



# Strokes and Turns Rules

Thank you to the National Officials Committee, Swim Alberta Officials and the Ontario Swimming Officials Association for the development of this presentation.

## RULES – Common to all strokes

- A swimmer who leaves the water before completing the distance will be disqualified (DNF)
- A swimmer may stop and stand on the bottom of the pool only in freestyle, however if the swimmer walks or pushes off from the bottom, they will be disqualified (DQ)
- A swimmer may hang on to the lane rope only in freestyle, however if the swimmer pulls on the lane markers, they will be disqualified (DQ)
- A swimmer may surface in the wrong lane without penalty, however, if the swimmer interferes with another swimmer they will be disqualified (DQ). A swimmer must complete the race in the correct lane.
- For freestyle, backstroke and butterfly starts - the head must have broken the surface by the 15m mark after the start or turn.

## RULES – Starts rules general

- Freestyle, Butterfly and Breaststroke
  - From the Blocks.
  - If the pool is not deep enough - in the water at the start end with one hand in contact with the side of the pool.
  - PARA and Master swimmers from on the blocks, beside the blocks, or in the water with one hand in contact with the end of the pool.
- Backstroke
  - The swimmer is in the water facing the start end.
  - PARA swimmers must have their toes below the water surface at the start.

## RULES – Breaststroke

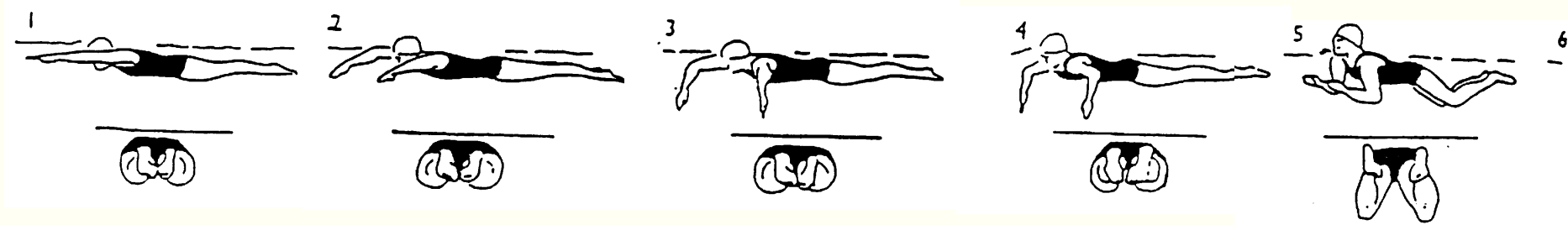


## RULES – Breaststroke Starts and Turns

- After the start & each turn the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs during which the swimmer may be submerged.  
A single butterfly kick is permitted during the first arm stroke, followed by a breaststroke kick.
- After the start & each turn the head must break the surface of the water by the time the arms have reached the widest part of the second arm pull.
- On the turn, the touch shall be a simultaneous two hand touch.
- On the turn, the head may be submerged
- PARA swimmers are NOT allowed to do a dolphin kick anywhere in the stroke.

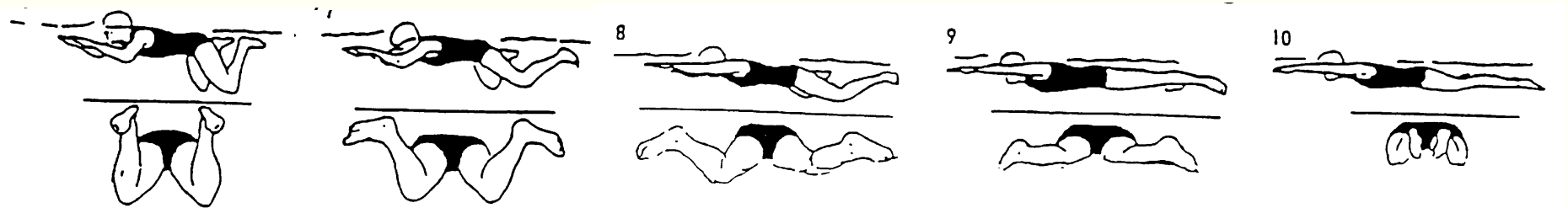
## RULES – Breaststroke Stroke

- Each stroke cycle must contain one pull and one kick in that order.
- During each cycle some part of the swimmer's head must break the surface of the water.
- The elbows shall be under the water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish
- During each cycle some part of the head shall break the surface of the water



## RULES – Breaststroke Stroke

- The feet must be turned outward in the propulsive part of the kick
- All movements of the arms are simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane.

