

BACKSTROKE TURN: DISQUALIFICATION LANGUAGE

There has been NO change in the interpretation of the backstroke turn rule.

Recently, USA-Swimming advised its officials that they should alter the wording typically used to report backstroke turn disqualifications. In 2005 USA Swimming deleted the following sentence from the backstroke turn rule: “Once the body has left the position on the back, any kick or arm pull must be part of the continuous turning action.” Deleting that sentence did not constitute a change in the interpretation of the turn because the previous sentence addresses initiating the turn. However, officials continued to use the statement “noncontinuous turning action” on disqualification slips. Since the USA Swimming rule no longer refers to “continuous turning action”, USA Swimming officials have been encouraged to use language such as “failure to initiate the turn after the arm pull” or “failure to initiate the turn after turning toward the breast” rather than “noncontinuous turning action”.

However, USMS did NOT delete the “continuous turning action” sentence from its backstroke turn rule (USMS article 101.4.3). The USMS Rules Committee deemed that sentence a good clarification for USMS members and retained the sentence. Therefore, **any of the statements listed above for describing infractions of the turn rule, including “noncontinuous turning action”, are acceptable for USMS competition.**

For any questions about backstroke turn infraction language contact:

Kathy Casey, Chair
USMS Rules Committee
rules@usms.org

or

Charlie Cockrell, Chair
USMS Officials Committee
officials@usms.org