

**CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA SWIM LEAGUE
RULE BOOK**

Revised January 2026

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Preamble

The Central Pennsylvania Swim League is a summer league comprised of teams from:

- Bellefonte
- Juniata Valley
- Park Forest Pool (Centre Region Parks and Recreation)
- Penns Valley
- Science Park Recreation Association
- Welch Pool (Centre Region Parks and Recreation)

The mission of the League is to teach young people the fundamentals of competitive swimming, sportsmanship and teamwork.

The following rules and regulations provide a structure for league operation and a foundation for conducting meets. This rulebook contains all relevant by-laws of the Central Pennsylvania Swim League.

This rulebook was updated in 2001, 2006, 2008, 2014, 2017, and 2022. Originally based on NCAA swimming rules, league governance was modified in 2006 to conform more closely to USA Swimming rules. In general, the rules of USA Swimming¹ govern meet conduct unless superseded by the deviations set forth in this rulebook.

Future reference to the Central Pennsylvania Swim League will be seen as CPSL.

¹ <http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1636&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>

I. Organization

A. League Membership

1. Pool organizations located in Central Pennsylvania are eligible for membership.
2. Associate Members: Pool organizations who do not wish to become members may become associate members under the following conditions:
 - a. Associate members that schedule non-league meets with active teams when mutually agreeable.
 - b. May participate in individual/team championship competition on a fee basis, determined by the coordinating committee.
 - c. May be required to pay a league fee.
3. Member Responsibilities:
 - a. Compete in meets according to the schedule approved by the coordinating committee.
 - b. Provide officials for each meet
 - c. All meets will be conducted according to CPSL rulebook

B. League Administration

1. Coordinating Committee
 - a. Representative from each pool in the league will have league administrative duties.
 - b. The representatives will act as liaisons between the league, team coaches, pool's board of directors and will have delegated responsibility to participate in decisions on fee assessment.
 - c. Representatives will be appointed at the close of the swimming season to serve for the following two calendar years beginning October 1.
 - i. The head of the committee, League President, will be one of the committee members of a representative pool and will serve on a two-year rotating basis.
 - ii. The league secretary will serve on a two-year rotating basis.
 - iii. The rotation order for the League President and Secretary will repeat as follows:

	President	Secretary
2026-2027	Park Forest	Welch
2028-2029	Welch	Penns Valley
2030-2031	Penns Valley	Juniata Valley
2032-2033	Juniata Valley	Bellefonte
2034-2035	Bellefonte	SPRA
2036-2037	SPRA	Park Forest

- iv. The League Treasurer position will be served by the league administrator, currently the CRPR Aquatics Supervisor. New League Treasurers will be selected by consensus of the Coordinating Committee.
- d. The Committee is responsible for providing rules and regulations to all participants in the CPSL.
- e. Committee Responsibilities
 - i. Schedule league and championship meets
 - ii. Determine team league fees
 - iii. Inform coaches and swimmers of league policies
 - iv. Collect league fees from each member pool
 - v. The league coordinator will be responsible for development of the league schedule, purchase and distribution of cards used for league meets and championship meets.
- f. Committee Meetings: At minimum, the league shall hold 3 meetings each year.
 - i. One to evaluate the season
 - ii. One to propose possible changes to league rules or format
 - iii. One to discuss and settle any league problems and set league and championship schedules.
- g. Decisions concerning league membership, fees, scheduling and meet regulations will be decided by a majority vote of the committee. Each team will have one vote.
- h. League meets will take place according to a schedule approved by the Coordinating Committee.

2. League Administrative Personnel

a. League President

- i. The League President will preside over all league meetings – bring meeting to order, start discussion, bring items to a vote, and adjourn meetings.
- ii. The League President may assign administrative duties to the members of the pool representatives.
- iii. The League President has final interpretation of rules and regulations governing the CPSL.

b. League Treasurer

- i. The League Treasurer is in charge of all league expenditures and keeping league account books up to date.
- ii. The League Treasurer will be in charge of all out going checks
- iii. The League Treasurer will account for the payment of championship awards and other league-related expenses. Funds will be held in and at a local bank. The League Treasurer will present a financial statement to the coordinating committee at the organizational meetings each year.

c. League Secretary

- i. The League Secretary will keep the minutes of all league meetings.
- ii. The League Secretary will keep all by-law changes along with an updated copy of the rules and regulations of the CPSL.

