Example: a tie for first in an individual event. Add the points for first and second place (16 + 13 =29) and divide by 2 (29 divided by 2 = 14.5). The two tied swimmers each receive 14.5 points and the next finisher receives third place.*
- v. Awards. In individual events, MCSL medals for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>; ribbons for 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. In relay events, MCSL medals for 1<sup>st</sup>; ribbons for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>. Duplicates awarded for ties.
- w. Meet results. The division automation liaison will forward the meet results to the MCSL automation chair.
- x. Postponed or interrupted meets. A postponed or interrupted meet shall be considered one continuous meet. The roster and original meet entry report cannot be changed.
- y. Exhibition swimming. Exhibition swimming is permitted for swimmers disqualified for false starts (where the start signal is not given) and for other swimmers if all teams agree. No additional heats shall be added to accommodate exhibition swims. An exhibition swimmer may not place in an event, and the time may not be included in his/her team’s results.

#### 14. DIVISION CHAMPION CALCULATION

- a. Dual meet points. A team earns six points for a win, three points for a tie and zero points for a loss.
- b. Division relay meet (relay carnival) points. Teams placing 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> earn points as follows: 10-8-6-4-2-0. For a five team division, the points are 8-6-4-2-0. For a four team division, the points are 6-4-2-0. Team ties remain as ties. The points are added and divided between the tied teams.

- c. Division championship meet (divisionals) points. Teams placing 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> earn points as follows: 20-16-12-8-4-0. For a five team division, the points are 16-12-8-4-0. For a four team division, the points are 12-8-4-0. Team ties remain as ties. The points are added and divided between the tied teams.
- d. Determination of final place in division. A team’s final place in the division is the sum of its dual meet, relay meet and division championship meet points.
- e. Awards. Trophies will be awarded to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams in each division.

#### 15. MCSL COACHES’ INVITATIONAL LONG COURSE MEET

- a. The meet shall be conducted under USA Swimming Stroke & Turn rules.
- b. Size of pool. This meet must be held in a 50 meter pool with at least 8 lanes.
- c. Events. Events are swum by stroke: Individual Medley, Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Butterfly. Each stroke is comprised of events swum in age group order (8&u, 9-10, etc). Dual meet events 3, 4, 49 and 50 (the relay events) are not swum. The distance for all events is doubled.
- d. Entries.
  - i. Invitations. Eight swimmers plus two alternates will be invited to swim in each event. Invitations are based on the swimmer’s best time achieved in the corresponding short course meter event in the first three dual meets of the current season.
  - ii. Number of events per swimmer. A swimmer may compete in a maximum of two events.
    - 1. Seeding. Seeding is at the discretion of the MCSL Board. All qualifying times are sorted by rank. Ties are broken to determine who is entered in the meet by using the next best swim.  
*Example: Swimmer A has times of 15.10 and 15.25; swimmer B has times of 15.10 and 15.35. Swimmer A will be ranked higher than swimmer B.*
    - 2. Selection of events. If a swimmer has more than two equally ranked qualifying times, the events which have the lowest ratio of time to MCSL record will be selected and the other events dropped to give the swimmer the maximum of two entries. The times for other swimmers will be re-ranked to reflect the scratching of these events. Before this automatic scratching process, swimmers may elect to scratch from individual events they do not wish to swim by notifying the MCSL Automation Chair. Such swimmer-initiated scratches must be submitted by the deadline posted on the MCSL web site. After this deadline, swimmers may only scratch from the entire meet. Early notification is important to allow the maximum number of swimmers to compete.
    - 3. No swims. If a swimmer fails to swim an event in which he or she is entered, he or she may be ineligible to swim subsequent events at the discretion of the meet referee and the MCSL Board
- e. No swim ups. Each swimmer must compete in his or her own age group.
- f. Heats. There will be one heat of every event. Lanes will be assigned by seeding.
- g. Order of finish. The order of finish for each event shall be determined by electronic timing in accordance with USA Swimming Rules.
- h. Awards. Medals for first through eighth place with duplicates for ties.
- i. Interrupted meet. The MCSL Board shall determine the postponement and rescheduling of the meet.

