

Session Duration – (for adoption at May HofD mtg)

USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Section 205.3.1(F) requires that:

“With the exception of championship meets, the program in all other age group competition shall be planned to allow the events for swimmers 12 years and younger to be completed in four (4) hours or less for a timed finals session or in a total of eight (8) hours or less per day for a preliminaries and finals meet.”

Middle Atlantic Swimming (MAS) further requires that individual sessions of ALL competitions - with the exception of MAS-hosted meets, meets for A-level or higher swimmers, and (single event) distance meets - must be completed in four (4) hours or less; this includes both preliminaries sessions in Prelims/Finals meets and Timed Finals sessions. MAS also recognizes that certain facilities may have participant limitations which must be adhered to and therefore all meet hosts must honor those limitations.

Penalties will be imposed on any Meet host who violates these “session duration” rules, including the forfeiture of the entire entry fee for all swims that occur after a scheduled session has gone over four hours based upon the seeded timeline for that session or \$50, whichever is greater. Conditions beyond the control of meet management (e.g. lightning, timing system failure, power failure) will not be subject to such penalties.

Exception: distance events when included as the final event in a session may be excluded from the four-hour limit, and may be considered as a separate session. Distance events are defined as any race of 1000 yards/800 meters or longer.

Procedure - all Meet Directors must follow the procedure described below in order to avoid penalties for exceeding the four-hour limit.

1. Set-up each session of your meet in Meet Manager [MM] (or equivalent) program prior to the meet entry deadline; use a 30-second heat interval.
2. Process the meet entries and enter them into MM as they are received. Monitor the timeline for each session as entries are processed.
3. Note: If you are prepared to use the ‘over/under’ starting procedure in the meet, you may use a 20-second interval for the timeline; however, this should only be done if you have experienced officials who are prepared to operate with this procedure and you have included the possibility of using this procedure in your meet information.
4. When the 4-hr session length is reached, do not accept and/or process any more entries for that session. (Note: as the timeline can be affected by seeding, you should do a preliminary seeding of that session and re-run the timeline to confirm that the 4-hr limit has been reached.)
5. Notify clubs (or individuals) with further entries to that session that the entry limit has been reached and that no further entries can be accepted for that session. You should offer the club the option of accepting their entries into other sessions of the meet, or returning the club's entire entry.
6. Notify the Middle Atlantic (MA) office when entries to a session have been closed. This information can be posted on the MA website, and the office can help advise whether other meets on the same or subsequent weekend are available to accept the excess entries.
7. Within two (2) days after the entry deadline for your meet, YOU MUST SEND A COPY OF THE COMPLETE SEEDED MEET TO THE MA OFFICE. The meet should be sent as a Meet Manager Backup file; this file will be used to confirm the length of all sessions and will also be used by the Registration Chair to confirm the registration information of all entered swimmers. The office will review the meet information and determine any penalties to be imposed.

According to MAS policy, there can be no changes to the meet format after the meet sanction has been granted. However, the following options may be considered when the four-hour limit has been reached for a session - but must be approved by the Admin and/or Tech Planning Vice-Chairs before they are implemented:

1. Elimination of relays from the session.
2. Limiting the number of heats in each event, or in specified events. This possibility must have been included in the Meet Information. Keep in mind that this process will likely affect ‘C’ swimmers to a greater degree when they are included in the meet.
3. Elimination of an event – but only if that possibility was included in the meet information.
4. Splitting the session into separate age groups with each individual age group run as a separate session – i.e., a session initially scheduled for both the 11-12 and 13-14 age groups can be split into separate 11-12 and 13-14 sessions. Each session must have its own warm-up, and neither split session should start more than approximately one hour before the original scheduled starting time; in addition, any subsequent sessions (e.g., later in the day) should not be adversely affected by the change. Approval by the Admin or Tech Planning Chairs must be obtained, and all affected clubs must be directly notified of such a change.

What you CANNOT do to resolve a long session:

1. Split an extended session into two sessions with the same age groups by inserting a 'break' into an existing session.
2. Moving an event from one session to another session, or into a separate session on the same or previous meet day.
3. Reduce the number of events allowed per swimmer, unless that provision was stated in the meet information and is then applied to all swimmers in the affected age group. Note that this requires that each swimmer notify the host club entry which event is their 'provisional' event – an administrative issue.
4. Eliminate planned 'breaks' if a warm-down facility is not available and 'breaks' were offered in the meet information.

PENALTIES – the following penalties will be imposed on any meet host that exceeds the four-hour session limit:

1. Forfeiture of the total entry fee for all 'splashes' scheduled to occur after the 4-hour limit as determined by the seeded meet timeline computed using a 30-second heat interval (or 20-sec interval when over/under starts are used) or \$50, whichever is greater.
2. A \$25 fine for not submitting the complete seeded Meet back-up file to the MA office by the second day after the close of meet entries. This fine may be increased to \$50 if any meet session is then determined to exceed the four-hour limit.
3. Possible loss of Meet Sanctions for subsequent meets during the current season, or loss of the right to bid on meets in the following year. The MAS Board of Directors will determine any loss of such sanctions.
4. Meet sessions which exceed four hours due to unusual circumstances beyond the control of the meet host will not be subject to these penalties provided the scheduled timeline was within the limit.

To help avoid unnecessary problems when your meet is over-subscribed, you should include in your meet information the possibility that entries may be rejected in order to remain within the required four-hour session limit, and what steps will be taken if that occurs. You should also consider and be willing to accept entries from clubs that have been rejected by other meets so long as those entries do not cause your meet to exceed the limits.

Advising Teams that They Did Not Get Into the Meet

One of the hardest things for a Meet Director to do is send entries back and tell a team that there is no more room in the meet. The phone rings continuously and the pressure is intense. You will be told over and over that, "We are here for the good of the swimmers and our swimmers need to swim in your meet!" Take this argument to heart and remember that you do no one a favor – either the 300 properly entered in your meet or those you turn away – if accepting them transforms the meet into a nightmare with six-hour sessions.

What can you do? Refer these teams to the MAS meet schedule so that they may find a spot in another meet. We all hate to bear bad news, but remember that you can help minimize problems by notifying both the Admin Vice-Chair and the affected teams as soon as you find your meet is over subscribed.

If your meet information says that you will limit your meet - then you must do so. Your entrants count on it and Middle Atlantic Swimming expects it as a condition of your Sanction. Help keep swimming fun!

NOTE: these revised procedures and policies will be presented at the May, 2005 Middle Atlantic House of Delegates meeting for review and adoption. A final copy of the revised Session Duration Policy will be sent to all meet hosts following that meeting.

In addition, each meet host is reminded that a Meet Director for their meets must attend one of the Meet Director clinics to be held in conjunction with a MAS long-course meet in June – tentatively planned for the Summer Storm meet in Lancaster and the Summer Solstice meet at GCIT.

VIOLATION	PENALTY
Late request for sanction	\$25 flat fee
Late submission of meet info for web posting	\$25 flat fee
Failure to make required corrections to meet information	Board of Review*
Late submission of "splash" fees	\$25 flat fee
Failure to submit seeded meet for review	\$25 flat fee
Failure to submit appropriate reports by deadline	\$25 flat fee
Blatant or repeated failure to follow meets rules and regulations established by USA-S and/or MAS	Board of Review*