

2025 USAAS RULES PROPOSALS

ITEM #1: Remove all references to US Open Championship from all sections of the USAAS Rulebook, including all Appendices.
Rules Committee Recommends Approval

Rationale: Neither the US Senior Open Championship nor the US Junior Open Championship have been conducted in many years and there are no apparent plans to reinstate these competitions.

ITEM #2: Adopt AQUA rules for number of participants included in Final events.
Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

CP 6.5.5 A drawing shall be held for the order of appearance in Finals as follows:

CP 6.5.5.1 For all competitions: After the Figures and/or Technical routines, Free routine Preliminaries, Acrobatic Routine Preliminary and Free Combination Preliminary, the first 12 by total score shall compete in the Finals. If the number of participants in preliminaries is higher than 35, the first fourteen (14) by total score shall compete in the Finals.

Rationale: Follow AQUA rules for Final events for consistency.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (to follow AQUA procedure for national championships with the exception of U.S. Junior Olympics)

CP 6.5.5 A drawing shall be held for the order of appearance in Finals as follows:

CP 6.5.5.1 For all competitions: After the Figures and/or Technical routines, Free routine Preliminaries, Acrobatic Routine Preliminary and Free Combination Preliminary, the first 12 by total score shall compete in the Finals.

Exception: For the U.S. National, U.S. Junior National and Youth National championships, and the U.S. 12 & Under National Invitational, if the number of participants in preliminaries is higher than 35, the first fourteen (14) by total score shall compete in the Finals.

ITEM #3: Adopt AQUA rules for order of appearance in Final events.
Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

CP 6.5.5 A drawing shall be held for the order of appearance in Finals as follows:

CP 6.5.5.1 For all competitions: After the Figures and/or Technical routines, Free routine Preliminaries, Acrobatic Routine Preliminary and Free Combination Preliminary, the first 12 by total score shall compete in the Finals.

- ~~1. The order of appearance in Finals shall be determined by lot in groups of 6 competitors. Those who placed 1-6 per CP 6.5.5.1 shall draw for start numbers 7-12. Those who placed 7-12 per CP 6.5.5.1 shall draw for start numbers 1-6. If the number of competitors is not divisible by 6, the smallest group must start first.~~
The order of appearance in Finals will be: the top 12 finalists from the preliminaries will swim in reverse order. Example: number 12 swims first, number 11 swims 2nd, etc. In cases of ties in the Preliminaries, there will be a separate draw between tied competitors to decide the order of the main draw.
- ~~2. For the Final draw, the highest qualifier in each group shall draw first, with the next qualifiers drawing in order of placement. If there is a tie for placement within the same group of 6, the names of the tied competitors shall be drawn by lot to determine the competitor to draw first for the order of swim. If there is a tie for places 6 and 7 (different groups), those routines will form their own group in the draw (1-5, 6-7, 8-12).~~

Rationale: Follow AQUA rules for Final events for consistency with the seeding procedures in other aquatic sports.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (to follow AQUA procedures with the exception of U.S. Junior Olympics)

CP 6.5.5 A drawing shall be held for the order of appearance in Finals as follows:

CP 6.5.5.1 For all competitions: After the Figures and/or Technical routines, Free routine Preliminaries, Acrobatic Routine Preliminary and Free Combination Preliminary, the first 12 by total score shall compete in the Finals.

Add new CP 6.5.5.1.1. and CP 6.5.5.1.2

CP 6.5.5.1.1 For the U.S. National, U.S. Junior National and Youth National championships, and the U.S. 12 & Under National Invitational, the order of appearance in Finals will be: the top 12 finalists from the preliminaries will swim in reverse order. Example: number 12 swims first, number 11 swims 2nd, etc. In cases of ties in the Preliminaries, there will be a separate draw between tied competitors to decide the order of the main draw.

CP 6.5.5.1.2 For the U.S. Junior Olympic Championship:

1. The order of appearance in Finals shall be determined by lot in groups of 6 competitors. Those who placed 1-6 per CP 6.5.5.1 shall draw for start numbers 7-12. Those who placed 7-12 per CP 6.5.5.1 shall draw for start numbers 1-6. If the number of competitors is not divisible by 6, the smallest group must start first.
2. For the Final draw, the highest qualifier in each group shall draw first, with the next qualifiers drawing in order of placement. If there is a tie for placement within the same group of 6, the names of the tied competitors shall be drawn by lot to determine the competitor to draw first for the order of swim. If there is a tie for places 6 and 7 (different groups), those routines will form their own group in the draw (1-5, 6-7, 8-12).

Rationale: Preference to maintain current draw rules for U.S. Junior Olympics, and have the elite championships follow the AQUA rules.

ITEM 4:

Remove all AQUA figures from the figure section of the USAAS Rulebook and refer instead to AQUA's Artistic Swimming | Figures Manual 2022-2025 and Artistic Swimming | Manual for Judges, Technical Controllers, Referees and Coaches 2022-2025, as follows:

Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

PART FOUR, FIGURE RULES

FIGURE RULE 1

- A. ALPHABETICAL INDEX OF FIGURES: Retain alphabetical index, but highlight USAAS-only figures, and refer all others to the above-named manuals.
- B. THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF FIGURES: Retain as is.

FIGURE RULE II, COMPULSORY FIGURES AND FIGURE SELECTION GROUPS FOR COMPETITIONS: Retain as is.

FIGURE RULE III, GENERAL REGULATIONS, GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR FIGURE EXECUTION: Retain as is.

FIGURE RULE IV, BASIC POSITIONS FOR FIGURES: Retain as is.

FIGURE RULE V, BASIC TRANSITIONS AND MOVEMENTS: Retain as is.

FIGURE RULE VI, DESCRIPTION OF FIGURES FOR ARTISTIC SWIMMING: List and describe the USAAS-only figures.

*Rationale: Having **all** figure descriptions in our USAAS is a duplication of effort when the AQUA figures are already listed in their manual, which is what we generally refer to as a matter of course. The actual formatting of the AQUA/USAAS figures will be decided during the process of updating the rulebook.*

ITEM 5:

Rename figure 345 Reverse Catalina as Catalina Reverse.

Figures Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

Rationale: As a matter of course the root figure name goes first (e.g., Ballet Leg Single and Ballet Leg Straight), so renaming this figure as Catalina Reverse puts the root figure name first and also matches the AQUA name for the figure.

ITEM #6:

Change description of Figure #302, Blossom to match AQUA description.

Figures Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

From a **Back Layout Position**, the legs are raised to the vertical as the body is submerged to a **Back Pike Position** with the toes just under the surface of the water. trunk is lowered as the hips are bent to assume a Submerged Ballet Leg Double Position. The feet separate along the surface of the water as a vertical upward movement of the legs and hips is executed as the body unrolls to assume the hips rise and the body assumes a **Split Position**. The legs join to assume a **Vertical Position** at ankle level. Maintaining the **Vertical Position**, the body descends along its longitudinal axis until the toes are submerged. **A Vertical Descent is executed.**

Rationale: As Blossom is an AQUA figure, our description should align with theirs.

ITEM #7: Update OD rules to reflect current practices and/or match AQUA.

Officials' Committee Recommends Approval
Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

OD 2 JUDGES

OD 2.1 Eligibility:

OD 2.1.1 ~~Categories of National Judges:~~

~~OD 2.1.1.1 Category 1: All Level 4 and 5 Judges who participate in judging at the Association, Regional or Zone Championships annually and who are unaffiliated at a specific competition.~~

~~OD 2.1.1.2 Category 2: All Level 4 and 5 Judges who meet the above requirements but are affiliated at a specific competition. These judges may be unaffiliated for some events at this competition and may judge as an unaffiliated judge in those events.~~

~~OD 2.1.2 2.1.1 All other Rated Judges: Judges who are on the current accredited list with the appropriate rating for that Championship. Level 2 and above shall be considered equal at all Association Championships.~~

Rationale: Category 1 & 2 references for judges have not been used in quite some time.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (to reference what judge level needs to be for specific competitions)

OD 2 JUDGES

OD 2.1 Eligibility:

OD 2.1.1 ~~Categories of National Judges:~~

~~OD 2.1.1.1 Category 1: All Level 4 and 5 Judges who participate in judging at the Association, Regional or Zone Championships annually and who are unaffiliated at a specific competition.~~

~~OD 2.1.1.2 Category 2: All Level 4 and 5 Judges who meet the above requirements but are affiliated at a specific competition. These judges may be unaffiliated for some events at this competition and may judge as an unaffiliated judge in those events.~~

~~OD 2.1.2 2.1.1 All other Rated Judges: Judges who are on the current accredited list with the appropriate rating for a specific competition. Refer to Appendix G, that Championship. Level 2 and above shall be considered equal at all Association Championships.~~

Rationale: Provide the reference that explains what level accredited judges are needed at each specific competition level.

ITEM #8: Update OD rules to reflect current practices and/or match AQUA.

Officials' Committee Recommends Approval
Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

OD 2.3 Selection Procedures:

~~OD 2.3.2 The Officials' Committee Chair shall draw select a minimum of 10 4 available unaffiliated judges from the list of eligible Category 1 Judges for each competition. For National Championships where a National Team Trials is attached, selection priority will be given to the judges selected by the Chief of Sport for the National Team Trials. These judges shall be officially notified that they have been selected and are required to be available to judge the entire competition. The individual judges shall officially accept or reject this selection. For the U.S. Senior Open Championship, only World Aquatics judges shall be selected.~~

~~OD 2.3.3.2 Judge Utilization: Where possible, the judges shall be drawn for Preliminary events in such a manner that no judge shall be used twice until all eligible unaffiliated judges have been used. The same procedures shall apply to Final events.~~

~~OD 2.3.3.3 Back to Back Judging: Where possible, a judge shall not be selected to judge consecutive Preliminary events on the same day.~~

Rationale: With National Team Trials attached to both the US Nationals/Jr meet & Youth meet, the judges for trials have been selected by the Chief of Sport and judge the entire competition. Fiscal considerations no longer make it possible to bring in 2 different sets of judges for trials & the competition. Since judges are now reimbursed for their flights & receive a hotel room,

this process is more beneficial to the judges. Previously, judges received hotel room, but only a small portion of reimbursement on airfare. USAAS no longer receives a set number of 'comp' rooms for judges, staff & volunteers. Rationale: Preselected (unaffiliated) judges are expected to judge consecutive events. We do try to give them a break when possible and we also use a wide selection of affiliated judges.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (amend to minimum of 6 unaffiliated so that the majority of each judging panel is unaffiliated, and also to allow judges sufficient notice of their selection)

OD 2.3 Selection Procedures:

- OD 2.3.1 All National Judges shall declare which competitions they shall be able to attend as an unaffiliated judge and which they shall be able to attend as an affiliated judge.
- OD 2.3.2 The Officials' Committee Chair shall draw select a minimum of 10 **6 available unaffiliated** judges from the list of eligible Category 1 Judges for each competition. **For National Championships where a National Team Trials is attached, selection priority will be given to the judges selected by the Chief of Sport for the National Team Trials.** These judges shall be officially notified that they have been selected and are **required to be available to judge the entire competition.** The individual judges shall officially accept or reject this selection. For the U.S. Senior Open Championship, only World Aquatics judges shall be selected.