## 16. MCSL ALL STAR RELAY MEET

- a. Teams are expected to provide volunteers for this meet roughly in proportion to the number of entries they have in the meet. Failure to do so may result in the team being barred from the meet. This will be determined by the Chairman of the Competition Committee and endorsed by the majority of the MCSL Board.
- b. Organization of meet. This meet will be run in two sections: Section I and Section II. Section I will include teams in Division A through the middle MCSL division; Section II will include teams after the middle to the last division. When there is an even number of divisions, the sections will be divided equally. When there is an odd number of divisions, the Board will determine by a flip of a coin which section has the extra division for that year. In subsequent years, the extra division will alternate between sections until the MCSL adds enough teams to move to an even number of divisions.
- c. Size of pool. The meet must be held in a 25 meter pool with at least 8 lanes. The depth at the shallow end shall not be less than 4'0".
- d. Events. The order of events is the same as the order for the division relay meet.
- e. Entries.
  - i. Invitations. Eight teams plus two alternates will be invited for each event at each section of the meet. The team with the fastest time in the event from each division will be invited first and seeded in the available lanes. If there are still positions available after these teams are seeded, the teams with the next fastest times in the section will be invited either to fill a lane or stand as alternates. Only times swim by relay teams with no swim ups in 25 meter pools in MCSL dual, relay or divisional meets in the current season will be used for selecting entries.
  - ii. Ties. With the exception of events that are also swum in dual meets (in which the tie breaker will be the team with the next fastest swim in that season) when there is a tie for first place in a Division Relay Meet event, all teams involved will be invited to the All Star Relay Meet. If this results in more than eight teams being invited from that section there will be two heats run in the All Star Relay Meet in that event. If two heats are run, there will be a minimum of three teams swimming in the first heat with the remaining teams with the fastest time seeded in the second heat.
  - iii. Swimmers. A tan MCSL "Official Relay Entry Card" containing each swimmer's first and last name will be submitted to the clerk of course prior to the event. No substitutions are permitted after the entry cards are turned into the clerk of course.
- f. No swim ups. Each swimmer must compete in his or her own age group.
- g. Heats. There will be one heat of every event. Lanes will be assigned by seeding.
- h. Order of finish. The order of finish for each event shall be determined by electronic timing in accordance with USA Swimming Rules.
- i. Awards. For each section, plaques for first place, medals for second and third, ribbons for fourth through eighth with duplicates for ties.
- j. Interrupted meet. The MCSL Board shall determine the postponement and rescheduling of the meet.

## 17. MCSL INDIVIDUAL ALL STAR MEET

- a. Teams are expected to provide volunteers for this meet roughly in proportion to the number of entries they have in the meet. Failure to do so may result in the team being barred from the meet. This will be determined by the Chairman of the Competition Committee and endorsed by the majority of the MCSL Board.
- b. Size of pool. This meet must be held in a 25 meter pool with at least 8 lanes. The depth at the shallow end shall not be less than 4'0".
- c. Events. The order of events is the same as the order for dual meets without events 3, 4, 49 and 50 (the relay events).
- d. Entries.
  - i. Eligibility. A swimmer must have competed in at least two MCSL dual ("A") meets or one dual ("A") meet and the Divisional Championship Meet during the current season to be eligible to swim in the Individual All Star meet. Requests for a waiver of this requirement must be made in writing to the Rules Committee by the day after the Division Championship (divisional) meet.
  - ii. Invitations. Sixteen swimmers plus three alternates will be invited to swim in each event. Invitations are based on the swimmer's best time achieved in the event in dual meets and the Division Championship (divisional) meet during the current season.
  - iii. Number of events per swimmer. A swimmer may compete in a maximum of two events.
    1. Seeding. Seeding is at the discretion of the MCSL Board. All qualifying times are sorted by rank. Ties are broken to determine who is entered in the meet by using the next best swim.  
*Example: Swimmer A has times of 15.10 and 15.25; swimmer B has times of 15.10 and 15.35. Swimmer A will be ranked higher than swimmer B.*
    2. Selection of events. If a swimmer has more than two equally ranked qualifying times, the events which have the lowest ratio of time to MCSL record will be selected and the other events dropped to give the swimmer the maximum of two entries. The times for the other swimmers will be re-ranked to reflect the scratching of these events. Before this automatic scratching process, swimmers may elect to scratch from individual events they do not wish to swim by notifying the MCSL Automation Chair. Such swimmer-initiated scratches must be submitted by the deadline posted on the MCSL web site. After this deadline, swimmers may only scratch from the entire meet. Early notification is important to allow the maximum number of swimmers to compete.
    3. No swims. If a swimmer fails to swim an event in which he or she is entered, he or she may be ineligible to swim subsequent events at the discretion of the meet referee and the MCSL Board.
- e. No swim ups. Each swimmer must compete in his or her own age group.
- f. Heats. There will be two heats of every event. Lanes will be assigned by seeding, with the fastest swimmers swimming in the second heat.
- g. Order of finish. The order of finish for each event shall be determined by electronic timing in accordance with USA Swimming rules.
- h. Awards. Plaques for first, second and third; medals for fourth, fifth and sixth; ribbons for seventh through sixteenth and duplicates for ties.
- i. Interrupted meet. The MCSL Board shall determine the postponement and rescheduling of the meet.

