

DELEGATE PACKET FOR 2024 USMS ANNUAL MEETING (LONG DISTANCE COMMITTEE)

TABLE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PART 3

The following proposed amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition were submitted to the Long Distance Committee in accordance with Articles 601.2, 601.4.1, 601.4.5, and 601.4.7. If adopted by the House of Delegates, these amendments will take effect on January 1, 2025.

The committee action is indicated as “recommended,” “recommended as amended,” or “not recommended.” Committee actions may be reconsidered at the annual meeting before presentation to the House of Delegates. Comments are invited from delegates at the annual meeting on all proposed amendments.

Amendments that are recommended by the committee require a majority vote of the House of Delegates to adopt.

Amendments that are not recommended by the committee require a two-thirds vote of the House of Delegates to adopt.

Number	Section	Description	Committee Action
LD-1	303.3.1.C.6	Add responsibility for Referee to modify rules for disabled swimmers.	Recommended
LD-2	303.4.2 B	Added that suit ties at the waist as acceptable.	Recommended
LD-3	303.4.2 E	Added language allow the LDC to waive the prohibition on personal buoys for swims in which individual escorts are required and drafting is not permitted.	Recommended
LD-4	303.10.1	Deleted original language and added the citation for authority for modification of rules for disabled swimmers and added a definition for disability.	Recommended
	303.10.2	Deleted the original language and added responsibilities for the swimmer/coach and the meet referee.	
	303.10.3	Deleted the original language and added definitions for accommodations and modifications.	
LD5	305.2.4	HK: Strike “only” form the last sentence	Recommended
LD 6	305.2.4	Clarifies that the USMS National Office shall have jurisdiction over National Championship virtual events.	Recommended
LD7	307.6	Change determination of event fees for open water national championships from the LDC to the Event Host. Assign fee determination for virtual national championships to the USMS National office.	Recommended

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PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO PART THREE RULES

The following proposed amendments to the USMS Rules of Competition were submitted to the Long Distance Committee in accordance with Articles 601.2, 601.4.1, 601.4.5, and 601.4.7. If adopted by the House of Delegates, these amendments will take effect on January 1, 2024.

LD-1, 303.3.1.C.6 Long Distance Committee p. 72 Modify

Committee Action:	Recommended		
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

C. Referee—The referee is responsible for the fair conduct of the swim. The referee shall be responsible for:

- (1) All officials, including instructing and assigning officials, enforcing all applicable rules, deciding all questions related to the conduct of the swim, and adjudicating protests.
- (2) Ensuring that all swimmers are briefed about safety procedures, the course, site-specific rules, and other necessary information about the conduct of the swim.
- (3) Barring, removing, or taking other appropriate action with any swimmer who acts in an unsporting or unsafe manner within the swimming venue.
- (4) Disqualifying any swimmer violating event or USMS rules or safety procedures.
- (5) Modifying the manner in which the swim is conducted, changing the course or distance, delaying the start, or stopping a swim in progress if circumstances warrant.
- (6) Modifying any rule for a swimmer who has a disability. Any such modification shall be in accordance with article 303.10, shall affect only the current swim, and not set precedent.**

Rationale: This proposal adds this responsibility to the duties of the open water referee, in parallel construction and language to article 103.6.9 which already describes responsibilities for pool meet referees.

LD-2, 303.4.2 B Long Distance Committee p. 72 Modify

Committee Action:	Recommended		
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

B The swimmer shall wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces. All swimsuits shall be made from textile materials and not contain clasps or zippers but may have ties that fasten **at the swimmer's waist and** on the swimmer's back. For both men and women, the swimsuit shall not cover the neck and shall not extend past the shoulder nor below the ankles.

Rationale: This proposal adds wording that is equivalent to article 102.12.1C, which permits waist ties for pool swimwear under World Aquatics rules. This would eliminate confusion about whether waist ties are permitted in open water swimwear.

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LD-3, 303.4.2.E Long Distance Committee p. 73 Modify

Committee Action: Recommended

HOD Action: Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated

- E. At the discretion of the event host, except for national championship swims, swimmers may be required to wear a personal buoy for identification and safety. Requirements for buoys as well as rules for the use of these devices will be included in the event information. **The prohibition of personal buoys in national championship swims may be waived by the Long Distance Committee for swims in which individual escorts are required and drafting is not permitted.**

Rationale: The primary argument against using personal buoys in national championship swims is the possibility of entanglement with other swimmers and/or personal buoys. Under current USMS rules 303.9.5 & 6, which define how drafting is defined and when it is prohibited in swims involving individual escorts, the possibility of entanglement with others in swims that require individual escorts and prohibit drafting (nearly always swims of Marathon or Ultra-Marathon distances) is very small. In such a case above, the LDC should be permitted to grant such a waiver for safety reasons.

