

2025-2026 Competitive Season Technical Memo #1

Rule Changes & Procedure Updates

Regional League: New System Adaptation

Starting in 2025-2026, Regional League competitions will be held using an adapted version of new system scoring.

Key points of this format include:

- Shift from three judging panels (Difficulty, Execution and Artistic Impression) to two panels (Elements and Artistic Impression)
- No synchronization technical controllers or synchronization errors
- Use of one difficulty technical controller and limited pass/fail procedure
- Use of TRE's (similar to 10U Competitive), Choreography Hybrids and a limited Acrobatics catalogue
- No coach cards required, however elements must be performed in the order listed

Full details of these rules are available in a separate document.

Changes to Basemark Protocol for Provincial Solo and Duet Events

Provincial stream Solo and Duet events will now be held using full basemark protocol. This excludes Adapted and Mixed Ability events.

Why are we making this change?

- This shift helps us to align with Canada Artistic Swimming and World Aquatics more closely as new system rules and procedures continue to develop.
- As the scoring system develops, Technical Controller protocol and understanding of what constitutes a base mark has also increased. DTCs are looking for clear pass and fail criteria.
- Applying this protocol in Duet and Solo events supports focus on execution of movements and appropriate difficulty, while being mindful of a wider range of abilities and experience which exist within Provincial level Teams.

Provincial stream Team events will continue to be held using the following partial basemark protocol (no change from 2024-2025):

Hybrids which are not successfully completed will receive partial basemarks (meaning that the DTC will remove only the DD of components which are not successfully completed, as was done in late 2023-2024) up to a maximum of 3 deductions. Should 4 or more components of a hybrid not be successfully completed, the hybrid will receive a full basemark of 0.5 DD.

Changes to 11-12 Synchronization Error Calculation

Synchronization errors for 11-12 Duet and 11-12 Team will now be applied using the following guidelines:

- Small synchronization errors will be worth a deduction of 0.1
- Obvious synchronization errors will be worth a deduction of 0.5
- Major synchronization errors will not be applied (however these will be noted as obvious errors)
- There will be no deduction cap to synchronization errors

No other major changes will be made to the 11-12 Team event.

Limits to Youth Figures Sections at Provincial Competitions

All Youth Figure events at OAS competitions will only be drawn from Group A and Group B. Figures in Group C will not be competed at OAS events by either Provincial or National athletes.

Exception for 11-12 Age Athletes Swimming on Youth National Teams

Athletes aged 11-12 who are swimming up on a Youth National Team will be permitted to enter in 11-12 Duet at Provincial competitions based on the criteria that there is no National stream in the 11-12 age category.

Application Process for 11-12 Age Athletes Wishing to Compete in Youth Solo

Following the removal of the 11-12 Solo event, athletes aged 11-12 who would like to compete in the Youth Solo category may apply to do so using the following process:

1) The athlete must submit the following items by email to [Laura Steacy](#).

- Figure scores from the past two competitive seasons
- Videos of the athlete performing all of the Group A and Group B Youth Figures
- A video of the athlete swimming a routine (Solo, Duet or Team) in the previous competition season

2) The above will be reviewed by the Jury of Appeal and decided based on the following criteria:

- A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the athletes' ability and performance in Routine and Figure events
- An assessment of the Youth Solo field and the athletes' prospective success in the category

3) Applicants will be notified as to the result of their application no later than two weeks following its submission.

The deadline to submit an application for the 2025-2026 competitive season is **Saturday, November 1, 2025**.

Shift to Draw Order Protocol at Ontario Championships

Routine events at Ontario Championships will now use the following guidelines for determining draw order:

- The draw for order of swim for all direct finals which do not include figure scores (Junior, Senior, Open, Mixed Ability events) will be **random**.
- The draw for order of swim for events which are direct finals that do include figure scores (10U, 11-12, Youth, AdAs events), draws will be **seeded based on figure results**.
- The draw for order of swim for all routine prelims will be **random**.
- The draw for order of swim for all routine finals will be created based on **reverse order of championship rank in the preliminary event**. The athlete or team in last position will swim first, and the athlete or team in first position will swim last.