## 18. DISQUALIFICATIONS (DQ's)

- a. Use of Video equipment for verifying or over-turning of Disqualifications or Order of finish is prohibited.
- b. General. MCSL Rules for Swimming the Strokes in this handbook apply.
- c. Documentation. DQ cards are to follow the template provided by the MCSL. The DQ card must be signed by the disqualifying official(s), the referee and the swimmer's coach or designated team representative. If a team wishes to have DQ's handled by a representative other than the coach, that representative must be identified to the referee at the start of the meet.
- d. Timeliness. The referee shall get the DQ card to the coach for signature before the next event begins. The DQ card then becomes part of the official record of the meet.
- e. Relay take-offs.
  - i. Dual confirmation of illegal take-offs is required; that is, both the side take-off judge and the lane take-off judge must record that a particular swimmer left early for a team to be disqualified. **Both the lane and side take-off judge shall sign the MCSL DQ slip for dual confirmed early take-off violations (see 18.c for additional signatures required).** Swimmers must be in a forward starting position when the relay exchange takes place
  - ii. Running starts. Running starts are not permitted in relay races. The swimmer may take at most one step to bring his or her foot to the edge of the pool at the exchange.
  - iii. Pushing. Swimmers on the deck must not push other swimmers into the water. Aside from the obvious safety issue, if an individual aides another swimmer by pushing them into the water at the start of a race or relay leg, that relay team should be disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct.
  - iv. Jurisdiction. For dual meets and Divisionals, disqualifications for running starts or pushing falls under the jurisdiction of the starter, who also has responsibility for watching swimmers who take more than one step to bring them to the edge of the pool during the start of a relay leg. For Relay Carnivals, the chief judge will also watch for running starts or pushing for starts or exchanges that occur on his or her end of the pool.
- f. Failure to swim an event. With the exception of MCSL Coaches' Invitational Long Course and Individual All Stars), a swimmer who misses an event will be disqualified from that event, but may swim his or her subsequent events. However, a swimmer may not swim an additional event because he or she missed an earlier event. At the MCSL Invitational meets, a swimmer who misses an event will be disqualified from that event and may be disqualified from subsequent events at the discretion of the meet referee and the MCSL Board.
- g. The following is taken from the USA Swimming Rulebook
  1. A disqualification can be made only by the official within whose jurisdiction the infraction has been committed. Except for Relay Take-off Judges when dual confirmation relay take-off judging, as provided in 102.13.6B is used, the Referee, Stroke, Turn or Relay Take-off Judge upon observing an infraction, shall immediately raise one hand overhead. If the official does not do so, there shall be no disqualification unless the Program Operations Vice President has directed that the meet be conducted under FINA procedures.
  2. The Referee or designated official making a disqualification shall 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. 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.
6. Obstructing or otherwise interfering with another swimmer shall disqualify the offender, subject to the discretion of the Referee.
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 shall be barred from the next individual event in which that swimmer is entered on that day or the next meet day, whichever is first.
8. Dipping goggles in the water or splashing water on the swimmer's face or body prior to an event shall not be considered entering the pool unless the Referee finds that such action is interfering with the competition. Should a foul endanger the chance of success of a swimmer(s), the Referee may allow the affected swimmer(s) to reswim 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, as well as the swimmer doing the fouling.
9. 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.
10. Grasping lane dividers to assist forward motion is not permitted.
11. The time and/or place of any swimmer or relay team disqualified either during or following an event shall not be recorded in the results of that event. If awards have been made prior to the decision to disqualify they shall be returned and made to the proper recipient(s) and if points have been scored by those disqualified the event should be rescored.

## 19. PROTESTS AND PENALTIES

- a. Protests regarding turns, strokes and other swimming technicalities. Protests involving judgment decisions by starters, stroke and turn judges and relay take-off judges must be considered by the referee at the meet. Only the team representative may present these types of protests. The team representative shall lodge the protest with the referee within 30 minutes after the scoring has been completed. The referee can overrule any starter, stroke and turn judge or relay take-off judge only on a point of rule interpretation or on a judgment decision pertaining to an action that the referee has personally observed.
- b. Protests regarding other MCSL rules. Protests arising during or after the meet dealing with issues other than swimming technicalities which cannot be satisfactorily settled by parties involved shall be referred within three days to the Chairperson of the Rules Committee.
- c. Other protests.
  - i. Facilities and equipment. Protests related to facilities and equipment that the home team proposes to use should be made at least 12 hours prior to the start of the meet by contacting the Chairperson of the Rules Committee..

## GUIDE FOR OFFICIALS

- ii. Ineligible swimmer. Protests involving an ineligible swimmer on a team roster can be made at any time during the season. An ineligible swimmer is one who does not meet MCSL rules (see especially “General–Eligibility of a Swimmer to Participate on a Team”, above). If an ineligible swimmer is found to have been entered in an event after the event has been swum, the points earned by the ineligible swimmer shall be cancelled, the order of finish corrected and the meet score adjusted accordingly.
- d. Method of protest. All protests must be submitted on the protest form available from the MCSL web site. If a protest does not include all requested information, the Rules Committee at its discretion may deny the protest without further consideration.
- e. Decision. After consideration of the facts provided and other facts that the Committee may gather, the Committee shall take appropriate action.

