

SECTION 6

AGE GROUP COMPETITION

A. Meet Formats & Qualifying

1. Far Western Championships
 - a. Meets to be Preliminaries and Finals and may not include Time Trials.
 - b. Meets may combine the 15-16 and 17-18 age groups.
 - c. Meets shall be awarded to the host team by the LSC.
2. Junior Olympic Championships
 - a. Meets to be Preliminaries and Finals and may not include Time Trials.
 - b. Meets events to be swum in single-age categories and have single-age time standards.
 - c. Competition Age categories shall be 10 & Under, 11, 12, 13, and 14.
 - d. Meets may include mixed gender relays.
 - e. Meets shall be awarded to the host team by the Meet Award Committee.
3. 10 & Under Championships
 - a. Athletes shall be 10 years of age or under on the first day of competition.
 - b. Competition Age categories shall be 6 & Under, 7, 8, 9, and 10.
 - c. Meets may include mixed gender relays.
 - d. Meets shall be awarded to the host team by the Meet Award Committee.
4. Zone-Awarded Meets
 - a. Zones shall determine the category and format used in zone-awarded meets.
5. Athletes shall be qualified for a specific meet in a given stroke and distance when they have equaled or bettered the time standard for that event.
6. Only times in the USA Swimming SWIMS database shall be acceptable to qualify for Junior Olympics and Far Westerns level competition and LSC Championship meets. In all other Age Group competition, coach-verified entry times may also be accepted.
7. Athletes who compete in a meet event at or better than the minimum standard shall thereafter be considered to be qualified in that particular event in all courses and may not again compete in the same event in a lower standard meet, even if they have not actually performed at or better than the time standard.
8. Qualifying By Stroke and Distance
 - a. An athlete who achieves any Pacific Swimming age-group qualifying standard in one course (SCY, SCM, or LCM) shall be considered qualified at that same standard in the equivalent stroke and distance in all courses.
 - b. Athletes maintain their time standard level for the duration of a meet even if they qualify for the next level during the meet. This rule also applies to relay events.

- c. Any athlete, upon changing age groups, who has already met any standard in an event offered in the new age group shall be considered qualified at that level for that event in the new age group, as long as the time has been achieved in the qualifying period (if any) for entry into the meet.
- d. Athletes, who enter an event for which they are not qualified, or who have met the next higher time standard, shall scratch the event.

B. Eligibility

1. Individual Eligibility

- a. Registered athletes, up to and including age 18, are eligible to compete in the Age Group program in those events scheduled for their age group and shall swim in events offered for that age or age group for an entire meet. Age on the first day of the meet governs for the entire meet.
- b. Athletes are eligible to compete only in the individual events for which they qualify in any meet unless provisions in the meet announcement allow for bonus events.
- c. In multi-classed meets, the zone may further restrict an event to a specific time standard.
- d. Invitational meets are open only to athletes from invited clubs. Invited clubs shall be named in the sanction.
- e. Athletes registered in other LSCs may swim in Pacific meets for which they qualify with the exception of Junior Olympics and 10 & Under Championships.
- f. To be eligible for a Pacific Swimming All-Star or Challenge meet team, an athlete shall be a lawful resident of the United States and a member of Pacific Swimming.

2. Event Limitations

- a. In Preliminaries and Finals meets, an athlete may compete in not more than three (3) individual events per day.
- b. In Timed Finals meets, an athlete may compete in not more than five (5) individual events per day.
- c. An athlete may enter as many events as they wish, but shall not compete in more than the maximum events allowed by the meet format, and are not guaranteed a refund of excess entry fees.

C. Conduct of Meets

- 1. Championship meets may offer all events that are officially recognized by USA Swimming in each age group. One or both distance events (1000/1650 Y Free in SCY and 800/1500 M Free in LCM) may be offered.
- 2. Age Group meet formats will be outlined in the Minimum Age Group Meet Criteria documents established by the Age Group Committee.
- 3. Individual Scratch Rule – Athletes shall inform themselves of the meet starting time and shall report to the proper meet authorities promptly upon call.
 - a. Pre-Seeded Meets
 - (1) Athletes shall report promptly to the starting blocks when their event/heat is called.
 - (2) Any athlete not reporting for or competing in an individual timed final event shall not be penalized.
 - (3) Any athletes not reporting for or competing in a preliminary heat when finals are scheduled shall not be penalized.

- b. In Zone-awarded meets that are Deck-Seeded
 - (1) No event shall be closed more than 30 minutes before the scheduled start of the session. Close of check-in for remaining events shall be no more than 60 minutes before the estimated time of the start of the first heat of the event. Athletes who fail to check-in shall not be seeded in the event.
 - (2) Any athletes not reporting for or competing in an individual timed final event that they have checked in for shall not be penalized.
- c. In LSC-awarded meets that are Deck Seeded
 - (1) No event shall be closed more than thirty (30) minutes before the scheduled start of the session. Close of check-in for remaining events shall be no more than sixty (60) minutes before the estimated time of the start of the first heat of the event. Any change to the closing time of check-in shall be described in the meet announcement. Athletes who fail to timely check-in shall not be seeded in the event.
- d. Scratching from Consolation Finals and Finals
 - (1) Athletes may scratch or declare their intent to scratch a final event, or multiple final events at the beginning of competition for that day.
 - (2) Any athlete qualifying for any level of finals in an individual event who does not wish to compete shall scratch within thirty (30) minutes after the announcement of qualifiers. During this period, qualifiers may also notify the referee that they may not intend to compete in consolation finals or finals. In this case, they shall declare their final intention within thirty (30) minutes after the announcement of qualifiers following their last individual preliminary event.
 - (3) In the event of a withdrawal or barring of an athlete from competition, the referee shall fill the consolation final or final when possible, with the next qualified athlete(s). First and second alternates shall be announced along with the final qualifiers. These alternates shall not be penalized if they are unavailable to compete in the finals.
 - (4) Where consolation finals have not yet been swum and barring or withdrawal is known to the referee, the referee may reseed the consolation final and the final, if necessary, to insert the alternate(s) in the appropriate lane(s), filling all lanes in the final.
 - (5) If a consolation final has already been contested, the Championship final shall be swum without reseeding for the empty lane(s).
- e. Penalty for No-Show at Finals
 - (1) Any athlete qualifying for a consolation final or final race in an individual event who fails to report to the blocks in said consolation final or final race prior to calling the alternate shall be barred from the remainder of any final events for that day. Should the athlete have no additional final events for that day, they shall be barred from their next preliminary event.
 - (2) If the No-Show occurs on the last day that the athlete is entered in an individual final event in the meet, and no other individual event penalty is applicable, the athlete shall be fined \$100.00. The fine will be increased to \$150.00 if after thirty (30) days of receiving the letter of notification the party has not made the payment.

- f. Exceptions – No penalty shall apply for failure to withdraw or compete in an individual event if:
 - (1) The referee is notified in the event of illness or injury and accepts the proof thereof.
 - (2) It is determined by the referee that the No-Show is caused by circumstances beyond the control of the athlete.
 - (3) The athlete qualified for any level of finals due to scratches of one or more original finalists.
 - (4) The athlete is an alternate for any level of finals.
- g. Relay Scratch Rule – Any relay team entered in a relay event that fails to compete in or report for that event shall not be penalized.