



November 12, 2025

SITUATION 1: Following completion of the third round of diving in a dual meet, a diver informs the diving referee that she is taking a declared false start for the dive she has listed for the fourth round. **RULING:** Incorrect procedure. Use of the DFS in the diving event is only for the purpose of removing the diver from that specific competition without being further penalized for non-participation. It is NOT to be used to avoid performing a specific dive on the dive list. A diver using the DFS procedure is charged with the event against the total events permitted under Rule 3-2-1. (3-2-3)

State Association: Instruction should be provided to coaches and officials on how the DFS should be adjudicated in diving. Diving entries must be consolidated with swimming entries to verify the entry limit for each participating athlete.

Coaches: Coaches must remember that diving is an individual event in a swimming competition.

Officials: When reviewing entries, be sure to regard the diving event as one of the individual events for an athlete.

SITUATION 2: The host school pool has water depth of at least 7 feet throughout the competition course. However, the host team chooses not to provide backstroke starting ledges for the competition. The visiting coach insists that the host team's medley relays and backstroke swimmers should be disqualified because of the absence of the ledges, claiming it's the host school's obligation to provide the equipment if their facility is of legal depth. **RULING:** The coach is incorrect. Just as individual swimmers may decide not to use the backstroke ledges, host schools may likewise choose not to provide ledges even though their facilities are legal. **COMMENT:** Backstroke starting ledges are optional, not required, equipment. (2-7-3d)

State Association: The state association should clearly communicate to member schools that the provision of backstroke starting ledges by the host is optional. However, if backstroke ledges are to be provided, they should be made available to all participating athletes.

Coaches: Coaches should articulate the availability of backstroke starting ledges to all participating schools and officials prior to their arrival to the event.

Officials: As part of preparation for training officials, officials' organizations throughout the state must confer with the state association to determine the status of Rule 2-7-3. If the state association has adopted the rule, the state's policy should be obtained, carefully reviewed and then implemented by all officials.

SITUATION 3: The meet committee for the state championships has designated the meet referee to be the official responsible for acquiring full technical information concerning the proposed use of electronic relay takeoff judging equipment. **RULING:** Appropriate. The referee is responsible for overseeing the work of the several meet officials who are responsible for acquiring, utilizing and implementing the data derived from the Relay Judging Platforms (RJP) and for determining how that data will be applied to the meet results (confirming human judge decisions, sole source of determining takeoff violations, etc.).

Coaches: Coaches must be informed of such policies and provided a timeline for backstroke ledge implementation as well as state policies regarding requirements for athlete education.

Officials: In order to properly utilize the RJP equipment, it is necessary to know the manufacturer's starting point for the specific equipment being used (Colorado and Omega use different starting points). The referee must also ensure that deck officials are properly trained to ensure there is no interference with the operation of the RJP system (e.g., swimmers leaning on the starting platforms).

NFHS Swimming and Diving Resource of the Week:

Backstroke Ledge FAQ: <https://nfhs.org/sports/swimming-diving/resources>

Teaching Starts Using the Backstroke Ledge: <https://nfhs.org/sports/swimming-diving/resources>