



REFEREEING NVSL DIVING





Outline

- **Rule Changes**
- **Before the dive meet**
- **During the dive meet**
- **After the dive meet**
- **Referee Calls, Judges Awards, and Disqualifications**
- **Final Thoughts**



2026 Rule Changes

- Rule 1.j. says: League diving meets should not be scheduled or rescheduled on Saturdays at times which conflict with League swimming meets published in the League Handbook. In addition, League diving meets should not be scheduled or rescheduled on Wednesdays which conflict with League swimming Division Relay Carnivals and the All-Star Relay Carnival as published in the League Handbook.
- Rule 3.c. says : At meet start and thereafter, divers shall perform the dives in the order listed on the meet entry form ~~unless rules specify otherwise.~~
- Rule 3.d. says: Disqualifications
 - **(1)** For all meets, a diver may eliminate one, but only one, optional dive and take zero on the dive without prejudice and remain in the contest if otherwise eligible.
 - **(2)** A diver may not eliminate a required dive and remain in the contest. (Note: because of the requirements of **Rules 3.b.(4) and 3.c** ~~and 3.d.~~, if a senior diver does not list 401 as the third dive on his/her entry sheet and it is discovered after the meet starts, he or she is disqualified).
 - **(3)** If a diver ~~makes a legitimate~~ attempts (including coach assistance) to perform a required dive and fails, he/she is not disqualified and may remain in the contest if otherwise eligible.
 - **(4)** ~~A diver who, in the referee's opinion, willingly fails, does not make a legitimate attempt, eliminates, or purposely chooses not to perform a required dive shall be disqualified from the contest immediately.~~



2026 Rule Changes (Continued)

- Rule 3.g Clarifies the optional dives may not be from the same group
- Rule 10.a.(2) says that the host Team Representative will contact the visiting Team Representative one week in advance of the meet, set time of meet and ensure an understanding of the number and source of officials, ~~and~~ unique configurations of the dive well, and shall include communication of dive well depth being less than 11 feet at plummet
- Rule 10.a.13. says that the meet secretary shall be responsible for recording the meet results on forms provided by the league



Reminder of Recent (2025) Rule Changes

- Rule 4.i.(4) says that manifest twisting is now clearly a referee call, max of 2
- Dive sheet corrections – after meet starts, cannot correct dive sheet mistakes by using “the one and only one optional dive” rule [rules 10.a.(9)/10.b.(7)]
- Consult with Division Coordinator Committee Chair (DCCC) if Division Coordinator (DC) unable to reschedule make-up meets or if DC has a conflict
- Involve referees or designated person(s) voluntarily before meet starts to check meet sheets for accuracy, completeness, and compliance with rules
- Must refer protests to rules committee if DC unable to resolve
- Must submit divemeets.com or paper meet registrations no later than 2 days before 3-meter, synchro, divisional, and All-Star meets
- Check pre-printed machine-generated meet sheets used at Divisional meets for mistakes before meet start
- Meet voluntarily with other team representatives in previous week before dual meets for plan coordination to deal with uniqueness of facility and dive well, officials running meets efficiently, and timely completion of meets



Preparing for the Meet

- **Arrive at least 30-45 minutes prior to meet start**
 - Introduce yourself to team reps, officials and coaches
 - Coordinate with announcer to keep the meet moving
- **Check dive sheets**
 - Look for critical errors which will cause failed dives or disqualifications
 - Determine if events will be combined
 - Note difficult or unusual dives for discussion with judges
- **Convene judges for pre-meet instructions**
 - Review criteria for satisfactory dives and score ranges
 - Highlight specific dives in *this* meet
 - Review judges' awards



Specific Pre-meet Instructions

- **Judge the entire dive**
 - Approach, take-off, flight and entry
- **Use the entire range of scores, consistent with diver-demonstrated skills**
- **Reward excellence when exhibited by any diver**
- **Make deductions as warranted**
- **Do NOT judge degree of difficulty; judge dive quality only**



During the Meet

- **Keep the meet moving**
 - Start on time and finish before dark
 - Keep track of and limit the amount pre-event warm-up time
- **Dive change**
 - Allowed for 1 and only 1 optional dive
 - NOT allowed for a required dive
 - Changed dive must have DD less than or equal to original dive
 - New dive must NOT repeat an optional group within the dive sheet
 - Cannot use rule 10.a.(9) or 10.b.(7) to fix a non-conforming dive sheet
- **Position change**
 - Any dive (required or optional) may have its position changed on the board
 - DD goes with the new position



During the Meet (cont.)

