

High-tech Swimsuits Banned in High School Swimming

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Becky Oakes

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (August 11, 2009) - High-tech swimsuits that have been linked to record performances at all levels of competition the past couple of years have been banned for high school competition, effective immediately.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Swimming and Diving Rules Committee approved changes to Rule 3-2-2 that will make the high-tech swimsuit no longer a legal suit for swimmers at the high school level. The committee's recommendations were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

Effective immediately, swimmers shall be limited to one swimsuit, which shall be constructed of a woven/knit textile material, permeable to water and air, constructed so as not to aid in buoyancy, and shall not contain zippers or other fastening systems. In addition, the suit shall be constructed so that the style/shape for males shall not extend above the waist or below the top of the kneecap and for females shall not extend beyond the shoulders or below the top of the kneecap, and it shall not cover the neck.

"These high-tech suits had fundamentally altered the sport and become more similar to equipment, rather than a uniform," said Becky Oakes, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Swimming and Diving Rules Committee. "The rules of swimming have always prohibited the use or wearing of items that would aid in the swimmer's speed and/or buoyancy. The technical suits and styles had evolved to a point where there was little, if any, compliance with these basic rules," Oakes said.

The committee discussed the high-tech swimsuit issue at its meeting in March, but did not have enough factual information to take action at that time.

"With new developments in the swimming community, the committee knew that in order to preserve the integrity, tradition and heritage of the sport, as well as protect and enhance the interscholastic swimming program, these new requirements were necessary to promote fair play and the educational values of high school and could not wait for another year," Oakes said. "The immediate implementation date, including style, will help guarantee fairness in competition throughout the high school swimming seasons and allow meet officials to fairly and consistently enforce the rule."

The following link to the NFHS Web site contains complete information on the new swimsuit requirements, as well as the penalties for violation of the uniform rule â€

<http://www.nfhs.org/core/contentmanager/uploads/Swimming%20&%20Diving%20Rule%20Change%203-3-2.pdf> .

Swimming/diving ranks eighth in popularity for girls with 147,197 participants in 6,766 schools, according to the NFHS 2007-08 High School Athletics Participation Survey. The sport ranks 10th among boys sports with 111,896 participants in 6,428 schools.