



**BC Summer Swimming Association**  
SWIMMING | DIVING | WATER POLO | ARTISTIC

# **RULES OF THE BC SUMMER SWIMMING ASSOCIATION**

## **Artistic Swimming**

The following rules govern all BC Summer Swimming Association activities. These have been approved by the BCSSA Board of Directors and are in effect until any changes are approved by the Board.

**January 2025**

**Published by**  
**BC Summer Swimming Association**  
205 — 2323 Boundary Road  
Vancouver, BC V5M 4V8  
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## **VISION STATEMENT**

To be a competitive sport organization, fostering a culture of fair play, inclusivity, fun and achievement.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The BC Summer Swimming Association (BCSSA) promotes, and encourages the development of athletes, coaches, and volunteers through life-long participation in aquatic activities.

## **CORE VALUES**

Through its member clubs, BCSSA provides opportunities for training, competition, and activities in communities throughout BC and surrounding areas.

BCSSA promotes the development of an individual's capacity to achieve excellence and life skills through participation in speed swimming, diving, water polo and artistic swimming.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>2. REGISTRATION</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 CLUB AFFILIATION	2
2.2 INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION — GENERAL	4
2.3 INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION — COMPETITIVE SEASON	5
2.4 INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION — NON-COMPETITIVE SEASON	6
2.5 PROTESTS REGARDING ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY	7
2.6 ATHLETE TRANSFER — COMPETITIVE SEASON	7
2.8 ASSIGNMENT TO A SECOND CLUB TO COMPETE IN AN ADDITIONAL SPORT	9
2.9 VISITING ATHLETE	11
2.10 REGISTRATION OF COACHES	12
<b>3. CONDUCT</b>	<b>1</b>
3.1 GENERAL	1
3.2 ATHLETES' CODE OF CONDUCT	1
3.3 COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT	2
3.4 OFFICIALS' CODE OF CONDUCT	2
3.5 PARENTS' CODE OF CONDUCT	2
3.6 HARASSMENT POLICY	3
3.7 COMMUNICATION AND CONFIDENTIALITY	3
3.8 GENDER EQUITY	4
3.9 DISCIPLINARY ACTION	4
3.10 ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS	6
3.11 BCSSA APPEALS COMMITTEE	6
<b>7. ARTISTIC SWIMMING</b>	<b>2</b>
7.1 ATHLETE CATEGORIES, SKILL LEVELS AND AGE DIVISIONS	2

7.2 COMPETITIONS	4
7.3 RULES GOVERNING COMPETITIONS	6
7.4 AWARDS	10
7.5 MUSIC	10
7.6 PENALTIES	11
7.7 ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION	13
<b>1. DEFINITIONS</b>	<b>14</b>

# **GENERAL BCSSA RULES**

# 1. DEFINITIONS

Definitions are now located at the end of the Rule Book, before the Index.

# 2. REGISTRATION

## 2.1 CLUB AFFILIATION

### 2.1.1 Existing Clubs

- a) An affiliated club is a member of the BCSSA during the period of May 1st of one year to April 30th of the following calendar year.
- b) Each club must be an incorporated Society in British Columbia that is in good standing under the Society Act.
- c) Each club must pay an annual BCSSA affiliation fee in advance by forwarding payment to the appropriate Regional Registrar by April 1st. The Regional Registrar shall forward affiliation fees paid plus a club membership list of affiliated clubs to the BCSSA Office, on or before April 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. The BCSSA may assess a penalty to any club that submits its club affiliation fees after the deadline.
- d) Each club must complete and submit an annual affiliation form and apply for BCSSA Directors and Officers liability insurance coverage by March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
- e) Each club must affirm that the purposes and activities of the club will be consistent with the purposes of the BCSSA, and the club commits to furthering the success of the Region and the BCSSA in advancing the BCSSA's purposes.

- f) Clubs with activities not aligning with BCSSA will not be permitted to affiliate.

### **2.1.2 New Clubs**

- a) To affiliate a new club, the following criteria must be met:
  - (i) The club must include five (5) or more Athletes.
  - (ii) The club must include two (2) or more families.
  - (iii) There must be an executive in place with a minimum of three (3) individuals.
  - (iv) The club must have a budget.
  - (v) The club must not unduly infringe on any current BCSSA club.
  - (vi) The club must have purposes and activities consistent with the purposes of the BCSSA and a commitment to furthering the success of the Region and the BCSSA in advancing the BCSSA's purposes.
  
- b) A group affiliated as a new club with BCSSA must:
  - (i) Apply to the appropriate Regional Board for Regional approval.
  - (ii) If approved by the Regional Board, the Regional Director shall submit the application to the Provincial Board of Directors for final approval. All applications must be submitted to the BCSSA before January 15th.
  - (iii) Pay the club affiliation fee on or before April 1<sup>st</sup> to the Regional Registrar.
  - (iv) Incorporate as a Society in British Columbia and be in good standing as per the requirements of the Society Act prior to April 1st of the year the group wishes to join the BCSSA.
  - (v) A group wishing to affiliate may appeal any decision by the Regional Board or the Provincial Board to the BCSSA Appeals Committee.

