

# SECTION 9

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## **COMPETITION RULES, REGULATIONS & INFORMATION**



**NEW ZEALAND  
MASTERS SWIMMING**

## Section 9

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### COMPETITION RULES REGULATIONS & INFORMATION

#### 1. World Aquatics Stroke Rules

All meets sanctioned by NZMS are governed by the World Aquatics Swimming Rules.

#### 2. World Aquatics Masters Rules

All meets sanctioned by NZMS are also governed by the World Aquatics Masters Swimming Rules.

- a. Exceptions to this rule are:
  - i. Swimmers aged 18-24 will form one age group.
  - ii. All NZMS sanctioned events will also be open for swimmers with a disability who hold a classification.
  - iii. The club championship will be based on results from the male, female, and multi-classification swimmers.

#### 3. Multi-classification Rules

Multi-classification swimmers' events will be based on the World Para Swimming Rules and Regulations.

- b. Exceptions and extensions are:
  - i. Multi-classification swimmers must have at least a provisional classification from Swimming New Zealand.
  - ii. Multi-classification swimmers can participate in all the masters events, including classification specific events such as the 150IM for SM1-4.
  - iii. Multi-classification swimmers can choose to compete against other multi-classification swimmers or non-impaired swimmers or both. This means each multi-classification swimmer can win up to two medals for each event.
  - iv. Multi-classification swimmers will be mixed into heats based on their registered times. Multi-classification medals will be distributed based on percentage of their respective classification world record, i.e. whoever is closest based on percentage wins.
  - v. Swimmers with a partial classification are only able to race as a multi-classification swimmer for their relevant races.
  - vi. Multi-classification swimmers will be officiated in the water based on World Para Swimming rules, even when competing alongside non-impaired swimmers.

#### 4.

##### **Extract from World Aquatics MSW 3 Technical Swimming Rules 2025**

The Swimming Rules in Part II of the World Aquatics Handbook shall apply to Masters with the following exceptions:

MSW 3.1 Age groups and sexes may be combined so that no swimmer has to swim alone and lanes may be filled.

MSW 3.2 When using the forward start, the referee's whistle shall indicate that the swimmers may take their positions with at least one foot at the front of the starting platform or pool deck, or in the water with one hand having contact with the starting wall.

MSW 3.3 Any swimmer starting before the starting signal has been given by the Starter, shall be disqualified. (Supersedes SW 4.1).

MSW 3.4 All Masters events shall be conducted on a timed final basis.

MSW 3.5 Swimmers may be allowed to remain in their lane while other swimmers are competing until directed by the referee to exit the pool.

MSW 3.6 The order of swimmers by gender is optional in mixed relays.

MSW 3.7 Events shall be pre-seeded with oldest age groups first, slowest heats swum first within each age group. Events 400 metres and over may be deck seeded from slowest to fastest, regardless of age.

MSW 3.8 The Organising Committee may arrange 400 metre, 800 metre and 1500 metre Freestyle to be swum two (2) swimmers of the same sex in a lane. Separate timing will be required for each swimmer.

MSW 3.9 The Warmup must be supervised.

MSW 3.10 A breaststroke kicking movement is permitted for butterfly. Only one breaststroke kick is permitted per arm pull except that a single breaststroke kick is permitted prior to the turn and the finish without an arm pull. After the start and after each turn, a single breaststroke kick is permitted prior to the first arm pull.

## 5. BL 8 Swimwear

**BL 8.1** All swimwear used at Olympic Games and World Aquatics Events (pool and open water competitions) shall be swimwear approved by World Aquatics in accordance with the rules and procedures set forth in the World Aquatics Requirements for Swimwear Approval (FRSA) issued by the World Aquatics bureau and valid on the date of approval. Following an approval process conducted by the Swimwear Approval Commission, a list of approved swimwear is published by World Aquatics (the Approved List) each year. The Approved List is published each year before December 31 and is valid starting from January 1 of the subsequent year.

[www.fina.org/swimming/approved-swimwear](http://www.fina.org/swimming/approved-swimwear)

## 6. World Records

World records can only be set in accordance with section **MSW3.5** of the World Aquatics masters Swimming Rules.

The National Recorder will complete the World Record Application form on behalf of a member upon ratification of the result. If the record is achieved in a competition outside New Zealand it is the responsibility of the **swimmer** to provide the National Recorder with the required paperwork to ratify the result, **except** that, if the record is achieved at a World Masters Swimming Championship, the swimmer is not required to provide the required paperwork as the National Recorder can obtain this information from World Aquatics.