### 20. RECORDS

- a. Records kept. MCSL shall keep a record for the fastest time swum for each MCSL event, including events swum at the divisional relay meets (Relay Carnival) and the Coaches’ Invitational Long Course meet. Requirements and conditions.
- b. Requirements and conditions
  - i. A record time can be achieved only by a swimmer swimming in his or her own age group. Times achieved by swimmers swimming in an older age group are not eligible.
  - ii. The lane in which the record time is achieved must have at least three timers or be equipped with an automatic timing device operated in accordance with MCSL rules.
  - iii. If one or more watches fail, back-up times shall be used in the order designated by the head timer prior to the event
  - iv. Relay lead off splits. A record can be achieved by a swimmer who swims the first leg of a relay under the following conditions:
    1. 3 additional timers need to be provided.
    2. The time must meet all the requirements and conditions for a record.
    3. Times achieved by a swimmer who swims the first leg of a relay cannot be used to qualify for the Individual All Star Meet or the Coaches’ Invitational Long Course meet.
- c. Submitting records.
  - i. The referee, head timer and the three timers on the lane must verify the record time by signing the lane/timer sheet or entry card.
  - ii. Within one week of the day on which the record time was swum, the host team must submit the signed lane/timer sheet or entry card to the MCSL Records Chairperson.
  - iii. Records achieved at the Coaches’ Invitational Long Course, Invitational All Star or Relay All Star meets shall be submitted to the meet manager.
- d. Recognition. Swimmers achieving an MCSL record will receive a certificate and a patch.

### 1. Timers

- a. Timers should assure that their watches are functioning properly at all times during the meet by:
  1. Checking their watch for accuracy at the starter’s “time check”
  2. Checking their watch occasionally during each event to make certain it is operating.
- b. Timers should look at the starting device and start their watches at the sight of the flash - not by the sound (unless a solely audible device is used). Timers should feel free at the start of a race to move to a position from which they can clearly see the starting device.
- c. Before the end of each race, timers should position themselves at the end of the pool directly overlooking the finish line in order to observe closely the swimmer’s finish.
- d. The watch should be stopped when any part of the swimmer’s body touches the solid wall at the end of the pool (or the touch pad if automatic timing equipment is being used). It is not the responsibility of the timer to judge if the finish touch meets the requirements of the appropriate stroke finish rule.
- e. If during an event a timer discovers that he or she has failed to properly start the watch or that the watch is not functioning properly, the timer should immediately raise his or her hand and notify the head timer or the assistant head timer.
- f. The official time used will be the time of two watches that agree or the middle time if none agree, and will be recorded to the hundredths (e.g. 1:35.79). If times from only two watches are available, the average should be recorded to the hundredth of a second (thousandths should be dropped, i.e. 1:25.435 to 1:25.43).

### 2. Head Timers

- a. The head timer shall start two watches and visually check the timers to ensure that no timer needs a replacement watch.
- b. The head timer shall time each race and, generally, shall time the winner except when needed for another lane. However, if a record is being contested, the head timer will time that lane and not substitute.
- c. The head timer shall see that at least one alternate timer is available during the meet for use where needed.
- d. The head timer shall instruct timers to clear their watches before the start of each race.
- e. The Head Timer shall collect all lane/timer sheets and shall check and approve the official time reported at each lane for each event.
- f. The head timer shall assure that at least three timers are available at any lane in which a record is likely to be contended or broken.
- g. If valid times are available from less than three watches on a lane, the head timer shall have the assistant head timer verify the validity of the available times by initialing the card or lane/timer sheet and presenting the card or lane/timer sheet to the referee for his initials.
- h. The head timer shall prepare the proper forms for record claims when appropriate, secure confirmations from lane timers and submit the form for approval by the referee.

### 3. Head Scorer

- a. The head scorer receives the cards or lane/timer sheets from the head timer and checks that the official time is indicated correctly (the middle of three times, two times which agree or see rule 10.a (“General–Official Time”) if less than three times are available).
- b. The head scorer reads the official times in lane order to the computer operator and then passes the cards or lane/timer sheets to the computer operator.

- c. The head scorer may be asked as a courtesy to check pool and team records, but it is not necessary to check for All Star nominating times or MCSL records since they will be flagged by the computer program.

#### 4. Computer Operator

- a. The computer operator must be thoroughly familiar with the MCSL Automation Training Handbook. Detailed guidelines for running the meet will be found there.
- b. The computer operator attends the scratch meeting to receive any changes in the meet which have occurred as a result of the scratch meeting. Such changes will be entered into the computer before the start of the meet.
- c. The computer operator enters times as read by the head scorer in each event. At the conclusion of the event, he or she prints out the results to be checked by the scorer.
- d. At the conclusion of the meet the home team is responsible for printing two copies of the results and placing the result on disk (or other compatible device) to be turned into the Division Automation Liaison or communicating the results to the Division Automation Liaison electronically.

#### 5. Scorer

- a. The scorer is provided by the visiting team to review results printed out by the computer.
- b. At the conclusion of each event, the scorer compares the cards or lane/timer sheets to the printout from the computer. When errors are found, the printout is returned to the computer operator for correction.
- c. When the results have been certified correct, the printout and ribbon labels (if produced by computer) are passed to the ribbon writers.

#### 6. Ribbon Writers

- a. Each team is responsible for providing a ribbon writer at the scoring table.
- b. If labels are produced by computer, the ribbon writer's job is to attach the correct label to the appropriate finish ribbon and then place the ribbon in the appropriate team ribbon box.
- c. If computer generated labels are not produced at the meet, the ribbon writer must transcribe the information from the results printout to the appropriate finish ribbon.
- d. If it is known in advance that computer generated labels will not be available, the home team should prepare ribbons before the start of the meet by writing the meet date, event number, distance and stroke on ribbons for each event.

