

DID YOU KNOW...?

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Rule Change for Swimwear

At the 2008 Annual Convention, USA Swimming modified **Rule 102.9.1A** on the design of swimwear for athletes 12 and under who swim in age group defined competition. For those LSC's who have not already adopted the rule, it will become effective on May 15, 2009. The modified rule reads as follows:

102.9 Swimwear

.1 Design

- A. **Swimsuits worn for all 12 & under age group defined competition shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulder, nor past the knee.**
- B. Swimsuits worn for competition must be non-transparent and conform to the current concept of the appropriate.
- C. The Referee shall have the authority to bar offenders from the competition until they comply with the rule.

There is an exception to Rule 102.9.1A. If an athlete has religious beliefs or a medical condition that requires more of the body to be covered, a waiver must be obtained from the USA Swimming Rules & Regulations Committee Chair. A copy of the waiver must be presented to the Meet Referee prior to the athlete competing. Colorado Swimming has modified this new rule to encompass **all 14 and under age group defined competition.**

What does this mean for our age group athletes? If a swimmer is 14 years old or younger and swims in an event in a USA Swimming sanctioned meet in Colorado that is labeled 14 & Under, 13-14, 12 & Under, 11-12, 10 & Under, 9-10, 8 & Under, etc., that athlete's attire must conform to the rule or it will be a disqualification; that includes boys suits that start at the waist and go down to the ankle. If a swimmer who is 14 or younger wishes to compete in Open competition in a swim suit that covers more of the body than is designated in Rule 102.9.1A, he or she may do so without being disqualified.

The reasoning behind this rule change is twofold. First, we are all aware of the expense of the high performance suits; the National Age Group Development Committee, the group that proposed this legislation change, is concerned about barriers to entry we could have in our sport if these suits are used for age group swimmers. We do not want our athletes to feel compelled to buy very expensive high performance suits in order to feel like they are competing on a level playing field. And second, it is believed by the Committee that the focus of age group swimmers should be on learning the correct techniques in order to improve performance. In other words, the Committee did not want athletes depending upon some artificial means to improve their times. And for those reasons, the USA Swimming National Convention voted to disallow the use of such swimwear when our athletes are competing in 12 and under defined competition. **As of March, 2009, Colorado Swimming chose to expand the rule change to be applicable for all 14 and under age group defined competition.**

Colorado Swimming is dedicated to serving all its athletes and supports a coaching philosophy of the right training at the right time for its age group swimmers. The Education Committee hopes you found this information helpful in supporting your athlete on his/her path toward strong technique development.