

Important Changes to the SAL By Laws for Age Group Events

Swimming Australia (SAL) has been monitoring the advancements made in swim suit design and their impact on the sport over the past few years and their effect on the sport at an Age Group level.

In the interest of equal opportunity, fair and equitable competition, and to prevent the deterioration of swimming skill development it has been determined that guidelines for swimsuits for Age Group Events conducted by SAL are required.

The following changes have been made to SAL's By-Laws for the conduct of Age Group Events.

CBL14.2 Additional Swimsuit Guidelines for Age Group Events

- (1) All swimwear worn by competitors in Age Group Events (18 and under) conducted in Australia by SAL shall be commercially available products.
- (2) Swimwear worn by competitors in Age Group Events shall conform to the following design – **effective 1 April 2009:**
 - (i) Men's swimwear is limited to one (1) swimsuit that covers at most the body surface from hips to knee. Swimwear must not extend above the waist or below the knees;
 - (ii) Women's swimwear is limited to one (1) swimsuit that is of "open back" and "open shoulder" designs that may extend down to the knee. Swimwear must not extend below the knees.
 - (iii) Swimwear must not have a zipper or any type of fastening system.

An **Age Group Event** is defined as any 18 and under swimming event conducted by SAL under the Australian Championships By-Laws. Currently this includes:

- Australian Age Championships (including Age SWD and Age Open Water), and
- State Teams Age Short Course Championships.

Please note that these changes will be in effect from 1 April 2009 and will be in place for the 2009 Australian Age Championships.

If you have any questions in relation to this please contact Tim Arnold on 02 6219 5600 or tim.arnold@swimming.org.au. A press release regarding the change is on the following page.

Yours sincerely



Kevin Neil
CEO

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Swimming Australia
Limited

ABN 14 109 333 628

Unit 12
7 Beissel Street
Belconnen ACT 2617

PO Box 3286
BELCONNEN ACT 2617

Tel: (02) 6219 5600
Fax: (02) 6219 5606
Country Code: 61

swim@swimming.org.au
www.swimming.org.au

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MEDIA RELEASE

December 19, 2008

SWIMMING AUSTRALIA STATEMENT RE SWIMSUITS

Swimming Australia wants FINA to cease approval of any further swimsuits, ban the use of “multi-layer” swimsuits in competition and has today announced its own modifications to “Competition Swimwear By-Laws” for age group swimmers.

The decisions come after lengthy discussion by the SAL board and following world wide discussion and debate in recent times regarding swimsuit advancements and their impact on swimmer performance.

Swimming Australia’s president and respected former international coach David Urquhart said SAL would request that world governing body FINA cease approval of any new swim suits immediately and request that the rules be amended so swimmers can only wear one swimsuit.

Mr Urquhart said Australia would support other members of the international swimming community to have the suit approval process reviewed in relation to fabrics and suit manufacture.

“After long debate and input from SAL’s High Performance Unit and other stakeholders our board unanimously agreed that FINA’s swimsuit approval process needs to undergo an immediate review, in particular in relation to fabrics and the manufacturing of swimsuits,” Mr Urquhart said.

“Australia supports other member federations and members of the international swimming community in this endeavour.”

Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association (ASCTA) president and Olympic team coach Rohan Taylor welcomed the decisions saying: “Since September ASCTA has been proactive in seeking the best possible outcome and has worked with its board and SAL to ensure this has happened.

“ASCTA has closely followed mounting evidence, scientific research and information provided by industry leaders such as Forbes Carlile.

“It has not been a simple process but now that the dust has settled after the Olympics, ASCTA is committed to join this united front to make sure that FINA gets a clear understanding of where Australia stands and that has certainly happened.”

The modification to SAL’s “Competition Swimwear By-Laws” for age group swimmers follows recommendations to the SAL Board from a select 10-member committee which included Australia’s National Head Coach Alan Thompson, its National Youth Coach Leigh Nugent and triple Olympian Adam Pine.

The group also included representation from the Australian Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association (ASCTA) and the Australian Swimmers Association (ASA).

The modification – effective from April 1 2009 is:

Swimwear worn by competitors in Australian Age Group Events shall conform to the following design:

- *Men's swimwear shall be limited to one swimsuit that covers, at most, the body surface from hips to knee. Swimwear must not extend above the waist or below the knees;*

- *Women's swimwear shall be limited to one swimsuit that is of "open back" and "open shoulder" designs that may extend down to the knee. Swimwear must not extend below the knees.*

- **General:** *Swimwear must not have a zipper or any type of fastening system.*

All swimwear worn by competitors in Age Group Events (18 and under) conducted in Australia by SAL shall be commercially available products.

The amended by-laws will come into affect in time for the 2009 Australian Age Championships at the Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre from April 13 to 18.

Mr Urquhart said the recommendation for the modification to the "Competition Swimwear By-Laws" from the select committee had also been unanimously agreed by the Board.

"SAL, ASA and ASCTA have been monitoring the advancements made in swimsuit design and their impact on the sport over the past few years at an age group level," Mr Urquhart said.

"We all agree this modification is in the interest of equal opportunity, fair and equitable competition and to prevent the deterioration of swimming skill development.

"There has been much discussion and debate in recent times both domestically and internationally regarding swimsuit advancements and their impact on swimmer performance.

"SAL has received feedback and comments from numerous stakeholders regarding this subject in the past few months and felt it had to make a stance on its age group swimmers for the true advancement of the sport.

"The future of swimming is about the swimmers, not about the swim suits. We believe swimmers and coaches at an age level should concentrate on getting the best coaching and training for the athletes and not the best swim suits.

"The focus has to be on good methodology, stroke technique, proper training, instruction, nutrition and good preparation for our age group athletes to make the step into our elite senior teams.

"Australia, under Leigh Nugent's guidance, has developed the best age group development program in the world – we are the envy of the other federations and that will always remain our focus

"We certainly have not taken this issue lightly and believe it is a decision for the betterment of our sport long term."

For further information please contact:

Ian Hanson
Media Director
Swimming Australia
(0407) 385 160