Add new 2.3.3

OD 2.3.3 Judges who have confirmed their availability will be notified whether or not they have been selected at least 60 days prior to the start of the competition.

OD 2.3.3.2 Judge Utilization: Where possible, the judges shall be drawn for Preliminary events in such a manner that no judge shall be used twice until all eligible unaffiliated judges have been used. The same procedures shall apply to Final events.

OD 2.3.3.3 Back to Back Judging: Where possible, a judge shall not be selected to judge consecutive Preliminary events on the same day.

Rationale: Desire to have majority unaffiliated judges; Judges need sufficient notice to arrange their schedules, travel, etc.

ITEM #9: Update OD rules to reflect current practices and/or match AQUA.
Officials' Committee Recommends Approval
Rules Committee Recommends Approval

OD 2.3 Selection Procedures:

OD 2.3.4 Selection of Judges:

OD 2.3.4.1 Judges shall be selected in the order of events.

and renumber following

OD 2.3.4.2 Judges shall be selected from a list of eligible judges as determined by the Officials' Committee **Chair for National Championships; otherwise, by the respective Officials Chair (or appointed representative).**

OD 2.3.4.4 Eligible judges are those on the current accredited list with the appropriate rating for that competition. (Example: At Senior Association Championships, Level 2 and higher ratings shall be considered equal.) Under no circumstances shall a judge with an inappropriate rating be selected until **All** available judges with appropriate ratings shall be have been seated **first.**

Rationale: Outdated verbiage corrected.

ITEM #10: Update OD rules to reflect current practices and/or match AQUA.
Officials' Committee Recommends Approval
Rules Committee Recommends Approval

OD 2.4 Duties/Responsibilities:

OD 2.4.1 When judging an event, a judge shall possess only those papers approved by the Event Referee.

OD 2.4.2 Each judge shall be provided with a means of recording and a visible signaling of awards.

- OD 2.4.2.1** At the completion of each routine the judges record their scores on a judging system (paper or electronic) provided. ~~by the Meet Management Committee. All scores shall be received and reviewed by the Event Referee (or appointed representative) before the scores are simultaneously presented manually, displayed on the scoreboard or announced, and shall then be the accepted score in case of error or dispute. When an electronic system is used, if a judge(s) makes an error inputting a score, the judge shall notify the Event Referee prior to the announcement of the scores for the routine, or the announcement of the next routine, whichever comes first.~~
- ~~**OD 2.4.2.2** On a signal of the Event Referee, the judges' scores will simultaneously be presented manually or electronically for each panel.~~
- OD 2.4.3** No judge shall communicate with another individual while a competitor(s) is performing.
- OD 2.4.4** Judges once seated may not leave their positions without the Event Referee's approval.
- OD 2.4.4.1** A judge who leaves the assigned position without approval shall be declared ineligible to judge for the remainder of that competition.
- ~~**OD 2.4.4.2** If a second infraction occurs, the judge shall be declared ineligible to judge for 1 year from the date of the infraction.~~

Rationale: Updating verbiage to match current procedures.

ITEM #11: Update OD rules to reflect current practices and/or match AQUA.

Officials' Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

OD 2.5 Judging Panels:

OD 2.5.1 Figure Competition:

- OD 2.5.1.1** Judges shall be placed, ~~when possible, in elevated positions~~ in such locations as to have a profile view of the competitors.

OD 2.5.2 Routine Competition:

- OD 2.5.2.1** Judges shall be placed, when possible, in elevated positions on opposite sides of the pool.

- OD 2.5.2.2** At all National Championships, When possible, 2 panels of 5 judges shall officiate in all routine events; one panel for Elements and one panel for Artistic Impression.

- When 6 to 8 judges are available, 2 panels of either 3 or 4 judges shall be used.

- OD 2.5.2.3** Two One Event Assistant Referees may be assigned for routine competition. ~~to assist the Event Referee with assessment of penalties. Refer to Appendix L.~~

Rationale: Updating verbiage to match current procedures.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (to clarify that there should be 2 panels of 5 judges at every competition)

OD 2.5 Judging Panels:

OD 2.5.1 Figure Competition:

- OD 2.5.1.1** Judges shall be placed, ~~when possible, in elevated positions~~ in such locations as to have a profile view of the competitors.

OD 2.5.2 Routine Competition:

- OD 2.5.2.1** Judges shall be placed, when possible, in elevated positions on opposite sides of the pool.

- OD 2.5.2.2** At all National Championships competitions 10 judges (2 panels of 5 judges) shall officiate in all routine events; one panel for Elements and one panel for Artistic Impression.

- ~~When~~ If only 6 to 8 judges are available, 2 panels of either 3 or 4 judges shall be used.

- OD 2.5.2.3** Two One Event Assistant Referees may be assigned for routine competition. ~~to assist the Event Referee with assessment of penalties. Refer to Appendix L.~~

Rationale: It is the goal to ensure every competition has 2 panels of 5 judges.

ITEM #12: Update OD rules to reflect current practices and/or match AQUA.

Officials' Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

OD 2.6 Methods of Scoring:

OD 2.6.1 Figure Competition:

OD 2.6.1.3 The judges' scores shall be flashed simultaneously and announced immediately after each figure on a signal from the Panel Referee. ~~Judges' scores may only be flashed on the scoreboard or be sent to the computer after approval by the Panel Referee.~~

OD 2.6.2 Routine Competition:

OD 2.6.2.1 Judges shall award scores from 0–10, with 0.25 point increments.

1. If 1 or more judge(s), by reason of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, has given no score for a routine, the average of the scores of the other remaining judges shall be computed and shall be considered as the missing score. For Methods of Scoring, see Rules OD 5.1.2.3.
2. If an unexpected situation occurs during the session and 1 or more judges cannot give a score for a routine, the Event Referee may disrupt the session and performance. After the settlement of the matter and safe confirmation, the Event Referee shall resume the session and allow the competitors to swim again.

OD 2.6.2.3 At the completion of each routine:

1. Judges shall record their scores and submit them on a judging system (paper or electronic) provided by the Meet Management Committee.
2. When the Event Referee (or appointed representative) determines that all scores have been received, the Event Referee shall signal for the results to be simultaneously presented manually, displayed on the scoreboard or to be announced. Judges' scores shall not be changed after being posted on the scoreboard or announced.
3. At the discretion of the Vice President Competitive Programs (or appointed representative) at all National Championships or the appropriate Technical Chair (or appointed representative) at all other competitions, the display of routine scores may be waived. If the scores are not displayed, the following alternate scoring method may be used.
 - When the Event Referee determines that all scores have been received, the Event Referee shall signal for the start of the next routine.
 - Scores for routines shall be announced as per standard procedures at any specific competition read upon completion of routine # 2 and the competitors shall be introduced at that time.
 - ~~This procedure shall be followed throughout the event.~~
4. Scores are only official once signed by the Vice President Competitive Programs (or appointed representative) or the appropriate Technical Chair (or appointed representative) at the conclusion of the competition.

OD 2.6.2.4

Second Panel – Artistic Impression

TRANSITIONS consider: The ~~artistry and mastery~~ execution and complexity of varied and purposeful movements, propulsions and strokes that link the routine elements.

Rationale: Updating verbiage to match AQUA.

ITEM #13: Update OD rules to reflect current practices and/or match AQUA.

Officials' Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

OD 3 TECHNICAL CONTROLLER

OD 3.1 Eligibility: An Official with the appropriate training. Refer to Appendix G.

OD 3.2 Selection Procedures:

OD 3.2.1 All Technical Controllers shall declare which competitions they shall be able to attend as a Technical Controller.

OD 3.2.2 The Officials' Committee Chair shall draw 6 Technical Controllers from the list of eligible, **and available**, Technical Controllers for each competition **event**. These Technical Controllers shall be **officially** notified that they have been selected and are **guaranteed to officiate at least 1 event**. The individual technical controllers shall officially accept or reject this selection.

OD 3.3 Duties/Responsibilities of the Technical Controllers:

OD 3.3.1 Two groups of 3 Technical Controllers shall officiate in all routines: 1 group to check the number, order of performance and predeclared difficulty of **Free** Elements (Hybrids and Acrobatics) and the performance and predeclared order of the Technical Required Elements (Technical routines) and 1 group to register the number and type of synchronization errors observed **in all routine events except solo events**.

OD 3.3.2 Difficulty Technical Controllers:

OD 3.3.2.1 There shall be 1 Difficulty Technical Controller ("DTC") and 2 Difficulty Assistant Technical Controllers ("DATC").

OD 3.3.2.2 The Difficulty Technical Controllers shall verify all of the **declared** Technical Required Elements (~~Technical routines~~) and the Free Elements (Hybrids and Acrobatics) performed in real time as they occur in a routine. ~~The Referee~~ In the case is consulted in case of a Conflict of Interest where one of the DTCs **will** recuses themselves. ~~They~~ **The DTCs** are also responsible for the identification of any "technical errors" which are differences in what is declared on the Coach Card/Element Card to what is performed in the water or an error in a Technical Required Element (Technical routines).

OD 3.3.2.3 The Difficulty Technical Controllers check the predeclared difficulty on the submitted Coach Card/Element Card. The Difficulty values may be found in World Aquatics Appendices 6 and 7.

OD 3.3.2.4 The Difficulty Technical Controllers may have 1 review in slow motion (and/or 1 time at normal speed for elements involving a timed skill) for each element or transition part they are questioning. In order for a Base Mark **or zero** to be applied ~~or the review to be dismissed~~, all 3 DTCs must be in agreement. If a unanimous decision cannot be reached, the ruling will go in the favor of the athlete.

OD 3.3.2.5 The Difficulty Technical Controllers will have communication with the Event Referee and shall be **placed in elevated positions, when possible**, and will be seated together on the pool deck **with a clear view of the pool**.

OD 3.3.3 Synchronization Technical Controllers:

OD 3.3.3.3 The STCs shall be placed in elevated positions, **when possible**, and will be seated together on the pool deck with a clear view of the pool.

Rationale: Updating verbiage to match current procedures.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (to allow Technical Controllers sufficient notice of their selection)

OD 3 TECHNICAL CONTROLLER

OD 3.1 **Eligibility:** An Official with the appropriate training. **Refer to Appendix G.**

OD 3.2 Selection Procedures:

OD 3.2.1 All Technical Controllers shall declare which competitions they shall be able to attend as a Technical Controller.

OD 3.2.2 The Officials' Committee Chair shall draw 6 Technical Controllers from the list of eligible, **and available**, Technical Controllers for each competition **event**. These Technical Controllers shall be **officially** notified that they have been selected and are **guaranteed to officiate at least 1 event**. The individual technical controllers shall officially accept or reject this selection.

Add new OD 3.2.3

OD 3.2.3 Technical Controllers who have confirmed their availability will be notified whether or not they have been selected at least 60 days prior to the start of the competition.

