



Minutes
Board of Directors Special Meeting
Thurs., Dec. 12, 2024

Board Members in Attendance: Kimberly Kohut, Cheryl Russell, Rebecca Phillips, Jocilyn Sayler, Denise Shively (non-voting; Secretary/Past President), Natalia Vega (AEC President), Claire Barton (Athlete At Large), Jaime Czarkowski (General Athlete Representative), Andrea Nott Miles (General Athlete Representative) Stacey Chapman, Joanne Pasternack	
Staff Members in Attendance: Adam Andrasko	
Excused: Anna Montgomery, Monica Velazquez-Stiak, Morgan Fuller Kolsrud (USOPC AAC Leadership team; non-voting), Mariya Koroleva (Team USA AC rep), Jacklyn Luu (Team USA AC alternate; non-voting), Jennell Lynch, Kerhyl Gantt, Bill May (AQUA/PAQ Athlete Representative, non-voting)	
Others in attendance: Patricia Jones, Rules Committee Chair	
Called to Order At: 8:03 PM EST	BY: Kimberly Kohut. A quorum was declared.

Topic	Declaration of Conflicts of Interest	Presented by	Kimberly Kohut
Discussion	Kimberly Kohut called for any additional conflicts of interest to be declared. No additional conflicts declared.		

Topic	New Business—Approval of Audit and Ethics Committees Membership	Presented by	Kimberly Kohut
Discussion	<p>Motion: Cheryl Russell moved to approve membership of both the Audit and Ethics Committees.</p> <p>Audit Committee--Stacey Chapman, Chair; Jennifer Jarboe, Mariya Koroleva, Natalia Vega, Monica Velazquez-Stiak (non-voting). Serves through Convention 2026.</p> <p>Ethics Committee—Megan Robins, Chair; Col. Mary Lowe Mayhugh (Ret.), Dr. Zachary Selden, Rabbi Jeremy Sher, Karensa Tjoa, Emma Tchakmakjian. Serves through Convention 2026.</p> <p>Seconded by: Rebecca Phillips.</p> <p>Motion approved.</p> <p>Vote: Yes-8 , No- 0, Abstain- 0</p>		

Topic	Rules Committee Report	Presented by	Rebecca Phillips and Patricia Jones
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Discussion

The Rules Committee report was submitted in two versions...an abbreviated version for the BOD with notes made as to recommendations from the committee and a longer version showing the progression of changes made. Rebecca asked for a blanket motion to approve the Rules Committee recommendation. Items 1A and 3A were pulled for discussion.

Motion: Rebecca Phillips moved to approve the Rules Committee report and recommendations with the exception of Items 1A and 3A.

Seconded by: Cheryl Russell

Vote: Yes – 9, No – 0, Abstain – 0.

Item 3A discussed first: Jocilyn asked for clarification on Item 3A. Rebecca explained that the accompanying chart was based on the current rulebook but once this item is approved, the Collegiate Trio proposal will be inserted into the Jr/Sr set number of elements chart based on the new AQUA chart.

Motion: Rebecca Phillips moved to approve item 3A as recommended by the Rules Committee.

Seconded by: Cheryl Russell.

Vote: Yes – 9, No – 0, Abstain – 0.

Item 1A was discussed. Natalia Vega explained that the athletes have been discussing this particular item since convention. At convention, the Board of Directors approved in concept that all youth competitors would compete the same two figures (instead of two groups). The item then was to be discussed as to how to implement. Rebecca Phillips, Rules Committee members, and event staff were very involved in identifying options for consideration that would work within the parameters of the event contracts that have been signed for 2025. Options were presented to Rules and the AEC.

Claire Barton stated that the AEC athlete representatives had a meeting on Dec. 11 to discuss this issue. At convention during the Board of Governors/Board of Directors meeting, the AEC representatives sensed uncertainty about what was being discussed at the time. They met on Dec. 11 to discuss the logistical options that had come from the Rules Committee and from event management staff. Claire explained that even with a call to the AEC, limited number of athletes were in attendance.

One option discussed was to change 12U figures to competing only two and run the two sets of figures concurrently. But the athletes stated that would be a totally different change to rules and they did not agree with that option.

A question was asked to Rules Chair Patricia Jones: Did Rules talk about the possibility of leaving things as they are with AQUA (competing with two different sets of figures)? Patricia responded that Rules wants to follow what was voted on at convention which is to have all athletes compete in the same set of figures. There is a perception that with two different sets of figures, unfairness results.

Discussion then ensued about whether it is even feasible to change 12U to two figures. Rebecca explained that for 2025, the only way to do so would be through a waiver and she believes that waivers are designed for individual exceptions and not for a general change of rules.

Discussion then moved to the two feasible options presented to the Rules Committee for 2025: Option 1 is to compete the same two figures but with different panels of judges. Option 2 was to eliminate preliminary competition for duet and team events. Patricia explained that neither option seemed favorable to implement as a result of discussion from the Rules Committee and the Town Hall meeting.

Andrea asked if there was a way to make the current system better. Claire asked, "Isn't it better to have two figures judged by two different panels than having 4 different figures?"

Patricia explained that after great discussion the Rules Committee then did articulate that the judges are trained and we should trust the judging panels.

Cheryl stated that the judges panels could come together to watch and discuss preswimmers so that all judges watching the same figure would have the same standard.

Claire stated that she believed this option reduced the number of variables that we were being asked to consider in implementing the two-figure rule for youth competitors.

Consensus was that this is the best option to move forward for the 2025 championships. Since the BOD had adopted the rule at convention, this discussion was to clarify implementation of the rule. Since implementation is operational, no vote needed to be taken on 1A. A housekeeping change (will to shall) will be noted.