Masters swimming competitions conducted for a third party, such as World Master Games (which may or may not include non-masters registered swimmers), are not eligible for setting World Aquatics World Masters Records or for inclusion in the World Aquatics Top10. This decision was approved by the World Aquatics Bureau following a recommendation of the World Aquatics Masters Committee in 2006.

This means New Zealand times recorded at New Zealand and other Masters Games meetings are not able to be ratified as World Records or be included in the World Aquatics Top10. See Appendix A for details of meets at which World Records can be set.

## **7. National Records**

A National Record can be set as follows.

### **7.1 Swimmer**

The swimmer must be:

- A financial member of an NZMS affiliated club at the time of the swim.
- A New Zealand citizen or hold current residency status and have lived in New Zealand for a period longer than 6 months.

### **7.2 Meet**

- See Appendix A for details of meets at which National Records can be set.

### **7.3 Event**

- The swim must be part of the scheduled program of events at the meet. There is no provision to attempt records on a one-off basis.
- A swimmer in an individual event may apply for a National Record at an intermediate distance if he/she specifically requests the referee that this performance be especially timed or if the time at the intermediate distance is recorded by automatic officiating equipment. The swimmer must complete the scheduled distance of the event to apply for a record at the intermediate distance.
- Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke and Individual Medley records cannot be set in a Freestyle event.

### **7.4 Relays**

- The first swimmer in a relay may apply for an individual National Record. The individual performance will not be nullified by any team disqualifications for violations after the first leg is complete.
- For a relay National Record, all four swimmers in the relay team must be from the same NZMS affiliated club and each must satisfy the Swimmer requirements of this section.
- Teams for a relay National Record in a Mixed event must consist of 2 men and 2 women.
- All swimmers in a team must be aged 25 or older for a relay National Record.
- Medley relay records cannot be set in a Freestyle relay event.

### **7.5 Timing**

- Records will be accepted when times are recorded by Automatic Officiating Equipment, or Semi-Automatic Officiating Equipment in case of Automatic Officiating Equipment system malfunction.
- Records will be accepted when times are recorded manually provided that:
  - Three (3) manual times are recorded.

- The lane slip or other document recording the times is signed by the Chief Timekeeper and sighted by the National Recorder.
- For manual timing, if all 3 times disagree the middle time will be used. If 2 out of 3 times agree, this time will be used.

## **8. Recognition of National Records**

The National Recorder will make every endeavour to identify records set at NZMS sanctioned meets in New Zealand. For SNZ events and meets outside of New Zealand, the swimmer must notify the National Recorder of their performance and provide any necessary information so that the result can be ratified.

In all cases, it is the responsibility of the swimmer to ensure that the National Recorder is aware of their performance. An application for a National Record must be received by the National Recorder within 3 months of the date of the performance.

The National Recorder will update the National Records register after the results have been ratified.

The current National Records will be published on the NZMS website.

Record certificates will be issued for all ratified records.

## **9. National Rankings (previously Top Ten Rankings)**

The National Rankings list is produced each year and ranks each swimmer in their age group from the results of each sanctioned or recognised meet held during the year.

The IT Officer updates the National Rankings list at the end of the year and this list is available on the NZMS website. These rankings are sent to World Aquatics each year, making New Zealand swimmers eligible for annual World Top Ten rankings.

Masters swimming competitions conducted for a third party, such as World Master Games (which may or may not include non-masters registered swimmers), are not eligible for inclusion in the World Aquatics Top10. This decision was approved by the World Aquatics Bureau following a recommendation of the World Aquatics Masters Committee in 2006.

This means New Zealand times recorded at New Zealand and other Masters Games meetings are not able to be included in the World Aquatics Top10.

See Appendix A for details of meets which are eligible for inclusion in the National Rankings.

## **10. Overseas Swimmers and Competitions**

### **10.1 Overseas Swimmers Competing in New Zealand**

An overseas swimmer is eligible to compete in a meet sanctioned by NZMS provided they are a financial member of a National Masters organisation affiliated to World Aquatics. They must provide proof of their membership with their entry to the sanctioned meet (a copy of their club or national registration card is sufficient).

Overseas swimmers will be presented with the appropriate medal for their placing. However the top three official placings will go to the first three New Zealand swimmers.

### **10.2 New Zealand Swimmers Competing Overseas**

There are no restrictions on New Zealand Masters members competing in sanctioned masters events overseas. A copy of their membership card or other proof of financial membership may need to be included with the entry form. This may be obtained from the National Secretary.

## **11. Transferring between NZMS Clubs**

A swimmer may transfer between NZMS clubs only once in a calendar year.

However if a swimmer has already competed in for a club in a calendar year, they cannot compete for another club in that year. A swimmer can apply to the NZMS Executive to waive this rule, for example if their old club has closed down.