#### 7. Take-Off Judges

NOTE: Relay starts for all swimmers after the first are governed by different rules from those at the initial start. Subsequent swimmers can lean, be off balance and can be in motion in anticipation of the incoming swimmer's finish. The only requirement is that some portion of the outgoing swimmer's foot is still in contact with the take-off surface when the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool.

- a. There shall be one judge and at each take-off point on each lane. In dual meets, the judges shall be from the opposing team for each lane. In addition, there shall be one judge alongside both outside lanes and each of these judges shall observe take-offs for the lanes nearest him or her (one judge on each side for dual meets; one or more, with authority for lanes divided, in divisional championship and relay meets).
- b. Lane take-off judges shall station themselves (after the first swimmer) alongside the starting swimmer so that they can clearly see both the touch of the incoming swimmer and the feet of the departing swimmer as the latter leaves the deck or wall. The judge shall determine whether the feet of the departing swimmer remain in contact, or for in-water take-offs whether some part of the body remains in contact with the wall or deck until the

incoming swimmer touches the wall. The take-off judge will not be responsible for determining if the swimmer pushed off from the wall or the bottom. Side take-off judges will stand at the side of the pool, or will stand alongside the outside lane and bend forward as necessary to view the take-offs.

- c. Lane and side take-off judges shall independently record infractions in writing without the use of hand signal during the race. The judge shall use forms provided to record whether each relay exchange observed was legal or illegal. If a team has committed an illegal take-off, the judge shall so inform the referee at the end of the event. Judges must not confer with each other or with timers during the event regarding their calls.
- d. The take-off judge must not, in any way, signal or advise the swimmer when to depart, nor affect the swimmer's take-off in any fashion.

#### 8. Stroke and Turn Judges

- a. The duties of the stroke and turn judges shall be to determine whether the swimmers perform their strokes, turns and finishes in accordance with the prescribed rules (those in the current USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, except where modified by MCSL rules).
- b. Each stroke and turn judge must be thoroughly familiar with all of the applicable rules.
- c. A disqualification for illegal techniques should be called whenever a stroke and turn judge observes a violation of the rules, even though it may have no effect on the outcome of the race. Conversely, a disqualification should not be called if the stroke and turn judge has reasonable doubt that he or she actually has seen the presumed fault. If a disqualification is observed, the stroke and turn judge shall indicate this by raising his or her hand immediately without waiting for the race to finish.
- d. Disqualifications shall be reported to the referee at the end of each event.
- e. The stroke and turn judge should not review or discuss a potential disqualification prior to his or her decision with anyone except the referee.

#### 9. Chief Judge

USA Swimming defines a chief judge as follows: *"An overall 'Chief Judge' may assign and supervise the activities of all stroke, turn, place and take-off judges and may report their decisions. If desired, any judging category may have a designated 'Chief'. Any 'Chief' may act as liaison for the judges and may serve simultaneously in one of the judging positions and shall assign those judges within the 'Chief's' category."*

*Any person appointed to be chief judge shall be MCSL certified as a referee, be experienced (at least one year's experience as a stroke and turn judge) and be willing to supervise the activities of others..*

For MCSL, a chief judge will be responsible for the following:

- a. Work with the referee to determine stroke and turn judge placement, jurisdiction and rotation. The Referee may delegate authority to the Chief Judge to conduct the Stroke & Turn Judge briefing and make deck assignments.
- b. Other duties for the chief judge as the referee sees fit.
- c. During the meet the chief judge will be positioned at the opposite end of the pool from the Referee and shall handle any stroke and turn infractions that are called by the stroke and turn judges at the chief judge's end of the pool. Handling an infraction means that the chief judge will ask the stroke and turn judge what they saw, why it is an infraction, and where they were positioned. Once the chief judge has approved the disqualification, he or she will take it to the referee for final approval and sign off.
- d. The chief judge may fill in for a stroke and turn judge in an emergency.
- e. The chief judge works under direct supervision of the referee. The chief judge will not make stroke and turn calls, or any other call or judgment

independent of the referee, except as noted in the next item below. If the chief judge observes an infraction, the chief judge should talk to the referee.

- f. During Relay Carnivals, the chief judge shall observe relay exchanges to ensure that swimmers who enter the water on his/her side of the deck take no more than one step to bring them to the edge of the pool and also ensure that no individual aids another swimmer by pushing that swimmer into the water at the start of a race or relay leg. The chief judge shall raise his/her hand if he/she observes a violation of these rules. This applies to relay exchanges for swimmers entering the water from the deck at the end of the pool where the Chief Judge is positioned.