LD-4, 303.10.1, 303.10.2, 303.10.3 Long Distance Committee p. 76 Modify

Committee Action: Recommended

HOD Action: Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated

- ~~303.10.1 The referee may modify any rule and the event director may modify any swim management procedure for a swimmer who has a disability. Any such modification shall affect only the current event and does not set precedent.~~

Authority—The USMS rules and regulations grant the referee the authority to modify the rules for the swimmer with a disability (see article 103.6.9). Disability is defined as a permanent physical or cognitive disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

- ~~303.10.2 **Definition**—Disability is defined as a permanent physical or cognitive disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities.~~

~~303.10.3~~ **303.10.2 Responsibilities**

~~A **Swimmer/Coach**—The swimmer (or the swimmer’s coach) is responsible for notifying the event director, prior to the competition, of any ~~disability of the swimmer~~ **swimmer with a disability** and of the requested **accommodations and/or modifications**. The swimmer/coach shall provide any assistant(s) or equipment if required.~~

~~B **Referee or event director**—The referee or event director shall devise such modifications that allow the swimmer to participate as long as they conform to safety requirements. No modifications shall be granted that will give a swimmer a competitive advantage.~~

~~B **Meet referee**—The meet referee’s responsibilities include:~~

- ~~(1) **Determining if the requested accommodations/modifications are appropriate, can be met, and conform to safety standards.**~~

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- (2) Instructing the starter and finish judge as to how the accommodations and/or modifications will be made for the swimmer with a disability.
- (3) In communication with the remaining officials a meet referee may:
 - a. Instruct them to observe and report ANY violation of the rules and apply article 310 to confirm or overturn the call against the approved modification(s) or
 - b. Share the specific modification(s) and instruct them to observe and report any violation except the approved modification(s).

303.10.3 Accommodations/Modifications

- A. Accommodations are considerations which allow a swimmer with a disability to access the venue and afford the athlete the time, assistance, and space required to obtain a starting position for each swim.
- B. Modifications are any exception to the technical rules approved by the meet referee (see article 303.3.1C(6) allowing a parallel performance for a swimmer with a disability. Aids to speed, pace, navigation, buoyancy or endurance are not allowed with Category I swimwear (see article 303.4.2). Aids to speed, pace, navigation, and endurance are not allowed with Category II swimwear.

Rationale: In previous years, the open water rules for swimmers with disabilities closely paralleled the section for swimmers with disabilities in pool meets. In 2023, the Rules Committee rewrote this section to align better with USA-Swimming rules, and the House of Delegates approved this proposal. This current proposal would return pool and open water rules to a desirable parallel structure. Of particular note, this proposal places the referee, who is responsible for the fair conduct of the swim under article 303.3.1C, in sole control of the accommodations and modifications permitted to swimmers with disabilities.

LD-5, 305.2.4 Long Distance Committee p. 78 Modify

Committee Action: Recommended
HOD Action: Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated

305.2.4 Virtual—A virtual event is a competition in which swimmers participate at a place of their choosing and submit the time or distance achieved to a central location for tabulation. The USMS National Office in coordination with the Long Distance Committee shall have jurisdiction **only** over virtual events that meet the requirements given in article 305.2.1.

Rationale: Housekeeping –Eliminates misleading word “only”. Clearly, the LDC has jurisdiction far larger than this rule currently states!

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LD-6, 305.2.4 Long Distance Committee p. 78 Modify

Committee Action: Recommended

HOD Action: Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated

305.2.4 Virtual—A virtual event is a competition in which swimmers participate at a place of their choosing and submit the time or distance achieved to a central location for tabulation. The USMS National Office in coordination with the Long Distance Committee shall have jurisdiction ~~only~~ over virtual events that meet the requirements given in article 305.2.1 **except for National Championship events described in article 307.2.3.**

Rationale: This aligns the jurisdiction over virtual swims with article 307.2.3.

LD-7, 307.6 Long Distance Committee p. 82 Modify

Committee Action: Recommended

HOD Action: Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated

307.6 Entry Fee

The ~~Long Distance Committee~~ **Event Host** shall determine the individual and relay entry fees for open water **national championships.** ~~and~~ The USMS National Office **shall determine individual and relay entry fees for** virtual national championships.

Rationale: This aligns fee approvals with the organization responsible for the events.