## 2.2 INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION — GENERAL

### 2.2.1 Registration Requirements

- a) An athlete or coach shall not participate in BCSSA activities — including training, competing, coaching, or otherwise taking part in club activities — at any time of year until fully registered with a BCSSA club.
- b) Clubs shall register all athletes and coaches in their correct age divisions and categories.
- c) At the time of registration, the specific aquatic activities of each Athlete shall be correctly recorded by the Club registrar or delegate.
- d) All new registrants shall show proof of age such as a birth certificate or an equivalent identification to the club registrar (or delegate). No copies or images shall be taken of any identification.
- e) The club registrar shall validate each registration before an athlete's first competition.

### 2.2.2 Sanctions for Not Meeting Requirements

- a) A club that allows an athlete to participate in a BCSSA activity before that individual is correctly registered shall be subject to immediate suspension, as governed by the Section entitled Disciplinary Action in these rules and regulations.
- b) A penalty of up to \$1,000 may be assessed by the BCSSA Board of Directors to a region or club that fails to submit its registration database or fees by the deadlines set out in this Section.



- c) Any athlete determined to have been competing in the wrong category shall be disqualified from all incorrectly entered events. Said disqualification shall occur at the time of determination in the current season.

## **2.3 INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION — COMPETITIVE SEASON**

### **2.3.1 Registration Timing**

- a) The competitive season is May 1st through August 31st of each year.
- b) All athletes shall be registered with the Region by the second Thursday of July in order to be eligible to compete at the Regional and Provincial Championships.
- c) An athlete who wishes to compete with BCSSA during the competitive season, but who registers AFTER the second Thursday of July, may do so but is ineligible to compete at the Regional and the Provincial Championships.

### **2.3.2 Registration Database and Fees**

- a) An annual Provincial individual registration fee shall be established by the BCSSA Board of Directors no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
- b) Each Regional Board may levy Regional fees by such amounts as may be deemed necessary for regional activities or expenditures.
- c) Each club shall submit a club competitive season individual registration database for each aquatic sport,

and fees, to the Regional Registrar by the second Thursday of July.

- d) The Regional Registrar shall submit each club's registration database and fees to the Provincial Registrar not later than 12 days before the first day of the Regional Swimming Championships.
- e) A penalty of up to \$1,000 may be assessed by the BCSSA Board of Directors to a region or club that fails to submit its registration database or fees by the deadline.

## **2.4 INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION — NON-COMPETITIVE SEASON**

### **2.4.1 Registration Timing**

- a) The non-competitive season is September 1st through April 30th.
- b) The closing date for non-competitive season registrations is as set by each Regional Board, but shall be no later than March 31st.

### **2.4.2 Registration Database and Fees**

- a) Each Regional Board may levy Regional fees by such amounts as may be deemed necessary for regional activities and expenditures.
- b) Each club shall submit a club non-competitive season individual registration database, and fees, to the Regional Registrar by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

- c) The Regional Registrar shall submit each club's registration database and fees to the Provincial Registrar by April 10th.
- d) A penalty of up to \$1,000 may be assessed by the BCSSA Board of Directors to a region or club that fails to submit its registration database or fees by the deadline.

## **2.5 PROTESTS REGARDING ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY**

### **2.5.1 Responsibilities**

- a) All matters of Athlete eligibility are the responsibility of the Provincial Registrar.
- b) All protests regarding Athlete eligibility must follow the current BCSSA Athlete Eligibility Protest Policy.

### **2.5.2 Process**

Removed January 2024 and replaced by BCSSA Athlete Eligibility Policy.

## **2.6 ATHLETE TRANSFER — COMPETITIVE SEASON**

### **2.6.1 Athletes shall not transfer between clubs:**

- a) until all relevant paperwork is complete and signed by all parties
- b) after the second Thursday of July.

### **2.6.2 Intra-Region Athlete Transfer**

- a) The transfer of an athlete between two clubs of the same BCSSA Sport within the same region requires the approval of the athlete, athlete's parent or guardian if necessary, as well as the president or designate of each club.
- b) The transfer shall be initiated by the athlete and/ or parent/ guardian using the BCSSA transfer form.
- c) The receiving club registrar shall submit the completed transfer form, signed by the relevant club presidents or designates, to the Regional Registrar.
- d) The Athlete shall not be required to pay any additional Regional or Provincial fees. Club fees are the responsibility of the Athlete.

