

Proposed Revision to the MS Four Hour Rule

Proposed January 14, 2007

By Kimble/Meconis/Nissley

H. Four Hour Rule:

All Michigan Swimming meets shall be conducted using the following rules for all swimmers regardless of age and all types of meets (except for the State Championship Meets, ABC Festivals, District Championships and Junior Olympics). Entries are to be accepted on a first come first serve basis until the maximum session time limits as stated below are met. No entries are to be accepted after the maximum time limits are met. Guidelines commonly referred to as "Numbers of splashes" are not to be used in accepting entries.

1. All Timed Finals meets, excluding warm-ups, shall be no more than four hours per session.

2. All Prelim-Finals meets, excluding warm-ups, shall be no more than eight hours per day. These meets may have any combination of session lengths so long as the eight hours per day limit is not exceeded. This means that a preliminary session might last 5 hours but the finals session must then be completed within 3 hours (for a maximum total of 8 hours per day). *It is recommended that a preliminary session also last no more than 4 hours.*

3. In the event that the daily meet format is a combination of a Prelim/Final meet and a Timed Final Meet, both 1 and 2 above apply. This means that the Prelim- Finals portion of the meet needs to be completed within 8 combined hours for the two sessions. The timed final session must be completed within the 4 hours per session. In this meet format the total sessions, excluding warm-ups, shall be no longer than 12 hours *and shall not go past 10 PM.*

4. These guidelines do not apply to State Championships where all qualified swimmers shall be allowed to swim regardless of the length of the sessions. These guidelines also do not apply to the ABC Festivals, District Championships and Junior Olympics where all sessions in excess of 4 hours must be approved by the Program Operations Vice-Chair, or in the Vice-Chair's absence, the General Chair.

5. Heat Intervals/Hy Tek Session Timelines:

a: When accepting meet entries, it is always the responsibility of the meet host to insure that all sessions be finished within 4 hours using an appropriate heat interval inserted in the Hy Tek MM software. For example, when there are 25 yard SCY or 50 meter LCM events that require timers to walk to the opposite end of the pool, the heat interval for those sessions should be greater. Another example where additional time should be inserted between heats would be backstroke events where additional time is needed for the backstrokers to enter the water and get positioned for the start of the race.

b. In all cases, regardless of the heat intervals which are chosen by the meet host, the 4 hour session time limit (subject to the paragraph 6 grace periods) is the responsibility of the Meet Host.

c. It is strongly suggested that the initial session timelines be calculated using Hy Tek Meet Manager or similar software with a minimum of 30 seconds inserted between heats. However, for "A" and above meets or other types of meets/sessions where the meet host believes it would be appropriate, the meet host may insert an interval of no less than 15 seconds. Under no circumstances may heat intervals of less than 15 seconds be inserted.

d. No entries are to be accepted after the Hy Tek session timelines indicate that 4 hour session period is full using the chosen intervals.

e. In determining the initial heat intervals and during the entry period, it is strongly suggested that the Meet Host consult with the Program Operations Vice Chair and the Meet Referee for advice to insure that the 4 hour session limit is not exceeded. When entries are closed, timelines for each session must be given to the Meet Director, the Meet Referee and the Program Operations Vice Chair.

6. Grace Periods will be granted as follows:

a. Facility Issues/Weather/Unforeseen: Any session will be given a 15 minute grace period for unforeseen problems that occur as it is recognized that still water or down time causing a session to run over the 4 hours may be out of the control of the Meet Director and Meet Referee. This allows a session to run 4 hours and 15 minutes maximum. However, the Meet Director and Meet Referee must keep a record of time line by session noting periods of still water and the reasons for down time. Such valid reasons include but are not limited to, power failures, equipment failures, weather, and pool/facility repairs. No sanctions will apply under this subsection.

b. Sessions where all athletes are 13 and Over: One session per meet where all athletes are 13 and Over (does not include any swimmers 12 years and younger) will be given a 30 minute grace period as it is recognized that the number of entries received for a single session may be grossly disproportionate to other sessions. This allows a single session per meet to run 4 hours and 30 minutes maximum. No sanctions will apply under this subsection.

