



2018-19 Synchro Swim Ontario Rule Changes – September Update

SENT TO: All Club Presidents, Head Coaches, and Registrars (with CC to OOC & SSO Board)

DATE: September 19, 2018

Dear Synchro Swim Ontario members,

The following memo is a further update to the **August Update** regarding 2018-19 Rule Changes. SSO is working with the Provincial Rules Committee to finalize all rule changes as quickly as possible, addressing those items with the greatest impact first. Once all rule proposals have been reviewed and confirmed, SSO will aim to release the new Ontario Rulebook as quickly as possible. To assist Clubs in planning for the season in the interim, SSO is releasing the following update with outlines of several newly-approved rule changes, in addition to those outlined in August (with final wording to be released with the new rulebooks):

A. Listing 10 + 2 on team rosters at Ontario meets

- A Provincial Stream Team is composed of a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 10 competitors. In addition to these 10 competitors, teams may list up to two alternates, for a total maximum of 12 competitors on the roster for that routine (10 in pattern maximum). All 12 athletes may enter the figure event.
- **National stream rules:** If a Club wishes to continue to Nationally-held meets, they must ensure CASSA rules are followed (maximum 8 in pattern + 2 alternates)

B. Provincial average ages for Junior and Senior

- As previously indicated, SSO will be removing the 16-20 age category (to be replaced by Junior and Senior). To align with other Ontario average age group rules, the averages for Junior/Senior will be:
 - **JUNIOR** = 15.5 to 18.4
 - **SENIOR** = 18.5 to 25.0
 - Note: The new maximum age for Competitive athletes in Ontario is 25 years of age (this will create added flexibility for athletes wishing to continue to compete at provincially-held competitions)

C. Limits on numbers of routines (clarifications)

- As per CASSA rules, a competitor may enter a maximum of 6 events: 1 Team (Tech and Free constitute 1 Team), 1 Free Combination, 1 Highlight Routine, 1 solo, 1 duet and 1 Mixed Duet
- Clarification that this rule will apply to 11-12 athletes within Ontario (previously, 11-12s competing at Espoir were limited to 2 routines only – this limit has been removed)

- Alternates: Note that as per CASSA, alternates may be listed on more than one entry but may not swim more than once in each event.
- Junior/Senior: Note that as per CASSA, a Junior FINA eligible age athlete may compete in both Junior and Senior FINA free AND/OR technical team.

D. Lisa A. Entry

- For the Lisa A. competition ONLY, each athlete will be limited to one figure event (due to large registration numbers for this competition)
 - Athletes will enter the figures of their OWN age, UNLESS the Club wishes to request a Jury of Appeal exemption (example: An 11-12 athlete is competing on a 13-15 team for the season, therefore the Club feels it is in the athlete's best interest to enter 13-15 figures, not 11-12 figures, at Lisa A). Clubs may submit ALL their exemption requests at the same time (emails should be directed to rklein@synchroontario.com). Exemption requests are due by the meet entry deadline for Lisa A.
 - Junior/Senior 'figures' at Lisa A: Juniors/Seniors will be required to swim x4 elements on panels at Lisa A. Specific elements to be released shortly.

E. Penalties/Scoring/Degrees of difficulty

- At Ontario competitions, CASSA rule 4.5.6 b) shall apply to all competitive stream athletes: "A two-point penalty shall be assessed and the athlete will be permitted a second attempt. If following the second attempt the penalty is still applicable, a zero shall be awarded."
 - The CASSA/FINA zero penalty rule shall not apply at provincially-held competitions; athletes continuing on to Nationally-held meets must be aware that the zero penalty rule will apply if there is an error on the first attempt.
- Degrees of difficulty (as per FINA) will be applied to all figures and technical routine elements for competitive stream athletes in Ontario (11-12, 13-15, Junior, Senior). There will be no degrees of difficulty applied for 10U competitive figures; degrees of difficulty are not applied to Novice figures.
- 11-12 & 10U weightings
 - Routine Score: In 10&U and 11-12, the Free Routine score shall be the sum of the Execution score (40%), Artistic Impression score (40%) and Difficulty score (20%). In all remaining age categories, the Free Routine score and the Free Combination score shall be the sum of the Execution score (30%), Artistic Impression Score (40%) and Difficulty Score (30%)
 - Championship Score: The ratio for determining Championship Score at applicable meets shall be 50% Figure and 50% Routine (CASSA Rule 4.7 Scoring). The exception shall be 10&Under and 11-12 Competitive, where the ratio for determining Championship Score at applicable meets shall be 60% Figure and 40% Routine.

F. Novice Rules

- Novice will follow the same blended team rules as Competitive (i.e. average age determines the team's age, and all athletes on the team compete in the same figures; if swimming down, marked as 'exhibition')
- Novice 8U, 9-10 and 11-12 Figures will be **x4 full figures** (no draws, no partial figures/skills list as in 2017-18). Specific figures per age group to be released shortly.
- Novice 13-15 and 16-20 will continue to do the required elements within the routine, as per 2017-18 (no figures on panels for these two age groups). Note that Novice 16-20 category remains as per last season (no change to 'Novice Junior/Senior').

- Novice Penalties in Figures: If a Novice athlete makes an error on their first attempt at a figure, the Head Judge shall inform the athlete of the error, and the athlete will be allowed to perform the figure again (no penalty). If, after the second attempt, the athlete still fails to complete the figure as per the FINA description, then the figure is awarded a zero (judges do not flash zero in this case, it is recorded by the scorers). This rule is to ensure that Novice athletes are given the opportunity to succeed and learn from their errors, however in the interest of time athletes cannot be given unlimited chances to re-swim a figure.
- **Upgrading to/from Novice:** Athletes may upgrade from Recreational to Novice, and from Novice to Competitive, however the deadline for any upgrades will be **December 17, 2018**. This is the entry deadline for the Novice Regionals/Trilliums Regionals event. Athletes must attend the qualifying meet in order to attend the finals/championship meet in their stream, therefore switching between Rec/Nov or Nov/Competitive after the deadline is not permitted.