OD 3.3 Duties/Responsibilities of the Technical Controllers:

OD 3.3.1 Two groups of 3 Technical Controllers shall officiate in all routines: 1 group to check the number, order of performance and predeclared difficulty of **Free** Elements (Hybrids and Acrobatics) and the performance and predeclared order of the Technical Required Elements (Technical routines) and 1 group to register the number and type of synchronization errors observed **in all routine events except solo events**.

OD 3.3.2 Difficulty Technical Controllers:

OD 3.3.2.1 There shall be 1 Difficulty Technical Controller ("DTC") and 2 Difficulty Assistant Technical Controllers ("DATC").

OD 3.3.2.2 The Difficulty Technical Controllers shall verify all of the declared Technical Required Elements (~~Technical routines~~) and the Free Elements (Hybrids and Acrobatics) performed in real time as they occur in a routine. ~~The Referee-In the case-is consulted in case of a Conflict of Interest where one of the DTCs~~ will recuses themselves. ~~They~~ The DTCs are also responsible for the identification of any "technical errors" which are differences in what is declared on the Coach Card/Element Card to what is performed in the water or an error in a Technical Required Element (Technical routines).

OD 3.3.2.3 The Difficulty Technical Controllers check the predeclared difficulty on the submitted Coach Card/Element Card. The Difficulty values may be found in World Aquatics Appendices 6 and 7.

OD 3.3.2.4 The Difficulty Technical Controllers may have 1 review in slow motion (and/or 1 time at normal speed for elements involving a timed skill) for each element or transition part they are questioning. In order for a Base Mark or zero to be applied ~~or the review to be dismissed~~, all 3 DTCs must be in agreement. If a unanimous decision cannot be reached, the ruling will go in the favor of the athlete.

OD 3.3.2.5 The Difficulty Technical Controllers will have communication with the Event Referee and shall be placed in elevated positions, when possible, and will be seated together on the pool deck with a clear view of the pool.

OD 3.3.3 Synchronization Technical Controllers:

OD 3.3.3.3 The STCs shall be placed in elevated positions, when possible, and will be seated together on the pool deck with a clear view of the pool.

Rationale: Technical Controllers would appreciate sufficient notice to arrange their schedules, travel, etc.

ITEM #14:

Add Mixed Ability Event

IF THIS PROPOSAL IS APPROVED, IT IS REQUESTED THAT IT TAKE EFFECT BEGINNING WITH THE 2025 US NATIONAL MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIP

Masters Committee Recommends Approval
Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL**CP 3 ELIGIBILITY****CP 3.1 General:****CP 3.1.1 Definitions:**

1. Solo event categories consist of:
 - Women Solo (an athlete who identifies as a girl/woman);
 - Men Solo (an athlete who identifies as a boy/man); and
 - Gender Inclusive Solo (open to athletes who do not identify as a girl/woman or boy/man).
2. Duet event categories consist of:
 - Women Duet (both athletes identify as girls/women);
 - Men Duet (both athletes identify as boys/men);
 - Mixed Duet (1 athlete identifies as a boy/man, 1 as a girl/woman); and
 - Gender Inclusive Duet (1 or more athlete(s) who do not identify as girls/women or boys/men); **and**
 - Mixed Ability Duet (open to an AWD athlete swimming with a non-AWD athlete in the Novice, Intermediate or Masters categories only)
3. Open event categories (no gender restriction) consist of:
 - Trio;
 - Mixed Ability Trio (open to an AWD athlete(s) swimming with a non-AWD athlete(s) in the Novice, Intermediate or Masters categories only)
 - Team;
 - Acrobatic Routine; and
 - Free Combination.

Housekeeping changes to the penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: The 2024 US Masters Championships allowed a Mixed Ability Duet and Mixed Ability trio to compete and the idea was very well received. The Masters Committee would like to see this event formally added to their competition. Some local associations have been adding this event to their competitions this year based on it happening at the 2024 Masters and so would like to see the event formally added to the Novice and Intermediate tracks.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (to restrict to Masters for now; work with AWD Subcommittee to include other programs in the future)

CP 3 ELIGIBILITY**CP 3.1 General:****CP 3.1.1 Definitions:**

1. Solo event categories consist of:
 - Women Solo (an athlete who identifies as a girl/woman);
 - Men Solo (an athlete who identifies as a boy/man); and
 - Gender Inclusive Solo (open to athletes who do not identify as a girl/woman or boy/man).
2. Duet event categories consist of:
 - Women Duet (both athletes identify as girls/women);
 - Men Duet (both athletes identify as boys/men);
 - Mixed Duet (1 athlete identifies as a boy/man, 1 as a girl/woman); and

- Gender Inclusive Duet (1 or more athlete(s) who do not identify as girls/women or boys/men); **and**
 - **Mixed Ability Duet (open to an AWD athlete swimming with a non-AWD athlete in the Masters categories only)**
3. Open event categories (no gender restriction) consist of:
- Trio;
 - **Mixed Ability Trio (open to an AWD athlete(s) swimming with a non-AWD athlete(s) in the Masters category only);**
 - Team;
 - Acrobatic Routine; and
 - Free Combination.

Housekeeping changes to the penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: Masters would like the Mixed Ability event added to their championship, but it is felt that adding this event to Novice and Intermediate levels should be delayed until details are worked out in conjunction with the AWD program.

ITEM #15: Include Mixed Ability and AWD routines in calculations for the High Point Team at the US Masters National Championship.

IF THIS PROPOSAL IS APPROVED, IT IS REQUESTED THAT IT TAKE EFFECT BEGINNING WITH THE 2025 US NATIONAL MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIP

Masters Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

MS 7.3 High Point Team Awards for the U.S. Masters Championship shall be awarded by total points accumulated as per scoring system for Team trophies, **including all Mixed Ability and AWD routines.** See Rule CP 7.4. A trophy shall be awarded to first place and plaques to second and third place.

Rationale: Masters athletes wish to have the above-noted routines included for determining the High Point Team at their national championship.

ITEM #16: Eliminate time limits for Walk-On and Deck movements in Masters competitions.

IF THIS PROPOSAL IS APPROVED, IT IS REQUESTED THAT IT TAKE EFFECT BEGINNING WITH THE 2025 US NATIONAL MASTERS CHAMPIONSHIP

Masters Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

MS 4.3 Technical Routine Competition

MS 4.3.2 Technical Routine Time Limits, including 10 seconds for Deck Movements:

Events	Minutes
Solo	2:00
Duet/Trio	2:20
Team	2.50

New MS 4.3.4 and 4.3.5

MS 4.3.4 Walk-On: In routine events, the walk-on of the competitors from the designated starting point to the achievement of a stationary starting position(s) on deck and/or in the water may exceed 30 seconds. (Exemption from Rule CP 4.2.2.6.2).

- 1. Competitors with disabilities are allowed to have assistance or be guided to the correct starting point on deck or in the water.**

MS 4.3.5 Deck movements are suggested to be 10 seconds as the competitors are exempt from the maximum allotment of Rule CP 4.2.2.6.3.

MS 4.4 Free Routine Competition

MS 4.4.1 Free Routine Time Limits, including 10 seconds for Deck Movements:

Events	Minutes
Solo	2:15
Duet/Trio	2:45
Team	3:30
Free Combination	4:00

New MS 4.4.3 and 4.4.4

MS 4.4.3 Walk-On: In routine events, the walk-on of the competitors from the designated starting point to the achievement of a stationary starting position(s) on deck and/or in the water may exceed 30 seconds. (Exemption from Rule CP 4.2.2.6.2).

1. Competitors with disabilities are allowed to have assistance or be guided to the correct starting point on deck or in the water.

MS 4.4.4 Deck movements are suggested to be 10 seconds as the competitors are exempt from the maximum allotment of Rule CP 4.2.2.6.3.

Housekeeping changes to CP 4.2.2.6.2 and CP 4.2.2.6.3, and the penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: The Masters program does not want athletes to be penalized if they require extra time to achieve their stationary starting routine position.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (to allow Masters to have more time as needed for walk-ons, but not to extend deck work times)

MS 4.3 Technical Routine Competition

MS 4.3.2 Technical Routine Time Limits, including 10 seconds for Deck Movements:

Events	Minutes
Solo	2:00
Duet/Trio	2:20
Team	2:50

New MS 4.3.4

MS 4.3.4 Walk-On: In routine events, the walk-on of the competitors from the designated starting point to the achievement of a stationary starting position(s) on deck and/or in the water may exceed 30 seconds. (Exemption from Rule CP 4.2.2.6.2).

1. Competitors with disabilities are allowed to have assistance or be guided to the correct starting point on deck or in the water.

MS 4.4 Free Routine Competition

MS 4.4.1 Free Routine Time Limits, including 10 seconds for Deck Movements:

Events	Minutes
Solo	2:15
Duet/Trio	2:45
Team	3:30
Free Combination	4:00

New MS 4.4.3

MS 4.4.3 Walk-On: In routine events, the walk-on of the competitors from the designated starting point to the achievement of a stationary starting position(s) on deck and/or in the water may exceed 30 seconds. (Exemption from Rule CP 4.2.2.6.2).

1. Competitors with disabilities are allowed to have assistance or be guided to the correct starting point on deck or in the water.

Housekeeping changes to CP 4.2.2.6.2 and CP 4.2.2.6.3, and the penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: Some Masters swimmers may need the walk-on exception to achieve their stationary starting position, but eliminating the 10-second deck work rule is not felt necessary.

ITEM #17: Facilitate timeliness of Student-Athlete Technical Affidavit submissions

Collegiate Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CO 1.3.2 All student-athletes shall complete the [Student-Athlete Technical Affidavit](#) 2 1 times per year. The Technical Affidavit can be found on the USAAS website. In the spring semester, the affidavit must be completed even though there may be no changes: by all student-athletes who were not on school roster during the fall semester. For each competitive season, the deadline for Student-Athlete Technical Affidavit submission will be determined by the Collegiate Committee and communicated to all Collegiate coaches via email.

New CO 1.3.2.1

CO 1.3.2.1 Failure to submit the online form for all competitive student-athletes by the deadline will result in a fine of \$25 per student-athlete.

Rationale: Many teams did not meet this year's deadline for submission or had incomplete submissions. It took enormous effort for the Tech Chair to track down coaches and athlete information to facilitate judge review and return placement to coaches. By instituting a fine for non-compliance, teams will be incentivized to complete this required form on time.

ITEM #18: Facilitate timeliness of uploading Collegiate competition results

Collegiate Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CO 3 COLLEGIATE SCORING

New CO 3.3, 3.3.1 and 3.3.2

CO 3.3 Collegiate Results

CO 3.3.1 Collegiate Competition hosts must upload results within two business days of the completion of each competition.

CO 4.1.3.1 Failure to upload scores will result in a fine of \$100 to the host institution.

Rationale: Competition scores were not uploaded promptly this season and as such this requirement needs to be formalized and compliance incentivized. Failure to upload results is a compliance issue as teams are required to compete in a certain number of competitions to be eligible for the U.S. Collegiate Championship. Uploading of results is how we verify the number of competitions for each team.