7. Reporting violations to the MS Board of Directors

a. Report by the Meet Referee to the Officials Chair and Program Ops: The Meet Referee of all MS Sanctioned swimming meets is under a mandatory duty to keep a written record of the length of all sessions at every swim meet, all grace period issues referred to in paragraph (6) (a) and (b) above

and any other circumstances that affect a session's length during the entire meet. If any session at a swim meet exceeds four hours in length, the Meet Referee must report this fact along with the reasons therefore (i.e. any grace period issues, weather delays, etc.) to the Officials Chair and the Program Operations Vice-Chair within 10 days following the conclusion of the meet by filing a written report (a copy of which is available from the Officials Chair).

b. Report to the MS Board of Directors: The Officials Chair and the Program Operations Vice-Chair must then immediately refer any alleged violation of the four hour rule to the General Chair and the MS Board of Directors for their consideration and review at their next regularly scheduled Board Meeting. The General Chair shall place the matter on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Board meeting and give notice to the affected Meet Host/Director that they should appear at this Board meeting if they desire to offer explanation. The affected Meet Host/Director may choose to offer written explanation and argument regarding the alleged violation of the four hour rule rather than appear in person.

c. Report to the MS Board by Others: Notwithstanding paragraphs 7 (a) and (b) above, any party (athlete, coach, spectator, etc) may bring any alleged four hour rule violation to the Board of Directors attention for their consideration and review by contacting the General Chair and requesting that the matter be placed on the agenda at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. In such circumstances the General Chair shall place the issue on the Board agenda and give notice to the parties involved to appear if they wish to. The affected Meet Host/Director may choose to offer written explanation and argument regarding the alleged violation of the four hour rule rather than appear in person.

8. Sanctions/Penalties:

a. Sanctions (if any) are to be decided by a majority vote of the Board of Directors present at the meeting where the matter is considered and reviewed provided a quorum of at least 5 members is present. If there is not a quorum of 5, the matter shall be tabled until the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting where the matter shall be revisited.

b. The Board of Directors may consider any and all circumstances surrounding the alleged violation of the four hour rule in determining whether the four rule was violated and the penalties and amount (if any).

c. Penalties:

(1) FIRST OFFENSE: The Club is fined a minimum of \$250 to a maximum of \$1,000 per session. SECOND OFFENSE: a)The Club is fined a minimum of \$500 to a maximum of \$1,500 per session and b) the Club may be barred from hosting a meet or meets for the rest of the season (includes either Short or Long Course or both). THIRD OFFENSE: The Club is fined a minimum of

\$1,000 to a maximum \$2,000 per session and the Club may be barred from hosting a meet or meets for up to two full seasons (Includes either Short or Long Course or both). All fines are due when the meet sanction/athlete surcharge fees are paid or, if the meet fees have already been paid, within 30 days after the Board of Directors decision. If the fines are not paid timely, a \$20 per day penalty applies [in addition to the principal fine] beginning on the first day after the due date of the fine.

(2) In determining whether or not a violation is a First, Second or Third offense (a) in meets where more than one session at the meet violated the four hour rule it will be considered a single violation (rather than multiple violations) and (b) An offense occurring more than five years in the past will not be considered.

Delete

Old Section 5 which reads as follows:

5. Timelines must be calculated using HY-TEK **Meet Manager** or similar software with a minimum of 30 seconds inserted between heats for all types of meets. However, for "A" and above meets **or other types of meets where the meet host believes it would be appropriate**, the meet host may request approval from the Program Operations Vice-Chair to insert a shorter interval between heats for good cause shown. No entries are to be accepted after the time limits are met using these intervals **without first obtaining approval from the Program Operations Vice-Chair**. Timelines for each session, excluding warm-ups, must be established as soon as entries are closed and then given to the Meet Director, the Meet Referee and the Program Operations Vice-Chair.

Delete

Old Section 7 which reads as follows:

7. Sanctions may be imposed in the event that any of the above Four Hour Rule(s) are violated as determined by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, the following penalties shall apply: **FIRST OFFENSE:** The Club is fined \$500 payable to Michigan Swimming when fees are paid. **SECOND OFFENSE:** a) The Club is fined \$500 payable to Michigan Swimming when fees are paid; b) The Club is barred from hosting a meet for the rest of the season (either Short or Long Course). **THIRD OFFENSE:** a) The Club is fined \$500 payable to Michigan Swimming when fees are paid. b) The Club is barred from hosting a meet for one full season (Includes both Short and Long Course).