II. Technical Rules

A. *Swimming Events*

Section 101 of the current USA Swimming rulebook shall govern the conduct of swimming events. The following modifications, however, will apply to the CPSL:

Section 101.3. **False Starts**

- A Any swimmer starting before the starting signal is given shall be charged with a false start if the Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter's observation that a violation occurred. Swimmers remaining on the starting blocks shall be relieved from their starting positions with the "stand up" command and may step off the blocks.
- B If the starting signal has been given before the disqualification is declared, the race shall be recalled. If the Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter's observation that a violation occurred, the swimmer or swimmers who have false started will be charged with a false start.
- C If the recall signal is activated inadvertently, no swimmer shall be charged with a false start and the Starter shall restart the race upon signal by the Referee.
- D A swimmer who would otherwise be charged with a false start may be relieved of the charge if the false start was caused by the swimmer's reaction to the "stand up" command.
- E A swimmer shall not be disqualified for an illegal starting position at the start if the race is permitted to proceed. Enforcement of the correct starting position is the responsibility of the Starter.
- F Declared false start: swimmers reporting to the Referee prior to the start of their race and declaring their intent not to compete will be disqualified except as noted in USA Swimming Rule 207.11.6D(1).
- G. A swimmer will be disqualified from an event after committing two false starts. Upon disqualification, the swimmer may still swim, but no time will be recorded.

B. *Conduct and Officiating of Swimming Competition*

Section 102 of the current USA Swimming rules shall govern the conduct of swimming events. The following modifications, however, will apply to the CPSL:

None.

C. *Facilities*

Section 103 of the current USA Swimming rules shall govern the conduct of swimming events. The following modifications, however, will apply to the CPSL:

Section 103.2.3 **Water depth.** Minimum water depth for racing starts, in any setting, from any height, starting blocks or the deck shall be 4 feet (1.84 meters) measured for a distance of 3 feet 3. inches (1.0 meter) to 16 feet 5 inches (5.0 meters) from the end wall. In starting areas with water depth less than 4 feet (1.22 meters), the swimmer must start from within the water.

III. League Rules

A. Safety requirements

One or more lifeguards, with current certification, must be on duty during any swimming competition, including warm-ups. Areas without a lifeguard are closed.

B. Competitors

1. Team membership. Team membership is defined as swimmers who are registered and included on a team roster. Only those members that are registered on or before July 1 can compete for points in CPSL meets. If a swimmer joins after July 1, they may swim as an exhibition swimmer in the regular dual meet season, but may not swim in point events, either individual or relay events. That swimmer may swim in championships if they swam in at least two regular dual meets during the scheduled season. Teams are to have a copy of their complete roster at each meet. Only swimmers listed on this roster may compete. Members may compete for only one CPSL team during a season. Violators will be disqualified from further participation in the CPSL.
 - a. EXCEPTION: Swimmers who join after July 1 may petition the CPSL committee for extenuating circumstances, such as moving into the area late, to be permitted to become point scoring team members after the July 1 registration deadline. Simply forgetting to register will not qualify for a petition. The CPSL committee will rule by simple majority vote which may be taken verbally or in writing.
2. Age. A swimmer will participate in an age group as determined by their age on or before June 1. Swimmers may compete through Championships after graduating high school provided they are 18 or younger by June 1.
3. Age bracket. Swimmers may swim in only one age group during a meet, except 6 year olds may participate in the 8 and under medley and free relay and move back to the 6 and under bracket. A 6 and under swimmer may also swim in the 8 and under Breast and Butterfly. Swimmers may only “swim up” one age group from their roster age group.
4. Rosters. Coaches must provide two copies of competitor rosters for scorers 30 minutes in advance of the start of the meet. In meets where Meet Manager software is used, the full roster and meet file with lineup must be provided to the host team by 9 PM the evening before a dual meet, along with the meet entries file. Following that deadline, only scratches and relay changes are permitted.