ITEM #19: Change routine requirements for Collegiate Trio Free event

Collegiate Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended

ORIGINAL PROPOSAL

Appendix L, JUNIOR / SENIOR / COLLEGIATE ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

7. Collegiate Trio Free	2:45	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 5 Free Hybrids (must include 1 declaration from each family in the routine)▪▪ 3 Pair Acrobatics* (free choice, but must not repeat the same Acrobatic) <p><u>Composition of Trio elements (combination of Pair Acrobatics*, Free Hybrids, and Choreography Hybrids ("ChoHY") with no DD (i.e., factor of 1.0) will be determined by the Collegiate Committee prior to the start of each season and will be communicated to all Collegiate coaches via email.</u></p> <p>* See Article 1, Section 1.05.</p>
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Housekeeping changes to the penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: The Collegiate Coaches have decided to pilot a new composition of elements for Trios for the 2025-26 season but have not yet decided on the details. This proposal allows for maximum flexibility as we pilot these changes.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (to ensure Collegiate coaches are notified by a date certain)

Appendix L, JUNIOR / SENIOR / COLLEGIATE ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

7. Collegiate Trio Free	2:45	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Free Hybrids (must include 1 declaration from each family in the routine) * 3 Pair Acrobatics* (free choice, but must not repeat the same Acrobatic) <p><u>Composition of Trio elements (combination of Pair Acrobatics*, Free Hybrids, and Choreography Hybrids ("ChoHY") with no DD (i.e., factor of 1.0) will be determined by the Collegiate Committee prior to the start of each season and will be communicated to all Collegiate coaches via email no later than October 1st of each year.</u></p> <p>* See Article 1, Section 1.05.</p>
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Housekeeping changes to the penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: It is felt important to establish a deadline for this information to be sent to Collegiate coaches so that they may efficiently get their trio routines underway.

ITEM #20: Establish new Collegiate event and its routine requirements
Collegiate Committee Recommends Approval
Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CO 2.4 Routine Competition:

CO 2.4.1 The competition shall consist of Solo, Men Solo (Honorary only), Duet, Mixed Duet (Honorary only), Trio and Team events, **along with Developmental Routines (Honorary only) in Solo, Duet, Trio and Team.**

Appendix L, JUNIOR / SENIOR / COLLEGIATE ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

Add new #11

<u>11. Collegiate Developmental Routines</u>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Collegiate Developmental Routines will include honorary Solo, Duet, Trio and Team events. These events will follow the requirements for Intermediate Routines with Required Elements with the following exceptions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>No acrobatics limitations</u> <u>Routine times will match other Collegiate routine events.</u> <u>Eligibility:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Solos must be competing in Technical Category D.</u> <u>Trios must have at least 1 competitor competing in Technical Category D.</u> <u>Duets and Teams must have at least 50% of competitors competing in Technical Category D.</u>
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Housekeeping changes to the penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved. The Developmental Routines will use the appropriate corresponding Intermediate routine penalties.

Rationale: This division will grow the sport by making competitions more accessible and enjoyable for new swimmers and/or teams that have swimmers new to competitive artistic swimming. It will also provide newer swimmers with a platform where

they can compete with other athletes at their level while also developing their skills to possibly compete in non-honorary events in the future.

ITEM #21:

Remove institutional coaching limitations

Collegiate Committee Recommends Approval

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CO 1.7 — Coaching Limitation: Each institution may have a maximum of 1 head coach, 1 assistant coach, 1 volunteer and 1 graduate assistant/volunteer on deck at the same time. Only the head coach and assistant coach may be paid.

Rationale: This rule limits options for teams to split coaching responsibilities across multiple personnel and negatively impacts club programs especially.

ITEM #22: Integration of ChoHY Hybrids Across All Routine Types
Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

APPENDIX L

ARTICLE I, GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL ROUTINES

1.01 All routines are composed of Elements and Transitions. All routines must perform the Technical Required Elements # 1-5 (Solo, Duet, Trio and Team Technical routines), or # 1-3 (Mixed Duet Technical routine), a predetermined number of Free Elements (Hybrids and Acrobatic Movements) and a free choice of Transitions as defined in Appendix L and [World Aquatics Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5](#).

- **Elements include:**

- Hybrids** (free content)

- Acrobatic Movements**

- Technical Required Elements** ("TRE"), which are precisely described combinations of positions and transitions to be performed by all athletes in Technical routines only.

- Choreography Hybrids ("ChoHY"), which have a fixed DD of 1.0.**

- **Transitions:** are the linking actions between the Elements, including propulsion techniques, strokes, ballet leg combinations, flexibility surface actions, surface pattern changes, or pair assisted actions.

1.03

1. Coach Card/Element Card: For all routines, it is required that the Technical Required Elements # 1-5 (Solo, Duet, Trio and Team Technical routines) or # 1-3 (Mixed Duet Technical routine), Free Elements (Hybrids, **Choreography Hybrids** and Acrobatic Movements) and Transitions be declared and submitted on the Coach Card/Element Card. The Coach Card/Element Card must indicate the degrees of difficulty for each Element selected to be performed, and the order of performance selected. **Each Choreography Hybrid must be clearly labeled as "ChoHY" with a fixed DD of 1.0.** The Coach Card/Element Card must be submitted prior to the competition.

- **Exceptions:**

- **Novice/Collegiate:** The Coach Card/Element Card is not required for Novice and Collegiate Technical Category A and B compulsory routines.
 - **Masters:** The Coach Card/Element Card is not required for Masters routines when the Technical Required Elements are performed in the order listed in this Appendix.
 - **Athletes With Disabilities:** The Coach Card/Element Card is not required for Athletes With Disabilities ("AWD") Free routines.

Add new #2

2. A ChoHY may be used in place of any Free Hybrid within a routine. The inclusion of a ChoHY does not increase the total number of Free Hybrids permitted; it serves as a substitute and maintains the required count of Free Hybrids as specified for each routine type. A ChoHY may be performed by any number of athletes as appropriate to the routine type. For example, in a Duet, only one athlete may perform a ChoHY if desired. In Free Combination, if a ChoHY is used in place of a Free Hybrid, it must still meet the participation requirement for that Element (i.e., 4 or more athletes for a team hybrid).

Housekeeping changes to Appendix L if item is approved

Rationale: Permitting the use of Choreography Hybrids across all routine types will allow coaches and athletes to pursue more artistry while simplifying the declaration process. This will reduce the administrative burden on developing clubs and coaches, especially at the Age Group and Intermediate levels. The addition of ChoHY does not alter routine requirements, bonus eligibility, or difficulty calculations. It simply provides more artistic freedom while maintaining scoring consistency and fairness.

Clarifying Examples

- **Free Solo Routine:**
In a Free Solo routine requiring six Free Hybrids, an athlete may perform five Free Hybrids and one ChoHY, maintaining a total of six Elements.
- **Technical Team Routine:**
In a Technical Team routine requiring eight Elements (five TRE, two Free Hybrids, and one Acrobatic), a team may perform five TRE, one Free Hybrid, one ChoHY, and one Acrobatic, maintaining the total of eight Elements.
- **Free Combination Routine:**
In Free Combo, ChoHYs are already permitted as listed in World Aquatics Appendix 5 and may continue to be used within the total element count. A ChoHY may replace a Free Hybrid in any section of the routine—whether performed by a soloist, duet, or team. However, if the ChoHY is used in a team Hybrid section, it must still meet the minimum participation requirement of four athletes.

Element Family Declaration (Free Routines):

In Free routines, the requirement for inclusion of an element from each family remains unchanged, regardless of whether the element is a Hybrid or ChoHY.

ITEM #23: Correct the rule for competitors 13-14 years of age in an Acrobatic routine.

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CP 3.2.4 Qualifications for entry in Zone and Association Championships: Each Zone or Association shall set its own rules for conduct of their Championships.

Exception: Competitors who are 13-14 years of age may be combined with competitors who are 15 & over in order to enter Honorary Junior and Senior routines in Zone and Association Championships. Honorary competitors in a given event in Senior Zone Championships shall not be eligible for the U.S. National Championship, with the exception of the Acrobatic Routine.

ITEM #24: Allow 13 and 14 year old athletes to compete in free team routines and tech team routines at Senior Nationals.

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CP 4.1.1.1 For the U.S. National Championship, competition shall consist of Technical and Free routines for Solos, Duets and Teams. There shall also be an Acrobatic Routine event.

1. When the U.S. National and U.S. Junior Championships are held together, there shall be 1 combined Acrobatic Routine event. Competitors from the U.S. National and U.S. Junior Championships may be combined in the same Acrobatic Routine for this event.
2. Competitors who are 13 and 14 years of age may participate in the Acrobatic Routine, Technical Team Routine, and Free Team Routine events at the U.S. National Championships. At least 1 competitor in the Acrobatic Routine, Technical Team Routine, or Free Team Routine must be in the Senior age division.

Housekeeping changes to CP 3.2.4 if item is approved.

Rationale: One of the target outcomes in the 2025-2029 USAAS Strategic Plan is to “Increase Event and program participation and satisfaction.” For smaller clubs, a barrier to greater participation in Senior Nationals is the restriction against swimming free team routines and technical team routines with athletes ages 13 and 14. Smaller clubs often do not have a full team of athletes ages 15 and over, and elect to not attend this championship even if they have more than sufficient skill and preparation to qualify. This reduces participation in this championship and makes it more difficult for emerging clubs to gain experience at this elite national meets. USAAS rules already allow 13 and 14 year olds to compete in the acrobatic team routine at Junior and Senior nationals. Extending this to free team routines and tech team routines will make it possible for small clubs to field free team routines and tech team routines for Senior Nationals, while simultaneously improving consistency in participation options for 13 and 14 year olds, as they would now be able to participate in all team routine events.

ITEM #25: Allow 13 and 14 year old athletes to compete in free team routines and tech team routines at Junior Nationals.

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CP 4.1.2.1 For the U.S. Junior Championship, competition shall consist of Technical and Free routines for Solos, Duets and Teams. There shall also be an Acrobatic Routine.

1. When the U.S. National and U.S. Junior Championships are held together, there shall be 1 combined Acrobatic Routine event. Competitors from the U.S. National and U.S. Junior Championships may be combined in the same Acrobatic Routine for this event.
2. Competitors who are 13 and 14 years of age may participate in the Acrobatic, **Technical Team Routine, and Free Team Routine** events at the U.S. Junior Championships. At least 1 competitor in the Acrobatic Routine, **Technical Team Routine, or Free Team Routine** must be in the Junior age division.

Rationale: One of the target outcomes in the 2025-2029 USAAS Strategic Plan is to “Increase Event and program participation and satisfaction.” For smaller clubs, a barrier to greater participation in Junior Nationals is the restriction against swimming free team routines and technical team routines with athletes ages 13 and 14. Smaller clubs often do not have a full team of athletes ages 15 and over, and elect to not attend this championship even if they have more than sufficient skill and preparation to qualify. This reduces participation in this championship and makes it more difficult for emerging clubs to gain experience at this elite national meet. USAAS rules already allow 13 and 14 year olds to compete in the acrobatic team routine at Junior nationals. Extending this to free team routines and tech team routines will make it possible for small clubs to field free team routines and tech team routines for Junior Nationals, while simultaneously improving consistency in participation options for 13 and 14 year olds, as they would now be able to participate in all team routine events.