## **12. NZMS Championship Events**

Clubs can apply to host any of the championship events by making an application to the National Secretary by the due date. The Swimming Officer will review all applications and make a recommendation to the Executive.

The Championship events are held annually:

- National Long Course Championships – rotating two years in the North Island and one year in the South Island.
- North Island/ South Island Short Course Championships.
- North Island/ South Island Long Course Championships – can be held in the years when the National Long Course Championships are held in the other island.
- National Open Water Swimming Championships.

## **13. Other Sanctioned Meets**

Clubs can apply to the National Secretary to have their meets sanctioned.

## **14. Sanction Fees**

A sanction fee is not currently charged by NZMS.

## **15. Unofficial Meets**

Clubs may conduct unofficial meets at any time. These meets, often known as 'Chocolate Fish' meets, may be conducted in any manner the club sees fit. There is no need to register with the National Secretary or pay a fee. Times swum for these meets do not qualify for records or National Rankings. Clubs can advertise these meets in Masterscrawl, on the website or in the NZMS newsletter.

## **16. NZMS Postal Swims**

NZMS hosts three postal swims each year:

- One hour postal swim
- 1500/800m postal swim
- The Wall

Further information about these events is available on the NZMS website and entry forms can be found in the events section of the website.

## **17. Distance Awards**

Swimmers can record their distances swum at club pool sessions in order to receive these awards. A chart for recording is available from the NZMS website or from the National Secretary.

Swimmers record their distances each time they swim. Once 100km, 250km, 500km, 1,000km etc has been reached the form can be forwarded to the National Secretary stating start date, completion date and the distance achieved. A certificate of achievement is then posted to the swimmer.

## Appendix A - Meet Classification

Meet Type	Definition	NZMS Records	NZMS Top 10	World Aquatics Top 10/ World Records	Responsibility
NZMS Sanctioned	Sanctioned by NZMS and run by a NZMS registered club, in accordance with NZMS/World Aquatics Masters rules. Open to registered Masters swimmers only (NZ or overseas) Swimmers must be competing for their NZMS club (if they also belong to an overseas club) (NZMS Sanctioned Meets are a subset of World Aquatics Masters Sanctioned Meets)	Yes	Yes	Yes *	NZMS National Recorder will collate all results, identify records set and include all records and results in the annual NZMS and World Aquatics Top 10 Swimmers should notify NZMS National Recorder of any records they believe they have set as the first leg of a relay swim, or a split in a longer event, as these may not be recognised automatically Split times are recognised for records but not for inclusion in the NZMS/FINA Top 10 otherwise * World Aquatics World Records can only be set at meets using electronic timing
World Aquatics Sanctioned Masters	Sanctioned by World Aquatics Masters or a World Aquatics Masters Member Federation, organised by or on behalf of a club or organisation which is a member of that federation, and in accordance with World Aquatics Masters rules using electronic timing. Open to registered Masters swimmers only (NZ or overseas) Swimmers must be competing for their NZMS club (if they also belong to an overseas club)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Swimmers must advise NZMS National Recorder and provide evidence of their participation and results. Records will be included in the annual NZMS and World Aquatics Top 10. Swimmers must supply other results details if they require these to be included in NZMS and World Aquatics Top 10 listings Split times are recognised for records but not for inclusion in the NZMS/World Aquatics Top 10 otherwise



Meet Type	Definition	NZMS Records	NZMS Top 10	World Aquatics Top 10/ World Records	Responsibility
Masters Games	Run by a commercial company, usually as part of a multi-sport festival, in accordance with World Aquatics Masters rules Open to any swimmers that meet age or other criteria specified by the organisers Examples: NZ Masters Games, Pan Pacific Masters Games, World Masters Games Swimmers must be current financial members of a NZMS club at the time of the event	Yes	Records only	No	Swimmers must advise NZMS National Recorder and provide evidence of their participation and results. Records will be included in the annual NZMS Top 10 NZMS may require the swimmer to provide additional evidence that the meet has been run in accordance with FINA Masters rules For meets using manual timing, NZMS National Recorder must sight the lane slip with the manual times recorded on it and signed by the Meet Referee or Chief Timekeeper
Swimming NZ Approved	Approved by Swimming NZ (SNZ), held in NZ and run in accordance with SNZ rules using electronic timing Open to swimmers that meet the criteria specified by SNZ for the meet Swimmers must be current financial members of a NZMS club at the time of the event.	Yes	Records only	No	Swimmers must advise NZMS and provide evidence of their participation and results. Records will be included in the annual NZMS Top 10
Other	Any other Masters or general swim meet, in NZ or overseas, which does not meet one of the above definitions	No	No	No	