5. Championship eligibility. Swimmers must swim in 2 league meets to qualify for participation in CPSL championships.
6. Gender. Females must swim in girl's events and males must swim in boy's events.
7. Any swimmer who misses their event/heat shall not be allowed to swim that event, nor will they be added to another heat.
8. Exceptions. Any exceptions to the above rules need to be addressed by the meet referee.

C. Events

1. List of events

The following is a complete list of the events that shall be swum in CPSL meets:

Event	Description
1	Girls 8 & Under 100 Y/M Medley Relay
2	Boys 8 & Under 100 Y/M Medley Relay
3	Girls 9-10 100 Y/M Medley Relay
4	Boys 9-10 100 Y/M Medley Relay
5	Girls 11-12 200 Y/M Medley Relay
6	Boys 11-12 200 Y/M Medley Relay
7	Girls 13-18 200 Y/M Medley Relay
8	Boys 13-18 200 Y/M Medley Relay
9	Girls 6 & Under 25 Y/M Freestyle
10	Boys 6 & Under 25 Y/M Freestyle
11	Girls 7-8 25 Y/M Freestyle
12	Boys 7-8 25 Y/M Freestyle
13	Girls 9-10 25 Y/M Freestyle
14	Boys 9-10 25 Y/M Freestyle
15	Girls 11-12 50 Y/M Freestyle
16	Boys 11-12 50 Y/M Freestyle
17	Girls 13-14 50 Y/M Freestyle
18	Boys 13-14 50 Y/M Freestyle
19	Girls 15-18 50 Y/M Freestyle
20	Boys 15-18 50 Y/M Freestyle
21	Girls 9-10 100 Y/M IM
22	Boys 9-10 100 Y/M IM
23	Girls 11-12 100 Y/M IM
24	Boys 11-12 100 Y/M IM
25	Girls 13-14 100 Y/M IM
26	Boys 13-14 100 Y/M IM
27	Girls 15-18 100 Y/M IM
28	Boys 15-18 100 Y/M IM
29	Girls 8 & Under 25 Y/M Breaststroke
30	Boys 8 & Under 25 Y/M Breaststroke

- 31 Girls 9-10 25 Y/M Breaststroke
- 32 Boys 9-10 25 Y/M Breaststroke
- 33 Girls 11-12 50 Y/M Breaststroke
- 34 Boys 11-12 50 Y/M Breaststroke
- 35 Girls 13-14 50 Y/M Breaststroke
- 36 Boys 13-14 50 Y/M Breaststroke
- 37 Girls 15-18 50 Y/M Breaststroke
- 38 Boys 15-18 50 Y/M Breaststroke
- 39 Girls 6 & Under 25 Y/M Backstroke
- 40 Boys 6 & Under 25 Y/M Backstroke
- 41 Girls 7-8 25 Y/M Backstroke
- 42 Boys 7-8 25 Y/M Backstroke
- 43 Girls 9-10 25 Y/M Backstroke
- 44 Boys 9-10 25 Y/M Backstroke
- 45 Girls 11-12 50 Y/M Backstroke
- 46 Boys 11-12 50 Y/M Backstroke
- 47 Girls 13-14 50 Y/M Backstroke
- 48 Boys 13-14 50 Y/M Backstroke
- 49 Girls 15-18 50 Y/M Backstroke
- 50 Boys 15-18 50 Y/M Backstroke
- 51 Girls 8 & Under 25 Y/M Butterfly
- 52 Boys 8 & Under 25 Y/M Butterfly
- 53 Girls 9-10 25 Y/M Butterfly
- 54 Boys 9-10 25 Y/M Butterfly
- 55 Girls 11-12 50 Y/M Butterfly
- 56 Boys 11-12 50 Y/M Butterfly
- 57 Girls 13-14 50 Y/M Butterfly
- 58 Boys 13-14 50 Y/M Butterfly
- 59 Girls 15-18 50 Y/M Butterfly
- 60 Boys 15-18 50 Y/M Butterfly
- 61 Girls 8 & Under 100 Y/M Freestyle Relay
- 62 Boys 8 & Under 100 Y/M Freestyle Relay
- 63 Girls 11-12 100 Y/M Freestyle
- 64 Boys 11-12 100 Y/M Freestyle
- 65 Girls 13-14 100 Y/M Freestyle
- 66 Boys 13-14 100 Y/M Freestyle
- 67 Girls 15-18 100 Y/M Freestyle
- 68 Boys 15-18 100 Y/M Freestyle
- 69 Girls 9-10 100 Y/M Freestyle Relay
- 70 Boys 9-10 100 Y/M Freestyle Relay
- 71 Girls 11-12 200 Y/M Freestyle Relay
- 72 Boys 11-12 200 Y/M Freestyle Relay
- 73 Girls 13-18 200 Y/M Freestyle Relay
- 74 Boys 13-18 200 Y/M Freestyle Relay