ITEM #26: Allow 12 and under athletes to compete in team routines at Youth Nationals.

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CP 4.1.3.1 For the U.S. Youth Championship, competition shall consist of Figures and Free routines for Solos, Duets and Teams. There shall also be a Free Combination event conducted as a 100% routine event.

1. U.S. clubs and U.S. National Teams may enter more than 1 Free Combination in the U.S. Youth Championship.
2. Competitors who are 12 years of age and younger and who have passed Grade Level 4 may participate in the Free Combination event **and in the Team event** at the U.S. Youth Championships. At least 1 competitor in the Free Combination **or Team** routine must be in the Youth age division.

Rationale: One of the target outcomes in the 2025-2029 USAAS Strategic Plan is to “Increase Event and program participation and satisfaction.” For smaller clubs, a barrier to greater participation in Youth Nationals is the restriction against swimming team routines with athletes 12 and under. Smaller clubs often do not have a full team of athletes in the youth age division and elect to not attend this championship even if they have more than sufficient skill and preparation to qualify. This reduces participation in this championship and makes it more difficult for emerging clubs to gain experience at this elite national meet. USAAS rules already allow 12 and under athletes to compete in the Free Combination routine at Youth nationals. Extending this to team routines will make it possible for small clubs to field team routines for Youth Nationals, while simultaneously improving consistency in participation options for 12 and under athletes, as they would now be able to participate in all team routine events.

ITEM #27: Eliminate the Junior Olympic exception for no minimum time limit on technical and free routines.

Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

CP 4.2.2.6 Time Allowances:

CP 4.2.2.6.1 Technical and Free Routines:

1. There shall be an allowance of 5 seconds plus or minus the allotted time limit.
Exception: In the following competitions, there shall be an allowance of 5 seconds plus the allotted time limit, but there shall be no minimum time limit.
 - Novice, Intermediate and Athletes with Disabilities competitions.
 - U.S. Junior Olympic, Regional Junior Olympic and Association Junior Olympic Championships.

- Collegiate Dual, Invitational, Regional and other routine competitions exception, see Rule CO 2.4.5.1

Housekeeping changes to Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: We have all had three years to adjust to the new +/- 5 seconds rule for music. Removing this exception will eliminate confusion for coaches/athletes and avoid penalties at Zone & National competitions. Also, judges at the Association and Regional level may not have as much experience in how to effectively assess a short routine.

ITEM #28: Eliminate the Junior Olympic exception for number of competitors in an Acrobatic Routine.

Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CP 5 ENTRY PROCEDURES

CP 5.1 Numbers of Competitors:

CP 5.1.1 A Team (Technical or Free) shall consist of 4, but no more than 8 competitors.

CP 5.1.2 A Free Combination shall consist of 4, but no more than 10 competitors who make a combination of routines.

CP 5.1.3 An Acrobatic Routine shall consist of 4, but no more than 8 competitors.

Exception: For U.S. Junior Olympic, Regional Junior Olympic and Association Junior Olympic Championships, an Acrobatic Routine shall consist of 4, but not more than 10 competitors.

Housekeeping changes to Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: The 10-athlete rule was only supposed to be for one year. With athletes competing in Zone & US Junior/Senior Championships, early competitions & Zones may have 10-man teams competing against 8-man teams.

ITEM #29: Reintroduction of Trios to the Junior Olympic Track (Finals only event)

Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

IMPORTANT NOTE: Accepting this proposal is not contingent upon accepting Item numbers 30, 31A, 31B, 32 or 33 below, which are standalone proposals, but which could also assist with scheduling Trios at National JOs. You may review the attached PDF for a rough draft of what a National JOs schedule could look like if Items 29-33 are accepted.

CP 3.5.5.2 May be held once a year in the following age divisions and routine events:

12 & under	Youth	15-17	18-19/20	16-19/20
Figures	Figures	Solo (Technical/Free)	Solo (Technical/Free)	Free Combination
Solo (Free)	Solo (Free)	Duet (Technical/Free)	Duet (Technical/Free)	Acrobatic Routine
Duet (Free)	Duet (Free)	Team (Technical/Free)	Team (Technical/Free)	<u>Trio (Free)</u>
Team (Free)	Team (Free)			
Free Combination	Free Combination			
<u>Trio (Free)</u>	<u>Trio (Free)</u>			

1. A competitor may only enter a specific routine event (Solo, Duet, **Trio**, Team, Acrobatic Routine or Free

Combination) in 1 age division. A competitor may enter a routine event (Technical or Free) in different age divisions as long as the competitor only enters 1 type of routine in the competition. (For example, Youth Free Duet and 15-17 Technical Duet). See Rule CP 3.1.4.

2. A competitor may enter either the Free Combination event or the Acrobatic Routine event in the 16-19/20 age division, but not both.
3. All Technical routine events, Free Solo, **Free Trio**, Acrobatic Routine and Free Combination events shall be Final events.

CP 3.5.5.3 Each Zone shall qualify up to 8 Solos, 12 Duets, and 12 Teams in each event in each age division. Each Zone shall qualify up to 12 Free Combination **and 12 Free Trio** routines in the 12 & under, Youth and 16-19/20 age divisions. Each Zone shall qualify up to 12 Acrobatic Routines in the 16-19/20 age division.

CP 3.5.5.4 No Region shall have more than its proportionate share of the 12. In the Solo, Duet, **Trio** and Team events in the Regional Championships, each Region shall qualify competitors by ranking in the: Combined Free routine and Figure competition (12 & under and Youth); or, Free routine or Technical routine competition (15-17 and 18-19/20).

CP 3.5.5.5 All 12 & under and Youth competitors in Solo, Duet, **Trio** and Team Free routines shall compete in the Figure competition. The Figure results shall be added to the Preliminary Free routine score to determine the top 12 Duets and Teams that qualify for the Final Free routine competition. Number 13 shall be the pre-swimmer.

CP 3.5.6.2 Each Association may qualify the top 3 Solos, Duets, **Trios**, Teams, Acrobatic Routines and Free Combinations in a specific age division. See Rule CP 3.5.5.2 for age divisions and routine events.

Exception: Any Association which is the only participant in its Region in a given year, event and age division, may qualify the top 4 Solos, Duets, **Trios**, Teams, Acrobatic Routines and Free Combinations in a specific age division.

Appendix L

12 & Under Routine Requirements

Add Trio

Event	Time	Total Elements	Summary
Trio Free	2:30	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>2 free hybrids (must include 1 declaration from each family in the routine)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <u>must follow hybrid safety limit for 12 & under</u> • <u>1x Choreography Hybrid ("ChoHY") with no DD (i.e., factor of 1.0)</u> • <u>2 Pair Acrobatics (free choice, but must not repeat the same Acrobatic)</u>
<u>Additional Trio Requirement: A Cadence Action must be performed by all routine members. Placement within the routine is optional.</u>			

Appendix L

Youth Routine Requirements

Add Trio

Event	Time	Total Elements	Summary
Youth Trio	2:30	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>3 free hybrids (must include 1 declaration from each family in the routine)</u> • <u>1x Choreography Hybrid ("ChoHY") with no DD (i.e., factor of 1.0)</u> • <u>3 Pair Acrobatics (free choice, but must not repeat the same Acrobatic)</u>

Additional Trio Requirement: A Cadence Action must be performed by all routine members. Placement within the routine is optional.

Appendix L

Junior / Senior / Collegiate Routine Requirements

Add Trio

<u>16-19/20 Trio Free</u>	<u>2:45</u>	<u>8</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>4 free hybrids (must include 1 declaration from each family in the routine)</u> • <u>1 x Choreography Hybrid ("ChoHY") with no DD (i.e., factor of 1.0)</u> • <u>3 Pair Acrobatics (free choice, but must not repeat the same Acrobatic)</u>
<u>Additional Trio Requirement: A Cadence Action must be performed by all routine members. Placement within the routine is optional.</u>			

Housekeeping changes to CP 3.5.3 and 3.5.3.2, and to Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale:

Support for Grassroots Clubs: The Trio event provides a vital competitive option for smaller clubs that struggle to field full teams. It allows these clubs to remain active and competitive while increasing opportunities for athletes. While this differs from the National track, it expands access and flexibility. Clubs with excess duets could convert some into trios, creating more entries and fostering broader participation across Regions. The South Zone has already seen success with trios at local levels—expanding this to JOs would strengthen participation at all levels.

Alignment with Collegiate Programs: Collegiate programs include trios as a core event. Reintroducing them at JOs ensures athletes are better prepared for the collegiate track and supports a smoother transition between levels.

Athlete Development and Versatility: Trios develop unique skills and foster adaptability, key traits for success in collegiate and international competition. Their inclusion supports more well-rounded athlete development.

ITEM #30: Upper Age Group Realignment for Junior Olympic Track, combine the existing 15-17 and 18-19/20 categories into a single Junior age division for all JO events.

Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

CP 3.5.2 Determination of Age Division:

CP 3.5.2.1 The age of a competitor shall be based on the year of birth. Age divisions are as follows:

- 12 & under
- Youth (13 to 15 for women and 13 to 16 for men, and Solo and Duet gender inclusive competitors)
- ~~15-17~~
- ~~18-19/20 (18-19 for women and 18-20 for men, and Solo and Duet gender inclusive competitors).~~
- **Junior (15-19 for women and 15-20 for men, and Solo and Duet gender inclusive competitors)**

Exception: 16-19/20 for Free Combination and Acrobatic Routines only. See CP 3.5.5.2.

Housekeeping changes throughout Technical Rules and Appendix L to eliminate the separate age divisions.

Rationale:

Event Size & Competitiveness: The 15-17 and 18-19/20 events are consistently the smallest fields at JOs. Combining them creates a deeper, more competitive Junior category for our older athletes.

Tech Events	2024 2025 total	2024 2025 combined	Free Events	2024 2025 total	2024 2025 combined
15-17 Team	13 14	30 34	15-17 Team	15 12	30 29
18-19 Team	17 20		18-19 Team	15 17	
15-17 Duet	28 28	53 49	15-17 Duet	35 24	59 45
18-19 Duet	25 21		18-19 Duet	24 21	
15-17 Solo	21 29	39 47	15-17 Solo	30 31	51 49
18-19 Solo	18 18		18-19 Solo	21 18	

With raising the solos back to 48 (Item #31A or #31B) and the reintroduction of trios (Item #29) we would not be excluding many, if any, of the athletes qualified in 2024 and 2025. In 2025 only 1 Tech Duet and 1 Free Solo would not have been eligible. In 2024 only 5 Tech Duets, 11 Free Duets and 3 Free Solos would not have been eligible. Some of these may have been "draw entries" and not true qualifiers as well.)

Schedule Feasibility: Frees up time to accommodate the proposed reintroduced Trio event (Item #29) as well as Solo Finals (Item #31A or #31B) without overextending the meet schedule.

Athlete Retention & Development: Keeps peers together longer, reducing the need to "swim up" younger athletes and preserving more age-appropriate developmental tracks.