Rebecca will work with event staff to determine how this process will be implemented at Youth Championships as well as Junior Olympics. The one variable for Youth Championships is to work with the national team staff as well since figures is part of the trials process.

Topic	Announcements	Presented by	Kimberly Kohut
Discussion	Kim stated that an email vote with a fast turnaround will be required in January. AQUA has requested names of individuals to be nominated for committees be submitted earlier than anticipated. USAAS IR Committee will prepare recommendations for the BOD's approval. Those approved will then be forwarded to United States Aquatic Sports in early January. Look for the email vote shortly after the holidays.		

Adjournment at approximately 9:01 PM EST		
Moved to adjourn by: Cheryl Russell	Seconded by: Stacey Chapman	Motion Approved unanimously

Respectfully Submitted,



Denise Shively
Secretary

Attachments:
Rules Committee Report

2024 UPDATED RULES PROPOSALS TO BOD

IMPORTANT NOTE: Each item below is to be voted on individually. “A” and “B” items are labeled as such because they pertain to the specific AQUA rule noted in the main item number, but the “A” and “B” items do require their own vote separately from the main item number.

ITEM #1: Accept Appendix 1 Revisions, Youth Figures
2025 AQUA Rules

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #1-A: **NOTE: This proposal addresses Item #8 from Convention (Youth Figure Competition), with voting at Convention as follows:** A motion was made, seconded and approved to accept Option 8A, in concept, and reject Option 8B. The proposal has been referred back to a Rules Subcommittee established for discussion of how to effectively implement Option 8A by a deadline that allows the USAAS Board of Directors to put the new rule in place no later than December 31, 2024.
The VP Competitive Programs, office staff and some BOD members took over the work on this item in order to consider all possible options that would work for national meets with all Youth athletes performing the same two figures. The original Option 8A is copied below and we will receive information on the implementation of Option 8A during the scheduled town hall meeting.
(see amendment below)

OPTION A: Perform only two figures for all competitors in the Youth Age Group Division

CP 4.3.3.1 Youth Championships: One group of 2 figures shall be performed. This group of figures shall consist of 2 figures drawn from the Section A, B or C from the Youth Age Division Figure Selection Groups listed in Figure Rule II.D.

- ~~1.~~ The Youth Figure Section A, B or C shall be drawn first, then the order of appearance shall be drawn. **Then 1 of the 2 figure groups of the drawn Section will be drawn. For example, if Section B, Group 4 is drawn, then all competitors will compete Section B, Group 4.** ~~The order of appearance draw list will be divided into 2 equal groups – Group 1 and 2 (if numbers are not equal, Group 1 will have 1 extra competitor). Then 1 of the 2 figure groups of the drawn Section will be assigned by lot to each competitor Group 1 and 2. For example, if Section B is drawn, competitor Group 1 may have Group 4 drawn, and competitor Group 2 may have Group 3 drawn.~~
- ~~2.~~ Each group will have a separate ranking. ~~The 2 rankings will not be combined.~~

Rationale: Due to the huge difference in level of scores during the 2024 Youth National Championship, C&I Committee asks that we go back to having all athletes perform the same figures. Because figures affect the end result of a combined routine score, two sets of medals don't help the fact that athletes of the same level could be getting around 7 points of difference in the average score for their figure performance. This has affected the final placements and has proved discouraging and worrisome to athletes and the whole community.

AMENDMENT

C&I COMMITTEE AND RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ITEM #1-A AS AMENDED BELOW

CP 4.3.3.1 Youth Championships: One group of 2 figures shall be performed. This group of figures shall consist of 2 figures drawn from the Section A, B or C from the Youth Age Division Figure Selection Groups listed in Figure Rule II.D.

- ~~1.~~ The Youth Figure Section A, B or C shall be drawn first, then the order of appearance shall be drawn. **Then 1 of the 2 figure groups of the drawn Section will be drawn. For example, if Section B, Group 4 is drawn, then all competitors will shall compete Section B, Group 4.** ~~The order of appearance draw list will be divided into 2 equal groups — Group 1 and 2 (if numbers are not equal, Group 1 will have 1 extra competitor). Then 1 of the 2 figure groups of the drawn Section will be assigned by lot to each competitor Group 1 and 2. For example, if Section B is drawn, competitor Group 1 may have Group 4 drawn, and competitor Group 2 may have Group 3 drawn.~~
- ~~2.~~ Each group will have a separate ranking. The 2 rankings will not be combined.

Rationale: Change wording from will to shall.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Rules Committee is very strongly in favor of implementing this rule for the 2025 competitive season, but is aware that most were not in favor of the two possible methods put forward during the Town Hall for accomplishing this. The Committee would like the BOD to consider the following option:

Have 12&Under athletes perform only two figures at JOs and at Youth Nationals/12U Invite so that the 12U and Youth figures can be run simultaneously and necessitate only four panels of judges. Use figure flights to alleviate the safety concerns of having too many athletes on deck at the same time.

Another option (less preferred by the Committee) would be to have only the top 20 Solo and Duet routines and top 10 Team routines from Prelims participate in figure competition.

ITEM #2:

Accept Appendix 2 Revisions, Technical Required Elements
2025 AQUA Rules

AMENDMENT

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ITEM #2 AS AMENDED BELOW

Accept Appendix 2 Revisions, Technical Required Elements **and General Regulations**
2025 AQUA Rules

Rationale: The clarify we are accepting both the new General Regulations and the Technical Required Elements in the AQUA Appendix 2.