2. Championship meets

- a. Championship meets will use the same events as stated in regular competition. Championship meets will be split into two sections: 10 and under in one section and those 11 and over in another.
- b. Teams will rotate responsibilities for hosting the CPSL Championship meet. The order of rotation will repeat as follows:

	10&U	11&O
2025	Park Forest	SPRA
2026	Penns Valley	Welch
2027	Juniata Valley	Park Forest
2028	SPRA	Penns Valley
2029	Welch	Juniata Valley
2030	Park Forest	SPRA

3. Number of events in competition

a. Non-championship meets

- i. During a regular season meet, each swimmer may swim a maximum of four events, including exhibition. However, only three of these events may be individual events. In the case of a violation of this rule, the swimmer is disqualified from the entire meet and no points are awarded for that swimmer and his/her relay.

Examples:

1. Three individual events and one relay
2. Three individual events
3. Two individual events and two relays
4. Two individual events and one relay
5. Two individual events
6. One individual event and one relay
7. One individual event and two relays
8. One event
9. Two relays
10. One relay

- ii. Exception: Teams whose roster lists seven or fewer swimmers in a given age group for the season may allow swimmers in that age group to swim a maximum of 5 events, where only four may be individual events.

b. Championship Meets

- i. Participants may swim in up to 4 events, at least one of which must be a relay event, regardless of how many rostered swimmers his/her team has in that age group.

- ii. If a swimmer must be scratched from an event, they may be removed from one event, but may not be entered into another individual event. If a scratched swimmer affects a relay entry, other swimmers may be substituted; however, this does not overrule the 4 event maximum rule or additional entries into individual events.

- c. Relay meets

The number of events that each participant may swim shall be decided by the coordinator of the relay meet.

D. Meet officials

1. Required officials:

Each team participating in a league meet must provide the following officials for each meet:

- a. Six (6) timers (or a sufficient number to provide two timers per lane)
- b. One (1) backup timer (home meets)
- c. One (1) scorer per team (computer)
- d. Two (2) stroke and turn judges

NOTE: If a pool requires additional stroke and turn judges other than what is normally required, it will be the responsibility of the home team to provide the extra stroke and turn judges or make prior arrangements with other team ahead of time.

- e. One (1) referee (home meets)
- f. One (1) announcer
- g. One (1) starter (home meets)
- h. One (1) runner (home meets)
- i. Clerk of course (one per team)

2. Number of Officials:

For each meet there shall be a sufficient number of officials to properly conduct the meet. Duties of meet officials are defined in Article 102 of the USA Swimming rulebook. However, more than one duty may be assigned to an individual, and two or more individuals may share a duty. Duties may include, but shall not necessarily be limited to, those of: the meet committee (championship meets), meet coordinator (championship meets), meet manager, referee, starter, recall starter, stroke judges, finish judge, timers, principal lane timer, scorers, announcer, clerks of course.

