The following information is intended to serve as a review of the pertinent playing rules and operational issues prior to the conference and NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships.

General Issues:

- **Event Day Questions:** If there is a question during the respective championships, the meet referee shall be the singular point of contact to the SRE. This policy is intended to prevent multiple contacts, for a singular issue.

  The beginning of the meet is defined as the scratch deadline prior to the first session through the conclusion of the final event. Emails will be answered quickly, but if an immediate response is needed, call or text Greg Lockard at 973-486-5501.

- **Meet Committee:** Per NCAA Rule 4-2, a meet committee shall be designated for each championship meet. This committee shall be responsible for the conduct of the meet and serves as the protest committee if such a situation should arise. This committee should be comprised of head coaches of competing teams as determined by the conference. No official in the meet should be a member of a meet committee.

- **Protests:** A protest must be submitted in writing within 15 minutes after final heat of the event in question. Appeals may only be lodged for errors in the recording of data, scoring and nonjudgmental errors in application of rules. The use of video is not permitted during the appeal process. If the referee uses video to review relay judging platforms, his/her decision is a judgement call and cannot be appealed. The decision of a meet committee is final.

- **Medical Scratches:** All requests for a medical scratch must include a written certification from a physician or ATC. A written certified request must be made to enable a student-athlete to be reinstated to compete in the same competition.

- **Starting Blocks/Wedges/Ledges:** All starting blocks/wedges/ledges must be identical for all lanes. If using the track style wedges that can be removed from the block, there should be information presented regarding the procedure for removing and replacing the wedges (especially during relays) and who will be responsible for replacing the wedges during a race. There is no rule preventing wedges from being removed during individual legs of relays.

  When using backstroke ledges, they must be identical in all competitive lanes. There should be a protocol for who will be removing ledges from the lanes during events, if they are non-retractable models.

  For relay takeoffs, the use of the starting block wedge is permitted; however, the take-off must occur from the relay-judging platform or the starting block, not from the wedge. Placement of the wedge at the front of the starting block and using it as the take-off point is not permitted.
A "step-over start" is permitted, provided the swimmer's point of take-off is from the starting block not the wedge.

- **Permissible Use of Tape**: The use of tape (any tape) is permitted to treat a documented medical condition to allow a student-athlete to compete, but, not gain an advantage. The referee must be presented with documentation from a designated health official (Physician or ATC) before certifying a student-athlete can compete with tape. If no documentation is provided, the student-athlete must remove the tape or be disqualified from the event. Divers may use tape and wrist guards to support wrists in a preventative manner without documentation.

- **Suits and Logos**: The meet referee’s responsibility regarding logos is to ensure that there is no more than a single manufacturer’s logo on a swimsuit and a single post-construction institutional logo. The size of the manufacturer’s logo is no longer a playing rules issue; and while potentially a bylaw issue, falls outside of the jurisdiction of meet officials. The meet officials have no jurisdiction over logos or markings on any other piece of apparel such as caps or warm-ups, etc.

- **Swimsuit Waivers**: There have been several waivers granted this year for medical and religious exceptions to the swimsuit rule. The institution has received a written copy of the waiver under my signature, on NCAA letterhead, with instructions to present it to the referee at each respective competition. If a coach presents a written waiver exempting the student-athlete from the conditions of the swimsuit rule, it must be honored.

- **Time Trials**: Each competitor or institution, in the case of a relay, is limited to one time-standard trial per event per meet.

- **Seeding**: When eight lanes are available, all eight lanes should be used in seeding preliminary heats, finals and time standard trials. A full complement of entries shall be placed in all heats starting with the fastest heat. However, no timed final-final or preliminary heat may contain less than three competitors.

- **Use of Lanes for Finals**: Lane assignments for events that require a preliminary qualifying heat for a final and the subsequent final must follow the same lane assignment procedure. However, lane assignments that are “timed finals” (i.e. distance events, relays) can be determined differently as long as each type of event is assigned consistently for the whole meet. For example, if you are competing in a nine or 10 lane pool; you could swim eight in the prelims/finals of those events and expand to nine or 10 for the 1650 and relay timed final events.

