

DELEGATE PACKET FOR 2026 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, 2026.

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	302.2.2 A	Clarifies requirements for water temperature and thermal plans for USMS sanctioned open water swims.	Recommended for Adoption
LD-2	303.12.1	Removes protest procedures from the rule book and provides a reference on the USMS web site.	Recommended for Adoption
LD-3	303.12.2	Adds a limitation on protests made on in-event judges’ decisions.	Recommended for Adoption
LD-4	305.7 A	Removes protest procedures from the rule book and provides a reference on the USMS web site.	Recommended for Adoption
LD-5	305.7 B	Adds a limitation on protests made on in-event judges’ decisions.	Recommended for Adoption
LD-6	307.3	Removes language for a successful bidder and the requirement for a contract for a long distance championship.	Recommended for Adoption
LD-7	307.6.8 A, B,C	Removes protest procedures from the rule book and provides a reference on the USMS web site.	Recommended for Adoption
LD-8	307.6.8 B	Clarifies a limitation on protests made on in-event judges’ decisions.	Recommended for Adoption

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, 2026.

LD-1, 302.2.2A Long Distance Committee p. 68 Modify

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

302.2.2 Water Conditions

A Water Temperature

- ~~(1) A swim shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 16 degrees Celsius (60.8 degrees Fahrenheit), unless heat-retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers or a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place.~~
- ~~(2) A swim in which heat-retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 13.9 degrees Celsius (57 degrees Fahrenheit) unless a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place.~~
- ~~(3) A swim of 5 kilometers or greater shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 29.45 degrees Celsius (85 degrees Fahrenheit). A swim of less than 5 kilometers shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 31 degrees Celsius (87.8 degrees Fahrenheit).~~
- (1) Water Temperature is below 16 degrees Celsius (60.8 degrees Fahrenheit) – Swim may proceed if a USMS approved cold water thermal plan is in place.
- (2) Water Temperature is greater than 16 degrees Celsius (60.8 degrees Fahrenheit) and less than 25.6 degrees Celsius (78 degrees Fahrenheit) - Swim may proceed with no restrictions.
- (3) Water temperature is greater than 25.6 degrees Celsius (78 degrees Fahrenheit) and less than 29.45 degrees Celsius (85 degrees Fahrenheit) - Swim may proceed if heat-retaining swimwear is not permitted.
- (4) Water temperature is greater than 29.45 degrees Celsius (85 degrees Fahrenheit) and less than 31 degrees Celsius (87.8 degrees Fahrenheit) - Swim may proceed if heat-retaining swimwear is not permitted and a USMS approved warm water thermal plan is in place
- (5) Water temperature is above 31 degrees Celsius (87.8 degrees Fahrenheit) - Swim may not proceed.

Rationale: New (1) removes an inconsistency between old (1), which requires heat-retaining swimwear and a thermal plan below 16 C, and old (2), which only requires a thermal plan below 13.9 C. New (1) removes the requirement for heat-retaining swimwear between 13.9 C and 16 C. This also changes the name of the thermal plan to “cold water thermal plan”.

New (2) defines the temperature range for which there are no requirements for heat-retaining swimwear or a thermal plan.

New (3) and (4) establish requirements for a warm water thermal plan and temperature restrictions on heat-retaining swimwear in warm water.

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New (5) establishes a maximum temperature above which swims cannot be held.

Old (3) is replaced by New (3), (4), and (5).

LD-2, 303.12.1 Long Distance Committee p. 77 Modify

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

303.12 Protests

303.12.1 Any protest arising from an open water swim ~~(other than national championship swims—refer to article 307.7.8)~~ shall be made to the event referee within 30 minutes after the release of results at the venue. ~~If results are not released in a timely manner, a protest may be made to the event director in writing within three days after all swimmers are notified of the release of results. If the protest is not resolved, the protester may appeal in writing promptly to the LMSC. If the LMSC does not satisfactorily resolve the protest, the protestor may appeal in writing promptly to the USMS Long Distance Committee chair.~~ shall be made in accordance with the procedures found in [link to be provided by the USMS NO on the USMS website.](#)

Rationale: The instructions for making protests are procedural and can be moved out of the Rule Book.

