

Safety Committee Update

RACING START CERTIFICATION

All coaches need to ensure that their swimmers are racing start certified or must ensure that their swimmer is starting from within the water. A reminder that according to a study conducted by the United States Swimming Insurance Company (USSIC) and Indiana University "Racing starts from the side of the pool are typically NO more shallow than racing starts off the starting blocks." Many times coaches believe they are taking the correct steps by having their kids dive from the side and unfortunately there is not much difference in angle or velocity from making that modification. Therefore any swimmer that is not certified must start from within the water until certification is complete. If an official or meet safety director notices a child who lacks the ability to proficiently perform a head first racing start from the block or side of the pool, said swimmer's coach may be asked to provide documentation that the swimmer is certified to be allowed to dive from the block or side of the pool. If the coach is unable to provide documentation the swimmer will be asked to start from within the water for the remainder of the meet

FAQs Regarding Racing Start Certification

1. What if a swimmer is certified at one club and then transfers to another?

Answer: The swimmer must be recertified at the new club.

2. Who is responsible for keeping copies of certification forms?

Answer: Each club is responsible for retaining, for three years, a certification form for each of its swimmers. There is no requirement that these forms be sent to an LSC or to officials responsible for any competition.

3. Does the certification process impose more liability on coaches?

Answer: No. A coach's liability is already based on the coach's exercise of good professional judgment in deciding whether a swimmer has the skills necessary to safely perform a racing start into less than six feet of water (including racing starts into the USA Swimming minimum starting depth of four feet). Certification simply documents that for each swimmer, such professional judgment was exercised. Similarly, coaches are also already responsible for following the progression set forth in the American Red Cross Safety Training Manual to teach racing starts to young or novice swimmers. Certification documents that the steps in the American Red Cross Safety Training Manual have been followed.

4. Can swimmers who have not been certified still participate in swim meets?

Answer: Yes. However, they may not start from either a starting block or from the side of the pool and may start only from within the pool.

5. Where can I find information about teaching head first entry progressions and racing start safety?

Answer: The progressions are described with accompanying photos in the American Red Cross Safety Training for Swim Coaches Manual. Access the Manual on the coach's tab at www.usaswimming.org. (See Chapter 2: Head-first Entries and Racing Start Safety.) The Red Cross Swimming and Diving Skills DVD includes a video of the progression.



LIFEGUARD REQUIRED BY STATE CODE

Just a reminder to all clubs that USA Swimming requires that all clubs comply with all local and state laws. In the state of Ohio a lifeguard must be present anytime a swimmer is in the water for a pool 2,000 sq. ft. or above (this covers most every pool a swim team would use to practice in.) This requirement also excludes a coach who is certified as a lifeguard to count as a lifeguard unless the coach is NOT coaching, is easily identifiable as the lifeguard, has a rescue tube and pocket mask on their person, and is engaged in only patron surveillance.

Please ensure that you are complying with state code and keeping your swimmers safe. Make sure a lifeguard is on duty at all times.



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REPORT OF OCCURRENCE

Please make sure that no matter how small an incident is that you make a report of occurrence and send the receipt you get from USA swimming to our LSC Safety Chair, Branden Burns at bburns@twinsburg.oh.us.

The smallest of lacerations can become infected and require advanced medical intervention which can become costly. Being a member of USA Swimming means that you are covered by insurance which allows for up to \$25,000 in coverage for each occurrence.

BOOSTER CLUB

Statement provided by the Organizational Risk management committee "We are seeing more and more clubs changing from volunteer run to coach owned with a booster club set up as the fund raising Organization for the club. As such, the Organization will run swim meets and other fund raising activities on behalf of the member club. Some booster organizations believe they are provided coverage because of their relationship with the member club. **This is not the case.**" For those coach or organization owned teams please see to it that your parent boards or boosters become member organizations with USA Swimming.

Running Starts and Sailor Dives have NO place in USA Swimming!

CONCUSSION REMINDERS

HYPOXIC TRAINING AND SHALLOW WATER BLACKOUTS.

Just a reminder to coaches that Hypoxic Blackouts more commonly known as Shallow Water Blackouts, is a major concern for USA Swimming. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Organizational Risk Management Committee that Hypoxic training follow a few guidelines.

1. Hypoxic sets occur at the beginning of practice.
2. Be under close supervision
3. Any swimmer who is believed to be hyperventilating in preparation of the set be removed from participating.
4. Any swimmer having difficulty be given extra recovery time.
5. Swimmers be instructed to not replicate these types of sets outside of coach supervision.

Concussions within the aquatic sports arena continues to be a safety concern for our swimmers. USA swimming continues to stress that "Any athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion should be removed immediately and should not return until evaluated and cleared by a licensed health care professional, trained and experienced in evaluating and management of concussions, acting within scope of practice. Compliance with all state and local laws dealing with concussion is the responsibility of the Club and/or LSC. "

Symptoms Reported by the athlete may include:

- **Any headache or "pressure" in head - how badly it hurts does not matter**
- **Nausea or vomiting**
- **Balance problems or dizziness**
- **Double or blurry vision**
- **Sensitivity to light and/or noise**
- **Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy**
- **Concentration or memory problems**
- **Confusion**
- **Trouble falling asleep**

When a concussion is suspected stop all strenuous activity and have the athlete checked out by a medical professional.

When an athlete is able to return start SLOW. If any symptoms reoccur stop allow time for additional rest and recovery and start again from the beginning.

1. Kicking sets only (no flip turns)
2. Lite Swimming (no flip turns)
3. Gradually increase practice length, yardage, and intensity.
4. Slowly add flip turns gradually (start with a few and increase slowly)
5. Lastly begin head first entries gradually.

***At no time should a person who has suffered a concussion participate in Hypoxic training. Hypoxic sets should not be reintroduced until the swimmer is well past performing head first entries.**