*MCSL recommends the use of a Chief Judge at all Divisional and All Star meets. MCSL does not recommend the use of a Chief Judge at dual "A" meets. Any individual serving in the capacity of Chief Judge must be certified as a MCSL Referee with at least one-year of experience in the Stroke & Turn position.*

## 10. Administrative Referee/Official

*MCSL does not use an Administrative Referee or an Administrative Official.*

## 11. Starter

*Rules for the forward start, the in-water start, the back start and false starts are given in the section Swimming Rules.*

- a. An electronic starting horn with an electronic strobe signal is the preferred starting device.
- b. The Starter shall stand within approximately five meters of the starting end of the pool. The starting unit shall be in the general vicinity of the start end backstroke flags. The visual starting signal shall be clearly visible to all of the swimmers and timers. The starting signal shall be audible to all starting positions.
- c. Upon signal from the Referee, the Starter assumes full control of the swimmers until a fair start has been achieved.
- d. Optional instructions include:
  - i. Event, stroke and distance
  - ii. For backstroke starts, the command, "Place your feet"
  - iii. "Stand" command to release swimmers if field is unsettled
- e. At the commencement of each heat, the Referee shall signal to the swimmers by a short series of whistles (four or five) to remove all clothing except for swimwear, followed by a long whistle indicating that they should take their positions near the edge of the pool and remain there. In backstroke and medley relay events, at the Referee's first long whistle the swimmers shall promptly enter the water and at the second long whistle shall return without undue delay to the starting end.
- f. When the swimmers and officials are ready, the Referee shall signal with an outstretched arm to the Starter that the swimmers are under the Starter's control.
- g. On the Starter's command "take your mark", the swimmers shall immediately assume their starting position with at least one foot at the edge of the pool. When all swimmers are stationary, the Starter shall give the starting signal.

Other responsibilities of the starter:

- i. During relay exchanges, the Starter is responsible for ensuring that swimmers entering the water from the deck take no more than one step to bring them to the edge of the pool. Running starts are not permitted. The Starter shall also ensure that no individual aids another swimmer by pushing them into the water at the start of a race or relay leg. This applies to all starts and relay exchanges for swimmers entering the water from the deck during dual meets and Divisionals. During Relay Carnivals, the Starter shall observe starts and relay exchanges for swimmers entering the water from the deck that take place on his/her side of the pool (the

Starter does not need to observe in-water relay exchanges). The Starter shall raise his/her hand if he/she witnesses a violation of these rules.

- ii. The Referee may ask the Starter to record the order of finish.

## 12. Referee

- a. The referee is the final arbiter of all decisions and questions during the conduct of the meet. The rulings of the referee during the meet shall be final, subject only to the protest procedures described elsewhere in this handbook.
- b. The referee shall have full authority over all officials and shall assign and instruct them; shall enforce all applicable rules and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the final settlement of which is not otherwise assigned by said rules; can override any meet official on a point of rule interpretation or on a judgment decision pertaining to an action which the referee has personally observed; shall also disqualify a swimmer for any violations he or she personally observes.
- c. The referee must be thoroughly familiar with all applicable USA Swimming rules, the MCSL rules, all meet procedures, the duties of all officials and the requirements for conduct of the meet.
- d. Before the outset of the meet, the referee shall determine that the prescribed number and kinds of officials are available, are familiar with the requirements of their positions and are appropriately placed or located for performing their functions.
- e. The referee will conduct a scratch meeting pursuant these rules for dual meets and for Divisionals.
- f. Before the meet begins, the referee shall have all timers perform a check of their watches with the aid of the starter.
- g. The referee shall determine that the requisite take-off judges and stroke and turn judges have been assigned, equipped as necessary, briefed on their duties and are ready for the start. The referee shall request silence for the start and signal the starter to take charge.
- h. The referee shall observe starts, strokes, turns, finishes, swimming techniques and other factors relative to the conduct of each event and may disqualify any competitor for any violation of the rules he or she observes. A starting violation must be confirmed by both the starter and the referee.
- i. The referee shall give decisions, whenever necessary, on any question of compliance with the applicable prescribed rules, any question of unsportsmanlike conduct, failure to meet the required competitive conditions, interference by persons or natural causes, or other problems raised in the conduct of the meet. Flagrant violations of rules pertaining to unsportsmanlike conduct shall be reported by the referee to the Chairperson of the MCSL Rules Committee for appropriate action.
- j. The referee shall review all disqualifications by stroke and turn judges or take-off judges and if he or she concurs, sign the DQ slips and see that they are officially recorded in the meet results. The referee must have the DQ slip signed by the designated person from the affected team as an acknowledgement of notification (not necessarily agreement, however) before the next event begins. In the event the team designee declines to sign the slip, the referee may make such a notation.
- k. The referee shall sign the lane/timer sheet certifying an MCSL record has been achieved.
- l. The referee shall record a sweep of the finish for each event. The referee's sweep shall not be used by the referee to change the order of finish when valid watch times are available as described in rule 10. The referee may delegate responsibility for conducting sweeps to the starter, if the starter is comfortable doing so.

