

**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO IHSA MEMBER SCHOOLS AND SWIMMING OFFICIALS -
NFHS/IHSA SWIMMING RULE CHANGE - EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY**

The following rule change was adopted by the National Federation of High Schools Board of Directors on Tuesday, August 11, 2009. The rule re-defines a legal suit for interscholastic swimming. The new rule makes it illegal to wear the "High Tech" suits that have been worn by swimmers at all levels of competition world wide over the past two years. IHSA member schools, as well as all NFHS member schools nationally, are required to implement this new rule IMMEDIATELY. FINA, NCAA and USA swimming will officially adopt the same rule in the weeks/months ahead.

NEW RULE 3-3-2

ART. 1...It is recommended all swimmers and divers on the team wear suits of identical coloring and pattern. Suits shall be of one piece. A competitor shall not be permitted to participate wearing a suit that is not of decent

New ART. 2...Suits worn by swimmers shall be limited to the following requirements:

a. only one swimsuit shall be permitted in competition. (A swimmer with special needs may request customization through his/her school to the state association.)

b. the swimsuit shall be:

1. constructed of a woven/knit textile material;

2. permeable (100 percent to air and water);

3. made so as not to aid in buoyancy and shall not be altered to aid in buoyancy;

4. made with no zippers or other fastening system other than a waist tie for a brief or jammer and elastic material within the casing/ribbing in the terminal ends (straps, leg openings, and waist openings); and

5. the style/shape of the suit for males shall not extend above the waist nor below the top of the kneecap and for females shall not extend beyond the shoulders nor below the top of the kneecap, nor cover the neck.

Penalty (For ART. 2): When an official discovers a competitor wearing an illegal swimsuit by the wearing of two suits or construction, the official shall:

1. when reporting prior to the start of the heat, notify the competitor to make legal the swimsuit before becoming eligible to compete and without delaying the start of the heat;

2. when the competitor has stepped up on the starting platform but prior to the starting device being activated, direct the competitor to "Step down," disqualify the competitor from that event and he/she shall not be eligible for further competition until in a legal swimsuit;

3. when the starting device has been activated, disqualify the competitor at the completion of the heat; nullify the competitor's performance time and he/she shall not be eligible for further competition until in a legal swimsuit.

Rationale: Technical swimsuits were introduced to the world of swimming approximately two years ago. The advanced technology fundamentally altered the sport, and swimwear became more of a piece of equipment as opposed to a uniform. The rules of swimming have always prohibited the wearing or use of an item that would aid in the swimmer's speed or buoyancy. The technical suits have evolved with little or no regard for these basic rules. In order to preserve the integrity, tradition and heritage of the sport, as well as protect and enhance the interscholastic swimming program, the new requirements and restrictions on swimwear are necessary to promote the educational values of high school athletics to promote fair play. The immediate implementation date will guarantee fairness in competition throughout the high school swimming seasons and allow the meet officials to fairly and consistently enforce the rule.