### **2.6.3 Inter-Region Athlete Transfer**

- a) The transfer of an athlete between clubs of the same BCSSA Sport in different regions requires the approval of the athlete, athlete's parent/ guardian if necessary, president of each club, and the two Regional Directors or designates.
- b) The transfer shall be initiated by the athlete or parent/ guardian using the BCSSA transfer form.
- c) The receiving club registrar shall submit the completed transfer form to the Regional Registrar.
- d) The Athlete shall not be required to pay any additional Provincial fees. Regional and Club fees are the responsibility of the Athlete.

## **2.7 ATHLETE TRANSFER — NONCOMPETITIVE SEASON**

### **2.7.1 Process**

- a) An Athlete may transfer between clubs during the non-competitive season by registering with the receiving club and paying all applicable fees.
  
- b) A transfer form is not required.

## **2.8 ASSIGNMENT TO A SECOND CLUB TO COMPETE IN AN ADDITIONAL SPORT**

### **2.8.1 What is Permitted**

- a) An Athlete may become a member of a second BCSSA club in their Region in order to compete in a BCSSA Sport not offered by the home club, as long as the assignment form and registration is completed by the Monday before the second Thursday of July.
  
- b) If another club in the Athlete's home region offers the desired second BCSSA Sport, then such an assignment may only be made within the same region as the Athlete's home club.
  
- c) If no club in the Athlete's home region offers the desired second BCSSA Sport, then such an assignment may be made to a club in a different region as long as the BCSSA Assignment form and registration is completed by the Monday before the second Thursday of July.

### **2.8.2 Process**

When registering an Athlete for a second BCSSA Sport, the second club shall ensure that the Athlete Transfer form is completed in its entirety.

### **2.8.3 Intra-region Athlete Assignment**

- a) The assignment of an athlete between two clubs of the same BCSSA Sport within the same region requires the approval of the athlete, athlete's parent or guardian if necessary, as well as the president or designate of each club.
- b) The assignment shall be initiated by the athlete and/ or parent/ guardian using the BCSSA transfer form.
- c) The receiving club registrar shall submit the completed assignment form to the Regional Registrar.
- d) The Athlete shall not be required to pay any additional Provincial fees. Regional and Club fees are the responsibility of the Athlete.

### **2.8.4 Inter-Region Athlete Assignment**

- a) The assignment of an athlete between clubs of the same BCSSA Sport in different regions requires the approval of the athlete, athlete's parent/ guardian if necessary, president of each club, and the two Regional Directors or designates.
- b) The assignment shall be initiated by the athlete or parent/ guardian using the BCSSA transfer form.
- c) The receiving club registrar shall submit the completed assignment form to the Regional Registrar.

- d) The Athlete shall not be required to pay any additional Provincial fees. Regional and Club fees are the responsibility of the Athlete.

### **2.8.5 Exceptions to Intra-Region and Inter-Region**

Under exceptional circumstances, an Individual Athlete Assignment may be approved by the home club, receiving club, the two Regional Directors and the Director of the specific BCSSA Sport by June 1st of each year. Unanimous approval is required for the assignment to be approved. Four or more assignment requests from the same club must be approved by the BCSSA Board of Directors.

## **2.9 VISITING ATHLETE**

### **2.9.1 What is Permitted**

- a) A visiting Athlete is an athlete registered with one BCSSA club who wishes to participate in activities with a different club for a limited time. Such participation is at the discretion of the visited club.
- b) Should a visiting Athlete take part in competition, the visiting Athlete shall be considered competing for the Athlete's home club.

### **2.9.2 Process**

- a) The visited club shall confirm that the visiting Athlete is duly registered with the home club prior to permitting their participation in club activities.
- b) The Athlete shall pay any applicable Regional and club fees.

## **2.10 REGISTRATION OF COACHES**

### **2.10.1 Registration Requirements**

- a) All coaches must be registered as BCSSA participants as provided for in this Section.
- b) Each club must obtain and keep in their secure club files the criminal record checks (vulnerable sector) for their coaches, as per the current BCSSA criminal record check policy. Clubs must declare the successful completion of a criminal record check (vulnerable sector) on the annual Coaches Roster as stated in 2.10.2.
- c) Each club shall ensure that its head coach is certified to a minimum of NCCP Fundamentals Coach (or equivalent) or trained and in the process of obtaining such certification.

### **2.10.2 Coach Rosters**

Each club shall submit a completed BCSSA Coach Roster Form to the BCSSA Office by May 15<sup>th</sup> annually, or within seven (7) days of the date of hire, whichever comes first.



## **3. CONDUCT**

### **3.1 GENERAL**

#### **3.1.1 Responsibilities**

All registered BCSSA members shall treat its clubs, athletes, coaches, officials, and members from other clubs fairly and with respect and integrity as stated in the BCSSA Code of Conduct. All BCSSA members shall follow the current BCSSA General Code of Conduct.

