



Breast Stroke Pullout Rule

Rule VIII A.3.a (p. 32) “After the start and each turn, a single butterfly kick, which must be followed by a breast stroke kick, is permitted during or at the completion of the first arm pull.”

This is a new rule that has the potential for misinterpretation and mistakes – on the part of coaches trying to teach the technique to their swimmers, on the part of the swimmers trying to learn how to execute the technique, and for officials trying to observe the technique and recognize violations.

Key Components:

- This rule applies to the pullout from the wall at the start and after the turn
- It also applies to the pullout at the start of the breast stroke leg of the Individual Medley (IM)
- The stroke sequence always applies – arm pull followed by leg kick
- Only one butterfly kick is permitted
- The butterfly kick, if used, must be followed by a breast stroke kick
- The butterfly kick, if used must occur during or after the first arm pull.

Pullout sequence without the butterfly kick (many NWAL swimmers will continue to use this pullout as the butterfly kick is not required):

(enter the water in a streamline position >>>arm pull past hips >>>arm recovery >>>breaststroke kick >>>begin second arm pull)

Ideal pullout sequence with the butterfly kick:

(enter the water in a streamline position >>> arm pull past hips >>> downward butterfly kick >>> arm recovery >>> breaststroke kick >>> begin second arm pull)

Rule Clarification: The butterfly kick, if used, must be taken “during or at the completion of the first arm pull”. NWAL has decided to adopt the same interpretation of this rule as USAS, FINA, and NFHS, meaning that any lateral or downward movement of the hands constitutes the initiation of “the first arm pull”. This means that in order for an official to report a disqualification for an out-of-sequence butterfly kick, he/she must be absolutely certain that no lateral or downward hand movement has occurred prior to the butterfly kick. If possible, the referee should verify that the S&T official making the call actually looked for hand movement (and saw no movement) prior to observing the butterfly kick. If the official did not look for hand movement first, or if he/she is unsure if any hand movement occurred, then the call should be overturned. As with all NWAL calls, the benefit should go to the swimmer if the official is unsure of the call.

New NWAL disqualifications resulting from this new rule: (1) Butterfly kick out of sequence (i.e., butterfly kick first, then the arm pull, or breaststroke kick first followed by



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a butterfly kick), (2) More than one butterfly kick during the pullout, and (3) Butterfly kick not followed by a breaststroke kick. As always there are other disqualifications that have existed all along, and these have not changed (one-hand touch, non-simultaneous touch, butterfly/flutter/scissor kick during swim, flutter/scissor kick during pullout, head not breaking the surface of the water prior to recovery of the second arm stroke, arms not on the same horizontal plane at the beginning of the first arm stroke, non-simultaneous arm motion during swim, pull past hips, elbows above water, non-simultaneous kick, multiple kicks, multiple arm pulls, feet not turned outward during the kick, and body not on breast when the feet left the wall).

Referees, in particular, need to be aware of potential problems and must be ready to discuss the rule in pre-meet briefings without altering the T&C interpretation. Some likely misinterpretations and misapplications of the rule by officials may include:

- Thinking that swimmers are required to execute a butterfly kick (they are not)
- Thinking that it is OK to use butterfly kicks during the swim. (no, this is a DQ)
- Not understanding the relative timing of the pull and the kick (some may think that the pull must be completed first)
- Thinking that a flutter kick is OK too. (it is not OK)
- Not understanding that multiple butterfly kicks is a violation.
- Getting confused about whether this new rule applies to just the start or after the turn. (it applies to both)
- Thinking that this rule doesn't apply to the individual medley. (it does apply)