LD-3, 303.12.2 Long Distance Committee p. 77 Modify

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

303.12.2 Protests against judgment decisions regarding the start, missing a course turn, failure to achieve a cutoff time, or the finish of a race ~~can~~ must be made to the referee. ~~only be considered by the referee, and the~~ The referee's decision shall be final and may not be appealed.

Rationale: This reflects language is in Article 307.6.8 (covers open water national championships) and applies to all open water events.

LD-4, 305.7 A Long Distance Committee p. 78 Modify

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

305.7 Protests

A. Any protest arising from a long distance pool swim ~~(other than national championship swims—refer to article 307.7.8)~~ shall be made to the event referee within 30 minutes after the release of results at the venue. ~~If results are not released in a timely manner, a protest may be made to the event director in writing within three days after all swimmers are notified of the release of results. If the protest is not resolved, the protester may appeal in writing promptly to the LMSC. If the LMSC does not satisfactorily resolve the protest, the protestor may appeal in writing promptly to the USMS Long Distance Committee chair.~~ shall be made in accordance with the procedures found in [link to be provided by the USMS NO on the USMS website.](#)

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Rationale: The instructions for making protests are procedural and can be moved out of the Rule Book.

LD-5, 305.7 B Long Distance Committee p. 78 Modify

Committee Action: Recommended for Adoption

HOD Action: Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated

B. Protests against judgment decisions of starters and turn judges must be made to the referee. The referee's decision shall be final and may not be appealed.

Rationale: This reflects language is in Article 307.6.8 and applies to long distance pool swims as well.

LD-6, 307.3 Long Distance Committee p. 81 Modify

Committee Action: Recommended for Adoption

HOD Action: Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated

Representatives of the host organization ~~that is the successful bidder~~ for an open water ~~and long distance championship~~ event shall sign a written contract with USMS, which specifies the responsibilities of the event host and of USMS.

Rationale: The host for a USMS open water championship may or may not be the result of a successful bid. Only open water NC's have a host. Virtual NC's are conducted by the USMS National Office.

LD-7, 307.6.8 Long Distance Committee p. 83 Modify

Committee Action: Recommended for Adoption

HOD Action: Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated

307.6.8 Protests

A Any protest arising from a USMS open water or virtual national open championship swim shall be made in accordance with the procedures found in [link to be provided by the USMS NO](#) on the USMS website.

~~B Any protest arising from an open water championship swim shall be made to the referee within 30 minutes after the release of results at the venue. If results are not released in a timely manner, a protest may be made to the event director in writing within three days after all swimmers are notified of the release of results. After receipt of a protest, the referee or event director shall have 10 days to reply. If the protest is denied by the referee or event director, the swimmer will have five days to appeal in writing to the Long Distance Committee Chair. The Long Distance Committee Chair will have 10 days to reply, unless the USMS Long Distance chair notifies the parties that the issue must come before the entire committee.~~

~~C Any protest arising from a virtual championship swim shall be made to the Long Distance Committee Chair in writing within five days after all swimmers are notified of the release of preliminary results or amendments to the preliminary results. The final decision for any protests will be determined by the Long Distance Committee chair. After receipt of a protest, the Long Distance Committee Chair shall have 10 days to reply, unless the USMS Long Distance chair notifies the parties that the issue must come before the entire committee.~~

Rationale: The instructions for making protests are procedural and can be moved out of the Rule Book.

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LD-8, 307.6.8 B Long Distance Committee p. 83 Modify

Committee Action: Recommended for Adoption

HOD Action: Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated

AB Protests against judgment decisions regarding the start, missing a course turn, failure to achieve a cutoff time, or the finish of a race ~~can only be considered by~~ must be made to the referee, ~~and the~~ The referee's decision shall be final and may not be appealed.

Rationale: Clarifies that judgements made by officials during the swim can be protested only to the event referee.