### **3.2 ATHLETES' CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **3.2.1 All Athletes shall:**

- a) respect and compete by the current BCSSA rules of their sport,
- b) not use alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, or illegal products before or during any meets or other BCSSA activities,
- c) respect other athletes and refrain from fighting, striking, or intentionally touching another athlete without their permission,
- d) respect their opponents, coaches, volunteers, officials, and teammates,
- e) direct questions regarding disqualifications, judge's decisions, etc. to their coach.

#### **3.2.2 Disqualification**

During a meet, the Referee may cause an athlete to be scratched from the rest of the meet for:

- a) Using obscene or abusive language in the pool area, including the dressing room.
- b) Causing wilful damage.
- c) Interfering with officials in the performance of their duties.
- d) Exhibiting other behaviour as outlined in the BCSSA Harassment Policy.

### **3.3 COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **3.3.1 Requirements**

- a) BCSSA has adopted the Coaching Association of Canada's Code of Conduct and Ethics with Reporting Procedures (the "Code"), its principles and its ethical standards, to establish and maintain high standards among BCSSA coaches and to ensure that all coaches act in a manner respectful of the dignity of all Athletes.
- b) Clubs shall require all coaches (paid and volunteer) to be listed on the BCSSA Coach Roster Form, affirming that they adhere to the Code. (Section 2.10.2).

### **3.4 OFFICIALS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

All BCSSA Officials shall follow the current BCSSA Officials' Code of Conduct.

### **3.5 PARENTS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

Parents and legal guardians of Athletes shall follow the current BCSSA Parents' Code of Conduct.

## **3.6 HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **3.6.1 Requirements**

- a) The BCSSA shall maintain a Harassment Policy and make it available through the BCSSA office.
- b) This policy applies to all Athletes, employees, volunteers, and spectators involved with BCSSA activities.
- c) The BCSSA shall work to prevent harassment by providing awareness, education, and training programmes.
- d) All participants shall treat harassment as a serious matter to be dealt with fairly and in consideration of the protection of individual rights and dignity of all people involved.

## **3.7 COMMUNICATION AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

### **3.7.1 Requirements**

- a) While communicating on matters related to the BCSSA, all participants, including Athletes, employees, volunteers, and spectators shall adhere to the principles of respect, courtesy, common sense and dignity.
- b) The BCSSA Board of Directors and staff shall treat information provided by clubs and individuals in accordance with the BCSSA Privacy Policy and British Columbia's Personal Information Protection Act.

### **3.8 GENDER EQUITY**

#### **3.8.1 Requirements**

- a) The BCSSA shall work to promote gender equity, which is the principle and practice of just, fair, and equitable allocation of resources and opportunities for all genders.
- b) All participants, including Athletes, employees, volunteers, and spectators shall ensure that gender equity is a key consideration in all BCSSA activities.

### **3.9 DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

#### **3.9.1 Responsibility**

- a) The BCSSA Board of Directors or the President or designate may initiate disciplinary action against any club, Athlete, coach, official or other person.
- b) Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, suspension from any or all BCSSA activities.
- c) Any club, Athlete, coach, official or other person who has been disciplined may appeal a Discipline Committee decision to the BCSSA Appeals Committee.

**3.9.2** Disciplinary action may be initiated for any of the following reasons:

- a) non-payment of any BCSSA fees, dues, levies, fines, assessments, or charges; or,
- b) for cause, which may include but not be limited to:
  - (i) failure to comply with BCSSA rules;

- (ii) failure to adhere to BCSSA policies;
- (iii) actions or behaviour endangering the health or well-being of an athlete, official, coach, volunteer, spectator or others;
- (iv) failure to comply with the ethical code of conduct; or
- (v) failure to submit required documents or other information required by the BCSSA.

**3.9.3** Disciplinary action shall follow these procedures:

- a) Upon initiating disciplinary action or being notified by the BCSSA Board of Directors that disciplinary action will be initiated, the President or designate shall establish a Discipline Committee.
- b) The committee shall include three members of the BCSSA Board of Directors, or appointed designates, plus a non-voting chairperson.
- c) Where the President or designate deems the situation to be urgent, the President or designate may immediately impose disciplinary action, subject to timely review by the committee.
- d) The President or designate shall, within a reasonable period of time, provide the affected club or individual with a written explanation of the matter resulting in disciplinary action.
- e) The committee shall assess the matter, including any disciplinary action that has already been imposed.
- f) The committee may, at its discretion, gather evidence and interview individuals with knowledge of the matter.

- g) The committee shall make a decision on what steps are necessary to resolve the matter. This may include disciplinary action.
- h) The committee chair shall notify, in writing, all relevant parties of the decision rendered by the committee.

### **3.10 ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS**

#### **3.10.1 Responsibility**

Clubs must report all accidents and incidents, in writing, to the BCSSA office within seven (7) days, using the applicable BCSSA form.