3. Championship Meets:

Each team will provide the following personnel for the operation of the championship meet:

- a. Two (2) Stroke and Turn Officials
- b. Seven (7) Timers
- c. Two (2) Clerk of Course

Host team will provide the following personnel for the operation of the championship meet:

- a. One (1) Starters
- b. One (1) Referee
- c. One (1) Place Judge
- d. One (1) Announcer

4. Under no circumstances may a coach serve as an official.

E. Interruptions and cancellations

1. Environmental conditions may cause a meet to be interrupted or cancelled.
 - a. Competition will be held at coaches' discretion if the air temperature is 65 degrees F or below.
 - b. In the case of thunder or lightning the pool will be cleared for a minimum of 30 minutes. This time period may be extended at the discretion of the pool manager.
 - c. The pool manager, after consulting both head coaches and the meet referee, is responsible to decide whether weather conditions necessitate cancelling a meet once the scheduled warm up period has commenced.
2. The following guidelines will be used to help determine the conduct of the meet following an interruption or cancellation.
 - a. Resuming competition following an interruption
 - i. If 30 minutes or more of competition can be completed, then the meet will resume with the event where the interruption occurred.
 - ii. If less than 30 minutes of competition remain, then the meet will either be swum in its entirety another day, resumed on another day, or considered completed, subject to the guidelines in Rule E.2.b.
 - b. Rescheduling competition on another day
 - i. Up through and including event 20, the meet will be made up in its entirety on the next available Tuesday or Thursday.

- ii. If the interruption occurs after event 20, but prior to event 39, then both coaches, after consultation with their parent representatives, will agree if the meet should be rescheduled. If one coach wants to reschedule, then the meet will resume on the next available Tuesday or Thursday, beginning with the event where the interruption occurred.
 - iii. If the interruption occurs after event 39, the meet will be considered over at that point and will not be rescheduled.
 - iv. Exception: If a rescheduled meet falls on the Thursday prior championship week, the meet will NOT be made up.
3. Coaches have the discretion of changing their lineups due to swimmer absenteeism on the rescheduled date. Swimmers not initially on the roster for the original meet may be added. Events already completed will count towards the total number of events a swimmer is able to be placed in according to the competitor's rules.
4. Pre-meet cancellations – coaches should reach an agreement on cancelling a meet within a reasonable amount of time to account for team travel. Final decisions must be given by the host team no later than 5:00 PM on the day of the meet.

F. Lanes, seeding and qualifying procedures

1. Lane assignments
 - a. For dual meets, the visiting team shall have odd lanes and home team shall have even lanes.
 - b. For all meets, swimmers shall be seeded by time according to the procedures in III.H.2.

G. Scoring

1. Dual meets.
 - a. Scoring of swimming events shall be as follows:
 - i. For individual events 7, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1
 - ii. For relays: 14, 10, 8, 6, 4, 2
 - b. All meets will be conducted as timed final events. A swimmer in any heat may score. No place judges will be used.
 - c. A team may score no more than three places in any event.
 - d. Ties. In the case of ties within an event, the points involved shall be equally divided among the tied competitors.
 - e. Failure to complete. If a team's individual or relay entries are unopposed, they still must complete the event. No competitor

may score points in an event in which the competitor does not compete or in which he or she is disqualified

- f. Non scoring Competition
 - i. Exhibition swims shall not be scored in any event. All competitors who are not designated by their coaches to be exhibition swimmers shall score according to the places they achieve with the exhibition swimmer removed from consideration.
 - ii. Time-standard trials shall not be scored in any meet.
- g. Winning Team. The team accumulating the greatest number of points shall be declared the winner of the swimming meet. If the final total number of points for each team is the same, the meet is declared a tie.

A meet score is subject to review and may be corrected by the meet committee within 30 subsequent days for championship meets or by that meet's referee within 7 days for other competition.