- **Declared False Start vs. Scratching**: Scratching is when a swimmer is eliminated by the coach following normal scratch protocol. The swimmer is relieved of the requirement to swim and is not charged with an event swam. A declared false start is a disqualification and counts as an event contested for the student athlete. Since a declared false start does not take place
until the heat of the race occurs, a coach can rescind a DFS without penalty. If a relay should take a DFS, they must turn in an entry card listing four eligible athletes and those student-athletes are all charged with an event.

- **Seeding vs. Reseeding**: A heat cannot be seeded with less than three competitors in it. However, once a heat is seeded, if DFS’s cause the heat to go below three, the heat may be swum because the DFS’s are DQ’s and the rule only speaks to seeding with a minimum of three participants. Since a coach can rescind the DFS, under current rules a heat IS NOT to be reseeded when the heat goes below three.

- **Failure to Compete**: Rule 5-1-1a states that failure to compete in a preliminary heat of a prelim/finals event is simply a disqualification and a charged event with no further penalty. Failure to compete in a timed final or in a final that had preliminary qualification remains a disqualification and prohibits further competition in the meet.

- **Relay Entries/Changes**: If a relay event has preliminary heats and finals, changes can be made to the relay line-up between preliminary and final heats (or between preliminary heats and swim offs when applicable). If a relay event is a timed final, a student-athlete may swim on only one relay team, even if they are swum with some heats in the morning and some in the afternoon, or even if some relays are non-scoring. A student-athlete can only compete on one relay – it is not permissible to swim on both an exhibition and a scoring relay in the same event.

- **Mixing Genders**: It is not permissible to mix genders in any individual or relay event, and/or time trial heats, and submit those times for ranking and championships qualification.

- **Bulkhead Measurement**: When bulkheads are used, the referee must verify the course measurement by laser before and after each day of competition. The host facility should provide the laser and conduct the measurement which is observed by the referee. If an NCAA record is set, the lane involved must be laser measured no later than the end of the session involved. Failure to properly measure bulkheads could nullify any performance recorded at the competition.

- **Timing Priority**: For a time to be considered for entry into an NCAA championship it must have been achieved using priority level one equipment (automatic equipment). If a malfunction is confirmed by the head judge, with priority level one equipment, then priority level two equipment (two-button semiautomatic equipment) is acceptable. If a malfunction is confirmed by the head judge with priority level two equipment, then priority level three equipment (two manual watches per lane) is acceptable. No other priority level is acceptable for NCAA championships time qualification.

- **Record Application**: The NCAA recognizes records across all three Divisions for non-NCAA Championships meets. The form can be downloaded from the NCAA website, completed and returned along with meet result for that event, timing tape from the heat involved, a copy of
the bulkhead laser measurements for that day and for the lane where the record was set. Materials need to be submitted within 14 days of the performance. If an American or US Open record is set, application must be made to USA Swimming, if done outside of the NCAA National Championships.

Technical Rules:

- **Finishes**: The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his person touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance.

- **Deaf and Hard of Hearing Swimmers**: Deaf and hard of hearing swimmers require a visual starting signal (i.e. a strobe light and/or starters arm signals.) The referee may reassign lanes within the swimmer’s heat in a nonchampionship meet, i.e. exchanging one lane for another, so that the strobe light or starter’s arm is visible to the competitor. The starter will use visual signals. The referee will notify the affected heat if a deaf and/or hard of hearing competitor is competing. A false start rope is required, in the event of a recall, provided that the host institution is notified at least 10 days prior to the event/meet that a deaf or hard of hearing swimmer will be participating. A strobe light shall be located where the swimmer can clearly see it from the start.

  It is permissible to use a lighting system (i.e. a lighting system using LED, strobe lights, etc.) in addition to hand signals used for the start of races involving deaf and hard of hearing swimmers. The lighting system, using either LED or strobe lights can be used to mimic the audio (whistle) and hand/arm commands of the referee and started. The system must be fully integrated with the existing automatic timing system.