### **3.11 BCSSA APPEALS COMMITTEE**

#### **3.11.1 Appeals**

- a) Any club executive member or coach may appeal any decision or application of BCSSA rules to the BCSSA Appeals Committee.
- b) The purpose of the appeals process is to determine whether the appropriate process and application of rules was followed. The appeals process is not to simply re-try an original protest or complaint.

**3.11.2** In order for the appeal to be considered, it must be submitted to the Provincial Office within 2 days of the decision in question and shall include the following:

- a) A written description of the matter being appealed, including the reasons why the decision should be changed.

- b) A \$100 filing fee.

### **3.11.3 Formation of an Appeals Committee**

Upon receipt of an appeal, the President or designate shall establish a BCSSA Appeals Committee composed of three members of the BCSSA Board of Directors, or designates, plus a non-voting chairperson.

### **3.11.4 Appeals Committee Authority**

- a) The Appeals Committee may uphold, reverse or vary the decision that is being appealed, based on the evidence it receives, as long as the committee's decision is consistent with BCSSA rules.
- b) Where an appeal relates to a BCSSA rule that gives a decision-maker discretion (generally indicated by the word "may" or "should"), then the Appeals Committee may use the same type of discretion in its decision.
- c) Where an appeal relates to a BCSSA rule that does not give a decision-maker discretion (generally indicated by the word "shall"), then the Appeals Committee shall not have discretion on that matter.
- d) The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

### **3.11.5 Appeals Committee Process**

The Appeals Committee shall:

- a) conduct its business in private,
- b) make a reasonable effort to complete its work in a timely manner,

- c) give the appellant and the individual whose decision is being disputed opportunities to present their cases to the committee,
- d) review any additional evidence it considers relevant to the appeal,
- e) provide the committee's decision in writing to the appellant and the individual whose decision is being disputed, and
- f) return the filing fee if the appeal is successful.



# **ARTISTIC SWIMMING RULES**

## 7. ARTISTIC SWIMMING

Unless specific wording is found in the General Rules and/or Artistic Swimming of the BCSSA Rules, or in the Provincial Meet Package, and all Officials shall refer to the 2018 World Aquatics rulebook for artistic competitions.

### 7.1 ATHLETE CATEGORIES, SKILL LEVELS AND AGE DIVISIONS

An Athlete's age as of December 31st each year, aquatic participation in the non-competitive season and skill level shall be used to determine the Athlete's category. All athletes shall declare all artistic swimming participation that occurs from September 1 of the previous year through to April 30 of the current year. The Athlete categories and skill levels for Artistic swimming are:

Categories	Skill Level	Age Divisions
<b>Summer Categories ("S")</b>	Once an athlete's marks from element panel from the technical routine reaches 4.6, they will move up to Intermediate.	Div 3 – 12u (aged 12 & under) Div 4 – 13o (aged 13 & over)
	Once an athlete's marks from element panel from the technical routine reaches 5.6, they will move up to Advanced.	Div 3 – 12u (aged 12 & under) Div 4 – 13o (aged 13 & over)
	Advanced Athletes can stay as advanced once the marks from the technical routine reaches 5.6 and they remain in this category.	Div 3 – 12u (aged 12 & under) Div 4 – 13o (aged 13 & over)
<b>Open Categories ("O"-cat)</b>	O category 1 artistic athletes were registered, trained and/or have competed in a provincial stream artistic swimming program age group 11-12 or younger, excluding recreational or limited competition.	PS 12u (Provincial Stream)

	O category 2 artistic athletes were registered, trained and/or have competed in any provincial or national stream artistic swimming program age 13 and older.	PS 13-15 & NS (National Stream)
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Protests of perceived breaches of Athlete eligibility in the categories or skill level shall adhere to process under BCSSA Rules.

### 7.1.1 Categories

- a) An S (summer category) artistic athlete is an individual who trains and competes with BCSSA for an unrestricted number of hours between May 1st and August 31st of each year. From September 1st to April 30th an S artistic athlete may:
- (i) Participate in artistic swimming training program that is classified as either recreational or limited competitive.
  - (ii) Train and compete in diving, speed swimming and water polo or any other sport with no restrictions.
  - (iii) Train any number of hours in a recognized school led artistic program with no consequences. They may compete in the Provincial high school meet.
- b) An O-cat (open category) artistic athlete is an individual who was registered, trained and/or competed in either a provincial stream or national stream organized artistic swimming program during the winter season October 1st to April 30th of the current year, excluding limited competitive and recreational athletes.

### 7.1.2 Skill Level and Age Division

An artistic athlete's age as of December 31st each year, artistic swimming participation in the winter season, and combined marks of either regionals or provincials from the

previous season shall be used to determine the Athlete's category/skill of competition. Artistic age skill levels are based on the current BCSSA swimming/ artistic age locator. When the threshold mark is met at either Regionals or Provincials Championships, the athlete will move up to the next level at the start of the next season. All 12 and under are classified as division 3 and all 13 and over are classified as division 4 within each level and the age divisions will apply to the results of the figure competitions and not the routine component of the meets. Notwithstanding the below, a coach may move an athlete up to any level if they deem that athlete ready at the beginning of the season.

