

World Para Swimming Butterfly Rule Clarification for NPCs

Following the conclusion of the World Series and feedback from athletes, coaches and/or NPCs, we'd like to offer some additional information regarding Butterfly.

11.5.2 Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water and brought backward simultaneously under the water throughout the race, subject to Rule 11.5.5.

11.5.2.4 Where an athlete can only use one (1) arm for the arm stroke (as determined by the athlete's Code of Exception), the arm shall be brought forward over the water. The position of the body must remain in line with the normal water surface. Where an athlete's impairment results in only one (1) arm being used the non-functioning arm shall be dragged or stretched forward.

The intent of this rule is to ensure when athletes compete, the stroke retains the integrity of a Butterfly stroke. An athlete using two arms will automatically keep their body position in line with the normal water surface to be able to bring both arms forward over the water. The new rule ensures an athlete who competes only using one arm stays on the breast in line with the normal water surface, as butterfly was originally intended, and are not swimming on the side, with a dropped shoulder. The WPS interpretation of 'the body' is the trunk of an athlete, including the shoulders, the position of the legs is covered in Rule 11.5.3.

We saw many correct examples of this during the 2018 World Series; an athlete using only one (1) arm to swim with; can keep their body in line with the normal water surface, by breathing to the front or by breathing to their non-functioning arm side. All certified World Para Swimming Technical Officials are fully aware of the Rules and what they need to observe during Butterfly events. World Para Swimming is working with our International Officials to help disseminate knowledge on a national level to ensure consistent officiating from one event to the next.

It is very important that we keep the integrity of all strokes and ensure Butterfly does not look or become Freestyle, especially as we are on the way towards major WPS events such as the upcoming Europeans in Dublin, 2018 Asian Para Games, 2019 World Championships and the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.