- **Piston Use**: The use of a pistol for start, recall, warning shot during distance races is no longer permitted. Bells, whistles, a horn, or etc. may be used.

- **Honest Effort Rule**: There is not an “honest effort” rule in the rulebook. Any action by a coach or student-athlete that is deemed unsporting or unsafe may be considered by the referee and/or meet committee for disciplinary action under the policies of the meet and the individual conference.

- **Minimum Number of Competitors**: In all NCAA Championship and nonchampionship meets, all swimming and diving events must be offered and contested as long as any of the eligible participating teams chooses to enter a minimum of one eligible student-athlete in the event. Furthermore, all events must be scored identically as stated in the playing rules. It is not permissible to adjust scoring values based upon the number of participants.

- **Lap Counting**: In distance events, lap counting may occur in an ascending or descending manner. The final number or orange card may be shown to signify the last lap. This is an individual’s choice and can vary from swimmer to swimmer.
• **Crossing Occupied Lanes:** Rule 2-5-1-d references that one of the first three swimmers on a relay cannot cross an occupied lane to exit the pool or the relay team is disqualified. With the number of international student-athletes involved in NCAA swimming, it may be beneficial to remind coaches at the pre-meet meeting or information sent that this differs from FINA rules and could cause their teams to be disqualified.

• **Referee Jurisdiction:** The referee has jurisdiction to overrule a call that he/she did not observe personally but was improperly recorded or report to them.

• **Disqualification Announcement:** Notification for a disqualification requires the referee to notify the swimmer/coach of a disqualification before the next heat proceeds, as well as inform the table and announced by the public-address announcer.

  **EXCEPTION:** When video review is used for a championship meet relay event, notification can be delayed until such time of the video review, but the above wording must be observed at the conclusion of the video review. The meet committee has the ability in the interest of keeping a proper flow to the meet to delay video reviews until after the final heat of the relay.

• **Turn Judges:** When not specifically instructed otherwise by the referee, jurisdiction for the turn judge for each turn, if positioned at the end of the pool at either end and having no more than two lanes of coverage responsibility, commences from the beginning of the last arm stroke before touching and ends with the completion of the first arm stroke after the turn; except in breaststroke where it shall be the second arm stroke. Jurisdiction for the turn judge at the finish, if positioned at the end of the pool, commences from the beginning of the last arm pull before finishing the race.

• **Relay Disqualification and Video Review:**
  - Video replay may be used at championship or invitational competitions governed by a meet or games committee composed of representatives of multiple institutions to determine if the electronic judging equipment has failed. Prior to the beginning of the competition, a decision should be made by the meet committee as to when video reviews will be conducted and all participants should be informed (i.e. after each heat where review is needed or after the final heat of a multiple heat relay, etc.) All reviews must be conducted before qualifiers/results are announced. If video replay is in place for the championships all disqualifications must be reviewed to evaluate whether the electronic system failed. The referee shall review the video to determine if there was a machine malfunction and clear video evidence exists to overturn the call. The referee has sole jurisdiction over the review and their decision is a judgement call not subject to further review or appeal. Only the referee and a conference or NCAA meet committee representative may view the video that is being used for review. Challenges by coaches are not permitted as part of this rule and coaches are not permitted to view the video being used at any time.
The result of the video review is merely to determine if the electronic judging equipment has failed. The video shall not be used to detect early takeoffs or any other rule infractions.

When stationary overhead cameras are recording 100 images per second and are fully integrated into the primary electronic system are in place at a competition, it is permissible to use the system as the primary secondary backup system. If the referee and head timer determine a discrepancy between the primary electronic touchpad system and the back-up camera, they may use the camera's time to establish the correct time.

If not using RJP’s, dual confirmation is required. Officials independently record infractions in writing and compare after the heat, if two or more hands are raised during the final length of the final competitor.

Questions:
Please send any questions by email to Greg Lockard (greg@swimdiverules.com). A summary of relevant questions and answers will be published and distributed to the membership following the second teleconference on January 25, 2018.