ITEM #31 A&B: Choose between options A and B regarding Solo qualifiers and Solo Finals for National Junior Olympics.

OPTION 31-A: Increased JO Solo Qualifiers and Reintroduce JO Solo Finals for 12U, Youth and Junior (Contingent upon Item #30 Passing)

Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

CP 3.5.5.3 Each Zone shall qualify up to 8 12 Solos, 12 Duets and 12 Teams in each event in each age division. Each Zone shall qualify up to 12 Free Combination routines in the 12 & under, Youth and Junior 16-19/20 age divisions. Each Zone shall qualify up to 12 Acrobatic Routines in the Junior 16-19/20 age division.

CP 3.5.5.4 No Region shall have more than its proportionate share of the 12. In the Solo, Duet and Team events in the Regional Championships, each Region shall qualify competitors by ranking in the:

- Combined Free routine and Figure competition (12 & under and Youth); or,
- Free routine or Technical routine competition (Junior 15-17 and 18-19/20).

1. ~~In the Solo event, 2 entries per region per age division shall qualify to the U.S. Junior Olympic Championship.~~
and renumber following

CP 3.5.5.5 All 12 & under and Youth competitors in Solo, Duet and Team Free routines shall compete in the Figure competition. The Figure results shall be added to the Preliminary Free routine score to determine the top 12 Solos. Duets and Teams that qualify for the Final Free routine competition. Number 13 shall be the pre-swimmer.

1. ~~The Figure results shall be added to the Solo Final Free routine scores to determine final placement.~~
and renumber following

CP 3.5.5.6 All Junior 15-17 and 18-19/20 competitors in Solo, Duet and Team may compete in the Technical and/or Free routine events. The Preliminary Free routine score shall be used to determine the top 12 Solos, Duets and Teams that qualify for the Final Free routine competition. Number 13 shall be the pre-swimmer.

1. All Technical routine events, ~~Free Solo~~, Acrobatic Routine and Free Combination shall be final events.

Rationale:

Equity & Opportunity: Solos remain one of the most contested events; a two-qualifier cap excludes top talent. Expanding to three ensures that the three best athletes advance, even if a zero or base-mark drop affects placings. More soloists at JOs elevates the competitive standard and encourages broader athlete growth.

OPTION 31-B: Increased JO Solo Qualifiers and Reintroduce JO Solo Finals for Junior (Contingent upon Item #30 Passing)
Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

CP 3.5.5.3 Each Zone shall qualify up to 8 Solos in the 12 & Under and Youth age divisions, and up to 12 Solos in the Junior age division. Each Zone shall qualify up to 12 Duets and 12 Teams in each event in each age division. Each Zone shall qualify up to 12 Free Combination routines in the 12 & under, Youth and 16-19/20 age divisions. Each Zone shall qualify up to 12 Acrobatic Routines in the 16-19/20 age division.

CP 3.5.5.4 No Region shall have more than its proportionate share of the 8 or 12. In the Solo, Duet and Team events in the Regional Championships, each Region shall qualify competitors by ranking in the:

- Combined Free routine and Figure competition (12 & under and Youth); or,
- Free routine or Technical routine competition (Junior 15-17 and 18-19/20).

1. In the Solo event, 2 entries per region in the 12 & Under and Youth per age divisions, and 3 entries per region in the Junior age division shall qualify to the U.S. Junior Olympic Championship.

CP 3.5.5.6 All Junior 15-17 and 18-19/20 competitors in Solo, Duet and Team may compete in the Technical and/or Free routine events. The Preliminary Free routine score shall be used to determine the top 12 Solos, Duets and Teams that qualify for the Final Free routine competition. Number 13 shall be the pre-swimmer.

Rationale:

Equity & Opportunity: Solos remain one of the most contested events; a two-qualifier cap excludes top talent. Expanding to three ensures that the three best athletes advance, even if a zero or base-mark drop affects placings. More soloists at JOs elevates the competitive standard and encourages broader athlete growth.

Option B - Age Group Realignment Impact: With the 15-17 and 18-19/20 age divisions merged into one Junior category (Item #30), maintaining only two slots would unjustly limit solo opportunities for older athletes.

ITEM #32: Eliminate the 16-19 Combination Routine at the Junior Olympics
Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

CP 4.1.4 Junior Olympic: Competitions shall consist of Figures and Free routines for the 12 & under and Youth age divisions. In the 15-17 and 18-19/20 age divisions, competitions shall consist of Technical and/or Free routines. In the 16-19/20 age division, competition shall consist of the Acrobatic Routine. ~~and Free Combination.~~

Housekeeping changes to remove all rulebook references to 16-19/20 Free Combination in the JO track if item is approved. If this item is NOT approved, and Item #30 IS approved, will require housekeeping to change Free Combination to the new "Junior" age division. Note that rule CP 3.5.5.2 #2 (A competitor may enter either the Free Combination or the Acrobatic Routine event in the 16-19/20 age division, but not both) will still apply.

Rationale:

Misalignment with Athlete Pathways: The Combo routine is not part of collegiate or AQUA competition. This event does not support long-term development.

Low Participation: In 2024, only 10 Combo routines were entered in the 16-19 category, and many did not feature the full complement of 10 athletes as intended. This low engagement indicates limited value and relevance to participants.

Redundancy with Acrobatic Routine: The Combo overlaps in purpose and style with the Acrobatic Routine. Now in its fourth season, the acro event has matured significantly. Coaches and athletes are familiar with its structure, and all acro families offer accessible lift options suitable for shallower water and varying skill levels.

Technical Relief: Unlike combos, the acro routine eliminates the need to choreograph hybrids with DD and the associated pressure of base marks—the DD of acrobatics is more accessible making it a more developmentally appropriate event for a wider range of athletes.

Scheduling Efficiency: Eliminating this underutilized event would free up time in the competition schedule, making room for higher-impact proposals such as the reintroduction of the trio event, expansion of solo qualifiers, and the potential reimplementation of solo finals.

ITEM #33: Limitation on Free Routines Entered at Junior Olympics
Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

CP 3.5.5.2 May be held once a year in the following age divisions and routine events:

(add new #4)

4. A competitor may enter a maximum of five (5) free routines, only three (3) of which may be in “non-team” events (all solo events and all duet events), unless their club has fewer than four members.

Housekeeping change to add Trios to the above if Item #21 is approved.

Rationale:

Athlete Safety: Historically, athletes could participate in up to three of the four traditional events: solo, duet, trio, and team. As new events like combo, mixed duet, and male duet have been added or proposed, the potential number of routines per athlete has increased significantly. Limiting participation helps prevent overtraining, fatigue, and injury, especially during a high-stress championship meet.

Fairness and Intent: The addition of new events is intended to create more opportunities for athletes who may not otherwise have a chance to compete—not to allow the same athletes to enter more events. A participation cap ensures broader access across the athlete pool while maintaining the integrity and intent of inclusive growth in the sport.

ITEM #34:

Intermediate Rules Change Proposal

Rules Committee Recommends Approval as Amended**ORIGINAL PROPOSAL****Appendix L****INTERMEDIATE FREE ROUTINES WITH TECHNICAL REQUIRED ELEMENTS**

INTERMEDIATE SOLO (1:45), DUET / TRIO (2:05) AND TEAM (2:35) <u>DUET, TRIO AND TEAM (2:00)</u> Technical Required Elements # 1-5 <u>1-3</u> must be performed in the order listed. Placement of additional routine requirements # 6-8 <u>4-6</u> is optional.	
1. ——— Figure # 348 Tower. [DD 1.9]	
<u>1A. Figure #348e Tower spinning 360 [DD 2.0]</u>	<u>1B. Figure #348 Tower [DD 1.9]</u>
2. ——— Boost – a rapid, head-first rise, with a maximum amount of the body above the surface of the water. One arm must be lifted above the surface as the body reaches maximum height. The Boost is begun with the body totally underwater or with the back of the head and/or torso flush with the surface. The Boost is completed upon total submergence. [DD 1.3]	
<u>2A. Figure # 423 Ariana [DD 2.2]</u>	<u>2B. Figure # 420 Walkover, Back [DD 1.9]</u>
3. ——— Figure # 101 Ballet Leg, Single. [DD 1.6]	
<u>3. Figure # 301 Barracuda [DD 1.9]</u>	
4. ——— Figure # 318 Kip, Bent Knee. [DD 1.8]	
5. ——— Figure # 301 Barracuda. [DD 1.8]	
6. <u>4.</u> Solo Additional Routine Requirement – maximum of 1 x Free Hybrid must be performed. Placement within the routine is optional	
7. <u>5.</u> Duet and Trio Additional Routine Requirement – maximum of 1 of the following must be performed. Placement within the routine is optional. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Free Hybrids OR • 1 x Free Hybrid and 1 x Pair Acrobatic* • *See Article 1, Section 1.05. 	
8. <u>6.</u> Team Additional Routine Requirement – maximum of 1 of the following must be performed. Placement within the routine is optional. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Free Hybrids OR • 1 x Free Hybrid and 1 x Team Acrobatic Movement* (with DD safety limit**) • *See Article 1, Section 1.04. 	
9. <u>7.</u> Solo, Duet and Trio General Routine Requirement – Technical Required Elements # 1-5 <u>3</u> shall be performed parallel to the sides of the pool where the panels of judges are seated.	
10. <u>8.</u> Duet, Trio and Team General Routine Requirement – All Technical Required Elements # 1-5 <u>3</u> must be performed simultaneously and facing the same direction by all competitors. Mirror actions are not permitted during the Technical Required Elements.	

Housekeeping changes to penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.**Rationale:**

- Allowing for more options for difficulty in the intermediate level while also limiting the requirements to align with the number of required elements in the advanced level routines.
- There is a wide range of athletes at the intermediate level - some who just move up from novice, and others who may remain at that level forever. It is important to have intermediate as a stepping-stone, but also as a landing pad for those who do not wish to pursue the more elite or competitive levels.

- Having 2 options for intermediate elements, similar to Jr/Sr A and B options allows for the more advanced/capable intermediates to learn more difficult skills without having to separate 2 different groups for competition, awards, etc.
 - The coach/athlete will decide which element they would like to put in the routine (A or B) and will declare it on the coaches card just like the Jr/Sr elements. Athletes are not required to perform all of the elements from A or B but can choose a combination of one or both
- Boosts and ballet legs are judged under artistic impression and should be included in the routine to be judged as they would in the more advanced level routines.
- The elements selected include skills needed from the difficulty table to develop airborne weight, flexibility, thrusts and rotations.

Routine Times:

- Align the time limit for the team routine with the duet and trio (2:00), as there are now fewer elements to perform.
- This also allows for clubs to use the same routine for team, duet, and trio without having to modify the routine or music.