### 13. Clerk of Course

- a. The clerk of course shall be provided with an area clearly marked “Clerk of Course” to which all contestants should report as soon as their event is called.
- b. In dual meets, the clerk of course shall be provided with a dual meet entry report and with time sheets or cards arranged by events, one for each lane. The timer sheets or cards will be given to the timers at the beginning of the meet.
- c. All scratches and substitutions pursuant to these rules shall be entered on the entry list during the scratch meeting by the clerk of course. Corresponding changes on the lane/timer sheets or time cards may be made after the meet starts, but must be completed before the swimmers are released by the clerk of course.
- d. The clerk of course should arrange with the announcer to call the events so that an adequate time interval is provided for check-in before each event is swum. In most cases, a two event interval should be adequate.
- e. When competitors for an event report, the clerk of course should inform them of their assigned lanes and help them get to the required places, as necessary. It is particularly important to ensure that swimmers in the 25 meter events, in which the timers are at the opposite end of the pool, are in their proper areas - it is helpful to have assistant(s) to aid with these events.
- f. The dual meet entry report, as corrected by the clerk of course during the scratch meeting shall be retained by the home team until the end of the current MCSL season.

### 14. Team Representative

- a. The team representative and coach should be familiar with all MCSL rules.
- b. The team representative will ensure that his or her team is represented at all MCSL Board meetings.
- c. The MCSL recommends that team representatives should not officiate on the deck at MCSL meets. In those instances where circumstances require the team representative to function as a deck official, or where the team representative cannot be present at a meet, the team representative is responsible for designating a substitute and for informing the referee and representative from the opposing team(s) of this substitution. From that point, all references in this handbook to the duties of team representative will fall on the designated acting representative. Furthermore, in those instances where the “permanent” representative is present but acting in another capacity, the “permanent” representative will not engage in any activities that are appropriate for a team representative but inappropriate for an official (e.g. consultation with coaches).
- d. The team representative is responsible for maintaining sportsmanlike behavior during the conduct of the meet.
- e. The team representative must ensure that all swimmers on the team roster are eligible to compete in MCSL meets and have the current roster available at all meets.
- f. The team representative must be familiar with the material covered in the MCSL Meet Management Handbook (“Green Book”).
- g. It is important that the team representative double check All Star qualifying nominations, particularly in the results of the dual meet which precedes the Coaches’ Invitational Long Course meet.
- h. The team representative is responsible for the ethics and behavior of parents pertaining to MCSL participation.

## CHECKLIST FOR MEET MANAGERS

*Please refer to the MCSL Meet Management Handbook (“Green Book”) as it contains valuable information about running MCSL meets.*

## Rules for Starts and for Swimming the Strokes

*These are the MCSL rules, as presented in the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations with modifications for MCSL for Starts and Backstroke.*

### 1. MCSL Starting Rules

Note: Towels draped over the pool edge are permitted at the start. Towels should be removed from the pool edge before the swimmer returns to the starting end; however, failure to remove a towel is not a valid reason for the swimmer’s disqualification.

- a. **The Forward Start** - The Referee issues a short series of whistle chirps after the last swimmer has touched (also to get ready for the first event) to alert the next heat to get ready. When the Referee is ready to continue, the Referee blows a single long whistle blast. This signals the swimmers to step up to the edge of the pool (if they haven’t already done so) or into the water with one hand in contact with the deck. When the Referee is ready, he/she signals the Starter by extending an arm towards the starter. The Starter upon receiving this clearance from the Referee determines that the swimmers are ready, and then directs the swimmers to “Take Your Mark.” Upon hearing “take your mark”, swimmers must immediately respond by assuming a starting position with at least one foot to the front of the deck. Sufficient time should follow “Take Your Mark” to enable swimmers to assume starting positions, but no swimmer shall be in motion immediately before the starting signal is given.
- b. **The In-water Forward Start** - Swimmers shall start in the water with at least one hand on the wall or on the deck. To initiate the start, the swimmer shall push off the wall, but shall not push off the pool bottom. At least one of the swimmers’ feet shall be in contact with the wall after the “Take Your Mark” command. A backstroke start may not be used. Towels may not be used for in-water starts. Swimmers may start in the water but the swimmer or coach should notify the Referee of their intentions before the event.
- c. **The Back Start** - The Referee issues a short series of whistle chirps after the last swimmer has touched (also to get ready for the first event) to alert the next heat to get ready. When the Referee is ready to continue, the Referee blows a single long whistle blast. This signals the swimmers to step into the pool.

One long whistle blast is then issued to signal the swimmers to get into position. The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands placed on the edge, on the gutter or on one assistant’s legs no higher than mid-calf. The heels of the person providing such assistance shall not extend beyond the edge of the pool. The swimmer’s feet may be placed in any position on the vertical surface of the pool. Prior to the command “Take Your Mark” and until the feet leave the wall at the starting signal, the swimmer’s heels shall be in contact with the surface of the water. Standing on, or curling toes over, the edge of the pool, the gutter or a skimmer is not permitted at any time.

A false start may be charged to any swimmer who fails to maintain his/her feet and/or hands in a legal position after appropriate warning.

#### False Starts:

- a. 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 starting signal sounds and there is a recall, no swimmer shall be charged with a false start.

