

MHSAA OFFICIALS BULLETIN



A topic that frequently comes up is that of Exhibition Swimmers. If Exhibition Swimmers are permitted in the meet. They must adhere to Rule 1-2-3. Notice in Article 3 they are “competitors”. 3b requires that they “must adhere to rules regarding event form, starting, judging, timing and conduct. Let assume we are conducting an exhibition heat of 100-yard Freestyle. The Exhibition Swimmer in Lane 5 departs the starting block prior to the heat when being told to “take your mark”. None of the other swimmers in the heat react except to look at the swimmer in the water. The starter releases the field and the swimmer in Lane 5 is disqualified. Rule 8-1-3 and PENALTIES.

Upon hearing this, the Exhibition Swimmer’s coach rushes up and implores you to allow him to swim anyway as it is “Only Exhibition”. You know to allow the swimmer to swim is a violation of Rule 1-2-3 and Rule 8-1-3 and PENALTIES section. What could happen? Several scenarios could happen. First everything could go right. What if the swimmer moves on the next start attempt and causes two or three other participants in the heat to false start? Let’s see a heat recall caused by a swimmer that isn’t supposed to be there? Rule 8-1-4 Notes: 2. Perhaps he gets a legal start but farther into the race, after the 3rd turn, the swimmer comes out of the turn and surfaces in Lane 4 colliding with the swimmer in that lane who stops and stands up after the collision. He was in 3rd place prior to the collision and now is 8th when he finishes the race. Rule 3-6-2 c. Again a swimmer who isn’t supposed to be there has caused a lot of issues.

As the official in charge of the meet you are responsible for adherence to the rules. Rule 4-1-5 and 4-2-2 j. Having let the Exhibition Swimmer swim means you have most likely failed to comply with rules 4-1-5 and 4-2-2 j. This has opened up the potential for other problems which could have been avoided. The coach making the request may think you are being a good person for allowing their person to swim; but, if anything goes wrong you won’t be thought of that way by the other coach if it has had a negative impact on his/her swimmers. You have also demonstrated your willingness not to enforce the rules. What other rules will you bend? This is not a good position to be in. Your responsibility is to know the rules enforce them fairly.

Last Rules Review: A swimmer performing the butterfly completes a full stroke as he is approaching the wall for the finish. He commences another pull but stops and then pushes his hands forward from where they are, toward the wall, when he realizes he is to close for another stroke. Legal?

Ruling: No, what is being described is a violation of 8-2-3 c. The forward movement underwater is a recovery and is required to be over the water.

This Week’s Rules Review: It is the Individual Medley and the competitor in Lane 6 uses the Trudgen to swim the 4th quarter of the race. Legal?