

## IMMEDIATE CHANGES TO CONFORM TO FINA AND USA SWIMMING RULES

FINA approved amendments to the rules of competition on July 21, 2017 during the FINA Congress in Budapest. These changes are effective on **September 21, 2017**. Pursuant to articles 601.4.7B and 601.4.8, changes adopted in between meetings of the House of Delegates shall automatically be adopted unless USMS takes action to reject, amend, or repeal the change.

The USMS Rules Committee voted to affirm these changes during their meeting in conjunction with the annual meetings of the USMS House of Delegates on September 14, 2017 and have been adopted in the USMS Rules of Competition.

### Explanation of Change #1

FINA approved a change which alters the timing system requirements for world records.

1. FINA will no longer accept world records when the times are reported from manual (hand-held) watches.
2. FINA will no longer accept world records when the times are reported from a semiautomatic (automatic start with a button finish) primary timing system (i.e., when touchpads are not in use and the buttons are considered primary).
3. FINA will continue to accept world record applications from times reported by automatic timing (automatic start and touchpad finish).
4. In the event of a touchpad malfunction, FINA will accept world record applications from times reported by a semiautomatic backup timing system. The backup semiautomatic timing system may consist of three, two, or one button(s).

### Explanation of Change #2

FINA approved a change that alters the interpretation of the freestyle leg of individual medley and medley relay events. This change is effective for all USMS sanctioned and recognized meets, regardless of the length of the course (short course yards, short course meters, long course meters).

1. An October 2015 interpretation said that if a swimmer is in a position on or towards the back during the freestyle leg of an individual medley or medley relay, the swimmer is subject to disqualification. The rationale for this interpretation is that the rule prohibits swimmers from repeating a stroke during the last leg of these events. Being in a position towards the back constitute a legal backstroke, regardless of the type of stroke or kick used.
2. The September 2017 change permits swimmers to leave the wall during a turn in a position on or towards the back during the freestyle leg of an individual medley or

medley relay event without being subject to disqualification. This includes the breaststroke-to-freestyle transition and freestyle turns.

3. If swimmers leave the wall in a position on or towards the back, they must return to a position towards the breast before any kick or stroke.
4. Being on or towards the back at any other time during the freestyle leg of an individual medley or medley relay event is still an infraction subject to disqualification, regardless of any type of stroke or kick used.
5. It remains legal to be on or towards the back during any portion of a freestyle event. The restriction on body position only applies to the freestyle leg of an individual medley or medley relay event.

### Explanation of Change #3

FINA approved a change to the wording of the butterfly rule. This is not a substantive change.

1. A sentence reading “underwater kicking on the side is allowed” was deleted because it was regarded as duplicative wording.
2. FINA SW8.5 still permits underwater butterfly kicking up to the 15-meter mark in butterfly. The reference to “on the breast” is still interpreted as a position toward the breast, meaning that kicking on the side is still legal.
3. Therefore, there is no change in how the butterfly will be judged as a result of this change.

The complete text of the changes are included in this notice. Please direct all questions to the USMS Rules Committee Chair.

Charles Cockrell  
USMS Rules Committee Chair  
September 17, 2017

Changes to FINA rules that eliminate acceptance of world records using manual or semiautomatic primary timing systems. This change reflects only the FINA changes affecting world records to ensure that this information is accurately reflected in the rule book for members.

Note: F-3 is effective September 21, 2017 to reflect changes to FINA rules.

**103.6.6** The referee may assign two or more additional timers per lane dedicated to recording initial distances for USMS Top 10 purposes ~~or may assign three additional timers per lane to record initial distances for world records~~. The swimmer may request such additional timers for this purpose.

**103.18.5** **Records and Top 10 times using an Automatic Primary Timing System—** Secondary and tertiary times may be used to determine the official time as follows when the automatic primary timing system fails, provided the procedures in 103.17.3B are followed. See 103.17.3D for overhead video backup.

**A** World records, USMS records, and USMS Top 10 times may be established when the times are reported by an automatic primary timing system.

**B** World records, USMS records, and USMS Top 10 times may be established when the automatic primary timing system fails if the times are reported by a semiautomatic secondary timing system using three, two, or one valid button(s).