- a) The coach will determine their skill level at the beginning of the season based on the Athlete's marks from the previous season. If they are a new Athlete, the coach will decide the level based on which elements of the technical routine they can competently compete.
- b) There will be **no** level changes after multi-regionals.
- c) An artistic athlete's age as of December 31st determines which age division they are in. All 12 and under are classified as division 3 and all 13 and over are classified as division 4 within each level, except category 1 and 2 which are already divided by age.

## **7.2 COMPETITIONS**

**7.2.1** From time to time, regions or clubs may hold meets that are either feedback or judged events with judges, or watershow, and will not be deemed to be required to attend by BCSSA.

### 7.2.2 Regional Championships

- a) Regionals will be held in the last half of July.
- b) Each region shall organize and conduct a Regional Championship to qualify the Athletes for the Provincial Championship. It shall be the responsibility of each Regional Director to ensure that the Regional Championship is properly organized and conducted. Due to the cost and attendance of certified judges, all regions in the province may group together to hold one Regional meet. At this time, as the sport is small, no scores will be separated out by region. As new clubs from around the province join, video submissions will be allowed for Regional Championships.
- c) All artistic athletes must have participated in a Regional Championship prior to being eligible to compete at Provincials. An exemption may be applied for to the Artistic Director and Artistic Regional Director for extenuating circumstances. If approved, any routines will be swum without said athlete and judged as registered at Regionals Solos not swum at Regionals can be swum as an exhibition at the Provincial Championships.
- d) If a Regional Championship cannot be scheduled or must be rescheduled, a request for an exemption must be submitted to the BCSSA Board of Directors, by the Director of Artistic Swimming, or Regional Director.
- e) The Regional Championship will have the same events as the Provincial Championship.
- f) Awards will be provided by Regional Directors. Each routine, technical and free, will be awarded medals to

the top three and ribbons to fourth through eighth place.

### **7.2.3 Provincial Championships**

- a) The BCSSA Board of Directors shall organize and conduct the annual Provincial Championship to be held in the second half of August each year.
- b) The Provincial Championship meet package shall be circulated to all BCSSA clubs no later than May 1st of each year.
- c) Athletes must be correctly registered with BCSSA for the current season.
- d) All entries must be submitted to the BCSSA Office by the date (and time) indicated in the Provincial Meet Package.
- e) Artistic athletes shall compete in their designated categories and skill level for technical and free routines under Section 7.1 Athlete Categories, Skill Levels and Age Divisions.
- f) Awards are provided by BCSSA. Each routine, technical and free will be awarded medals to the top three and ribbons to fourth through eighth place.

## **7.3 RULES GOVERNING COMPETITIONS**

### **7.3.1 General**

- a) All entry packages must be completed and shall be submitted to the BCSSA office by each club by the deadline stated in the Provincial Meet Package.

- b) Nose clips or plugs may be worn for all events.
- c) Make-up that provides a natural, clean and healthy glow is acceptable. Theatrical make-up, nail polish, jewelry, accessory equipment, goggles and/ or additional clothing is not permitted, unless required for medical reasons, except for medical alerts and spiritual/ religious bracelets/ jewelry. Medical certification must be submitted to the Chief Referee/ Judge at least 30 minutes before the event.
- d) White caps and black suits are permitted for technical routines. Caps are permitted for free routines if desired.
- e) The use of goggles during routine events is not permitted unless required by medical reasons.
- f) Suits for all routines shall conform to World Aquatics specification in the latest World Aquatics manual, nothing may hang/ dangle from the suits (including longties) – nothing on the suit should be able to float. In the event that the Referee deems an athlete's(s') swimwear does not conform to World Aquatics standards, the athlete(s) will not be permitted to complete until changing into appropriate swimwear.

### **7.3.2 Scores**

All technical and free routines are scored in their individual category/ level with awards for each.

### 7.3.3 Routine Events

- a) BCSSA competes both technical and free routines in team, duet and limited solo.
- b) An athlete may be permitted to compete in a maximum of one solo (for advanced and o-cat), one duet event, one team event for free and a maximum of one solo (for advanced and o-cat), one duet event, one team event for technical routines.
- c) Every athlete must compete at least one technical routine.
- d) The solo event is for athletes competing in the advanced and o-cat levels only.
- e) The duet event is open to all levels of athletes and consists of two athletes. They will compete in the highest skill level of the duet partners.
- f) Technical routines will have 4 elements (generally figures or positions) that may change from year to year and can be found in the Provincial meet package.
- g) Technical and free routines will be judged as free routines (with Execution, Difficulty and Artistic Impression), using the system prior to 2023, with the addition of judging of the walk-on. Two technical monitors will be assigned to technical routines.
- h) The free team and technical event is open to all skill levels and shall consist of a minimum of three (3) to a maximum of ten (10). The team event can have any number of different skill levels on the team. When there is more than one skill level on a team, the skill



level with the majority of athletes will determine which skill level the team competes in. When there is the same number of athletes in more than one skill level, that team will compete at the highest skill level.