ITEM #3: Accept Appendix 3 Revisions, Junior and Senior Events
2025 AQUA Rules

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #3-A: Collegiate Rule Proposal (Collegiate Trio Free)

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

IMPORTANT NOTE: *This proposal is presented using the chart in our current rulebook, but once Item #3 above is approved, the Collegiate Trio proposal will be inserted into the Jr/Sr Set Number of Elements chart based on the new AQUA chart.*

JUNIOR / SENIOR ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

JUNIOR / SENIOR ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS – SET NUMBER OF ELEMENTS			
Event	Time (+/- 5 sec)	Total Elements	Summary
1. Solo Technical	2:00	7	Total of 5 Technical Required Elements and 2 Free Hybrids.
2. Solo Free	2:15	7	Total of 7 Free Hybrids.
3. Duet Technical	2:20	8	Total of 5 Technical Required Elements, 2 Free Hybrids and 1 Pair Acrobatic*. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
4. Duet Free	2:45	9	Total of 7 Free Hybrids and 2 Pair Acrobatics*. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
5. Mixed Duet Technical	2:20	8	Total of 5 Technical Required Elements, 2 Free Hybrids (1 which must include a Hybrid connection) and 1 Pair Acrobatic*. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
6. Mixed Duet Free	2:45	9	Total of 6 Free Hybrids (1 which must include a Hybrid connection) and 3 Pair Acrobatics* (1 Lift, 1 Throw/Jump and 1 free choice). PLUS additional required movements for Mixed Duet Free: 2 connected surface movements with travel. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
7. Collegiate Trio Free	2:45	<u>8</u>	Total of <u>5</u> Free Hybrids and 3 Pair Acrobatics*. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
8. Team Technical	2:50	9	Total of 5 Technical Required Elements, 3 Free Hybrids (1 which must include a Cadence Action*) and 1 Required Team Acrobatic Movement.* *See Article 1, Sections 1.03 & 1.05.
9. Team Free	3:30	11	Total of 7 Free Hybrids and 4 Free Team Acrobatic Movements.* *See Article 1, Section 1.03.

10. Acrobatic Routine	3:00	7	7 Team Acrobatic Movements* (1 of each group = 4 + 3 of free group choice) + Transitions are free, but no difficulty awarded + Hybrids are free, but no difficulty awarded. *See Article 1, Section 1.03.
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Rationale: Due to the recent AQUA changes affecting the total number of elements for routines. We propose changing the total number of elements for Collegiate Trios such that the total number of elements matches Free Duet (with the exception of swapping one Hybrid for an additional Acro).

ITEM #4: Accept Appendix 3 Revisions, 12/U and Youth Events
2025 AQUA Rules
RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #5: Accept Appendix 4 Revisions, Acrobatic Routine
2025 AQUA Rules
RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #6: Accept Appendix 5 Revisions, Free Combination Routine
2025 AQUA Rules
RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #6-A: Revise Appendix L
16-19/20 Free Combination Routine Additional Requirements
(see amendment below)

Time = 3:30
Elements = 10

- a) 4 Team Acrobatics (free choice, but must not repeat the same acrobatic)
- b) 1 x DD Solo Hybrid
- c) 1 x DD Duet Hybrid
- d) 1 x DD Trio Hybrid
- e) 2 x Team DD Hybrid (must be executed with a minimum of 4 athletes)
- f) 1 x Team choreography hybrid with no DD (i.e. factor of 1.0) (must be executed with a minimum of 4 athletes)
- g) Element parts cannot occur simultaneously (i.e. Team Acrobatic occurs while Solo Hybrid starts)

Rationale: To align the 16-19/20 Free Combination with new AQUA rules for Combos.

AMENDMENT
RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ITEM #6-A AS AMENDED BELOW

Revise Appendix L
16-19/20 Free Combination Routine Additional Requirements

Time = 3:30
Elements = 10

- a) 4 Team Acrobatics *** with DD safety limit**** (free choice, but must not repeat the same acrobatic)
- b) 1 x DD Solo Hybrid
- c) 1 x DD Duet Hybrid
- d) 1 x DD Trio Hybrid
- e) 2 x Team DD Hybrid (must be executed with a minimum of 4 athletes)
*** Must include 1 declaration from each family in the routine (counted across Solo, Duet, Trio and Team DD Hybrids)**
- f) 1 x Team choreography hybrid with no DD (i.e. factor of 1.0) (must be executed with a minimum of 4 athletes)
- g) Element parts cannot occur simultaneously (i.e. Team Acrobatic occurs while Solo Hybrid starts)

**** Safety Limit: Team Acrobatic Movements cannot have a Degree of Difficulty ("DD"), (inclusive of the Base Mark) higher than the following:**

Group A: 2.7

Group B: 2.8

Group C: 2.8

Group P: 3.0

Rationale: To add in the new AQUA rule about hybrids including 1 declaration from each family in the routine and to specify the DD Safety Limits for the Acrobatic Movements (to match new AQUA limits for Youth Combo).

ITEM #7: Accept Guide for the Application of Declared Difficulty Revisions
2025 AQUA Rules

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #7-A: **NOTE: This proposal addresses Item #7 from Convention (Increase Rotation Limits in 12&Under Routines), with voting at Convention as follows:** The proposal was tabled during the BOG/BOD meeting until seeing what AQUA approved for 12&Under routines. Thus, a new proposal is now being put forward.

