

PVS Officials
Swim Suit Guidelines

Following is guidance for PVS Officials on enforcing the recently enacted rule change on swim suits.

Legal Swimsuits for PVS Competitions Starting October 1, 2009¹

1. Swimsuits for men may not extend above the navel or below the knee and for women may not cover the neck or extend past the shoulders or below the knee (A limited religious/medical condition exception exists but requires pre-approval at the national level²);
2. No zippers or other fastening devices are allowed except for a waist tie on a brief or jammer; and
3. Suits must be of textile material and must not be made of any rubberized type of material such as polyurethane or neoprene.

Officials Guidance

- The focus of applying the rule should be on the requirement that only one swimsuit is worn during competition and that the suit adheres to the style and shape indicated in the rule. However, please note that for age group competitions, it is permissible for an athlete to wear a single set of garments underneath his or her competition swimsuit for modesty and/or privacy reasons.
- Referees should use reasonable and good judgment in application of the rule.
- Assume that coaches and swimmers want to do the right thing and give them the benefit of doubt
- Officials should be proactive to ensure coaches and competitors are fully aware of legal swimsuits. See sample handout that can be distributed to coaches at the start of each session.
- Until athletes and coaches become more experienced with this rule, the referee should hold a coaches meeting before the first session to confirm that all their competitors will compete in legal swimsuits.
- During warm-ups or while walking on deck, there are no restrictions on the type or number of suits that can be worn.
- The Referee shall bar any swimmer from competing who does not conform to the swim suit rule. In making the decision, the Referee should consider the circumstances (see situation on the next page). If a swimmer is observed swimming in competition with an illegal suit, the swimmer shall be disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct.

¹ Stratton, Bruce W., Memo Subject: "Important new rules regarding swimsuits", dated September 21, 2009, USA Swimming Rules and Regulation Committee, http://www.pvswim.org/official/rules/Letter_to_Members_about_Swimsuits_2009-09-21.pdf

² Stratton, Bruce W., Memo Subject: "Interpretation of USA Swimming Rules & Regulations Article 102.9.1 (Swimwear)", dated January 19, 2009, USA Swimming Rules & Regulations Committee, http://www.pvswim.org/official/rules/Swimsuit_Intepretation_2009-01-19.pdf

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Situation: At the long whistle a swimmer steps up on the starting blocks wearing an illegal suit.

Response: The proper response is dependent on the particular circumstances. One example, the swimmer is wearing a drag suit. Since this situation can be corrected quickly, the Referee should allow the swimmer to remove the drag suit before starting the heat. On the other hand, if the illegal suit issue cannot be corrected quickly, i.e., can only be corrected by changing swim suits, then the Referee shall bar the swimmer from swimming and record the disqualification. In addition to informing the swimmer, the swimmer's coach should be told of the issue. The Referee should communicate swim suit rules to coaches and swimmers before the session to minimize/avoid this situation.

Applicable Rules: 102.9.1BF³, 102.13.1., 101.1.5

³ Op. cit., Stratton, memo dated September 21, 2009.

Notice to Coaches and Swimmers

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- 1. Swimsuits for men may not extend above the navel or below the knee and for women may not cover the neck or extend past the shoulders or below the knee.**
- 2. A limited religious/medical condition exception exists but requires pre-approval at the national level.**
- 3. No zippers or other fastening devices are allowed except for a waist tie on a brief or jammer.**
- 4. Suits must be of textile material and must not be made of any rubberized type of material such as polyurethane or neoprene.**
- 5. Only one swimsuit may be worn during competition and that suit must adhere to the style and shape indicated above. However, for age group competitions, it is permissible for an athlete to wear a single set of garments underneath his or her competition swimsuit for modesty and/or privacy reasons.**

Any questions should be directed to the Referee.