H. Conduct of Competition

1. Dual Meets

- a. Meet line-ups need to be sent to the home team by 9 p.m. the night before the meet in Meet Manager™ format.
- b. A change sheet for the entire meet must be submitted to the scorer's table not less than 15 minutes prior to the start of the meet. All other changes after the start of the meet are left to the discretion of the Meet Referee and Parent Representatives from each team, except relay substitutions which are allowed (see above).
- c. The Home Team will provide the computer to be used for scoring.
- d. Each facility is responsible for roping off the scorer's table by 5:30 p.m.

2. Championships

- a. Entries
 - i. Participants may compete in the Championship meet if they swam in at least two regular season meets during the season.
 - ii. Entries must be received by the host team(s) in Meet Manager™ format by 5 p.m. on the Friday of the week preceding the week in which the Championship meet is held.

Swimmers are considered entered in the meet when entries are submitted.

- ii. Within 24 hours of the entry deadline the host team will provide an entry report to each participating team. Corrections to the report must be returned no later 5 p.m. on the Sunday preceding the Championship meet. No new entries will be accepted at this time.

b. Entry times

- i. All entry times must be obtained during the current CPSL Summer season in which the Championship meet is held.
- ii. Championship seeding times should be submitted in yards. If a time in Meters is available but a time in yards is not, then for seeding purposes the seeding time will be calculated as $(\text{time in meters})/1.11$. Participants that do not have a time for an event will be entered as "No time" and seeded with the slowest heat. The team hosting 11+ championships will produce heat sheets and conduct the meet using the appropriate time standard for the host pool (yards or meters) using the conversion factor $(\text{time in Yards}) \times 1.11 = (\text{time in meters})$.
- iii. In the case of relay events, all entries should be submitted as team entries. The fastest actual time or converted metric time that has been achieved in bona fide competition by each team during the specified qualifying period must be submitted. An institution may use an aggregate time to enter a relay if this time is faster than the best actual relay performance.
- iv. For meets in which standards are not imposed and a team does not have an actual time for a relay event or can aggregate a time for the event, the institution may enter that event without submitting a time. Such relay teams shall be seeded in random order behind all other teams that have submitted entry times. An aggregate relay time for an team is obtained by adding the best times achieved by that institution's four fastest eligible swimmers in four appropriate gun-start swims.
- v. Once a team has been entered in a relay event, any eligible competitor from the institution may be designated by his or her coach to participate in the heats, swim-offs and/or finals of that event.

c. Seeding.

- i. Swimmers and relay teams shall be assigned to lanes in accordance with USA Swimming Rule 102.5.

NOTE: When eight lanes are available, all eight lanes should be used.

d. Timed Final Events

The CPSL championship meet will be conducted as a timed final event. No place judges will be used.

- i. A timed final event is one in which only heats are contested and final places are determined by the times achieved in those heats. All competitors in all heats are eligible for all places.
- ii. In all timed final events the final heat shall be composed of the entries with the fastest seeded times. The entries with the next fastest group of times shall compose the next to the last heat, etc. Lane assignments shall be made as in all other final events. A full complement of entries shall be placed in all heats starting with the fastest heat. Whenever this results in less than three entries in the first heat, the slowest seeded entries in the second heat shall be moved into the first heat so that no heat has less than three entries.
- ii. If a swimmer who is entered in a timed final event is certified at any time after the start of the first heat of that event as being ill or injured, the event shall proceed with an empty lane and without re-seeding.

e. Championship Meet Records

- i. It is the responsibility of the League Secretary to assure that records of the fastest time swum in each event during Championship competition are maintained. Records will be recorded in both Meet Manager and an electronic format suitable for distribution to coaches, swimmers, and parents. Separate meet records shall be kept for 25 meter pools and 25 yard pools.
- ii. Records will only be recognized when the race was swum at the specified distance. Records will not be recognized when times have been mathematically converted from yards to meters or vice-versa.

3. Challenges. The Coordinating Committee will review challenges to meet referee decisions if they agree that the challenge may be legitimate and if the complaint is introduced by a Committee member or coach.