(see final amendment)

Proposal for 12&Under Safety Limits for Hybrids and Acrobatics

APPENDIX L

12 & UNDER ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

12 & UNDER ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS – SET NUMBER OF ELEMENTS

Hybrid Safety Limits: In all 12 & under routines, ~~Rotation (R-) movements in Levels 5-9 shall be counted only 2 times (2x) per hybrid, as declared on the Coach Card/Element Card.~~ **there shall be a Hybrid Safety Limit for Degree of Difficulty of 3.5 (inclusive of the Base Mark).** This restriction is in addition to all stated AQUA hybrid restrictions. A Base Mark will be applied for violations to the Hybrid Safety Limits ~~for Rotation (R-) movements.~~

** 12 & under Team Acrobatic Movement Safety Limit: Team Acrobatic Movements cannot have a Degree of Difficulty (“DD”) higher than the following **(inclusive of the Base Mark):**

Group A: ~~2.65~~ **2.50**

Group B: 2.60

Group C: ~~2.45~~ **2.60**

Group P: ~~2.50~~ **2.80**

Rationale: To eliminate our prior USAAS rule concerning rotation limits for 12&Under athletes and to adopt both Hybrid and Acrobatic Safety Limits based upon the limits approved by Lara Teixeira.

AN AMENDMENT TO ITEM #7-A (PROPOSED BY C&I COMMITTEE):

APPENDIX L

12 & UNDER ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

12 & UNDER ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS – SET NUMBER OF ELEMENTS

Hybrid Safety Limits: In all 12 & under routines, ~~Rotation (R-) movements in Levels 5-9 shall be counted only 2 times (2x) per hybrid, as declared on the Coach Card/Element Card.~~ **there shall be a Hybrid Safety Limit for Degree of Difficulty of 7.0 (inclusive of the Base Mark of 0.5).** This restriction is in addition to all stated AQUA hybrid restrictions. A Base Mark will be applied for violations to the Hybrid Safety Limits ~~for Rotation (R-) movements.~~

** 12 & under Team Acrobatic Movement Safety Limit: Team Acrobatic Movements **to align with World Aquatics Rules.**

Rationale:

To avoid the need for additional personnel on deck to administer apnea limits, the establishment of a Degree of Difficulty limit on hybrids offers an approach to removing any potential incentive for coaches to write excessively long hybrids for 12&Under Age Group. We arrived at 7.0 as the proposed limit by conducting analysis with the current AQUA Hybrid Difficulty Catalogue, with an average of 15 seconds of apnea per hybrid as a target maximum, in line with the 2024 season total routine apnea limits.

The first analysis involved a simple evaluation of the potential for a hybrid involving five three second airborne actions, which would exceed 15 seconds because movements between these would be necessary. Per the AQUA Hybrid

Difficulty Catalogue, a hybrid could include three times A7 (sustained height in vertical position lasting 3 seconds or more, value 1.45) and two times A6 (sustained height with one or two legs lasting 3 seconds or more, value 1.15). The Degree of Difficulty of this hybrid would be 7.15, and it would take several seconds longer than 15 seconds to execute.

The second analysis involved reviewing videos of winning routines from a November 30-December 1 regional 12&Under Age Group meet in St. Petersburg, Russia. These routines were constructed using the current AQUA rules for routine content and hybrid difficulty, and reflect the types of hybrids we would expect to see this season. This analysis, which can be seen in detail [here](#), revealed that hybrids with an intense focus on rapid execution of difficulty will see a Degree of Difficulty per second in the range of 0.4 to 0.5. This would give a 15 second hybrid a range of Degree of Difficulty from 6.0 to 7.5. This additionally supports a limit of 7.0 as reasonable for hybrids that are not excessively long for 12&Under Age Group Athletes.

This Degree of Difficulty limit will be simple to administer and check for prior to the beginning of events, and does not impose unique restrictions that could hinder development to Youth competition.

AMENDMENT

C&I COMMITTEE AND RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ITEM #7-A AS AMENDED BELOW

APPENDIX L

12 & UNDER ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

12 & UNDER ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS – SET NUMBER OF ELEMENTS

Hybrid Safety Limits: In all 12 & under routines, ~~Rotation (R-) movements in Levels 5-9 shall be counted only 2 times (2x) per hybrid, as declared on the Coach Card/Element Card.~~ **there shall be a Hybrid Safety Limit for Degree of Difficulty of 7.0 (inclusive of the Base Mark of 0.5).** This restriction is in addition to all stated AQUA hybrid restrictions. A Base Mark will be applied for violations to the Hybrid Safety Limits ~~for Rotation (R-) movements.~~

**** 12 & under Team Acrobatic Movement Safety Limit: Team Acrobatic Movements cannot have a Degree of Difficulty (“DD”) higher than the following (inclusive of the Base Mark):**

Group A: ~~2.65~~ **2.50**

Group B: 2.60

Group C: ~~2.45~~ **2.60**

Group P: ~~2.50~~ **2.80**

Rationale: To specify the exact Team Acrobatic Movement Safety Limits.

ITEM #7-B:

Remove apnea bonus from USAAS Rules

(Note: This proposal is to reverse the approval of Item #16 (Apnea Bonus) by BOG/BOD at Convention.)

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

OD 4.6 Application of ~~Bonuses and~~ Penalties:

~~(add new OD 4.6.2.3 and OD 4.6.2.3.1)~~

OD 4.6.2.3 Bonuses in Technical Routines, Free Routines, Acrobatic Routines and Free Combinations:

~~OD 4.6.2.3.1 An apnea bonus shall be applied to the routine score when the routine meets the Free~~

~~Hybrid Apnea Maximums. Refer to Appendix L.~~

~~(renumber the remaining)~~

APPENDIX L

ARTICLE 1, GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL ROUTINES

~~(Add new 1.07)~~

~~1.07 Bonuses: Refer to USAAS Rule OD 4.6.2.3.1.~~

~~(renumber the remaining)~~

~~Housekeeping of Item #16 is approved~~

~~1. Move the entire Article 3 of Appendix Y to Appendix L.~~

~~2. Add new table for 16-19/20 Free Combination Routine with Free Hybrid Apnea Maximum and Factors Applied to Scoring to match the Junior Team Free event.~~

Rationale: To align with AQUA, which has eliminated the apnea bonus in routines.

