

EXEMPT COMPETITORS' CODE

Dear fellow members,

You will be aware that FINA introduced new swimwear regulations in 2009 to restore the competitor's fitness and technique as the primary considerations in competition.

Masters Swimming Australia (MSA) considered these changes and then accepted them in October 2009 with one addition, an allowance for modesty garments. This was adopted as the General Rule GR 16:

GR 16 SWIMWEAR

GR 16.1 FINA rulings on Swimwear, FINA General Rule GR 5 and FINA By-Law BL 8 including FINA requirements for swimwear approval from 01.01.2010 shall apply to Masters Swimming Australia competitions except for modesty garments.

Note that swimwear includes caps and goggles.

Since then the National technical Committee (NTC) has become aware that there are other reasons apart from "modesty" why our swimmers may wish to apply to wear swimsuits or equipment not allowed by Rule GR 16.

For example SWIMMERS

- Who have had a mastectomy may need to wear a supporting garment under their regulation swimwear
- are extra sensitive to sunlight may need to wear a rashie type garment over their regulation swimwear in outdoor events
- have religious beliefs may wear a garment that covers their head and upper body

For these reasons we believe the individual competitor not the swimwear needs to be granted an exemption. To be able to achieve this GR 16 would need to be altered as follows.

GR 16 SWIMWEAR

GR 16.1 FINA rulings on Swimwear, FINA General Rule GR 5 and FINA By-Law BL 8 including FINA requirements for swimwear approval from 01.01.2010 shall apply to Masters Swimming Australia competitions except for ~~modesty garments~~ exempt competitors.

Note that swimwear includes caps and goggles.

Note 2: Meet Referees may grant exemptions to individual swimmers in accordance with the "Exempt Competitors Code".

There may be other reasons that need to be added to this list. Please let us know what other situations you think need to be included in the proposed Exempt Competitor Code which follows on pages 2 and 3.

EXEMPT COMPETITORS' CODE

The Code is in four sections.

1. Who can ask to be "Exempt"?
2. What swimwear can they wear?
3. What restrictions, if any, will apply to "Exempt Competitors"?
4. What must competitors and officials do to make the Code work?

1. WHO CAN ASK TO BE EXEMPT?

Swimmers who

- have had mastectomies
- are extra sensitive to sunlight (outdoor pools only)
- have religious beliefs that require extra covering
- are embarrassed by their body shape/size
- have an injury that needs to be taped
- have other medical conditions that require them to cover more of their body than is allowed by GR 16.

2. WHAT SWIMWEAR CAN THEY WEAR?

The guiding principle should be that no exemption that is granted would give the swimmer a competitive advantage.

Extra swimwear

Swimmers who

- have had a mastectomy may need to wear a supporting garment under their regulation swimwear
- are extra sensitive to sunlight may wear a rashie type garment over their regulation swimwear
- have religious beliefs may wear a garment that covers their head and upper body
- swimmers who are embarrassed may wear a second swim suit or rashie type garment over their regulation swimsuit

As these swimmers would be wearing a regulation swim suit plus additional garments it could readily be said that they are not gaining a competitive advantage. If anything they are at a disadvantage.

Swimsuits not complying with GR 16

In exceptional circumstances swimmers may request permission to wear a swimsuit that does not comply with GR 16.

These swimmers may be deemed to be capable of gaining a competitive advantage.

3. WHAT RESTRICTIONS WILL APPLY TO EXEMPT COMPETITORS?

All swimmers who do not comply with GR 16

- will not be eligible for FINA World Records either as individuals or as members of a relay team.

- should not be eligible for World Top 10 but this may not be able to be enforced.

Swimmers deemed to be wearing extra garments that meant they were not obtaining a competitive advantage would not be subject to any other penalties.

Swimmers wearing a swimsuit that is deemed capable of giving a competitive advantage will be subject to the following extra restrictions:

- Will not be eligible for National individual or team records.
- Will not be eligible for National medals.

Note they cannot be excluded from National Top 10 as times recorded at internal club activities are eligible for National Top 10 and are not refereed.

4. WHAT MUST COMPETITORS AND OFFICIALS DO TO MAKE THE CODE WORK?

1. Competitors wishing to apply for an exemption from Rule GR 16 must contact the Meet Referee at least 7 days before the meet and discuss their situation.
2. Competitors may only use/wear those items for which they have been granted approval by the Meet Referee. Any variation may result in disqualification.
3. The Meet Referee shall prepare a list of Exempt Competitors with a brief description of their approved items.
4. A copy of this list shall be supplied to both the Marshals and the Event Referees.
5. Marshals, Clerks of Course and Check Starters shall report any anomalies they sight to the Event Referee.
6. Any competitor may report any anomalies they see in the dressing rooms to the Meet Referee.
7. The Meet Referee shall ensure that the requirements of SW 12.6 and any FINA World Record Applications are adhered to.