



1 Olympic Plaza  
Colorado Springs, CO  
80909-5770

o 719.866.4578  
f 719.866.4669

usaswimming.org

Daniel W. McAllen III  
2127 Summer Bloom Lane  
Fallbrook, CA 92028

h 760-723.2540  
c 214-316.9215  
f 760-723.2540

d.mcalleniii@sbcglobal.net

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To: General Chairs Board of Directors, USA Swimming  
Officials Chairs USA Swimming Officials  
Rules & Regulations Committee USA Swimming Coach Members

From: Daniel W. McAllen III, Chair, Rules & Regulations Committee

Re: Interpretation of USA Swimming Rules Article 101.2.3 (breaststroke)

On March 7, 2012, FINA issued an interpretation of the breaststroke rule covering the initiation of the arm pull. Obviously, this interpretation also applies to correctly judging the timing of the single butterfly kick which may follow initiation of the arm pull.

#### **BREASTSTROKE INTERPRETATION**

**SW 7.1** After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs during which the swimmer may be submerged. A single butterfly kick is permitted during the first arm stroke, followed by a breaststroke kick.

##### ***Interpretation***

*The first arm stroke begins with the separation of the hands.*

**SW 7.2** From the beginning of the first arm stroke after the start and after each turn, the body shall be on the breast. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time. From the start and throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order. All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and on the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.

##### ***Interpretation***

*A pause after the separation of the hands is not a violation of the rule.*

1. This interpretation is substituted for breaststroke interpretations issued on December 8, 2008 and April 14, which are hereby expressly revoked.
2. This interpretation requires “observable separation” to initiate the arm pull. No other action will initiate the arm pull.
3. This interpretation requires additional separation if the swimmer starts or leaves the wall after a turn with the hands already separated.

Should you have any questions regarding the above, please contact me.

Daniel W. McAllen III, Chair, USA Swimming Rules & Regulations Committee