ITEM #8:

Accept AQUA Routine Penalties Revisions.

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #8-A:

Routine Penalties for Masters Technical Routines, Novice and Intermediate Free Routines with Technical Required Elements, and AWD Routines shall remain the same as listed in the current USAAS Technical Rules.

(see amendment below)

Rationale: Masters and AWD programs are judged on the old scoring system and the routine scores received in these categories cannot support the substantial penalties AQUA is now proposing for routines. At the local level, Novice and Intermediate are also often judged on the old system due to insufficient judging/DTC/STC officials, in addition to the fact that even on the new scoring system these routines do not receive high enough scores to support the new AQUA penalties.

AMENDMENT

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ITEM #8-A AS AMENDED BELOW

IMPORTANT NOTE: *The purpose of this amendment was to specify the Deduction Points for the Free Combination, not previously noted in the rule book. Once Item #8 above is approved to accept the new AQUA penalties, the 1/4 point noted in CP 5.2 and OD 4.6.2.1 will be changed in the rule book to indicate the revised AQUA penalty*

of 1/2 point for 12&U, Youth, Junior and Senior events. Thus, the addition of the second Exception in both rules to clarify that the penalty remains at 1/4 point for the programs listed (Masters, Novice, Intermediate and AWD).

CP 5.2 Deduction Points: In Team and Acrobatic Routine competition, whether Preliminary or Final events, 1/4 point penalty shall be deducted from the Total Score for each competitor less than 8. **In Free Combination, whether Preliminary or Final events, 1/4 point penalty shall be deducted from the Total Score for each competitor less than 10.** See Rule OD 4.6.2.1.

Exception: For U.S. Senior Open Championship exception, see Rule CP 1.1.2.1. For the U.S. Junior Open Championship exception, see Rule CP 1.2.2.1.

Exception: The penalty deducted from the Total Score shall be 1/4 point for Masters Routines, Novice, Intermediate and AWD Routines.

OD 4.6.2.1 In Team and Acrobatic Routine competition, whether in Free Routine Preliminary, Free Routine Final or Technical Routine Preliminary and Technical Routine Final, 1/4 point penalty shall be deducted from the Total Score for each competitor less than 8. **In Free Combination, whether Free Routine Preliminary or Free Routine Final, 1/4 point penalty shall be deducted from the Total Score for each competitor less than 10.**

Exception: For U.S. Senior Open Championship exception, see Rule CP 1.1.2.1. For the U.S. Junior Open Championship exception, see Rule CP 1.2.2.1.

Exception: The penalty deducted from the Total Score shall be 1/4 point for Masters, Novice, Intermediate and AWD Routines.

Rationale: To specify the penalty in the Free Combination routine (not previously noted in our rule book) and to stipulate that the penalty remains at 1/4 point for certain programs.

ITEM#8-B: Move routine penalty information to Appendix L.

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

OD 4.6.2 Routine Competition **(Refer to Appendix L)**

Eliminate OD 4.6.2.1 through OD 4.6.2.8.3 from the Technical Rules and place all routine penalty information in Appendix L using the new AQUA penalty chart format.

Rationale: Easier for coaches to understand what the penalties are, for example, if all Intermediate routines penalties are listed in Appendix L, where all Intermediate routine requirements are listed.

ITEM #9: Accept most recent (Oct 2024) AQUA Hybrid, Pair Acro, and Team Acro catalogues

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #10: STC and DTC review rule

NOTE: This proposal addresses Item #9 from Convention (DTC and STC Review Rule), with Convention voting as follows: An additional amendment (see below) was

proposed during Convention; however, prior to voting on that amendment the USAAS Board of Directors voted to send this item back to the C&I Committee for further discussion.

(see final amendment)

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

(Add new TR 3.8 and TR 3.8.1)

TR 3.8 Any DTC or STC review request shall be made within 30 minutes of the Completion of the event in which the alleged infraction took place. DTC review requests must be accompanied by a fee of \$50.00 per element for which review is requested. The STC review shall be for major synchronization errors only, and are permitted only if there are more than 5 major synchronization errors awarded in a routine. STC review must also be accompanied by a fee of \$50.00.

TR 3.8.1 In the event that the alleged infraction is upheld, the fee of \$50.00 shall go to the host organization.

TR 3.8.2 In the event that the alleged infraction is overturned, the fee of \$50.00 shall Be returned to the payer.

Rationale: Due to a lot of review requests that were made by coaches just to try overturn even though Base Mark was clear we ask for a fee of \$50 for each element to be Reviewed to hopefully reduce the number of reviews. We ask for the process of STC reviews for 5 or more majors only in case there was an error made by STC panel and for the cases when coaches cannot see and understand why those majors were given to the routine .

AMENDED PROPOSAL

OD 3.4 Review Process:

OD 3.4.1 There may be a review process as determined by the Vice President Competitive Programs (or appointed representative) or the appropriate Technical Chair (or appointed representative). Any request for review of a DTC or STC ruling shall be made within 30 minutes of completion of the event for which the review is being requested.