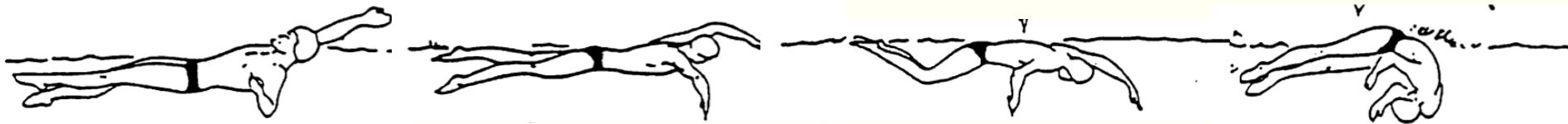


## RULES – Backstroke



## RULES – Backstroke Start and Turn

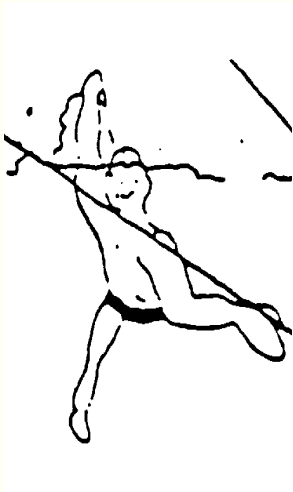
- Any part of the body must have broken the surface by the 15m mark after the start or turn.
- At the turn, the swimmer may touch on the back and **MUST** leave on the back.....**OR**.... the swimmer may roll onto the breast, use a **CONTINUOUS** single or double arm pull to initiate the turn
- There is no infraction for kicking or lifting of the head during the continuous turn.
- When executing the turn, there must be a touch of the wall with some part of the body. The swimmer must leave on their back.
- On the back is defined as less than 90 degrees to the horizontal plane.



## RULES – Backstroke Stroke and Finish

- NO movement beyond 90 degree vertical
- At the finish of the race the swimmer **MUST** touch the wall while on the back.
- The body may be submerged at the touch.

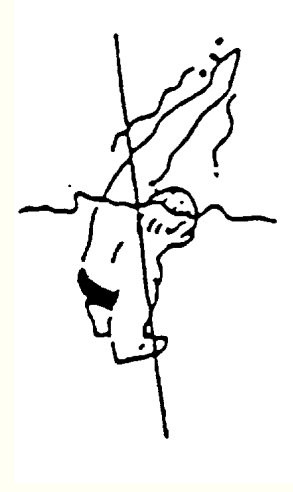
*Legal*



*Illegal*



*Legal*



## RULES – Butterfly

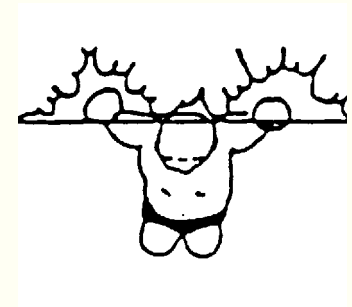
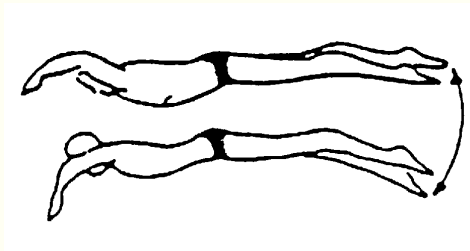
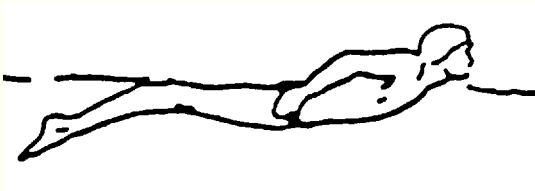


## RULES – Butterfly Start and Turn

- The swimmer is allowed to take no more than one arm pull while totally submerged. This must bring the swimmer to the surface.
- There is no limit to the number of leg kicks allowed off the start and at each turn.
- On the turn and finish, must make a two hand, simultaneous touch.
- On the turn and finish, arms must be recovered over the water on the touch.
- The head must have broken the surface by the 15m mark after the start or turn.

## RULES – Butterfly Stroke

- Both arms must be brought forward together over the water and brought backward simultaneously throughout the race.
- All up and down movements of the legs must be simultaneous.
- The position of the legs or feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other. Flutter kick is not allowed.
- The Dolphin kick is the only legal kick, however PARA and MASTERS swimmers may use the breaststroke kick.
- PARA Swimmers MUST recover their arms OVER the water.
- PARA Swimmers shoulders MUST be in line with normal water.



## RULES – Freestyle



## RULES – Freestyle Start and Turn

- Some part of the head must have broken the surface by the 15m mark after the start or turn.
- The swimmer must touch the end wall with some part of the body during the turn.



## RULES – Freestyle Stroke

- the swimmer may swim any style or combination – the stroke is judged as a freestyle stroke.
- Some part of the swimmer must break the surface throughout the race.