



2020-21 Swimming & Diving Virtual Competition Guidance

The NFHS rules which govern high school swimming and diving competition assume that such competition will be “head-to-head” with ALL participants engaging in an environment that is identical for all and thus equitable to all. “Virtual” competition cannot provide such identical conditions, however. With that understanding in mind, there are no NFHS rules provisions that would prohibit “virtual” competition when unique conditions, such as a pandemic, necessitate its use.

The following are some best practices and guidelines in conducting “virtual” swimming and diving competition.

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- Competition for each team/school involved should take place in a venue that meets all requirements of Rule 2 (Pool, Lanes, and Equipment Specifications) and Rule 9 (Diving Competition), with special emphasis on risk minimization.
- Competition should be officiated by qualified personnel of sufficient number (see Rule 4-1-3) to assure fair results at each location. The meet must be conducted under the supervision of a meet referee who is a duly certified NFHS or state association registered official. The official(s) may not be coaches of the team(s) involved in the meet.
- All rules regarding athlete entry, participation and conduct should apply; technical rules for competition (Rules 8 and 9) should be enforced.
- The course must be the same at each site. All teams must compete in short course yards or short course meters.
- Schools competing in swimming or diving virtual competitions should consult with their league to see if/how those competitions will count toward league points and/or standings.
- Virtual competitions count toward the 16 regular season contests that are permitted.

SWIMMING:

- Participants in each race shall be limited only to those eligible to score points.
- Fully automatic timing is the most equitable in a “virtual” situation, but some facilities may not be able to offer that environment. The same timing protocol shall be used at all venues involved in the “virtual” competition. There should be no mixing of fully automatic timing, semi-automatic timing, or manual watches.
- All aspects of competition shall be agreed upon by participating schools in advance. This includes, but is not limited to, configuration of swimmers, breaks within competition, timing system,
- Virtual competition is permitted to count toward the two interscholastic meets needed prior to January 25 in order to be eligible for relay event entry at the sectional/district tournament.

DIVING:

- All aspects of virtual competition and judging shall be agreed upon by the participating schools in advance.
- Virtual competition is permitted to count toward the 11-dive championship competition needed in order to enter a diver into the OHSAA tournament.