~~**C** World records may be established when both the automatic primary and semiautomatic secondary systems fail (no valid button times) if the times are reported by a manual tertiary system with three valid watch times.~~

~~**DC** USMS records may be established when both the automatic primary and semiautomatic secondary systems fail (no valid button times) if the times are reported by a manual tertiary system using a minimum of two valid watch times.~~

~~**ED** USMS Top 10 times may be established when both the automatic primary and semiautomatic secondary systems fail (no valid button times) if the times are reported by a manual tertiary system using a minimum of one valid watch time.~~

~~**FE** An initial distance or a relay leadoff leg may be used to establish world records, USMS records, or USMS Top 10 times when reported by an automatic primary timing system.~~

~~**GF** An initial distance or a relay leadoff leg may be used to establish world records when the automatic primary timing system fails and if the times are reported by a manual backup semiautomatic secondary timing system with using three, two, or one valid watch button(s) times.~~

~~**HG**~~ USMS records shall not be established for initial distances and relay leadoff legs using a manual backup system when the primary system fails.

~~**HH**~~ An initial distance or relay leadoff leg may be used to establish USMS Top 10 times when the primary timing system fails and the times are reported by a manual backup timing system with a minimum of two valid watch times. Note: If the secondary system is manual watches (no semiautomatic system), the requirements listed in 103.18.5C-~~**DE**~~ shall apply to the watch times.

**103.18.6 Records and Top 10 times using a Semiautomatic Primary Timing System—**  
Semiautomatic times are used to determine the official time as follows (or backup times when the semiautomatic primary timing system fails), provided the procedures in 103.17.3B are followed.

~~**A**~~ World records may be established when the times are reported by a semiautomatic primary timing system with three valid button times.

~~**BA**~~ USMS records may be established when timed by a three-button semiautomatic primary timing system and the times are reported by three, two, or one valid button times.

~~**CB**~~ USMS Top 10 times may be established when timed by a minimum two-button semiautomatic primary timing system and the times are reported by three, two, or one valid button times.

~~**D**~~ World records may be established when the three-button semiautomatic primary system fails (no valid button times) if the times are reported by a manual backup system with three valid watch times.

~~**EC**~~ USMS records may be established when the three-button semiautomatic primary system fails (no valid button times) if the times are reported by a manual backup system with three or two valid watch times.

~~**FD**~~ USMS Top 10 times may be established when the minimum two-button semiautomatic primary system fails (no valid button times) if the times are reported by a manual backup system with three, two, or one valid watch times.

~~**G**~~ An initial distance or a relay leadoff leg may be used to establish world records when reported by a manual backup timing system with three valid watch times.

~~**HE**~~ USMS records shall not be established for initial distances and relay leadoff legs using a manual backup system when the primary system fails.

~~**HF**~~ An initial distance or relay leadoff leg may be used to establish USMS Top 10 times when the times are reported by a manual backup timing system with a minimum of two valid watch times.

**103.18.7 Records and Top 10 Times using a Manual Primary Timing System—**

Manual times are used to determine the official time as follows, provided the procedures in 103.17.3B are followed.

~~A World records and USMS records may be established when the times are reported by a manual primary timing system with three valid watch times.~~

**BA** USMS Top 10 times may be established when the times are reported by a manual primary timing system with a minimum of two valid watch times.

~~C An initial distance or a relay leadoff leg may be used to establish world records when the times are reported by a manual primary system with three valid watch times.~~

**DB** USMS records shall not be established for initial distances and relay leadoff legs using a manual primary timing system.

**EC** An initial distance or a relay leadoff leg may be used to establish USMS Top 10 times when the times are reported by a manual primary system with a minimum of two valid watch times.