- i) Routines may start on the deck or in the water, but must finish in the water.
- j) The walk-on will no longer be timed.
- k) Deck movements will no longer be timed separately but will still be included in the routine time.
- l) All routines, technical and free will have a maximum time of four minutes which includes 10 seconds for deck movements and allows a plus or minus of 15 seconds.
- m) Timing of the routines shall start when the music starts upon a signal from the Referee and finish when the music stops.
- n) The music accompaniment shall begin upon a signal from the Referee. After the signal, the athlete(s) must perform the routine without interruption.
- o) In the case of technical problem(s) during a routine, the athletes may be allowed to re-swim at the discretion of the Chief Referee/Judge.

## 7.4 AWARDS

**7.4.1** All technical and free routines are scored in their individual category and level with awards for each. Medals will be awarded to the top three finishers in each category events (free and technical). Ribbons will be awarded for the 4-8 place in each category events (free and technical).

**7.4.2** The type of awards (ribbons and medals) are provided by the regional directors at regionals and provincial awards (ribbons and medals) are provided by BCSSA at provincials.

## 7.5 MUSIC

**7.5.1** There should be no more than a 10 second lead in before the music starts.

**7.5.2** Music must be uploaded to the software BCSSA is using two (2) weeks prior to Regionals and submitted as follows:

Event — Skill Level — Club Name — Coach Name —  
Athlete

Name for solo, Athlete Names for duet and theme for  
technical and free team

Examples:

Free Solo — Advanced — CRB — Sally Sue — Charlie Smith

Free Duet — Ocat2 — CRB — Sally Sue — Charlie Smith  
and Jane Doe

Free Team — Beginner — COQ — Bill Boy — Beautiful Day

Technical Team – Intermediate – NVC - Nancy Road -  
Happy Days

**7.5.3** Each club coach must be available with a back-up electronic version of the music for each routine in case of technical difficulties.

## **7.6 PENALTIES**

Coaches will be informed of any penalties after the event(s) are completed.

### **7.6.1 Routines**

Coaches are expected to attend the re-timing of their music. Should a coach fail to participate, the Chief Judge/Referee will make the final ruling without the coach. There will be no protest opportunity once the final ruling has occurred when a coach fails to attend the re-timing. Coaches need to be mindful that routines are timed on a "meet-by-meet" basis. Routines that did not receive a timing violation at a previous competition can still be subject to timing violations at subsequent competitions.

- a) A one (1) point penalty shall be deducted from the routine score if:
  - (i) There is a deviation from the specified routine time limit allowed (less or more than) for the routine.
  - (ii) An athlete has made a deliberate use of the bottom of the pool during the routine.
  
- b) A two (2) point penalty shall be deducted from the routine score if:

- (i) An athlete has made a deliberate use of bottom of the pool during a routine to assist another athlete.
- (ii) If during the deck movements in team routines athletes are executing stacks, towers or human pyramids.

### **7.6.2 Right to Appeal**

- a) The artistic athlete, or the club, may exercise the right to appeal any decision under these rules to the Jury of Appeal at a meet or if not at a meet, the Appeals Committee of the BCSSA. No protests shall be made against a judges' marks or penalties. The Jury of Appeal shall resolve any protests referred to it at a meet when possible.
- b) A verbal protest must be submitted within 30 minutes of the results being posted or 12 hours after being emailed out and be followed up with a written protest to the Chief Referee/ Judge. The Chief Referee/ Judge shall deliver the written protest to the Meet Manager and the Artistic Director for consideration by the Jury of Appeal named for the meet. The Jury of Appeal will then be convened and reach a decision.
- c) The Jury of Appeal is named prior to the meet and the name written on the Officials schedule and shall have no conflicts, where possible, with any BCSSA Clubs and/ or athletes. The Jury of Appeal shall follow World Aquatics procedures.

Any decision of the Jury of Appeal may be appealed to the Appeals Committee of the BCSSA as per Rule 3.11.

*(\*Note: The confirmed results of any event conducted under protest, or any protested event, should be withheld (not announced or published and no prizes or scoring points should be awarded) until the protest is withdrawn or resolved.)*

## **7.7 ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION**

- a) BCSSA is committed to providing an inclusive environment for all athletes.
- b) BCSSA clubs are encouraged to work with athletes and their families to adapt training programs and competitions to meet the needs of all interested athletes.
- c) While BCSSA rules apply to all BCSSA sanctioned Regional and Provincial competitions, the Head Official shall permit adaptations, variations, and exceptions within the spirit of the rules, that provide an equitable competitive field for all athletes. Permission must be requested in advance of the competition in order to be considered.