- 1. DTC review requests shall be accompanied by a fee of \$50.00 per element for which review is requested. The review panel shall consist of three Level 2 certified DTCs, unaffiliated if possible.**
- 2. STC review requests shall be accompanied by a fee of \$50.00. An STC review request shall be for major synchronization errors only and is permitted only if there are five (5) or more major synchronization errors declared in a routine. The review panel shall consist of three Level 2 certified STCs, unaffiliated if possible.**
- 3. If a DTC and/or STC ruling is overturned, the fee shall be returned to the requester. If a DTC and/or STC ruling is upheld, the fee shall remain with the authority conducting the competition (i.e., Club, Association, Region, Zone, National).**

Rationale: This proposal belongs under the Technical Controller/Review Process section, not under Protests and needs to state who comprises the review panel.

NEW AMENDMENT PROPOSED POST CONVENTION

OD 3.4 Review Process:

OD 3.4.1 There may be a review process as determined by the Vice President Competitive Programs (or appointed representative) or the appropriate Technical Chair (or appointed representative). **Any request for review of a DTC or STC ruling shall be made within 30 minutes of completion of the event for which the review is being requested.**

- 1. The DTC review** requests shall be accompanied by a fee of \$50.00 per element for which review is requested. **The review panel shall consist of three Level 2 certified DTCs, unaffiliated if possible.**
- 2. STC review requests shall be accompanied by a fee of \$50.00. An STC review request shall be for major synchronization errors only and is permitted only if there are five (5) or more major synchronization errors declared in a routine. The review panel shall consist of three Level 2 certified STCs, unaffiliated if possible.**
- 3. If a DTC and/or STC ruling is overturned, the fee shall be returned to the requester. If a DTC and/or STC ruling is upheld, the fee shall remain with the authority conducting the competition (i.e., Club, Association, Region, Zone, National).**

Rationale: The athlete representatives at Convention expressed a strong desire to apply no fees for reviews in 2025 due to all of the new AQUA rules that the technical controllers will be learning.

AMENDMENT

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ITEM #10 AS AMENDED BELOW

OD 3.4 Review Process:

OD 3.4.1 There may be a review process as determined by the Vice President Competitive Programs (or appointed representative) or the appropriate Technical Chair (or appointed representative). **A request for review of a DTC or STC ruling shall be made within 30 minutes of completion of the event for which the review is being requested. An STC review request shall be for major synchronization errors only and is permitted only if there are 5 or more major synchronization errors declared in a routine.**

OD 3.4.2 **Where possible, the DTC and/or STC review panel(s) shall consist of 3 unaffiliated Level 2 certified Technical Controllers (DTC/STC respectively).**

OD 3.4.3 **When unaffiliated Level 2 certified Technical Controllers are not available, the Vice President Competitive Programs (or appointed representative) or the appropriate Technical Chair (or appointed representative) may appoint replacements.**

Rationale: To clearly state what the Review Process is going forward but to allow flexibility in situations where there are not enough Level 2 certified controllers.

ITEM #11:

Masters Figure Penalties

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

OD 4.6 Application of Penalties:

OD 4.6.1 Figure Competition:

OD 4.6.1.1 For the **Masters**, 12 & under, Intermediate and Novice categories, if a competitor does not perform the announced figure, or if the figure does not have all of the required elements, or is performed other than according to the description, the competitor shall be allowed to perform the figure again and a 1 point penalty shall be applied. If the competitor fails again, the Panel Referee shall inform the judges and the competitor that the result will be a zero for that figure.

MS 5 **JUDGING AND SCORING**

ADD NEW MS 5.4

MS 5.4 Application of Figure Penalties: Refer to Rule OD 4.6.1.1 and OD 4.6.1.3.

Rationale: To address an issue arising at the 2024 Masters National Championships and clarify how figure penalties are applied in Masters Figure Competition.

2024 UPDATED RULES PROPOSALS TO BOD

IMPORTANT NOTE: Each item below is to be voted on individually. "A" and "B" items are labeled as such because they pertain to the specific AQUA rule noted in the main item number, but the "A" and "B" items do require their own vote separately from the main item number.

ITEM #1: Accept Appendix 1 Revisions, Youth Figures
2025 AQUA Rules

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #1-A:

OPTION A: Perform only two figures for all competitors in the Youth Age Group Division

AMENDMENT

C&I COMMITTEE AND RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ITEM #1-A AS AMENDED BELOW

CP 4.3.3.1 Youth Championships: One group of 2 figures shall be performed. This group of figures shall consist of 2 figures drawn from the Section A, B or C from the Youth Age Group Division Figure Selection Groups listed in Figure Rule II.D.

1. The Youth Figure Section A, B or C shall be drawn first, then the order of appearance shall be drawn. **Then 1 of the 2 figure groups of the drawn Section will be drawn. For example, if Section B, Group 4 is drawn, then all competitors will shall compete Section B, Group 4.** The order of appearance draw list will be divided into 2 equal groups — Group 1 and 2 (if numbers are not equal, Group 1 will have 1 extra competitor). Then 1 of the 2 figure groups of the drawn Section will be assigned by lot to each competitor Group 1 and 2. For example, if Section B is drawn, competitor Group 1 may have Group 4 drawn, and competitor Group 2 may have Group 3 drawn.
2. ~~Each group will have a separate ranking. The 2 rankings will not be combined.~~

Rationale: Change wording from will to shall.

ITEM #2: Accept Appendix 2 Revisions, Technical Required Elements
2025 AQUA Rules

AMENDMENT

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ITEM #2 AS AMENDED BELOW

Accept Appendix 2 Revisions, Technical Required Elements **and General Regulations**
2025 AQUA Rules

Rationale: The clarify we are accepting both the new General Regulations and the Technical Required Elements in the AQUA Appendix 2.