AMENDED PROPOSAL (to maintain the current time limits for Intermediate routines)

Appendix L

INTERMEDIATE FREE ROUTINES WITH TECHNICAL REQUIRED ELEMENTS

INTERMEDIATE SOLO (1:45), DUET / TRIO (2:05) AND TEAM (2:35) Technical Required Elements # 1-5 <u>1-3</u> must be performed in the order listed. Placement of additional routine requirements # 6-8 <u>4-6</u> is optional.	
1. ——— Figure # 348 Tower. [DD 1.9]	
1A. Figure #348e Tower spinning 360 [DD 2.0]	1B. Figure #348 Tower [DD 1.9]
2. ——— Boost – a rapid, head-first rise, with a maximum amount of the body above the surface of the water. One arm must be lifted above the surface as the body reaches maximum height. The Boost is begun with the body totally underwater or with the back of the head and/or torso flush with the surface. The Boost is completed upon total submergence. [DD 1.3]	
2A. Figure # 423 Ariana [DD 2.2]	2B. Figure # 420 Walkover, Back [DD 1.9]
3. ——— Figure # 101 Ballet Leg, Single. [DD 1.6]	
3. Figure # 301 Barracuda [DD 1.9]	
4. ——— Figure # 318 Kip, Bent Knee. [DD 1.8]	
5. ——— Figure # 301 Barracuda. [DD 1.8]	
6. <u>4</u> . Solo Additional Routine Requirement – maximum of 1 x Free Hybrid must be performed. Placement within the routine is optional	
7. <u>5</u> . Duet and Trio Additional Routine Requirement – maximum of 1 of the following must be performed. Placement within the routine is optional. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Free Hybrids OR • 1 x Free Hybrid and 1 x Pair Acrobatic* • *See Article 1, Section 1.05. 	
8. <u>6</u> . Team Additional Routine Requirement – maximum of 1 of the following must be performed. Placement within the routine is optional. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Free Hybrids OR • 1 x Free Hybrid and 1 x Team Acrobatic Movement* (with DD safety limit**) • *See Article 1, Section 1.04. 	
9. <u>7</u> . Solo, Duet and Trio General Routine Requirement – Technical Required Elements # 1-5 <u>3</u> shall be performed parallel to the sides of the pool where the panels of judges are seated.	

10- **8.** Duet, Trio and Team General Routine Requirement – All Technical Required Elements # 1-5 **3** must be performed simultaneously and facing the same direction by all competitors. Mirror actions are not permitted during the Technical Required Elements.

Housekeeping changes to penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: The routine time limits should not be changed, even with the decreased required elements, so that coaches can use the extra time in Teams to train additional routine skills for Intermediates in preparation for moving up to Age Group level. There is no minimum time limit in Intermediate routines, so if a club wishes to have athletes perform the identical routine as a duet, trio and team, they can simply make the team routine the same length of 2.05 for duet and trio without receiving a timing penalty.

ITEM #35: Establish Hybrid Family declaration limitations in Intermediate routines
Rules Committee Recommends Approval

Appendix L

INTERMEDIATE FREE ROUTINES WITH TECHNICAL REQUIRED ELEMENTS

Add new chart below Intermediate Team Acrobatic Movement Safety Limits Chart

*** Intermediate Routines Free Hybrid Family Declaration Limits: Refer to the World Aquatics Hybrid Catalogue.

<u>HYBRID FAMILY</u>	<u>DD LIMITS</u>
<u>Thrusts</u>	<u>Level B - Level 4</u>
<u>Spins</u>	<u>Level B - Level 1</u>
<u>Twists</u>	<u>Level B - Level 1</u>
<u>Airborne Weight</u>	<u>Level B - Level 6</u>
<u>Flexibility</u>	<u>Level B - Level 3</u>
<u>Connections</u>	<u>Level B - Level 1</u>

Housekeeping changes to penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved, and to #s 4, 5 and 6 of chart for Intermediate Free Routines with Technical Required Elements to reference the new chart for Free Hybrid Family Declaration Limits.

Rationale: Intermediate-level athletes are still developing the core strength, control, and precision required to safely and effectively execute more advanced elements. By restricting routine content, coaches are encouraged to focus on refining foundational skills across all families. This structure promotes more balanced training and ensures that Intermediate routines emphasize mastery over complexity. This proposal also supports the long-term development of athletes by:

- Reinforcing proper technique before advancing to higher difficulty levels.
- Preventing premature inclusion of high-level elements that may compromise execution quality.

ITEM #36: Eliminate Intermediate Combos
Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CP 3.6 Intermediate:

CP 3.6.3 Regional Championships:

CP 3.6.3.1 May be held in Figures, Solo, Duet, Trio, and Team and ~~Free Combination~~ in 4 age divisions: 10 & under, 11-12, 13-15 and 16 & over.

CP 3.6.3.2 Each Region may set its own rules for conduct of their Championships.

CP 3.6.4 Association Championships:

CP 3.6.4.1 May be held in Figures, Solo, Duet, Trio, and Team and ~~Free Combination~~ in 4 age divisions: 10 & under, 11-12, 13-15 and 16 & over.

CP 3.6.4.2 Each Association may set its own rules for conduct of their Championships.

CP 4 EVENTS

CP 4.1 Programs:

CP 4.1.5 Intermediate: Competitions shall consist of Figures and/or Free Routines with Technical Required Elements. There shall also be a Free Combination event conducted as a 100% routine event.

CP 4.2 Routine Competition:

CP 4.2.2 Time Requirements for Routines by Event and Age Division shall be as follows, including 10 seconds for Deck Movements:

CP 4.2.2.5 Free Combination:

1. 16-19/20 3:30
2. Youth and 12 & under and Intermediate 3:00

Appendix L

Article 4

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR FREE COMBINATION ROUTINES

FREE COMBINATION REQUIRED ELEMENTS

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

~~Intermediate (3:00) / 12 & Under (3:00) / Youth (3:00) / 16-19/20 (3:30) / Masters (4:00)~~

Article 5

INTERMEDIATE FREE COMBINATION ROUTINE REQUIREMENTS

Event	Time (+ 5 sec)	Total Elements	Summary
1. Free Combination	3:00	7	2 Team Acrobatics* with DD safety limit** Free Transitions 1 x DD Solo Hybrid 1 x DD Duet Hybrid 1 x DD Trio Hybrid 2 x DD Team Hybrids (must be executed with a minimum of 4 competitors required). * See Article 1, Section 1.04.

** Intermediate Team Acrobatic Movement Safety Limits for Team and Free Combination:

Team Acrobatic Movements cannot have a Degree of Difficulty ("DD") higher than the Total DD (Max), inclusive of the Base Mark value, than the following:

Housekeeping changes to penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: The Intermediate Combo event is recommended for removal due to several key concerns regarding its effectiveness and alignment with the developmental goals of the Intermediate category.

Lack of Clear Structure and Rules: The current rules governing the Intermediate Combo are too vague, leaving too much room for interpretation in routine composition and judging. This lack of clarity creates inconsistency in how the event is prepared, executed, and evaluated, making it difficult for athletes, coaches, and officials to fully understand expectations and measure progress.

Insufficient Developmental Value: The Combo event, in its current form, does not provide the structured technical and artistic training that Intermediate athletes require at this critical stage in their development. Without a defined framework emphasizing the specific skills and transitions appropriate for this level, the event fails to reinforce the foundational elements necessary for athlete progression.

Misalignment with the Purpose of the Intermediate Category: *The Intermediate category was created to provide a bridge between Novice and Age Group levels, offering athletes a focused environment to build consistency, technical proficiency, and routine discipline. The open-ended nature of the Combo event does not align with this mission, and its removal will allow athletes and coaches to concentrate on events that more directly support long-term skill acquisition and readiness for higher levels of competition.*

ITEM #37: Allowance of 45 Degrees for DTC Evaluations in All Intermediate Routines
Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

OD 3.3 Duties/Responsibilities of the Technical Controllers:

OD 3.3.2 Difficulty Technical Controllers:

OD 3.3.2.2 The Difficulty Technical Controllers shall verify all of the Technical Required Elements (Technical routines) and the Free Elements (Hybrids and Acrobatics) performed in real time as they occur in a routine. The Referee is consulted in case of a Conflict of Interest where one of the DTCs recuses themselves. They are also responsible for the identification of any “technical errors” which are differences in what is declared on the Coach Card/Element Card to what is performed in the water or an error in a Technical Required Element (Technical routines).

Add Exception to OD 3.3.2.2

Exception: For all Intermediate routines, Difficulty Technical Controllers (DTCs) shall allow for up to a 45 degree deviation on all evaluated spins and rotations, including those executed during thrusts and connection elements.

Rationale:

To enhance consistency in tech controlling and align with the developmental intent of the Intermediate category, it is proposed that all Difficulty Technical Controller (DTC) evaluations for Intermediate routines allow for a 45-degree deviation on all spins and rotations, including those performed in thrusts and connections.

Intermediate athletes are still developing control and precision, and current spin and rotation expectations may be too stringent, potentially discouraging progression. Allowing a 45-degree margin in DTC evaluations would create more realistic, developmentally appropriate standards. This change would promote consistency across regions, provide a more supportive environment for skill growth, and encourage continued athlete participation by recognizing effort and improvement.

ITEM #38:

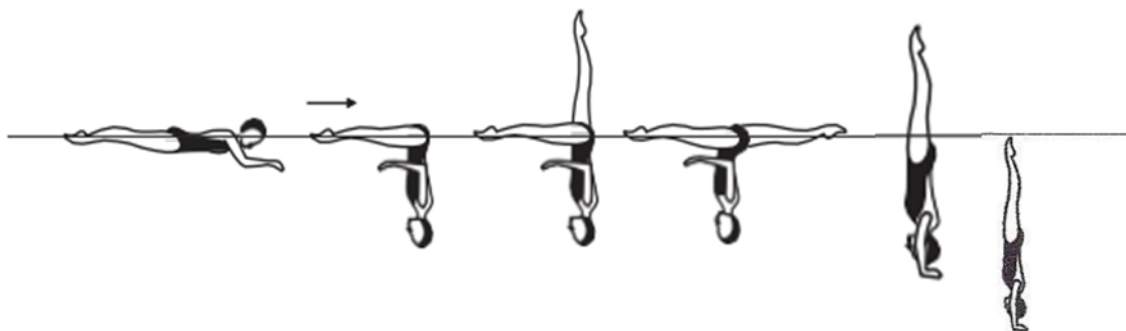
Proposed new Novice Figure

Figures Committee Recommends Approval**Rules Committee Recommends Approval****FIGURE RULE 1A, ALPHABETICAL INDEX OF FIGURES****Add new figure****[# ??] Snapping Turtle [DD ??]****FIGURE RULE 1B, THE FOUR CATEGORIES OF FIGURES**

[Category IV Diverse Category ??]

FIGURE RULE VI, DESCRIPTION OF FIGURES FOR ARTISTIC SWIMMING**Snapping Turtle:**

From a Front Layout Position, a Front Walkover (360) is executed to a Split Position. The legs join symmetrically and RAPIDLY to assume a Vertical Position. Maintaining the Vertical Position, the body descends along its longitudinal axis until the toes are submerged at the same tempo as the join.



Rationale: Learning to press overhead to a vertical is a skill that is necessary to learn. Figures are judged based on height, so allowing novice athletes the opportunity to show height and learn how to achieve it is a needed skill.