**Note: F-3 also requires modification to the reference table on page 29 for consistency**

	Automatic Primary Timing System	Semiautomatic Primary Timing System	Manual Primary Timing System
<b>World Records</b>	Touchpad time		
	Semiautomatic backup time with three, two, or one valid button(s) if the touchpad fails.	<del>Three valid buttons.</del>	
	<del>Manual backup time with three valid watches if the semiautomatic system fails (no valid buttons).</del>	<del>Three valid watches if the three-button semiautomatic system fails (no valid buttons).</del>	<del>Three valid watches.</del>
	Leadoff or initial split recorded by a touchpad.		
	Leadoff or initial split recorded by <del>three valid watches</del> <u>three, two, or one valid semiautomatic button(s)</u> if the touchpad fails.	<del>Leadoff or initial split recorded by three valid watches.</del>	<del>Leadoff or initial split recorded by three valid watches.</del>
<b>USMS Records</b>	Touchpad time		
	Semiautomatic backup time with three, two, or one valid button(s) if the touchpad fails.	Three-button system with a time calculated using the procedure in 103.17.3B	
	Manual backup time with two valid watches if the semiautomatic system fails (no valid buttons).	Two valid watches if the three-button semiautomatic system fails (no valid buttons).	Three valid watches
	Leadoff or initial split recorded by touchpad.		
<b>USMS Top 10 Times</b>	Touchpad Time		
	Semiautomatic backup time with three, two, or one valid button(s) if the touchpad fails.	Two-button system with a time calculated using the procedure in 103.17.3B	
	Manual backup time with one valid watch if the semiautomatic system fails (no valid buttons).	One watch if the two-button semiautomatic system fails (no buttons)	Two valid watches
	Leadoff or initial split recorded by two valid watches if the touchpad fails.	Leadoff or initial split recorded by two valid watches.	Leadoff or initial split recorded by two valid watches.

**Changes approved by FINA to modify the interpretation of freestyle in an individual medley or medley relay event.** The change means that swimmers must return to a position on the breast before any propulsive movement (kick or stroke). The change permits swimmers to leave the wall while on the back during the freestyle leg of an individual medley or medley relay event without being subject to disqualification. Being on the back at any other time during the freestyle leg of an individual medley or medley relay event is still an infraction subject to disqualification.

**Text of the FINA Rule after the change:**

**SW 9 MEDLEY SWIMMING**

**SW 9.1** In individual medley events, the swimmer covers the four swimming strokes in the following order: Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Freestyle. Each of the strokes must cover one quarter (1/4) of the distance.

**SW 9.2** In Freestyle the swimmer must be on the breast except when executing a turn. The swimmer must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.

**SW 9.3** In Medley relay events, swimmers will cover the four swimming strokes in the following order: Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly and Freestyle. Each of the strokes must cover one quarter (1/4) of the distance.

**SW 9.4** Each section must be finished in accordance with the rule which applies to the stroke concerned

**USMS Rule Change:**

**101.6 Individual Medley**

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

**101.6.1 Start**—The forward start shall be used.

**101.6.2 Stroke**—The stroke for each one-fourth of the designated distance shall follow the prescribed rules for that stroke, except that in the freestyle, the swimmer must be on the breast except when executing a turn.

**101.6.3 Turns**

A Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke, except that in the freestyle turn, the swimmer must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.

B 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 article 101.3.5. 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 article 101.2.4. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner and must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.

**101.7.1 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; fourth, freestyle. Rules pertaining to each stroke as described in 101.6 (Individual Medley) used shall govern ~~where applicable~~. At the end of each leg, the finish rules for that stroke apply.



## **F-1 Informational Only – No Action Required**

<b>Action:</b> <b>Adopted</b> Defeated Adopted/Amended Tabled Withdrawn Pulled
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Change approved by FINA to eliminate the sentence that references underwater kicking on the side in butterfly. This change is not a substantive change. FINA SW8.5 still permits underwater kicking up to the 15-meter mark and the reference to “on the breast” is still interpreted as a position toward the breast.

### **Text of the FINA Rule Change:**

#### **SW8 BUTTERFLY**

**SW8.1** From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and after each turn, the body shall be kept on the breast. ~~Under water kicking on the side is allowed.~~ It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time, except after the turn after the touch where it is permissible to turn in any manner as long as the body is on the breast when leaving the wall.

**No change is required to USMS rules in order to conform to FINA since this specific reference does not exist in the current rules.**