- b. When a swimmer does not respond promptly to the command “Take Your Mark” or false starts before the starting signal is given, the Starter shall immediately release all swimmers with command “Stand” on which the swimmers may stand up. Any swimmer who enters the water or backstroker who leaves the starting area shall be charged with a false start, except that a swimmer who would otherwise be charged with the false start may be relieved of the charge if the false start was caused by the swimmer’s reaction to the “Stand” command.
- c. In backstroke or medley relay events a false start may be charged to any swimmer who fails to maintain his/her feet and/or hands in a legal position after the first warning.
- d. A swimmer can be charged with a false start by the Starter only if the Referee has observed the violation and confirms that the violation occurred.
- e. A swimmer shall not be disqualified for an illegal starting position at the start if the race is permitted to proceed without recall. Enforcement of the correct starting position is the responsibility of the Starter, who, with the concurrence of the Referee, may impose the appropriate penalty for violation before the starting signal is given.
- f. If a swimmer is disqualified for a false start and the starting signal is not given, the swimmer shall be permitted to swim the event as an exhibition swim.

## 2. Breaststroke

- a. **Start** – The forward start shall be used.
- b. **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 except at the turn after the touch of the wall where it is permissible to turn in any manner as long as the body is on the breast when leaving the wall. 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 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 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.
- c. **Kick** – After the start and each turn, at any time prior to the first breaststroke kick a single butterfly kick is permitted. 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. Scissors, alternating movements or downward butterfly kicks are not permitted except as provided herein. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward butterfly kick.
- d. **Turns and Finish** – At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. At the last stroke before the turn and at the finish an arm stroke not followed by a leg kick is permitted. 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.

## 3. Butterfly

- a. **Start** – The forward start shall be used.
- b. **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. It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged 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. The swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish. From the beginning of the first arm pull, the body shall be kept on the breast except at the turn after the touch of the wall where it is permissible to turn in any manner as long as the body is on the breast when leaving the wall. Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water and pulled back simultaneously under the water throughout the race.
- c. **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.
- d. **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.
- e. **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.

## 4. Backstroke

- a. **The back start** shall be used.
- b. **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 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.
- c. **Turns** – Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. After the swimmer’s head has passed the backstroke flag, prior to the turn, the swimmer’s upper shoulder may (but is not required to) rotate past vertical toward the breast before the touch is completed provided such rotation is accomplished by an initiation of the turning action or continuation into the wall. The initiation of the turning action shall be accomplished by a single-arm or simultaneous double-arm pull, or in the absence of such pulls, by a downward, underwater movement of the head. After the initiation of the turning action, no additional arm pulls may be started; however kicking and gliding actions are permitted. The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall.
- d. **Finish** – Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back.

## 5. Freestyle

- a. **Start** – The forward start shall be used.
- b. **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 yards) after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface.
- c. **Turns** – Upon completion of each length the swimmer must touch the wall.
- d. **Finish** – The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his person touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance.

## 6. Individual Medley

The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: in the first one-fourth, butterfly; the second one-fourth, backstroke; the third one-fourth, breaststroke; and the last one-fourth, freestyle.

- a. **Start** – The forward start shall be used.
- b. **Stroke** – The stroke for each one-fourth of the designated distance shall follow the prescribed rules for that stroke.
- c. **Turns**
  - i. Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke. (This does not apply to MCSL, since there are no intermediate turns in Individual Medley events).
  - ii. 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 3.e above. 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 2.d above. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner.
- d. **Finish** – The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his/her person touches the wall after the prescribed distance.

## 7. Relays

- a. **Freestyle Relay** – Four swimmers on each team swim the prescribed distance using any desired stroke(s). Freestyle finish rules apply.
- b. **Medley Relay** – Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance in the following order: first, backstroke; second, breaststroke; third, butterfly; and 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.
- c. **Rules pertaining to relay races:**
  1. No swimmer shall swim more than one leg in any relay event.
  2. In relay races a swimmer other than the first swimmer shall not start until his/her teammate has concluded his/her leg.
  3. 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. Exception: When an in-the-water start is required or such start is approved by the Referee.
  4. Each relay team member shall leave the water promptly upon finishing his/her leg, except the last member.
  5. In relay exchanges, the team of a swimmer whose feet have lost touch with the deck or whose body has lost contact with the wall (for in-water relay exchanges) before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified.
  6. A swimmer may take not more than one step during the forward start of his/her relay leg to bring him/her to the edge of the pool.
  7. The 175 meter graduated freestyle relay shall be swum in the following order: 2 lengths 9-10 year olds, 2 lengths 11-12 year olds, 2 lengths 13-14 year olds, and 1 length 8 and under.
  8. The 250 meter crescendo freestyle relay shall be swum in the following order: 1 length 8 and under, 2 lengths 11-12 year olds, 4 lengths 15-18 year olds, 2 lengths 13-14 year olds, and 1 length 9-10 year olds. Except at the All Star Relay meet, the 250 meter crescendo freestyle relay shall start in the shallow end with an in-water forward start.
  9. All 100 meter medley events shall start in the shallow end. The mixed 8 and under freestyle relay shall start in the deep end. There must be two in-water starts for each 100 meter relay. All swimmers starting their leg of a relay in the shallow end must use an in-water start. This rule does not apply to the All Star Relay meet.
  10. For pools with no shallow end (4 feet or deeper at both ends), a “shallow” end must be designated.