ITEM #3: Accept Appendix 3 Revisions, Junior and Senior Events
2025 AQUA Rules
RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #3-A: Collegiate Rule Proposal (Collegiate Trio Free)
RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL
IMPORTANT NOTE: This proposal is presented using the chart in our current rulebook, but once Item #3 above is approved, the Collegiate Trio proposal will be inserted into the Jr/Sr Set Number of Elements chart based on the new AQUA chart.

JUNIOR / SENIOR ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

JUNIOR / SENIOR ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS – SET NUMBER OF ELEMENTS			
Event	Time (+/- 5 sec)	Total Elements	Summary
1. Solo Technical	2:00	7	Total of 5 Technical Required Elements and 2 Free Hybrids.
2. Solo Free	2:15	7	Total of 7 Free Hybrids.
3. Duet Technical	2:20	8	Total of 5 Technical Required Elements, 2 Free Hybrids and 1 Pair Acrobatic*. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
4. Duet Free	2:45	9	Total of 7 Free Hybrids and 2 Pair Acrobatics*. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
5. Mixed Duet Technical	2:20	8	Total of 5 Technical Required Elements, 2 Free Hybrids (1 which must include a Hybrid connection) and 1 Pair Acrobatic*. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
6. Mixed Duet Free	2:45	9	Total of 6 Free Hybrids (1 which must include a Hybrid connection) and 3 Pair Acrobatics* (1 Lift, 1 Throw/Jump and 1 free choice). PLUS additional required movements for Mixed Duet Free: 2 connected surface movements with travel. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
7. Collegiate Trio Free	2:45	<u>8</u>	Total of <u>5</u> Free Hybrids and 3 Pair Acrobatics*. *See Article 1, Section 1.04.
8. Team Technical	2:50	9	Total of 5 Technical Required Elements, 3 Free Hybrids (1 which must include a Cadence Action*) and 1 Required Team Acrobatic Movement.* *See Article 1, Sections 1.03 & 1.05.

9. Team Free	3:30	11	Total of 7 Free Hybrids and 4 Free Team Acrobatic Movements.* *See Article 1, Section 1.03.
10. Acrobatic Routine	3:00	7	7 Team Acrobatic Movements* (1 of each group = 4 + 3 of free group choice) + Transitions are free, but no difficulty awarded + Hybrids are free, but no difficulty awarded. *See Article 1, Section 1.03.

Rationale: Due to the recent AQUA changes affecting the total number of elements for routines. We propose changing the total number of elements for Collegiate Trios such that the total number of elements matches Free Duet (with the exception of swapping one Hybrid for an additional Acro).

ITEM #4: Accept Appendix 3 Revisions, 12/U and Youth Events
2025 AQUA Rules
RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #5: Accept Appendix 4 Revisions, Acrobatic Routine
2025 AQUA Rules
RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #6: Accept Appendix 5 Revisions, Free Combination Routine
2025 AQUA Rules
RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #6-A: Revise Appendix L
16-19/20 Free Combination Routine Additional Requirements
(see amendment below)

AMENDMENT

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ITEM #6-A AS AMENDED BELOW

Revise Appendix L
16-19/20 Free Combination Routine Additional Requirements

Time = 3:30
Elements = 10

- a) 4 Team Acrobatics * **with DD safety limit**** (free choice, but must not repeat the same acrobatic)
- b) 1 x DD Solo Hybrid
- c) 1 x DD Duet Hybrid

d) 1 x DD Trio Hybrid

e) 2 x Team DD Hybrid (must be executed with a minimum of 4 athletes)

*** Must include 1 declaration from each family in the routine (counted across Solo, Duet, Trio and Team DD Hybrids)**

f) 1 x Team choreography hybrid with no DD (i.e. factor of 1.0) (must be executed with a minimum of 4 athletes)

g) Element parts cannot occur simultaneously (i.e. Team Acrobatic occurs while Solo Hybrid starts)

**** Safety Limit: Team Acrobatic Movements cannot have a Degree of Difficulty (“DD”), (inclusive of the Base Mark) higher than the following:**

Group A: 2.7

Group B: 2.8

Group C: 2.8

Group P: 3.0

Rationale: To add in the new AQUA rule about hybrids including 1 declaration from each family in the routine and to specify the DD Safety Limits for the Acrobatic Movements (to match new AQUA limits for Youth Combo).

ITEM #7:

Accept Guide for the Application of Declared Difficulty Revisions
2025 AQUA Rules

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #7-A:

APPENDIX L

12 & UNDER ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

AMENDMENT

C&I COMMITTEE AND RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF ITEM #7-A AS AMENDED BELOW

APPENDIX L

12 & UNDER ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

12 & UNDER ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS – SET NUMBER OF ELEMENTS

Hybrid Safety Limits: In all 12 & under routines, ~~Rotation (R-) movements in~~

~~Levels 5-9 shall be counted only 2 times (2x) per hybrid, as declared on the~~

~~Coach Card/Element Card. **there shall be a Hybrid Safety Limit for Degree of**~~

~~**Difficulty of 7.0 (inclusive of the Base Mark of 0.5).** This restriction is in~~

~~addition to all stated AQUA hybrid restrictions. A Base Mark will be applied for~~

~~violations to the Hybrid Safety Limits for ~~Rotation (R-) movements.~~~~

** 12 & under Team Acrobatic Movement Safety Limit: Team Acrobatic Movements cannot have a Degree of Difficulty (“DD”) higher than the following **(inclusive of the Base Mark)**:

Group A: ~~2.65~~ **2.50**

Group B: 2.60

Group C: ~~2.45~~ **2.60**

Group P: ~~2.50~~ **2.80**

Rationale: To specify the exact Team Acrobatic Movement Safety Limits.