ITEM 39:

Change Novice Compulsory Figures

Figures Committee Recommends Approval**Rules Committee Recommends Approval****FIGURE RULE II, COMPULSORY FIGURES AND FIGURE SELECTION GROUPS FOR COMPETITIONS****A. NOVICE FIGURES:****COMPULSORY FIGURES:**

100 Bent Knee, Alternate	1.1
201 Dolphin	1.4
??? Snapping Turtle	???
302 Blossom	1.4
316 Kipnus	1.4

Rationale: All 4 novice figures currently start in a back layout. We need variety and to teach the front pike pull down. In addition, learning to press overhead to a vertical is a skill that is necessary to learn. Figures are judged based on height, so allowing novice athletes the opportunity to show height and learn how to achieve it is a needed skill.

ITEM #40: Proposal to change Novice Technical Required Elements
Figures Committee Recommends Approval
Rules Committee Recommends Approval

APPENDIX L

NOVICE FREE ROUTINES WITH TECHNICAL REQUIRED ELEMENTS NOVICE

<p>SOLO / DUET / TRIO AND TEAM (1:30) Technical Required Elements # 1- 5 <u>4</u> must be performed in the order listed. Placement of optional routine requirement # 6 <u>5</u> is optional.</p>
<p>1. ——— Figure # 310 Somersault, Back Tuck. [DD 1.1] <u>1. Figure #316 Kipnus [DD 1.4]</u></p>
<p>2. ——— Figure # 100 Bent Knee, Alternate. [DD 1.1]</p>
<p>3. ——— No-Arm Boost - a rapid, head-first rise, with a maximum amount of the body above the surface of the water. The No-Arm Boost is begun with the body totally underwater or with the back of the head and/or torso flush with the surface. The No-Arm Boost is completed upon total submergence. [DD 1.0] <u>3. Figure # TBD Snapping Turtle [DD TBD]</u></p>
<p>4. ——— Figure # 302 Blossom. [DD 1.4] <u>4. Figure #460 Oyster [DD 1.2]</u></p>
<p>5. ——— Figure # 316 Kipnus. [DD 1.4]</p>
<p>6. 5. Solo, Duet, Trio and Team Optional Routine Requirement - One Free Hybrid may be performed (optional). Placement within the routine is optional.</p>
<p>7. 6. Acrobatic Movements are not permitted.</p>
<p>8. 7. Solo, Duet and Trio General Routine Requirement - Technical Required Elements # 1- 5 <u>4</u> shall be performed parallel to the sides of the pool where the panels of judges are seated.</p>
<p>9. 8. Duet, Trio and Team General Routine Requirement - All Technical Required Elements # 1- 5 <u>4</u> must be performed simultaneously and facing the same direction by all competitors. Mirror actions are not permitted during the Technical Required Elements.</p>

Housekeeping changes to penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: The current novice elements all begin in a back layout. Variety is needed to teach the basic skills that are required at the higher levels of our sport. The eggbeater boost elements are judged under artistic impression and should be included in the routine to be judged as they would in the more advanced level routines.

ITEM #41:

Proposal to change Novice Technical Required Elements

Figures Committee Recommends Rejection**Rules Committee Recommends Rejection****APPENDIX L****NOVICE FREE ROUTINES WITH TECHNICAL REQUIRED ELEMENTS**

NOVICE SOLO / DUET / TRIO AND TEAM (1:30) Technical Required Elements # 1-5 must be performed in the order listed. Placement of optional routine requirement #6 is optional.
1. Figure # 310-Somersault, Back Tuck. [DD 1.1] <u>Front Walkout: Split to Surface Arch to Back</u> <u>Layout: From the Split Position, the hips remain stationary as the front leg is lifted in a 180° arc over the surface of the water to meet the opposite leg in a Surface Arch Position. An Archup (see Figure Rule V.A.) is executed to a Back Layout Position. [DD TBD]</u>
2. Figure # 100 Bent Knee, Alternate. [DD 1.1] <u>Inverted Tuck Position to Bent Knee Vertical Position: From an Inverted Tuck Position with the shins perpendicular to the surface of the water, the shins remain perpendicular to the surface while the trunk unrolls as the legs assume a Bent Knee Vertical Position (left or right leg) midway between the former vertical line through the hips and the former vertical line through the head and the shins. [DD TBD]</u>
3. No-Arm Boost - a rapid, head-first rise, with a maximum amount of the body above the surface of the water. The No-Arm Boost is begun with the body totally underwater or with the back of the head and/or torso flush with the surface. The No-Arm Boost is completed upon total submergence. [DD 1.0]
4. Figure # 302-Blossom. [DD 1.4] <u>Surface Front Pike Position to Fishtail Position: From a Surface Front Pike Position, without movement of the trunk and with minimal change in level, one leg is lifted to a Fishtail Position. [DD TBD]</u>
5. Figure # 316-Kipnus. [DD 1.4] <u>Thrust: From a submerged Back Pike Position, with legs remaining perpendicular to the surface of the water, a vertical upward movement of the legs and hips is rapidly executed as the body unrolls to assume a Vertical Position. In the Back Pike Position the toes are just under the surface of the water prior to the Thrust. Maximum height is desirable. [DD TBD]</u>
6. Solo, Duet, Trio and Team Optional Routine Requirement - One Free Hybrid may be performed (optional). Placement within the routine is optional.
7. Acrobatic Movements are <u>not</u> permitted.
8. Solo, Duet and Trio General Routine Requirement - Technical Required Elements # 1-5 shall be performed parallel to the sides of the pool where the panels of judges are seated.
9. Duet, Trio and Team General Routine Requirement - All Technical Required Elements # 1-5 must be performed simultaneously and facing the same direction by all competitors. Mirror actions are not permitted during the Technical Required Elements.

Note:

1. All Novice routines shall include the Technical Required Elements and may also include 1 optional Free Hybrid. The optional Free Hybrid may be placed anywhere in the routine and will be judged under Artistic Impression (no Acrobatic Movements permitted).
2. The Coach Card/Element Card is not required for Novice routines.
3. There will be a maximum synchronization error deduction of 10 points for all Novice routines.

Housekeeping changes to penalty section of Appendix L if item is approved.

Rationale: Move Novice athletes away from doing full figures in routines and instead use body positions as better preparation for thrust, airborne weight and flexibility families in the hybrids required at higher levels.

LATE RULES PROPOSALS SUBMISSIONS

Late items shall only be approved if ninety percent (90%) of the Board of Directors present and voting vote in favor.

ITEM #42: Eliminate Figures competition at the U.S. Junior Olympic Championship Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

- CP 3.5.5.5 All 12 & under and Youth competitors in Solo, Duet and Team free routines shall compete in the Figure competition. The Figure results shall be added to the Preliminary Free routine score to determine the top 12 Duets and Teams that competition. The top 12 Duets and Teams shall qualify for the Final Free routine competition. Number 13 shall be the preswimmer.
- ~~1. The Figure results shall be added to the Solo Final Free routine scores to determine final placement.~~
 - ~~2. The Figure results shall be added to the Solo Final Free routine scores to determine final placement.~~
 - ~~1. The Solo and Free Combination events shall be a Final event, and shall not include the Figure scores.~~

Rationale: This competition is intended to honor the Age Group athletes who have worked diligently to qualify for a national championship. The Figures competition has become so large that the overall national championship experience is impacted negatively. Athletes would still qualify through their association and regional championships using figure scores added to routine scores to determine final placement. The Youth National Championship and 12 and Under Invitational would still require Figures competitions. For several years now we have struggled with accommodating all athletes competing in figures at the U.S. Junior Olympic Championship. When we moved from the top 10 moving into figures to all competitors, we knew it would add numbers. With additional qualified athletes and events, the numbers in the Figures competition have grown and really squeezed the schedule. The hours-long competitions for both 12 and Under competitors and Youth competitors now seem to be more of a struggle to accommodate than a benefit encouraging athletes to work on technique. As a result, this proposal suggests eliminating Figures competition at the U.S. Junior Olympic Championship. The proposal maintains figures as part of the qualifying process through association and regional competitions to ensure some focus on technique is incorporated into athletes' training. By eliminating figures at this one competition, athletes can then focus on preparing for Routine competition and not have quite as much fatigue from first-day figures as they head into the rest of the competition. It is hoped that all athletes, particularly those who are competing at the U.S. Junior Olympic Championship for the first time, have a positive experience that helps retain them in the sport of Artistic Swimming. In reviewing the results from the preliminary events at this year's U.S. Junior Olympic Championship, figure scores did impact a few placements in the preliminary events, but in most cases the movement was not so significant as to shift competitors from final events. Previously we considered returning to the practice of having the top preliminary routines (e.g., top 12 or 14) move into figures, but the numbers are still large and would necessitate a significant amount of time in planning for Figures competition.

ITEM #43: Eliminate preswimmers at the U.S. Junior Olympic Championship Rules Committee Recommends Rejection

- CP 3.5.5.5 All 12 & under and Youth competitors in Solo, Duet and Team free routines shall compete in the Figure competition. The Figure results shall be added to the Preliminary Free routine score to determine the top 12 Duets and Teams that qualify for the Final Free routine competition. ~~Number 13 shall be the preswimmer.~~
1. The Figure results shall be added to the Solo Final Free routine scores to determine final placement.
 2. The Free Combination event shall be a Final event, and shall not include the Figure scores.
- CP 3.5.5.6 All 15-17 and 18-19/20 competitors in Solo, Duet and Team may compete in the Technical and/or Free routine events. The Preliminary Free routine score shall be used to determine the top 12 Duets and Teams that qualify for the Final Free routine competition. ~~Number 13 shall be the preswimmer.~~
1. All Technical routine events, Free Solo, Acrobatic Routine and Free Combination shall be Final events.

Housekeeping changes to remove all references to Figures competition and pre-swimmers at U.S. Junior Olympic Championship.

Rationale: We have increased finals from 8 competitors to 12 in both Duet and Team finals. There is also no reason to have a pre-swimmer after watching the many preliminary routine competitions. By the time the final events are held in duet and team, judges have seen many routines and are well practiced. Pre-swimmers used to help “warm up” judges, but that is no longer necessary for this particular competition. Events such as Solos, Mixed Duets, Free Combination and Acrobatic Routine are final events and do not have pre-swimmers. To align with our other national championships and in keeping with World Aquatic practices, we propose eliminating pre-swimmers at all national championships. In addition, elimination of pre-swim routines reduces each final event by approximately 10 minutes each.

ITEM #44: Change random draw procedure for additional entries to national championships.
Rules Committee Recommends Approval

CP 3 ELIGIBILITY

CP 3.1 General:

CP 3.1.6 Additional Entries: When a National Championship has fewer entries than the maximum allowed, the Vice President Competitive Programs (or appointed representative) may select additional entries by a random draw from the provisional entries, with the initial draw being from the next routines(s) in order of placement from the qualifying competition and any following draws from the subsequent routines(s) in order of placement, until the maximum number of entries for the championship has been reached. See Rule CP 5.5.6.1. The number of randomly selected entries and qualified entries may not exceed the maximum number of possible entries for the championship.

Rationale: The highest placing routines should always have the first opportunity to qualify as additional entries at national championships.