# 1. DEFINITIONS

**“Artistic Swim Meet”** — an artistic swimming competition involving two or more clubs with officials appointed for the express purpose of judging the correctness of each routine using the BCSSA General Rules, the Provincial Meet Package, and the most recent World Aquatics rule book for artistic competition.

**“BCSSA Club Hosted Meet”** — a swim meet offering events in all Athlete age groups and categories at which BCSSA-registered Athletes representing three or more clubs compete using the Rules of Swimming as defined by BCSSA Rules.

**“Calendar Week”** — a seven-day period between Sunday to Saturday.

**“Choreography”** — is the art of assembling movements that create a cohesive, complete, and well-balanced picture, which has meaning, style and form.

**“Club”** — a duly registered club in good standing with the BCSSA and must be an incorporated Society in British Columbia and be members in good standing under the Society Act.

**“Degree of Difficulty (D.D.)”** — In artistic swimming is the number value placed on each figure form. The higher the number, the more difficult the figure.

**“Figure”** — a combination of positions and transitions performed in the water, as defined in the World Aquatics manual.

**“May”** — an action is optional at the discretion of the person identified as the decision-maker.

**“O-Cat or O Athlete”** — An O-cat (open category) artistic athlete is an individual who was registered, trained and/or competed in either a provincial stream or national stream organized artistic swimming program during the winter season October 1st to April 30th of the current year, excluding limited competitive and recreational athletes.

**“Official/Judge/Referee”** — a person charged with responsibility to serve in a particular position of responsibility.

**“Pool Area”** — any area of the competition under the jurisdiction of the referee.

**“Pre-swimmer”** — in artistic swimming is an Athlete who swims before the Athletes in order to “warm up” the judges. A pre-swimmer is not competing; therefore, their marks are not counted into the competition scores.

**“Routine”** — in artistic swimming is a timed program performed to music containing parts of figures, strokes and body movement. Routines are choreographed to synchronize the athletes’ movements to music and each other. Within a routine the athlete tries to demonstrate maximum skill, ease of execution and musical interpretation. A routine may be swum as a solo, duet or team. Each routine category has a specific time limit depending on the age group.

**“S Athlete”** — An S (summer category) artistic athlete is an individual who trains and competes with BCSSA for an unrestricted number of hours between May 1st and

August 31st of each year. From September 1st to April 30th an S artistic athlete may:

- (i) Participate in artistic swimming training program that is classified as either recreational or limited competitive.
- (ii) Train and compete in diving, speed swimming and water polo or any other sport with no restrictions.
- (iii) Train any number of hours in a recognized school led artistic program with no consequences. They may compete in the Provincial high school meet.

**“Shall”** — an action is mandatory, so there is no discretion associated with it.

**“Should”** — an action is preferred under normal circumstances.

**“SC”** — Swimming Canada, the national governing body recognized by World Aquatics.

**“World Aquatics”** — formerly known as FINA — the international aquatic body that regulates and controls competitions in the four aquatic sports world-wide.



## 8. INDEX

**A**

Accessibility .....	13
Accident.....	6
Appeal.....	3, 4, 6, 12
Appeals Committee .....	3, 4, 6, 7
Artistic Director .....	5, 12
Athlete's Code of Conduct.....	1
Awards.....	5, 6, 7, 10

**B**

Bracelets.....	7
----------------	---

**C**

Chief Judge .....	7, 9, 11, 12
Chief Referee .....	7, 9, 11, 12
Coaches' Code of Conduct.....	2
Conduct .....	1, 5

**D**

Deck.....	9, 12
Disciplinary Action .....	4
Discipline Committee .....	4, 5
Disqualification .....	5, 1

**E**

Eligibility .....	7, 3
Eligibility - Athlete.....	7

**G**

Gender Equity .....	4
Goggles.....	7

**H**

Harassment Policy .....	2, 3
-------------------------	------

**I**

Incident .....	6
----------------	---

**J**

Jewelry .....	7
Judge .....	1, 5, 15
Jury.....	12

**M**

Make-up .....	7
Medical alerts.....	7
Medical certification .....	7
Medical reasons .....	7
Meet Manager .....	12
Music.....	10, 11, 15

**N**

Nail polish .....	7
-------------------	---

**O**

Officials .....	2, 14
Officials' Code of Conduct .....	2
Officials Schedule .....	12

**P**

Parents' Code of Conduct .....	2
Penalties .....	11, 12
Protest .....	7, 6
Provincial Championship .....	5, 6

**R**

Referee .....	1, 7, 9, 15
Regional Championship .....	5

**S**

Sanctioned .....	13
Scoring .....	13
Scratch .....	1
Suspension .....	4
Swimwear .....	7

**T**

Timing .....	9, 11
Timing violation .....	11