- **Resolve issues immediately, if possible**
 - Have the dive reannounced – if there are questions
 - Distinguish the difference between a rule interpretation and a referee judgment call
- **Make referee calls with confidence**
 - Be sure of your call beyond a shadow of a doubt
 - **MAKE THE CALL! What you don't call, you condone**
 - If unsure, the benefit of doubt goes to the diver
 - May confer with another judge for declaring failed or unsatisfactory dives
- **Questionable judging discrepancies**
 - Consider re-instructing judges at the completion of a round, if needed



During the Meet (cont.)

- **Weather delays/interruptions**
 - **Pool Manager**
 - Has the responsibility for determining whether the facility is open or closed for diving
 - **Referee**
 - May determine that the conditions are unsafe and stop the diving event, e.g., cannot see the bottom of the pool during a rain event
 - May not determine to continue without the Pool Manager's approval
- **Minor delay, same day**
 - Continue from last dive completed
- **Delay of date or change in venue**
 - Resume at beginning of interrupted ROUND (not event)
 - No changes or additions to dive sheets



After the Meet

- **Review the final meet results**
 - Correct any rule interpretation errors, if appropriate
 - Correct DD discrepancies, math errors, etc.
- **Refer any protests/issues to the DC, DCCC, or Rules Committee as appropriate**
 - Confer with any NVSL official as needed to resolve any conflict
- **Be available for questions from Team Reps or Coaches**



Referee's Calls

• Failed Dives

- Dive announced not executed
- Entries on dives twisted over or under 90 degrees at any time during entry
- Head or hands not contacting water first on head-first dive
- Feet not contacting water first on feet first dive
- Double jump (bound) after a clearly defined hurdle
- Take-off from one foot for forward or back approach
- Diver is assisted by another person
- Diver executes two balks
- Diver executes dive not listed or allowed in World Aquatics or NVSL DD tables
- Blank dive entry for an optional dive found after meet start
- After meet start, dive entry on form missing either dive number, position, or description



Referee's Calls (cont.)

- **No more than 2 points to be awarded by judges:**
 - Dive clearly performed in the wrong position
 - Fall-in (entry) performed when a forward/back dive is announced
 - Diver does not attempt to come out of a tuck, pike, or twist
 - Diver is too close to the board or hits the board
 - Diver manifestly twists from the board
- **No more than 4 ½ points to be awarded by judges:**
 - One or both arms above head on feet-first entry
 - One or both arms below the head on head-first entry
- **Balks or violation of the forward approach: (2-point deduction from each judge's score)**
 - Motion of approach, press, or dive stopped (balk)
 - Hurdle from two feet on forward approach, e.g., "bunny hop" (violation of forward approach)



Judge's Calls

- **Zero (0) score:**
 - Any failed dive if referee does not make call
- **No more than 2 points awarded:**
 - Dive manifestly twisted from board if referee does not make call
 - Dive clearly out of position if referee does not make call
 - Fall-in (entry) performed when a forward/back dive announced, if referee does not make call
 - No attempt to come out of a tuck, pike, or twist, if referee does not make call
 - Diver is too close to the board or hits the board if referee does not make call
- **No more than 4 ½ points awarded:**
 - One or both arms above the head on feet-first entry if referee does not make call
 - One or both arms below the head on head-first entry if referee does not make call



Judge's Calls (cont.)

- **Point deduction (1/2 to 2 points):**
 - Crow hop on standing dive (forward or back)
 - Excessive rocking
 - Unaesthetic performance of straight, pike, tuck, or free position on dive
 - Arms not in correct position on the entry of dive
- **Point Deduction (Judge's Opinion)**
 - Forward approach not smooth, aesthetically pleasing, or does not reach the end of the board
 - Take off not bold, high, and confident
 - Dive partially performed (broken) in wrong position
 - Entry is too far from or off to one side of the board
 - Entry is twisted, too short or too long of vertical, or body position is not straight
- **Balks or violation of forward approach (2-point deduction from score)**
 - Motion of approach, press, or dive stopped (balk) if referee does not make call
 - Hurdle from two feet on forward approach, e.g., "bunny hop" (violation of forward approach) if referee does not make call



Disqualifications

- **A diver may not eliminate a required dive and remain in the contest.**
- **Unsportsmanlike conduct**
- **2 failed dives**
 - May continue in the meet
 - No team points scored



Last Thoughts and Considerations

- **ABSOLUTELY ENSURE DIVER SAFETY**
- **Maintain the reputation of NVSL Dive as one of the premier developmental dive leagues in the country**
- **Be the model of sportsmanship**
- **Set the tone of the meet and maintain order**
- **Resolve issues immediately, if possible**
- **Be a judge as well as a referee, if possible (you are probably among the most qualified judges)**
- **Know and explain the difference between a rule interpretation and a referee judgment call**
- **Finally, HAVE FUN! DIVING IS A GREAT SPORT!**