

Technical / Performance Race Suit Policy

Version 2.0

Approved – 10 October 2019

Reviewed - Annually by Technical Committee

Purpose:

To ensure that all attendees, be they Competitors, Coaches, Team Managers, Technical Officials or Spectators in any capacity of Meets organised and sanctioned by Swimming Counties Manukau (SCM), know and understand the policy regarding Technical/Performance Race Suits for those 12 years of age and under, and those 13 years of age and above competing or wanting to compete at an SCM meet.

Description:

Swimming Counties Manukau (SCM) in consultation with Swimming New Zealand (SNZ) and the SNZ Technical Group, have instituted this Policy pertaining to the use of technical/Performance race suits at SCM sanctioned competitions.

Technical/Performance race suits can be very expensive and thus could provide a potential barrier to entry for families looking to start out in swimming or continue their swimming journey.

In the opinion of the SCM Technical Committee and Board, there are no proven performance benefits for young swimmers using Technical/Performance Race Suits.

After consultation with coaches across SNZ regions, feedback indicates that it is not clear how much of a difference wearing such a suit makes at a young age for the majority of studies conducted across the world on the 'drag reduction' produced have been conducted on post-adolescents whose physically mature bodies are likely to have found greater benefits from the compression the suits provide.

As such much of the benefit of wearing a Technical/Performance Race Suit is not relevant to young swimmers who are yet to physically develop.

The move to limit the use of Technical/Performance Race Suits for young swimmers is another initiative from SCM to remove the competitive pressure on young swimmers at a crucial development phase of their swimming journey.

This Technical/Performance Race Suits Policy has been in effect since the 1st January 2019.

Please note that other SNZ Regions have already passed this policy so please communicate this to all your members.

Who does this Policy apply to?

Swimmers aged 13 Years and over:

Shall continue to be permitted to compete in swim wear in line with the FINA bylaws 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3.

Swimmers aged 12 Years and under:

Are no longer permitted to wear Technical/Performance Race Suits at any SCM sanctioned competition.

What is a Technical/ Performance Suit?

Technical/Performance Race Suits are manufactured using scientifically advanced materials. Materials of this type are normally comprised of spandex and nylon composite fabrics with features to reduce “drag” against the water.

The fabrics include features which are highly compressive and increase the swimmer's glide through water and reducing absorption of water by the suit as opposed to regular swimsuits.

Traditional one-piece race suits for females as well as briefs and trunks for male Swimmers are not Technical/Performance Race Suits and will be permitted. Knee length suits and “jammers” will also be permitted provided they do not feature the key components of a Technical/Performance Race Suit.

The key component of a Technical/Performance Race Suit which should be identified when differentiating what is and isn't permitted are the following:

- **Bonded/ Sealed Seams**
- **Meshed Seams**
- **Kinetic Tape**



The above photographs are examples of seaming which will continue to be permitted for swimmers aged 12 years and under, note the stitching is raised on the outside of the fabric.



The above photographs are examples of swim suit seaming which is no longer be permitted for swimmers aged 12 years and under.

- **Note the bonded/sealed seams and use of kinetic tape.**

How will this Policy be officiated?

Technical Officials will enforce this Policy as described in the 'Procedure' section of the **Technical/Performance Race Suit Disqualification Policy**.

It is recommended that all Competitors, Coaches, Team Managers, Technical Officials and spectators in any capacity of Meets organised by SCM make themselves aware of the procedure.

Part of the Technical/Performance Race Suit Disqualification Policy places any questions regarding such attire on the competitor to get clearance when unsure and on Coaches and Team Managers to check their athletes abide by the Policy.

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Chairperson
By Order of the Board of Swimming Counties Manukau
Signed 16 October 2019