ITEM #7-B:

Remove apnea bonus from USAAS Rules

(Note: This proposal is to reverse the approval of Item #16 (Apnea Bonus) by BOG/BOD at Convention.)

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

Rationale: To align with AQUA, which has eliminated the apnea bonus in routines.

ITEM #8:

Accept AQUA Routine Penalties Revisions.

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #8-A:

Routine Penalties for Masters Technical Routines, Novice and Intermediate Free Routines with Technical Required Elements, and AWD Routines shall remain the same as listed in the current USAAS Technical Rules.

(see amendment below)

Rationale: Masters and AWD programs are judged on the old scoring system and the routine scores received in these categories cannot support the substantial penalties AQUA is now proposing for routines. At the local level, Novice and Intermediate are also often judged on the old system due to insufficient judging/DTC/STC officials, in addition to the fact that even on the new scoring system these routines do not receive high enough scores to support the new AQUA penalties.

AMENDMENT

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ITEM #8-A AS AMENDED BELOW

IMPORTANT NOTE: The purpose of this amendment was to specify the Deduction Points for the Free Combination, not previously noted in the rule book. Once Item #8 above is approved to accept the new AQUA penalties, the 1/4 point noted in CP 5.2 and OD 4.6.2.1 will be changed in the rule book to indicate the revised AQUA penalty of 1/2 point for 12&U, Youth, Junior and Senior events. Thus, the addition of the second Exception in both rules to clarify that the penalty remains at 1/4 point for the programs listed (Masters, Novice, Intermediate and AWD).

CP 5.2 Deduction Points: In Team and Acrobatic Routine competition, whether Preliminary or Final events, $\frac{1}{4}$ (1/2) point penalty shall be deducted from the Total Score for each competitor

less than 8. **In Free Combination, whether Preliminary or Final events, ¼ (1/2) point penalty shall be deducted from the Total Score for each competitor less than 10.** See Rule OD 4.6.2.1.

Exception: For U.S. Senior Open Championship exception, see Rule CP 1.1.2.1. For the U.S. Junior Open Championship exception, see Rule CP 1.2.2.1.

Exception: The penalty deducted from the Total Score shall be 1/4 point for Masters Routines, Novice, Intermediate and AWD Routines.

OD 4.6.2.1 In Team and Acrobatic Routine competition, whether in Free Routine Preliminary, Free Routine Final or Technical Routine Preliminary and Technical Routine Final, ¼ (1/2) point penalty shall be deducted from the Total Score for each competitor less than 8. **In Free Combination, whether Free Routine Preliminary or Free Routine Final, ¼ (1/2) point penalty shall be deducted from the Total Score for each competitor less than 10.**

Exception: For U.S. Senior Open Championship exception, see Rule CP 1.1.2.1. For the U.S. Junior Open Championship exception, see Rule CP 1.2.2.1.

Exception: The penalty deducted from the Total Score shall be 1/4 point for Masters, Novice, Intermediate and AWD Routines.

Rationale: To specify the penalty in the Free Combination routine (not previously noted in our rule book) and to stipulate that the penalty remains at 1/4 point for certain programs.

ITEM#8-B: Move routine penalty information to Appendix L.

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

OD 4.6.2 Routine Competition (**Refer to Appendix L**)

Eliminate OD 4.6.2.1 through OD 4.6.2.8.3 from the Technical Rules and place all routine penalty information in Appendix L using the new AQUA penalty chart format.

Rationale: Easier for coaches to understand what the penalties are, for example, if all Intermediate routines penalties are listed in Appendix L, where all Intermediate routine requirements are listed.

ITEM #9: Accept most recent (Oct 2024) AQUA Hybrid, Pair Acro, and Team Acro catalogues

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

ITEM #10: STC and DTC review rule

AMENDMENT

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL OF ITEM #10 AS AMENDED BELOW

OD 3.4 Review Process:

OD 3.4.1 ~~There may be a review process as determined by the Vice President Competitive Programs (or appointed representative) or the appropriate~~

Technical Chair (or appointed representative). A request for review of a DTC or STC ruling shall be made within 30 minutes of completion of the event for which the review is being requested. An STC review request shall be for major synchronization errors only and is permitted only if there are 5 or more major synchronization errors declared in a routine.

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OD 3.4.3 When unaffiliated Level 2 certified Technical Controllers are not available, the Vice President Competitive Programs (or appointed representative) or the appropriate Technical Chair (or appointed representative) may appoint replacements.

Rationale: To clearly state what the Review Process is going forward but to allow flexibility in situations where there are not enough Level 2 certified controllers.

ITEM #11:

Masters Figure Penalties

RULES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS APPROVAL

OD 4.6 Application of Penalties:

OD 4.6.1 Figure Competition:

OD 4.6.1.1 For the Masters, 12 & under, Intermediate and Novice categories, if a competitor does not perform the announced figure, or if the figure does not have all of the required elements, or is performed other than according to the description, the competitor shall be allowed to perform the figure again and a 1 point penalty shall be applied. If the competitor fails again, the Panel Referee shall inform the judges and the competitor that the result will be a zero for that figure.

MS 5 JUDGING AND SCORING

ADD NEW MS 5.4

MS 5.4 Application of Figure Penalties: Refer to Rule OD 4.6.1.1 and OD 4.6.1.3.

Rationale: To address an issue arising at the 2024 Masters National Championships and clarify how figure penalties are applied in Masters Figure Competition.